

HETEROSEXUAL DATING INHIBITION: A COMPARISON  
OF DATING AND MINIMAL DATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By

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To

Nancy J. Owen

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HETEROSEXUAL DATING INHIBITION: A COMPARISON  
OF DATING AND MINIMAL DATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By

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The purpose of this research was to investigate and identify factors characteristic of minimal dating behavior and heterosexual social anxiety. Previous research into the problems of dating inhibition has tended to be treatment oriented and based upon assumed rather than demonstrated differences between dating and nondating subjects. Much of this treatment oriented research has produced equivocal results. This study was prompted by the need to more clearly understand the ways in which heterosexually anxious and inhibited individuals differ from those who are able to develop successful heterosexual relationships. With the identification of specific characteristic differences between dating and minimal dating individuals, a more concise and effective treatment would then be possible.

This investigation took the form of a comparison of two groups of subjects selected from the undergraduate population at the University

of Florida during the winter quarter of 1977. Group I (minimal dating subjects) was composed of thirty-one (31) undergraduate student volunteers, each of whom presented histories of unsuccessful and unsatisfactory dating interactions characterized by low dating frequencies and high levels of personal dissatisfaction. Group II (dating subjects) was selected as a comparison group and was composed of thirty-six (36) undergraduate student volunteers who gave evidence of having successful and satisfactory dating activities characterized by high dating frequency and the absence of any apparent concern or dissatisfaction over dating frequency.

The subjects in both groups were given test packets containing instruments designed to assess five factors which have been assumed but never demonstrated to be associated with minimal dating behavior. These factors were: (a) self-actualization, (b) self-concept, (c) social avoidance and distress, (d) fear of negative evaluation, and (e) social assertiveness. The test packet contained the Personal Orientation Inventory, Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale and Social Avoidance and Distress Scale, the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule, and a dating activity questionnaire.

The data collected permitted the evaluation of eight null hypotheses, seven of which were rejected as the result of finding significant differences between the two sample groups of dating and minimal dating subjects.

Highly significant differences ( $p < .01$ ) were found to exist between dating and minimal dating subjects along the dimensions of self-concept, fear of negative evaluation, social avoidance and distress, and social assertiveness. Minimal daters in this sample were characterized by low levels of self-regard, self-acceptance, and social assertiveness, as well

as significantly higher levels of general social avoidance and distress and fear of negative evaluation. A clear and positive relationship between the frequency of dating and perceived satisfaction was observed ( $r = .85$ ). The minimal dating sample was 81% male while only 36% of the dating group was male. This difference in male-female proportions between groups was found to be highly significant ( $p < .01$ ). No significant difference between dating and minimal dating samples could be found to exist with regard to academic achievement as assessed by reported grade point average.

This study sought to reassess the topic of heterosexual dating inhibition. The results obtained in this study suggest the complexity of a form of social anxiety often thought to be the expression of a simple behavioral deficit.

These findings permitted the development of a conceptual model in which minimal dating behavior was seen not as a situationally specific anxiety response, but as a symptom of general interpersonal dysfunctioning which appears to arise out of depressed levels of self-esteem and self-regard. As a result of the development of this conceptual model, the implications for further counseling research and the development of effective therapeutic interventions were discussed.

CHAPTER I  
INTRODUCTION

In recent years the process of interpersonal interaction has become a subject of study among researchers in the behavioral sciences. One such area of investigation which has become important to members of the counseling profession, particularly in educational institutions, is that of minimal dating behavior. Although largely ignored in the past, the plight of the minimal or nondater has become the focus of a limited number of research studies undertaken primarily since 1970.

Statement of the Problem

The fact that heterosexual relationships in dating pose frequent and serious problems for college students has been suggested as a common and socially significant problem (Bath, 1961). Martinson and Zerface (1970) described a survey undertaken at the University of Indiana in 1967 in which an investigation was conducted concerning the perceived problem areas reported by university and college students. This problem area survey was completed by students utilizing the counseling center. This survey revealed that many students experienced difficulties in establishing and maintaining heterosexual dating relationships and that these problems were both widespread and personally significant. In fact, there was a marked tendency for students responding to this survey to be more concerned with improving the quality and frequency of their dating interactions than with receiving assistance in selecting a vocation or in learning about their abilities, interests, intelligence, or personalities.

What is striking about these findings is that the counseling profession has, particularly in educational institutions, traditionally sought to provide assistance to students primarily in academic and vocational areas. This focus has generated a situation in which the problems associated with social interaction have been largely ignored or dealt with only superficially (Martinson and Zerface, 1970, p. 36). Martinson and Zerface, in introducing their 1970 study, wrote,

. . . the counseling profession has traditionally endeavored to serve academic and vocational ends but has not concerned itself energetically with problems associated with an individual's inability to relate successfully with members of the opposite sex.

Prior to 1970, the counseling literature contained few detailed reports of programs designed to assist young people to cope with the problems of dating. This neglect is indeed difficult to comprehend in view of the important significance dating behavior has for the individual's socialization into adult roles. Generally, dating interactions are seen as a prelude to courtship, eventual marriage, and the establishment of home and family, and thus represent a significant component of the socialization process (Hurlock, 1967, p. 525).

Despite the limited research in the field of minimal dating behavior, there is evidence to suggest that there are individuals who are either unable or unwilling to engage in the social practice of heterosexual interaction known as dating. These individuals, for whom social interaction with the opposite sex is difficult or impossible, have received relatively little attention from the counseling profession despite the fact that there exists evidence to suggest that their problem is both widespread and socially debilitating (Bath, 1961, Martinson and Zerface, 1970).

As a social practice, dating is a behavior (or a complex of behaviors) in which nearly every member of society is expected to engage, usually at the beginning of the early adolescent period. The social practice of dating represents a significant step in the process of socialization for it marks the initiation of heterosexual social interaction.

Dating, as a form of social behavior, has been viewed by cynic, critic, promoter, and researcher (Gilmer, 1967). However, in a general way, dating is viewed as a significant step in the socialization process which culminated in the development of a socially and personally competent adult (Martinson and Zerface, 1970). The successful establishment of heterosexual relationships, free from anxiety and inhibition has been suggested as an indicator of a socially competent adult for it marks the successful acquisition of a variety of socially prescribed roles (Jourard, 1963, p. 279).

Jourard (1963) in his discussion of the healthy personality suggested that an indicator of social competence was the facility with which one learned and enacted new social roles appropriate to one's age, sex, and social status. The establishment of heterosexual relationships requires the learning and enactment of such roles and thus represents not only movement toward development as a socially competent and fully functioning adult but also toward a more healthy personality as well.

The term "dating" has been used to refer to a wide range of heterosexual interactions in which two individuals mutually agree to participate in a social activity (Hurlock, 1967; Lowrie, 1951; Melnick, 1973; Rehm and Marston, 1968). Dating as a social behavior has been described as an important educational process which contributes to the development of interpersonally competent and well adjusted adults (Gilmer,

1967; Hurlock, 1967). These authors have suggested a number of benefits for those who can successfully engage in dating activity. For example, Gilmer (1967, p. 160) wrote,

It [dating] is a process in which one learns to control behavior, evaluate personality types, and build up concepts of right and wrong. Dating is a means of having a good time socially, and it helps define the roles of members of the two sexes.

Additionally, Gilmer suggested that dating provides opportunities in which individuals learn to adjust to members of the opposite sex and to gain poise and self-confidence in social situations.

However, unlike many other social behaviors which are easily learned and then integrated into the process called socialization, there are those for whom the acquisition of the requisite skills and the initiation of dating behavior is extremely difficult or impossible. This apparent difficulty for some to engage in a social practice commonly and routinely engaged in by the majority of the population as part of the socialization process is the topic of this study.

#### Definition of Terms

##### Dating

For the purpose of this study, dating was defined as the social practice in which two members of the opposite sex mutually agree to participate in a social activity as a couple for mutual enjoyment. This term was applied to spontaneous pairing activity which may occur in groups as well as to prearranged and formal heterosexual meetings. This definition, however, does not include casual or informal heterosexual contacts.

##### Dater

This term was used throughout this study to refer to an individual who engages in dating activity and who does not experience significant levels of heterosexual anxiety or inhibition.

### Minimal Dater

This term was used to refer to an individual who is unable or unwilling to engage in heterosexual dating activity or, in heterosexual dating, experiences significant and troublesome anxiety and social inhibition. In this study, the use of this term was restricted to individuals who expressed concern and dissatisfaction over their dating inhibition and resulting low dating frequency. The term nondater was used interchangeably with minimal dater and referred to a special case of minimal dating behavior characterized by a total absence of dating interaction.

### Need for the Study

Although heterosexual anxiety and minimal dating pose significant problems to a portion of the college student population, relatively little effort has been expended in the empirical investigation of this phenomenon. Since 1970, for example, fewer than twelve controlled studies have appeared in the literature in which minimal dating was the primary subject. These studies have primarily been conducted to evaluate or compare the relative effectiveness of a variety of insight and behaviorally oriented intervention techniques designed to treat minimal dating behavior primarily by seeking to increase dating interaction frequency. These studies have dealt almost exclusively with male populations and the results of the various treatment programs have been equivocal. One explanation for the wide variety of reported results is the fact that numerous possible ways of conceptualizing the problem of minimal dating behavior and resulting difficulties have been proposed and quite different treatment strategies developed (MacDonald, et al., 1975).

The general picture one develops after reviewing the literature in this field is that minimal dating behavior has only recently become of

interest to the counseling profession. At the present time no conceptual framework exists from which an understanding of the characteristics of minimal dating behavior can be drawn. Further, minimal dating behavior has been assumed, but never empirically demonstrated, to be associated with: (a) general social anxiety (Hokanson, 1971), (b) distorted self-perception and negative self-concept (Melnick, 1973; Rehm and Marston, 1968), (c) specific and general communication and interactional skills deficits (Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970; Martinson and Zerface, 1970), or (d) high fear of rejection and/or expectation of sexual gratification (McGovern, Arkowitz, and Gilmore, 1975).

Review of current literature reveals that previous researchers may have been too quick to rush in and provide intervention techniques in the treatment of a problem which still remains poorly defined, conceptually confused, and misunderstood. It is not surprising then that, in view of the previous research, most of which has involved the evaluation of a variety of treatment techniques, there has been mixed and equivocal success. There appears to be a distinct lack of agreement on the nature and etiology of social anxiety and resulting dating inhibition. These studies have not provided any clear understanding of the problem faced by college and university students who, because of as yet undescribed and undefined factors, either are unable or unwilling to engage in the social practice called dating. The identification of these specific factors would then suggest specific therapeutic targets for intervention in the treatment of minimal dating behavior.

This study was undertaken in recognition of the following:

1. There exists no adequate description of behavioral or personality variables characteristic of minimal dating.

2. Minimal dating behavior appears to be a widespread and personally significant problem among college and university students and thus, is deserving of further investigation.

3. There exists extremely limited empirical data relating to the characteristics of minimal dating behavior.

4. Previous attempts at treating minimal dating behavior have produced no consistent results.

It seems obvious that, despite the fact that some attempt has been made to provide treatment interventions for minimal dating behavior, there exists no clear understanding of heterosexual dating anxiety or of the important distinguishing characteristics of minimal dating behavior.

#### Purpose of the Study

This study had as its primary goal the investigation of the minimal or nondater. This individual has been described as typically male (Rehm and Marston, 1968). Hurlock (1967) suggested that the minimal dater was emotionally maladjusted and Jourard (1963) indicated that the minimal or nondater, because of his apparent inability to establish heterosexual interactions, was socially incompetent and was functioning poorly. These observations suggested the following research questions:

1. Do systematic differences exist between daters and nondaters on measures of self-actualization, self-concept, social evaluative anxiety, and social assertiveness?

2. Is minimal dating the result of a situationally specific anxiety response or symptomatic of a generally poor level of interpersonal functioning?

3. Is minimal dating behavior more characteristic of males or females?

4. What is the relationship between dating frequency and reported dating satisfaction?

This study represented an attempt to develop a conceptual model for understanding minimal dating behavior as well as to identify specific behavioral and personality factors characteristic of nondaters. From this analysis, an attempt was made to describe systematic differences between dating and nondating college students with regard to these specific and characteristic behavioral and personality factors thereby identifying targets for therapeutic intervention.

