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Phototherapy--A Phenomenologically Based Approach to Psychological Assessment

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Phototherapy -- A Phenomenologically Based Approach To Psychological Assessment

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ABSTRACT

Abstract

In this project the use of phototherapy in the psychological assessment process was proposed and explored. The conceptual roots for the phototherapy assessment used here can be found in phenomenological psychological literature, in the history and exploration of photography as an expressive art medium, and in the work of social scientists researching the use of photography in human study. The study investigates whether the photography, its content as well as its formal elements, i.e. camera angle, framing, perspective, lights and darks, distance of the subject from photographer, can reflect the experience and perception of the photographer. It has as its aim the recording and reconstruction of the inner and outer worlds of three individuals through photography.

The specific research methodology involved the selection of three volunteers who agreed to photograph their world on one roll of black and white film. Interviews were conducted in which each of the individuals viewed and titled his/her photographs and explained to the researcher the meanings the images held for him/her. These titles and explanations were transcribed verbatim and are included in the data analysis.

The nature of the data analysis involved a reflective phenomenological reduction. This means that the author attempted to go beyond presuppositional thinking and beyond conceptual theories and systems to the subject's experience as reflected in the verbal and visual elements. From this process specific themes emerged: the individuals image of him/herself, way of relating to others and to the world, feelings of movement, constriction, openness, and/or frustration and isolation. From this information narrative reconstructions of each of the three individuals life-worlds were developed by the researcher.

Implications for the uses of phototherapy in psychological assessment and psychotherapy were discussed. Particularly noted was the value of the photograph as a participant-crafted stimulus material and as a rapid facilitator of personal insight. In conclusion, questions for further research were proposed.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Photography is a mechanical process capable of transcribing the world with a meticulous exactitude not possible in traditional art media. Indeed, its visual authenticity in recording objects may lead many to conclude it is primarily an optical recreation of reality rather than true artistic expression. Contemporary uses of photographs and film support this conclusion. Photographs and filmreels lend authenticity to our news stories; while textbook photos illustrate concepts and verify facts. Photography and related photographic media, film, television, and video, are not only responsible for what we know about our world, but also for the way we know that world. Indeed, the photograph "pictures" our world for us, leading us to believe that it recreates that world, making it visible, knowable, and even possessable.

Craven (1975) reiterates this notion that the photograph is real and notes the propensity of many photographers to perpetuate it:

> People readily believe that the photographic image is indeed a recreation of the original object, and photographers on the whole, seem content to let this naive assumption go unchallenged. A photograph signifies the real and thus, it becomes a symbol of truth. The fact that a photograph presents only an illusion of reality may go unnoticed. (p. 10-11)

Although the photograph is an illusion of reality, we experience it as much more than a two dimensional objective transcription. It is, Gasson (1972) suggests, "a magical window through which we leap or fall" (p. 6). The initial response to the photograph Gasson (1972) points out, is rarely conscious. It is rarely even a response to the print, but more likely an emotional and physical reaction to the persons and actions revealed "just beyond the magic window" (Gasson, 1972, p. 6). It is a response to the

subject matter captured in the photograph. Thus, the magic of the photograph, lies not only in its ability to mechanically transcribe its subject, but also in its ability to trigger in the viewer an experience or a re-experience of that subject.

Nathan Lyons in his introduction to Photography in the Twentieth Century expands on this. For him the phtography is not only capable of evoking an experience in the viewer, but more importantly it can record or express the experience and perception of the viewer. He discussed this expressive power of the photograph at great length.

> Historically man has entered a dialogue with what we term the world. It speaks and acts upon him and he has the option of some action which might be considered his answer ... With the camera man has an instrument capable of recording and retaining his responses with unprecedented facility. His camera becomes the biographer of his interaction with the world. (Lyons, 1967, p. viii)

As a record of an interaction with the world, the photograph and the photographic experience can be as varied as the photographer taking the picture. Cartier-Bresson (1973), eloquently describes this capability:

> The photograph is not merely a literal translation of fact ... It is a way of shouting the way you feel. The camera can be a machine gun; it can be a psychological couch. It can be a warm kiss; it can be a sketchbook, and even ... for me, a way of being present. ... It's there and it's a respect of things. It's an enjoyment of yes, even if it's something you hate. It's an acclamation: Yes! Shouted like that, YES! (The Decisive Moment, filmstrip, 1973)

Given this ability of the photograph to record and retain the photographer's response to the world, combined with its ability to transcribe and reveal visually the experience of the photographer, the use of photography as a means of self-discovery and personal exploration seems altogether possible. Moreover, the use of photography as an expressive art therapy appears quite feasible.

The relationship of photography to psychology, however, has only begun to

be explored. Only in the last decade has the use of photography as a therapeutic tool been utilized to any significant degree. Although interest in using photography in the clinical setting dates back to its first documented use in 1948, it was not until the 1970's that an organized attempt was made to assemble a body of literature on the subject.

The current impetus for the use of photography in the clinical setting, or 'phototherapy' as it has been named, can be traced to Brian Zakem's (1977) article on the subject in Psychology Today. The article drew such an overwhelming response that Zakem, the coordinator of the phototherapy program at Ravenswood Hospital in Chicago, responded with a three page publication describing that program. This three page publication was the beginning of what has become, over the last three years, the "Photo Therapy Quarterly," a twenty-four page publication with an international distribution of over four thousand.

Purpose of the Study

The increasing attention being accorded to photography as a psychotherapeutic tool and as an expressive art therapy demands that its practitioners not only provide more extensive information about the medium, but better researched and more detailed information about its use in the clinical setting. It is towards this purpose that the writer undertook the present study. If photographs are to be used in the clinical setting, the art, photo or psychotherapist using them must have a thorough understanding of the medium and its possibilities. The level of understanding in photographic imagery goes far beyond the obvious surface content of the picture to aspects which give clues to the way an individual structures his or her universe.

It is the assumption of this paper that the organizational structure, (i.e.,

camera angle, perspective, use of lights and darks, use of space, interplay between objects in the foreground and the background, distance of objects from the viewer), as well as the content of the photograph, give a great deal of information not only about the photographer's relationship to objects and people photographed, but also about the photographer's experience or perception of the world in general. The contention of this study is that the photo combined with the photographer's account and description of the photographic experience can be an invaluable diagnostic, as well as therapeutic tool for the clinician.

Methodology

This study employs a phenomenological methodology. It has as its aim the recording and reconstruction of the individual's world through photography. By examining the photos taken by three subjects and by analyzing the photo-interviews that followed, the study attempts to determine to what extent these photographs reflect the subject's experience and perception of the world. In the study three subjects were given the instructions, "Photograph your world", on one roll of black and white film of approximately twenty exposures. After the film was processed, the subjects were asked to meet with the author individually to discuss the photographs, and their thoughts and experiences while viewing them. The material derived from this discussion, as well as the researcher-interviewer's impressions about the photographs and photographers, were then compiled and analyzed phenomenologically in an effort to reconstruct what the study refers to as the photographer's way of being-in-the-world, i.e. his/her way of relating to the world and to others.

Limits of the Study

In using client-made photos and statements about those photos, this study

represents only one possible use of photography in therapy. Given the fact that subjects were volunteers who did not contract with the researcher for therapy, the interaction between the therapist and the subjects was limited. This study is therefore most easily translatable to the assessment process. It should be noted, however, that the use of this material and the photo-interview method that the study employs is appropriate for use in the context of ongoing psychotherapeutic work as well.

Phototherapy has been operationally defined by Stewart (1979) as:

> the use of photography in a therapeutic setting under the direction of a trained therapist to reduce or relieve painful psychological symptoms and as a method of facilitating psychological growth. (p.002)

The term 'photography' in the context of this paper includes all its related forms: film, television, videotape, etc. Although this discussion will limit itself to the use of still photographs, it seems feasible that the method or 'technique' demonstrated and examined in this study could be adapted to other photographic media.

Stewart (1979) and Krauss (1979) identify many uses clinicians have already made of photography in the clinical setting. Photographs of clients record progress in treatment as it is reflected in the physical appearance of the client. Both self-portraits and portraits of clients by signficant others, the authors note, can be excellent indicators of how the subject perceives himself and/or how he is perceived by others. Family albums, family snapshots, and portraits -- can provide as well as elicit historical, biographical, geographical, and even psychological information about the client invaluable to the clinician.

The photograph can also be used as a projective stimulus. Specific photographs of an individual's life give the subject access to thoughts and feelings which surround the time and circumstances when the photograph was originally taken.

(Krauss, 1979). Photographs of a more ambiguous nature on the other hand, can elicit in the client a response from a deeper layer of the personality. (Stewart, 1979)

The client-made photograph provides an excellent tool for the psychotherapeutic process as well. Indeed photographers and photo-therapists alike contend that the way the photographer chooses and frames his pictures is indicative of his perception of the world. To this extent the photograph taken by the client, regardless of the subject matter, is a self-statement. The content, context, and point of view of the photograph can provide the means by which both the therapist and client can examine the client's perception and experience of the world.

In spite of the limited research in the area of phototherapy, the possibilities for its therapeutic uses indicated in illustrative studies are fascinating. This study will limit itself for the most part to an investigation of the last two uses of the medium indicated above, i.e., the client made self-statement and the photograph as a projective stimulus. In so doing, the study will explore the concepts behind phototherapy as well as help to validate it as an expressive art therapy.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The conceptual roots of this approach to the use of phototherapy lies in phenomenological existential psychology, in projective literature, and in the history and development of photography as an art form. This chapter will begin with a consideration of the phenomenological perspective and its theories of human personality. It will include a consideration of the role of art and art making in the therapeutic process as described in projective literature. It will survey the history and exploration of photography for precedents for its therapeutic uses. A selective review of uses of photography in psychological research and in the social sciences will then follow.

Phenomenological Psychotherapy

Over the last fifty years it has become increasingly apparent that serious gaps exist in our way of understanding human beings. Numerous psychological theories and schools have emerged presenting very different and even opposing conceptions of man. These range from the most reductive mechanistic behavioral views to the more expansive humanistic personality theories. Equally diverse are the systems of therapy advocated by each of these psychological approaches.

Rogers (1965) and Smith (1979) note that not only have these psychological systems and theories been unable to explain why certain cures occur and why others do not, they cannot explain or at least agree upon what happens to and within the client during therapy, or even what constitutes a positive therapeutic intervention. Given this, how can therapists know if the system of concepts and the mechanisms of behavior developed by a particular school of psychotherapy

have anything whatever to do with the specific patient in front of them? How can they know that they are not merely perceiving the patient as a projection of their own theories and constructs?

Similar questions have begun to be raised in the area of psychological assessment. Fischer (1971), Breger (1968), and Smith (1979) report that traditional psychological assessment has fallen into disfavor with many clinicians. Constance Fischer (1971) in her article "Toward the Structure of Privacy", explores the experience of privacy and its implication for psychological assessment. Noting the guarded, antagonistic, aggressive behaviors people exhibit in situations where their privacy has been invaded, Fischer points out that these same behaviors are those most often indicated in the results of traditional psychological testing. She questions whether these findings are not the result of the testing situation itself and calls for an assessment procedure that addresses more directly the individual's experience and perception of the testing situation.

In another article, "The Tester as Co-evaluator," Fischer (1971) quotes from the preamble to the Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association, pointing out the self-proclaimed duty of the psychologist to uphold the worth and dignity of the individual. Any procedure that objectifies the individual and reduces him or her to a theoretical frame of reference, any evaluation that takes little account of the participant's experience, she contends, inevitably compromises the dignity and personal worth of that individual.

Others, (Seskin, 1977; Smith, 1979) concur with Fischer, insisting that the dignity of the patient is diminished unless the patient participates in, or as Fischer states, "co-constitutes" the evaluative process. The patient's experience must be clearly reflected in the psychological testing and writings,

furthermore, the patient must understand the implications of this information for his or her future life. In short, what these authors are calling for is a psychological theory and methodology based on the worth and dignity of the individual.

Influenced by the works of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Jean Paul Sartre, growing numbers of psychotherapists have become engaged in the search for a method of assessment and analysis that can overcome the weaknesses inherent in traditional analytical approaches. Together they have begun to question and "redefine for themselves the mission, methodology and underpinnings" (Seskin, 1973, p. 3) of contemporary clinical psychology. What has emerged is a humanistic theoretical model and a method of inquiry that is based upon the principles of phenomenology.

The Phenomenological Conception of Man

Every systematic inquiry into human psychology is based upon a particular conception of man that determines the inquiry's orientation and approach. For the phenomenologist, humans are inextricably bound to the world and their experience and thus, cannot be studied and understood apart from that world. A human being is a being-in-the-world.

