Effects of interpersonal touch on client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness

Ralph Joseph Shirley

Iowa State University
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EFFECTS OF INTERPERSONAL TOUCH ON CLIENT PERCEPTIONS OF COUNSELOR CREDIBILITY AND ATTRACTIVENESS

Iowa State University

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Effects of interpersonal touch on
client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness

by

Ralph Joseph Shirley

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For the Major Department

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Ames, Iowa

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Figure 3  Touch Manipulation by Sex of Subject by Individual Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF  63
INTRODUCTION

Counseling Defined

Counseling may be defined as:

an interpersonal process designed to bring about modifications of feelings, cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors which have proven troublesome to the person seeking help from a trained professional (Strupp, 1978, p. 3).

Such a definition is not unique to Strupp. It accurately reflects the formulations of a number of authors (e.g., Benjamin, 1974; Brammer & Shostrom, 1977; Kanfer & Goldstein, 1975; Krumboltz, Becker-Haven & Burnett, 1979; Krumboltz & Thoresen, 1976). More importantly, such a definition delineates counseling as a social interaction wherein one individual ("a trained professional," the counselor) influences (or, at least attempts to) another individual (the "person seeking help," the client). The focus of this influence is on increasing (a) the client's satisfaction from and (b) the client's effectiveness in social interactions outside counseling (Strong, 1978). As such, counseling may then be viewed as an interpersonal influence process.

Counseling as Interpersonal Influence Process

The model of counseling as an interpersonal influence process developed by Strong (1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973) is based upon two theoretical formulations: social power theory and attitude change theory (cf. Torresdal, 1979). The focus of the interpersonal influence paradigm is on what occurs during counseling to account for the changes in the client's attitudes, behaviors, cognitions and/or feelings. The central premise of the interpersonal influence model is that the change in the client's behavior is a consequence of the client's interaction with the counselor.

Social power theory

Social power theory attempts to specify the factors and processes which contribute to one individual's ability to influence and control another individual's behavior (Cartwright, 1959; French &
Raven, 1959; Raven, 1965). Strong (1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973) argues that counselors influence their clients in such a way that the client changes his/her behavior. In other words, Strong asserts that the counselor is in a position of "power" relative to the client. Such an assertion is not unique to Strong. It has also been put forward by Frank (1961) and by Haley (1963) and has been echoed by Goldstein (1975), to name but a few.

Attitude change theory

Attitude change theory (Hovland, 1957; Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953; Hovland & Rosenberg, 1960; McGuire, 1969; Sherif & Hovland, 1961) is, to say the least, multifaceted. The component of attitude change theory that is critical to the interpersonal influence model of counseling concerns the characteristics of a communicator which facilitate attitude change in the recipient of a communication (Goldstein, Heller & Sechrest, 1966; Strong, 1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973). In terms more germane to the present discussion, the interpersonal influence model concerns itself with the attributes of a counselor which facilitate behavior change in a client. Of specific relevance to client behavior change are the attributes of counselor credibility and attractiveness.

Counselor credibility and attractiveness are of specific relevance to the interpersonal influence model of counseling in that both are posited to be a major source of counselor "power" by Strong (1978, in particular). Essentially, Strong (1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973; Strong, Wambach, Lopez & Cooper, 1979) argues that the change in client behavior is a consequence of the client's interaction with the counselor. In effect, the counselor has the ability to influence the client because the client perceives the counselor as an individual who possesses the resources that could help the client deal with the behaviors that have proven troublesome to her/him. Two of the bases of this perception of the counselor are the credibility and the attractiveness of the counselor—at least as these are, in turn, perceived by the client. The dimensions of perceived counselor credibility and attractiveness are discussed in greater detail below.
The Dimension of Perceived Counselor Credibility

It will be recalled that in Strong's interpersonal influence model of the counseling process (Strong, 1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973), the client's perception of the counselor as credible is posited to be a major source of the counselor's power to facilitate client behavior change (see Strong, 1978, pp. 106-109, in particular). Whether or not perceived counselor credibility does indeed affect the counselor's ability to influence client behavior change has been the subject of several investigations. These investigations are summarized in Table 1 and are discussed below. Generally, the findings regarding the effect of counselor credibility on client behavior change are mixed and inconclusive.

Bergin (1962) initiated the efforts to examine the relationship between perceived counselor credibility and client behavior change. Sixty college students provided self-ratings concerning their masculinity-femininity. The subjects were then interviewed by a counselor who was presented as either high or low in credibility. During the interview, the counselor presented interpretations of the subjects' self-ratings that were discrepant from those ratings. After the interview, the subjects again provided self-ratings of their masculinity-femininity. Bergin (1962) obtained highly significant differences in these post-interview masculinity-femininity self-ratings: subjects who had been interviewed by the counselor presented as high in credibility changed their self-ratings to reflect the information given them by the counselor more than did the subjects who had been interviewed by the counselor presented as low in credibility. Sprafkin (1970), however, found that counselors presented as high in credibility and counselors presented as low in credibility did not differ in their ability to influence college students to change word meanings in a counseling-like one-interview analogue setting.

In a study similar to the one conducted by Bergin (1962), Binderman, Fretz, Scott, and Abrams (1972) had counselors presented as either high in credibility or as low in credibility present discrepant information regarding personality traits to their college student sub-
Table 1
Summary of the Research Investigating the Effects of Client-Perceived Counselor-Credibility on Client Behavior Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bergin (1962)</td>
<td>60 college students</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Credibility was manipulated in terms of initial information and counseling setting variables; only 1 male counselor was used in the high credibility condition and another male counselor was used in the low credibility condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprafkin (1970)</td>
<td>64 males</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>Credibility was manipulated in terms of initial information variables; 2 male counselors were used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binderman et al. (1972)</td>
<td>100 college students</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>Credibility was manipulated in terms of initial information variables; 2 counselors (sex unspecified) were used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guttman &amp; Haase (1972)</td>
<td>31 male college students</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>Credibility was manipulated in terms of initial information variables and counseling setting variables; 2 male counselors were used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks (1974)</td>
<td>40 male &amp; 40 female college students</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>Credibility was manipulated in terms of initial information and counseling setting variables; 2 male and 2 female counselors were used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beutler et al. (1975)</td>
<td>97 psychiatric patients</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>Credibility was determined by client-ratings on a semantic differential; 6 therapists (sex unspecified) were used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For a discussion of what is meant by initial information and counseling setting variables see the text below.*
jects. The information was discrepant, however, in either a posi-
tive or a negative manner. Binderman et al. (1972) found that their
subjects changed post-interview self-ratings more toward the informa-
tion presented in the interview when the interview was conducted by
the counselor presented as high in credibility. But this was only
ture for the cases in which the discrepant information was negative.
When the discrepant information was positive, the credibility of the
counselor had no effect.

Guttman and Haase (1972) tested the impact of perceived coun-
selor credibility in a field experiment involving students coming
to counseling for routine test interpretation. Their results in-
dicated that the students interacting with a counselor presented as
highly credible remembered more about what was presented in the
interview than did the students interacting with a counselor pre-
sented as low in credibility. On the other hand, however, the stu-
dents interacting with the counselor presented as low in credibility
reported on an opinion scale that they believed that they had learned
more than did the students interacting with the counselor presented
as high in credibility.

Brooks (1974) attempted to explore the effects of client-per-
ceived counselor-credibility in a counseling-analogue one-interview
setting. Two male and 2 female doctoral students served as the
counselors while 40 male and 40 female undergraduates served as the
clients. Brooks (1974) reported that male subjects disclosed more
of themselves during the interview when they were interacting with
a counselor presented as high in credibility. Conversely, female
subjects disclosed more of themselves when they were interacting
with a counselor presented as low in credibility. To complicate
matters further, Brooks (1974) reported that male counselors who
were presented as high in credibility were able to elicit more dis-
closure from their clients than were male counselors presented as
low in credibility. The credibility of the female counselors played
no significant part, however, in their ability to elicit disclosure.

In a correlational study, Beutler, Johnson, Neville, Elkins,
and Jobe (1975) asked psychotherapy patients to rate the credibility of their therapist on a semantic differential scale after a mean of 16.5 therapy sessions. The results indicated that the ratings of therapist credibility were positively related to the patients' self-rated improvement. Unfortunately, Beutler et al. (1975) provide no other evidence of patient improvement.

The logical questions at this point seem to concern: (a) what is meant by perceived counselor credibility and (b) how perceptions of counselor credibility are manipulated in the experimental setting.

Hovland et al. (1953) suggest that the variable referred to as the perceived credibility of a communicator has two main characteristics: perceived expertness and perceived trustworthiness. Although Strong (1978) and others (e.g., Merluzzi, Banikiotes & Missbach, 1978; Siegel & Sell, 1978), as well as the six studies discussed above (Bergin, 1962; Beutler et al., 1975; Binderman et al., 1972; Brooks, 1974; Guttman & Haase, 1972; Sprafkin, 1970), have tended to equate perceived counselor credibility with perceived counselor expertness, Strong (1978, p. 108 in particular) nonetheless insists that perceived counselor trustworthiness is a fundamental component of perceived counselor credibility. Corrigan (1978) provides empirical evidence that, at least for professional mental health workers, perceived credibility has both perceived expertness and perceived trustworthiness as its salient characteristics. Krumboltz et al. (1979, p. 574 in particular) also discuss perceived counselor credibility in terms of both perceived counselor expertness and perceived counselor trustworthiness. Therefore, the present discussion will do the same.

**Perceived counselor expertness**

The client's perception of the counselor as an expert seems to be important before, during, and after the counseling interaction. Fiedler (1950) argued that the counseling relationship is a function of the expertness of the therapist rather than of his/her orientation. Fiedler (1950) had compared the therapeutic relationships in psychoanalytic, nondirective, and Adlerian therapy. He found that there
was greater similarity between the therapeutic relationships developed by experts of the three schools than between expert and less expert therapists within the same school.

Tinsley and Harris (1976) provided evidence that one of the strongest expectations regarding counseling held by undergraduate college students was the expectation of seeing an experienced, expert counselor. Corrigan (1978) found that one of the most salient characteristics expected of mental health professionals was expertness. Atkinson and Carskadon (1975) and Barak and Dell (1977) found that subjects' perceptions of a counselor in a videotaped interview as an expert were positively related to expressed willingness to refer oneself to the counselor for a variety of problems. After the initiation of the counseling interaction, the client's perceptions of the counselor's expertness determines, at least in part, the counselor's ability to promote client behavior change (Bergin, 1962; Beutler et al., 1975; Binderman et al., 1972; Brooks, 1974; Browning, 1966; Claiborn & Schmidt, 1977; Dell, 1973; Guttman & Haase, 1972; Hartley, 1969; Heppner & Dixon, 1978; Merluzzi et al., 1977, 1978; Patton, 1969; Pope, Nundler, Vonkorff & McGhee, 1974; Scheid, 1976; Schmidt & Strong, 1971; Siegel & Sell, 1978; Spiegel, 1976; Strong & Dixon, 1971; Strong & Schmidt, 1970a).

Two studies (Dell, 1973; Heppner & Dixon, 1978) have specifically examined the effects of perceived counselor expertness on post-counseling behavior. The results are inconclusive. The Dell (1973) study indicated that interviewers presented in an expert role were unable to influence clients' extrainterview behaviors significantly more than interviewers presented in a referent (attractive) role. Unfortunately, the dependent variable in the Dell (1973) study was a self-report of the behavioral events under consideration rather than an observation of those behavioral events. Additionally, no comparison of the effects of different levels of expertness was included in the study. In contrast, the Heppner and Dixon (1978) study did allow for observation of the extrainterview behaviors and for comparison of different levels of perceived counselor expertness.
Heppner and Dixon (1978) had 90 undergraduate college students take part in a study involving a 2 (high versus low client need) x 2 (expert versus inexpert counselor) x 2 (counselors) design. The subjects attended a 20-minute counseling analogue interview in which they discussed their problem solving skills. During the interview, the counselor attempted to alter the subjects' ratings of their problem-solving skills as well as two extrainterview behaviors. Following the interview, subjects rated the counselor on a counselor rating form, responded to two problem-solving inventories, and were given the opportunity to engage in two self-help activities outside the interview. The self-help activities involved (a) seeking handouts discussing basic problem-solving skills and (b) attending a 2-hour problem-solving workshop conducted by the interviewer. The results indicated that the counselors presented as expert were able to influence the subjects' self-ratings significantly more than were the counselors presented as inexpert. Further, the subjects who had seen the counselor presented as an expert sought the problem-solving handouts significantly more often than did the subjects who had seen the counselor presented as being inexpert. However, only one subject attended the problem-solving workshop. Thus, perceived counselor expertness did influence subjects to engage in certain self-help activities, but the scope of this behavior was sorely constricted. The Heppner and Dixon (1978) study is limited in its own way though: only female counselors and female subjects were employed, limiting the generalizability of the results.

