



**RORSCHACH PERFORMANCE
ASSESSMENT SYSTEM® (R-PAS®)**

www.r-pas.org

A Relatively Brief Introduction to R-PAS
Designed for Users Familiar with Exner's
Comprehensive System

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Erdberg; Slides prepared by Andrew Williams & the Authors

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R-PAS Preview

- Introduction
- What is it?
- What is it good for? What isn't it good for?
- How does it work?
- Why should I care? (applications and relevance to me)

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Introduction

- The Rorschach has the dubious distinction of being simultaneously the most cherished and most reviled of all psychological assessment tools
- Was one of the two most frequently used personality tests for over 50 years

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Historical Validity

- Even staunchest critics generally agree it is valid for certain items
 - Thought disorders
 - Severe mental disorders
 - Dependency
 - Treatment outcomes
 - Suicide Risk
 - Correlations with intelligence

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How Can We Know Another Person?

- Address this first to contextualize Rorschach task
- Long history of controversy with the Rorschach
 - Reliability (scoring, interpretation), validity
 - At times, polarized views
 - **Pro:** e.g., Bruno Klopfer: X-ray of the mind
 - **Con:** e.g., Arthur Jensen: Progress in psychology measured by speed of getting rid of the Rorschach
- 1995 to 2015 heated debates
 - Wood, Lilienfeld, & Garb led most critiques
- Thus, conceptual foundation for use is important

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Performance Based

- Most variables are not psychological constructs but reflect process of producing a (verbal) response
- Similar to WAIS, WISC, WRAT, etc
 - Assessing a **behavioral** sample
- Very different from self-report which relates to “introspectively reported characteristics”

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Self-Report

- Asking people about themselves is a key component of psychological assessment & research
- BUT, decades of research show people often say different things about themselves than how they behave or others see them
- Distorted self-views can skew self-reported data

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Main Ways to Know Someone

- Ask questions
 - Self-report
 - Informant report
- Observe behavior
 - Maximum performance
 - Typical performance
- Psychological measures mine these methods
 - Standardized stimuli, administration, and scoring
 - Norms and standardized interpretive routines

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Question-Based Methods

- Assess virtually any concepts or experiences
 - Past, present, or expected future
- Ideal for
 - Subjective beliefs, experiences, & impressions
- Limited by
 - Quality of perceptions
 - Potential to report information in a biased way



Performance Measures

- Provide observable, discrete samples of behavior
 - Not linguistic descriptions like question-based measures
 - Assessor classifies relevant behaviors, not respondent
- Ideal for
 - Assessing qualities out of respondent's awareness
- Limited by
 - Task requirements, which dictate constructs assessed
 - Inauthentic task engagement at time of testing
- Not helpful for assessing historical events or consciously held attitudes, beliefs, symptoms, or experiences



Performance Measures

- Maximum (e.g., IQ tests, neuropsychological tests)
 - Have a correct and desirable way of responding
 - Clear guidance about what success is and how to achieve it
 - Limited number of response options
 - Testing conditions that foster motivated performance
 - Show what one *can do* when motivated to perform optimally
- Typical (e.g., Rorschach task, Strange Situation)
 - General guidelines for completing a task
 - No clear standards for correct or desirable performance
 - Provide wide latitude for responding
 - Testing conditions foster individualized solutions
 - Show what one *chooses to do* when left to their own preferences

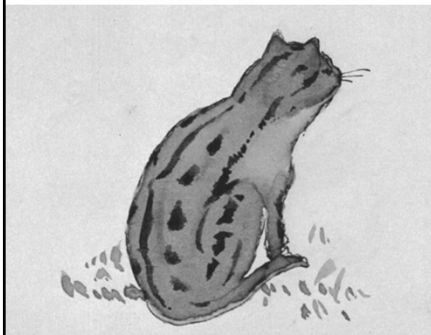
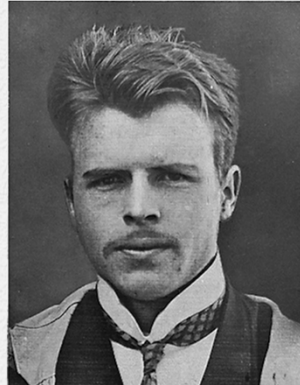


Why the Rorschach?

- The task provides a standardized, in vivo sample of perceptual and verbal problem-solving behavior
 - Inkblots were artistically created and enhanced, carefully selected, and pilot-tested
 - Stimuli are structured to provide multiple suggestive but incomplete or imperfect perceptual likenesses that form competing visual images



Hermann Rorschach (1884-1922)



Rorschach's Art

- He trained as an artist
- Fascinated with contradictory or multiply suggestive images
 - Squirrel colored like a rooster
 - Cat colored like a frog
- He artistically embellished and enhanced his inkblots
 - Images evolved with practice
 - Card III Example on next pages



The Rorschach Comprehensive System



- Between 1974 and 2006, John Exner standardized administration, coding, and interpretation for most Rorschach users in most countries around the world
 - Combined 5 earlier US systems
- CS became the dominant system for Rorschach research
 - Its empirical foundation was a recognized strength, but also a source of criticism

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Comprehensive System

- Exner (1974) integrated what he believed were the best test variables from five different scoring and interpretive systems.
- Hundreds of empirical studies were published on the Rorschach's reliability and validity, but there was not a single standardized system.
- Like the DSM-III, he used an atheoretical approach so clinicians from a variety of theoretical orientations could use the test.



Why the Rorschach?

- Task allows us to see what the person does
 - Not learn what he thinks he does
 - It is a reasonably brief, portable, behavioral experiment – this is “performance assessment”
 - Can be used in various settings
- As a behavioral task, the most valid inferences are those in which the behaviors observed and coded in the microcosm of the task generalize to parallel mental, verbal, perceptual, and interactive behaviors in the external environment
 - MOR, Sy are good examples

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CS

- The CS was the dominant Rorschach system from 1974 to 2011. It added credibility to the test and was widely used in forensic psychology because of positive reliability and validity studies.
- In 2011 96% of clinicians surveyed said they coded the Rorschach with the Comprehensive System (CS).
- RPAS was considered an evolutionary step for the Rorschach and only retained variables that had empirical support.



Why the Rorschach?

- The place of Rorschach data in an assessment
 - Coded behaviors may reflect implicit qualities not recognized by the respondent
 - Like other performance tasks; e.g., WAIS, WMS
 - Complement consciously recognized self-report
 - At best, Rorschach scores just modestly correlated with self-report measures
 - So valid scores provide unique personality data
 - Add incrementally and meaningfully to self-report

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Core Variable Validity Meta-analysis

Mihura, J. L., Meyer, G. J., Dumitrascu, N., & Bombel, G. (2013). The validity of individual Rorschach variables: Systematic reviews and meta-analyses of the Comprehensive System. *Psychological Bulletin*, 139, 548-605. doi: 10.1037/a0029406

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The Validity of Individual Rorschach Variables: Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses of the Comprehensive System

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We systematically evaluated the peer-reviewed Rorschach validity literature for the 65 main variables in the popular Comprehensive System (CS). Across 53 meta-analyses examining variables against externally assessed criteria (e.g., observer ratings, psychiatric diagnosis), the mean validity was $r = .27$ ($k = 770$) as compared to $r = .08$ ($k = 386$) across 42 meta-analyses examining variables against introspectively assessed criteria (e.g., self-report). Using Hemphill's (2003) data-driven guidelines for interpreting the magnitude of assessment effect sizes with only externally assessed criteria, we found 13 variables had excellent support ($r \geq .33$, $p < .001$; $\therefore FSN > 50$), 17 had good support ($r \geq .21$, $p < .05$, $FSN \geq 10$), 10 had modest support ($p < .05$ and either $r \geq .21$, $FSN < 10$, or $r = .15-.20$, $FSN \geq 10$), 13 had little ($p < .05$ and either $r < .15$ or $FSN < 10$) or no support ($p > .05$), and 12 had no construct-relevant validity studies. The variables with the strongest support were largely those that assess cognitive and perceptual processes (e.g., *Perceptual-Thinking Index*, *Synthesized Response*); those with the least support tended to be very rare (e.g., *Color Projection*) or some of the more recently developed scales (e.g., *Egocentricity Index*, *Isolation Index*). Our findings are less positive, more nuanced, and more inclusive than those reported in the CS test manual. We discuss study limitations and the implications for research and clinical practice, including the importance of using different methods in order to improve our understanding of people.

