



The Shy Guy's Guide to Dating: The Best Places to Meet Women, the Ten Best Pickup Lines, How to Tell if She Likes You, Eleven Women to Avoid, Do's and ... What Girls Say...and What They Really Mean

By Barry Dutter

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The authoritative guide that will take shy guys everywhere—from the first date to home plate.

"Hey baby, what's your sign?" "Come here often?"

These lines may work in the movies, but not in real life, and not for the millions of guys too shy to risk their dignity on such flimsy pickup lines. Barry Dutter knows, he used to be a shy guy himself, sitting at home night after night watching television because asking a woman for a date was simply too scary.

Not anymore. He's learned dozens of tricks to help shy guys ease into the swing of dating while avoiding humiliating rejections and romantic disasters. Keeping a shy guy's tender ego in mind, he tells guys where to meet women, which ones to approach and which to avoid. Readers will learn what to do with them, and how to act from the first date through commitment time. Filled with hilarious lessons from the pop culture we grew up in, this witty, commonsense guide is a must for everyone who's ever been afraid to try—which means everyone.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Former shy guy Barry Dutter lives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where he is a stand-up comedian and a writer for cartoons like *The Simpsons* and *The Ren & Stimpy Show*. Girls love him.

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Chapter One

ARE YOU A SHY GUY?

This book is designed to help Shy Guys take a one-way trip out of Shy Town and into Confidenceville, USA—population: You! Take the following quiz to determine if you are a Shy Guy, and if this is the right book for you. You may pick more than one response to each question. Give yourself one point for each answer you pick. Then add up the total number of points when you are finished.

1. The thought of meeting a new girl makes you:

- a. enthusiastic for a new opportunity
- b. as tense as Al Gore
- c. paralyzed with fear
- d. tongue-tied

2. Which of the following Warner Brothers characters best describes your social skills?

- a. Pepe Le Pew (smooth Casanova with body odor)
- b. Bugs Bunny (hides in a hole most of the time)
- c. Foghorn Leghorn (talks the talk, but can't walk the walk)
- d. Tasmanian Devil (no focus; all over the place; mildly retarded)
- e. Yosemite Sam (loud and blustery, always shooting off his guns)

3. You don't like meeting new people because:

- a. you are uncomfortable with your appearance
- b. you are afraid you will say the wrong thing
- c. you are not particularly good at conversation
- d. you are very picky about who you associate with

4. You prefer to:

- a. surround yourself with a small group of close friends
- b. hang out alone
- c. associate only with your family
- d. chase after every girl in sight
- e. join clubs that have almost exclusively male memberships

5. If you had things your way, you would:

- a. go through life celibate
- b. have one girl who you could be with for the rest of your life

- c. go through more chicks than the Fonz
- d. have subscriptions to all the best porno mags

6. When people ask you personal questions about your social life, you wish you could:

- a. curl up and die
- b. disappear
- c. cause them as much humiliation as they are causing you
- d. rip their heads off

7. When you meet a girl you like, you:

- a. let her know right away
- b. keep it to yourself, for fear of embarrassment
- c. tell only a few close friends
- d. find a way that you can be around her all the time, without actually letting on that you like her

8. The reason you never meet any girls is because:

- a. you are so busy with school
- b. you are so busy with work
- c. you never have any opportunities
- d. you just don't know how to talk to girls
- e. you are good at making excuses

9. Your idea of a good time is:

- a. a quiet night at home, alone, reading a book
- b. a quiet night at home, alone, watching TV
- c. playing Myst on your computer
- d. a night out with the boys, chasing chicks

10. You never have any luck with girls because:

- a. you are too picky
- b. you are waiting for a girl to approach you
- c. you don't try hard enough
- d. you are just unlucky in love

11. You do not have a girlfriend because:

- a. you don't want one at this time
- b. you can't afford one
- c. your friends always ruin your chances
- d. you are intimidated by the girls you really like
- e. you just haven't found the right one yet

12. You are most comfortable talking to:

- a. strippers
- b. phone sex operators
- c. barmaids and waitresses
- d. girls at parties

13. The one thing preventing you from dating any girls right now is:

- a. you live at home, and your family would only embarrass you
- b. your friends would bust your chops
- c. you don't make enough money to take anyone out
- d. you are really good at making excuses