With these results in mind, the discussion will now turn to a consideration of how perceptions of counselor expertness have been manipulated in previous investigations.

Variables affecting perceived counselor expertness

The research on perceived counselor expertness has focused on investigations of the effects of four classes of variables on clients' perceptions of counselor expertness: (a) variables related to the initial information the clients (subjects) have about the counselor; (b) variables related to the counseling setting in which the clients
(subjects) encounter the counselor; (c) variables related to the behaviors the counselor emits during the counseling interaction; and, (d) the variables of the sex of the clients (subjects) and/or of the counselor (cf. Shirley, 1980; Torresdal, 1979). In most studies, the former two classes of variables are usually confounded. Therefore, the present discussion will consider both classes under the same heading.

**Initial information and counseling setting variables** Table 2 presents a summary of the investigations focusing on the effects of initial information and counseling setting variables on client-perceived counselor-expertness by indicating how such variables have been operationalized.

Initial information presenting the counselor as having considerable experience, a reputation as being an expert, a strong professional interest in counseling, extensive training in counseling and a Ph.D. in psychology have all been consistently shown to enhance client perceptions of counselor expertness (Atkinson & Carskaddon, 1975; Bergin, 1962; Binderman et al., 1972; Brooks, 1974; Claiborn & Schmidt, 1977; Greenberg, 1969; Guttman & Haase, 1972; Scheid, 1976; Siegel, 1980; Spiegel, 1976; Sprafkin, 1970; Strong & Schmidt, 1970a). In a quasi-counseling analogue study, Heppner and Pew (1977) found that counselors displaying diplomas, certificates, and awards on their office walls were perceived as significantly more expert than those without such visible credentials. Heppner and Pew's (1977) results have been replicated by Heppner and Dixon (1978), Siegel and Sell (1978), and Siegel (1980). The size of the counselor's office has been shown to be positively correlated with the client's perceptions of the counselor's expertness by Bergin (1962), Guttman and Haase (1972), and Brooks (1974). Bloom, Weigel, and Trautt (1977) attempted to explore the effects of office decor, subject sex, and counselor sex on the subjects' perceptions of the counselor's expertness. The results indicated that a male counselor was perceived as more expert when he occupied a casual, "humanistic" office than when he occupied a traditional, "professional" office; the reverse was true for female
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Type of Variable</th>
<th>Operational Specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson &amp; Carskaddon (1975)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with 4 years of experience versus introduction as a graduate student with no experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bergin (1962)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>senior experimenter introduced as the director of a personality assessment project versus a high school freshman introduced as another subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binderman et al. (1972)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>experimental room in the Psychiatry Department at the Stanford Medical Center furnished with elaborate equipment, a couch, an impressive array of medical and psychological volumes and a large portrait of Freud versus a decrepit room in the basement of the Education building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom et al. (1977)</td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. versus introduction as a psychology practicum student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks (1974)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>traditional professional office (e.g., the presence of file cabinets, diplomas, texts and reference manuals) versus a humanistic office (e.g., the presence of sculptures, posters, a bean bag chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claiborn &amp; Schmidt (1977)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with experience versus introduction as a student with limited experience</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>nicely furnished counselor offices versus sparsely furnished rooms located in the basement of the counseling service</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with experience versus introduction as an undergraduate student with no experience doing volunteer work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Setting</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Greenberg (1969)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guttman &amp; Haase (1972)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartley (1969)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heppner &amp; Dixon (1978)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heppner &amp; Pew (1977)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerr &amp; Dell (1976)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merluzzi et al. (1978)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patton (1969)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Type of Variable</td>
<td>Operational Specifications</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheid (1976)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with experience versus introduction as a beginning counseling student seeing his first client for the 3rd interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siegel (1980)</td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
<td>presence of diplomas and certificates on walls of office versus absence thereof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siegel &amp; Sell (1978)</td>
<td>Counseling Setting</td>
<td>presence of diplomas and certificates on walls of office versus absence thereof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiegel (1976)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as someone having extensive training versus introduction as someone having no training; introduction as someone being highly similar to the subject in terms of age and SES versus introduction as someone being highly dissimilar to the subject in terms of age and SES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprafkin (1970)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with years of experience and national recognition versus introduction as an undergraduate in his junior year of study who had a passing interest in counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong &amp; Dixon (1971)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with experience versus introduction as a first year student with no experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
<td>Initial Information</td>
<td>introduction as a Ph.D. with several years experience versus introduction as a student with no experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
counselors. Kerr and Dell (1976) found evidence that the perceptions of a counselor's expertness were influenced by the counselor's attire, at least for female counselors.

Taken together, these investigations indicate that the counselor who desires to be perceived as an expert by his/her clients should (a) be dressed appropriately, (b) have a large office in a sex-appropriate decor with diplomas and other credentials displayed prominently, and, (c) receive a prestigious introduction to his/her clients (cf. Krumoltz et al., 1979; Shirley, 1980).

Counselor-emitted behavior variables Schmidt and Strong (1970) proposed that the behaviors emitted by the counselor may be even more important in determining client perceptions of counselor expertness than are initial information and/or counseling setting variables. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that there has been a series of investigations into the effects of counselor-emitted behavior on client perceptions of counselor expertness. Table 3 presents a summary of these investigations by indicating how such variables have been operationalized.

Atkinson and Carskaddon (1975) reported that counselors were perceived as more knowledgeable about psychology when they employed abstract psychological jargon instead of concrete layman's language. The results of the previously mentioned Kerr and Dell (1973) study indicated that client perceptions of counselor expertness were influenced jointly by counselor attire (professional versus casual) and counselor role (expert versus attractive), at least for the female counselors employed. In the expert role, the counselor followed a logical order of questioning, tried to obtain complete information, structured the interview and minimized client responses. On the other hand, counselors in the attractive role were more concerned with client feelings and provided less structure during the interview. Expertness ratings obtained when the counselor's role and attire were consistent (i.e., expert-professional or attractive-casual) were higher than when they were inconsistent.

Schmidt and Strong (1970) found that counselors were rated as
Table 3
Summary of the Operational Specifications of Counselor-Emitted Behavior Variables in Investigations of Client-Perceived Counselor-Expertness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Operational Specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson &amp; Carskadon (1975)</td>
<td>use of abstract psychological &quot;jargon&quot; versus use of concrete, laymen's language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson et al. (1978)</td>
<td>logical, rational, directive counseling style versus reflective, affective, nondirective counseling style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dell (1973)</td>
<td>in the expert role the interviewer structured the roles of the subject and herself and then inquired about the subject's personal difficulties. The interviewer was very thorough in her examination of the subject's experiences, but she contributed nothing of her personal experiences. During the interview she made four comments about the relationship of the experiences described by the subject to those of other students or to research with which the interviewer was familiar. These comments were inserted to display her knowledgeable. In the referent role the interviewer greeted the subject warmly and structured the subject and interviewer roles emphasizing her desire to understand the subject's experiences. She was also responsive (both verbally and nonverbally) to the subject throughout the interview. The interviewer made four positive similarity self-disclosures designed to enhance the subject's perception of interviewer similarity. The referent interviewer avoided references to previous experiences (other than her own personal experiences) and denied psychological knowledge whenever a question concerning the cause of the subject's problem was raised. (from Merluzzi et al., 1978, p. 432)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heppner &amp; Dixon (1978)</td>
<td>same as Dell (1973)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoffman &amp; Spencer (1977)</td>
<td>positive self-disclosure versus negative self-disclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerr &amp; Dell (1976)</td>
<td>same as Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Merluzzi et al. (1977)  same as Dell (1973)
Merluzzi et al. (1978) high self-disclosure versus low self-disclosure
Patton (1969)  friendly manner that included head-nodding and smiling versus an unfriendly manner marked by inattention
Peoples & Dell (1975) friendly manner, use of "expert language," no hand or body movements (except for head nods), liberal use of reflection and restatement but few direct questions and no self-disclosure versus a friendly manner, use of hand and body gestures, mildly confrontive style, direct questions and at least 3 self-disclosures, use of language similar to that of the subject
Scheid (1976) Level 1 versus Level 3 of the Carkhuff-defined (Carkhuff, 1969) core conditions
Schmidt & Strong (1971) same as Strong & Schmidt (1970a)
Siegel (1980) same as Siegel & Sell (1980)
Siegel & Sell (1978) 100% eye-contact, shoulder and body lean directed toward the client, hand gestures versus 25% eye-contact, arms folded, gazing about room, flicking speck of dust from tie, looking at and handling a coffee cup, inspecting fingernails
Slaney (1977) facilitative, empathic responses versus suggestion of assertive training
Sprafkin (1970) attentive, confident, reassuring manner versus a self-conscious, stumbling, unsure manner
Strong & Dixon (1971) same as Strong & Schmidt (1970a)
Strong & Schmidt (1970a) The expert was attentive and interested in the subject. He looked at the subject, he leaned toward him and was responsive to the subject by his facial expressions, head nods, posture and so on. He used hand gestures to emphasize his points. The inexpert was inattentive to the subject. He either did not look at the subject, or he gave him a dead-pan stare and was not reactive to him. He either did not use gestures, or his gestures were stiff, formal, and overdone. While the expert performed with an air of confidence, the inexpert was unsure, nervous and lacked confidence. The expert was organized and knew what he was doing. He structure the interview by suggesting possible topics and where the subject might begin. He de-
Table 3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Operational Specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong et al. (1971)</td>
<td>described the task to the subject and he explained his own role in the interview was to facilitate the subject's discussion. The inexpert was confused and unsure of where to begin. He offered only minimal help to the subject and did not clarify his own role in the interview (from Strong &amp; Schmidt, 1970a, p. 82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assumption of a position of alertness but remaining as still as possible versus frequent movement, changing body position and posture, smiling, frowning, gesturing, changing head and eye orientations, crossing and uncrossing the legs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expert if they were perceived as being interested, relaxed, friendly, attentive, confident, prepared, fluent, logical, spontaneous, and responsive to the client. On the other hand, counselors were rated as inexpert if they were perceived as awkward, tense, dominating, formal, disinterested, unprepared, vague, and abrupt. Dell and Schmidt (1976) reported that client perceptions of counselor expertness were enhanced by hand gestures, verbal fluency, a friendly, relaxed manner, and evidence of concern for the client and preparation for the interview. Similar results were obtained by Dell (1973), Heppner and Dixon (1978), Hoffman and Spencer (1977), Merluzzi et al. (1977, 1978), Patton (1969), Peoples and Dell (1975), Scheid (1976), Schmidt and Strong (1971), Sprafkin (1970), Strong and Dixon (1971) Strong and Schmidt (1970a), and Strong, Taylor, Bratton and Loper (1971). More importantly, counselors who suggested possible solutions to the client's problems were viewed as more expert by Schmidt and Strong's (1970) subjects and by Slaney's (1977) subjects.

Siegel and Sell (1978) attempted to explore the effects of initial information/counseling setting variables and counselor-emitted behavior variables in the same quasi-counseling analogue study. Eighty female undergraduate students viewed videotapes of a standardized counseling interaction between a professional counselor and a confederate client. There were four videotapes and the design was such that each videotape was viewed by twenty subjects. Each tape presented one of the following conditions: (a) presence of objective evidence of expertness and presence of expert nonverbal behaviors; (b) presence of objective evidence of expertness and absence of expert nonverbal behaviors; (c) absence of objective evidence of expertness and presence of expert nonverbal behaviors; and, (d) absence of objective evidence of expertness and absence of expert nonverbal behaviors.

The objective evidence of expertness manipulation consisted of the presence of the counselor's M.A. and Ph.D. diplomas, state licensure certificate, and certificate of membership in a major professional organization being either present or absent on the wall behind the counselor. Regarding the behavioral manipulation, the specific
counselor-emitted behaviors demonstrated in the expert condition were eye-contact, shoulder and body lean and hand gestures directed toward the client. Eye-contact was maintained during 100% of the interaction, and the other behaviors were cued at specific points in the dialogue. In the nonexpert condition, the counselor maintained eye-contact during less than 25% of the interaction, folded his arms, gazed about the room, flecked a speck of dust from his tie, looked at and handled a coffee cup on the desk and inspected his fingernails. Other than the eye-contact, the nonexpert counselor-emitted behaviors were cued in the dialogue.

