



UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

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NEWSLETTER

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UPCOMING
EVENTS**12/10-14**

Finals Week

12/14

Start of Winter Break

12/31Deadline for CPSO
shirts**1/3**

FedEx Orange Bowl

1/172008 Spring Semester
beginsDSM MOVIE
REVIEW

This Weeks Case:

*How the Grinch Stole
Christmas!* (1966)

DSM-IV-TR Code:

301.7, Antisocial
Personality Disorder

This Movie's GAF:

96, a Seussian
masterpiece!

Prognosis: Must see, but be careful, this holiday classic will make your heart grow three sizes - a likely fatal condition known as "hypertrophic cardiomyopathy."

Joke of the Month

Q: Why was Santa's helper depressed?

A: He had low ELF-esteem.

MERRIMENT OR MELANCHOLY?

All humbuggery aside, the Holidays aren't that bad.

Everyone seems stressed around the holidays. There is a common perception among the public and professionals that the tension associated with this time of year creates or exacerbates pathology. The majority of research indicates, however, that this perception is inaccurate. Suicide attempts and psychiatric hospitalizations do not increase during the month of December; in fact, they seem to peak in the springtime month of April.

In fact, there is evidence that significant dysphoria may accompany the *end* of the holidays. Upon returning to the daily grind, many may feel the loss of social support offered by family and friends. Or, alternately, others may suffer from dashed expectations of a relaxing, romanticized, or harmonious family retreat.

This may have a more dramatic effect on those who hold an internal-stable-global attribution style as they may view a holiday disappointment as a personal failure.

Several studies have noted an increase of suicide attempts and hospitalizations on Mondays and after federally recognized holidays. This postponed suicide peak may be a result of the "Broken Promise Effect," in which those already experiencing dysphoric moods may expect to feel better after weekends or holidays, but are further discouraged after the relief does not occur.

On the brighter side, there are some predictors of beneficial, positive holiday experiences. Americans who describe family relationships and religious rituals as the most salient aspects of holiday practices also report more positive affect during these times. Those who reported gift giving, gift receiving, or shopping as important aspects reported more negative affect. Interestingly, negative affect was also associated with giving or receiving gifts that were a significant portion of the family income.

In a last bit of good news for the holidays, some studies have shown that people are actually "merrier" surrounding Christmas, and, for all you Tiny Tim fans out there, this transient bump in holiday cheer appears regardless of family income.

-TCM

ORDER A **CPSO T-SHIRT!**

Go to the CPSO website, <http://groups.ku.edu/~cpso/>, to see what the "Rorschach Jayhawk" T-shirts will look like (on right) and place an order! They make great gifts, and Valentine's Day is around the corner. Please order by January 1st. The shirts should be available for pick up at the beginning of next semester.

