



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2009 PROJECT SUMMARY**

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| Name(s) Page B. Benoit | Project Number J1304 |
| Project Title They're Not Sticking! A Study of Gender Responses to Frustration | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>Objectives/Goals My objective was to determine if there is a difference in the way males and females respond to frustration. Based on my research and observations, I predicted that there would be a difference. I thought males would respond more aggressively and females would respond more subtly, without aggression.</p> <p>Methods/Materials Using nails, I made a grid of 16 electromagnets. I attached switches to two so I could switch the polarity. Using a screen to hide the wiring and switches, I asked 15 males and 15 females to copy a pattern by placing paper chips on the electromagnetic nail heads as many times as they could in three minutes. Every 10 seconds, I reversed the polarity on one of the electromagnets so a paper clip would fall, making it impossible to complete the task. Each subject was videotaped and responses were analyzed, using 7 categories. I calculated the frequency of occurrence in each category by gender and performed a chi-square analysis, with the help of a psychology professor, to see if the differences were statistically significant.</p> <p>Results My test results showed that boys and girls responded to frustration more alike than they did differently. Although there were some differences in seeking clarification, giving up, persistence, positive responses and subtle postural responses, these differences were small and not statistically significant. This meant that the differences were due to chance and not necessarily due to gender differences. The two categories where they did respond differently were aggression and new methodology. In both categories, boys had a higher percentage of response behaviors. These were statistically significant differences which meant that the differences were due to gender.</p> <p>Conclusions/Discussion My hypothesis was supported. Boys responded with more aggressive behavior than girls. Girls did not respond aggressively; they responded in subtle non-aggressive ways. Boys also sought new methods more often than girls. The results of this experiment are important because if people understand how they respond to frustration, they can overcome it more easily. Teachers and parents can help students learn positive new ways to deal with frustration so goals can be achieved and learning can continue.</p> | |
| Summary Statement This project studied gender responses to frustration in adolescents. | |
| Help Received An electrician helped problem solve how to reverse the polarity of electromagnets, Dr. Myers at Humboldt State University helped me do a chi-square analysis, mother helped type | |