After the subjects had viewed the videotapes, they rated the counselor on a counselor credibility checklist. The results indicated that each of the manipulations significantly affected the subjects' perceptions of the counselor's expertness in the predicted directions. More importantly, the counselor-emitted expert nonverbal behavior had the greater effect on the subjects' perceptions. There were no interaction effects. These results have been replicated by Siegel (1980).

Two other studies concerning counselor-emitted behavior variables affecting client perceptions of counselor expertness (Atkinson, Maruyama & Matsui, 1978; Slaney, 1977) deserve detailed consideration. Atkinson et al. (1978) attempted to explore the effects of counselor race and counseling approach on client perceptions of counselor expertness. Two audiotapes of a contrived counseling interaction were prepared in which the client responses were identical but the counselor responses differed. One tape depicted a logical, rational, directive approach to counseling. The other tape depicted a reflective, affective, non-directive approach. Each tape was paired with two different introductions. In one introduction, the counselor was identified as an Asian-American. In the other introduction the counselor was identified as a Caucasian American. Two different groups of Asian American students served as subjects. The effects of counselor race on perceived counselor expertness differed for the two groups of subjects. However, among both groups, the counselor was rated as more expert, more credible and more approachable when employing the directive approach than when employing the nondirective approach. This finding may be related to Schmidt and
Strong's (1970) finding that a counselor's suggestion of possible solutions to the client's problem—a relatively active and directive approach—enhanced client perceptions of that counselor's expertness.

Slaney (1977) also attempted to examine the effects of counseling style on client perceptions of counselor expertness. Two transcripts of a counseling session were designed. One transcript depicted a counseling style that used the Carkhuff-defined facilitative conditions (e.g., Carkhuff, 1969) as the treatment modality. The other transcript depicted a counseling style that used the Carkhuff-defined facilitative conditions as an intermediate step to the suggestion of a specific behavioral treatment, assertion training. The subjects were 100 male and 100 female undergraduate students. Each subject read one of the transcripts, then rated the counselor. The results indicated that the behavioral treatment counselor was perceived as more expert and more appealing than the facilitative conditions counselor. Subject estimates of counselor effectiveness also favored the behavioral approach. However, no differences were found on the ratings of the counselor's understanding. Slaney's (1977) results seem to lend further credence to the work of Schmidt and Strong (1970) and Atkinson et al. (1978) discussed above.

In sum, the results of the investigations into counselor-emitted behavior variables affecting client perceptions of counselor expertness indicate that the counselor who would be perceived as expert by her/his clients should proceed in a relaxed, confident and behavioral manner once counseling has begun (cf. Krumboltz et al., 1979; Shirley, 1980).

Gender effects Except in those situations where transcripts of the client-counselor interaction are used as stimulus materials, the sex of the counselor will be readily apparent to the clients (subjects) and may exert either a direct or an indirect effect on the clients' (subjects') perceptions of the counselor. The sex of the counselor, once it is known by the clients (subjects), may also interact with other counselor characteristics and/or behaviors to influence perceived counselor expertness (cf. Shirley, 1980; Torresdal, 1979). Furthermore, the sex of the client (subject) ought also to be evaluated (cf. Deaux,
To date, at least fourteen investigations have examined the effects of counselor gender and/or client gender on client perceptions of counselor expertness. The results of these investigations are summarized in Table 4 and discussed below. In general, the results tend to be mixed and inconclusive.

With regard to counselor sex, Bloom et al. (1977), Brooks (1974), and Shirley (1980) all present evidence supportive of the proposition that counselor sex affects client perceptions of counselor expertness. Bloom et al. (1977), as was noted previously, reported that female therapists were rated higher in expertness if they occupied a traditional-professional office as opposed to a humanistic office; male therapists, on the other hand, were perceived as being more expert if they occupied the humanistic office as opposed to the traditional-professional office. Brooks (1974) found that males presented as high in status were rated as more expert than males presented as low in status whereas the opposite was true for females: those presented as low in status were perceived as more expert than those presented as high in status. Shirley (1980) found that female therapists were rated as being more expert than male therapists across all conditions.

Dell and Schmidt (1976) and Merluzzi et al. (1978) report evidence that partially supports the hypothesis that counselor sex affects client perceptions of counselor expertness. In the Dell and Schmidt (1976) study, male counselors were rated as being more expert than female counselors, but only by female subjects. Merluzzi et al. (1978) found that a female introduced as an expert was rated as more expert than either a female introduced as an inexpert or as a male, regardless of the introduction the male received.

Contrary to the foregoing, however, Heppner and Pew (1977), Highlen and Russell (1980), and Lee, Hallberg, Lones and Haase (1980) all report that the sex of the counselor had no effect on client perceptions of counselor expertness.

With regard to the effects of client gender on client perceptions of counselor expertness, the preponderance of evidence indicates that no
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson &amp; Carskaddon (1975)</td>
<td>16 male &amp; 16 female undergraduates; 16 male &amp; 16 female county mental health center clients; 16 male &amp; 16 female incarcerated drug abusers</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>only one male client and one male counselor were used as stimulus persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloom et al. (1977)</td>
<td>72 male &amp; 72 female undergraduates</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>written descriptions of the counselor, varying counselor gender, were the stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooks (1974)</td>
<td>40 male &amp; 40 female undergraduates</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dell &amp; Schmidt (1976)</td>
<td>60 male &amp; 60 female undergraduates</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>only one female client was used in the stimulus materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heppner &amp; Pew (1977)</td>
<td>42 female &amp; 22 male</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>only one male and one female were used as stimulus persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlen &amp; Russell (1980)</td>
<td>84 female undergraduates</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>only female subjects were employed; the stimuli were photographs of one of 3 male counselors or 1 of 3 female counselors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill (1975)</td>
<td>24 male &amp; 24 female clients at a university counseling service</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoffman &amp; Spencer (1977)</td>
<td>16 male &amp; 16 female undergraduates</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sample Description</td>
<td>Results</td>
<td>Stimuli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lee et al. (1980)</td>
<td>162 male &amp; 132 female secondary school students</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>only one male and one female counselor were used as stimulus persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merluzzi et al. (1978)</td>
<td>63 male &amp; 49 female undergraduates</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>written descriptions of the counselor, varying counselor gender, were the stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley (1980)</td>
<td>108 male &amp; 121 female undergraduates</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siegel (1980)</td>
<td>40 male &amp; 40 female undergraduates</td>
<td>negative</td>
<td>only one male counselor served as the stimulus person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slaney (1977)</td>
<td>100 male &amp; 100 female undergraduates</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td>transcripts of a counseling interaction were used as stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiegel (1976)</td>
<td>179 female &amp; 98 male undergraduates</td>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
significant effect exists (Atkinson & Carskaddon, 1975; Hoffman & Spencer, 1977; Lee et al., 1980; Siegel, 1980; Spiegel, 1976). The minority of studies that do report an effect, however, are quite consistent: in all cases female clients (subjects) rate the counselor as higher in expertness than do the male clients (subjects) (Bloom et al., 1977; Dell & Schmidt, 1976; Shirley, 1980; Slaney, 1977).

In sum, the results of the investigations into the effects of counselor and/or client gender on client perceptions of counselor expertness are, basically, inconclusive.

Perceived counselor trustworthiness

As noted previously, Hovland et al. (1953) suggest that the variable referred to as the perceived credibility of a communicator has two main characteristics: perceived expertness and perceived trustworthiness. Corrigan (1978) provides evidence which indicates that the perceived credibility of professional mental health workers has both perceived expertness and perceived trustworthiness as its salient characteristics. Strong (1978, p. 108 in particular) emphasizes perceived counselor trustworthiness as a source of counselor power. Johnson and Matross (1975) assert that "the first issue in helping another person is how much the other person trusts" the counselor (p. 57). Research evidence indicates that the discussion of the client's behavior, the client's openness to influence and change, the effectiveness of the communication between the counselor and the client, and the success of the counselor-client cooperative problem-solving process, all depend upon the level of trust established in the client-counselor relationship (Deutsch, 1962; Friedlander, 1970; Gibb, 1964; Johnson, 1971; Johnson & Noonan, 1972). Therefore, in their texts designed to help train counselors, Benjamin (1974) and Johnson and Matross (1975) offer discussions on how to develop and maintain trust in the counseling relationship.

Variables affecting perceived counselor trustworthiness

Although there is both theoretical and empirical import attached to client-perceived counselor trustworthiness (as noted above), few studies have actually investigated the effects of various manipulations on the same. Indeed, a survey of the literature through May of 1980 produced
only seven investigations that employed client-perceived counselor trustworthiness as a dependent variable. Six of those seven investigated the effects of counselor-emitted behavior variables on client-perceived counselor trustworthiness and are discussed below. The seventh study (Shirley, 1980) examined the effects of counselor and client gender on client perceptions of counselor trustworthiness. Shirley's (1980) results indicate that female clients (subjects) perceive counselors as more trustworthy than do male clients (subjects). Further, Shirley (1980) reported that female counselors were rated as more trustworthy than were male counselors.

Counselor-emitted behavior variables Table 5 presents a summary of the investigations into the effects of counselor-emitted behavior variables on client perceptions of counselor trustworthiness by indicating how such variables have been operationalized.

Strong and Schmidt (1970a, 1970b) and Kaul and Schmidt (1971) report studies of student judgements of videotaped interviews that explore the perceptual cues of counselor trustworthiness. Roll, Schmidt and Kaul (1972) report a similar study but one employing black and white convicts as subjects. The results of all four studies indicate that such acts as making superficial remarks, breaking confidences to others, and making dishonest remarks have the expected detrimental effects on subjects' ratings of counselor trustworthiness. The results of the Kaul and Schmidt (1971) and the Roll et al. (1972) studies indicate that variables such as facial expressions and hand gestures are just as influential in determining subject ratings of counselor trustworthiness. Atkinson et al. (1978) report that a counselor who employs a logical, rational, and directive style is perceived as more trustworthy than a counselor who employs a reflective, affective, nondirective counseling style. Merluzzi et al. (1978) provide evidence that low self-disclosing counselors are perceived as more trustworthy than are high self-disclosing counselors.

Thus, the counselor who would be perceived as trustworthy by her/his clients should employ appropriate nonverbal behaviors, a low level of self-disclosure, and a logical, rational, directive counseling style while avoiding dishonest and/or superficial remarks as well as the break-
Table 5
Summary of the Operational Specifications of Counselor-Emitted Behavior Variables in Investigations of Client-Perceived Counselor Trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atkinson et al. (1978)</td>
<td>logical, rational, directive counseling style versus reflective, affective, nondirective counseling style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaul &amp; Schmidt (1971)</td>
<td>same as Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merluzzi et al. (1978)</td>
<td>high self-disclosure versus low self-disclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll et al. (1972)</td>
<td>same as Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
<td>The expert was attentive and interested in the subject. He looked at the subject, he leaned toward him and was responsive to the subject by facial expressions, head nods, posture and so on. He used hand gestures to emphasize his points. The inexpert was inattentive to the subject. He either did not look at the subject, or he gave him a dead-pan stare and was not reactive to him. He either did not use gestures, or his gestures were stiff, formal, and overdone. While the expert performed with an air of confidence, the inexpert was unsure, nervous and lacked confidence. The expert was organized and knew what he was doing. He structured the interview by suggesting possible topics and where the subject might begin. He described the task to the subject and he explained his own role in the interview was to facilitate the subject's discussion. The inexpert was confused and unsure of where to begin. He offered only minimal help to the subject and did not clarify his role in the interview (from Strong &amp; Schmidt, 1970a, p. 82) (Note: expert is equivalent to trustworthy.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970b)</td>
<td>same as Strong &amp; Schmidt (1970a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of the research regarding perceived counselor credibility

Perhaps the best summary of the research involving the dimension of perceived counselor credibility is provided by Krumboltz et al. (1979) when they note:

Counselors who wish to be seen as expert and trustworthy should obtain a Ph.D. degree, display their diplomas, receive a prestigious introduction to clients, and behave in a prepared, confident, and relaxed way (p. 575).

