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**HUMOROUS COMMUNICATION
IN CASUAL/WORK RELATIONSHIPS:
SELF-PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING
HUMOR ORIENTATION, LONELINESS
AND VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS**

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Communication

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Maurizio Gagliolo

May, 1999

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the Graduate College,
University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment for the
requirements for the degree Master of Arts,
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Abstract

In order to understand humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness better, 14 faculty members and 25 graduate students from the University of Nebraska at Omaha completed measures of humor orientation (HO), loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness (VA). These individuals were asked to have an acquaintance (as opposed to a close friend or relative) complete an adapted version of the HO scale (HOA). Results indicated that faculty members and graduate students did not significantly differ in HO, loneliness, or HOA, however graduate students were more verbally aggressive than faculty members in 10 different questions concerning VA. No correlation was found between HO and loneliness. No overall correlation was found between self-reported HO and HOA. However, a significant correlation was found between faculty members' HO and their acquaintance's HOA scores. Unexpected significant positive correlations were found between HO and VA for the overall group and the faculty sub-group.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Humor plays many roles in our everyday lives. Incidents involving humor are frequently associated with some sort of smiling or laughter (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991) and may serve as useful ice breakers. We tend to enjoy smiling and laughter and in a sense, we are more socially attracted to individuals who are capable of entertaining us. Displaying humor or wit in a skillful way may reveal an individual's communication competence and social skills (McGhee, 1989). McGhee (1989) states that individuals who use humorous communication as a tool, as opposed to simply using humor as a regular part of communication, are more effective in understanding when and how to use humor to communicate well with others. Understanding the role of humorous communication in casual/work relationships can vary from one social group to another, yet humor is evident in many relationships. For instance, McGhee (1989) suggests that communication competence is related to social attraction and humor. He found that people who are funny are rated as more popular or socially attractive and find it easier to develop friendships.

Although humorous conversation may be more evident in the developmental stages of a relationship and may play a less important role as the relationship develops, it is an important ingredient in many relationships (Foot, 1986; Kane, Suls, & Tedeschi, 1977). These studies suggest that humor is more evident at the start of a casual/work relationship because it is used to form some type of comfort zone and then humorous communication may lessen as a relationship develops. By using humor, people can

"break the ice" and begin communicating easier (Tedeschi, 1977). Humor is recognized as an important behavior and is both effective and necessary in obtaining social/interpersonal competence (Foot, 1986; Kane, Suls, & Tedeschi, 1977). Initiating new relationships whether you are an adult or child can be a difficult task and possessing effective communication skills can make situations easier. Individuals who are less skilled in communicating humor may find it difficult to make friends and become part of a social circle. Lacking humorous communication skills may lead individuals to believe the assertion presented by Murstein and Burst (1985) that "entertainingness is an important dimension of friendship which is directly related to the production of humor" (p. 639).

Humor is a mechanism that is seen by others as a sign of maturity, health, coping, and social competence (Masten, 1986). People who are funny are capable of functioning more efficiently in society. A good sense of humor builds popularity and social attractiveness, making it easier to develop friendships with peers (McGhee, 1989). Individuals recognized by their peers as humorless are liked the least and are less likely to be invited to social events (Masten, 1986; Sherman, 1985). Humor is a form of entertainment that can be found in all stages of relationships: in initial stages, in deepening and maintenance phases, and even in termination (Baxter, 1992), making it an important ingredient of our lives. The present study will explore humorous communication by examining relationships among humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness.

It is important to understand the definition of humor when examining the role it plays in relationships. Humor is defined by The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary as: "That quality of action, speech, or writing, which excites amusement; oddity, jocularly, facetiousness, comicality, fun." This definition can be broadened in

the study of interpersonal communication, in the sense that humor can vary from amusement (Zillman & Stocking, 1976), to coping (Alberts, 1990), to even provoking some conflict (Fine, 1983). These multi-functional meanings give justifiable reasons to explore and understand the role of humor in relationships.

Review of Literature

Researchers have studied humor in many ways. In 1925, Bird, created a way to measure the sense of humor. This measure was tested and re-tested by many other scholars who were also trying to find a correlation between humor and relationships. Bird's measure was the foundation for many other scholars. Humor measures started to emerge from all areas of interest, including studying ethnic groups from all perspectives (McGhee & Duffey, 1983), using humor as a tool in teaching elementary students (Gorham & Christophel, 1990), incorporating humor and personality traits (Ziv, 1984), and factoring group interactions (Ziv, 1984). Humor measures were being developed and tested by many scholars and eventually were related to interpersonal competence (Duran 1983; Graham, Papa, & Brooks, 1992; and Sprowl, 1987). The field of study expanded as researchers tested many variables and correlated them with humor and relationships. These variables included: group interactions, physiological arousal, nonverbal behavior, gender, and persuasion.

People differ in their predisposition to categorize humor so several measures have been developed to analyze humorous messages. Personalities vary from individual to individual, and the same is true for humor. Without developing individualized measures, it would be difficult to categorize humor and study it. The field of study is still growing and scholars are discovering new variables to research correlating humor and its role in relationships.

A measure that is relied on by many scholars was developed in 1991 by Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield. This scale is known as the Humor Orientation Scale (HO) which is a 17 item self-report inventory measure of "individual differences in the

predisposition to use humor" (p. 2). It has been found to be a reliable form of measurement (Cronbach's alpha = .89) because of its consistency across time (S. Booth-Butterfield and M. Butterfield (1989). This scale is intended to be used as a measure associated with personality traits (e.g., "People usually laugh when I tell a joke or story"). The Humor Orientation Scale also measures the different types of humor used in conversation, the level of detail used, the amount of planning for humor, and the situations in which a person will attempt to use humor.

Another measure used by scholars to measure humor is the Situational Humor Response Questionnaire (SHRQ) (Martin & Lefcourt, 1984). This scale differs from the HO scale in that it focuses on the situational perspective of incidents (e.g., "If a waiter spilled a glass of water on your head would you not be amused, or would you laugh heartily?"). The SHRQ measure is reported to be a reliable source in measuring personality traits and individual reactions to different humorous situations (Martin & Lefcourt, 1984).

Functions of Humor in Interpersonal Communication

Humor can be used in many ways to communicate and useful approaches to communicating humor include: social control, attaining status, displaying shyness, exhibiting excitement, exerting power, helping others, publicly disgracing another, engaging in conflict, and displaying masculinity (McAdams, 1988). Humor is a general term and usually denotes anything comical or anything that makes us laugh or smile.