14. The Elvis Presley song that best sums up your experiences with girls so far is:

- a. "Love Me Tender"
- b. "Don't Be Cruel"
- c. "Heartbreak Hotel"
- d. "Kissing Cousins"

15. If a girl found out you liked her, you would:

- a. kill yourself
- b. consider joining the priesthood
- c. become nervous and uncomfortable around her
- d. take advantage of this situation

16. When people ask you nosy questions about your personal life, you:

- a. pleasantly answer all the questions
- b. lie like a rug
- c. wish a bolt of lightning would come down and strike them dead
- d. politely inform them that it's none of their business

17. The thing that scares you the most is:

- a. having your fingernails ripped off one by one
- b. having a pit bull chomp onto your genitals and not let go
- c. walking around naked in Times Square
- d. having a girl find out you like her

18. Which of the following group names did the singing Brady kids perform under on *The Brady Bunch*?

- a. The Brady 6
- b. The Brady City Rollers
- c. The Brady Rhythm Section
- d. The Silver Platters

(Okay, I admit, that last question had nothing to do with being shy. I just threw it in to see if you were paying attention. The answers are A and C. But if you were a Shy Guy in the early seventies, you probably spent a lot of Friday nights at home watching *The Brady Bunch*!)

SCORING: 10–15 points: You're not a Shy Guy! What the hell are you doing reading this book?

16–20 points: You're semi-shy, but with a little help, you can be saved.

21–25 points: You're a Shy Guy! You need this book! Study it like the Bible! Memorize it! Learn it! Know it!

26–30 points: To paraphrase Kajagoogoo, you're too shy-shy, hush hush, eye to eye!

31–35 points: Well, at least we've identified your problem. Now let's see what we can do to solve it!

36–40 points: Have you tried that Nintendo 64? They've got some really cool graphics ...

Okay, so let's say you've taken my little quiz, and you've confirmed what you already knew all along—that you are a Shy Guy. Now what do you do?

Shy Guy Movies to Watch

If there's a recurring theme to this book, it's that we can look to the magic of Hollywood to inspire us in our quest to overcome shyness. One of the oldest Hollywood cliches is that of the nerdy guy who learns how to stand up for himself and become a man. Countless movies have carried this theme. Here's an overview of the ones that do it well. These are the films that you may want to watch to help you pick up a few pointers on your road to Real Manhood.

NIGHT SHIFT (1982): One of the greatest Shy Guy movies of all time. In a complete reversal from his Fonzie persona, Henry Winkler stars as a mild-mannered nerd who is pushed around by everyone. In an unforgettable debut, Michael Keaton plays a frantic wildman named Billy Blaze—he's energetic, he's funny, he's full of personality. Keaton embarks on a mission to make Winkler into a man. Keaton is the mentor every real-life Shy Guy wishes he had. By the end of the movie, Winkler learns to stand up to the deli

delivery boy, talk back to barking dogs, and inspire a hooker to quit hooking and become his girlfriend. This is the movie that redefined the “nerd-into-man” story for our generation.

RISKY BUSINESS (1983): A classic movie, in the same mode as *Night Shift*. Tom Cruise plays Joel, a high school kid who always strikes out with chicks. At the beginning of the movie, Joel confesses to his friends that he blew a chance to score with a hot girl at his school. Joel’s friends mock his awkwardness with girls. Then Joel winds up turning his home into a brothel and taking on the head hooker as his girlfriend. Needless to say, he wins the respect of his friends, who go on to become some of his best customers! Even though his brothel is shut down and all his profits are taken away from him, Joel makes it into Princeton—and still gets to keep the hooker as his girlfriend! Even more important, Joel has learned what it means to be a man. Oh yeah, he also gets to make love on a train!

(Interesting to note how many movies seem to feel a Shy Guy needs a hooker in order to become a man ... An earlier movie to contain this theme was a 1973 Jack Nicholson flick called *The Last Detail*. In that film, Nicholson is a career sailor ordered to transport a young kleptomaniac to prison. But before that klepto can get to jail, Nicholson makes sure the kid gets drunk, gets in a bar fight, and gets a hooker. This is Hollywood’s three-point plan for becoming a man!)

ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO’S NEST (1975): Aside from being one of the greatest movies of all time, this Academy Award—winner also has a great subplot about a Shy Guy. Jack Nicholson plays McMurphy, a convict who pretends to be crazy so he’ll be put in an asylum instead of going to prison. One of the inmates he meets in the asylum is Billy, a kid who, at first, seems to have some serious mental problems, but is actually suffering from a bad case of shyness (as well as an overbearing mother complex). McMurphy figures out how to cure Billy’s condition—he invites a couple of babes to the institution for a party! One of the party girls takes a liking to Billy, and the two start to get it on. That wicked Nurse Ratched comes along and breaks up the party and threatens to tell Billy’s mother. Billy winds up committing suicide. If only the staff of the institution had let McMurphy implement his rather radical methods of curing shyness, Billy would still be around today.

HARDBODIES (1984): This classic teen sex comedy addresses the plight of men who are successful in business, but unlucky in love. What do you do if you’ve made millions, but still can’t get girls? Here we find the answer!

Hardbodies is the story of three middle-aged businessmen—Hunter, Ashby, and Rounder (he’s the fat one, natch!)—who move into a California beach house and hire a surfer dude to teach them how to score with chicks! The surfer dude is Scotty, a master at picking up Hardbodies, which, he informs us, are “the perfect little foxes down on the beach.” According to Scotty, the way to approach Hardbodies is to “dialogue” them by giving them the BBD—the Bigger, Better Deal. Scotty says, “Chicks want something better out of life. The faster car. The richer boyfriend. The hotter action. That’s the BBD.” Scotty feels that conventional pickup lines won’t work on a Hardbody.

He tells his students, “These chicks are black and blue from guys hitting them with lines. Ya gotta give them them something fresh.” Scotty’s suggested approach? When you see a pretty girl Rollerblading on the strip, fall down in front of her. Then ask her if she is a model. Tell her, “We’re having a party on Saturday, and every modeling agent in the city is gonna be there—and I bet they’d love to meet you!” Scotty notes that “dialoguing” a girl is easy. “Any slob can do it.”

Scotty also recommends heading down to the mall, which he calls “a hidden valley of Hardbodies. They’re alone, they’re off guard, and they’re ready to be dialogued!” (This is one point where Scotty is right on target. See the chapter on “The Best Places to Meet Girls”!) Scotty also has the three middle-aged guys get

new haircuts and a new wardrobe. Thanks to the advice of Scotty, his three charges succeed in their goal of landing some Hardbodies.

Among the other techniques employed: Hunter spills a drink on a girl's dress, then convinces her to take it off and run some water on it. Then he makes his move! Rounder poses as a photographer and tricks girls into posing topless for him at a party. Ashby serenades a girl with a country-western song he has written based on a line a hooker used to reject Hunter: "I Don't Fuck Fossils for Free!" Another character, a big beach bully, teaches his dog to steal the bikini tops of pretty girls lying on the beach.

Any of these methods seem reasonable to me, especially if you are middle-aged and desperate.

FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH (1982): It's funny how many great coming-of-age movies came out in the early eighties. (They just don't make teen sex comedies any more!) This film has many characters, all of them representing different aspects of high school life. One character fancies himself a ladies' man. He is Damone, who advises not talking to girls, just sending out a lot of attitude instead. Damone says, "The attitude dictates that you don't care whether she cumms, lays, stays, or prays. I mean, whatever happens, your toes are still tappin'. And when you've got that ... then you've got the attitude." I'm not so sure the "Attitude" method works in real life, especially for Shy Guys.

One of the kids in the movie, Rat, is a Shy Guy who likes Jennifer Jason Leigh's character, Stacy. Stacy comes on real strong to Rat, inviting him over her house one night when her parents aren't home. Rat, who is a virgin, panics, makes up a lame excuse, and runs home! Talk about shy! I have a hard time believing any Shy Guy would be so afraid of sex that he would run away from it (maybe they should have gotten that kid a hooker). But the scene does illustrate that some Shy Guys are not comfortable with the idea of sex without love. Every Shy Guy likes to think that his first time is going to be special, that it's going to be with a girl he really cares about. Sadly, it doesn't always work out that way. By the end of the movie, Stacy decides to reverse tactics and pursue Rat the old-fashioned way, by courting him. It is implied that this method will work much better for her, instead of rushing him into something he's just not ready for. (In real life, she probably would have thought Rat was gay and given up on him.)

