

SOFIA TRUJILLO'S

RATROCK PORTFOLIO!

A GUIDE TO HYPERCONSCIOUS PRETTY PEOPLE

This college campus is filled with too many laid back people.

This is how you become one.

CONTENTS

1. Clothes, Hair and Other Paraphernalia	3
2. Hobbies and Other Activities	5
a. An Exception To The Rule	8
3. Delivery, Tone, and What Not To Say	10
4. Romantic Interests and People You Want To Kiss	11
a. Case Study A: The Suitor	11
b. Case Study B: The Pursued	15
5. “Cool,” in All Its Forms	17

1. Clothes, Hair and Other Paraphernalia

Clothes are most important and thus they go first. As you will come to know, here, we are all about invisible effort. Combine your jeans with a disheveled top, maybe a lopsided hat and a patterned jacket. Walk outside. Look so detached from reality (and thus from how you look) that you make your audience feel like they are the first ones to realize your clothing items come together to make a spectacular blend of chromatism. You had no idea. First attempts at creating this effect will be inevitably futile but you must persist. Don't worry: You will earn back the right to be visibly intentional about things. Estimate a one year turn-around, on average. First, you must master the skill of taking a step back. Learn to juggle the admiration that will pour out of people when they come to believe that you don't even know you look good. It begs the question: What beautiful things have you seen such that your own allure is not enchanting enough to be recognized? In due course, you will master this ability such that, when the time comes for you to make a statement and put on something the world can tell you thought about for three hours, you will have the backbone for it. Personal investment that is made public is perhaps one of the riskiest social moves in this here community of hyperconscious pretty people. They teach this in economics.

As you grow in your time here, you may want to dye or de-dye (also known as bleach) your hair. This is an accepted exception of "making an effort." You are allowed to dye your hair any color you please, but are only permitted to color coordinate it with your outfit no more than a couple of times a month. That is unless you have decided to make your personal identity attached to a particular color, as some on campus, as well as several other people on the internet, have done, (In this case you are expected to wear a specific item of clothing of said color every day for the rest of your college career). Never break character. Again, it must be reiterated, you may

never at any stage truly indulge people—particularly those who yearningly aspire to be a part of our community—by telling them how frightfully excited this new red, black, bright pink, bleached, rainbow, polka dot hair makes you. We remain calm. Always. Accessories should be kept to a minimum, but developing one’s personal staples is encouraged. Previous examples include turquoise earrings, nipple piercings, a leather cuff, a pageboy hat, a pair of bright red headphones, and perhaps the most powerful statement of them all, nothing.

It is impossible to write about clothes and accessories without writing about the body. In your efforts to forget yourself, you will learn that, through the lens of aesthetics, some bodies are easier to forget than others. Remember, you are aiming to create a seamless experience for those that interact with you (on college walk, on the lawns, walking out of the dining hall). Those that follow this guide, thus, may begin questioning whether the way their stomach curves out entails a visual inconvenience to those taking in the image of them in their indigo nightgown-esque skirt. They perhaps will begin to resent the fat stored in their armpits, and how it protrudes when they place their arms on their sides and catches their eye in the mirror, as they try on a white strapless dress. If you too follow this path, you will begin to see your body as a roadblock between yourself and an exquisite social performance. *Oh no, you will realize, they will never only be looking at the skirt, or glancing at the dress, your body will always be there, making itself known.* If you choose to feed this agonizing spiral of doubt for long enough, you may find yourself, perhaps on a slow morning, as you get ready, watching an Instagram Reel video by a fashion influencer titled: “Is it stylish or is she just skinny?” and (you would never say this out loud) think there isn’t a difference. Bodies that jut out, perhaps a bit (perhaps a lot), impose into the space in a way that cuts through the mirage of indifference.¹

¹ As a reader, you may sense that I am hesitant to spell out this idea to its fullest extent. I am. The basic tenets of this guide are distasteful to say out loud. Not because they are not real, not because you yourself, deep down, don’t agree with them, but because you all are cowards who don’t have the balls to publicly associate with the things you

There is only a certain person that is able to follow these rules to a T. This person makes the world a place where only they can survive effortlessly. Every other color and shape, both of body and face, will make itself so impossible to ignore you will feel it is working against you. There are limits to this guide. Like that thing both Picasso and the Dalai Lama said, in different periods of time but in fairly similar ways, I am giving you the rules for you to break them.

2. Hobbies and Other Activities

Hobbies occupy a unique role in the creation of your social identity. It is more important than your job, and in some cases even more than what you study. Your hobbies are expected to reveal the truth of your character, as they represent it in its moments of pure relaxation. We love a contradiction. A neuroscience major that directs stop motion films on the side. The guy that wants to major in “Undeclared” who also happens to be a secret chess fanatic (he has a 1700 score on Chess.com). The tight-lipped girl you play pool with just started taking martial arts classes. Talent is only a soft-prerequisite for your extracurricular endeavors; the soundbite of the anecdote is sometimes enough to charm. Besides, effort in this realm of behavior is acceptable;

