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# Communication and Female Date Initiation: Differences in Perception Based on Sex of Initiator

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COMMUNICATION AND FEMALE DATE INITIATION: DIFFERENCES IN  
PERCEPTIONS BASED ON ASSERTIVENESS OF INTITATOR

By

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Bachelor of Science in Human Services Counseling  
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the

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## ABSTRACT

Communication and Female Date Initiation: Differences of Perceptions Based on Assertiveness of Initiator

by

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First dates represent an important early event in the development of dating relationships. Commonly, date initiation is a behavior in which men take control; however, more women are attempting this task. Women initiating dates is a deviation from cultural norms or what society views as expected behavior. The deviation in behavior could have negative repercussions for women, which was investigated for the current study. College-aged participants ( $n = 232$ ) completed an online survey regarding their perceptions of two hypothetical women who initiated dates. Informed by Expectancy Violations Theory, the expectedness and valence of the date-initiation behavior and mode of follow-up communication was examined in order to gain insight into the perceptions of this dating issue. The majority of the participants reported positive perceptions of women who initiated dates. Men had slightly more positive perceptions than women. Also, texting was the most positive and expected mode of follow-up communication. This study reveals perceptions on present dating trends and provides insight into possible shifts in the future from traditional gender roles in dating situations.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Dating is an important aspect of young people's lives because it is the first step to finding a lifelong partner. Rules and social expectations complicate dating, and women are constrained in certain areas, such as date initiation. Men predominantly take on the role of the date initiator. Although in recent decades more women have initiated dates than before (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2010; Mongeau & Carey, 1996), date initiation is still widely more acceptable for men than women (Bartoli & Clark, 2006; Mongeau, Hale, Johnson, & Hillis, 1993; Riege Laner & Ventrone, 2000). The view that women should not initiate dates with men is contradictory to how women are expected to behave in other aspects of their lives. They are expected to establish themselves in careers, get married and have children all while continuing to excel in their career (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005). Balancing these expectations is not a simple task. In order to gain success, many women have adopted what is usually perceived as a masculine style of communicating (Eagly & Koenig, 2006; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006). Women have developed their assertiveness skills to succeed in areas previously dominated by men such as in careers and education (Smiler & Kubotera, 2010); therefore, these skills should prove to enhance their success in dating as well, but this does not seem to be the case.

While assertive communication from women is generally accepted in school and work environments (Mathison, 2001; Smiler & Kubotera, 2010), this type of communication could be perceived negatively in dating and sexual situations. Women might still be expected to play a more submissive role in romantic relationships. For example, researchers report that by society's standards women should not be the initiators

of dates (Smiler & Kubotera, 2010), verbal contact after dates, or sexual encounters by society's standards (Mongeau & Carey, 1996). The societal standard reinforcing these rules for women is "be desirable but not desiring" (Reid, Elliot, & Webber, 2011, p. 549). These gender differences are also prevalent in dating. For instance, when a woman initiates a date, the sexual expectation from the man increases (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2010; Mongeau & Carey, 1996). The behaviors among daters perpetuate stereotypes and those who stray from these expected behaviors can be viewed negatively. For example, women who initiate dates could be seen as sexually aggressive, and likewise, men who do not initiate dates, could be seen as weak. This perception of women is in contrast to how women are perceived in other aspects of their lives when they express assertive behavior, as previously mentioned.

What happens when communicative behaviors from one part of life inevitably contradict one another? Women are constrained in dating because they are told not to be the initiator. The expectations from one area of life are different from another area of life; therefore, perceptions of their behaviors will differ, as well. Expectations in the communication sense imply a repeated pattern of anticipated behavior (Burgoon, 1993). The interest of this study rests on general expectations that pertain to all members of a given group. General expectations are grounded in societal norms for what is typical and appropriate behavior (Burgoon). Expectations are placed on individuals in society based on common beliefs and stereotypes. These stereotypes are categories individuals place others into depending on specific physical or behavioral characteristics. Gender-based stereotypes support expectations regarding "appropriate" behavior for men and women (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). Society often constructs gender in oppositional terms: what



men are, women are not, and vice versa. Women should be passive and dependent, while men are most often described as assertive (Hegstrom & McCarl-Nielsen, 2002).

When women express assertive communication by initiating a date, a violation of expected behavior according to social norms likely occurs. An expectation of another is violated when behavior differs from what is typical (Afifi & Metts, 1998). Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) is a useful framework for evaluating women's assertiveness as a violation of dating norms. EVT addresses how expected certain behaviors are and how positively or negatively they are perceived. Specific qualities are generally associated with women (e.g., compassion, kindness, nurturance, and devotion to others) and men (e.g., willingness to take risks, assertiveness, and adventurousness are associated with men) (Eagly & Koenig, 2006; Lindsey & Zakahi, 2006). These gender-based stereotypes seem to have great impact on romantic situations. They could be preventing women from taking on assertive roles in dating, specifically in date initiation, because they are not expected to be assertive in that situation. Women who are taking initiative might affect their dating prospects because their behaviors are seen negatively.

For this study, I collected perceptions of women who initiate dates. By examining the violation valence and expectedness of the behavior through EVT, I provide insight into perceptions of this dating issue. First in Chapter one, I review literature relevant to assertiveness, date initiation, gender stereotypes, and then discuss how EVT as a framework presents an opportunity to assess individuals' views of women who initiate dates. Mode of communication is also discussed as a factor of assertive communication and how female initiators are perceived. In Chapter Two, the method used in the study is detailed and descriptions of all measures implemented are described. Chapter Three

reveals the results and analysis of the data found in the investigation. Finally, Chapter Four provides a discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, and areas of future investigation.

#### Assertiveness and Date Initiation

In U.S. culture, women are expected to be feminine and portray expressive traits (Smiler & Kubotera, 2010); therefore, a woman depicting assertive traits could be perceived negatively or as acting unexpectedly. Assertiveness can be defined as a person's tendency to stand up and speak out for their own interests and concerns, such as voicing opinions, making offers and concessions, and attempting to persuade or intimidate others (Ames, 2008). Assertiveness is reflected by direct, authoritative, self-promoting, instrumental and interpersonally dominant communication (Eagly & Carli, 2003). A component of assertive communication is directness (i.e., how clearly one states her goals, desires, or needs) (Ames). Being direct is exhibiting authority and dominance, in which communication is presented in a straight forward and commanding manner (Mathison, 2001). Communicating assertively is not seen as typical behavior for women (Smiler & Kubotera). Commonly, date initiation is a behavior in which men take control. Date initiation is the act of approaching an individual and asking them out on a one-on-one meeting at a later time (Morr & Mongeau, 2004). Comparing women's levels of assertiveness is a potentially important consideration in date initiation. Perceptions of women may change due to the level of assertiveness they portray in the date initiation. For this discussion and investigation, assertiveness was conceptualized as the degree of directness.

Understanding the rules or expectations placed on women regarding sexual circumstances is important because similar rules apply in dating contexts. Assertiveness in dating can also be perceived as sexual aggression (Reid, Elliot, & Webber, 2011). Women are often told not let their desires be known whether (Reid et al.) they be an eagerness to date a man or to have sex with him. Many social scripts designate women as less sexual than men, and more sexually active women are seen as “loose” or “bad” (Reid et al.). Similar to stereotypes, double standards shape men and women’s sexual behaviors and experiences (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Reid et al.). College students report that individuals judge women negatively for engaging in multiple sexual encounters, where men gain status (Crawford & Popp; Marks, 2008; Reid et al.). Women’s assertiveness might be interpreted as meaning a woman is sexually aggressive, which in turn is viewed negatively. Stereotypes in romantic situations call for women to be passive and feminine and men to be assertive and masculine. Muehlenhard and McCoy (1991) discuss how double standards impact how women communicate about sex. “A woman who wants to have sexual intercourse with a man but believes that he accepts the double standard faces a double bind” (Muehlenhard & McCoy, p. 449). They go on to explain that if a woman says she wants to have sex, she may face scrutiny or she can refuse and be labeled “respectable” (p. 449). The rules and stereotypes placed on women influence how they are perceived. The main focus for this study is date initiation, which is generally not an acceptable behavior for women.

Gender stereotyping leads to the promotion and development of social norms or rules of how to behave appropriately in society. Stereotypes influence how individuals perceive women in dating situations. They can cause women to act certain ways and they

can also influence how men expect women to act. Women are expected to maintain their femininity on dates and in romantic situations (Smiler & Kubotera, 2010). Smiler and Kubotera investigated factors that increase the beliefs and behaviors of both the actor and the perceiver of gender-stereotypical behavior. “Subsequent gender-typical behavior is maintained or diminished based on the actor’s and perceiver’s responses to the initial behavior” (Smiler & Kubotera, p. 565). They hypothesized “Young men will be more desirous of expressive than instrumental traits in the romantic context and less desirous of expressive traits in the workplace context” (p. 567). In the study, they associate feminine traits as expressiveness and masculine traits as instrumentality. Expressive and instrumental traits were assessed using the Personality Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ). The participants completed the PAQ twice, once for a “potential female romantic partner” and once for a “potential female co-worker.” They found men expected women to demonstrate more expressive traits in the romantic context and more instrumental traits in the workplace context. In romantic situations, men preferred expressive traits, like emotional expression, gentleness, understanding others, and relating to others, which are consistent with traditional female roles. Therefore, in romantic contexts or dating situations, women are expected to be feminine (Eaton & Rose, 2011). Gender-stereotypes are present in many aspects of life including dating situations and specifically date initiation.

