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[PEOPLE ■ PLACES ■ WHATNOT]

Schoolhouse dog

College Press Service

AUSTIN, Texas — University of Texas social work Professor Leslie Wind has found truth in the saying a dog is man's best friend.

That is why she chose to use a 96-pound golden retriever named Johnny in therapy for patients in her clinical practice and now for students in her class.

"If you're feeling tearful, he will come lie at your feet. If you're yelling, he'll back off and lay in the middle of the room," Wind said.

Wind, who brought Johnny to two of her classes for the first time in late February, always has used the dog at her clinical practice, located at Westlake Psychotherapy Center.

She said Johnny is good therapy for her patients, and she hopes he will have the same effect on her students.

"From what I saw today, students are more comfortable in making eye contact with Johnny than they would with a teacher, which is very soothing for them," Wind said. "They also feel more relaxed in learning, and this is a real positive influence."

She added that Johnny also should be able to ease a little of the stress graduate students face.

Stephanie Lerner, a graduate social work student, said she has been feeling anxious lately. After being around Johnny, her anxiety turned to comfort.

"I am a huge dog lover, so for me it was really good having him there," Lerner said. "In a way, he distracted me, though, because I wanted to be on the floor playing with him the whole time. I'm excited he'll be there, though, because he adds that warm element to the class."

Kate Wambach, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work, said using dogs can be very effective, but it really depends on the individual.

"For certain clients, it can be

very calming," Wambach said. "When used appropriately, it can be a mechanism for making environments less stressful, and it helps to establish an atmosphere when intimate details of one's life can be discussed and worked on."

Wambach said she has seen significant results in using dogs for therapy, especially in nursing homes.

"It really helps to draw out the client. A lot of the time, people are not very interactive, but when the dog is around, they'll open up and start interacting with it," she said.

Wind describes golden retrievers as "very gentle, sensitive, highly trainable and wanting to please." Before

Wind purchased Johnny from High Mark Kennels, he was a champion show dog.

She said Johnny is able to tolerate many attitudes and has a personality that is able to fit into the calm environment of a clinical practice.

"My anxiety really goes down in treating difficult patients with Johnny. It is very reassuring to have him around. He knows he has to be calm at work," she said. People call Johnny "Mr. Mellow," Wind said, because he is so calm.

Wind said one of her patients, who often tries to harm her ill brother, is schizophrenic. But because the patient likes animals and is gentle with them, Wind said she uses Johnny to show the child how to treat her brother.

"There is really a distinct change with kids. I have never had a child say to put him out," Wind said. "By the end of the session, they are all over him."

Wind said she consults her patients to find out if any of them are allergic to or afraid of animals. And she does not use Johnny as part of therapy if patients have an objection to the procedure.

"I hope this is a statement about the creative ways we are able to provide treatment," Wind said.



GABRIEL MADDEN
The Gamecock



RYAN SIMS The Gamecock

GENDER WARDROBE

ON A RECENT TRIP TO THE MALL WITH A GROUP OF FRIENDS, I REALIZED EXACTLY HOW MUCH THE SHOPPING HABITS OF MEN AND WOMEN DIFFER.

As we went from store to store, the females in the group continued to try on every article of clothing they could get their hands on. Call me crazy, but I have never spent 45 minutes in a dressing room to see if a pair of pants matched my watch.

Guys buy clothes the way we do just about everything else in life. We want to make a good deal, but we want to get it over fast. When I go into a store, I can immediately look at the clothes on display and decide if I like them. Occasionally, I have to try on a pair of pants, but I can make it and out of the store with a time of about 10.000 minutes.

Women, on the other hand, use a lot more effort when shopping, and an innocent excursion to Columbia Mall can easily turn into an all-day nightmare. The following scenarios have been experienced by everyone, so pay close attention to them so you can be better informed the next time you go shopping.

Example 1. The dress (or anything else, for that matter) that just won't fit. The woman usually only weighs about 95 pounds and claims that she is too fat for anything in the store. Guys, when she steps out of that dressing room, she will ask you how she looks. Even if you are sincere and tell her she looks great, she will tell you that you are lying, and this process will be repeated six times that afternoon.