privately uphold. Skinny has always been in (At least for everyone born after the 1920s) and it creates the impression that from here on out, it always will be. And while we have occasionally entertained a celebrity with a BBL and called her beautiful, it is only an indicator of our shock that, along with the BBL, she has been able to retain an unimaginably thin waist, arms and face. We are shocked at how, even in the face of obstacles, they have made the skinny persist. Did you know there are injections that help you get skinny now? There’s advertisements for them on the subway. Every celebrity and their mother is on these drugs. Shocking. We may have clapped for the curvy woman for a second—with our #bodypositivity hashtags on Instagram and plus size models now featured in Nike commercials—but what these injections tell you is that, if skinny wasn’t in, it was only because it was inaccessible. You can sign up for your first month of shots for \$99. Ironically, it is a drug also prescribed to people with diabetes, and the current uptick in interest has created a drug shortage for patients who truly need this life-saving medicine. Yes, skinny may kill, but being skinny saves you time. Being skinny saves you money (you may have to pay for the shots but have you ever paid to get into a club?) . Being skinny lets you not think. And this last one speaks to the crux of the laid back person. You never have to be concerned whether your new partner will be attracted to your body. You will not wonder whether they have this shirt in your size or even if it was designed to look good on someone not a size 2. You will never ask yourself whether your family members discuss your body in private. The best part about skinny, is that it claims to provide you with peace of mind. The fact that you can always be more skinny, and that therefore so many already skinny people want to be more skinny, and that people die for skinny and starve for skinny and lose their social lives and personality over skinny, etc, is a flaw in the system that we will ignore.

we will cheer you on for trying. Surprise is the key element. We shouldn't be able to see it coming. People are supposed to go: "Charlie? Really? Buzzcut Charlie?," and then finish with, "That's actually really cool."

Gender is an unspoken factor in hobby categorization. Gender affects the threshold that determines how "revealing" your hobby actually is. On a point system, a guy who takes pictures on film gets 7.5 points, and a girl who does the same gets around 5, and only if she actually takes good ones. A similar pattern can be seen with sketching, acrylic painting, and any singing-related pursuits. An example of the contrary, which abound much less: A guy who skates still gets a high score, 8, but not as high a score as a girl who does, who ranks with a solid 9. Grade-wise, having a radio show remains one of the most equitable hobbies to date, with an 8 on average for all parties involved. The power of music. Keep in mind that a 2 point deduction will be applied to any person that expresses pride in their hobby yet is visibly challenged in their ability to execute said hobby. If you honestly think that deformed cup you made in pottery class is some of your best work, best believe we will make you pay for it. Talent may not be a requirement but self-awareness always is.

The following graph has been provided as a visual representation of the above ideas:

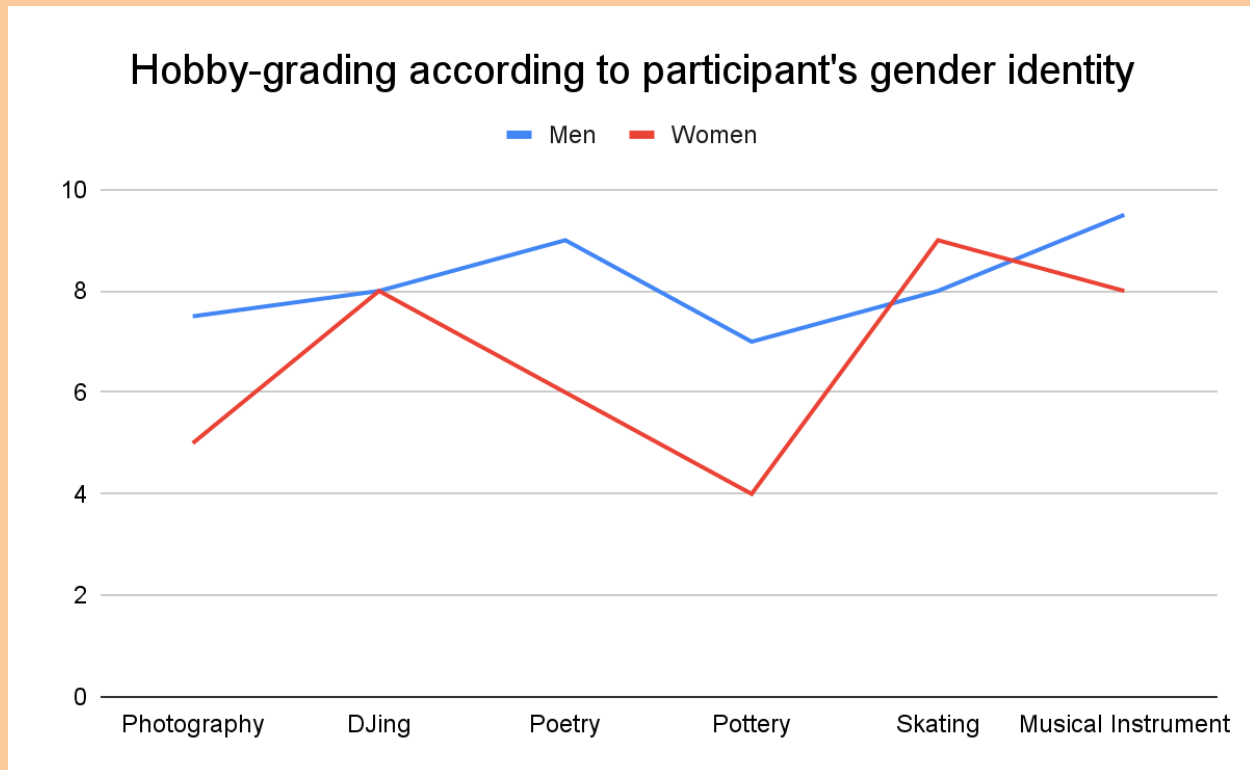


Figure 1: Graph showing the average grade awarded to various arts-related hobbies according to gender. Note this graph does not take into account point additions or deductions based on ability and self-awareness, or lack thereof.

