

Transcultural Psychiatry

<http://tps.sagepub.com>

RORSCHACH AND TAT RESPONSES OF NEGRO, MEXICAN-AMERICAN, AND ANGLO PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS, by DALE L. JOHNSON and MELVIN P. SIKES, Houston, Texas. *Journal of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment*, 29 (June 1965), 183-188

TRANSCULT PSYCHIATRY 1966; 3; 72

DOI: 10.1177/136346156600300130

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://tps.sagepub.com>

Published by:

 SAGE Publications

<http://www.sagepublications.com>

Additional services and information for *Transcultural Psychiatry* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://tps.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://tps.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

RORSCHACH AND TAT RESPONSES OF NEGRO, MEXICAN-AMERICAN, AND ANGLO PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS, by DALE L. JOHNSON and MELVIN P. SIKES, Houston, Texas. *Journal of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment*, 29 (June 1965), 183-188.

Yet a third method of making reasonably standardized comparisons between groups of patients of different cultural background is to use psychological tests. By such means one can in theory obtain results further abstracted from the subjective bias of the interviewer than with either of the two approaches just discussed, but a different problem comes more into view. This is the problem of distinguishing cultural differences in psychopathology from cultural differences in non-pathological response style. However, this approach also permits a better exploration of the ways in which a culture supports or fails to support its more vulnerable members.

For the present study Johnson and Sikes took twenty-five non-psychotic male patients from each of the three main cultural groups their hospital served—Mexican-American, Negro, and Anglo-American. They were all U.S. born veterans, between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five, and within each subgroup the diagnostic distribution was approximately the same, namely 60 per cent anxiety reactions, 20 per cent depressive reactions, and 20 per cent other diagnoses. Mean educational and occupational levels were not significantly different, though the Anglos had the highest mean each time. Three psychologists were used, each representing one of the subcultures under investigation, but each had worked with patients from the other subcultures and comparison of results suggested that the identity of the examiner did not significantly affect results.

The tables show where differences occurred that appeared to be more than accidental. With the Rorschach, the most impressive are in measures of hostility and in the overall pattern of handling hostility. By emphasizing mutilation and the results of destructiveness (e.g. 'squashed insect'), which are here classified under the title of 'victim hostility', the Negro group seems to indicate that they feel themselves victims, vulnerable, and surrounded by impending violence. They do not show much 'potential hostility' (inferred from such content items as 'great horns', 'jet plane') and this suggests that the neurotic Negro in Texas feels defeated. The Mexican-American patient, on the other hand, shows relatively much 'potential hos-

RESEARCH AND OBSERVATIONS: NORTH AMERICA

TABLE I

Categories of Rorschach Response Showing Significant (< .05) Differences in Mean Scoring (Klopfer Categories, except for Last Three Items).

| RORSCHACH CATEGORY | ANGLO | MEX-AM | NEGRO |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| (Total responses, mean no.) | (18.9) | (18.2) | (16.4) |
| Wholes (W) | 9.2 | 7.1 | 7.3 |
| Poor form level (—) | 2.6 | 2.3 | 4.1 |
| Human movement (M) | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| Populars (P) | 4.2 | 3.4 | 2.5 |
| Human detail (Hd) | 0.64 | 1.08 | 0.44 |
| Animal detail (Ad) | 0.96 | 1.68 | 0.48 |
| Anatomy (At) | 1.48 | 0.88 | 2.16 |
| Sum C (percentage scoring over 2) | 68% | 32% | 48% |
| FC (percentage scoring over 2) | 56% | 24% | 28% |
| “Potential hostility” | 1.84 | 2.00 | 0.96 |
| “Victim hostility” | 1.48 | 0.84 | 2.24 |
| “Mild movement” | 2.6 | 2.1 | 1.2 |

tility’ and little ‘victim hostility’, suggesting that he feels more secure, but at the same time is defensively on guard. The Mexican-American group also appear to be more concrete and constricted, and to handle conflict by formalizing and compulsively dealing with details, whereas the other two deal more in generalities. The Negroes appear to be more body-centered and to be more hysteroid in their emphasis on repression and low impulse control. The Anglos occupy a middle position in their handling of hostility, but show greatest internal tension together with more flexible control.

With the TAT, the most clear-cut differences appeared on the field scene in Card 2. The Mexican-American group usually saw the family as unified, working together to get a good crop or to send the girl to school. The Negro subjects, on the other hand, tended to give stories in which there was no interaction or in which trouble was being experienced or the girl trying to get away. On Cards 6 BM and 7 BM (often taken as mother-son and father-son situations) the same difference appears, the Mexican-Americans seeing the couples as related and in an affectionate relationship, and the Negroes seeing the first situation more often as one of conflict with the older woman rejecting and the second as conflict with the young man rebelling. With Card 13 MF, where a sexual interpretation is often elicited, what was notable was that the Negro subjects tended to deny or avoid the sexual content, again reducing the degree of intimacy between the persons

TRANSCULTURAL PSYCHIATRIC RESEARCH

TABLE 2

Themes in TAT Responses Showing Significant (< .05) Differences in Frequency.

| | ANGLO | MEX-AM | NEGRO |
|--|-------|--------|-------|
| Family unity as indicated on Card 2 | | | |
| Present | 9 | 16 | 4 |
| Absent | 16 | 9 | 19 |
| Relationship with mother, Card 6 BM | | | |
| Accepted | 7 | 14 | 4 |
| Rejected | 8 | 5 | 10 |
| Relationship with father-figure, Card 7 BM | | | |
| Accepted | 5 | 17 | 8 |
| Rejected | 9 | 4 | 19 |
| Aggressive or sexual theme, Card 13 MF | | | |
| Present | 19 | 23 | 13 |
| Absent | 5 | 2 | 10 |

seen. The Anglo group, as before, tends to be in the middle position in these themes, but on Card 7 BM, with the two men, they have their own type of response which does not view the couple as related at all. The Anglos also tend, on all cards, to give stories that are flat and without involvement, unless outright discord is present.

The authors compare their findings with the comments of Diaz-Guerrero on the Mexican family¹ and with Goldfarb's Rorschach studies of Negroes². They find the former's remarks about the "unquestioned and absolute supremacy of the father and the necessary and absolute sacrifice of the mother" well supported in their material. On the other hand, the features which Goldfarb found in the "Mark of Oppression" subjects were not more frequent in the present Negro patients than in the other groups. Goldfarb's remarks about the Negro are true enough for the present sample, but were equally applicable to the Mexican-American and Anglo-American patients, and hence not culturally helpful.

1. R. DIAZ-GUERRERO, "Neurosis and the Mexican Family Structure," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 112 (1955), 411-417.

2. K. KARDINER and L. OVESEY. *The Mark of Oppression*. Cleveland, Ohio: Meridian Books (The World Publishing Company), 1962. Chapter 10, 318-330.