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ABSTRACT

This study examines four hypotheses concerning the nature of fear of success (FOS). Data were gathered in two stages. First, respondents in a large sample survey of metropolitan Detroit area residents were asked to tell a Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) story. In the second stage, white currently-married females aged 18 to 56 whose households were included in the first sample were re-interviewed six months to a year later. Comparative results suggest that the presence of FOS was strongly related to story length. Further, the hostility in FOS stories may represent free-floating anger. The study concludes that parents who are traditional, and who regard competition as inappropriate for females, seem more likely to rear daughters who regard achievement as inappropriate or threatening. FOS does not seem to be related to the inhibition of achievement activity but rather to high-achieving behavior, suggesting the need for further exploration of environment factors. (Author/BW)

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FEAR OF SUCCESS: FOUR HYPOTHESES

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Introduction

In an effort to understand the complicated and often contradictory results of achievement research done with female subjects, Matina Horner has put forward the concept of a motive to avoid success. She contends that women are often disrupted in their achievement strivings because of a tendency to avoid success (Horner, 1968). Horner has supported her hypothesis with data gathered for her dissertation: of ninety female college students, presented with a written thematic apperception cue describing a high-achieving coed named Anne, 62 percent wrote stories indicating affiliative loss, unhappiness, or some other negative outcome for "Anne." Less than 10 percent of the males who were presented with a cue about a high-acieving college student named John wrote negative stories about "John," a highly significant difference. In a subsequent experiment that was also part of Horner's thesis, it was found that the women high in fear of success imagery performed better on varied tasks in a non-competitive as opposed to a competitive condition. These unusually clear results have a great deal of intuitive appeal, because they reflect well the double-bind situation of the achievement-oriented woman: danger in failure in addition to danger in success.

The introduction of this concept has sparked a great deal of research, and not surprisingly the clarity and the finality of the concept have come into question. For example, Horner's study was replicated exactly, point by point, in 1971 by Hoffman (Hoffman, 1973). Expecting that the women's liberation movement had brought about a decline in fear of success (FOS) among women, she found no decline among women but an increase in negative imagery among men. Other researchers have variously

found FOS to be as high in males, higher in males, and higher in females (Condry, 1975). Research on the association between FOS and competitive achievement has also produced mixed findings, again ranging from FOS women doing better against men, equally well against men, or more poorly against men (Condry, 1975).

The concept of a "motive to avoid success" was introduced within the framework of the expectancy-value theory of motivation. According to this theory, FOS is a:

> latent, stable personality disposition acquired early in life in conjunction with standards of sex role identity. In expectancy-value theories of motivation, the most important factors in determining the arousal of these dispositions or motives and thereby the ultimate strength of motivation and direction of one's behavior are: a) the expectations or beliefs the individual has about the nature and likelihood of the consequences of his/her actions, and b) the value of these consequences to the individual in light of his/her particular motives (Horner, 1972: 159).

Thus, for FOS to properly be considered a motive, it should be demonstrated to be associated with measures of childhood socialization and measures of the woman's perception of the consequences of success for herself.

In addition, it is to be expected that FOS is related to behavior. As Horner says, "The expression of the achievement-directed tendency of most otherwise positively motivated young women is inhibited by the arousal of a thwarting disposition to be anxious about the negative consequences they expect will follow the desired success" (Horner, 1972: 159). In an experimental setting, the inhibition of achievement tendencies is usually measured by relative performance on competitive versus non-competitive tasks. It seems to me that this is the critical

test. If telling a FOS story is predictably related to the inhibition of achievement behavior, then a truly important and very serious concept has been introduced. In a real world setting, there are many ways for a woman who fears the consequences of success to escape from the competitive arena. She may take a low-skilled, dead-end job, or not work at all, or she may become pregnant repeatedly.

Hypothesis Development

My own interest in FOS evolved out of a prior (and continuing) interest in fertility motivation--that is, in the reasons why people have and do not have children. My underlying assumptions were that while many people want to have a child for very unselfish reasons and have the child for its own sake, it is equally possible to have a child as a means to some other goal, for example, stabilization of a shaky marriage[1]. Thus a man might not admit or even know that he wants his wife pregnant in order to keep her out of circulation or to identify her as his, but such a wish might affect his behavior. Or a woman might fear that negative consequences will result from successful competition in an achievement activity. She might react to the anxiety produced by such a fear by becoming pregnant--perhaps intentionally, perhaps not--to provide herself with a reason to leave the competitive situation and to establish her femininity.

