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## A training package for teaching effective dating skills to the mentally disabled

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A TRAINING PACKAGE FOR TEACHING EFFECTIVE  
DATING SKILLS TO THE MENTALLY DISABLED

A Thesis Presented to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School  
University of the Pacific  
Stockton, California

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

by  
Richard E. Billo

December 1981

This thesis, written and submitted by

Richard E. Billo

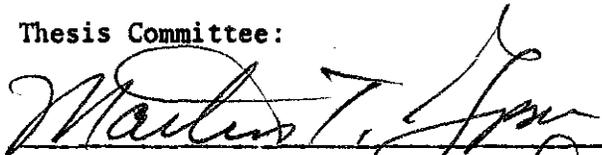
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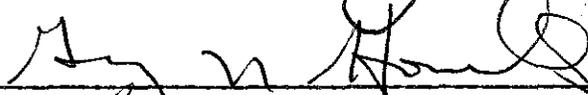
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### Abstract

A skills training package designed to teach effective dating skills to mentally disabled patients was investigated. Nine male, mentally disabled outpatients were randomly assigned to either a dating skills treatment group or an attention placebo/waiting list control group. The training package consisted of presentation of information, prompting, modeling, behavioral rehearsal, live and taped feedback, and homework assignments. Skills taught were ways of enhancing physical attractiveness, appropriate partner selection, and social skills. Dependent measures used to measure training efficacy were an anxiety measure, three measures of heterosexual interaction at a party, ratings of physical attractiveness, an appropriate partner choice measure, a behavioral measure of social skills, frequency of dating, an oral quiz of social skills, and a personal hygiene checklist. Results indicated that the oral quiz of social skills was the only measure in which the trained subjects performed superior to the control subjects. The other nine measures failed to yield any significant difference between groups. Discussion focused on factors accounting for the negative findings.

## A Training Package for Teaching

### Effective Dating Skills to the Mentally Disabled

In recent years, the treatment of ineffective social skills has been a growing concern of various investigators (Edelstein & Eisler, 1976; Finch & Wallace, 1977; Goldsmith & McFall, 1976; Hersen & Bellack, 1976; Marzillier & Winter, 1978; McFall & Twentyman, 1973). One aspect of social skills which has recently received attention is the treatment of ineffective heterosexual dating skills (Arkowitz, Christensen, & Royce, 1975; Bander, Steinke, Allen, & Mosher, 1975; Curran, 1975; Curran & Gilbert, 1975; Glass, Gottman, & Shmurak, 1976; Twentyman & McFall, 1975). Heterosexual dating skills consist of the abilities to effectively and comfortably initiate and maintain relationships with members of the opposite sex (Perri, 1975).

The development of effective heterosexual dating skills is a problem prevalent among many young people (Borkovec, Stone, O'Brien, & Kaloupek, 1974; Herold, 1973; Martinson & Zerface, 1970). People who experience difficulties in dating usually manifest large amounts of social anxiety in heterosexual encounters (heterosexual anxiety) which does not readily habituate (Borkovec et al., 1974). Decreasing this heterosexual anxiety by either direct or indirect means has been the focus of treatment approaches designed to deal with dating difficulties

(Arkowitz et al., 1975; Bander et al., 1975; Curran, 1977; Hedquist & Weinhold, 1970; Perl, Hinton, Arkowitz, & Himadi, 1977; Rehm & Marston, 1968; Stewart & Hay, 1972).

Four explanations have been posed as to the etiology of heterosexual anxiety: (a) the conditioned anxiety hypothesis; (b) the dysfunctional cognitive process hypothesis; (c) the skills deficit hypothesis; and (d) the physical attractiveness hypothesis.

The conditioned anxiety hypothesis (Hokanson, 1971) states that heterosexual anxiety is the result of anxiety that is classically conditioned to heterosexual interactions. According to this view, previously neutral heterosexual interactions come to elicit anxiety through associations with aversive stimuli such as rejection and failure. This conditioning may occur regardless of the adequacy of an individual's dating skills (Curran, 1977). People who date infrequently are viewed as anxious people who avoid heterosexual interaction in order to avoid anxiety (Hokanson, 1971).

The dysfunctional cognitive process hypothesis views heterosexual anxiety as a result of faulty cognitive appraisals and information processing relating to heterosexual social interactions (Arkowitz, 1977; Glass et al., 1976; Rehm & Marston, 1968). These cognitive processes may include: overly negative self evaluations of social performance, negative covert self statements,

excessively high standards for performance, selective attention and memory for negative versus positive information about oneself and one's social performance, and pathological patterns of attribution for social success and social failure (Arkowitz, 1977; Curran, 1977). Clark and Arkowitz (1975) and Curran, Wallender, and Fischetti (1977) conducted studies in which low and high heterosexually anxious subjects judged their own performance and the performance of others in a simulated dating interaction. Results of both studies showed that although all subjects were accurate in judging the performance of others, the high anxious/high skill subjects tended to underestimate their own performance.

According to the skills deficit hypothesis, heterosexual anxiety occurs as a result of an inadequate or inappropriate behavioral repertoire (Curran, 1977). It is assumed that the skills comprising effective dating are learned inadequately or not learned at all by heterosexually anxious persons. As a result, the individual does not handle the demands of the situation appropriately and experiences aversive consequences that elicit anxiety. Arkowitz, Lichtenstein, McGovern, and Hines (1975) found that low heterosexually anxious subjects scored higher than high heterosexually anxious subjects on global measures of skill performance in simulated heterosexual interactions.

The physical attractiveness hypothesis maintains that the major difficulty of minimal daters is relatively low physical attractiveness (Berscheid & Walster, 1973). Any anxiety, negative appraisals, or social skill deficiency that occur are secondary results of their low physical attractiveness (Arkowitz, 1977). Various investigators have found that one's physical attractiveness is a very powerful determinant of heterosexual attraction. Walster, Aronson, Abrahams, and Rottman (1966) found that physically attractive subjects are more apt to be liked on a first date than are physically unattractive subjects. Curran and Lippold (1975) found a linear relationship between a date's rating of the physical attractiveness of his/her partner and the date's attraction toward the partner. They also found a significant correlation between a subject's degree of sexual experience and physical attractiveness, and a significant negative correlation between dating anxiety and physical attractiveness. Curran and Lippold (1975), Walster et al. (1966), and Berscheid, Dion, Walster, and Walster (1971) all found significant correlations between dating popularity and physical attractiveness. Finally, Glasgow and Arkowitz (1975) found that partner ratings of physical attractiveness was the only measure that discriminated between high frequency and low frequency daters.

Various treatment strategies have been designed based

on three of the four previously described hypotheses. Systematic desensitization (Wolpe, 1958), pertinent to the conditioned anxiety hypothesis, has shown success in alleviating heterosexual anxiety in college students (Curran, 1975; Curran & Gilbert, 1975; Hill, 1974; Hokanson, 1971).

Treatment approaches based on the dysfunctional cognitive process hypothesis usually involve cognitive self-statement modification programs (Glass et al., 1976) or self-reinforcement modification programs (Rehm & Marston, 1968). Cognitive self-statement modification programs (Glass et al., 1976) teach people to verbalize negative self-talk, teach them to recognize that their negative self-talk leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy, help them change their negative self-talk to positive self-talk, and finally, teach them to reinforce themselves for positive interactive behaviors. Glass et al. (1976) compared this procedure with a behavioral skills training procedure and a procedure combining both skills training and cognitive self-statement modification in several simulated dating test situations. Results showed that although the skills training and combined groups showed the greatest improvement in behavioral ratings on the trained dating test situations (situations roleplayed several times), the cognitive modification groups rated

significantly higher on the untrained dating test situations (situations roleplayed once at posttest). Also, individuals in the cognitive modification groups made more phone calls to women and were rated by these women as more impressive than individuals in other groups.

Another treatment strategy based on the dysfunctional cognitive process hypothesis is a self-reinforcement modification program. Rehm and Marston (1968) used this procedure to successfully increase heterosexual competence in a group of college students. This procedure required subjects to make up a hierarchy of heterosexual interactions, beginning with those which elicit little anxiety and adding ones which elicit increasing amounts of anxiety. The subjects then systematically worked up the hierarchy by becoming involved in interactions at given levels and then evaluating their performance and rewarding themselves with self-approval for each interaction. The group receiving the self-reinforcement program yielded the greater improvements in self-report and behavioral ratings of anxiety and overt behavior than subjects receiving nondirective techniques such as client centered therapy.

