

# HOUSE, TREE, PERSON

By

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Read me what you write or show me what you draw and I will tell you what you are. . . .

The drawing page serves as a canvas upon which the subject may sketch a glimpse of his inner world, his traits and attitudes, his personality strength and weaknesses including the degree to which he can mobilize his inner resources to handle his psychodynamic conflicts, both interpersonal and intrapsychic.

Artists have understood for centuries the creative urge to express personal ideas, reactions, and interpretation of unstructured stimuli through symbolic media. However, it is only recently that this process has been studied in a systematic manner to gain insight and understanding about the artist himself. As the science of psychology has developed, and people have become more concerned with how man thinks and feels, it has become apparent that individuals who express themselves in artistic forms are actually sharing their perceptions and reactions to the world around them. Their art is not necessarily a realistic portrayal of the world but rather the expression of their subjective response to, and personal interaction with, their perceived reality. To put this in psychological terms, the person "actively and spontaneously structures unstructured materials, and in so doing reveals . . . . the principles of his psychological structure."

## II. BACKGROUND

### Establishment

The House, Tree, Person Test (HTP) was originally developed by Buck and Hammer in 1969 who reasoned that, in addition to human figure drawings, drawings of houses, and trees were also likely to be associated with relevant aspects of the person. All are familiar objects, are likely to be accepted objects for drawing, and will produce a number of associations than most other, more neutral objects. The HTP potentially has advantages over the DAP in that, not only does it include human-figure drawings, but the greater variety of object drawn is likely to produce greater number of areas of interpretation. If the house, tree and person are all drawn on one sheet of paper as recommended by Burns and Kaufman (1970, 1972) and Burns (1987), then the picture often results in an integrated international story.

The earlier developers tended to rely heavily on traditional Freudian theory, as is represented by the following discussion of chimneys by Handler (1985).

. . . . If a subject suffers from psychosexual conflicts, the chimney – by virtue of its structural design and its protrusion from the body of the house – is susceptible to receive the projection of the subjects inner.

### Author's Biography

The H-T-P technique proposed by Buck (1948) derives its designation from the fact that the subject is requested to make freehand drawings of *House, Tree, and Person*. Buck describes his method as a two-phased approach: the first being nonverbal, creative, relatively unstructured, and requiring a rather primitive form of expression, drawing; the second, verbal, apperceptive, and somewhat more structure.

The subject is first asked to make drawings of the three objects and is allowed almost complete freedom in the manner in which he performs the tasks.. Following this, the subject is asked to define, describe, and interpret the objects drawn and their respective environments and to associate concerning them.

According to Buck, "The specific items, House, Tree, and Person, were chosen because: (1) they are items familiar to even the comparatively young child; (2) they were found to be more willingly accepted as objects to be drawn by subjects of all ages than other items suggested and (3) they appeared to stimulate more frank and free verbalizations than did other items"

Buck postulates further that the H-T-P is valid measure of adult intelligence, for the reasons that: (1) the H-T-P appraises intelligence from the standpoints of elemental information (details), spatial relationships (proportion and perspective), and concept formation (organization and quality of the completed whole, and the subject's spontaneous and/or induced comments concerning it); (2) the problem presented to the subject in the nonverbal phase involves the reproduction in two-dimensional form; and (3) because of the relatively primitive method of expression, subjects who find verbalization difficult may reveal the presence of a hitherto unsuspected intellectual ability or potential.

With regret to the latter set of postulates, Buck proceeds to a method of estimating adult intelligence that is unique, to say the least. The exact mode of approach employed in this series of steps is much too involved and complicated to be described in detail here and the reader is referred to the *Qualitative and Quantitative Scoring Manual*. Suffice it to say that fairly acceptable correlations seemed to exist between H-T-P scores and standardized intelligence tests, although few of the 356 subjects were normals.

Another complicated series of instructions is presented for qualitative analysis and interpretation, in which Buck assigns psychological values to certain designated characteristics of the drawings. For example: "if the tree is tiny, the subject is believed to feel inferior and inadequate, to be indicating a desire to withdraw."

## Theoretical Framework

Because drawings are such unique and creative expressions of an individual it is a grave injustice to interpret them with a rigid dogmatic structure. When this is attempted, the rich variety of information and the depth of understanding that can be gained about a person are lost, and the personal characteristics that contribute to the expressions and symbols within the drawing are often discarded. On the other hand, some guidelines and training are necessary for the clinician to sharpen his interpretative skills and benefit from the experience of others who have attempted the same tasks. It is important for the evaluator to become familiar with the guidelines and use the standard interpretations as springboard or baseline from which to branch out and explore the intricacies and unique characteristics of the particular drawing being studied.