Humans cannot think, feel, or imagine without an object of thought, feeling, or imagination. Inner experience always has an outer referent. The phenomenologist, therefore, makes little distinction between inner and outer experience. Thus, to understand and ultimately to help the individual, the therapist must understand him or her in terms of these experiential dimensions. Relationships and experience are the key to understanding the inner world and psychical experience; the individual's ideals, feelings, and perception can be seen and understood only as they refer to events, people and objects.

The Goal of Phenomenological Psychotherapy: Description and Understanding

Phenomenological psychotherapy assumes that heightening an individual's awareness of his "way-of-being-in-the-world", i.e., his relationship to others, to himself, and to space and time, brings about positive change and growth. The phenomenologist, thus identifies change or growth with the individual's expanded awareness of these relationships.

Like many other psychotherapists, the phenomenologist is very aware of the need to empathize as fully as possible with the client's experience. The therapist must strive to adopt the internal frame of reference of each client. In short, without this ability to empathize, the therapist can facilitate little change in the client's awareness.

Phenomenological psychiatrist, Van den Berg, underscores this need. Quoting Kierkegaard, he states, that the secret of all helping is "before everything else to put oneself in the other's place, to make one's home in his existence, and to learn to know the world in which he lives" (Van den Berg, 1955, p. 102). This does not mean however, that the phenomenologist rejects all traditional psychological theories and concepts, but only that he/she recognizes the importance of understanding as fully as possible the individual's perception and experience of his/her own situation before drawing on these models for evaluation or interpretation. Through this "understanding" the therapist affords the patient "that form of help that is the foundation of all further help" (Van den Berg, 1955, p. 102).

In short, the phenomenologist contends that it is necessary to go beyond any theoretical constructs, beyond "pre-suppositional thinking," to the individual's experience itself. The phenomenologist cannot content himself with identifying pathological idiosyncracies, nor can he limit himself to dealing with and

correcting ego functions. His goal is not to control, predict, or even explain behavior, but to describe how that behavior feels bodily, spatially, temporally, and thereby to approach an understanding of the individual through his experience.

Description here is of the utmost importance. For the phenomenologist, it is empathy operationalized. The phenomenologist, Amedeo Giorgi, refers to this description as "the door of entry to the meaning of the situation as it exists for (and is experienced by) the subject" (Giorgi, 1975, p. 74). Valle and King (1978) expand on this:

> Through description, the pre-reflective life-world is brought to the level of reflective awareness, where it manifests itself as psychological meaning. (p. 56)

Indeed, the psychological meaning one assigns to an experience or relationship determines that experience, in the sense that it determines the individual's way of relating in that experience or relationship. The meaning of an experience, as Van Eckhartsberg suggests, can be defined as the way one's relationship to that experience is "patterned", even though this pattern may only be partially ascertainable. (Von Eckhartsberg, 1975, p. 77)

Thus, for the phenomenologist assigning meaning to experience, as well as discovering meaning and purpose in life is central to existence and, therefore, to psychotherapy. Description of the individual's experience and perception is the "door of entry" to this meaning for client and therapist alike. By describing his experience, the individual gains access to his way of being and relating to the world and others.

But of what benefit can the photographic expression be in this descriptive task? What is the role of the photographic expression and experience in the therapeutic process? How can it facilitate description and awareness? These are the questions that the next section will address.

Photography - An Expressive Art Therapy

The Therapeutic Value of Art Expression

The efficacy of the use of art expression in gaining an understanding of the individual has long been recognized and documented. Emmanuel Hammer (1958), in his article "Projection in the Art Studio" states that:

> Historically man used drawings to record his feelings and actions long before he employed the symbols that recorded specific speech. From cave man on through the ages, man, both primitive and cultured, has expressed his emotions, feelings, religious ideas, and needs by art work. (p. 7)

Drawing on the writings of Leonardo Da Vinci, Hammer (1958) notes Da Vinci's observation that any person who draws and paints "is inclined to lend the figures he renders his own bodily experience, if he is not protected against this by long study" (p. 8). Artists project themselves onto canvas as they feel themselves to be. They also project their experience of life. "The artist", Hammer (1958) concludes, "does not see things as they are, but as he is." When he paints a portrait, "he paints two, himself and the sitter" (p. 16).

The assumption underlying this contention is that every act, no matter how trivial, is determined, as Freud and his contemporaries have convinced us, by psychodynamic factors or, put in other terms, by the individual's "image" of himself and his relation to the world and others. (Levy, 1958, p. 85)

As Freud (1947) stated, "Nothing is too trifling as a manifestation of hidden psychic processes" (As cited in Levy, 1958, p. 84). Every act reflects the individual's way of being-in-the-world and, therefore, assumes significance.

> One's way of walking, whether proudly, arrogantly, self consciously; one's way of hammering a nail, whether confidently, impatiently, irritatedly, rhythmically, joyfully; even one's way of lacing a shoe, whether one places a foot on a hydrant and thus alloplastically bringing the shoe up to oneself, or whether one autoplastically brings oneself all the way down to the ground to encounter the shoe lace; all reflect some facet of one's personality. (Hammer, 1958, p. 5)

The phenomenologist philosopher Merleau Ponty would concur with Hammer here; for him, "art is disclosure" (as cited in Rabil, 2967, p. 212). As Rabil (1967) explains:

> Art relates to the perceived world with which we are in contact. It seeks to describe that world through various media to put us in touch with it, to awaken us to the nature of the world (and ourselves) ... and to activate our freedom in the world, i.e., to lead us beyond what has been to what can be, through intention. (p. 212)

Put simply, "what an artist seeks to do is to describe his contact with the world" (Rabil, 1967, p. 207), and to discover not only what is but what can be.

In sum, the ability of drawing, painting and sculpture, (i.e., the more traditional art forms) to reflect and reveal the experience and perception of the artist has been well estavlished in both art and psychological literature. From the beginnings of history man has used art "to record his emotions, feelings, religious ideas and needs" (Hammer, 1958, p. 7). Art is as Merleau Ponty claims, "self disclosure". It reveals man's image of himself and his relations to the world and others. Through art the artist can discover this "image'. More importantly he can, in the process, enlarge and expand that image and thus, broaden his possibilities for being and becoming.

If this is true for the artist working in traditional media, does it hold true for the artist working with the mechanical process of photography? Is the image formed by a lens more than an exact recording of the world? Can it describe his/her way of relating in the world? If so, how? What function can photographic expression serve in the therapeutic process? The next section will examine the work of those experimenting with the expressive powers of photography in hopes of determining the role photographic expression can play in the therapeutic process.

Photography and Cultural Expression

The art of a culture reveals the attitudes and values of its people. Through imagery it defines what is real and therefore what is important. Indeed, in this lies one of the most important functions of art. Anthropologist J. W. Collier (1967) contends that:

> Man has always used images to give form to his concepts of reality. It was the artist's imagery that defined heaven and hell, the shape of evil and demons, ... and people thought by means of these representations. (p. 3)

Art forms the world and informs the audience as to the nature of that world. Indeed, it is by the artist's imagery that we can come to know a culture. It is by imagery that people as a culture and as individuals think and feel, and it is through their art productions that we can come to understand them.

In medieval art, for example, artistic imagery was characterized by a spiritual functionalism. Art transported its viewer beyond the material facts of everyday reality. The realm of the spirit was not only real but of utmost importance to viewer and artist alike. With the dawning of the Renaissance however, art took a decidedly materialistic turn. Man, not God, became the measure of things and a corresponding interest in the study of man and the world emerged, dominating artistic as well as intellectual and scientific pursuits for the next four centuries.

With the invention of the camera the photograph replaced the more traditional arts in the role they had played in determining man's life and thinking. The photograph reshaped the pictorial conventions of the day and, in the process, man's perception of the world. Photography not only changed man's imagery in a dramatic fashion, but more importantly, it profoundly altered man's experience of the imagery. Man's vision became photographic. As Collier (1967) suggests:

> The effect of photography as an aspect of reality is felt throughout modern life. In a sense, we think photographically and certainly we communicate photographically. (p. 4)

As noted earlier, the photograph is not only responsible for what we know about our world, about our past, and even about ourselves, it is also responsible for the way we know about these things. Indeed, photography in a sense "pictures" our world for us.

As McLuhan (1967) suggests, the photograph has superceded the printed word and the drawn or painted image in its capacity to influence society, to mediate and transform our notions of time and space. In most cases, the changes wrought by photography have been (and continue to be) so complex and so pervasive that they elude measurement.

The impact of photography on the traditional arts and art making was felt almost immediately. In his book Understanding Media, McLuhan (1967) points out that after the invention of photography:

> The painter could no longer depict a world that had been photographed. He turned instead to reveal the inner process of creativity in expressionism and abstract art. Likewise, the novelist could no longer describe objects or happenings for readers who already knew what was happening through ... photo and film. The poet and novelist turned to inward gestures of the mind by which we achieve insight and by which we make ourselves and our world. (p. 23)

The aim of art thus became a search for ways of expressing not the objective world, but the artist's vision and insight, the inward gestures of the mind. In short, twentieth century art making turned "inward".

Photography explores visual reality:

Although twentieth century art may have turned inward, turn of the century photographers continued to explore and expand the camera's ability to transcribe

and capture reality. With the invention of the Daguerreotype, one of the earliest forms of photography, the photographer turned to what was personally important -- and what must have seemed most important was his own image. As Szarkowski (1973) notes:

> What the Daguerreotype was used for was recording the faces of millions of people ... (Daguerreotypes depict) an endless parade of ancestors. Most of these people were, outside their family circle, as anonymous when alive as their portraits are now. (p. 14)

The photograph, unlike the painted portrait, was a mechanical optical process that rendered its subject with such meticulous exactitude that it seemed to the viewer to render it real. This illusory realistic quality made the photograph and its subject a totally new experience for the early nineteenth century audience.

It is, as Stewart (1980) points out, "not a long or difficult conceptual leap from accepting the photograph as 'reality' to believing that photographing the subject is tantamount to possessing it as ones own" (p. 4). Indeed the realism of the photograph rendered the subject not only real but tangible and possessable. (Sontag, 1978)

With the invention of the Calotype, an early photographic process that chronologically parallelled the Daguerreotype, the world as well as man became a fitting subject to be investigated in the photograph. As a process especially suited for landscape photography, the Calotype enabled photographers to photograph and record for their audience mountains, seas, tropical lands and exotic scenes unfamiliar to the nineteenth century audience. Photographs of such places soon became a popular subject. It was through these photographs that the nineteenth century viewer came to know worlds previously inaccessible to all but a few. Due to the photograph the world rapidly became a smaller more familiar place.

Photography explores social reality:

Gradually, however, it became apparent to a few of those experimenting with the new medium that the camera was capable of more than merely recording or creating a secondhand experience. It was soon discovered that:

> The photo conveyed ideas beyond the two dimensional black and white image of shadow and light. The scene before the lens was reality but the photographer could make his camera's rendering of the scene generate another reality, deeper, perhaps more important. He could introduce comment. (Documentary Photography, 1972, p. 4)

The fact that the camera could express the photographer's interest, experience, and perception of a subject suddenly became apparent. There is perhaps, no clearer illustration of this than the work of Jacob Riis in the early part of the century, and that of Lewis Hine, who followed a few decades later. Both these photographers photographed the abominable living conditions of the poor immigrants of the time in the hopes of ultimately changing these conditions. Both sought to communicate their political and sociological views through their photographs. However, as Szarkowski notes, the photos are "less protest and far more a celebration of the subject, a celebration of people who had nerve, skill, muscle, and tenacity" (Szarkowski, 1973, p. 60). In short, the photos communicate forcefully and directly the photographers experience and perception of the common man.

Carrying on this tradition several decades later, the Farm Security Administration photographers, Dorothea Lang, Walker Evans, and Russell Lee, and others, were commissioned to photograph the people of the Depression era. Again, the subject was the social reality of the times. The photographers however, did not, or could not remain neutral observers. They photographed the hard, cold facts of the era: the parched fields, the tarpaper shacks, the undernourished children, the unemployed, the homeless, but more importantly, they captured for posterity what they saw: the dignity, the inner strength, and transcendent

hope of these people. Using what the eye could see, the visible world, the photographs capture or reflect the invisible world -- the inner experience, the perceptions, relationships, and values of these people as they saw them.

Photography explores psychological reality:

As it evolved, photography, like the traditional art forms of the day, became increasingly introspective. With the publication of The Americans (1958), by the Swiss photographer, Robert Frank, documentary photography took a sharp turn in this direction. Frank (1958) photographed chromium and plastic luncheonettes, cadillac tailfins, jukeboxes, motels and motorcycles, all motifs familiar to any American. Frank, however, used these motifs and these photographs to explore for himself "the gaudy insanities and the strangely touching contradictions," (Szarkowski, 1973, p. 176) that he found in America. He used his photographs not only to understand Americans and the American situation but, more importantly, to come to an understanding of the world and his relationship to it. Frank's work is less a portrait of Americans, than a portrayal of what it was like to be an American in the 1950's. The fragmented vision, the gestures, and the pulls and tension in the photographs create for the viewer a feeling of life in America at that time, a feeling Frank shared, explored, and recorded.

