Louisiana Tech/LSU research suggests consumer stereotypes strongly influence their perceptions of the taste of a wine.

Ruston, LA, January 5, 2010: A team involving lead authors from Louisiana Tech University and Louisiana State University recently published research recognized by the Emerald Literati Network with a 2010 Award for Excellence. The research, published in the November 2009 issue of the *International Journal of Wine Business Research*, demonstrates that consumers’ psychological beliefs about a wine can over-ride consumer taste sensations in making quality and price judgments. The research involved an experiment in which a sample of Texan consumers tasted a wine ostensibly labeled as either a standard French table wine or a wine from a known wine region in Texas. The results suggest that the knowledge that the wine was French led to greater likability, higher quality perceptions and a willingness to pay a higher price compared to a wine thought to be from a Texas wine region. In reality, all subjects tasted the same wine so that if the physical characteristics determined consumer judgments the French and Texas wine should have been liked the same. Even subjects having the strongest affinity for Texas and all things Texas displayed greater favorability for a wine described as French. Their ethnocentrism or affinity for their home region was not resistant to the belief that French wines are better. According to the research, psychological affects determine which wines are preferred and purchased more than do the actual physical characteristics of the wine. These results have implications for emerging wine regions but also for the marketing of goods in general as the knowledge that certain products originate from certain regions influences the value of many products.

The title of the article is “Pride and Prejudice in the Evaluation of Wine?” The work is coauthored by Barry J. Babin, Max P. Watson, Jr. Professor of Business, and Chair of the Department of Marketing & Analysis and Immediate Past-President of the Academy of Marketing Science, Julie Guidry, Assistant Professor Marketing at Louisiana State University, William Graziano of the Department of Psychological Sciences at Purdue University and Joel Schneider, Department of Psychology at Illinois State University. The award will be given this February at the Fifth International Conference of the Academy of Wine Business Research being held at Auckland University in Auckland, NZ.