The primary tool used by the skilled clinician to integrate to seemingly contradictory details within the drawing, and to understand the message conveyed through the symbols represented, is himself. No book or set of rules will contain the unique combination of characteristics that the evaluator is called upon to examine, and as a result, he must rely on his personal skill and expertise to determine the meaning of the drawing. Responsibility rests on the examiner, then, to continue developing himself and familiarizing himself with a variety of stimuli which will contribute to his skill as clinician. Exposure to various avenues of understanding people – the arts, literature, psychological studies, and self-exploration – can greatly enhance the examiner's skill. The key to evaluating drawings is for the examiner to open himself up to any and all possibilities of interpretation, and the extent of exposure and interaction he had had with different worlds and people will enhance this process. When strict, formalized procedures are followed, these more elusive qualities are missed, and the full impact and meaning of the picture are lost. For the evaluation then, it is important (1) to be familiar with standard guidelines for drawing interpretation, (2) to be aware of all the possibilities contained within the drawings, (3) to be open and confront inconsistencies when evaluating a drawing, and (4) to integrate the observations with all the other information known about a person to crystallize one's understanding of the present drawing.

In addition to these areas of knowledge which the evaluator needs to develop, the following general guidelines should be utilized when attempting to interpret a drawing.

1. Once the drawing has been obtained, it is important to consider it in its totality. Rather than focusing attention on specific detail, it is valuable to look initially at the whole picture and notice what mood or message is conveyed. This is a very intuitive process, and involves stepping "into" the picture to see how it "feels" and what overall impression is portrayed. From these first impressions of the drawing, it is often possible to see how the individual relates in his world how receptive he is to outside influences, how he handles emotion, and how he feels about himself. It is valuable at this point to jot down initial impressions and reactions without any attempt to analyze, integrate, or understand the observations.

2. After this intuitive, impression gathering stage, the examiner should go back to the drawing and analyze the specific details in a more logical or rational manner, using published guidelines and previous clinical experience. Some interpreters conduct this process in a routine and systematic manner, often using a checklist to categorize the different components. Other examiners begin with the details that draw their attention and proceed from there to further observations. The details within a drawing that initially catch one's attention are usually quite obvious and can take numerous forms, such as the unusual treatment of a particular figure, a large inconsistency in how the drawing was executed, intense erasure or scratching over, or unusual figure placement on the page. They serve the function of focusing the evaluator's attention onto the drawing and often convey the primary message of the drawing quite clearly. Both of these approaches are valuable, and the preference of the examiner determines which is the more effective style to utilize.
3. The final step in interpreting a drawing is to evaluate the information obtained from steps 1 and 2, and integrate it with any other test results or background data known about the person. Things that are true and significant for an individual are usually repeated in numerous forms, and it is important for the evaluator to recognize this and obtain confirmation of his clinical conclusions from other information known about the person. In other words, drawings can only be understood in the context of other test data and the individual's personal life and these must be considered when making final conclusions about a drawing's possible meaning.

Depending on the theoretical framework from which the examiner is operating, interpretations of a specific drawing may vary greatly. For example, a person with an analytic bias may see a particular drawing as representing conflicts from early childhood while a family therapist may emphasize current attitudes and feelings towards family members in the interpretation. Both interpretations may correctly portray different aspects of the individual, and both may be useful in terms of understanding the unconscious dynamics operating in person's life. Some drawing tasks are more conducive to particular theoretical framework than others, and it is up to the clinician to select the drawing tests that best meet his needs. A Kinetic Family Drawing or a House-Tree-Person Tests, for example, may be ideal for revealing attitudes and feelings towards family member, while a Draw-A –Person Test may be more adept at uncovering sexual attitudes and feelings towards the self.

Once the clinician has found the drawing test that works well for his theoretical framework, he must become aware of the subtleties of interpretation. There are as many variations of the same drawing as there are persons doing the drawing. To complicate matters even further, a person's drawing can change considerably each time it is executed. Within this wide range of variation, however, there are some common characteristics which the trained eye can quickly assess to determine the emotional stability and psychological orientation of the individual.

The more exposure a person has had to interpreting drawings, the more accurate will his interpretative skills become.. Also, the more open the interpreter can be to all the possibilities contained within a drawing the more he can trust his trained intuitions about the meaning of that particular drawing. There is a delicate balance in this process, combining the uses of personal intuitive skills with concrete knowledge based on research and experience. When the balance is maintained between these two methods of observation, the interpretation and understanding of particular drawings is likely to be both accurate and meaningful.

### III. TEST DESCRIPTION

The H-T-P is a two phase technique, the first phase is non-verbal creative, relatively unstructured that of drawing; the second phase the past drawing integration is more formerly stretch.

1. The H-T-P is a projective device although its stimuli house, tree, person are objects that are completely familiar, subject is not told what house, tree or person to draw. Buck regards drawing as a self portrait.
2. The H-T-P measure intelligence from the standpoint elemental information (details size and spatial relationship (proportion and perspective) and concept information (as evidence by the organization and quality of the completed holes drawn and by the subjects spontaneous and or induce comments concerning them).
3. Each drawing may arouse both conscious and unconscious associations that of the house, associations concerning the subjects home and those living with him; the tree, his life role and his ability to device satisfaction from and his environment is general; person, interpersonal relationship both specific and general. In each instance past, present and future may be involved.
4. Any emotion exhibited by the subject while drawing or during the past interrogation about this drawings is presumed to represent his emotional reaction to the relationships situations needs or posses that he sees or feels which may have been suggested by the drawings.
5. A subject may indicate that a given detail or details complex of the method or presentation is special significance for him in two general ways.
  - a. Positively, as by exhibiting over emotion while drawing it, by excessive erasures and re-drawing, or by presenting it in deviant or bizarre fashion and
  - b. Negatively, by presenting a detail incompletely by omitting an essential detail, by refusing to comment upon a detail.
6. If the HTP details do not have universal and absolute meaning the subjects own meaning must not be overlooked.
7. Interpretation of the HTP, detail must be made in the light of as complete knowledge of the subject, of his past and present environment.
8. Chromatic drawings may tap even deeper personality layers than the subject may convey through a chronic drawings. May top another psychological item.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATION

