



DEAR DR. HARTMAN

Clichés can be fun

Hello patients,

As the weather begins to cool, and the time for snuggling under warm covers on rainy Sundays is about to come around again, the thoughts of many of my patients have been turning to the question of psychosexual loneliness.

In recognition of your plight, I present for you now, the famous Dr Mary Hartman Five Point Plan For Getting a Boy or a Girl, Depending on Your Sexual Preference. This plan is a simple kit of sexual tools, a staged seduction which will enable even the most foolish fumbler to get the object of their desire into the cot with charm and finesse. And isn't that something we all need in the 'nineties! I want to assure you that this plan was not developed in some academic ivory tower. Not at all! This plan is based upon years of back-breaking work out in the field.

STEP ONE. Ring the object of your desire when you know for sure they are not at home. I repeat, ring when they are not at home. And leave a simple message, for example, "Mary rang", and your telephone number. The aim of Step One is to get the object thinking about you in your absence. Thus you begin the all-important process of building sexual tension.

STEP TWO. The object returns your call. Here we see another excit-

ing aspect of this unique plan, the built-in participation of the object! They ring you, and you say, "Oh, Hi. Why have you rung?" Thus you throw the object off guard and gain the advantage. Then, in Step Two you invite the object out to dinner. Why dinner? It's intimate, you can maintain eye contact, but you've got something to do, if you need to fill in any uncomfortable silences. Most important of all during the dinner, do not touch the object.

The aim of this dinner is to get to know the mind of the object. Because this isn't about some 'seventies one-night stand. What you want in the 'nineties, with AIDS and herpes and privatisation, is ongoing commitment. And so you need to know their mind. Now, if you discover during dinner that you don't like their mind, there's no harm done. Just part company as friends. But if you do like their mind, you are now ready for Step Three.

STEP THREE is my favourite step. It's my own innovation. Step Three is a simple flamboyant romantic gesture. For example, why not send a telegram, "Lovely night. Love Mary."

But sometimes, patients, I wonder if you can go past chocolates and flowers when it comes to Step Three. I think perhaps the women's movement threw the baby out with the bathwater when they shied away from such gestures in the early years.

The simple fact of the matter is that women love chocolates and flowers, and chaps aren't known to knock them back either. But use your own discretion. The simple aim is to send a clear message of sexual interest.

So to **STEP FOUR.** And again we see the exciting participation of the object. Because, after they receive your flowers or whatever - any ambiguity which existed during the dinner evaporates.

Now they know exactly what is going on and, in a flush of excitement, they ring you to initiate the

next date. Thus they share the responsibility for sexual initiation, reducing your level of anxiety. Here are a few words of guidance for this all-important second date.

I recommend that you go somewhere which offers the opportunity for physical relief. Perhaps a walk on the beach (cliches can be fun). Or perhaps you could walk a dog around the grounds of a large psychiatric hospital. Or go to a dance. Most important of all, you drive the car on the night, because it will give you that all-important sense of power and control which is necessary to reduce anxiety.

On this second social encounter you must remember to touch the object as often as possible, even if apparently inadvertently. I personally recommend that, early on in the evening, you look the object right in the eye and say something like, "We're going to get off together tonight, aren't we?" or "Let's fuck" or whatever is appropriate to your social context. The object will laugh nervously, not unlike yourself. But you'll have got it off your chest and you won't have to spend the whole night worrying about when it's finally going to be said.

STEP FIVE, of course, is IT. We don't give detailed information about it. Other health professionals cover that area, and we don't like to interfere in the way the market, sorry, the profession, has been divided up.

Just one final word of warning. If you do find yourself late one night sitting in a car with an object and you hear yourself saying something really pathetic like, "Can I come inside for coffee?" for God's sake, **DON'T DRINK COFFEE!** If you do, your tension will rocket into a ball of anxiety in your stomach.

As soon as you get inside the object's front door, grab them and kiss them as quickly and as hard as you can!

*Send your problems to Dr
Hartman's secretary, Julie
McCrossin, c/o ALR.*