Humorous communication is a way of freely expressing feelings that exhibits generous, benevolent sentiments, which individuals use to communicate their feelings (McAdams, 1988). In some instances as seen by McAdams (1988), benevolence gives individuals the opportunity to release the inner impulse by trusting that spontaneous expression of personal feeling. This type of expression can be good for the individual

and the people around him or her. Some of the functions of humor in communication include: establishing intimacy, being accepted, communicating loneliness, exhibiting joy or excitement, self-disclosure, privately betraying another, separating oneself from others, and displaying femininity (McAdams, 1988). With each of these functional approaches comes the implication that individuals use humorous communication to achieve goals and satisfy needs.

According to Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) humorous communication is typically associated with positive communication attributes. Humor can generate support and approval from peers even though humor may be perceived differently from peer to peer. Humorous enactments are defined by Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) as intentional verbal and nonverbal messages which elicit laughter, chuckling, and/or other forms of spontaneous behavior taken to mean pleasure, delight, and/or surprise in the targeted receiver. These responses can be characterized as positive and in some way desirable for the receiver.

These responses display the strategies used by individuals in everyday interactions. The strategies developed reveal individual accomplishments and goals for interpersonal needs. Thus, humor is a strategy used to reinforce individuality and shape communication habits. Production and deployment of humor are two mechanisms which senders develop over time to help transmit their messages positively. Different levels of humorous communication incorporating timing and production are developed by humorous individuals. Some people are better at enacting humor than others because planning, rehearsing, and modification of humor is taken into consideration (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991). The processing of information is a key factor in producing successful humor. Therefore, a symbolic approach can be taken when examining performance.

When examining performance, it is important to recognize that not all people are seen as funny, whether it is by themselves or others. Humorous messages can be seen as expert and novice by the receivers. Experts are assumed to be skilled in presentation and effectiveness, while novices tend to be inexperienced and tentative. Experts may use humor on a more frequent basis than novices because eliciting laughter may be an easier task. Also, experts may incorporate a greater variety of humor in different situations. Humor performance is preconceived and varies from user to user.

Functions of Humor in Conversation

Researchers have also looked at how humor functions in conversation. Humor is both a mechanism of social control and a device for tension-reducing (Bricker, 1980). Also, humor has been categorized as a group-identity and group inclusion factor. Humor can play an important role in the development of relationships by reducing the social distance between people and creating a sense of unity. Cheatwood (1983) suggested that humor can be used to organize social distance by allowing individuals to both create or decrease distance between themselves. He also explained that humor can become a form of societal play as relationships develop and end. Humorous conversation can also knock down walls by helping individuals communicate better and more openly. Here, values, motives, and intentions are released and the start of a new relationship can develop.

Laughing is an activity that we can all relate to. We occasionally may laugh alone when reading, watching, or listening to something funny, but most of the time we laugh in the presence of others. Social laughter can begin when people organize situations where laughter can be shared. Shared laughter generally starts when one speaker begins to laugh and another speaker joins in rapid succession (Jefferson, Sacks, & Schegloff, 1977). Conversational laughter is organized to some extent. According to Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff (1977), people react differently to laughter in its length, placement,

acoustic shape, and coordination with other bits of conversation. Laughter as a social phenomenon involves a wide range of social reactions; we laugh more easily in a group, for example, than when alone as previously mentioned because sometimes it is merely a social gesture. The joyful laugh, laughing over good humor, commonly occurs when people are in a state of well-being and simply enjoying the presence of other individuals; while the comic laugh is directed at a joke or humorous situation.

Studies on two party conversation have shown that participants routinely create shared laughter through a sequence of first laugh invitation and second laugh response. While two party conversations have a current speaker provide the first laugh, multi-party conversations usually have someone else laugh first, preventing a bias against laughing at one's own humor. This type of distribution reveals that "laughter may be most fully realized in its small group manifestations rather than as a one-to-one phenomenon" (Glenn, 1989, p. 127).

Laughter has been described as a sequence in which a speaker invites a recipient to laugh and the recipient has the opportunity to accept or decline that invitation (Jefferson, 1979). This suggests that when speakers invite recipients to laugh, either the invitation is accepted and returned with a laugh, or the laughing is terminated. Coordination is an element important in conversation and participants should be able to form a mutual understanding of each other. Adding laughter to a conversation can elicit positive effects from both the receiver and recipient.

In addition to laughter in social interactions, laughter among students in the classroom has also been researched. In a number of different social conditions presented by Foot and Chapman (1976), studies on the presence of companions in reference to laughing, smiling, and gender, revealed clear cohort effects (laughing and smiling increased in the presence of companions); gender effects (girls laughed and smiled more in the presence

of boys; while boys were not as affected by the gender of their companions); adult effects (some adults increased and some decreased humorous behaviors); and age effects for boys (more laughing and smiling when in the presence of similar or older companions). Foot and Chapman (1976) conclude that humorous communication is associated with different social contexts and a social setting may have an affect on how humorous communication is perceived.

Humorous contexts at work can help organizations function more efficiently by bringing employees together (Ullian, 1976). Joking among employees can help individuals release tensions and reduce boredom by opening up communication among employees. Ullian (1976) associates humor with ambiguity and intricacy. Subtle humor can cause individuals to become uncertain on how to respond and act. People may tend to shy away from a situation when the target of a joke is uncertain. Situations like these tend to question the meaning and intent of a sender's message. Playful and aggressive humor are two different types of humor that need to be distinguishable or conflict may arise. Humorous individuals may not be taken seriously or seen as worthy of serious consideration when using aggressive or negative humor. These individuals may use humor as an act to avoid blame. Therefore, distinguishing humorous messages and their implications is important.

Humor in the classroom has been shown to be both positive and negative in regards to student/professor relationships. Some of the problem aspects presented by Fisher & Fisher (1981) show that humor in the classroom may present disruption and be associated with signs of immaturity. Disruption may occur in the classroom when a student and/or a professor may use humor excessively. Humorous messages in the classroom may affect each student differently and present some sort of distraction to the learning process. There are many inconsistencies in literature regarding humor and the classroom. Various

conceptualizations of humor lead researchers to examine humor in different and sometimes questionable ways. For example, several studies on humor in the classroom have been unidimensional where one or two variables were examined (Christophel, 1990; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990), while others have examined it multidimensionally, incorporating several variables at a time (Darling & Civilky, 1987; Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988; Neulip, 1991). Also, humorous content is defined differently by many people and data collection methods may vary, resulting in different findings of the effects of humor (Fraser, 1989).

