

## Warning Concerning Copyright Restrictions

The Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials.

Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If electronic transmission of reserve material is used for purposes in excess of what constitutes "fair use," that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

University of Nevada, Reno

**Professional Writers, Personality Types, & Genre Choice**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts in English Writing and the Honors Program

by

Kimberly-Anne M. Darnell

Dr. Lynda Walsh, Thesis Advisor

May, 2011

**UNIVERSITY  
OF NEVADA  
RENO**

**THE HONORS PROGRAM**

We recommend that the thesis  
prepared under our supervision by

**KIMBERLY-ANNE M. DARNELL**

entitled

**Professional Writers, Personality Types, & Genre Choice**

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH WRITING**

---

Lynda Walsh, Ph.D., Faculty Mentor

---

Tamara Valentine, Ph.D., Director, **Honors Program**

May, 2011

## Abstract

The major question of interest in this study is, *Are there associations between professional writers' personality types and the genres in which they write?* Accordingly, data were collected via interviews with and surveys of professional writers. In Phase I of the research study, three face-to-face interviews with writers representative of different genres were conducted. Information from these interviews widened the number of participants for Phase II, in which an online survey asking for self-reported personality types and professional genres was extended to many more writers via an emailed web link.

Once all survey results were in, Fisher's Exact Test was performed to assess the statistical relevance of the data. The results of this study suggest that writers of different genres may differ significantly on the personality index of judging-perceiving, with poets tending to identify with a perceiving style while fiction, nonfiction, and academic writers tend to identify with a judging style. This finding seems to echo the notions put forth in the interviews as well, that poets are perceived as especially unique from other writers. Follow-up research is encouraged to verify this tendency, as this was a limited pilot study. This knowledge may be useful for professional writers, aspiring writers, and teachers of writing in vocational, pedagogical, and personal capacities.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my faculty mentor, Dr. Lynda Walsh, whose guidance and support greatly contributed to my learning experience. I would also like to show my gratitude to the Honors program staff for their ongoing support, the University Math Center staff for their statistical aide, and my research participants for their time.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Honors Undergraduate Research Award committee for the grant that funded this research.

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Literature Review	
a. Background on Personality Studies.....	2
b. Background on Genre Studies.....	5
c. Research Gap.....	8
Methodology	
a. Phase I (Interviews).....	8
b. Phase II (Surveys).....	10
Results	
a. Phase I (Interviews).....	12
b. Phase II (Surveys).....	12
Discussion.....	13
Conclusion.....	15
References.....	17
Appendix A – Tables.....	19
Appendix B – Survey.....	23
Appendix C – Cognitive Style Inventory.....	25

## List of Tables

Table 1 <i>Raw Data: Summary of Survey Responses</i> .....	19
Table 2.1 <i>Genre by Introversion-Extraversion</i> .....	19
Table 2.2 <i>Genre by Sensing-Intuition</i> .....	19
Table 2.3 <i>Genre by Thinking-Feeling</i> .....	20
Table 2.4 <i>Genre by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	20
Table 3.1 <i>Nonfiction v. Fiction by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	21
Table 3.2 <i>Fiction v. Poetry by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	21
Table 3.3 <i>Fiction v. Academic by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	21
Table 3.4 <i>Nonfiction v. Poetry by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	21
Table 3.5 <i>Nonfiction v. Academic by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	22
Table 3.6 <i>Poetry v. Academic by Judging-Perceiving</i> .....	22

## Professional Writers, Personality Types & Genre Choice

### **Introduction**

For several decades, the field of composition has been investigating the relationship between literary genre and factors like voice and identity, theoretically speculating about how writers and teachers of writing can best conceptualize genre (cf. Bazerman, 1997; Freedman, 1997; Brooke & Jacobs, 1997). Simultaneously, the field of psychology has been investigating the relationship between personality types, skills, and interests and how those factors apply to decisions like career choices (cf. Chauvin, Miller, Godfrey, & Thomas, 2010) and individual differences in language (Pennebaker & King, 1999; Li & Chignell, 2010). This study seeks to combine these strands of research to see how writers' personality types relate to their professional choices of genre in order to create vocational, pedagogical, and personal insight into professional writing choices. As writing professionally can seem like a great risk—given that job placement is far from certain— information that will help writers and educators make informed choices is of value.

This study sprang from the observation that many aspiring writers lack direction as to which genres they should pursue professionally. This observation raises questions about successful, professional writers: What led them to choose to write in their respective genres? Did personality play a part? These questions point to a gap in the research that should be filled in order to improve self- and societal understanding of professional writers and to support aspiring writers who need guidance in finding their own genre of choice. However, for this study, cause-and-effect relationships should not

be presumed, as such attributions were not the intent of this research; rather, the results should be considered a prompt for future research by scholars and a guide for reflection by writers. The major question of interest in this study is, *Are there associations between professional writers' personality types and the genres in which they write?*

Accordingly, data were collected via interviews with and surveys of professional writers. In Phase I of the research study, informal face-to-face interviews with writers representative of different genres were conducted, the purpose of which was to gain an understanding of common perceptions of differences among writers as well as to network with the interviewees in order to widen the number of participants for Phase II. In Phase II, an online survey asking for self-reported personality types and professional genres was extended to many more writers via an emailed web link. The predicted findings were that relationships between personality type and professional genre choice would be found that differentiated writers of different genres.