When women initiate dates they are violating expectations of how dating situations should be enacted. Baxter, Dun and Sahlstein (2001) investigated behavioral rules and how they are perceived and shared in a social network. Rules are guidelines of appropriate conduct in relationships that are agreed upon by the majority and individuals

who deviate from them face negative repercussions (Baxter et al.). Their study evaluated sex differences in how men and women perceive others' behaviors according to rules or appropriateness. Some notable perceptions found in the study relevant to the current work are "Don't get involved with a person who is more than a few years younger than you," "Don't have sex with a person on the first date," and "Take the initiative in inviting a person on a date." According to the findings of this study, taking the initiative to invite someone on a date is a social rule women should not follow. Each of these three rules had a significant difference between how men and women were perceived if they followed them. It was seen as more acceptable for men than women to get involved with someone younger, have sex on the first date, and take initiative in inviting someone on a date. The implications of these results are women could be negatively perceived if they date men more than a few years younger, have sex on the first date, and if they initiate dates. Date initiation is a significant part of dating practices. First dates represent an important early event in the development of dating relationships. From this encounter, individuals frequently decide if the relationship will remain platonic or evolve into something romantic (Morr & Mongeau, 2004). Understanding acceptable and positive practices in date initiation is beneficial for those who wish to participate in dating activities and wish to possibly progress in their relationships.

Social rules can have an impact on first dates and influence how individuals should or should not behave. First-date scripts regularly depict men as taking an active role and women as taking a passive one. The man is usually expected to initiate the date, plan the date activities, drive, pay for the date, and initiate sexual intimacy. Specifically, date initiation is a behavior typically done by men. Despite some indication that woman

initiated dates are more frequent now than in past decades (Eaton & Rose, 2011; Emmers-Sommer et al., 2010; Mongeau et al., 1993), there is still an expectation that men will initiate the first date (Bartoli, 2006; Mongeau & Johnson, 1995). In a study conducted almost twenty years ago, Mongeau et al. (1993) investigated female directness in date initiation and how it was perceived. Participants read one of four scenarios describing a social interaction. The scenarios described a male and female student involved in various date initiation contexts. The participants then answered questions regarding their own experience with female date initiation to find the proportion of people who had experienced it. The woman initiator was seen as being socially liberal or as a casual dater and sexually active. The results also indicated the directness of the woman significantly influenced how expected and appropriate her behavior was perceived. As previously stated, being direct is exhibiting authority and dominance, in which communication is presented in a straightforward and commanding manner (Mathison, 2001). Mongeau et al. (1993) found the more direct approaches lead to perceptions of greater appropriateness than the more passive tactics. However, the direct tactics were perceived as being less expected than the indirect tactics. Also, the results point to sex differences in perceptions; men made less positive attributions about female initiators than the women. The result that men made less positive attributions is an important aspect to the current study, because how men perceive women who initiate dates directly affects the outcomes of the initiations. If men perceive women who initiate dates negatively, then they could be less likely to accept the invitation.

In the late 90s, research indicated potential for changes in gender roles in dating, but much of the data supported the perseverance of traditional views (Eaton & Rose,

2011). Willis and Carlson (1993) found that in 1991 men and women's singles ads were even more aligned with gender stereotypes than they were in 1986, with men offering status and seeking attractiveness in partners, and women offering attractiveness and seeking status in partners. Ross and Davis (1996) found that only a minority of participants believed the man should always pay for date activities or that a woman should not initiate intimacy on a date. However, the majority of participants indicated that the man should pay for the first date. Traditional gender roles in dating were persistent in a study conducted by Gilbert, Walker, McKinney, and Snell (1999). Men and women were asked to role play date initiations. In the role plays where men were supposed to ask the women out, all men completed the task. Additionally, men also initiated 31% of the dates where the woman was told to ask for the date. This was typical of much of the data reported in the 1990s (Eaton & Rose, 2011). There were glimpses of change or deviations from typical roles, but traditional perceptions of gender roles in dating held strong.

The research conducted in the 2000s revealed similar data pertaining to dating expectations. The evidence from this decade indicated that attitudes and judgments about dating were still strongly stereotyped (Eaton & Rose, 2011). Morr Serewicz and Gale (2008) investigated first-date scripts and gender roles. The participants, from a large Midwestern university, were asked to read hypothetical dating scenarios and were asked to imagine themselves in the role of the same gendered dating partner. Then they were asked to answer surveys measuring expectations of communication, sexual intimacy, and goals for the date. Participants were then instructed to write a script for the scenario. Similar to previous studies, both men and women expected the man to take control of the

date, including picking up the woman, paying for the date, and taking her home.

Interestingly, these expectations were present despite who initiated the date, man or woman.

Emmers-Sommer et al. (2010) also investigated expectations among men and women of dating. They focused on first date expectations within different scenarios and the effects of who asked, who paid, the date location, and the gender. Typically men ask out women and pay for the date, but as noted by the authors, this has noticeably changed in recent years. In this particular study, the researchers examined expectations of daters when the initiations were by men or women, the location changed, and who paid differed, as well. Participants completed a survey in which 12 scenarios varied by who asked for the date, who paid for the date, and where the date took place were randomly assigned. Despite the cultural changes in society and more accepting views of women, the results reflect certain sexual expectations and beliefs about differences in gender expectations still exist. Even though men and women reported it did not matter if the man or woman initiated the first date, in their own lives, the participants reported following previously stated social norms where men usually initiated dates and paid for them. Similarly, they found most of the participants believed it was acceptable for the man or the woman to pay for the first date, but most also reported the man should always pay. What happens when these expectations are met? Due to sexual scripts and social stereotypes, women are not supposed to be the date initiators or the initiators of a sexual encounter; however, men enter a first date with high expectations for intimacy. Although these expectations are present in dating and could be seen as negative, increasingly more women are taking the



initiative and asking men on dates. The first research question seeks to find out the prevalence of woman-initiated dates.

**RQ1: What proportion of individuals experience a woman-initiated date?**

Given gender stereotypes continue to be held by large and quite varied samples of the population indicates how deeply embedded these attitudes are in society. When men and women stray from the social expectations of their gender roles with their behavior, they can be viewed negatively. Any inconsistency between an individual's behavior and their gender roles "often elicits negative sanctions" (Eagly & Koenig, 2006, p. 165). Men and women may have the same behaviors in similar situations, but they can be perceived differently. People's perceptions generally follow the social expectations for men and women. These beliefs and expectations influence important aspects of individuals' lives and specifically in dating situations.

The previous research indicates gender stereotypes and certain expectations are present in heterosexual dating relationships. What they do not focus on enough is whether or not these stereotypes and social expectations cause a negative impact on individual's views of women who express assertive communication in dating situations and specifically date initiation. When expectations of women's behaviors and communication in dating are violated, are these women viewed negatively? Expectancy Violations Theory is a clear choice to guide this investigation. Factors of EVT such as expectedness (i.e., how surprised someone is by a behavior) and violation valence (i.e., how much someone likes or dislikes a behavior of another) provide a means to measure perceptions of women who initiate dates. The next section offers a detailed description of the theory and its application for the current study.

## Expectancy Violations Theory

Expectancy Violations Theory is used as a framework for the current study to evaluate perceptions of women who initiate dates. EVT is a theory that explains and predict how individuals assess behavior deviating from expectations and how they respond communicatively to such violations (White, 2008). “Interest in interpersonal expectancies stems largely from interest in the perseverance of stereotypes” (Miller & Turnball, 1986, p. 233). As discussed, stereotypes inform behaviors and influence expectations. Expectancies have a strong impact on communication. “Expectancies gain their importance in social interaction to the extent that they persevere and influence subsequent information processing, behavior, and perceptions” (Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993, p. 68). EVT allows the current project to investigate expectations for dating behaviors.

Dating environments are composed of various factors that can influence behaviors and outcomes. Burgoon (1993) discusses communication expectancies as deriving from three classes of factors: communicator, relationship, and context characteristics. Communicator characteristics are features of individuals, such as demographics, personality, and physical appearance, which help to determine how people will communicate. The present study focuses on the degree of assertiveness, operationalized as directness, as a communicator characteristic. Relationship factors include characteristics that describe the relationship between communicators, such as attraction, similarity, or the degree of familiarity. Context characteristics include what is going on in the situation at hand such as situational factors that require certain behaviors (e.g., How one acts on a date). The combination of these factors influences the expectancies

individuals place on others in certain situations. Individuals plan and adapt their communication according to the kind of encounter and communication style they anticipate from another. The current study focuses on the context characteristics or the situation of a date initiation and how individuals expect the situation to develop.