[1]It must be acknowledged, of course, that many babies are conceived without a decision ever being made one way or the other and without unconscious motivations ever entering the picture. In addition, multiple factors may be inter-related. I was interested, however, in isolating and studying one non-articulate motivation that might affect behavior.

It was while thinking along these lines that I encountered Hoffman's replication of Horner's initial research. This study seemed to provide the measure for which I was searching. I hypothesized that women who are scored as having a fear of success would tend to have pregnancies that serve to remove them from the competitive arena. I decided to study this problem in a non-college population, using Horner's measure, adapted for a survey interview.

But as I became more and more involved with the details of FOS research--reading the literature, pre-testing the measure, learning the coding scheme--I came to harbor doubts about what is truly being measured in a FOS TAT story. For example, these two stories, told to the cue "Anne has just graduated at the top of her college class," are both coded "FOS present" though the type of imagery is radically different.

1.) She wants out of college. She gets a good job at whatever profession she's in. She's a liberal person and she won't get married. She's probably a women's liberationist.

She was a real goody-goody. She studied all the time. Her parents paid for everything.

She wants superiority.

She'll get a job. Then she'll meet a person who'll change her lifestyle.

2.) Anne looks forward to a series of interviews in her specialty, home economics. She traveled around the country interviewing newspapers; her minor was in journalism. Anne has visions of being the next Juliet Child [sic], get her pictures in the paper. She couldn't decide which of several offers to take. She went home to decide and dated her high school sweetheart who proposed and she decided to use her home economics and they got married and lived happily ever after.

In addition, the question of whether FOS is really a motive became increasingly important. The rule of parsimony requires that one look first for the simplest explanation. Thus, it seems important to explore environmental factors that might produce FOS stories prior to accepting the existence of an internalized disposition to fear success.

Consideration of these problems eventually resulted in the formulation of four alternate hypotheses concerning the nature of FOS. First, FOS may be a by-product of an ability to tell long and/or complex stories, of verbal fluency or cognitive complexity rather than a motive to avoid success. Second, the hostility and unhappiness in the stories may be more a reflection of the generally frustrated and unhappy state of the storyteller than it is of the specifically success-related fears of the storyteller. Third, FOS stories may simply be the product of early childhood socialization and thus represent merely the replication of learned material rather than the projection of an underlying disposition. Fourth, FOS stories may simply be a description of the world as the storyteller sees it, a summary of reality rather than personal projection. None of these hypotheses taken individually assumes that FOS is a motive; only if FOS is related to early socialization and to the woman's perception of achievement-related consequences can FOS properly be considered a motive. And only if such anxiety is--when aroused--translated into behavior is it a motive of importance.

Data Collection

Data to evaluate these hypotheses were gathered in two stages. First, respondents in a large random sample survey of residents in the Detroit metropolitan area were asked during the interview to tell a TAT

story to the cue "Anne has just graduated at the top of her college class."[2] In the second stage, white, currently married females aged 18 to 56 whose household fell into the first sample were re-interviewed six months to a year later. One hundred sixty-five women were re-interviewed in Stage II, for a response rate of 62 percent. These women were asked to tell TAT stories to two new cues[3] and then were asked to tell a story to the cue "Mary has just graduated at the top of her college class." Stories from both stages were typed up and coded independently for FOS by two coders using Horner's coding categories (Horner, 1970: 59. As part of the Stage II interview, respondents were also asked a variety of questions designed to test the four alternate hypotheses.

Results

The first hypothesis (verbal fluency and cognitive complexity) suggests that some persons, when asked to tell a story in response to a sentence cue, proceed to do just that. They strive to tell the most interesting, full, and perhaps realistic story that they can. They include elements of sadness and tragedy because real life includes such elements. Many persons enjoy storytelling and tell such long and full stories that they eventually include some negative element which results in the story being designated a FOS story.

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[2]One-third of the 576 Stage I respondents received a "John" version of the cue; however, these results are not reported here. Also, respondents in the survey included males as well as females and blacks as well as whites; however, only results based on the stories of 151 white females are presented here.

[3]The new cues are "Carol is a terrific mother and homemaker. She's thinking about her life," and "Barbara, a highly respected newspaper editor, is sitting in a chair with a smile on her face."