This study sought to investigate the specific differences between dating and nondating subjects with regard to four concepts: (a) self-actualization, (b) self-concept, (c) social assertiveness, and (d) social evaluative anxiety. Each of these factors has been suggested by previous researchers as being closely associated with minimal dating behavior. However, these associations have been assumed rather than demonstrated as discriminative characteristics of minimal dating behavior.

While finding predicted differences between daters and nondaters would be of conceptual and theoretical interest, there would still be the further and as yet unresolved questions concerning the development of a practical, identifiable, and effective procedure for dealing with the socially debilitating effects of dating anxiety. However, until minimal dating behavior is better understood, attempts at treating it are likely to continue producing inconclusive results similar to those obtained by past researchers. With the delineation of the specific characteristics of minimal dating behavior, specific behavioral and insight oriented treatments will then be possible. The differential application of these therapy modes will permit more effective counseling procedures

for those for whom dating anxiety and inhibition are personally troublesome.

As counseling centers at colleges and universities continue to develop programs designed to assist the student in areas other than the traditional ones of academic and vocational concerns, the need for the identification and conceptualization of students' personal and social problems will become increasingly important. This study represented an attempt to provide the identification and description of behavioral and personality factors associated with minimal dating behavior and heterosexual dating anxiety. These are problems which are increasingly being brought to the attention of counseling center psychologists in colleges and universities as they begin to provide assistance outside the traditional fields of counseling.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, literature which is considered relevant to the topic of minimal dating behavior and dating inhibitions is reviewed. This review is organized into the following sections: Adolescent Dating Behavior, Dating Inhibition, Recent Investigations of Minimal Dating Behavior, Treatment of Minimal Dating Behavior, and Summary.

#### Adolescent Dating Behavior

The topic of dating is one which has arisen in psychological literature only in the past few decades. Hurlock (1967) proposed that the reasons for the relatively recent emergence of this topic as a subject for analysis are unclear but may include the fact that dating is itself a social practice which can no longer be considered a colloquialism for "courtship." She suggested that in previous generations courtship was a social practice, complete with clearly defined roles, in which young people of marriageable age engaged as a prelude to marriage. However, Lowrie (1951) indicated that in recent generations dating has arisen as a distinct and separate practice from courtship in which the main purpose is to provide the participants a pleasant social experience with no commitment beyond that expectation. A number of authors (Gilmer, 1967; Hurlock, 1967; Duvall, 1963) have suggested that dating is a pairing process in which couples jointly agree to engage in some social activity. More specifically, Gilmer (1967) spoke of dating, unlike courtship, as a paired association of members of opposite sexes without reference to

the intent to marry. On the other hand, courtship involves obligations to carry through to marriage and is, therefore, a relationship into which two individuals enter which has associated with it a great many more obligations and expectations. Unlike courtship, the serious purpose of marriage is not involved in dating. Thus, dating is an end in itself. The relationship called dating may be, and often is, a prelude to courtship; for the purpose of this paper, the distinction drawn between dating and courtship will be made and maintained.

Since marriage is not an expectation of dating, the age at which young people begin to date has declined and produced a situation in which increasingly younger people are called upon to engage in complex social behaviors at a relatively early age. By the time most boys and girls are in their sophomore year in high school, the majority have not only had their first date but many are dating regularly (Cameron and Kenkel, 1960).

During the 1950's and 1960's the topic of dating became the subject of increasing interest among researchers. Much of this work (Cameron and Kenkel, 1960; Christensen, 1952; Crist, 1953) concerned the process of adolescent pairing and was descriptive in nature. These early studies of dating behavior tended to view dating from a sociological perspective and attempted to identify as many of the salient social characteristics effecting the dating process as possible. Cameron and Kenkel (1960), for example, described dating as a pairing process initiated primarily as the result of peer or even family pressure. These same conclusions were drawn by Crist (1953) and Lowrie (1951).

The socio-economic status of the families of dating couples was the subject of a study by Bock and Burchinal (1962). Their results

indicated that when the socio-economic status is favorable, both men and women tend to begin dating earlier and more frequently than when the family status is less favorable. Children from favorable socio-economic families tend to have somewhat more erratic dating patterns perhaps because of the family expectation for college attendance thereby necessarily delaying marriage.

Another factor considered in these early studies of dating behavior was investigated by Duvall (1964). He suggested that the religious background of the family influences not only the age and amount of dating, but the pattern of dating as well, particularly with girls.

The home environment also was studied by Duvall (1964) and his results indicated that adolescents from happy homes begin dating earlier and are more active in their dating relationships than those from unhappy homes. Duvall's results suggested that unhappy family relationships result in unsatisfactory relationships with members of the opposite sex. Landis (1963) came to essentially the same conclusions in investigating the dating behavior of adolescents from happy and unhappy marriages.

From a review of the literature written in the 1950's and 1960's during which dating became a topic of psychological and sociological research, a number of observations can be made. Nearly all of these research studies investigated the dating behaviors of young adolescents. The dating behavior of college students was generally ignored. The reasons for this apparent lack of interest in the dating behavior of late adolescent and post-adolescent individuals may be accounted for by the fact that in many of the early studies the teenage years were described as years of social and psychological turmoil. The adolescent was thought to be seeking identity, and was, in some way, clumsily passing through a period

during which he or she would acquire the normal social skills necessary to conduct apparently satisfactory heterosexual relationships which, for the overwhelming majority of the population, would ultimately result in marriage. In a surprisingly uniform fashion, these early studies suggested that adolescence was a difficult period during which individuals first encounter heterosexual social activity. After a period of experimentation and heterosexual social experiences the skills necessary to carry off successful heterosexual relationships would be acquired.

The time during which this process occurs was taken to be the high school years; and the strong implication made in these studies was that, by the time an individual reaches his junior or senior year of high school, many of these difficulties have been resolved. If this conceptual formulation of the socialization process were true, then it would indeed indicate that there would not be any strong reasons to conduct any research into dating behaviors of adolescents past the high school years. However, Martinson and Zerface (1970) reported the results of a survey undertaken at the University of Indiana in 1967 which strongly suggested that heterosexual relationships continue to be of considerable concern to college students as well. Their investigation provided evidence that among the college student population there exist individuals for whom dating is both anxiety producing and personally troublesome.

#### Dating Inhibition

An observation which could be made about the early research in the field of dating behavior concerns the fact that the studies tended to focus on the behaviors of those who do date. There is little mention of nondating or minimal dating behavior. The few statements concerning the problems of those who do not date are to be found primarily in the textbooks by Cole and Hall (1964), Davis (1958), Duvall (1963), and Mead (1952).

Hurlock (1967), in presenting one of the more complete explanations for nondating behavior, suggested that individuals may become highly absorbed in some activities such as sports or studies to the point that they would have little or no time for social life. The recognition obtained through dating may be gained primarily through pursuit of other activities which are themselves held in high esteem by their peer group. She presented the idea that for some individuals the social life of their peers may be trivial or irrelevant to their interests. The possibility that an individual may view himself as physically immature and may feel disqualified from the dating game may also exist.

Hurlock further reported that there may be a possibility that for some individuals the lack of proper clothing or money may account for the fact that they do not date. She described the personality patterns for individuals who do not date as characterized by shyness, emotional maladjustment, and social reticence. Her analysis suggested that nondaters are at a distinct social disadvantage because the social life of adolescents is organized around pairing, and adolescents must pair in order to participate. Those who do not date in their high school days lack the experiences that come from dating and thus are deprived of learning how to behave in social situations with members of the opposite sex.

Hurlock (1967) pointed out that by late adolescence when nondaters go to college or to work, they feel inadequate to meet the demands of a near adult social life and, as the result, may turn to more introverted forms of recreation. She suggested that nondaters often doubt their normality and often gain the reputation of being "squares." Hurlock asserted that this self-doubt and unfavorable recognition can, and often does, play havoc with the future personal and social adjustment of those nondaters.

The description of the nondating individual which Hurlock presents is consistent with the presentation made by Mead (1952), Crist (1953), and Duvall (1964). However, these are subjective evaluations of nondating individuals and do not represent the findings of controlled investigations. In short, what many of the early researchers presented as causes for nondating behavior have never been empirically demonstrated. For example, is it true that nondaters tend to view themselves as "square" or doubt their normality as Hurlock suggests? Is it true that nondaters are as a group emotionally more maladjusted than are daters? If, as Hurlock indicated, nondaters are socially reticent, or to use a more contemporary phrase socially nonassertive, are they any more so than those individuals who are capable of what is considered to be normal heterosexual dating activity?

As the result of early sociologically based descriptive studies, a stereotypic picture of nondating or minimal dating college and university students has emerged which results from subjective observations. These unsubstantiated assumptions about the characteristics of nondaters and minimal daters have formed the framework for more recent investigations into the treatment of minimal dating behavior among college and university students.

#### Recent Investigations of Minimal Dating Behavior

In the material presented in the previous section of this chapter, the studies mentioned were of a distinctly sociological nature and highly descriptive in their methodology. Since interest in dating behavior and minimal dating in particular is relatively recent, it is quite logical that the initial research conducted in the field would be more descriptive. However, in recent years a distinct change is apparent in the

literature reported in the field of minimal dating behavior as well as other forms of social interaction.

During the past 10 years there has been a shift in the focus of the research conducted in the field of interpersonal interaction. While prior to the late 1960's much of the research conducted was descriptive in nature, since that time there has been a rapid increase in the number of reported studies investigating the relative effectiveness of a variety of therapy techniques and procedures used to treat minimal or nondaters. One need only review the explosive increase in so-called growth groups, sensitivity training, assertiveness training, and a variety of other programs designed to improve general interpersonal communication and functioning to gain some understanding of this radical shift in the focus of research.

During the 1950's and 1960's the emphasis of the literature was on describing many of the sociological factors effecting interpersonal interaction, its process and form. However, research conducted during recent years has tended to investigate specific procedures for facilitating interpersonal growth or developing specific interevntion programs for dealing with areas of interpersonal concern among individuals. One such area of interpersonal concern is that of heterosexual dating inhibition and social anxiety.

Since concern over heterosexual social interaction continues to trouble a significant percentage of the college and university student population (Bath, 1961; Martinson and Zerface, 1970), it is, therefore, not surprising that a number of studies have been conducted during recent years investigating specific treatment approaches for the problem of minimal dating.

A review of the literature reveals that although it was recognized that for a portion of the college population dating was either difficult or impossible, the problems of dating inhibition were not investigated until recent years. This awareness that some individuals have difficulty engaging in heterosexual interaction has resulted in the development of a variety of conceptualizations of dating inhibition.

Since 1968 fewer than twelve controlled studies have apparently been conducted with minimal dating behavior as the subject (MacDonald, et al., 1975). These studies have sought to evaluate intervention techniques useful in the treatment of minimal dating behavior. The reasons for the use of minimal dating behavior in these recent studies were suggested by Curran, Gilbert, and Little (1976). They described heterosexual dating anxiety as an excellent target behavior for counseling research because: (a) it is only minimally susceptible to demand or suggestion effects, (b) it is accompanied by strong physiological arousal which does not readily habituate, (c) it occurs with sufficient frequency that an adequate number of subjects can be found, and (d) it is of sufficient personal concern and consequence to be representative of cases treated in therapy.

Rehm and Marston (1968) in conducting one of the first investigations into the problem of dating inhibitions studied males who, "reported a problem in meeting and dating girls; that is, the problem involved feeling uncomfortable in social situations with girls and avoiding such situations." Martinson and Zerface (1970) described their subjects as college males who experienced "a fear of dating."

Melnick (1973) introduced the term "minimal dating behavior" as a means of describing the behavioral expression of dating anxiety. Melnick

also introduced the idea of dating frequency as a means of operationalizing the term. In his investigation, a minimal dater was defined as an individual who: (a) dated less than twice a week and (b) felt uncomfortable in social situations with the opposite sex.

Christensen and Arkowitz (1974) investigated the value of practice dating as a means for decreasing dating inhibition. Their study described college dating problems in terms of low frequency, poor social skills and social discomfort. This study was unusual for it was one in which female subjects were included.

MacDonald, et al. (1975) described nondaters as socially unskilled individuals. Subjects for this investigation were male and selected on the basis of the following criteria: (a) no more than four dates during the preceding twelve months, (b) a desire to change present behavior, (c) adequate functioning in other areas of their life, and (d) willingness to participate in a treatment program.