Other teen sex comedies from the eighties that you may enjoy include *The Last American Virgin*, *Fraternity Vacation*, *Valley Girl*, and *Heaven Help Us*.

BACK TO THE FUTURE (1985): The first movie in the trilogy is really the only good one, and for one very significant reason: it is the only one of the three that featured the incomparable Crispin Glover in the role of George McFly, father to Michael J. Fox's Marty. The story has Marty McFly traveling back in time, where he must teach his Shy Guy father how to get over his shyness and ask out the girl who is destined to become his wife (and Marty's mom). Glover does a tremendous job portraying the awkwardness and hesitation of a Shy Guy. Marty has to resort to some desperate methods, such as dressing up like Darth Vader and zapping George with his Walkman. Eventually, George comes around, ending his life of Shyness the old-fashioned way, by giving that mean ol' Biff a punch in the nose. In the end, we see that George McFly's life has turned out for the better. By learning to stand up for himself, he has gone on to become a best-selling author and an aggressive, confident man, instead of a wimp. So the message of the movie can be seen as this: Shy Guys get walked all over. Real Men stand up for themselves.

ROXANNE (1987): *Cyrano de Bergerac* is perhaps the alltime great treatment of the Shy Guy phenomenon, and this movie, written by and starring Steve Martin, is a modern telling of that timeless tale. Martin plays a fireman in love with the beautiful Roxanne, played by Daryl Hannah. Because of his rather prominent snout, Martin is afraid to confess his true feelings. When a better-looking guy asks Martin to help him woo Roxanne, by writing love letters and hiding in the bushes beneath her window and feeding the guy romantic

lines to use, Martin agrees. How many Shy Guys out there can relate to being afraid to ask out a girl because you're uncomfortable with your appearance? And how many Shy Guys can relate to watching some other guy make time with the girl who should have been yours? I think we all can.

THE NUTTY PROFESSOR (1963 AND 1996): Whether you prefer Eddie Murphy's remake or the Jerry Lewis original, both movies are about a shy college professor who tries to overcome his condition through chemistry. In Lewis's case, he goes from a skinny nerd to a smooth ladies' man. In Murphy's flick, he goes from a big blubber boy to a svelte stud. Every Shy Guy wishes he could magically transform himself like this—from unconfident weakling who's uncomfortable with his appearance, to cocky Casanova who knows all the right things to say and can get all the girls.

Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way in real life. There are no magic potions you can take to transform yourself. If you really want to change your behavior or your appearance, you're going to have to do both the hard way. For what it's worth, in both movies, the main character finds that easy answers and quick changes are not the solution. Both Murphy and Lewis come to resent what they turn into, and both are happy to go back to the way they were.

BIG (1988): This beloved Tom Hanks film offers an insightful look at how a little boy's shyness can carry over into adulthood. The film tells the story of a young boy who magically becomes an adult overnight, but still has the mind of a child. A lot of Shy Guys can relate to this, because many Shy Guys are just children in grown-up bodies. There are times when I still feel as shy as I did when I was five years old.

In this film, Hanks's character is very naive sexually. When he excitedly tells a girl, "I get to be on top!" he's talking about bunk beds, not sex positions. When the woman finally decides to have sex with Hanks, she finds she must be the aggressor. This is a situation every Shy Guy can relate to. If women never made the first move when it comes to lovemaking, many Shy Guys would still be virgins.

Another good Hanks movie about a Shy Guy is *Forrest Gump*. Technically, Forrest is really more of a semi-retarded guy than a Shy Guy, but still, he is very timid when it comes to putting the moves on his true love, Jenny. Forrest even experiences premature ejaculation, and that's something every Shy Guy can relate to, I'm sure! (Not that I would know anything about that . . .)

SWINGERS (1996): *Swingers* is a low-budget movie that offers a very funny look at a bunch of pickup artists and their various techniques. One of the Swingers is a Shy Guy who is still pining for his ex-girlfriend six months after their breakup. The other Swingers try to help the Shy Guy overcome his funk and get on with his life.

In one hilarious scene, the Shy Guy gets a girl's phone number—and then makes the biggest mistake you can make: he calls her the *same night* and leaves four messages on her answering machine! Needless to say, the girl never wants to see him again!

A good film to study for technique, even if some of the pickups are a little unbelievable.

