

# THE SCHOLAR

**April 2007 Edition**

**Editors:**  
Katelyn  
Busmann  
Emily Kendall  
Amy Wilson

**In this edition:**

<i>My "Scholars" Testimonial</i>	<i>Alexis Luckey</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
<i>Plastic Flowers</i>	<i>Amy Wilson</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Beach Reflections</i>	<i>Melaina Whitley</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Untitled</i>	<i>Sarah Henson</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>2341 hours</i>	<i>Whitney Coomer</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>Lost in Conversation</i>	<i>Christopher Cates</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>The Cricket</i>	<i>Sarah Roberts</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>Untitled</i>	<i>Rachel McCoy</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>Big, Bold, and Frugal</i>	<i>Katelyn Busmann</i>	<i>Page 8</i>
<i>ENSO and Global Warming: What the Future Holds</i>	<i>Carol Perritt</i>	<i>Page 9</i>
<i>Mermaid</i>	<i>Rizi Aizer</i>	<i>Page 11</i>

**My "Scholars" Testimonial**

*Alexis Luckey*

*Recently, I was contemplating my first year of college and how much that I have already changed. I haven't exactly changed my personality, but, instead, I have become so much more secure with myself. I'm no longer scared to speak in front of people because of the fear of what they might think or say. I've been in several different organizations and had many friends in my life, but University Scholars is much different. I have realized how blessed that I am to have been chosen to be a Scholar. While the opportunities and scholarship money that it brings are wonderful, the bonds that I've already formed with many other Scholars are quite unique. I've become closer to some of them than I've ever felt with a group of friends, and we have only known each other for about a year! We have so many things in common with each other. One of the things that I look forward to the most about each school week is Wednesday afternoon, because I love being around this group of people. I feel like I have finally made true friends that I will have for years to come, and I am so glad that I have been given this opportunity. I have never fit in a group better than the way that I fit in with the other Scholars, and I thank God that He has blessed me with such an amazing group of friends and mentors.*

---

## **“Plastic Flowers”**

Amy Wilson

*Their anniversary was coming soon; it was only a few days away. This meant one thing: roses, a dozen beautiful roses of a unique shade of red. I was going along for the ride to hold the flowers. My mother had ushered me out the door quickly, I didn't even have time to change; I was still in my pajamas. I laughed to myself as I considered my grandmother's reaction to the way I was dressed, but I was staying in the car to save her the embarrassment. I was a little upset at being sent out of the house so abruptly, but I went without complaining.*

*“I still don't even know why your grandmother married me,” my grandfather said with a twinkle in his eyes. “She always said it was my blue ford.” His smile grew as I laughed along with him. I tore off a loose petal and started playing with it. Next to me, my grandfather sighed as he continued down the road.*

*“I don't know why she married me, but God does. He knew I needed her. He brought her to my work and brought us together when I came back.” I didn't have to ask where he had come back from; my grandparents were married not long before he left for Germany to fight in the war. I always thought it was amazing that they had been able to put their life back in order after he had been gone for so long. My aunt had been born while he was still away; she didn't know him or want anything to do with him when the war was over. But somehow, they managed and became a family again. He fell silent as we got closer to our destination.*

*He parked the car and got out to grab his things from the trunk. Then he came around to my side of the car to get the flowers. I closed the door and watched as he walked down the lawn. I didn't want to intrude on his private time with my grandmother, but I kept watching as he meticulously cut the flowers to the right length and arranged them in the vase. The full level of his love and devotion hit me at that moment. The flowers would be gone in a few days, the water would run out and they would die, but he continued to carefully measure and cut each stem. My eyes traveled around the grounds. There was row after row of plastic flowers; there were even some balloons on one marker for some special occasion. But only one vase had real flowers, beautiful roses of a unique shade of red.*

*When he was finished, my grandfather continued to gaze at the ground, at a grave marker on which I knew his own name and birthday were also engraved. A space had been left for a plaque with the date of his death on it. That had always bothered me. I knew he would be gone one day. I even knew that part of him would rather be there with his wife. But his name engraved like that just made everything seem so final.*