Humor in the classroom does have its advocates (Horn, 1972). Tone and ambience are two positive benefits associated with humor in the classroom. Positive humor can lift spirits in the classroom by changing the atmosphere in which students and teachers work. Changing the atmosphere in a classroom and making it enjoyable will facilitate learning (Curran, 1973). Much research has indicated that dealing with humor in the classroom has concentrated on events mostly presented by professors, and not on events by students. Fisher and Fisher (1981) found that professors who dealt with humorous students in their classrooms usually saw those students as problematic and not clever. However, professor initiated humorous behavior was seen as acceptable, suggesting that student-initiated humor is dis-valued in the classroom.

Verbal Aggressiveness

Verbal aggressiveness in communication has been associated with an emphasis on destructiveness. Verbal aggressiveness has been defined by Infante and Wigley (1986) as a predisposition to attack the self-concepts of other individuals as a way of inflicting pain onto others. Also, verbal aggressiveness is a way of promoting psychological pain (Infante & Wigley, 1986) and is a destructive form of communication. Verbal aggression produces a number of negative effects: embarrassment, feelings of inadequacy,

humiliation, hopelessness, despair, and depression (Infante, 1987). Verbal aggressive individuals may isolate themselves from others by taking an active role to use verbally aggressive humor when involved in group communication. This type of aggression may stem from an individual's lack of arguing skills. These individuals then must resort to using verbally abusive messages to attack another's self conscience (Infante, 1987). Several researchers have indicated that verbal aggression is a very destructive form of communication and further research needs to be done to try and understand this type of communication.

What if verbal aggression is used in attempts at humorous conversation? Studies done by Infante, Riddle, Horvath, and Tumlin (1992), found that individuals did not necessarily see their messages as being aggressive or negative. Also, respondents indicated that they were just trying to be funny or entertaining. Verbally aggressive individuals tended to send messages concerning character attacks, competence attacks, malediction, threats, nonverbal emblems and ridicule. People with high verbal aggression may be viewed as outcasts and less socially attractive by their peers.

Other perceptions of verbal aggression and its link to social attraction have been investigated, revealing two approaches. A situational approach to verbal aggression looks at the many situational factors that inhibit or facilitate aggressive behavior (Berkowitz, 1962). Some of the facilitators of aggressive behavior identified by Berkowitz (1962) include: anticipated positive consequences for aggressive behavior, frustration being stimulated in the situation, the presence of aggression cues, and reciprocity of aggressive language. Furthermore, inhibitors were identified which include: anticipated punishment for aggressive behavior, a motive such as affiliation which is incompatible with aggression being activated in the situation, one's opponent in an argument being easy-going, persuadable, and hostile language not being reciprocated.

Another approach identified by Berkowitz (1962) is the person-centered approach. Research shows that individuals who are high in terms of trait verbal aggressiveness are not always verbally aggressive. While individuals who are low in terms of verbal aggressiveness have a tendency to direct self-concept attacking messages toward others. For example, a verbally aggressive person may have a reason for making aggressive attacks in some situations, but if the situation is not provoking, a verbal aggressive statement would most likely be absent. Verbal aggression can be measured by the Verbal Aggressiveness (VA) Scale (Infante & Wigley, 1986). This 20 item scale is reported to be a reliable measure used by many scholars to effectively measure verbal aggressiveness such as character attacks, malediction, and ridicule (Infante, Riddle, Horvath, and Tumlin, 1992).

Loneliness

Loneliness is a variable that scholars have examined in conjunction to social attraction and popularity, as well as communicative competence, communication apprehension, and various other concepts (Solano and Koester, 1989). Loneliness can be defined as a subjective experience in which an individual feels that the number and/or quality of his/her relationships is lacking (Peplau & Perlman, 1979). Thus, loneliness is a variable that can play an important role in a person's health and social environment. Given that lonely people seem to demonstrate a certain social anxiety, it is unreasonable to see a positive relationship between loneliness and social attraction. Lonely people are probably not as popular or socially attractive as someone who knows how to relate to others. Lacking social skills can lead to exclusion and avoidance by peers because peers may feel there is no interest in communicating from the other member. A study by Bragg (1979) shows that chronically lonely people often suffer from a variety of social/relational problems, including depression to recurring health problems, alcohol

and drug abuse, suicide, and immune deficiencies. Bragg concludes that lonely people are usually not as effective communicators as people who are not lonely.

Other research has noted that ineffective communication skills and communication apprehension caused feelings of chronic loneliness (Zakahi and Duran, 1985). These ineffective skills can lead to negative views of society by the lonely person and lonely people may also exhibit less development in social relationships due to poor communication skills. Though lonely people may not be disinterested in communicating, the passive presentation given may result in others thinking just that. Relating to humor, it seems that people who can carry themselves well and can be humorous at the same time, are well liked. An individual who is capable of making people laugh is capable of breaking the ice and finding a way into a conversation. When inclusion is part of a conversation, the chances that the individual will begin some type of relationship are favorable. On the other hand, being unable to "break the ice" may result in exclusion and the potential for loneliness.

Loneliness can be measured by the Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale developed by Russell, Peplau & Cutrona (1980). The scale is a 20 item Likert type scale that measures loneliness reliably with a high internal consistency ($\alpha = .94$) and demonstrates discriminant validity. The emergence of this scale has added further attention to the study of loneliness research. An increase in loneliness studies has not surprised researchers because up to 15 percent of the population report being lonely (Rubinstein & Shaver, 1980). Much research on loneliness has dealt with variables that are difficult to study (e.g., self-esteem, depression, trust, etc.). The field of communication based research seems to be the only research that links loneliness and methods of dealing with loneliness. An indirect approach to examining loneliness and social problems may open doors for future research.

Communication and Relationships

In summary, there has been much research done dealing with communication and relationships (e.g., Christophel, D. 1990, Baxter, L. 1992, McGhee, P. 1989). People develop new relationships as a part of life and knowing how to communicate effectively can play a major role in reinforcing relational ties. Humor is pervasive in all human communication; in meetings, in politics, at home, and at work, etc. Humor can also be a soothing force or feared for its ability to insult, divide, and produce tension.

