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## Toward a new understanding of wisdom: the role of communication on perceptions of wisdom

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TOWARD A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF WISDOM:  
THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION ON  
PERCEPTIONS OF WISDOM

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Communication Studies

by

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## ABSTRACT

Wisdom is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional, multidisciplinary construct which has been discussed and examined since the beginning of recorded history. Many classical and contemporary scholars have sought to define wisdom, but a precise definition has proven elusive. Since wisdom often defies easy categorization, this dissertation examines wisdom using a multi-methodological perspective. Four chapters of this dissertation discuss the historiography of various societal attributions of wisdom using performance studies techniques. Three chapters examine wisdom and the instruments constructed to measure the construct from a social scientific approach. This study seeks to clarify, while simultaneously deconstructing, the definition of wisdom. The four performative chapters address wisdom primarily from the perspective of Gregory Ulmer's "mystory". The three social scientific chapters discuss the existing social scientific literature, information about the sample and questionnaire, and the results of the statistical analysis of the 12 hypotheses and 17 research questions posed. The discussion considers how the methodologies used clarify and obscure wisdom. Conclusions about the elusive nature of wisdom are posited. The role of different methodological approaches, age, and poor performance of existing wisdom scales suggest directions for future research.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

“Where is the Life, we have lost in living?

Where is the Wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the Knowledge we have lost in information?”

T. S. Eliot (as cited in famouspoetsandpoem.com, n.d.)

#### An Aging World

In 2000, the older adult population in the United States represented over 13% of the total population (approximately 35 million Americans). While the oldest old (85 years+) population represented only 2 percent of the population (about 4 million people) in 2000, this age group was the fastest growing segment of the American population. The increase in older adults' percentage of the total population is expected to continue well into the twenty-first century. The older population is projected to exceed 70 million people by 2030 when projections say it will account for approximately 20 percent of the American population. Projections by the U.S. Census Bureau on 85 and older adults will increase from 4 million to 19 million by 2050 (United States Census Bureau and the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, 2000). Surprisingly, critics argue that U. S. Census projections inherently underestimate the growth rate of the older adult population (Manton, Singer, & Suzman, 1993).

This age shift is not confined to the United States or other industrialized or post-industrialized nations, but appears to be a global phenomenon. Projections from the Census Bureau and the National Institute on Aging suggest that most nations will experience a dramatic increase in their older adult populations in the near future. The

majority of the recent increases in the older adult population worldwide have occurred in developing countries, with those 65 and older accounting for as much as one-third of the global population by year 2150 (United States Census Bureau and the National Institute on Aging, 2001). The increased longevity of older adults will have economic, cultural and social ramifications effecting numerous institutions, including governments, hospitals, colleges and universities, and social support services.

Despite the burgeoning older adult population in both the United States and worldwide, there has been no corresponding shift in research toward examining later adulthood. In addition, much of the previous research examining older adults has painted a rather bleak picture of decline and impairment (Cumming & Henry, 1961; Gravell, 1988; Rabbitt, 1984). While the image of the aging process is improving and research seems to support the prospect of aging as a mix of gains and losses (e.g., stereotype research has found that stereotypes of older adults can be positive or negative based upon context and previous interactions; Hummert 1999; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1994; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1995; Hummert, Shaner & Garstka, 1995; Hummert, Shaner, Garstka & Henry, 1998; Pecchioni & Croghan, 2002), the one positive attribute of older adults which is consistently superior to younger individuals is wisdom.

### Aging and Wisdom

While people talk about wisdom everyday, it is seldom conceptualized in any uniform way. The elusive nature of wisdom lends itself to diverse modes of analysis. While social scientists examine wisdom as an individual characteristic to be measured, qualitative researchers consider socio-cultural elements that foster or impede the practice or performance of wisdom. This project will consider different conceptions and contexts

of wisdom: methodologically, socio-politically, and culturally from classical times to the present. In the West, wisdom has changed significantly from classical times to the present. These differences between classical and contemporary ideas of wisdom represent its embeddedness in different contextual patterns that force its continual refining and re-operationalization within temporal contexts (Takahashi & Bordia, 2000; Takahashi & Overton, 2002). The different conceptions of wisdom work in a constant Brownian movement between cooperation, apathy, and competition with other disciplinary definitions.

In order to begin to capture the multidimensionality of and constantly changing nature of wisdom, this century as well as much of the twentieth century tended to see wisdom as a product of education and knowledge, but even more, a product of specialization: less and less emphasis was placed on understanding the more esoteric forms of wisdom like spiritual and practical wisdom and more was placed on economic and technological forms of wisdom (more appropriately framed as knowledge). One need only roam through the business and computer science sections to see stunning examples of this conflation like *Deep Smarts: How to Cultivate and Transfer Enduring Business Wisdom* (Leonard & Swap, 2005), whose cover articulates the text as offering “...penetrating insight into the relationships among knowledge, competitive advantage, and continuous innovation,” or the *Wisdom Network: An 8-step Process for Identifying, Sharing and Leveraging Individual Expertise* (Benton & Giovagnoli, 2006).

Even research on wisdom in academic circles has done little to clarify either a universal definition or common characteristics associated with it. Baltes and Staudinger (2000) define the criteria for wisdom as “rich factual and procedural knowledge, lifespan

contextualism, relativism of values and life priorities, and recognition and management of uncertainty” (p. 122). Baltes and Staudinger (2000) classify wisdom as a cognitive construct. Other social scientific researchers operationalized wisdom more broadly. Haste, Helkama, and Markoulis (1998) conceptualize wisdom as a set of individual attributes including contentment, compassion, concern for people, integrity, and honesty as well as cognitive problem-solving skills (for other definitions of wisdom see APPENDIX A). Based on a review of these numerous definitions of wisdom, for this study, wisdom is attributed to policies which are proactive, improve the quality of life, and uphold equality and justice as well as to individual behaviors that express satisfaction with life, creativity, concern for others, superior communication capacity, and cognitive, emotional and reflective abilities.

Because of the complexities inherent in examining such a wide-ranging definition of wisdom within its socio-cultural and historical contexts, a multi-methodological approach was deemed necessary. Therefore, this project is multi-methodological in its approach to the study of models of wisdom from the classical period to the present as well as the issues associated with agency and power that accompany the differing methods. The first section will use the mystery approach to examine the competing discourses that surround social/political/economic/environmental issues from professional, popular, and personal sources. The second section will use the social scientific approach to analyze the factors that effect the various operationalized definitions of wisdom and the scales constructed to measure it.

## Mystory Approach

The first part of this project will consider different types of wisdom inherent in socio-political contexts. Without an understanding of the role of time, social conditions, and culture, without a genealogy of wisdom, we will be unable to distinguish the seemingly significant differences between cultures and their manifestations in real human conditions (Takahashi & Bordia, 2000; Takahashi & Overton, 2002). This project makes no claims to have exhaustively explored wisdom in all philosophic, spiritual, literary treatises, nor does it claim to deal specifically with all of the philosophers, teachers, and laymen who were interested in wisdom. Rather this study is concerned with observing the trajectories of different traditions which do not necessarily agree with each other, but which inform cultural practices and perceptions. Perhaps even more important, the goal is to provide a context for how wisdom is identified and performed in different cultural milieus and diverse contexts.

While the tacit goal of the study is to examine socio-political conceptions of wisdom and its consequences on those subjected to the corresponding policies, it requires that a genealogy of wisdom be constructed within and between the cultures and institutions being analyzed. These sections will be examined using a method derived from the Foucauldian critical genealogical methodology (Foucault, 1977; Halpern, 2002; Nietzsche, 1994). The three main tenets of this genealogical approach are that: 1) the origins of any philosophic concept or idea are not linear; 2) the origins of a philosophical concept or idea is full of contradictions and disruptions; and 3) the origins of ideas in history reveal the symbolic destruction of the body (Halpern, 2002). Genealogy as articulated by Foucault then is intimately tied to performance and the body. The specific

genealogical method of analysis used in this project is *mystory* (Ulmer, 1989). Ulmer (1989) in *Teleteory: Grammatology in the age of video* describes the *mystory* methodological approach as “a translation (or transduction) process researching the equivalencies among the discourses of science, popular culture, everyday life, and private experience” (p. vii). The advantage of the *mystory* approach is that it allows for the integration of visual representations, cultural artifacts, and non-scholarly discourses as competing voices on discussions of wisdom especially at the societal level. Research using the *mystory* approach does not attempt to claim authority, but rather uses discourse to highlight the historicity and multiple interpretations of an event/artifact/text. Pollock (1998) describes the perspective of historicity as an acknowledgement that “...history is never total: it produces contradictions and tensions that it must, in turn, continually work to overcome” (p. 4). Since no type of discourse in the *mystory* approach is privileged, it is important that the ideological/philosophical underpinnings of the “private and public dimensions of knowledge” being produced are acknowledged (Ulmer, 1989, p. 39) (see APPENDIX B).

### Social Scientific Approach

The second part of this dissertation will consider wisdom from a social scientific perspective by examining the social scientific research on wisdom. The idea of wisdom will be considered through the meta-theoretical frameworks of lifespan developmental perspective. Life-span developmental psychology involves the study of changes (or its lack) in behavior throughout the life course of individuals. The issues addressed by this meta-theoretical view of life-span developmental perspective includes: the multidirectionality in change across the lifespan, age-related developmental factors, the



relationship between growth (gain) and decline (loss), the role of “historical embeddedness” and other contextual factors, and adaptability in development (Baltes, 1983; Baltes & Reese, 1984; Lerner, 1984; Sherrod & Brim, 1986). Two additional theories will examine the role of intergroup behaviors (social identity theory) and intrapersonal processes (stereotype models) on perceptions of wisdom. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of wisdom as a construct and the competing paradigms used to measure and define it. Finally, a number of scales used in the questionnaire to measure wisdom in this study will be examined (e.g., the Adjective Check List, the Practical Wisdom Scale, the other-directedness factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, the Relational Communication Scale, the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale, and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale). A new subscale, Aesthetic Value Scale, which was developed by the author to assess the role of artistic endeavors on perceptions of wisdom, will also be considered. The social scientific literature section will conclude with the 12 hypotheses and 17 research questions posited to be important to understanding the role of different variables on perceptions of wisdom. The social scientific portion of this study will also examine the methods used in this project including manipulations checks, sample information, and instrumentation. The wholly social scientific section of the study will conclude with the results from the statistical tests examining the proposed hypotheses and research questions.

### Organization of Dissertation

Section 1, chapters 2 – 5, will examine socio-political examples of economic, environmental, religious, and military wisdom from a mystery perspective, respectively. These chapters should be approached, not as a linear progression, but rather as a nexus of

competing discourses and performances of wisdom. Chapter 2 examines the socio-political practices associated with economic wisdom associated with the “North Woods” of Wisconsin. Chapter 3 examines the socio-political practices associated with environmental wisdom of Plan Colombia, an anti-narcotics fumigation effort lead by the United States. Chapter 4 examines the religious wisdom associated with the Crusade against Albigensian heretics in Southern France. Chapter 5 considers the military wisdom of Chechnya’s bid for independence.

Section 2, chapters 6 – 8, will examine the social scientific literature on wisdom, the social scientific methods used, and the results of the statistical analyses of the hypotheses and research questions. Chapter 6 examines the social scientific literature on wisdom and attributes associated with acquiring wisdom. Additionally, hypotheses and research questions are presented concerning the perception of wisdom using self-report measures. Chapter 7 will consider the methodological considerations associated with data collection including sample demographics and instrument development. Chapter 8 will report the results of the statistical analyses run on the hypotheses and research questions including statistical analyses, charts, and tables.

Section 3, chapter 10, will discuss the implications of the different methodologies used on perceptions of wisdom, the limitations of this study, and the implications on future wisdom research.

## SECTION 1

### MYSTORY APPROACH

The first section of this study examines four social/economic/religious/military/political contexts for examples of societal wisdom. The methodology used in this section comes from the Foucauldian critical genealogical methodology lineage (Foucault, 1977). Genealogy as articulated by Foucault is intimately tied to performance and the body. The specific genealogical method of analysis used in this project is mystery (Ulmer, 1989). Ulmer (1989) in *Teletheory: Grammatology in the age of video* describes the mystery methodological approach as “a translation (or transduction) process researching the equivalencies among the discourses of science, popular culture, everyday life, and private experience” (p. vii). The advantage of the mystery approach is that it allows for the integration of visual representations, cultural artifacts, and non-scholarly discourses as competing voices on discussions of wisdom especially at the societal level.

Research using the mystery approach does not attempt to claim authority, but rather uses discourse to highlight the historicity and multiple interpretations of an event/artifact/text. Since no type of discourse in the mystery approach is privileged, it transcends the normal documenting of citations. Instead, the author/reader participates in the construction of the links between different types of discourse. The author makes no claims to producing a totalizing narrative. In the mystery approach, the discourse is juxtaposed and interwoven to create meanings. The recognition of the writer as creator/perceiver/destroyer empowers the author to decide what is important and how it links to other ideas. Mystery is not linear. It is not just another way of documenting phenomena/history/life but rather a pedagogical exercise. The reader finds his/her own

connections from the text. The links that each person discovers comes from his or her own experiences.

Realizing that learning is much closer to invention than to verification, I intended mystoriography primarily as a pedagogy. The modes of academic writing now taught in school tend to be positioned on the side of the already known rather than on the side of wanting to find out (of theoretical curiosity) and hence discourage learning how to learn” (Ulmer, 1994, p.xxi).

## CHAPTER 2

### ECONOMIC WISDOM

#### Overview

The early history of northern Wisconsin is rife with narratives, counternarratives, and artifacts that allow or perhaps force multiple interpretations. Roach (1996) contends that the collective memory of a community "...works selectively, imaginatively, and often perversely..." (p. 2.). Ulmer's mystery approach will be particularly valuable in examining the lack of economic wisdom exercised in this region. Wise policies as defined in the introduction of this project are proactive, improve the quality of life, and uphold equality and justice. The economic policies in northern Wisconsin fulfill none of these requirements, but rather epitomize: greed, expedience, and discrimination.

#### "North Woods" of Wisconsin

In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the Great Lakes and their waterways flowed through areas densely covered with virgin pine forests. Timber was a vital resource for both regional and national building materials, industry, and fuel being used for shingles, tan bark, masts, telephone poles, railroad ties, slabs, posts, potash, cordwood, barrel staves, and paper pulp (Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary). In the early part of the nineteenth century, timber harvesting was confined to shores of Lake Erie, Lake Michigan, and Lake Ontario. By the 1840's, many cities had been established along the Great Lakes, including Cleveland, Buffalo, Toronto, Milwaukee, Chicago, and Detroit, and they were importing wood products both for local building as well as shipment back east. The demand for wood products dramatically increased the harvesting of timber. As the area around the Great Lakes was exhausted of timber, loggers and the

“timber barons,” the individuals who made millions financing the logging industry, moved inland, away from the easy access of the Great Lakes and major waterways. As timber was depleted in one area, the "timber barons" moved their logging operations to new, more remote, forested areas (Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum).

The clear-cut logging of the Chippewa Valley and “North Woods” region in northern Wisconsin began in earnest in the latter half of the 1800’s. Before 1850, scouts looking for stands of pine trees entered the “North Woods” of Wisconsin. The seemingly endless supply of pine available quickly brought loggers and the industry to the region to process the timber. Towns soon developed to accommodate the people and industries necessary to process this wealth of lumber. One such town was Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Eau Claire, dubbed “Saw Dust City”, because of the sheer number of sawmills in that city during the late 1800’s, was inextricably tied to the timber industry. The city profited from its location near two major waterways: the Chippewa and Eau Claire rivers. Eau Claire also had access to two lakes that eventually served as holding areas for the region’s timber transported by waterways initially and later by railways (Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum).

The transport of timber via local waterways began in spring with the melting ice. The vast majority of the logs cut in the Chippewa valley were cut in the winter and hauled to the banks of local rivers and streams awaiting the spring thaw. These waterways freed from ice and swollen with melting snow, announced the beginning of log drives. The log “drivers” dressed in mismatched colorful clothing released the logs piled along the river and stream banks. A hazardous job, many drivers were injured or drowned as they drove the log rafts to local sawmills. Log jams, some miles long, were

common. To free these log jams, skilled drivers were required to search for the “key” log which had triggered the jam, and then finding a way to free it, occasionally resorting to explosives to destroy it (Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum).

My grandmother, a quiet woman who always smiled, told me local folk tales of Paul Bunyan and the loggers of the region. The one story about Paul Bunyan that I clearly remember concerns the Blue Hills and a logger called Shanty Boy. The tale begins with Paul Bunyan logging the area near Lake Superior during a year of two winters. During this interminable winter, Lake Superior had become frozen solid. Paul Bunyan’s loggers had cut huge chunks of ice, which Babe, the Great Blue Ox, hauled up onto land. The ice would melt in the spring and fill the local rivers, big and small. The only timber left in the area was on the Blue Hills, a great distance from his camp near Lake Superior. The trip to and fro was time-consuming and dangerous. The roads were nonexistent or in disrepair. Though Babe had no difficulty traversing the rough terrain, Paul Bunyan’s men were frequently thrown from the sled or injured by the uneven ground. Paul decided to make camp in the Blue Hills, but the ground was so rocky and the water well was so deep that it took one whole day to hoist a single bucket. Out of ideas, Paul talked with Shanty Boy, known for his resourcefulness, to a meeting. Late one night, Shanty Boy and Babe dragged the Blue Hills right up next to the logging camp. Paul and his logging crew were ecstatic about this deed. Soon thereafter, the remaining trees were felled and the spring sun melted the ice chunks from Lake Superior and Paul and his loggers were able to roll his logs into the lakes and rivers. A similar story of the Shanty Boy can be found in Charles Brown’s (1945) collection of folktales surrounding Shanty Boy’s exploits in Michigan and Wisconsin.

In the 1870's and the early 1880's, loggers had exhausted the easily accessible timber and were forced to haul logs five miles or more to reach waterways, and even very small streams were put to work. It was during this time that railways became vital transportation of timber from the region to sawmill and eventually to huge lumber warehouses, in cities like St. Louis, for commercial sale. A local roadside marker (Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 1959) entitled "The Chippewa River & Menomonic Railway" tells the story of the railroad on logging in the region.

#### "Crooked, Rough, and Muddy"

During the middle 1870's, when the great logging era of northern Wisconsin was in its infancy, the Mississippi River Logging Company, attempted to float pine logs down the Soft Maple and Potato creeks to the Chippewa River, but the streams were too shallow and crooked. To solve this problem, the first logging railroad in Wisconsin was constructed in 1875-6 from Potato Lake to the Big Bend of the Chippewa River with a later extension northward.

The town road, which can be seen to the immediate west of this site follows that railroad grade. Sleds pulled by horses carried, the locomotive, cars, and track overland from Chippewa Falls. In July, 1884, this railroad and subsequent lines constructed through the Blue Hills were finally organized as the Chippewa River and Menomonic Railway Company.

By 1890, the end of the logging in the "North Woods" was in sight. Many Eau Claire sawmills closed by the beginning of the twentieth century. Other regional sawmills in Menomonie and Chippewa Falls were closed a decade later. The Daniel Shaw Lumber Company, one of the oldest firms in Eau Claire, closed in 1912 because it had run out of timber reserves (Paul Bunyan Logging Camp Museum, 2006). In much the same manner as the "North Woods" of Wisconsin, the pine groves of Michigan, Minnesota, and Ontario were largely deforested by the end of the nineteenth century.



While the local communities in the region prospered in the great logging era of northern Wisconsin, the loggers as a whole were less fortunate. An article by George Austin Woodward in *Munsey's Magazine* (1894) described life in the logging camps as largely dreary and dangerous. A lake captain, who in his younger days spent several years in the woods, was purported to remark that if he had his choice between spending three months in a lumber camp and the same amount of time in jail, he would unhesitatingly choose the latter.

A logging camp was concerned primarily with the efficiency of its loggers and maximizing the profits of the company that employed them. To this end, the company planned Spartan accommodations and buildings for the loggers. The buildings were constructed of rough-hewn pieces of timber, fitted together, with the chinks between pieces being filled with sticks and mortar. The roof was made from boards covered with tar paper. Light entered through only two small windows, which in addition to funnels in the roof offered the only ventilation.

A logging camp usually consisted of five buildings: the “cook’s camp,” “men’s camp,” office, barn, and blacksmith. The “cook’s camp” consisted of a kitchen and dining room. During meals, little was said, with the exception of quaint expressions like “Pass the butter, Bill!” or “Yank over a hunk o’ that ‘ar meat, Jim.” The utensils commonly used for eating were iron knives and forks, tin dishes, plates and spoons. The utensils were washed and then put in a dry grain bag and thoroughly shaken. Then they were poured out upon the table for the next meal. The food and drink consisted primarily of tea and water, salted meat and bread, butter, corn bread, crackers, potatoes, plain cake and cookies, and so on.

The "men's camp" was a large dormitory made up of one large compartment with two rows of bunks, one above the other, extending down its entire length. The sleeping capacity of a single camp was between fifty and one hundred men.

The office was the general store for the loggers. It kept a full stock of supplies for loggers including boots, tobacco, medicines, and clothing. The office charged individuals for their purchases and when the logging season was done the charges were deducted from each person's pay. The price and quantity of goods sold resulted in a large profit for the store operator or company.

Logging camps were usually organized during the summer or early fall. Men were divided into three groups: choppers, sawyers, and skidders. The choppers went first, cutting the log road as they went. A sawing crew consisted of three men--a chopper and two sawyers. The chopper cut small pieces from the trees on the side where he wanted it dropped. The sawyers, with their long, cross-cut saws, cut the trees down. The chopper then removed the branches and the sawyers cut it into sixteen foot logs. The skidders followed, a skidding crew consisted of seven men. The "swampers" trimmed the logs to fit on the roadway and cleared the thick underbrush. The teamster hauled the logs, while the deckers rolled logs into a pile varying from about four to ten feet high on the skidway for transport.

The George Austin Woodward article in *Munsey's Magazine* (1894) concludes that life in the logging camps was fraught with dangers. Falling trees and rolling logs as well as other occupational hazards caused numerous deaths. To decrease the likelihood of injury, the logger wore the brightest colors: blue, green, red, and yellow. These colors were more visible through the thick forest growth allowing men to see each other and

avoid injury. Feet and legs were covered in long woolen socks which were pulled over the loggers' pants. Cloth overshoes or rubbers were worn on one's feet, while his multicolored mackinaw coat and cap completed his work attire. At camp, newcomers were often hazed and required to buy a pound of tobacco. These newcomers were often treated quite poorly. A common practice was for six or eight men to seize a new logger and toss him up quite high in the air with a blanket. In addition, stealing was so frequent that socks were taken from the feet of sleeping men.

Winter marked the busiest time for loggers, as logging companies chose to greatly increase hours rather than hiring additional loggers. During the summer and fall hours were regular, but in winter hours were uncertain. Work delegated by the foreman had to be completed before a logger was finished for the day, regardless of the time necessary to complete the task.

As the spring thaw began, and the logs began to float, the logging camp broke up. The loggers then chose to go home, frequent the nearest town for entertainment, or join the river crew-- men employed to drive the logs down the streams to the saw mills. These drivers often worked all summer then returned to the logging camp in the fall.

At the turn of the twentieth century, as the timber industry moved westward after deforesting much of the "North Woods" of Wisconsin and local economies collapsed from its withdrawal, the cleared land was claimed for farming by a new wave of immigrants coming to the United States from Scandinavia and Eastern Europe as well as young families from the Midwest looking for cheap land. Northern Wisconsin, the vast majority of its natural resources plundered, was touted as the poor man's paradise. The local media, merchants, and bankers having lost its major industry began promoting the

area as profitable farmland. The push for agriculture in northern Wisconsin was articulated by the Secretary of Agriculture, James Wilson, who declared that the region would be "... a great agricultural country" (Gough, 1997, p. 1). Despite state and federal government's assurances, no real assessment of the region's farmland was undertaken. Much of northern Wisconsin farmland at the time was only marginally productive.

In response to the media and favorable credit with which to buy the land, thousands moved to the region to build family farms. The new settlers soon learned that their new farmland was less than ideal. The tree stumps and debris left from the clear-cut trees as well as the very rocky soil made clearing the land for crops back-breaking and expensive. A few people spent as much on dynamite to remove tree stumps as they did to initially purchase the land (Gough, 1997). The land, however, did not yield to the plow easily. Less productive than the farms in the southern part of the state, the farmers in the region had to use family labor, labor exchanges, and more profitable jobs in nearby towns and cities to survive.

Within three decades, the families lured to the region by the possibility of independence and a piece of paradise, were being reviled by the very agricultural experts, state and national politicians and media that had earlier lauded these new pioneers. These farmers, referred to as criminal, immoral, and a drain on the economy, by the state and national media, and the communities that held these small networks of farms together collapsed. The marginal nature of the land as well as changes in policies, zoning, and the formation of state and national parks drove many families off their land in the 1930s (Gough, 1997).

Seventy-years later, the failed farms of northern Wisconsin are being slowly absorbed into the woods ravaged a century before. The communities primarily dependent on agriculture are slowly disappearing as new communities develop around new manufacturing, service, and tourism centers. The poor man's paradise in northern Wisconsin was an abysmal failure. The paradise propagated, reviled, and eventually destroyed by local, state, and national politicians, along with the family and community cohesiveness that kept agriculture in this area alive, has left its dilapidated remains strewn throughout the region as a reminder of myopic concerns on profits and its consequences.

I spent a good part of my early life in northern Wisconsin. The area 75 miles north of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, which I called home, is in the middle of the "North Woods," not to be confused with the "Great North Woods" of New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine, having gained renown for hosting the Annual World Lumberjack Championships in Hayward, Wisconsin. Though dubbed the "Dairy State", this part of Wisconsin has few cows and fewer farms. Beautiful and rugged, this region is slowly reverting to a primeval wilderness. Some efforts have been made to maintain the farmland cleared a century ago for small family farms, but they have largely failed. The children of those farmers had long ago forsaken the difficult and only marginally profitable profession of farming for higher paying jobs in Madison, Milwaukee, or Minneapolis. In the last twenty years, lake cottages for people escaping urban life have largely supplanted farms. Beautiful mansions dot the numerous lakes in the region as the farm houses and accompanying buildings have fallen into disrepair or been overrun by the stubborn grasses and prolific trees of this part of the country. The lakes have become self-sustaining communities fortified by wooden fences and brick walls against nature's

encroachment on the manicured lawns. Meanwhile outside the palisaded lake walls, the indigenous wildlife has returned. Wolves, black bears, moose, and coyotes, while being observed only occasionally, frequently cause mischief for the remaining farmers.

Meanwhile the state, undaunted by its culpability in the failure of farming in northern Wisconsin, now claims that “Unlike some parts of the world, Wisconsin has been gaining forest acreage, not losing. After heavy logging early in the 20th century, much land was burned and converted to agriculture. But, since the 1930's, much marginal crop and pastureland has been planted with trees so the state now has more forestland than at any time since inventories began in 1936” (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, 2006)

### Conclusion

While this chapter was labeled economic wisdom, it could just have easily been labeled as environmental or practical wisdom. The label was an academic distinction and wholly arbitrary. The primary reason that it was labeled as such was due to the trade off of economic wisdom for greed that was instrumental to the subsequent tragedies of loss of life, property, and identity. Wisconsin is usually considered an environmentally progressive state. Despite its concern for the environment, Wisconsin was fifty years too late to stop the rape of the “North Woods” by lumber barons in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While the timber industry was instrumental in economic and population growth in the region, its departure for Western forests left a desolate landscape of impoverished families, sluggish local economies, and millions of stumps and brush piles. The graves of loggers who lost their lives working in logging camps are strewn throughout the area. The loss of the money and capital derived from logging was

replaced by the money and capital coming in from the influx of largely immigrant farmers buying homesteads in northern Wisconsin. The farmer's utopia promised by local, state, and federal agencies to maintain the economy in the region was uniformly hyperbolic. While some of the land in the region is quite fertile, most is only marginally productive. The human cost of reclaiming the clear-cut forests for farming was great. Despite amazing feats of perseverance, many families' farms were lost because the soil simply could not provide enough food for the family and for the mortgage. Probably the most egregious affront to the farmers of northern Wisconsin was the transmogrification of their identity from pioneers to uneducated criminals.