Regardless of the different variations in administration, instructions are kept to a minimum. This helps to maintain the antiquity of the situation, thereby increasing the likelihood that significant aspects of personality will be projected onto the drawings. Clients should be seated in a comfortable position, with sufficient room to freely move their arms while completing the drawings. They are provided with a single sheet of 8 1/2 x 11-inch sheet of paper and, if an achromatic drawing is desired, are given a sharp #2 pencil with an eraser. If chromatic drawings are desired, clients should be provided with crayons, colored pencils, or different colored felt-tip pens. Some administrations suggest that no other instruction be given, whereas others recommend that the person also be told to take his or her time and do as good a job as possible. One variation of the HTP recommends that the client be requested to "Draw me a picture that includes a house, a tree, and a person." Once the drawing has been completed, the clinician should note the client's name, age, and date, and should number the drawings according to the order in which they were drawn.

Sometimes, clients complain that they are poor artists. This might be countered with the observation that most people's artistic ability stops when they are about 10 years of age so that most people are not particularly good artists. Furthermore it might be stressed that this is not a test of artistic ability but that they should still do the best they can. Occasionally, clients will request specific guidelines, such as how big to make the person, what sex they should be, or what the person in the drawing should be doing. The examiner should simply state that it is up to them. If they draw a stick figure, they should be given a sheet of paper and requested to draw a more complete person. Some examiners recommend that, if subjects draw only the top half or quarter of a person, they should also be given a new sheet of paper and be requested to draw a complete person.

One option is to include an inquiry phase, in which the client might be requested to tell a story about the person in the drawing. This story can then be used to aid future interpretations. More specific questions might be asked, such as having subjects indicate what the person in the drawing is thinking or feeling, what makes him or her happy/sad, or what his or her interests are. A semi structured list of questions for the HTP is included in Appendix O. If only the DAP is administered, the examiner might only select and ask the questions relevant to the person drawing(s). Some examiners might want clients to associate to and interpret the significance of their drawings. The clients themselves are thereby being used as consultants to help with the interpretations. This latter procedure is likely to be most successful for clients with a good level of insight and who are fairly appreciative of unconscious processes.

During the administration, the examiner should note any relevant behavior. These might include clients' level of confidence or hesitancy, whether the procedure increases their anxiety. Their degree of playfulness, impulsiveness, conscientiousness, or the presence of excessive erasures.

The most appropriate variation on administration will depend on the purpose of assessment as well as the personal preference of the clinician. In general, the

most research and therefore the most strategies available for interpretation can be found with human-figure drawings. However, if a clinician would like to obtain information about family, school, or work, then variations such as the Kinetic Family Drawing or Kinetic School Drawing might be administered. Different authors argue the relative usefulness of different variations. For example, Burns (1987) has argued for and provided examples of the advantages of the Kinetic House-Tree-Person over the regular House-Tree-Person. Similarly, Sarrell & Berman (1981) have emphasized that the Draw-A-Person is good at uncovering attitudes toward the person's sexuality and body image.

### Rationale

The HTP Freehand drawing of house-tree-person is a technique designed to aid the clinician in obtaining information concerning the sensitivity, maturity, efficiency and the degree of integration both specific and general.

Drawings, though they have only recently been classified and understood as projective techniques, are more accurately expressive methods for revealing individual feelings and personality structures. As such, they have become a valuable tool for understanding and assessing the personality characteristics of an individual, and have gained popularity among clinicians because of their unique ability to allow the nonverbal expression of an individual's feelings and attitudes.

In order to appreciate the complexity and symbolic messages communicated through drawings, it is necessary to look at the theoretical assumptions that form the basis of projective drawing interpretation. In general, without a belief in the unconscious, the whole discussion of project testing and interpretation is meaningless. Given the existence of an unconscious, there follows the assumption that this unconscious can reveal itself in symbolic form to the individual's conscious mind. Because man tends to view the world in an anthropomorphic manner, he can project his unconscious feelings, conflicts, attitudes, and reaction onto anything outside himself. Projection is most likely to occur when an individual feels threatened or insecure with certain personal feelings because it is less anxiety provoking to attribute problem areas to the outside world than to himself. Drawings, then, are just one technique of bringing into awareness unconscious feelings, attitudes, and reaction through the use of symbolic representation.