Humorous communication may play an important role in relationship development (Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1996). Humor orientation, verbal aggressiveness, and loneliness are three variables that may impact relationships and their development. Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1996) found that humor did play a positive role in relationships concerning humor orientation, loneliness, verbal aggressiveness, and social attractiveness. In the same study, humorous communication was evident in the early stages of relationship development and varied according to the individual's humor orientation level. The results of these previously mentioned studies, indicated that a person's humor orientation, verbal aggressiveness, and loneliness are affected by the use of humorous communication.

Statement of Purpose

Communication patterns vary from individual to individual. We tend to associate ourselves with people who are similar to us and who understand us (Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield, 1996). A socially skilled individual may excite our attention through wit, knowledge, and humor. Humor is an important component of communication competence (Duran, 1983, 1992) and has been related to social attraction as well (McGhee, 1989). Socially skilled individuals tend to be more enjoyable to communicate with than less socially skilled individuals (Jones, Freemon, & Goswick, 1981).

Humorous communication may play a role in the development of casual relationships because it can be used to obtain social acceptance (Foot, 1986). Social skills may develop through the use of humor by means of entertaining. Entertaining is an important characteristic of friendship that can be directly related to humorous outcomes. Individuals who entertain one another often produce laughs and smiles based on humorous communication.

Humor orientation is directly associated with communication competence as Wanzer; Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1995) point out. Humor orientation can be demonstrated through two types of orientation. High humor orientation is associated with reports of frequent attempts to communicate humorous content. The humorous content is identified as actions, jokes, stories, riddles, and puns (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991). Individuals exhibiting high humor orientation are also viewed as being funnier when they enact jokes than those scoring low. Also, people displaying high humor orientation are found to be more popular and socially attractive than people with low humor orientation.

Low humor orientation individuals have been associated with loneliness because of the inability to communicate with competence. Having ineffective communication skills may lead to feelings of isolation, seclusion, and in turn, loneliness. Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1991) established that high humor orientated individuals were happy and social people.

In evaluating verbally aggressive individuals, McGhee (1989) found that these individuals prefer to isolate themselves from social circles. The inability to communicate or argue effectively leads verbally aggressive individuals to lash out at others in unnatural ways. Also, verbal aggression is associated negatively with the need for approval by others (Kazoleas & Wanzer, 1993). Verbally aggressive individuals may not be aware of the way their messages are being interpreted, even if stated with humorous intent. Therefore, verbally aggressive individuals are not perceived as funny to others.

The purpose of this study is to research the role of humorous communication in relationships through completion of the Humor Orientation measure. The key concepts to be investigated are: humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggression. Partial instrumentation replication of Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield's (1996) study of the role of humorous communication in relationships will be used in the present study. Instrumental replication is defined by Lykken (1968), as replicating measures and varying manipulations. For example, the subjects may differ, while measures do not. This study will focus on the role of humorous communication in relationships, as seen by faculty members and graduate students as opposed to the undergraduate sample used by Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1996).

The instruments and procedures will be among those used by Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1996). Using faculty members and graduate students

rather than undergraduate students will help determine if there are similarities and/or differences in humor use and application between different individuals.

The following hypotheses are proposed. Hypotheses two and three are replicated from Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield (1996).

H1: There will be no differences in HO, HOA, VA, and loneliness between faculty members and graduate students.

H2: Humor orientation (HO) will be negatively correlated with loneliness.

H3: Self-reported HO will be positively correlated with humor orientation of acquaintance (HOA).

H4: Verbal aggressiveness (VA) will be negatively correlated with HO and HOA.

CHAPTER TWO

Methodology

Sample

Sixty-five questionnaires were distributed to faculty members and graduate students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Thirty questionnaires were sent to graduate students and thirty-five questionnaires to faculty members. This sample was chosen for its availability. IRB approval was granted to begin research (see Appendix A). A cover letter was included for each group (see Appendix B).

Procedures

Subjects were asked to complete the Humor Orientation scale (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1991), (see Appendix C), the revised UCLA Loneliness scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980), (see Appendix D), and the Verbal Aggressiveness scale (Infante & Wigley, 1986), (see Appendix E).

Participants (acquaintances of the subjects) were asked to complete the adapted version of the Humor Orientation scale (see Appendix F). These people were to be casual or work acquaintances, and not close friends or family who already have established a close, understood relationship with the target individual. After completing the measures, the acquaintances were asked to place the completed measure in sealed envelopes, and return them via campus mail to the researcher. Acquaintance responses were matched with the participants by using a code number on the outside of the envelope.

Measurement

The Revised UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980) is a 20 item self-report instrument which is used to assess an individual's psychological state of chronic loneliness. High scores on this scale reflect consistent feelings of dissatisfaction in social relationships in regards to quality and quantity. The revised instrument has high internal consistency, $\alpha=.94$ (Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield, & Booth-Butterfield, 1996).

The Verbal Aggressiveness Scale (Infante & Wigley, 1986) is a 20-item measure which assesses an individual's predisposition to send messages which attack an individual's self-concept (Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1996).

In reference to the acquaintance-completed measure, for each participant noted above, one acquaintance was asked to complete an adapted, other-perceived humor orientation scale. The adapted version of the HO scale presents identical items/statements, but with a modified format, for example, "This person (e.g. , Joe) usually laughs when I tell a joke or story," has been modified from, "People usually laugh when I tell a joke or story." This scale has performed reliability ($\alpha=.80+$) in previous unpublished research, according to Wanzer, Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield, 1996. Completion time for this measure is estimated at about 3-4 minutes.

Statistical Procedures

All data were analyzed with descriptive and correlational statistics. The Pearson r test was used to test all hypotheses. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure reliability.

CHAPTER THREE

Results

General Results

Of 65 questionnaires sent out, 39 were completed and returned, which represents an overall response rate of 60%. Of the 39 respondents, 14 were faculty members and 25 were graduate students ($n = 39$). Graduate students had a response rate of 83%, while faculty members only had a 40% response rate. Respondents were asked to complete 57 questions in a questionnaire (the Humor Orientation scale, the Revised UCLA Loneliness scale, and the Verbal Aggressiveness scale) and have an acquaintance complete an adapted version of the Humor Orientation scale. The scales administered to the subjects were not titled. Means, standard deviations, and reliabilities concerning HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA, are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Responses to questionnaires concerning HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA (N=39)

SCALE	M	SD	alpha
HO	62.84	9.98	.90
LONELINESS	34.84	8.84	.90
VA	40.87	10.08	.88
HOA	67.46	8.91	.89

Results of Analysis for H1

H1: There will be no differences in HO, HOA, VA, and loneliness between faculty members and graduate students.