## **Literature Review**

Since this is an interdisciplinary study (and the disciplines of psychology and composition have different approaches to the topics of personality and genre as they relate to writers), background on both personality studies and genre studies is outlined below.

### *Background on Personality Studies*

Personality has been defined and measured in a number of ways, often involving the use of personality inventories, which are assessment tools used to measure a person's identification with selected personality factors, such as extraverted /introverted.

Typically, these inventories consist of around 100 statements and ask the individual to rate each statement on a Likert scale (i.e. strongly agree to strongly disagree; not at all like me to very like me). After all of the responses are scored, the output is normally a code that shows the personality factors with which the person identifies (i.e. for the Myers-Briggs, the output would be a four-letter code such as ISFJ, which stands for Introverted-Sensing-Feeling-Judging) and a detailed description of the personal characteristics associated with those factors. Some of the major personality models that utilize such inventories are the five-factor model (or Big Five), the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI), and Holland's vocational typology. These inventories are often used in psychological research since they provide a means of quantifying personality; they are also used in vocational counseling/instruction as well as by individuals who simply wish to understand themselves better (McCrae & Costa, 1989). These three models have even shown to have inter-relations (i.e. Those identifying with Intuition on the MBTI also identify with Openness to Experience on the Big Five); McCrae and Costa (1989) related the Big Five to the MBTI, and Chauvin, Miller, Godfrey, and Thomas (2010) related the MBTI to Holland's typology.

The MBTI is the most widely used personality inventory (Reinhold, 1997-2011) and is the inventory referenced in this study. Created by Isabel Briggs Myers and her mother Katharine Briggs, the MBTI is derived from Carl Jung's psychodynamic theory (Myers & Briggs Foundation). It measures personality type on four dimensions: the indices of extraversion-introversion, sensation-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judging-perceiving. However, MBTI type is defined as "more than simply the four basic

preferences; it is a dynamic and complex interrelated system of personality” that measures people’s orientations to the world and their dominant mental functions (Myers & Briggs Foundation).

There is some controversy over the validity of the MBTI with claims of little structural support (Stricker & Ross, 1964) and evidence against test-retest reliability contingent on mood (Howes, & Carskadon, 1979). However, other studies have showed favorable validity in a number of ways: positive psychological validity (the extent to which people’s self-perceptions match up with inventory results), convergence with other personality inventories (as mentioned above), and generally favorable criterion validity (Carlson, 1989). The MBTI continues to be used widely in vocational counseling and instruction, mostly as a prompt to discussion and reflection on a deeper level for the person seeking guidance. Since this is a small study that seeks to give a similar prompt for reflection to writers and not to claim widespread validity of results, the MBTI is an appropriate model to begin with.

As previously stated, there has been some scholarly interest in how personality relates to individual differences in language. This phenomenon has been studied by the analysis of written texts, as in the two studies outlined below. These studies have found that personality is in fact related to language use, a correlation that lays a foundation for investigating relationships between personality and genre, since language use differs among genres (Swales, 1991).

Pennebaker and King (1999) conducted a study in which they analyzed writing samples of several hundred university students and correlated the students’ word use to

the Big Five personality dimensions. They used the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) program for text analysis and categorized word use under the factors of immediacy, making distinctions, the social past, and rationalization; then they correlated each of those LIWC factors with the Big 5 factors of neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Their results concluded that word use and personality are correlated in low magnitudes. For example, they found that high extraversion is correlated with more positive emotion words and social process words but fewer negative emotion words. Similarly, conscientious and agreeable people used more positive emotion words and fewer negative emotion words. They concluded that linguistic style does provide valid insight into the study of personality.

Li and Chignell (2010) confirmed this conclusion in their study on personality and the reading and writing of blogs. They, too, found that emotion word use correlated with writers' personalities. They further focused their study by looking at two distinct genres of blog-writing—commentary and personal journal—and by assessing readers' perceptions of writers' personalities within these two genres. Readers rated the personalities of bloggers who wrote journal entries as more introverted, more agreeable and less conscientious than for those who wrote commentary entries. The authors speculated that these attributions could be a reflection of the topics and word uses linked to the genres themselves and not to the writers, but they noted that further research needs to be done on this issue.

### *Background on Genre Studies*

Scholars have defined genres by similarities in strategies or forms, by similarities

in audience, by similarities in modes of thinking, and by similarities in rhetorical situations (Miller, 1984). Formal or textual definitions of genre are no longer widely accepted in the field of composition; genre is now understood to be unfixed, situational, and socially rooted (Bazerman, 1997). Consequently, Bazerman suggests that this turn be taken in the teaching of genre as well, so that genres are not just formal reproductions but appropriate ways of approaching different social circumstances. He goes on to say that teachers should help students locate the kinds of writing that they themselves are interested in pursuing. (Personal interest and personality would seem to be strongly related in this instance).