EVT also helps to explain how individuals interpret and react to situations that violate expectations. Expectancies may be general and pertain to all members of a community or personal and pertain to a specific individual. Burgoon (1993) explains a model for expectancy violations as the characteristics influencing expectancies, which also influences the communicator reward valence by how the receiver interprets the violation, which results in the interaction patterns and outcomes. When a communicator's behavior is sufficiently different from expected behavior to be recognized, expectancy violations theory determines that the violation is "arousing and distracting" (Burgoon, p. 35). That is, it directs attention away from the topic at hand and toward the violator and violation. The shift of attention caused by the violation makes the characteristics of the communicator and their relationship to the perceiver more significant, which intensifies reward effects (Burgoon). The perceiver then evaluates the violation. When behavior violates expectancies, individuals likely experience arousal and evaluate both the transgressor and transgression. These evaluations then guide the victim's behavioral response, as well as perceptions of the partner and relationship (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006). The current study evaluates the perception of the proposed violation of a woman initiated date.

Three important contexts of application for the theory have been the study of nonverbal behavior during conversation, expectations and patterns of interaction in

intimate relationships, and the influence of expectations or adaptation on the detection of deception (White, 2008), therefore, the current study advances the theory by investigating both nonverbal and verbal communication behaviors. EVT predicts a violation with a positive valence will typically lead to better interaction outcomes than a non-violation. A violation with a negative valence will typically lead to worse interaction outcomes than simply meeting expectations. Burgoon (1993) has focused the theory on the nonverbal interpretation process. Initial tests of the theory explored how violations of personal space were interpreted in conversation and considered how characteristics of the communicator who engaged in a violation influenced those interpretations. Investigating verbal communication can enhance the uses of the theory.

Within each culture, the degree of consent or variation existing in interpreting and evaluating behaviors will affect the theory's ability to account for outcomes (Burgoon, 1993). EVT is especially useful for cultures that are more explicit about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. "The interpretations and evaluation of an enacted behavior, relative to the expected behavior, determine the valence of a violation" (Burgoon, p. 40). There are positive and negative violations that are theorized to produce more positive or negative interaction patterns and outcomes and are more positively or negatively valenced. "All interpersonal encounters begin with some sociocultural prescriptions about which emotional experiences and expressions are expected" (Burgoon, p. 43). As discussed, American culture explicitly portrays women's roles as being expressive, feminine, and supportive especially in dating situations. Therefore, anything deviating from this norm should be perceived as negatively valenced.

Burgoon and Le Poire (1993) studied the perseverance of preinteraction expectancies in the face of actual communication behavior, the separate effects of personal attribute and communication expectancies, and the role of expectancy confirmation or disconfirmation on postinteraction evaluations. They hypothesized “positively valenced expectancies regarding target personal attributes and target communication elicit more favorable judgments of target personal attributes and communication behavior than do negatively valenced expectancies” (p. 71). They found expectancies and expectancy violations play a major role in the evaluation of individuals and their communicative behavior.

Bevan (2003) applied an expanded version of EVT to the realm of sexual resistance. The expansion includes how expectancy violations are interpreted. This includes violation valence, involving the extent to which the behavior is seen as positive or negative, violation expectedness, defined as the extent to which the behavior varies from the range of expected behaviors, and violation importance, characterized as the impact behavior will have on a relationship (Bevan). Bevan hypothesized “those being resisted by a dating partner will perceive sexual resistance as an expectancy violation that is (a) more negative, (b) more unexpected, and (c) more important than will those being resisted by a cross-sex friend” (p. 71). She also hypothesized “both cross-sex friends and dating partners who are resisted will perceive partners’ use of a direct sexual resistance message to be an expectancy violation that is (a) more negative, (b) more unexpected, and (c) more important compared to indirect sexual resistance messages” (p. 71). She found significant correlations between negative valence and unexpected violations. The

present study will probably uncover similar correlations between negative valence and unexpected violations.

Preinteractional expectancies also influence perceivers to evaluate others and their communication behavior differently than when preinteraction expectancies are not induced (White, 2008). EVT has been used to evaluate communication in romantic relationships, which has provided understanding of patterns of behavior that enhance or destroy relationships (White, 2008). Researchers have not investigated how interactants respond to each other once a violation has occurred in the initial phases of romantic relationships.

Generally, expectancies can be conceptualized as framing devices that help to characterize and structure interpersonal interactions and affect consequent information processing, behavior, and perceptions (Bevan, 2003). This type of framing can help to structure the perceptions in the present study. Expectations are beliefs individuals hold for potential behaviors of others that are typical to certain situations (Roese & Sherman, 2007). An expectation of another is violated when behavior differs from what is typical or expected. This leads to the first hypothesis:

**H1: If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as unexpected.**

Additionally, this hypothesis renders a follow-up question concerning sex differences in perceptions.

**RQ2: Do women and men perceive expectedness of a woman initiated date differently?**

In communication contexts, it is not the expectancies themselves but their valences and their resulting implications for benefiting the perceiver that are probably

most important for communicators (Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993). Valence refers to the positive or negative evaluation of an act. Mongeau and Carey (1996) investigated expectancies men had of women who initiated dates. In the study, they investigated whether men enter woman-initiated first dates with especially high sexual expectations and the role of both man and woman date initiation on evaluations of partners' non sexual characteristics. Participants read scenarios where the directness of the woman varied and then answered questions regarding expectations for the date. Male participants evaluated the male target as expecting considerably more intimate sexual contact on a woman initiated first date. Therefore, if their expectations were not met, the behavior of the woman was negatively valenced.

EVT proposes when someone violates expectations, individuals are required to make sense of what happened and figure out what their behavior means. The valence of the unexpected act consistently plays a critical role in predicting behavioral and relational outcomes (Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993). A behavior is valenced as negative if it is perceived to fall far short of a behavioral expectation or is the opposite of what was expected and preferred. Behaviors are positively valenced when they exceed expectations. EVT dictates that all communicators are on a valence continuum from positive to negative according to how rewarding they are seen by the perceiver (Burgoon & Le Poire). Date initiation proposed by a woman is thought to be a violation of expectations because as earlier discussed, society expects women to refrain from such direct behaviors and assertiveness; therefore, the date initiation will be viewed negatively. The second hypothesis tests this notion.

**H2: If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as negative.**

Additionally, this hypothesis renders a follow-up question concerning sex differences in perceptions.

**RQ3: Do women and men perceive the valence of a woman initiated date differently?**

In addition to woman-initiated dates, initiated contact after a date could be perceived as negative or unexpected. The degree of each depends on the mode of communication used in the contact. The next section discusses perceptions of various communication modes.

#### Communication Modes

Similarly to how perceptions of women who initiate dates vary by degree of assertiveness, perceptions may vary regarding how a woman contacts a man after a date. There are various modes of communication. This study evaluates perceptions of calling, texting, and emailing by a woman after a first date that she initiated. Calling after the date could be seen as more abrupt or unexpected and negative than the other two modes because calling involves more time and contact with the person, which strays from recent communication norms.

Media Richness Theory classifies each communication medium according to the complexity of the messages it can handle efficiently. The concept of media richness has provided a foundation for understanding human behavior involving electronic communication media (Sheer, 2011). Daft and Lengel (1986) developed the theory to help to explain how people use technology to communicate in order to alleviate uncertainty and equivocality. They argued communication media fall along a continuum



of richness. The richness of a medium is measured by four aspects: (a) the availability of instant feedback, which allows questions to be asked and answered; (b) the use of multiple cues, such as physical presence, vocal inflection, body gestures, words, numbers, and graphic symbols; (c) the use of natural language, which can be used to convey an understanding of a broad set of concepts and ideas; and (d) the personal focus of the medium. The more a medium displays these characteristics, the richer it is. They also assert that communication is most effective when the medium of communication matches the type of message conveyed. For example, if an individual wants to communicate a short and specific message, the medium they might choose would be a form of online communication because the message would be sent directly and without nonverbal interference.

Another reason calling could be perceived more unexpected and more negatively than texting or emailing is based on Expectancy-Value Theory. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) elaborated and tested an expectancy-value model of achievement-related choices. In this model, choices are influenced by both negative and positive task characteristics, and all choices are assumed to have costs associated with them because one choice often eliminates other options (Eccles & Wigfield). They also explain how expectancies and values are influenced by task-specific beliefs such as perceptions of competence and individuals' goals. These variables are influenced by individuals' perceptions of other peoples' attitudes and expectations for them. The theory asserts that the gratifications individuals seek from media are determined by their attitudes toward the media (Eccles & Wigfield). In other words, whatever medium individuals use most commonly are the ones they will perceive most positively. Due to the increased popularity of online

communication (Jin & Park, 2010; McQuillan, 2003) given people's desires for short and to the point communication, texting and emailing will likely be perceived more expected and positive than calling. This leads to the final hypotheses:

**H3: If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more unexpected than if she had texted or emailed.**

**H4: If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more negative than if she had texted or emailed.**

Additionally, these hypotheses render follow-up questions concerning sex differences in perceptions.