The presence of FOS was indeed found to be strongly related to story length. The mean number of words in Stage II FOS stories was 142, compared to a mean length of 99 words for non-FOS stories, a difference significant at the $p < .0001$ level. Respondents told two other TAT stories to different cues before receiving the college graduate cue, and the mean number of words on all three stories was 406 for women coded as fearing success compared to 306 words for women not coded as fearing success, a difference that is again significant at the $p < .0001$ level. This tendency for women coded as fearing success to be verbally fluent was replicated by another measure. Summing the number of separate mentions in five open-ended questions[4] occurring at different times in the interview, FOS women were found to make 19.7 separate mentions compared to 16.5 for the non-FOS women, a difference significant at the $p = .0002$ level. In addition, there is a non-significant tendency for FOS women to be more complex in their responses. That is, when asked "How is a woman's life changed by having children?" FOS women were more likely to mention <u>both</u> good and bad changes, compared to non-FOS women.

The second hypothesis did not receive such support. It was felt that the hostility in FOS stories may really represent free-floating anger, that the person would have told a negative or unhappy story to

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[4]The five open-ended questions were as follows:

"How is a woman's life changed by being married?"
"How is a woman's life changed by having children?"
"How is a married woman's life changed by having a job?"
"What advice would you give to a young girl growing up today?"
"If you didn't need the money that you get when you work, do you think you would work anyway?" (Why/Why not?)

An example of a "mention" is this response to the last question: "I'd still want to get out of the house."

any cue, simply because she is a frustrated, dissatisfied person. A number of different operationalizations of this hypothesis were written into the interview, including the respondent's assessment of her happiness, measures of alienation, personal health and luck, the respondent's estimation of her marital satisfaction, interviewer evaluations of respondent's physical attractiveness, and respondent's satisfaction with her standard of iving. None of these operationalizations resulted in any meaningful support for the hypothesis. This may have occurred because the re-interview sample appears to have included unusually fortunate persons. Only 13 respondents described themselves as having more bad luck than most and only 14 families were interviewed in which the husband earns less than $10,000 per year. However, in this sample using these measures, there seems to be no relationship between FOS and hostility/frustration on the part of respondents.

The third hypothesis concerns the effect of childhood socialization on FOS. Parents who emphasized traditional goals for their daughters because they regarded the competitive arena as inappropriate for females seem likely to have reared women who regard achievement as inappropriate and threatening. Items in the re-interview questionnaire assessed parental views, as perceived by their daughters, on female achievement. For example, respondents were asked to note which of several social, personal, and academic traits their parents would have considered important for them when they were growing up. Detailed information on maternal employment was also obtained. In addition, respondents were asked to report their closeness to mother and father, and which parent they were most like. A slight tendency was found for daughters of employed

women who worked because they enjoyed it to be higher in FOS, however status of mother's job was not important. The only other variable that differentiated between women who told FOS stories and those who did not were closeness to father, with women who were closer to their fathers than to their mothers being slightly more likely to tell FOS stories.

Given the number and variety of measures used to tap this socialization hypothesis, this is meager evidence to claim that early childhood socialization forms the basic disposition to fear success. It is of course possible that socialization of white females in the United States has been so uniform that all (or nearly all) young girls are instructed as to the potential negative consequences of besting a male. It is also possible that parental values were not well-tapped by interview questions, and then, too, it is possible that socialization is not in any way related to ultimately fearing success. It is not possible to distinguish between these interpretations on the basis of the data available, but the absence of an expected relationship suggests that the socialization hypothesis may not be particularly useful.

In the fourth hypothesis, a FOS story is suggested to be a very rational, realistic description on the part of the storyteller of what happens to females when they "beat out" males. Thus, women in high status, relatively powerful occupations, who are in a position to experience and observe the consequences and costs attendant upon success, should be more likely to tell FOS stories. In addition, a respondent whose personal current reinforcement situation is such that achievement is likely to result in negative consequences--say in hostility from her husband--should be more likely to tell a FOS story than a woman who does not see punishment as the likely consequence of success.

Data on respondents' occupation, income and education were gathered in the Stage I and Stage II interview schedules, and a rather marked interview effect can be noted. Trends are generally significant only among Stage I respondents, an important difference that will be discussed shortly. In general, women who have high status jobs, women who earn high salaries, and, to a lesser extent, women who are well-educated, are more likely to tell FOS stories. In addition, women who earn a relatively large proportion of the family income are also more likely to tell FOS stories. (See Tables 1-4.)