## CHAPTER 3

### ENVIRONMENTAL WISDOM

#### Overview

Plan Colombia, the United States- led fumigation policy in Colombia, has many advocates and critics. Plan Colombia had 2 distinct goals: reduce deforestation and decrease cocaine and heroin production. While much of the discourse from both supporters and critics alike acknowledge Plan Colombia's failure with regard to its two tacit goals, there have been positive consequences for Colombia and U.S. corporate interests. The mystery approach is not bound by linear conceptions of cause and effect, but rather embraces non-linear relationships as well. Tofts (1999) argues "one of the advantages of this kind of historiography, as Greil Marcus has demonstrated, is the formation of alternative histories, generated according to the principles of serendipity, audacious comparisons and unexpected links" (pp. 23-24). Plan Colombia, while failing the definition of wisdom articulated in this project, may have advantageous consequences for some here and abroad.

#### Plan Colombia

A United States Drug Enforcement Agency (2006) advertisement posted at colleges and universities, as well as online, discusses the environmental damage to the world's fragile eco-system by the planting and harvesting of illegal substances like coca, opium and the manufacture of methamphetamine and cocaine. One reason that the rainforests are being destroyed is to make room for farming. Two crops being grown in the clear-cut remains of the rain forest are coca and opium. Coca and opium production are partially responsible for the environmental destruction occurring in South America. "One quarter (25 percent) of all of the deforestation that has taken place in Peru in



modern times is associated with clear cutting and burning to prepare land for the planting of coca bushes. Over the past twenty years, 2.4 million hectares of rain forest...an area roughly the size of El Salvador--- has been lost to drug production fields in the Andean region of Peru, Bolivia and Colombia” (United States Drug Enforcement Agency, 2006). The thin topsoil of the clear-cut areas is overworked by these plants and eroded into local streams by the rain causing significant flooding in South America in the late 1970s. Within ten years, the coca and opium farmers are forced to move due to losses in agricultural productivity resulting in another cycle of deforestation of South American rainforests. In the U.S., methamphetamine laboratories and materials used to produce it are toxic. The people manufacturing often dump their toxic chemicals into either local water sources or at remote sites to avoid detection by local law enforcement. The chemicals can injure or kill children through contact due to its toxicity. Cleanup is time consuming, dangerous, and expensive and can run up to tens of thousands of dollars and require months to complete. The United States Drug Enforcement Agency (2006) concludes that more than 2,500,000 marijuana plants have been discovered in National Forests since 1997. These marijuana crops have resulted in the environmental destruction of flora and fauna in these areas caused by the indiscriminate use of herbicides and pesticides.

In response to both the perceived environmental destruction as well as to an increase in the amount of illicit drugs making it into the United States, Plan Colombia was launched by President Clinton in 2000. According to the Transnational Institute (2004), Plan Colombia was portrayed as “...an integrated strategy to bolster rule of law, economic development and peace-building in Colombia” (n.p). Instead Plan Colombia

was actually a 5-year anti-narcotics and counterinsurgency plan with the United States allocating more than 3 billion dollars of support. The anti-drug portion of Plan Colombia involved spraying of chemicals on coca-producing regions. The two chemicals being used to fumigate the coca plants are Fusarium EN-4 and Glyphosate (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

Fusarium EN-4 is a defoliant akin to those used in Vietnam. The research on Fusarium EN-4 is still primarily classified and little is known about its environmental or human consequences. While little information has been forthcoming from official circles, circumstantial evidence suggests EN-4 can have devastating consequences on the environment and living organisms. Also, despite reports published by the White House-based Office of National Drug Control Policy, non-governmental researchers have found more than 200 plant species susceptible to destruction by EN-4. In addition, an outbreak of a strain similar to EN-4 in Peru caused widespread sickness and death in Peruvian cattle. Colombian researchers have suggested that the mortality rate for humans subjected to EN-4 is 76% (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

Glyphosate, the other chemical being sprayed in Colombia, while called a “mild” herbicide by Monsanto, is classified as “extremely poisonous” by the World Health Organization (2007). The research on mice by the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS) of the WHO found that short-term exposure to Glyphosate significantly decreased growth and increased weight in the brain, heart, and kidney as well as causing lesions in the salivary glands of the mice tested. According to IPCS, the long-term consequences of Glyphosate in mice include necrosis and precancerous kidney hyperplasia. The Glyphosate being used in Colombia has been modified with an

additional chemical called Cosmo-flux to improve its capacity to destroy coca plants. While calls for more information on the chemical and testing on the environmental consequences of Roundup Ultra (Glyphosate plus Cosmo-flux) had come from both national and international groups went unheeded, the chemical was less problematic than its concentration, which were being used at 5 times greater than the recommended level (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001). The spray was so concentrated that it was difficult to remove and much less likely to breakdown into less dangerous substances. The Roundup Ultra and Fusarium EN-4 used to fumigate the coca fields contaminate the land for at least 6 months making it unproductive for any crop: legal or illegal.

Statistics from U.S. government officials reported that at the end of 2002, there were approximately 144,450 hectares of land under coca cultivation in Colombia (a hectare being 10,000 square meters or approximately 2.5 acres). In 2003, 139,000 hectares of coca-producing land were fumigated with Roundup Ultra or Fusarium EN-4 primarily in the insurgent-controlled Putumayo and Bolivar departments. Despite the sheer surface area sprayed, by the end of 2003, there were still 113,850 hectares being used for coca production. The net loss of coca-producing was only about 30,000 hectares in 2003. This 20% reduction of coca-producing farms was touted as a success for Plan Colombia by U.S. and Colombian government officials who argued that spraying has proven to be very effective in reducing this illicit crop (Transnational Institute, 2004). Additional information suggests that this decrease was largely localized as coca crop production shifted to different regions and even another country. Despite Colombia's net decrease in the Putumayo department, the Catatumbo region reported increases as well as the Guaviare and Nariño departments in Colombia. In 2003, Bolivia also reported an

increase in coca production from 2002 numbers (Transnational Institute, 2004). These numbers support the U.N. and Colombian surveys from 2000, the first year of Plan Colombia, where the hectares devoted to cultivating coca actually increased to over 400,000 acres (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

The environmental implications of Plan Colombia with its tacit goal of coca production decreases have had detrimental affects on ecological biodiversity and the environment in the sprayed areas and beyond. Both Roundup Ultra and Fusarium EN-4 destroy numerous types of flora and fauna and pollute the rainforests of Colombia. One example of its consequences on the ecology of Colombia concerns the Canangucha Palm trees. Canangucha Palm trees provide shelter for other plants and animals and are integral to the Amazonian rainforest ecosystem. While normally very porous and flexible, these palms are particularly sensitive to Glyphosate and after being sprayed loose their “sponge-like” properties causing them to dry out and eventually die. Since the Canangucha Palm creates its own micro-ecological system, the system that depends on the trees for its existence also dies (Transnational Institute, 2004).

In addition to the environmental damage to the indigenous flora and fauna, the chemicals used for spraying have had a dramatic effect on domesticated livestock production and other local food sources. Cows, pigs, and chickens have died in large numbers from contaminated water and food resulting from fumigation of surrounding coca-producing areas. While cattle are less susceptible than smaller animals, they have suffered from hair-loss and other ailments associated with contact with toxins. Fish from local rivers and streams in the fumigated areas have died by the thousands. Some areas report the complete extinction of local fish stocks after the region was fumigated (Lucas,

2000; Knight, 2000). Fumigation of legal crops of farmers in the spray areas has increased the possibility of starvation and displacement in rural communities sometimes threatening the farmers' and their communities' very existence. Nearly 100,000 gallons of Glyphosate has been sprayed over the Putumayo department of Colombia. The fumigation planes often release their chemical spray from over 100 feet despite Monsanto's recommendations that it should never be applied from over 10 feet (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

The fumigation in Colombia has also had health impacts on the people living in the area, especially the young and old. In both Putumayo and Bolivar, where most of the coca fumigation has taken place, the majority of these two groups reported ill health and sickness after spraying their area by fumigation planes. Some of the symptoms reported by indigenous people in the region are vomiting, nausea, headaches, diarrhea, skin rashes and even hair-loss. Colombian doctors in these regions report increased visits by indigenous people, particularly children, immediately after spraying. One journalist cited the prevalence of illness in children following the spraying at 80% (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001). Since the research on the health consequences of these chemicals is not known, many doctors and residents fear sterility in adults and deformities in children associated with contamination by these chemicals.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, much of the southern Louisiana was contaminated with waste and debris all of which was hazardous to the ecosystem as well as human beings. I have often watched my two children, Taylor and Connor, interact with the natural world. Children have an amazing ability to be curious without a corresponding desire to destroy. Both of them love being outside, away from the four

walls that impede their view of the universe. The first time I took my daughter, Taylor, outside to the portal of nature represented by my backyard, she looked petrified. All of these unknown sights and sensations quickly forced us inside. Now she relishes every second that she spends outside, a little more so when the Louisiana weather is somewhat temperate. In every other endeavor and place, both of my children have the attention span of children their own age; microscopic, but outside they are Zen masters contemplating a fallen leaf for minutes. They then turn it over and repeat the examination. They have to touch and for Taylor try to taste nature. Connor will find an interesting stone where all I see is a pile. He will find the sole nut in the midst of a pile of wind-blown leaves. They experience nature in a way that I had long ago forgotten how to do. I only see what they experience and perhaps that is the greatest tragedy of being an adult. Unlike Biblical prescriptions, I think that children should inherit the earth. They seem to be the only ones that truly appreciate it as it is. Unfortunately Hurricane Katrina changed the Louisiana landscape in dramatic and dangerous ways. Being outside, once a world of joy and experimentation, was now a world filled with toxins and debris that their parents were unwilling to let them visit with their previous reckless abandon.

While Plan Colombia is heralded a success by Colombian and U.S. officials for decreasing the environmental destruction of rainforests for coca production as well as the cocaine production and availability in the U.S, their optimism might be misplaced. The runoff from the fumigation has killed many domesticated animals and local food sources and the destruction of Canangucha Palm forced the indigenous peoples to abandon their infertile, poisoned lands for other areas of the rainforest that are then deforested for farming (Lucas, 2000; Knight, 2000). The governor of the Putumayo department in

Colombia called fumigation "...an attack on the people" (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001). With the livelihood of the impoverished indigenous people destroyed, they have little recourse but another cycle of slash and burn deforesting to support their families. Fumigation seems to have set off another cycle of rapidly increasing deforestation as the indigenous population is displaced from their farms and communities by the destructive capacity of Glyphosate and Fusarium EN-4 (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

Governmental optimism about a decrease in cocaine production and availability has also been discredited. The U.S. ambassador to Colombia admitted that the aerial spraying of illicit crops has had no impact on the cocaine market. Drug-reporting agencies found that heroin and cocaine were cheaper and more accessible than ever before. Despite spending more than \$3 billion on Plan Colombia, cocaine continues to be available in U.S. cities at about the same price suggesting no significant decrease (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

Even prior to its implementation of Plan Colombia, U.S. government sources doubted its ability to change environmental degradation associated with drug production in the region or a decrease of availability in the U.S. A previously classified document by the Central Intelligence Agency was skeptical of Plan Colombia's effectiveness. This C.I.A. document was written before the first phase of the Plan Colombia went into effect (DCI Crime and Narcotics Center, 2000). Since its inception, other policy think-tanks have argued that the goal of Plan Colombia was flawed and would inevitably fail without a corresponding plan for socio-economic change in the poorer regions of Colombia (Transnational Institute, 2004).

With its own sources predicting the failure of Plan America on all fronts including the possibility of increased deforestation due to ground and water contamination by the Glyphosate and Fusarium EN-4, what could the U.S. and Colombia gain by large-scale environmental destruction and displacement? Some have argued access to areas of Colombia with mineral and oil rights vacated by its legal occupants. A Washington Post article entitled “Aerial Attack Killing More Than Coca”, recounts the story of the village of La Hormiga where legitimate crops of the locals were targeted instead of the coca plants. The mayor of a town in the Putumayo department predicted that the spraying would affect up to 35,000 people therefore requiring many to leave (Wilson, 2001, p. A1). Despite proof from regional and local officials about the health consequences to people exposed to the chemicals used in fumigation, the Colombian government has refused medicine to rural clinics in Putumayo because spraying-related illnesses did not exist. Colombian government sources suggest that approximately 10,000 people have left the Putumayo department for neighboring areas or Ecuador. Despite official assurances by the Colombian government for subsidies to displaced farmers, none have been distributed to the farmers of the region (Edwards, 2004).

A Colombian expert suggests that the technological capabilities of U.S. satellites and the targeting equipment on fumigation planes should make spraying nearly mistake-proof. Yet, the fumigation planes have repeatedly sprayed legal crops and communities in the Putumayo department, effectively forcing the displacement of the majority of the people living there (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

While the sheer environmental and human destruction done in Colombia does not seem to offer an advantage to anyone in any rational way, some suggest that the



interesting array of supporters for Plan Colombia are indicative of ulterior motives. Occidental Petroleum and British Petroleum supported Plan Colombia through their lobbyists when it was under review in Congress. Occidental Petroleum alone spent \$350,000 in the U.S. Congress to ensure Plan Colombia was passed. The two departments in Colombia which were heavily fumigated, Putumayo and Bolivar, have huge, unexploited mineral and oil deposits. The fumigation of the region and the use of Colombian paramilitary forces have forced the displacement of tens of thousands off their land. The vacated land can now be used for oil exploration and production while simultaneously reducing the insurgents in the area. Plan Colombia has made it safe for multinational corporations, like Occidental and British Petroleum, to rape the Putumayo and Bolivar departments of Colombia of their natural resources (Craig-Best & Shingler, 2001).

In addition, the money from Plan Colombia doubled the number of death squads in Colombia. These Colombian death squads have killed hundreds while pacifying insurgent areas. In addition, these paramilitary troops have received specialized training from U.S. military advisers. In 2004, President Bush asked Colombian officials to increase the number of U.S. military advisers allowed in Colombia (Transnational Institute, 2004).

### Conclusion

Plan Colombia has proven to be an abject environmental failure. Despite its purported emphasis on decreasing deforestation and drug production, Plan Colombia has actually exacerbated both problems in Colombia and surrounding countries. The most interesting part of the discourse is the overwhelming criticism from both Colombian and

U.S. sources. The fact that Plan Colombia continued long after the goal of a 50% reduction in coca farming became highly improbable suggests that alternate goals were being achieved.

While my personal narrative about my children may seem totally inconsistent with the other professional and popular competing discourses, it acknowledges the way that I relate to the environmental consequences of such a flawed policy. I have never been to Colombia, but I have been to Love Canal and the small towns of “Cancer Alley” in Louisiana where cancer is so prevalent that most have at least one resident with extremely rare types of tumors. Fearing for the safety of your children is a universal human condition. This fear becomes overwhelming when the air, food, and water with which they come into contact may poison them. While we live in one of the most affluent country in the world, the poorly conceived and executed Plan Colombia isn’t that different from various state and regional plans to reduce or eliminate environmental guidelines to promote “economic growth”.

Likewise Plan Colombia, while an abject environmental failure, lacking any semblance to a wise policy, could promote economic growth. Plan Colombia could be particularly advantageous to the oil and pesticide companies which experienced new drilling sites and increased sales. Unfortunately, the consequences of these environmental policies on the bodies of poor Colombian farmers, like so many others worldwide, were tragic: displacement, sickness, and death.

## CHAPTER 4

### RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL WISDOM

#### Overview

One philosopher associated with genealogical approaches and an examination of morals, a domain usually associated with religious/spiritual discourse, is Frederick Nietzsche. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1994), Nietzsche considers the development of good versus bad and good versus evil. For Nietzsche the first binary pair arose from “...the same evolution of the same idea—that everywhere ‘aristocrat,’ ‘noble’ (in the social sense), is the root idea, out of which have necessarily developed ‘good’ in the sense of ‘with aristocratic soul,’ ‘noble,’ in the sense of ‘with a soul of high calibre,’ ‘with a privileged soul’—a development which invariably runs parallel with that other evolution by which ‘vulgar,’ ‘plebeian,’ ‘low,’ are made to change finally into ‘bad’” (pp. 14-15). For Nietzsche (1994), the latter binary pair was more refined, more cunning, and more problematic for the will to power: “...the resentful man, on the other hand, is neither sincere nor naive nor honest and candid with himself. His soul squints; his mind loves hidden crannies, tortuous paths and back-doors, everything secret appeals to him as his world, his safety, his balm; he is past master in silence, in not forgetting, in waiting, in provisional self-depreciation and self-abasement” (p. 19). In the case of the Catholic Church in Medieval Europe, its control over defining good versus evil created almost limitless power and the ability to write the “accepted” history of this time, which had gone largely unchallenged until the twentieth century. Needless to say, the Catholic Church had the last word on what was proactive, just, and equitable or wisdom.

## The Crusade against Albigensian Heretics

In 1985, on a sojourn to visit family during the holidays, I went shopping on a dreary day in Indiana between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. As is usual during the holiday season, I found a parking spot out of eyesight of the Glenbrook Mall in Fort Wayne, Indiana. After trudging through the lines of parked cars for what seemed an eternity, I reached the entrance guarded by two Santa Clauses. Since they only accosted people leaving the mall, I entered quickly.

The mall was blaring Muzak versions of Christmas songs that have since become canonized nationwide. The mall mob was a pastiche of families with screaming children and harried shoppers frantically trying to get a last minute gift. After shopping for an hour or so, I stopped at a seating corral just off the main court. Within minutes, the area around the main court was packed with unwashed humanity. The speakers announced that Santa was arriving at Glenbrook and those wanting a picture with Santa should head immediately to the Main Court. Since I already had a pretty good seat, I decided to see “Santa Claus.”

I didn’t have to wait for too long before a couple of mall cops herded some domesticated deer, with reindeer antlers attached to their heads with Christmas ribbon, into the confined area and attached them to the sleigh. Unfortunately, they were a few deer short of the number required to pull Santa’s sleigh, but nobody seemed to care. After a little while, the children on the far side of the Main Court started screaming “Santa”. Then an older Caucasian man dressed in the requisite red clothes jumped onto the sleigh and shouted “On Dancer....” Meanwhile, a couple of people dressed as elves carried props for the Santa pictures into a cordoned off area. The last thing I saw clearly was a deer defecating on the floor as it continued to munch on its ration of hay. The loudspeakers then announced that

Santa's picture workshop was open and my view of the Main Court was obscured by a mass of parents and children.

Before I turned away from the pandemonium enveloping the Main Court, the middle-aged Caucasian woman sitting next to me said, "Fucking retards!" A profane rejoinder ready, I turned my head. She wasn't looking at me, however. Her gaze was fixed on a group of adolescents. A small group of adolescents with exceptionalities had taken seats behind me during Santa's arrival. Her glare was fixed on an African-American male who was rocking and humming to some internal music. The girl next to him kept calling his name, but he kept rocking and humming. I must have watched his rhythmic dance for several minutes before I turned back around to see the Caucasian woman and her husband had returned with mall security. The mall guard quietly asked the woman in charge of the group of adolescents to take her charges and leave.

I remember sitting dumbfounded. These students hadn't created a disturbance. They had maintained the quiet decorum befitting a monk. While the teacher was getting them ready to leave, the middle-aged woman said to her husband in an aggravated tone "Why do they let them out in public?" I followed the group as they left to apologize for the woman and her husband's stupidity and lack of humanity. During this time of love and forgiveness, the mass of people shopping parted like the Red Sea for Moses as the group of students passed and then quickly closed behind them again. Someone should have been shouting "Leper! Outcast! Unclean!" since no one dared touch them out of fear of contamination. I reached the mall's exit in time to see them bathed in a ray of light that had broken through the clouds. As they left, the light died. The grey clouds closed again and bled black tears.

While all religions preach tolerance and love, simultaneously all religions have adherents that do not follow the precepts of the religion that they profess to follow. This lack of religious tolerance and the fear of belief that does not adhere to orthodox doctrine results in catastrophic consequences like the first Crusade against Christian France.

The Albigenses, probably akin to the neo-Manichæans, cannot be clearly traced to these preceding heresies. Church doctrine suggests that it had neo-Manichæan doctrines that had begun infiltrating southern France from Italy. The Councils of Arras (1025), Charroux (c. 1028), and of Reims (1049) dealt with the resurgence of neo-Manichæan heresy with the torture and “the extreme penalty of death” of its adherents (BeDuhn, 2000).

The Albigenses asserted the co-existence of two mutually opposed principles: one good, one evil. The good arises from the spiritual or soul side of being while the body represented the corporeal evil in the world like natural disasters, war, and sin. The Old Testament was associated with the evil principle, while the beneficence of the New Testament is associated with the good principle. Our earthly existence is hell, and our spirits will eventually be liberated into the Divine. To free our souls, God sent Jesus Christ, his perfected son to redeem humans. The Albigensian church required membership before people could be liberated from their corporeal shells. They denied orthodox Catholic canon that the resurrection of body would take place since it was in essence a vessel of evil (Weber, 1907).

An alternate explanation suggests that Albigensian doctrine might also have arisen from a seventh century Christian sect, called the Paulicians, in the region of the Euphrates. This sect spread to Armenia, Asia Minor, Thrace, Bulgaria, and eventually

southern France. While some contend that the Paulicians still practiced neo-Manichæans doctrine: belief in a plurality of Gods; held all matter to be bad; rejected the Old Testament; taught that faith in Christ saves from judgment; etc, some argue that the Paulicians were concerned primarily with the epistles of Paul (Keating, K., 1988). They were probably called Paulicians because they quoted and followed especially the writings of the Apostle Paul (Ford, 1876). The name Albigenses simply refers to Albigeois, southern provinces of France, where this form of Paulician doctrine took root. The Albigenses were related to, if not the same order, as the Paulicians because of great similarities in doctrine. They had no bishops and viewed baptism as appropriate for adults only. They were concerned with behaving in a Christian manner as represented in the New Testament rather than following religious canon (Orchard, 1973). Albigensian (and Paulician) doctrine was later classified as a type of Cathari (the pure) heresy, consisting of various groups of ascetic-minded Christians, characterized by a marked reverence for the New Testament Scripture.

While specifics about Albigensian doctrine may never be known, whether an immoral asceticism bent on destroying the human body and propagation or a benevolent attempt to remove Catholic priests as middle-men in the salvation of souls, its existence "...had the conspicuous honor to be maligned by those whom history proves to have been adept in the two trades of murder and slander" as well as the very real destruction of an entire region (Smith, 1887, p. 227). In the early twelfth century, the Albigenses heresy was brought to the attention of Pope Eugene III (1145-53). The Council of Reims (1148) had the protectors "of the heretics of Gascony and Provence" excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church. The Council of Tours (1163) went further and decreed that all

Albigensian heretics should be imprisoned and their property confiscated for the church. The Third General Council of the Lateran (1179) maintained the previous severe measures against the Albigenses and issued a summons to use force against the heretics, who were plundering and devastating Albi, Toulouse, and the vicinity (Weber, 1907).

St. Bernard and his Cistercians preached against the Albigenses, but they continued to grow in numbers. Bernard reported in his letters that Catholic churches were deserted, altars were falling into decay and priests were starving. He lamented that the whole of southern France was given over to heresy (Weber, 1907). In 1194, Raymond V, Count of Toulouse died and was succeeded by Raymond VI who sided with the Albigenses. Four years later, Pope Innocent III, doubled efforts at conversion in southern France. In 1205, a Spanish cleric, Dominic Guzman of Osma, visited southern France. He believed many Cistercian priests were poorly educated in spiritual matters and lived extravagantly. Dominic Guzman believed that the Albigensian heresy could only be defeated by morally-grounded ascetics which he named the Order of Preachers, a new order frequently referred to as the Dominicans order (de Wohl, 1961).

By 1207, after the death of legate, Pope Innocent III called upon the King of France to use force to rid southern France of the Albigensian heresy, purported to have been practiced in over 1000 cities or towns (Weber, 1907). Pope Innocent III raised men from all over Europe to attack this "Albigensian heresy"; barons from northern France, Germany, and Belgium joined the crusade lead by Arnold, Abbot of Citeaux, and two bishops. The first time that a crusade had been called against other Christians (or Christian-controlled lands), the crusaders received the same indulgences as indulgences given for crusades to the Holy Land. In 1209, Roger, Viscount of Béziers, was attacked,



and his principal fortresses at Béziers and Carcassonne destroyed. Arnold, Abbot of Cîteaux, Pope Innocent III's legate, reportedly shouted to the crusaders "Slay all; God will know His own," at the capture of Béziers (Weber, 1907, n.p.). Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was given control of the conquered territory in Béziers and became the military leader of the crusade. Meanwhile Raymond VI, Count of Toulouse, who was deemed an enemy of the church, asked for help from Peter of Aragon. Lavaur, fell in 1211, the crusaders killing all regardless of age or sex. At this point, Pope Innocent III, powerless to stop the crusade, watched as Simon de Montfort conquered much of southern France. When Simon de Montfort met Peter, King of Aragon, at Muret, Peter was killed (1213). The remaining allies of Peter and Raymond capitulated. In 1215, the Council of Montpellier (1215), with the approval of Pope Innocent III, appointed Simon de Montfort lord over all the acquired territory. The crusade continued until 1229 with Simon de Montfort's son, Almaric, gaining little additional territory (Weber, 1907).

The crusade against the Albigenses was only too successful. While "the death penalty was, indeed, inflicted too freely on the Albigenses, ... it must be remembered that the penal code of the time was considerably more rigorous than ours, and the excesses were sometimes provoked," because "What the Church combated was principles that led directly not only to the ruin of Christianity, but to the very extinction of the human race" (Weber, 1907, n.p.). To others, it was "...a bloody war of extermination scarcely paralleled in history" and "cruel in the extreme. All of the townspeople in many French towns were killed without the distinction of age or sex" (Remwick, 1978, p.98).

The Albigensian presence remaining after the crusade was destroyed by the first Inquisition which "arose from the necessity of extirpating the remnants of the

[Albigensian] disease” (Belloc, 1994, n.p.). The Inquisition of Pope Gregory IX quickly destroyed the Albigensian heresy, along with most Provençal culture. Pope Gregory IX put this inquisition into the hands of the Dominican order, giving its leaders immense church-sanctioned powers to coerce bishops and nobles whose help they wanted in their effort to destroy the Albigenses (de Wohl, 1961). And in the end, “The machinery, so wonderful in its wickedness and its craft, did not fail in its object. By the middle of the fourteenth century there were probably few Albigenses left” (Trench, 1877, p. 219).

### Conclusion

The personal narrative with which I began the previous section in a small way illuminates the role of intolerance (toward the different other) which are magnified when carried out at the societal level. The Western European institution that controlled education in the Middle Ages was the Roman Catholic Church. Since most literate individuals received their training from the Catholic Church, it still presents a monolithic, totalizing narrative of its historical role as the protector. The competing professional discourses, however, show the disjunctures of the orthodox religious doctrine espoused at the time. The divergent narratives come from historians, Catholic theologians, and Protestant theologians. To construct the revisionist discourse above, the various discourses were occasionally juxtaposed to show the narratives competing, but when possible they were woven together in an almost cohesive historical narrative. Despite the ascension of Science as the proper paradigm of inquiry and the protestations of Nietzsche (1994) against priests as being “...the most evil enemies—but why? Because they are the most impotent” (p. 19), the role of religion still has much to say about its own history and even more about what is perceived of as wise. The consequences of religious definitions

of wise behaviors and policies are generally applied to orthodox religious doctrines and, as the Albigensian heresy suggests, the violation of canonical “orthodoxy” can lead to mass genocide and torture on a monumental scale.

## CHAPTER 5

### MILITARY WISDOM

#### Overview

The tale of Chechnya's bid for independence is perhaps the most tragic example of policies that could be wise, that could be proactive, improve quality of life, and foster equality and justice, but the process of independence became politicized, followed by militarized. The mystery approach allows readers to "provide another way of conceiving a particular terrain, in the process uncovering the assumptions that underlie 'official' histories" (Tofts, 1999, pp. 23-24). The official histories of the conflict go back five centuries, have resulted in two mass deportations, one of which has been labeled a genocide, two major wars, and numerous terrorist attacks. While the histories presented by pro-Russian and pro-Chechen sources are quite different, both exclaim the fault lies with the other, the life of the average Chechen or Russian soldier stationed in Chechnya is frightening and bleak.