**RQ4: Do women and men perceive the expectedness of follow-up modes of communication differently?**

**RQ5: Do women and men perceive the valence of follow-up modes of communication differently?**

## CHAPTER TWO

### METHOD

#### Participants

After the UNLV IRB committee for human subjects approved the study procedures, participants were recruited from undergraduate Communication Studies courses as well as two Marriage and Family Therapy courses at a large Southwestern urban university. There were 232 participants surveyed overall. Only data from heterosexual individuals was analyzed, because the scenarios reflected heterosexual relationships and the focus of the study pertained to heterosexual dating relationships; therefore, the final sample included 218 individuals (136 women and 82 men) with an average age of 21.18 ( $SD = 3.93$ ). Convenience was a factor for choosing the current sample. Convenience sampling relies on proximity and is sometimes risky because of the tendency to over generalize data, (Baxter & Babbie, 2004), but surveying college undergraduates for a study on date initiation is relevant due to the great amount of daters in the population (Morgan, Thorne, & Zurbriggen, 2010).

#### Procedures

The researcher posted a description of the survey on the Communication Studies Research Participation Website (<http://unlv-comm.sona-systems.com/>) to announce and describe the study to potential participants. The students were offered one research credit by their instructors for participating in the study and were directed to the website. The students who wished to not participate in the study were allowed to participate in a different study offered through the website or complete an alternative assignment (i.e., write a 2-page summary of an article related to the research study). Students were informed by instructors to check this website periodically for research participation

opportunities and alternatives for earning research credits. Once a student reviewed the available studies and chose to participate in this study, they could choose to take the study immediately.

Participants first viewed the consent form page. They read and, if they chose to continue, electronically signed the consent form (see Appendix A) by clicking “accept” at the bottom of the page. They were then taken to the survey. The survey took approximately 45 minutes to complete. Once they submitted the survey they were taken to a completion page, which they were asked to print for their records. Credit was awarded automatically in the system. The researcher verified survey participation (or alternative summary completion) and assigned research credit in the SONA system.

### Measures

The survey included three sections (See Appendix B). The first section asked demographic questions. The second section involved reading two scenarios and answering three sets of questions regarding the participants’ perceptions about them. In the last section, participants answered questions regarding their experience with female date initiation.

**Demographics.** Three demographic questions began the survey. Participants were asked their sex, age, and sexual orientation.

**Scenarios.** Participants were asked to read two scenarios adapted from Mongeau et al. (1993) and then responded to three sets of questions. The first described a situation when a woman initiates a date with a man and demonstrates a high level of assertiveness, (i.e., direct date initiation), which was defined in terms of goal-oriented behaviors that

express an individual's feelings or opinions and their future interests (Fitch & Saunders, 1994).

Derek and Jenny are undergraduates taking the same English class. They have had conversations over the course of the semester and have grown attracted to each other although they've never been on a date. Today, they are sitting beside each other waiting for class to start. There are several minutes before class begins, so they are alone. Jenny starts a conversation about different events happening on and off campus. They end up discussing a new restaurant/bar opening up near campus. Jenny says "I'd like go out with you. Would you like to go for dinner or drinks tonight after class?"

In the second scenario the woman initiates the date and demonstrates a low level of assertiveness (i.e., indirect date initiation).

Ryan and Emily are also undergraduates taking the same English class. They have had conversations over the course of the semester and have grown attracted to each other although they've never been on a date. Today, they are sitting beside each other waiting for class to start. There are several minutes before class begins, so they are alone. They start a conversation about different events happening on and off campus. They end up discussing a new restaurant/bar opening up near campus. Emily asks, "I don't know if you're interested, or maybe you're dating someone else, but I was thinking of going to that restaurant/bar tonight. Do you want to come? If you're busy or something, it's okay."

Midway through the data collection, the order of the scenarios was switched to ensure ordering effects did not influence the results of the study.

**Violation Valence.** After each scenario, the participants answered a series of items adapted from Afifi and Metts (1998) and Bevan (2003) about violation valence. The reliabilities of this scale were  $\alpha = .94$  and  $\alpha = .86$  respectively in the previous studies. The items used in this study were similar but the behaviors specified were about date initiation and possible contact after the date by calling, texting, and emailing. The 15 violation valence items measured how positive or negative the behaviors were perceived. Examples of the 7-point Likert-type items are, “Jenny’s/Emily’s behavior was a very positive/negative behavior” and “If Jenny/Emily had called/texted/mailed Derek/Ryan after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.” Six of the items assessed the violation valence of the women’s general behavior in each scenario. Lastly, each mode (calling, texting, and emailing) was assessed using three items. The reliability of the violation valence scale for the “high assertiveness” scenario was  $\alpha = .90$  and  $\alpha = .92$  for the “low assertiveness” scenario.

**Perceived violation of expectancy.** Perceived violation of expectancy was measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale with 14 items adapted from Bevan (2003). Bevan reported a reliability of  $\alpha = .78$  for this scale. Examples of the items are “Jenny’s/Emily’s behavior surprised me a great deal,” and “If Jenny/Emily called/texted/mailed Derek/Ryan after the date, I’d find this completely unexpected. Five of the items were about the general behavior of the women in the scenarios. Then three items assessed the expectedness of calling as a mode, three items about texting as a mode, and three items about emailing as a mode. The reliability of the expectedness scale for the “high assertiveness” scenario was  $\alpha = .80$  and  $\alpha = .83$  for the “low assertiveness” scenario.

**Manipulation check.** A manipulation check was created for this study to ensure the realism and salience of the scenarios for the participants. Four items designed for this study measured realism on a 7-point, Likert-type scale. Paired t-tests indicate the low assertive scenario was both more realistic and more familiar to the participants than the high assertiveness scenario. One item assessed how realistic the situation is for the participant (e.g., “How realistic do you think this situation is?”) for scenario one ( $M = 4.84$ ,  $SD = 1.66$ ) and scenario two ( $M = 5.36$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ) ( $t_{217} = 5.36$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Three items measured how often the participant experienced a similar situation. The first item (“How often does this situation happen in real life?”) significantly differed between the high ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.60$ ) and low assertiveness ( $M = 4.55$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ) scenarios ( $t_{217} = 5.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The second item (“How often has this situation occurred in your own dating experience?”) also significantly differed between the high ( $M = 3.02$ ,  $SD = 1.84$ ) and low ( $M = 3.45$ ,  $SD = 1.76$ ) scenarios ( $t_{217} = 4.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Lastly, the third item (“How often does this situation happen in dating situations?”) significantly differed between the high ( $M = 4.16$ ,  $SD = 1.55$ ) and low ( $M = 4.64$ ,  $SD = 1.50$ ) scenarios ( $t_{217} = 5.50$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

A second manipulation check was created to determine the difference in assertiveness portrayed in the scenarios. Four items were adapted from the Gambrell-Richey Assertiveness Scale (1975) and measured on a 7-point, Likert-type scale. The reliability of this scale is  $\alpha = .84$ . Paired t-tests indicated the “high assertiveness” scenario was perceived as significantly different from the “low assertiveness” scenario in terms of the woman’s behavior. The first item, “Jenny was very confident in her behavior” was measured in the first ( $M = 6.28$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) and second ( $M = 4.35$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ ) scenarios

( $t_{216} = 13.54, p < .001$ ). The second item, “Jenny was shy in how she asked out Derek” was measured in the first ( $M = 1.99, SD = 1.31$ ) and second ( $M = 4.60, SD = 1.89$ ) scenarios ( $t_{216} = 17.20, p < .001$ ). The third item, “Jenny was hesitant in her behavior” was measured for the first ( $M = 2.03, SD = 1.18$ ) and second ( $M = 4.59, SD = 1.71$ ) scenarios ( $t_{216} = 18.83, p < .001$ ). Lastly, the fourth item, “Jenny was direct in how she asked out Derek” was measured for the first ( $M = 6.21, SD = 1.09$ ) and second ( $M = 3.96, SD = 1.81$ ) scenarios ( $t_{207} = 15.24, p < .001$ ).

**Experience with female initiated dating.** Experience with female initiated dates was measured with a series of questions adapted from Mongeau et al. (1993). In the survey, participants answered the question, “Has a person of the opposite sex ever asked you out on a date?” If the participant responded *yes* to that question, they were asked to think of the most recent occurrence and if the request was accepted. If they answered affirmatively to that question, they were then asked if they were asked out again by the same person (and if so, if they had accepted). Then they were asked “Have you ever asked someone of the opposite sex out on a date?” If they answered *yes*, they were asked if they had asked the same person out again (and if so, if they accepted). Significance of the relationship was measured by asking respondents “Did you and the person ever become a couple?”

#### Data Analysis

The data gathered in SONA was downloaded from the research participation website and uploaded into SPSS19. The data is analyzed according to the research question and hypotheses proposed.

**RQ1: What proportion of individuals has experienced a woman-initiated date?**



This research question was analyzed by calculating the percentages of men who have been asked out by women and of the women who have initiated dates. Comparisons were made between men's and women's experience using Chi-Square tests when the dependent variable was nominal (Yes/No) and T-tests when continuous (How many times?).