Nevertheless, on the basis of the foregoing review, it may be noted that behaving "in a prepared, confident, and relaxed way" appears to be more important than receiving the Ph.D. degree, displaying one's diplomas, and/or receiving a prestigious introduction to one's clients (cf. the review by Shirley, 1980).

The Dimension of Perceived Counselor Attractiveness

It will be recalled that in Strong's interpersonal influence model of the counseling process (Strong, 1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973), the client's perception of the counselor as attractive is posited to be a major source of the counselor's power to facilitate client behavior change (see Strong, 1978, pp. 109-111, in particular). The dimension of perceived counselor attractiveness seems to have two components, physical attractiveness and social attractiveness, although these two are not clearly differentiated by Strong (1978) or others (e.g., Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; Krumboltz et al., 1979; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976).

Physical attractiveness

Physical attractiveness is a variable which affects interpersonal judgements, such that attractive persons elicit more favorable evaluations and are better liked than unattractive persons. Dion, Berscheid and Walster (1972) found that college students expected physically attractive individuals to possess more socially desirable traits, such as sensitivity and strength, than unattractive individuals. These investigators also found that students expected attractive people to have more good things in store for them in the future, for example, in terms of occupation and marriage, than unattractive people. Dion (1973) even
found that preschoolers (ages 3 through 6 1/2 years) showed a preference for attractive children as friends. Indeed, physical attractiveness seems to be a strong and pervasive determinant of initial impression formation (see also Miller, 1970).

Physical attractiveness also appears to affect counseling relationships. On the one hand, Barocas and Vance (1974) found that attractiveness ratings of clients by counselors were positively correlated with prognosis and outcome. More germane to the present investigation, correlational research has indicated significant positive relationships between counselors' client-rated attractiveness and clients' judgments of improvement, counselor likability, and counselor competence (McClernan, 1973; Shapiro, Struening, Barten & Shapiro, 1973; Shapiro, Struening, Shapiro & Barten, 1976).

Three studies (Carter, 1978; Cash, Begley, McCown & Weise, 1975; Cash & Salzbach, 1978) have experimentally manipulated counselor physical attractiveness. Cash et al. (1975) asked college students to watch a videotape of a male counselor describing himself. Half of the subjects saw a counselor cosmetically altered to appear physically attractive; the other half saw a counselor cosmetically altered to appear physically unattractive. Two control groups of subjects heard the same descriptions without seeing the counselor. The results indicated that when the counselor was physically attractive he was rated as significantly more intelligent, friendly, assertive, trustworthy, competent and more likely to produce a positive outcome than when he was unattractive. No significant differences were found between the two audio control groups who did not see the counselor.

The Cash et al. (1975) work had limitations, however. They employed only one male stimulus person for both the attractive and the unattractive conditions, making cosmetic changes to manipulate attractiveness levels. Carter (1978) attempted to correct for these limitations.

Carter (1978) had 40 male and 40 female undergraduates give (a) their first impressions of a counselor and (b) their expectations for counseling outcome on the basis of (a) a photograph of either an attractive or an unattractive person and (b) a brief, audiotaped self-intro-
duction by either a male or a female counseling psychologist. Attractiveness did not show a significant main effect, but it did interact with the sex of the client and the sex of the counselor. Carter (1978) found that physical attractiveness exerted more of an influence when the counselor was a female rather than a male. Furthermore, attractiveness seemed to exert a greater influence on female subjects than it did on males.

The Cash and Salzbach (1978) investigation simultaneously manipulated physical attractiveness and social attractiveness. Therefore, their results will be discussed below.

**Social attractiveness**

Social attractiveness is a term used to describe the variable of interest in a series of investigations on counselor-client attraction, independent of physical attractiveness. These studies, as outlined by Strong (1978) and others (e.g., Krumboltz et al., 1979; Cash & Salzbach, 1978), seem to focus on manipulations involving client-perceived similarity between the client and the counselor.

One method of investigating the effects of client-perceived similarity on client perceptions of counselor attractiveness involves the presentation of similarity information to the client before the client-counselor interaction. This was the method employed by Goldstein (1971), Cheney (1975), and Spiegel (1976). In all three studies, the subjects were informed that the counselor they would be interacting with had responded to an attitude inventory in a manner either highly similar or highly dissimilar to their own. Goldstein (1971) and Spiegel (1976) employed college students as subjects; Cheney (1975) employed inmates serving sentences for public intoxication. Post-interaction assessments of the counselor's attractiveness in all three studies showed no differences between the high and low similarity conditions.

A second method of investigating the effects of client-perceived similarity on client perceptions of counselor attractiveness involves the manipulation of counselor self-disclosure during the client-counselor interaction. Murphy and his colleagues (Giannandrea & Murphy, 1973; Mann & Murphy, 1975; Murphy & Strong, 1972) varied the number of
counselor self-disclosures during an interview. Their results indicated that a moderate number of self-disclosures on the part of the counselor was maximally facilitative of client (subject) self-disclosures, of client (subject) ratings of counselor empathy, regard and congruence, and of client (subject) rate of return for a second interview.

Hoffman-Graff (1975) had her counselor-confederates disclose experiences similar or dissimilar to the experiences reported by the students serving as subjects. She found that the students receiving the similar self-disclosures rated the counselor as more attractive than did the students receiving the dissimilar self-disclosures.

As was noted earlier, Cash and Salzbach (1978) manipulated both physical attractiveness and social attractiveness in the same study. In a 3 x 3 factorial design, 144 college females were exposed to audio-taped interviews in which an attractive, unattractive, or physically unidentified male counselor revealed no self information or expressed an equal and moderate number of demographic or personal similarity self-disclosures. The results indicated that unattractive, nondisclosing counselors elicited less desirable behavioral attributions and counseling expectations than did attractive counselors. The presence of similar self-disclosures, however, eliminated the attractiveness effects.

Summary of the research involving perceived counselor attractiveness

The research involving perceived counselor attractiveness seems to indicate that the counselor who would be perceived as attractive by his/her clients should (a) actually be physically attractive, and, (b) make a moderate number of self-disclosures regarding experiences similar to those of the client during the counseling interaction. These conclusions must be considered as most tentative, however, in light of the paucity of methodologically sound investigations into variables affecting perceived counselor attractiveness (cf. Shirley, 1980).

The Role of Nonverbal Communication

Nothing more than a cursory examination of the investigations discussed in the foregoing review is needed to convince one of the importance of nonverbal behavior in the determination of client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness. Indeed, most of the studies
involving the manipulation of counselor-emitted behavior variables have relied on counselor-emitted nonverbal behaviors. Furthermore, the critical importance of nonverbal communication in the counseling process has become increasingly apparent (Tepper & Haase, 1978). As Tepper and Haase (1978) note:

within the past decade nonverbal communication has gained increasing prominence as an object of study; within the past 5 years the counseling literature has begun to reflect the importance of the total communication process to the texture and outcome of the counseling relationship (p. 35).

Nonverbal behaviors that have been shown to be significant in terms of affecting client perceptions of the counselor are eye-contact, trunk lean, head nodding, smiling, distance, body orientation, movement, facial expression, vocal intonation, gestures and selected features of the spatial environment (Bayes, 1972; Broekman & Moeller, 1973; Chaikin, Derlega & Miller, 1976; Dinges & Oetting, 1972; Ekman & Friesen, 1968; Fretz, 1966; Gladstein, 1974; Graves & Robinson, 1976; Haase, 1970; Haase & DiMattia, 1970, 1976; Haase & Tepper, 1972; Hackney, 1974; Kelly, 1972; Knight & Bair, 1976; LaCrosse, 1975; Lee, Zingle, Patterson, Ivey & Haase, 1976; Mehrabian, 1969, 1970; Reece & Whitman, 1962; Smith, 1975; Stone & Morden, 1977; Strahan & Zytowski, 1976; Sweeney & Cottle, 1976; Tepper & Haase, 1978). Although it does not appear that the performance of these behaviors necessarily leads to the enhancement of the counseling relationship, the opposite seems true: failure to perform these behaviors does reliably lead to negative consequences in terms of the client's perceptions of the counselor (Dell & Schmidt, 1976; Schmidt & Strong, 1970; Siegel, 1980; Siegel & Sell, 1978).

While most investigations have focused on the verbal or the non-verbal modes of communication separately, several have examined both in the same study (Haase & Tepper, 1972; Mehrabian, 1972; Seay & Altekruse, 1979; Tepper & Haase, 1978). In all of these cases the results have been interpreted to mean that the nonverbal mode carries the most weight (i.e., accounts for the most variance) of the communication and is,
therefore, the more important of the two.

There is, however, a substantial gap in the literature on nonverbal communication/behavior in the counseling situation. The literature is almost entirely void of information on what should be a significant mode of nonverbal communication, interpersonal touch (cf. Montagu, 1978; Shirley, 1980). The importance of this mode of communication (at least as it relates to the counseling interaction) and the limited research that has been done involving interpersonal touch will be examined in detail below.

Interpersonal Touch

As noted above, interpersonal touch should be a significant mode of nonverbal communication. LaRusso (1977) argues that there is a need for touching in interpersonal communication, particularly in therapeutic encounters (see pp. 176-180). Key (1975) notes that "occupational forms of tactile behavior include the performance of professionals such as the therapist, where it is their role to touch" (p. 103). Key (1975) also stresses that, within counseling interactions, "the manipulation of interpersonal relationships is expedited by tactile expression" (p. 104). On the other hand, while admitting the therapeutic power of touch, Corey, Corey and Callanan (1979) nevertheless assert that "touching should not be done as a technique" (p. 148). Despite the seeming importance attributed to interpersonal touch in such statements, there is a veritable dearth of empirical evidence on which to base such assertions or make such judgments. It is to the existent evidence that the present discussion will now turn. The discussion will first consider the evidence that is primarily correlational in nature. Then the discussion will examine the evidence that is experimental in nature.

Correlational research investigating interpersonal touch

The correlational research investigating interpersonal touch has focused primarily on (a) status differences and (b) sex differences related to touching behavior.

Status differences Goffman (1956, 1967) may have been the first to explore the status connotations of interpersonal touch. Goffman (1956, 1967) observed the touch system in a hospital. He noted that,
although doctors might touch others of a lesser rank to convey comfort or support, those of lesser rank tended to feel it would be presumptuous to return a doctor's touch, and particularly to initiate it.

Henley (1973a, 1973b, 1977) has also described the status connotations of touch. Henley (1973a, 1973b, 1977) observed people in a variety of settings and noted that, in an interaction between two people of different status, the higher-status person is always freer to touch the lower-status person. When Henley (1973a, 1973b) categorized status by social class and age, she found that the person of higher standing and the older person touched more and were touched less in return.

Sex differences Correlational research has consistently demonstrated the existence of sex differences in touching behavior. Goldberg and Lewis (1969) noted that the mothers of 6-month-old girls were observed to touch and handle their infants more than did the mothers of 6-month-old boys. When the babies were 13 months old, the girls tended to touch their mothers more than did the boys. At 13 months, the girls' touching behavior showed a curvilinear relation to their being touched and handled at 6 months: both the girls who had been handled a great deal and those who had been handled very little touched their mothers more than did the girls who received a moderate amount of handling. For boys, the relation was linear: those who were touched, touched; those who were not, did not.

Whiting and Edwards (1973) compared the touching behaviors of children aged 3 to 11 in seven cultures. The results indicated the presence of sex differences in touching behavior in all seven cultures. Girls sought and offered more nonaggressive contact than boys, particularly in the younger age groups. Moreover, nonaggressive touch decreased with age for all the children.

With adults, sex differences in touching behavior has been studied by questionnaires. Men and women have been asked to indicate on a diagram of the human body where they had touched or had been touched within the last year by their father, mother, closest same-sex friend, and closest opposite-sex friend (Jourard, 1966; Jourard & Rubin, 1968). Most touch was reported with opposite-sex friends. Women reported that
their closest male friend had touched them more than did their father, mother, or closest woman friend. Men, in contrast, reported that their closest woman friend touched them least. It should be noted, however, that questionnaire studies asking people to remember and report in which part of the body they have been touched in the last year can be subject to a great deal of distortion.

Women's reports indicate that they receive much touching from men (Jourard, 1966; Jourard & Rubin, 1968), and observations of actual touching support these results. Henley (1973a, 1973b, 1977) reported that men touch women about twice as much as women touch men. This pattern was even more clear-cut when the women lacked certain status advantages such as age or social class.