Table 1: The Relationship Between Presence/Absence of FOS Imagery and Respondent's Personal Income[5]

FOS Imagery	All Respondents		Short Stories		Long Stories	
STAGE I	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)
Present	$4,800	(61)	$2,200	(22)	$4,600	(39)
Absent	$2,300	(91)	$2,000	(57)	$2,800	(34)
	F = 4.5057		t = .184		t = 1.692	
	p < .04		NS		p < .10	
STAGE II						
Present	$1,700	(71)	$1,700	(29)	$1,700	(42)
Absent	$1,300	(94)	$ 800	(57)	$2,200	(37)
	F < 1		t = 1.759		t = .546	
	NS		p < .10		NS	

[5] In the tables, the effect of verbal fluency is controlled by dividing respondents into two groups, those who told short TAT stories ("Short Stories") versus those who told longer stories ("Long Stories").

Table 2: The Relationship Between Presence/Absence of FOS Imagery and Respondent's Occupational Status

	Percent of Respondents Telling FOS Stories		
STAGE I	All Respondents	Short Stories	Long Stories
Occupational Status of Respondent			
Professional/Management	69% (16)	60% (5)	73% (11)
Other Employed	40 (45)	20 (20)	56 (25)
Not Employed	32 (78)	22 (49)	48 (29)
	$\chi^2 = 7.5638$	$\chi^2 = 3.18$	$\chi^2 = 1.94$
	$p < .03$	NS	NS
	Gamma = .3466	Gamma = .208	Gamma = .274
STAGE II			
Occupational Status of Respondent			
Professional/Management	62% (13)	50% (4)	67% (9)
Other Employed	38 (32)	29 (17)	47 (15)
Not Employed	42 (117)	34 (64)	51 (53)
	$\chi^2 = 2.2721$	$\chi^2 = .44$	$\chi^2 = 1.73$
	NS	NS	NS
	Gamma = .0830	Gamma = 0	Gamma = .0966

Table 3: The Relationship Between Presence/Absence of FOS Imagery and Respondent's Educational Attainment[6]

FOS Imagery	All Respondents		Short Stories		Long Stories	
STAGE I	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)
Present	3.8	(61)	3.6	(22)	3.8	(39)
Absent	3.3	(90)	3.2	(56)	3.6	(34)
	F = 2.8676		t = 1.309		t = .617	
	p < .10		NS		NS	
STAGE II						
Present	3.9	(71)	3.6	(29)	4.1	(42)
Absent	3.8	(94)	3.6	(57)	4.1	(37)
	NS		NS		NS	

[6]Education was coded according to the following scale:

Re-Coded Value	Original Categories
1	One to eight years
2	Nine to eleven years
3	Twelve years: high school graduate
4	Vocational school after high school
5	Some college
6	College graduate
7	Some graduate or professional school
8	Completed graduate or professional school

Table 4: The Relationship Between Fear of Success Imagery and the Relative Income of Husbands and Wives

STAGE I

Wife's Income as a Proportion of Total Family Income	Percent of Respondents Telling a FOS Story	(n)	
0.0	27%	(59)	$\chi^2 = 7.08$
0.1 to 0.58	42	(19)	$p < .03$
0.6 to 1.00	61	(18)	Gamma = .4633
	36%	(96)	

STAGE II

Relative Income of Wife and Husband			
Wife earns as much or more than her husband	57%	(7)	
Wife earns less than her husband	49	(68)	$\chi^2 = 0.52$
Wife is not employed	45	(87)	NS
	47%	(162)	Gamma = -.0958

Table 5: The Relationship Between Fear of Success Imagery and the Relative Occupational Status of Husbands and Wives

STAGE I

Relative Occupational Prestige of Husband and Wife	Percent of Respondents Telling a FOS Story	(n)	
Wife's occupation is more prestigious	33%	(12)	
Equal (All cases are couples in which husband and wife are both professional/management.)	80	(5)	$\chi^2 = 4.17$
Wife's occupation is less prestigious, or wife is not employed	35	(69)	NS

STAGE II

Relative Occupational Prestige of Husband and Wife			
Wife's occupation is more prestigious	39%	(18)	
Equal (All cases are couples in which husband and wife are both professional/management.)	78	(9)	$\chi^2 = 5.10$
Wife's occupation is less prestigious	40	(126)	NS