*It suddenly hit me how long it had been. Three years. She had been gone for three years. I had gone through most of high school without a woman who had helped raise me. My oldest brother had gotten married and my other brother had finished college and gone off to medical school. Mostly, the time passed without me even really noticing. But as I watched my grandfather talk to the ground, three years felt like an eternity.*

*He looked up at the sky and it was almost as though he was looking into heaven, like he was seeing my grandmother. He smiled, the twinkle in his eyes visible even from the distance. He picked up his things and walked back to the car. On the way, he stopped at the last grave marker of the row. I had noticed it earlier because it was the only one around with out a vase on it. It was one of the few that didn't have plastic flowers adorning it. I craned my head to see if I could read the engraving, but it was too far away. I watched as my grandfather closed his eyes and said a few words to the person in the grave.*

*“I always stop and talk to Christopher Lincoln,” my grandfather explained once he got in the car. “He was eighteen when he died and I don't think anyone comes to see him.”*

---

*My heart swelled at my grandfather's compassion. Even in his grief of the memories of losing his wife, he never forgot to talk to a young man whom he thought had no one.*

*He told stories and made me laugh as we drove home. He told me about how they met at work and how he had, at first, just considered her like any other girl. When he fell for her though, he fell hard.*

*"One day, she was complaining about her feet. She had grabbed the wrong shoes and her feet were hurting. And at this point, I was interested." His grin grew mischievous. "We had an hour for lunch, and somehow I convinced her to let me take her home to get better shoes. And just like that, I was in love with her. I was so in love with her. When we dated, we dated every night. Even nights we didn't go out I would drive by her house just to see her. Just to be near her. I guess it really was the blue ford."*

*As I laughed, I looked at the old, plastic flowers that had filled the vase on my grandmother's grave marker, sitting in my lap. It wasn't a profound, mountain top epiphany, it was just a moment sitting in the car with my grandfather, but at that moment, I realized what love is. Love is a bouquet of beautiful roses of a unique shade of red amid a field of plastic flowers.*

## **"Beach Reflections"**

*Melaina Whitley*

*The sun was shining. A gentle breeze was blowing. I shared the beach with only one shy seagull. The calming sound of the waves should've lulled me to sleep, but my mind was a million miles away from the warm sand on which I was laying.*