Genre studies differ from psychological studies in that they do not typically concern themselves with terms like “personality” but more so with words like “voice” and “identity.” For this study, these terms are assumed to point to the same idea as personality because they, too, are concerned with how individuals are uniquely distinguished from one another.

Freedman (1997) says that the issue of identity is foregrounded in genre studies and that “the learner must want to take on this identity” (p. 189). She states that pushing students to take on different genres is to push them to take on different perspectives and subject-positions, and it is then up to the students to what extent they personally identify with each genre.

Brooke and Jacobs (1997) echo this notion, advocating that genre should be seen as a process that “shows us what writers are choosing (and why) as they develop their own reasons for writing” and not as a product that “shows us what writers aren’t

choosing (and why) as they distance themselves from some of the social roles around them” (p. 225). They argue that writers’ relationships to social roles follow the same reasoning as their relationships to genre: “In the same way we create a self by negotiating our stance toward the social roles we inhabit... so we create our self as writer by negotiating our stance toward the genres we use” (p. 217). In line with this view of genre as “identity negotiation,” in their writing program at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Brooke and Jacobs (1997) allow their students to choose their own genres and purposes for writing. They speculate that life stage seems to affect students’ genre choices, since most first-year students gravitate toward personal experience genres while more experienced students typically explore professional and unfamiliar ones. In either case, the authors argue that genre is a way for student writers to explore who they are and who they are becoming by experimenting with a wide number of genres and seeing how each fits.

In a 1985 telephone interview, the acclaimed writer Rita Dove alluded to this same idea of a genre “fitting” a person when she said, “I really believe I’m more of a poet than a fiction writer, that it seems to fit me better” (Johnsen & Peabody, 2003, p. 18). Dove also refrained from naming people who have influenced her work, stating that she was more concerned with “trying to find the voice that’s truest and the style that’s truest to [her] own voice” (p. 24). From student writers to award-winning writers, these issues of voice and identity as they relate to genre seem to have a notable bearing on decisions about practice and vocation.

### *Research Gap*

After reviewing the literature on both personality and genre as they relate to writers, it is known that there are correlations between word use and personality and that genre has been tied to writers' identities. What is lacking is the explicit knowledge of which personality types are tied to which genres, and this study seeks to address this gap in research in order to offer writers more practical vocational, pedagogical, and personal enlightenment.

### **Methodology**

This study had two major components. Phase I entailed the informal, preliminary interviews with professional writers while Phase II entailed the web-based survey. Phase I was a useful precursor to Phase II, as it widened the number of survey participants and validated that some professional writers do perceive personality differences among writers of different genres.

Approval for both phases was granted by the University Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board: IRB00000216.

### **Phase I**

#### *Participants*

Participants for Phase I were 3 professional, adult writers recruited from the English faculty at the University of Nevada, Reno – one poet, one fiction writer, and one nonfiction writer. For this study, a professional writer was defined as someone who has published at least one piece of writing in any given genre. The term was defined in this way because this study was interested in writers who had experienced some level of

success in their writing of specific genres, and publication is a quantifiable marker of such professional success.

### *Procedure*

Individual interviews with participants were scheduled via email. Interviews took approximately 20 minutes and were conducted in faculty offices. The major question addressed was designed informally as a means of generating conversation about perceptions of differences between different types of writers. The final question was asked in order to network with the interviewees to expand the number of survey participants.

At the time of interview, the following questions were asked:

1. Are there certain personality traits that you feel are generally linked with specific genre/s (i.e. Poets are typically X)?
2. Are there other writers who you would like to refer me to for participation in my survey? Do you belong to any writer's associations or clubs that you would like to extend my survey to?

Participants' responses were recorded via note-taking by the interviewer (no personally identifying information was noted). These notes were aimed at recording any personality descriptors mentioned by the interviewees as well as any email addresses they noted that could be used for the recruitment of participants for Phase II. Since these interviews were meant to be very informal and the sample size was extremely small, no recording or transcription was done (i.e. the sample size was so small that coding wouldn't have yielded any significant patterns). The main purpose of the interviews was

simply to informally assess writers' perceptions of personality differences among writers of different genres and to see if those perceptions could guide the interpretation of the survey results.

## **Phase II**

### *Participants*

Participants for Phase II were 67 professional, adult writers. These participants were recruited from University of Nevada, Reno faculty (via their public email addresses) as well as by the email addresses provided from Phase I interviewees. All of the writers emailed were also encouraged to forward the survey web link to other writers and/or to post the survey on writing listservs in which they participate. The same qualifications of Phase I applied: In order to be considered a professional writer, a participant must have published at least one piece of writing.

### *Procedure*

Due to financial limitations, the MBTI was not administered to survey participants in this study. Rather, participants were instructed to take the Cognitive Style Inventory (see Appendix C), an online self-scoring inventory which allows people to approximate their MBTI scores quickly and without cost by self-identifying with brief listed descriptions and characteristics of each preference choice (Reinhold, 1997-2011). The Cognitive Style Inventory was created by Ross Reinhold, researcher and qualified administrator of the MBTI, not as a substitute for the MBTI but as an introduction to it, with aspirations to increase people's interest in personality types (Reinhold, 1997-2011). This inventory was the most accessible tool for this exploratory, pilot study with limited

resources, as it allowed participants to estimate their MBTI score on the Web in a short amount of time at no cost.