Research into minimal or nondating behavior has produced little agreement as to its origin. Rhem and Marston (1968) suggested, for example, that minimal dating behavior was the result of faulty self-reinforcement. They maintained that dating deficits became evident because individuals negatively evaluated themselves when they interacted with members of the opposite sex or because they simply avoided heterosexual interactions due to their negative self-evaluation. The suggestion that minimal dating may be associated with low self-concept, or distorted self-perception was also proposed in Melnick's dissertation and resulting journal article (1973).

Hokanson (1971) viewed nondating as the result of anxiety conditioned to heterosexual social encounters. Morgan (1969) reported that dating

difficulties originate from unrealistic notions about dating and deficient skills in initiating dating. This same view of the origin of dating inhibition was proposed by Martinson and Zerface (1970) who characterized male nondaters as individuals who experienced an obvious lack of exposure to dating situations, who displayed extreme misconceptions about women, who became disturbed by a number of unrealistic fears about dating, and who were either misinformed or uninformed about dating behavior.

In addressing the possibility that minimal dating was the result of social skill deficits, a number of studies have reported that dating inhibitions may result from a reactive anxiety response (Curran, Gilbert, and Little, 1976; Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970; MacDonald, Lindquist, Kramer, McGrath, and Rhyne, 1975). Curran, et al. (1976), for example, suggested that dating inhibition may be viewed as partly the result of anticipating negative consequences caused by personal social-skill deficits. They maintained that an individual may simply be deficient in the skills necessary for successful dating interactions and, as the result, may experience reactive anxiety to the anticipation of continual failures in such situations. MacDonald, et al. (1975) described minimal dating behaviors as essentially maladaptive behaviors which developed in the absence of specific skill responses.

McGovern, et al. (1975), in an attempt to account for minimal dating behavior, proposed that a high fear of rejection and/or expectation of sexual gratification may generate reactive anxiety and produce inhibited heterosexual interaction.

#### Treatment of Minimal Dating Behavior

The treatment programs for minimal dating behavior appear to be as varied as the conceptualizations from which they were developed. Hokanson

(1971) viewed nondating as an expression of social anxiety. In his study, one group of subjects visualized items from a hierarchy of dating situations while relaxed; a second group visualized the items without relaxation. Compared with individuals in a waiting list control, subjects in both treatment conditions reported a significant improvement in dating and a significant reduction in anxiety.

Morgan (1969), who suggested that dating difficulties originate from unrealistic notions about dating, compared the remedial effectiveness of four treatment packages: (a) focused counseling, (b) behavior rehearsal, (c) model exposure, and (d) model exposure with behavior rehearsal. Morgan was unable to report significant group differences in the number of reported conversations with females or reported number of dating interactions. His results did, however, suggest that rehearsing date initiation behaviors did reduce the intensity of reported anxiety in seldom dating males.

Rehm and Marston (1968) assumed that their subjects (all male) had at least a minimally adequate repertoire of social skills. Dating deficits were thought to be evident because the subjects evaluated themselves negatively when they did interact with females following a punishment paradigm or because they avoided heterosexual situations due to their negative self-evaluation following a conditioned avoidance paradigm. Rehm and Marston's (1968) intervention strategy was consistent with this conceptualization and involved the gradual exposure to heterosexual situations, objective restructuring of behavioral goals, and encouragement of more frequent self-reinforcement. Results reported by Rehm and Marston suggested a significant improvement of the experimental subjects over the control subjects on a series of behavioral and paper and pencil measures. Melnick (1973), following a comparable paradigm, obtained similar results.

Martinson and Zerface (1970) developed and tested a treatment program based upon a conceptualization of minimal dating behavior which portrayed nondaters as heterosexually misinformed or uninformed. They included three treatment conditions: (a) individual counseling, (b) no systematic treatment, and (c) a program of arranged interactions with female volunteers. The results of this investigation suggested that the arranged heterosexual social interaction condition was significantly more effective than the other conditions in helping subjects achieve the goal of dating and in reducing their specific dating anxiety.

MacDonald, et al. (1975) viewed minimal dating or nondating as the result of a social skills deficit. Four treatment conditions and two control conditions were evaluated. Results of this investigation suggested that skill training using behavioral rehearsal produced significant improvement on a measure of social skill. Significant improvement among control subjects was not demonstrated.

Curran, et al. (1976) investigated the relative value of behavioral replication and sensitivity training approaches in the treatment of heterosexual dating anxiety. Although no significant differences between the two programs was demonstrated on measures of general social anxiety, the behavioral program did produce significant treatment efficiency on specific measures of heterosexual dating anxiety. Curran, et al. (1976) suggested that specific "tailoring" of treatment programs to specific target problems would produce the most efficient means of treating minimal dating behavior.

In the investigations described previously in this chapter, the population being sampled for study was composed exclusively of nondaters or minimal daters. In nearly every case the subjects were self-referred

and admitted to being troubled by dating anxiety or heterosexual social inhibition. Since the target behavior (minimal dating) was specific, equally specific behavioral interventions were proposed, developed, and tested.

There are, however, a number of studies which have been conducted in recent years and have sought to deal with general social assertiveness of which minimal dating behavior has been assumed to be a special case. These studies have typically investigated the value of assertiveness training groups in facilitating the development of normally assertive behavior particularly as it is associated with the development of social skills acquisition.

Hedquist and Weinhold (1970) compared social learning and behavioral rehearsal treatments in assertiveness training groups to a control group. Although the study was designed to investigate a wide range of social behaviors, a number of those considered were relevant to dating (e.g. "I started a conversation with a girl/boy I have wanted to meet." "I called someone I met in class for a date."). In the behavioral rehearsal treatment group, each subject was called upon to role play a situation which he/she had previously identified as being anxiety provoking. In the social learning group, each subject had to agree to four group rules: honesty, responsibility, helpfulness, and action. Agreement to these rules committed the subjects to a program of social behavior change since the implications of the group rules contradicted any self-concept of helplessness.

The results of this study yielded some significant behavior change among members of both treatment groups; however, during follow-up six weeks following the conclusion of therapy, both treatment groups had returned to pre-test levels of social assertiveness. Thus, the two

treatments did show evidence of temporarily increasing general social assertiveness; however, the effects of therapy were not sustained beyond relatively brief periods.

Sansbury (1974) reported that in assertive training groups students are most frequently seeking help in improving the frequency and quality of their interactions with the opposite sex. His procedure trains subjects in each of three component assertive skills: nonverbal, vocal, and verbal. Following this treatment package, the author states that almost all subjects reported an increase in the ratio of assertive behaviors to opportunities presented.

The development of assertiveness training has greatly accelerated during recent years. If, as Sansbury (1974) suggests, many of those who seek assertive training are experiencing heterosexual dating anxiety and social inhibition, then the possibility exists that nondaters may view their minimal dating behavior first as troublesome enough to seek assistance and second, that they account for their minimal dating behavior as a symptom of general social nonassertiveness. The implication is that minimal daters are socially nonassertive, although differences between daters and nondaters have not yet been demonstrated along the dimension of assertiveness.

The intervention techniques developed thus far have been primarily behavioral and have included: (a) systematic desensitization (Curran, 1975); (b) graded tasks with self-reinforcement (Rehm and Marston, 1968); (c) arranged interactions with members of the opposite sex (Christensen and Arkowitz, 1974; Christensen, Arkowitz, and Anderson, 1975); and (d) behavioral rehearsal and other replication techniques (Curran, Gilbert, and Little, 1976; MacDonald, Lindquist, Kramer, McGrath, and Rhyne, 1975;

McGovern, Arkowitz, and Gilmore, 1975; Melnick, 1973; and Schinke and Rose, 1976).

A review of minimal dating literature reveals that since 1968 the studies conducted were based upon assumed associations between minimal dating behavior and a variety of possible antecedent events or personality characteristics. These studies have essentially sought to develop methods for treating dating anxiety and heterosexual inhibition and were based upon assumed rather than demonstrated differences between dating and minimal or nondating college students. Further, these investigations have typically attempted to treat only the male population and have, in a surprisingly uniform fashion, failed to address the problems of the female nondater.

Twentyman and McFall (1975, p. 385) came to this same conclusion. Their study, in which the interpersonal skill level of daters and non-daters was investigated, represents virtually the only previous attempt to delineate and verify the characteristics of minimal dating behavior. In introducing their 1975 study, they wrote,

Virtually all of the limited research thus far has been treatment oriented, focusing narrowly on evaluating different approaches to increasing the frequency of dating behavior. There has been no systematic study of the important distinguishing characteristics of nondaters.

A review of recent research in the field of minimal dating behavior suggests that much of the work done to date has focused upon the behavioral expression of heterosexual dating anxiety. Previous researchers have defined minimal dating as a function of frequency (number of dates in a standard time period) and have suggested a variety of possible explanations for the existence of minimal dating. The criterion for defining minimal dating behavior in terms of frequency has been arbitrarily

chosen by the experimenters; and thus, minimal dating behavior has been treated in terms of response rate. Subjects reporting a dating frequency less than the criterion rate set by the experimenter were defined as minimal daters. If minimal dating is defined in terms of frequency alone, and minimal dating is generally assigned to be of general concern among college and university students, then it becomes increasingly difficult to account for the behavior of individuals who might:

1. date infrequently or not at all and who remain well adjusted and unconcerned or
2. date with apparently normal frequency, but who come to counseling centers expressing concern over their dating frequency and quality.

In providing a description of minimal daters, Martinson and Zerface (1970, p. 40) stated:

It is generally agreed that retardation in the development of dating behavior frequently precipitates severe psychological discomfort in young people and appears to be associated inextricably with certain kinds of maladjusted behavior.

This statement is remarkably similar to the position presented by Hurlock (1967) who portrayed minimal daters as "emotionally maladjusted."

To date, the investigations into minimal dating behavior have resulted in a variety of conceptual formulations to explain the existence of low-dating frequency. Daters have been assumed, but never demonstrated, to differ from minimal daters in terms of (a) general social anxiety (Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970; Hokanson, 1971), (b) self-perception (Melnick, 1973; Rehm and Marston, 1968), (c) social skills (Curran, Gilbert and Little, 1976; Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970; Martinson and Zerface, 1970), and (d) fear of rejection and/or expectation of sexual gratification (McGovern, Arkowitz, and Gilmore, 1975). Additionally, it has been

suggested that low frequency daters and nondaters may be emotionally maladjusted (Martinson and Zerface, 1970) or interpersonally incompetent (Jourard, 1963).

A review of the literature relating to minimal dating behavior has permitted the identification of four characteristic areas in which dating and minimal dating college students were assumed to differ.

1. The minimal dater has been described as emotionally maladjusted (Hurlock, 1967; Melnick, 1973), socially inhibited (Martinson and Zerface, 1970; Twentyman and McFall, 1975), and lacking in social and interpersonal skills (Hedquist and Weinhold, 1970; McGovern, et al., 1975). These factors suggest the strong possibility that the minimal dater is functioning at a relatively low level. Indeed, if the minimal dater does experience reactive anxiety and, as the result, is socially and interpersonally inhibited, then it would be reasonable to expect that minimal daters would be less self-actualized and lower functioning than daters. What has been presented would tend to support the notion that minimal dating is merely a symptom of more general interpersonal dysfunction. However, this view of minimal dating does not effectively account for instances in which minimal dating appears as a situationally specific response to heterosexual interaction. In such instances, individuals who appear fully functioning in all other facets of their life may become inhibited during heterosexual interaction and may be unable to date successfully (MacDonald et al., 1975). This apparent difference between viewing minimal dating as a situationally specific response or as symptomatic of general interpersonal dysfunction has yet to be investigated.

2. Rehm and Marston (1968) and Melnick (1973) proposed that a possible characteristic of minimal dating behavior was related to self-

concept. The suggestion has been made that dating inhibitions result from distorted self-perception and negative self-concept. However, the association between self-concept and dating inhibitions has never been demonstrated.

3. Hokanson (1971) and McGovern, Arkowitz, and Gilmer (1975) suggested that minimal dating behavior and dating inhibition may be an expression of social evaluative anxiety. This characteristic has yet to be experimentally verified. Watson and Friend (1969) identified two components of social evaluative anxiety as: (a) social avoidance and distress and (b) fear of negative evaluation. If social evaluative anxiety is characteristic of minimal dating behavior, then differences between daters and minimal daters may be expected; however, this difference remains to be demonstrated.

4. Studies conducted by Serber (1972), Rathus (1973), and Sansbury (1974) suggested the possibility that low levels of social assertiveness may contribute to minimal dating behavior. Although the association between nonassertive social behavior and dating inhibition has been suggested, it has never been specifically tested.