Given this set of hypotheses, the evaluation of a person's drawings provides useful information for clarifying areas of conflict and assessing the strengths and weakness available to handle these conflicts. In order to do this, both the style of the drawing and the specific content depicted in the drawing must be looked at. The style of the drawing, or the manner in which the person has presented the specific content of his drawing, may vary tremendously from person to person and from drawing to drawing. Some drawings are very bold, others quite sketchy; some small, other large; different perspective may be used, as well as varying amounts of shading, erasures, and organization. The way a person elects to perform his drawing reflects the way he approaches his personal life situation. Evaluation of one's style of representation is

useful in determining the person's strengths and abilities, and gives the interpreter a better understanding of how the person interacts psychologically with specific aspects of his life. The content of the drawings, that is, what the person has content of the drawings, that is what the person has chosen to draw within the given set of directions, helps the clinician to assess specific areas of conflict within an individual. Since these areas are often not readily accessible to a person's consciousness, their recognition and classification may also help the individual to understand his current situation and his reaction to it. Within the conscious areas of conflict, there are often underlying unconscious dynamics that are influencing a situation. As these areas of the unconscious become known and clarified for the individual, the conflicts often resolve themselves.

Of course, drawing must be interpreted with caution and treated with same carefulness as any other type of psychological test data. One drawing may reflect a specific aspect of an individual, but the significance of that drawing in terms of how a person is functioning psychologically can only be determined when other drawings or data from other psychological tests have been evaluated and understood in the content of the person's present life situation. It is important then, when making clinical judgements, to consider how a person appears through the interpretations derived from a number of different psychological tests. What is most significant psychologically will appear consistently throughout the test data and will also be visible in the person's current life situation. When this kind of consistency is noted in the test results and interpretations, the examiner can be reassured that the conclusions are an accurate reflection of that person's level; of psychological functioning.

## V. SCORING

### A. Quantitative

The subject's achromatic and chromatic drawings are to be scored quantitatively which is based upon the items of detail, proportion and perspective. Their presence or absence is the basis of the person's intelligence.

Detail scores appear to be a quantitative index of the subject's recognition of his own of his own orientation to the elementary concrete aspects of everyday life.

Proportion scores seem to be an index of his judgment, to represent a way the elemental relationship of details.

Perspective scores seem to be a measure of the subject's ability to evaluate environment and his relation to those peopling it on a broad basis.

### B. Qualitative Analysis

The meaning of the three wholes:

- a. House represents the home or the domestic situation.



- b. Tree represents the individual's general role in life (wherein the trunk reflects the individual's feelings of basic power while the branch structure represents the individual's flexibility.)
- c. Person is the self-portrait.

## 1. Details

### A. Essential Details

House must have at least one door, one window, one wall, and the roof must have its chimney.

Tree must have a trunk and at least one branch.

Person must have a head, a trunk, 2 legs and 2 arms, facial characteristics; must have 2 eyes, 2 ears, a nose and a mouth.

### B. Non-Essential Details

This includes window curtains, shading materials for the wall with regards to the house and drawing the bark for the tree is considered non-essential. As to the person, it is not necessary to draw the neck, hair and clothing.

Note: The absence of even a single detail is to be regarded as serious. Limited use of non-essential details implies good reality testing; a sensitive and well-balanced interaction with the environment.

C. Bizarre detailing is strongly suggestive of a major maladjustment.

## 2. Proportion

A relatively tiny whole suggests feelings of inadequacy and withdrawal tendencies.

Too large whole and wholes that tend to press out against the page's borders denote feelings of environmental constriction.

## 3 Perspective

Drawing that are rigidly framed suggests maladjustment.

## VI. INTERPRETATION

### The Healthy Drawing

There is a tendency in the field of psychology to focus on pathology, sometimes to the exclusion of the more stable and healthier aspects of personality.

Rather than attempt the difficult task of defining emotional health with all its unique and individual variations, psychologists tend to focus on what is not healthy and to assume that the remaining attitudes, feelings, and behaviors fall within the broad spectrum of normalcy. In the field of psychological testing, this approach has predominated, with interpretations being based on what is "wrong" with the person rather than on what is "right". As would be expected then, in most drawing interpretation guidelines there is little mention of what constitutes a healthy drawing; rather there is subtle encouragement to study the drawing in extreme detail until the internal pathological dynamics of the unconscious are revealed.

When approaching drawing interpretation, the clinician needs to have a clear definition of his personal concepts of both psychological health and pathology. He should then be aware of how these concepts bias his orientation, as well as how they help clarify his drawing interpretations.

Although the theoretical framework and value system of each examiner may vary tremendously, there are certain characteristics of psychological health common to most orientations which would be considered when evaluating drawings. People whose lives appear to be working well for them are individuals who are able to identify and meet their psychological needs accurately and adequately. They feel positive about themselves, and are not afraid to express their ideas and feelings to others. In addition, these people are accurate in their self perceptions, and feel they have power and control in their lives to effect change when necessary. In other words, they have the tools to handle their life problems and conflicts successfully. As would be expected, these traits are visible in the drawings of psychologically healthy individuals and are demonstrated clearly in the following guidelines.