Treatment based on the skills deficit hypothesis involves response acquisition (Curran, 1975; MacDonald, Lindquist, Kramer, McGrath, and Rhyne, 1975; McGovern, Arkowitz, & Gilmore, 1975; Twentyman & McFall, 1975; Zarle, 1977). This approach employs such behavioral techniques as

modeling, behavior rehearsal, feedback, in order to increase heterosexual competence (Curran, 1977). In a series of three studies, Curran and his colleagues (Curran, 1975; Curran & Gilbert, 1975; Curran, Gilbert, & Little, 1976) examined the effects of a training package designed for alleviating heterosexual anxiety and increasing dating skills. These studies used information presentation, modeling, behavioral rehearsal, coaching, feedback, and in vivo assignments to increase the various skills comprising effective dating (i.e., complimenting, planning and asking for dates, ways of enhancing physical attractiveness). Results of these studies showed dating skills training to be superior to various control groups at posttest and at long-term followups on both self-report and behavioral measures of anxiety and skill.

This author could find no treatment strategies based solely on the physical attractiveness hypothesis of minimal dating. However, Curran and his colleagues (Curran, 1975; Curran & Gilbert, 1975; Curran et al., 1976) included "ways of enhancing physical attractiveness" in their treatment packages for minimal daters. Unfortunately, no details of this phase of treatment were described in any of these studies.

Other approaches which do not fit solely into any of the four major hypotheses but have shown varying degrees of success in decreasing heterosexual anxiety in college

students are practice dating (Arkowitz et al., 1975; Martinson & Zerface, 1970; Perl et al., 1977) and sensitivity training (Bander et al., 1975; Curran et al., 1976; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1970).

In summary, each of the treatment strategies discussed above emphasize a different factor as the primary cause of dating anxiety, and view other problems of minimal daters as of secondary importance. However, it may be the case that dating anxiety in college students is a combination of skill deficit, faulty cognitive evaluation, conditioned anxiety, and low physical attractiveness, or that the basis may be different for individual subjects (Curran, 1977; Arkowitz, 1977).

#### Factors Comprising Effective Dating

Several factors have been found to be involved in heterosexual attraction and effective dating, and may be included in a skills training program. As discussed previously, a major factor related to heterosexual attraction and effective dating appears to be physical attractiveness. Learning ways of enhancing physical attractiveness may be a useful skill for minimal daters interested in increasing their dating skills.

Related to physical attractiveness is the issue of the similarity between members of a couple in physical attractiveness. Berscheid et al. (1971) found that when an individual was required to actively choose a dating partner,

he/she chose to date someone who was similar to himself/herself in physical attractiveness. Teaching minimal daters to identify dating partners that are similar to themselves in physical attractiveness may also prove a useful skill.

Conversational behavior may be another factor affecting heterosexual attraction. Kupke, Hobbs, and Cheney (1979) found that verbal behavior such as personal attention toward the partner was positively related to heterosexual attraction. Personal attention involved asking questions of or talking about the partner, e.g., "What did you do this week?"; "Sounds like you had a good time." Having a minimal dater learn to initiate these types of responses may also prove a valuable tool in effective dating.

Other behaviors that may be taught to minimally dating subjects are adequate handling of periods of silence and increasing length of responses (Arkowitz et al., 1975; Hines, 1973); asking for dates (Collins, Kennedy, & Francis, 1973); and acting in a cheerful manner (Hanson, 1977).

In summary, several behaviors which may be taught in a heterosexual skills training program for college students are (a) ways of enhancing physical attractiveness, (b) identification of similarities in physical attractiveness, (c) increasing personal attention toward the partner,

(d) handling periods of silence, (e) increasing response length, (f) asking for dates, and (g) acting in a cheerful manner. Curran and his colleagues (Curran, 1975; Curran & Gilbert, 1975; Curran et al., 1976) have included several of these skills in their skills training packages described earlier.

Although many studies have been conducted in attempts to relieve heterosexual anxiety and increase dating skills, the subjects in all of these studies were college students. Nowhere could this author find a study attempting to modify the dating skills of a "handicapped" population (i.e., mentally disabled, physically disabled, developmentally disabled). The present investigation was an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of a dating skills training package with mentally disabled outpatients. The training package consisted of presentation of information, modeling, behavioral rehearsal, live and taped (audio and visual) feedback, and homework assignments. The following was taught: (a) ways of enhancing physical attractiveness; (b) appropriate partner selection; and (c) social skills. All of the previously described skills were subsumed under one of these headings.

### Method

#### Subjects

The subjects were nine male, mentally disabled patients chosen from the Socialization Center in Stockton,

California. They were between the ages of 19 and 43. Although all subjects were living independently in the community at the time the study was conducted, seven had been previously hospitalized for psychiatric problems. Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis. Names of potential subjects were provided by the director of the Socialization Center. All potential subjects were seen individually and given a brief description of the program (see Appendix A), and those who had not had more than one date six months prior to the beginning of the study and who expressed an interest in increasing their dating skills were allowed to participate. All subjects who met these criteria were asked to complete an "Informed Consent Form" (see Appendix B) before the study began. In an attempt to decrease mortality, all subjects were told that they would receive a prize (e.g., calculator, wristwatch) if they would remain in the study until its completion.

### Design

A split plot factorial 2.2 design was employed to assess the effectiveness of the training package. Subjects were randomly assigned to either a dating skills treatment group or an attention placebo/waiting list control group. There were four subjects in the treatment group and five subjects in the control group. Both groups received a pretest and posttest; however, only the treatment group received the training package. The attention placebo/

waiting list control group was told that the training program was full and they would be notified as soon as openings became available.

### Dependent Measures

Anxiety. Heterosexual anxiety was measured by the Situation Questionnaire (see Appendix C), a self-report questionnaire developed by Rehm and Marston (1968). It consists of 30 items relating specifically to heterosexual interactions. Subjects were asked to rate on a 7-point scale the amount of anxiety they would feel in each situation, with a score of 1 indicating "none" and a score of 7 indicating "extreme".

Heterosexual interaction. At both the pretest and posttest, all subjects were invited to a party (complete with refreshments and stereo music) where female psychiatric patients living in the community were present. The party was scheduled to last from 7:30 p.m. till 10:00 p.m.. Three measures of heterosexual interaction were used for each subject. The first measure was frequency of dancing with a woman. Dancing was defined as a series of rhythmic bodily movements performed to music. An event recording system was used to measure this behavior with a new trial beginning at the start of each song. The second measure was percentage intervals in heterosexual conversation. This behavior was defined as speaking to or listening to a woman that was within a 5-foot distance. It

was recorded by an interval recording system (1-minute intervals), and was observed from 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.. The final behavior to be measured was the number of subjects who left the premise of the party with a woman. This behavior was defined as exiting from the building at least once with a woman, even if the subject returned 5 minutes later (a copy of the data sheet is presented in Appendix D).

Physical attractiveness. While at each of the previously described parties, each subject was photographed. Each subject had been informed that he would be photographed at the time he completed the "Informed Consent Form". Later, all photographs were rated on a 9-point scale of attractiveness (see Appendix E) by four judges (two male and two female), and mean ratings for each photograph were calculated. The judges were undergraduate and graduate students recruited from the psychology department at the University of the Pacific.

Appropriate partner choice. Subjects' partner selection was measured by a pretest and posttest which is included as part of a physical attractiveness discrimination training package developed by the author (described in Procedure section). The package was based on the findings of Berscheid et al. (1971) who found that when an individual was required to actively choose a dating partner, he/she tended to choose someone who was similar to

himself/herself in physical attractiveness. The package was designed to teach subjects to discriminate between women that are similar and dissimilar to themselves in physical attractiveness. It was composed of 40 photographs of women who had been rated on physical attractiveness. The pretest and posttest was composed of the first 10 pictures in the training package. Each subject was instructed to view the 10 pictures and decide whether he would ask each woman out on a date judging solely on the basis of her physical attractiveness. Subjects were unaware of the actual ratings of the photographs. Criteria for correct and incorrect decisions are presented in Appendix F.