#### Chechnya's Bid for Independence

On October 23, 2002, a little over a year after 9/11 in the United States, Chechen rebels in Moscow took over 750 people hostage at the Nord-Ost theater. In the initial chaos about one hundred hostages fled, one hostage was killed and another injured attempting to escape the Chechen rebels. The 41 Chechen terrorists demanded the immediate withdrawal of all Russian forces in Chechnya by dawn Saturday, October 26, 2002. If their demands were not met, the Chechens promised to start killing the hostages one at a time until the Russian government did. In the two days preceding the deadline, the Chechen rebels released about 50 children and Muslim adults. On Saturday, October

26, 2002, however, Russian sources told the world media that the Chechen rebels had killed two hostages as the deadline approached prompting a raid by Russian Special Forces who stormed the theater using a “sleeping gas” (fentanyl). Official sources said that all 41 Chechen rebels had been shot and killed and 67 hostages had been killed in the raid by weapons fire and 42 hostages had been hospitalized (Stephens, 2002). By October 31<sup>st</sup>, the total number of hostages killed by the Chechen rebels was reported as 5, while 124 had been killed by the fentanyl gas used by the Russian Special Forces. Some hostages died from medical conditions that were exacerbated by the fentanyl gas. Others died from asphyxiation caused by choking to death on their own vomit while unconscious. In all, 653 hostages were rescued for the Nord-Ost theater in Moscow while 170 people, including the Chechen rebels, were killed (Johnston, 2007).

After the raid many lauded President Putin for his handling of the hostage crisis, based upon previous clashes with Chechen rebels. The 2002 Moscow theater incident was not the first time that a Russian president had to deal with Chechen separatists, nor the last, prompting some commentators to depict the Chechens as heartless, suicidal zealots. "The Chechens have acted extremely brutally in the past. They are willing to die, there is no doubt about that. We know they are absolutely committed to their cause. The use of women in the crisis is a political statement saying that the entire community is involved in their campaign" (Stephens, 2002, n.p.). The Moscow theater attack coincided with a Russian anniversary to highlight their plight in the international political arena.

Prior to this incident, the biggest clash between Russian and Chechen separatists occurred in 1995 when 1,000 patients were held captive at Budyonnovsk, a city near the border with Chechnya. Russian troops in an effort to break the standoff unsuccessfully

stormed the hospital twice with more than 100 civilians, police and soldiers dying in the gun battles between Russian and Chechen forces (Q & A: The Chechen conflict, 2006). The worst terrorist attack perpetrated by the Chechen rebels occurred on September 3, 2004. On that day, Chechen rebels, with the support of Shamil Basayev, a Chechen warlord, attacked a school in Beslan, North Ossetia, which resulted in 336 deaths. These 336 deaths included 156 children, 19 teachers, and 161 other adult hostages. 727 hostages were injured in the attack, including 18 soldiers and at least 2 police officers. Many injuries were sustained by gunfire from Chechen rebels while hostages attempted to flee and when the gymnasium collapsed due to explosive devices placed there by the rebels. The number of terrorists killed is unclear, but it was believed that several terrorists escaped (Johnston, 2007).

It was around 1552 that Russia's southward expansion came into contact with the Chechen people when Ivan the Terrible conquered the khanate of Astrakhan (Trenin & Malashanko, 2004). However, it was not until the late eighteenth century that major conflicts occurred. In 1783, Russia and the eastern Georgian kingdom of Kartl-Kakheti signed the Treaty of Georgievsk, making it a protectorate of Russia. In order to secure communications with Georgia and other regions of the Transcaucasia, the Russian Empire began spreading its influence into the Caucasus mountains where the Chechen people reside (Trenin & Malashanko, 2004). By the conclusion of the Napoleonic Wars, the Russian Tsars had begun to colonize the Caucasus region in earnest, constructing lines of forts along the Terek and Sunzha rivers in Chechnya. The Russian colonial policy in the region brutalized the Chechen people. Around 1816, the Russian General, Aleksei Yermolov, attempted to subdue Chechnya. When the Chechen people resisted, General

Yermolov began punitive raids on mountain villages, imposing collective punishments on Chechens by razing of houses and crops and forcing deportation. The vacant land was settled by loyal Cossacks. The Chechens forced into the mountainous regions by Russian forces were eager for retribution in a region that made guerilla warfare particularly effective (Trenin & Malashanko, 2004).

Chechen resistance began under the guidance of an Islamic Avar, Imam Shamil, who fought the Russians in the Caucasus Mountain regions from 1834 until 1859 (Gammer, 1994). From 1840 -1859 Russian forces moved from repression to war against Imam Shamil's forces. Russian forces under Tsar Alexander II and General Paskievich eventually won the war against the combined Muslim forces under Imam Shamil. To pacify resistance in the region, beginning in 1856 until 1864 Tsar Alexander II forced the deportations of approximately 600,000 Muslim peoples from the North Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire. Tens of thousands perished from death and disease during the forced deportation to the Ottoman Empire. During the next fifty years, many of the Chechens who survived the deportation returned to Chechnya (Gammer, 1994).

In the twentieth century, Chechen rebellion would usually occur when Russia had internal strife. Chechen insurrections occurred in 1905, 1917, during the Russian Civil War, and during World War II. The Chechen insurgency during World War II, labeled German assistance by Stalin, resulted in the deportation of the entire Chechen and Ingush populations to the Kazakh Republic and eventually to Siberia in 1944. The claim of German assistance by the Chechen and Ingush, according to a Russian writer, arose from claims that all of the air bombers stationed on the Caucasian front had to be directed at quelling the Chechen rebellion instead of fighting the German siege of Stalingrad

(Nekrich, 1978). The official line that there was mass collaboration between the Chechens and Nazis is highly unlikely. The German army barely made it to Chechnya before it stalled. The small area of Chechnya controlled by the Germans during World War II was populated by mostly ethnic Russians (Dunlop, 1998). In addition, the number of Chechen volunteers fighting for the Red Army was in excess of 17,000 (Nekrich, 1978).

The plan for the mass deportation of Chechens was drawn up in October 1943. The mass deportation of ethnic Chechens “...codenamed ‘Operation Lentil’—the first two syllables of the Russian word *chechevitsa* pointing a phonetic finger at the principal targets” (Nekrich, 1978, p. 138). In February 1944, 478,000 Chechens and Ingush were transported by truck to freight trains destined for Central Asia. The close proximity of passengers caused widespread illness and death. Soviet files give an official death rate of 23.7 per cent in the trains, or a total of 144,704 Chechens alone. Other estimates suggest that the death toll for Chechens in transportation alone range from 170,000 to 200,000. (Nekrich, 1978, p. 138). Ironically, the brutal exportation and exile of Chechens actually solidified Chechen nationalism rather than dissipating it. While in exile, the surviving Chechens and Ingush were restricted to mostly manual labor in Central Asia and Siberia. Though Islam played an important role in the Chechen exile, it seemed to serve as “spiritual clothing for [a] national struggle” (Lieven, 1998, p. 357). Sixty years later, the European Parliament recognized the deportation of Chechen people by the Soviet government as an act of genocide.

It wasn't until 1956 under Nikita Khrushchev that Chechens were allowed to return to Chechnya. Even after Chechens returned to their Caucasus Mountains, they



continued to be discriminated against. Russification policies towards Chechens continue even after 1956, with Russian language proficiency required in many aspects of life and for advancement in the Soviet system. Their return from exile did not improve their employment opportunities. Ethnic Russians were employed in the oil and manufacturing sectors as well as the health, education, and social services. The Chechens were relegated to work in agriculture, construction, and crime. By 1989, over 100,000 ethnic Chechens had to leave in search of employment. An example of the disparities between Chechnya and rest of the Soviet Russia include "...the average wage in 1985 was 83 per cent of the rsfsr [Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, the largest and most populous of the 15 Soviet republics] average, dropping to 75 in 1991; infant mortality was 23 per 1000 in 1987, compared to an rsfsr mean of 14 per 1000. In 1989, only 5 per cent of the population of Checheno-Ingushetia had higher education, while 16 per cent had no education at all" (Dunlop, 1998, pp. 87-88).

Chechen separatism came to a head in 1990–91 as the former Soviet Union started to dissolve. Unlike other ethnic republics, the Chechen exile and Soviet discriminatory practices had failed to produce a Soviet elite which could create an interim government (Lieven, 1998). The result was that the remaining Communist party leaders clung to power until 1991 as the pro-nationalist faction quickly gained power. The Executive Committee of the Chechen National Congress, headed by Dzhokhar Dudaev, seized the Supreme Soviet on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1991 with the National Guard. By the end of September, Chechen nationalists had captured more government buildings. The Executive Committee of the Chechen National Congress then formed a Provisional Council until elections could be held on October 27, 1991. Dzhokhar Dudaev was

elected in a landslide victory and on November 1<sup>st</sup> declared independence. On March 14, 1992, Chechen and Russian officials signed several protocols explicitly acknowledging the political independence of the Chechen Republic (Lieven, 1998).

The Russian acknowledgement of a sovereign, independent Chechen government did not last long, however. In 1994, the First Chechen War began with a coup attempt by Russian Special Forces in late November. In December 1994, Russian forces entered Chechnya and bombarded Grozny continuously until a full-scale ground assault was launched capturing the capital in March 1995. Grozny had suffered heavy casualties in addition to significant damage to the city's center. A brutal massacre of at least two hundred villagers in Samashki, Chechnya in April 1995 by Russian troops galvanized Chechen soldiers. The First Chechen War was disastrous for both sides. "Conservative casualty estimates give figures of 7,500 Russian military dead, 4,000 Chechen combatants dead, and no fewer than 35,000 civilian deaths—a minimum total of 46,500 dead. Others have cited figures in the range 80,000 to 100,000 dead" (Dunlop, 2000, 335). Widespread demoralization of Russian troops forced Russian President Boris Yeltsin to declare a ceasefire in 1996, but not before ordering the assassination of the democratically elected Chechen President, Dzhokhar Dudaev, in April 1996. In August of 1996, after a Chechen offensive pushed Russian forces back, the two countries signed the Khasavyurt accords which recognized Chechnya as a subject of international law but postponed a final decision on its independence until the end of 2001. The Khasavyurt accords brought with it the seeds of the Second Chechen War.

The First Chechen War has been called Russia's Vietnam (Dunlop, 2000). Like Vietnam, the combatants of the First Chechen War continued the warfare long after meaningful dialogue and peace talks would have been warranted.

One of my first memories of television was news coverage of the Vietnam War. I remember quite vividly a Buddhist monk practicing self-immolation in protest to the war. I remember seeing large bags being placed on helicopters and planes that I now know were the body bags of military men and women killed in the Vietnam War. The thing that I remember the most, however, was not the visual images, but rather the cacophonous noise of arms fire and explosions. In my 5-year-old mind, it sounded like the end of the world.

This following is a story recounted to me by my father-in-law, a Vietnam War veteran. My wife has often remarked that her father was reticent to talk about his Vietnam War experiences. His passion for collecting firearms seems to be the only remnant of that period in his life. The following story was one of a very few that he has told about his experiences in Vietnam.

On a breathtakingly beautiful, country morning, the feel of the grass, cool and wet, beneath my feet, a light breeze, just enough to take the edge off the heat of the day, with birds singing, I walked to the mailbox, hoping for a letter or card, anything as long as it was for me. On this day, I thought myself lucky as a piece of mail had arrived addressed to me. My anticipation quickly turned to dread, as my heart sank; I had been drafted.

Upon arriving in Vietnam, I found that I had one of the least envied assignments in the military. I was a scout. It seemed funny to me

that such a small word could be such a dangerous, frequently lethal, assignment. I would be flown into enemy-controlled territory, dig a hole, crawl in the hole up to my neck, and wait. Along with one other man, my job was to wait and watch for the enemy. We didn't have reinforcements, high-tech weapons, or any advantage other than patience and secrecy. It's hard to remember what I thought about more, waiting for the enemy, waiting for our troops, or waiting to die. We lived like ghosts in the middle of nowhere so we could warn the rest of our company of enemy numbers and positions.

As soon as I had the opportunity, I transferred to communications. While I still hit ground before most of troops, it was only to setup communications equipment. I liked my new assignment. It seemed so much safer than being a scout. I thought I was safe, or as safe as I could be. This sense of safety quickly vanished after I was assigned to the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne. On a trip from Danang to Quan Tre, I was reassigned to an Alpha Company Shinook helicopter when the Huey did not arrive. The weather that whole month had been bad, but this day was particularly shitty, and after 15 minutes the Alpha Company Shinook helicopter returned to base. The Huey I was supposed to have taken had just arrived. After arriving at my new assignment, I learned that Alpha Company's Shinook helicopter, which I had been on hours before, crashed on a mountainside. The crew and military personnel on board had all been shot. There were no survivors.

Aslan Maskhadov, a former Soviet artillery general and Dudaev's Minister of Defense, won the Chechen presidential elections of January 1997. Discord among powerful warlords and political leaders made Maskhadov's government pretty ineffective especially against corruption and crime. The religious practices of the Chechens (Sunni Muslims) aroused Russian fears of a supra-Islamic state. The incursion of the Chechen warlord, Shamil Basayev, in Dagestan as well as evidence of terrorist acts in major Russian cities prompted armed intervention in Chechnya in 1999 (Lieven, 2004). Some sources suggest that Russian plans for invading Chechnya were in place as early as 1998 (Trenin & Malashanko, 2004).

Unlike the First Chechen War, the Second Chechen War received significant support from the Russian public as a counter-terrorist operation. Russian President, Vladimir Putin's Russian forces were more brutal than those used by Boris Yeltsin in the First Chechen War. After heavy bombing from the air, 100,000 Russian forces entered Chechnya in the Autumn of 1999. By February 2000, Russian forces had captured Grozny. After securing most Chechen cities, Akhmad Kadyrov was elected President in 2003 when former President Aslan Maskhadov (subsequently killed by Russian special forces prior to the 2006 elections) was banned from running.

After Russian occupation in 2000, the life in Chechnya became even worse for the average Chechen. Wanton kidnappings, rape, and murder are common. "The women are the only Chechens who venture to cross the Terek. Even 12-year-old boys and old men are being apprehended at the Russian checkpoints under pretexts of being guerrillas and are being sent to the dreaded infiltration camps where reports of torture, murder and rape are well-known. Usually, the women will have to pay ransoms to have their men

released” (Lysemose, 2000, n.p.). Russian forces, in an effort to stop Chechen secession, created a wasteland as well as a population ready for vengeance. Grozny’s population, half of its 1989 total, is now littered with bomb craters and ruins. In 2002, about 160,000 displaced Chechens still remained within the Chechen war zone. Another 160,000 were living in refugee camps across the border in Ingushetia. This figure has since declined to about 50,000 Chechens living in Ingushetia refugee camps. Russian policies have closed many camps and prohibited the construction of any more. Chechens live in fear of rape, abduction, and torture by Russian forces (Politkovskaya, 2003). A human rights organization, which covers only a third of Chechnya, reported that between “January 2002 and August 2004, some 1,254 people were abducted by federal forces, of whom 757 are still missing” (Walsh, 2004, n.p.).

### Conclusion

Chechnya’s bid for independence has proven to be a military failure. The competing histories in this conflict have become vital to the political system with both combatants. In the last 5 years, this conflict could have easily been written as religious or economic wisdom since the conflict has been portrayed as an Islam-Christianity or mafia-government issue. The possibility of a peaceful resolution has been viewed by almost all foreign observers as highly unlikely. The Khasavyurt accords at the end of the First Chechen War simply allowed both sides to rebuild their armies for the next disastrous conflict. The most interesting discourse used by both sides revolves around the use of the word “terrorists” in reference to their enemies’ troops. Ironically, they both use it correctly.

Both the Russians and Chechens perpetuate violence on the others' noncombatants which is then justified as a protection against terrorism. The use of brutality against noncombatants (terrorism) as a preemptive attack to prevent terrorism creates a vicious cycle of escalating violence that destroys buildings, lives, and any possibility of peace. The average person involved in the conflict bears the ultimate price. Perhaps my father-in-law's reluctance to discuss Vietnam arises from his desire to spare the rest of us an understanding of the large scale violence done to the human psyche that he experienced.

## SECTION 2

### SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC APPROACH

The second part of this dissertation will consider wisdom from a social scientific perspective. The organization will follow APA conventions: literature review, methods, and results. The construct of wisdom will be examined through communication and gerontological frameworks. The literature review will analyze the different theories that explain the relationship between perceptual schemas and indicators of wisdom. The literature review will also consider the various scales that were integrated to measure the construct of wisdom in this study. The social scientific literature section will conclude with the 12 hypotheses and 17 research questions posited to be important to understanding the role of different variables on perceptions of wisdom. In addition, this section will examine the methods used including: manipulation checks, sample information, and instrumentation. The social scientific section of the study will conclude with the results from the statistical tests examining the 12 proposed hypotheses and 17 research questions.



## CHAPTER 6

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on Lifespan Developmental Perspective, Social Identity Theory, Stereotype Activation Model, Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model, as well as different paradigms for measuring wisdom and the implications of these concepts on perceptions of wisdom. This review of literature is followed by the specific hypotheses and research questions that were analyzed.

#### Lifespan Developmental Perspective

It is increasingly common to see the word lifespan attached to academic texts and course descriptions as the word continues to proliferate into new disciplines. An Amazon search of all books with lifespan in the title returned more than 27,000 citations. A sampling of books with lifespan in the title as listed on Amazon.com include such diverse titles as: *Health Promotion Throughout the Lifespan, 5th edition* (Edelman & Mandle, 2002), *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities over the Lifespan: Psychological Perspectives* (D'Augelli & Patterson, 1995), and *Maternal, Newborn, and Women's Health Nursing: Comprehensive Care Across the Lifespan* (Orshan, 2006). The reason that lifespan has become such a buzzword in so many disciplines is that it offers insight into the ways that people develop and behave in sometimes similar and sometimes different ways. It accounts for broad similarities and differences in different age groups as well as accounting for inter-individual similarities and differences within the same cohort. In one of the seminal works on lifespan developmental psychology, Baltes (1987) articulates the core ideas of concepts that were later integrated into the meta-theoretical Lifespan Developmental Perspective. According to Baltes (1987), lifespan

developmental psychology involves "...the study of constancy and change in behavior throughout the life course" (p. 611). The Lifespan Developmental Perspective is based on the following theoretical premises:

the recognition of multidirectionality in ontogenetic change, consideration of both age-connected and disconnected developmental factors, a focus on the dynamic and continuous interplay between growth (gain) and decline (loss), emphasis on historical embeddedness and other structural contextual factors, and the study of the range of plasticity in development (Baltes, 1987, p. 211).

Baltes argues that human development occurs throughout an individual's life course.

While psychology has historically placed a great deal of emphasis on childhood as the primary period of growth and development and older adulthood as the period of decline leading to death, the Lifespan Developmental Perspective contends that no age period is more important than any other in regulating an individual's development. In childhood, older adulthood, and all ages in between, there are both continuous and discontinuous processes.

Baltes justifies Lifespan Developmental Perspective as a meta-theoretical perspective based on similar findings in sociology and anthropology usually referred to as life course research. He argues that observations in both the humanities and social sciences detail the corresponding effects articulated in life-span developmental psychology. He argues that it is psychology that has been forced to recognize the importance of social, historical, and contextual factors on individual conceptions of the human condition. For Baltes (1987), the role of lifespan developmental psychology "will not be identified with a single theory. It is above all a subject matter divided into varying scholarly specializations. The most general orientation toward this subject matter is simply to view behavioral development as a life-long process" (p. 613). The value of the

lifespan developmental perspective is that it embraces perspectives that had generally been disconnected in the social sciences. This meta-theoretical perspective allows researchers to study fluid intelligence declines and wisdom gains in older adults as a part of the process of living rather than two disparate phenomena. According to Baltes (1987), the concepts elucidated below (see Table 1) articulate the major theoretical premises of lifespan developmental psychology and subsequently the lifespan developmental perspective (p. 614-615).

Table 1

Major Lifespan Developmental Perspective Concepts

Concepts	Propositions
Life-span development	Ontogenetic development is a life-long process. No age period holds supremacy in regulating the nature of development. During development, and at all stages of the life span, both continuous (cumulative) and discontinuous (innovative) processes are at work.
Multidirectionality	Considerable diversity or pluralism is found in the directionality of changes that constitute ontogenesis, even within the same domain. The direction of change varies by categories of behavior. In addition, during the same developmental periods, some systems of behavior show increases, whereas others evince decreases in level of functioning.
Development as gain/loss	The process of development is not a simple movement toward higher efficacy, such as incremental growth. Rather, throughout life, development always consists of the joint occurrence of gain (growth) and loss (decline).

Table 1 (continued)

Major Lifespan Developmental Perspective Concepts

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Concepts	Propositions
Plasticity	Much intraindividual plasticity (within-person modifiability) is found in psychological development. Depending on the life conditions and experiences by a given individual, his or her developmental course can take many forms. The key developmental agenda is the search for the range of plasticity and its constraints.
Historical embeddedness	Ontogenetic development can also vary substantially in accordance with historical-cultural conditions. How ontogenetic (age-related) development proceeds is markedly influenced by the kind of sociocultural conditions existing in a given historical period, and by how these evolve over time.
Contextualism as paradigm	Any particular course of individual development can be understood as the outcome of the interactions (dialectics) among three systems of developmental influences: age-graded, history-graded, and nonnormative. The operation of these systems can be characterized in terms of the metatheoretical principles associated with contextualism.
Field of development as multidisciplinary	Psychological development needs to be seen in the interdisciplinary context provided by other disciplines (e.g., anthropology, biology, sociology) concerned with human development. The openness of the life-span perspective to interdisciplinary posture implies that a "purist" psychological view offers but a partial representation of behavioral development from conception to death.

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Research using the Lifespan Developmental Perspective has found that older adulthood is characterized by multidirectionality especially in relation to fluid and crystallized intelligence. Older adults seem to show a decrease of crystallized

intelligence which researchers define as primarily concerned with information processing (Cattell, 1971; Horn, 1970; Horn 1982). Older adults seem to continue to have incremental increases in crystallized intelligence well into older adulthood. Crystallized intelligence is characterized by social intelligence and language skills (Cattell, 1971; Horn, 1970; Horn 1982).

Baltes (2003) continues this research into arenas of incremental increases in older adulthood, arguing that older adults show increases in emotional intelligence and wisdom. Baltes defines emotional intelligence as the ability to understand the mechanisms that trigger such disparate feelings as hatred, love, and fear. Older adults also seem to have, in general, more well-developed strategies to avoid emotional conflicts and mitigate the negative consequences when they do arise. Baltes (2003) argues that the other cognitive factor that seems to show incremental increases throughout the lifespan is wisdom. Baltes operationalizes wisdom as “knowledge of the *conditio humana*, provides insight into how to combine virtue and knowledge in leading one’s life” (p. 16). Baltes acknowledges that chronological age is not enough to guarantee wisdom, but contends that life experiences paired with certain personal qualities usually facilitate the development of wisdom.

There are several qualities and characteristics that play a role in demonstrating wisdom in older adults. Specialized professional knowledge is often unaffected by age, except in instances of disease or dementia, as long as the older adult continues to practice it. Another quality of older adults that impacts wisdom is self-image and life satisfaction. Baltes contends that older adults generally maintain a positive self-image using adaptive measures. In other words, they maintain this positive life satisfaction by adapting their

expectation of reality. Baltes refers to this as “adaptive self-plasticity.” Adaptive self-plasticity consists of three behavioral strategies: selection, optimization, and compensation. Baltes cites a response by the celebrated pianist Arthur Rubenstein as an example of how these three strategies work as adaptive self-plasticity in older adults. Pianist Arthur Rubinstein who at the age of 80 was asked how he still managed to give such excellent concerts. Rubenstein offered three reasons. “First, he played fewer pieces - an example of selection; second, he practiced these pieces more often - an example of selective optimization; finally, he used tempi of larger contrasts to make it appear as though he were playing the piano faster than he was actually able to - an example of compensation” (Baltes, 2003, p. 16). People capable of applying selection, optimization, and compensation often feel better about themselves and continue to enjoy life more than people who do not (Baltes 1987, Baltes, Staudinger, & Lindenbereger, 1999).

The Lifespan Developmental Perspective was instrumental in the emerging science of positive psychology. Positive psychology expands the role of psychology to include “positive subjective experiences, positive individual traits, and positive institutions [with which it identifies] the factors that allow individuals, communities, and societies to flourish” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 5). Lifespan and positive psychologists contend that wisdom may be an essential part of aging successfully and additional research needs to be done to understand the elusive nature of wisdom (Baltes & Graf, 1997; Dittman-Kohli, 1990; Ranzijn & Andrews, 1999).

### Wisdom

There are hundreds of social scientific articles that define wisdom. Defining wisdom has become so contentious in social science contexts that researchers have

debates about their wisdom paradigms in major journals. Baltes (2004, p. 17) argued that there are seven primary properties associated with wisdom universally. They are as follows:

- (1) Wisdom addresses important and difficult questions and strategies about the conduct and meaning of life.
- (2) Wisdom includes knowledge about the limits of knowledge and the uncertainties of the world.
- (3) Wisdom represents a truly superior level of knowledge, judgment, and advice.
- (4) Wisdom constitutes knowledge with extraordinary scope, depth, and balance.
- (5) Wisdom involves a perfect synergy of mind and character, that is, an orchestration of knowledge and virtues.
- (6) Wisdom represents knowledge used for the good or well-being of oneself and that of others.
- (7) Wisdom, though difficult to achieve and to specify, is easily recognized when manifested.

Additionally, Baltes (2004) suggests that the typology of wisdom (Assmann, 1994), personality characteristics (reflectivity, skepticism, and “constructive melancholy”), and meta-wisdom (wisdom about wisdom) are important issues to be considered when evaluating wisdom. Baltes also considers the role of cooperation and communication and its relationship to collective goals and ethics essential elements of wisdom. While thorough, his definition of wisdom is so expansive that it is difficult to classify behaviors as wise or not. In order to operationalize wisdom in a context, it is necessary to consider the various scales of wisdom constructed to measure this amorphous construct.

The importance of wisdom has been increasingly investigated in different disciplinary contexts, the conceptualization and operationalization of wisdom has been especially confrontational in the social sciences. A series of forum pieces on wisdom in the social scientific journal, *Human Development*, vol. 47(5) (2004) has divided the

discussion of wisdom in the social sciences into two main paradigmatic camps: implicit and explicit theories of wisdom. The wisdom debate articulated many areas of importance in this quest for understanding probably the most understudied construct in social science. All of the contributors to this series on wisdom, while advancing their approach as the best means of measuring wisdom, recognize the importance of the following three characteristics of wisdom (to varying degrees): 1) wise people choose their best course of action in an objective manner, unconstrained by conventional ways of expected behavior; 2) rational thinking informs how wise people treat others so that they act in a just, compassionate way; and, 3) a sense of transcendence informs wise people's choices (Achenbaum, 2004, p. 300).

The primary mechanisms for measuring wisdom in social psychological contexts are implicit-theoretical approaches and explicit-theoretical approaches. According to Sternberg (2004), implicit theoretical approaches assess wisdom as a product of what the average person believes about wisdom. Two series of studies are important for understanding the role of implicit theoretical approaches to examining wisdom.

The first study of implicit theories of wisdom salient to this project comes from the work of Holliday and Chandler (1986). In their work, Holliday and Chandler (1986) examined 500 participants' beliefs about wisdom over several experiments and subsequently ran a factor analysis of their results which provided 5 factors associated with wisdom: exceptional understanding, judgment and communication skills, general competence, interpersonal skills, and social unobtrusiveness.

The other major study of implicit wisdom comes from Sternberg (1985). In his 1985 study, Sternberg asked professors in art, business, philosophy, and physics and



laypeople to rate whether wisdom in their field (or in general for laypeople) was epitomized by ideally wise, intelligent or creative individuals. Sternberg found that wisdom was highly correlated with intelligence (except for philosophy professors) and least correlated with creativity. Wisdom from the implicit theoretical perspective offers some valuable insight into the role of non-knowledge and expertise skills in conceptions of wisdom and in particular the role of communication skills and strategies.

