Studies show bias

Looks can affect your future

Physically attractive people are more likely to score good grades and land better jobs than their plainer counterparts.

That claim is among the theories advanced in a new book called "Mirror, Mirror," which explores the importance of physical attractiveness in school, at work, and in romantic relationships.

The findings, by Illinois State University Prof. Susan Sprecher and University of Hawaii Prof. Elaine Hatfield, indicate that looks may be more important than previously believed.

For example, they learned that couples consider physical attractiveness to be the most important factor in beginning interpersonal relationships.

"In the early sixties, studies seemed to show that things like intelligence and social skills brought people together," Sprecher explains.

"Now, in real life, it seems attractive people meet attractive people and that seems to work at first. Of course, when you get beyond the surface, you find you need more social matching to make relationships work. One partner may not be as physically attractive as the other, but may have money instead and that may be what eventually makes the relationship work."

Some of the book's findings show:

- Pretty women get better grades in college than their plainer counterparts, possibly because professors tend to remember them.

- Attractive job applicants are more likely to get hired and be paid more.

- Tall men score better in the job market than short men.

- Just half of 2,000 people surveyed were extremely or quite satisfied with their looks. Only a few were extremely dissatisfied.

- Most of the women surveyed like broad-shouldered men with small hips. Most men preferred women with big breasts, medium-to-small hips and medium legs.

"But these statements are generalized, and not as simple as the results suggest," argues Frank Saal, Kansas State University psychologist and author of a 1985 study on male and female sexual interaction.

"There is evidence, for example, that in a traditionally male domain, physical attractiveness can work against a woman applying for a job," Saal says. However, he continues, "In 'pink collar' fields where women dominate the workforce, attractiveness is good for getting hired and for getting paid well."

Saal suggests that attractive women trying to break into male-dominated fields may face "the dizzy-blond syndrome. There's the feeling in some cases that no matter how good a woman is, there's no way she can do what a man does."

In classrooms, the same system applies, Saal contends. "In a mechanical engineering class, beauty often is going to work against a woman. She'll be seen as a dizzy dame, out of her league. In home economics, looks will work to her advantage."

Sprecher admits some of the studies researched for "Mirror, Mirror" show results that back Saal's claims.

"A few studies show that when a job can be defined as masculine or feminine, really beautiful women fare less well in vying for masculine positions," she says.

Book offers tips for landing jobs

College graduates looking for their first full-time job, or even students looking for summer jobs, can have greater success if they follow some common rules say experts in career planning and counseling.

According to Robert Nelson in his book, "The Job Hunt: A Concise Guide to the Biggest Job You will ever Have," two important rules are to view the job search process from the prospective employer's standpoint and to be consistent in your efforts and follow up.

Nelson says that while your reasons for needing a job are certainly important to you, your reasons are irrelevant to prospective employers. They are looking for people who can best answer their questions, "How will my hiring you benefit my organization? How are you going to fit into our scheme? What can you offer us?"

Job seekers must view themselves as the product in a marketing process. Just as companies find out how they can meet the needs of prospective consumers by planning and research, a propective employee must find out how he or she can meet the needs of the prospective company by doing the same thing.

Part of any good plan says Nelson, is follow up. Following up telephone calls with letters, letters with telephone calls, and interviews wit thank-you letters is a mus Studies have shown a correla tion between the number interviewees who send thank you letters and job offer Such action gives you a se ond chance to demonstrat your communication skills, t demonstrate your operatin style, and to demonstrat your seriousness about you job search. Employers sa that while job openings ma not be available when the in tial interview or contact made, often when an openin does occur, it the best re membered interviewe whose resume and applica tion is pulled from the files.

Information interviews ca also be useful Nelson says. I stead of waiting for a jo opening announcement, begi investigating the type of wor with the kind of companie you desire. Set up meeting with key people to find ou more about the company or particular position. Again, d your homework because thi should not be a high schoo tour of the plant. You ar there for serious talk abou the company. This method a lows you to learn more abou industry and also gives th company a chance to look you without the pressures the interviewing process.

Experts like Nelson, agree the keys to a successful jo search are methodical an persistent research, invest gation and follow up.

HELP WANTED:

Experience required

Industrial technology students gain experience

In a job search, experience is often recommended, but many students are not sure how to get that experience. Three opportunities to help students gain experience offered at ECSU are a Co-op Education Program in conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard; a Cooperative Education program through the Industrial Arts and Technology Department, and an internship/seminar course in the English/News Media Department.

The Cooperative Education Program offers many students in the Industrial Arts and Technology Department valuable experiences in their chosen fields of study. Some of the students taking advantage of this program are as follows:

Rhonda James, an Industrial Technology major with a mechanical option attended NASA Research Center for the summer of 1986. She was assigned to the Airborne Lida Laboratory where her duties consisted of mechanical modifications of the Ultraviolet Differential Absorption Lidar (UV-DIAL) system. Due to safety factors, she was not allowed to work with the system while it was in operation, but she learned its function. Rhonda says that the experience was valuable to her because she learned the importance of working cooperatively with others. She has returned to NASA under the co-op program again this semester.