PRETTY WOMAN (1991): In this film, Richard Gere plays a high-powered executive who is in LA for a few days on business and needs a female companion to attend some social functions with him. Since he doesn't have a girlfriend, Gere decides to hire a hooker (naturally)!

When he sees a streetwalker (played by Julia Roberts) on the corner, Gere's character asks her for directions! The filmmakers try to make Gere appear more sympathetic here by making it seem like Gere is really lost, and would never even think about approaching a hooker. But us Shy Guys know the truth: Gere wasn't really lost. He only asked for directions as an excuse to talk to the hooker! Fortunately for him, Roberts is an

aggressive hooker, and she closes the deal.

After one weekend together, Roberts falls in love with Gere, gives up her life of prostitution for him, and they go off to get married. That must make for some interesting stories at cocktail parties. "So, how did you two meet, anyway?"

MILK MONEY (1995): This movie deals with a kid who lives with his widowed father, played by Ed Harris. Since the kid knows his father is too shy to ever meet another woman, the kid does what any loving son would do. He saves up his milk money and hires his dad a hooker (played by Melanie Griffith)! I can only hope that someday my children love me enough to do the same for me!

Naturally, by the end of the movie, Melanie has fallen in love with Ed, given up hooking, and agreed to marry him! Hollywood seems to have this real fascination with the idea that it's okay for a Shy Guy to use a hooker to help him get over his shyness, as long as the hooker turns into an Honest Woman in the end. Well, whatever works ...

Shy Guys on TV

Since Shy Guys generally spend over half their lives at home watching TV, we'll finish this chapter with a look at TV Shy Guys.

For every Fonzie, there is a Potsie. For every Vinnie Barbarino, there is an Arnold Horshack. The TV landscape has always been littered with Shy Guys who seek out the advice of Cool Guys who know how to score. Unfortunately, in real life, Shy Guys often lack helpful role models. Not all of us have a tough-but-cool friend who dispenses advice on meeting girls.

No, most Shy Guys have to do it on their own. They're usually too shy to consult with other Shy Guys, so they can't even take comfort in the knowledge that others are suffering as they are.

In the event that you can't find a real-life Fonzie, you may just want to be inspired by the examples you see on TV. Here's my round-up of some famous TV Shy Guys.

RICHIE CUNNINGHAM: Richie was your basic awkward teenager, but he was fortunate in that he had his horny friend, Potsie, who pushed him into getting into all kinds of trouble. Although Potsie was a bad influence, he never asked Richie to do anything that was *really* bad. When Richie looks back on his high school experience, the things he will remember most fondly are the things he did with Potsie. Like the time they got fake IDs and snuck into a strip club. Like the time they got in a drag race. Like the time they almost joined a street gang.

Although Richie was initially reluctant to do any of these things (a Shy Guy never wants to break the law or go against the rules), he could be talked into almost anything. That's pretty much the way it works in real life. Usually a Shy Guy's first impulse is to turn down any invitation to do anything different. Speaking from personal experience, I can say that my first impulse is to say "no" whenever anyone asks me to do anything I haven't done before. Why would I want to do something different? What happens if I don't like it? No, it's safer just to stay home and follow the old reliable routine.

That's the Shy Guy way.

But if TV has taught us nothing else, it's that the greater you resist doing something ("Uh-uh! I am not going hang gliding! No way! No how!"), the more fun you will have when you finally give in and do it. ("Look at me! I'm hang gliding! Wheeee!")

We all need a Potsie in our lives. Every responsible person needs an irresponsible sidekick to lead them into all kinds of mischief. Without that rascally sidekick, our lives would be a lot less interesting.

Let me give you a real-life example of the Potsie Syndrome. My friend Patrick had been dumped by his girlfriend of several years, and he was taking it hard. He went into a deep depression; he spent his nights walking the streets in the rain, crying. He had basically sunk about as low as a human being could go.

He just couldn't let go of his ex-girlfriend. She had gone on with her life, met a new guy, but Pat was having

a real hard time starting over. He couldn't get her off his mind.

One night, me and my buddy Dave were going on a road trip to a new nightclub we had heard about. We invited Pat to come with us. He turned us down, saying he wasn't interested. We badgered him, cajoled him, and pressured him, until finally, he caved in and agreed to come along, swearing he was not going to have any fun.