Social skills. Subjects' social skills were evaluated through the use of the Role-Played Dating Interactions Test (see Appendix G), an assessment device developed by Rhyne, MacDonald, McGrath, Lindquist, and Kramer (1974). This is a situation test involving three 4-minute interactions with trained confederates. Although the test was developed for training with college students, it was revised in order to be applicable to the present population of subjects. Subjects were introduced to the test with a brief description and rationale for roleplaying. Instructions to subjects and confederates for specific role-played scenes as well as criteria for scoring appropriate behavior are included in the test. Two female undergraduate college

students acted as confederates for the scenes. All confederates had previously participated in a pilot study in which they were trained on the scenes. Confederates were unaware of whether subjects were in the treatment group or control group.

Dating frequency. As an indirect measure of treatment efficacy, dating frequency was recorded for a 3-week period prior to the beginning of training and following completion of training. Each subject was telephoned weekly and asked if he had dated someone in the previous week. Any other persons who spent very much time around the subject were also contacted and asked if the subject had dated the previous week. A "date" was defined as planfully spending time with a member of the opposite sex (Arkowitz et al., 1975). This would include such things as going out to a movie or dancing, visiting at his or her apartment, studying together, etc.

Skill acquisition. As direct measures of treatment efficacy, an oral quiz of social skills and a personal hygiene checklist were administered to both groups at pretest and posttest. The oral quiz consisted of 11 questions on the social skills taught to the treatment group (see Appendix H). The personal hygiene checklist consisted of various grooming, hygiene, and dressing skills taught to the treatment group (see Appendix I). These measures, along with the training portion of the measure

for appropriate partner choice, were also administered to the treatment group during the training phase to ensure that skill acquisition was taking place (described in Procedure section).

#### Interobserver Agreement

Interobserver agreement was assessed with both groups at pretest and posttest. Two experimentally naive observers were enlisted and trained to record Roleplayed Dating Interactions scores, the appropriate partner choice measure, the skill acquisition measures, and the three heterosexual interaction measures. Interobserver agreement for the roleplaying, the heterosexual conversation, the appropriate partner choice, the oral quiz, the personal hygiene checklist, and the leaving-with-a woman measures were calculated by using effective percentage agreement for occurrences of behaviors ( $\text{agreement of occurrences} / \text{agreement of occurrences plus disagreement of occurrences}$ ), or effective percentage agreement for nonoccurrence of behaviors ( $\text{agreement of nonoccurrences} / \text{agreement of nonoccurrences plus disagreement of nonoccurrences}$ ) when behaviors did not occur with appreciable frequency. Interobserver agreement for the dancing measure was calculated by using overall percentage agreement for each subject ( $\text{agreement of occurrences} / \text{agreement of occurrences plus disagreement of occurrences}$ ).

### Procedure

The program lasted 11 weeks for each subject. During weeks 1 - 3, all subjects were assessed; during weeks 4 - 8, only subjects in the treatment group were trained; during weeks 9 - 11, all subjects were again assessed.

During the training period, each subject in the treatment group was trained separately in his home or in the trainer's office. Each training session was planned to last approximately 60 minutes. After the first training session, 10 minutes were allotted for discussion of the previous week's homework assignment, 45 minutes for training, and 5 minutes for assignment of new homework. Each subject was encouraged to participate fully, ask questions, make suggestions, and apply the material under discussion to his own personal life and social situations.

To help diminish the possibility of a placebo effect the training package may have produced, the attention placebo/waiting list control group was telephoned or visited weekly in their homes. At this time, they were asked several questions relating to any dating they may have done or conversations they may have had with women the previous week. However, subjects in the control group were not given any information or suggestions on how to improve their skills (the questions that these subjects were asked each week are presented in Appendix J).

Weeks 1 - 3: Pretest. The pretest was conducted over

a 3-week period. All subjects were seen both individually and in groups. In the first two weeks of pretesting subjects were telephoned to obtain the dating frequency report. Subjects were also seen individually in their homes to obtain the social skills measure, the anxiety measure, the appropriate partner choice measure, and the skill acquisition measures. In the third week of pretesting, all subjects were observed at the party. At this time, each subject was reminded that he had agreed to be photographed. Each subject was then photographed and the heterosexual interaction measures were recorded. The following day, the final weekly report of dating frequency was collected from each subject.

Week 4: Ways of enhancing physical attractiveness.

In this phase, subjects in the treatment group were taught the importance of their personal appearance. Subjects were told that a major factor in whether they would date or not would depend on their own personal attractiveness. In order to assess their personal appearance before training, subjects were administered a personal hygiene checklist (see Appendix I). Subjects were then given a list of suggestions for enhancing their personal appearance (see Appendix K). Each suggestion was read aloud and explained by the trainer.

To enhance learning of current hair styles and clothing styles, subjects were shown catalogue pictures

(e.g., J.C. Penneys) depicting these styles. Finally, subjects were given a homework assignment in which they were instructed to follow each of the suggestions listed in Appendix K. Subjects were required to appear for the next training session "demonstrating" what they had learned. At the beginning of the next training session, each subject was again administered the personal hygiene checklist and given feedback from the results of the checklist. If a subject did not reach 90% mastery on the checklist, he was required to repeat the homework assignment for the following training sessions until mastery was reached.

Week 5: Social skills training. In this phase, subjects were taught to carry on a conversation with a woman. Subjects were first presented with an oral quiz on the skills that would be taught (see Appendix H). Subjects were then presented with situations from the Taped Situation Test, a test developed by Rehm and Marston (1968) (see Appendix L). This test involves 10 social situations in which a student subject must carry on a conversation with a female student confederate. Several of the situations were modified to include subjects who were not students.

The trainer initially described the background of a situation (e.g., "As you are leaving a cafeteria, a girl taps you on the back and says. . ."). Following this, the confederate said a line of dialogue (e.g., "I think you

left this book"), to which the subject was asked to respond. Subjects' responses were either audiotaped or videotaped and feedback was given. Then the trainer and confederate modeled the situation, and the subject again attempted to roleplay it. This format was followed until the 45 minutes allotted for training elapsed. Various suggestions that were given to each subject for improving conversation with women are presented in Appendix M.

At the end of the session, the subjects were given a homework assignment which consisted of carrying on conversations with at least three women. In the following session, subjects would be asked to discuss the content of these conversations as well as any problems they may have encountered. In order to remind subjects to carry out this assignment, the trainer telephoned each subject once before the next training session.

Week 6: Social skills training (continued). After discussion of the homework assignment, the training portion of this session was conducted the same way as the previous session. Previously practiced roleplay situations were quickly reviewed. Any situations that were not practiced in the previous session were now practiced. Suggestions for improving conversation (see Appendix M) were reviewed.

Near the end of the training portion of the session, subjects were again administered the oral quiz on social skills. Subjects were required to reach 90% accuracy on

the quiz. If a subject did not reach mastery on the first attempt, he was retrained in the areas where the quiz indicated a deficit, and the quiz was again administered.

At the end of the session, subjects were instructed to ask a woman out before the next training session. Each subject was again telephoned to be reminded to carry out the assignment.

Week 7: Appropriate partner selection training. In this phase, subjects were taught to identify women who would be likely prospects for successful dates. Specifically, each subject was told that he may have more success and/or satisfaction in dating if he attempted to date women who were reasonably similar to himself in physical attractiveness, rather than women who were appreciably more or less attractive than himself.

To enhance acquisition of this skill, each subject was administered the training section of a physical attractiveness discrimination training package. The subject was given the photograph taken of him at the pretest. He was then presented with three series of photographs of women. Each series contained ten photographs. Each photograph represented one trial. The procedure for each trial was as follows:

1. The trainer instructed the subject to look at the photograph of the woman and compare his photograph

with the woman's photograph.

2. The trainer instructed the subject to state whether or not he (the subject) was similar in attractiveness to the woman in the photograph. If the subject responded correctly (see Appendix N), then the trainer praised the subject and moved to step 3; if the subject responded incorrectly, the trainer scored the trial "incorrect". The trainer then told the subject that "the woman is probably a little too attractive (or not attractive enough) for him". The trainer and subject did not proceed to step 3, but proceeded to the next photograph and began at step 1 above.
3. The trainer instructed the subject to make a decision as to whether he would ask the woman out on a date, judging solely on the comparison in step 2 above. After the subject made his decision, the trainer scored his response as "correct" or "incorrect", asked for a reason for his decision, and gave appropriate feedback.