Group t-tests were conducted to examine if graduate students and faculty members differed concerning HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA. Group t-tests of individual scales are presented in Table 2. The only significant difference was for the Verbal Aggressiveness scale. Graduate students were more verbally aggressive than faculty members (see Table 2).

Table 2
Group t-tests of individual items of HO, loneliness, VA, and HO

SCALE	SUBSET	M	SD	t-value	<i>p</i>
HO	Faculty	59.0	10.32	-1.86	.07
	Graduate	65.0	9.30		
LONELINESS	Faculty	37.71	9.84	1.54	.13
	Graduate	33.24	8.00		
VA	Faculty	34.07	5.60	-3.62	.00
	Graduate	44.68	10.10		
HOA	Faculty	66.78	8.12	-.35	.73
	Graduate	66.84	9.47		

Group t-tests were also conducted to examine if graduate students and faculty members differed concerning individual items on the HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA

scales (see Table 3). On 14 of the 57 faculty/graduate student questionnaire items there were significant ($p < .05$) differences between the faculty and graduate students. Faculty members reported a higher level of humor orientation and loneliness concerning four specific questions. The first question referred to one's ability to tell jokes (HO) when in a group (see Table 3, Q1). The second question referred to the ability to be funny (HO) without having to rehearse a joke (see Table 3, Q4). Faculty members reported a higher HO level in both of these questions as compared to the graduate students. Faculty members also reported a higher level loneliness concerning two specific questions. The first question referred to how well others knew them. Faculty members reported a higher level of loneliness (see Table 3, Q30) as compared to graduate students in this response. Also, faculty members reported a higher level of loneliness when asked if he/she had someone they could turn to (see Table 3, Q 37).

Graduate students reported higher levels of verbal aggressiveness in 10 questions as compared to the faculty members (see table 3, Q 39-54). Some of the questions concerning verbal aggressiveness included topics such as: using insults to soften stubbornness, telling others they are unreasonable, attacking one's character, using insults to shock, getting back at someone, poking fun at people, and correcting one's behavior.

Table 3**Group t-tests of individual items of HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA**

ITEM	SUBSET	M	SD	t-value	P
Q1	Faculty	3.21	1.12	-2.11	.042
	Graduate	3.88	.83		
Q4	Faculty	3.64	1.15	-2.39	.022
	Graduate	4.32	.62		
Q30	Faculty	2.14	.95	2.03	.049
	Graduate	1.60	.70		
Q37	Faculty	1.42	.646	2.36	.024
	Graduate	1.08	.277		
Q39	Faculty	1.50	.519	-2.87	.007
	Graduate	2.24	.879		
Q41	Faculty	2.07	.829	-2.78	.008
	Graduate	3.00	1.08		
Q42	Faculty	1.85	.535	-3.43	.002
	Graduate	2.68	.802		
Q43	Faculty	1.28	.469	-3.26	.002
	Graduate	2.04	.790		
Q44	Faculty	1.28	.611	-2.12	.041
	Graduate	1.72	.614		
Q47	Faculty	2.07	.616	-2.59	.014
	Graduate	2.76	.879		
Q50	Faculty	1.42	.646	-2.04	.049
	Graduate	2.16	1.248		
Q51	Faculty	1.21	.426	-2.29	.028
	Graduate	1.76	.831		
Q53	Faculty	1.78	.893	-2.27	.029
	Graduate	2.52	1.005		
Q54	Faculty	1.85	.663	-3.09	.004
	Graduate	2.88	1.130		

Results of Analysis for H2

H2: Humor orientation (HO) will be negatively correlated with loneliness.

No significant correlations were found between HO and loneliness for the overall group or for either faculty or graduate student sub-group.

Results of Analysis for H3

H3: Self-reported HO will be positively correlated with humor orientation of acquaintance (HOA).

No significant correlations were found between HO and HOA for the overall group, or for the graduate students and their acquaintances. However, a significant correlation ($r = .54, p < .05$) was found between HO and HOA for faculty members and their acquaintances (see Table 4).

Results of Analysis for H4

H4: Verbal Aggressiveness (VA) will be negatively correlated with self-reported HO, HOA, VA, and loneliness between faculty members and graduate students.

Significant correlations (see Table 4) were found between VA and HO for the overall group ($r = .33, p < .05$), and for the faculty sub-group ($r = .53, p < .05$). No significant correlation was found between VA and HO for the graduate student sub-group.

Table 4
Pearson correlations- HO, Loneliness, VA, HOA

SCALE	HO	LONELINESS	VA	HOA
HO all subjects (N=39)			.33*	
HO faculty (N=14)			.53*	.54*

* $p < .05$

CHAPTER FOUR

Discussion

H1: There will be no differences in HO, HOA, VA, and loneliness between faculty members and graduate students.

The hypothesis was supported for HO, HOA, and loneliness scale scores. However, there were differences between faculty members and graduate students in VA overall scores and several individual item scores. Results indicated differences between faculty members and graduate students concerning overall verbal aggressiveness (see Table 2) and 10 specific questions (see Table 3). Graduate students reported higher levels of VA overall (see Table 2) and in each of 10 individual VA questions as compared to the faculty members (see Table 3, Q 39-54). Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) reported that undergraduates had a 50.1 mean VA level as compared to 44.6 for graduate students and 34.0 for faculty members in this study. Perhaps the age difference influenced the results. It is possible that the older an individual becomes, the less verbally aggressive he/she becomes.

Question 39 on the VA scale focused on using insults to soften the stubbornness of another individual. Graduate students reported a higher level of VA in regards to stubbornness and insults than faculty members did and this may be in part due to difference in maturity levels. Using insults when speaking to other individuals seems childish and maybe this played a role in the results. Graduate students also reported a higher level of VA concerning being unreasonable when others refuse to do a task they felt was important (see Table 3, Q 41). This response indicates that graduate students

may experience less patience than faculty members. Question 42 focused on the ability to be gentle with others when they do something regarded as stupid. Graduate students again have demonstrated less of an ability to assess a situation with less VA and more patience. Question 43 concerns attacking an individual's character when trying to influence him or her. The higher VA response by the graduate students shows that faculty members are more reserved in this situation. This may be true because faculty members interact with students everyday as part of their job, while graduate students do not.