Example 2. The salesman that just won't give up. I am approached by this person in 99 percent of the stores in any mall. I usually tell him that I am just looking until I really need him. However, the salesman still tries to sell me everything in the store.

When it comes to women, the overzealous salesman will tell them, "Oh, you have the figure for this. You'd look great in this, homegirl!" Too often, I have seen women take so many clothes into the dressing room that they need a team of salesmen to help them. Then they buy everything they try on, bring it home and take it back two days later. Either they want to impress their friends with what they bought, or they just can't make up their minds.

Example 3. The newly issued credit card. Because all of us are harassed by the Discover/Visa/Master-Card/American Express man in front of the Russell House five days a week, this is a situation that both men and women can get themselves into. Sure, that free T-shirt or squirt bottle seems like a good deal at the time, but once we hit the mall, a strange instinct seems to take over our minds.

We tend to look at all the clothing, tennis shoes, stereo equipment and CDs and say to ourselves, "I'll just pay the bill at the end of the month. I can handle it." That is, until you count in finance charges, annual fees and the constant threat that our credit report will be screwed up for life.

As you can see, men and women both have shopping habits that are less than perfect. However, men tend to look at the shopping experience as one where they will actually accomplish something. Women, on the other hand, become mindless creatures that aimlessly roam the mall in search of anything that will remotely look good on them, and that is the way it will always be.

WOMEN KNOW THAT SHOPPING IS SERIOUS BUSINESS WHILE MANY MEN CONSIDER SHOPPING TO BE A PASTIME OR A CHORE, WOMEN KNOW "MALL" IS A EUPHEMISM FOR "BATTLE ZONE."

We arm ourselves with credit card and checkbook in pursuit of the perfect outfit, shirt or pair of shoes, trying to remember that this is supposed to be fun.

Today will be the day, we think, that I find the blouse to go with the skirt with the tags still on it in the closet. It's out there somewhere. It's just a matter of finding it.

There is no such idealism for guys. The hunt for the just-right piece of clothing is lost on the men.

"Guys walk in already knowing what they want. They get it and leave, occasionally stopping to look at the clearance racks," business sophomore Tim Cooper said. "Girls go in and could wander aimlessly for an hour and still walk out with nothing."

What guys don't understand is that shopping is more than just walking around the mall. It's a bonding experience. Mothers, daughters and girlfriends typically get along best when they shop because they are united for a common purpose.

It's only clothes, right? Sophomore psychology major Becky Fleming said that while clothes are only important for the guys when the Duckheads start coming apart at the seams, girls know it's the clothes that make the woman.

"When guys go in, they're looking for a shirt and a pair of pants," Fleming said. "Girls aren't going to buy just anything. It's an investment for them."

While maroon, navy, khaki and white are all pretty much interchangeable, and a tie, slacks and maybe a coat will do for pretty much any occasion, women must face the world of dress pants vs. skirts vs.

the power suit vs. the dress. I'm sure you can get the idea.

It's hard for men to grasp the idea of being underdressed or overdressed, but believe me, wearing the dress slacks when you're supposed to wear the power suit can be the kiss of death.

Not to mention accessorizing and all of the rules. For example, it's important to switch handbags for different seasons. Yes, there are such things as winter and summer purses. As for shoes, never, ever wear your white pumps after Labor Day.

So, if women spend what seems like an inordinate amount of time agonizing over whether these earrings go with that blouse, now you know why.

However, if men give women a hard time about the time they spend trying on article of clothing after article of clothing, have you ever been shopping for electronics with a guy?

At least we don't research Consumer Reports before we hit the mall. Guys will spend forever when it comes to electronics. If guys shake in their boots about visions of holding their girlfriend's purse in The Limited, girls dread trips to Best Buy.

It's true that some women will take their time when it comes to shopping. And yes, it's true that girls could try on every blouse and every pair of shoes in the store and it still wouldn't be right, but for women, clothes are just not something to put on in the morning.

"Girls go in with the attitude that they want something to feel good in, look good in," Fleming said. "Guys go in with the attitude that they need something to cover themselves up in."

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