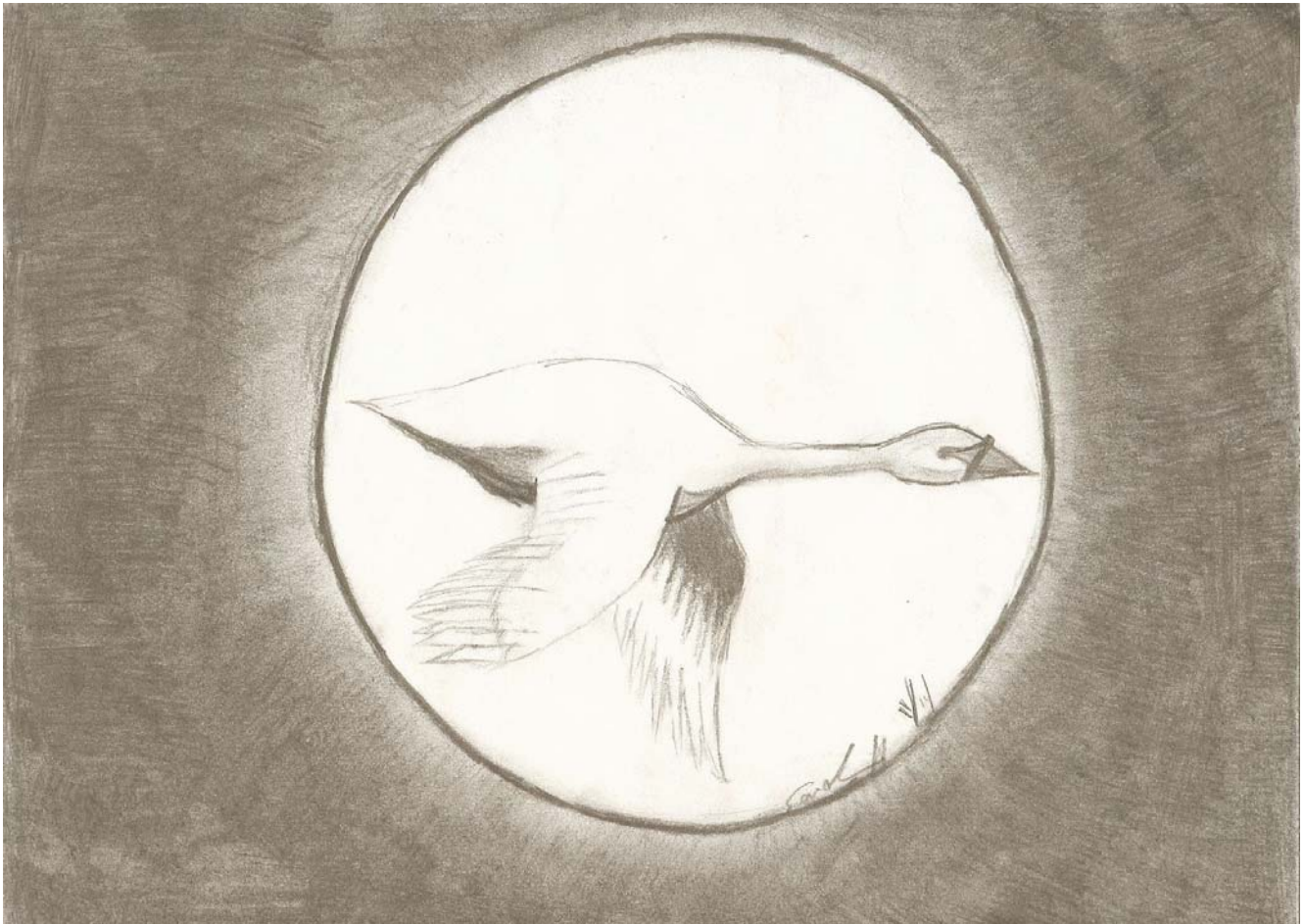
*As I lay there in a completely relaxed state, my thoughts drifted north. My mind raced to Alabama, where my wonderful fiancé was spending the day fishing. Next my thoughts shifted west to Memphis, a city full of uncertainty and promise. Finally, my mind rested on Martin and the friends that I have grown to love...and then it hit me.*

*This is my last spring break. This is my last semester. My undergraduate education is almost complete. And right there, alone on the beach, I realized that my life is about to change, just as it did three years ago. I am about to step into the unknown. The transition from high school to college was pretty intimidating. I was moving away from home for the first time, and I was very apprehensive. On the first day of freshman welcome week, I realized that the other freshmen were just like me. I jumped in and didn't look back. Meeting new people and making new friends, my college career was off and running. I learned how to live with complete strangers, and the friendships we formed have lasted through the ups and downs of college life. I know my way around Martin, and I now call my apartment "home." I know that my life has been shaped by this place, and I am honestly scared to leave.*

*My thoughts shifted once again, and I decided to embrace the changes that are about to occur. I want the thrill of meeting new people, having new scenery, and escaping some of the drama of college. I can't wait to find that new apartment that fits me and form relationships with my future roommates. With a resolution to face change with enthusiasm and not worry, my mind was clear at last. Just as I began to doze off, I heard the blaring radio of other spring breakers joining me on the beach. I knew that it was going to be a wonderful day.*

---

**Untitled**  
Sarah Henson



**2341 hours**  
Whitney Coomer

*Let the rain pour down.  
Let the rain pour down and wash it all away.  
Let the rain pour down and wash away all the worlds inequities.  
To feel one pure, sweet drop land upon the face.  
One succulent bead to land in the mouth and quench the thirst that lives so deep in the soul.  
Innocent and satisfying...to one who longs so greatly.  
Greatly for the world.  
Greatly for its unsatisfied thirst for blood and revenge.  
Greatly for its people who have lost their taste for something sweet and pure.  
But what we ask is pure anymore?  
Children, children are innocent they say. But not anymore.  
Love, all love is untainted by this world. But not anymore.  
Babies, babies they cry out....yes perhaps we can agree to this one.  
But as a mother cries out in agony for her child who has lost his way, so we cry out for this  
world and the depraved ideals of too many of her people.*