Using insults to shock an individual into proper behavior was the focus of question 44. Graduate students again, reported higher levels of VA when concerning the use of insults. Graduate students reported that they were more likely than faculty members to purposely use shocking insults against another individual if they felt that it was needed. In question 47, graduate students reported that they would be more likely than faculty members to get back at an individual who criticized their shortcomings. Faculty members reported being more able to restrain themselves from getting back at an individual by taking it in good humor and moving on. This reaction seems more typical by adults than it does for younger individuals or in this case the graduate students. Graduate students also reported in question 50, that they are more likely than faculty members to like poking fun at individuals who do things which are very stupid. This result may indicate that graduate students are more playful or humorous when it comes to using sarcasm as a form of humor.

Question 51 focused on attacking persons' ideas as well as their self-concepts. Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) stated that perhaps aggression and tolerance levels are similar among acquaintances. This may be why graduate students and faculty members differed in results. Graduate students may have

established a common trait among each other, while faculty members have established a trait of their own. These different traits may produce different VA levels. Questions 53 and 54 both concerned personal attacks. Graduate students reported a higher level of VA concerning personal attacks which may show that they tend to express themselves differently than faculty members. This may result from lacking social composure. Duran (1983) found that maintaining social composure helps individuals stay calm and relaxed, therefore preventing verbally aggressive situations.

H2: Humor orientation (HO) will be negatively correlated with loneliness.

No correlation was found between HO and loneliness. This is contrary to Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield's (1996) finding that HO negatively correlated with loneliness ($r = -.23, p < .005$). Their results suggest that humorous communication is one way that individuals initiate friendships, therefore they are less lonely. The 1996 study used undergraduates as subjects, which may have played a role in their results. Their findings suggested that undergraduates had a sufficient network of relationships established to satisfy their social needs. This may also suggest that adults use less humor to initiate friendships as compared to undergraduates. Also, these results may suggest that undergraduates regularly use humor in their communication with acquaintances.

Though a correlation was not found between HO and loneliness in this study, means were similar in regards to loneliness to the 1996 study. Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) found a mean of 33.5 for undergraduates and this current study had a mean of 33.2 for graduate students and 37.71 for faculty members. Does this mean that the older we get the more lonely we get too? Also, the means regarding HO in this study were similar to those of the 1996 study. Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S.

Booth-Butterfield reported undergraduates with a mean of 59.6 as compared to faculty members who reported a mean of 59.0 and graduate students who reported a mean of 65.0 in this study. Another factor which may have affected results in this study may be the sample size of $N = 39$, as compared to the 1996 study, $N = 125$.

H3: Self-reported HO will be positively correlated with humor orientation of acquaintance (HOA).

No overall correlation was found between self-reported humor orientation (HO) and humor orientation of acquaintance (HOA). However, a significant correlation ($r = .54, p < .05$) was found between HO and HOA for faculty members and their acquaintances. This result may suggest that faculty members know each other better than graduate students know each other. Humor orientation may have been easier for faculty members to recognize because of their everyday interactions with each other. Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) found a significant correlation ($r = .39, p < .05$) among undergraduates and state that a pattern of humor production was established. This is also true for the faculty members in this study. Faculty members may have worked together for years and may have established social circles with one another. Also, a social bond may have developed through faculty meetings, work gatherings, office location, etc. Thus, it appears that faculty members may have been more than casual acquaintances from the responses gathered. They may have asked fellow faculty members who knew them pretty well to fill out the questionnaire.

On the other hand for graduate students there was no significant correlation between HO and HOA. This may suggest that graduate students had someone fill out the questionnaire who was not truly a work acquaintance. It is possible, that classmates may

have filled out questionnaires about someone they hardly knew or thought they knew. These results may show that the graduate students who participated in this study were merely classmates and nothing more. If the students were "true" acquaintances, a correlation would be expected. Another possible explanation why a correlation was not found could be that the graduate students had not had the opportunity to get to know each other because it was early in the semester. Also, it is not known whether graduate students dispersed questionnaires among classmates or co-workers. This too may have played a role in the results.

H4: Verbal Aggressiveness (VA) will be negatively correlated with HO and HOA.

The overall results (faculty and graduate students combined) showed a significant correlation ($r = .33, p < .05$) (see Table 4), suggesting a positive connection between HO and VA. A positive correlation was also found for the faculty sub-group ($r = .53, p < .05$). No correlation was found between VA and HO for the graduate student sub-group. There were no significant correlations between VA and HOA for the overall group or either sub group (faculty or graduate students).

Negative correlations were expected between VA and HO/HOA because as VA levels increase one would expect that the HO/HOA levels would decrease. Individuals who display high levels of VA are less likely to be funny or socially attractive as reported by McGhee, 1989. McGhee states that verbally aggressive individuals are not positively received by children or adults. Also, verbally aggressive individuals may attack other individuals' self concepts, making themselves less enjoyable to be around (Infante, Chandler, & Rudd, 1989). These types of messages may be perceived as personal attacks and may lead to less acceptance by others. However, individuals who use sarcasm in an

aggressive way may not be seen as verbally aggressive (O'Connell, 1969). O'Connell states that those individuals who use sarcasm effectively are not seen as VA. He also states that the relationship between sarcasm and VA is unclear.

There is no apparent explanation for the positive correlation between VA and HO for the faculty members, which is probably the main contributing factor to the overall positive correlation found between VA and HO.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

The present thesis results support findings from Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) that humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness can be measured reliably. However, the present study does not support a key finding of Wanzer et al. (1996) that humor orientation is negatively correlated with loneliness. There was no significant correlation between HO and loneliness for the overall group or the two sub-groups (faculty and graduate students). Wanzer et al.'s (1996) finding that self-reported humor orientation correlated with humor orientation of acquaintance was only partially supported. For faculty members there was a significant correlation between HO and HOA with their acquaintances. However, no correlation was found between HO and HOA with the overall group and the graduate students. A significant correlation was found between VA and HO for the overall group and for the faculty sub-group, but not with the graduate student sub-group. Graduate students and faculty members differed concerning VA as the graduate students reported higher levels of VA in 10 different questions specifically concerning VA.

