

From: Frank Langer frank.langer@ALIENS.COM
Subject: Re: Would this be a reflection?
Date: January 30, 2004 at 8:09 AM
To: RORSCHACH@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU



As things stand, with the Comprehensive System's requirement for the use of blot symmetry, we probably can't code a vertical reflection rF/Fr. Even so, this type of response suggests a heightened expression of the meaning of reflections even more than the ordinary symmetry based type. It's likely that reflections entail a disengagement from the environment and degraded reality testing due perhaps to self-focus. Blot symmetry invites the expression of this subjectivity, but to impose it on even non-symmetrical and probably rather arbitrarily isolated blot environments suggests an even more subjective and idiosyncratic stance, with even less concern for the goodness of fit between inner and external worlds. To go with Robert's description of the reflection response as "it's about me," then it really is all about me if I'm seeing me even in non-obvious locations. In this context the question that then arises is why a person would give a non-symmetrical reflection response when the blots afford so many opportunities to give the usual symmetrical reflection. One possibility would be the avoidance that sometimes accompanies the Dd and in particular the Dd99 restriction on perception. In any case, understanding the vertical or non-symmetrical reflection would seem to require data that are not yet and may never be available because they're so rare (like another response I wish I understood, the color-based perception of hot/cold objects).

-- Frank

----- Original Message -----

From: [Stephen Brennan](#)
To: RORSCHACH@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU
Sent: Friday, January 30, 2004 10:30 AM
Subject: Re: Would this be a reflection?

Thank you. And I woke up in the middle of the night thinking "Of course it's not a reflection! The bottom half is nothing like the top half!" I don't know what I was thinking. Long week. Must play tennis or watch Super Bowl or something.

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert W. Garlan, Ph.D. [<mailto:lysis@PSYCH.STANFORD.EDU>]
Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2004 12:49 PM
To: RORSCHACH@MAELSTROM.STJOHNS.EDU
Subject: Re: Would this be a reflection?

Steve Brennan wrote:

... I would like to know what the rationale is for saying a vertical reflection is not a scorable reflection. What supposed internal process is going on in a person that produces a vertical "reflection" (or one like Catlow's subject) that is different and which thus merits something other than a Reflection score? Always trying to learn! Steve Brennan

Reviewing Exner Vol. 3 (1993) provides a few clues. He reports that the code was empirically generated and validated as "ego-centricity" or "self-centeredness" (rather than the initial characterization as "narcissism") by comparison to other measures of egocentricity, such as sentence completion blanks. The original inspiration was "accidental", based on the records of "overt homosexuals" and "psychopaths" in an "institution for the 'criminally insane'" (p. 133).

He continues (p. 135), "These types of reflection answers are based *on the symmetry of the blot*, and are different from the extremely rare reflection answer that does not use symmetry. The nonsymmetrical reflection ordinarily involves shading, and thus is usually scored either *V* or *Y*" (*emphasis* in original). From a technical standpoint, this would seem to answer the question of "why not *vertical* reflections" (i.e., upper reflects below or v.v.; in contrast to *laterally* reflected images). A vertical reflection cannot be based on pure symmetry because the blots are not constructed that way. Thus, technically, the reflection code is based on the stimulus property of symmetry, and not shading or other features.

A further clue to the conceptual basis for CS reflection can be found in Exner's definition of the "related" *Pair* response, "in which the perceived object is reported as two identical objects because of the card symmetry" (p. 135). Both reflection and pairs are based on symmetry. Thus the distinguishing characteristic appears to be whether the objects are seen as *looking* the same (i.e., Exner's use of the word "identical"), or as *being identical* objects (i.e., literally, sharing *identity*, in the sense of being *one and the same thing*) in two places and combined or unified as a reflection. If Exner's various limits and distinctions are warranted, it would seem that there is something about the phenomological field in which separate objects are experienced as the very same object, that elevates reflection to an important variable concerning egocentricity.

Speculating wildly, perhaps this can be understood if the subject is thought to identify with the primary concept ("it's about me!"), sees it's "pair" across the card, and rather than seeing something that must be different ("I'm

here, it's there"), sees himself again ("and that's about me, too. It's all about me!").

Just reflections on a foggy day in California. I'm sure you psychoanalytic types can do better.

Robert G.

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*I just wonder if you should feel
A little less concerned about the deep unreal.
The very first word is how-do-you-do...*

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