As seen in the above graph, men get a higher average point score than women for performing the same (artistic) activities. Clearly, we assume, men have to bypass several more societal hurdles than their female counterparts to arrive at these hobbies, and even enjoy them. If we are to understand art as requiring a desire for intimacy—if not with others at least with ourselves—then you must understand that, as a society, we have yet to overcome our shock at men’s desire to create art. A man who writes is exceptional. A woman who writes is merely expressing what we already knew was inside her². The process of selecting hobbies is surrounded by such fan fare

² Granted, in terms of historical accuracy, this may not be the most sound statement to make. Don’t show it to your History or Feminist Theory Professors. And sure, men have, for centuries past, had an iron grip

because they have become a figurative playground in which we challenge and tamper with established forms of gender expression. There is a delicious tension produced between a woman and her interest in repairing cars³ or F1 racing, and in the same fashion between a man and his penchant for acrylic paint, vintage jean jackets, and books⁴. Deep down, we are flabbergasted by such a contrast, and it is your lack of recognition of it that will propel you to the heights of absolute nonchalance. The ultimate push and pull: You say you skate; They go, “Oh yeah? That’s awesome”; You nod your head slowly and slightly, chuckle under your breath and look at the ground; You let the words hang in the air (It is as if you are made uncomfortable by them pointing such a fact out); The space is immediately divided into two: the people that skate and the people that tell those people that skating is awesome. This is the driving principle of hobby selection for laid back people: choose something that shocks, disturbs, enlightens, excites, generates jealousy and/or desire, and then, as smoothly as possible, act like it does none of these things.

2 a) An Exception to The Rule:

The need for hobbies is erased if you are lucky enough to have life experiences and histories that can stand in for it. Such is the case with international students. Not from America? You have a

on the access and production of art. But this is now. 21st Century. New York. College. Things have changed. The men that refused to teach women how to write now barely know how to write themselves. They are engineers.

³ Note that pursuing activities such as car restoration as a woman comes with the additional requirement that you must unquestionably and at all times look Megan Fox-level hot in your dungarees and concerningly small top, with little to no smears of motor oil or grease on your face, although 1 or 2 add to the ambiance. Sweat must be minimal and must similarly adorn your body and face in a complementary but not overpowering way. For a visual reference, see: Sydney Sweeney.

⁴ Note in this point that, for men, a connection with the emotional will always attract inquiries into your sexuality. A penchant for fashion will reel in doubts about your manliness as fast as you can sew a button onto a jacket. “But even if he isn’t straight,” you might interject, “what if he’s bisexual or queer or any of the other points on the spectrum?” It is with great sorrow that this guide must let you know that society doesn’t believe male bisexuality to be real. In both cases, male and female, we will assume bisexual people are more attracted to men.

plethora of stories and opinions at your fingertips that will entertain merely because of the fact that you are not from here! You don't have Five Guys back at home? Tell us more! Haven't seen Disney movies we refer to as classics? Let us gape our mouths open in exaggerated displays of awe! "How do you say "love" in your native language?," a guy at a bar will ask you. The options are endless. Any hobby on top of this is just extra. A Colombian guy with a film camera might max out people's barometer for interestingness. At a party, it will only take one "Oh we didn't have those back at home," to pique people's childlike interest in you. Boom. Suddenly everyone wants to fuck you. If you are looking to avoid the hefty DJ-training fees or monthly ink costs of hypothetical makeshift tattoo parlor you run out of your dorm room, you might want to look into being born in another country, or at least conference with your parents about making the move to another continent⁵ at least 5 years before you get to college. For interested international students, keep this in mind when moving abroad.

⁵As a general rule of thumb, Middle Eastern and Latino People are in right now. Regardless, the following is a list of countries from which you might wish to seek relocation to, if you too want to be laid back without the added effort of hobby-doing: Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Puerto Rico (not a country but you get it), South Africa, Morocco, Philippines, Italy, Lebanon, Argentina, Indonesia, Portugal, Cuba, Nigeria.

3. Delivery, Tone and What Not To Say

The following is a list of phrases, words, and comments that you may use in conversation. Included to their right are all the things you should avoid. Good luck.