**Self-esteem.** When the drawing contains person, the figure is integrated and contains all the essential details (facial features, torso, hands, feet, legs, arm; Buck, 1948; Urban, 1963). It is drawn in proportion to the rest of the picture (Urban, 1963), and for males, the drawing is neither extremely large on or extremely small (Delatte and Hendrickson, 1982). Line quality is firm and definite, and the appearance of the figure is strong, solid, and pen in position (Levy, 1958).

**Security and Self-Confidence.** The figures in the drawing are grounded and represented as touching the earth or floor. They occupy the central area of the paper and do not cling to the edge of the sheet (Lakin, 1956). Line quality is firm and strong (Urban, 1963). Figures are often shown moving in the picture or having the potential to move; they possess arms, feet, and legs that are free and adequate for mobility in the environment.

**Personal Relationships.** The figures in the drawing are fairly close to each other and show some type of dynamic interaction or relationship. The figure themselves contain the essential tools for communication, that is, open arms with hands, ears, mouth, and eyes (Burns, 1982).

**Openness.** The figures in the drawing are standing in open posture or interacting with their environment in a positive manner. Buildings are drawn with

windows and doors that are unencumbered and accessible to the environment (Barnouw, 1969; Jolles, 1971).

**Stability and Orderliness.** The drawing forms a complete picture, with the parts integrated and relating in a complementary manner. Each figure in the drawing contains its essential elements and relates with the other figure to form a unified and orderly picture (Jolles, 1971; Urban, 1963).

**Sexual Identification.** Figures of people are drawn as obviously male or female, and the first figure drawn is the same sex as the person doing the drawing (Gravitz, 1968). All figures (male and female) contain the details essential in a human figure drawing, are comparable size, and are in proportion to the complete picture (Buck, 1966).

### Age Consideration

When interpreting drawing of young children, it is important to take into consideration their respective capabilities at various stages of development. A 2 year old will usually scribble when presented with paper and pencil. His muscle movements are uncoordinated and random, although he can make dots and dashes. He can move about the page, filling the unused portions and usually managing to stay on the paper.

The 3 year old can execute circles, loops, arcs, and lines. These earliest attempts to create identifiable objects often result in unrecognizable forms which the child may call "Daddy" or "Mommy".

At 4 years of age, a child can arrange ovals and circles in a horizontal fashion, and is able to add lines to the circles to represent people's legs and arms. Although a 4 year old can orient himself on the paper from left to right, any other differentiation or order in the drawing is unusual.

The 5 year old is able to use combinations of circles, arcs, lines and dots to create familiar objects. Most children at this age are able to cross vertical with horizontal lines.

By 6 years of age, the child is capable of integrating his drawing and has the fine motor control needed to represent his visual world more accurately. He can orient a square obliquely, produce vertical series, and successfully make dots which are not circles.

It is not until the child is about 7 to 8 that he is able to foresee sequences and therefore represent movement in his drawings. Until this age, the child's images are static and the figures often unrelated to each other. After the age of 7, the child is able to produce integrated picture. He has the mental and fine motor skills necessary to represent the picture he has in mind accurately on the paper.

## General Interpretive Guidelines

There are general guidelines that should be taken into consideration when evaluating any projective drawing. Regardless of which drawing is being completed, the manner in which the task is approached and the way the drawing is presented are of equal importance to the content itself. The first step in analyzing the drawing, then, is to look the overall picture and evaluate it in the following areas.

### Caution in Interpretation

No one thing indicates anything; it is the whole configuration.

### Interpretation

Placement is important. Usual position is upper left center of page.

Left:

- a. Indication of past, events of the past
- b. Traditional in thinking
- c. Feminine tendencies
- d. Repression of feeling

Right:

- a. Over anxious about involvement
- b. Indication of future, of what will happen in future
- c. Intellectual control; obsessive, intellectual controlled masculinity

Top Left: Severe regression; never was, never matured

Down Right: Depression, hypercontrol

## Aspects of the Drawings

### The House

1. Roof – meticulous roof: normal, tactful, sensitive interaction with environment. If details is meticulous, obsessive compulsive traits.
  - a. Deep shading of roof: anxiety in fantasy level.
  - b. Wing-like formation: idea of flying away
  - c. Ear-like roof: auditory sensitivity
  - d. When roof and walls equivalent: (Wall Roof) tendency to act on fantasy immediately
2. Wall – indicator of ego
  - a. Overemphasized: effort to maintain control
  - b. Weak boundary line: beginning breakdown of ego control
  - c. Light pencil line: I don't want to be involved

- d. Break in lines: aggressive impulses. Impulses may come to expression without control; person is vulnerable to influence from outside
- e. Transparency: marked regression
- f. No wall line: a maniac, no control over impulses, murderer
- g. Horizontal dimension of wall emphasized: unable to bring dominance to any orientation, latent homosexuality; Horizontal expression of phallic symbols: vulnerable to environment pressure.
- h. Vertical dimension of wall: more latent
- i. Double perspective: intellectual deficit

1). Emotional pathology if sing well

2). Armoring or buttress defense produced by Schizoid much of myself, fear to reveal self at the beginning of contract. If reverse, trying to adapt to conviction but irritable about it.

3). One dimensional facade: I will not tell you much of myself, feat to reveal self at the beginning of contract. If reverse, trying to adapt to convention that irritable about it.