The survey was built online at SurveyMonkey.com, and the web link was emailed to a number of professional writers with a deadline to complete the survey three weeks from the time of email. In order to increase the number of responses, the recruitment emails also included notice of an incentive: survey participants could choose to be entered into a raffle to win a \$200 gift card to Amazon. The survey questions asked writers to identify their primary genre and their four-letter personality type (see Appendix B) so that these two variables could be investigated for associations in order to answer the research question stated in the introduction.

Genre can be categorized in a number of ways (i.e. short stories and novels; comedies and tragedies; etc.). The primary genres listed as choices on this survey are a reflection of the basic genre differentiations typical in college-level writing courses: fiction, nonfiction, and poetry. Not only were the investigators most familiar with this classification; it also left the number of genre categories manageable for this small, pilot study.

Once the survey deadline had passed, the gift card winner was randomly selected. The winner was notified via email and asked to respond by calling and providing his information so that the gift card could be mailed. All survey data were tallied by the indices of genre and personality (see Table 1). Fisher's Exact Test was then performed with the help of employees in the University Math Center in order to determine if any relationships of statistical significance had been found between the personality categories

and the genre categories.

## **Results**

### **Phase I**

Interview data suggested that writers themselves perceive differences between different types of writers and are interested in pinpointing them but face difficulty in doing so. There was an articulation of dissimilarity between poets and other writers, in which poets are thought to be short-term oriented and a bit more “whimsical” while fiction writers are assumed to be more long-term oriented and “serious” in demeanor. This dissimilarity was noted in two of the three interviews, with poets seeming to be characterized as the most different in personality from other professional writers.

### **Phase II**

Survey responses were tallied and are summarized in Table 1 (see Appendix A). Since the three responses in the “Other” category were too few to process, they were left out of the significance testing.

Fisher’s Exact Test was performed on the survey data (see Tables 2.1-2.4). This test measures the significance of the association between variables. It is comparable to the chi-square test, except that it produces an exact calculation rather than an approximation and it can be used on small sample sizes. The p-value that results from the test represents the probability of obtaining a test statistic at least as extreme as the one that was observed, assuming that there is no association between the two variables. Whereas in many other statistical tests, a researcher would mandate that the p-value be equal to or less than 5% in order to attribute a significant relationship between the

variables, there is a controversy that Fisher's test is too conservative for such a model, so fixed significance levels should not be used.

With this in mind, the data comparing the index of judging-perceiving to the different genres of writing may be significant. While Tables 2.1 through 2.3 all have high p-values (and therefore no statistically significant relationships), Table 2.4 has a p-value of .0899, just .0399 from the standard .05 p-value that generally establishes significance. For this reason, further tests were run on this personality dimension comparing just two genres at a time (see Tables 3.1-3.6). In all three comparisons of poetry to other genres, relatively low p-values emerge (.0656 for fiction versus poetry, .0516 for nonfiction versus poetry, and .0406 for academic writing versus poetry). This pattern suggests that poets tend to identify with a perceiving style while fiction, nonfiction, and academic writers tend to identify with a judging style, with an especially pronounced difference between poets and academic writers.

## **Discussion**

The results of this study suggest that writers of different genres may differ significantly on the personality index of judging-perceiving, with poets tending to identify with a perceiving style while fiction, nonfiction, and academic writers tend to identify with a judging style. In lay terms, this means that poets may be characterized more by a preference for freedom as opposed to routine and structure (see a more detailed description in Question Four of the Cognitive Style Inventory, Appendix C). This finding seems to echo the notions put forth in the interviews as well, that poets are perceived as especially unique from other writers.

The knowledge of this distinction between poets and other writers may be useful to professional writers, aspiring writers, and teachers of writing. For professional writers, it offers some confirmation and understanding of the perceived differences amongst themselves. It also adds to societal understanding of why writers compose what they do, pointing to at least one of the factors that make their choice of genre a good fit. This awareness is even more relevant for aspiring writers who need guidance in finding the genre that fits them (i.e. since there seems to be a relationship between poets and perceiving styles, aspiring writers with perceiving styles might want to try out poetry whereas those with judging styles might not). Writing teachers would be great candidates to guide this process if they had students in need of professional direction.

Of course, these conclusions should be verified, as the limitations of this study were substantial. In regards to the interviews, they were few and informal, and while they did suggest that professional writers may be interested in the personality differences between writers of different genres as well as provide insight into what some of the perceptions of those differences are, it did not seem that writers are well-equipped to speak spontaneously about personality in ways that lead to conclusive reflections. If future studies should choose to include the use of interviews, a more formal vocabulary of personality that can serve as a prompt to discussion and reflection would be recommended.