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COMMENT

A Second Look at the Validity of Widely Used Rorschach Indices: Comment on Mihura, Meyer, Dumitrascu, and Bombel (2013)

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We comment on the meta-analysis by Mihura, Meyer, Dumitrascu, and Bombel (2013), which examined the validity of scores in Exner's Comprehensive System (CS) for the Rorschach. First, we agree there is compelling evidence that 4 categories of cognitive scores—the "Rorschach cognitive quartet"—are related to cognitive ability/impairment and thought disorder. We now feel comfortable endorsing the use of these scores in some applied and research settings. Second, we conducted new meta-analyses ($k = 44$) for the 4 noncognitive Rorschach scores with highest validity in the Mihura et al. findings. Unlike Mihura et al., we included unpublished dissertations (although we did not attempt to exhaustively unearth all unpublished studies), calculated correlations instead of semipartial correlations, and used the Rorschach International Norms for a larger proportion of comparisons. Our validity estimates for the *Suicide Constellation* and *Weighted Sum of Color* were similar to or even higher than those of Mihura et al., although we concluded that support for the *Suicide Constellation* is limited and that *Weighted Sum of Color* probably does not measure its intended target. Our validity estimates for Sun Shading and the *Anatomy and X-ray* score were much lower than those of Mihura et al. We conclude that their meta-analysis accurately reflects the published literature, but their exclusion of unpublished studies led to substantial overestimates of validity for some and perhaps many Rorschach scores. Therefore, the evidence is presently insufficient to justify using the CS to measure noncognitive characteristics such as emotionality, negative affect, and bodily preoccupations.

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Wood et al. (2015)

- “The estimated validity coefficients reported by the authors provided an unbiased and trustworthy summary of the published literature” (p. 243)
- “Nearly 15 years ago, one of the authors of this Comment published a recommendation that a moratorium be placed upon use of the Rorschach in clinical and forensic settings because of the test’s weak scientific foundation (Garb, 1999). He and the other authors of this Comment agree that, in light of the compelling evidence laid out by Mihura et al. (2013), the time has come to withdraw this recommendation so far as it applies to the [14 variables that Wood et al. call the] Cognitive Quartet” (p. 243).



Other Meta-Analytic Support

- Meta-Analyses
 - Bornstein (1996, 1999): Oral Dependent Language
 - Deiner et al. (2011): Ego Impairment Index
 - Graceffo et al. (2014): Mutuality of Autonomy
 - Grønnerød (2004, 2006): Stability; Change in treatment
 - Monroe et al. (2013): Mutuality of Autonomy
- Systematic Review: Mihura et al. (2017): SR & SI
- Summary
 - Most variables in R-PAS have meta-analytic support
 - R-PAS variables have more construct validity meta-analyses documenting their validity than any other multiscale measure
 - MMPI/2/RF, PAI, MCMI, Wechsler scales, CBCL, etc.



Some Key Citations

www.r-pas.org/Articles.aspx

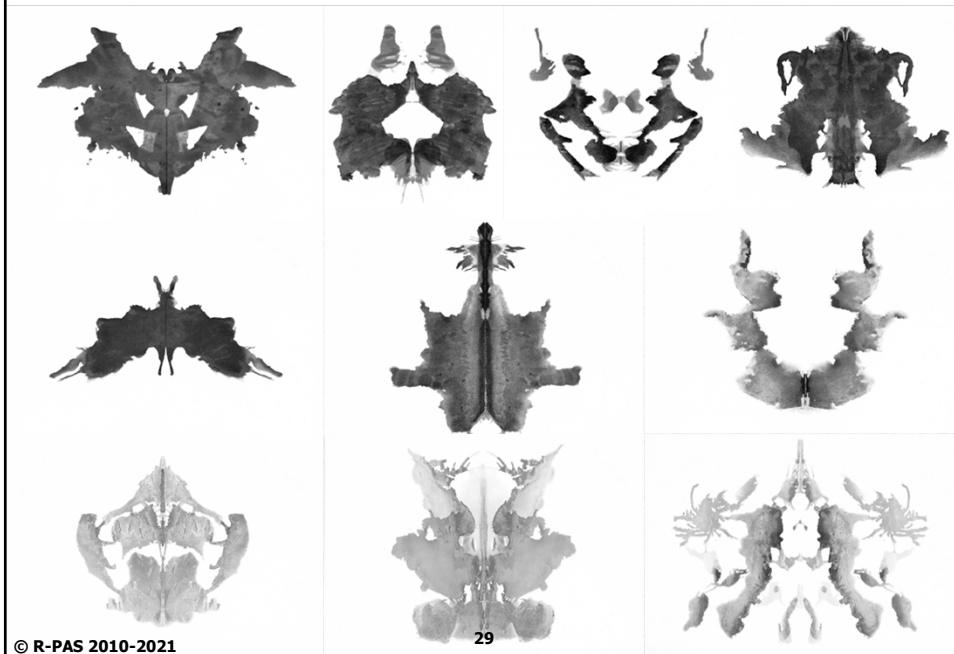
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Why the Rorschach?

- The visual problem solving task:
 - Look at the stimuli and answer the question:
 - “What might this be?”

What Might This Be?



The Rorschach – Respondent's Steps

- Scan the stimuli to figure out what it might be
- Select locations for emphasis
- Compare potential answers to recalled object images
- Filter out responses judged less optimal
- Articulate ones selected to the assessor
- All dependent on personal meaning-making activity
 - Parallels decoding of complex situations in daily life



The Rorschach – Assessor's Steps

- Hand each card saying, “What might this be?”
 - Record verbatim responses
- Clarify where objects reside & why they look the way they do
- Code responses and behaviors by classifying features, e.g.:
 - Was the card turned?
 - Did the object seen fit the inkblot contours?
 - Did the color or ink saturation contribute to the perception?
 - Was the response logically structured and clearly communicated?
- Count codes across responses, create summary scores
 - Compare to norms; interpret nomothetically
 - Interpret idiographically: content, imagery, & sequence



The Rorschach – What it Engages

- Predictive processing and active inference
 - Clark (2013, 2016); Friston (2010); Friston et al. (2012); Hohwy (2016)
- Visual-spatial, lexical-conceptual problem solving
- Dealing with
 - Imprecision, contradiction, and uncertainty of responses
 - Relative stranger sitting adjacent observing & recording
- Neurophysiological studies:
 - Engages bilateral frontal, temporal, parietal, occipital, & limbic lobes
- Moderately stressful
 - More than other methods (e.g., Momenian-Schneider et al., 2009)



The Rorschach – What it Provides

- Three main types of data
 - Visual attributions
 - Verbal explanations
 - Interactions with stimuli and assessor
- We observe what a person sees, says, and does
 - Not learn what they think they do
- Scores quantify behavior when repeatedly attributing meaning to the visual stimuli and explaining to another how one looks at things in the context of multiple competing possibilities

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How R-PAS Works

- Administration
 - Response Phase (RP)
 - Clarification Phase (CP)
- Coding
- Interpretation

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The R-PAS Codes

What is the card angle?	Where is it seen?	Is white space used? How?		What is seen?	Are any objects meaningfully related?	Are all objects in the percept vague?	Are there two identical objects?	How well does it fit the blot?	Do many people see it?	What makes it look like that?	Are there issues with thought processes?	What themes are present?	Were steps taken to manage R?
Card Orientation	Loc-ation*	Space Reversal	Space Integration	Content Class*	Synthesis	Vagueness	Pair	Form Quality*	Popular	Determinants*	Cognitive Codes	Thematic Codes	R-Optimized
@	W,D,Dd	SR	SI	H An	Sy	Vg	2	o, u, -, n	P	M	DV1,DV2	ABS	Pr,Pu
< v >	Loc#(s)			(H) Art Hd Ay (Hd) Bl A Cg (A) Ex Ad Fi (Ad) Sx NC						FM m (a,p,a-p) FC, CF, C C' Y T V FD r F	DR1,DR2 INC1,INC2 FAB1,FAB2 PEC CON	PER COP MAH AGM AGC MOR MAP GHR, PHR ODL	

Scored for every response

Use the same row of Determinants, Content, Cognitive, or Thematic codes can be assigned to each response.

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Entries on the same row within a column are mutually exclusive options; only one can be assigned to a response.