We went to the nightclub, and Patrick met a girl—a cute nanny. After the club closed, Patrick and the nanny went to a diner for a bite to eat. Then they started dating. From there, Patrick's confidence grew so much that he started asking out other girls. The next thing you knew, he was dating two girls at once!

He rebounded big time from his earlier funk. It was one of the healthiest recoveries from a breakup I had ever seen, and it all came about because we had badgered Pat to come out with us that night. It just goes to show you the importance of being supportive to your friends.

It would be great if we all knew a seemingly-dangerous-but-really-harmless biker who could dispense all his wisdom in the art of dating, but realistically, that's probably not going to happen. More likely, we'll have to rely on our fellow Shy Guys for support. So if you have a mischievous friend who's always trying to get you to do stuff that goes against your Shy Guy nature, why not give it a try sometime? Likewise, you should try to support your friends in all their wacky adventures. (Just try to stay away from those drag races!)

ROSS GELLER: This character from the TV series *Friends* is the perfect example of the Shy Guy who wastes half his life pining over a girl before finally revealing his true feelings to her. Ever since he was in high school, Ross had the hots for Rachel, who was his sister's best friend. But Ross never acted on his feelings. Instead, he admired Rachel from afar, pining for her, dreaming of her, but never daring to express how he really felt.

Because of Ross's shyness, he almost let Rachel slip through his fingers. He could only stand by helplessly as she announced her engagement to another man.

Fortunately, Rachel's wedding plans fell apart and he got another chance. That's something a lot of guys don't get. Even after Rachel called off her engagement, Ross was afraid to pounce. (As we'll discuss later, Shy Guys don't pounce!) It was another full year before Rachel found out Ross liked her! By then, Ross was in another relationship with someone else.

Eventually, things worked out and Ross and Rachel finally got together, but it took far longer than it should have. Just think if Ross had told Rachel how he felt about her when they were both in high school. Think of all the great times they could have had together. They could have gone to the prom together, been dating all through college—they could have had another ten years together! Instead, Rachel was out having fun, while Ross spent all his time moping and making puppy-dog eyes.

Because of his Shyness, Ross wasted years of his life. Any Shy Guy can relate to that. Just about every Shy Guy knows what it's like to have a big crush on the girl next door, only to go your whole life without ever seeing it consummated.

Don't make the same mistake Ross made. Don't wait ten years to tell a girl how you really feel. Tell her today. If there's one thing the TV show *Friends* has taught us it's that it's never too late for a man and a woman who are friends to become lovers. (Even though Ross and Rachel eventually broke up, at least they had a season and a half together! And you know they are destined to get back together again. My prediction: they'll be married years from now, when the show reaches its last episode!)

RADAR O'REILLY: This Shy Guy from the TV series *M*A*S*H* suffered through eight years of the Korean War (which, as we all know, really only lasted two and half years), with only a small handful of dates to his credit. All around him, irresponsible doctors and soldiers were cheating on their wives, going into town to get hookers, and chasing nurses. Radar could only sit back and watch as the camp studs, Hawkeye and Trapper John scored on a nightly basis. Even though Radar was a nice guy with good

intentions, he couldn't help but feel a little envious of the dating prowess of the doctors in "The Swamp." On those rare occasions when Radar could actually get a date, he would always turn to Hawkeye and Trapper for advice. In one instance, Radar was dating a sophisticated girl who had an interest in classical music. Radar felt out of his element. How could a naive Iowa farmboy possibly hope to impress such a girl? Good ol' Hawkeye came through with the answer. He told Radar, "Whenever she talks about classical music, just say, 'Aaaaah ... Bach.' Radar tried it and unfortunately the line didn't work, but Hawkeye came to the rescue yet again, piping in with, "I guess once you've said, 'Aaaaah, Bach,' there's nothing more left to say!" Even though Radar was stationed alongside the studly surgeons for the duration of the Korean War, he really didn't take advantage of their advice on dating as much as he could have. When he got his orders and went back home to Ottumwa, Iowa, he packed up his teddy bear and his grape Nehis and left behind a golden opportunity to learn about the ladies.

For all his ability to predict the future, there was one thing Radar's psychic powers couldn't do, and that's read the hearts and minds of the women around him. If he had learned to do this, his Shy Guy days would have been behind him forever!

