

James Wood on the Current Rorschach Debate

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From: Dr. Brown

To: [PED-NPSY@LISTS.UMN.EDU](mailto:PED-NPSY@LISTS.UMN.EDU)

Sent: 20 February, 2008 16:24

Subject: Re: [PED-NPSY] Rorschach

Dr. Rozenblatt:

You are far from alone on your perspective. James Wood, Scott Lilienfeld and others involved in the current wave of critical review of Herman Rorschach's Inkblot Test are not attacking and attempting to debunk Herman Rorschach's work and the use of inkblots. Wood initiated the current wave of criticism based on problems he encountered with John Exner's Comprehensive System, mainly problems related to the research and normative data. It should be obvious from the bulk of articles and Wood's book that continued research with the inkblots is supported and encouraged. These critics have not tossed the baby out with the bath, and that includes all instruments historically referred to as "projective" (an antiquated term with extant problems, cf. recent articles in J. Personality Assessment). Note the endorsement Wood makes regarding a recently developed Rorschach system published by Western Psychological Services: "Current Rorschach systems are time-consuming, cumbersome, and overloaded with scores and indexes that lack a sound scientific foundation. The Logical Rorschach provides a practical and time-efficient alternative, emphasizing the test's well-demonstrated usefulness as a measure of thought disorder and perceptual accuracy."

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[http://portal.wpspublish.com/portal/page?\\_pageid=53,70408&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://portal.wpspublish.com/portal/page?_pageid=53,70408&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL) In What's wrong with the Rorschach?

Wood also writes positively in regard to the Holtzman Inkblot Technique, and the Hand Test, both often classified as “projective” techniques. From the 1st edition of Neuropsychological Assessment Muriel Lezak included the “Piotrowski Signs for Identifying Brain Impairment” (cf. p740 4th ed.) research which demonstrated in 1937 that the inkblots were sensitive for detection of neuropathology. Note: Dr. Lezak’s use of the Rorschach in a forensic context on a case of Aggravated Murder, First Degree (2 counts). [http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=wa&vol=2002\\_app/44463-8&invol=3](http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=wa&vol=2002_app/44463-8&invol=3) I fully concur with your point about “incompetent” use of the inkblots. Yet, how often do we see reports crossing our desks with questionable use and interpretation of any test(s), i.e., John Doe had an M-FAST or a TOMM score of X and is therefore malingering. I’ll cut short with this point; until we better understand the neurocognitive and neuro-affective processes involved during examination with the inkblots then the Jury (adequate rigorous peer review) is still out. Thank you for your comments, Bob Shahal Rozenblatt <crozenblatt@HOTMAIL.COM> wrote: I actually use the Rorschach on a regular basis. Aside from the politics, what I am hearing is that incompetent clinicians are using the test incompetently. Of the hundreds of Rorschachs that I have administered, none have lead me to diagnose a patient with any disorder. It does provide insight into how the patient picks up information, organizes it, and how they are likely to think, act and feel during problem-solving or decision-making.

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