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Depth of Sexual Involvement Scale
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The purpose of this instrument is to measure the depth or intimacy of desired and experienced sexual behaviors during various stages of heterosexual dating.

Description
A Guttman-type scale of 16 behaviors (Guttman, 1944) was constructed by extending the scale used by Collins (1974) with items from Luckey and Nass (1969). This scale was administered to 259 high school and university students who were asked to indicate which of 16 behaviors they would like to experience in a heterosexual dating relationship. The scale was reduced to 12 items by combining adjacent scale items which showed similar responses by males and females over a number of stages of dating. Examples of items that were combined were “hand holding” and “light embrace,” redefined as “hand holding: holding hands or locking arms, generally while walking.” Three other items which were combined were “necking,” “deep kissing,” and “general body contact.” These were redefined as “necking: close body contact, with hugging and prolonged kissing.” The final scale is a Guttman-type scale of 12 behaviors which could measure either the heterosexual desires or experiences of adolescents and young adults during dating.

The three stages of dating for which the instrument has been used are the first date (defined as “the first time you go out with a new dating partner to whom you are attracted”), several dates (defined as “when going out with a partner consistently, but both partners feeling free to go out with others”), and going steady (defined as “when both partners come to a mutual and implicit understanding that dating will exclude others”). The scale could also be used for other relationship stages.

Response Mode and Timing
Respondents circle yes if they have experienced (or want to experience) a particular behavior, and no if they have not experienced (or do not want to experience) a particular behavior at the stage of dating being studied. The length of time taken to complete the scale will depend upon the number of aspects of the dating relationships under consideration; that is, the number of times the scale is administered. Any single administration of the scale requires an average of 3 minutes.

Scoring
As the scale is of a Guttman-type, a score may be obtained by determining the last item which received an affirmative response. Alternatively, the number of affirmative responses for each use of the scale may be totalled. Higher scores indicate a greater desire for, or experience of, sexual intimacy at the stage of dating being studied.

Reliability
McCabe and Collins (1984) reported test-retest reliability over an 8-week period with 61 student volunteers for behaviors on a first date as .83; after several dates, .73; and when going steady, .96. For desires, over the same time period, the coefficient for the first date was .85; after several dates, .80; and when going steady, .78. McCabe and Collins also administered the scale to 2,001 volunteers ranging in age from 16 to 25 years to evaluate the scalability of the component items of each of the six uses of the scale. The coefficient of reproducibility exceeded .90 and the corresponding coefficient of scalability was greater than .70. These same data show the scale to be internally consistent and predominantly unidimensional with coefficient alpha exceeding .87 for each use of the scale.

Validity
Construct validity has been established by McCabe and Collins (1984). The scale was administered to 156 subjects ranging in age from 18 to 48 years. Results showed that as dating became more involved, the level of sexual activity both desired and experienced by males and females also increased. A further study of 259 subjects demonstrated that the desire for sexual experience was higher for males than for females until a committed relationship was established, and that females desire greater sexual involvement with increasing age.

Criterion validity was demonstrated by McCabe and Collins (1984). Twenty-nine couples who were going steady at the time of testing were asked to indicate their desired level of sexual experience for this stage of dating. Results showed that 62% of couples indicated the same number of yes responses, with a total of 77% scoring within one yes response of their partners.

References
Collins, J. K., & McCabe, M. P. (1980). The influence of sex roles on psychobiological and psychoaffectional orientations to dating. In C. A. Rigg & L. B. Sherin (Eds.), *Adolescent medicine: Present...

### Exhibit

#### Depth of Sexual Involvement Scale

The following instructions accompany the scale, depending upon the purpose for which it is used.

**Desire on First Date**

This task is to determine what you would like at different stages in the dating relationship.

Indicate which of the following you would like on the **FIRST DATE** (i.e., the first time you go out with a new dating partner to whom you are attracted).

Circle the response which is applicable.

**Behavior on First Date**

Instructions as above, but "would like" is replaced by "have never experienced."

**Desires After Several Dates**

Instructions as for Desires on First Date but "FIRST DATE" is replaced by "SEVERAL DATES" with the definition of this stage of dating given earlier in this paper.

**Behavior After Several Dates**

Instructions as for Behavior on First Date but "FIRST DATE" is replaced by "SEVERAL DATES" with the definition of this stage of dating given earlier in this paper.

**Desires When Going Steady**

Instructions as for Desires on First Date but "FIRST DATE" is replaced by "when GOING STEADY" with the definition of this stage of dating given earlier in this paper.

**Behavior When Going Steady**

Instructions as for Behavior on First Date but "FIRST DATE" is replaced by "when GOING STEADY" with the definition of this stage of dating given earlier in this paper.

**Scale of Sexual Activities**

1. Hand holding: holding hands or locking arms, generally while walking.
2. Light kissing: casual goodnight kiss on the lips.
3. Necking: close body contact, with hugging and prolonged kissing.
4. Light breast petting: caress of the girl’s breasts outside the clothing.
5. Heavy breast petting: fondling or kissing of the girl’s breasts under the clothing.
6. Light genital petting of the female: touching genital area of the girl, outside the clothing.
7. Heavy genital petting of female: touching genital area of the girl, under the clothing.
11. Petting of each other’s genitals resulting in orgasm for one or both partners.
12. Intercourse.