The other main strain of thought regarding wisdom is explicit- theoretical approaches. Explicit-theoretical approaches are conceptions of wisdom constructed by experts and researchers rather than laypeople. The three major conceptualizations of explicit-theoretical approaches of wisdom are Wink and Helson's (1997) Practical and Transcendent Wisdom Scales, Ardel's (2003) Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale, and the *Max Planck Institute's* conception of wisdom and its five constituent elements.

Wink and Helson (1997) argue that research in explicit-theoretical approaches is primarily concerned with intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal dimensions. Practical wisdom in this context is a primary concern of those theorists of life-span cognitive development "...who approach wisdom in terms of good judgment and expertise in the pragmatics of life.... that results in an increased awareness of the complexity of life, better judgment and decision-making skills, and the opportunity to monitor others" (Wink & Helson, 1997, p. 2). Such ideas fit readily into an approach to wisdom as an aspect of personality development in adulthood.

Transcendent wisdom (Wink & Helson, 1997), on the other hand, represents a transpersonal dimension of wisdom: a nexus of self-awareness, integration of disparate ideas, and loss of ego. Creativity plays a role in this transcendence of ego. While

creativity is indicative of the ability to view situations in new ways, there is no guarantee that it will produce self-development. The tacit goal of the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) is to let the participant show his/her level of self-awareness and universality of conceptualization regarding wisdom. Narratives that are self-focused or superficial display different levels of wisdom than do insightful, decentered narratives.

Ardelt's (2003) Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale measures three dimensions of wisdom: cognitive, reflective, and affective. Ardelt's operationalization of wisdom arises from previous work by Clayton and Birren (1980). The cognitive dimension of wisdom "refers to a person's ability to understand life, i.e., to comprehend the significance and deeper meaning of phenomena and events, particularly with regard to intrapersonal and interpersonal matters" (Ardelt, 2003, p. 276). The second dimension, reflection, refers to a person's perspective-taking ability which increases self-awareness and insight while reducing self-centeredness and subjectivity. The third dimension of the Three Dimensional Wisdom Scale is the affective dimension. The affective dimension measures the individual's "positive emotions and behaviors toward other beings" (Ardelt, 2003, p. 277).

The *Max Planck Institute's* (MPI) conception of wisdom consists of five factors: "a) rich factual knowledge (general and specific knowledge about the conditions of life and its variations), b) rich procedural knowledge (general and specific knowledge about strategies of judgment and advice concerning matters of life), c) lifespan contextualism (knowledge about the contexts and their temporal [developmental] relationships), d) relativism (knowledge about differences in values, goals, and priorities), and e) uncertainty (knowledge about the relative indeterminacy and unpredictability of life and ways to manage" (Baltes & Staudinger, 1993; Sternberg, 2005, p. 10).

The research from this perspective tends to approach wisdom as expert knowledge about fundamental or uncertain conditions in life.

The different perspectives used to analyze wisdom from a social scientific perspective generally fall into one of the two broad paradigmatic approaches discussed above, and while the theoretical implications of these different paradigms have interesting research consequences, they offer little insight into how the different conceptions of wisdom that are espoused are perceived. Wisdom as a construct in a theoretical vacuum is not all that valuable. Without corroborating evidence that these different theories actually correspond to people's perceptions about wisdom and wise individuals, they offer little guidance on how the practice of wisdom can be facilitated. The following three theories address perceptual issues important to understanding wisdom in an applied way: Social Identity Theory, Stereotype Activation Model, and Self-Evaluation Model.

### Social Identity Theory

The first theory that offers insight into role of individual perceptions on wisdom is Social Identity Theory. Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a social-psychological theory concerned with the differentiation of individuals based upon social category or group membership. Henri Tajfel, one of the initial proponents of SIT, defined social identity as "...that part of an individual's self concept which derives from his (sic) knowledge of his (sic) membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (1978, p. 63). SIT examines the complex relationship between individual identity and the self-esteem that individuals derive from membership in a group or social category. While people are inherently different from one another by genetics, predispositions, motives, and experiences, in practice individuals are prone to classify another person based upon social categories. After assessing the other

person's group membership(s), an individual assigns her/him either to an ingroup (the other belongs to the same group as the person assessing him/her) or to an outgroup (the other belongs to a different group from the person assessing her/him). SIT uses two underlying socio-cognitive processes: "1) Categorization sharpens intergroup boundaries by producing group-distinctive stereotypical and normative perceptions and actions, and assigns people, including self, to the contextually relevant category, and 2) Self-enhancement guides the social categorization process such that in-group norms and stereotypes largely favor the in-group." (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, p. 260).

The first important socio-cognitive process assessing group membership is self-categorization. The process of a reflexive self that can "...take itself as an object and can categorize, classify, or name itself in particular ways, in relation to other social categories or classifications..." is called self-categorization. (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 221). Self-categorization is a process of categorization-accentuation which serves several important functions: illuminating intergroup differences, creating meaning for individuals, and identifying the salient elements of a context. Self-categorization accentuates the defining characteristics or prototypicality (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, and/or behaviors) of a social category. The prototype is constructed from relevant contextual information in the current social (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Because members of the same ingroup are generally perceived of in similar ways concerning a specific issue, often from the same perspective, group members develop shared prototypes. These group prototypes are not made up of distinctive features, but rather amorphous context-dependent characteristics of group members. Depersonalization in self-categorization forces many of the basic underlying group processes: "social stereotyping, group cohesion and ethnocentrism, cooperation

and altruism, emotional contagion and empathy, collective behavior, shared norms, and the mutual influence process” (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, p. 261). Through depersonalization, self-categorization effectively modifies self-perception into ingroup prototypes. Self-categorization is a vital component in understanding the interplay between self-perception and group perception (Turner, 1985; Turner, 1991). Self-categorization based upon demographic characteristics (e.g. age, race, ethnicity, and gender) and their related objective physical traits (i.e., hair, skin color, body type) are probably the most easily discernible categories upon which to base group membership as ingroup or outgroup (Harwood, Giles & Ryan, 1995). For example, an individual at an NAACP meeting would probably distinguish race as the most important social category. At an AARP meeting, race would probably not be as important a social classification as would age. These easily identifiable categories of group membership are important for understanding wisdom since older adults are more likely to be considered wise based solely upon age.

Self-enhancement is the other important socio-cognitive element of SIT. Self-enhancement deals with issues related to the basic need of individuals to see themselves in a positive light in relation to others. Self-enhancement can be achieved in intergroups comparisons by finding ways to favor the ingroup (Hogg & Abrams, 1993). Even early studies in intergroup dynamics discovered that arbitrary and trivial group memberships could manifest distinct ingroup biases. Tajfel, Billig, Bundy and Flament (1971) found that after being assigned to arbitrary groups, individuals still rewarded their ingroup members more frequently than they did outgroup members. Therefore, all intergroup interactions are inherently evaluative. Dovidio and Gaertner (1993) contend that “...at

least in terms of social cognition, category-based responses inherently involve an evaluative, or affective component” (p. 189). The assignment of individuals to either ingroup or outgroup status activates “differential evaluations” (p.189).

Groups can be privileged: high status groups or low status groups. Thus, intergroup encounters are essentially competitive even if conceptualized more cooperatively (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Since group membership is competitive and some groups will be high status and others low status, a group hierarchy based upon social categorization of demographic classifications such as age, raises the question “What can an individual do in response to being a member in a lower status group?” According to Boen and Vanbeselaere (2001), there are two strategies for changing low-status membership: individual mobility (i.e., try to gain acceptance on an individual basis into the high status group) and social competition (i.e., collective action to change status of the whole group). However, the most viable strategy in a situation is based upon several criteria: the permeability of group memberships, the stability of group hierarchies, and the legitimacy of the group’s status. Permeability refers to accessibility of individuals to group memberships. If group boundaries are permeable, there are few barriers between groups. Demographic social categories are not usually permeable (Giles & Johnson, 1981). Therefore, though it is possible to dye your hair to appear more youthful, other age-related signs (wrinkles, hearing loss, and so forth) will probably cause an older adult to be classified as an outgroup member by members of the young and middle-aged age cohorts. Age, while a demographic characteristic in the present (a 23-year-old is a member of the young adult ingroup), is a complex demographic phenomenon and poses unique research challenges in SIT because, unlike race or biological sex, individuals

change group memberships involuntarily. With regard to Boen and Vanbeselaere's (2001) three criteria, age is permeable within the context of time. The 23-year-old in 50 years will be an older adult. In three years (depending upon which researcher is operationalizing age), the 23-year-old will now be a middle-aged adult. At age 26 or 73, the individual's race and biological sex (unless she/he has opted for radical medical treatments) has remained the same. The result of this permeability on corresponding behavior is that "we feel a greater sense of threat from outgroup members when group boundaries are unclear and may go extra lengths to shore up those boundaries by emphasizing difference" (Williams & Nussbaum, 2001, p. 11). The next criterion articulated by Boen and Vanbeselaere (2001) is stability, which refers to the hierarchical relationship between groups across time. Demographic social categories including age are relatively stable. Finally, legitimacy refers to the fairness of the hierarchy. Groups based on social categories often deny the legitimacy of their lower status. Research by Scheeper, Branscombe, Spears, and Doosje (2002) found that individuals within lower status groups that attempt to legitimize their group's low status, as opposed to challenging its legitimacy, are perceived of as deviants. The lack of viable options for low status group members based upon easily discernible demographic classification can result in efforts by individuals to reclassify themselves as a high status sub-group within a low status group like a young person that believes he/she and his/her friends are wiser than same age peers. Boen and Vanbeselaere (2001) found this strategy being employed in their study.

The creation of a more complex hierarchy allows individuals within lower status groups to improve the likelihood that he/she will belong to a more privileged group than

other ingroup members. When examining age categories, communication scholars have found that older adults have more categories for older adults than do younger adults (Hummert, 1994; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner, & Strahm, 1994; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1995; Hummert, Shaner, & Garstka, 1995). Which suggests that a 70 year-old older adult might perceive of him- or herself as less wise than a 65 year-old who has had more varied life experiences while a younger adult is more likely to see chronology, by itself, as a sign of wisdom. For example, a 25 year-old might decide that the 7 year difference between him- or herself and an 18 year-old is indicative of greater wisdom. Social Identity Theory illuminates the process whereby individuals classify people in intergroup encounters and how these assignments facilitate modifications in the perception of wisdom in age-specific ingroups and outgroups.

#### Stereotype Activation Model

While Social Identity Theory is useful for discussing the role of group memberships on perceptions of wisdom, the Stereotype Activation Model (SAM) is concerned specifically with stereotypes associated with age. One aspect of aging that has received systematic treatment in the social scientific literature concerns stereotypes associated with age. In one of the most comprehensive examinations, Ashmore and Del Boca (1981) found three different theoretical conceptualizations of stereotypes: sociocultural, psychodynamic, and cognitive (1981).

The sociocultural perspective contends that the functions of stereotypes primarily “serve utilitarian and value expressive functions” (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981, p. 24). From this perspective, stereotypes are important for maintaining social distinctions and perpetuating existing prejudices. Hummert, Shaner, and Garstka (1995) argue that the



sociocultural perspective assumes a relatively constant stereotype of a group that exists across the culture as a whole, which utilizes this stereotype to continue its discriminatory cultural practices. The research using the sociocultural perspective to gauge perceptions of older adults found that individuals were more likely to have incorrect and negative views of the older population than incorrect and positive views (Klenmack, Roff & Durand, 1980; Palmore, 1982). This sociocultural perspective is not very valuable because it perpetuates negative stereotypes about older adults despite cultural beliefs that older adults are wiser than are younger age cohorts.

Though Ashmore and Del Boca (1981) differentiate two distinct types of psychodynamic stereotypes—psychoanalytic reductionism and psychosocial theories both fulfill an existing personality need of the individual. Psychodynamic stereotypes are still negatively conceived, but instead of being constructed culturally, as in the sociocultural perspective, they are constructed to fulfill the needs of specific individuals. Several studies have attempted to delineate the personality factors that elicit negative biases toward older adults using the psychodynamic perspective (Katz, 1990; Klenmack, & Roff, 1983). Besides aggressiveness, psychodynamic stereotype research has not discovered any personality factors that explain both positive and negative views of the respondents about age cohorts. Both sociocultural and psychodynamic perspectives contend that stereotypes are negative and thus have deleterious consequences for the group to which it is assigned as well as any potential communicative interaction.

The cognitive perspective assumes that stereotypes are not inherently negative, but rather a form of information processing linked to an individual's perceptual schemas that organize new information into preexisting categorical structures. "Cognitive

limitations make humans susceptible to systematic biases in processing information about people and events, and these biases contribute significantly to the formation and maintenance of stereotypes regarding social groups” (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981, p. 29). The research using the cognitive stereotype perspective has found that individuals have complex categories made up of specific traits that they use to process social information (Heckhausen, Dixon & Baltes, 1989; Hummert 1990; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1994; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1995; Hummert, Shaner & Garstka, 1995; Hummert, Shaner, Garstka & Henry, 1998). While this perspective, according to the research, more accurately reflects social-psychological processes because it allows for differing perceptions of individuals based upon category (e.g., age, race, ethnicity) as well as differing constructions of similar stereotypes based upon specific traits, the cognitive stereotype is still limited to either a positive or a negative perception of age-related traits. Because the process of aging can be a positive or a negative transition or both, a cycle that includes both positive and negative elements, a different approach was necessary to facilitate a multifaceted analysis of the diverse stereotypes that can be activated within the same individual toward older adults.

The development of multiple stereotypes resolved the problems associated with the sociocultural, psychodynamic, and cognitive stereotypes differentiated by Ashmore and Del Boca (1981). This theoretical conception of multiple stereotypes could account for both differences in trait organization and overall attitude toward members of certain age groups. Hummert, Shaner, and Garstka (1995) contend that “with multiple stereotypes, we now have a theoretical account for observed attitudes toward older adults; that is, attitudes vary toward older individuals as a function of their perceived

characteristics, not as a function of their status alone” (p. 121). Hummert (1994) discusses several factors that affect the valence and activation of stereotypes: characteristics of the perceiver and characteristics of the target were particularly salient to the examination of wisdom.

### Characteristics of the Perceiver

A couple of characteristics of the perceiver including age and cognitive complexity have been shown to influence the activation of stereotypes available to the perceiver. The age of the perceiver is an important element in stereotype activation. Research has found that as the age of the perceiver increases, there is a corresponding increase in the identification of some positive traits associated with age (Brewer & Liu, 1984; Hummert 1999; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1994). Older adults hold a wider range of stereotypes for older adults than their younger age peers. Another characteristic of the perceiver that affects stereotype activation is cognitive complexity. Cognitive complexity measures an individual’s ability to differentiate, abstract, and integrate social constructs about another person (Crockett, 1965; O’Keefe & Sypher, 1981). Individuals with a greater hierarchical structure would have a larger set of schemas from which to find the most appropriate one. Hummert (1994) concludes “...individuals with high cognitive complexity should be less likely to activate negative stereotypes than should those of lower cognitive complexity” (p. 173).

### Characteristics of the Target

The primary characteristic of importance in the current study is perceived wisdom. Since wisdom is supposed to be the domain of older adults, the primary demographic characteristic used to assess this is age-specific group membership. While

physical characteristics like wrinkles can activate negative stereotypes, the physical characteristics of aging actually increases perceptions of wisdom. Hummert (1999) concludes that trait information, used in conjunction with photographs when appropriate, elicits both numerically more as well as more diverse stereotypes. Denney, Dew, and Kroupa (1995) found that people in general nominated people older than themselves as particularly wise. Not surprisingly, considering the aforementioned work on stereotypes and increased schemas, as respondents aged the difference between their own age and the person they nominated as epitomizing wisdom decreased. These researchers found several sex differences that affected perceptions of wisdom. Participants nominated males more frequently than females as wise (in general), and females more frequently than males as interpersonally wise (with the exception of older females). The wisdom associated with men arose primarily from disciplinary knowledge while women were associated with interpersonal/relational wisdom.

#### Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model

Previous psychological research suggests that individuals are motivated to maintain a positive self-evaluation. Additionally, this research suggests that our experiences not only generate both understanding and feelings, but the relationship between the two are interconnected and vital to positive conceptions of self as is the necessity of maintaining consistency (Lawrence, & Scheier, 1996; Tesser, 2003). Tesser (2001) in a review of previous research cited numerous examples of positive self-evaluation maintenance. For example, successful endeavors are internally attributed (I worked hard), failed ones are externally attributed (My team members are lazy) (Zuckerman, 1979). Other positive self-evaluation strategies include inflated perceptions

about individual level of participation and influence, excessive optimism about long-term prospects, inflated perceptions of individual contributions to group projects, and unrealistic beliefs about an individual's ability to control events (Langer, 1975; Ross & Sicoly, 1979; Tiger 1979; Greenwald, 1980). Tesser (2003) creates a typology of positive self-evaluation strategies. His typology consists of three major categories: social comparison, inconsistency reduction, and value expression.

Tesser (2003) and others (Suls & Wheeler, 2000; Wood & Wilson 2003) have described the social scientific research using social comparison theory. The elements of social comparison that assist in understanding its value were described by Festinger (1954) in his seminal work on social comparison. The goal of social comparison was to assist in accurate self-evaluation. Social comparison is sometimes the only way that individuals can gauge their abilities and beliefs. Social comparison drives individuals to improve in comparison to others. Additional research (Stapel & Tesser, 2001) has found that individuals who think more about themselves are more prone to use social comparison. When individuals were asked to describe themselves, there was an increase in social comparison over the control group which was not asked to describe themselves. This suggests that when we make the self salient to the research, individuals begin by comparing themselves with others as a frame of reference for their self-evaluations.

Another element of positive self-evaluation is cognitive consistency. One approach to cognitive consistency uses another theory developed by Festinger (1957): cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance occurs when the individual is forced to believe or behave in a manner inconsistent with his/her self-evaluation. Since people are motivated to be consistent in their beliefs and their behavior, individuals must receive a

reward, a threat of possible punishment, or an increased perception of choice to alter their behavior in a way inconsistent with their self-evaluation (Aronson & Carlsmith, 1963; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959; Linder, Cooper, & Jones, 1967). The result of most cognitive dissonance research suggests that the primary means of reducing inconsistency is attitude change. Cognitive dissonance is not concerned with general inconsistency but rather the discrepancy between an individual's behaviors and self-concept. Inconsistent behaviors that do not reflect a person's self-concept often lead to behavior changes to correct the discrepancy between behavior and self-evaluation (Aronson, Fried, & Stone, 1991).

Tesser (2003) describes value expression as simply the disclosure of values individuals hold dear. The role of value expression in self-evaluative circumstances tends to increase self-affirmation. These three elements of self-evaluation are important to the self-evaluation maintenance model. The goal of the self-evaluation maintenance model is to discover a general rule by which individuals maintain positive self-concepts. Tesser (2003) argues that individuals with the ability to self-affirm via value expressions were able to overcome cognitive dissonance and social comparison self-evaluative strategies. When individuals were not able to use self-affirmation techniques, individuals were prone to use the complementary strategy appropriate for maintenance of a positive self-concept (Tesser & Cornell, 1991; Tesser, Crepaz, Collins, Cornell, and Beach, 2000).

All three of these elements have consequences on the individual perceptions of their own and others' wisdom. For example, social comparison is important when the individual's perceived level of wisdom is compared to the wisdom levels of others. Since most people, especially in a low status group, want to be perceived as more wise than

same age peers, the comparison of self to other same age peers should be more positive. Additionally, individuals should be allowed to express their attitudes and beliefs about wisdom in a way that they can make meaningful.

#### Instruments Measuring Characteristics of Wise People

While the larger goal of this project is to examine the competing discourses of wisdom, the goal of the social scientific section is to assess the ways in which wisdom has been defined and operationalized through the use of scales and to examine the impact of individual characteristics on assessments of wisdom in order to explore a broader definition of wisdom than is captured by any one of these scales. Some of the elements that will be examined in this project are the relationship between wisdom scales, demographic characteristics, and self-reported wisdom on perceptions of wise individuals. The specific wisdom scales being assessed are the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), and the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). The Transcendent Wisdom Scale replaced the qualitative responses used by Max Planck Institute researchers because it had a more detailed analysis of scoring and specific examples for each of the scores additionally. Additionally, Baltes and Staudinger (2000) express some concern about the ecological validity of the hypothetical scenarios being used. Several additional non-wisdom specific scales were added to examine dimensions of wisdom articulated in the preceding theories including: other-directedness, satisfaction with life, aesthetic interest, sex-role orientation, and relational communication. The remainder of this literature review will examine the different scales and the elements of wisdom that they represent.

### Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)

The Transcendent Wisdom Scale developed by Wink and Helson (1997) measures an individual's ability to see universal connections that transcend normal self-centered interests. Wink and Helson (1987) argue that this scale measures the transpersonal component of wisdom and approximates philosophical conceptions of wisdom. The Transcendent Wisdom scale also gives insight into similar issues identified by Max Planck Institute researchers concerning expertise on fundamental or uncertain issues. The TWR requires individuals to write an example of wisdom that they have acquired. Responses to the TWR range from 5 being transcendent and insightful to 1 being self-absorbed and lacking self-transcendence.

### Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO & FSRO)

One scale used in the current study, the Adjective Check List (ACL) (Heilbrun, 1981), is a sex-differentiated role scale. The ACL is a list of adjectives that individuals check if the corresponding attribute describes him/herself. The ACL (Heilbruner, 1981) consists of 28 items that measure masculine sex-role orientation and 25 items that measure feminine sex-role orientation. While the ACL is primarily used in gender role research (Davis, Ray, & Burt, 1987; DeLucia, 2004; Witt, 1997), the research on wisdom has found that biological sex is associated with different skill sets (Denney, Dew, & Kroupa, 1995). The ACL examines possible differences in wisdom associated with sex role beliefs. The ACL has been divided into Masculine Sex-Role Orientation and Feminine Sex-Role Orientation subscales to facilitate easier statistical analysis.



### Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS)

Another scale used to assess wisdom as referenced above is the Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS) (Wink & Helson, 1997). The PWS consists of 18 adjectives derived from the 300-item Adjective Check List (ACL) (Gough & Heilbrun, 1983) that most accurately reflected the traits of a wise person in which individuals are presented a list of adjectives, like the ACL, which describes him/herself. Fourteen items were adjectives indicative of wisdom and 4 adjectives were counterindicative of wisdom. Wink and Helson (1997) contend that the PWS measures intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. These eighteen items create a superordinate category of adjectives associated with wisdom.

### Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS)

The Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS) was developed to address the role of artistic and creative endeavors as indicators of wisdom. Researchers associated with both implicit-theoretical and explicit-theoretical approaches have discussed the role of creative endeavors as an example of problem-solving or transpersonal skill (Sternberg 1985; Sternberg 2005; Wink & Helson, 1997). The AVS was specifically developed for this project. The Aesthetic Scale was developed by using famous quotations about artistic endeavors from the likes of Frank Zappa and Cicero into a 12 item subscale.

### Other-Directedness Factor of Self-Monitoring Scale (OD)

The next scale used to assess wisdom is the other-directedness factor, a subscale of the Self-Monitoring Scale (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980). This subscale measures the interpersonal and transpersonal skill of empathy or concern for others. While the OD is primarily used in self-presentation research (Berinsky 2004, Slama & Celuch, 2005;

Williams, Hudson, & Lawson, 1999), the scale focuses on a person's desire to please others by masking his/her own true feelings.

#### Life Satisfaction Index – Z (LSIZ)

Another important element of wisdom concerns satisfaction with life. The Life Satisfaction Index-Z scale (Wood, Wylie, & Sheafor, 1969) is a shortened form of the Life Satisfaction Index-A (Neugarten, Havighurst, & Tobin, 1961). The Life Satisfaction Index (LSI-Z) consists of 13 items that measure an individual's satisfaction level with his or her own life choices and experiences. The Life Satisfaction Index has been used primarily in gerontological research (Burckhardt, 1984; Lyyra, Törmäkangas, Read, Rantanen, & Berg, 2006). Satisfaction with life is a characteristic of self-understanding and reflection constituent to many elements of wisdom (Ardelt, 2003; Sternberg 2005; Wink & Helson, 1997).

#### Relational Communication Scale (RCS)

One of the most understudied elements of wisdom is the communication component which has been articulated in both implicit theoretical and explicit theoretical approaches as vital to understanding and behaving in a wise manner. Denney, Dew, and Kroupa (1995) found that women were better at relational and interpersonal components than their male counterparts. The Relational Communication Scale was used to assess the communication aspect of wisdom partly because it has a number of subscales that might more clearly articulate the most important communicative strategies in perceiving wisdom in others. The Relational Communication Scale used in this study consisted of the 41 items (used in their third study) including all 8 themes since the scale was not developed specifically for assessing wisdom (Burgoon & Hale, 1987). The Relational

Communication Scale measures immediacy/affection, similarity/depth, receptivity/trust, composure, formality, dominance, equality, and task orientation themes in communicative interactions.

### Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS)

The Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale consists of three indicators of wisdom: the cognitive, the reflective, and the affective (Ardelt, 2000; Ardel, 2003). The 3D-WS uses the cognitive, reflective, and affective subscales as essential indicators of the wisdom construct. The 3D-WS normally measures the respondents level of wisdom on the three indicators but since part of the goal of this project was to assess the relationship between different elements of wisdom, the 3D-WS was modified to assess perceptions of a wise person's use of the cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions of wisdom.

### Hypotheses and Research Questions

Based on the social scientific research in Lifespan Developmental Perspective, wisdom, Social Identity Theory, Stereotype Activation Model, Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model, and the eight instruments that measure a characteristic of wise people, 12 hypotheses and 17 research questions have been proposed. The hypotheses and research questions have been divided into 3 distinct sections: role of perceiver characteristics on wisdom (Hypotheses 1-7 and Research Questions 1-16), role of self-reported wisdom on perceptions of wisdom in others (Hypotheses 8-10), and relationships among wisdom scales (Hypotheses 11 and 12, Research Question 17). To facilitate ease of reading, hypotheses and research questions will be grouped if the rationale for their inclusion is similar. In addition, a summary table of the hypotheses and research questions examined in this study are presented at the end of this section (see Table 2).

## Role of Perceiver Characteristics on Wisdom

Age. The research on the Stereotype Activation Model, especially the research on perceiver age and target characteristics, suggests that as people age they develop more complex ideas about wisdom. In addition, the process of aging activates positive stereotypes and decreases the age distance between the individual and those individuals to which they attribute wisdom (Brewer & Liu, 1984; Denney, Dew, & Kroupa, 1995; Hummert 1999; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1994).

H1: Age will be positively associated with participant's self-reported wisdom.

Both the Stereotype Activation Model and Social Identity Theory suggest that as people age they believe that it decreases the age distance between themselves and those individuals to which they attribute wisdom (Brewer & Liu, 1984; Denney, Dew, & Kroupa, 1995; Hummert 1999; Hummert, Garstka, Shaner & Strahm, 1994). In addition, Social Identity Theory explains that all intergroup encounters are essentially competitive even if conceptualized more cooperatively (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Since group membership is competitive and older adults are high status compared to younger adults, older adults will perceive of this construct as less permeable. This lack of permeability and the relative stability of wisdom as being the domain of older adults suggests that as people age they will perceive less wisdom in the lower status younger (Boen & Vanbeselaere, 2001; Scheeper, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002).

H2: Age will be negatively associated with perceptions of wisdom in all three age groups (young, middle-aged, and older adults).

Social Identity Theory explains all intergroup encounters are essentially competitive. Since group membership is competitive and some groups will be high status

and others low status, a group hierarchy based upon social categorization of demographic classifications results. The primary way that an individual can try to gain acceptance on an individual basis into the high status group such as older adulthood with regard to wisdom is individual mobility (Boen & Vanbeselaere, 2001). The lack of viable options for low status group members based upon easily discernible demographic classification can result in efforts by individuals to reclassify themselves as a high status sub-group within a low status group like a young person that believes he/she and his/her friends are wiser than same age peers (Scheeper, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). The Self-Evaluation Maintenance Model also supports the premise that individuals attribute greater abilities to themselves than others (Langer, 1975; Ross & Sicoly, 1979; Tiger 1979; Greenwald, 1980).

H3a: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to young adults (18-29) by same age peers.

H3b: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to middle-aged adults (30-59) by same age peers.

H3c: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to older adults (60+) by same age peers.

Social Identity Theory explains much of difference associated with age cohort differences as articulated above. Since older adults are high status when considering wisdom, they will have the highest self-reported wisdom, followed by middle-aged adults, and finally young (Boen & Vanbeselaere, 2001; Scheeper, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Williams & Nussbaum, 2001).

