



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2009 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Erin E. Coates	Project Number J0305
Project Title To Trust or Not to Trust, That Is the Question	
Abstract Objectives/Goals The purpose of this project is to find out if gender has an influence on whom people choose to trust. Methods/Materials The first part of this project involved recruiting two people (one male and one female) to be the script readers for the project. Each script reader read the scenarios into a recording machine. In Script Version 1, Scenario 1(hiking), the female recording is played first. In Script Version 1, Scenario 2(snowboarding), the male recording is played first. In Script Version 2, Scenario 1(hiking), the male recording is played first. In Script Version 2, Scenario 2(snowboarding), the female recording is played first. These recordings were loaded onto a CD so they could be played to many people at one time. One hundred students were tested for this project. For half of the test subjects, the scenarios of the first version of the script were played and the test subjects wrote down which person they were going to trust for each scenario. For the other half of the test subjects, the scenarios of the second version of the script were played and they wrote down which person they were going to trust for each scenario. Results It was found that females trust people of their same gender more frequently than those of the opposite gender. For the male test subjects, males trust people of the opposite gender more frequently than people of their own gender. It was also found that the majority of the male test subjects trusted the directions given to them first. Conclusions/Discussion The hypothesis, when trusting people, a person is more likely to trust another person of their own gender over someone of the opposite gender, was proven partially correct. It is only partially correct because the majority of the female test subjects chose to trust the female in each scenario, but the majority of the male test subjects chose to trust the female in each scenario or the order of the voices.	
Summary Statement A person's willingness to trust or follow sometimes is influenced by the gender of the leader.	
Help Received Mrs. Elaine Gillum for helping me find test subjects and giving me space to work on my project, Mr. David A. Pizzaro for being my email mentor.	