**H1: If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as unexpected.**

This hypothesis was analyzed using the one-tailed paired *t*-test. The grouping variable was scenario directness (i.e., high assertiveness vs. low assertiveness), and then groups were compared for perceptions of behavior expectedness.

**RQ2: Do women and men perceive the expectedness of a woman initiated date differently?**

This research question was analyzed using the two-tailed independent samples *t*-test.

**H2: If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as negative.**

This hypothesis was also analyzed using the one-tailed paired *t*-test. The grouping variable was scenario directness (i.e., high assertiveness vs. low assertiveness), and then groups were compared for perceptions of behavior valence.

**RQ3: Do women and men perceive the valence of the woman initiated date differently?**

This research question was analyzed using the two-tailed independent samples *t*-test.

**H3: If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more unexpected than had she texted or emailed.**

This hypothesis was analyzed using the one-tailed *Repeated Measures test* because the variables being compared are the perceptions of the behavior of each mode of follow-up communication (i.e., call, text, email).

**RQ4: Do women and men perceive the expectedness of follow-up modes of communication differently?**

This research question was analyzed using the one-tailed independent samples t-test.

**H4: If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more negative than had she texted or emailed.**

This hypothesis was analyzed using the one-tailed *Repeated Measures test* because the variables being compared are the perceptions of the behavior of each mode of follow-up communication (i.e., call, text, email).

**RQ5: Do women and men perceive the valence of follow-up modes of communication differently?**

This research question was analyzed using the two-tailed independent samples t-test.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESULTS

**RQ1.** *What proportion of individuals has experienced a woman-initiated date?*

The research question focused on how many of the individuals surveyed experienced a woman-initiated date. Sixty-two percent of the participants experienced a woman-initiated date ( $n = 136$ ). Seventy-five percent ( $n = 62$ ) of male participants reported a woman asked them out in the past. This is a significant difference ( $\chi^2 = 17.46, p < .001$ ) compared to the 94.9% ( $n = 135$ ) of female participants who reported being asked out by a man. See Table 1.

Fifty-four percent ( $n = 74$ ) of the 136 female participants reported they had asked out a man. These results are significantly less than ( $\chi^2 = 41.16, p < .001$ ) the 95% ( $n = 78$ ) of male participants who reported asking out a woman. See Table 1.

**H1.** *If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as unexpected.*

Hypothesis One was supported. Individuals did perceive the expectedness of the “high assertiveness” scenario ( $M = 4.48, SD = 1.04$ ) as significantly less ( $t_{213} = -3.03, p < .05$ ) than the “low assertiveness” scenario ( $M = 4.72, SD = 1.06$ ); but both are within the expected range.

**RQ2:** *Do women and men perceive the expectedness of a woman initiated date differently?*

Men ( $M = 4.17, SD = 1.12$ ) perceived the “high assertiveness” behavior as more expected ( $t_{216} = -.810, p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 3.95, SD = 1.28$ ). Men ( $M = 4.66, SD =$

.96) perceived the “low assertiveness” behavior as less expected ( $t_{216} = .538, p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 4.75, SD = 1.12$ ). See Table 2.

**H2.** *If a woman initiates a date with a man using high assertiveness, her actions are perceived as negative.* Hypothesis Two was not supported. Participants reported the woman’s date initiation behavior in the “high assertiveness” scenario ( $M = 5.20, SD = 1.37$ ) as positive and more so than in the “low assertiveness” scenario ( $M = 5.17, SD = 1.37$ ); however, these perceptions did not significantly differ from one another ( $t_{213} = -.84, p > .05$ ).

**RQ3:** *Do women and men perceive the valence of the woman initiated date differently?*

Men ( $M = 5.78, SD = 1.02$ ) perceived the “high assertiveness” behavior more positively ( $t_{216} = 5.14, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.85, SD = 1.43$ ). Men ( $M = 5.79, SD = .96$ ) also perceived the “low assertiveness” behavior more positively ( $t_{216} = 5.48, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.80, SD = 1.45$ ). See Table 2.

**H3.** *If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more unexpected than had she texted or emailed.*

Hypothesis Three was partially supported because calling was seen as more unexpected than texting, but emailing was perceived as the most unexpected of the three modes in each scenario. The differences were significant (*Wilks’ Lambda* = .57,  $F(2, 230) = 87.65, p < .001$ ). In the “high assertiveness” scenario, individuals perceived texting as the most expected mode ( $M = 5.19, SD = 1.01$ ), followed by calling ( $M = 4.62, SD = 1.19$ ).

Emailing was perceived most unexpected of the three modes of follow-up communication ( $M = 4.04, SD = 1.23$ ). Emailing was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} =$

13.12,  $p < .001$ ) than texting. Calling was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} = 7.82, p < .001$ ) than texting, and emailing was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} = 6.89, p < .001$ ) than calling. See Table 3.

In the “low assertiveness” scenario, individuals perceived texting as the most expected mode ( $M = 5.13, SD = 1.15$ ) followed by calling ( $M = 4.16, SD = .71$ ). Emailing was perceived most unexpected of the three modes of follow-up communication ( $M = 4.08, SD = 1.25$ ). The differences between each mode’s expectedness were significant (*Wilks’ Lambda* = .55,  $F(2, 230) = 94.45, p < .001$ ), but not in the predicted order. Emailing was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} = 11.37, p < .001$ ) than texting. Calling was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} = 12.20, p < .001$ ) than texting, and emailing was perceived as less expected ( $t_{216} = .92, p > .05$ ) than calling, which was not significant. See Table 3.

**RQ4:** *Do women and men perceive the expectedness of follow-up modes of communication differently?*

In the “high assertiveness” scenario men perceived texting ( $M = 5.46, SD = .92$ ) as more expected ( $t_{216} = 3.32, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.99, SD = 1.03$ ). Men also perceived calling ( $M = 4.81, SD = 1.12$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 1.81, p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 4.81, SD = 1.12$ ). Men also perceived emailing ( $M = 4.17, SD = 1.12$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 1.29, p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 3.95, SD = 1.28$ ). See Table 5.

In the “low assertiveness” scenario men perceived texting ( $M = 5.21, SD = .99$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = .78, p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 5.08, SD = 1.21$ ). Men also perceived calling ( $M = 4.25, SD = .70$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = -1.51, p > .05$ ) than women

( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = .73$ ). Men also perceived emailing ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = -.61$ ,  $p > .05$ ) than women ( $M = 4.03$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ). See Table 4

**H4.** *If a woman makes follow-up contact with a man after a date by calling him, her actions are perceived as more negative than had she texted or emailed.*

Hypothesis Four was partially supported because calling was seen as less positive than texting but emailing was actually perceived as the least positive of the three modes in each scenario (*Wilks' Lambda* = .55,  $F(2, 230) = 94.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ). See Table 5. In the “high assertiveness” scenario individuals perceived texting as the most positive ( $M = 5.22$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), followed by calling ( $M = 4.77$ ,  $SD = 1.39$ ). Emailing was perceived least positive of the three modes of follow-up communication ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ). Emailing was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 13.75$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than texting. Calling was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 5.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than texting, and emailing was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 8.66$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than calling. See Table 3.

In the “low assertiveness” scenario valence was also different by mode of communication (*Wilks' Lambda* = .63,  $F(2, 230) = 68.27$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Individuals too perceived texting as the most positive mode ( $M = 5.13$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ), followed by calling ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ). Emailing was perceived most negatively of the three modes of follow-up communication ( $M = 4.00$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ) for this scenario. Emailing was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 11.52$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than texting. Calling was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 6.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than texting, and emailing was perceived as less positive ( $t_{216} = 6.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than calling. See Table 3.

**RQ5:** *Do women and men perceive the valence of follow-up modes of communication differently?*

In the “high assertiveness” scenario men perceived texting ( $M = 5.67, SD = .92$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 5.05, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.93, SD = 1.17$ ). Men also perceived calling ( $M = 5.36, SD = 1.17$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 5.18, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.41, SD = 1.38$ ). Men also perceived emailing ( $M = 4.28, SD = 1.45$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 2.86, p < .005$ ) than women ( $M = 3.74, SD = 1.28$ ). See Table 5.

In the “low assertiveness” scenario men perceived texting ( $M = 5.51, SD = 1.12$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 3.54, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.90, SD = 1.29$ ). Men also perceived calling ( $M = 5.25, SD = 1.19$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 4.86, p < .001$ ) than women ( $M = 4.30, SD = 1.50$ ). Men also perceived emailing ( $M = 4.32, SD = 1.43$ ) more positively ( $t_{216} = 2.60, p < .005$ ) than women ( $M = 3.80, SD = 1.42$ ). See Table 5.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION

The current study investigated perceptions of men and women of dating trends. This study evaluated the perceptions by designing and implementing measures to test how individuals viewed women who initiated dates and how they also viewed various modes of follow-up communication. The study provided new information and insight on the topic of date initiation and specifically woman initiated dates. Although the data do not fully support the hypotheses, the results offer useful information to dating research. These findings can prompt later research to evaluate further the dating trends and perceptions surrounding woman initiated dates. Additionally, the results about modes of communication render further evaluations of how people are communicating in romantic relationships.