### 3. Size

- a. Tiny regression, if scant detailing. Desired lack of involvement with reality.
- b. Tiny and well drawn: feeling of great inadequacy, that environment is hostile, is opposing person.
- c. Large: excessively o, strong feelings of conflict with environment. Person refuse to found in by environment; breaking loose with hostility.
- d. House not completed: act out hostility to someone in household; evasive, acting out potential.

### 4. Absolute Profile House

Evasion: desire to show self as little as possible.

### 5. Bird's eye view

- a. Looking down at house: rejection of home except for medical student
- b. Worm's eye view: home inadequate, goals not attainable
- c. Fear from observer, use of foreground objects: inaccessibility, home beyond coping with
- d. Drawn down: insecurity or dependency
- e. Arch-like: dependency on mother; exhibitionism may be implied
- f. Upward ground line: future is difficult, much striving
- g. Downward ground line: pessimistic,, less willingness to strive

### 6. Fence

Guardedness, protect self from people

### 7. Door

Direct contact with environment

- a. No door: difficult accessibility; only in inner life.

- b. Door high beyond baseline: person is inaccessible
- c. Emphasis on door and hinges: admit you only on his own terms
- d. Door knobs: orality and dependency. Will not permit contact. Higher the door is beyond baseline, the greater the degree of unwillingness to get in contact

#### 8. Windows

Media of contact with environment

- a. Overly large windows: great demand ness
- b. No panes, blank: oppositional tendencies; if windows are light in strokes, apathy, empty feeling within
- c. Bar in window: keep away
- d. Look in windows: guardedness, suspiciousness
- e. Decorations of shutters, shades and curtains: controlled, too defensive
- f. Little dots: eye watching
- g. If windows made differently: disorganization, unpredictability
- h. General emphasis on door or window: possible oral pre-occupation
- i. Oriental window with overhanging: suspiciousness, drawn by paranoid people
- j. Windows up in the wall: inaccessibility

#### 9. Chimney

- a. Smoke in profusion: inner tension
- b. Right: pressure from the past
- c. Left: pressure from current situation
- d. Thin line: little assimilation
- e. Overlarge chimney: virility, exhibitionism
- f. None: coolness in home, missing father
- g. Tottering: castration, tottering virility
- h. Transparent: attempt at masculinity
- i. Peeping: weak, coward, is afraid to come out in open
- j. Large chimney looming at the back of house: latent aggressiveness
- k. With antenna: protection of phallus

#### 10. Walkway

Well proportioned, easily drawn means person is in intact

- a. Long: loosened accessibility
- b. Ladder-like: impulsive, move away, much reaction formation
- c. Wide at entrance, narrow to house: remain aloof, superficially friendly. Forced qarety and goodwill
- d. With impulsive lines: tendency to rush; without adequate control and foresight: cannot predict what he will do next
- e. Large, with house small: compensatory sociability

#### 11. Shrubs and trees

Mild anxiety, channelized and under control.

#### 12. Irrelevant details

Severe anxiety

13. Clouds

Generalized anxiety

14. Garage emphasis

Large or reinforced, need for motor release (Desire to get out of the house)

15. Backdoor

Stealthy, guilt ridden activity

16. Lack of function

Poor tie reality

17. Bizarre

Confusion, does not know what he is doing

18. Unconventional

Schizophrenia, marked vulnerability. Two picture of hose: by schizoid, demanding mother or mother-wife

The Tree

Basic self portrait, less conscious. Normal tree is two dimensional.

Dead trees: traumatized, hurt and damaged. Penetration tree, trunk like.

Thallus: uncertainty in sex identity.

X-ray: strong hypochondriacal tendencies, strong suicidal tendency

Two Trees: sibling rivalry, anxiety.

Fruit: dependent children and pregnant women draw fruits.

Apple falling: rejection.

Grass and shrub around tree: some anxiety, but pretty well under control.

1. Trunk

Basic power, person's ego strength.

Beyond top of page: heavy fantasy.

On baseline of paper: depression, adult feeling of inadequacy.

In yardstick area: material dependency.

Reinforcement of trunk line:

- 1). Faint line: weakness, breakdown
- 2). Heavily drawn: anxiety
- 3). Vertical lines: splitting tendency
- 4). Scar: scarring event of the past
- 5). Overly large: react aggressively in fantasy or in actuality
- 6). Narrow at base, large at end: over-striving, may collapse
- 7). Round, rounded: dependency
- 8). One dimensional: inferior adjustment to life. If drawn slowly or hesitantly, could be depression.

## 2. Branches

Resources, satisfaction from environment. Inter-relationship of branches: how well organized is he?

- a. Flexible: better flexibility to environment
- b. Shade: anxiety in integration with environment
- c. Two-dimensional, clubs: strong hostility
- d. Turned inward: obsessional
- e. Drooping: indication of depression, like weeping willow tree
- f. Open ended: lack of ego boundary; involved with arms and legs
- g. Breakthrough boundary: aggression potential tremendous

## 3. Roots

Stabilizing strength of personality

- a. Roots exposed: ungratified need
- b. Emphasized: great need for dependency
- c. Root-like talons, but not in ground: paranoid
- d. Cut: psychopathic, suicidal potential
- e. Transparent roots below ground: poor judgment, basic mental deficit, expression of guilt or acting out tendency

## 4. Leaves

Leaves represent fulfillment and satisfaction

- a. Well drawn: strong obsessive compulsive ill
- b. Crude: less intelligent
- c. None: frustrated, cold.