---

## **Lost in Conversation**

**Christopher Cates**

*The old gentleman and I sit together in the dry-rotted plastic lawn chairs beneath the shade of the carport. It is another hot afternoon in Burlison, Tennessee and neither of us wants to go back out into the bleached sunshine. The humidity makes his white hair stick to his forehead and causes us both to sweat muddy rivers down our arms, but we don't pay too much attention to the heat. The old man doesn't do much of the work anymore; time has made him too stiff to bend, lift, or carry the things he used to. He pulls out one of his cigarettes (the same ones he has promised to quit using after more than sixty years), lights it, and takes a slow pull. When he exhales, I dodge the cloud as it crosses the two feet between our chairs. He gets a little frown on his face as he prepares to tell me another of his stories. He leans forward and looks me in the eye. I lean forward too, not wanting to miss what he says.*

*"I had a dog once and when she would point birds, she would lay down. You know, she wouldn't point at those birds like other dogs, she would lay flat down. I was out one day huntin' with ol' So-and-so and we came up on her when she pointed a group of hens. He said to me 'She's had a spell and fallen down' and I told him 'No, she's pointing at a group of hens yonder.'" The old man pulls his cigarette out of his mouth and gives a great, belting laugh the stretches the hot air. His thin frame rocks gently as the wrinkled skin on his face contorts about his open, laughing mouth. He continues to chuckle as he leans back again in the lawn chair, putting the cigarette to his lips for another pull as he looks out at the yard. The slow frown forming on his face tells me that he is deliberating another story, but he seems to wonder what it is about.*

*He leans forward again, taking the now spent cigarette out of his mouth, drops it, and mashes it out with the toe of his dirt-caked work boots. I lean forward again to hear what he has to say. He turns to me from looking at the crushed butt, and his eyes still seem to be searching for something just out of his sight.*

*"I was out huntin' one day and I was in this little ditch that run all the way up a field of grass. I was walkin' and I saw this hen runnin' in front of me and she ran up on the side of the bank." He has tapped out a new cigarette and he points off in the distance like he can see the hen running out in the yard. "I walked up real quietly to where she was hidin' and I saw a bunch of heads pokin out of that grass. So I took my gun and I shot at one of them. All of them birds took off flyin away after that. I walked up to get my bird and I found three dead birds lyin there. They had all been roostin there so thick that I had shot three of them with one shot!" He finishes with another drawling peal of laughter as he lights his new cigarette. He goes back to puffing, but he still looks contemplative about what he had just said. He squints out at the yard as he takes a drag, elbows resting on his knees. The flies are buzzing around us thick, trying to take a bite out of our salty skin.*

*Then I see something I have never seen before on his face in all the years that I had known him. He looks confused about what he was about to say, like he had lost what he had been talking about. In all of his stories he had never failed to have a reason for remembering them and has always given me some tidbit of information that I might need some day. I know this is what he is reaching for. The furrows on his forehead get deeper, channeling the sweat to the edges of his glasses and from there to the floor. Time drifts along while he rests in thought. He turns to me, taking his cigarette out of his mouth again.*

*"I had a dog once that would lay down to point. Do you know what I mean?" he says passionately. I nod and say yessir. "I was out with So-and-so one day and she pointed like that. He said 'She's had a fit.' I said 'No, she pointin at a group of birds.'" He speaks the last sentence triumphantly with a short laugh, then sits back, bringing the short cigarette back to his lips. He keeps smiling for a moment as he takes another draw. Then that same*

---

*confused expression crosses his face. He drops the cigarette and rubs it out of existence next to its brother. He leans forward again, his elbows hitting his knees in the same spot as the other two times. The look on his face is so insistent that I lean forward, waiting for the reason behind the story.*