R-PAS Code Sequence

C-ID: JS P-ID: 154 Age: NA Gender: Male Education: NA

Cd	#	Or	Loc	Loc #	SR	SI	Content	Sy	Vg	2	FQ	P	Determinants	Cognitive	Thematic	HR	ODL (RP)	R-Opt
I	1	W				SI	A				o	P	C'	DV1	MOR			*
	2	W					(A)				o		F		PER,AGC			
	3	W					A,Sx				-		FD		AGC			
II	4	W					H,Bl,Cg	Sy	2	o			Ma,FC	FAB1	AGM,MOR	PH	ODL	*
III	5	W					H,A,Cg,Sx,NC	Sy	2	o	P		Ma,FMa-p,FC		COP	GH	ODL	Pr*
	6	v	D	1,3		SI	Ad				u		FC,C'		AGC,MOR		ODL	*
IV	7	@	W			SI	Ad				u		C',FD		AGC		ODL	*
	8	v	W			SI	A				u		FMp,C'		AGC			*
V	9	W					A				o		F		PER			
	10	@	W				A				o	P	F	DR1				*
VI	11	v	W				A	Sy			u		F		AGC,MOR,MAP			Pr*
	12	>	W				Ad,NC	Sy			-		T,r	INC1	MOR		ODL	*
VII	13	W					(H)	Sy	2	u			F	DV1			GH	*
	14	@	W				H,Cg,NC	Sy	2	u	P		Mp				GH	*
VIII	15	v	W				A				-		CF		PER,AGC			*
	16	>	W				A,NC	Sy			o	P	FMa,r					
IX	17	v	W				A				-		FC,V	INC1	PER,AGC			
	18	>	D	6,12			H,NC	Sy			u		Ma,FC,r		PER,MOR	PH		*
X	19	v	W				A,NC	Sy	2	o			FMp,CF	DV1	AGC		ODL	*
	20	v	W				NC		Vg	n			ma,C	DV1	PER,MOR			*

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R-PAS Protocol Level Counts & Calculations											
C-ID: JS			P-ID: 154			Age: NA		Gender: Male		Education: NA	
Section	Counts	Counts	Calculations			Section	Counts	Counts	Calculations		
Responses & Administration	R = 20	R8910 = 6	R8910%	= 30%		Determinants	M = 4	FC = 5	WSumC	= 6.0	
	Pr = 2	Pu = 0				Blends:	FM = 4	CF = 2	SumC	= 8	
	CT = 13					Ma,FC	m = 1	C = 1	(CF+C)/SumC	= 38%	
						Ma,FMa-p,FC	C' = 4	Y = 0	MC	= 10.0	
Location	W = 18	D = 2	W%	= 90%		C',FD	T = 1	V = 1	M/MC	= 40%	
	Dd = 0	WD = 20	Dd%	= 0%		FMp,C'	r = 3	FD = 2	YTV'	= 6	
						T,r		F = 5	mY	= 1	
						FMa,r			F%	= 25%	
Space	SR = 0	SI = 4				FC,V			PPD	= 11	
	AnyS = 4					Ma,FC,r			MC - PPD	= -1.0	
						FMp,CF			p/(a+p)	= 40%	
						ma,C			Mp/(Ma+Mp)	= 25%	
Content	H = 4	An = 0	SumH	= 5			a = 6	p = 4	Blend%	= 55%	
	(H) = 1	Art = 0	NPH	= 1			Ma = 3	Mp = 1			
	Hd = 0	Ay = 0	NPH/SumH	= 20%			Blend = 11	CBlend = 2			
	(Hd) = 0	Bl = 1									
	A = 11	Cg = 3				Cognitive Codes	DV1 (1) = 4	DV2 (2) = 0	WSumCog	= 15	
	(A) = 1	Ex = 0					INC1 (2) = 2	INC2 (4) = 0	SevCog	= 0	
	Ad = 3	Fi = 0					DR1 (3) = 1	DR2 (6) = 0	Lev2Cog	= 0	
	(Ad) = 0	Sx = 2					FAB1 (4) = 1	FAB2 (7) = 0			
		NC = 7					PEC (5) = 0	CON (7) = 0			
Object Qualities			Sy%	= 45%		Thematic Codes	ABS = 0	PER = 6	MAHP	= 1	
Synthesis	Sy = 9		Vg%	= 5%			COP = 1	MAH = 0	MAP/MAHP	= NA	
Vagueness	Vg = 1						AGM = 1	AGC = 9	GPHR	= 5	
Pair	Z = 5						MOR = 7	MAP = 1	PHR/GPHR	= 40%	
							ODL = 6		ODL%	= 30%	
							GHR = 3	PHR = 2			
Form Quality and Popular	FQo = 8	WDo = 8	FQo%	= 40%		Other Calculations	IntCont = 0	TP-Comp = 1.7	Complexity	= 87	
	FQu = 7	WDu = 7	FQu%	= 35%			CritCont% = 55%	V-Comp = 3.7	LSO	= 36	
	FQ- = 4	WD- = 4	FQ-%	= 20%			EII-3 = 1.2	SC-Comp = 6.3	Cont	= 23	
	FQn = 1	WDn = 1	WD-%	= 20%					Det	= 28	
	M- = 0	P = 5									

Counts and Calculations in Bold font are on the Summary Scores and Profiles Pages

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R-PAS Summary Scores and Profiles – Page 1															
C-ID: JS			P-ID: 154			Age: NA		Gender: Male		Education: NA					
Domain/Variables	Raw Scores	Raw %ile	Raw SS	Cpb. Adj. %ile	SS	Standard Score Profile R-Optimized						Abbr.			
Admin. Behaviors and Obs.						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	
Pr	2	82	114												Pr
Pu	0	40	96												Pu
CT (Card Turning)	13	96	126												CT
Engagement and Cog. Processing						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	
Complexity	87	73	109												Cmplx
R (Responses)	20	21	88	5	75										R
F% [Lambda=0.33] (Simplicity)	25%	17	86	26	91										F%
Blend	11	97	128	93	123										Bln
Sy	9	73	109	57	103										Sy
MC	10.0	78	112	61	104										MC
MC - PPD	-1.0	59	104	64	105										MC-PPD
M	4	58	103	34	93										M
M/MC	[4/10.0]	40%	30	92	29	92									M Prp
(CF+C)/SumC	[3/8]	38%	34	94	34	94									CFC Prp
Perception and Thinking Problems						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	
EII-3	1.2	94	123	94	123										EII
TP-Comp (Thought & Percept. Com...)	1.7	92	121	91	121										TP-C
WSumCog	15	86	116	82	114										WCog
SevCog	0	35	94	35	94										Sev
FQ-%	20%	93	122	92	122										FQ-%
WD-%	20%	92	121	88	118										WD-%
FQo%	40%	7	78	6	77										FQo%
P	5	39	96	43	97										P
Stress and Distress						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	
m	1	42	97	14	84										m
Y	0	17	85	17	85										Y
MOR	7	99	137	99	136										MOR
SC-Comp (Suicide Concern Comp.)	6.3	86	116	81	113										SC-C
Self and Other Representation						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	

R-PAS Summary Scores and Profiles – Page 2																
C-ID: 35		P-ID: 154		Age: NA		Gender: Male		Education: NA								
Domain/Variables	Raw Scores	Raw %ile	Raw SS	Cpb. Adj. %ile	Cpb. Adj. SS	Standard Score Profile R-Optimized								Abbr.		
						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140		
Engagement and Cog. Processing																
W%	90%	99	134	98	131	[Scale]								W%		
Dd%	0%	5	75	6	77	[Scale]								Dd%		
SI (Space Integration)	4	77	111	79	112	[Scale]								SI		
IntCont	0	11	81	11	81	[Scale]								IntC		
Vg%	5%	55	102	54	101	[Scale]								Vg%		
V	1	72	109	55	102	[Scale]								V		
FD	2	84	115	83	115	[Scale]								FD		
RB910%	30%	37	95	39	95	[Scale]								RB910%		
WSumC	6.0	86	116	78	112	[Scale]								WSC		
C	1	82	114	82	114	[Scale]								C		
Mp/(Ma+Mp)	[1/4]	25%	23	89	23	89	[Scale]								Mp Prp	
Perception and Thinking Problems																
FQu%	35%	69	107	68	107	[Scale]								FQu%		
Stress and Distress																
PPD	11	66	106	51	101	[Scale]								PPD		
YTVC'	6	70	108	58	103	[Scale]								YTVC'		
CBInd	2	88	117	75	110	[Scale]								CBInd		
C'	4	88	117	79	112	[Scale]								C'		
V	1	72	109	55	102	[Scale]								V		
CritCont% (Critical Contents)	55%	98	131	98	131	[Scale]								CrCt		
Self and Other Representation																
SumH	5	40	96	26	91	[Scale]								SumH		
NPH/SumH	[1/5]	20%	5	76	6	77	[Scale]								NPH Prp	
r (Reflections)	3	97	128	97	128	[Scale]								r		
p/(a+p)	[4/10]	40%	48	99	47	99	[Scale]								p Prp	
AGM	1	75	110	75	110	[Scale]								AGM		
T	1	68	107	68	107	[Scale]								T		
PER	6	>99	141	>99	141	[Scale]								PER		
An	0	16	85	16	85	[Scale]								An		