CLIFF CLAVIN: Cliff (from *Cheers*) represents an extreme version of a Shy Guy. He's the classic example of the guy who thinks he knows everything about everything, but knows nothing when it comes to women. Whenever he tries to talk to a pretty girl, Cliff gets so tongue-tied he can't even form words. Only nonsense sounds come out of his mouth. Yet if you ask him about the history of the Pony Express, he'll bore you for hours with endless stories.

This is the kind of guy you see a lot of in bars. Guys who are incredibly knowledgeable when it comes to certain subjects—usually sports and cars—but know absolutely zilch about women. Back in my bartending days, it always amazed me how some guys could be so confident when it came to certain subjects, yet so terrified of girls. Why couldn't they take that confidence they had in every other aspect of life and apply it to the opposite sex?

Cliff spent eleven years sitting on the bar stool at *Cheers*, and if the show hadn't been cancelled, he'd still be there today. Cliff had a couple of dates over the course of the show's run, but he usually botched them by making a blithering idiot of himself. If you see yourself as a real-life Cliff Clavin, you may want to return this book, because I'm afraid there may be no hope for you!

JOHN BURNS: (*Taxi*) John was the Shy Guy who appeared in the first season of *Taxi*, and then disappeared and was never referred to again. He occupies a special place in TV history, along with Spearchucker and Ugly John from *M*A*S*H* and Richie Cunningham's older brother, Chuck, from *Happy Days*—characters who disappeared and were forgotten, as if they had never existed.

The only storyline of his own John ever had was one episode when he was looking for a good pickup line. He decided to try, "Will you marry me?" Much to his surprise, it actually worked. A girl John met in a bar said yes, and John was stuck marrying her. Yeah, like that would happen! If you ever tried to use this line in real life, the girl would think you were a desperate loser and she would never, ever say yes. (Or if she did, she would be joking!)

I guess the lesson to be learned here is that what works on TV doesn't always work in real life.

There's nothing wrong with picking a TV character from one of your favorite shows and trying to emulate him. But set realistic goals. We can't all be Fonzie.

Pick a TV character that you can actually relate to. For instance, when I was growing up, I always wanted to be one of the Monkees, preferably Mickey—the funny one. The Monkees had the life. They lived in an awesome house on the beach with a cool car, they had pretty girls coming over all the time, and they got chased by monsters and gangsters. It doesn't get any better than that! At least there was a chance of me actually having a life like Mickey's, except for the part about the monsters.

DA-WAYNE (*What's Happenin'!!*): *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network and Cable TV Shows* describes Da-Wayne as “the shy tagalong, always striving to be ‘cool.’” He’s a classic Shy Guy. When he walked into a room, he was full of confidence, greeting his friends with a hearty “Hey Hey Hey!” But when it came to girls, Da-Wayne was quiet and reserved. Perhaps he felt a little intimidated, hanging out with his smart pal, Raj, and the flamboyant Rerun, whose colorful wardrobe and energetic dancing would always capture the crowd’s attention. When competing with guys like that, Da-Wayne would be lucky to get a date with fat Shirley the waitress!

Of course, since he was a sitcom character, Da-Wayne still did much better than a real-life Shy Guy would have. He could always get a date to the Doobie Brothers concert if he needed one. As you may have noticed, characters on TV sitcoms do quite a bit of dating. There is a lot we can learn from their methods. Whenever you’re not sure what to say to a girl, just say to yourself, “What would Schneider from *One Day at a Time* do in this situation?”

If it means disguising yourself as a woman and moving into an all-girl hotel in order to win the girl you love, then so be it. If it means pretending to be gay to fool your landlord so you can move in with two sexy roommates (well, okay, one sexy roommate and her sensible friend), then go for it. As TV has taught us, no approach is too outrageous. There’s no such thing as going too far when pursuing your soulmate—even if you have to steal her away from her snooty rich fiancé on their wedding day.

Some of these approaches may seem a bit extreme, but for all its razzle-dazzle, Hollywood does try to inspire us to do better. If we follow the examples set by our favorite movie and TV characters, we can’t lose. If nothing else, we can borrow from these characters their persistence and their incredible optimism.

Now that we have identified all the different types of Shy Guys on TV, and witnessed Shy Guys transforming into real men in the movies, it’s time to teach you about actually getting out there and meeting girls.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Roberto Senn:

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