Another study attempted to specify the meaning of touch between the sexes. When unmarried college students were asked what a pat, a squeeze, a brush and a stroke meant when directed to different parts of the body by someone of the opposite sex, men and women differed considerably in their responses (Nguyen, Heslin & Nguyen, 1975). Women discriminated among body parts more than did the men. Men seemed to attend more to the differences among patting, stroking, squeezing and brushing regardless of the body parts involved. For women, love and friendliness were shown by touch on the hands, head, face, arms and back but not by touch on the breasts or genital areas. In fact, women excluded touch that signaled sexual desire from touch indicating love and friendliness. For males, pleasantness, sexual desire, warmth, and love were all similar in meaning. Similar results with a married population have been reported by Nguyen et al. (1976).

In sum, the correlational research investigating interpersonal touch seems to indicated that (a) higher-status persons touch lower-status persons more than the latter touch the former; (b) older persons touch younger persons more than the latter touch the former; and, (c) men touch women more than women touch men. The correlational research also seems to indicate that men and women perceive touch differently.
Experimental research investigating the effects of touch

In 1973, Pattison noted that "no experimental research has been reported which tests whether or not touching clients is causally related to...perceptions of therapeutic conditions" (Pattison, 1973, p. 173). The situation differs little in 1980. An exhaustive search of the literature through May of 1980, aided by the work of Lederman (1977) and Stein (Note 1), produced only nine studies that employed a manipulation of interpersonal touch as an independent variable: Aguilera (1967), Alagna, Whitcher, Fisher and Wicas (1979), Fisher, Rytting and Heslin (1976), Jourard and Friedman (1970), Kleinke (1977), Pattison (1973), Shirley (1980), Staneski, Kleinke and Meeker (1977), and, Whitcher and Fisher (1979). Of these nine studies, only four (Alagna et al., 1979; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Pattison, 1973; Shirley, 1980) deal specifically with a counseling situation. Due to this paucity of experimental evidence, all nine of the aforementioned studies will be examined in some detail. The discussion will address these studies in a chronological manner.

Aguilera (1967) investigated the relationship between physical contact and verbal interaction between nurses and psychiatric patients. She hypothesized that the use of touch would increase verbal interaction between nurses and patients. The hypothesis was supported. Each of six nurses touched three experimental subjects, and differences between the experimental and control groups began to appear on the eighth day. Aguilera (1967) attributed the delay in effect to the initial unfamiliarity of the nurses with touching.

The Jourard and Friedman (1970) study was specifically concerned with the effects of experimenter distance and topic intimacy level on subject self-disclosure. The relevance of the Jourard and Friedman (1970) investigation to the present discussion lies in the fact that one aspect of the distance manipulation involved one form of interpersonal touch. Thirty-two male and thirty-two female subjects were asked to self-disclose to a male experimenter on 4 questions of low intimacy value and on 4 questions of high intimacy value. The interactions took place at one of 4 distance manipulations: (a) the greatest
distance—the experimenter basically responded to the subjects' self-disclosures with "empathic grunts;" (b) less distance—the experimenter touched the subject by placing his hand on the subject's back as s/he entered the room but still only responded with "empathic grunts" to the subject's self-disclosures; (c) still less distance—the experimenter exhibited self-disclosure for 3 to 5 minutes before the interview proper began; and, (d) the least distance—the experimenter both touched the subject and exhibited self-disclosure before the start of the interview.

Jourard and Friedman (1970) found that subjects to whom the experimenter had revealed something of himself disclosed themselves at greater lengths than did subjects to whom he had not so revealed himself. Furthermore, touching the subjects in combination with the experimenter's self-disclosure resulted in more self-disclosure on the part of the subjects than either touching alone or experimenter self-disclosure alone.

Although Jourard and Friedman's (1970) results provide support for the hypothesis that touching one's clients enhances the therapeutic relationship (as determined by level of client self-disclosure), that support is severely limited. Only one male counselor served as the experimenter; and he was aware of the hypotheses of the study prior to his participation in it. More importantly for present purposes, the question of the effects of touching on the clients' perceptions of the counselor was never broached by Jourard and Friedman (1970) save in a very indirect manner.

Pattison (1973) set out to explore the effects of counselors touching clients on client self-exploration during the initial interview and on client and counselor perceptions of the therapeutic relationship after the initial interview. Pattison (1973) employed 20 female undergraduate students who actually sought personal counseling at a university counseling center as subjects/clients. Two second-year graduate students (1 male, aged 24, and 1 female, aged 32) served as the counselors. When the subjects arrived at the counseling center for their initial interview they were randomly assigned to one of the two counselors and to either a touch or a no-touch experimental condition. Apparently, this was done without the subjects' prior knowledge and/or consent.
In the touch procedure, the counselors implemented the following instructions:

1. Go to the reception area and introduce yourself to the client, extending your hand for handshake. Place your left hand firmly over her right hand without losing eye contact or hesitating in your introduction (4-5 seconds).

2. As client nears office door, usher her down the hall ahead of you and place your hand and wrist on her back and shoulder as you tell her where to go and/or which seat to take (about 10 seconds). You should sit close enough to the client to allow easy reaching to touch.

3. Ten to 15 minutes into the interview, place your hand on client's lower arm for about 4-6 seconds. Hold fairly firmly unless the client shows discomfort, in which case, remove your hand. Avoid touching when client is extremely emotional since such a situation probably will not occur for all clients.

4. Twenty-five to 30 minutes into the interview, place your hand over the back of the client's hand and hold firmly for 2-3 seconds. Again, avoid strongly emotional situations, perhaps pairing the touch with an interruption to ask for clarification or to reflect or summarize.

5. Forty to 45 minutes into the interview, terminate. Place your hand and arm on the client's upper back or shoulder as she leaves and go out the door and down the hall with her (about 10 seconds) (p. 172).

During the interview, "the counselors used reflection of feelings as the basic technique with the assumption that the client would choose content appropriate for her" (p. 174; italics added). What other techniques, if any, were ever used is never specified. Nor is it specified if client permission was sought and/or gained to audiotape the counseling session although the sessions were indeed taped. At some unspecified time after the interview, both the counselor and the client completed the Relationship Questionnaire. The Relationship Questionnaire is an
instrument based on the Barrett-Lennard (1962) Relationship Inventory which was "designed to assess the attitudes that the counselor or client thought that the counselor was expressing during the interview" (Pattison, 1973, p. 174) but on which no reliability data are available. The Relationship Questionnaire and judges' ratings of the audiotapes for depth of client self-exploration were Pattison's (1973) dependent measures. The results indicated that only on the judges' ratings of the depth of client self-exploration was there a significant difference between the touch and the no-touch conditions: clients who were touched engaged in more self-exploration than clients who were not touched. Touch made no significant difference in terms of clients' or counselors' perceptions of the relationship conditions offered by the counselor during the interview. Nor were there any counselor or interaction effects. Nevertheless, in spite of these results and in spite of the limitations of her design (subjects of only one sex, only one counselor of each sex, sorely constricted sample size, relatively questionable dependent measures, possible ethical improprieties), Pattison (1973) noted that client comments in and out of the interview about having been touched and observations of clients who were touched indicated that there was some kind of meaningful impact on the client in terms of rapport building (p. 173). With somewhat more prudence, Pattison (1973) concluded her discussion with the observation that perhaps before dwelling on the "whys" of the importance of touch, further experimental research should be conducted to establish its real effects (p. 174).

Fisher et al. (1976) were interested in the effect being touched in an accidental way had upon subsequent evaluations of the setting in which the touch had taken place. The study was conducted in a university library. Male and female library clerks were taught to either touch or not touch the hands of students who were checking out books. The touch involved was a very brief one: the library clerk made contact with the student's hand for approximately one-half second as the student's identification card was being returned. After each student
had left the check-out desk, s/he was approached by an experimenter (sex unspecified) who asked the subject to complete a questionnaire concerning the library and its personnel. Although the questionnaire was not specifically related to the subject's being touched by the clerk, the effects of that touch were evident—at least for the women subjects. The women who had been touched by the library clerk reported feeling generally more positive than did the women who were not so touched. Further, the women who had been touched reacted more favorably toward both the library setting and the particular clerk with whom she had interacted than did the women who had not been touched. In contrast, for the male subjects, being touched seemed to have little effect. Nor did the sex of the library clerk seem to have an effect. Of particular interest, however, is the fact that many of the subjects reported that they were unaware of having been touched by the clerk. Nevertheless, the students who were unaware of having been touched reacted in the same manner as the subjects who indicated that they were aware of having been touched.

Kleinke (1977) conducted two field experiments specifically dealing with the effects of touching, eye gaze, and physical proximity on compliance behavior. In the first study, female experimenters approached male subjects and asked them if they had found a dime in a telephone booth. The experimenter either approached the subject at a distance of 1 1/2 ft. and touched him or approached the subject at a distance of 3 ft. and did not touch him, and either gazed or did not gaze at him. In the second study, female experimenters approached male and female subjects and asked the subjects to lend them a dime. Again the experimenters approached the subjects at distances of 1 1/2 or 3 ft., touching them or not touching them, respectively, and gazing or not gazing at them. In both studies, the results indicated that subjects who were touched were more compliant than those who were not; that is, the subjects who were touched either returned more dimes or lent more dimes to the experimenters than did the subjects who were not touched. Unfortunately, the results are limited in that (a) the touching manipulation was confounded with the distance manipulation in an incomplete design, (b) the
experimenters were all of one sex, female, and, (c) in the first study, only male subjects were employed.

Staneski et al. (1977) conducted an investigation specifically involving an opening handshake. Videotapes were made of male actors playing the roles of interviewers and of job applicants in an interview for the position of research assistant. During the 4-minute interview, the interviewers either touched the job applicants or did not touch them, either used or did not use the job applicant's first name, and were presented as being in an ingratiating or a noningratiating position with regard to the job applicant. The videotapes were shown to 38 males and 52 female introductory psychology students for affective ratings of the interviewers and job applicants. Interviewer touching did not have a significant effect on the ratings given to the interviewers, but it did influence the ratings given to the job applicants. When an interviewer who was initially described as uninterested in a job applicant shook the applicant's hand, the applicant was evaluated as more sincere and as liking the interviewer more, but also as less intelligent and somewhat less polite. Staneski et al. (1977) concluded that the behaviors of the interviewers could influence the perceptions others have of the interviewers and of the job applicants. This study is limited, however, in that only males were used in the roles of interviewer and job applicant. More importantly, the study is limited in that, intuitively, being touched is not the same as watching someone else be touched.

Whitcher and Fisher (1979) conducted a field study in a hospital setting to examine the effect of nurses touching clients on client affect prior to and during recovery from elective surgery. Nineteen male and 29 female patients who entered a hospital for elective surgery were employed as subjects. Female nurses served as the experimenters. Prior to the surgery, the nurses conducted briefing sessions for the patients regarding the surgery. At the start of this briefing session, the nurse momentarily touched one of the hands of the subjects in the experimental groups. At about the midpoint of the session, the nurse rested her hand on the subject's arm for approximately one minute. At the end of the session, the nurse gave the subject reading material regarding the
surgery. After the surgery had taken place and while the subject was still in the recovery room, a number of physiological measures were recorded. When the subject had left the recovery room, but before s/he left the hospital, s/he was asked to complete a number of rating forms.

The results of this study are equivocal at best. A number of measures, including subject-rated satisfaction with the briefing session, subject-rated attraction toward the nurse, and most of the physiological measures, showed no differences between the experimental and the control groups. On subject-rated affect concerning the surgery and on a measure of the amount of reading material actually read, a significant main effect for touch was obtained. However, a sex of subject by touch manipulation interaction was also obtained such that females who were touched responded most favorably and males who were touched responded least favorably of all the groups.

Alagna et al. (1979) used a counseling analogue study to investigate the effects of the use of touch gestures by counselors on client evaluative responses to counseling experience. Fifty-three male and 55 female undergraduates volunteered to participate in a study of career counseling techniques. Two male and 2 female doctoral students served as the counselors. The subjects were randomly assigned to touch-no touch and sex of counselor conditions. In the touch condition, the counselor touched the client five separate times: once to begin the interview, three times during the interview, and once to end the interview. In the no touch condition, the counselors avoided all bodily contact with the subjects. In all conditions, the counselors followed a script which engaged the subjects in discussion of and reflection on career interests, plans, and aspirations. Following the interview, the subjects completed a modified version of the Semantic Differential Scale (Osgood, Suci & Tannenbaum, 1957) with reference to the counseling experience.