Administration: Setting the Stage

- Schedule 1 to 1½ hour time frame
 - R-Optimized reduces variability of time frame
 - 17 R typical minimum, 40 R absolute maximum
- Can use either pen and paper or a laptop
- Other guidelines:
 - Side-by-side seating
 - Provide general information about the assessment process
 - Establish rapport during the warm-up period



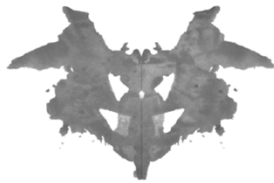
Unnecessary Qs

Try not to:

- Ask why an object was seen in motion
- Confirm form features after F is established; e.g., after object features are linked to sublocations
- Clarify the same determinants in new places
- Ask about determinant-irrelevant descriptors
- Ask about determinant-irrelevant objects
- Ask for words where gestures suffice
- Ask leading questions to elicit determinants

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Card I



W	253
v Hair (Styled)	-
v Monster	o
v Pumpkin, Carved; Jack-O-Lantern	o
v Astrodome	u
v Building	-
v Cabin	-
v Cap (Snow)	u
v Castle	-

Beard	-	Cat	-
Body (Human)	-	Cattle (Herd)	-
Body (Split)	-	Cow	-
Breast	-	Crab	o
Chest	-	Crawfish or Crayfish	-
Clitoris	u	Crustacean	-
Elves	u	Dragon (Usually with Wings)	u
Face, Human	-	Face, Animal (Unspecified)	o
Face, Robot	u	Face, Animal (with Horns)	o
Face, Witch	u	Face, Ant	u
Human	-	Face, Bear	u
Human or Human-Like Figure with Cape or Wings	o	Face, Bird	-
Human or Human-Like Figures (2 or 3 with Dd34 or Outer Part of D2 Accounted For by Clothing, Motion, etc.)	o	Face, Bug	u
Humans (2 Facing Midline)	o	Face, Cat	o
		Face, Cow	u
		Face, Dog	o
		Face, Fish	-
		Face, Fox	o
		Face, Horse	-

Turned cards (v,<,>) first

1. **Bold** = H/H-like
2. **Bold/Italic** = H/H-like or A/A-Like
3. *Italics* = A/A-Like

4. Underlined = Anatomy
5. Normal Font = Other

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Probes for Key Words or Phrases

Question/Probe

**Repeat the key word
or phrase.**

Examples

Dark? (Y, C')
Behind him? (FD, r)
Mirrored? (r, 2)
Bloody prints? (CF, FC, C)

And the ...

(key word or phrase)?

And the softness? (T)
And the depth? (FD, V)

You said it was ...

(key word or phrase)?

You said it was rough? (T, V)
You said it was pretty? (CF, FC, C)

What makes it look

(key word or phrase)?

What makes it look bright? (C, Y, C')
What makes it look delicate? (Y)

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General Probes

Examples

I'm not sure how you
see it?

Purpose/Issue

Use only with vaguely stated,
confusing, or odd responses with
multiple coding ambiguities.

Where did you see it?

Location clarification is rarely
needed; typically only if E has looked
away during CP.

For location do not ask the person to
precisely trace what they see (this
leads to too many Dd codes).

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Interpretation

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Complexity Adjusted Norms

- Scores tend to rise and fall with protocol Complexity so created norms that adjust for it
 - Shows what stands out despite high or low Complexity
 - Like relative strengths and weaknesses on the WAIS
- Result is what the score would be if the person's complexity was typical (i.e., at the median)
- Leads to conditional inferences
 - C-Adj score < 90:
 - Lower than expected *given his/her level of Complexity*
 - C-Adj score > 110
 - Higher than expected *given his/her level of Complexity*

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Page 1 and Page 2 Profiles

- 5 Logically Organized Domains
 - Administration Behaviors and Observations
 - Engagement and Cognitive Complexity
 - Perception and Thinking
 - Stress and Distress
 - Self- and Other-Representation
- 3 Types of Scores
 - Raw Percentile Standard Score
- 2 Models
 - Unadjusted Complexity Adjusted

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R-PAS Code Sequence

C-ID: JS P-ID: 154 Age: NA Gender: Male Education: NA

Cd	#	Or	Loc	Loc #	SR	SI	Content	Sy	Vg	2	FQ	P	Determinants	Cognitive	Thematic	HR	ODL (RP)	R-Opt	
I	1		W			SI	A				o	P	C'	DV1	MOR				*
	2		W				(A)				o		F		PER,AGC				
	3		W				A,Sx				-		FD		AGC				
II	4		W				H,BI,Cg	Sy		2	o		Ma,FC	FAB1	AGM,MOR	PH	ODL		*
III	5		W				H,A,Cg,Sx,NC	Sy		2	o	P	Ma,FMa-p,FC		COP	GH	ODL	Pr	*
	6	v	D	1,3		SI	Ad				u		FC,C'		AGC,MOR		ODL		*
IV	7	@	W			SI	Ad				u		C',FD		AGC		ODL		*
	8	v	W			SI	A				u		FMp,C'		AGC				*
V	9		W				A				o		F		PER				
	10	@	W				A				o	P	F	DR1					*
VI	11	v	W				A	Sy			u		F		AGC,MOR,MAP			Pr	
	12	>	W				Ad,NC	Sy			-		T,r	INC1	MOR		ODL		*
VII	13		W				(H)	Sy		2	u		F	DV1			GH		*
	14	@	W				H,Cg,NC	Sy		2	u	P	Mp				GH		
VIII	15	v	W				A				-		CF		PER,AGC				*
	16	>	W				A,NC	Sy			o	P	FMa,r						
IX	17	v	W				A				-		FC,V	INC1	PER,AGC				
	18	>	D	6,12			H,NC	Sy			u		Ma,FC,r		PER,MOR	PH			*
X	19	v	W				A,NC	Sy		2	o		FMp,CF	DV1	AGC		ODL		
	20	v	W				NC		Vg		n		ma,C	DV1	PER,MOR				*

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R-PAS Summary Scores and Profiles – Page 2

C-ID: 35		P-ID: 154		Age: NA		Gender: Male		Education: NA								
Domain/Variables	Raw Scores	Raw %ile	Raw SS	Cpb. Adj. %ile	Cpb. Adj. SS	Standard Score Profile R-Optimized								Abbr.		
						60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140		
Engagement and Cog. Processing																
W%	90%	99	134	98	131											W%
Dd%	0%	5	75	6	77											Dd%
SI (Space Integration)	4	77	111	79	112											SI
IntCont	0	11	81	11	81											IntC
Vg%	5%	55	102	54	101											Vg%
V	1	72	109	55	102											V
FD	2	84	115	83	115											FD
R8910%	30%	37	95	39	95											R8910%
WSumC	6.0	86	116	78	112											WSC
C	1	82	114	82	114											C
Mp/(Ma+Mp)	[1/4]	25%	23	89	23	89										Mp Prp
Perception and Thinking Problems																
FQu%	35%	69	107	68	107											FQu%
Stress and Distress																
PPD	11	66	106	51	101											PPD
YTVC'	6	70	108	58	103											YTVC'
CBlend	2	88	117	75	110											CBlnd
C'	4	88	117	79	112											C'
V	1	72	109	55	102											V
CritCont% (Critical Contents)	55%	98	131	98	131											CrCt
Self and Other Representation																
SumH	5	40	96	26	91											SumH
NPH/SumH	[1/5]	20%	5	76	6	77										NPH Prp
r (Reflections)	3	97	128	97	128											r
p/(a+p)	[4/10]	40%	48	99	47	99										p Prp
AGM	1	75	110	75	110											AGM
T	1	68	107	68	107											T
PER	6	>99	141	>99	141											PER
An	0	16	85	16	85											An

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EII-3 and Composite Calculations