*“I had a dog once who would lay down to point!” he began forcefully, with an expression that begged me to understand. The old man was trying to tell me something he felt it was important that I know, and he was desperate to get it across. But his Alzheimer’s wouldn’t let him do it. He just wanted to tell me some little fragment of information that was important to him, but of little use to me, to have a conversation with me like all grandfathers like to have with their grandsons. But he could not do it. He kept forgetting, from the beginning of the story until the end, what it was that he was trying to share with me. What ever he was trying to share with me was locked in his mind, just out of his reach. My grandfather wanted to tell me something, I wanted to listen and learn, but we were both lost in conversation.*

## **The Cricket**

*Sarah Roberts*

### **Chapter One**

*Once upon a time there was a man walking down the road. He noticed two crickets sitting in the grass, one on each side of the road. The man took interest in each of the crickets and gave them both a little food. He picked up the crickets and began to take them on his journey. He then placed one of the crickets in his shirt pocket to keep it safe. The other he let go by the wayside. The latter cricket kept hopping along beside the man, watching him with his other cricket friend. The man did not try to stop the cricket from following him, and actually encouraged the little cricket with the offer of a meal in the future. The cricket in the man's pocket remained perfectly content and safe in this cozy environment, never aware of the second cricket wishing to be carried in the pocket, as well. The cricket on the road noticed that there was a split in the path ahead. This cricket needed to decide which route to take. Should he follow the man, or take a new route? This alternate path might offer an immediate reward to come, since he was, after all, getting very hungry and could not wait much longer for this man to give him some food. The small cricket decided to take the path separate from the man, never to know if the man would continue to keep the cricket in his pocket satisfied, or if he would, for one reason or another, leave that cricket by the wayside to fend for life on his own once again. The cricket on his friendless expedition realized that there was a lonely journey ahead of him; yet, he knew that he must venture upon this excursion since it appeared that the man would not keep his promise. The road looked a bit rocky, but there was a hill the little cricket was about to mount. He did not know what was to come beyond this hill, but there was nothing that would hold him back from his adventure.*



---

**Untitled**  
*Rachel McCoy*



---

## **Big, Bold, and Frugal**

**Katelyn Busmann**

*Have you ever wondered about a person who drives a lavish SUV and wears eye-catching jewelry and holey, white, oversized undershirts? One of my parents encompasses this seemingly contradictory description. Living in East Tennessee for over a half century, my mother has developed a style that is a unique blend of Southern hospitality and frugal extravagance.*

*My mother loves big, bold items that make a statement: "If it is not noticed from across the room, it is not worth having." One example of this would be her anniversary rings. Custom designed and created, the rings contain multiple diamonds and are set in platinum; these rings say "commitment" in their shine. Not only can one suntan in their reflection, but one can also find her anywhere in the room from the jewels' flash and glitter Morse Code. In similar style, her other jewelry is also considerably bold. If my mother buys a piece of jewelry, wears it, and receives no comments on it, the jewelry is returned to the store. Her jewelry always makes the statement "I have arrived!" In the same way, so must her car. After riding in a friend's Lincoln Navigator, she decided that would be her next vehicle. She drives a used, golden Lincoln Navigator that gives her command of the road as if she is queen. To add to the SUV's already imposing look, she had a stainless steel brush guard attached. One notices when she arrives.*

*In contrast to my mother's expensive jewelry and desire for the best, she bargain shops. She has never met a sale she did not like. If there is a sale on any item we use, she stocks up. Crest toothpaste was on sale for two dollars when it is usually four. A four-dollar toothbrush was included in this offer. My mother cleaned out the shelf of thirty packages of toothpaste, each bundled with a toothbrush. "We'll eventually use them." This is not the only time excessive bargain shopping has occurred. When my mother's college roommate was getting married, they divided the apartment contents in half. They had seven cans of Crisco shortening, for two singles who did very little baking. "It was on sale." My mother also enjoys shopping at wholesale stores such as Sam's Club and Big Lots. She buys in bulk items we use often and some items we rarely ever use. "By buying it in bulk we 'save' more money."*