The results indicated a significant main effect for touch. Specifically, clients who were touched rated the counseling experience more positively than the no touch controls. However, a three-way interaction involving touch condition, sex of subject, and sex of counselor also emerged. The exact nature of this interaction was not specified by
Shirley (1980) employed counseling analogue methodology to explore the effects of the use of one type of interpersonal touch, the opening handshake, on client perceptions of counselor expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness. The Shirley (1980) investigation involved a completely randomized $2 \times 3 \times 2 \times 2$ partial hierarchical design (Kirk, 1968). The four fixed effects factors were counselor sex, individual counselor (three levels), subject sex, and touch manipulation. Shirley (1980) employed 108 male and 121 female undergraduates as client-subjects and 3 male and 3 female advanced undergraduates as confederate-counselors. The subjects were recruited to take part in an experiment allegedly designed to train peer counselors. When the subject arrived for her/his interview, s/he was met by a counselor who either did or did not proffer a handshake, depending on the touch condition. Then, prior to any actual counseling interaction, the subject was asked to rate the counselor s/he had just met on the Counselor Rating Form (CRF; Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976) under pretext of providing initial impression data. When the subject had completed the CRF, the experiment was terminated and the subject was debriefed.

Shirley's (1980) results indicated that there was no significant main effect due to touch condition. There was, however, a significant touch condition by sex of subject interaction such that females who were touched rated the counselors most favorably while males who were touched rated the counselors least favorably of all the groups.

**Summary of the findings regarding touch**

The experimental research published to date on the effects of interpersonal touch is, it should be evident, quite limited. The research tends to indicate that being touched can alter one's perceptions (Alagna et al., 1979; Fishor et al., 1976; Shirley, 1980; Staneski et al., 1977; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979) and behavior (Aguilera, 1967; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Kleinke, 1977; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979) although the results of being touched may be partially determined by one's sex (Alagna et al., 1979; Fisher et al., 1976; Shirley, 1980; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979). The results also seem to indicate that the effects of touch are
in the directions implicitly predicted by Strong's (1968, 1978; Strong & Matross, 1973) interpersonal influence model of counseling in that touch enhances the perceptions the person being touched has of the person who does the touching (Fisher et al., 1976; Shirley, 1980; Staneski et al., 1977; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979) and enhances the "power" the person who does the touching appears to have in terms of inducing behavior change in the person touched (Aguilera, 1967; Alagna et al., 1979; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Kleinke, 1977). Unfortunately, due to the weaknesses of the studies on which these conclusions are based, the reliance one can have in these assertions is sorely constricted. More importantly, no definitive statement about the effects of specific types or specific amounts of touch on client perceptions of the counselor's credibility and attractiveness can be made. The present investigation is an attempt to help rectify such a situation.
OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

This study was a one-interview counseling analogue (Helms, 1976) directed at determining the effects of different levels of interpersonal touch, client sex and counselor sex on client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness. Subjects briefly interacted with a confederate-counselor who implemented either an early-touch, a late-touch, a multi-touch, or a no-touch manipulation. Subjects were then asked to fill out a counselor rating form under the pretext of giving the counselor feedback regarding his/her performance in the counseling interaction. When they had completed the dependent measure, the subjects were debriefed and dismissed.

On the basis of the foregoing literature review, the following predictions were advanced concerning the effects of interpersonal touch, client sex and counselor sex on client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness:

1. Presence of interpersonal touch would enhance client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness. There would be no differences among the early-touch, late-touch, and multi-touch conditions.

2. Male counselors would be perceived as more credible than female counselors. There would be no difference in terms of perceived attractiveness.

3. Female clients would rate counselors higher in credibility and attractiveness than would male clients.
METHOD
Design

A completely randomized $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 4$ partial hierarchical design was employed in this study (Kirk, 1968). The four fixed effect factors were counselor sex, subject sex, individual counselor, and touch manipulation (four levels), respectively. Individual counselor was nested in counselor sex; all other factors were crossed. The dependent variables were perceived counselor expertness, perceived counselor attractiveness, and perceived counselor trustworthiness as measured by the Counselor Rating Form (CRF; Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976).

Subjects

Subjects were 80 male and 80 female Caucasian American undergraduate students at Iowa State University who received course credit in their psychology classes for their participation in the study. Male and female subjects were randomly assigned to experimental conditions based on counselor sex, individual counselor, and touch condition. There were 5 subjects in each of the 32 cells of the design.

Counselors

Two male and two female Caucasian American advanced undergraduate students at Iowa State University served as the counselors in exchange for independent study credit. The counselors received 10 hours of training in implementing the experimental conditions from the author prior to the actual running of subjects. The training sessions involved demonstrations of the procedure and a number of role plays of the interview to insure that the touch manipulations were administered uniformly and that the behavior of the counselors was otherwise similar in the experimental and control groups.

Dependent Measure

The Counselor Rating Form (CRF; Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976) was used to assess subjects’ perceptions of the counselors. Barak and LaCrosse (1975) selected 36 adjectives that reached inter-judge agreement of 75% for inclusion on the CRF. Twelve adjectives represented each of three dimensions: perceived counselor expertness, perceived counselor attractiveness, and perceived counselor trustworthi-
ness. Seven-point bipolar scales (using the 36 adjectives and their opposites) were constructed, and 202 subjects' ratings of three counselors were elicited. Factor analysis of these ratings indicated that the items representing expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness separated into three respective factors. LaCrosse and Barak (1976) found interitem reliability coefficients of .874, .850, and .908 for expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness, respectively. With a sample highly similar to the one in the current investigation, Shirley (1980) reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of reliability of .92, .89, and .93 for the expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness scales of the CRF, respectively. LaCrosse and Barak (1976) and Shirley (1980) also found moderate to high levels of intercorrelation between the three dimensions. Analyses of variance, however, revealed that the CRF distinguished both within and between counselors (LaCrosse & Barak, 1976). Studies using the CRF have demonstrated reliable differences in perceived expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness as a function of appropriate experimental manipulations (e.g., Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; Corrigan, 1978; Heppner & Dixon, 1978; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976; Shirley, 1980; to name but a few).

Procedure

Subjects were recruited to take part in an experiment allegedly designed to help train peer counselors. They were informed that they would meet with a person who was in training to be a peer counselor. They were further informed that they would be asked (a) to discuss their vocational interests, plans, and aspirations during a 10-minute interview with the counselor and (b) to allow their discussion to be taped. The vocational focus was selected because it was assumed to be of interest to most students. Complete confidentiality was assured.

Each day before the sessions took place, the experimenter provided the counselors with a list of the first names of their clients and the manipulation to be employed in each case. When the subjects arrived for their appointment, each was given a statement to read which ostensibly discussed the purpose of the study (i.e., to train peer counselors) and which encouraged their active participation. The subjects were also
asked to sign a form giving the counselor permission to audiotape the interview. If any subject declined to give such permission, they were allowed to participate without taping, if they so desired. Once the forms were completed, the experimenter directed the subject to the office in which the counselor was waiting.

In all of the interviews, the counselors followed a script which engaged the subject in discussion of and reflection on career interests, plans and aspirations. In the experimental groups, in addition to this basic format, the subjects were touched by the counselor in the manner discussed below. During the interaction, the counselor maintained eye-contact, body-orientation, vocal intonation, and other nonverbal cues at the appropriate levels attained during the training sessions.

After approximately 10 minutes of interaction, the counselor terminated the interview by indicating it was time to close and that it had been a real pleasure talking to the client. The counselor then asked the client to wait in the interview room until the counselor's supervisor (the experimenter) came in to talk to the client for a few minutes. The counselor then left the room.

Shortly after the counselor had left the room, the experimenter entered and identified himself as the counselor's supervisor. The experimenter asked the client to fill out the CRF, explaining that it would be used to give feedback to the counselor. The experimenter assured the client of complete confidentiality and indicated that the counselor would never see the client's individual responses. When the subject had completed the CRF, or when s/he refused to do so, the experimenter debriefed and then dismissed the subject.

**Touch manipulations**

Four levels of touch were used: an early (ET) touch condition, a late (LT) touch condition, a multi-touch (MT) condition, and a no (NT) touch control condition.

In the ET condition, the counselor proffered the client a handshake when the client first entered the interview room. In the LT condition, the counselor proffered the client a handshake at the end of the interaction, just before the counselor left the interview room. In the MT
condition, the counselor proffered the client a handshake at the begin­ning and at the end of the interaction. In the NT control condition, the counselor never proffered the client a handshake.
RESULTS

Reliability of the Counselor Rating Form

The reliability of the three scales of the Counselor Rating Form was estimated by the computation of coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951) pooled across all 160 subjects who completed the measure after correction for mean differences between the 32 cells of the completely randomized $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 4$ partial hierarchical design. Alpha coefficients of .82, .78, and .80 were obtained for the expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness scales, respectively. These are lower than the split-half estimates of the reliabilities of the scales reported by LaCrosse and Barak (1976) which were .87, .85, and .91, respectively. The alpha coefficients obtained in the present investigation are also lower than the alpha coefficients reported by Shirley (1980) for a similar sample of subjects. Shirley (1980) reported alpha coefficients of .92, .89, and .93 for the expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness scales, respectively.

Intercorrelations Among the Dependent Measures

Pearson product-moment coefficients of correlation were computed for each pair of the three dependent measures pooled across all 160 subjects after correction for mean differences between the 32 cells of the $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 4$ completely randomized partial hierarchical design. These correlation coefficients are presented in Table 6. All three measures were significantly and positively correlated. To facilitate comparison, the alpha coefficients for each scale are given in parentheses along the main diagonal of Table 6. The intercorrelations among the dependent measures are all substantially higher than those reported by LaCrosse and Barak (1976) but lower than those reported by Shirley (1980) for a similar sample of subjects.

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on the Counselor Rating Form

It will be recalled that a completely randomized $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 4$ partial hierarchical design was employed in this study (Kirk, 1968). The four fixed effect factors were counselor sex, subject sex, individual counselor, and touch manipulation (four levels), respectively. Individual counselor was nested in counselor sex; all other factors
Table 6
Intercorrelation Matrix for the Three Scales of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expertness</th>
<th>Attractiveness</th>
<th>Trustworthiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expertness</td>
<td>(.82)</td>
<td>.747*</td>
<td>.769*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.861*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.80)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Cronbach's coefficient alpha values are given along the diagonal.

*P < .0001.
were crossed. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) based on this model was conducted on the perceived counselor dimensions of expertness, attractiveness and trustworthiness. The MANOVA yielded significant main effects for sex of counselor, $F (3, 128) = 13.42, p < .0001$, and for individual counselor, $F (6, 250) = 9.35, p < .0001$. There were no other significant main or interaction effects. These two effects are discussed, in turn, below.

**Main effect: sex of counselor**

Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations generated by the male and female counselors on the three scales of the CRF. It should be recalled that the scores on the CRF scales may range from 12 to 84, with higher scores representing more positive evaluations. Male counselors were rated as (a) more expert, $F (1, 128) = 7.69, p < .0064$, (b) more attractive, $F (1, 128) = 36.30, p < .0001$, and, (c) more trustworthy, $F (1, 128) = 14.07 = p < .0003$, than were the female counselors. These effects must be qualified, however, in light of the main effect for the individual counselor discussed below.

**Main effect: individual counselor**

Table 8 presents the means and standard deviations generated by the individual counselors on the three scales of the CRF. Again it should be noted that the scores may range from 12 to 84, with higher scores representing more positive evaluations. Individual counselors were differentially perceived in terms of (a) expertness, $F (2, 128) = 16.64, p < .0001$, (b) attractiveness, $F (2, 128) = 13.70, p < .0001$, and, (c) trustworthiness, $F (2, 128) = 3.57, p < .0309$. To further explicate the nature of these differential perceptions, Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference test (HSD; Tukey, 1953, as cited in Kirk, 1968) was used to carry out a posteriori pairwise comparisons between the means on each scale of the CRF. Through the use of superscripts, Table 8 indicates which means differed.