DOs	DON'Ts
“that’s so funny”	[Actually laugh]
“that’s dope”	“Wait, are you serious? That’s awesome. I’m really into that.”
“heads” <i>Example:</i> <i>“Saw a lot of heads at this party that I haven’t seen in a while.”</i>	“People”
“i’m down”	“I’m interested”/ “Count me in”/ “I actually would love to join you” / “I’m really excited for that”
“dude” / “yo”	Any other form of address people
“wya”	“What are you up to” / “I miss you” / “Where are you”
Not separating the “hey” from the rest of your message (Send the smallest text as possible) <i>Example:</i> <i>“Hey when are you pulling up to [X]’s party”</i> <i>“Hey wanna do hw together in [Library] I’m heading over now”</i>	Sending more than 2 texts per time
“pull up”	“Come over”

Tone is equally as important as the vocabulary you are using. The listener's experience of being in conversation with you must be a mediation between what you’re saying (“That’s so cool”), your tone (You sound like you would care more about a dead cat), and the head nod or small smile you offer while you say it. People will conclude that that’s just how you talk and move on,

but they will never be less unsettled by it. Your voice should sound like you smoked a lot in high school. The ultimate vocal fry (what it referred to as in New York). Hearing you speak, one should feel that half of the sounds you are making are rasping against your vocal chords. Because balance is important, when you actually laugh (although, as outlined, this must be rare), your laugh will ring into the air and it will sound like true joy.

4. Romantic Interests and People You Want To Kiss

In this realm of your life, you must be either **the suitor or the pursued**. You either get them all or few get you. It is important to note, however, that Romance, Kissing and All That Jazz are intimate dynamics that are unique to individual people. This complicates this guide's goal to provide all-encompassing rules and blanket statements for you, the reader. What better way to learn about this topic, then, than from already-existing examples in our community. These are Case Study A & B. They represent the epitome of the lessons we wish to impart on you. Embody them, become them, learn from their ways.

4 a) Case Study A: The Suitor

If you are the suitor, the charisma in you overflows so much it drenches all those you invite to bathe in your flirtations. Getting hit on by you is both a compliment and an official admission to a cult of your own making, of cool people you collect in your roster. You are the magnet that pulls them all together, through this you become an amalgamation of all their talent, their interests, their "cool," their beauty. Anyone that catches your attention has, at the very least, mastered the basic tenets of this guide. Good job to them. Those paying enough attention will remark that you seem to know everyone. Every time you meet someone you are captivated by,

you begin to court them in an ambiguous and even taunting fashion. Discreetly, as if it were a game of chess, you gradually introduce them to your world. You invite them to write a 3-part play over a beer at the local bar whose owner you consider a close personal friend (you do have a gift for talking to people); you send them a song titled “A Tender Kiss” at 1am after hanging out; you convince them to skip class and lay on the grass together in delicious rebellion. When you hastily pass them outside of the library, you will look back, point at them (you are still close enough for them to hear you) and say: “ACME. This Thursday.” They will most likely not know what ACME is and you will never follow up with details. For months on end, you will tip toe around the line of unspoken desire. Like a staring contest, both parties will begin to get the sense that the first one that does something, loses. Once you have been friends with these infatuations for enough time, you might text them “We have an interesting friendship,” and then refuse to elaborate.

Nevertheless, this level of intensity will persist only during the short window of time when you see these crushes in person. Once you swivel your head back to the front, you will go on to think about the last time you ate, or how you are listening to this song for the third time in a row, and in the confusion of the millions of things you juggle in your head (you have ADHD), you will truly, truly forget who you even invited in the first place. On your way to class, you will run into another “new person,” you will also invite them to ACME, and each time you swivel your head back and walk away, those left standing will be left marinating in the feeling that they are merely a placeholder, a doll played with and discarded, left with tousled hair and mismatched shoes. Your inconsistencies, your abrupt fallings in and out of love with the random people you meet, how you are suddenly so much more interested in them when they tell you about the cool party they went to, or the fact that they dance, make it no secret to anybody that you are only

chasing the next best thing. The next cool story. The next person that can teach you something. When romantic interests (you have gone on several dates) (you juggle several people at the same time) confront you about their feelings of insignificance in your life, you will—only half jokingly—declare: “I am a poet and a lover.”

The only relationships you are able to sustain long term are those which are not supported by overwhelming amounts of sexual tension, innuendo and double entendres. Nevertheless, you are a community builder; you are talented, and your refusal to take yourself too seriously inspires those around you to loosen up. These are the elements that balance you out. When people invite you to birthdays, you say “Thank you for letting us celebrate you.” You regularly form new imessage group chats, filled with people that don’t know each other and in an ominous tone text something along the lines of: “It would be in all our best interests to go to [insert bar] on Tuesday night, to spring ;) back into our tradition, and welcome new people—if you’re so inclined to embrace change.”

For weeks or months on end, you tend to disappear. Your presence, both online and in person, vanishes. The invitations stop coming. ACME is (one can only assume) empty. There are no more playwriting nights (or not that you’ve heard). Maybe you are spending this time on your bed, sleeping in until 3pm. Or maybe you’ve gone home for a while, only making note of it to a small group of people. No one person is familiar enough with your schedule to piece it together by themselves. And so where do you go? Nobody knows. But these randomly spaced-out withdrawals from public life offset your bouts of profound fascination. *Ah*, other people conclude, *what was for me a rebellious sitting down on the lawn, for you was just another moment sitting on the ground*. Again, remember your economics recitation, the rule of supply and demand, yada yada yada. You have created an excess supply of your attention, such that no

one is sure if gaining it is worth anything at all. Your life is brimming with people, you have invested in them, and in some ways, you have shown that you cared.