Differences between daters and nondaters along these dimensions are of theoretical as well as of practical importance to the counseling profession. The study presented in the following chapter sought to confirm these differences in an attempt to identify the important distinguishing characteristics of the socially anxious and heterosexually inhibited individual.

#### Summary

The study presented in the following chapters represented an attempt to investigate the existence of important distinguishing factors charac-

teristic of minimal or nondating college students. The identification of these characteristics would permit not only a greater understanding of minimal dating behavior but would suggest opportunities for the development of specific counseling interventions which could then be tailored to meet the needs of the minimal or nondater who seeks assistance through counseling.

To date, the causes and contributing factors of dating inhibition have largely been assumed, resulting in a variety of treatment programs. The equivocal results of previous research suggest a need to reevaluate the problem of minimal dating behavior and more clearly define its characteristics. This is the purpose of the study.

CHAPTER III  
METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Overview

This study was undertaken specifically to investigate the distinguishing characteristics of nondaters and to verify the existence of characteristic factors suggested, but largely unconfirmed, by previous researchers. This investigation sought to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. Do systematic differences exist between daters and nondaters on measures of self-actualization, self-concept, social evaluative anxiety, and social assertiveness?
2. Is minimal dating the result of a situationally specific anxiety response or symptomatic of a generally poor level of interpersonal functioning?
3. Is minimal dating behavior more characteristic of males or females?
4. What is the relationship between dating frequency and reported dating satisfaction?

The general method for this study involved the comparison of two groups of undergraduate students at the University of Florida. This comparison was made between an experimental group of subjects (counseling center clients) who reported unsuccessful and unsatisfactory dating interactions and a comparison group (nonclients) who reported successful and satisfactory dating histories. The comparison of groups was made

possible by collecting measures of self-actualization, self-concept, social evaluative anxiety, and social assertiveness from each group. Data collected from each group were statistically compared to identify the existence of systematic differences between groups on each of these independent factor measures. Results of this comparison were used to evaluate the null hypotheses presented below.

#### Hypotheses

From the research question, "Do there exist systematic and predictable differences between daters and minimal daters?" a number of research hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 1. There is no difference between minimal or nondating subjects (Group I) and dating subjects (Group II) on a measure of self-actualization.

Hypothesis 2. There is no difference between Group I and Group II subjects on a measure of self-concept.

Hypothesis 3. There is no difference between Group I and Group II subjects on a measure of general social anxiety and avoidance.

Hypothesis 4. There is no difference between Group I and Group II subjects on a measure of evaluative anxiety.

Hypothesis 5. There is no difference between Group I and Group II subjects on a measure of social assertiveness.

Hypothesis 6. There is no correlation between reported dating frequency and reported dating satisfaction ratings as assessed by questions four and five of the Dating Activity Questionnaire. (Appendix B)

Hypothesis 7. There is no relationship between reported dating frequency satisfaction and sex of subject.

Hypothesis 8. There is no relationship between dating satisfaction and academic performance among sample groups.

### Subjects

Subjects for this investigation were selected from among student volunteers. All subjects were undergraduate students enrolled at the University of Florida during the winter quarter of 1977 and were assigned to one of two comparison groups. The criteria for assignment of subjects were selected in such a fashion so as to identify two groups who differed along the dimensions of dating frequency and reported level of satisfaction. These criteria were consistent with previous research (MacDonald, et al., 1975; Melnick, 1973), and permitted the identification of extreme samples in order to enhance the probability for detecting differences between groups.

The criteria for selection and assignment to Group I (minimal dating subjects) were: (a) a reported dating frequency of two or fewer dates per month and (b) a dating satisfaction level of three or less as indicated by responses to questions four and five of the DAQ. Additionally, all Group I subjects were drawn from students who gave evidence of being dissatisfied enough to seek counseling assistance. Selection and assignment into Group II (dating subjects) were contingent upon a reported dating frequency of three or more dates per month and a satisfaction level of six or greater as reported by each volunteer on questions four and five of the DAQ.

#### Group I (Minimal Dating Subjects)

This group was composed of 31 undergraduate students at the University of Florida who identified themselves as minimal daters and, as the result, sought assistance through group or individual counseling services offered by the university counseling center. Subjects for Group I were recruited primarily through advertisements which appeared in the student

newspaper. These notices announced the formation of dating interaction groups, the purpose of which was to assist nondating students overcome their social anxiety and acquire appropriate social skills. Additionally, subjects were recruited through the direct referral from staff members of the counseling center.

Of the 31 subjects selected for Group I, six were female (19%) and 25 were male (81%). The mean age of Group I subjects was 20.6 years.

#### Group II (Dating Subjects)

This group was composed of 36 undergraduate students who reported high levels of satisfaction with regard to their dating frequency. Subjects for Group II were selected from student volunteers from introductory classes in the departments of Behavioral Sciences and Psychology. Of the 36 subjects who met criteria for inclusion into Group II, 22 (64%) were female and 13 (36%) were male. Mean age of Group II subjects was 19.4 years.

#### Instruments

Comparison of Groups I and II was accomplished using the following instruments:

1. Personal Orientation Inventory (POI), (Shostrom, 1966)
2. Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS), (Rathus, 1973)
3. Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE), (Watson and Friend, 1969)
4. Social Avoidance and Distress Scale (SAD), (Watson and Friend, 1969)

Additionally, a Dating Activity Questionnaire, was prepared to collect information pertaining to dating activity and perceived satisfaction. This questionnaire (Appendix B) permitted the collection of data relating

to sex, race, age, student status and reported academic achievement in terms of grade point average. The DAQ also provided a relatively non-threatening means by which to assess past and present dating frequency as well as perceived satisfaction with dating activity. The use of this form enabled systematic and consistent assignment of subjects to appropriate comparison groups.

Personal Orientation Inventory (POI). The POI (Shostrom, 1966) was selected as an instrument for this study to assess self-actualization and level of functioning of S's in both comparison groups. The POI consists of 150 two-choice comparative value and behavior judgments. The items are scored twice, first, for two basic scales of personal orientation: inner-directed support (127 items) and time competence (23 items); and second, for ten subscales, each of which measures a conceptually important element of self-actualization.

The ten subscales represent five additional constructs available through the use of the POI. These five constructs represent factors associated with self-actualization and are described below.

Valuing. This factor is assessed through the subscales of Self-Actualizing Value (SAV) and Existentiality (Ex). The subscale SAV assesses the degree to which an individual holds the values of self-actualizing people and subscale Ex is a measure of the flexibility with which an individual applies those values.

Feeling. This factor is composed of the subscales Feeling Reactivity (Fr) and Spontaneity (S). The Fr scale is a measure of one's sensitivity to needs and feelings while the S scale is a measure of how freely an individual expresses those needs.

Self-Perception. This factor is considered equivalent to a measure

of self-concept and is assessed through the subscales of Self-Regard (Sr) and Self-Acceptance (Sa).

Synergistic Awareness. This factor is composed of the Nature of Man, Constructive subscale (Nc) and the Synergy subscale (Sy). Subjects scoring highly on subscale Nc tend to see people as essentially good. High scores on the Sy subscale indicate the ability of a subject to meaningfully relate opposing ideas or antagonistic beliefs.

Interpersonal Sensitivity. This final factor is composed of the acceptance of Aggression subscale (A) and the Capacity for Intimate Contact subscale (C). Subscale A is a measure of one's ability to accept feelings of aggression, hostility, and anger. Subscale C is a measure of one's ability to develop warm, interpersonal relationships.

The two ratio scales identify two major areas important in personal development and interpersonal interaction. The support scale is designed to measure whether an individual's mode of reaction is characteristically "self" oriented or "other" oriented. Inner, or self, directed individuals are guided primarily by internalized principles and motivation, while other directed individuals are, to a great extent, influenced by their peer group or other external focus. The time competence scale measures the degree to which an individual lives in the present as opposed to the past or future. The time competent individual tends to live primarily in the present with full awareness, contact, and full feeling reactivity; while the time incompetent individual lives primarily in the past, with guilt, regret and resentment, and/or in the future with idealized goals, expectations, predictions, and anxiety. Scores for these two constructs are reflected as ratio scores indicating the proportion of time incompetence/time competence or other directed/inner

directed. The test manual, for example, suggests that self-actualizing time incompetence:time competence ratios are between 1:6 and 1:22 (Shostrom, 1966, p. 16). This same relationship is suggested for the other/inner directed dimension resulting in self-actualizing ratios of 1:2.9 to 1:6.4.

The validity of the POI has been repeatedly demonstrated in terms of nominated groups. It has consistently discriminated between groups which had been clinically judged self-actualized and nonself-actualized (Shostrom, 1964; Fox, 1965). The manual gives high reliability correlations of .91 to .93 for all scales on the test. Reliability coefficients for the major scales of time competence and inner-directedness are .71 and .84 respectively based upon a study by Robert Klavetter, reported by Shostrom (1966).

The POI was selected for use in investigating differences between daters and minimal daters because it provides a general indicator of not only functional level but also a number of other constructs which have been suggested as discriminating variables between the two comparison groups. These constructs include self-regard (Sr), self-acceptance (Sa), feeling reactivity (Fr), spontaneity (S), capacity for intimate contact (C), acceptance of aggression (A), nature of man (Nc), and Synergy (Sy). The use of this instrument thus permitted a comparison of dating and minimal dating groups with regard to general level of functioning and self-actualization (hypothesis 1) and with regard to self-concept (hypothesis 2) as well.

Social Avoidance and Distress Scale (SAD). This instrument was selected to measure one of two components of social-evaluative anxiety. Developed by Watson and Friend (1969), this 28 item self-report instrument

(Appendix C) purports to assess levels of social anxiety and tendency to avoid social interaction.

Data reported by the authors of this instrument indicate satisfactory test-retest reliability ( $r = .79$ ). The SAD has been validated in four experimental studies performed at the University of Toronto (Watson & Friend, 1969). In each of the studies the instrument was able to discriminate effectively between high and low anxious students. The SAD has been correlated with a number of other tests of anxiety and results have demonstrated satisfactory validity. Scores of the SAD and the Manifest Anxiety Scale (Taylor, 1953) produce acceptable correlations ( $r = .54$ ). A recent study by Arkowitz, et al. (1975) provided further validation for this scale as a measure of social inhibition. This study demonstrated that the scale correlated significantly with other self-report, behavioral, and peer rating measures of social anxiety and social skill.

Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE). The second component of social evaluative anxiety was assessed using a second scale developed and validated by Watson and Friend (1969). This scale (Appendix D) was designed to assess apprehension in and avoidance of socially evaluative situations along with expectations of being negatively evaluated by others.

Validation and reliability for this instrument are reported by the authors as acceptable. Test-retest reliability is reported to be quite good ( $r = .94$ ). Correlation with other measures of anxiety such as the Manifest Anxiety Scale (Taylor, 1953) and the S-R Inventory of Anxiousness (Endler-Hund, 1966) is reported to be between a low of  $r = .47$  to a high of  $r = .60$  thus demonstrating acceptable validity. Additional validation support for this scale was provided by Watson and Friend (1969) and Arkowitz, et al. (1975).

Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS). This 30 item schedule (Appendix E) was selected to measure social assertiveness among client and nonclient samples. Rathus (1973) reports moderately high test-retest reliability ( $r = .78$ ;  $p < .01$ ) and split-half reliability ( $r = .77$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Validity appears equally satisfactory ( $r = .70$ ;  $p < .01$ ) in terms of the impression respondents made on other people. The instrument generally provides an accurate and stable assessment of socially assertive behavior levels and social boldness.

Copies of the instruments are presented in the Appendices. Copies of the instruments used in this study were not identified by title to participating subjects.

#### Procedure

This investigation was composed of two phases. The first of these was the identification of subjects for appropriate assignment to one of the two comparison groups. The second phase consisted of the collection of data from each of the comparison groups. This second phase was accomplished by administering a testing packet containing the DAQ and other instruments identified previously. This procedure is described in greater detail below.

Group I (nondating students). This group of subjects was composed of students who were clients at the University of Florida Counseling Center during winter quarter 1977. Advertisements which appeared in the student newspaper, and in residence halls, were used to announce the formation of dating interaction counseling groups at the university counseling center. The purpose of these groups was described as providing assistance to minimal or nondating college students who wished to increase their dating frequency and to help overcome dating inhibition

and anxiety. Additionally, potential subjects for Group I were recruited through personal referrals from counseling psychologists on the staff of the University Counseling Center.