**Univariate Analyses of Variance on the Counselor Rating Form**

In spite of the fact that the three scales of the CRF have consistently been shown to be significantly and positively correlated (Corrigan, 1978; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976; McCarthy, 1979; Shirley, 1980;
Table 7
Means and Standard Deviations Generated by Male and Female Counselors on the Three Scales of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertness</td>
<td>64.34</td>
<td>7.72</td>
<td>61.01</td>
<td>9.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>69.70</td>
<td>7.52</td>
<td>62.40</td>
<td>9.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>71.34</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>67.16</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8
Means and Standard Deviations Generated by the Individual Counselors on the Three Scales of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselor (Sex)</th>
<th>Expertness</th>
<th></th>
<th>Attractiveness</th>
<th></th>
<th>Trustworthiness</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 (F)</td>
<td>Expertness</td>
<td>56.68&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.84</td>
<td>58.80&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.87</td>
<td>65.70&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 (F)</td>
<td>Attractiveness</td>
<td>65.35&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>66.00&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>68.63&lt;sup&gt;bc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C3 (M)</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>62.08&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>67.03&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8.19</td>
<td>69.83&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C4 (M)</td>
<td>66.60&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>72.38&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>72.85&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Under each scale, those means which share a common superscript do not significantly differ. The .05 alpha level of significance was adopted for the set of all possible pairwise comparisons using Tukey's HSD test.
the present investigation), there is evidence that the three scales are, indeed, independent (Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; Kleinke & Tully, 1979; Nilsson, Strassberg & Bannon, 1979; Strahan & Shirley, Note 2). Therefore, it was decided to perform univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) on each of the three scales of the CRF based on the completely randomized 2 x 2 x 2 x 4 partial hierarchical design of the investigation. Tables 9, 10 and 11 present summaries of the ANOVAs on the expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness scales of the CRF, respectively.

Examination of Tables 9, 10 and 11 reveals that the ANOVAs mirror the MANOVA in that, on each of the scales, a significant main effect for the sex of the counselor factor and a significant main effect for the individual counselor factor are obtained. These effects have been discussed above. The ANOVAs diverge from the MANOVA in that, for the expertness scale of the CRF, significant interaction effects involving the (a) touch manipulation by sex of counselor, (b) touch manipulation by sex of subject by sex of counselor, and, (c) touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor factors are obtained. These interaction effects are discussed below.

**Perceived counselor expertness: interaction effects**

On the dimension of perceived counselor expertness, significant interaction effects emerged for (a) the touch manipulation by sex of counselor factor, $F(3, 128) = 3.10, p < .0288$, (b) the touch manipulation by sex of subject by sex of counselor factor, $F(3, 129) = 2.79, p < .0423$, and, (c) the touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor factor, $F(6, 128) = 2.53, p < .0348$.

Table 12 presents the means and standard deviations generated by the touch manipulation by sex of counselor interaction for the expertness scale of the CRF. Tukey's HSD test was employed to make a posteriori comparisons between the means. The .05 alpha level of significance was adopted for the set of all possible pairwise comparisons between the four touch manipulation by sex of counselor means. Through the use of superscripts, Table 12 indicates which means differed. Male counselors who employed either a no touch or a late touch manipulation were perceived as more expert than female counselors who employed an early
Table 9  
Summary of the ANOVA of the Expertness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>$w^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Touch Manipulation (T)</td>
<td>230.60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Subject (A)</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Counselor (B)</td>
<td>442.23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>.0064</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Counselor (C)</td>
<td>1914.63</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.64</td>
<td>.0001</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T \times A$</td>
<td>94.70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T \times B$</td>
<td>535.08</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>.0288</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T \times C$</td>
<td>514.18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A \times B$</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$A \times C$</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T \times A \times B$</td>
<td>482.28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.0423</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$T \times A \times C$</td>
<td>810.88</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>.0348</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Error**                       | 7365.20| 128|       |      |       |

*Note.* $w^2$ (omega-square) was computed only for those effects reaching conventional levels of significance.
Table 10

Summary of the ANOVA of the Attractiveness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>w²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tocuh Manipulation (T)</td>
<td>212.05</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Subject (A)</td>
<td>14.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Counselor (B)</td>
<td>2131.60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36.30</td>
<td>.0001</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Counselor (C)</td>
<td>1609.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.70</td>
<td>.0001</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A</td>
<td>189.65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x B</td>
<td>420.55</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x C</td>
<td>205.95</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A x B</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A x E</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A x B</td>
<td>332.75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A x E</td>
<td>579.35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>7516.80</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. w² (omega-square) was computed only for those effects reaching conventional levels of significance.
Table 11
Summary of the ANOVA of the Trustworthiness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>(w^2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Touch Manipulation (T)</td>
<td>236.90</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Subject (A)</td>
<td>30.63</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Counselor (B)</td>
<td>697.23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.07</td>
<td>.0003</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Counselor (C)</td>
<td>354.13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.0309</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A</td>
<td>199.88</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x B</td>
<td>338.28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x C</td>
<td>141.28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A x B</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A x C</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A x B</td>
<td>126.60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T x A x C</td>
<td>566.28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>6344.80</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \(w^2\) (omega-square) was computed only for those effects reaching conventional levels of significance.
Table 12
Means and Standard Deviations for the Touch Manipulation by Sex of Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of Counselor</th>
<th>Touch Manipulation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NT</td>
<td>ET</td>
<td>LT</td>
<td>MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>66.50&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>64.00&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>66.10&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>60.75&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>7.02</td>
<td>7.98</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>8.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>61.85&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>57.95&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>60.55&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>63.70&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>9.28</td>
<td>10.19</td>
<td>9.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means which share a common superscript do not significantly differ. The .05 alpha level of significance was adopted for the set of all possible pairwise comparisons using Tukey's HSD test.
touch manipulation. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of this touch manipulation by sex of counselor interaction. The interpretation of this interaction must be qualified, however, in light of the higher-order interactions discussed below.

Table 13 presents the means and standard deviations generated by the touch manipulation by sex of subject by sex of counselor interaction for the expertness scale of the CRF. Tukey's HSD test was employed to make a posteriori comparisons between the means. The .05 alpha level of significance was adopted for the set of all possible pairwise comparisons between the 16 touch manipulation by sex of subject by sex of counselor means. None of the 120 pairwise comparisons attained significance. Figure 2, below, is a graphic representation of this touch manipulation by sex of subject by sex of counselor interaction. The interpretation of this interaction must be qualified, though, in light of the touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor interaction discussed below.

Table 14 presents the means and standard deviations generated by the touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor interaction for the expertness scale of the CRF. Tukey's HSD test was employed to make a posteriori comparisons between the means. The .05 alpha level of significance was adopted for the set of all possible pairwise comparisons between the 32 touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor means. None of the possible 496 pairwise comparisons attained significance. Figure 3 is a graphic representation of the touch manipulation by sex of subject by individual counselor interaction.
Figure 1

Touch Manipulation by Sex of Counselor Interaction

on the Expertness Scale of the CRF
Table 13
Means and Standard Deviations for the Touch Manipulation by Sex of Subject by Sex of Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Touch Manipulation</th>
<th>Male Counselors</th>
<th>Female Counselors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Subjects</td>
<td>Female Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>64.50</td>
<td>68.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>61.90</td>
<td>66.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>5.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>67.20</td>
<td>65.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>8.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>63.20</td>
<td>58.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>9.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2

Touch Manipulation by Sex of Subject by Sex of Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF
Table 14
Means and Standard Deviations for the Touch Manipulation by Sex of Subject by Individual Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Touch Manipulation</th>
<th>Male Subjects</th>
<th>Female Subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>C2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>59.80</td>
<td>69.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ET</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>55.60</td>
<td>61.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>5.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>53.40</td>
<td>63.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>8.26</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>58.20</td>
<td>68.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>11.65</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 3

Touch Manipulation by Sex of Subject by Individual Counselor Interaction on the Expertness Scale of the CRF
DISCUSSION

In an attempt to provide some data concerning the effects of interpersonal touch in a counseling setting not available from earlier work, the present investigation explored the effects of various levels of touch on client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness. The major hypothesis put forward in the introduction to this investigation, that the presence of interpersonal touch would enhance client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness, was not supported. Interpersonal touch was, however, implicated in various interaction effects involving perceived counselor expertness. The predicted main effect for the sex of the counselor attained significance while the predicted main effect for the sex of the subject failed to do so, both results providing corroboration for some previous work while questioning other prior investigations. The presence of a significant individual counselor main effect and the emergence of impressive reliability coefficients for the dependent measures adds support to the arguments put forward by previous authors. Finally, a comparison of the results of the present investigation with those reported by Shirley (1980) highlights some of the difficulties encountered in this area of research as both studies employed similar subject populations and the same counselor-confederates but yielded divergent results.

The Counselor Rating Form

As in previous research (e.g., Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976; Shirley, 1980; Torresdal, 1979) the Counselor Rating Form yielded impressive indices of reliability. Since Cronbach's coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1951), a measure of homogeneity, was used, it can be argued that the scales of the CRF meet a necessary, but not sufficient, characteristic of a scale designed to measure a unitary trait (Brown, 1976). The present results can, therefore, be interpreted as further evidence that the CRF is a reliable measure for use in counseling settings and related research.

The continued documentation of significant positive intercorrelations between the scales of the CRF raises questions as to whether three dimensions (expertness, attractiveness, and trustworthiness) or one (e.g.,
counselor credibility) are being measured. The evidence regarding this question is mixed. On the one hand, correlational analyses (e.g., Barak & LaCrosse, 1975; Corrigan, 1978; LaCrosse & Barak, 1976; Shirley, 1980; the present investigation) seem to argue for an interpretation calling for one, and only one, dimension as they indicate moderate to high levels of correlation among the three scales. On the other hand, certain means analyses (e.g., Barak & LaCrosse, 1975, 1977; Claiborn & Schmidt, 1977; Kerr & Dell, 1976; the present investigation) seem to indicate that the CRF is capable of discriminating both among counselors and within an individual counselor on the various dimensions. This issue is discussed in detail elsewhere (Strahan & Shirley, Note 2). Strahan and Shirley (Note 2) argue that the means analyses indicate that the three scales of the CRF provide enough distinct information to be kept separate. However, Strahan and Shirley (Note 2) also warn that researchers should remain cognizant of the significant positive interrelatedness of the scales.

The Individual Counselor Main Effect

The emergence of a significant main effect for the individual counselor replicates the work of Shirley (1980) and adds further credence to the argument put forward by a number of authors (e.g., Parloff et al., 1978; Strupp, 1978): "therapists cannot be regarded as interchangeable units that deliver a standard treatment in uniform quantity or quality" (Strupp, 1978, p. 8). The present findings thus raise questions about prior investigations into perceived counselor credibility (e.g., Siegel & Sell, 1978), perceived counselor attractiveness (e.g., Cash et al., 1975), and interpersonal touch (e.g., Jourard & Friedman, 1970) that have used one counselor or one counselor of each sex as the stimulus person(s).

More importantly, the present findings regarding a significant main effect for the individual counselor, when viewed in conjunction with the results of the Shirley (1980) investigation raise questions regarding counseling research in general. Although the Shirley (1980) study and the present investigation employed the same individuals as counselor-confederates, and although both report a significant main effect for the individual counselor, the nature of that main effect was different from
from the one study to the other. The individual counselor-confederates were not only perceived differentially in both studies, but each individual counselor was perceived differentially from one study to the other. This implies that perceptions of the same counselor may change from one point in time to another, even under controlled laboratory settings. One must then wonder about the validity of counseling data collected over any extended period of time, no matter how short.

In sum, the emergence of a significant individual counselor main effect in the present investigation adds credence to the argument that future investigations incorporate the individual counselor as an important source of variance (cf. Shirley, 1980).

The Sex of the Counselor Main Effect

As predicted in the introduction to this investigation, the male counselors were perceived as more credible than the female counselors. Contrary to the prediction put forward in the introduction, the male counselors were also perceived as more attractive than the female counselors. It had been predicted that, in terms of attractiveness, the male and female counselors would not be differentially perceived.

The present findings regarding the sex of the counselor main effect are in accord with the results reported by others (e.g., Bloom et al., 1977; Brooks, 1974; Dell & Schmidt, 1976; Merluzzi et al., 1978; Shirley, 1980) which indicate that the sex of the counselor is an important variable in investigations involving client perceptions of counselor attributes. Unfortunately, the results of these investigations are inconsistent with regards to the specific effect the sex of the counselor has on client perceptions. In the present investigation, as in the Brooks (1974) and the Dell and Schmidt (1976) studies, male counselors were perceived more favorably than female counselors. In other investigations, however, female counselors have been perceived more favorably (Bloom et al., 1977; Shirley, 1980).