In depicting his personal view of his experience of America, Frank opened a new world to photographers who followed. With the publication of The Americans, an interest in communicating psychological reality replaced the earlier interest in exposing social reality or revealing visual reality. Thus, "the photographer's emotions or experience became as pivitol to the picture as his view of the world" (Documentary Photography, 1972, p. 15).

This exploration of psychological reality, so new to documentary photographers, had actually been discovered earlier by self-proclaimed 'art' photographers working in the early thirties. Alfred Stieglitz, the most outspoken of these, indeed the founder of the 'art' movement in photography, introduced the trend as early as 1920 with the formulation of his concept of "equivalence". With this concept, the photographer, like the artist, turned his art 'inward', directing his attention to inner realities.

The photographic medium, Stieglitz felt, was capable of much more than just creating visible evidence or providing an objective record. For him, the photograph could be the 'equivalent' of his inner experience. It could be a metaphor. It was for him an objective correlation of a particular feeling but one associated with something other than the ostensible subject. In describing his experience of photography, Stieglitz stated:

> What is of gravest importance, is to hold a moment, to record something so completely that those who see it will relive an equivalent of what has been expressed. (Norman, 1973, p. 161)

Put more precisely, what the photographer experiences or perceives of a situation, his feelings and attitudes, are essentially what is being communicated in a photo-equivalent. In this sense, they are the subject of the photograph, and so provide the viewer with at least partial access to what the phenomenologist would call the photographer's "way of being-in-the-world."

The photographer's "equivalent" was for Stieglitz an expression of his thought, of his hopes and aspirations, of his despairs and fears. As Beaumont Newhall notes:

> They (the photo-equivalents) are photographic abstractions, for in them form is abstracted from its illustrative significance. Yet, paradoxically, the spectator is not left for an instant unaware of what has been photographed... For this is the power of the camera; it can seize upon the familiar, endow it with new meanings, with special significance, with the imprint of personality. (Newhall, 1964, p. 113)

Minor White, a photographer working several decades later, declared this "concept and discipline of equivalence to be the backbone and core of photography as a medium of expression-creation" (White, 1966, p. 168). In an effort to clarify the concept, White attempted to define it operationally:

> When any photograph functions for a given person as an equivalent, we can say that at that moment and for that person, the photograph acts as a symbol or plays the role of a metaphor for something that is beyond the subject photographed. We can say this in another way; when a photograph functions as an equivalent, the photograph is at once a record of something in front of the camera and simultaneously a spontaneous symbol. (A "spontaneous symbol" is one which develops automatically to fill the need of the moment. A photograph of the bark of a tree, for example, may suddenly touch off a corresponding feeling of roughness of character within an individual.) When a photographer presents us with what to him, is an equivalent, he is telling us in effect "I had a feeling about something and here is my metaphor of that feeling." (White, 1966, p. 169)

The psychological process that White is outlining here can be thought of as "the placing of an inner experience, an inner image into the outside world" (Kris, as cited in Hammer, 1958, p. 18). This is the mechanism of projection as described by Kris as early as 1952. White expands on Stieglitz's idea. For him, every photograph is an equivalent; every one is a self portrait, or a self statement. What White is suggesting is that the individual interprets or experiences reality to conform with the reality he expects. He sees in the outer world (and in himself) only what he wants and is able to see. This perception then, determines both his experience and expression. Inner perceptions determine outer experiences.

Photography as transformation of self:

If it is true that the photograph is some facsimile of an inner perception, as Stieglitz, White, and others contend, and if it is true that the inner perception determines experience and expression, then it is also true that the world perceived and photographed by an individual, reflects the world experienced by that individual. There seems to be, as Henry (1978) notes:

> No advantage to be gained by making too sharp a distinction between inside and outside the person. The environment is an integral part of the individual whose ideas, feelings, and values can most often be clearly seen only as they are referred to events, people, and objects. (p. 17)

Stewart (1980) concurs, noting that:

> We would never photograph anything unless we had become attentive to it. We photograph something because we carry a great chunk of it within ourselves... As we go around, we are only paying attention to those things which have already busied us, occupied us or better still, are so much a part of us that we can lean into another situation which is already ourselves. (Stewart, 1980, p. 28)

The photograph, the self statement that a photographer makes, Stewart goes on to note, "is hopefully some transformation, some extension of an image within (him) and an image that (he) finds" (Stewart, 1980, p. 28).

Stewart expands the concept of equivalence and the concept of the photographic experience as well. He suggests in the previous passage that the confrontation of the photographer's own inner image with the image he or she finds in the world (or in the photo) brings about a transformation in the photographer, "an extension of an image within him and the image without." With the expansion of imagery and therefore perception comes a transformation of experience. The photograph expands and shifts the photographer's and/or viewer's perception and therefore, experience of the world.

Jay (1979), discusses the transformation possible in photography at great length in his own philosophy of photography, Negative/Positive. For him, it is not self-expression, but self-transformation that is the aim of the artist and photographer alike:

> Once and for all, we must reject the notion that self-expression is any sort of justification for art. The best art is the by-product of self-transformation. Then, in a very much more potent way, it will also be self expression." (Jay, 1979, p. 14)

The photographer's aim, as Jay defines it, is not only to communicate his/her personal expression, i.e., his/her "life attitude", or unique perception and experience of the world, "a goal implicit in all art", but in so doing to transform, to enlarge that perception and experience. A photograph, as Jay (1979), sees it, is about "both the photographer and the world simultaneously, the contact point between the two being the object, the print." (p. 28)

"Our minds and feelings," Jay continues, "are constantly scanning the universe for meanings. A 'meaning' happens when we compare two lots of experience, and suddenly something is understood about them both " (Jay, 1979, p. 29). The self-transformation possible in photography Jay contends, is the result of insights, meaning, and relationships created and realized in the photography.

Dorothea Lang, FSA photographer, Jay (1979) states, understood this when she wrote, "The great photograph first asks, then answers, two questions: Is that my world? What, if not, has it to do with mine?" (Jay, 1979, p.29) In short, creating and discovering personal meanings and relationships is what photography is all about.

An American contemporary photographer, Ralph Hattersley expands on this contention in his book, Discover Yourself Through Photography (1971). He

writes about the rich possibilities for using photographs in gaining personal insight and supports the use of photography as a self healing therapy. Indeed, Hattersley contends that thousands of today's photographers are using their photographs in just this way. The therapy, Hattersley (1971) contends, can be conducted without the aid of a trained therapist. Photographs, he states reveal:

> Ps hological and philosophical insight that helps reveal the photographer's own personality to himself ...[as well as how the photographer] can learn via the visual medium, how he actually relates (or can relate) to family, friends, the world, and the universe. (Hattersley, 1971, book jacket)

Hattersley suggests not only that photographs reflect the photographer's way of being and relating, but also that by studying their photographs, photographers can become more aware of their particular way of being in the world.

In short, the richness and scope of photographic expression and the innumerable possiblities for using this expression in the clinical setting are striking. This illusion of reality that the photograph creates, can first of all trigger in the viewer an experience or re-experience of a person, place, or circumstance photographed. It can bring the viewer back to the events photographed, and aid in recalling his/her experience. Given this, the possiblities for using photography to elicit verbal and emotional expression in the psychotherapeutic process seems clear.

Beyond its transcriptive and illusory qualities photography is capable of communicating deeper, more important, more personal realities than visual reality. It can transcribe the world, but more importantly it can transcribe the individual's experience and perception of the world. The

photograph, indeed, every photograph, is a self statement. It is an equivalent of a way of seeing, of a way of perceiving and experiencing the world. By examining with the individual his ideas, feelings and values as they are related to the events, peoples, and/or objects photographed the therapist can help the individual discover personal insight and meaning.

In short, creating and discovering personal meanings, and relationships is what, these photographers (Jay, Lang, Stewart, White, Hattersley, Stieglitz) contend, photography is all about. But photographers are not alone here. Within the last two decades psychologists and psychotherapists are beginning to recognize and research the rich possibilities of this new medium. The next section will review the work being done in this area.

The Use of Photography in Psychological Literature

Having established in the review of photographic literature the photograph's ability not only to reflect, but to transform, to bring about a change in the photographer's perception or experience, this section will review the psychological literature for the uses of photography in clinical work. It will then survey research studies in anthropology, psycho-history, and in psychology that use photographs as the primary method of investigating human experience.

Given the purpose of this study, an exhaustive review of the literature is not warranted. This study will focus on documents relevant to its purpose. Hence, large amounts of the literature, including studies of photographic self-confrontation techniques, as well as articles dealing with the medium's adaptability to various psychological orientations and approaches, have been eliminated. Since the present study uses photographs both as self-statements

and as projective stimuli for verbal and emotional expression, this review will limit itself to studies using photographs in these two capacities. The review will concentrate on studies that demonstrate the ability of the photograph to evoke emotional as well as verbal expression, and on studies that support the use of photography as an aid in verbal therapy and a complement to traditional assessment tools.

The Photograph as an Aid to Verbal and Emotional Expression

Most relevant to this discussion is the research into the use of photography being done by anthropologists and social scientists. Like the psychologist, the anthropolist is faced with the task of describing and understanding the perception and experience of the person in front of him, be that person a native of the Andes, or a Brooklyn street gang member. Photography can be an invaluable aid in this task.

Anthropologist, J. G. Collier, recognized the value of photography in the interviewing process as early as 1967. In his book, Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method, (1967), Collier notes the advantages of incorporating photographs in the interview sessions:

> Photographs sharpen the memory and give the interview an immediate character. The informant is back on the fishing vessel, working out in the woods, or carrying out a skillful craft. The projective opportunity of the photographs offers a gratifying sense of self expression as the informant is able to explain and identify content and educate the interviewer with his wisdom...
>
> Skillfully presented, the photographs divert the informant from wandering out of the research area... photo interviewing allows for very structured conversation without any... questionnaires or compulsive verbal probes... Photographs examined by the anthropologist and the native together, become the object of discussion. This appears to reduce stress in the interview by relieving the informant of being the "subject" of the interrogation. The photographs allow

> him to tell his own story spontaneously. This usually elicits a flow of information about personalities, places, processes... artifacts. The facts are in the picture, the informant does not have to feel he is divulging confidences. (p. 48)

Collier's observations here present an eloquent case for the utility of the photograph in reconstructing or describing the individual's world. The power of the photograph to elicit without undue stress historical, geographical, as well as psychological and interpersonal data provides encouraging support for the present researcher's hypothesis regarding the richness and scope of photographic data.

Collier compares the use of photographs as a projective tool to the most commonly used projectives available to the anthropologists, e.g., the TAT, Rorschach, and Defined line drawings, (i.e., detailed drawings of the native's environment and experiences). Collier compiled research using these tests and collated his findings in a schema (reproduced in Table 1) noting the relationship between the projective tool and the nature of the individual's response.

The Rorschach tests, the most abstract of the projectives, stimulated "extremely free associations that dredged up ··· submerged feelings about the self, sexual emotions and fixations." The Thematic Apperception Test, (TAT), is a test that offers the individual pictures as stimuli for stories from the subject's imagination. This projective also stimulates free associations, but associations about the significances of circumstances relationships, events, etc. depicted in the pictures. The test elicits submerged feelings of the self but these feelings are related to the content of the individual's life as revealed in the stories.

Defined line drawings, the third projective on the schema (Table 1), are drawings of familiar scenes in the culture of the native informant, (e.g.,

TABLE 1

THE POSITION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE SCALE OF PROJECTIVE TOOLS

Projective Testing Tool	Levels of Expected Responses
	EXTREME ABSTRACTION
Rorschach Tests	Submerged feelings about self. Sexual emotions and fixations. Extremely free associations that dredge up thoughts passing through consciousness and subconsciousness.
	SEMIABSTRACTION
Thematic Apperception Tests	Submerged feelings about self in relation to experiences in real world. Free association about the significances of circumstances which could take place in the real world.
	GENERALIZED REPRESENTATION
Defined Line Drawings (Drawings of environment, experiences common to culture).	Concrete sentiments about circumstantial reality. Free association about universal problems. Positive views about self with regard to the supernatural, universal or cultural values.
	LOWEST LEVEL OF ABSTRACTION
Clear Photographs of Familiar Circumstances	Precise descriptive reportage. Sweeping encyclopedic explanations. Precise identification of event or circumstance. Noticeable lack of submerged psychological responses. Noticeable lack of free association. BUT Factual representation of critical areas of the informant's life can trigger emotional revelations otherwise withheld, can release psychological explosions and powerful statements of values.

the market, ceremonial dance, ritual, general store, etc.). These, Collier noted, prompted free associations about universal problems and brought out less personal information.