Students responding at the counseling center to these advertisements, as well as students referred by other counseling psychologists, were provided a brief description of the present study (Appendix A) and were told that their participation was entirely voluntary and would be unrelated to their counseling. A total of 38 possible subjects was identified. Six of these declined to participate and another failed to meet the requirements for selection into Group I after testing.

Thirty-two volunteers were given test packages by the writer containing the DAQ and all other instruments. The volunteers were asked to complete the packet at home and to return the testing materials within a two day period. Of the thirty-two test packages distributed, all were returned within the requested time period and all but one met the criteria for selection into Group I.

Subjects were selected for inclusion in Group I if they:

1. had identified themselves as minimal or nondaters and sought counseling assistance at the University Counseling Center.
2. reported a dating frequency of two or fewer dates per month on question four of the DAQ.
3. reported dating frequency dissatisfaction by indicating a response of three or lower on question five of the DAQ.

Group II subjects (dating students). Group II was composed of students who reported on the DAQ a generally high level of dating satisfaction and indicated an absence of concern over their present dating activity. Subjects for this group were selected in the following fashion.

A brief presentation was made to five introductory behavioral science and psychology classes at the University of Florida. A presentation by the writer was made to each class and included a brief description of the present study as well as a request for volunteers to act as subjects (see Appendix A). Students indicating a willingness to participate in the study were given the test packet and were asked to complete and return all testing materials at the next class meeting. A total of 123 test packets were distributed. Of these only 76 were returned and only 52 were returned completed. Of the 52 volunteers who returned completed test packets, 16 did not meet the criteria for selection into Group II.

Subjects were included into Group II if they:

1. reported a dating frequency of three or more dates per month on question four of the DAQ.
2. reported a satisfaction level of six or greater on question five of the DAQ.

The procedure described above permitted the collection of data from two clearly defined groups of students who were known to differ in terms of their reported dating frequency and reported satisfaction with that frequency. Following the completion of the test packets, both groups were given the opportunity to ask any questions concerning the study or personal performance and were thanked for their participation.

The data collected using the procedure outlined above were subjected to the statistical procedures explained in the following section, utilizing the computer available for the University of Florida, Northeast Regional Data Center, Gainesville, Florida.

### Analysis of Data

The primary purpose of this study was to determine if samples of daters and nondaters differed significantly on five dependent factor measures. These factors were: (a) self-actualization, (b) self-concept, (c) social avoidance and distress, (d) fear of negative evaluation, (e) social assertiveness. Five null hypotheses were generated and were tested in the following manner:

Hypothesis 1. There exist no differences between dating and minimal dating university students on a measure of self-actualization as assessed by the POI. Sample means and standard deviations were calculated for both groups on each of the following POI subscales:

- a. Time Incompetence/Competence Ratio ( $T_i:T_c$ )
- b. Other/Inner Directedness (I:O)
- c. Self-Actualizing Value (SAV)
- d. Existentiality (Ex)
- e. Feeling Reactivity (Fr)
- f. Spontaneity (S)
- g. Nature of Man (Nc)
- h. Synergy (Sy)
- i. Acceptance of Aggression (A)
- j. Capacity for Intimate Contact (C)

Sample means of both comparison groups for each of these scales were tested for significant differences using a t-Test (Roscoe, 1965, p. 217). Data collected in this study were evaluated through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). These routines provided an evaluation of the homogeneity of sample variances and provided t scores for pooled as well as separate variances. The confidence level for evaluating this null hypothesis was set at  $p < .05$ .

Hypotheses 2-5. There exist no differences between daters and nondaters on measures of:

- a. Self-concept (hypothesis 2)
- b. Social Avoidance and Distress (hypothesis 3)
- c. Fear of Negative Evaluation (hypothesis 4)
- d. Social Assertiveness (hypothesis 5)

These null hypotheses were tested using a procedure similar to that used to test the first null hypothesis. Sample means for each dependent measure were calculated for both dating and nondating sample groups. These means were then compared using a t test to detect significant differences.

Hypothesis 6. There exists no correlation between reported dating frequency and reported dating satisfaction ratings as assessed by questions four and five of the DAQ. This null hypothesis was tested through the use of a biserial correlation. Dating satisfaction represented a dichotomous variable (dater, nondater) with underlying continuity and dating frequency representing a continuous ordinal variable which permitted the use of the biserial correlation (Roscoe, 1975, p. 113).

Hypothesis 7. There is no relationship between reported dating frequency satisfaction and sex of subject. This null hypothesis was tested in the following way: subjects from both groups were grouped according to sex and the test for significant differences between proportions was used to detect significant differences in sex distribution between Groups I and II.

Hypothesis 8. There is no relationship between dating satisfaction and academic performance among sample groups. This hypothesis was tested by comparing mean grade point averages for daters and nondaters to detect

the existence of significant differences. The t test was performed using reported grade point averages of daters and nondaters.

In all tests for significant differences, a confidence level of  $p < .05$  was used. Demographic data collected using the DAQ were tabulated and presented in table form for comparison.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The principal purpose of this study was to investigate the existence of differences between dating and minimal dating or nondating university students at the University of Florida. This investigation was accomplished by comparing samples of high frequency and highly satisfied daters with low frequency, dissatisfied daters. These two groups of subjects were identified and all data were collected during winter quarter, 1977. What follows are the results of the analyses of these data.

Of the 38 possible subjects considered for inclusion in Group I (Minimal Dating Subjects), six declined to participate and one was found to be ineligible because of a dating frequency in excess of the criterion of two dates per month. Group I was composed of 31 subjects (25 males, 6 females) each of whom met the criteria for inclusion by reporting a dating frequency of two or fewer dates per month and a satisfaction rating of three or less on question five of the DAQ (Appendix B).

Of the 52 students volunteering to participate as Group II subjects (dating subjects), 16 were not eligible because they did not meet the requirements for inclusion into Group II. Group II (dating students) was composed of 36 subjects who reported on question four of the DAQ a dating frequency of three or more dates per month and a satisfaction rating of six or more on question five of the DAQ. Of the 36 Group II subjects, 23 were female and 13 were male.

Through the use of the Dating Activity Questionnaire (DAQ), data

were collected from subjects in Group I and II. This questionnaire provided self-report data relating to high school dating frequency (question one), perceived social and dating skills level (question three), current dating frequency (question four), and satisfaction with dating frequency (question five). A comparison of the group means on each of the four measures listed above is presented in Table I.

Table 1

Comparison of Minimal Dating Subjects (Group I) and Dating Subjects (Group II) on DAQ Data.

DAQ Question	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
1	2.58	2.20	5.30	2.13	65	5.13 ***
3	3.32	1.60	6.69	1.39	65	9.23 ***
4	0.96	0.79	9.41	3.66	65	12.56 ***
5	1.61	1.02	7.58	1.13	65	22.69 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

The data presented in Table 1 permit the following observations: Group I subjects reported that they dated very little while in high school (mean score 2.58) and significantly less than Group II subjects (mean score 5.30). Group I subjects tended to view themselves as relatively socially unskilled and less confident of their social skills than were Group II subjects. Not unexpectedly the minimal dating subjects of Group I presented a mean dating frequency of 0.96 dates per month as compared with a mean for Group II subjects of 9.41 dates per month. Finally, Group I subjects reported a mean dating frequency satisfaction level of 1.61 as compared with a mean of 7.58 for Group II subjects.

In each case, the differences noted between the comparison groups were highly significant ( $p < .001$ ).

In this study eight hypotheses were tested. Each of these hypotheses was evaluated in terms of the data collected and the results of these analyses are presented below.

Hypothesis 1. There exists no difference between dating and minimal dating subjects on a measure of self-actualization.

This hypothesis was tested through the use of a t-Test for a difference between independent means. The data presented in Table 2 reflect the mean scores for the two comparison groups on each of the four primary scales of the POI: Time Competence (TC), Time Incompetence (TI), Inner Support (I), and Other Support (O).

Table 2

Comparison of Minimal Dating Subjects (Group I) and Dating Subjects (Group II) on Time Competence and Support Scales of the POI.

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
TI	8.129	3.201	6.06	2.888	65	2.75 **
TC	13.742	3.316	16.722	2.953	65	-3.89 ***
O	50.226	13.928	41.472	11.302	65	2.84 **
I	72.613	12.038	84.611	12.164	65	-4.04 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

Review of Table 2 suggests that minimal or nondaters differed in a systematic and statistically significant fashion from dating subjects in the sample. The direction of these differences further suggests that Group I subjects may be somewhat less fully functioning than Group II

subjects in terms of Time Competence/Time Incompetence (TC/TI) and Other/Inner Support (O/I).

The performance of dating and minimal dating subjects on the remaining POI subscales is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Comparison of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects on the Subscales of the POI.

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
SAV	17.097	3.581	20.139	2.910	65	-3.48 ***
Ex	18.032	3.656	10.083	4.170	65	-2.12 *
Fr	14.581	2.941	15.778	3.618	65	1.47
S	9.354	3.332	12.722	2.794	65	4.50 ***
Sr	10.129	2.668	12.667	2.788	65	3.79 ***
Nc	10.290	2.584	11.722	1.980	65	2.56 *
Sa	12.323	3.198	15.278	3.239	65	3.75 ***
Sy	6.903	3.627	6.778	1.174	65	.18
A	13.161	3.267	16.389	3.580	65	3.83 ***
C	16.032	3.638	17.833	3.629	65	2.02 *

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

The results presented in Table 3 indicate specific areas in which the comparison groups differed significantly. Differences between groups on the POI subscales Self-Actualizing Value (SAV) and Existentiality (Ex) suggest that minimal dating subjects are significantly more likely to reject the values of self-actualizing people than are daters ( $p < .001$ ).

Additionally in the application of their values, minimal daters indicated more rigidity than high frequency daters.

The subscales Feeling Reactivity (Fr) and Spontaneity (S) assess relative sensitivity to one's own needs and willingness to express those needs and feelings behaviorally. Comparison of both groups indicated that minimal daters and daters are not significantly different in their sensitivity to their own needs but that minimal daters are much more prone to inhibit the behavioral expression of those needs and feelings. This interpretation is supported by the fact that Groups I and II did not differ significantly on the Feeling Reactivity (Fr) scale ( $p = 0.146$ , d.f. 65) while the difference between the group means on the spontaneity scale (S) was highly significant ( $p = 0.000$ ). One possible explanation may be that both groups of subjects were about equally sensitive to their needs and feelings but that minimal dating subjects were much less able or willing to act on these feelings or otherwise express them behaviorally.

In the area of synergistic awareness, Nature of Man (Nc) and Synergy (Sy), significant subscale differences were detected only on the scale Nc ( $p = .015$ ). This would tend to indicate that minimal dating subjects were inclined to view mankind in a more negative light than did dating subjects who tended to see people as essentially good. Mean difference between groups on the Synergy subscale was not significant ( $p = .845$ ). The absence of a significant difference between groups on this scale would tend to suggest that both groups do not differ greatly in their ability to resolve conflicts in their life although the means by which conflicts and opposing beliefs are resolved may be highly different.

Both groups differed significantly on the measures of interpersonal sensitivity. This construct was assessed using the Acceptance of Aggression

(A) and Capacity for Intimate Contact (C) subscales. The difference between group means for the Acceptance of Aggression scale (A) was highly significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) while the difference between group means on the Capacity for Intimate Contact scale (C) was significant to a much smaller degree ( $p = .047$ ).

As the result of the detection of significant differences between the means of Groups I and II on the primary scales of time competence and support, hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Hypothesis 2. There exists no difference between dating and minimal dating subjects on a measure of self-concept.

This hypothesis was tested through the use of a t-Test for differences between group means on the POI subscales of Self-Regard (Sr) and Self-Acceptance (Sa) as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Comparison of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects on Self-Regard and Self-Acceptance Scales of the POI.

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
Sr	10.129	2.668	12.667	2.788	65	3.79 ***
Sa	12.323	3.198	15.278	3.239	65	3.75 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

Review of the data presented in Table 4 tends to indicate that significant differences exist between dating and minimal dating subjects along the dimension of self-concept. The construct of self-concept was investigated by comparing group means on the component scales of self-regard and self-acceptance. In each case, minimal dating subjects demon-

strated significantly lower levels of self-regard and self-acceptance than did the frequently dating and satisfied subjects of Group II ( $p = 0.000$ ). Since the differences between the two groups were significant, hypothesis 2 was rejected.