The research question presented interesting information regarding date initiation. As reported, 54.4% of women surveyed had initiated a date with a man, and 75.6% of the men reported a woman had asked them out on a date in the past. Considering these results in comparison to the vast majority of men who had asked out a woman and the large number of women who reported a man asked them out on a date, men seem to continue in their date initiator role. Even though women in this study did take the initiative, traditional roles where men initiate dates were more frequent. Interestingly, a similar study conducted by Mongeau et al., (1993) reported that 90.8% of men in their study had been asked out by a woman and 84.5% of the women had asked out a man. The current results reflect a dramatic decrease in woman initiated dates; however, participants' perceptions of woman initiated dates were surprising considering the results of previous



research. The results, as will be discussed in future paragraphs, reveal perceptions that contradict previous research on the topic of date initiation. This is notable because these results could represent shifts in gender roles in dating and provide a focus for further research on the subject to see if future studies reflect similar conclusions.

In this study, the two scenarios presented to the participants differed in degree of assertiveness with one displaying a high level of assertiveness and the other a low level of assertiveness. The first hypothesis predicted the woman's behavior portrayed by the woman in the high assertiveness scenario would be perceived as unexpected. This behavior was not seen as unexpected, but it was seen as slightly more unexpected than the low assertive behavior in the second scenario. The results of the research question partially explain these results. Over half of the participants surveyed had been involved in a woman-initiated date, so that could lead them to find it an expected behavior. The interesting part of these findings is the low assertive scenario was seen as less positive but more expected than the high assertive scenario. Research has shown that women should behave in supportive and feminine ways (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Reid et al., 2011; Smiler & Kubotera, 2010), which could be why a less assertive approach to date initiation would be more expected than an assertive approach. However, these results indicate that women should portray higher levels of assertiveness in date initiation because it will be perceived more positively. Women may be doing more initiating, but they could still be portraying behaviors dictated by socially acceptable gendered-stereotypes. In essence, many women could be avoiding date initiation as to not violate their own expectations of dating norms. The second hypothesis predicted the high assertiveness scenario would be perceived as negative. This was not the case. Participants

reported the high assertive behavior as positive and more positive than the low assertive scenario. As discussed previously, women have adopted assertive communication and behavior in other aspects of their lives such as employment and education (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005; Smiler & Kubotera). In these areas, assertive behavior is acceptable and necessary. The results of the current study indicate assertive behavior by women in dating is acceptable, as well. In contrast, Smiler and Kubotera reported men expected women to demonstrate more expressive traits like emotional expression, gentleness, and understanding in romantic contexts. In the current study men perceived the assertive behavior more positively than women, which contradicts previous research.

Men perceived the female date initiation as positive in both scenarios. There are multiple possible explanations for these results. In the study conducted by Emmers-Sommer et al. (2010) they found that men's expectation for sex increased if a date was initiated and paid for by a woman. This expectation for sex could explain why men in the current study perceived female date initiation positively. Also, in the scenarios the assumption is made that the individuals are attracted to each other. Male participants could imagine the women in the scenario as physically attractive, which would increase the communicator reward valence or the sum of the positive and negative characteristics the individual brings to the encounter in addition to the potential they have to reward or punish in the future (White, 2008).

The results for the last two hypotheses potentially offer insight into the behaviors involved in date initiation and how dating partners value modes of communication in today's society. First, follow-up communication was perceived similarly regardless of assertiveness level. Individuals saw the follow-up contact by the women, in general, as

expected and positive. The fascinating element of the findings is which modes participants seemed to prefer over others. The “best” mode for follow-up communication in both scenarios was texting. Individuals perceived this mode as the most expected and positive of the three modes. There was a significant difference in how the participants perceived texting versus emailing. Although sending an email, especially after a date, was not seen as negative, emailing was seen as the least positive of the three modes tested. These findings represent how dating partners value modes of communication. This could also be representative of how college students prefer to communicate. Additionally, there were differences in how men and women perceived the different modes of communication. Men perceived all modes more positively than women in both scenarios. This could be a reflection of how men view female date initiation. If they perceived the act of the date initiation more positively than women, then it is likely they would perceive other female initiations positively, as well.

The findings present some valuable implications for female date-initiation research and EVT. First, researchers studying female date-initiation have not studied perceptions of modes of follow-up communication. Communication surrounding the date experience is an important aspect of study, especially in the Communication Studies discipline. There are many expectations involved in the process of dating, and anticipating contact after first dates is a notably important avenue for future research. Investigating how individuals perceive various modes or duration of time for follow-up communication could reveal much about dating and communication trends. Second, few studies within female date-initiation research have investigated perceptions of differing degrees of assertiveness in date-initiation. Mongeau et al. (1993) provided an example of

scenarios varying in degree of a woman's assertiveness in initiating dates. Although their study offered insight into dating trends, they conducted their study almost twenty years ago. Studying recent communication behaviors among women in dating, specifically degree of assertiveness, allows exposure to changes in not only dating trends but also trends in communication behaviors. Are women making progress in how they communicate effectively or are they maintaining traditional gender role expectations on how they communicate? The present study expanded the research in this area and portrayed women as making progress in communication by asserting their desires, and the behavior was perceived positively. Also, researchers using EVT have not placed much emphasis on investigating verbal violations of expectancies. In much of her research, Burgoon focused on physical behaviors such as personal space and how they violate expectations. EVT research has been focused mostly on nonverbal communication (Burgoon, 1993). An expansion of the theory into verbal communication is useful because much of how everyday life involves verbal communication and expectations thereof. There are many expectations and gendered stereotypes placed on individuals in society (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). These expectations are especially prevalent in dating. Using EVT to investigate verbal qualities of women who initiate dates and how others perceive them, helped to uncover that although these gendered stereotypes may be present, deviations from them can be positive.

Although, studying female date-initiation through EVT provided useful insight, female date-initiation has also been studied beyond this framework. Much of the research surrounding female date-initiation investigated certain sexual expectations placed on women who initiate dates (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2010; Mongeau & Carey, 1996; Morr

& Mongeau, 2004). Although understanding possible negative implications to female date-initiation is important, knowing potential benefits for female date-initiation is equally insightful. This study provided insight into how men and women perceive women who initiate dates. Knowing that these men perceived the behavior positively, perhaps more women could take initiative in their dating lives.

This study also expanded research on general dating activities. Previous dating research indicated that many societal norms and expectations are placed on women and their behaviors in dating situations. Women are expected to portray supportive and feminine traits in dating situations (Smiler & Kubotera, 2010). However, in the current investigation, the scenario with the woman expressing a high degree of assertiveness was perceived as more positive than the scenario with the woman expressing a low degree of assertiveness. This expands knowledge of individuals' perceptions of female assertiveness. Women may initiate dates and do so in a firm, direct manner with potentially positive outcomes.

Another finding that proved interesting and offered insight into dating trends is women in the study perceived the woman in the scenario less positively than men. This could account for the relatively low number of women in the sample who initiated dates. If they perceive the behavior to be less positive, then they are probably less likely to engage in that behavior themselves. The study uncovered that men potentially like when women take on an assertive role; therefore, perhaps more women will initiate dates. This differing view could also reflect that men may enjoy sharing the pressures of date-initiation. Men are usually expected to be the initiator, which can bring a certain amount

of pressure and expectations they must meet. Sharing this obligation decreases pressure on men and provides a certain degree of freedom for women.

There were strengths of this study. The sample was a strength because college aged individuals make up a large part of the dating population (Morgan, Thorne, & Zurbriggen, 2010), which makes the sample in this study a good representation of the general dating population. Also, the participant solicitation process was a study strength. Researcher biases can threaten the validity of a study. Participants were solicited for this study by their own instructors and did not come in contact with the researchers. This alleviated potential researcher's biases, which are characteristics of the researcher that can influence participant participation and responses (Baxter & Babbie, 2008). Finally, manipulation checks were done to ensure the realness of the scenarios and to confirm the differences between the assertiveness in the scenarios was clear to participants. These manipulations were successful.

#### Limitations

This study did not occur without limitations. The first limitation involves the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in the study. Although college age students are a population highly involved in dating, older adults engage in dating activities, as well. This study and findings represent a large portion of dating individuals but is still limited by excluding an older demographic. To solve this issue, a similar study could be conducted by surveying an older population. The scenarios could be changed to reflect possible date initiation situations in a workplace or at church. Also, a higher age restriction could be placed on the sample (i.e. no one under the age of 30). Investigating an older demographic could reveal different results surrounding female date-initiation.

Their experiences or values could vary and reflect differing perceptions of dating behaviors and expectations.