In regards to the survey, although there were 67 responses, the majority of those responses were from nonfiction writers, leaving much less data on poets and fiction writers (see Table 1). Ideally, one would want to have enough writers so that a chi-square

analysis could be performed. Secondly, the reported personality types may not be accurate, as the Cognitive Style Inventory only gives an *approximation* of a person's MBTI score and is not a valid substitute. Another concern is the interpretation of the genre categories. For example, although "academic writing" could certainly fall under the category of "nonfiction," seven participants chose to differentiate it by typing it into the "other" category. The question then becomes, Did all academic writers classify themselves as such or did some classify themselves under "nonfiction"? It is suspected that some classified themselves one way while others classified themselves another way, in which case there may be some inconsistency in the data. Future studies would need to more precisely define each genre category, or at least give more guidance to academic writers as to how to categorize themselves.

### **Conclusion**

This study's aim was to answer the question: *Are there associations between professional writers' personality types and the genres in which they write?* Surveys of professional writers have pointed to at least one significant association: Poets tend to identify with a perceiving style while fiction, nonfiction, and academic writers tend to identify with a judging style. Interviews informally supported this notion, with an articulation that poets did seem to be set apart from other writers in some way.

Not only does this finding offer some confirmation and understanding of the perceived differences amongst professional writers; it also has the potential to offer pedagogical guidance to teachers of writing in how to direct their writing students into genre choices that fit their personalities. If confirmed and researched further, personality

differences could lay the foundation for vocational counseling to aspiring writers trying to find their professional genre of choice.

A suggested follow-up study would be one that mimicked the survey methods of this study on a larger scale with the fine-tuning of the genre categories and the use of a valid personality inventory. As noted above, verification of the found differentiation between poets and other writers would serve as useful knowledge to professional writers, aspiring writers, and teachers of writing, in vocational, pedagogical, and personal capacities.

## References

- Bazerman, C. (1997). The life of genre, the life in the classroom. In W. Bishop & H. Ostrom (Eds.), *Genre and Writing* (pp. 19-26). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.
- Brooke, R., & Jacobs, D. (1997). Genre in writing workshops: Identity negotiation and student-centered writing. In W. Bishop & H. Ostrom (Eds.), *Genre and Writing* (pp. 215-228). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.
- Carlson, J. G. (1989). Affirmative: In support of researching the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 67(8), 484-486. Retrieved from <http://ejournals.ebsco.com/login.asp?bCookiesEnabled=TRUE>
- Chauvin, I., Miller, M., Godfrey, E., & Thomas, D. (2010). Relationship between Holland's vocational typology and Myers-Briggs' types: Implications for career counselors. *Psychology Journal*, 7(2), 61-66. Retrieved from <http://ejournals.ebsco.com/login.asp?bCookiesEnabled=TRUE>
- Freedman, A. (1997). Situating “genre” and situated genres: Understanding student writing from a genre perspective. In W. Bishop & H. Ostrom (Eds.), *Genre and Writing* (pp. 179-189). Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc.
- Howes, R. J. & Carskadon, T.G. (1979). Test-retest reliabilities of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as a function of mood changes. *Research in Psychological Type*, 2(1), 67-72.
- Johnsen, G., and Peabody, R. (2003). A cage of sound. In E.G. Ingersoll (Ed.), *Conversations with Rita Dove*, (pp. 15-37). Jackson, MS: University Press of

Mississippi. (Original work published 1985).

Li, J., & Chignell, M. (2010). Birds of a feather: How personality influences blog writing and reading. *International Journal of Human -- Computer Studies*, 68(9), 589-602. doi:10.1016/j.ijhcs.2010.04.001.

McCrae, R.R., & Costa Jr., P.T. (1989). Reinterpreting the Myers–Briggs Type Indicator from the perspective of the five-factor model of personality. *Journal of Personality*, 57(1), 17–40. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6494.1989.tb00759.x

Miller, C.R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, 151-167.

Retrieved from

[sullivanfiles.net/science\\_rhetoric/miller\\_genre\\_as\\_social\\_action.pdf](http://sullivanfiles.net/science_rhetoric/miller_genre_as_social_action.pdf)

Myers & Briggs Foundation. MBTI type dynamics. Retrieved from

<http://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/understanding-mbti-type-dynamics/type-dynamics.asp>

Pennebaker, J., & King, L. (1999). Linguistic styles: Language use as an individual difference. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 77(6), 1296-1312.

Retrieved from <http://ejournals.ebsco.com/login.asp?bCookiesEnabled=TRUE>

Reinhold, Ross. (1997-2011). Myers Briggs test: What is your Myers-Briggs personality type? Retrieved from [http://www.personalitypathways.com/type\\_inventory.html](http://www.personalitypathways.com/type_inventory.html)

Stricker, L. J., & Ross, J. (1964). An assessment of some structural properties of the

Jungian personality typology. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 68(1), 62-71. doi:10.1037/h0043580

Swales, J.M. (1991). *Genre analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## Appendix A – Tables

**Table 1***Raw Data: Summary of Survey Responses*

Total: n=67*	Fiction (n=10)	Nonfiction (n=39)	Poetry (n=8)	Academic* (n=7)	Other* (n=3)
Introverted	8	28	7	7	2
Extraverted	2	11	1	0	1
Sensing	3	9	1	1	2
Intuition	7	30	7	6	1
Thinking	6	18	4	5	2
Feeling	4	21	4	2	1
Judging	6	21	1	5	1
Perceiving	4	18	7	2	2

\*Note: There were actually a total of 68 responses, but one survey response was not used due to incoherence.