The photograph is at the lowest level of abstraction on the schema. The photographs Collier is referring to here are photographs taken by the anthropologist of the everyday circumstances he found in the culture, and perhaps of the individual subject living and/or working in these circumstances. Although these photographs did not elicit submerged psychological responses or free associations, Collier notes, they did stimulate precise identification of events or circumstances and of the individual's feelings, relationships to the events, and people in the picture. Of particular significance to the present study is Collier's appreciation of the photograph's ability to elicit detailed "verbal reportage", to release "psychological explosions, and powerful statements of value", as well as trigger "emotional revelations otherwise withheld" (Collier, 1967, p. 62).

Phenomenologist-psychologist, Michael Seskin, in his study, "Photobiography: A Phenomenologically Based Approach to Human Study and Personal Insight," carries this research further, exploring the use of "participant-crafted photographs", i.e., photographs taken by the subject, in eliciting verbal information about the life and experience of his subject. In this phenomenological study, Seskin (1977) directed his subject, a middle-aged woman selected for the study, to freely explore her world as well as areas of her life selected by Seskin, e.g., images of self, significant others, home, work, etc. One would expect to find embedded in these photographs taken by the subject much more evidence of the subject's unconscious impressions, and thus, Seskin (1977) hypothesizes, one could assume that photographs taken by the

subject would have an even greater capacity for triggering emotional responses of the individual. Seskin (1977) also notes that:

> In the light of these significant differences in the nature of the photographic stimulus (Seskin's photobiography vs. Collier's photo-interviewing), this researcher suggests that the participant crafted photographs might better be assigned a position somewhere between what Collier considers semi-abstraction and generalized representation. (p. 52)

Seskin thus underscores in this study not only the ability of the photograph to aid in eliciting verbal and emotional responses, but also it's ability to evoke inner psychological states and to stimulate feelings about the self in relation to experiences and relationships in the real world.

Like Seskin, Lesy (1980), combined power of the photograph to elicit verbal information with its power to reveal relationships. In his book Time Frames, a fascinating study in what he calls "psycho-history", Lesy retraces the history, the relationships, the defeats, the sorrows, the joys, in short, the life, of 8 couples and 3 individuals as they are recorded in family photographs and recounted in photo-interviews. As Lesy says of this work:

> The book attempts to give meaning to these complex patterns (of these lives) by analyzing the images as if they were frozen dreams and by interpreting the text as if it were part of a spontaneous monologue elicited by free association. (p. xv)

Unlike Seskin who uses recent photographs taken by the subject -- Lesy chooses participant-crafted portraits and snapshots taken over a long period of time to stimulate his subject's memories, discussions, and revelations. In describing his photo-interviews, he reiterates in his personal style the ability of the photograph to elicit verbal and emotional expression from the interviewee.

> Most of the time we'd sit in the kitchen and start looking at the pictures. They (the subjects) would go through them, quickly at first, one after the other, or one page after the other. But then it always happened: we'd get to one picture, one page, and they'd stop, ... they'd sit up and rise back and start talking, looking right through me... they'd be gone. Back there... I never said a word except "Yes", because I was back there with them, riding the wave, holding the table, my eyes on theirs, my eyes in theirs, breathing 'til it passed. Wave after wave; recapitulation, conjunction, revelation.

Like Seskin and the present writer, Lesy hopes to reconstruct the life and experience of his subjects. Lesy's aim, like that of the phenomenologist, is description. It is, in his words, "to tell their story." This book, published in 1980, offers a direct precedent for the approach followed in the present study.

The Photograph as Self Statement

In the field of phenomenological psychologists, several researchers have made significant inroads into the investigation of the photograph as self statement. Photography, these researchers hypothesize, offers the subjects an excellent tool in which their perception of events, peoples, and circumstances can be recorded visually and can bring researchers closer to their experience.

Indeed, the authors Ziller and Smith (1977) have researched the use of photography as an approach to the descriptive task of phenomenological psychology in a series of studies. These studies concentrate on the power of the photograph itself, its content as well as its formal composition, to reveal the perception and experience of the photographer.

In their first study, on the subject, the authors (1977) asked two groups first and third term students at the University of Florida, to photograph their environment. When the photographs taken by the first-term students,

newcomers to the environment, were compared with the photos by the third-term students, it was found that the third-term students took significantly more photographs in which eye contact between the photographer and the subject were depicted. The more familiar people are with their environment, the authors concluded, the greater is their orientation toward people as opposed to buildings.

In a second study, Ziller and Smith (1977) compared the orientation of physically handicapped people to their physical and social environments with the orientation of normal subjects. The study notes that the photos of handicapped individuals were "pictorial descriptions of avoidance." Rarely would subjects in the photos make eye contact with the photographer in a wheelchair. "The handicapped persons sees bodies without eyes... and in a crowd, seems to be surrounded by unconcerned, even distant people although they are only a few feet away" (p. 176).

In a third study, the authors (Ziller and Smith, 1977) used this same approach to the study of sexual difference in self presentations. Combs and Ziller (1977), again using the phenomenological approach to analysis of photographs, compared the photographs of counseling students with photos of other university students. Indeed the emphasis these studies place on the value of the photograph, i.e., the visual record, rather than its verbal description, in revealing the experience of the photographer, also offers a direct precedent for this present study.

In sum, this section has drawn on social scientific, and anthropological literature as well as psychological research. It has pointed out the value of the subject-crafted photograph in the interview session: its ability to elicit verbal reportage and to trigger emotional responses; its ability to evoke

submerged feelings about the self as related to the persons, places, or things photographed. Literature on the use of the photo-document itself, both its content and compositional elements, was then reviewed to determine precedents for using photographs themselves as reflections of the experience and perception of the individual.

It remains now to examine in greater detail, the methodology of the present study.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The concepts, viewpoints, and methods of phenomenological psychology have emerged as a result of a direct study of the human experience. The methodological design used the present study has been constructed in the tradition of phenomenological existential research. The design emerged as a result of looking at the phenomena involved: the photographs, verbal reports, non-verbal behavior of the subjects, and the impressions of the researcher. This is as it should be, for phenomenologists contend that each piece of human scientific research demands its own investigative style.

Unlike much of contemporary phenomenological research, the present study does not hope to explore a single phenomenon, e.g., anger, fear, learning, privacy, but attempts rather to explore the photographic experience and the individual's 'way-of-being-in-the-world' as it is reflected in that experience. The aim of this study is not only to demonstrate the richness and utility of involving photography in clinical work, but also through photographs to reconstruct and thereby understand the experience of the individual subjects. This section will discuss the procedures used in interviewing participants. It will also review methodological considerations behind the collation and analysis of the photographic and interview data.

Selection

9 volunteers were initially solicited for the study with the intention of presenting all the material. A willingness to participate in research was

the only requirement. All 9 (3 males, 6 females) were well educated adults in their late twenties or early thirties. Three of these subjects, 2 males and 1 female, were later selected for this investigation by the researcher because their photographs appeared, at least at the initial stages of the investigation, to be the most diverse of the 9 solicited and therefore seemed to the researcher to offer the most illustrative possibilities.

Task:

Each participant was given the instructions: "Photograph your world", on one roll of black and white film. Any type of photographic equipment was considered acceptable, providing the participant could render reasonably clear photographs of "snapshot" quality. Film was specified: Tri-X film, a black and white, relatively "fast" film, largely because it is easy to use and economical to process.

Although the directions specified film type, one participant, E., elected to ignore the directions and shot color film. This issue of using chromatic over achromatic photographs was felt to be a significant variable in his approach to, and vision of, his life world. This was considered in the analysis of his photos and interview material.

Timelines

No timelines for the photo assignment were given with the thought that the time taken to complete the task would be of significance in determining the individual's willingness to look at his/her world and to participate in the study. The participants contacted the researcher once the photos were taken. Timespans between the time the photographs were taken and the time the

interviews occurred were given consideration as well. Associations to the photographs, it must be noted, may be richer when the time span between the interviewing and shooting of the photos is kept to a minimum. In the case of the three participants selected, timespans between the shooting and interviewing were less than three weeks.

Interview

After the photographs were taken and the film was processed (developed) the participants and researcher met for one session, the length of which varied depending on the information volunteered and willingness of the participant to talk about the photographs. Prior to the interview session, the participants were asked to arrange the photos in a sequence of their choice and to title each photograph. Each photo was then presented to the participant in sequence chosen by the subject. The participant was asked to give a brief explanation of or statement about the pictures which was transcribed by the researcher. This information has been included in the assembled material that is presented in the data analysis that follows. The interviewer attempted to minimize questioning which could move the participant away from his/her stream of thought or associations. Questions were limited to those which would evoke more information about or clarification of the statements made.

Data Analysis

Having completed the interviews and transcribed the data, the researcher's task was to reflect on the interview material and the photographs in order to move beyond description to meaning. The phenomenological analysis used in the study began with a phenomenological "gazing" or reflection (Betensky, 1979, AATA, Oral Report). The first step

taken in the analysis of the photographs and the interview material was to read through the material and view the photographs to get some sense of the whole. The researcher then tried to determine and delineate 'units of meaning' (i.e., compositional elements in the photographs and significant statements expressed by the subject) without imposing conceptional theories on this data. The attitude of the researcher at this time was one of openness, with little concern for the aim of the study taken into account. From the information above, the researcher attempted to note as simply as possible, themes that emerged from the verbal and visual units of meaning noted. To prevent the imputation of the researcher's meaning onto the subject's experience, these themes were referred back to the descriptive material in order to validate them. This information is included in the data analysis that follows.

In the second step of the data analysis, the researcher examined this information in terms of the specific purpose of the study, i.e., the reconstruction of the world as experienced by the individual. This was begun by searching the data (the photos and interview material) for patterns and themes, for relationships between the compositional elements and the subjects' statements about the photographs. The following questions were then addressed: "What does this statement and/or visual component tell me about the individual? About his way of being, or relating? How do the visual and verbal statements reveal significance about his/her world?"

Once certain themes were enumerated, an attempt was made to tie them together into a descriptive statement of the essential themes, the writer also attempted, on the basis of the photographs, to describe the structure of the subject's world and the subject's mode of being in that world. Finally, the worlds of the three individuals were compared for structure and styles and ways of responding to their respective worlds.

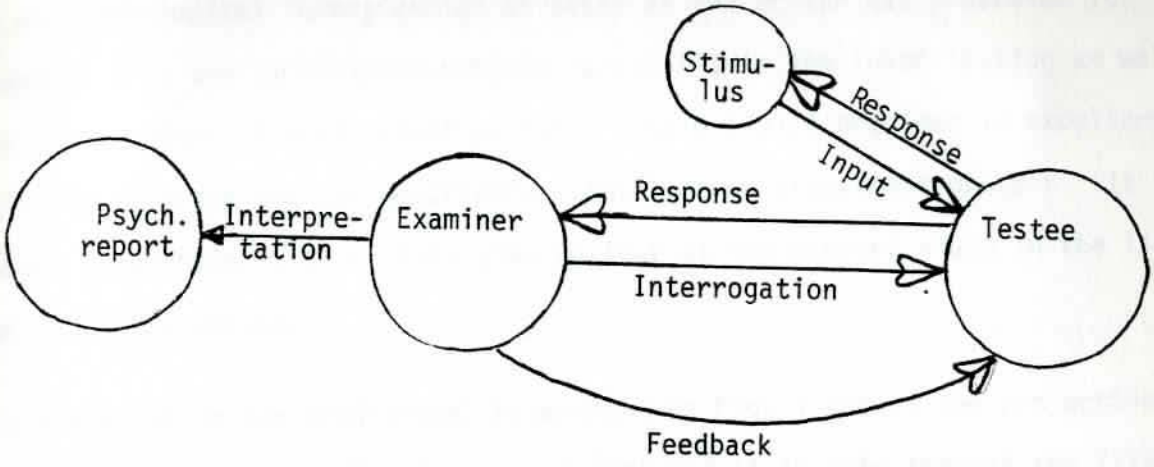


Fig. 1 Traditional assessment:
In the paradigm for traditional assessment it is only through the filter of the examiner's interpretations that the testee may later gain access to his/her productions.