H4: Hypothesis 4: Age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults) will

be associated with different age-specific self-reported levels of wisdom increasing from the lowest in young adults to the highest in older adults.

The following research questions about the role of age and wisdom or age group membership and wisdom are posited because they fill in areas of previous research that have not been analyzed or that different theories suggest different conclusions.

RQ1: Is there a relationship between group membership and perceptions of wisdom associated with the three different age groups?

RQ7: Is there a relationship between age and score on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?

RQ8: Is there a relationship between membership in an age cohort and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?

RQ12: Is there a relationship between age and the various wisdom scales (excluding TWR)?

Biological Sex. Research on stereotype activation from Denney, Dew, and Kroupa (1995) found several sex differences that affected perceptions of wisdom. Specifically, participants nominated males more frequently than females as wise (in general), and females more frequently than males as interpersonally wise (with the exception of older females).

H5: Males will have higher self-reported levels of wisdom than will females.

H6: Males will score higher on masculine and task-oriented wisdom scales than will females.

H7: Females will score higher on feminine and relational wisdom scales than will males.

The following research questions about the role of biological sex and wisdom have been posited because they fill in areas of previous research that have not been analyzed or that different theories suggest different conclusions.

RQ2: Is there a significant difference between males and females on perceived levels of wisdom associated with age group membership?

RQ9: Is there a relationship between biological sex and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?

RQ13: Is there a relationship between biological sex and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?

Education. Though explicit-theories of wisdom examine wisdom from experts, no systematic analysis of the role of education on wisdom has been undertaken. The conflation of wisdom into knowledge and expertise require measurement to see if individuals perceive of education as the same as wisdom.

RQ3: Is there a relationship between education and self-reported level of wisdom?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between education and perceptions of wisdom associated with age group membership?

RQ10: Is there a relationship between educational level and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?

RQ14: Is there a relationship between educational level and the various scales (excluding TWR) being studied?

Income. The following research questions about the role of income on perceptions of wisdom have been posited because they fill in areas of previous research that have not been examined. Since affluence is associated with numerous other positive stereotypes, it is important to examine its relationship to wisdom.

RQ5: Is income related to self-perceived levels of wisdom?

RQ6: Is there a relationship between income and wisdom associated with age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults)?

RQ11: Is there a relationship between income and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?

RQ15: Is there a relationship between income and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?

Relationships among Sex, Education, Income, and Perceived Wisdom. The following research question examines the relationship between three of the demographic variables and perceived wisdom. This research question will suggest which variables should be pursued in future research on wisdom.

RQ16: Is there a significant difference between biological sex, participant education, and participant income as a predictor of wisdom level on the various wisdom scales being examined?

#### Role of Self-Reported Wisdom on Perceptions of Wisdom in Others

Social Identity Theory explains all intergroup encounters are essentially competitive. Since group membership is competitive and some groups will be high status and others low status, a group hierarchy based upon social categorization of demographic classifications is necessary (Scheeper, Branscombe, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). The Self-



Evaluation Maintenance Model also supports the premise that individuals attribute greater abilities to themselves than others, while simultaneously attempting to avoid the possibility of cognitive dissonance associated with inflated self-esteem (Aronson & Carlsmith, 1963; Festinger, 1957; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959; Linder, Cooper, & Jones, 1967).

H8: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with perceptions of wisdom for young, middle-aged, and older individuals.

H9: Self-reported wisdom will be positively related to the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR).

H10: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with the wisdom scales excluding TWR) being examined.

#### Relationships among Wisdom Scales.

Since all of the scales included in the current study have been used in previous studies of wisdom (i.e., Practical Wisdom Scale, Transcendent Wisdom Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z, and other-directedness factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale OD) or are characteristics that previous research has attributed to wise individuals, the scales should be positively related.

H11: The Transcendent Wisdom Scale will be positively correlated with the other wisdom scales.

H12: The various wisdom scales (excluding TWR) will be positively correlated with each other.

Even though the scales used in this instrument should be positively related, the relationship between overall mean scores has never been identified.

RQ17: Is there a difference in the overall mean scores on the various wisdom scales  
(excluding TWR)?

Table 2

Summary Table of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

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Hypotheses and Research Questions

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- H1: Age will be positively associated with participant's self-reported wisdom.
- H2: Age will be negatively associated with perceptions of wisdom in all three age groups (young, middle-aged, and older adults).
- H3a: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to young adults (18-29) by same age peers.
- H3b: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to middle-aged adults (30-59) by same age peers.
- H3c: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to older adults (60+) by same age peers.
- H4: Age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults) will be associated with different age-specific self-perceived levels of wisdom increasing from the lowest in young adults to the highest in older adults.
- H5: Males will have higher self-reported levels of wisdom than will females.
- H6: Males will score higher on masculine and task-oriented wisdom scales than will females.
- H7: Females will score higher on feminine and relational wisdom scales than will males.
- H8: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with perceptions of wisdom for young, middle-aged, and older individuals.
- H9: Self-reported wisdom will be positively related to the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR).
- H10: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined.

Table 2 (continued)

Summary Table of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

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Hypotheses and Research Questions

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- H11: The Transcendent Wisdom Scale will be positively correlated with the other wisdom scales.
- H12: The various wisdom scales (excluding TWR) will be positively correlated with each other.
- RQ1: Is there a relationship between group membership and perceptions of wisdom associated with the three different age groups?
- RQ2: Is there a significant difference between males and females on perceived levels of wisdom associated with age group membership?
- RQ3: Is there a relationship between education and self-reported level of wisdom?
- RQ4: Is there a relationship between education and perceptions of wisdom associated with age group membership?
- RQ5: Is income related to self-perceived levels of wisdom?
- RQ6: Is there a relationship between income and wisdom associated with age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults)?
- RQ7: Is there a relationship between age and score on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?
- RQ8: Is there a relationship between membership in an age cohort and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?
- RQ9: Is there a relationship between biological sex and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?
- RQ10: Is there a relationship between educational level and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?
- RQ11: Is there a relationship between income and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?
- RQ12: Is there a relationship between age and the various wisdom scales (excluding TWR)?

Table 2 (continued)

Summary Table of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

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Hypotheses and Research Questions

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RQ13: Is there a relationship between biological sex and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?

RQ14: Is there a relationship between educational level and the various scales (excluding TWR) being studied?

RQ15: Is there a relationship between income and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?

RQ16: Is there a significant difference between biological sex, participant education, and participant income as a predictor of wisdom level on the various wisdom scales being examined?

RQ17: Is there a difference in the overall mean scores on the various wisdom scales (excluding TWR)?

## CHAPTER 7

### METHODS

The general purpose of this section is to describe the demographics, instruments, and statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses and research questions posed in the previous chapter. This chapter consists of 3 sections. The first section examines a manipulation check on a scale constructed to measure the participants' interest in various aesthetic forms (Aesthetic Value Scale). The second section examines the demographic information about the sample. The final section considers the various scales used to measure wisdom in the questionnaire distributed to the sample.

#### Manipulation Check

Despite the contentious nature of the debate over the best way to define wisdom there continues to be increasing interest in wisdom, but work on the more global dimensions of wisdom needs to be undertaken. One area that has been understudied and needs to be explored is the relationship between wisdom and creative or artistic endeavors. While Sternberg (2005) found little support for a strong relationship between perceptions of wisdom and creativity, an understanding of creativity and interest in different aesthetic forms, especially in non-academic settings, needs to be examined. To test the relationship between perceived wisdom and the aesthetic, a new scale, the Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS) was constructed. The AVS consisted of 12 quotations (or negatively modified quotations) about artistic endeavors derived from both contemporary and classical authors and artists. These specific quotations were chosen because they treat artistic endeavors as indicative of attributes used by wise individuals such as reflection, improved outlook on life, and a desire for a new understanding of experiences.

The new Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS) underwent two separate tests of validity prior to being used in the final instrument. The first manipulation check was completed prior to the distribution of the instrument. The subjects for this manipulation check were 15 students in an introductory-level Communication Studies course at Louisiana State University. The students completed a sorting task that integrated the new 12-item AVS assessing the participants' perception of the importance of aesthetics on wisdom and 12 loosely related items from Ardel's Three-dimensional Wisdom Scale (2003) (see APPENDIX C). The participants were not given any information about the scales or the number of items derived from each scale. Two items of the new Aesthetic Value Scale given to the participants were "He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth" and "He/she would agree that art and music make him/her feel more positive toward others." Two items from Ardel's (2003) Three-dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) given to the participants include "Simply knowing the answer rather than understanding the reasons for the answer is fine with me" and "You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked." Twelve of the students correctly sorted all 24 items into two groups of 12 corresponding to the appropriate scale from which they were derived. One student assigned the item from the AVS "A wise person thinks art is making something out of nothing and selling it" in with the 12 actual items from Ardel's 3D-WS (2003). The rest of the items were sorted correctly. Another student put the item from the 3D-WS "You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked" in with the new AVS items and the new scale item "A wise person thinks art is making something out of nothing and selling it" in with the 12 items from the 3D-WS. One student withdrew before completing the task.

An additional check of the new scale's validity was assessed by content experts. The Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS) was assessed by two of the three professors in the Department of Communication Studies at Louisiana State University that specialize in quantitative communication theory research. These graduate faculty members were questioned about its design, reasonableness of measure, and adherence to aging theory. They found the AVS to be an appropriate measure of participant perceptions of the role of aesthetic and artistic elements on wisdom.

### Sample

The questionnaires were distributed to students in introductory courses at Louisiana State University. Students were asked to complete the survey during class time and/or to recruit middle-aged and older adult acquaintances by distributing the questionnaires to them. Students received extra credit for recruiting these additional participants. Students who decided not to participate in this study or opted out before completing the questionnaire as well as students without access to possible middle-aged or older adult participants had the opportunity for extra-credit unrelated to the current study.

Of the 558 questionnaires returned, 10 (1.8%) participants were excluded from statistical analyses because they failed to complete more than one-half of the questionnaire. Two hundred and fifty-two (46.0%) respondents were male, 291 (53.1%) were female, and five (0.9%) participants did not respond to the item. The average age of the participants was 38.8 years of age ( $SD = 20.5$ ). Some of hypotheses posited in this study examine age in terms of three distinct age cohorts: young adults (18-29 years-old), middle-aged adults (30-60 years-old) and older adults (60+). The young adult category

had 264 respondents with a mean age of 20.42 years-old ( $SD = 1.84$ ). The middle-aged adult category had 156 respondents with a mean age of 44.92 years-old ( $SD = 7.76$ ). The older adult category had 128 members with a mean age of 69.10 years-old ( $SD = 7.58$ ). Five hundred and twenty-one (95.1%) of the participants claimed U.S. citizenship. The ethnic composition of the participants was 80.3% European American (440), 5.8% African American (32; which is lower than the 11% African-American student body campus-wide), 1.8% Asian-American (10), 2.6% Latina/o (14), 0.2% Middle Eastern American (1), 2.0% Native American (11; tribal membership not included), 0.5% reported as “other” (3 participants listed several ethnicities from the ethnicities included on the questionnaire), and 6.8% (37) participants did not respond to the question. The item assessing the participants’ educational level ranged from 3.5% who had completed some high school, 17.2% had a high school diploma, 46.9% had some college, 22.3% had a college diploma, 8.9% had attended graduate school, to 1.1% who reported their highest educational level as terminal degrees. One (0.2%) participant did not respond to this item. Forty-eight (8.8%) participants estimated their family income to be between \$0-\$20,000, 84 (15.3%) participants between \$20,001-\$40,000, 86 (15.7%) participants between \$40,001-\$60,000, 87 (15.9%) participants between \$60,001-\$80,000, 70 (12.8%), participants between \$80,001-\$100,000, and 155 (28.3%) participants estimated their family income as over \$100,000. Eighteen (3.3%) participants did not respond to the item.

#### Instrumentation

Besides the demographic variables, several pre-existing scales were chosen for integration in this study because these measures assess variables that have been



hypothesized to affect perceptions of wisdom including sex-role orientation, adjective-specific traits, artistic and aesthetic interest, concern for others, satisfaction with life, interpersonal communication, as well as cognitive, reflective, and affective indicators.

The questionnaire for the study consisted of four major parts (see APPENDIX D). The first section was comprised of demographic questions about the research participant's sex, age, country of origin, ethnicity, educational level, and family income as well as several Likert-scaled items that assessed: perceived level of wisdom for self, young adults, middle-aged adults, and older adults.

The second section of the instrument assessed the participants' perception of adjectives representing possible traits of wise people. Two instruments were integrated in this section: the Adjective Check List (ACL) and the Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS).

#### Adjective Check List (Sex-Role Orientation)

The first instrument, the Adjective Check List (ACL) (Heilbrun, 1981) is a sex-differentiated role scale. The ACL is a list of adjectives that individuals check if the corresponding attribute seemingly describes him/herself. The 53-item ACL used in this instrument is an abbreviated list of the original 300 adjectives (Gough & Heilbrun, 1965) used to assess participant's association of sex-roles with wisdom. The ACL (Heilbrun, 1981) consists of 28 items that measure masculine sex-role orientation and 25 items that measure feminine sex-role orientation. The 53 adjectives were standardized with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 50 using the sex stereotype indices reported by Williams and Best (1977) and create two superordinate adjective scales consisting of the 28-item masculinity scale and the 25-item femininity scale. The Masculine Sex-Role Orientation subscale of the ACL consisted of adjectives like "confident" and "tough".

The Feminine Sex-Role Orientation subscale of the ACL consisted of adjectives like “cooperative” and “talkative”. The ACL was modified to examine the role of adjectives associated with sex-roles on participant perceptions of characteristic traits of wise individuals using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from almost never true to almost always true from the Adjective Check List. The participants completed the 53-item ACL that assesses the relationship between sex-roles and wisdom. In this study, reliability (using Cronbach’s alpha) for the Masculine Sex-Role Orientation was .81. Reliability for the Feminine Sex-Role Orientation was .73. The overall reliability of the combined superordinate scales of the ACL was .82.

#### Practical Wisdom Scale (Adjective-Specific Traits)

The second instrument used in this section was the Practical Wisdom Scale (Wink & Helson, 1997). The Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS) consists of 18 adjectives derived from the 300-item Adjective Check List (Gough & Heilbrun, 1983) that most accurately reflected the traits of a wise person in which individuals are presented a list of adjectives, like the ACL, which describes him/herself. Fourteen items were adjectives indicative of wisdom (e.g., “intelligent” and “reflective”) and 4 adjectives were counterindicative of wisdom (e.g., “intolerant” and “reckless”). Individual scores were calculated summing the indicative minus the counterindicative adjectives. The overall reliability of the PWS in the original study ranged from .81 to .74 depending upon sex and age. In the current study, the PWS was modified to examine the role of adjectives associated with sex-roles on participant perceptions of characteristic traits of wise individuals using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from almost never true to almost always true from the PWS. In this

study, reliability (using Cronbach's alpha) for the PWS was .86 (slightly higher than the authors found in their original research).

The third section of the questionnaire consisted of scales that measure participant perceptions about the beliefs or behaviors appropriate to or used by wise people. This section consisted of 5 separate scales whose items were randomly integrated into this portion of the questionnaire. Unlike the previous section which was concerned primarily with adjectives approximating traits associated with sex-roles or wisdom, this section presented scales assessing the importance of such disparate constructs as artistic/creative endeavors, interpersonal communication, and cognitive development on perceptions of wisdom.

#### Aesthetic Value Scale (Artistic and Aesthetic Interest)

The first scale in this section of the questionnaire is the Aesthetic Value Scale developed for this instrument by the author to address perceptions of aesthetic endeavors and wisdom. The Aesthetic Value Scale was developed by using famous quotations about artistic endeavors from contemporary and classical sources including Frank Zappa and Cicero into a 12-item subscale using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. An exploratory factor analysis was run on the 12-item Aesthetic Value Scale using an oblique rotation. There are two frequently used rotation methods in exploratory factor analyses: orthogonal and oblique. Orthogonal (SPSS - Varimax) assumes no correlation between the factors and the pattern and structure matrices are equal. Oblique rotation (SPSS - Direct Oblimin) assumes correlation between factors. Oblique rotation only requires an analysis of the pattern matrix since it differs from the structure and allows for easier interpretation (Rummel, 1970; George &

Mallery, 2001). Since the Aesthetic Value Scale assesses various attitudes which are often correlated, an oblique rotation was used. Factor loadings of greater than .4 are suggested (Gable & Wolf, 1993). Three items were deleted for low factor loadings in their respective domains or when eliminating the item increased the overall alpha level. The 3 items from the 12 item scale deleted for low factor loadings or for low reliability levels were “He/she [a wise person] would think that aesthetics aren’t important in our everyday world,” “He/she [a wise person] would agree that art is making something out of nothing and selling it,” and “He/she [a wise person] would agree that music is a great mental distraction.” After deleting the three items, another factor analysis was done (see Table 3). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity were run to make certain that factor analysis was appropriate. The KMO Measure of Sample Adequacy for the Aesthetic Value Scale was .72 which exceeds .7 and suggests that the data is likely to factor well (George & Mallery, 2001). A Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was run to assess multivariate normality and the results ( $p < .001$ ) indicated normality, linear relationships among items, and appropriate sample size. While the Aesthetic Value Scale was meant to measure a univariate construct, the exploratory factor analysis found two factors. The first factor reflects negatively valenced items (e.g., “A wise person doesn’t find any real value in art or music” and “He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth”). The second factor reflects the positively valenced items (e.g., “He/she would agree that music gives insight into his/her past or current problems” and “He/she would agree that art begins in the heart not in the mind”). A secondary reliability analysis was run to see if the AVS was perceived of as a univariate construct, by recoding negatively valence items, and the

Cronbach's alpha decreased substantially (.33). In this study, the alpha reliability for the new Aesthetic subscale was .66. While this reliability is relatively low, the Aesthetic Value Scale will be used in subsequent analysis because it is the only scale assessing the role of artistic/creativity on perceptions of wisdom.

Table 3

Factor Loadings for the Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Aesthetic Value Scale

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2
A wise person doesn't find any real value in art or music	.81	
He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth	.78	
He/she would agree that art and music are just forms of entertainment	.64	
He/she would agree that art and music are inherently different than intelligence	.49	
He/she would agree that art changes my perceptions of reality		.69
He/she would agree that music gives insight into his/her past or current problems		.65
He/she would agree that art and music make him/her feel more positive toward others		.59
He she would agree that art is born of observation and investigation of nature		.56
He/she would agree that art begins in the heart not in the mind		.48

Other-Directedness Factor of Self-Monitoring Scale (Concern for Others)

The next scale used in this section is a subscale of the Self-Monitoring Scale (Briggs, Cheek, & Buss, 1980) focusing on the other-directedness factor of self-monitoring, which was used to assess perceptions of a wise person's desire to please

others by masking his/her own true feelings. The other-directedness factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale consists of 11 items using either a true-false dichotomy or a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and is concerned with behaviors whose intent is to please others by masking the respondent's own true feelings. The overall reliability of the other-directedness subscale of the Self-Monitoring Scale ranged from .70 to .72 when used with two different samples. In this study, the alpha reliability for the other-directedness factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale which included items modified to assess perceptions of wisdom (e.g., "Even if a wise person is not enjoying himself/herself, he/she would often pretend to be having a good time" and "A wise person may deceive people by being friendly when he/she really dislikes them") was .63. This Cronbach's alpha result reflects dropping the 3 items from the 11-item subscale of other-directedness for low reliability levels including "At parties and social gatherings, he/she [a wise person] would not attempt to do or say things that others will like," "He/she [a wise person] would agree that his/her behavior is usually an expression of his/her true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs," and "A wise person feels a bit awkward in company and does not show up as well as he/she should."

#### Life Satisfaction Index – Z (Satisfaction with Life)

The next scale used in this section, the Life Satisfaction Index-Z (Wood, Wylie, & Sheafor, 1969), is a shortened form of the Life Satisfaction Index-A (Neugarten, Havighurst, & Tobin, 1961). The Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSI-Z) consists of 13 items using a 3-point Likert scale using agree, disagree, or unsure format and examines an individual's satisfaction level with his or her own life choices and experiences. The LSI-Z was modified using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly

disagree to assess perceptions of a wise person's satisfaction level with his/her life choices and experiences and included items such as "A wise person would think that he/she was just as happy as when he/she was younger" and "When he/she look backs on what's happened to him/her, a wise person feels cheated." The overall reliability of the LSI-Z was .79. In this study, the alpha reliability for Life Satisfaction Index-Z was .54. This Cronbach's alpha reliability level reflects dropping 6 items from the 13-item LSI-Z for low alpha reliability levels including "As he/she [a wise person] grows older, things seem better than he/she thought they would be," "He/she [a wise person] would have gotten more of the breaks in life than most people," "A wise person would believe that this is the dreariest time of his/her life," "A wise person would believe that most of the things people do are boring or monotonous," "Compared to other people, a wise person does not get down in the dumps too often," and "He/she would agree that in spite of what people say, the conditions of the average man is getting worse, not better." While the reliability was relatively low even after several items were deleted, it was necessary to measure life satisfaction because of its inclusion in other composite wisdom instruments. The low reliability, however, will adversely affect the possibility of the Life Satisfaction Index-Z being related to other scales and/or constructs being measured.

#### Relational Communication Scale (Interpersonal Communication)

The next scale in this section was the Relational Communication Scale (Burgoon & Hale, 1987), which normally consists of 26 items using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measuring 8 themes common to interpersonal communication: immediacy/affection, similarity/depth, receptivity/trust, composure, formality, dominance, equality, and task orientation. For this study, the 41 items used in

the third study of Burgoon and Hale's (1987) article on the construction of the Relational Communication Scale (RCS) which included all 8 themes was used since the RCS was not developed specifically to assess perceptions of wisdom-related relational communication. The Relational Communication Scale was modified to a 5-point Likert scale and the items altered to assess perceptions of a wise person's use of the immediacy/affection (e.g., "He/she was intensely involved in conversations with other people"), similarity/depth (e.g., "A wise person would make others feel he/she was similar to them"), receptivity/trust (e.g., "He/she is sincere with others"), composure (e.g., "He/she feels very tense when talking to others"), formality (e.g., "He/she wants conversations to be casual"), dominance (e.g., "He/she would attempt to persuade others"), equality (e.g., "He/she considers other people his/her equal"), and task orientation themes (e.g., "He/she is more interested in social conversation than the task at hand"). The alpha reliabilities for the 8 themes in Burgoon and Hale's (1987) article were immediacy/affection .81, similarity/depth .77, receptivity/trust .76, composure .80, formality .74, dominance .66, equality .52, and task orientation .42, respectively. In this study, the alpha reliabilities of the respective themes were immediacy/affection .69, similarity/depth .05, receptivity/trust .70, composure .70, formality .27, dominance .69, equality .60, and task orientation .35. The themes of similarity/depth, formality, and task orientation were all excluded from further analysis for low reliability levels. The RCS, while not constructed to measure wisdom *per se*, was used because it uses several themes common to many communicative interactions. In addition, previous research on aging and communication suggests that communication is vital in the formation of perceptions about wisdom. While it is difficult to ascertain with certainty the reasons for the poor



reliability of these subscales, a few possible issues need to be considered. The similarity/depth subscale was problematic because it measures two constructs: active listening and communication as well the similarity between the communicator and interlocutor (for example, “He/she tries to move the conversation to a deeper level.” and “A wise person would make others feel he/she was similar to them.”) The poor reliability levels of formality and task orientation subscales might actually be indicative of divergent ideas of wisdom: aloof and reserved or collegial and friendly; task orientation or social orientation. The overall reliability for the remaining 5 themes (i.e., immediacy/affection, receptivity/trust, composure, dominance, and equality) was .80.

#### Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (Cognitive, Reflective, and Affective Indicators)

The final scale used in the third part of this questionnaire is the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) by Ardel (2003) which consists of 39 items using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree measuring three indicators of wisdom: cognitive, reflective, and affective domains. The 3D-WS uses the cognitive, reflective, and affective subscales as the essential indicators of wisdom. The 3D-WS was modified to assess perceptions of a wise person’s use of the cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions of wisdom. The cognitive subscale assesses participants’ ability to understand life (e.g., “A wise person recognizes that ignorance is bliss.”) The reflective subscale measures perspective taking (e.g., “A wise person tries to look at all sides of a problem.”) The affective subscale measures emotional maturity and the role of individuals in comparison to others (“A wise person makes too much out of the feelings and sensitivities of animals.”) The alpha reliability of the cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions articulated in the original study of the 3D-WS ranged

from .78 to .85, .75 to .71, and .74 to .72, respectively, for the same sample across a ten month period. In the current study, the overall reliability for the 3D-WS was a .85. The alpha reliability for the cognitive dimension of the 3D-WS was .69. The reliability for the reflective dimension of the 3D-WS was .72. The reliability for the affective dimension of the 3D-WS was .66. The Cronbach's alpha for the affective dimension reflects dropping 3 items from the 12 items measuring this dimension including "A wise person would be annoyed by unhappy people who just feel sorry for themselves," He/she [a wise person] would agree that there are some people he/she would never like," and "If he/she [a wise person] sees a person in need, he/she would try to help them in one way or another."

#### Transcendent Wisdom Scale (Qualitative Statement of Wisdom)

The final part of the instrument consists of additional two items. The first is the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (Wink & Helson, 1997). The Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) is an open-ended question requiring the participant to give an example of wisdom that they have acquired. The responses were coded on a scale from 5 being transcendent and insightful to 1 being self-absorbed (see Table 4). To receive a 5 rating, the statement needed to transcend personal insights while integrating an understanding of the complexities of wisdom and/or philosophical/spiritual depth. To receive a 4 rating, the response had to include some of the elements of a 5 but in a less coherent manner. A 3 rating discussed a specific aspect of wisdom like patience, restraint, forgiveness usually in a personal context. A 2 rating indicated a superficial understanding of wisdom often couched in clichés. A 1 rating was reserved for comments that were wholly self-centered or tangential (this rating scale was articulated by Wink & Helson, 1997). Of the 548 responses rated for wisdom, 2% received a score of 5, 10% received a score of 4, 49%

received a score of 3, 16% received a score of 2, and 10% received a score of 1. Seventy-one (13%) participants did not respond to the question.

Table 4

Specific Examples of Ratings Using Transcendent Wisdom Scale

Level	Example	No.
1	I can't think of anything.	38
1	I found out that if you don't cook squirrels right then they might make you go to the emergency room. Always make sure you blacken the meat.	26
1	You can hold a snuff can to a bear's ass for a little while.	31
2.	In order to succeed in work, school, life.... You must do what you have to do, whether you like it or not, whether you feel like it or not.	1
2	I have learned a lot of information about business and how to run and manage them. I have never been shown this particular skill but have acquired it due to my father.	32
3	Listening is one of the greatest ways to learn from others. at times, I will sit back and listen without uttering a word and take in everything around me. It is very educational and you can learn a lot.	300
3	Happiness can't be bought. When it's late at night and you're all alone with your thoughts, money doesn't mean much.	40
4	I learned and understand that throughout life you will get dealt a bad hand, but you can get through it with work, no matter how bad it is. There is also something good that comes out of it.	3
5	No one is responsible for my happiness. I am responsible for my happiness. The one I love, other people, things, events can add to my happiness, bring me greater enrichment, pleasure to my life- but ultimately I am responsible.	162

To check for intercoder reliability, the researcher and a second coder with an advanced degree in communication spent several hours identifying the five levels of wisdom articulated in the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (Wink & Helson, 1997). Each completed answer was coded on separate sheets by the two coders. One hundred and ten (23.1%) questionnaires with completed answers to the TWR were randomly selected and rankings between coders compared. Two indices of intercoder reliability were used: percentage of coder agreement and Cohen's Kappa. The average agreement between the two coders was 91% with most of the disagreement (7%) arising from differences between responses coded as 2 or 1. Since percentage of agreement is too liberal an analysis for some statisticians, another index of intercoder reliability, Cohen's Kappa, was run since it accounts for possibility of the agreement occurring by chance. The Cohen's Kappa was .87 ( $\chi^2(16, n = 110) = 343.95, p < .001$ ). Lombard, Snyder-Duch, and Bracken (2002) argue that a Cohen's Kappa of .80 or greater is acceptable in most situations. Any discrepancies between the rankings assigned by the coders on the remaining items were discussed until a mutual agreement was reached. The final item of the questionnaire is a repeated item from the beginning of the questionnaire assessing the participants' perception of his/her own wisdom.