\*Academic: includes “academic,” “scholarly,” and “lit. theory/criticism.”

\*Other: includes “technical writing,” “How To books/articles,” Children’s Lit.

**Table 2.1***Genre by Introversion-Extraversion*

Genre	Introverted		
	Frequency	Percent	Row Pct
	Yes	No	Total
Fiction	8	2	10
	12.50	3.13	15.63
	80.00	20.00	
	16.00	14.29	
Nonfiction	28	11	39
	43.75	17.19	60.94
	71.79	28.21	
	56.00	78.57	
Poetry	7	1	8
	10.94	1.56	12.50
	87.50	12.50	
	14.00	7.14	
Academic	7	0	7
	10.94	0.00	10.94
	100.00	0.00	
	14.00	0.00	
Total	50	14	64
	78.13	21.88	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Table Probability (P)	0.0126
Pr <= P	0.4670

**Table 2.2***Genre by Sensing-Intuition*

Genre	Sensing		
	Frequency	Percent	Row Pct
	Yes	No	Total
Fiction	3	7	10
	4.69	10.94	15.63
	30.00	70.00	
	21.43	14.00	
Nonfiction	9	30	39
	14.06	46.88	60.94
	23.08	76.92	
	64.29	60.00	
Poetry	1	7	8
	1.56	10.94	12.50
	12.50	87.50	
	7.14	14.00	
Academic	1	6	7
	1.56	9.38	10.94
	14.29	85.71	
	7.14	12.00	
Total	14	50	64
	21.88	78.13	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Table Probability (P)	0.0298
Pr <= P	0.8297

**Table 2.3**  
*Genre by Thinking-Feeling*

Genre	Thinking		Total
	Yes	No	
Fiction	6	4	10
	9.38	6.25	15.63
	60.00	40.00	
	18.18	12.90	
Nonfiction	18	21	39
	28.13	32.81	60.94
	46.15	53.85	
	54.55	67.74	
Poetry	4	4	8
	6.25	6.25	12.50
	50.00	50.00	
	12.12	12.90	
Academic	5	2	7
	7.81	3.13	10.94
	71.43	28.57	
	15.15	6.45	
Total	33	31	64
	51.56	48.44	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Table Probability (P) 0.0108  
Pr <= P 0.6596

**Table 2.4**  
*Genre by Judging-Sensing*

Genre	Judging		Total
	Yes	No	
Fiction	6	4	10
	9.38	6.25	15.63
	60.00	40.00	
	18.18	12.90	
Nonfiction	21	18	39
	32.81	28.13	60.94
	53.85	46.15	
	63.64	58.06	
Poetry	1	7	8
	1.56	10.94	12.50
	12.50	87.50	
	3.03	22.58	
Academic	5	2	7
	7.81	3.13	10.94
	71.43	28.57	
	15.15	6.45	
Total	33	31	64
	51.56	48.44	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Table Probability (P) 0.0012  
Pr <= P 0.0899

**Table 3.1**  
Nonfiction v. Fiction by Judging-  
Perceiving

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Fiction	6	4	10
	12.24	8.16	20.41
	60.00	40.00	
	22.22	18.18	
Nonfiction	21	18	39
	42.86	36.73	79.59
	53.85	46.15	
	77.78	81.82	
Total	27	22	49
	55.10	44.90	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	6
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.7576
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.5059
Table Probability (P)	0.2635
Two-sided Pr <= P	1.0000

**Table 3.2**  
Fiction v. Poetry by Judging-  
Perceiving

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Fiction	6	4	10
	33.33	22.22	55.56
	60.00	40.00	
	85.71	36.36	
Poetry	1	7	8
	5.56	38.89	44.44
	12.50	87.50	
	14.29	63.64	
Total	7	11	18
	38.89	61.11	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	6
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.9962
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.0566
Table Probability (P)	0.0528
Two-sided Pr <= P	0.0656

**Table 3.3**  
Fiction v. Academic by Judging-  
Perceiving

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Fiction	6	4	10
	35.29	23.53	58.82
	60.00	40.00	
	54.55	66.67	
Academic	5	2	7
	29.41	11.76	41.18
	71.43	28.57	
	45.45	33.33	
Total	11	6	17
	64.71	35.29	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	6
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.5158
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.8405
Table Probability (P)	0.3563
Two-sided Pr <= P	1.0000

**Table 3.4**  
Nonfiction v. Poetry by Judging-  
Perceiving

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Nonfiction	21	18	39
	44.68	38.30	82.98
	53.85	46.15	
	95.45	72.00	
Poetry	1	7	8
	2.13	14.89	17.02
	12.50	87.50	
	4.55	28.00	
Total	22	25	47
	46.81	53.19	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	21
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.9966
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.0371
Table Probability (P)	0.0336
Two-sided Pr <= P	0.0516