Hypothesis 3. There exists no difference between dating and minimal dating subjects on a measure of social anxiety.

This hypothesis was tested through the use of a t-Test for differences between independent means as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Comparison of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects on a Measure of Social Avoidance and Distress (SAD).

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
SAD	16.613	6.566	22.167	2.990	65	-4.34 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

The results depicted in Table 5 suggest that Group I subjects reported significantly greater levels of social anxiety and distress than did the subjects from Group II ( $p = 0.000$ ). In view of the highly significant differences obtained between dating and minimal dating groups, hypothesis 3 was rejected.

Hypothesis 4. There exists no difference between dating and minimal dating subjects on a measure of social evaluative anxiety. The Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (Watson & Friend, 1969) was administered to each group and the difference between group means was tested using a t-Test. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Comparison of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects on the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE).

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
FNE	10.226	6.597	16.694	7.978	65	-3.52 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

On the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale the difference between group means was highly significant ( $p = .001$ ) and suggests that Group I subjects were more fearful of being negatively evaluated than were subjects of Group II. As the result of this finding, hypothesis 4 was rejected.

Hypothesis 5. There exists no difference between dating and minimal dating subjects on a measure of social assertiveness.

This hypothesis was tested by comparing group means obtained through the administration of the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule. The results of this comparison are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Comparison of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects on the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS).

Scale	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
RAS	-8.000	27.105	15.056	26.346	65	3.52 ***

\*  $p < .05$

\*\*  $p < .01$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

Comparison of group means revealed that minimal dating subjects were significantly less socially assertive than were dating subjects. This difference was not unexpected and was generally consistent with the differences detected between the two groups on the dimensions of social anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

In view of the fact that minimal dating subjects were significantly less assertive than dating subjects from Group II, Hypothesis 5 was rejected.

Hypothesis 6. There exists no correlation between reported dating frequency and reported dating satisfaction ratings as assessed by questions four and five of the Dating Activity Questionnaire.

This hypothesis was tested by performing a correlational analysis of the responses to questions four and five of the DAQ for the Groups I and II combined. The correlational coefficient obtained through this analysis was  $r = .8516$  ( $p < .001$ ). This highly significant correlation between reported dating frequency and reported satisfaction tends to verify the belief that individuals who date frequently do find gratification and satisfaction while those individuals who are unable or unwilling to date with any frequency tend to be dissatisfied. In view of the finding that dating frequency and dating satisfaction were highly positively correlated for all subjects combined, Hypothesis 6 was rejected.

Hypothesis 7. There exists no difference in sex distribution between Group I and Group II.

Table 8

Sex Distribution of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects.

	Male	Female	Total
Group I	25 (81%)	6 (19%)	31 (100%)
Group II	13 (36%)	23 (64%)	36 (100%)

Table 8 depicts the distribution, by sex, of subjects in dating and minimal dating groups. Although inspection of this distribution indicates a difference in distribution between Groups I and II, the test for significant difference in proportion between groups was performed.

The difference in proportions between groups was found to be highly significant ( $z = 4.18$ ,  $N = 67$ ,  $p < .01$ ). As the result of this finding, Hypothesis 7 was rejected.

Hypothesis 8. There exists no significant difference between dating and minimal dating groups with regard to academic achievement as reflected in grade point averages.

To test this hypothesis, mean grade point averages for dating and minimal dating groups were calculated and tested for significant difference using a t-Test. The results of this comparison are reflected in Table 9.

Table 9

Comparison of Grade Point Averages of Dating and Minimal Dating Subjects.

	Group I		Group II		df	t
	M	SD	M	SD		
GPA	2.782	0.552	3.040	0.533	58	1.84 p = .071

\*  $p < .05$ \*\*  $p < .01$ \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Review of the results presented in Table 9 tends to suggest a slightly lower mean grade point average for minimal dating subjects, although the difference between groups was not statistically significant. As the result of this comparison, Hypothesis 8 was not rejected.

#### Summary of Results

The data permitted the evaluation of eight null hypotheses, seven of which were rejected as the result of finding significant differences between the two sample groups of dating and minimal dating subjects. Minimal dating subjects were found to be less self-actualizing than dating subjects in terms of time competence and support measures. Significant differences were detected between these groups on all but two of the POI subscales, namely feeling reactivity (Fr) and synergy (Sy). In all cases where significant differences were detected between groups, the minimal dating subjects in the sample evidenced depressed scores.

Highly significant differences between groups ( $p < .001$ ) were detected on the dimension of self-concept, with minimal dating subjects demonstrating consistently lower levels of self-regard ( $p < .001$ ) and self-acceptance ( $p < .001$ ). The differences between these groups on the two component measures of social evaluative anxiety were found to be highly significant. Minimal daters reported much higher levels of social avoidance and distress ( $p < .001$ ) and were more fearful of negative evaluation ( $p < .01$ ) than frequently dating subjects.

On an assessment of social assertiveness, minimal dating subjects were found to rate themselves as nonassertive in a clear and consistent fashion. The difference between groups was found to be highly significant ( $p < .001$ ).

The relationship between dating frequency and dating satisfaction

was tested by correlating combined data from both groups. This resulted in a correlation coefficient of  $r = .8516$  ( $p < .001$ ). The clear and positive relationship between the amount of dating activity and perceived satisfaction was demonstrated and permitted the rejection of a null hypothesis that no clear relationship existed.

Data collected in this study supported the fact that the sex distribution of the minimal dating group was quite different from the dating group and was highly biased toward males. The minimal dating group was composed of 81% males, while only 36% of the dating group was male. The difference in male-female proportions between groups was found to be significant ( $p < .01$ ). Although a number of very striking differences were found to exist between these samples of dating and minimal dating students, no significant difference was found to exist with regard to academic achievement as assessed by reported grade point average. Although the mean GPA for the minimal dating sample was somewhat lower than that of the dating sample, the data did not permit the rejection of a null hypothesis that no difference would exist in mean grade point averages between groups.

Although drawn from the same population, the two samples compared in this study differed quite dramatically on the dimensions of self-actualization, self-concept, social evaluative anxiety, and social assertiveness. In the following chapter, the results presented in this section are more fully discussed.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate and identify factors characteristic of minimal dating behavior and heterosexual anxiety. Previous research into the problems of dating inhibition has tended to be treatment oriented and based upon assumed rather than demonstrated differences between dating and nondating subjects. Much of this treatment oriented research has produced equivocal results. This study was prompted by the need to more clearly understand the ways in which heterosexually anxious and inhibited individuals differ from those who are able to develop successful heterosexual relationships. With the identification of specific characteristic differences between dating and minimal dating subjects, more concise and effective treatment may be possible.

#### Overview

This study took the form of a comparison between two groups of undergraduate students at the University of Florida during the winter quarter of 1977. Group I (minimal dating subjects) was composed of 31 undergraduate student volunteers each of whom dated fewer than two times a month and was dissatisfied enough to seek individual or group counseling assistance. Group II (dating subjects) was composed of 36 undergraduate student volunteers who gave evidence of successful and satisfactory dating activities. Subjects in Group II were selected from introductory psychology and behavioral science classes and each reported a dating

frequency of three or more dates per month and a high level of reported satisfaction with their dating frequency.

Subjects in both groups were given a test packet containing instruments designed to assess five factors which have been assumed but never demonstrated to be associated with minimal dating behavior. These five factors were: (a) self-actualization, (b) self-concept, (c) social avoidance and distress, (d) fear of negative evaluation, and (e) social assertiveness. In addition to these dependent measures, a Dating Activity Questionnaire was used to collect data relating to past dating frequency, self-perceived dating and social skills, as well as current dating behavior.

The results presented in the previous chapter indicated that dramatic differences existed between the comparison groups in this study. On the basis of this data, a composite picture of the heterosexually anxious and socially inhibited individual was developed. The clear and systematic fashion in which dating and minimal dating subjects differed also suggested that a pattern may exist in which these differences might be meaningfully related. In the following section these differences are discussed in greater detail.

#### Discussion

Based upon the data collected from the samples of dating and minimal dating subjects in this study, the following observations can be made. The minimal dating sample was disproportionately male as compared with the dating group. Although the potential for heterosexual inhibition would appear to be equal for males and females alike, this study produced results which suggested that the minimal dating student is typically male. These results are generally consistent with previous research in the area of heterosexual anxiety in which the incidence of reported

dating inhibition is much higher for men than for women (Christensen and Arkowitz, 1974). To account for the skewed sex distribution of minimal dating subjects in this study is difficult and no completely adequate answer exists. However, one possible explanation may be that although social anxiety may be present for both males and females, it may be more troublesome for males because of the generally accepted social role that males initiate dating activities. Minimal dating behavior is a specific result of social anxiety and while men and women may experience social anxiety equally, it may be manifest differently between the sexes as the result of differences in social roles and expectations. With the recent movement toward less rigid sex role behavior which now permits women to more freely initiate dating activities, the incidence of self-reported dating inhibition among women may increase.

From the data it was possible to conclude that the minimal dating group was not only characterized by an absence of dating activity and high levels of dissatisfaction but the group's dating behavior was quite stable. This conclusion was based upon the data from question one of the DAQ which indicated that the Group I subjects dated very little during high school. The correlation between reported high school and current dating frequency for Groups I and II was moderately high ( $r = .58, p < .001$ ) and clearly suggested the possibility that heterosexual anxiety may develop prior to the high school years. The relative stability of reported dating activities may indicate that an individual's level of social anxiety and, consequently, his dating pattern may be well developed by middle adolescence and clearly defined by the time of college admission.

Although drawn from the same undergraduate population, the sample groups compared in this study differed significantly and quite dramatically

on each of the dependent measures assessed. These differences are discussed in greater detail below.

Self-Actualization. This dimension was assessed using the Personal Orientation Inventory (Shostrom, 1966). Results indicated that on this measure of interpersonal functioning, Group I subjects were less self-actualized in terms of time-competence and support. Minimal dating subjects tended to be relatively time-incompetent and, hence, tended to be excessively concerned with the past or future relative to the present. The dating subjects of Group II tended to be oriented primarily in the present and were consistently more time-competent than were Group I subjects. As relatively time-competent individuals, Group II subjects, as compared with subjects from Group I, were found to be relatively less burdened by guilt, remorse and resentment, or by anticipation of the future and idealized goals and expectations.

The second major scale of inner/other support produced results which also indicated lower levels of self-actualization among subjects from Group I as compared with subjects from Group II. The minimal dating sample was characterized as relatively "other" directed and, hence, tended to be greatly concerned with the opinion of others. This concern about the opinion of others tended to be expressed in terms of an exaggerated need to seek approval from others.

Essentially all data relating to self-actualization indicated that the minimal dating sample was less fully functioning and less self-actualized than the dating sample.

Self-Concept. This dimension was assessed using the Self-Regard (Sr) and Self-Acceptance (Sa) subscales of the POI. The dramatic differences observed between Group I and Group II, although not unexpected,

were certainly striking in their magnitude and consistency. The results demonstrated that the minimal dating subject clearly holds himself in low esteem, as indicated by depressed Sr subscale scores, and also finds self-acceptance difficult.

Social Evaluative Anxiety. This dimension was assessed through the use of two instruments developed by Watson and Friend (1969) each of which measures a component of social evaluative anxiety. The data indicated that minimal dating subjects reported experiencing much higher levels of social avoidance and distress and fear of negative evaluation than did dating subjects. These differences were found to be consistent and statistically significant ( $p < .001$ ). These results further suggested that dating inhibition may be characteristic of generalized social anxiety rather than indicative of situationally specific response associated with heterosexual social contact. This finding was important since it suggests that minimal dating is probably symptomatic of the larger problem of social anxiety.

Social Assertiveness. The final characteristic difference between subjects from Groups I and II was along the dimension of social assertiveness. Results indicated that subjects from Group I reported themselves to be significantly less socially assertive than did subjects from Group II. This finding is certainly consistent with the fact that subjects from Group I hold themselves in low esteem and tend to seek approval from others.