## The Person

Drawing of person is most conscious self concept; actual reproduction of self with weaknesses, or may be a fantasy portrait.



The adjusted: drawn the person he likes.

The less adjusted: draw those they don't like.

The ambivalent: draw that which is ambivalent to them. Vale with drawing of bulging muscle suggests anxiety with masculinity.

A body like a face: drawn by Psychotic.

Clothing when over emphasized: may suggest need to compensate>

When underemphasized: something to hide.

Transparency: indicated poor judgment.

Looping lines: desire to return to womb.

Broken down boundaries: lack of control.

## Profile

Absolute: suggests strong paranoid tendency: this is only of what you see, one arm, one leg

Partial profile: tendency to paranoid, evasive, aloof, socially snobbish, pretentious.

### 1. Size

If the self concept is small (average would be two thirds of the available space) the hypothesis may be formulated that the person feel small (inadequate) and that he is responding to the demand of the environment with feelings of inferiority.

### 2. Movement

A drawing that is suggestive of much activity: is frequently drawn by those individual, the man of action, the hypermaniac, hysterics.

Drawing that convey the impression of extreme rigid and usually brittle control is maintained.

If a drawing is a mechanical kind of figure: completely lacking in kinesthetic implications, the analyst should be alert for other signs of depersonalization and psychosis.

Seated or Reclining: frequently indicative of low energy level, lack of drive, or of emotional exhaustion

### 3. Distortions and Omissions

A distortion of omission of any part of the figure suggests that conflict may be related to the part so treated.

Voyeurists: frequently omit the eyes or close them.

Individual with sex conflict will omit or distort the areas associated with sexual parts.

Infantile individuals with oral needs usually draw enlarge breast

Remarks, erasure, shading, and reinforcement are all in the same direction as distortions and emission, and should be explored for possible relationship with conflict areas.

#### 4. Parts

##### A. Head: General – usually drawn first – concept of self is focused in the head or face

If head is markedly enlarged: the subject may either be very grandiose, have intellectual aspirations, or may have head pains or other schematic symptoms, be introspective or fantasy ridden.

If head and face dimmed out: the subject may be extremely self conscious and shy.

If head drawn last: the possibility of severe thought disturbance should be explored.

If head very clearly drawn in contrast with a vaguely sketched or rejected body: subject may resort to fantasy.

Small head: may suggest obsessive compulsive, or marked inferiority feelings, or denial of site of guilt feeling.

Large head on small body: false impulses control (catatonic may draw tiny head, huge body, outbidded house, huge tree).

Large body and small head: may indicate impulsive acting out.

If shape odd look for delusions.

Flat top head: may suggest feelings of castration especially intellectual and learning area.

Head to back: may mean paranoid a withdrawal.

Peripheral line: in head suggests effort to control fantasy or perhaps obsessional reaction.

Older people may draw larger head than body, suggesting effects of reaction to arteriosclerosis.

Features - If no features, subject is uncertain of identity unable to face self or world.

#### Hair and Beard

If hair well drawn: sensitivity

Lack of hair: suggest feeling of impotence or lack of virility. Adolescent girls emphasize hair.

Heavily shaded hair: suggests anxiety about fantasy.

When hair astray or "messy": there may be anxiety about sexual strivings.

Gives hair a great deal of attention and care: narcissistic or homosexual individuals.

Hair on face, or beard or mustache: is usually associated with compensatory striving for virility by those who have feeling of sexual inadequacy or doubts about masculinity. e.i. serve as phallic substitutes.

Face - Main index of social adjustment.

When over emphasized: look for attempt to maintain facade or social front.

Shaded face: suggests depersonalization, guilt

Eyes

If very large if those of male figure have lashes: subject tends to be homosexual.

If large in outline but pupils omitted or absent: subject may be expressing guilt in relation to voyeuristic tendencies.

If large and staring: possibility of paranoid trends.

Hollow sockets: lack of ability to accept stimulus from the eye.

Closed eyes: suggest avoidance of unpleasant stimuli.

Complete omission of eyes: might indicate visual hallucinations.

Pinpoint eyes or dot eyes: subject wants to see as little as possible.

Oriental eyes: suspiciousness. One is not fully seen.

Watchful, looking eyes: emphasis on detail, very sensitive visualization.

Nose - May portray a social stereotypes, or may be interpreted as phallic symbols.

If hooked or broad and flared: the subject may be expressing rejection and contempt.

If especially large: may associated with feelings of sexual impotence.

If extremely large: usually drawn by male involuntarily (depressed).

Large noses: drawn by adolescents who are attempting to establish their male role but feel inadequate for it almost invariably.

Turned up nose: Schizoid, "Don't want to smell it"

Mouth and Chin - Mouth suggests oral adjustment.