**Table 3.5***Nonfiction v. Academic by Judging-Perceiving*

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Nonfict	21	18	39
Frequency	45.65	39.13	84.78
Percent	53.85	46.15	
Row Pct	80.77	90.00	
Col Pct			
Academic	5	2	7
Frequency	10.87	4.35	15.22
Percent	71.43	28.57	
Row Pct	19.23	10.00	
Col Pct			
Total	26	20	46
Frequency	56.52	43.48	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	21
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.3318
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.9017
Table Probability (P)	0.2335
Two-sided Pr <= P	0.4462

**Table 3.6***Poetry v. Academic by Judging-Perceiving*

Genre	Judging		
	Yes	No	Total
Poetry	1	7	8
Frequency	6.67	46.67	53.33
Percent	12.50	87.50	
Row Pct	16.67	77.78	
Col Pct			
Academic	5	2	7
Frequency	33.33	13.33	46.67
Percent	71.43	28.57	
Row Pct	83.33	22.22	
Col Pct			
Total	6	9	15
Frequency	40.00	60.00	100.00

Fisher's Exact Test

Cell (1,1) Frequency (F)	1
Left-sided Pr <= F	0.0350
Right-sided Pr >= F	0.9986
Table Probability (P)	0.0336
Two-sided Pr <= P	0.0406

## Appendix B - Survey

**Professional Writers, Personality Types, & Genre Choice****1. Survey Information Sheet**

Dear Participant,

I am a student investigator studying English at the University of Nevada, Reno. I am conducting a research study to ascertain whether or not there is a correlation between professional writers' personality types and genre choices. I am inviting your participation, which will involve filling out this brief online survey and submitting your responses electronically. Your participation will take approximately 15 minutes.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study, and you also must have published at least one piece of writing.

Your participation will contribute information that may be used to inform aspiring and professional writers about relationships among writers' personality types and genre choices.

As a result of study participation, the likelihood and seriousness of risk is low. However, there is a chance of psychological discomfort due to self-reflection (i.e. self-doubt). Conversely, there is also the potential benefit of greater self-understanding due to the introspection prompted by the survey questions.

Your survey responses will be kept confidential and will not be linked to you personally. You will never be asked to provide your name or any other identifying information. The results of the study may be used in presentations or publications but only the combined results from all participants will be used. SurveyMonkey collects IP addresses for internal use.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please feel free to contact me at [kimpossible77@hotmail.com](mailto:kimpossible77@hotmail.com).

You may ask about your rights as a research subject or you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any comments, concerns, or complaints to the University of Nevada, Reno Social Behavioral Institutional Review Board, telephone number (775) 327-2368.

Filling out and submitting this questionnaire will imply your consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Kim Darnell

Next

Powered by **SurveyMonkey**  
Create your own [free online survey](#) now!

## Professional Writers, Personality Types, & Genre Choice

### 2. Survey

1. Mark the primary genre in which you write professionally. By primary genre, I mean the one with which you most closely identify. (Please remember that for the purposes of this survey, a professional writer in a particular genre has published at least one piece of writing in that genre).

Fiction

Nonfiction

Poetry

Other (please specify)

2. Open a new tab or browser window and copy and paste the following link:

[http://www.personalitypathways.com/type\\_inventory.html](http://www.personalitypathways.com/type_inventory.html)

Determine your personality type by answering the four questions of the Cognitive Style Inventory (found towards the bottom of the web page). Enter your four-letter result in the text box below.

Example: ISFJ

Open a new tab or browser window and copy and paste the following link:

[http://www.personalitypathways.com/type\\_inventory.html](http://www.personalitypathways.com/type_inventory.html) Determine your personality type by answering the four questions of the Cognitive Style Inventory (found towards the bottom of the web page). Enter your four-letter result in the text box below. Example: ISFJ

*If you would like to be entered into the raffle to win a \$200 gift card to Amazon, please email me at [kimpossible77@hotmail.com](mailto:kimpossible77@hotmail.com) with the subject line "Survey Raffle." No message or personal information is necessary. Only the winner will receive a return email.*

Prev

Done

Powered by **SurveyMonkey**  
Create your own [free online survey](#) now!

## Appendix C – Cognitive Style Inventory

**Cognitive Style Inventory©**most recent revision 12/12/06 - [Ross Reinhold, INTJ](#)[www.PersonalityPathways.com](http://www.PersonalityPathways.com)

Determining one's natural Myers Briggs Personality Type is frequently complicated by our life-long learning experiences. The classic question is: " Am I this way because I learned it or is this just the way I am?"

In reviewing the comparisons in our inventory, you may find yourself drawn equally to opposing personality preference choices. In such cases I suggest you try to think back to **how you were** before the age of 12 or even younger if you can recall. The rationale for this suggestion is the fact that by the time we are 3 years old, the core of our cognitive organization is well-fixed. . . although the brain continues to allow some plasticity until puberty.

After the onset of puberty, our adult learning begins to overlay our core personality - which is when the blending of **nature** and **nurture** becomes more evident. For some people, this "learning" serves to strengthen what is already there, but with others it produces multiple faces to personality. Discovering or rediscovering this innate core of yourself is part of the journey of using personality types to enrich your life.