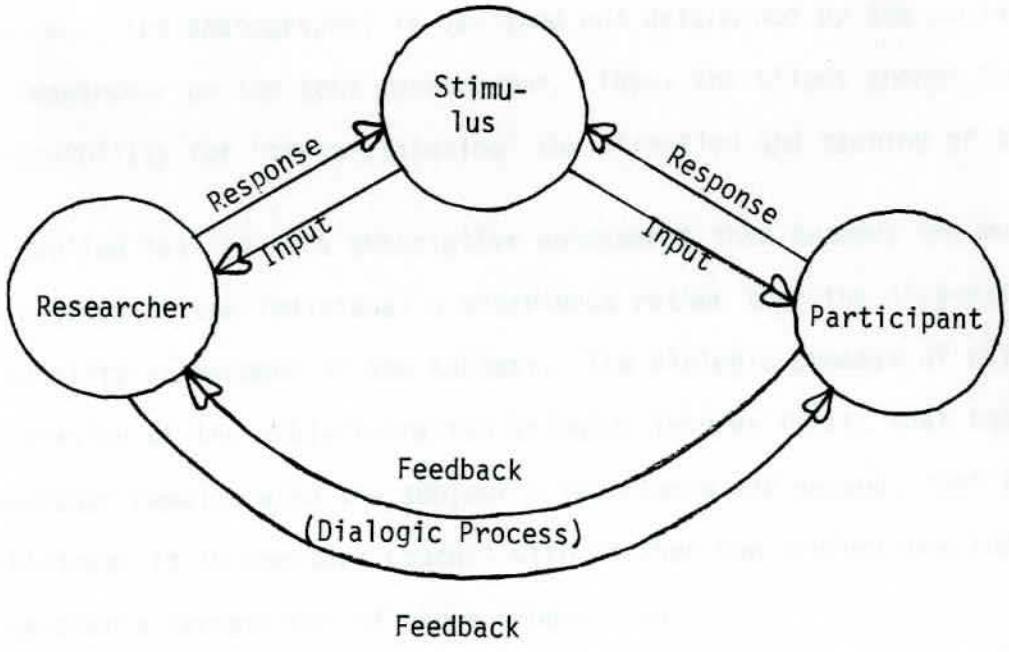


Fig. 2 Co-evaluation:
Continuous access to the stimulus of his own productions, as well as to the researcher's perceptions of these productions provides the testee the opportunity of immediate personal insight.

Limitation of the data and data analysis

A phenomenological investigation at least as the writer has presented it, demands that the participant-subject co-constitute the investigation as well as the findings of that investigation. Seskin (1977) provides an excellent diagram illustrating the descriptive coevaluation assessment process. It would prove beneficial at this time to look at the present study in the light of this information.

In the paradigm for traditional assessment as Fig. 1 shows, the projective stimulus is the standardized test material and it is only through the filter of the examiner's interpretations that the testee may later gain access to his/her productions or the information that the therapist derived from these productions. The stimulus material for the co-evaluative assessment, (in this case, the photographs) is designed and determined by the subject, not the researcher or the test constructor. Thus, the client shares the responsibility for "co-constituting" the direction and meaning of the study.

The implied task in this descriptive assessment then becomes the mutual exploration of the individual's experience rather than the diagnosis and personality assessment of the subject. The dialogic process of this mutual exploration of the subject-crafted stimulus insures first, that the researcher remains with the subject's experience and second, that the subject-participant is in constant contact with his/her own productions and with the researcher's perceptions of these productions.

It is this continuous access that provides the opportunity of immediate insight for the subject. Thus, in descriptive assessment, the separation between the assessment and therapy is not clearly distinguished, the photo assessment

being only the starting point for the therapy that follows.

Given this, and the fact that the subjects selected for the present study were volunteers, and not individuals who had contracted with the researcher for therapy a problem arose in carrying out the dialogic process to its ultimate end. The findings and completed reconstructions here are a large part of the researcher's feedback (see Fig. 2). For the paradigm to be complete, it would be necessary for each individual to be given this information, and the opportunity to react and to respond to and about it, and then for these responses to be included in the findings. Without this the "insight", the goal of the assessment and therapy cannot occur. It is of great importance to reiterate here the fine line between the descriptive task assessment and therapy process. The reconstructions as they stand here, represent the starting point for therapy sessions that ideally would follow.

Researcher's Perspective

The wtiter of this study is the primary researcher and the sole analyzer of the data. In order that her philosophical orientation and biases may be more clearly understood and their influences more visible, the writer will attempt to enumerate these briefly. The phenomenological approach and orientation elaborated earlier was taken. This means that the researcher attempted to go beyond pre-suppositional thinking. She attempted to read the statements and to view the photographs without the prejudice of theoretical constructs and psychological theories, adopting the point of view and the language of the subject as she understood it, using the subject's metaphors and analogies.

The analysis that provided the formulated meanings proceeded from the same phenomenological perspective. For the writer, this meant that the writer was

sensitive to certain elements that emerged from the data such as: the individual's way of relating to others, his/her feelings and perception of self, his/her way of being in the world, movement or lack thereof indicated in the photo or statement. These were expressed in terms of the individual's response style, and in terms of his/her experience of time and space with all the nuances implied by these contexts. Thus these factors do not vitiate the findings but rather set the context in which they are valid.

Chapter IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Analysis: E

Photograph #1

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: From my window.

Statement: I grew up in this neighborhood and played in this playground and could never have known that thirty years later, I'd be living across the street.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The subject looks out at the world from the vantage point of his apartment window. Most striking is the hazy appearance he creates by shooting the photograph through the screen of the window. In looking at the photograph the eye travels across the large expanse of the empty cement in the foreground around the turn at the left, where it follows the street into the distance. The distant street is lined with houses, apartment buildings, and parked cars. Some movement, a blur barely decipherable as a moving car, is indicated. Except for the parked car cut off by the base of the photograph, the street in the foreground is empty.

In the middle line of the photograph E. positioned the turn in the road, a fenced-in playground, two children stopped in play, and very close to the center of the photograph, a stop sign.

Themes suggested:

Arrested movement: suggested by the stop sign in the center of the photograph, by the moving car in the distance, by the parked car on the street closest to the vantage point of the camera, and the statement,"...I grew up in this neighborhood... thirty years later, [I'm living] across the street."

The individual's relationship to time: suggested by the visual and verbal allusions to movement or lack thereof and by E.'s choice of perspective -- the camera angle looks down and over the scene from a distance, giving a view of a distant scene (the past), as well as the street closest to the vantage point of the camera (the present).

Formulated meanings:

The photograph appears to be an overview of his life. E. looks out over his world and his life from the vantage point of the present. The street in the distance, which suggests the past, is lined with homes and cars; some movement is indicated here. In the middle of the photograph the movement stops; the street turns sharply onto the large expanse of cement, the world E. sees closest to his present perspective. At that turn and very near the center of the compostion is a stop sign.

The photograph seems to suggest E.'s present feelings of psychological immobility and emptiness. Is arrested movement central to the meaning of the photograph? To E.'s present mode of being? Can these hypotheses be substantiated in the photographs and statements that follow? (see photo #2)

Photograph #2

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: The hand is quicker than the eye.

Statement: Things are going too fast.

Content and Compositional Elements:

Again E. looks out his window this time at the world he sees directly below. The camera angle looks down, providing a distant view of the world. The photograph is of a pedestrian walking across the street. His path, the path of the sidewalk, is clearly marked; it traverses the central portion of the photograph slightly diagonally from top to bottom. The diagonal line creates a feeling of movement, leading the eye from the large expanse of cement in foreground up the sidewalk to the pedestrian further away. Near the center of the photograph, a blur barely recognizable as a moving car stops the movement of the viewer's eye as well as blocks the way of the

pedestrian. In the center of the photograph is a stop sign, this time from a different angle, from a different perspective.

Themes suggested:

Arrested movement: suggested by the stop sign at the center of the picture, the blur of movement that stops the movement of the viewer's eye as well as blocks the pedestrian's path.

Relationship to time: suggested by his statements ("The hand is quicker than the eye", "Things are going too fast.") The blur of the moving car suggests the speed of the car.

Way of being in the world: suggested by the passive stance of the pedestrian.

Formulated meanings:

The stop sign is again at the center of the photograph. If arrested movement is the central theme of the photograph, this is the theme from a different perspective. The photograph seems to be another view of the sidewalk and street depicted in the foreground of photo #1. The camera angle looks down giving a distant view of present experience - i.e. of what is in closer proximity to E.'s chosen vantage point.

The pedestrian stands with his hands in his pockets; he is passive. His legs together, he does not take a step. His feet are cut off by the blur of white streaks barely discernible as a moving car. The stop sign as well as the blurred streaks that interrupt the movement of the eye at the center of the photograph seem to reiterate the central theme of arrested movement.

E.'s comment "Things are going too fast," suggests that the movement, or change in his world is too fast. E. cannot make sense out of the movement in his life. He is cut off by it, stopped in his tracks.

It may be of significance to note that E. chooses a cliche, "The hand is quicker than the eye" to title his photograph. The cliche is a trite stereotypic expression, exhausted by overuse. It is language that permits little movement, little expansion of meaning, supporting the suggested theme of the photograph.

The photographs and statements seem to suggest that E.'s own movement is arrested by his inability to make sense out of and/or to affect the movement or changes in his life and that his stance is a passive one. The photographs substantiate the hypotheses of photograph #1 and introduce another, E.'s passive way of being in the world. Again it remains to be seen whether this stance, as well as the theme of arrested movement can be substantiated in other photographs and statements.

Photograph #3

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Look for the silver lining.

Statement: Behind every door there's a surprise.

Q. But why did you take this picture? What does this picture have to do with your world? Why is it your world?

A. There is a mystery in our lives, but we forget the mystery. There is a mystery, but once you've walked behind the door, it stops being a mystery. What good is life without the mystery?

Content and Compositional Elements:

This is a straight forward photograph of doorways taken in E.'s apartment. He photographs a series of doorways that open one into another. At the end of the somewhat tunneled vision and at the center of the photograph is a warm golden light emanating from a window. The composition is carefully composed and centrally organized. E. situates his camera so that he creates a line of movement similar to that in photo #2. The eye travels a diagonal through the central portion of the photograph; (from bottom left to the upper right) the eye is drawn into the picture through the series of doorways in an uninterrupted movement. It follows the light on the floor to its source at the upper center of the photograph.

Themes suggested:

Way of being/relating in the world: suggested by the title "Look for the silver lining" which in turn suggests a "clouded" view of his world.

Feelings of frustration and ambivalence: suggested by "silver lining" and by "mystery" that makes life worth living on the one hand and that stops or that E. forgets on the other.

Arrested movement: suggested by the statement that the mystery in life stops or E. forgets it.

Formulated meanings:

E. looks for the "silver lining" in what he intimates to be the cloud of his life, or world. The silver lining and movement towards it (signified by warm golden light in the central portion of the photograph) seems to be the central theme here. The silver lining, the golden light that draws the eye into the

picture and that creates movement through the doorways is a "mystery" that "makes life worth living." But this mystery, this attraction, this movement, stops as E. walks behind the door, as E. approaches it.

As a symbol the door, the opening, is a potent one that has many levels of significance. E. portrays doorways opening into doorways, suggesting worlds opening to worlds. The many doorways, or worlds, however, are not specified, but suggest rather the many worlds, or involvements in life, (involvements with others, with women, with work, with self, etc.). In all of these the pattern of movement, the way of relating that E. seems to suggest is the same.

Attracted by the new, by the "surprise", E. moves into the new world, the new involvement, but once behind the door, the "surprise" stops. The world (e.g., the object, the relationship, the work, the involvement, etc.) stops being a mystery and the attraction ceases, leaving E. cut off from the warm golden light, from the warmth and nourishment, that makes life worth living.

The general mood here seems to be one of dissatisfaction and frustration E. seems to recognize his ambivalent feelings and has enough cognizance to verbalize the irony of his situation.

Photograph #4

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: This is freedom or a man is rich based upon ..., or as Thoreau said, "The less you need the richer you are."

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is a double self portrait, or rather two half exposed self portraits. At the center of the photo is a shadow of a figure of E. seated on a chair with his hands folded at his lap. A second shadow of E. stands with his hands in a similar pose in front of the TV. The room is empty of furniture, save for the TV and the chair. The walls are white. The shades on the three windows are drawn. The space is limited. No movement is suggested.

Themes suggested:

Withdrawal tendencies: suggested by the shades drawn on the three windows, and by the empty room, and by the statement "The less you need the richer you are."

Relation with self: suggested by his ability to observe himself indicated by the second standing ghost figure watching from the background.

Passive stance: suggested by the seated half-exposed figure, passive lack of energy is suggested by barely visible figures.

Formulated meanings:

The room here is empty. There is no furniture except for the chair E. sits on and the TV. The shades are drawn on the windows permitting no access to or intrusion from the view outside. E. not only isolates himself but becomes a shadow of himself. Both images of himself only barely visible.