Criteria for correct and incorrect decisions in step 3 above was the same as in the pretest. Examples of trainer questioning and feedback for correct and incorrect decisions in step 3 above is presented in Appendix O.

This procedure continued until mastery was reached for each series of photographs or until the 45 minutes allotted

for training elapsed. The criterion for each series of photographs was 80% correct responding.

Subjects were then assigned homework in which they were given the name and phone number of a female psychiatric patient who expressed a desire to date more frequently. None of the subjects had ever met this woman. Subjects were only given information on the woman's name, age, telephone number, and the type of residence she lived in (e.g., board and care home). Each subject was simply instructed to telephone the woman and to use the skills that were learned in the program. Any decision to carry on a conversation or ask the woman for a date were left entirely to each subject. Once again each subject was telephoned to be reminded to carry out the assignment.

Week 8: Final training session. Subjects discussed the results of the last homework assignment. Subjects discussed responses of the woman, any problems encountered, whether they asked her out or not, etc. Finally, short reviews of each phase of training were conducted and the three training measures (personal hygiene checklist, one series of photographs from the discrimination package, and the oral quiz on social skills were administered).

Weeks 9 - 11: Posttest. The posttest was conducted in a similar manner as the pretest. It was conducted over a 3-week period. All subjects were seen individually and in groups. In the first week of posttesting, all subjects

were observed at a party. Each subject was again photographed and the heterosexual interaction measures were recorded. The following day, the weekly report of dating frequency was collected from each subject. In the second and third weeks of posttesting, subjects were telephoned to obtain the social skills measure, the anxiety measure, the appropriate partner choice measure, and the skill acquisition measures.

### Results

Separate split-plot factorial 2.2 analysis of variance were carried out on each of the dependent measures. The between group variables were the treatment group and the control group (Groups). The within group variables were the pretest and posttest sessions (Sessions). Mean scores of subjects on all dependent measures are shown in Table 1.

#### Anxiety

The analysis of scores from the Situation Questionnaire (see Table 2) yielded a significant session effect,  $F(1,7) = 9.64$ ,  $p < .05$ , with both groups of subjects describing themselves as less anxious at posttesting (Treatment:  $\bar{x} = 56.8$ ; Control:  $\bar{x} = 74.2$ ) than at pretesting (Treatment:  $\bar{x} = 72.8$ ; Control:  $\bar{x} = 104.2$ ) (see Table 1). However, no significant group effect was found, nor was there a significant interaction effect.

#### Heterosexual Interaction

The analysis of scores from the dancing and

Table 1  
Mean Scores for Dependent Measures

Groups	Trials	
	Pretest	Posttest
Situation Questionnaire		
Treatment	72.8	56.8
Control	104.2	74.2
Dancing		
Treatment	8.8	9.3
Control	3.4	3.4
Heterosexual Conversation		
Treatment	20.9	41.3
Control	12.3	35.1
Leaving-with-a-Woman		
Treatment	.3	1.3
Control	.2	.4
Physical Attractiveness		
Treatment	3.5	3
Control	3.8	3.6

Table 1 (continued)

Groups	Trials	
	Pretest	Posttest
Appropriate Partner Choice		
Treatment	4.3	6.3
Control	3.6	4.6
Role-Played Dating Interactions Test		
Treatment	54.3	54
Control	50.2	45
Dating Frequency		
Treatment	0	2.8
Control	.6	2.2
Oral Quiz of Social Skills		
Treatment	5.8	12.5
Control	5.2	5.8
Personal Hygiene Checklist		
Treatment	7.8	9.8
Control	8	9

Table 2  
Analysis of Variance:  
Situation Questionnaire

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	3174.90	.88
Error between	7	3605.59	
Sessions	1	2544.22	*9.64
Sessions x Groups	1	217.78	.82
Error within	7	264.00	

\*p.<.05

heterosexual conversation measures both failed to indicate any significant effects (see Tables 3 and 4). The leaving-with-a-woman measure showed a significant session effect,  $F(1,7) = 6.7, p < .05$ , with both groups of subjects leaving the premises with a woman more often at posttest (Treatment:  $\bar{x} = 1.3$ ; Control:  $\bar{x} = .4$ ) than at pretest (see Table 5). Although no significant group effect or interaction effect was found for this measure, the interaction effect approached significance,  $F(1,7) = 3.8, p < .10$ .

Interobserver agreement for the dancing measure was 98% at pretest and 94% at posttest. For the heterosexual conversation measure, interobserver agreement was 73% at pretest and 85% at posttest. Interobserver agreement for the leaving-with-a-woman measure was 95% at pretest and 96% at posttest.

#### Physical Attractiveness

The analysis of scores from the physical attractiveness measure failed to yield any significant effects (see Table 6), indicating that subjects were no more attractive at posttest than at pretest. In fact, mean ratings of subjects' attractiveness show a slight decrease at posttest than at pretest (see Table 1).

#### Appropriate Partner Choice

The analysis of scores from the appropriate partner choice measure failed to show any significant effects

Table 3  
Analysis of Variance:  
Dancing

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	154.71	4.64
Error between	7	33.34	
Sessions	1	1.38	.02
Sessions x Groups	1	.02	.00
Error within	7	58.3	

Table 4  
Analysis of Variance:  
Heterosexual Conversation

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	240.59	.20
Error between	7	1212.08	
Sessions	1	2121.18	2.70
Sessions x Groups	1	6.92	.01
Error within	7	785.64	

Table 5  
Analysis of Variance:  
Leaving-with-a-woman

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	.90	1.03
Error between	7	.87	
Sessions	1	1.34	*6.70
Sessions x Groups	1	.76	**3.80
Error within	7	.20	

\*p. < .05

\*\*p. < .10

Table 6  
Analysis of Variance:  
Physical Attractiveness

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	.28	.10
Error between	7	2.64	
Sessions	1	1.39	1.59
Sessions x Groups	1	.76	.01
Error within	7	.20	

(see Table 7), indicating that subjects had not maintained the trained skill of selecting dating partners similar to themselves in attractiveness. Interobserver agreement for the appropriate partner choice measure was 100% at pretest and posttest.

### Social Skills

Analysis of scores from the Role-Played Dating Interactions Test failed to yield any significant effects (see Table 8), indicating that subjects' social skills had not improved at posttesting. Interobserver agreement for the test was 80% at pretest and 88% at posttest.

### Dating Frequency

Analysis of dating frequency over the three week period at pretest and posttest failed to show any significant effects (see Table 9). These results indicated that subjects were not dating more frequently at posttest than at pretest. Questioning of subjects' peers and houseparents confirmed the accuracy of subjects' responses of dating frequency.

### Skill Acquisition

Analysis of scores from the oral quiz of social skills indicated a significant interaction effect of groups and sessions,  $F(1,7) = 19.6$   $p < .01$  (see Table 10). An analysis of simple main effects of groups and sessions indicated a significant difference between groups at posttesting (Treatment:  $x = 12.5$ ; Control:  $x = 5.8$ ),

Table 7  
Analysis of Variance:  
Appropriate Partner Choice

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	5.88	1.42
Error between	7	4.12	
Sessions	1	9.39	*5.06
Sessions x Groups	1	1.11	.60
Error within	7	1.86	

\*p. < .10

Table 8  
Analysis of Variance:  
Role-Played Dating Interactions Test

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	189.22	.78
Error between	7	242.68	
Sessions	1	40.50	.46
Sessions x Groups	1	27.22	.31
Error within	7	87.82	

Table 9  
Analysis of Variance:  
Dating Frequency

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	3.21	.54
Error between	7	5.98	
Sessions	1	16.05	1.92
Sessions x Groups	1	.05	.01
Error within	7	8.34	

Table 10  
Analysis of Variance:  
Oral Quiz of Social Skills

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	58.40	*11.24
Error between	7	5.20	
Sessions	1	49.99	*23.38
Sessions x Groups	1	42.02	*19.65
Error within	7	2.14	

\*p. < .01

Table 11  
 Analysis of Variance for simple Main Effects:  
 Oral Quiz of Social Skills

Source	df	MS	F
<b>Groups</b>			
Groups x Pretest	1	.67	.18
Groups x Posttest	1	99.76	*27.20
Error cell	14	3.67	
<b>Sessions</b>			
Sessions x Treatment	1	91.12	*42.60
Sessions x Control	1	.90	.42
Error within	7	2.14	

\*p. < .01

Table 12  
Analysis of Variance:  
Personal Hygiene Checklist

Source	df	MS	F
Groups	1	.28	.09
Error between Sessions	7	3.21	
Sessions	1	9.39	2.27
Sessions x Groups	1	1.11	.27
Error within	7	4.14	

$F(1,14) = 27.2$   $p < .01$ , and a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores for the treatment group (pretest:  $\bar{x} = 5.8$ ; posttest:  $\bar{x} = 12.5$ ),  $F(1,14) = 42.6$ ,  $p < .01$  (see Table 11). On the basis of this analysis and observation of mean scores on this measure (see Table 1), two conclusions can be drawn: (a) scores of the treatment group significantly improved from pretest to posttest, whereas, scores of the control group remained unchanged; (b) scores of the treatment group were significantly superior to those of the control group at posttest as compared to scores at pretest.