*Although my mother drives a monster SUV, she is still down to earth in her dress and speech. Her Saturday attire consists of my dad's hand-me-down undershirts and a pair of knit shorts. Most of her weekday work clothes are purchased "on sale" at Wal-Mart and are washed and worn over and over. She wears her nurse uniforms until holes form and the color fades. While they are well worn, they are always clean, neat, and pressed.*

*My mother is very friendly. During a trip to Wal-Mart, I left my mother at the seafood counter while I selected some salad ingredients. When I returned, the seafood clerk was telling my mother her life's story. Later, I asked my mother what she had said to the lady to hear her life's story. Her reply, "I said 'Hi.'" To further illustrate my mother's knack for cordiality, when we are traveling on the back roads of Sevier County, she will wave to the passing drivers. I ask her, "Who was that?" "I don't know; I was just being friendly," is her response. Others notice it as well. While my mother was helping line up veterans for our Honors English IIB research project, Ms. Lewis remarked that she should become a phone solicitor because she has the ability to engage people in conversation and communicate with them. One example occurred when she accompanied a cardiologist who was meeting with the family of a man who had just undergone a heart catheterization. After the doctor had patiently described the results of the procedure to the family, the room was silent. It was apparent that the family did not comprehend what they were told. My mother piped in, "He's not gonna cut on ya', he is just gonna give ya' some pills." This was received with nods,*



---

*grins and thanks to the doctor as they all shook his hand. After leaving the room the doctor asked, "Why didn't I think of that?"*

*Full of apparent contrasts, my mother has developed a unique style of thrifty lavishness punctuated with a "Southern Belle" accent. If you see a lady in a white undershirt, waving and driving a gold Navigator on the back roads of Sevier County, chances are you have seen my mother.*

## **ENSO and Global Warming: What the Future Holds**

**Carol Perritt**

*During recent history, global warming has risen to the forefront of international discussion and concern. The issue has served to strike fear into the hearts of millions. A major climatic shift? Intense thunderstorms? An increase in the frequency of hurricanes and tornadoes? Global winter? All are words and phrases that force one to become aware of the environmental situation on the planet. This increase in interest in global climate has made the average person acutely aware of all major climatic events, namely El-Nino.*

*Most noteworthy for its effects in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, El-Nino has become a focus of the effects of global warming on climate. Despite extensive research however, a consensus has yet to be reached. A careful critique of El-Nino is required to understand what effect an increase in global temperature will have upon the phenomenon. Thus, due to its complexity, research is tedious. Yet, what has been discovered may serve to stimulate the imagination, not sooth it.*

*Knowledge of the formation and effects of El-Nino are required in order to proceed with predicting changes its in character. The standard definition of "a sustained increase in sea surface temperature of magnitude greater than 0.5 °C across the central tropical Pacific Ocean," lacks a representation of the true complexity of El-Nino (Wikipedia). A region of strong temperature gradient in the surface layer of the ocean, the thermocline, is depressed in the Eastern Pacific during El-Nino (Frauenfeld 154). This serves to push warm surface waters from the western Pacific towards the east (154). This warm water area causes changes in convection in tropical regions. Convection is the force responsible for formation of thunderstorms and showers due to rising and sinking of air (Camberlin 644). Therefore, El-Nino, a purely oceanic phenomenon, is intrinsically related to atmospheric aspects of climate.*

*The Southern Oscillation, defined as "a fluctuation of surface air pressure in regions dominated by tropical convection," forms a major part of the global climate but pertains to the atmosphere not the ocean. A pressure gradient occurs over the Pacific, which in turn enhances trade winds (Frauenfeld 153). Trade winds cause an upwelling of cold water on the coast of South America. As trade winds weaken during El-Nino, the upwelling of cold water is reduced. Thus, the atmosphere over South America is prohibited from the normal cooling that occurs due to the cold water upwelling (Balling 45). This reversal of air pressure causes changes in convection, thus, rain occurs in normally dry regions and droughts occur in typically saturated areas. These combined effects of El-Nino and the Southern Oscillation have come to be called ENSO.*