Implications

A primary goal of this thesis was replication of results concerning humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness by Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996) by using different types of subjects. Another goal of this thesis was to determine if faculty members and graduate students differed not only in terms of these

characteristics but also in terms of how casual work acquaintances viewed their humor orientation.

It must be noted that the failure to confirm all hypotheses was unanticipated. It may suggest that the sample size was too small or that HO and the other variables tested are not as strong interpersonal or relational constructs as perceived. It may also reflect the nature of what we view as "humorous" as we get older.

Being a highly humor oriented person has its benefits. High humor orientated college students appear to be able to make friends and have others see them as "humorous", without being verbally aggressive as noted by Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1996). However, do these qualities benefit an individuals' social skills in developing casual or work relationships?

It seems from the results that the faculty members involved in this study had closer ties with one another as compared to the graduate students. Faculty members' acquaintances were able to predict the humor orientation of their casual/work acquaintance; graduate students' acquaintances were not. Results from this study and the 1996 Wanzer et al. study offer support for the conclusion that some people have established acquaintances who really know them and some have not. In terms of the work environment, results from this study indicate that it takes time, more than the few months or even year that graduate students may have known their work acquaintances, for acquaintances to accurately predict characteristics such as humor orientation.

Limitations

There were several limitations in this thesis. The first was the small sample size of N=39. Although the overall response rate was fairly good, 60%, it could have been better. Another limitation of this study was that it is uncertain who the "acquaintance" was who completed the adapted version of the Humor Orientation Scale. Despite

instructions, there is no sure way to ascertain who actually filled out the questionnaires. High reliability scores were obtained for the HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA scales. It would be unlikely that subjects would refer an enemy to complete a questionnaire about them. Nevertheless, it seems from the results that graduate students did not know their acquaintances as well as the faculty members did. The graduate students' self-reported humor orientation did not correlate with perceptions of humor orientation by acquaintances.

Also, the research has been restricted to faculty members and graduate students at one university. Testing of other populations and other occupational groups is needed. The results reported here indicate the complexity of humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness. This study offers new pathways for future research in these areas of communication.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results obtained in this study were perplexing and provocative. Incorporating more subjects from different surroundings may illuminate reasons for the unexpected results of the present study. Also, a different methodology might be used to examine humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness. Zakahi (1985) conducted a competence study which had dyad partners rate the interaction of individuals concerning humor orientation. Incorporating some of his ideas may help observation attempts of humor orientation by targeting all three variables.

Also, Wanzer, M. Booth-Butterfield and S. Booth-Butterfield (1995) conducted a study in which a specific humorous episode (joke-telling) was viewed and rated. A similar study incorporating humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness could be beneficial for additional research in this field. Analyzing specific traits between individuals may ultimately help produce significant results.

Another recommendation would be to analyze age differences concerning HO, loneliness, VA and HOA. Perhaps age plays a role in how an individual develops and perceives these qualities. A study involving elementary students, middle school students and high school students may help determine if there is any relationship between HO, loneliness, VA, and HOA among different age groups. Also, analyzing different social classes can further research involving these traits.

From results obtained, it is evident that further research is needed to understand humor orientation, loneliness, and verbal aggressiveness and their possible interrelationships.

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Appendix A
IRB Exemption



Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA)
University of Nebraska Medical Center
Eppley Science Hall 3018
986810 Nebraska Medical Center
Omaha, NE 68198-6810
(402) 559-6463
Fax (402) 559-7845
E- mail: irbora@unmc.edu
<http://info.unmc.edu/irb/irbhome.htm>

July 1, 1998

Maurizio Gagliolo
14739 Arbor Street
Omaha, NE 68144

IRB#: 074-98-EX

TITLE OF APPLICATION/PROTOCOL: Humorous Communication in Casual/Work Relationships: Self-Perceptions Concerning Humor Orientation, Loneliness, and Verbal Aggressiveness

Dear Mr. Gagliolo:

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided, this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46:101b, category 2. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Please be advised that the IRB has a maximum protocol approval period of five years from the original date of approval and release. If this study continues beyond the five year approval period, the project must be resubmitted in order to maintain an active approval status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'E. Prentice/jlg'.

Ernest D. Prentice, PhD
Vice Chair, IRB

EDP:jlg

Appendix B
Cover Letters



University of
Nebraska at
Omaha

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Communication
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0112
(402) 554-2600
(402) 554-2520
Broadcasting Journalism Speech

July 1998

Dear UNO Faculty Member:

I am a UNO graduate student seeking my Master of Arts in Communication. I am conducting a research study to complete work for my thesis and need your assistance. To complete this study, I am surveying UNO faculty members and students.

This study will investigate communication in casual work relationships. Enclosed is a questionnaire that contains three scales used in my research. The three scales should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. In addition, an extra copy of one of the scales is enclosed for you to give to a casual work acquaintance (as opposed to a close friend or family member). You are to ask this acquaintance to complete the scale in terms of how he or she perceives you.

Your responses and those of your acquaintance will be totally confidential. Identities of participants will be revealed to no one. Code numbers have been placed on each questionnaire. These numbers will be used only to monitor returns and match responses. Upon receipt of both your and your acquaintance responses, the code numbers will be removed and identities of respondents will be completely anonymous for data analysis and reporting purposes. Envelopes have been supplied for the completed questionnaires. Upon completion of the questionnaire, place the questionnaire in the envelope, seal the envelope and place in UNO campus mail. If you would rather use United States regular mail, you may do so.

Each of your responses is critical for me to be able to complete my thesis. If you have any questions, you may contact me at 333-2483. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maurizio Gagliolo".

Maurizio Gagliolo
UNO graduate student



University of
Nebraska at
Omaha

College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Communication
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0112
(402) 554-2600
(402) 554-2520
Broadcasting Journalism Speech

July 1998

Dear UNO student:

I am a UNO graduate student seeking my Master of Arts in Communication. I am conducting a research study to complete work for my thesis and need your assistance. To complete this study, I am surveying UNO graduate students and faculty members.

This study will investigate communication in casual/work relationships. Enclosed is a questionnaire that contains three scales used in my research. The three scales should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. In addition, an extra copy of one of the scales is enclosed for you to give to a casual school/work acquaintance (as opposed to a close friend or family member). You are to ask this acquaintance to complete the scale in terms of how he or she perceives you.