C-ID: 35		P-ID: 154		Age: NA		Gender: Male		Education: NA	
Composite / Element	Case Data	Beta Weight	Equation	Result	Composite / Element	Case Data	Beta Weight	Equation	Result
EII-3			EII-3 =	1.2	TP-Comp			TP-Comp =	1.7
FQ-	4	.36	+ 0.138 × (1.318) × (FQ)	0.73	WD-%	20%	.18	+ 2.159 × (1.168) × (WD-%/100)	0.50
WSumCog	15	.49	+ 0.302 × (1.000) × (√WSumCog)	1.17	FQ-%	20%	.48	+ 5.618 × (1.194) × (FQ-%/100)	1.34
CritCont%	55%	.19	+ 0.265 × (1.000) × (√CritCont)	0.88	FAB2	0	.12	+ 0.598 × (1.000) × (-1/(FAB2 + 1) ²)	-0.60
M-	0	.18	+ 0.321 × (1.068) × (√M-)	0.00	WSumCog	15	.28	+ 0.191 × (1.000) × (√WSumCog)	0.74
PHR	2	.19	+ 0.287 × (1.002) × (√PHR)	0.41	M-	0	.17	+ 0.329 × (1.068) × (√M-)	0.00
GHR	3	-.17	- 0.101 × (0.998) × (GHR)	-0.30	R	20	-.06	- 0.017 × (1.000) × (R)	-0.34
R	20	-.20	- 0.052 × (1.000) × (R)	-1.04				- 0.458 × (0.560)	0.10
			- 0.955 + (0.268)	-0.69	SC-Comp			SC-Comp =	6.3
V-Comp			V-Comp =	3.7	V+FD	3	.16	+ 0.322 × (1.000) × (√(V + FD))	0.56
T	1	-.27	- 0.631 × (√T)	-0.63	CBlend	2	.35	+ 0.896 × (1.000) × (√CBlend)	1.27
#R with W SI Sy	20	.20	+ 0.065 × ([#R with W or SI or Sy])	1.30	r	3		+ 2.123 × (1.000) ×	1.21
LSO Complexity	36	.12	+ 0.699 × (LSO/R)	1.26	Pair	5	-.19	(√(((3 × r) + Pair)/R) - 0.375))	0.70
AnyS	4	.32	+ 0.224 × (AnyS)	0.90	MOR	7	-.13	+ 0.263 × (1.000) × (√(MOR))	0.58
SumH	5	.20	+ 0.652 × (√SumH)	1.46	LSO Complexity	36	.10	+ 0.882 × (1.000) × (√(LSO/R) - 1.373))	0.07
(H)+(A)+(Hd)+(Ad)	2	.18	+ 0.388 × (√(((H)+(A)+(Hd)+(Ad))))	0.55	PPD	11		+ 0.065 × (1.000) × (PPD - MC)	0.07
H+(H)+A+(A) / Sum H & A Cont	17	-.21	- 2.340 × ((H)+(H)+A+(A)) / [H+(H)+A+(A)+Hd+(Hd)+Ad+(Ad)]	-1.99	MC	10.0			
Cg	3	.13	+ 0.278 × (√Cg)	0.48	CF+C	3		+ 0.152 × (1.000) × ((CF+C) - FC)	-0.30
			+ 0.332	0.33	FC	5			
					FQo%	40%	-.08	- 1.031 × (0.967) × (FQo%/100)	-0.40
					AnyS	4	.25	+ 0.177 × (1.000) × (AnyS)	0.71
					P	5	-.16	+ 0.589 × (1.000) × (√(P - 5.5))	0.42
					H	4	-.16	- 0.128 × (1.000) × (H)	-0.51
								+ 2.020 + (0.033)	2.05

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R-PAS Profile Appendix – Summary Scores for All Variables																								
C-ID: JS					P-ID: 154					Age: NA					Gender: Male					Education: NA				
Section & Variable	Raw Scores				Cpbx. Adj.		Section & Variable	Raw Scores				Cpbx. Adj.		Section & Variable	Raw Scores				Cpbx. Adj.					
	Raw	%ile	SS	%ile	SS	Raw		%ile	SS	%ile	SS	Raw	%ile		SS	%ile	SS							
R & Admin.						FQ and Popular						Cognitive Codes												
R	20	21	88	5	75	FQo	8	5	75	5	74	DV1 (1)	4	99	135	99	135							
R8910	6	22	88	20	87	FQu	7	54	101	48	99	DV2 (2)	0	49	100	49	100							
Pr	2	82	114			FQ-	4	84	115	81	114	DR1 (3)	1	80	113	80	113							
Pu	0	40	96			FQn	1	89	118	89	118	DR2 (6)	0	48	99	48	99							
CT	13	96	126			WDo	8	8	79	5	75	PEC (5)	0	43	97	43	97							
R8910%	30%	37	95	39	95	WDu	7	74	110	63	105	INC1 (2)	2	86	116	73	110							
						WD-	4	91	120	87	117	INC2 (4)	0	45	98	45	98							
						WDn	1	89	118	89	118	FAB1 (4)	1	78	112	78	112							
Location						M-	0	36	95	36	95	FAB2 (7)	0	47	99	47	99							
D	18	94	124	90	119	P	5	39	96	43	97	CON (7)	0	49	100	49	100							
D	2	3	71	4	73	FQo%	40%	7	78	6	77	WSumCog	15	86	116	82	114							
Dd	0	5	75	5	75	FQu%	35%	69	107	68	107	SevCog	0	35	94	35	94							
WD	20	52	101	37	95	FQ-%	20%	93	122	92	122	Lev2Cog	0	41	97	41	97							
W%	90%	99	134	98	131	WD-%	20%	92	121	88	118													
Dd%	0%	5	75	6	77							Thematic Codes												
						Determinants						ABS	0	40	96	40	96							
Space						M	4	58	103	34	93	PER	6	>99	141	>99	141							
SR	0	19	87	19	87	FM	4	68	107	58	103	COP	1	54	102	47	99							
SI	4	77	111	79	112	m	1	42	97	14	84	MAH	0	26	90	26	90							
AnyS	4	71	108	67	106	FC	5	93	123	92	121	GHR	3	26	90	15	84							
						CF	2	61	104	60	104	AGM	1	75	110	75	110							
Content						C	1	82	114	82	114	AGC	9	99	136	99	135							
H	4	81	113	68	107	C'	4	88	117	79	112	MOR	7	99	137	99	136							
(H)	1	48	99	41	96	Y	0	17	85	17	85	MAP	1	65	106	44	97							
Hd	0	14	84	14	84	T	1	68	107	68	107	PHR	2	42	97	25	89							
(Hd)	0	26	91	26	91	V	1	72	109	55	102	ODL	6	92	122	89	119							
A	11	85	116	85	116	r	3	97	128	97	128	MAHP	1	44	98	25	89							
(A)	1	80	113	80	113	FD	2	84	115	83	115	MAP/MAHP	NA											
Ad	3	62	104	62	104	F	5	14	84	20	88	GPHR	5	26	91	15	85							
(Ad)	0	43	97	43	97	a	6	65	106	52	101	PHR/GPHR	40%	62	105	62	105							
An	0	16	85	16	85							ODL%	30%	95	124	94	124							
(An)	0	18	85	18	86																			



Interpretive Procedures: 4 S's

- **Scan** profiles quickly (< 1 min) to note red and black
- **Sift** carefully through interpretive postulates for each variable; start on Page 1 and go through Page 2
- **Synthesize** inferences; while sifting, consider score in relation to other scores, test data, history, behavior
 - Burrow into the data; move from aggregated variables down to their component parts; typically 1-level
 - e.g., for Complexity consider its subcomponents (LSO, Cont, Det), but not typically their elements (e.g., not the individual contents that comprise Cont Complexity).
- **Summarize** what you learned about this person from the test data and address the referral questions



Self-Report & Performance Based

- Self-report ask examinee to report on mental events and past experiences
- Performance tests assess psychological characteristics by evaluating examinees behavior in the context of the task
- Ideally, use both

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Example

- Mihura, et al (2012) example of a disturbed response:
 - “It’s a Jesus head with smoke coming out of the eyes. The smoke is a sign that he’s judging me. It’s scary.” (FAB2)
- Self-report:
 - “My thoughts often blend into each other so I can’t tell one from the other.”

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Self-Report vs. Implicit Assessment

- Meyer (2001)
 - Spontaneous achievement behaviors (job performance) were most strongly predicted by implicit measures (storytelling) over self-report.
 - Only a small association between implicitly assessed items & self-reported achievement
- Meta Analysis by Cyders & Coskunpinar (2011)
 - Small association between self-reported & behaviorally assessed impulsivity

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Implicit Assessment

- Mihura (2012) stated:
 - Thus, what people say is true about their personal characteristics often bears little association to these same qualities as assessed by behavioral performance tasks, though the latter typically show stronger relations to other externally assessed criteria.
- How often have people told you their IQ was 160?
- The results most strongly show how people make meaning out of the world around them.