In sum, the results of the present investigation indicate that future studies ought to evaluate the effects of the sex of the counselor (cf. Rumenik et al., 1977).
The Interpersonal Touch Manipulation

Contrary to the prediction put forward in the introduction to the present investigation, the presence of interpersonal touch did not enhance client perceptions of counselor credibility and attractiveness. The failure of the touch manipulation to emerge as a significant main effect replicates the findings of Fisher et al. (1976), Jourard and Friedman (1970), Pattison (1973), and Shirley (1980). On the other hand, the failure of the touch manipulation to emerge as a significant main effect contradicts the results reported by Aguilera (1967), Alagna et al. (1979), Kleinke (1977), Staneski et al. (1977), and Whitcher and Fisher (1979). Since tabulating negative and positive results to arrive at some type of overall "box score" is, at best, of dubious value, at present the most that can be said is that the effects of interpersonal touch remain to be explicated. Some speculation as to why various authors obtain divergent results might, however, be profitably advanced.

Eighty percent of the investigations reporting no significant main effect for interpersonal touch (Fisher et al., 1976; Jourard & Friedman, 1970; Shirley, 1980; the present investigation) involved manipulations consisting of the occurrence of one touch at the initiation and/or termination of an interaction. On the other hand, 60% of the investigations reporting a significant main effect for interpersonal touch (Aguilera, 1967; Alagna et al., 1979; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979) involved manipulations of consisting of many occurrences of touch at various points during an interaction. It could be that isolated instances of touch do not convey the same meaning to the recipients of the touch as do many instances of touch. Or it could be that touch used to initiate and/or terminate an interaction conveys a different meaning than touch used to punctuate an interaction.

The hypothesis that manipulations involving one occurrence of interpersonal touch do not convey the same meanings as manipulations involving many occurrences of touch may be partially addressed by the present study. A post hoc comparison of the early touch (ET) and late touch (LT) conditions, both of which involved one and only one touch, with the multi-touch (MT) condition, which involved two occurrences of touch, indicated no
significant difference. Thus, the aforementioned hypothesis seems unsupported. However, no definitive decision should be made on the basis of this one test.

Another tenable explanation for the divergent findings on interpersonal touch involves the subject populations involved in the diverse investigations. All of the studies which report no significant main effect for interpersonal touch employed undergraduate students. To the contrary, 60% of the investigations reporting a significant main effect for touch (Aguilera, 1967; Kleinke, 1977; Whitcher & Fisher, 1979) employed a noncollege student population.

Yet a third tenable hypothesis for the divergent findings involves the status correlates of interpersonal touch. All of the studies which report a significant main effect for interpersonal touch involved interactions between two people of unequal status. Forty percent of the investigations which report no significant main effect for interpersonal touch (Shirley, 1980; the present investigation) involved interactions between individuals of equal status. Perhaps as Henley (1973a, 1973b, 1977) suggests, status is the key determinant of who touches whom and of how such touching is interpreted.

The touch manipulation did enter into interaction effects in the present study, but only on the dimension of perceived counselor expertise. The interaction of a touch manipulation with some other factor is a finding common to the results reported by Aguilera (1967), Alagna et al. (1979), Fisher et al. (1976), Jourard and Friedman (1970), Shirley (1980), and Whitcher and Fisher (1979). The nature of these interactions differ from study to study and defy simple summarization. For the most part, the interactions, seem to involve the sex of the person who does the touching and/or the sex of the recipient of the touch with the touch manipulation. Typically, females are implicated in more favorable responses to touch.

The failure of the touch manipulation to emerge as a significant factor in the present investigation is particularly unsettling in light of the results presented by Shirley (1980) using a similar subject population and the same counselor-confederates. Shirley (1980) found a significant
touch manipulation by sex of subject interaction on all three dimensions of the CRF. In the Shirley (1980) investigation, the subjects did not interact with the confederate-counselors for any appreciable amount of time. In the present investigation, there was a 10 to 15 minute interaction. It would seem that the lack of other evidence of credibility and attractiveness on the part of the counselor-confederates in the Shirley (1980) study caused the touch manipulation to have a saliency it did not enjoy in the present work.

The results of the present investigation, in conjunction with the results of previous investigations, raise some questions of a practical nature with regard to the use of interpersonal touch. It appears that the research to date supports neither LaRusso (1977) and Key (1975), who argue that it is the therapist's role to use interpersonal touch, nor Corey et al. (1979), who argue that therapists should not employ touch in a counseling interaction. What then is the practicing clinician to do? It is the view of the present author that therapists should make judicious use of interpersonal touch if, and only if, they personally feel comfortable with the responsibility the use of touch implies. This responsibility entails being "sensitive to each client's readiness for physical closeness and the impact such contact may have on the client" (Corey et al., 1979, p. 148).

The results of the present study also raise questions concerning the training of counselors/therapists. The present findings, in conjunction with previously published results, suggests that "introducing nonverbal communication as a concomitant of relevant graduate programs could produce beneficial results" (Alagna et al., 1979, p. 471). The present results point up the need for such training to strive to inculcate in the trainees a willingness to live with the ambiguities of the current empirical findings rather than a willingness to accept simple, dogmatic statements regarding the effects of nonverbal communication.

Finally, the present investigation highlights the need for more research into the area of interpersonal touch. The failure of current research to explicate the nature of the effects of interpersonal touch should be considered indicative of the complex role interpersonal touch
plays in human communication. It should not be read as a sign that such research is, a priori, worthless and/or impossible to carry out successfully. What seems to be needed is a more concerted effort by concerned researchers to overcome the difficulties that are apparently inherent in such investigations. Perhaps a constructive first step would be a move away from the laboratory setting toward controlled experiments in more realistic field settings.
FOOTNOTES

1. From this point on, the word "behavior" will be used to signify the domain encompassed by the phrase "attitudes, behaviors, cognitions and/or feelings" unless otherwise specified.

2. It should be noted that the interrater reliability for the judges' ratings was .79. However, Pattison (1973) never specifies if the judges were blind to the experimental conditions.

3. It should be noted that the same four undergraduates served as confederates in the Shirley (1980) investigation.

4. LaCrosse and Barak (1976) reported that expertness correlated .58 and .78 with attractiveness and trustworthiness, respectively. Attractiveness correlated .74 with trustworthiness. Shirley (1980) reported the three correlations as .83, .87, and .80, respectively.
REFERENCE NOTES


2. Strahan, R. F. and Shirley, R. J. How distinct are the CRF's three dimensions? Manuscript in preparation.
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APPENDIX A

The Counselor Rating Form

Please rate the counselor you have just met on the following scale.

Unlikeable Likeable
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Selfless Selfish
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Closed Open
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Distant Close
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Inexperienced Experienced
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Enthusiastic Indifferent
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Friendly Unfriendly
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Confident Unsure
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Unappreciative Appreciative
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Stupid Intelligent
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Disrespectful Respectful
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Prepared Unprepared
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Compatible Incompatible
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Honest Dishonest
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
Warm Cold
1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irresponsible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsociable</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insincere</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincere</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logical</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illogical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeable</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreeable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vague</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unattractive</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytic</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diffuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressed</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskillful</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believable</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspicious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrustworthy</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insightful</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insightless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alert</td>
<td>1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unalert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straightforward</td>
<td>Deceitful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1......2......3......4......5......6......7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td>Inexpert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1......2......3......4......5......6......7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>Ignorant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1......2......3......4......5......6......7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undependable</td>
<td>Dependable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1......2......3......4......5......6......7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B
Adjectives on the CRF Defining the Dimension of Perceived Counselor Expertness

Alert—Unalert
Analytic—Diffuse
Clear—Vague
Confident—Unsure
Experienced—Inexperienced
Expert—Inexpert
Informed—Ignorant
Insightful—Insightless
Intelligent—Stupid
Logical—Illogical
Prepared—Unprepared
Skillful—Unskillful
APPENDIX C

Adjectives on the CRF Defining the Dimension of Perceived Counselor Attractiveness

Agreeable—Disagreeable
Appreciative—Unappreciative
Attractive—Unattractive
Casual—Formal
Cheerful—Depressed
Close—Distant
Compatible—Incompatible
Enthusiastic—Indifferent
Friendly—Unfriendly
Likeable—Unlikeable
Sociable—Unsociable
Warm—Cold
APPENDIX D

Adjectives on the CRF Defining the Dimension of Perceived Counselor Trustworthiness

Believable—Suspicious
Dependable—Undependable
Honest—Dishonest
Open—Closed
Reliable—Unreliable
Respectful—Disrespectful
Responsible—Irresponsible
Selfless—Selfish
Sincere—Insincere
Straightforward—Deceitful
Trustworthy—Untrustworthy
Genuine—Phony
APPENDIX E

Instructions to the Subjects

Recent research has shown that peer counselors, if properly trained, may be just as effective as professional counselors in terms of helping other people. For example, peer counselors have been found to be effective in helping college students deal with a number of concerns. A major reason that peer counselors are found to be effective seems to be that they, too, are students. Therefore, they probably live in a similar environment to the students they are counseling. More importantly, the peer counselors have probably had to deal with some of the same concerns the students they are counseling present.

The purpose of this study is to help train students to be peer counselors here at Iowa State. Your task in this study is to serve as pseudo-clients for these students. We are asking you to let one of our potential peer counselors talk to you for about 15 minutes. You are being asked to talk about your vocational interests, plans, and aspirations because a recent survey has indicated that concerns about such matters are common among Iowa State students. We are also asking you to let us tape your interview so that our potential peer counselor may discuss it with his/her supervisor. These tapes will be kept completely confidential and will be destroyed as soon as this study is completed. You may even come watch us destroy the tapes if you so desire.

During your interview with our potential peer counselor, we ask you to be as natural as possible. Also, please be honest. If at any time you want the counselor to turn the tape recorder off, simply tell him/her that and s/he will do so. If you do not wish to answer a question the counselor asks, simply say so. You may ask the counselor to end the interview at any time and s/he will do so.

After your interview is finished, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding your perceptions of the counselor. This questionnaire will be totally confidential. The counselor you talk to will never see your personal comments. The counselor's supervisor will use your questionnaire to give feedback to the counselor on how well s/he did during her/his talk with you. In order to help make our training
program as effective as possible, we ask you to be totally honest on these questionnaires.

If you have any questions at this time, please feel free to ask them now. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in this study.
APPENDIX F

Permission to Tape Interview Form

I, ______________________, give ______________________ permission to tape our interview of __________. I understand that no identifying marks will be made on this tape to protect my anonymity and confidentiality. I also understand that this tape will be destroyed upon completion of this study. Finally, I know that I am permitted to end this interview at any time I so desire.

______________________________
signed

______________________________
date

______________________________
counselor's signature

______________________________
date
APPENDIX G
Script of the Counseling Interaction

The counseling interaction may be thought of as consisting of three stages: an opening, a middle, and a closing (Benjamin, 1974; Brammer & Shostrom, 1977). For purposes of the present study, the opening and closing stages are more important (in terms of being experimentally controlled) than is the middle stage. Furthermore, it is impossible to provide a verbatim prescription for the middle stage of the counseling interaction as this stage, in particular, depends upon the client's individual contribution. Therefore, this script provides a verbatim prescription for the opening and closing stages only. However, the agenda and strategy which will be employed by the counselor during the middle stage is indicated.

Opening stage

When the client has entered the interview room, the counselor will address the client in these words:

Hi, _________. I'm _________. I'll be talking to you today. Have a seat and make yourself comfortable.

As you know, I'm in training to be a peer counselor and the purpose of our talk is to give me some practice. We're supposed to talk about your career plans since that seems to be a major concern among students here at ISU. Why don't you begin by telling me a little about yourself.

Middle stage

During the middle stage of the interaction, the counselor will attempt to have the client discuss and reflect upon his/her vocational interests, plans and aspirations. The counselor will do this by focusing the discussion on topics related to the client's major, his/her likes and dislikes about that major, what the person sees him/herself doing after graduation from school, and, what the person hopes to accomplish in his/her career. While this discussion is taking place, the counselor will maintain "Level 3" empathy and understanding as described by Carkhuff (1969).
**Closing stage**

At the first appropriate point after approximately 10 minutes of interaction, the counselor will terminate the session. S/he will do so by first summarizing what the client has said during the interaction. Then s/he will address the client in these words:

> Well ________, believe it or not but our time is already up. I want to thank you for coming in today. I've really enjoyed talking to you, and I appreciate your sharing with me what you did. Now, I'd just ask you to wait here a few minutes so that my supervisor can come in and talk to you. Thanks, again.