Analysis of scores from the personal hygiene checklist failed to indicate any significant effects (see Table 12). These results indicate that subjects' grooming, hygiene, and dressing skills that had been trained to criterion had not maintained improvement at posttesting.

Interobserver agreement for the oral quiz was 100% at pretest and posttest. For the personal hygiene checklist, interobserver agreement was 89% at pretest and 94% at posttest.

### Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the skills training package employed was not effective in teaching heterosexual dating skills to mentally disabled subjects. While the results showed that the trained subjects performed superior to control subjects on the oral quiz of

social skills, the other nine measures of heterosexual dating competence failed to yield any significant difference between the groups. On the anxiety measure and the leaving-with-a-woman measure, the ordered performance of the groups was in the predicted direction, however, neither measure indicated a significant group or interaction effect.

These results are contrary to previous findings on skill acquisition approaches to dating competence. McDonald et al. (1975) found their dating skills program superior to control groups on behavioral measures of heterosexual competence. As stated earlier, Curran and his colleagues (Curran, 1975; Curran and Gilbert, 1975; Curran et al., 1976) found dating skills training superior to control groups on both behavioral and self report measures of skill and anxiety. The interventions employed in these programs (e.g., information presentation, modeling, feedback) were similar to those used in the present study. Also, the Role-Played-Dating-Interactions measure used in the present study and stated as being a sensitive instrument to dating skill changes, as well as a valid measure of dating competence (Arkowitz, 1977), was used as a measurement device in the McDonald et al. (1975) study. However, these programs utilized college students as subjects, and the specific intervention techniques and

measures used in them may not be useful or valid for an outpatient population.

A number of factors may have accounted for the negative results of the study, including the small sample size and the long intervals between treatment sessions (7 days). While other studies have shown positive results with once-per-week training sessions with college students (McDonald et al., 1975) the subjects in the present study often forgot to carry out homework assignments between sessions, and may have better benefited by being trained more frequently.

Other factors that may have contributed to the negative findings may be the lack of a customized training program for each subject necessitated by the group design. As stated earlier, it may be the case that dating anxiety is the result of a combination of skill deficit, faulty cognitive evaluation, conditioned anxiety, and low physical attractiveness, or that the basis may be different for individual subjects (Curran, 1977; Arkowitz, 1977). The format of the present study was not designed to assess and modify individual deficits and excesses of a subject's behavioral repertoire. Therefore, any positive changes that may have occurred as a result of training for subjects lacking adequate skills, may have been hidden due to subjects who already had appropriate skills in several of the targeted areas. Future studies should employ similar

dating skills training methods using single subject designs, and designing training content to modify individual deficits and excesses of subjects.

The data indicated that both treated and untreated subjects' posttest performance on the anxiety measure was significantly better than their pretest performance. These results may be partially explained by subject "hypothesis guessing" of the experimental situation (a threat to construct validity). Subjects involved in the study knew that they were there in order to increase their dating skills. Therefore, it is possible that the subjects' reduction in Situation Questionnaire scores (a self-report measure) was due to their knowledge of the purpose of the study. That is, subjects may have tried to present themselves in a more favorable light at posttesting because they believed that "improvement" was expected of them.

The implication of this study of the failure to obtain significant interaction on all measures except the oral quiz of social skills may be that, at the time of posttesting, the higher scores on the oral quiz reflected changes in the knowledge of dating skills that were not necessarily accompanied by overt behavioral change. For example, subjects may know that they should ask questions of the dating partner, speak in a lively, cheerful voice, and maintain eye contact with the dating partner, without actually acquiring an effective repertoire of these

behaviors. Future studies should incorporate a behavioral assessment device along with an oral quiz to measure these skills during the training phase of a program. In this manner, trainers may be ensured that the skills trained are adequately incorporated into the subjects' repertoire.

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## Appendix A

## Brief Program Description

My name is Richard Billo. I'm a psychology graduate student at the University of the Pacific, and I'm going to be conducting a project during the next few weeks which will involve teaching men how to date women. The project will include such topics as ways of increasing physical attractiveness, identifying types of people that would be suitable dating partners, and how to act when involved in an interaction with a woman. If you would like to attempt to improve your dating skills, I'm willing to sit and talk with you and answer any questions you may have about the project.

## Appendix B

## Informed Consent Form

I understand that this is a research project and that some of the procedures I may be asked to carry out are in an experimental stage of development. Furthermore, I understand that I will be assigned to either a training or a waiting list control group.

It is also my understanding that there are no known physical or psychological risks that may result from the training I receive. Conversely, it is hoped that the program will help me increase my dating skills.

I understand that there are several procedures that may be used for increasing dating skills and that none of the procedures will involve any physical pain; nor will I be asked to take any intelligence or personality tests.

Richard Billo and his assistants have agreed to answer any questions about the research. I also understand that any personal information requested of or about me will only be obtained with my consent, and that if this information is published or presented in a scientific forum, my personal identity will not be revealed.

I also understand that a photograph of me will be taken in the course of the project, and it will be turned over to me at the completion of the project.

Finally, I understand that my success or failure in this project may depend on any of several factors,

including the type of training I receive, and does not reflect any deficiency in intelligence or personality problem.

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

## Situation Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Read each of the situations below carefully. For each item rate the amount of discomfort or anxiety which you would feel in such a situation. Make your rating by circling a number from 1 to 7 according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
None	Very Little	A Little	Some	Much	Very Much	Extreme

Although some items may seem too general or may not seem to apply to you, answer all items as best you can.

1. Calling up a female just to talk. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Carrying on a conversation initiated by a female classmate on campus. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Asking a female for information about a class after class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Talking with a female whom you have known for some time. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Casually talking to a girl much younger than yourself. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Buying an item from an older sales-woman. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Starting a conversation with a female whom you have never met before in a dorm lounge or cafeteria. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Asking a female to have a cup of coffee with you after class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Conversing with a female on a date. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Talking to an older female whom you know. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. Kissing a girl goodnight at the door. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. Conversing with a saleswoman or female clerk your age about some topic beyond the business at hand. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Answering a female classmate's questions about an assignment after class. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. Initiating a conversation with a female from one of your classes whom you see on campus. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. Just meeting a particularly good looking female. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. Talking to a female with a group of male and female friends. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. Parking with a female after a date. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. Sitting next to a girl in a class not by your choice of seats. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. Being introduced to a new girl at a party. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

- |     |                                                                     |               |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 20. | Being introduced to a female while<br>with a group of your friends. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 21. | Picking a girl up for a first date.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 22. | Asking a female for a date in person.                               | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 23. | Taking a female home after a date.                                  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 24. | Taking a seat next to a female in<br>class.                         | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 25. | Calling up a girl about some class<br>work.                         | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 26. | Calling a girl to ask her for a date.                               | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 27. | Buying an item from a female of your<br>age at a store.             | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 28. | Dancing with a girl on a date.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 29. | Putting your arm around your date<br>in a theatre.                  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |
| 30. | Walking hand in hand with a female.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 |



Appendix E  
Physical Attractiveness Scale

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

- 1 -- Extremely unattractive; no attractive characteristics.  
2  
3 -- Unattractive; maybe one or two semi-attractive characteristics but unattractive overall.  
4  
5 -- Average attractiveness.  
6  
7 -- Attractive; maybe one or two unattractive characteristics, but attractive overall.  
8  
9 -- Extremely attractive; beautiful.