Response Altering

- By manipulating the beliefs, attitudes, or experiential states of participants, researchers can directly influence the process and resulting scores.
- Results often differ as a function of assessment method, this approach enhances understanding of method-based differences.
- Bornstein, Rossner, Hill, and Stepanian (1994) found that manipulating beliefs about dependency altered self-reported dependency, but not Rorschach assessed dependency. Bornstein, Bowers, and Bonner (1996) showed an induced negative mood *increased* Rorschach assessed dependency but not self-reported dependency.



Review Self report vs. Implicit Assessment

- The person's agenda and motives for participating in the evaluation will skew the results.
- Test taking approach is critical to the results.
- Mood, situational events and the client-psychologist relationship will impact objective and projective results differently.
- In general, projective testing is less transparent and harder to manipulate. However, the person has to engage in the process & psychologically perform for the results to be valid and meaningful.



RPAS meta-analysis

- Mihura, J. L., Meyer, G. J., Dumitrascu, N., & Bombel, G. (2012, August 27). *The Validity of Individual Rorschach Variables: Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses of the Comprehensive System*. *Psychological Bulletin*. doi: 10.1037/a0029406
- Psych Info and Medline database searches between 1974 and 2011 yielded 2467 citations. Review of predictor-criterion associations yielded 3074 potentially relevant validity coefficients. 53 CS variables were assessed.



Meta-analysis

- Meta-analysis takes individual variables from a single study and compares the results to other studies.
- Using this approach, three different teams of researchers reported that the Rorschach's global validity was acceptable and on par with the MMPI (Atkinson, 1986; Hiller, Rosenthal, Bornstein, Berry, & Brunell-Neuleib, 1999; Parker, Hanson, & Hunsley, 1988).



MMPI & Rorschach

- Global validity for the Rorschach was $r .32$ across 523 hypothesized relationships and $r .29$ across 73 samples (N 6,520);
- global validity for the MMPI was $r .32$ across 533 hypothesized relationships and $r .29$ across 85 samples (N 15,985).
- 30 CS variables had *good* validity support.
- All but 1 of the 30 variables with good to excellent support were included in RPAS. Organizational Frequency (Zf) was not included because of redundancy with other variables.



Viglione (1999)

- Viglione (1999) conducted a systematic review of Rorschach validity that focused on psychological constructs, not Rorschach variables.
- The *Schizophrenia Index* had adequate validity for detecting schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, but should not be used with children.
- The *Depression Index* should not be used to diagnose depression, but it might predict depressive reactions to life events



Viglione (1999)

- The *Suicide Constellation* is a valid predictor of self-destructive behavior.
- Measures of situational stress and anxiety; m (*inanimate movement*) and Y (*diffuse shading*) was supported by the literature.
- A meta-analysis conducted by Jørgensen, Andersen, and Dam (2000, 2001) found that the *Schizophrenia Index differentiated* psychotic samples from controls. The *Depression Index's ability* to differentiate mood disorders from controls was highly variable.



Best performing variables

- Mihura (2012) reported the best supported variables were those that targeted cognitive and perceptual processes, e.g., thought processes and reality testing.
- *Perceptual-Thinking Index; Form Quality and Cognitive scores (X-%; FQ-%; Lvl2 and Popular)*.
- The Perceptual-Thinking Index showed strong ability to detect psychotic disorders within clinical samples.



Variables that showed strong support

- Variables that assessed psychological resources and mental complexity also showed good validity
- *M, EA (MC), DQ+ (Synthesis), Blends*
- Other variables that showed excellent validity support were the Suicide Constellation [Suicide Risk Composite]; distressing internal experiences or reactions to stressors [PPD]; Sum Shading [YTVC'], m
- Preoccupations with body vulnerability or its functioning; An + Xy [An].



ODL

- Bornstein's (1999) construct validity meta-analysis for the *Rorschach Oral Dependency Scale* (ROD) found a medium effect size association with external validity criteria.
- The ROD was renamed Oral Dependency Language (ODL) in RPAS to emphasize its reliance on language and not imagery.
- Two categories; oral language (drinking, talking, eating) and dependency (Baby birds, a begging dog).



EII & MOA

- Diener et al. (2011) did a meta-analysis with the Ego Impairment Index (EII). It had a medium effect size as a measure of psychiatric severity (Thought impairment + disturbing & crude imagery).
- Mutuality of Autonomy (MOA), Critical Content and Aggressive Content also displayed strong research support for assessing object representations and aggressive behavior.



RPAS

- RPAS included updated administration procedures to address the problem of variable responses (R-Optimized - pull for 2 pull at 4). Using R-Optimized most protocols are 20 – 30 responses.
- Internally based normative reference values were derive from international samples (percentile ranks).
- New Form Quality (FQ) tables that corrected for CS over-pathologizing.
- A scoring program that used percentile-based standard scores similar to the MMPI-2.



Interpretation Basics – Start with Complexity

Index of overall level of complexity in the protocol. Responding to the test with a high Complexity score means the person has brought a considerable amount of psychological activity and effort to bear in coping with the demands of the test.

In real life this would suggest more success and flexibility in coping, preference for more cognitive activity and energy when responding to challenges.



Complexity

- The term *psychological complexity* refers to the *intricacy of cognition*.
- Complexity has been in the psychological literature since the 1940s and soon thereafter was applied to Rorschach responses and interpreted as a demonstration of developmental progress and maturation.



Complexity

- The simplest Rorschach responses are characterized by single object responses to a visually prominent subcomponent area of the blot involving only a global specification of the shape of the response (e.g., “a potato” or “that part is a dog’s head”).
- Complex responses specify forms, break up the entire blot into different types of objects, interrelate them, and use multiple blot stimuli, for example, color, movement, shading, and depth (e.g., to Card III using the entire blot “twins in black tuxedos setting a table for a party, you can see the red decorations in the background”).



Complexity

- Research on Rorschach complexity provided indirect support for the conclusion that individuals who have the capacity and motivation to encode, integrate, and organize complex visual stimuli should have more positive outcomes in their everyday and social functioning.
- If thinking and perception are complex that should equate with better reasoning and more sophisticated problem solving.



Complexity

As a strength complexity would suggest more sophisticated processing, increased productivity, superior resources, and heightened engagement with the world.

Complexity is generally good. More flexible, more ways to cope with reality, more options.

Conversely, heightened complexity could be associated with losing ideational control or focus associated with anxiety, agitation, mania, trauma, or [emergent-disorganized] psychosis.

It could cause somebody to be over-burdened, over-wrought, preoccupied, ruminative & paralyzed. The person doesn't have the capacity to do things simple and efficiently, e.g., mountains out of molehills.



Complexity

In disturbed clients high complexity scores would relate to confusion, poor psychological boundaries, getting overwhelmed with upsetting and poorly controlled ideas and emotions.

When associated with *pulls*, high complexity could indicate problems with *lack of inhibition or impulse control*. High complexity and low pulls suggest complex processing and achievement strivings. Low complexity is associated with diminished IQ and/or constricted functioning. Could be guarded test-taking.

The complexity adjusted scores compensate for the client's test taking approach, the amount of complexity they brought to their responses.



Depleted resources

- Charek, Meyer and Mihura (2015) studied the impact of *ego depletion* on Rorschach cognitive processing variables. *Acts of effortful self-regulation deplete a finite pool of cognitive resources* (MC). The results suggested Rorschach Whole Synthetic and Space Integration responses were indicators of organized and sophisticated processing.
- Depleted individuals were *less able to synthetically integrate objects* and less likely to integrate the background white space with inked areas. Depleted subjects also showed more emotional (color) reactivity.



Moore et al (2013)

- Moore et al (2013) studied 72 middle age outpatient's diagnosed with schizophrenia.
- The combination of *high thought disorder* (EII-2) and *low psychological complexity* was associated with the greatest impairment in functional and social skills capacity.
- Low complexity was associated neuro-cognitive deficits.
- Multiple regression models found psychological complexity played a significant role in functional limitations seen in schizophrenia.



Moore et al. (2013)

- Specifically, having both high thought disorder and low complexity was associated with lower functional and social skills capacity compared with having only high thought disorder or low complexity in isolation.
- Complexity by itself and in combination with EII-2 is known to be closely related to everyday functional skills and exerted effects that suggest a unique role in the capacity for functional and social skills.
- Beware of low complexity and high EII-3 on RPAS, e.g., *limited resources + psychopathology*.



