I will say right off the bat that the last paragraph of the Scientific American article that we read really resonated with me. Cindy May, the writer, argues that scheduling study sessions and putting in the effort to test yourself on the material is a universally effective way to retain information, but people don’t do it because it’s a lot work. When I read that, I couldn’t help but think to myself, “dang, she’s serving some truth.” If I think about my study habits and techniques, they aren’t great. I have always dreaded studying because I think it’s kind of boring. Therefore, I tend to study in the laziest way possible (just glancing over notes) and I usually put it off and do it a day or two before the actual assessment. However, this is something that I’ve improved on since starting college.

I’ve got to admit, I was kind of surprised to find out that the results of the study done by Hussman and O’Loughlin pointed to the ineffectiveness of learning styles. Clearly some people enjoy learning in different ways, so I guess I’ve always assumed that if you could find ways to cater to someone’s preferred way of learning, they would be successful. Obviously, this study suggests otherwise. However, I’m a little skeptical given that most of the students simply chose not to adopt the strategies that best fit their learning styles. However, in the study, the 30% of students who did, still did not show improvement in their academic performance. The study consisted of over 400 students, so you’re talking about at least 120 students that showed no improvement which is a pretty significant sample size.

When it comes to the 70% of students who chose not to commit to a study technique that aligned with their learning style, I think that speaks more to the students’ refusal and/or hesitancy to change their current ways of studying rather than the ineffectiveness of learning styles. I think people are very set in their ways sometimes, which can make it difficult to change the way you do things just because one test said you should do so. However, I can’t argue with the other 30%. It might be too small of a sample size or maybe there is truth to it. I do, however, agree with what May said: If people, in general, adopted better study habits (like studying ahead of time and spacing out their studying) they would be more successful, regardless of what their learning styles are, I know I would!