## Appendix F

## Correct and Incorrect Dating Decisions

Correct Decisions

1. Subject's ratings of his physical attractiveness and actual ratings of woman's physical attractiveness are similar, and subject decides he would ask woman out.
2. Subject's ratings of his physical attractiveness and actual ratings of woman's physical attractiveness are not similar, and subject decides he would not ask woman out.

Incorrect Decisions

1. Subject's ratings of his physical attractiveness and actual ratings of woman's physical attractiveness are similar, but subject decides he would not ask woman out.
2. Subject ratings of his physical attractiveness and actual ratings of woman's physical attractiveness are not similar, but subject decides he would ask woman out.

## Definitions of similar and dissimilar ratings

1. similar ratings: ratings of subject and woman are no more than 1 point apart on the Likert scale (e.g., subject = 3, woman = 2; subject = 3, woman = 4).

2. dissimilar ratings: ratings of subject and woman are more than 1 point apart on Likert scale (e.g., subject = 3, woman = 5; subject = 3, woman = 1).

## Appendix G

## The Role-Played Dating Interactions

## Situation One: Telephone Interaction

Instructions to the subject (Provided to the subject for 30 seconds prior to entering the situation): There is a girl in your largest class (or at work) that you have talked with a couple of times before class (or work) and who seems pretty nice. You have decided to call her up and ask her out. Her name is Nancy Smith and her number is 344-1212.

Instructions to the Actress: Your name is Nancy Smith. Both you and the subject are in a large class. You have talked with him a couple of times before class. Be receptive, but not gushy.

## I. Initiation of interaction

Telephone rings.

Actress: Hello

If subject says, "May I speak with Nancy Smith?"

Actress: This is Nancy.

## II. Identification

A. If subject identifies himself as person in a specific class,

Actress: Oh, yes. How are you?

B. If he identifies himself as having talked to her about a specific topic,

Actress: Yes, I remember. How are you?

C. If he identifies himself by name only,

Actress: Hi, how are you?

D. If no identification,

For example, if he says, "Hello, how are you?"

Actress: fine. (Wait 3 seconds, if he has not identified himself, interrupt even though he may be talking).

"Your voice sounds familiar, but I don't recognize it."

(After he gives any identification, the actress says, "Oh yes," . . .)

If he has already asked what she is doing, etc., she is to pause and go into, "I've been decorating. . .")

If he has not asked actress a question:

Actress: How are you?

III. Get response to the question, "How are you?"

a. If he answers, "OK, not bad, etc.," only

Actress: (Wait 5 seconds) What have you been doing lately?

b. If he answers as above and asks, "How are you?" or "What have you been doing?"

Actress: I've been decorating my new apartment. My roommate and I are going to Lincoln Square to buy some things for the apartment tonight.

Actress should wait for 5 seconds. If he has not

spoken,

Actress: What have you been doing lately?

(Note: Actress is not to volunteer that she must leave in four minutes unless the subject specifically asks if she has time to talk. If he asks,

Actress: I can talk for a couple of minutes. My roommate has gone to get the car; she'll be back in just a few minutes.)

c. If he states specifically something that he has been doing, the actress is to ask two questions or make a statement which he can followup. Unless he asks a question, the actress is to pause, after having asked two questions, and wait until he speaks.

IV. Following (a) or (b) above

a. If he says he has not been doing anything or not much.

Actress: (Wait 3 seconds) Oh come on, everybody does something.

b. If he tells actress what he's been doing, she responds by asking two questions which give him a chance to elaborate. If the subject responds to "a" with "Just going to classes (or work)": "You must have a heavy load then. What are you taking besides the class we have together?" (or "You

must work very hard then. How long do you usually work?").

V. Whenever he makes a statement or asks a question the actress should respond in a brief (one or two one-line sentences) way that could be followed by a statement from him. After the above exchanges, she should only respond to what he says. She is to respond but not initiate.

VI. When, and if, he asks her out

a. If he mentions a specific activity

Actress: Oh, that sounds great, but I can't accept. I'm dating a guy and we've agreed not to date anybody else. Thanks for asking, anyway.

b. If he doesn't state a specific activity.

Actress: I really appreciate your asking, but I have to say no. I'm dating a guy and we've agreed not to date anybody else. Thanks for asking, anyway.

VII. Then Actress is to wait, let him speak.

a. If he persists about dating,

Actress: You don't understand. I don't want to date anybody but my boyfriend.

b. If he just talks, actress is to respond as in "V" above.

VIII. Regardless of whether or not he has stated date intentions, at 3 minutes 30 seconds (210 seconds),

the actress will say:

"Well, my roommate is here with the car, so I'll have to be going now."

If he brings up date at this point, respond as specified above.

Let him end the conversation, then

Actress: Goodbye. See you in class (or at work) tomorrow.

(Hangs up)

Situation One: Performance Rating Scale

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_ Subjects: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score + for each answer of "Yes".

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject give his name without a prompt?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject identify himself by context (where he and the girl met) without a prompt?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the subject make sure he is talking with the right person (by asking her name, or in some other way)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does the subject call the girl by name at least once (use her name in the conversation)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject find out how long the girl has available for the phone conversation?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject find out what the girl has been doing lately (decorating her new apartment)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject make at least two follow-up sentences (either questions or statements) about her recent

activity or apartment-decorating or some topic he brings up?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject give information about what he has been doing lately on the first prompt?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject elaborate on what he's been doing lately in response to girl's follow-up response or (if subject did not respond to the first prompt) does subject give information about what he's been doing lately on the second prompt?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does he get to the point of asking her out quickly (within 210 seconds and before she says she has to go)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject ask girl out?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject ask girl out in an assertive, positive manner?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject ask girl out for a definite time?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject have a definite activity to suggest?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject recover well from the refusal (verbally respond with an appropriate comment within three seconds)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject end the conversation?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject end the conversation nicely (do not score "+" if subject makes a statement that would induce guilt or anger in the girl)

Number of seconds between entrance of room and dialing: \_\_\_\_\_ seconds

\_\_\_\_ Does subject complete the dialing on the first attempt?

Total duration of the phone call: \_\_\_\_ seconds

Instructions to the subject (provided to the subject for 30 seconds prior to entering the situation): You are in a waiting room of a doctor's office waiting to see the doctor. It is 1:00 p.m., Wednesday afternoon. There is a girl in the room. The girl is nice looking, someone you'd be interested in dating. Your task is to do what you would normally do in this situation.

Instructions to the Actress: she is to be friendly but not exuberant. When the male enters, she is to be looking at a magazine but not seriously.

Actress is sitting in the room. She is slowly flipping through the magazine, looking at the pages, but not reading.

Subject comes in.

Actress looks up briefly (raises eyes and head slightly) when he enters, but continues looking at the magazine.

If the subject has not initiated conversation after 30 seconds of being in the room:

Actress: (Actress is to light a cigarette. Look about room). Do you see an ashtray? (Smile)

A. If subject looks for ashtray and/or gives it to her.

Actress: Thank you. Are you waiting for the doctor?

B. If subject says, "It's under your chair."

Actress: (Leans over and picks up ashtray). No wonder I couldn't see it. Thank you. Are you waiting for the doctor?

C. If subject says "No" or looks around without finding it

Actress: (Looks around, finds it). Here it is. Are you waiting for the doctor?

If the subject says, "Yes" without additional information,

Actress: Have you ever seen this doctor before?

After the actress has initiated three questions, she is not to respond to further noninformational statements (e.g., I don't know, yes, no, maybe).

Throughout the interaction the actress is to observe the following rule for responding to the subject: Respond to him by answering questions with a one- or two-line statement. At the end of the response to the subject's every second statement, ask him a question related to the topic. (This means that the response to the subject's every other statement will be a statement). That is, he asks a question, actress answers with a statement, he asks a second question, actress responds and ends with a question for the subject.

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If the subject initiates contact by speaking:

Subject: Hi.