Moore (2013) Conclusions

- The *interpersonal communication of problem solving with complex visual stimuli* that is involved in producing complex Rorschach responses apparently provides a sample of how a person often needs to resolve visual material in real life, including visual problem solving of daily tasks (e.g., reading a letter from a doctor, navigating a bus route) and visual recognition of social cues.
- Consistent with prior theory, such results suggest that complexity involves a tendency to use more cognitive activity, intelligence, energy, and motivation, and thus cope better with life's challenges.



Form %

Interpretation is similar to complexity except it is in opposite direction. High F% would equate with low complexity. Exner referred to high F% as Lambda and compared it to *psychological blinders*. Low F% would equate with high complexity.

High F% suggests a simplistic/concrete approach to problem solving and coping. The client understands self and others in simple and unreflective way. May approach the world in a disengaged, distant and uninvolved manner. It equates with poor adaptation, problem solving and insight.



Low F%

- Person notices and articulates nuances and subtle aspects of the internal and external world. This does not necessarily equate with accurate perceptions or good adjustment.
- It suggests a more complex level of functioning and *openness to experience*.
- They pay attention to more details in their environment and use more energy during problem solving.



MC (Human Movement + WSumC)

Measure of psychological activity and processing most often interpreted as an index of *psychological resources* and adaptive capacity. It is based on the ability to populate, animate and color one's experiential world.

High MC suggests the ability engage the world with vitality, reflective thought, emotion and psychological activity. *Low MC is associated with poor adaptation and weak problem solving, absence of enlivening thought and emotion, and a chronic problem with coping activities. Could reflect psychological constriction or limited IQ.*



MC - PPD

Ratio of Human Movement and Weighted Color (MC) to Potentially Problematic Determinants (PPD). Suggests what is left for coping after taxing anxiousness, disruptive ideation and dysphoria are removed.

Low (negative) scores suggest limited internal capacity to cope with day-to-day events of life. Situational stressors are likely present that disrupt concentration, thinking and cause impulsive behavior/emotional upsets



M/MC

- High scores are associated with a coping style characterized by *deliberation and thoughtful strategy* (M>SumC). Decisions and actions are generally delayed and multiple options are considered (introversive).
- As Sum C increases, emotion has more impact on coping and decision making. As M increases decisions are more influenced by deliberation and thought. M>Sum C; perceptual accuracy important.
- CS terms: Introversive, extratensive, ambitent



Rorschach Color (Herman Rorschach and Schachtel)

- *It has long been realized that there must exist a very close relationship between color and affectivity. The gloomy person is one to whom everything looks "black," while the cheerful person is said to see everything through rose-colored glasses (Rorschach, 1921/1942, p. 99).*
- *Colors are not merely recognized, they are felt to be exciting or soothing, dissonant or harmonious, clamorous and shrill or tranquil, warm or cool, cheerful or drab, disturbing and distracting or conducive to tranquility and concentration (Schachtel, 1966, p. 161).*



Color

- Attending to chromatic color is similar to attending and responding to other stimulating and compelling aspects of the environment. This is based more on *spontaneous receptivity to experience*, including *emotional reactivity*.

Form provides structure. The extent F is represented in color responses is thought to suggest cognitive organization and control over emotions. The less form is present the more likely emotion is to drive behavior.



Overton (2000)

- Overton (2000) hypothesized the *FC:CF+C ratio reflected styles of relating* to the interpersonal environment. *Affect is object seeking*. Emotion always relates to self and others.
- She described four relational styles; healthy, egocentric, veneered egocentric, and defensive based on color use.
- Predominance of CF + C corresponded with feeling-centered, self-centered relatedness. “A person acting on unprocessed CF+C will be blind to the rights and feelings of others as well as to most external considerations.” The person releases emotion but nothing is learned about self or other. Reactive emotion drives behavior with no insight.



Color

- Exner consistently argued the use of color on the Rorschach provided an indication of the subject's ability to modulate affect.
- Ideally, individuals harness their emotions to guide thoughts, relationships, and behaviors. However, affect regulation may range from extremes of constricted expression (pure F) to flooded dysregulation (C).



Color

- When form is absent (e.g., pure C), it is believed that emotional responsivity due to the color stimulus has left the person without the ability to structure and organize his or her thinking (e.g., *"blood, it's all red and bloody"*).
- Blais, Hilsenroth, and Fowler (1998) found that the sum of color determinants was positively correlated with not only specific symptoms of histrionic personality disorder but also the number of symptoms of this disorder.



Color research

- Zodan, Charnas, and Hilsenroth (2009) found that the weighted sum of color responses could differentiate those with and without a borderline personality disorder.
- Couples engaged in custody disputes have also been found to have higher rates of domestic violence when they have greater levels of C and less FC.
- Exner and colleagues (Exner, 1978; Exner & Murillo, 1975; Exner, Murillo, & Cannavo, 1973) found that “successful” post-treatment outcomes were associated with color responses *shifting to more form dominant responses* and less color dominated (shift in FC:CF+C ratio).



Ego Impairment Index-3

- EII-3 is broad measure of thinking disturbance and severity of psychopathology. Includes reality testing (FQ), thought disturbance (Cognitive Codes), crude and disturbing thought content (critical content scores), and measures of interpersonal misunderstanding and disturbance (M-, GHR & PHR).
- High EII implies impaired cognition, disturbing thought content, and less functional resources.



EII-3

When EII-3 is high, and Thought & Perception Composite (TP-Comp) is low, it could be due to crude and disturbing thought content or impaired object relations.

$EII-3 > TP-Comp$ = personality disorder.

$TP-Comp > EII-3$ = thought disorder



Thought and Perception Composite TP-Comp

Assesses reality testing and thought disorganization.
Based upon FQ, WSumCog; FAB2 & R.

When elevated it provides solid evidence of thinking and reality testing problems typically found in schizophrenic spectrum disorders.

Best empirical support of R-PAS variables.



Form Quality Minus (F%-)

Measures distortion or misinterpretation. Often leads to poor judgments or unconventional behavior.

Internal imagery and concerns may overwhelm the person's ability to process and interpret external reality and the person may describe things in a mistaken, distorted, personalized way that others won't understand.



Mutuality of Autonomy Health

- MAH (Mutuality of Autonomy Health) is a subset of COP. Consider COP first and then MOA.
- Two people saying hello is not MAH, don't score for superficial greetings. 2 friends saying hello is MAH.



MAP – Mutuality of Autonomy Pathology

- Coded when an agent or response object compromises the autonomy or integrity of another object and is destructive to it. *Action is aggressive, harmful, or dominating.* Interaction need not be current and both parties don't have to be present.
- Example: It ll somebody took an expensive painting and left it in the rain and all of the colors started to run. I dk, it's ugly. Clarification: Cause each color is darker at the top. It ll the orange was dark and it started to run. The green was dark and it started to run. Same with the pink. Somebody sat it in the rain and the water is going downward.



Mutuality of Autonomy

- The Mutuality of Autonomy (MOA; Urist, 1977; Urist & Shill, 1982) scale for the Rorschach is one of the most widely used performance-based scoring systems to measure quality and structure of implicit mental representations, e.g., object relations.
- MAH correlates with health and positive adjustment. MAP correlates with psychopathology and negative outcomes across a range of circumstances.
- MAP suggests a fearful approach to the environment and the expectation of collapse. MAP correlates with severe mental disorders and active psychopathology.



MAP

- Ryan, Avery, and Grolnick (1985), in an investigation of the convergent and discriminant validity of the MOA Scale, found that healthier (i.e., lower) MOA Scale responses were significantly related to social adjustment *and interpersonal cooperation* but not to teacher ratings of achievement and intelligence.
- Blatt et al. (1990) found the MOA Scale mean scores correlated significantly with symptom severity, reality testing *and thought disorder but not with ratings of social behavior* and interpersonal relations on a psychiatric ward.



MOA

- Blatt concluded the *MOA measured psychopathology primarily and interpersonal relationship quality secondarily.*
- Berg (1993) studied MOA responses in psychiatric outpatients. A strong relationship was found between MOA scale pathology scores and thought disorder.
- Bombel et al. (2009) found the MOA was a good measure of Object Relations quality and psychopathology. However, it does not appear to discriminate between the two. *However, MAH speaks more to positive object relations qualities, and MAP speaks more to psychopathology and mental illness.*



B.K. MAP Response

II. 4. And then **bears dancing**. The red seems to represent blood. Almost 1 2 bears with **bloody heads** dancing and high fiving each other. **2 bloody bears high fiving each other and dancing**.

