

Case I. K.N.

HISTORY

K. N. is a 26-year-old, white, male, native Virginian, who came to one of the Colony's mental hygiene clinics in 1946. Although he was a high school graduate with a Wechsler-Bellevue, Form I, Full IQ of 121, he had never been able to maintain himself much above the marginal level economically, until shortly before this examination when he started to sell life insurance and had begun to do well once the threat of an immediately and constantly supervising male figure (presumably a father substitute) was removed.

He was married, but he had never made a satisfactory sexual adjustment which he attributed to his wife's physical incapacity.

Mr. N. complained of chronic fatigue, diffuse anxiety, low thresholds for frustration and satiation, and an imposing number of minor somatic complaints. On psychological examination it was found that he had become prone to seek in phantasy the satisfactions that had been denied him thus far in reality.

Psychiatric diagnosis: Psychoneurosis, mixed type.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

I. Details

House: (1) There is no chimney (this omission, which cannot be explained here on the grounds of intellectual inferiority, suggests (a) a definite lack of warmth in the home situation, P2; (b) difficulty dealing with a masculine sex symbol, P2). (2) The steps are of inferior quality (the subject is somewhat inaccessible, P1). (3) There is a bar drawn across the porch (relative inaccessibility, P1; rejection of the House as an unpleasant dwelling in the past, P2). (4) The walkway is incomplete, tentative only (relative inaccessibility, P1). (5) There are two trees and a shrub beside the House (they were found to symbolize from left to right the patient's father, brother, and mother symbolically, as well as actually. the mother is the farthest away, P1). (6) The windows are drawn in unusual sequence, the second from the left in the second story the last of all (strongly unpleasant associations result first in temporary refusal to portray this room, in its devaluation when it is drawn, P2) and this window was given bar-like window panes (subject felt imprisoned in it, P2). Tree: (1) There are two scars upon the Tree's trunk (for Mr. N. the scar nearest the trunk's base stood for the death of a playmate when Mr. N. was four; the scar farther up the trunk symbolized psychic trauma sustained by Mr. N. at life age 15 upon the death of his brother, P2). (2) There is a prominent, but not emphasized, baseline (basic insecurity, P1).

Person: The mouth and cigar are emphasized (strong oral preoccupation, P2). (2)
Unessential ornamental details of clothing are emphasized (narcissistic X. Content

The House is one in which he

House:

and his brother spent a most unhappy
time in their early childhood after their
mother had deserted them, and_ their
father had gone away to look for work
(the negative valence is strong, P2).

Tree: The Tree was in the yard of a house in which he had pleasant experiences in the
past (wish to return to dependent, responsibility-free, childhood role, Pl).

Person: The caricature is Oscar, a drug store cowboy, Who is a dope (ego-inflation by
the devaluation of another figure, D1); (2) Oscar is standing on the corner watching the
girls go by, It s all in his head (sexual inadequacy, P2). (3) Oscar is, Day-dreaming like
me I d be standing on the corner wondering how my wife was; what was going on at
home (anxiety concerning marital relationships, Pl; phantasy as source of satisfaction,
P1).

SUMMARY Quantitative Analysis: The H-T-P Raw G IQ is 107, the Net Weighted Score IQ
is 123; the former is believed to represent in this instance present functional level, the
latter a definite potential which he may well be able ultimately to realize (for his
Wechsler-Bellevue IQ is 121). The definitely excessive number of detail items employed
suggests strong overt concern with the superficial aspects of everyday living, with what
others will think of him. The unusually high number of factors employed for the House
would indicate that perhaps his greatest single source of difficulty is his present
unsatisfactory marital adjustment.

Qualitative analysis of Mr. N s H-T-P productions reveals: (1) severe sexual
maladjustment which has produced painful anxiety; (2) a tendency to avoid inter-
personal relationships whenever possible ;to act in rigid, indecisive manner in those
relationships that he cannot avoid; (3) major needs for security, affection, masculinity,
achievement, and autonomy; (4) feelings that his environment is essentially cold,
constrictive, and non-satisfying ;that he is inadequate to cope with it; (5) attempts to
suppress the past with concomitant over-evaluation of the future as the source of
satisfaction; (6) a tendency to seek satisfaction in phantasy. Impression:

Psychoneurosis, mixed type; present intellectual function, average; potential function,
above average to superior. It is believed that the prognosis for improvement is good.
Psychiatric treatment is recommended.selfcontemplation with compensatory

selfadornment, Pl). (3) The nose, cigar and tie believed to be phallic substitute objects are emphasized (sexual maladjustment, P2).

II. Proportion Tree: The Tree is rather large compared to form page size (subject feels definitely constricted by and in his environment, EZ ye

III. Perspective House: The House is placed toward the upper left-hand corner (insecurity in home situation, Pl).

Tree: The Tree is placed somewhat up on the form page (mild feelings of striving, Pl). (2) The Tree leans definitely toward the right (attempts to suppress the past, with concomitant mild overevaluation of the future as a satisfaction source, P1).

Person: (1) The Person is almost absolutely centered on the form page (rigidity and basic insecurity, P2). (2) The Person's movement is a startle reaction at the sight of passing girls so the patient later explained (sexual maladjustment, P2).

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A. Drawing Phase. Tree: After he had produced the branches, he remarked, I'm more interested in dead trees than I am in live ones; is that O.K.? (P2. He recognizes the morbidity of interest, which may indicate mild self-destructive tendencies).

Comments

Person: Before he began to draw his Person; he asked, The whole Person? Should it be a likeness of a living person or the drawing is the point? I have a special character I like to fool with . He went on to remark that he had drawn this Person many times before, but never before below the waist (indecisiveness and sexual conflict, P2. The disturbing pelvic area has always been avoided heretofore).

B. Post-Drawing. Tree: (1) Mr. N. stated that his Tree appeared to him to be more feminine than masculine, made him think of his mother (dead in effect), since she deserted the family when he was 9 years of age (need for maternal succorance, Pl). (2) Mr. N. first stated that his Tree was dead (strong feelings of inadequacy, with depression, P2), but he later amended this to say that the Tree was living but was neither healthy nor strong (he is able to view the future as perhaps not completely bad, P1).

Person: In response to the question, How does he feel? Mr. N. said, He should feel good, for he's supposed to be the slap-happy type, (rejection of present state, P2).