“But wasn’t this exactly what I’m not supposed to do?,” you might ask. Good question. This is caveat n1: showing that you care is only advised against if you are risking something while doing it. If this is the persona you wish to take on, you must master the art of empty exposure. It’s like a girl who has gone through so much therapy that she is excessively fluent in the language of her emotions. Talking about how she is feeling requires, for her, no risk, no stakes, nothing to be put on the line. People feel like they are holding you, and yet every time you disappear, they are reminded that they never did. Even the most expressive of people can remain the most detached. If your attention were to graphed over time, you should aim for it to look like this:

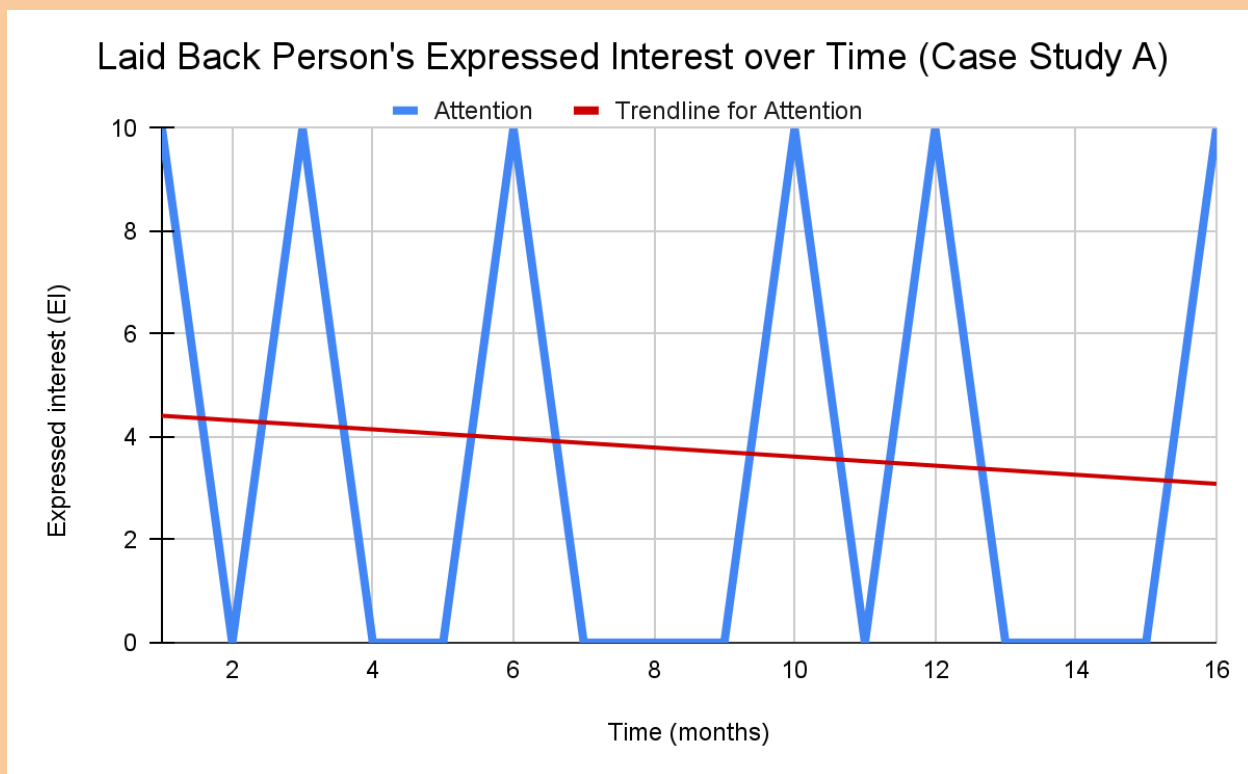


Figure 2: Graph describing the aggressive peaks and troughs of Option A's expressed interest over time. These fluctuations balance each other out to obtain an overall average EI of 3.75, the standard EI for a laid back person. As you can observe, this pattern of behavior is characterized by a decreasing trend line of EI over time, averaging about a 1 point drop every 16 months, if the trend is not reversed by an outstanding event.

4 b) Case Study B: The Pursued

If you are the pursued, however, discretion is respected above all else. Your strategy is different. While the opposite approach creates scarcity through the inability to entertain anyone for a long period of time, you barely entertain anyone at all. People (and this is only ones *in the know*) should, at a maximum, be able to name two people you have actually been interested in during college. Thus, your desire becomes a currency, and so does your time. Few are able to retain it for long and even less are able to say that they got something out of it. Your romantic stamp of approval, if you will, is so rarely seen that people often question whether it exists. Maybe you like people that don't go to your school, maybe you like people that dropped out of school. Either way, there is a drought produced by your lack of explicit interest. People are parched. You will end up going out for a few months with this senior, a Brazilian guy, who knows a lot about 60's carioca funk. Like your counterpart, you find people that can teach you new things attractive (to determine what new things qualify as interesting see section above). He will end up being an overhyped indie guy but this will not detract from how untouchable you are. People never even knew you cared. Some time in the future, you will move on to having a crush on someone else, you will even text them to get "food, coffee or something." You will never repeat letters or characters in these texts. Ever. No heys, no hey!!s, no helloos. When they respond saying that they would love to and, "Thursday?," you will just reply with "Yeah." Close friends will know that you were giddy when you saw that they texted back. You were on the

street and you grinned, dimples and all. But you recouped. You must remain laid back. Rest assured though, given all this, that the day you enter a relationship will be one of shock for the community. All around the land you will hear echoes of “What is it about them that clicked for her?” and “So this is what it looks like for her to care about something?” Speculation will abound but you will remain intact, always intact. Once, you will show someone a picture of them and say “They’re so cute,” and we will all know it speaks volumes. If you are to follow this option, a visual representation of your EI over time must look as follows:

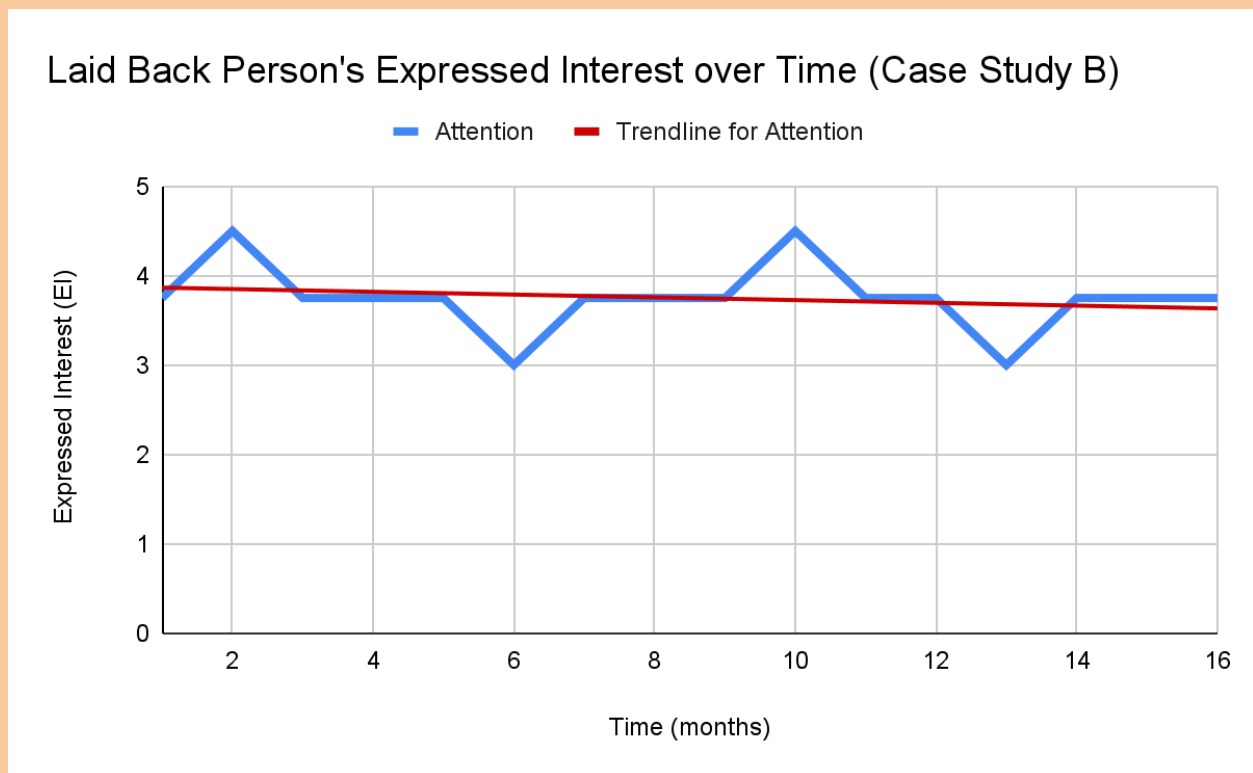


Figure 3: Graph describing the minor peaks and troughs of Option B's expressed interest over time. Like Option A, the overall average EI of this person is of 3.75, although it is achieved through a different form of expression. This pattern of behavior is also characterized by a decreasing trend line of EI over time, although this decline is slighter, with an average of a 0.2 drop every 16 months (there was not that much attention to lose to begin with).

5. “Cool,” In All Its Forms

The secret to “cool” is that for it to exist you must be completely unaware of it. Like silence, it is the thing that disappears when you speak its name. The only indicator that cool people have any idea of how they come off is that they naturally gravitate to people that act just like them. From the outside looking in, “cool” depletes you of your resources. It drains your energy and buys up all your time as you try to untangle cool people in all their contradictions (“There’s no way someone can be apathetic towards everything,” “What is interesting about someone that stands for nothing?,” “I wonder what she’s like with people that she trusts.”)