The data bearing on the relative occupational status of wife and husband (presented in Table 5) are rather tricky. In essence, women who are coded as having a more prestigious occupation than their husbands are not more likely to tell fear of success stories. However, it is questionable whether the occupational status of the wife in these couples is really higher than that of the husband. The women are generally in white collar occupations, such as sales clerk and secretary, while their husbands hold blue collar jobs, often in the auto industry. The women's jobs are generally low in pay, autonomy and status; thus it is not likely that among these couples the prestige of the wife's job is seen to exceed that of the husband's job. The cases in which true occupational competition might be expected are those in which the wife is in a professional/management occupation. In the few instances in which such women were interviewed, the woman's husband was also pursuing a professional or management level occupation. These women do tend more frequently to tell FOS stories; 80 percent of them did so in Stage I, and 78 percent did in Stage II.

These data do not suggest that women who tell FOS stories tend to inhibit their achievement strivings. On the contrary, the women most prone to include FOS imagery in their stories are the high-achievers, women who work at prestigious occupations and who have high salaries. In addition, women who describe themselves as being equally or more intelligent than their husbands are more likely to tell FOS stories than are women who consider themselves less intelligent. (See Table 6.)

Table 6: The Relationship Between FOS Imagery and the Wife's Estimation of the Relative Intelligence of Husband and Wife

In terms of natural intelligence--that is, how smart one person is compared to another--who do you think is more intelligent, you or your husband?	Percent of Respondents Telling Fear of Success Stories		
	All Respondents	Short Stories	Long Stories
Wife is as intelligent or more intelligent, than husband	50% (64)	44% (34)	59% (29)
Husband is more intelligent than wife	37 (99)	27 (52)	49 (47)
	$\chi^2 = 2.5385$ $p = .1111$	$\chi^2 = 2.7195$ $p = .0991$	$\chi^2 < 1$ NS

Respondents were asked several questions such as, "If you earned more money than your husband, how likely is it that this would damage your relationship--very likely, somewhat likely, or not at at all likely?" The rationale for these questions is that anticipation of personal negative consequences resulting from success should be related to telling a FOS story; however, no such association was unearthed. On the other hand, similar measures which switched the referent from the respondent and her husband to women in general are consistently related, though non-significantly, to telling FOS stories. (See Table 7.) For example, respondents were asked, "In general, how likely do you think it is that high-achieving, successful women experience damage to their close personal relationships because of their success--very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely?" A linear trend exists with women who responded "not at all likely" being least likely to tell FOS stories.

Table 7: The Relationship Between Fear of Success Imagery and Thirteen Questions Measuring Respondent's Perception of Reality
STAGE II RESPONDENTS

Questions	Percent of Respondents Telling FOS Stories: All Respondents	Short Stories	Long Stories
No matter how it should be, girls that are too smart have trouble keeping a man.			
Disagree and Strongly Disagree	39% (124)	30% (64)	48% (60)
Agree and Strongly Agree	54 (39)	45 (22)	65 (17)
	χ^2 = 2.7845	χ^2 = 1.8211	χ^2 = 1.4225
	p = .0952	NS	NS
Most men would get angry if you beat them at a game.			
Disagree and Strongly Disagree	49% (69)	33% (48)	68% (31)
Agree and Strongly Agree	37 (94)	34 (38)	41% (46)
	χ^2 = 2.3634	χ^2 < 1	χ^2 = 5.1855
	p = .1242	NS	p = .0228
In general, how likely to you think it is that high-achieving, successful women experience damage to their close personal relationships because of their success--very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely?			
Very likely	50% (28)	40% (15)	62% (13)
Somewhat likely	44 (108)	36 (55)	51 (53)
Not at all	27 (26)	13 (15)	46 (11)
	Gamma = .2597	Gamma = .3431	Gamma = .18
	χ^2 = 3.2645	χ^2 = 3.2407	χ^2 < 1
	NS	NS	NS

The one behavioral indicator that does differentiate women who tell FOS stories from those who do not is family size. (See Table 8.) Note that in Stage I, women who told FOS stories had significantly larger families than women who did not. This basic relationship holds in Stage I even when one controls for story length, religion of respondents, education of respondent, and age of respondent, although the sub-group differences are not always significant. The direction of causality is not clear, however. Women may have babies to escape success, but women with larger families may also tell negative stories about success because it is so difficult for them to achieve when mothering a large brood. From this perspective, fertility is not an inhibiting behavior but a reality variable. The data are, of course, in line with the original hypothesis that women who fear success will tend to become pregnant to escape the competitive arena and/or to establish their femininity.