"Freedom" E. seems to be saying is disappearing; it is erasing your needs or denying them. He suggests that needing very little is wealth and freedom, the implication being that needing something, needing someone is the opposite. Needing as E. presents it here is impoverishing. It is entrapment, a prison. (See photo #7) The statements seem to point rather strongly to dissatisfying experiences in the past. A tendency towards withdrawal, isolation, as well as a tendency to deny needs is indicated here (See photo #8, #9, #12)

Photograph #5

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Another one of those blue days.

Statement: Is it true that dogs are color blind? My desk is no longer in the kitchen. It's in the bedroom where it belongs. I took this picture because red is a fiery color and my apartment is white, i.e., What you see is not what is. To put it more trite: (sic.) You can't judge a book by its cover.

Content and Compositional Elements:

E. places himself in the center of the photograph. The photograph is a portrait of himself, seated at and partially behind the desk.With his head in hand he turns towards and faces the camera. His right arm is stretched out across his chest and rests on the desk. Although he faces the camera, his body posture is guarded, and defensive. Most striking is the red overlay of color.

The red, suggesting energy, or "fiery" emotions, and intense feelings, it incongruent with the restrained pose and rather blue facial expression.

Themes suggested:

E.'s way of relating to others: suggested by the guarded body posture, by his passive stance, (he is seated, leaning on desk for support) and by his statement "What you see is not what you get," and by the humorous tone.

Need for order and/or control: suggested by the statement "My desk is no longer in the kitchen, (where it is in the picture) it is in the bedroom where it belongs."

Denial and/or avoidance of intense feelings: suggested by incongruent statements: "Just another one of those blue days," "Red is a fiery color and my apartment is white", "You can't judge a book by its cover". By irony and humorous tone.

Poor self-esteem: suggested by "Is it true that dogs are color blind?" Intimation here is that he is a dog.

Formulated Meanings:

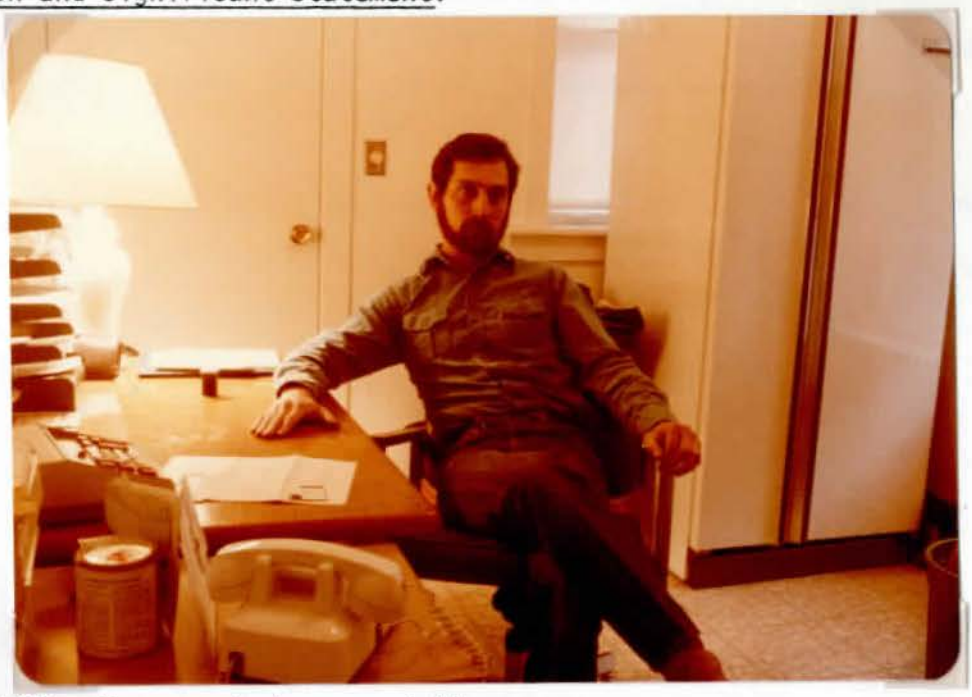
E. presents himself in a passive defensive pose. He is seated, partially behind a desk. He is guarded -- protected. Head in hand, he turns toward and faces the camera. His immediate response to the photograph is to deny the red "fiery" overlay. Jokingly he titles his photo: "Just another one of those blue days." "I took this picture because red is a fiery color and my apartment is white," he goes on to explain. "What you see is not what is." One cannot judge him by his rather reserved cover; he does not express these red "fiery" emotions easily.

He also verbalizes a need for order and control. "My desk is in the bedroom where it belongs". Although the "fiery" emotions are like a red filter through which he experiences and perceives, the lack of control the loss of control that expressing these feelings represents for him is too threatening and therefore something to be avoided and denied.

E. in his initial statement or explanation of photo, "Is it true that dogs are color blind," seems to indicate lack of self esteem. It remains to be seen whether this can be substantiated in photographs and statements that follow.

Photograph #6

Photograph and Significant Statement:



Title: Hello, My name is Larry and I'm very angry.

Statement: No further explanation of this statement was provided.

Content and Compositional Element:

This photograph is again a self portrait, E. presents himself in the center of the picture plane in a rather straightforward manner. He sits cross legged, leaning back, one arm on the desk at his side, one on the arm of the chair. It is again a reserved, passive, somewhat defensive pose, incongruent with his statement of anger.

Themes suggested:

Passive defensive stance is suggested by cross legged and seated body posture, denial and/or avoidance of as well as difficulty expressing anger: suggested by incongruence of statement and photograph.

Formulated Meaning:

Here E. sits in an ostensibly reserved pose with little expression of emotion. He fixes his eyes on the camera and hence, the viewer. He then introduces himself and states that he is angry.

Again the implication here to be his difficulty expressing "fiery" emotions, in this case anger. The photo and statement support the meaning formulated in Photo #5.

Photograph #7

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Prison.

Statement: It's a prison but there's always a way out. It -- it's whatever you want it to be, -- it's the road you take that becomes a prison. So change your road! You don't see that though, you have no map.

Content and Compositional Element:

The photograph is again carefully composed, centrally organized. He places himself in the center of the picture. He depicts himself behind bars, and cut off at the waist. The space here is very limited, the movement very constricted.

Themes suggested:

Feelings of psychological immobility, powerlessness: suggested by the fact that he portrays himself behind bars, cut off at the waist, by statement.

Feelings of frustration and constriction: suggested by the statement that he believes there is a "way out" only he doesn't have a map, by the limited space, and constricted movement.

Feelings of isolation: suggested by photograph behind bars, unapproachable and unable to approach others.

Formulated meanings:

E. presents himself behind bars; his legs, (and therefore his possibility for movement) are cut off. He is trapped unable to move (See photo #1, #2). Frustrated by his immobility, he explains that "any road you take", any involvement in life becomes a prison. Adding to this frustration is his belief that there is a way out. He, however, cannot find it. He is without a map and consequently feels cut off, immobile and powerless to do anything about his situation.

The general mood is one of frustration and powerlessness.

Photograph #8

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Who are you looking at?

Statement: I know you're watching me and I don't like it. They're always watching you and I don't like it. (Q. Who's watching you?) Everyone they're all spectators.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is again centrally composed. E. places himself in the center of the photograph, positioning himself with his back to the camera, and his chest shielded by the back of the chair. He turns his head to view the camera and his viewers. His facial expression suggests that he is annoyed, angry, and/or defensive.

The space is limited to one room. The walls are white, blank; the windows have the shades drawn again permitting no access to or instrusion from the world outside.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the passive/defensive body posture, by the fact the figure is seated; and by the "spectator" analogy, tendencies towards withdrawal, isolation: suggested by body posture, by statement of discomfort at being looked at.

Feelings of ineffectiveness: suggested by "spectator" stance.

Formulated meanings:

E. sits with his back to the camera, his chest protected by the back of the chair on which he sits. Guarded, impenetrable, unapproachable, he turns his head to eye the camera and his viewers. His expression is one of annoyance, anger. His wide eyed stare, is somewhat paranoid. The tone here is humorous. Joculously he verbalizes his dislike for, perhaps his discomfort at, being looked at, at being approached. "People," he states, "are spectators." Uninvolved, they look on. The metaphor that E. chooses to describe "their" way of relating is the way of relating that he knows, sees, and experiences. The spectator looks on. If moved or touched, he cannot return the touch, he can not make contact. He cannot, as a spectator, affect the event, the situation or those involved.

The dissatisfaction with relationships in the past, suggested in photo #4 seems to be reiterated here, as well as are the feelings of frustration, (suggested in photo #6), feelings of powerlessness (suggested in photo #7), feelings of anger (photo #4 and #6).

Photograph #9

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Lovers.

Statement: It's nice to have a friend. If you don't like yourself, how can you expect others to like you?

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is centrally organized. E. positions himself in a corner with his back to the camera. He wraps his arms around himself, his hands clutching his head in what he jokingly intimates to be a warm embrace. In the photo E. depicts himself up against the wall. His space is severely limited. His possibility of movement is constricted.

Themes suggested:

Tendencies towards withdrawal and isolation: suggested by body posture, by verbal account.

Formulated meanings:

E. portrays himself with his back completely to the camera. He makes himself inaccessible to the viewer and jokingly states: "If you don't like yourself, how can you expect others to like you?" He puts himself in a corner, wraps his arms around himself. He withdraws, restricting his movement and limiting his space so severely that he essentially eliminates any possibilities for movement or contact.

Photograph #10

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Hello.

Statement: You can't make that separation. Which one is the entertainer? I wanted to introduce myself, but I had to compete with video. People are so dull. TV is always changing. How can you compete?

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is centrally organized. E. photographs himself seated, facing the camera. He sits in a relaxed posture, open except for his hands folded over his crotch. The room is the same. The walls are white with three windows, with shades drawn. The room is empty except for the TV and the chair he sits on.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating: suggested by the passive, defensive posture, and by the "entertainer" analogy he uses for relationships.

Formulated Meanings:

E. sits in a passive somewhat defensive stance. He faces the camera and the viewer and asks "Which one is the entertainer?" Is it himself, the viewer, or the TV? He uses this entertainer analogy for interpersonal relationships, which is very much related to the spectator analogy used earlier (Photo #8). The spectator looks on, while the entertainer competes for his attention. E. voices his unwillingness to compete for attention. "I wanted to introduce myself, but how can I compete with TV." He passively sits unwilling to entertain in order to keep the attention, in order to be accepted by the spectator.

The irony is apparent but again E. presents a parody of human relationships that suggests his withdrawal tendencies, his fear of rejection and some lack of self esteem.

Photograph #11

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Who is the watcher?

Statement: It's better this way. Just knowing it's there is enough.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is again a self portrait. E. turns the chair in photo #10 around and faces the TV in the corner of the room. The room is the same: white walls, the two windows with the shades drawn.

Themes Suggested:

Way of relating: tendencies towards withdrawal and isolation indicated by the posture, by the verbal statement.

Formulated Meanings:

E. turns his chair around an faces the TV here. With his back to the viewer he states, "It's better this way." E. is the watcher here, he is the spectator, uninvolved, unmoved, unaffected, even unapproachable.

Photograph #12

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Everyone needs company sometimes.

Statement: No statement was provided.

Content and Compositional Elements:

E., a shadow of the figure in photo #11 is seated, with his back to the viewer. The room again is the same as in photo #11.

Themes suggested:

Tendencies towards withdrawal and isolation: suggested by half exposed portrait with back to camera.

Feelings of ambivalence: suggested by the increased withdrawal from photo #11 and by the incongruent statement "Everybody needs company sometimes."

Formulated Meanings:

E. withdraws further. He positions himself so that his back is to the camera, as in photo #11, but in the photo here E. is only a shadowy image, half exposed. His feelings of ambivalence about withdrawal, isolation are indicated by the incongruence between the photograph and the statement.

Photograph #13

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Don't judge me too harshly.

Statement: This is a Harry Mintz picture. H. Mintz says he's a very good artist... Therefore, I have a very good wall. But you wouldn't know it unless you talked to Harry.

Content and Compositional Element:

The photograph is of the wall in E.'s apartment. The corner of the room and a portion of the TV are still visible.

Themes suggested:

Withdrawal tendencies: suggested by his removal from photograph.

Need for acceptance from others: suggested by title.

Formulated Meanings:

E. removes himself from the photograph altogether here. The photograph indicates again tendencies to withdraw and isolate himself. The statement of concern about being "Judged too harshly", again suggests his fears of being rejected intimated in photo #12, and #10, and his lack of self esteem suggested in photo #1.

Data Analysis: J

Photograph #1

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: None given.

Statement: The pictures are in chronological order, beginning Saturday morning. This is Elaine. Well, I woke her up and this is the first thing she did while I was there.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is of a friend, Elaine. The photograph is centrally organized; J. places her subject in the center of the photograph. The friend is shown here in profile. She brushes her teeth and does not look into the camera or show any knowledge of being photographed.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by eye contact, or lack of eye contact evident in picture.

