

## ANOTHER EVALUATION OF TOUCH AND HELPING BEHAVIOR<sup>1</sup>

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*Summary.*—Although positive effect of touch on compliance has been widely reported, new evaluation was made with an unusual request. 80 male bus drivers were solicited by a male or a female confederate to take the bus despite having too little money for the fare. Bus drivers were briefly touched by the confederate during solicitation. Analysis showed that bus drivers who were touched accepted the request more favorably but only when made by a female.

A multitude of research had demonstrated that touch was positively associated with helping. People receiving a request for a dime accepted the request more favorably when slightly touched on the forearm during the solicitation (Kleinke, 1977). When touched by a confederate, passersby in a street agreed more favorably to look after a large and very excited dog for 10 minutes because the confederate wanted to go into a pharmacy where animals were prohibited (Guéguen & Fischer-Lokou, 2002). The probability of agreeing to participate in a street survey increased when the solicitor made a brief tactile contact with the subject when presenting the request (Paulsell & Goldman, 1984; Hornik, 1987; Guéguen, 2002). A simple touch of a client by a waiter or a waitress in a restaurant increased the amount of the tip (Lynn, Le, & Sherwyn, 1998). During a demonstration of products in a store, willingness to taste the products increased, when the client was touched during the request. Tactile contact also was associated with an increase in selling rate of the product (Smith, Gier, & Willis, 1982; Hornik, 1992). In the same way, Kaufman and Mahoney (1999) showed that, when touched by a waitress, patrons of a public tavern consumed more alcohol than patrons who were not touched.

In all of the experiments presented above, subjects were solicited to donate their time or their money. Then it would be interesting to test if touch increases the probability of donating something which is not personal. So, the effect of touch was tested in a professional context wherein subjects were asked to donate money of their employer.

### METHOD

Eighty male bus drivers of an important town (more than 400,000 in-

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habitants) were estimated to be between 20 and 50 years old. Using different bus stops, a single confederate from men and women aged 19 to 22 years old signaled the bus driver to stop, got into the bus, and asked for a ticket. With perplexity the confederate looked through a billfold during 15 to 20 sec., through pockets for another 15 to 20 sec., and again through the billfold. In a confused manner, the confederate explained to the bus driver that he had only 10.00 FF. The confederate when asking him for a ticket briefly touched the bus driver's forearm.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

When touched by a female confederate, 60.0% (12 of 20) of the bus drivers consented to the confederate's request whereas 35.0% (7 of 20) agreed to the request in the control noncontact condition. When touched by a male confederate, 25% (5 of 20) accepted the confederate's request whereas 10.0% (2 of 20) accepted the same request in the control condition. Generally, touch was associated positively with compliance [ $\chi^2(1, N=80)=8.44, p < .005$ ], but the difference between male and female confederates was not [ $\chi^2(1, N=80)=3.69, p < .06$ ]. Analysis of the interaction between the two factors by a log-linear analysis showed a positive effect [ $\chi^2(4, N=80)=12.58, p < .02$ ].

As in most prior studies, touch was positively associated with compliance to a request for help but only for the woman solicitor. A similar request was reported for a female solicitor when the solicited person was a male (Crusco & Wetzel, 1984). Some studies have shown that helping behavior is more important in a high need situation (Bickman & Kamzan, 1973; Harrel & Goltz, 1980) and that men are more favorable to female solicitors (Dovidio, 1982) especially if need is high (Harris & Bays, 1973).

Kleinke (1977) reported that touch increased the probability people would give their own money to a solicitor. Our experiment shows that money of someone else (the employer of the bus drivers) was more favorably granted when the subject was encouraged by a tactile contact. Such findings confirm that touch influenced behavior.

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