Table 8: The Relationship Between Presence/Absence of FOS Imagery and the Number of Children Ever Born to Respondents

FOS Imagery	All Respondents		Short Stories		Long Stories	
STAGE I	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)	Mean	(n)
Present	3.1	(46)	3.3	(16)	3.0	(30)
Absent	2.5	(72)	2.3	(45)	2.8	(27)
	F = 2.93		t = 2.773		t = .487	
	p < .02		p < .01		NS	
STAGE II						
Present	2.7	(66)	2.8	(27)	2.7	(55)
Absent	3.1	(92)	3.0	(39)	3.2	(37)
	F = 1.43		t = .317		t = .399	
	NS		NS		NS	

Given these rather strong results, one is struck by the fact that the fertility finding was not replicated in Stage II. As has been noted, Stage II data are generally not too interesting; FOS imagery is associated with story length and not much else. The clear trends found in Stage I dissolve into non-significant tendencies and no tendencies at all in the Stage II data. The samples differ somewhat between the two interviews, the second sample being restricted to currently married women under age 56. In addition, some women refused to be re-interviewed. However, preliminary analysis suggests that the differences are not a sufficient explanation. The crucial difference is probably the difference between the two interviews.

In the Stage II interview, respondents told the stories near the beginning of a generally relaxed and easy questionnaire on "Marriage and Family Life." On the other hand, in the Stage I interview, respondents told TAT stories at the end of a very long and difficult interview that concerned a variety of topics.[7] None of the manipulations in the Stage I

[7] The Stage I interview opened with a section on the military. Respondents were asked a variety of questions concerning their experiences with the armed forces and assessing their attitudes on war, government, and the military. Next, respondents were subjects in two very demanding social psychological experiments that were being conducted in a field setting. These experiments, especially, were probably highly arousing to respondents, perhaps eliciting FOS imagery in a way that the deliberately relaxed, open atmosphere characteristic of the Stage II interview did not. For example, in Stage I, respondents were asked to

> Think about a person who might be called successful in his or her career--that is, has a good income and a career with lots of prestige . . . How important is effort in this person's success? . . . How important is ability in this person's success? . . . How important is good luck in this person's success? . . . How important is the ease of the career in this person's success? . . . How important are advantages passed on from parents in this person's success?

Then a parallel series of questions was asked about "a person who might be called a failure."

interviews seems, by itself, to have affected the likelihood of telling a FOS story. However, it appears highly likely that the total impact of the 40 to 50 minutes of the interview that preceded the TAT story section may have been to arouse a set in the respondents, influencing all respondents to think about achievement and affiliation issues, and eliciting from respondents a different kind of story than was elicited in the easy comfortable atmosphere of the Stage II interview.

Thinking along these lines, it does not seem surprising that the strongest relationship in the Stage II data is between FOS and story length. Respondents often do indeed seem to be "telling stories," not unlike soap opera plots. On the other hand, in Stage I, where achievement was made salient, FOS is significantly related to more than simply story length (though it is also significantly related to story length).

Although this research effort was initiated with the intent of using FOS as a predictor to fertility behavior, it has evolved into a methodological critique. Several suggestions are offered to researchers working in the field. First, the situation in which FOS stories are gathered is crucial. Presumably it was not necessary for Horner to explicitly arouse FOS in her subjects because the university classroom environment itself is arousing to female undergraduates. This is not necessarily the case when working among other populations. Second,

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Other experimental manipulations stressed achievement values, while in another section the interviewer attempted to either satiate or deprive the respondent of social reinforcement by saying "good" at programmed intervals. Later the interviewer tried to influence the respondent's behavior on a task by saying "good" as a verbal reinforcement.

researchers should be alert to possible obfuscating effects of verbal fluency and/or cognitive complexity on FOS imagery. Third, the assumption that FOS is a motive deserves further scrutiny. This is an important issue, because positing FOS as a motive assumes that anxiety concerning success is deeply-rooted in women's personalities, while the alternate "reality" hypothesis concentrates on the reinforcement structure of society. The finding reported here that FOS is not related to the inhibition of achievement activity but rather to high-achieving behaviors suggests further exploration of the impact of environmental factors is necessary before the concept of an internalized disposition to fear success is accepted.

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