Formulated meanings:

In the photograph J. makes no contact with the subject. She photographs her friend in profile brushing her teeth. Is this indicative of the way J. relates to Elaine, to others. Further corroboration of this is necessary to determine if this is so. (See photo #2, #3, #7, #8, #9, #15, #16)

Photographs #2 and #3

Photographs and Significant Statement:

Title: No title given.

Statement Photo #2: Happy Elaine and Jackson

Title: No title given.

Statement:Photo #3: Pensive Elaine. The dog represents Elaine's husband so she's thinking about him.

Content and Compositional Elements:

Both photographs are of Elaine, and her dog Jackson. Both are centrally organized, i.e., subjects the central interest are positioned in the center

of the photographs. In photo #2 Elaine smiles, looking at Jackson. She seems to be relating to the dog rather than to J. J., too, in this picture is relating to the dog. Jackson looks straight at the camera making eye contact with J. In photo #3 the contact is lost. Jackson looks away. Elaine looks "pensively" at Jackson. As the viewer, one has little sense that Elaine is aware of the photographer.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by the lack of any suggestion of contact between the subjects and J.

Formulated meanings:

J. makes no contact with Elaine in any of these three photographs. The fact that J. makes eye contact with Jackson, the dog, in the second photograph leads one to question whether she feels more comfortable relating to animals than she does with people. This, however, remains to be substantiated in other photographs and statements.

Photographs #4 and #5

Photographs and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement Photo #4: Jackson sticking his head in the toilet bowl. It's pretty funny, because it disappears.

Q. How is it your world?

A. Well, it's what my cat would love to do, but isn't able to.

Title: No title was given.

Statement Photo #5: Jackson licking his mouth after he drank.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The two photographs are of the dog, Jackson, in the bathroom. The dog in photo #4 sticks his head in the toilet so it disappears. In photo #5, Jackson turns his head to the side and licks his mouth after taking a drink. Both photographs are centrally organized, i.e., the central interest in the picture is placed in the center of the photograph.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the fact that she includes 4 pictures of her friend's dog in what is supposed to be a record of her world.

Formulated meanings:

When asked why these photographs of her friend's dog were part of her world, J. answered, "It's what my cat would love to do, but can't." Yet J. included no pictures of her cat, or her apartment. The response leads the researchers to questions whether the subject really knows what is central in her life. She may be avoiding communicating and/or looking at what is centrally important to her world.

The fact that she chooses to relate to animals in these pictures leads the investigator again to speculate that she prefers relating to animals to relating with people. The hypothesis needs further substantiation and investigation.

Photograph #6

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: A stuffed boar's head at Elaine's place. Another animal curiosity, taken at Elaine's place.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is again centrally organized. The center of interest in the picture is a stuffed boar's head.

Themes suggested:

J.'s interest in the strange: suggested by the content of the photograph.

Way of relating to others and self: suggested by her the fact that she selected this inanimate strange object belonging to her friend as part of her world.

Formulated meanings:

J. includes this object, a stuffed boar's head that belongs to her friend, as part of her world. She presents this "animal curiosity" as central to her world, leading one to question whether she is avoiding communicating and/or looking at what is centrally important in her life.

This is one of several photographs of "the strange". J. identifies these "animal curiosities", and presents these and other pursuits of strange, the unusual, (Photo #10, #11, #13, #14, #18) as an important part of her world.

Photographs #7 and #8

Photographs and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement Photo #7: It's Saturday evening. This is Charles fixing his tie. He's getting dressed up to go to his mother-in-law's.

Statement Photo #8: Joyce trying to look like she's not posing. It's out of focus; she moved.

Content and Compositional Element:

Both photographs are portraits of friends. In this case the two are a couple. Both photographs are centrally organized. Both are profile views. In neither does the subject make any acknowledgement of the photographer's presence. There is no eye contact, no visible acknowlegement of the photographer.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the contact or lack of contact with the subjects in the photograph.

Formulated meanings:

In the photographs J. photographs two individuals, both in profile. The subjects give no indication that they are aware of the photographer's presence. J. avoids eye contact with her subjects perferring instead to photograph them involved in some activity. Of significance here is the fact that J. also volunteers little or no information about her feelings for and/or relationships with the people she photographs. One questions whether she is avoiding communicating and/or looking at this information as well.

Photograph #9

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: Charles and Joyce. I call them Mom and Dad, all dressed up and ready to go and see grandma-in-law.

Content and Compositional Elements:

The photograph is again a portrait of the friends in photos #7 and #8. The photograph is centrally organized. In the photograph the couple look at each other, smiling, laughing; they relate to one another but again give little indication of being aware of the photographer's presence.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the profile view of the couple, by the fact that there is no eye contact between the subject and the photographer, by the fact that J. refers to her friend's as Mom and Dad.

Formulated meanings:

Again, J. avoids any eye contact with the individual's in her photographs. She does however, refer to them, as Mom and Dad, but gives little information as to her relationship with them or significance of this nickname.

Photograph #10

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Saturday night.

Statement: This is a middle age disco singles' bar on North Clark Street. It was an incredible place. A middle aged pick-up disco. It was somewhere in between art deco and Saturday Night Fever.

Content and compositional elements:

There does not seem to be any central focus in this photograph. In the foreground are empty tables; mid-ground there are backs of people seated at the bar and tables. In the background J. photographs the backs of people dancing and the blur of ceiling lights.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the way she relates to people photographed.

Interest in the "bizarre": suggested by the "incredible" place, a middle-aged disco bar.

Formulated meanings:

J. presents this middle aged disco bar as part of her world. She includes no pictures of those she is with in her photographs, but chooses instead to photograph the place and its clientele. The photograph shows empty tables in the foreground. The background is a blur of lights and faceless people dancing, most with their backs to J. The photograph seems to indicate the psychological distance created, at least for J., by the crowd. It also suggests once again J.'s reluctance to face, to confront, to contact people.

Photograph #11

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: I was concentrating on getting the midget's dancing. They got up and left after we went and sat next to them. They moved because they didn't like us.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is of the middle aged disco bar. Again it seems to have no central focus. The foreground consists of an empty table. Mid-ground we can see backs of people and couples dancing; the background is a blur of lights in the distance.

Themes suggested:

Interest in the strange: suggested by the content of the photograph -- the middle aged disco bar, and by her interest in the midget couple.

Way of relating to others: suggested by the fact that she does not include in the photograph the people she is with, the fact that she photographs only the backs of strangers dancing, drinking, etc.

Formulated meanings:

J. states that she wanted to photograph "the midget's dancing" but "they got up and left after we went and sat next to them. They didn't like us". She includes no pictures of her friends here but rather presents the strange, (i.e., the bar, the midgets, etc.) as her central concern. The photograph is again a blurred scene of faceless others, drinking, dancing, relating, with whom J. makes no contact and who make no effort to contact her. She and her friends seem to have spent the evening seeking out the bizarre and avoiding each other. (See photo #13)

Photograph #12

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: In the bar. A woman in the bar was looking at me, in this middle-aged disco bar.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is poorly exposed and is indistinguishable. J. reports this figure at the left to be the photograph of a woman sitting at the bar, her back to the camera. In the center of the photograph J. positions the round mirror and light above the bar.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by this portrait of a woman from the back, and by J.'s explanation that the woman was looking at her.

Formulated meanings:

The photograph J. explains is of a "woman who was looking at me." The photograph is of the woman with her back to the camera, but it is so underexposed that the woman is only a dark shape, a silhouette. The photograph intimates J.'s way of relating. She photographs the back of the woman who was looking at -- who was making contact with her, but avoids that contact or waits until it is unattainable.

Photograph #13

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: This is a picture of Heather's family on the side here, at Heather and DNA's (Dan's nickname) after the bar. This next to it is a picture they found in a junk store. It's really strange.

Q. "Why did you choose this to photograph? How is it your world?"

A. "I chose it because it's strange. The head of the painting reminded me of someone I know."

Content and compositional elements:

This is a photograph of her friend's wall. At the left of the photograph are

three photographs of Heather's family. In the upper center portion of the photograph is a large painting of a man. Below this are records. The photograph is a rather straightforward record of details in her friend's apartment.

Themes suggested:

Interest in the strange: suggested by J.'s statement that she photographed this "because it was strange."

Formulated meanings:

Again she avoids what is centrally important in her life. She appears to show little introspective tendencies and seemingly avoids looking at her life altogether. She shows little sense of self, little sense of her world, and her relationship to it. She reacts rather to what catches her attention in the moment, photographs it and incorporates this attraction as a part of her world, and what attracts her most often is the element of the strange or unusual.

Since the photographs and statements about the strange, funny, the curiosity appear repeatedly throughout the series of photos, this attraction should be considered in terms of what it says about J. and her experience. By incorporating the strange, the unusual, into her image of the world, into her image of herself, J. seems to gain a sense of individuality, a sense of identity -- false though this may be. It is this image she presents. Like the objects she photographs, she too is unusual; she too is a curiosity. Strange -- she is likewise estranged from others. This hypothesis/observation would bear sharing with J. for additional information and for her response.

Photograph #14

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: "This is the record we listened to. It's so funny. It's by Helen Gurley Brown, Sex and the Single Girl. Her voice is so simped out. (She imitates her) She's really a twirp."

Content and compositional elements:

This is a straightforward shot of a record album cover.

Themes suggested:

Interest in the strange and funny: suggested by the record albums and J.'s comments about the album.

Way of relating with people: suggested by the photograph which is in some way a record of a portion of the evening's activities with her friends.

Formulated meanings:

J. photographs what attracts her attention: she photographs her momentary reactions to her experiences seemingly without a great deal of pre-thought. The photographs and verbal accounts indicate the evening activities with little significance beyond this.

The photograph again reflects J.'s interest in the strange, this interest should be considered in terms of what it says about J. and her experience of the world. (See photo #13)

Photographs #15 and #16

Photographs and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement Photo #15: "This is Heather and DNA. They do performances together. They mouth the words."

Title: No title was given.

Statement Photo #16: "This is Heather performing; she's dancing."

Content and compositional elements:

Photo #15 is a closeup of two people, one a woman with her back to the camera and photographer, the other a man with his head in profile. He looks at the woman. Neither gives any indication of being aware of the photographer's presence. Photo #16 is a portrait of the woman. It is a straightforward shot, rather

close up of J.'s friend, Heather, dancing. There is some indication of movement -- her open arms, open pose suggest this. But again there is no indication that she recognizes or acknowleges the photographer. Her eyes are down, they do not appear to meet the camera.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by the lack of contact with the subjects photographed.

Formulated meanings:

Again J. makes little or no contact with the friends she photographs. She photographs them relating with one another or involved in some activity, avoiding any contact with them, and they with her. Her verbal accounts likewise do not disclose her feelings or relationships with her subjects. It is implicit that they are friends, but no information about her relationships with them is volunteered.

Photograph #17

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: "Picture of a motorcycle being taken apart for the twelfth time. It's in front of a set, a corrugated set. Robert Clark, an artist, is working on his bike. He's a friend of mine who lives downstairs."

Content and compositional elements:

The motorcycle in the foreground occupies the right half of the photograph. On the left side of the photograph there is a piece of art work, a sculpture of a human-like form, and the artist, a friend of J.'s. The artist-friend is bent over, the wheel of his bike. His back is to the camera and J., he does not give any indication of knowing she is there.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by the lack of contact with the subject in the picture.

Formulated meanings:

The motorcycle is the foreground fills the right side of the film plane. To the life J.'s friend is bent over, curled up, closed. He is involved in his own world, at least at the moment J. chose to photograph him.

This seems to indicate how she perceives her relationships with others, or with him. She is distanced. He is self involved. Curled up, bent over, closed, he cannot be approached. This hypothesis/impression would bear further investigation with J.

Photograph #18

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: No title was given.

Statement: A snake in a waterdish. I took it because he was looking at me.

Content and compositional elements:

This is a straightforward shot of a snake in a water dish. The snake seems to be looking into the camera. He appears to make eye contact with the photographer.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by the fact that J. chooses to photograph the animal as part of her world.

Interest in the strange: suggested by what J. calls her interest in animal curiosities.

Formulated meanings:

J. states that she photographed the snake because the snake was looking at her. She can make some contact with the animal; she is able to respond to its look, suggesting again that contact with animals is less threatening for her than contact and relationships with people.

Data Analysis: G

Photograph #1

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: It's good to be alive in the morning.