## CHAPTER 8

### RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses of the data from the current study. The results of the statistical procedures will be presented in the following manner. First, the statistical tests assessing the role of participant characteristics on their perceptions of wise individual characteristics and behaviors will be examined. Secondly, the relationship between participant self-reported wisdom and perceptions of wise individual characteristics and behaviors will be tested. Finally, the relationships among the various wisdom instruments used will be discussed. A summary table of the results of the statistical analyses used to test the hypotheses and research questions proposed in this study is presented at the end of this chapter (see Table 9).

#### Role of Perceiver Characteristics on Wisdom

##### Age

The first hypothesis contends that there should be a positive relationship between age and self-reported wisdom. This hypothesis was supported. A bivariate regression analysis was conducted in which participant age was regressed on self-reported levels of wisdom. Age was positively associated with self-reported wisdom at a statistically significant level ( $\beta = .31, t = 7.71, p < .001$ ). Age accounted for approximately 10% of the variance associated with participant self-reported of wisdom. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that age had a medium effect on self-reported wisdom.

The second hypothesis asserts that there should be a negative relationship between age and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle-aged (30-59), and older (60+) individuals. This hypothesis was supported. A Pearson product-moment correlation revealed that age was negatively associated with perceptions of wisdom

attributed to all three age groups (young, middle-aged, and older). The negative correlations between age and perceived wisdom in young adults ( $r = -.08, p = .04$ ), middle-aged adults ( $r = -.31, p < .001$ ), older adults ( $r = -.16, p < .001$ ) were all at a statistically significant level.

The third hypothesis consists of three sub-hypotheses that assessed the relationship between age and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle (30-59), and older (60+) individuals as measured by same-age peers. Even though the sample was divided into the three age groups, age was still a continuous variable. A 33-year-old middle-aged adult would probably think quite differently about the wisdom levels of his same-age peers than would a 55-year-old, even though they are both considered to be middle-aged. Hypothesis 3a asserts that there should be a positive relationship between age and perceptions of wisdom attributed to young (18-29) adults when evaluated by same-age peers. This hypothesis was supported. A bivariate regression analysis was conducted in which participant age (18-29 year-olds) was regressed on the perceptions of wisdom associated with young adults. Increasing age within the young adult group was positively associated with perceptions of wisdom in young adults at a statistically significant level ( $\beta = .24, t = 3.86, p < .001$ ). Age accounted for approximately 5% of the variance associated with perceptions of wisdom in young adults. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that age had a small effect on perceived wisdom levels of young adults by young adults. Hypothesis 3b asserts that there should be a positive relationship between age and perceptions of wisdom attributed to middle-aged (30-59) adults when evaluated by middle-aged peers. This hypothesis was supported. A bivariate regression analysis was conducted in which participant age (30-59 year-olds) was regressed on the perceptions of wisdom associated with middle-aged

adults. Increasing age within the middle-aged adult group was positively associated with perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults at a statistically significant level ( $\beta = .58, t = 7.86, p < .001$ ). Age accounted for approximately 29% of the variance associated with perceptions of wisdom in the middle-aged age group. This  $R^2$  level indicates that age had a large effect on the perceived wisdom levels of middle-aged adults by same-age peers (Cohen, 1988). Hypothesis 3c asserts that there should be a positive relationship between age and perceptions of wisdom attributed to older (60+) adults when evaluated by same-age peers. This hypothesis was supported. A bivariate regression analysis was conducted in which participant age (60+ year-olds) was regressed on the perceptions of wisdom associated with older adults. Increasing age within the older adult group was positively associated with perceptions of wisdom in older adults at a statistically significant level ( $\beta = .40, t = 4.86, p < .001$ ). Age accounted for approximately 15% of the variance associated with perceptions of wisdom in the older adult age group. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that age had a medium effect on the perceived wisdom levels of older adults by their same-age peers.

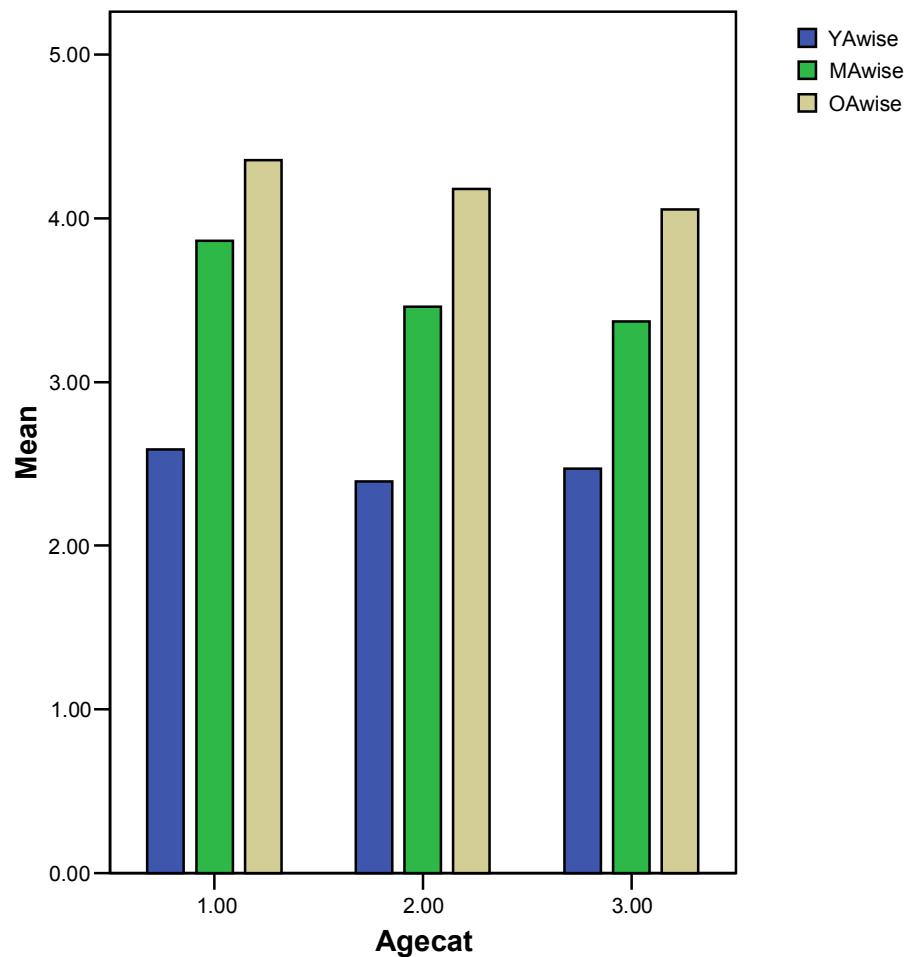
Hypothesis 4 asserts that the three age cohorts (young, middle-aged, and older) will have statistically different levels of age-specific self-perceived wisdom increasing from young to older adult. This hypothesis was supported. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of group membership (young, middle-aged, and older) on perceptions of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults revealed a significant relationship ( $F(2, 544) = 31.63, p < .001$ ). A Tukey HSD (Honestly Significant Differences) post hoc multiple comparisons test was run to ascertain where the significant differences were between young, middle-aged, and older adults' perceptions of self

wisdom. The Tukey HSD test found a significant difference between young adults' ( $M = 3.32$ ) and middle-aged adults' ( $M = 3.52$ ) self-perceived levels of wisdom by age cohort ( $p = .006$ ). There was also a significant difference between young adults' and older adults' ( $M = 3.32$ ;  $M = 3.90$ ;  $p < .001$ ) and between middle-aged adults' and older adults' ( $M = 3.52$ ;  $M = 3.90$ ;  $p < .001$ ) self-perceived level of wisdom by age cohort.

Research Question 1 asks if there were significant differences between group membership in the three age groups (young, middle-aged, and older) and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle (30-59), and older (60 +) individuals. This research question found statistical support. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of group membership (young, middle-aged, and old) on the perception of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults revealed a significant relationship for all three ( $F(2, 544) = 3.66, p = .03$ ;  $F(2, 544) = 33.97, p < .001$ ;  $F(2, 544) = 7.34, p = .001$ ). A Tukey HSD post hoc multiple comparisons test was run to ascertain where the significant differences between age group membership and perceived wisdom in different age groups were. The Tukey HSD post hoc test found a significant difference between young adults' ( $M = 2.59$ ) and middle-aged adults' ( $M = 2.39$ ) perceptions of wisdom in young adults ( $p = .02$ ). There was no significant difference between young adults' and older adults' ( $M = 2.59$ ;  $M = 2.47$ ;  $p = .32$ ) perceptions of wisdom in young adults or between middle-aged adults' and older adults' ( $M = 2.39$ ;  $M = 2.47$ ;  $p = .62$ ) perceptions of wisdom in young adults. The Tukey HSD test found a significant difference between young adults' ( $M = 3.86$ ) and middle-aged adults' ( $M = 3.46, p < .001$ ) perceptions and young adults' ( $M = 3.86$ ) and older adults' ( $M = 3.37, p < .001$ , perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults. There was no significant difference between middle-aged adults' and



older adults' ( $M = 3.46$ ;  $M = 3.37$ ;  $p = .45$ ) perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults. The Tukey HSD test found a significant difference between young adults' ( $M = 4.36$ ) and middle-aged adults' ( $M = 4.18$ ) perceptions of wisdom in older adults ( $p = .05$ ). In addition, there was a significant difference between young adults' ( $M = 4.36$ ) and older adults' ( $M = 4.05$ ) perceptions of wisdom in older adults ( $p = .001$ ) (see Figure 1).



(Agecat: 1 = young adults, 2 = middle-aged adults, 3 = older adults)

Figure 1. Differences between age cohort perceptions of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults

Research Question 7 asks if there is a relationship between age and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR). This research question was supported. A

Spearman rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to measure the relationship between participant age and Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) rankings. The Spearman rank correlation between age and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale was .16 ( $p = .001$ ).

According to Cohen (1988), an  $r_s$  of .16 indicates that age had a small effect on TWR scores (Cohen, 1988).

Research Question 8 asks if there is a relationship between age groups (young, middle-aged and older adults) and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR). This research question was supported. A Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA was used to measure the relationship between age group membership on Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) rankings. There was a significant difference using a Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA between age cohorts on the TWR ( $\chi^2 (2, N = 477) = 21.30, p < .001$ ).

Research Question 12 asks if there is a relationship between age and the various wisdom scales used in the current instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), Other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This research question was partially supported. A regression analysis was conducted in which participant age was regressed on the respective wisdom scales cited above. Age was only associated with the other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale and the Relational Communication Scale (RCS) ( $\beta = -4.73, t = -2.39, p = .02$ ;  $\beta = -7.12, t = -2.15, p = .03$ ) at statistically significant levels (see APPENDIX E for the full statistical analysis).

## Biological Sex

Hypothesis 5 asserts that males will have higher levels of self-reported wisdom than will females. This hypothesis was supported. To control for the role of age, a one-way ANCOVA was run. Even after controlling for age, male participants ( $M = 3.61$ ) reported having a significantly higher levels of wisdom than did their female counterparts ( $M = 3.42$ ) ( $F(1, 542) = 12.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02$ ). According to Cohen (1988), the  $\eta^2$  level indicates that sex had a small effect on self-reported wisdom controlling for age.

Research Question 2 asks if there is a relationship between biological sex and perceptions of age-related (young, middle-aged, older) levels of wisdom. This research question was not supported. Females rated all three age groups slightly (young, middle-aged, older) higher ( $M = 2.53, M = 3.67, M = 4.29$ ) than did males ( $M = 2.47, t = .92, p = .36; M = 3.59, t = 1.34, p = .19; M = 4.18, t = 1.61, p = .11$ ) but none at a statistically significant level.

Hypothesis 6 contends that males will score higher on “masculine” and task measures of wisdom. The scales in this study hypothesized to be “masculine” or task-oriented are the Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), the cognitive subscale of the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS), and the dominance subscale of Relational Communication Scale (RCS). This hypothesis was partially supported. Males scored higher on the cognitive subscale of the 3D-WS and the dominance subscale of the RCS ( $M = 2.61, M = 3.05$ ) than did female respondents ( $M = 2.47, t = 3.87, p < .001; M = 2.79, t = 4.32, p < .001$ , respectively). There was no significant difference on the MSRO between males and females ( $M = 3.14; M = 3.13; t = .49, p = .62$ ).

Hypothesis 7 contends that females will score higher on “feminine” and relational measures of wisdom. The scales in this study hypothesized to be “feminine” or relational are the Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), the affective subscale of the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS), the other-directedness factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale (OD), and the equality, trust and immediacy subscales of Relational Communication Scale (RCS). This hypothesis was partially supported. Females scored higher on the equality, trust, and immediacy subscales of the (RCS) compared to male respondents. Two relational scales were statistically significant but in the opposite direction than hypothesized. Males scored higher on the OD factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale and the affective subscale of the 3D-WS as opposed to females. There was no significant difference on the FSRO between females and males (see Table 5).

Table 5

The Role of Biological Sex on Perceptions of Wisdom in “Relational” Scales

	Female		Male		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
FSRO	3.23	.37	3.20	.31	0.96	.17
OD factor	2.47	.52	2.67	.52	-4.35	.000
Affective subscale	2.39	.50	2.53	.46	-3.58	.000
Immediacy subscale	3.86	.50	3.69	.48	4.19	.000
Trust subscale	3.93	.51	3.83	.49	2.21	.02
Equality subscale	3.74	.68	3.62	.66	2.18	.02

Research Question 9 asks if there is a difference between sex and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale. This research question was supported. This hypothesis was tested using a Mann-Whitney test. Males had a mean rank of 220.54 while females had mean rank of 251.46 which was statistically significant ( $U = 24191.50, p .01$ ).

Research Question 13 asks if there is any difference between biological sex and wisdom instruments (not classified as task, masculine, feminine, or relational). The “gender neutral” scales are the Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), both the reflective subscale and composite Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS), the Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), and both the composure subscale and composite Relational Communication Scale (RCS). This research question was partially supported. Females scored higher on the composure subscale of the RCS compared to male respondents. Males scored higher on both the composite 3D-WS and reflective subscale of the 3D-WS compared to the female respondents. There was no significant difference on the remaining “gender neutral” wisdom scales: LSIZ, PWS, AVS, and the composite RCS between females and males (see Table 6).

### Education

Research Question 3 asks if the participants’ education affects self-reported levels of wisdom. This research question was supported. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of education (some, high school, high school graduate, some college, college graduate, graduate school, terminal degree) on self-reported wisdom found a significant relationship ( $F(5, 540) = 7.26, p < .001$ ). A Tukey (Honestly Significant Differences) HSD post hoc multiple comparisons test was run to ascertain where the significant differences between educational level and self-reported wisdom were. The Tukey HSD

test found a significant difference between some high school ( $M = 3.95$ ) and some college ( $M = 3.35$ ) education on self-reported wisdom ( $p = .004$ ). There was also a significant difference between some college ( $M = 3.35$ ) and college graduate ( $M = 3.61$ ) education on self-reported wisdom ( $p = .006$ ). In addition there was a significant difference between some college ( $M = 3.35$ ) and graduate school ( $M = 3.80$ ) education on self-reported wisdom ( $p = .001$ ).

Table 6

The Role of Biological Sex on Perceptions of Wisdom in “Gender Neutral” Scales

	Female		Male		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
PWS	4.10	.46	4.06	.50	1.02	.28
AVS	3.42	.48	3.36	.43	1.60	.110
LSIZ	3.48	.47	3.41	.46	1.72	.09
RCS	3.63	.36	3.58	.36	1.71	.09
3D-WS	2.37	.40	2.50	.37	-4.07	.000
Reflective subscale	2.23	.44	2.34	.44	-2.95	.003

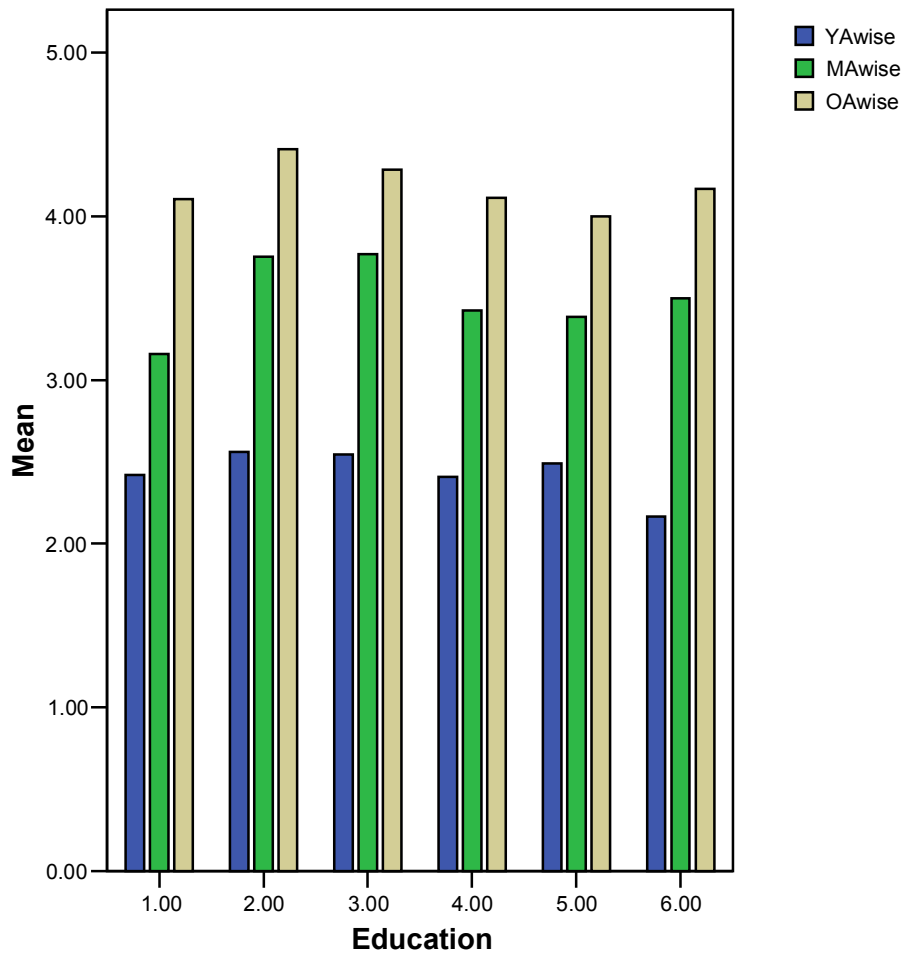
Research Question 4 asks if there are significant differences between educational levels and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle (30-59), and older (60+) individuals. This research question was partially supported. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of educational level on the perception of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults revealed a significant relationship for only middle-aged and older adults ( $F(5, 540) = 8.95, p < .001$ ;  $F(5, 540) = 2.78, p = .02$ ). A Tukey HSD

post hoc multiple comparisons test was run to ascertain differences between education and self-perceived wisdom. There was a significant difference between some high school ( $M = 3.16$ ) and high school graduates and participants with some college ( $M = 3.75$ ,  $p = .004$ ;  $M = 3.77$ ,  $p = .001$ ) education on perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults. There was a significant difference between high school graduate ( $M = 3.75$ ) and college graduate ( $M = 3.43$ ;  $p = .004$ ) and high school graduate ( $M = 3.75$ ) and graduate school ( $M = 3.39$ ) education on perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults ( $p = .02$ ). There was also a significant difference on perceptions of wisdom in middle-aged adults between participants with some college ( $M = 3.77$ ) and college graduates ( $M = 3.42$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and participants with some college ( $M = 3.77$ ) and graduate school ( $M = 3.39$ ;  $p = .002$ ) education adults. There was also a significant difference between high school graduate ( $M = 4.40$ ) and graduate school ( $M = 3.39$ ) education on perceptions of wisdom in older adults ( $p = .03$ ). In addition, there was a difference approaching significance between high school graduate ( $M = 4.40$ ) and college graduate ( $M = 3.39$ ) education on perceptions of wisdom in older adults ( $p = .06$ ) (see Figure 2).

Research Question 10 asked if there are significant differences between participant educational levels and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR). This research question was supported. A Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA was used to measure the affect of participant education on (TWR) rankings. There was a significant difference between educational level and scores on the TWR ( $\chi^2 (5, N = 477) = 13.38$ ,  $p = .02$ ).

Research Question 14 asked if educational levels are correlated with scores on the various wisdom scales being used: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale

(AVS), Other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This research question was partially supported. A Spearman rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) found that educational level was only correlated with the 3D-WS ( $r_s = -.08, p = .05$ ) (see APPENDIX F for the full statistical analysis).



(Education: 1 = some high school, 2 = high school graduate, 3 = some college, 4 = college graduate, 5 = graduate school, 6 = terminal degree)

Figure 2. Differences between educational levels and perceptions of wisdom associated with young, middle-aged, and older adults.



## Income

Research Question 5 asks if the participant's income affects self-reported wisdom. This research question was not supported. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of income (\$0 -\$20,000, \$20,000-\$40,000, \$40,000-\$60,000, \$60,000-\$80,000, \$80,000-\$100,000, \$100,000+) on self-reported levels of wisdom did not find a significant relationship ( $F(5, 524) = 1.01, p = .41$ ).

Research Question 6 asks if there are significant differences between participant income and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle (30-59), and older (60 +) individuals. This research question was not supported. A one-way ANOVA measuring the effect of income level on the perception of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults did not reveal a significant relationship for young, middle-aged, or older adults ( $F(5, 523) = 0.27, p = .93$ ;  $F(5, 523) = 0.57, p = .72$ ;  $F(5, 524) = 1.03, p = .39$ ).

Research Question 11 asks if there are significant differences between participant self-reported family income and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR). This research question was supported. A Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA was used to measure the relationship between participant income and Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) rankings. There was a significant difference using a Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA between age cohorts on the TWR ( $\chi^2 (5, N = 477) = 13.38, p = .02$ ).

Research Question 15 asked if participant income is correlated to scores on the various wisdom scales used in the current study: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), Other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and

Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This research question was not supported. A Spearman rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to measure the affect of self-reported income on the various wisdom scales used. Participant self-reported income was not correlated with any of the wisdom scales or corresponding subscales (see Appendix G for the full statistical analysis).

#### Relationships among Sex, Education, Income, and Perceived Wisdom

Research Question 16 asked if there was a significant difference between sex, education, and income as a predictor of perceived wisdom on the various wisdom scales used in the current study: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This research question was supported. A MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate effect for only biological sex ( $F(8, 509) = 3.24, p = .001$ , Wilks'  $\Lambda = .95$ , power = .97). A Bartlett's test of sphericity ( $\chi^2(35) = 1161.40, p < .001$ ) for this MANOVA was significant indicating normality, linear relationships among items, and appropriate sample size. Biological sex was statistically significant for the Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS) ( $F(1, 547) = 6.29, p = .01$ ), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale ( $F(1, 547) = 11.15, p = .001$ ), Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ) ( $F(1, 547) = 4.11, p = .04$ ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS) ( $F(1, 547) = 4.27, p = .04$ ), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) ( $F(1, 547) = 16.94, p < .001$ ). Biological sex also accounted for significant differences on the 5 RCS subscales: dominance ( $F(1, 547) = 10.40, p = .001$ ), immediacy ( $F(1, 547) = 15.33, p < .001$ ), trust ( $F(1, 547) = 7.26, p <$

.01), equality ( $F(1, 547) = 4.02, p = .05$ ), and composure ( $F(1, 547) = 5.34, p = .02$ ).

Biological sex also accounted for significant differences on the 3D-WS 3 subscales cognitive ( $F(1, 547) = 13.70, p < .001$ ), reflective ( $F(1, 547) = 10.40, p = .001$ ), and affective ( $F(1, 547) = 13.22, p < .001$ ). The effect size of biological sex on the various wisdom scales used in the current study was  $\eta^2 = .05$ . According to Cohen (1988), this  $\eta^2$  levels indicate that sex had a small effect on the wisdom scales tested (see Table 7).

Table 7

Multivariate Analysis of Variance of Biological Sex, Education, and Income on Wisdom Scales

Multivariate Tests						
Independent Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$	power	Wilks' $\Lambda$
Biological Sex	8/509	3.24	.001	.05	.97	.95
Education	8/509	1.58	.13	.02	.70	.98
Income	8/509	0.67	.72	.01	.31	.99

Biological Sex					
Dependent Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$	power
MSRO	1	0.003	.96	.000	.05
FSRO	1	0.17	.68	.000	.07
PWS	1	0.27	.60	.001	.08
AVS	1	6.29	.01	.01	.70
OD factor	1	11.15	.001	.02	.92
LSIZ	1	4.11	.04	.01	.53
RCS	1	4.27	.04	.01	.54
3D-WS	1	16.94	.000	.03	.98

Table 7 (continued)

## Multivariate Analysis of Variance of Biological Sex, Education, and Income on Wisdom Scales

Education					
Dependent Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$	power
MSRO	1	2.71	.10	.01	.38
FSRO	1	0.005	.95	.000	.05
PWS	1	0.57	.45	.001	.12
AVS	1	2.03	.15	.004	.30
OD factor	1	2.16	.14	.004	.31
LSIZ	1	1.47	.23	.003	.23
RCS	1	0.20	.66	.00	.07
3D-WS	1	3.05	.08	.01	.41

Income					
Dependent Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$	power
MSRO	1	0.14	.71	.000	.07
FSRO	1	0.005	.95	.000	.05
PWS	1	0.57	.45	.001	.12
AVS	1	0.33	.56	.001	.09
OD factor	1	1.46	.23	.003	.23
LSIZ	1	1.63	.20	.003	.25
RCS	1	1.11	.29	.002	.18
3D-WS	1	0.004	.95	.000	.05

## Role of Self-Reported Wisdom on Perceptions of Wisdom in Others

Hypothesis 8 asserts that there should be a positive relationship between self-reported wisdom and perceptions of wisdom associated with young (18-29), middle (30-59), and older (60+) individuals. This hypothesis was partially supported. A regression analysis was conducted in which participant self-reported wisdom was regressed on the respective perceptions of wisdom associated with young, middle, and older adults. Self-reported wisdom was positively associated with perceptions of wisdom in young adults ( $\beta = 0.13$ ,  $t = 2.72$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and older adults ( $\beta = 0.14$ ,  $t = 3.23$ ,  $p = .001$ ) at a statistically

significant level. While there was a positive relationship between participant self-assessed wisdom and perceptions of wisdom associated with middle-aged adults ( $\beta = .01$ ,  $t = 0.16$ ,  $p = .88$ ), it was not at a statistically significant level. Self-reported wisdom accounted for approximately 5% of the variance associated with perceptions of wisdom in the three age groups. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that self-reported wisdom had a small effect on perceptions of wisdom in young, middle-aged, and older adults. The variance-inflation factors for all variables were significantly less than the standard cutoff of 4.0 indicating no multicollinearity-related issues.

Hypothesis 9 asserts that there should be a positive correlation between self-reported wisdom and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR). This hypothesis was not supported. A Spearman rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to measure the relationship of self-reported wisdom on the scores of the TWR. There was no relationship between self-reported wisdom and the Transcendent Wisdom Scale ( $r_s = .01$ ,  $p = .42$ ).