Actress: (Smile) Are you waiting for the doctor?

If the subject asks: Are you waiting for the doctor?

Actress: Yes, the nurse said he would be back in a few minutes. Are you waiting too?

If the subject says, "Yes" without additional information.

Actress: Have you ever seen this doctor before?

If the subject does not give an informational statement in response, go into the cigarette routine but do not include any question except, "Do you see an ashtray?"

If the subject begins with or brings up the magazine article,

Actress: I'm reading the article on \_\_\_\_\_.

It states that \_\_\_\_\_.

If the subject does not respond, wait 5 seconds. Then, if the subject has not had questions from the actress, she is to go into the cigarette routine with questions.

Regardless of what happens, even if the subject is talking, the actress is to engage in the cigarette routine without the questions. This can come near the end or following the first 10-second silence. (Note: The routine must include, "Do you see an ashtray?" If after the actress has asked the three questions above and finished the cigarette routine the subject has not brought up a topic of conversation", the actress is to remain silent unless the subject initiates conversation. She is to continue glancing at her magazine.

After 4 minutes Actress says: I'm going to look for a drinking fountain." (She leaves)

Situation Two: Performance Rating Scale

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_ Subjects: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score + for each answer of "Yes".

- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject look at girl within 10 seconds of entering room?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject acknowledge the girl's presence with a smile or nod when she looks up?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject speak to the girl within 30 seconds after entering the room?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject respond to girl's question (score + for any type of verbalization or non-verbal acknowledging response)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject respond to girl's verbalizations with follow-up questions or comments (Score one + for each time)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject initiate a topic of conversation (Score one + for each "Yes")?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject state his name?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject pronounce his name clearly and look at girl as he says it?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject find out the girl's name?
- \_\_\_\_\_ When the girl says: "Do you see an ashtray anywhere?", does subject look for an ashtray?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Does subject hand the ashtray to her or make any

movement pointing out its location?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject speak to her as he hands her the ashtray or points out its location?

Situation Three: Double-Date Interaction

Instructions to subject (provided to the subject for 30 seconds prior to entering the situation): Jerry, a guy you vaguely know in the dorm, has asked you to double date with him and his steady girlfriend, Susan. Your date for the movie is his steady girlfriend's hometown friend who is visiting for the weekend. She is a nursing student and lives in Sacramento. He'll be in the room and the two girls will enter shortly. the group is going to be deciding which movie to see.

Subject enters the room.

Actor (Jerry) enters the room.

Jerry (shake hands): Thanks a lot for helping me out. I didn't think I could find anyone on such short notice... Oh, here the girls are now. Hello, Susan, Marcia--that didn't take long... Susan, this is \_\_\_\_\_ (subject's name).

Susan: Hi

(all actors pause for 2 seconds. After subject speaks or all remain silent for 2 seconds, Jerry speaks)

Jerry: Marcia, this is \_\_\_\_\_ (subject's name).

(All actors pause for 2 seconds. After subject speaks or all remain silent for 2 seconds, Jerry and Susan begin moving toward the mirror, Marcia stays where she is and as Jerry and Susan begin talking, she begins to move to chairs)

Jerry: (Talking as he and Susan cross room) you remember when I took my car in to the garage to be fixed. I've been waiting 2 weeks for it (voice is getting quieter) and I still haven't got it back. I'm beginning to worry. I could tell from the look that jerk gave me when I asked him to look at it that it was going to cost me a lot of money to get fixed. (Jerry and Susan are to talk very quietly in the corner for 60 seconds)

Marcia: (After Susan and Jerry have moved away, begin counting for 20-second intervals in which you are silent unless the subject speaks. After 3 of these seconds, begin moving to chair. Respond to him by answering questions with a one- or two-line statement which he would follow with a question. At the end of the response to the subject's every second question, ask him a question related to the topic. That is, he asks a question, actress answers with a statement, he asks a second question, actress responds and ends with a question

for the subject.

(Note: The above format for responding to subject is to be followed throughout interactions in this segment and in his conversation with the two girls. Additionally, if the subject gives noninformational statements (e.g., I don't know, yes, no, maybe), actresses are not to respond.)

If after 20 seconds, the subject has not spoken to Marcia,

Marcia: Jerry didn't have much time to tell me anything about you, so why don't you tell me something about yourself (speaks indifferently).

Marcia and subjects talk for 40 seconds more.

Marcia waits for subject to speak. If he says something like: "I don't know what to say."

Marcia: Well, what are you majoring in?" (or "Where do you work?")

Subject: Biology (Goodwill Industries) (for example)

If he says nothing else, Marcia might say: "What about biology (or your job) interests you?"

From this point on, the subject must give an informational response before the actress will speak.

When the minute ends: Jerry and Susan come over.

(Jerry's arm around Susan)

Jerry: All right you guys, we have to decide on a movie.

(Susan sits down beside Marcia.) How about the monster oldie at the Auditorium?

Marcia: Not again! You took me to one of those the last time I was here.

Susan: He's just saying that. Don't pay any attention to him. What do you want to see?

Marcia: It's up to you. I don't know what's in town (as she says this, she turns to the subject)

All actors pause for 5 seconds.

If the subject makes a suggestion:

Marcia: Oh, I saw that. It was awful--even the title is dumb.

All actors pause for 3 seconds.

Regardless of the subject's response, go to

Susan: I suppose so (use preceding statement only if subject has made a response to criticism). Jerry, go get a newspaper and then we can decide. We'll need it for the times anyway.

(Jerry leaves)

Susan: (To Marcia after second interchange with subject if he is talking: otherwise as soon as Jerry leaves): How is Judy? The last time we talked, she and John were thinking of getting married.

Marcia: Oh, she's really happy. You know it seems almost

all our friends are thinking of getting married.  
 (Turning to the subject). Is that true of your  
 friends too?

If the subject does not respond or answers "Yes,"  
 "No," "I don't know," the girls are to be silent for 10  
 seconds.

Susan: It is the same situation here. Julie, Patti, and  
 Evelyn are all thinking about marriage.

From this point on, the girls are not to speak unless  
 the subject initiates a conversation. They are to be  
 responsive (as defined above) but not initiating.

After 4 minutes have elapsed since subject entered  
 room, Jerry comes in.

Jerry: Let's go. We'll decide on the way.

Situation Three: Performance Rating Scale

Rater: \_\_\_\_\_ Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Score + for each answer of "Yes"

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject look at both girls as they are  
 introduced?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject smile at both girls as they are  
 introduced?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject verbally respond in some manner to the  
 introductory remarks?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject stand close to the rest of the group  
 during the introductions?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject remain with date when other couple-

actors move away (for example, stand near her, walk with her to chairs)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject initiate conversation with his "date" when the others turn away?

\_\_\_\_\_ If the girl initiates the conversation, does subject respond with an informational statement or, if the subject initiated the conversation, does he respond to the girl's follow-up question with an informational statement?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject ask his "date" a question relating to herself?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject suggest a movie when the group cannot decide?

\_\_\_\_\_ If the subject made a movie suggestion, does he recover well from the rejection (make an appropriate verbal response within 3 seconds)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject look at the girls as they talk between themselves (after the actor has left)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject answer the question about marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject either pursue the topic of marriage appropriately or initiate a new topic of conversation within the 10-second silence?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject make informational statements (score one + for each)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject ask questions (score one + for each)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Does subject attempt to include both girls in the conversation?

## Appendix H

## Oral Quiz for Social Skills

1. When there is a long silence in a conversation, what should you do? (1 pt.)
2. When speaking to a woman on the telephone, what should you first do when you begin to speak to her? (1 pt.)
3. What should you decide beforehand, when asking a woman out on a date? (2 pts.)
4. What tone of voice should you speak in when talking to a woman? What should your mood be like? (2 pts.)
5. What are two things you can do to show a woman who is speaking, that you are interested in what she is saying? (2 pts.)
6. When the conversation begins to drag, what should you do? (1 pt.)
7. Give three examples of questions you may ask in order to start a conversation with a woman. (3 pts.)
8. Describe two ways to meet girls at parties. (2 pts.)
9. Instead of making dead end comments like "this guy just doesn't know what he's talking about," what should you try to do when speaking to a woman about another person? (1 pt.)
10. Instead of speaking in one or two word responses, how should you try to respond? (1 pt.)