Darryl Thompson, also an Industrial Technology major with a mechanical option, attended NASA Langley Research Center the summer of 1986. He was assigned to the Operations Support Division Laboratories Operations Branch, Technical Support Section "B" in support of the High Energy Science Branch. Darryl assisted the engineering technicians on three research projects: a mega-ampere plasma switch, which he helped in the reassembly of, a laser oscillator amplifier, with which he performed operations with power tools and precision instruments, and a hypocycloidal pinch, with which his duties included making detail and isometric drawings and the cutting of O-rings and O-rings grooves.

Michael Ray, an Industrial Technology major with an electronics option, attended NASA Langley Research Center during the Fall 1986-87. He was assigned to the Microelectronics Development Section (MDS) which provided technical support for the design, development, fabrication, and testing of microelectronics. His responsibilities icluded the fabrication of Thin-Film Sensors, coating materials with Parylene, and working in the Speed Wind Tunnel.

Lonnie Young, an Indu trial Technology major wi an electronics option,a tended NASA Langley R search Center during the Fa of 1986-87. Lonnie was a signed to the Facilities R search Support Section. H duties consisted of assisti the senior technicians, and was instructed on how make pins for computer c bles to be used in the Wi Tunnels. He also worked gauges that would be used the Space Shuttle. Lonn says that this was a greate perience that will benefit h in the years to come.

Co-op program involves students with Coast Guard

by Valerie Williams
staff writer

A Co-op education program, offering students "hands-on" experience and giving them a chance to work on state of the art equipment before finishing school has been developed in the Industrial and Technology building by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Automatic Test Equipment Research Laboratory contains all electronic test equipment and is the first attempt of the Coast Guard to develop its own computer programs to assist in repairing equipment.

Mike Ray, a 29-year old Jacksonville, N.C. native and Industrial Technology student has been actively involved in the program since its inception in November 1985. Ray served six years in the Navy prior to enrolling at ECSU and has since learned a great deal of digital technology. As a result of Ray's diligence, he has been offered the opportunity to work with NASA in the summer.

Becoming involved in the Co-op program will not only help prepare students for a career in the military, but will also be helpful in pursuing any kind of work dealing with electronics and computer programming.

"Students could be involved in a wide range of activities if only they would give the program a chance. Only about six students are involved in the program," said Ray.

"Everything the military does is becoming more mechanized with sophisticated electronics. Since there are so many pieces of information that the human mind can't always grasp, computers can be very helpful," said Lt. Cmdr. Sam Edwards, a 25-year veteran in the electronics field and employee of the U.S. Coast Guard. According to Edwards, this program is not only beneficial to the students at ECSU, but to the Coast Guard as well because they get student labor for free, large space, and visibility on campus.

Although the laboratory will not remain on campus indefinitely, Edwards said, "We don't intend for the project to ever be over as long as there is new technology. We want to find ways of shortening the length of time it takes to repair equipment and hopefully the students on campus will become more involved in such a unique opportunity before it is too late to get the experience needed before entering the competitive work force."

Media student interns as utility PR person

Experience is needed for the job, but how can you get a job to get the experience without the experience to get the job. It is a Catch-22.

According to Joe Holley, a senior majoring in English with a concentration in Media, valuable experience is possible for media students in the internship/seminar course. This course for media students requires at least 50 hours of fieldwork.

Holley worked this semester with the Albemarle Electric Membership Corporation (AEMC) in the Public Relations/Member Services Department. AEMC is an electric utility located in Hertford that provides power to approximately 7,500 consumers. Holley was supervised by Larry Johnson, Member Services Director.

Holley was mainly responsible for interviewing, gathering, writing and editing the March issue of the electric company's consumer newsletter. He also prepared several feature stories plus handled black and white photography assignments.

"Interviewing some of the consumers was quite interesting. I learned some things about welding, bee keeping, sign painting, as well as learning to work with the public in the capacity of a public relations person."

According to Holley, experience is a must because without experience most employers will overlook your application to get those that have relevant work experience for the position.

There are even some extra experience gained sometimes. Holley had to learn something about bees for one story.

According to the Edenton native, he had to interview a farmer for a story who kept about 20 beehives that we leased to farmers to he cross-pollenate the cro These bees also provid honey for commercial a personal use of the b keeper.

"I got close to one of t beehives, maybe about thr or four feet," Holley sa "which required coura since I had been attacked about five bees at one tir about five years ago."

Working with the electr company's personnel al was valuable experience sa Holley.

"While working with Lar Johnson, the Member Servi Director, he gave me the portunity to write my own s ries after which he would over them and make sugg tions as far as improvi them, but it was always left me as to what aproach use."