Each of the four questions of the CSI inventory has two parts. The first part is a general description of the preference choices. The second part is a list of paired statements. Use **both** parts to form your opinion on your more dominant preference.

### Q1. Which is your most natural energy orientation?

Every person has two faces. One is directed towards the **OUTER** world of activities, excitements, people, and things. The other is directed inward to the **INNER** world of thoughts, interests, ideas, and imagination.

While these are two different but complementary sides of our nature, most people have an innate preference towards **energy** from either the OUTER or the INNER world. Thus one of their faces, either the **Extraverted** (E) or **Introverted** (I), takes the lead in their personality development and plays a more **dominant role** in their behavior.

#### Extraverted Characteristics

- Act first, think/reflect later
- Feel deprived when cutoff from interaction with the outside world
- Usually open to and motivated by outside world of people and things
- Enjoy wide variety and change in people relationships

#### Introverted Characteristics

- Think/reflect first, then Act
- Regularly require an amount of "private time" to recharge batteries
- Motivated internally, mind is sometimes so active it is "closed" to outside world
- Prefer one-to-one communication and relationships

▶ **Choose which best fits:**



**Extraversion (E)**



**Introversion (I)**

## Q2. Which way of Perceiving or understanding is most "automatic" or natural?

The **Sensing** (S) side of our brain notices the sights, sounds, smells and all the sensory details of the **PRESENT**. It categorizes, organizes, records and stores the specifics from the here and now. It is **REALITY** based, dealing with "what is." It also provides the specific details of memory & recollections from **PAST** events.

The **Intuitive** (N) side of our brain seeks to understand, interpret and form **OVERALL** patterns of all the information that is collected and records these patterns and relationships. It speculates on **POSSIBILITIES**, including looking into and forecasting the **FUTURE**. It is imaginative and conceptual.

While both kinds of perceiving are necessary and used by all people, each of us instinctively tends to favor one over the other.

### Sensing Characteristics

- Mentally live in the Now, attending to present opportunities
- Using common sense and creating practical solutions is automatic-instinctual
- Memory recall is rich in detail of facts and past events
- Best improvise from past experience
- Like clear and concrete information; dislike guessing when facts are "fuzzy"

### Intuitive Characteristics

- Mentally live in the Future, attending to future possibilities
- Using imagination and creating/inventing new possibilities is automatic-instinctual
- Memory recall emphasizes patterns, contexts, and connections
- Best improvise from theoretical understanding
- Comfortable with ambiguous, fuzzy data and with guessing its meaning.

▶ Choose which best fits:

Sensing (S)

iNtuition (N)

### Q3. Which way of forming Judgments and making choices is most natural?

The **Thinking** (T) side of our brain analyzes information in a **DETACHED**, objective fashion. It operates from factual principles, deduces and forms conclusions systematically. It is our logical nature.

The **Feeling** (F) side of our brain forms conclusions in an **ATTACHED** and somewhat global manner, based on likes/dislikes, impact on others, and human and aesthetic values. It is our subjective nature.

While everyone uses both means of forming conclusions, each person has a natural bias towards one over the other so that when they give us conflicting directions - one side is the natural trump card or tiebreaker.

Thinking Characteristics	Feeling Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instinctively search for facts and logic in a decision situation.</li> <li>• Naturally notices tasks and work to be accomplished.</li> <li>• Easily able to provide an objective and critical analysis.</li> <li>• Accept conflict as a natural, normal part of relationships with people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instinctively employ personal feelings and impact on people in decision situations</li> <li>• Naturally sensitive to people needs and reactions.</li> <li>• Naturally seek consensus and popular opinions.</li> <li>• Unsettled by conflict; have almost a toxic reaction to disharmony.</li> </ul>
<p>▶ <b>Choose which best fits:</b>      <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Thinking (T)</b>      <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Feeling (F)</b></p>	

#### Q4. What is your "action orientation" towards the outside world?

All people use both **judging** (thinking and feeling) and **perceiving** (sensing and intuition) processes to store information, organize our thoughts, make decisions, take actions and manage our lives. Yet **one** of these processes (Judging **or** Perceiving) tends to **take the lead** in our relationship with the **outside world** . . . while the other governs our inner world.

A **Judging** (J) style approaches the outside world **WITH A PLAN** and is oriented towards organizing one's surroundings, being prepared, making decisions and reaching closure and completion.

A **Perceiving** (P) style takes the outside world **AS IT COMES** and is adopting and adapting, flexible, open-ended and receptive to new opportunities and changing game plans.

##### Judging Characteristics

- Plan many of the details in advance before moving into action.
- Focus on task-related action; complete meaningful segments before moving on.
- Work best and avoid stress when able to keep ahead of deadlines.
- Naturally use targets, dates and standard routines to manage life.

##### Perceiving Characteristics

- Comfortable moving into action without a plan; plan on-the-go.
- Like to multitask, have variety, mix work and play.
- Naturally tolerant of time pressure; work best close to the deadlines.
- Instinctively avoid commitments which interfere with flexibility, freedom and variety

▶ Choose which best fits:  Judging (J)  Perceiving (P)

### Your 4 Personality Type Letters

--	--	--	--

---