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| transparent_spacer | **January 11, 2004** **Handwriting may be window to soul** **By Patricia Miller,** Herald Staff Writer Mary Ann Persons believes you are what you write. The Bayfield resident has spent 35 years analyzing handwriting, and she believes that people can change any personal characteristic they want by simply changing the way they scribble.

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| **Mary Ann Persons examines handwriting on a sheet of paper as part of her analysis in her Bayfield business on Monday.**  |
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Persons learned graphology - the official study of handwriting - from Richard Stollert, a public school principal who completed a doctorate in the subject. Persons believes graphology can help schoolchildren with their self-esteem, and she said it can help employers hire better employees. She's been paid to do both. She has given classes in handwriting analysis to the Four Corners Personnel Officers Association to teach them what to look for in employees. And she has used graphology to help parents decide on the trustworthiness of nursery caregivers. "I usually get 85 percent right in a handwriting analysis, better than a standardized test," Persons said. Handwriting is a physical behavior that leaves tracks, like tracks in the snow, she explained. She believes that handwriting is a kind of body language and notes that, in communication, body language accounts for almost all of what we learn. Ken Starr is a psychotherapist working as outpatient services manager for a nonprofit psychology rehabilitation agency in California's Silicon Valley. He said, "Anything that you believe is going to help, is going to help. If you think that crossing your t's higher will raise your self esteem, it will. But it won't if you don't believe it." Persons believes: • To gain a greater feeling of sexual attractiveness, people can change the way they write their "d's" by cutting out the loops. • Raising the bars on the "t's" can raise self-esteem.  |

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| **Graphology: A test case**  |
| Graphologist Mary Ann Persons looked at a handwriting sample submitted by Cindi A. Sheridan, owner of The Buzz House coffee shop, 1019 Main Ave. Sheridan wrote three lines and signed her name. The two women didn’t meet.When she heard Person’s conclusions, Sheridan thought they were about 80 percent right and was surprised at how detailed the analysis was.Sheridan was surprised when Persons said she was "very organized" because Sheridan feels she’s messy about external things like getting behind in her filing. After some thought, she said, "But I must be organized internally because I’m really good at multi-tasking."Persons said the handwriting showed that Sheridan set her goals low, well within her comfort level. Sheridan disputed that: "I went to massage school for a year and trained for my first marathon at the same time as I ran my business and raised my son as a single mom. That’s not setting goals low."Persons said Sheridan was looking for a relationship in which she could be worshipped."I’m not looking for a relationship at all," Sheridan said. She paused: "But one in which someone would worship me? That would be OK. Otherwise not." |

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| Title: | The predictive validity of graphological inferences: A meta-analytic approach. |
| Author(s): | [Neter, Efrat](http://web23.epnet.com/searchpost.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+fic+0+ln+en%2Dus+sid+7EFA809A%2D1BC9%2D47C7%2DAA54%2DAFB97183867F%40Sessionmgr6+C89E&_us=bs+%28AW++%221990%2E03056%2E001%22%29+cr+%5Fs%5F2+db+0+ds+RA++%222000%2E14053%2E005%22+dstb+ES+fh+0+hd+0+hs+0+or+Date+ri+KAAACBTC00019803+sm+RB+ss+RF+B05F&ss=AR%20%22Neter%2C%20Efrat%22&fscan=Sub), Hebrew U of Jerusalem, Israel[Ben-Shakhar, Gershon](http://web23.epnet.com/searchpost.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+fic+0+ln+en%2Dus+sid+7EFA809A%2D1BC9%2D47C7%2DAA54%2DAFB97183867F%40Sessionmgr6+C89E&_us=bs+%28AW++%221990%2E03056%2E001%22%29+cr+%5Fs%5F2+db+0+ds+RA++%222000%2E14053%2E005%22+dstb+ES+fh+0+hd+0+hs+0+or+Date+ri+KAAACBTC00019803+sm+RB+ss+RF+B05F&ss=AR%20%22Ben-Shakhar%2C%20Gershon%22&fscan=Sub) |
| Source: | [Personality & Individual Differences](http://web23.epnet.com/searchpost.asp?tb=1&_ug=dbs+0+fic+0+ln+en%2Dus+sid+7EFA809A%2D1BC9%2D47C7%2DAA54%2DAFB97183867F%40Sessionmgr6+C89E&_us=bs+%28AW++%221990%2E03056%2E001%22%29+cr+%5Fs%5F2+db+0+ds+RA++%222000%2E14053%2E005%22+dstb+ES+fh+0+hd+0+hs+0+or+Date+ri+KAAACBTC00019803+sm+RB+ss+RF+B05F&ss=JN%20%22Personality%20%26%20Individual%20Differences%22&fscan=Sub), Vol 10(7), 1989. pp. 737-745. Journal URL: <http://www.elsevier.com/inca/publications/store/6/0/3/>    |
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| Key Concepts: | validity of graphology, personnel selection, meta analysis |
| Abstract: | Examined the validity of graphology in personnel selection by means of meta-analysis (a method of integrating research findings across studies). 17 studies dealing with the validity of graphology as a personnel selection device were tracked down. 63 graphologists and 51 nongraphologists (controls) evaluated 1,223 scripts. Results show that graphologists were not better than nongraphologists in predicting future performance on the basis of handwritten scripts. Psychologists (with no knowledge in graphology) outperformed graphologists on all dimensions. It is suggested that the source of limited validity of handwriting analysis may be the script's content. |