Like them, there must be an aloofness to you. Maybe it’s all the weed, which you smoke every couple of days when your friends—who don’t buy from the Columbia Smoke Shop—hit you up. The hitting up is rarely, if ever, done by you. The creative pursuits that you might or might not have never occupy any formidable space in conversation. Comments here and there reveal that you dabble in pottery making, playing grunge on the radio station that runs out of the college basement, and anthropology (just generally). These are all things that are reproduced by others in this city with such frequency that they have lost all power of defining you. Even when you are talking about the hypothetical digging trip you may be partaking in in New Mexico, excitement, true effusive elation, is never present in your eyes or tone. Power in this dynamic will rely on your ability not to be directly tied to anything. Don’t fret, you will still have a solid friend group, which you will hang out with on rooftops and during dinners hosted at your close friend’s apartment. The last one you attended, which you refused to dress up for⁶, was eccentrically yet

⁶ From now on, consider yourself an exception to every dress code and theme thrown your way. You are above this. Theme-following implies time spent in front of the mirror, which means time spent acknowledging how you look, how other people perceive you, and caring about both. This is to be avoided. You are allocated a maximum of 3 days per year where you can freely indulge in the peasant tradition that is committing yourself to the bit. Halloween is one of them. You are not by any means allowed to buy anything for your costume; the options available are borrowing and scrummaging through

appropriately titled: “Grimes’ Bar Mitzvah.” Other people will also think of you when they are doing something “cool” and will text you, as if they were trying to bait you into getting a reaction out of you. The void left by your lack of sharing is filled with the imaginative overcompensation of others that mystery often gives rise to.

“Cool” things will come in many forms. As time passes and new discoveries of “cool” activities, habits, thoughts, friends and interests are made, they will be emulated and regurgitated as the culture sees fit. However, for your own sake, you should also seek to be at the forefront of this aesthetic expedition, this archeological dig of sorts (we know you like those), to find the next best jealousy-inducing, awesome thing. Imagine the first guy that decided he was going to skateboard for a personality. Or the first person to upload a mismatched compilation of—at times blurry, at times colorful, at times under-exposed—pictures to their Instagram story, spurring also the first person ever to think: “Oh this person must live such an incredible life,” and subsequently try to figure out what bar that picture with a disco ball seemed to be from. Or better yet, imagine the first person to create an Instagram page and think “I will never post anything *ever*,” and just leave it at that. That was an innovator. We need more of those. The truly hard thing to do is to know when you’ve hit gold. I will warn you now, no one will tell you. Like a Van Gogh of “cool,” you will only know when it's too late for you to appreciate it.

There is a caveat to cool, that perhaps override everything else, which is that not giving a single fuck is cooler than everything you could ever do. The only honest thing to do with this guide is burn it. Burn it.

your closet. Low-effort costumes that meet this criteria are: Ballerina, Boxer, Lola from Run Lola Run, Soccer Player, Men (or women) in Black, anyone in Pulp Fiction, or inanimate objects, like a Bike.

Write 25 lines that have nothing in common

A homeless carpenter carves a dollhouse out of wood.

Key elements to the debate are bad opinions.

No crown jewels have ever been stolen when taxes are high.

Fig and blue cheese pair well for people who like French films.

The pharmaceutical company is my wife's lover.

Yo-yo all you want but I will never believe you again.

Pour honey on the flashlight so they know we are nice visitors

Gardens are cults and flowers are our masters.

An engagement ring says a lot about your job.

When the greenhouse sings, the horticultural crisis begins.

Colombian passports are the reason my father feels alone.

Unbutton my sweater, carve out the place where the yearning comes from.

Silk worms are not made out of silk.

Confiscate my candles, but you will never find what's hidden.

Bathe under the shade of my ego.

Knives want to be taken seriously.

I could never return this borrowed lamp; what I borrow, I own.

Are the grasshoppers between the blades of grass or under my bed?

Spoonfuls of cumin make the blood thicker.

Glass Mexican Coke bottles are global warming.

Writing books is confusing, making pens is harder.

Stop thinking Moonstone can fix your ignorance.

Even the stars find dimes in their socks, why else would they shine so bright?

Cashmere sweaters are sold here for a bad price.

Death of a Piano Tuner

You can talk poetry all day long all you want doesn't change the fact you're heating up blackened chicken and yellow rice cooked a Sunday ago with some greek olives and olive oil that's really far from cold pressed but that's okay because tonight you've drank cold gin with your hands and rolled joints and talked about sweden, and the dow jones and the french foreign legion. By coincidence we all say at the same time that Nordic countries have it all figured out but no one, I mean no one, will ever buy a ticket to go there. Sorbet and Negroni kind of give the same sort of feeling as orange juice and toothpaste, the white from the wine has been checked with your coat but don't rush back home because where is it anyway and papers at progress turn into more talk of growing up in red buildings where people don't listen or don't know.....fell asleep at the wheel of this poem here but going to let it ride anyway - another late night by accident but with all the best intentions and some good talk and too many cigarettes.. I mean I'm not sure but it all works out in the end anyway even if things are a little different. I gotta find some money to pay my dad back and buy a cute butterfly sticker for the empty part on my headphones and maybe some kinda boots (i can't keep on gluing the sole) and gloves and a helmet that wasn't found under a bridge for 0 dollars. I would ask my dad for help but it's a conflict of interest, we share the same birthday you know. Did you know the Piano Tuner got drunk and cried on show night? You would have loved that. Last seen on the edge of his balcony with an empty bottle of tequila talking something crazy. For lost luggage in Townsville domestic terminal please call +61 07 3114 8150 - I Typically wouldn't be losing track of things but personal effects can be misplaced while moving other folks' things on other folks' schedule especially while you're playing chess for a 100 dollar banknote. Right? Still doing nothing in the best of ways with work coming and work to be done - who cares - god bless. Happy birthday to all of us, who deserve nothing less.