Your responses and those of your acquaintance will be totally confidential. Identities of participants will be revealed to no one. Code numbers have been placed on each questionnaire. These numbers will be used only to monitor returns and match responses. Upon receipt of both your and your acquaintance responses, the code numbers will be removed and identities of respondents will be completely anonymous for data analysis and reporting purposes. Envelopes have been supplied for the completed questionnaires. Upon completion of the questionnaire, place the questionnaire in the envelope, seal the envelope and place in UNO campus mail. If you would rather use United States regular mail, you may do so.

Each of your responses is critical for me to be able to complete my thesis. If you have any questions, you may contact me at 333-2483. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Gagliolo".

Maurizio Gagliolo
UNO graduate student

Appendix C
Humor Orientation scale

Directions: Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking the corresponding number for whether you:

- 1- strongly agree**
- 2- agree**
- 3- neutral**
- 4- disagree**
- 5- strongly disagree**

- ___ 1. I regularly tell jokes and funny stories when I am with a group.
- ___ 2. People usually laugh when I tell a joke or story.
- ___ 3. I have no memory for jokes or funny stories.
- ___ 4. I can be funny without having to rehearse a joke.
- ___ 5. Being funny is a natural communication style with me.
- ___ 6. I cannot tell a joke well.
- ___ 7. People seldom ask me to tell stories.
- ___ 8. My friends would say that I am a funny person.
- ___ 9. People don't seem to pay close attention when I tell a joke.
- ___ 10. Even funny jokes seem flat when I tell them.
- ___ 11. I can easily remember jokes and stories.
- ___ 12. People often ask me to tell jokes or stories.
- ___ 13. My friends would not say that I am a funny person.
- ___ 14. I don't tell jokes or stories even when asked to.
- ___ 15. I tell stories and jokes very well.
- ___ 16. Of all the people I know, I'm one of the funniest.
- ___ 17. I use humor to communicate in a variety of situations.

Appendix D
Revised UCLA Loneliness scale

Faculty/Graduate Student Questionnaire

Directions: Indicate how often you feel the way described in each of the following statements. Circle one number for each.

Statement	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
18. I feel in tune with the people around me.	1	2	3	4
19. I lack companionship.	1	2	3	4
20. There is no one I can turn to.	1	2	3	4
21. I do not feel alone.	1	2	3	4
22. I feel part of a group of friends.	1	2	3	4
23. I have a lot in common with the people around me.	1	2	3	4
24. I am no longer close to anyone.	1	2	3	4
25. My interests and ideas are not shared by those around me.	1	2	3	4
26. I am an outgoing person.	1	2	3	4
27. There are people I feel close to.	1	2	3	4
28. I feel left out.	1	2	3	4
29. My social relationships are superficial.	1	2	3	4
30. No one really knows me well.	1	2	3	4
31. I feel isolated from others.	1	2	3	4
32. I can find companionship when I want it.	1	2	3	4
33. There are people who really understand me.	1	2	3	4
34. I am unhappy being withdrawn.	1	2	3	4
35. People are around me but not with me.	1	2	3	4
36. There are people I can talk to.	1	2	3	4
37. There are people I can turn to.	1	2	3	4

Appendix E
Verbal Aggressiveness scale

Directions: Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking the corresponding number.

1- almost never true

2- rarely true

3- occasionally true

4- often true

5- almost always true

- ___ 38. I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individuals' intelligence when I attack their ideas.
- ___ 39. When individuals are very stubborn, I use insults to soften the stubbornness.
- ___ 40. I try very hard to avoid having other people feel bad about themselves when I try to influence them.
- ___ 41. When people refuse to do a task I know is important, without good reason, I tell them they are unreasonable.
- ___ 42. When others do things I regard as stupid, I try to be extremely gentle with them.
- ___ 43. If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character.
- ___ 44. When people behave in ways that are in very poor taste, I insult them in order to shock them into proper behavior.
- ___ 45. I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.
- ___ 46. When people simply will not budge on a matter of importance I lose my temper and say rather strong things to them.
- ___ 47. When people criticize my shortcomings, I take it in good humor and do not try to get back at them.
- ___ 48. When individuals insult me, I get a lot of pleasure out of really telling them off.
- ___ 49. When I dislike individuals greatly, I try not to show it in what I say or how I say it.
- ___ 50. I like poking fun at people who do things which are very stupid in order to stimulate their intelligence.

- ___ 51. When I attack a persons' ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.
- ___ 52. When I try to influence people, I make a great effort not to offend them.
- ___ 53. When people do things which are mean or cruel, I attack their character in order to help correct their behavior.
- ___ 54. I refuse to participate in arguments when they involve personal attacks.
- ___ 55. When nothing seems to work in trying to influence others, I yell and scream in order to get some movement from them.
- ___ 56. When I am unable to refute others' positions, I try to make them feel defensive in order to weaken their positions.
- ___ 57. When an argument shifts to personal attacks, I try very hard to change the subject.

Appendix F
Humor Orientation of Acquaintance scale

Acquaintance Questionnaire

Directions: Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to the acquaintance who gave you this questionnaire by marking the applicable number according to the key below. When completed, please place in the attached envelope, seal the envelope, and place in UNO campus mail (or U.S. mail if you prefer). Do not place your name or the name of your acquaintance anywhere on the questionnaire or envelope.

1- strongly agree

2- agree

3- neutral

4- disagree

5- strongly disagree

- ___ 1. This person regularly tells jokes and funny stories when with a group.
- ___ 2. People usually laugh when this person tells a joke or story.
- ___ 3. This person has no memory for jokes or funny stories.
- ___ 4. This person can be funny without having to rehearse a joke.
- ___ 5. Being funny is a natural communication style with this person.
- ___ 6. This person cannot tell a joke well.
- ___ 7. People seldom ask this person to tell stories.
- ___ 8. My friends would say that this person is a funny person.
- ___ 9. People don't seem to pay close attention when this person tells a joke.
- ___ 10. Even funny jokes seem flat when this person tells them.
- ___ 11. This person can easily remember jokes and stories.
- ___ 12. People often ask this person to tell jokes or stories.
- ___ 13. My friends would not say that this person is a funny person.
- ___ 14. This person doesn't tell jokes or stories even when asked to.
- ___ 15. This person tells stories and jokes very well.
- ___ 16. Of all the people I know, this person is one of the funniest.
- ___ 17. This person uses humor to communicate in a variety of situations.