## Appendix I

## Personal Hygiene Checklist

1.  No offensive body odor.
2.  Face clean, no dirt, clean shaven or neatly trimmed beard and moustache.
3.  Hair clean, no grease or dirt, neatly combed or styled.
4.  Fingernails clean, trimmed or clipped, no dirt visible under nails.
5.  Teeth clean, no food particles on teeth, no offensive odor on breath.
6.  Clothing clean, no dirt spots, food stains, wrinkles longer than one inch, no tears in clothing.
7.  Clothing is color coordinated.
8.  Shirts are buttoned properly, collars are arranged properly, shirt is tucked in.
9.  Pants are of adequate length, belt is worn if appropriate.
10.  Shoes should be clean, color coordinated with clothing.
11.  Clothing should be appropriate for a casual date.

## Appendix J

## Weekly Questions Asked of Control Group

Trainer: Well, (Subject's Name), have you dated any girls this past week?

I. If subject answers "yes":

Trainer: A. Who did you go out with?

B. Can you tell me how you happened to take her out?

C. Where did you go?

D. What did you do?

E. What did you talk about?

F. Do you plan to see her again?

II. If subject answers "no":

Trainer: Have you talked to any girls this past week?

A. If subject answers "yes":

Trainer: 1. Who did you talk to?

2. What did you talk about?

3. How did you meet her?

4. Are you romantically interested in her?

5. Do you plan to see her again?

B. If subject answers "no":

Trainer: Well OK, I just thought I would ask.

## Appendix K

## Suggestions for Enhancing Physical Attractiveness

- I. Hair Care
  - A. Have a current, neatly cut hairstyle
  - B. Shampoo hair daily
  - C. Comb hair neatly
- II. Clothing
  - A. Wear current clothing styles
  - B. Make sure clothes are clean and neatly pressed
  - C. Wear clothes that are well fitting
    1. Pants are adequate length
    2. Belt is worn if appropriate
  - D. Wear matching clothes
    1. Similar colors
    2. Prints with solids
    3. Solids with solids
  - E. Wear clothes properly
    1. Shirts tucked in
    2. Collars arranged properly
    3. Shirts buttoned properly
- III. Daily Personal Hygiene
  - A. Bathe daily and before dates
  - B. Brush teeth after each meal
  - C. Use mouthwash
  - D. Use deodorant

## Appendix K. (continued)

- E. Shave (trim beard or moustache)
- F. Use aftershave and cologne
- G. Clean and trim fingernails

## Appendix L

## Situations Used in Taped Situation Test

1. You're calling up a girl from one of your classes (or who you work with) to ask her to go to a movie. After chatting about school (or work) for a few minutes, you ask her if she would like to go to a movie Friday night. She says, "Gee, I'd really like to but I have three exams next week and I just have to study this weekend." (or "Gee, I'd really like to but I'm going out of town this weekend").
2. You're calling a girl for a date whom you had just met last night at a small party at your friend Larry's house. She answers the phone and says, "Hello," and you say. . . .
3. You're at a party given by a friend of yours. The room you're in is crowded, with people drinking and talking. In the corner, you see an attractive girl whom you'd never seen before. You walk over to her and say . . . .
4. You receive a phone call from a girl who you know casually from one of your classes (or work). She chats with you for a few minutes about how to prepare for an exam (or an incident that occurred at work). Then she says, "my apartment building is having a party next Saturday night and I was wondering if you'd like to go?"

5. You are taking a girl home after your first date which has gone very well. As you walk up to her door, she says, "I really enjoyed the evening. Thanks for asking me."
6. You are in the cafeteria line at the union (or at work) waiting to pay for a cup of coffee and a donut. The girl in front of you turns around and you recognize her as someone you once took a class with (or worked with). She says, "Hi, I didn't see you there."
7. You are hurrying to one of your classes (or to work) but you already realize you will be a few minutes late, however, the instructor (supervisor) is still not there. As you take a seat a female classmate (fellow worker) says "You made it. He's really late today."
8. As you're walking along campus, you find yourself walking beside a girl who is in one of your classes (or who works at the same place as you) but have never spoken. She sees you and says, "Hi, how's it going?"
9. At a party, there are a lot of people dancing. You see a girl on the other side of the room and walk up to her and ask her to dance. She says, "I'm really not much of a dancer."

10. You've volunteered to be a subject in a psychology experiment and when you get there, you're asked to wait in a waiting room. As you go into the waiting room you see a girl sitting there alone and you want to strike up a conversation with her.

## Appendix M

## Suggestions for Improving Conversation

1. Try to respond with whole sentences, not one- or two-word responses.
2. Watch out for dead-end comments like "this guy just doesn't know what he's talking about." Instead, try to elicit the other person's opinion by saying, "What do you think of his teaching style?"
3. Ways of opening or starting a conversation.
  - A. Where are you from?
  - B. Do you come here often?
  - C. Is anyone sitting here?
  - D. How long have you been working here?
  - E. Have you always lived here?
  - F. What kind of courses are you taking?
4. Ask personal questions.
  - A. What do you like to do with your spare time?
  - B. Are you happy here at this job?
5. When the conversation drags, change the topic, (i.e., what else do you like to do besides backpacking?)
6. Act interested in what the other person is saying by looking them in the eye and having an interested animated expression.
7. Speak in a lively voice; be in a cheerful mood.
8. Avoid long silences by asking something new.
9. When speaking to a woman on the telephone, promptly

identify yourself.

10. When asking a woman out on a date, decide beforehand where and when to go.

11. Meeting women at parties.

A. Look for a girl that is unattached and notice something you could comment on, (i.e., I notice that you're watching people dance over there; would you like to try it out?)

B. Look for someone you have seen before and ask about something you have in common, (i.e., Aren't you a friend of Jane, the hostess? Her boyfriend Bob is a good friend of mine. I thought I had seen you two together a few times.).

## Appendix N

## Correct and Incorrect Attractiveness Similarity Decisions

Correct Decisions

1. Subject and woman have similar attractiveness ratings, and subject states that he and woman are similar in attractiveness.
2. Subject and woman have dissimilar attractiveness ratings, and subject states that he and woman are not similar in attractiveness.

Incorrect Decisions

1. Subject and woman have similar attractiveness ratings, but subject states that he and woman are not similar in attractiveness.
2. Subject and woman have dissimilar attractiveness ratings, but subject states that he and woman are similar in attractiveness.

## Appendix O

## Trainer Questioning and Feedback

## I. Correct Decisions

## A. Subject decides he would ask woman out.

Trainer: "That's right Jerry! Why did you decide you would ask this woman out?"

1. Subject says he and the woman are similar in physical attractiveness.

Trainer: "That's right! Good thinking!"

2. Subject does not know or gives some other reason for choice.

Trainer: "Jerry, this woman is very similar to you in physical attractiveness. You want to try to choose those women that are similar to you in attractiveness, not women that are too attractive or not attractive enough for you."

B. Subject decides he would not ask woman out.

Trainer: "That's right Jerry! Why did you decide you would not ask this woman out?"

1. Subject says that the woman and he are not similar in physical attractiveness, or that she's too attractive or not attractive enough for him.

Trainer: "That's right! Good thinking!"

2. Subject does not know or gives some other reason for choice.

Trainer: "Jerry, this woman is not similar to you in physical attractiveness. You should choose those women that are similar to you in attractiveness, not those women that are too attractive or not attractive enough for you."

## II. Incorrect Decisions

- A. Subject decides he would ask woman out.

Trainer: "No, that's not right Jerry. Why did you decide you would ask this woman out?"

Subject says that he and the woman are similar in physical attractiveness or gives some other reason.

Trainer: "Jerry, this woman is not similar to you in attractiveness. You should choose those women that are similar to you in attractiveness, not those women that are too attractive or not attractive enough for you."

- B. Subject decides he would not ask woman out.

Trainer: "No, that's not right Jerry. Why did you decide not to ask this woman out?"

Subject says that he and the woman are not similar in attractiveness, that she is too attractive or not

attractive enough for him, or subject gives some other reason.

Trainer: "This woman is very similar to you in attractiveness. You want to choose those women that are similar to you in attractiveness."