*Any credible research study employs a General Circulation Model, or GCM, which attempts to represent the three-dimensional structure of the Earth's climate. However, the information produced from said studies is conflicting. Most studies find a slight shift, if any, toward El-Nino like responses under conditions of an increase in temperature (Liu 4684). Yet, each study provides valuable findings.*

*The Twenty Coupled Model Intercomparison Project, or CMIP, is viewed by many to be the most sophisticated study to date. The highly anticipated publication of findings were rather unexpected however. CMIP gave a 59% chance that "the most likely scenario [for El-Nino variability in global warming] is for the pattern to remain constant" (Liu 4687). The*

---

*study found only a 16% probability that El-Nino like conditions could occur (4687). Other similar projects have reached the same conclusion: It is unlikely that an El-Nino event would occur in conditions of a climatic temperature shift of only a few degrees Celsius.*

*However, evidence for the indirect effects of global warming in the tropics will cause changes in climate similar to the effects of El-Nino. According to the Atmosphere-Ocean Global Circulation Model (AOGCM), temperature warming promotes a more intense hydrological cycle. It also supports SST warming in central and eastern tropical Pacific and an eastward shift of precipitation. Higher air pressure over Australia causes drought, and lower air pressure over the tropical eastern Pacific causes more precipitation (Schimel 12). As stated earlier, these are characteristics of El-Nino.*

*There can be no increase in El-Nino frequencies without a shift in the thermocline however and evidence of this occurring due to global warming is slight. However, the Southern Oscillation may hold clearer results when analyzed for changes due to global warming. According to a study by Hoerling et.al, progressive warming in tropical the tropical Indian and Pacific Oceans is most directly related to the SO, not El-Nino (Schimel 2610).*

*While many models do not predict an increase in the frequency of El-Nino, they also admit failures of the study's extensiveness and thoroughness. All GCMs have inherent problems. One study, particularly critical of GCMs, states "complexity of feedback processes and difficulties with model simulations of present day ENSO" are reasons for the uncertainty of conclusions (Collins 89). It should also be noted that GCMs are based on the current limited human understanding of climatology (Legates 126).*

*Yet another interesting critique of current research applies to the approach of most scientists to the issue at hand. Nearly all studies focus on the latitudinal SST gradient between the equator and subtropics, roughly 0-30°N and 0-30°S. One study in particular begs to question this approach to the topic. The findings suggest an enhanced equatorial response (EER) to global warming. The study claims that the current prediction of El-Nino like responses to global increase in temperature is false for several reasons. Most importantly, zonal SST observations may be unreliable or perhaps non-conclusive in their application to El-Nino (Liu 4687). Therefore, zonal SST is not used in this research.*

*By focusing on specific verifiable global warming effects, the study finds new ground for research. Due to an increase in CO2 levels, the atmosphere and ocean surface will stabilize. In turn, ocean surface stability will suppress oceanic mixing/entrainment (Liu 4688). As the atmosphere stabilizes, there will also be a reduction of shortwave radiation (4688). All of these effects lead to enhanced warming in the equator. This enhanced warming will lead to El-Nino like responses. However, once again there is no change in the thermocline, therefore no direct changes in El-Nino.*

*Evidence for direct global warming effect on El-Nino is limited at best. Initial observations of the data may lead one to conclude that obvious changes will occur, however, a closer inspection of fundamental El-Nino formulation and climatology leave much to be desired before a conclusive argument can be reached. Understanding of climatology broadens each day, thus advances in accuracy of predictions are forthcoming. At this point, the answer to whether global warming will lead to an increase in El-Nino frequency remains unclear: "possibly." If the answer is "yes" then the question posed to all mankind becomes "Will it be too late once we realize our mistake?"*

---

**Mermaid**  
Rizi Aizer



*Thanks for a great year's worth of articles! Good luck on finals and have a wonderful summer! -- Editors*