

Hysteria

Paul Lerner (1998) said hysterics depict “the emotional way of life.” Their lives are emotional reactions to their involvement with others. Lerner cites Easser and Lesser (1966) who describe the hysterics emotionality, “as a jewel to be exhibited, fondled and cherished. Any attempt to move beyond it or remove it is viewed as an attack and is defended against with the total personality.

Lerner, P. M., (1998). “Psychoanalytic perspectives on the Rorschach”. London: The Psychoanalytic Press, pp. 53-54.

Easser, R., & Lesser, S., (1966) “Transference resistance in hysterical character neurosis-technical considerations” *Developments in Psychoanalysis at Columbia University*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 69-80.

Hysterics remain anchored in the emotionality of their own childhood. Feelings dominate and often overrule their thinking. They need is to be appreciated, valued, recognized and loved. This is their “prime directive”.

Freud (1915) in his article “The Unconscious” said, “...repression is essentially a process affecting ideas on the border between the Ucs and Pcs.”

Freud, S., (1915). “The unconscious”. *Standard Edition 14:159-216*. London: Hogarth Press 1957. p. 180

Levine and Spivak (1964) theorize repression inhibits cognitive processes.

Levin, M., & Spivak, C., (1964). “The Rorschach Index of Repressive Style”. Springfield, IL: Thomas.

Repression blocks entrance to awareness of ideas containing painful emotions. Hysterics welcome pleasurable emotions with open arms. The inability to integrate both painful and pleasurable emotions results in the failure to use all available information upon which to base reactions to the circumstances in which the hysterics find themselves. So long as the hysteric receives adulation, they are happy. Disappointment, criticism, or rejection depresses them.

The hysteric repairs their injured sense of self by planting subtle suggestions upon which others are to act to supply them with those pleasant experiences they crave simultaneously avoiding any hint of plethora of approval (Easser and Lesser 1965).

Easser, R., & Lesser, S., (1965). “Hysterical personality: A re-evaluation”. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 43:390-405. p. 397.

The emphasis upon the emotional side of existence overshadows the cognitive side. Hysterics avoid engaging in the mundane, dull, drudgery involved in most everyday activities like balancing the check book, house work, grocery shopping, getting the car serviced to mention only a few. These duties fall upon the shoulder of those closest to them. They would rather do things that get them the recognition they want.

Scale 3 (Hy)

Scale 3 (Hy) has 60 items on both the MMPI and MMPI-2. Forty-seven items are scored in the false direction and 13 of the items are scored in the true direction. A false response set will elevate Scale 3 (Hy). The K scale has 10 items in common with Scale 3 (Hy), which represents a built-in K correction. Item overlap is: **L (0), F (1), K (10), 1 (20), 2 (13), 4 (10), 5 (4), 6 (4), 7 (0), 8 (8), 9 (6), Sie (13)**. Test-retest correlations range from 0.66 to 0.80 for intervals of 1 to 2 weeks on the MMPI (Dahlstrom et al., 1972) and 0.72 to 0.75 for a one-week interval on the MMPI-1 (Butcher et al. 1989).

Dahlstrom, W. G., Welsh, G. S., & Dahlstrom, L. E., (1972). "An MMPI Handbook: Vol. 1. Clinical Interpretation" (Rev. Ed.) Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Butcher, J. N., Dahlstrom, W. G., Graham, J. R., Tellegen, A., & Kaemmer, B., (1989) Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2): Manual for administration and scoring. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.