The results presented above indicate that there exists a pattern of characteristic differences between the samples of subjects in Groups I and II. These differences, although assumed by previous researchers, were demonstrated in a clear and consistent fashion. The detection of significant differences along the dimensions of self-actualization, self-concept, social evaluative anxiety, and social assertiveness does seem

to suggest that minimal dating behavior is not an expression of heterosexual anxiety alone, but is indicative of a much more global problem. Since the minimal dating subject was found to be characterized by generalized social anxiety, lack of assertiveness, poor self-concept, and low levels of self-actualization, the problem of dating inhibition may not be simply situationally specific for one to one heterosexual contact. These differences suggest that the problem may be more complex and wider ranging than previously thought and may be indicative of a low level of interpersonal functioning in all facets of the minimal dater's life. Simply stated, dating inhibition may be symptomatic of a more complex process characterized by high levels of social avoidance and anxiety, high fear of negative evaluation, poor self-regard and acceptance, non-assertiveness and low levels of self-actualization.

One possible explanation of the differences between dating and minimal dating groups may lie in the fact that the minimal dating group exhibited significantly higher levels of social anxiety and a heightened fear of negative evaluation. The presence of relatively high levels of social anxiety would tend to limit the potential for interpersonal growth and change and would result in depressed levels of self-actualization.

The argument presented above does seem to beg for an answer to the origin of social anxiety. This study did not pretend to address this question. However, the distinctive pattern of differences observed between dating and minimal dating subjects does raise the possibility that a cyclical process may exist which results in minimal dating behavior and heterosexual inhibition. If such a process does exist, then its identification could provide a scheme for understanding and relating the characteristic differences between groups. What follows is an attempt

to organize the results obtained in this study into a meaningful conceptual scheme from which to view minimal dating behavior and out of which may be drawn new directions for the treatment of heterosexual inhibition.

#### Conceptual Scheme

One of the most significant differences observed between the comparison groups was along the dimension of self-concept. In this study, self-concept was assessed using the constructs of self-regard (Sr) and self-acceptance (Sa). Now, consider person (P) who holds himself in low esteem and is then acutely aware of his own shortcomings. One would not expect P to find comfort in situations in which he would be open to evaluation by others. Clearly, it would be reasonable to expect P to respond with anxiety and distress when faced with the possibility for social interaction. It would not be unlikely to expect that P would even actively avoid such distress provoking social encounters which he would perceive as potentially threatening. Consider how, in this example, P might limit his behavior as the result of a particular attitude or belief (whether true or false) which he holds about himself. To speculate as to why or how P has acquired these beliefs about himself would be difficult, but what seems to be important is what follows from his holding himself in low esteem.

If P holds himself in low regard, it is indeed reasonable that he would expect others to see in him what he sees in himself. This belief about himself would translate quite easily into a fear of negative evaluation and a high expectation that, when evaluated, such evaluation would be negative. This finding was confirmed by significantly depressed scores on the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale.

If it can be established that P may, as the result of a poor self-concept, experience a high fear of being negatively evaluated, then P may also have reason for behaving in a nonassertive fashion in order to reduce the possibility of negative evaluation and to enhance the probability of gaining approval from others. Additionally, a high fear of negative evaluation would give P a substantial reason for avoiding social interactions, or becoming anxious if he were unable to do so. One might then predict that P would not achieve high scores on the Social Avoidance and Distress Scale and the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule. Scores on these instruments for dating and minimal dating groups confirm this pattern.

The relative stability of minimal dating patterns must also be explained. Little can change for P if he holds himself in low esteem, has a high fear of negative evaluation and consequently inhibits his social activity, experiences social anxiety, and adopts a nonassertive behavioral style. For P to avoid social contact, he must pay the price of losing opportunities to acquire social skills and experience. For P to be nonassertive is to insure that he will be used or even abused. Now the situation exists for P to see himself as socially unskilled, unexperienced, and an easy target for those whom he sees as more assertive. Having this information about himself, all of which is perfectly consistent with his already low self-concept, P now is in a position in which change and growth are extremely unlikely, at least without a great deal of risk taking, support, and motivation. If growth and change are unlikely, then one may expect lower levels of self-actualization for P and others like P.

This description suggests that P would have cause to worry about

his past and his failures as well as to worry about his future. For someone like P, being time-competent would be a difficult task indeed. Similarly, given what is known about P, one would expect him to be other directed rather than inner directed. In fact, substantial differences between the groups in this study were confirmed on these two primary measures of self-actualization.

On the basis of information about self-concept levels, a logical and systematic line of reasoning can be formed which not only suggests a predictable pattern of differences between dating and minimal dating groups, but also which accounts for the fact that social anxiety, as a cyclical process, is resistant to change or treatment.

Although perhaps much over simplified, this process still expresses possible relationships between the factors which were investigated in this study. Poor self-concept may contribute to social evaluative anxiety and social nonassertiveness, all of which then contribute to limited potential for successful interpersonal functioning which in turn contributes to poor self-concept.

This study investigated the differences between samples of dating and minimal dating college students. The results obtained confirmed that these two groups differed dramatically along the dimensions of interpersonal functioning (self-actualization), social evaluative anxiety, social assertiveness, and self-concept. The scheme presented by the writer in this section suggests that these factors may be related in a meaningful way. Further, the systematic fashion in which dating and minimal dating subjects differed raises questions concerning the value or effectiveness of several of the treatment programs proposed by previous researchers. In the following sections conclusions drawn from the study and their implications for counseling and treatment are discussed.

### Conclusions

The conclusions of this study, in which samples of dating and minimal or nondating university students were compared, are:

1. The minimal or nondating student is likely to be male. Although the potential for heterosexual inhibition is equal between males and females, the minimal dating group was found to contain a disproportionately large percentage of male subjects.
2. Minimal dating and heterosexually anxious individuals are characterized by: (a) relatively low levels of interpersonal functioning and self-actualization, (b) high levels of social evaluative anxiety, (c) low levels of self-regard and self-acceptance, (d) low levels of social assertiveness.
3. There appears to be a high correlation between dating frequency and dating satisfaction although it is possible to identify individuals who date infrequently but report high levels of satisfaction. The reverse of this situation does not appear to hold. Among all data collected, no case could be found in which a high frequency dater reported a low level of satisfaction.
4. The minimal dater does not appear to differ from his frequently dating classmates in terms of his academic achievement. The stereotypic college scholar who is shy and has little time for social activities was not found. The picture of the minimal dater as the lonely, troubled, and isolated individual who is unable to cope academically was not confirmed either.
5. Perhaps the most important conclusion drawn from this study was that dating inhibition appears to be symptomatic of generalized social anxiety and not situationally specific to heterosexual interaction.

The minimal dating subject was found to differ greatly from the dating subject not only with regard to his dating activities but along several other dimensions as well. The fact that the minimal dating subjects were characterized by low levels of self-actualization, poor self-concept, high levels of social evaluative anxiety and social nonassertiveness suggests that not only are they likely to be unable to develop successful and personally satisfying heterosexual relationships, but they are likely to experience dissatisfaction and difficulty in other facets of their lives as well.

#### Implications for Counseling

These conclusions permit the development of a composite picture of the minimal dating student. He is typically male and presents a history in which there has been very little heterosexual social activity. He tends to view himself as socially unskilled and unsophisticated and dates infrequently. He often becomes anxious in new or unfamiliar social situations and actively avoids such potentially threatening situations. He has a high fear of being negatively evaluated and usually avoids social confrontations by adopting a passive or "shy" behavioral style. Perhaps central to this description is the fact that the heterosexually inhibited individual holds himself in low regard and has difficulty accepting himself as he is.

Review of the results suggests the efficacy of a multifaceted intervention program for heterosexually anxious and inhibited clients. Not only do minimal daters apparently see themselves as possessing insufficient social and dating skills, but they appear to value themselves and others quite differently from the way daters do. Their view of the world is quite different from that of a dater. This conclusion indicates

the need to focus not only on the acquisition or improvement of appropriate social skills, but upon the affective components of social anxiety which conspire to inhibit behavior. There is a need to clearly examine in the counseling relationship the individual's self-worth, exaggerated beliefs or misconceptions about himself and others, and unrealistic expectations about dating and heterosexual interactions. With the resolution of these issues, the minimal dating client may gain the insight necessary to permit the acquisition and spontaneous expression of behavior appropriate to dating and other social interactions.

These observations indicate the need to treat minimal dating behavior as a complex syndrome with many and varied origins and multiple modes of expression. Although minimal daters tend to exhibit a series of characteristics in a surprisingly uniform fashion, as this study has described, it would be unreasonable to expect that the modification of one factor or characteristic through the use of a behavioral training program would produce significant or lasting changes. Indeed, the past treatment of minimal dating behavior as a manifestation of a simple behavioral deficiency may be a gross over simplification of the problem. Heterosexual dating anxiety, although manifesting similar characteristics among individuals, is likely to arise from a variety of antecedent events and conditions, and is likely to be manifest in a variety of ways unique to the individual for whom social anxiety is a problem.

The need for a nonthreatening and supportive initial approach in working with minimal dating clients would appear to be not only desirable but essential. Until the client is able to perceive the world and those around him as less threatening and potentially less harmful, it is unlikely any behavioral approach will prove successful. Simply stated,

the client must not only know how to behave differently, he must also have sufficient need to so behave. Such a need is not likely to occur until the minimal dater is able to identify an alternate behavioral style more safe, comfortable, and rewarding than his present style. The minimal dater is not a risk taker and, in fact, builds a world around himself where very little risk taking is required or even possible. To be shy and passive is to be in control of one's environment in such a way as to regulate and limit interpersonal contact with only a chosen few. Clearly, the need to encourage minimal dating clients to take risks in a controlled, structured, and supportive environment is indicated.

Perhaps if counselors were to consider heterosexual dating inhibition as a complex phobic response rather than the expression of a simple behavioral deficiency, much more efficient treatment strategies could be developed to deal with this widespread form of social anxiety.

#### Implications for Further Research

This study addressed a special form of social anxiety found to exist among late adolescents and young adults. Minimal dating subjects were compared to subjects who gave evidence of having established successful dating patterns. Among the factors found to be characteristic of minimal dating subjects, low self-concept is the one which would seem to be of the greatest value in discriminating between dating and minimal dating subjects. However, further validation of the relationship between social anxiety and low self-concept would require replication of this study, perhaps using a more sensitive instrument for the assessment of self-concept as well as a much larger sample of subjects so that complete factor analysis would be possible.

The question of why minimal dating behavior is troublesome primarily for males and not frequently reported as troublesome for females still remains unanswered. As social customs change to permit females to take a more active role in dating activities, it is possible that the incidence of reported minimal dating behavior among females will increase.

This study did not address the issue of the origin of social anxiety nor its influence in affecting self-concept differentially. Clearly, if systematic and consistent antecedent events were found to exist then perhaps more specific treatment would be possible.

Other questions arose during the course of this study the answers to which could be not only interesting but important to counseling. For example, what motivates certain minimal daters to seek help while others refuse assistance? What factors constitute satisfactions in a dating relationship and how would they best be assessed?

#### Summary

This study, through the comparison of dating and minimal dating sample groups, sought to identify specific factors characteristic of minimal dating behavior and heterosexual dating inhibition. The identification of such factors suggested targets for counseling intervention. What arose from an analysis of the data collected in this study was the fact that there is no single behavioral or personality trait which is characteristic of the minimally dating student. Heterosexual dating inhibition may be characterized by a constellation of factors rather than any one in particular. Indeed, in each of the following dimensions highly significant differences were detected between dating and minimal dating groups: (a) self-actualization, (b) self-concept, (c) social avoidance and distress, (d) fear of negative evaluation, and (e) social assertiveness.

To build a treatment program upon any one factor exclusively is to ignore what appears to be an interaction of multiple factors producing dating inhibition. To assume, for example, that dating inhibitions result from a social skills deficiency only implies that the acquisition of social skills would result in increased dating frequency and decreased anxiety. However, this assumption ignores the fact that a minimal dater may not have sufficient reason to use his new found social skills. Quite simply, it may be said that a person behaves as he does either because he knows no other way to behave or because he has sufficient reason for continuing to behave as he does despite the fact that he may know of alternatives. It appears that the minimal dater is behaving in a way that is least threatening and poses the least risk. Although perhaps knowing the appropriate and expected behaviors, the minimal dater inhibits these behaviors to avoid any possibility of further threat to or assault on an already poor self-concept. This inhibitory quality was confirmed in this study by the depressed spontaneity scores (S) on the POI by minimal dating subjects.