Clarification: Yea. They're **mirror images** of each other. This is their heads, eye and mouth, eye and mouth. Ex. Blood? Pt. the red. And it ll they're bleeding out of leg apertures. Like sideways standing on one leg each and legs kind of kicking each other but dancing. Ex. Apertures? Pt. These kind of ll what's left of legs and blood is coming out of them.



B.K. MAP Response

IV. 6. Nothing initially. And I qualified it with initially, hoping s.t. will come out. Ex. It will. Pt. **A torn up bear rug**. That's about all I can c. the top represents top of rug. **Bear skin filleted out and laying on the floor**. Little details and stuff don't register.

Clarification: These are the ears, both sides, this is the muzzle. Almost ll they're eyes are in here somewhere. This is the head spread out. I c these things but they don't represent anything. **That makes it ll it's torn up**. Ex. Why torn up? Pt. **Some body didn't take succors and carefully cut around it. All this jagged stuff reminds me of s.t. torn up, holes and stuff**. Ex. Bear rug? Pt. Because this at top rep bear head and rest kind of, uh, I made it into a bear rug. I made it represent a bear rug.



B.K. MOR

IV. 7. Something, what is it? Okay, a horned insect, mothish, butterfly-ish. **A disfigured b.f.-moth type thing.** But again that's an overall, they don't represent anything to me.

Clarification: Yea, these might be little horned antenna of moth, but so are these. These and these things in middle and these are short stubby antennas. It also ll it got torn up wings. This W thing rep moth or b.f. but looks **disfigured.** Symmetrically disfigured.



B.K. MAP Response

VI. 10. I saw cat whiskers 1st thing, and then I have to l for cat. Cartoon cat, what's his name. Fibs, Gibs, come on now. But because it's symmetrical it l s.t. **filleted out.** Ex. Cat filleted out. Pt. almost ll cat rug to me, filleted out and spread on the floor. Hairy things on top ll whiskers. Bottom ll, can't remember name.

- Calvin and Hobbs. A boy and a cat. That's what l c up in here. That's Hobbs, artist draws with exaggerated whiskers. Using W pic. Ex. Filleted out? Pt. can't do nothing with rest. **Smashed out flat, spread open and spread out and that's how he ended up.** I guess u could make out leg, leg, spread open or run over by car. **Very smashed cat.**



B.K. Exit Response

X. 19. **The burnt orange ones remind me of livers, human livers, unhealthy human livers.**

Clarification: Oh, oh, these represent the livers.

Ex. Unhealthy? Pt. Because they're jagged and the **coloring**. I think I seen a few livers on the internet but jagged. **Coloring doesn't look healthy.**



Critical Content

(An+Bl+Ex+Fi+Sx+AGM+MOR)

- Combat veterans with a hx of PTSD displayed higher frequency of blood and anatomy responses. Morbid responses were elevated in a study of sexually abused African American girls.
- Levin (1997) noted that Rorschach characteristics of PTSD and traumatized civilians victims showed elevations of blood and sex percepts. Other authors have suggested that anatomy responses and aggressive responses were evident in these subjects.



Critical Content

- The Trauma Content Index was developed to capture this pattern. Sum Blood, anatomy, sex, morbid, and aggressive movement responses divided by R. Armstrong and Loewenstein (1990) found that the TC/R was above .50 in subjects suffering from MPD or Dissociative Identity Dx.
- There is a positive correlation btw the number of lifetime incidents of sexual abuse and TC/R. More abuse, higher TC/R. Subjects with Dissociative Dx. had the highest TC/R.



Critical Content

- Trauma and Critical Contents involve the breakthrough of intrusive traumatic imagery incorporating damage, aggression, blood, guts, sex, and mayhem.
- In day-to-day terms the person experiences involuntary imagery (flashes) reflected in Rorschach responses with An, Xy, Sx, MOR, Ex, and Fi.



Critical Content

- Critical content suggests that intrusive traumatic imagery surfaces and derails attention and leads to either flooding or constriction
- (biphasic response to trauma – flooding vs. numbing/constriction).
- When critical content reaches .50 and higher consider dissociative processes and possible malingering.



Critical Content

- Content codes reflect what one thinks about and meanings attributed to the world. It is composed of MOR+AG+An+BI+Ex+Fr+Sx. Elevations could reflect traumatic imagery, primitive thinking, or malingering.
- Critical content draws upon response imagery that is often censored or inhibited in general social interactions.
- Malingered protocols usually contain much higher levels of dramatic content.



Morbid Content “MOR”

Response Process – Behavioral Representation Foundation

Seeing injured, defective, or damaged images suggest that a person has these ideas on his or her mind, although a MOR code by itself does not indicate the person’s attitude toward these ideas. Relevant data support the belief that in most instances the respondent sees him or herself as damaged, flawed, or hurt by life. More rarely, MOR is coded for dysphoric images, which at least suggests that dysphoric ideas are on the respondent’s mind or being experienced emotionally. Like many other Thematic Codes, MOR is subject to impression management.



Trauma

- Crucial to the understanding of the psychological issues related to post-traumatic reaction is an *appreciation of the struggle between loss of control and over-control*.
- Cognitive intrusions and loss of affective control are opposed by cognitive constriction, avoidance tactics, and emotional numbing.
- Reactions could include *flooding* with traumatic imagery or constriction, e.g, *numbing*.



Biphasic Response Trauma

- Flooding states where trauma-related imagery and associated painful feelings and fears are re-stimulated, even if this flooding is contained internally.
- Constriction is where memories, fears and associated affects are warded off.
- Viglione (2012) “Suppression in the form of over-control, emotional numbing, withdrawal, dissociation, and cognitive constriction limit psychic life, problem-solving flexibility, affective expression, and engagement in the world.”



Traumatic constriction

- With impoverished simplistic Rorschach records, one is unlikely to see much of an individual’s problems or liabilities.
- Such cognitive activity is an effort to suppress rather than express internal issues.
- Repetitive or perseverated response elements or imagery may reflect preoccupations used to avoid traumatic intrusions and cues.
- The Rorschach tells us more about how these people avoid things.



Traumatic Dissociation

- Armstrong (2002) has conceptualized dissociation as an “avoidance maneuver” and could occur in the flooding phase of PTSD (i.e., flashbacks).
- Could be reflected in emotional distancing seen in FD responses.
- Affective numbing with less responsiveness to colored cards.



DID

- Wagner (1978) hypothesized that patients dissociate would have Rorschachs characterized by greater complexity, human relatedness and conflict. This was the “greater complexity” hypothesis.
- Armstrong and Loewenstein evaluated 14 inpatients diagnosed with dissociative disorder. Their results supported Wagner’s “greater complexity” hypothesis.



Wagner

- Wagner suggested **five** Rorschach features of DID.
- At least six movement (m+FM+M) determinants
- At least 2 qualitatively opposite M percepts (two people planning a party vs. 2 people arguing).
- At least 1 movement response involving oppression (A shark about to attack a smaller fish)
- At least 3 chromatic color determinates with $CF + C > FC$
- At least one positive (red butterfly) and one negative (blood) chromatic color response.



Labott (1997)

- Labott (1997) hypothesized that dissociation would manifest in two distinct types of percepts.
- I
 - a. Seeing the world through some sort of obscuring element that renders objects unclear or blurry (like looking through something cloudy toward a mountain)
 - b. reporting very exaggerated distance (the people look like they're a long way off)
 - c. reporting a sense of disorientation in which the percepts are unstable or changing rapidly (a tornado blowing everything apart)
- II. The authors proposed that splitting percepts would also be present. This would include split or pulled-part images (l a person just fragmenting into pieces).
- This has been known as the Labott signs and showed some validity in identifying DID.



Aggressive Content

“AGC”

Seeing aggressive, powerful, dangerous, predatory, or threatening images coded by AGC is a behavioral indication that these themes are on the person’s mind.

The person envisions aggressive, dangerous, and powerful images, but it does not indicate the person’s attitude toward these images.

They are not movement responses, there is less indication of identification with or mentalization of the aggressive activity. *These images may be on a respondent’s mind because he or she enjoys or identifies with them, fears them as external environmental dangers, or expects them as natural part of life.* Such images are subject to impression management and are easy to produce deliberately. The more obvious ones are also quite easy to suppress.



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END