Hypothesis 10 asserts that there should be a positive relationship between self-reported wisdom and the various wisdom scales used in the instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This hypothesis was partially supported. A regression analysis was conducted in which participant self-reported wisdom was regressed on the respective wisdom scales (MSRO, FSRO, PWS, AVS, OD, LSIZ, RCS, and 3D-WS). Self-reported wisdom was positively associated with only the MSRO and FSRO at statistically significant levels ( $\beta = 0.20$ ,  $t = 2.20$ ,  $p = .02$ ;  $\beta = 0.20$ ,  $t$

= 2.05,  $p = .02$ , respectively). Self-reported wisdom was positively associated with the OD factor, RCS, and 3D-WS ( $\beta = 0.05$ ,  $t = 0.73$ ,  $p = .24$ ;  $\beta = 0.40$ ,  $t = 0.34$ ,  $p = .37$ ;  $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $t = 0.32$ ,  $p = .38$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. Self-reported wisdom was negatively associated with the PWS, AVS, and LSIZ ( $\beta = -0.01$ ,  $t = -0.13$ ,  $p = .45$ ;  $\beta = -0.06$ ,  $t = -0.79$ ,  $p = .22$ ;  $\beta = -0.01$ ,  $t = -0.03$ ,  $p = .49$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. Since both RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, the composite scales were removed and the subscales entered into the model. The Relational Communication Scale consists of 5 subscales (3 other subscales were removed for low alpha reliability levels), the composite Relational Communication Scale was removed and the subscales put into model to assess the role of self-reported wisdom on all the wisdom scales and the RCS subscales (dominance, equality, trust, composure, and immediacy). Self-reported wisdom was not related to any RCS subscale at a statistically significant level. The 3D-WS consists of 3 subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective). The composite 3D-WS was removed and the subscales put into the model to assess the role of age on all the wisdom scales and the 3D-WS subscales. Self-reported wisdom was not related to any 3D-WS subscale. Self-reported wisdom accounted for approximately 3% of the variance associated with these wisdom scales. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that self-reported wisdom had a small effect on these measures of wisdom.

#### Relationships among Wisdom Scales

Hypothesis 11 contends that the TWR will be positively correlated with the other wisdom scales used in the current instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life

Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) controlling for age. This hypothesis was partially supported. This hypothesis was tested using a partial correlation matrix. There was a positive correlation between TWR and PWS ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ), AVS ( $r = .12, p < .01$ ), and RCS ( $r = .08, p = .05$ ) at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R$  level indicates that there was a small effect size between the Transcendent Wisdom Scale and the positively correlated wisdom scales: PWS, AVS, and RCS (see APPENDIX H for the full statistical analysis).

Hypothesis 12 asserts that the various wisdom scales used in the current instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) will be positively correlated controlling for age. This hypothesis was partially supported. This hypothesis was tested using a partial correlation matrix. There was a positive correlation between MSRO and FSRO, AVS, OD factor, LSIZ, RCS, and 3D-WS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), these  $R$  levels indicate a small effect size between the scales except for MSRO-FSRO correlation which has a moderate effect size. There was a positive correlation between FMSO and PWS, LSIZ, and RCS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), these  $R$  levels indicate a moderate effect size between the scales except for FSRO-LSIZ correlation which has a small effect size. There was a positive correlation between PWS and AVS, LSIZ, and RCS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), these  $R$  levels

indicate a moderate effect size between the scales. There was a positive correlation between AVS and LSIZ and RCS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), these *R* levels indicate a moderate effect size between the scales. There was a positive correlation between OD factor and 3D-WS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), this *R* level indicates a large effect size between the scales. There was a positive correlation between LSIZ and RCS at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), this *R* level indicates a large effect size between the scales (see Table 8).

Table 8

A Partial Correlation Matrix of Wisdom Scales Controlling for Age

	MSRO	FSRO	PWS	AVS	OD	LSIZ	RCS	3D-WS
MSRO	1.00 -	.26 .000	.04 .006	.11 .006	.21 .000	.17 .000	.12 .000	.12 .002
FSRO		1.00 -	.33 .000	.18 .000	-.02 .31	.16 .000	.27 .000	-.10 .009
PWS			1.00 -	.35 .000	-.31 .000	.30 .000	.47 .000	-.51 .000
AVS				1.00 -	-.19 .000	.23 .000	.34 .000	-.39 .000
OD					1.00 -	-.20 .000	-.25 .000	.54 .000
LSIZ						1.00 -	.51 .000	-.30 .000
RCS							1.00 -	-.53 .000
3D-WS								1.00 -

*N* = 548



Since both the RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, a post hoc partial correlation matrix controlling for age was run to see if the subscales were significantly different than either combined scale. The RCS subscales (dominance, immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were significantly different than the correlation to the composite RCS scores overall. There was a positive correlation between the RCS and MSRO ( $r = .11, p < .01$ ) at a statistically significant level. The composure subscale ( $r = .07, p = .04$ ) and the dominance subscale ( $r = .07, p = .04$ ) were positively correlated with MSRO at a statistically significant level. The RCS subscales of trust ( $r = .06, p = .07$ ) and immediacy ( $r = .01, p = .38$ ) were positively correlated with MSRO, but not at a statistically significant level. The equality subscale ( $r = -.08, p = .04$ ) was negatively correlated with MSRO at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between the RCS and FSRO ( $r = .27, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. Four of the RCS subscales (immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were also positively correlated with FSRO at a statistically significant level ( $r = .21, p < .001$ ;  $r = .33, p < .001$ ;  $r = .26, p < .001$ ;  $r = .15, p < .001$ , respectively). The dominance subscale ( $r = -.06, p = .09$ ) was negatively correlated with FSRO, but not at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between the RCS and PWS ( $r = .47, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. Four of the RCS subscales (immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were also positively correlated with PWS at a statistically significant level ( $r = .37, p < .001$ ;  $r = .50, p < .001$ ;  $r = .41, p < .001$ ;  $r = .45, p < .001$ , respectively). The dominance subscale ( $r = -.17, p < .001$ ) was negatively correlated with PWS at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between the RCS and AVS ( $r = .34, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. Four of the RCS subscales (immediacy, trust,

equality, and composure) were also positively correlated with AVS at a statistically significant level ( $r = .32, p < .001$ ;  $r = .33, p < .001$ ;  $r = .24, p < .001$ ;  $r = .26, p < .001$ , respectively). The dominance subscale ( $r = -.03, p = .22$ ) was negatively correlated with AVS, but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between the RCS and the OD factor ( $r = -.25, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. Four of the RCS subscales (immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were also negatively correlated with the OD factor at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.38, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.31, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.26, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.33, p < .001$ , respectively). The dominance subscale ( $r = .36, p < .001$ ) was positively correlated with the OD factor at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between the RCS and LSIZ ( $r = .51, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All five RCS subscales (immediacy, trust, equality, composure, and dominance) were also positively correlated with LSIZ at a statistically significant level ( $r = .40, p < .001$ ;  $r = .40, p < .001$ ;  $r = .31, p < .001$ ;  $r = .43, p < .001$ ;  $r = .10, p = .01$ , respectively). There was a negative correlation between the RCS and the 3D-WS ( $r = -.53, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. Four of the RCS subscales (immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were also negatively correlated with the 3D-WS at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.60, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.56, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.45, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.50, p < .001$ , respectively). The dominance subscale ( $r = .32, p < .001$ ) was positively correlated with 3D-WS at a statistically significant level. All of the post hoc correlations related to the RCS were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

The 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were not significantly different than the correlation to the composite 3D-WS scores. There was a positive

correlation between the 3D-WS and MSRO ( $r = .12, p < .01$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also positively correlated with MSRO at a statistically significant level ( $r = .12, p < .01$ ;  $r = .08, p = .03$ ;  $r = .11, p < .01$ , respectively). There was a negative correlation between the 3D-WS and FSRO ( $r = -.10, p < .01$ ) at a statistically significant level. Two of the 3D-WS subscales (reflective and affective) were also negatively correlated with FSRO at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.08, p = .04$ ;  $r = -.17, p < .001$ , respectively). The cognitive subscale was negatively correlated with FSRO ( $r = -.03, p = .22$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between the 3D-WS and PWS ( $r = -.51, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also negatively correlated with PWS at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.39, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.48, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.44, p < .001$ , respectively). There was a negative correlation between the 3D-WS and AVS ( $r = -.37, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also negatively correlated with AVS at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.34, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.33, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.31, p < .001$ , respectively). There was a positive correlation between the 3D-WS and the OD factor ( $r = .54, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also positively correlated with the OD factor at a statistically significant level ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ;  $r = .46, p < .001$ ;  $r = .47, p < .001$ , respectively). There was a negative correlation between the 3D-WS and LSIZ ( $r = -.30, p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also negatively correlated with LSIZ at a statistically significant level ( $r =$

-.10,  $p < .01$ ;  $r = -.36$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $r = -.35$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively). There was a negative correlation between the 3D-WS and RCS ( $r = -.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ) at a statistically significant level. All three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also negatively correlated with RCS at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $r = -.54$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $r = -.56$ ,  $p < .001$ , respectively). All of the post hoc correlations related to the 3D-WS were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

Research Question 17 asks if there is a significant difference between the mean scores on the wisdom scales in this study. This research question was partially supported. This research question was tested using 28 paired sample t-tests. All 28 paired sample t-test were significant at the  $p < .001$  level except the t-test between AVS and LSI-Z which was statistically significant at the  $p = .02$  level. The mean scores for the eight wisdom scales were: MSRO = 3.14, FSRO = 3.22, PSW = 4.01, AVS = 3.40, OD factor = 2.57, LSIZ = 3.45, RCS = 3.61, 3D-WS = 2.43. With a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment, 27 of the paired t-tests (with the exception of the AVS – LSIZ paired test) would still be statistically significant.

Table 9

Summary Table of the Results of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypotheses and Research Questions	Results
H1: Age will be positively associated with participant's self-reported wisdom.	Supported
H2: Age will be negatively associated with perceptions of wisdom in all three age groups (young, middle-aged, and older adults).	Supported
H3a: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to young adults (18-29) by same age peers.	Supported

Table 9 (continued)

## Summary Table of the Results of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypotheses and Research Questions	Results
H3b: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to middle-aged adults (30-59) by same age peers.	Supported
H3c: Age will be positively associated with wisdom levels attributed to older adults (60+) by same age peers.	Supported
H4: Age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults) will be associated with different age-specific self-perceived levels of wisdom increasing from the lowest in young adults to the highest in older adults.	Supported
H5: Males will have higher self-reported levels of wisdom than will females.	Supported
H6: Males will score higher on masculine and task-oriented wisdom scales than will females.	Partial Support
H7: Females will score higher on feminine and relational wisdom scales than will males.	Partial Support
H8: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with perceptions of wisdom for young, middle-aged, and older individuals.	Partial Support
H9: Self-reported wisdom will be positively related to the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR).	Not Supported
H10: Self-reported wisdom will be positively associated with the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined.	Partial Support
H11: The Transcendent Wisdom Scale will be positively correlated with the other wisdom scales.	Partial Support
H12: The various wisdom scales (excluding TWR) will be positively correlated with each other.	Partial Support

Table 9 (continued)

## Summary Table of the Results of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypotheses and Research Questions	Results
RQ1: Is there a relationship between group membership and perceptions of wisdom associated with the three different age groups?	Relationship
RQ2: Is there a significant difference between males and females on perceived levels of wisdom associated with age group membership?	No Relationship
RQ3: Is there a relationship between education and self-reported level of wisdom?	Relationship
RQ4: Is there a relationship between education and perceptions of wisdom associated with age group membership?	Partial Relationship
RQ5: Is income related to self-perceived levels of wisdom?	No Relationship
RQ6: Is there a relationship between income and wisdom associated with age group membership (young, middle-aged, and older adults)?	No Relationship
RQ7: Is there a relationship between age and score on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?	Relationship
RQ8: Is there a relationship between membership in an age cohort and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?	Relationship
RQ9: Is there a relationship between biological sex and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?	Relationship
RQ10: Is there a relationship between educational level and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?	Relationship
RQ11: Is there a relationship between income and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR)?	Relationship
RQ12: Is there a relationship between age and the various wisdom scales (excluding TWR)?	Partial Relationship

Table 9 (continued)

Summary Table of the Results of the Hypotheses and Research Questions

Hypotheses and Research Questions	Results
RQ13: Is there a relationship between biological sex and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?	Partial Relationship
RQ14: Is there a relationship between educational level and the various scales (excluding TWR) being studied?	Partial Relationship
RQ15: Is there a relationship between income and the wisdom scales (excluding TWR) being examined?	No Relationship
RQ16: Is there a significant difference between biological sex, participant education, and participant income as a predictor of wisdom level on the various wisdom scales being examined?	Relationship
RQ17: Is there a difference in the overall mean scores on the various wisdom scales (excluding TWR)?	Partial Relationship

## SECTION 3

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The third and final part of this dissertation will conclude with a discussion of the important findings. The role of the different approaches (i.e., mystory and social scientific) used in this study will be considered. The implications of the findings on future research will be posited. Finally, the limitations of the current study will be examined.



## CHAPTER 10

### DISCUSSION

#### Mystory Approach

“The attempt to combine wisdom and power has only rarely been successful and then only for a short while.”

Albert Einstein (as cited in quoteworld.com, n.d.)

Wisdom is defined in this study as policies which are proactive, improve the quality of life, and uphold equality and justice as well as individual behaviors that express satisfaction with life, creativity, concern for others, superior communication capacity, and cognitive, emotional and reflective abilities. The first section of the current study discusses four separate topics of wisdom relevant to this definition: economic, environmental, religious/spiritual, and military and competing discourses that are constructed around them and how these types of wisdom are performed. While these chapters are labeled as distinct forms of wisdom, actually the designations are quite arbitrary. Each chapter contains elements of another type of wisdom. While the use of labels to “define” them specifically is an academic convention, the idea that wisdom can be encapsulated so easily belies its elusive nature.

The mystory approach is particularly valuable in framing political actions as epitomizing wisdom or the lack thereof. Mystory is capable of activating hyperlogic, the linking of nonlinear discourses to create context-specific meanings. Since mystory uses professional, popular, and personal sources, creating universal truths is impossible, but rather “specified subjectivities speak in the full context of their localities” (Tofts, 1999, p .24). Since governments and corporations have greater access to media sources and

greater sources of funding, they generally create the professional or dominant discourse. Foucault (1977) and Pollock (1998) contend the dominant discourse is full of contradictions and this is evident in the “official” discourse used by governments, government institutions, and the large corporations that support them.

The specific example of “wise” socio-economic policy constructed in this study involves the northern part of Wisconsin and its policies toward the people in this part of that state. This chapter examines the legitimization of several poor socio-economic policies in northern Wisconsin and the environmental and human consequences of these decisions. The timber industry of the mid-nineteenth century was largely unfettered by the current rules and regulations that control the use of natural resources and as such clear-cut huge swaths of pine and later hardwood trees in the “North Woods” of Wisconsin. The wanton destruction of the forests in the “North Woods” prompted state regulations on logging on state lands but it was too late for the largely clear-cut woods of northern Wisconsin. Even the newspaper article written about life in the logging camps was written in a high style that did not accurately represent the languages, style, or customs of the primarily poor, immigrant workers. The professional discourse, as articulated by state officials and academics primarily, at the beginning of the twentieth century was that the thin, clear-cut, and rocky land of northern Wisconsin would be ideal for small family farms. Some of the state officials espousing this idyllic vision of northern Wisconsin knew that their discourse was largely hyperbolic (Gough, 1997). That knowledge did not curtail them from reviling the immigrant families that moved to the region. Within 30 years, the farmers were no longer pioneers settling the inhospitable land but rather uneducated, freeloaders. Sixty years later, Wisconsin brags about its

environmental policy which has actually seen an increase in forested land despite its complicity in destroying the utopian agricultural vision they had promised a century earlier.

While interesting academically, the various stages of the socio-economic policy in Wisconsin had dramatic and mostly tragic consequences as it was performed by and on the people living in the region. The timber industry was largely unregulated, as was most industry in the nineteenth century. The people employed in the logging camps were subjected to harsh conditions with little recompense. The timber barons effectively depleted the resources of entire regions and then moved their operations to a new location. Woodward's (1994) article describing the horrors of logging camps was written in high style for people back east, most, if not all of whom, had never seen region. As the timber barons moved their operations west, local economies dependent on the timber industry were suffering. In response, the State of Wisconsin began advertising the region as prime agricultural land for small family farms. Gough (1997) recounts stories of people moving to the area having to spend as much on dynamite to clear their land of stumps as they did on the actual property. The stumps, marginal soil, and short growing season were the death knell for many of the "yeoman" farmers of northern Wisconsin. The region is now littered with dilapidated farm houses, buildings, and cemeteries. As the cemeteries attest, many families fought in a futile effort to create an impossible agricultural utopia. If northern Wisconsin was actually an agricultural paradise, the state and federal officials who articulated that vision would have been wise. The abandonment or sale of most farms in the region suggests otherwise.

The second type of wisdom articulated at the societal level is environmental wisdom. While the previous chapter had environmental consequences, Plan Colombia was espoused as both a plan to decrease environmental destruction (i.e., deforestation) and illegal drug availability in the United States. Plan Colombia actually increased the rate of deforestation and the number of acres of land being used for coca and opium cultivation. Was Plan Colombia an example of dominant discourse legitimizing unwise policies or was it just poorly executed? Even using governmental sources, Plan Colombia was unlikely to succeed at any of its specified goals. While the goal of coca fumigation in Colombia was to decrease tropical deforestation by reducing the amount of illicit crops and drugs derived from them, in practice it was used to drive indigenous peoples off their lands in the Putumayo and Bolivar Departments of Colombia. Unclassified U.S. documents say that Plan Colombia would not change drug levels in any significant way (DCI Crime and Narcotics Center, 2000). Despite its failure to reduce deforestation in Colombia or drugs in the U.S., the mass exodus of people from fumigated regions has left much of the Putumayo and Bolivar Departments available for oil exploration while simultaneously assisting the Colombian government in dispersing the insurgents in these poor areas.

The consequences of environmental damage have long-term consequences on all species in the region. The consequences of spraying Roundup Ultra on coca plants from high altitude has had serious environmental consequences: 1) it kills much of the non-coca native plants which are essential to the ecosystem; 2) it harms legal crops; 3) it kills or poisons animals and livestock, and 4) it gets into the water supply killing fish and making people sick. The poor people of the region are then forced to either stay and live

off the poisoned land left in the wake of the fumigation planes or leave and move their families and all their belongings to another place. Neither option gives poor Colombian farmers much hope.

The third type of wisdom articulated at the societal level is religious/spiritual wisdom. Religion has been instrumental in starting many wars since the beginning of recorded history. While most religions have precepts that espouse tolerance and love, in actual practice, religious beliefs in conflict have usually been met with intolerance and war. The example of religious wisdom examined in this chapter arises from discourse about the Albigensian heresy in southern France. True to form, religious differences were met with intolerance, war, and torture.

Roman Catholic doctrine and history portray the Albigenses of southern France as a fanatical hybrid of bastardized Christianity that practiced asceticism. Many people in southern France became Albigenses because of the excesses of Catholic priests. Despite efforts to bring “heretics” back into Roman Catholicism, the people could not be swayed. In response, the Catholic Church used the Albigensian heresy as justification for the first Christian crusade against other Christians. This crusade and the subsequent Inquisition to root out the remaining Albigensian followers destroyed much of southern France. While the Catholic Church discourse acknowledges that the Pope and fervent supporters might have been a little brutal in destroying the Albigensian heretics, it maintains that it saved mankind from certain extinction. The discourse from historians and Baptist theologians suggests that the Albigenses were dangerous to the existing church because of its emphasis on community-appointed clergy and an individual relationship with God.

This example of wisdom and the competing discourses that attempt to define the conflict are particularly interesting. The Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages constructed the monolithic totalizing history that has been passed down to the present from this era. The competing discourses about this conflict forces the different factions to acknowledge that the conflict is open to multiple interpretations. While the Roman Catholic Church supports its previous position on the importance of destroying the heresy, several Catholic theologians have acknowledged that the means was quite flawed. The historians and non-Catholic theologians portray the Albigenses as religious purists. The initial religious intolerance had dire consequences that left southern France decimated and most of its population killed. While the crusade and the subsequent Inquisition were probably not wise, the debate about the wisdom of the crusade itself is.

The final type of wisdom articulated at the societal level is military wisdom. The adage that there is very little intelligence in military intelligence also applies to military wisdom. The goal of all military engagements is to win. The diplomacy that occurs afterwards can be wise, however. The example of military wisdom examined in this final chapter arises from discourse about Chechnya's bid for independence. This chapter illuminates the competing discourses about which military techniques are appropriate in warfare.

The Russian discourse suggests that Chechnya's bid for independence is fostered by terrorist links to Al Qaeda. The Russian and world media have covered Chechen attacks on hospital, theaters, and schools. The Russian media labels Chechen separatists as terrorists. This Russian discourse about the conflict often fails to mention the two mass deportations of Chechens from Chechnya and the violation of Chechen human

rights by Russian troops including the treatment of Chechens in refugee camps outside Chechnya and kidnappings and extortion of the Chechens in Russian-occupied Chechnya. The Chechen media portrays the Chechen separatists responsible for attacks on Russian theaters, schools, and hospitals as patriots. It fails to acknowledge that the death toll from these attacks on public buildings invariably is largely civilian.

The discourse used by the opposing sides in the Chechen conflict revolves around the word terrorist. Is a terrorist someone who transplants an entire people resulting in tens of thousands deaths or is a terrorist someone who shoots up schools? The correct answer is yes to both. In the 1990s this conflict could have been brought to an end, but neither side was willing to compromise in any sort of meaningful way. Both use discourse that portrays the other as brutal and inhuman. Obviously, Hitler's use of that discursive strategy has been lost on the leaders in Chechnya and Russia.

The mystery approach section considers four chapters (excluding the introduction) that have broad overarching issues related to social, economic, cultural, political, and historical conceptions of wisdom. Wisdom in any of these contexts is subjected to contradictions and tensions from competing narratives, discourses, and performances. The idea that wisdom can be located in any "perfect" form is doomed to failure. As Tofts (1999) suggests, wisdom at a societal level is always and will always be contextual and contingent, not universal.

#### Social Scientific Approach

"Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life."

Immanuel Kant (as cited in quotelady.com, n.d.)

The second section discusses the social scientific issues related to wisdom: chapter six examines the social scientific literature on wisdom, chapter seven articulates the methods used in this study to analyze wisdom, and chapter eight discusses the results of the proposed hypotheses and research questions. The analysis of the results illuminates some important issues related to perceptions of wisdom: the role of perceiver characteristics on wisdom, the role of self-reported wisdom on perceptions of wisdom in others, and the relationship among wisdom scales.

#### Role of Perceiver Characteristics on Wisdom

Age. The first four hypotheses examined the role of the participants' age on their perceptions of wisdom. The results support previous research that stresses the role that age and age cohorts play on perceptions of wisdom in self and others. First, wisdom is associated with age and as people age they tended to have higher self-reported levels of wisdom. Second, people tend to have positive estimates of the wisdom of same age peers. Third, there is a difference in self-reported wisdom associated with age cohort. In other words, young people tended to think of themselves as less wise than middle-aged and older adults, while middle-aged adults tended to think of themselves as less wise than older adults.

In addition to the hypotheses examined above, four research questions were posed. The results suggest that age plays additional roles to the ones cited above. First, the age group to which an individual belongs affects his or her beliefs about wisdom in other age groups. Specifically, young adults perceived greater levels of wisdom for all age cohorts. Second, people are more likely to report more cohesive and transcendent examples of wisdom as they age. Finally, members of different age groups (young,



middle-aged, and older) are more likely to report more cohesive and transcendent examples of wisdom than members of other age groups.

In general, as participant age increased so did their self-reported level of wisdom, perceptions of wisdom associated with same-age peers, as did his/her scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale. Group membership associated with age was related to self-reported levels of wisdom, differences in perceived levels of wisdom by age group, and scores on the Transcendent Wisdom Scale.

Biological Sex. The next three hypotheses examined the role of the participants' biological sex on their perceptions of wisdom. The results suggest partial support for previous research on biological sex. First, males had higher levels of self-reported wisdom. Second, males scored higher on instruments that measured cognitive and dominance levels of wisdom. Finally, females scored higher on instruments that measured equality, trust, and immediacy as wise qualities.

In addition to the hypotheses examined above, three research questions were posed. The results suggest that biological sex plays additional roles to the ones cited above. First, females are more likely to report more cohesive and transcendent examples of wisdom than are males. In addition, males and females responded differently to some of the scales measuring wisdom (not already examined above). In general, males did have higher self-reported levels of wisdom and higher mean scores on task-oriented scales and the 3D-WS. Females had higher scores on TWR and relational communication subscales with the exception of the dominance subscale.

Education. Four research questions about the relationship between the educational level attained by the participant and wisdom were posed. The results suggest that

education plays an important role on perceptions of wisdom in four ways. First, people with the lowest and highest levels of education had the highest self-reported wisdom. Second, educational level affected perceptions of the level of wisdom attributed to middle-aged and older adults in that high school graduates and participants with some college attributed much more wisdom to these two age cohorts than did the other educational levels. Third, educational level was related to the ability to write a cohesive transcendent example of wisdom. Finally, educational level was negatively associated to the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale.

In general, the participants' level of education was associated with self-perceived wisdom, perceptions of middle-aged and older adult levels of wisdom, and scores on the TWR and 3D-WS.

Income. Four research questions about the relationship between participant income and wisdom were posed. The results suggest that income does not play an important role on perceptions of wisdom overall. In general, participant income was only related to the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (which is a measure of the cohesiveness and transcendence of participant-generated examples of wisdom).

Relationships among Sex, Education, Income, and Perceived Wisdom. A research question about the relationships among the three demographic variables (excluding age) and perceptions of wisdom was posed. The results revealed that biological sex was the only variable that had a significant multivariate effect. Biological sex was statistically different on several wisdom scales (i.e., AVS, OD, LSIZ, RCS, and 3D-WS). While statistically significant, biological sex only had a small effect on the wisdom scales used in this study.

### Role of Self-Reported Wisdom on Perceptions of Wisdom in Others

Three hypotheses examined the role of participant self-reported wisdom on perception of wisdom in other people. The results support previous research that self-reported wisdom is associated with perceptions of wisdom in others in 2 ways. First, people who have higher self-reported wisdom attributed more wisdom to young and older adults than did those with lower self-reported wisdom. In addition, self-reported wisdom was related to both sex-role orientation scales (i.e., MSRO and FSRO). Specifically, wisdom associated with masculine and feminine sex-linked increased as self-reported wisdom increased. In general, self-reported wisdom is associated with perceptions of wisdom in young and older adults and sex-role orientation.

### Relationships among Wisdom Scales

Two hypotheses and one research question were posed about the relationship among the scales. The results supported, albeit minimally, previous research that self-reported wisdom is associated with perceptions of wisdom in others. Three conclusions can be made. First, the TWR (Transcendent Wisdom Scale) was negatively associated with all the wisdom scales except the PWS, AVS, and RCS controlling for age. Second, even though the scales were used to measure the characteristics of wise individuals, the only scale that was positively correlated with every other scale was the Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO) scale. The Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale was negatively correlated with every other wisdom scale except the MSRO. Finally, the mean scores of the various wisdom instruments were significantly different suggesting that they were tapping into the construct differently. In general, the wisdom scales do not correlate well with each other.

## Implications

“It requires wisdom to understand wisdom: the music is nothing if the audience is deaf.”

Walter Lippmann (as cited in quoteworld.com, n.d.)

Needless to say, the results of this project suggest that more research on wisdom needs to be done. The fact that this construct has been debated since the beginning of recorded history to some seems futile, but if one accepts that wisdom is contingent and elusive, its pursuit offers advantages. A “perfect” definition of wisdom is impossible. An understanding of what characteristics of individuals and policies are important for both the societies in which we find ourselves and us as individuals as a way to age more successfully.

The mystery approach allows one to approach socio-political issues and contextualize them in the persons of the author and readers. The role of “hyperlogic” suggests ways at getting at wisdom in non-linear ways. Like the Tao, wisdom has often been relegated as a meaningless construct because it was too subjective to merit inquiry. The mystery approach allows the individual to shape the examples in a way meaningful to him/her, while still letting the audience interpret the discourse individually. There is no right and wrong. Just links to links. “The pedagogical value of this [mystoriography] lies in the positioning of the learner as an active participant in the production of knowledge rather than as a consumer of already decided ‘truths’” (Tofts, 1999, p. 24). I have to extend that argument and say that this approach allows the writer and reader to produce not only knowledge, but possibly wisdom as well. If wisdom in the most simplistic sense is an

understanding of others, then this approach allows for a more thorough understanding of the relationship between the author and the text than any other alternative.