Heavy lips: oral emphasis

Teeth: oral hostility

Smiling mouth: desire to be occupied socially, but may be artificial.

One line mouth: oral resistance or denial

No mouth: resistance.

Chin - associated with masculinity, often social rather than sexual.

Underemphasized: suggest feeling of social impotence.

Ear - Rarely detailed.

If enlarge or emphasized: the clinician may explore the possibility of organic damage to the auditory area, or auditory hallucinations in a paranoid individual, a hearing disability, or a passive homosexual conflict.

If underemphasized: sensitivity to criticism.

If omitted entirely: possibility of auditory hallucinations should be explored.

B. TRUNK: General – Seat of Basic need and desires

Long trunk: unsatisfied needs of which patient is not aware

Short trunk: denial or drives

Tall, narrow trunk: avoidance of extreme contract, fantasy.

Neck - Coordinating element

Thin neck: drawn by schizoid people.

No neck: suggests lack of control, person at the mercy of body desire which may overwhelm him.

Shoulder - Physical strength and power.

Tiny: feelings of inferiority.

Rounded: well balanced.

Square: over defensive attitude.

Unequal: sexual conflict

Left, female

Right, male

Waist - coordination of power drive.

Genitalia - severe maladjustment, severe sex problems, seen in exhibitionist, psychotics.

Overemphasize on buttocks: may be seen in male homosexuals

Lack of pelvic closure: May suggest latent homosexuality. Closure means vulnerable, passive.

Arms - Related to control of environment.

Arms as wings: schizoid tendency

Overlong: over ambitious striving

Short: absence of striving

Thin: absence of striving

One dimensional: gross inadequacy feelings, regression

Broader in hand area: lack of control, impulsiveness

Snake-like: stealing activity, with pockets for stolen good.

Broken off or omitted: feelings of castration

Arms at back: guilt no desire to meet people

No arms: feelings of tremendous inadequacy.

Relaxed arms: suggest adjustment

Tense: rigidity

Crossed over pelvic region: involuntional melancholics, feelings of loss of sexual potency.

Arms against body: acting out against environment.

Hands

Good hands - usually found in drawings of person of above average intelligence,

Heavily shaded: suggest guilt, masturbation

Clenched fist: hostile feelings

Extremely large hands: impulsiveness, awkwardness in social relations.

Petal hand (mitten hand also): infantile frustrated, weak, dependent.

Hand behind back: subject afraid of own aggression

Absence of hands: guilt, castration feelings.

Finger large, spikelike, protruding: suggest hostility

Hand a line with no fingers delineated: suggestion of feelings of loss of control.

Legs - Absence, feeling of castration

Large: striving for autonomy

Tied together: rigidity and tension in regard to sexual area

Broad based stance, spread out legs: suggests defiance, or insecurity if body is not too well balanced.

Relaxed position normal: adjustment running feels forced to achieve.

Controlled running: attempt to escape or achieve;

Panic reaction, compelled to run: feelings of castration.

Knee - emphasized, homosexual tendencies (strain during act of sex).

Feet - control location

Placement gives clue to ambivalence, indecision

Backward: desire to get away from the environment, phallic looking, assaultive weapon.

Large: may suggest phallic exhibitionism

Tiptoe: tenuous reality, fantasy

Club: poor judgment

Web-like: schizoid, stick, hostility of kind seen in sociopath, schizophrenic, connotes weakness

Bars: form of defiance

Clothing

Overemphasis on clothing has feeling of inferiority to which he over compensates through physical attraction.

Heavily coated figure or with a heavy coat shows isolation against the environment seem in schizophrenic due to character disorder. With tie – has problem of masculinity.

Body

Body transparent through clothing: has conflict over sexual impulses, has poor control of sexual impulses.

Overemphasis on body/shown by heavy lines: shows narcissism.

Broken lines for body/with zones separated, or a disintegrating body:  
shows deterioration of age bounds, has ego dysfunction, schizophrenic.  
All parts of the body shows, or face-like body: paranoid, schizophrenic.  
Intestine: show schizophrenic.

#### Other Graphic Considerations

Impulsive drawing ex. Christmas tree or fruits - hysteria  
Draws very fast – acute schizophrenia  
Wide space in drawing – paranoid schizophrenia  
Lower part of the page used – neurotic depression, psychotic depression  
Lacking details – neurotic depression, psychotic depression  
Disorganization of details or confusion in drawings – acute schizophrenia  
Excessive details – obsessive-compulsive neurotic  
Cleanliness - obsessive-compulsive neurotic  
Repaired lines - anxiety neurosis  
Overuse of shading – shows tense anxiety, see in anxiety neurosis and borderline schizophrenia  
Very light shading – neurotic depression, psychotic depression  
Overemphasis on symmetry - obsessive-compulsive neurotic  
Exact angulation - obsessive-compulsive neurotic  
Sharp angles – paranoid schizophrenia

#### VII CONCLUSION

The H-T-P is applicable to Filipino setting for the reason that: (1) the items drawn are familiar to the comparatively young child. (2). They are willingly accepted as object to be drawn and (3) they appeared to stimulate more frank and free verbalization than any other items.

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