A granola bar and a Kit-Kat

You don't have to be a good kid in high school to be a "good kid" in highschool. At home, you go through kindergarten, primary and high school with the exact same people, so you learn to read them well. Once you reach the age of 12, everybody kind of just stops paying attention to what you're actually doing. Who you are in the webs of popularity, truancy, obedience and wit is cryogenically frozen into place until graduation. As fifth graders we could tell you exactly who was going to be hot senior year. We were never off, we just missed a couple. On this web, I was one of the kids that did well. My teacher and I had this game where whenever she wrote something on the blackboard that we had to copy in our notebooks, I would anticipate her next words so that I could yell "DONE" before she had even completed her last sentence. I was so annoying about it, my wanting for attention, my unfazed ability to demand it. It goes without saying, I don't do that anymore. At my primary school graduation, I was asked to give a speech. I wrote it by myself, with minor contributions from my parents. That day, the microphone stopped working right in the middle of my sentence. I remember calmly waiting while the tech guy rushed up the stairs of the stage to help the adorably poor girl in need, during which I broke no sweats and showed no signs of concern. Pristine, I was. My Spanish teacher beamed at me from the front row, somehow nothing makes teachers happier than students who never needed to be taught.

Seventh grade turned everything on its head, it exposed me as primary school "excellent" but high school "good." I got more 9s than 8s but more 8s than 10s. An accessible good, such that boys with anger management problems and social clout would ask to copy my exams. (I was, it seemed, approachable; the cool mom of good grades, but perhaps this fact only succeeds

at exposing the undeniable truth that I was a push-over.) As we got older, people began to care less about your report card and so the vague notion that I, and other kids of my standing, did well now merely translated to the idea that we were decent, law-abiding people, bestowing upon us an ambiguously superior moral standing. It is truly bizarre to grow up under the weight of your assumed purity and goodness, in that I was never given any space to be anything other than a good kid. So every intrusive thought, twisted desire, the \$50 bill I stole from the Monopoly bank every once in a while, the actual money I took from my parents' wallets, the clubs I went to without permission, every time my neighbors' kid annoyed me and I truly, honestly wanted to hit him, I acknowledged and diligently submitted these moments as evidence. Evidence that I, in fact, was one of the good empty ones, one whose goodness is more recessive rather than continuously and honestly earned. There was something else though, with every banknote I unlawfully added to my pile, I reveled in the sensation that people did not know everything about me, that I was a world unto my own.

The thing I am getting at, one of my big things, is that I once stole a granola bar. From a random girl's lunchbox. It was actually a Kit-Kat and a granola bar, but I only got caught for one. Both the Kit-Kat and a granola bar being acknowledged would have been a disaster, a testament to my catastrophic greed, indicative of a confusing comfort with doing things that should not be done.

Here's a list of the things that had never happened to me before this granola bar:

- Seen the inside of my High school Director's office.
- Had any meeting with my "Head of Year."
- Got called out of class (not that I didn't deserve it, I just was never caught).
- Got sat in a chair to talk about something "serious" with adults I did not know.

It turns out someone had reported to their teacher that their granola bar was missing, and they then went to look at the cameras in the hallway and recognized my book bag. She recognized me because she was my film teacher, my favorite teacher. She is one of the only things I regret about it, and that's a problem, I think. Because one of the first things I asked myself in that cushionless chair was "Who the hell reports a missing granola bar?" I glanced at the fluffed-up box of tissues on the desk in front of me. They continued to address me in a somber tone, waiting for me to relieve themselves of the mystery, and answer the question that stumped us all: "What does this say about you?"

I know how to spin things. Spin is my thing, that's why I write. But I cannot for the life of me tell you if what I said next is spin or truth. (Perhaps this is also spin. Perhaps I cannot take what I truly was and perhaps people cannot either, this is also why I write). In that room, for one of the first times ever, I scared myself. I told these 60 year-old men that I was struggling with my eating disorder. I gave context; half a year back, I had lost my period, I got scared, and told my parents, who took me to a doctor. Their gray heads tried to nod respectfully as I talked about my menstrual cycle. I was supposedly doing better, eating more, stressing less, I explained, but I wasn't. That day, I had a blood test scheduled after school, and I had grown terrified my hormones were going to expose how little I ate at lunch and the lack of yesterday's breakfast—because if there is someone you cannot trick it is the body— so I took someone's food. All of these individual facts are true. I lost my period. I chronically under-ate. I had a blood test that day. Yet that story did not exist before I had stepped into that room, and I was unsure whether it ever did once I left. I got the same punishment as a guy that called a teacher who wore colorful pants a slur.

Among the adrenaline of being found out, the desperate fight to keep something alive, maybe my reputation or my primary school self, I found no room to feel remorse. Perhaps it wouldn't have even appeared had it had space to. I tried to force myself to experience it. But the shame only came when the shame never came. Scrolling google, and youtube and reddit, I made a genuine attempt at deciphering why I had no issue going back tomorrow and doing it again. This was the question that kept booming in my head for days to come: Who cares about a granola bar?