The social scientific approach toward wisdom as articulated in this study has been primarily concerned with developing the best instrument to assess operationalized definitions of wisdom. Most of the scales have been used in previous social scientific examinations of wisdom. Unfortunately most have fundamental flaws. The Practical Wisdom Scale measures wisdom by simply listing adjectives that are either indicative or counter-indicative of wisdom. Is the ability to locate synonyms for wisdom actually a valid operationalization of wisdom? The Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (2003), which underwent the most rigorous social scientific methodological scrutiny of any scale in the current study, had the lowest overall correlation with perceived wisdom. Both the new Aesthetic Value Scale and the Relational Communication Scale, which had never been used to measure wisdom, were significantly more indicative of wise behaviors. More flawed than the wisdom scales, self-reported wisdom is susceptible to social desirability bias and attribution errors. As proof of this flaw, the results of this study found no relationship between self-reported wisdom and the ability to provide a cohesive and transcendent example of wisdom. The most interesting result of the quantitative analysis is the role of age on perceptions of wisdom. For young people, wisdom is associated with experience and knowledge from continued breathing. Older adults tend to underestimate their wisdom, but recognize that wisdom is primarily the purview of older adults.

While a definitive conception of wisdom is unlikely and the two approaches make very different assumptions about how wisdom is constructed and performed, they both

offer insight into the elusive nature of wisdom. The criteria used to examine ideals of socio-political wisdom are not the same as those to examine the generalizability of behaviors attributed to wise people.

While the two approaches seem incommensurable, there are places of overlap which could prove very valuable for research into wisdom. One of them is the relationship between the mystory approach and positive psychological research into gerontology. Like the mystory approach, positive psychology is concerned with the contingent value-laden nature of wisdom as operationalized by most social scientists. Both agree that “most facets of human behavior – for example, creativity, maturity, and empathy – are extraordinarily difficult to measure” (Vaillant, 2000, p. 89). Positive psychologists understand that the language used to define wisdom has real consequences on the people expected to perform it, primarily older adults. Ranzijn (2002) articulates three ways that positive psychology can assist an understanding of wisdom by examining the contexts in which it is enacted:

- Psychology has over-emphasised the measurement of the individual in isolation, whereas the qualities in which older people may excel are those more likely to be expressed as interactions with their environment
- Empirical evidence is emerging which demonstrates the hitherto under-recognised skills, potentials, and contributions of older adults
- Identifying and removing environmental constraints, including negative ageist stereotypes and lack of knowledge, will do a great deal towards enabling the potential of older adults to be expressed (p. 83).

Both mystory and social scientific approaches are important for creating a meaningful definition of wisdom that both defines and delimits.

## Limitations

This study attempted to explore the ramifications of a multi-methodological approach to the study of wisdom. Additional research needs to be done on using different methodologies for understanding wisdom (e.g., rhetorical, ethnographic, cultural studies). Application of these approaches would help answer questions such as the role of *praxis* and *phronesis* on conceptions of practical wisdom, the performance of wisdom in everyday life, and the role of ideology on conceptions of wisdom. This examination of wisdom also did so from a largely Western perspective. While research is being done (Giles, Fortman, Honeycutt, & Ota, 2003; Takahashi & Bordia, 2000; Takahashi & Overton, 2002), different cultural conceptions should be examined to see how they can be used to inform each other and help us to generate a more thorough understanding of what it means to be wise.

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## APPENDIX A

### SHORT COMPILATION OF WISDOM DEFINITIONS

“In the present study, wisdom is defined as an integration of cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions based on previous work by Clayton and Birren” (Ardelt, 2004, p. 4).

“An essential part of wisdom is the ability to determine what is uncertain; that is, to appreciate the limits of our knowledge and to understand its probabilistic nature in many contexts” (Dawes, 1988, p. 264).

“Wisdom is that understanding and those justified beliefs which are essential for living the best life” (Garrett, 1996, p. 220).

"I hope our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us, that the less we use our power the greater it will be" (Jefferson, 1815, p. 304).

“Wisdom is a character-trait intimately connected with self-direction. The more wisdom a person has the more likely it is that he will succeed in living a good life” (Kekes, 1983, p. 277)

“Whereas for the philosophy of knowledge the fundamental kind of rational learning is acquiring knowledge, for the philosophy of wisdom the fundamental kind of rational learning is learning how to live, learning how to see, to experience, to participate in and create what is of value in existence” (Maxwell, 1984, p. 66).

“Wisdom is what you need to know to understand in order to live well and cope with the central problems and avoid the dangers in the predicament(s) human beings find themselves in” (Nozick, 1989, p. 267).

“A person S is wise if and only if (1) S is a free agent, (2) S knows how to live well, (3) S lives well, and (4) S’s living well is caused by S’s knowledge of how to live well” (Ryan, 1996, p. 221).

“Wisdom is defines as the application of successful intelligence and creativity as mediated by values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among (a) intrapersonal, (b) interpersonal, and (c) extrapersonal interests, over (a) short and (b) long terms, in order to achieve a balance among (a) adaptation to existing environments,(b) shaping of existing environments, and (c) selection of new environments “ (Sternberg, 2003, p. 152).

## APPENDIX B

### STATEMENT OF PERSPECTIVE

A precise understanding of wisdom has eluded some of the greatest minds in history. Not being one of the greatest thinkers of all time, I decided when undertaking an examination of wisdom to use different methodologies to facilitate the broadest understanding of wisdom as possible. To understand the results of this project, however, requires an explanation about where I started from (i.e., my philosophical underpinnings). To assist the reader in understanding the role of these different philosophical underpinning on choices made in this study, I have articulated the two perspectives that underlie this examination of wisdom: my perspective on research methodologies and my perspective on socio-political disparities.

My perspective on research is that all methodologies illuminate certain issues while simultaneously being blind to others. If I had to use a label, I would call myself a critical objectivist. I believe that all methodologies produce knowledge. The means and ends to these specific methodological understandings are quite different, but the ultimate goal is to analyze/create/perform knowledge. Social science, for example, is good at understanding human behaviors in general. Although it is impossible to be totally objective, this approach explains how individuals behave generally under certain conditions. I, like every other social scientist, have interests, values, and theoretical approaches that impact my research. I am interested in communication and aging and I tend to use theories that support the possibility of successful aging because my research tends to focus on how to facilitate that prospect. Like all scholars, social scientists choose to study something for reasons that are not objective at all. Just because a

researcher has a subjective reason for doing research in a certain area, does not mean that social science is somehow irrevocably flawed. Rather the ability to control this subjective interest shows the strength of the methodology.

My philosophical perspective is probably most closely related to critical humanism. I believe that those people in a position of power have an obligation to empower those without it. I practice empowerment in my classes as well as my behaviors in my personal life. I am the sponsor of the social justice dialogue group at Northwestern State University. I am actively involved in efforts to change the plight of individuals in Darfur and Myanmar. I believe that people can change the power dynamics in the world. Those changes must start in our educational system, as conservative and myopic as it is, so that the next generation won't accept genocidal dictatorships as the status quo.

## APPENDIX C

### MANIPULATION CHECK ON THE AVS

Directions: Below is a list of statements. Put the statements into two groups of similar statements that you think are measuring the same idea or construct. Place an X by all the items that measure one construct and an O by items that measure the other construct.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Ignorance is bliss.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. He/she would think aesthetics aren't important in our everyday world.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. People are either good or bad
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. People make too much out of the feelings and sensitivities of animals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A wise person thinks art is making something out of nothing and selling it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. There is only one right way of doing things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. He/she would agree that art begins in the heart not in the mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. He/she would agree that art and music make him/her feel more positive toward others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. He/she would agree that music gives insight into his/her past and current problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Sometimes I get so charged up emotionally that I am unable to consider many ways of dealing with the problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. He/she would agree that music is a great mental distraction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I prefer just to let things happen rather than try to understand why they turned that way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. In this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders and experts who can be trusted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. He/she would agree that art changes my perceptions about reality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. It is better not to know too much about things that cannot be changed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. He/she would agree that art and music are just forms of entertainment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. He/she would agree that art is born of the observation and investigation of nature.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. A person either knows the answer to a question or he/she doesn't.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. A wise person doesn't find any real value in art or music.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. A problem has little attraction for me if I don't think it has a solution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. He/she would agree that art and music are inherently different than intelligence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. When I am confused by a problem, one of the first things I do is survey the situation and consider all the relevant pieces of information.

### Aesthetic Value Scale

1. He/she would think aesthetics aren't important in our everyday world.
2. A wise person thinks art is making something out of nothing and selling it.
3. He/she would agree that art begins in the heart not in the mind.
4. He/she would agree that art and music make him/her feel more positive toward others.
5. He/she would agree that music gives insight into his/her past and current problems.
6. He/she would agree that music is a great mental distraction.
7. He/she would agree that art changes my perceptions about reality.
8. He/she would agree that art and music are just forms of entertainment.
9. He/she would agree that art is born of the observation and investigation of nature.
10. He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth.
11. A wise person doesn't find any real value in art or music.
12. He/she would agree that art and music are inherently different than intelligence.

### Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale

- 1:1. In this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders and experts who can be trusted.
- 1:4. People make too much out of the feelings and sensitivities of animals.
- 1:5. You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked.
- 1:7. There is only one right way of doing things.
- 1:9. It is better not to know too much about things that cannot be changed.
- 1:11. Ignorance is bliss.
- 1:13. A person either knows the answer to a question or he/she doesn't.
- 1:15. People are either good or bad
- 2:10. A problem has little attraction for me if I don't think it has a solution.
- 2:14. Sometimes I get so charged up emotionally that I am unable to consider many ways of dealing with the problem.
- 2:16. I prefer just to let things happen rather than try to understand why they turned that way.
- 2:17. When I am confused by a problem, one of the first things I do is survey the situation and consider all the relevant pieces of information.



APPENDIX D

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Study Title: Wisdom and Sagacity across the Lifespan.

Performance Site: Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

Investigators: Jon M. Croghan

The purpose of this study is to assess conceptions of wisdom and sagacity across different age groups and cultures. There is no known risk to the participants that exceeds normal daily risk. **Participants may choose not to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without any adverse consequences.** The results of this study may be published, but no identifying information will be released.

I understand and agree to participate in the study described above.

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date



**Directions:** For questions 7-10, circle the number that most accurately reflects your level of wisdom and the level of wisdom of young adults (18-29 years of age), middle-aged adults (30-60 years of age), and older adults (60 + years of age) in general. Use the following scale:

---

1	2	3	4	5
Not	Not Very	Moderately	Quite	Very
Wise	Wise	Wise	Wise	Wise

7. Extent to which you believe **you are wise.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

8. Extent to which you believe **young adults (18-29 years of age) are wise.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

9. Extent to which you believe **middle-aged adults (30-60 years of age) are wise.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

10. Extent to which you believe **older adults (60 + years of age) are wise.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

## Part 2

**Directions:** Please read the following questions and indicate how often each trait is true for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question).  
**Use the following scale:**

1	2	3	4	5
Almost Never True	Rarely True	Occasionally True	Often True	Almost Always True

- |                               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| _____ aggressive              | _____ arrogant       |
| _____ appreciative            | _____ assertive      |
| _____ autocratic              | _____ clear-thinking |
| _____ conceited               | _____ confident      |
| _____ contentious             | _____ cooperative    |
| _____ cynical                 | _____ deliberate     |
| _____ dependent               | _____ dominant       |
| _____ emotional               | _____ enterprising   |
| _____ excitable               | _____ fair-minded    |
| _____ feminine                | _____ fickle         |
| _____ forceful                | _____ foresighted    |
| _____ forgiving               | _____ frank          |
| _____ friendly                | _____ frivolous      |
| _____ handsome                | _____ hard-headed    |
| _____ helpful                 | _____ immature       |
| _____ industrious             | _____ ingenious      |
| _____ insightful              | _____ intelligent    |
| _____ intolerant              | _____ inventive      |
| _____ masculine               | _____ mature         |
| _____ modest                  | _____ opportunistic  |
| _____ outspoken               | _____ praising       |
| _____ realistic               | _____ reasonable     |
| _____ reckless                | _____ reflective     |
| _____ self-confident          | _____ sensitive      |
| _____ sentimental             | _____ shallow        |
| _____ sharp-witted            | _____ shrewd         |
| _____ sincere                 | _____ stern          |
| _____ strong                  | _____ submissive     |
| _____ sympathetic             | _____ talkative      |
| _____ timid                   | _____ thoughtful     |
| _____ tolerant                | _____ tough          |
| _____ understanding           | _____ vindictive     |
| _____ warm                    | _____ wise           |
| _____ wide range of interests | _____ worrying       |

### Part 3

**Directions:** Please read the following statements about life satisfaction, communication styles, and age-related beliefs and indicate how true each item would be for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question). Use the following scale):

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_\_ 1. As he/she grows older, things seem better than he/she thought they would be.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. In different situations and with different people, a wise person acts like very different persons.
- \_\_\_\_ 3. He/she would be intensely involved in conversations with people.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. He/she tries to move the conversation to a deeper level
- \_\_\_\_ 5. He/she would have gotten more of the breaks in life than most people.
- \_\_\_\_ 6. A wise person recognizes that ignorance is bliss.
- \_\_\_\_ 7. He/she would think aesthetics aren't important in our everyday world.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. He/she is sincere with others.
- \_\_\_\_ 9. A wise person would not always be the person that he/she appears to be.
- \_\_\_\_ 10. He/she would think that people are either good or bad
- \_\_\_\_ 11. A wise person would believe that this is the dreariest time of his/her life.
- \_\_\_\_ 12. He/she considers other people his/her equal.
- \_\_\_\_ 13. A wise person would believe that things often go wrong for no fault of his/her own.
- \_\_\_\_ 14. A wise person would think that he/she was just as happy as when he/she was younger.
- \_\_\_\_ 15. He/she wants discussions to be casual.
- \_\_\_\_ 16. A wise person would be annoyed by unhappy people who just feel sorry for themselves.
- \_\_\_\_ 17. A wise person would think these are the best years of his/her life.
- \_\_\_\_ 18. A wise person would make others feel he/she was similar to them.
- \_\_\_\_ 19. A wise person would believe that it's not really his/her problem if others were in trouble and needed help.
- \_\_\_\_ 20. He/she thinks that life is basically the same most of the time.
- \_\_\_\_ 21. As he/she looked back on life, he/she would be fairly well satisfied.
- \_\_\_\_ 22. Compared to other people, a wise person does not get down in the dumps too often.
- \_\_\_\_ 23. He/she is interested in talking to people.
- \_\_\_\_ 24. He/she would try to gain others approval.
- \_\_\_\_ 25. A wise person would believe that most of the things people do are boring or monotonous.
- \_\_\_\_ 26. He/she would try to control the conversation.
- \_\_\_\_ 27. He/she wants others to trust him/her.

**Directions (repeated):** Please read the following statements about life satisfaction, communication styles, and age-related beliefs and indicate how true each item would be for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question). **Use the following scale):**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. He/she has gotten pretty much what he/she expected out of life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. A wise person feels a bit awkward in company and does not show up quite as well as he/she should.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. He/she would attempt to persuade others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. A wise person tries to look at all sides of a problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. The things a wise person does now are as interesting to him/her as they ever were.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. He/she have made plans for things he/she will be doing a month or a year from now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. He/she would want to stick to the main purpose of the interaction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. He/she makes communication interactions very formal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. A wise person makes too much out of the feelings and sensitivities of animals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. He/she would feel much better if his/her present circumstances changed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. When a wise person thinks back over his/her life, he/she would believe that he/she didn't get most of the important things he/she wanted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. In order to get along and be liked, a wise person tends to be what people expect him/her to be rather than what he/she wants to be.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. He/she would put on as show to impress or entertain people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. He/she feels very tense when talking to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. He/she is more interested in social conversation than the task at hand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. He/she would agree that there are some people he/she would never like.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. A wise person thinks art is making something out of nothing and selling it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. He/she would agree that in spite of what people say, the conditions of the average man is getting worse, not better.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. Even if a wise person is not enjoying himself/herself, he/she would often pretend to be having a good time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. He/she treats others as an equal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. He/she would attempt to persuade others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. He/she does not attempt to persuade others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. A wise person may deceive people by being friendly when he/she really dislikes them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. He/she would agree that there is only one right way of doing things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. He/she would agree that art begins in the heart not in the mind.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. He/she could be comfortable with all kinds of people.

**Directions (repeated):** Please read the following statements about life satisfaction, communication styles, and age-related beliefs and indicate how true each item would be for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question). **Use the following scale):**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. A wise person would not change his/her opinions (or the way he/she does things) in order to please someone else or win their favor.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. He/she is calm and poised when communicating with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. He/she would often have not comforted another when he or she needed it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. He/she would agree that art and music make him/her feel more positive toward others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. A wise person is hesitant about making important decisions even after thinking about them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. When a wise person is upset at someone, he/she would usually try to put “myself in his or her shoes” for a while.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. When uncertain on how to act in social situations, he/she looks to the behavior of others for cues.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 61. He/she would agree that music gives insight into his/her past and current problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 62. Before criticizing somebody, he/she tries to imagine how he/she would feel in the other person’s place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 63. He/she does not want deeper relationships with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 64. He/she does not enjoy conversations with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 65. In conversations, he/she would act like the other people were very good friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 66. He/she finds conversation stimulating.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 67. He/she would agree that his/her behavior is usually an expression of true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 68. He/she doesn’t like to get involved listening to another person’s troubles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 69. He/she communicates coldness rather than warmth to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 70. He/she would want discussions to be informal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 71. A wise person is easily irritated by people who argue with him/her.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 72. He/she would agree that music is a great mental distraction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 73. Sometimes when people are talking to him/her, he/she would wish that the other people would leave.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 74. He/she tries to look at everybody’s side of a disagreement before making a decision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 75. He/she either gets very angry or depressed if things go wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 76. Sometimes he/she feels a real compassion for everyone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 77. At parties and social gatherings, he/she would not attempt to do or say things that others will like.

**Directions (repeated):** Please read the following statements about life satisfaction, communication styles, and age-related beliefs and indicate how true each item would be for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question). **Use the following scale):**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 78. He/she would agree that there are certain people who he/she dislikes so much that he/she is inwardly pleased when they are caught and punished for something they have done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 79. Sometimes a wise person gets so charged up emotionally that he/she is unable to consider many ways of dealing with the problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 80. He/she creates a distance between others in conversations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 81. He/she wants to cooperate with others when communicating.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 82. He/she would agree that art changes my perceptions about reality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 83. He/she sometimes finds it difficult to see things from another person's point of view.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 84. He/she is willing to listen to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 85. A wise person prefers just to let things happen rather than try to understand why they turned that way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 86. He/she acts bored in conversations with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 87. He/she is interested in talking to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 88. He/she is more interested in working on the task at hand than having a social conversation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 89. He/she would agree that in this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders and experts who can be trusted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 90. He/she would agree that it is better not to know too much about things that cannot be changed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 91. He/she would agree that art and music are just forms of entertainment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 92. He/she is very work oriented.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 93. A wise person often does not understand people's behavior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 94. When he/she look backs on what's happened to him/her, a wise person feels cheated.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 95. He/she didn't try to win the favor of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 96. He/she would agree that art is born of the observation and investigation of nature.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 97. He/she seemed to care if others liked him/her.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 98. He/she is open to the ideas of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 99. He/she believes that a person either knows the answer to a question or he/she doesn't.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 100. He/she would agree that you can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked.



**Directions (repeated):** Please read the following statements about life satisfaction, communication styles, and age-related beliefs and indicate how true each item would be for a **wise person** (Place the corresponding number on the line to next to each question). **Use the following scale):**

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 101. He/she was comfortable interacting with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 102. He/she would agree that art is a form of propaganda, not a form of truth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 103. A wise person doesn't find any real value in art or music.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 104. He/she feels very relaxed talking to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 105. He/she shows enthusiasm while talking to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 106. When he/she looks back on what has happened to him/her, a wise person can't help feeling resentful.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 107. A problem has little attraction for a wise person if he/she doesn't think it has a solution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 108. He/she seems to desire further communication with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 109. He/she tries to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance he/she will have to think in-depth about something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 110. He/she would agree that art and music are inherently different than intelligence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 111. He/she has the upper hand in the conversations with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 112. He/she is honest in communicating with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 113. When confused by a problem, one of the first things he/she does is survey the situation and consider all the relevant pieces of information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 114. Simply knowing the answer rather than understanding the reasons for the answer to a problem is fine with him/her.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 115. Sometimes he/she doesn't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 116. He/she seems nervous in the presence of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 117. He/she would believe that there are some people he/she would never like.

**Directions:** Answer the following question to the best of your ability:

Many people hope to become wiser as they grow older. Would you give an example of a bit of wisdom you have acquired and how you came by it?

**Directions:** Circle the number that most accurately reflects your level of wisdom. Use the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Not Wise	Not Very Wise	Moderately Wise	Quite Wise	Very Wise

117. Extent to which you believe you are wise.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

## APPENDIX E

### COMPLETE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS FOR R.Q. 12

Research Question 12 asks if there is a relationship between age and the various wisdom scales used in the current instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), Other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This hypothesis was partially supported. A regression analysis was conducted in which participant age was regressed on the respective wisdom scales (MSRO, FSRO, PWS, AVS, OD, LSIZ, RCS, and 3D-WS). Age was not positively associated with any wisdom scale, although the Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO) and Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO) approached significance ( $\beta = 4.48, t = 1.75, p = .08$ ;  $\beta = 5.01, t = 1.78, p = .07$ , respectively). Age was negatively associated with the other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale and the Relational Communication Scale (RCS) ( $\beta = -4.73, t = -2.39, p = .02$ ;  $\beta = -7.12, t = -2.15, p = .03$ ). Since both RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, the composite scales were removed and the subscales entered into the model. The Relational Communication Scale consists of 5 subscales (3 other subscales were removed for low alpha reliability levels), the composite Relational Communication Scale was removed and the subscales put into model to assess the role of age on all the wisdom scales and the RCS subscales (dominance, equality, trust, composure, and immediacy). Age was related to only one RCS subscale, dominance at a statistically significant level ( $\beta = -4.57, t = -3.16, p < .01$ ). The 3D-WS consists of 3 subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective).

The composite 3D-WS was removed and the subscales put into the model to assess the role of age on all the wisdom scales and the 3D-WS subscales. Age was not related to any 3D-WS subscale. The variance-inflation factors for all variables were significantly less than the standard cutoff of 4.0 indicating no multicollinearity-related issues. Age accounted for approximately 4% of the variance associated with these wisdom scales. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that age had a small effect on these measures of wisdom.

## APPENDIX F

### COMPLETE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS FOR R.Q. 14

Research Question 14 asked if educational levels are correlated with scores on the various wisdom scales used in the current study: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This hypothesis was partially supported. There was a positive correlation between education and MSRO ( $r_s = .07, p = .10$ ), PWS ( $r_s = .05, p = .25$ ), AVS ( $r_s = .08, p = .08$ ), and LSIZ ( $r_s = .02, p = .72$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between education and 3D-WS ( $r_s = -.08, p = .05$ ) at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between education and FSRO ( $r_s = -.06, p = .15$ ), OD factor ( $r_s = -.002, p = .96$ ), and RCS ( $r_s = -.02, p = .63$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. All of the correlations for this hypothesis were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

Since both the RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, a post hoc correlation was run to see if the subscales were significantly different than either combined scale when compared to the TWR. The RCS subscales (dominance, immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were significantly different than the correlation to the composite RCS scores. There was a negative correlation between education and RCS ( $r_s = -.02, p = .63$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between education and the immediacy subscale ( $r_s = .003, p = .95$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between education and the dominance subscale ( $r_s = -$

.009,  $p = .83$ ), trust subscale ( $r_s = -.02$ ,  $p = .69$ ), equality subscale ( $r_s = -.04$ ,  $p = .32$ ), and composure subscale ( $r_s = -.02$ ,  $p = .59$ ), but not at a statistically significant level.

Education was negatively correlated at a statistically significant level with 3D-WS ( $r_s = -.08$ ,  $p = .05$ ). Education was negatively correlated with the cognitive subscale ( $r_s = -.13$ ,  $p < .01$ ) at a statistically significant level. The reflective subscale ( $r_s = -.06$ ,  $p = .19$ ) and affective subscale ( $r_s = -.03$ ,  $p = .47$ ) were also negatively correlated, but not at a statistically significant level. All of the post hoc correlations were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

## APPENDIX G

### COMPLETE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS FOR R.Q.15

Research Question 15 asked if participant income is correlated with scores on the various wisdom scales used in the current study: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS). This research question was not supported. A Spearman rank correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) was used to measure the affect of self-reported income on the various wisdom scales used. There was a positive correlation between income and the PWS ( $r_s = .02, p = .72$ ), AVS ( $r_s = .08, p = .09$ ), OD factor ( $r_s = .02, p = .62$ ), and LSIZ ( $r_s = .01, p = .90$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between income and MSRO ( $r_s = -.002, p = .97$ ), FSRO ( $r_s = -.02, p = .60$ ), RCS ( $r_s = -.01, p = .82$ ), and 3D-WS ( $r_s = -.05, p = .26$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. All of the correlations for this hypothesis were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

Since both the RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, a *post hoc* correlation was run to see if the subscales were significantly different than either combined scale when compared to the TWR. The RCS subscales (dominance, immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were not significantly different than the correlation to the composite RCS scores. There was a negative correlation between income and RCS ( $r_s = -.01, p = .82$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between income and the trust subscale ( $r_s = .01, p = .79$ ) and the equality subscale ( $r_s = .001, p =$

.99), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a negative correlation between income and the dominance subscale ( $r_s = -.02, p = .65$ ), immediacy subscale ( $r_s = -.04, p = .31$ ), equality subscale ( $r_s = -.04, p = .32$ ), and composure subscale ( $r_s = -.02, p = .67$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. Income was negatively correlated with 3D-WS ( $r_s = -.05, p = .26$ ) but not at a statistically significant level. Income was negatively correlated with the cognitive subscale ( $r_s = -.02, p = .07$ ) at a level approaching statistical significance. The reflective subscale ( $r_s = -.02, p = .67$ ) and affective subscale ( $r_s = -.001, p = .98$ ) were also negatively correlated, but not at a statistically significant level. All of the post hoc correlations were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.



## APPENDIX H

### COMPLETE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS FOR H. 11

Hypothesis 11 contends that the Transcendent Wisdom Scale (TWR) will be positively correlated with the other wisdom scales used in the current instrument: Masculine Sex-Role Orientation (MSRO), Feminine Sex-Role Orientation (FSRO), Practical Wisdom Scale (PWS), Aesthetic Value Scale (AVS), other-directedness (OD) factor of the Self-Monitoring Scale, Life Satisfaction Index-Z (LSIZ), Relational Communication Scale (RCS), and Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) controlling for age. This hypothesis was tested using a partial correlation matrix. This hypothesis was partially supported. There was a positive correlation between TWR and PWS ( $r = .14, p < .01$ ), AVS ( $r = .12, p < .01$ ), and RCS ( $r = .08, p = .05$ ) at a statistically significant level. According to Cohen (1988), this  $R^2$  level indicates that the relationship between the Transcendent Wisdom Scale and other measures of wisdom were small. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between TWR and FSRO ( $r = .01, p = .45$ ), LSIZ ( $r = .04, p = .21$ ), and RCS ( $r = .04, p = .20$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. The TWR was negatively correlated at a statistically significant level with MSRO ( $r = -.09, p = .02$ ), OD factor ( $r = -.18, p < .001$ ), and 3D-WS ( $r = -.20, p < .001$ ). All of the correlations for this hypothesis were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

Since both the RCS and 3D-WS consist of subscales, a *post hoc* correlation was run to see if the subscales were significantly different than either combined scale when compared to the TWR. The RCS subscales (dominance, immediacy, trust, equality, and composure) were significantly different than the correlation to the composite RCS scores.

There was a positive correlation between TWR and RCS ( $r = .04, p = .20$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. There was a positive correlation between TWR and the immediacy subscale ( $r = .14, p = .001$ ), trust subscale ( $r = .14, p = .001$ ), and the composure subscale ( $r = .08, p = .05$ ) at a statistically significant level. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between TWR and the equality subscale ( $r = .04, p = .18$ ), but not at a statistically significant level. The TWR was negatively correlated at a statistically significant level with the dominance subscale ( $r = -.17, p < .001$ ). The TWR was negatively correlated at a statistically significant level with 3D-WS ( $r = -.20, p < .001$ ). The three 3D-WS subscales (cognitive, reflective, and affective) were also negatively correlated at a statistically significant level ( $r = -.18, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.16, p < .001$ ;  $r = -.20, p < .001$ , respectively). All of the post hoc correlations were figured without a Bonferroni-Sidak adjustment.

## VITA

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