The depressed scores of the minimal dating sample for each of the main factors assessed in this study may all be interrelated and suggest a behavioral style characterized by passivity, need for approval, and an unwillingness to enter into a relationship in which the possibility exists for rejection and therefore further harm to the self-concept. The minimal dater is then withdrawn, shy, passive, unassertive, and consequently well defended and safe. Unfortunately, he is often lonely as well and may not realize how his actions contribute to his feeling of loneliness.

Review of the differences between the two sample groups suggests

the possibility of a common underlying pattern which is cyclical in nature and which accounts for the detected differences. The minimal dater in this sample was typically male and was characterized by a history of unsuccessful dating activities. He tended to be poorly functioning interpersonally and possessed low levels of self-regard and self-acceptance. He was socially anxious and unassertive and highly fearful of negative evaluation. The minimal dater in this sample clearly portrayed himself as an ineffective, unskilled, and undesirable person and as such, behaved accordingly.

This study sought to reassess the topic of heterosexual dating inhibition. The results point to the complexity of a form of social anxiety often thought to be the expression of a simple behavioral deficit. The pattern of differences detected between those who date and those who either cannot or will not, point to the existence of a highly complex phobic response with many possible antecedent events and behavioral and affective expressions. The minimal dater looks at himself and his place in the world in a way very different indeed from his frequently dating counterpart. It is hoped that this study will generate continued interest and further research into treatment of social anxiety and in doing so, open a new world to those for whom it is now closed.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
COLLEGE DATING SURVEY

This packet contains material which is being used to collect information about the dating activities of college and university students. Since you indicated an interest in participating in the investigation, you will need some additional information. This introduction will help you decide if you want to be part of this study.

Since this study is concerned about dating, perhaps a definition of "dating" would be helpful. In this study a "date" is defined as: a prearranged meeting between a man and a woman for mutual, social enjoyment. This definition does not include casual and informal contact between men and women which occurs in groups. It does include just about any activity in which two people agree to participate as a couple. The important point is that a date is a pairing activity, even if it is only for brief periods such as going to a movie, dinner, or a sporting event.

Your participation in this study will require about an hour of your time. During that time you will be asked to respond in an open and honest fashion to a series of questions about your dating and social activities. All of this information will be kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL and will be used for statistical purposes only. At the completion of this testing, if you have any questions or comments concerning this study, I will be happy to discuss them with you. All I ask is that you respond as honestly as you can so that this study will be meaningful. Thanks for volunteering.

APPENDIX B

DATING ACTIVITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_  
 Current student classification \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_  
 Estimated overall grade point average to date \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Below are some questions relating to your past and present dating activity. This information will be useful in an investigation into the dating activities of university students. Your answers to these questions will be kept strictly confidential and used for statistical purposes only. Your honest and frank responses will help make this research meaningful.

1. How much did you date in high school? (Circle one)

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9  
 not at all    very little    average    often    very often

2. Do you now date about as often as you would like? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

3. How would you rate your dating and social skills? (Circle one)

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9  
 quite poor    about average    quite good

4. On the average, how many dates do you have in a month? (Circle one)

0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   11   12   13   14   15

5. Generally, how satisfied are you with your dating frequency: (Circle one)

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9  
 not at all    quite pleased

APPENDIX C

SOCIAL AVOIDANCE AND DISTRESS SCALE (SAD)

(Title was Omitted on Subjects' Copies)

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are listed a variety of statements concerning how you relate to people. Read each statement carefully and then indicate whether the statement is true (T) or false (F) by circling the appropriate letter at the right.

It should be emphasized that this is not a test in the usual sense of the word since there are no right or wrong answers. Simply read each sentence and answer as honestly as you can.

- 
- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations.                                    | T | F |
| 2. I try to avoid situations which force me to be very sociable.                           | T | F |
| 3. It is easy for me to relax when I am with strangers.                                    | T | F |
| 4. I have no particular desire to avoid people.  | T | F |
| 5. I often find social occasions upsetting.  | T | F |
| 6. I usually feel calm and comfortable at social occasions.                                | T | F |
| 7. I am usually at ease when talking to someone of the opposite sex.                       | T | F |
| 8. I try to avoid talking to people unless I know them well.                               | T | F |
| 9. If the chance comes to meet new people, I often take it.                                | T | F |
| 10. I often feel nervous or tense in casual get-togethers in which both sexes are present. | T | F |
| 11. I am usually nervous with people unless I know them well.                              | T | F |
| 12. I usually feel uncomfortable when I am with a group of people                          | T | F |
| 13. I often want to get away from people.  | T | F |

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 14. I usually feel uncomfortable when I am in a group of people I don't know. | T | F |
| 15. I usually feel relaxed when I meet someone for the first time.            | T | F |
| 16. Being introduced to people makes me tense and nervous.                    | T | F |
| 17. Even though a room is full of strangers, I may enter it anyway.           | T | F |
| 18. I would avoid walking up and joining a large group of people.             | T | F |
| 19. When my superiors want to talk with me, I talk willingly.                 | T | F |
| 20. I often feel on edge when I am with a group of people.                    | T | F |
| 21. I don't mind talking to people at parties or social gatherings.           | T | F |
| 22. I tend to withdraw from people.   | T | F |
| 23. I am seldom at ease in a large group of people.                           | T | F |
| 24. I often think up excuses to avoid social engagements.                     | T | F |
| 25. I sometimes take the responsibility for introducing people to each other. | T | F |
| 26. I try to avoid formal occasions.  | T | F |
| 27. I usually go to whatever social engagements I have.                       | T | F |
| 28. I find it easy to relax with other people.                                | T | F |

APPENDIX D

FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION (FNE)

(Title was Omitted on Subjects' Copies)

INSTRUCTIONS: Below are listed a series of statements concerning how you relate to people. Read each statement carefully and then indicate whether the statement is true (T) or false (F) by circling the appropriate letter at the right.

It should be emphasized that this scale is not a test in the usual sense of the word since there are no right or wrong answers. Simply read each sentence and then answer as honestly as you can.

- 
- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. I rarely worry about seeming foolish to others.   | T | F |
| 2. I worry about what people will think of me even when I know it doesn't make any difference. | T | F |
| 3. I become tense and jittery if I know someone is sizing me up.                               | T | F |
| 4. I am unconcerned even if I know people are forming an unfavorable impression of me.         | T | F |
| 5. I feel very upset when I commit some social error.  | T | F |
| 6. The opinions that important people have of me cause me little concern.                      | T | F |
| 7. I am often afraid that I may look ridiculous or make a fool of myself.                      | T | F |
| 8. I react very little when other people disapprove of me.                                     | T | F |
| 9. I am often afraid of other people noticing my shortcomings.                                 | T | F |
| 10. The disapproval of others would have little effect on me.                                  | T | F |
| 11. If someone is evaluating me I tend to expect the worse.                                    | T | F |

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 12. I rarely worry about the kind of impression I am making on someone.              | T | F |
| 13. I am afraid that others will not approve of me.                                  | T | F |
| 14. I am afraid that other people will find fault with me.                           | T | F |
| 15. Other's opinions of me do not bother me.   | T | F |
| 16. I am not necessarily upset if I do not please someone.                           | T | F |
| 17. When I am talking to someone, I worry about what they may be thinking about me.  | T | F |
| 18. I feel that you can't help making social errors sometime, so why worry about it. | T | F |
| 19. I am usually worried about what kind of impression I make.                       | T | F |
| 20. I worry a lot about what my superiors think of me.                               | T | F |
| 21. If I know that someone is judging me, it has little effect on me.                | T | F |
| 22. I worry that others will think I am not worthwhile.                              | T | F |
| 23. I worry very little about what others may think of me.                           | T | F |
| 24. Sometimes I think I am too concerned with what other people think of me.         | T | F |
| 25. I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things.                            | T | F |
| 26. I am often indifferent to the opinions others have of me.                        | T | F |
| 27. I am usually confident that others will have a favorable impression of me.       | T | F |
| 28. I often worry that people who are important to me won't think very much of me.   | T | F |
| 29. I brood about the opinions my friends have about me.                             | T | F |
| 30. I become tense and jittery if I know I am being judged by my superiors.          | T | F |

APPENDIX E

RATHUS ASSERTIVENESS SCHEDULE (RAS)

(Title was Omitted on Subjects' Copies)

DIRECTIONS: Indicate how characteristic or descriptive each of the following statements is of you by using the code below.

- +3 very descriptive of me, extremely characteristic
- +2 rather descriptive of me, quite characteristic
- +1 somewhat descriptive of me, slightly characteristic
- 1 somewhat nondescriptive of me, slightly uncharacteristic
- 2 rather nondescriptive of me, quite uncharacteristic
- 3 very nondescriptive of me, extremely uncharacteristic

- 
- \_\_\_ 1. Most people seem to be more aggressive and assertive than I am.
  - \_\_\_ 2. I have hesitated to make or accept dates because of shyness.
  - \_\_\_ 3. When the food served at a restaurant is not done to my satisfaction, I complain about it to the waiter or waitress.
  - \_\_\_ 4. I am careful to avoid hurting other people's feelings, even if I feel that I have been injured.
  - \_\_\_ 5. If a salesman has gone to considerable trouble to show me merchandise which is not quite suitable, I have a difficult time saying "No".
  - \_\_\_ 6. When I am asked to do something, I insist upon knowing why.
  - \_\_\_ 7. There are times when I look for a good, vigorous argument.
  - \_\_\_ 8. I strive to get ahead as well as most people in my position.
  - \_\_\_ 9. To be honest, people often take advantage of me.
  - \_\_\_ 10. I enjoy starting conversations with new acquaintances and strangers.
  - \_\_\_ 11. I often don't know what to say to attractive persons of the opposite sex.
  - \_\_\_ 12. I will hesitate to make phone calls to business establishments and insitutions.

- \_\_\_13. I would rather apply for a job or for admission to college by writing letters than by going through with personal interviews.
- \_\_\_14. I find it embarrassing to return merchandise.
- \_\_\_15. If a close and respected relative were annoying me, I would smother my feelings rather than express my annoyance.
- \_\_\_16. I have avoided asking questions for fear of sounding stupid.
- \_\_\_17. During an argument I am sometimes afraid that I will get so upset that I will shake all over.
- \_\_\_18. If a famed and respected lecturer makes a statement which I think is incorrect, I will have the audience hear my point of view.
- \_\_\_19. I avoid arguing over prices with clerks and salesmen.
- \_\_\_20. When I have done something important or worthwhile, I manage to let others know about it.
- \_\_\_21. I am open and frank about my feelings.
- \_\_\_22. If someone has been spreading false and bad stories about me, I see him/her as soon as possible to "have a talk" about it.
- \_\_\_23. I often have a hard time saying "No".
- \_\_\_24. I tend to bottle up my emotions rather than make a scene.
- \_\_\_25. I complain about poor service in a restaurant and elsewhere.
- \_\_\_26. When I am given a compliment, I sometimes just don't know what to say.
- \_\_\_27. If a couple near me in a theatre or at a lecture were conversing rather loudly, I would ask them to be quiet or to take their conversation elsewhere.
- \_\_\_28. Anyone attempting to push ahead of me in a line is in for a good battle.
- \_\_\_29. I am quick to express an opinion.
- \_\_\_30. There are times when I just can't say anything.

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#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dean Wallace Owen, Jr. was born April 29, 1947, in Tampa, Florida. As the son of a career military officer he attended numerous elementary and secondary schools and graduated from Minot Senior High School, Minot, North Dakota, in May, 1965. He attended the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology in August, 1970 and a Master of Arts degree in June, 1973. During his undergraduate and graduate study, Mr. Owen held various research assistantships and was actively engaged in experimental study in the fields of animal learning and human physiological conditioning.

Mr. Owen was married in 1973 to the former Nancy J. Brabant and is the father of three children. Between 1968 and 1974 he served with the United States Air Force and was later employed by the Hillsborough County School Board as a personnel manager. Since 1974 he has been working toward a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Counselor Education at the University of Florida. From 1975 until the present time Mr. Owen has worked as a Vocational Counselor at the Psychological and Vocational Counseling Center at the University of Florida.

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Harold C. Riker, Chairman  
Professor of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Roderick J. McDavis  
Assistant Professor of Education

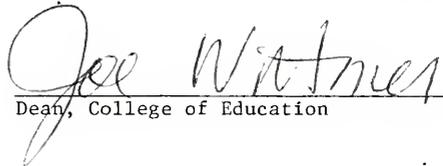
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.



Donald L. Avila  
Professor of Education

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

June, 1977



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