Additionally, the majority of the participants being female (58.6%,  $n = 136$ ) might also be a limitation. The sample for this study was drawn from basic courses in the Communication Studies department and Marriage and Family Therapy courses. These courses enroll a largely female population. Having an even distribution of sex could be helpful in improving the external validity of the study. The external validity pertains to how reflective a study and the components of a study are to the outside population (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). The sample in a study should be fairly representative of the population of interest (Baxter & Babbie). Collecting a sample with equally distributed sex would better represent the population of heterosexual daters. An additional issue with the sample could be the location where the sample was drawn. Las Vegas has a unique culture especially regarding romantic relationships. The fast pace lifestyle that many people live could influence perceptions of female initiated dates.

Another limitation of the study stems from using hypothetical scenarios. This limitation pertains to the internal validity of the study, which is how truthful the outcome of the study is to what the researcher set out to explain (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). Although the manipulation checks showed the participants viewed the scenarios as realistic, participation in a real date-initiation scenario would increase internal validity. There is always a risk when providing hypothetical scenarios, because they could fall short of representing actual experience. In a previous study conducted by Emmers-Sommer et al. (2010), they asked additional questions about the participant's own experiences along with asking them about their feelings about the hypothetical situation.

Similar questions could have been asked in the present study to find out if the participant's perceptions of the individuals in the scenario reflected how they would act if they experienced a similar situation.

Finally, intersubject bias, although not likely, could be a limitation to the study. Intersubject bias occurs when participants can influence each other somehow (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). The survey was administered online, which allows participants to participate in the study with other participants at the same time and potentially communicate about their responses. Also, an online survey allows participants to take the survey separately over a period of time. This could give them an opportunity to discuss the survey with participants who have already participated, which could possibly influence their responses. They could potentially answer the same as other participants even if they do not necessarily hold the same views.

#### Future Research

Due to the relevance of the subject matter for individuals in the dating world, there are many areas of expansion for future research. Aspects of methodology could be changed to expand on the findings. Different demographic questions could be asked to improve validity and to provide more insight into variables that influence dating habits and views. Other elements of EVT could be applied to improve understanding of the topic and the theory. Finally, other theories could be used as guides in the investigation of a similar study.

The first area for future research is methodology. For the current study, a quantitative method using an online survey was employed. The findings of the study could be expanded if the study was conducted in a lab setting with the scenarios acted out



by real individuals. Reports based on first-hand experience could provide more realistic insight into perceptions of woman initiated dates. Also, the hypothetical scenarios could be replaced by asking the participants to recall a situation where they were involved in a woman initiated date. This would allow them to be able to place themselves into the actual experience.

Next, more demographic questions could be asked in order to analyze and identify other variables that might influence dating behaviors. For instance, questions about participants' religious affiliations and participation could present correlations as to how they respond to certain items in the survey. Similarly, participants' race or ethnicity could allow for cultural differences in how they respond. Including these demographic characteristics would expand the research in the subject of date initiation.

Additionally, other elements of EVT could be applied to similar studies to enrich knowledge on the topic and advance uses of the theory. Afifi and Metts (1998) expanded EVT to include not only violation valence and violation expectedness, but also violation importance, which is characterized as the impact that a behavior will have on the relationship. An expansion of the study could focus on date initiation of participants in previously established long-term friendships to see how the violation affects their relationships and if violation valence and violation expectedness would render different results from what was found in this study. For example, would the date initiation be perceived as more or less positive or more or less expected of friends than the acquaintances portrayed in the current study?

Additionally, communicator reward valence could be evaluated. The reward valence of a communicator is the sum of the positive and negative characteristics the

individual brings to the encounter in addition to the potential they have to reward or punish in the future (White, 2008). The present study evaluated the valence of the communication behavior of the female date initiator under the circumstances that the man being asked on the date was assumed to be attracted to the woman initiating the date. In future studies, variations of the communicator reward could be applied and tested. For example, differing levels of attractiveness and likeability could be addressed when testing the valence of the woman's date initiation behavior. Another aspect of EVT that could be used in future investigation of female date initiation is the extension of the theory called Interaction Adaptation Theory. This theory expands from the assumption that "adaptation in interaction forms the foundation of our relationships with one another and that adaptation is communicative, signaling both interactants and observers about the nature of the relationship between communicators" (White, 2008, p. 193). This theory could be used to guide evaluations of dating communication.

Also, an expansion of the study could be achieved through varying relationship characteristics and contexts of the scenario. For example, different types of relationships could be portrayed in various scenarios. The individuals could be described as having certain things in common such as participation in Greek life or other campus organizations. Different contexts could include workplace scenarios or situations that take place in a bar or restaurant.

Another line of future research is studying additional modes of follow-up communication. In a society with several communication media available for dating interaction, new modes of communication have been introduced. Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter offer new ways for people to communicate. These are becoming

popular and possibly taking the place of email as a means to communicate especially among the younger demographic. For example, friend requests on Facebook could be evaluated as a follow-up mode of communication. By investigating the newer modes of communication, a future study could find insight on what modes are appropriate for various situations in the dating context and how communication has changed in recent years.

Finally, studying female date-initiation could be studied by additional theories. Relational Dialectics Theory could offer insight into how individuals independently and collectively talk about female date-initiation. This theory highlights tensions found in discourse that enable individuals to make sense of their behaviors and surroundings (Baxter, 2011). The struggle or tension between traditional gender roles and non-traditional gender roles could be evaluated through RDT by investigating the conversations surrounding the dating trend of female date-initiation. Another potential theory to evaluate female date-initiation is Imagined Interaction Theory. This theory focuses on nonverbal and psychological processing of “messages that happen within individuals as they attempt to understand themselves and their environment” (Honeycutt, 2008, p. 79). Investigating how women attempt to understand their role in date-initiation could provide interesting and thoughtful insight into the progressive dating trend of woman initiated dates.

### Practical Applications

This study and the topics covered in the study are relevant to current situations and trends in heterosexual dating. Romantic relationships and the initial stages of dating are a place of interest for not only interpersonal scholars, but also the general public. The

results found in this study offer those interested individuals valuable knowledge about current trends in dating.

One practical piece of information provided is that men actually do perceive women who initiate dates positively. Much of previous research point to opposite perceptions and lead women to believe they should not be the initiators of dates because they will be viewed negatively and therefore, rejected. Although, this is just one study, the results indicate the possibility of a shift in traditional gendered beliefs. This information could allow more women the freedom to take their dating lives into their own hands. If women know that more men than in the past perceive woman initiated dates positively, then perhaps they can take on that task without hesitation. Women should also take note that how they ask is a potentially important aspect of date initiation, as well. According to the results of this study, men perceive a high assertive approach to date initiation more positively than if a woman were to ask them out in a less assertive way. This information could allow new opportunities for women in dating.

Another application of the findings in this study is to spread awareness of how women perceive themselves and other women. An interesting finding in the study was that men perceived women more positively than the women participating in the study. This is an important finding to note because women perceiving themselves and other women less positively than men do could be problematic. One would assume women would feel empowered by witnessing other women taking control of situations previously dominated by men. It is important to be aware that this was not the case.

The findings about modes of communication offered knowledge about how individuals communicate in dating situations. Texting was perceived as the best way to

communicate after a date. Many people dating may not be sure if how they communicate with present or potential dating partners is appropriate. There are many modes of communication available to individuals today, and choosing the appropriate one could be difficult especially in such delicate situations as the initial stages of dating where all of the moves one makes is closely evaluated. Calling could be perceived as too forward or emailing could be perceived as too vague. This study provides some insight into how individuals expect one another to act in those circumstances.

### Conclusion

Dating and date initiation is an extremely relevant topic because most people have encountered the activity at some point in their lives. Date initiation, many times, is the beginning to lifelong partnerships and relationships. Although, date initiation is a role usually taken on by men, women can be the initiators of dates, as well. Traditional gender roles and beliefs dominated dating in the past. According to the findings in this study, men and women can be equal participants in date initiation in the future. Also, much of communication means have switched to digital or online communication. This remains the case for dating situations. Dating practices seem to be slowly evolving, but changes, however small, are taking place. Interpersonal communication needs to continue to be studied pertaining to dating practices due to the importance many people place on this aspect of their lives.

## Appendix A

### INFORMED CONSENT Department of Communication Studies

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**TITLE OF STUDY: Communication Behaviors and Date Initiation**

**INVESTIGATORS: Dr. Erin Sahlstein & Lindsey Odom**

**CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: 702-895-3640; 702-895-0024**

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#### **Purpose of the Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate communication between men and women regarding date initiation.

#### **Participants**

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit the following criteria: you are at least 18 years of age and are a student in a Communication Studies course.

#### **Procedures**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following: complete a survey regarding your perceptions and dating experience.

#### **Benefits of Participation**

There can be direct benefits to you as a participant in this study. The study could provoke thought about your own communication habits in dating situations.

#### **Risks of Participation**

There are risks involved in all research studies. This study may include only minimal risks. You may become uncomfortable when answering personal questions. If you have questions about your own health, you can call the Student Wellness Center for more information, 702-774-7100.

#### **Compensation**

The study will take about 45 *minutes* of your time. You will be compensated for your time with one research credit in your COM class. If you choose not to participate but want to earn research credit, you may ask the researcher for an article to summarize in lieu of completing the survey.

#### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you may contact Dr. Erin Sahlstein at 702-895-3640 or Lindsey Odom at 702-895-0024. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact **the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-2794 or toll free at 877-895-2794 or via email at IRB@unlv.edu.**

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

**Confidentiality**

All information gathered in this study will be kept completely confidential. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. All records will be stored in a locked facility at UNLV for 1 year after completion of the study. After the storage time the information gathered will be deleted from the computer's hard drive.

**Participant Consent:**

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study by clicking the button "next" below, which will take me to the survey. In doing so I am certifying that I am at least 18 years of age.



## Appendix B

### Communication Behaviors and Date Initiation Survey

#### Section One

Directions: Please answer the following questions as they apply to you.

1. Your Sex: Male  Female
2. Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years
3. Sexual Orientation: Homosexual  Heterosexual  Bisexual

#### Section Two

##### Scenarios

Directions: Please read the following scenario where Jenny asks Derek out on a date and answer the questions using the scales provided. Note that individuals are attracted to each other.

Derek and Jenny are undergraduates taking the same English class. They have had conversations over the course of the semester and have grown attracted to each other although they've never been on a date. Today, they are sitting beside each other waiting for class to start. There are several minutes before class begins, so they are alone. Jenny starts a conversation about different events happening on and off campus. They end up discussing a new restaurant/bar opening up near campus. Jenny says "I'd like go out with you. Would you like to go for dinner or drinks tonight after class?"

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was a very positive behavior.
2. If Jenny had called Derek after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.
3. If Jenny had texted Derek after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.



4. If Jenny had emailed Derek after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.
5. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was a behavior I liked a lot.
6. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was a very negative behavior.
7. I'd rather never experience behavior like Jenny's.
8. If Jenny had called Derek after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
9. If Jenny had texted Derek after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
10. If Jenny had emailed Derek after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
11. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was a behavior I did not like at all.
12. I'd like to see more behavior like Jenny's.
13. If Jenny had initiated contact by calling after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot.
14. If Jenny had initiated contact by texting after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot.
15. If Jenny had initiated contact by emailing after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was acceptable.

2. Jenny's behavior in initiating the date was only very slightly unexpected.
3. Jenny's behavior was completely unexpected.
4. Jenny's behavior surprised me a great deal.
5. Jenny's behavior surprised me only very slightly.
6. If Jenny called Derek on the telephone after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
7. If Jenny texted Derek after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
8. If Jenny emailed Derek after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
9. If Jenny called Derek on the telephone after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
10. If Jenny texted Derek after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
11. If Jenny emailed Derek after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
12. If Jenny called Derek on the telephone after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.
13. If Jenny texted Derek after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.
14. If Jenny emailed Derek after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.

Directions: After reflecting on the scenario between Jenny and Derek, please read the questions and choose an answer that best describes your own experience.

Not realistic at all=1 very realistic=7

1. How realistic is this situation?

Not often at all=1 very often=7

2. How often does this situation happen in real life?
3. How often has this situation occurred in your own dating experience?
4. How often do you think this situation happens in dating situations?

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Jenny was very confident in her behavior.
2. Jenny was shy in how she asked out Derek.
3. Jenny was hesitant in her behavior.
4. Jenny was direct in how she asked out Derek.

Directions: Please read the following scenario where Emily asks Ryan out on a date and answer the questions using the scales provided. Note that individuals are attracted to each other.

Ryan and Emily are also undergraduates taking the same English class. They have had conversations over the course of the semester and have grown attracted to each other although they've never been on a date. Today, they are sitting beside each other waiting for class to start. There are several minutes before class begins, so they are alone. They start a conversation about different events happening on and off campus. They end up discussing a new restaurant/bar opening up near campus. Emily asks, "I don't know if you're interested, or maybe you're dating someone else, but I was thinking of going to that restaurant/bar tonight. Do you want to come? If you're busy or something, it's okay."

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was a very positive behavior.
2. If Emily had called Ryan after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.
3. If Emily had texted Ryan after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.
4. If Emily had emailed Ryan after the date I would think this was a very negative behavior.

5. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was a behavior I liked a lot.
6. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was a very negative behavior.
7. I'd rather never experience behavior like Emily's.
8. If Emily had called Ryan after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
9. If Emily had texted Ryan after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
10. If Emily had emailed Ryan after the date I would think this was a very positive behavior.
11. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was a behavior I did not like at all.
12. I'd like to see more behavior like Emily's.
13. If Emily had initiated contact by calling Ryan after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot.
14. If Emily had initiated contact by texting Ryan after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot.
15. If Emily had initiated contact by emailing Ryan after the date I would have liked this behavior a lot.

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was acceptable.
2. Emily's behavior in initiating the date was only very slightly unexpected.
3. Emily's behavior was completely unexpected.

4. Emily's behavior surprised me a great deal.
5. Emily's behavior surprised me only very slightly.
6. If Emily called Ryan on the telephone after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
7. If Emily texted Ryan after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
8. If Emily emailed Ryan after the date, I'd find this acceptable.
9. If Emily called Ryan on the telephone after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
10. If Emily texted Ryan after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
11. If Emily emailed Ryan after the date, I'd find this only very slightly unexpected.
12. If Emily called Ryan on the telephone after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.
13. If Emily texted Ryan after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.
14. If Emily emailed Ryan after the date, I'd find this completely unexpected.

Directions: After reflecting on the scenario between Emily and Ryan, please read the questions and choose an answer that best describes your own experience.

Not realistic at all=1 very realistic=7

1. How realistic is this situation?

Not often at all=1 very often=7

2. How often does this situation happen in real life?
3. How often has this situation occurred in your own dating experience?
4. How often do you think this situation happens in dating situations?

Directions: Please read each statement and choose the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

Strongly disagree=1 Strongly agree=7

1. Emily was very confident in her behavior.
2. Emily was shy in how she asked out Ryan.
3. Emily was hesitant in her behavior.
4. Emily was direct in how she asked out Ryan.

### Section Three

Directions: Please read the questions and choose an answer that best describes your own experience.

1. Has a person of the opposite sex ever asked you out on a date? Yes/no
  - a. If yes, then think of the most recent time this happened.
    - i. Did you accept? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - ii. Did they ever ask you out again? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - iii. If yes, did you accept? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - iv. Did you and the person ever become a couple? Yes/No, Does not apply
2. Have you ever asked a person of the opposite sex out on a date? Yes/no
  - a. If yes, then think of the most recent time you did this.
    - i. Did they accept? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - ii. Did you ask the same person out again? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - iii. If so, did they accept? Yes/no, Does not apply
    - iv. Did you and the person ever become a couple? Yes/No, Does not apply

Thank you for your time. Once you complete the survey, submit it by clicking the button below.

**Submit**

## Appendix C

### Tables

Table 1

*Percentages and Frequencies of Date Initiations by Sex*

	Have Initiated Dates		Have Been Asked on Dates	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Women	54.4 (74)	44.1 (60)	94.9 (129)	5.1 (7)
Men	95.1 (78)	3.7 (3)	75.6 (62)	24.4 (20)

Table 2

*Expectedness and Valence of Scenarios by Sex*

	High Assertiveness				Low Assertiveness			
	Expectedness		Valence		Expectedness		Valence	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Women	4.44	1.07	4.85	1.43	4.75	1.18	4.80	1.45
Men	4.55	1.00	5.78	1.02	4.66	.96	5.79	.96
<i>t</i>	-.810		-5.14**		.538		-5.48**	

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01



Table 3

*Valence and Expectedness of Modes by Scenario*

	High Assertiveness				Low Assertiveness			
	Valence		Expectedness		Valence		Expectedness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Text	5.22	1.15	5.17	1.01	5.13	1.26	5.13	1.14
Call	4.77	1.39	4.62	1.20	4.66	1.46	4.16	.72
Email	3.95	1.37	4.03	1.23	3.99	1.45	4.07	1.23
<i>F</i>	88.01**		84.32**		64.67**		91.77**	

\*\* $p < .01$

Table 4

*Expectedness of Mode by Sex and Scenario*

	High Assertiveness				<i>t</i>	Low Assertiveness				<i>t</i>
	Men		Women			Men		Women		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Text	5.46	.92	4.99	1.03	3.32**	5.21	.99	5.08	1.21	.78
Call	4.81	1.12	4.50	1.23	1.81	4.25	.70	4.10	.73	1.51
Email	4.17	1.12	3.95	1.28	1.29	4.14	1.15	4.03	1.28	.61

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

Table 5

*Valence of Mode by Sex and Scenario*

	High Assertiveness					Low Assertiveness				
	Men		Women		<i>t</i>	Men		Women		<i>t</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Text	5.67	.92	4.93	1.17	5.05**	5.51	1.12	4.90	1.29	3.54**
Call	5.36	1.17	4.41	1.38	5.18**	5.25	1.19	4.30	1.50	4.86**
Email	4.28	1.45	3.74	1.28	2.86*	4.32	1.43	3.80	1.42	2.60*

\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01

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