Statement: This is the first thing I saw. The morning is the best part of the day when no one has ... when no outside influence has tampered with your thoughts. You're most yourself at this time.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph uses vertical framing: the camera angle looks up. It is a view of the subject's leg backlit against the window in his bedroom. The zig zag of the curtain echos the line of the bent leg; the forms are related.

Themes suggested:

Being with himself; his relationship to self: suggested by the statement, "The morning is the best part of the day ... when no outside influence has tampered with your thoughts. You're most yourself at this time."

Formulated meanings:

The general mood of the statement of the photograph and statement is one of good humor, and optimism. G.'s first impression when looking at the photo was "It's good to be alive in the morning." In the statement he indicates that the time he spends alone -- before anyone has tampered with his thoughts,is the time he's most himself. Time alone, or time he spends "without outside influences" is time for him valued, and important.

Photograph #2

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: The Unknown.

Statement: A self portrait. Jane took this photo over my shoulder and that was the perspective. So you can't see what I look like in the morning. (Laughs)

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is a double self portrait, although G. had his wife take the picture. The larger of the two figures is the portrait of him with his back to the camera. A small mirrored image, a reflection of a reflection of G., shows a frontal view of the subject, yawning and rubbing his eye.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating with others: suggested by very controlled point of view and explanation of this offered in the statement, "So you can't see what I look like in the morning."

Formulated meanings:

In the photograph G. controls the perspective from which the viewer can see him. Initially one sees only the back of the larger figure, but as the eye peruses the photograph the second, smaller portrait comes into view. G. offers an explanation, "So you can't see what I look like in the morning," and laughs. Although the photograph is both humorous and quite clever, it seems to indicate G.'s need for a good deal of control in his interpersonal relationships. This hypothesis will be substantiated in photographs and statements to come.

Photograph #3

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: She moved her eyes.

Statement: This is someone I know.

Q. Who?

A. Jane. (his wife)

Questions after viewing all of the pictures together:

Q. I notice you didn't take any pictures of people other than Jane. Why?

A. You asked me to shoot "my world" so I got up in the morning and shot that day. I started with a sort of tongue-in-cheek attitude and shot the first thing I saw and that was me. I don't know if it came out. It's like John Houston said near

> the end of the movie, "Chinatown"; "At any given time, under the right conditions, anything can happen." So that was that day. You said "my world" and you can divide your world into sections. That was that day, that moment. On my job, I don't come into contact with people especially that day -- it was, wet and muddy. I didn't get out of the truck. It's not that I don't take pictures of people, I have lots of them. It's just that people didn't fit in those pictures.

Content and compositional elements:

G. uses the vertical framing here, the camera angle is straightforward. The photograph is a photo of a woman washing a pot. The camera is relatively closeup. In the picture the woman smiles, and appears to have looked down, perhaps to have moved her eyes when the photograph was taken.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to others: suggested by the subject's eye contact with the photographer, her distance from the photographer, by the photographer's statement about the photograph.

Formulated meanings:

Most significant to G. at least in titling the photograph was the fact that "she moved her eyes." Her eyes blurred and appear closed in the photograph. She doesn't look at the photographer although from his remark and the surprise in his tone of voice this seems to have been his intention. Although she smiles, and looks away, she seems aware of the photographer. The relationship

is understated. The "someone I know," here is his wife. Again his style of communicating indicates a reluctance to share too quickly. He doesn't actually hide the information but leaves it for the researcher to probe further.

Photograph #4

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Waiting for a fly.

Statement: It's just typical furniture! (This is a bird mask atop a barber's chair in the apartment)

Content and compositional elements:

G. uses a vertical format, the camera angle is straightforward. The photograph is of a bird-like mask the subject made atop a barber chair. The photograph is backlit and consequently, underexposed and difficult to see.

Themes suggested:

Importance of his art work: suggested by the fact that he photographed it and uses it as part of his home furnishings.

Formulated meanings:

His art work is included in these photographs of his world. For him they are home furnishings. His art is an integral part of his life.

Photograph #5

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Born of flies, dead of Raid. Watch Out! The kids look different!

Statement: Just more home furnishings!

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is of bat sculptures the photographer constructed. They are backlit here against the light of the window in his apartment where they hang. G. uses horizontal framing; the camera angle looks up.

Themes suggested:

Relationship to his personal world: suggested by the fact he photographs his home and home furnishings.

Relationship to art work: suggested by the fact he shoots his creations, and by the fact that these are displayed in his house.

Formulated meanings:

G. photographs in these photos (Photos #1-#7), his personal world: he photographs himself, his view from bed, his wife, and here his home furnishings, documenting these as part of his world. The fact that his art work is part of his personal world is significant.

Photograph #6

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Think Tank - Complete with O_2.

Statement: It's my office 1980.

Q. What are these boxes, it look like, magazines, papers?

A. They're little tidbits of me all over.

Content and compositional elements:

E. uses a horizontal framing; the camera angle looks down from above creating an overview of the room. The strong diagonal created by the table the separation between the light and dark areas of the photograph create a tension, giving the room an even more disorganized appearance. The photograph is of G.'s office and his personal effects, piles of papers, magazines, boxes and files, etc.

Themes suggested:

Relationship to himself, to his personal work, art work: suggested by the fact he photographs his office and his papers and by the statement that these are "tidbits of me."

Formulated meanings:

Included in these photographs of his personal world, his home, is the photograph of his office, this "Think Tank," and its "tidbits" of G. The "tidbits of me" are magazines, papers boxed, filed, piled, or strewn across the desk. If these are potential for a creative work (See photo #18) G. appears to have ideas, plans, dreams, filed, stored, perhaps on paper, but not as yet put together. This hypothesis would be worth sharing with G. for additional feedback.

Photograph #7

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: What a Dump!

Statement: A scenic view. This is what life looks like when I look out my door. Glamorous. It's what I see: trash, stuff, chaos, and mud in a nice neighborhood setting. It makes you want to dream.

Q. Why?

A. Because I don't care for this, 'cause it makes you depressed sometimes.

Q. What does?

A. Looking at a colorless world. I'll qualify this. This is winter time, dreary, no excitement.

Content and compositional elements:

G. uses a horizontal framing, and organizes the composition around a strong diagonal. The light and darks of the picket bannister separate the very light

outside world with the darker clutter on the porch. The photograph opposes the clutter on the porch with the "dump" outside in the alley.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to his world, his environment: suggested by the indication that he is visually involved with his environment.

Way of relating to others, to the world: suggested by the statement that "dump" ... makes him depressed and makes him "want to dream".

Formulated meanings:

This is the first view outside his personal world, his home life. It includes more personal effects, boxed in suitcases, saved and stored. These are opposite the mud and debris - he sees from his porch of the world outside. The horizontal composition as well as the separation between the lights and darks seem to oppose the two worlds. The photo depicts a tension between the "colorless" (at least in winter) world outside, and the material of his own world and imagination boxed, bagged, and stored inside him. "The dump" outside sometimes depresses him and makes him "want to dream." Dreaming, he suggests here, is his escape, as well as his coping mechanism. In further discussion it might be interesting to discuss how he might have the imagination presently boxed. How he might realize some of these dreams. This, however, remains outside the limits of the present study.

Photograph #8

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Command Module.

Statement: That's my life support unit there. It's the front seat of my truck.

Q. Why is that your life support unit?

A. Well, it's where I keep my wallet, papers and things, and the O.J.

Q. What is this, this tie, it looks like hanging from the mirror?

A. It's not a tie, it's an armband to show respect for those who have died. Mo, Mo of the Three Stooges, died not long ago, and a couple of others.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is a straightforward view of the inside of his truck cab. On the seat of the cab, the length of which is distorted and enlarged by the

camera lens, is cluttered with his papers, maps, orange juice, etc. The world outside can be seen through the windshield and door windows.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by the fact that he photographs his place in this outside world, the truck cab.

Formulated meanings:

G. titles the photograph "Command Module" and again the mood reflects his good sense of humor. Most of the photographs that follow are shot through the front windshield of his truck cab. The windshield wipers and/or the edge of the windshield is quite clear in these photographs giving us a clear sense of where G. sits spatially.

This does in a sense put G. in a position of command. G.'s photographs and his responses to them give the sense that he knows where he sits; that he has a sense of himself, and of the world, and where he is in relationship to it. (See photos that follow) This position of command is in this sense his "life support unit."

Photograph #9

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Being followed.

Statement: Job perspectives.

Q. Why did you take this picture?

A. Because it looks really neat.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is of the view from his truck as he drives. View of the traffic ahead is clear. In the rear view window however G. photographs a view of the traffic behind him as well.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by the title referring to his job, by a view of his world as he sees it on the job.

Formulated meanings:

In this photograph G. looks both forward and backwards, ahead and behind -- from the perspective of where he sits. The way he sees his vision is characterized by his sense of humor, tongue-in-cheek manner that prevails throughout the series. The fact that he can see the rear at the same time he is looking forward suggests an overview, a reflective distance that allows him to see humor, and irony in any situation he encounters.

Photograph #10

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: A sunny day - but not here.

Statement: This is my job. It's a view from the window of my truck.

Q. I notice, also, you titled the picture of your job. "It's sunny, but not here". How do you feel about your job?

A. Well, its not the job I want to be doing the rest of my life but it's okay. I work for nice people and it's the reason I could move my house. You know, my Halloween show (a sculpture show at a local gallery) was because of that job too. I collected all of the materials while driving around the city.

Content and compositional elements:

This is a straightforward, horizontally framed, view from the front windshield of the truck. The gray flat road, appears to extend for miles. It is one dull road going straight ahead.

Themes suggested:

Relationship to the word, to his job: suggested by the view of the world he sees from his windshield-- a view of the world he encounters on the job, as well as by the title.

Formulated meanings:

G. describes his job as being right for the time. The truck he explained, enabled him to move his house and to gather the materials for his sculpture show. This information balances the rather dismal scene of the job provided here as well as the statement "A sunny day, but not here." The rapidly converging lines of the vanishing point perspective created by the trucks, disappear into a flat gray sky. The world photographed narrows quickly -- the direction is too sharply defined; it provides no opportunity for divergence or for change.

Photograph #11

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Captive animals on the move.

Statement: The canyons of the road.

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is a straightforward shot, horizontally framed of the traffic line up at a toll booth. The trucks on either side of G.'s truck create a strong vanishing point perspective.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to world: suggested by this photograph of the world he encounters on the job and his statement about it.

Formulated meanings:

G. photographs a rather grim scene of what he refers to as "captive animals on the move." Again G.'s sense of humor prevails. He points out these trucks,

that transport animals to the slaughter houses. They are, he says, "the canyons of the road" that he traverses. He again points out the irony and humor in his encounters; it is therefore this way-of-relating so evident in the photograph that makes it a picture of his world.

Photograph #12

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Security angle.

Statement: This is curious from the standpoint of boundaries, taboos, specifications, qualifications.

Q. Why?

A. It's like man and his symbols. Man and his technologies and his systems to deal with them.

Content and compositional elements:

The camera angle is tilted, creating a strong diagonal composition. The scene is a toll booth security station seen from an interesting angle.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by this view of the world photographed.

Formulated meanings:

G. tilts the camera presenting the scene from a different perspective. Verbally he does the same; he titles the photograph "security angle" so that it refers to a whole other layer of meaning. The security station for G. represents not only the station where trucks are inspected, weighed, and made to wait, etc., but also, the systems of "boundaries, specifications,qualifications and taboos" man invents to deal with progress and his many technologies. It is G.'s perspective, the tilt he takes on life, that not only determines what he sees, but more importantly, allows him to see the ordinary with fresh eyes.

Photograph #13

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences - Chicago Branch.

Statement: It's shape and form. It's the airport from the window of my car. It's there all the time. I was pulling in and it filled up the angle and lens nicely. The building's curved. The combination of shapes and the way you capture shapes, how it translates, makes it interesting.

Content and compositional elements:

G. creates a formal composition organized around the diagonal of the dark shape of the building against the gray sky.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by the perspective he uses, by the statement.

Formulated meanings:

Again G. creates a diagonal composition. He states the way you see " the way you capture shapes -- how they translate makes (them) interesting." Although G. is referring to the way he sees with a camera it seems to translate to the way he sees the world. The reflective distance that looking for and responding to shapes and form in the world creates allows him to see relationships and creates meanings -- giving him fresh perspective in the world.

Photograph #14

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Wired.

Statement: It's shape, that's what's interesting.

Content and compositional elements:

G. again tilts his camera creating a strong diagonal composition, opposing the technological forms, the electrical towers against the dark grasslands.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by this record of the way he sees the world.

Formulated meanings:

The diagonal composition opposes light against dark, forms of technology against forms of nature. (See photo #8)

Photograph #15

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Boxes. Up, Up, and away.

Statement: It's shape and form. The old and the new. The straight and the round. The sharp lines and the circular forms.

Content and compositional elements:

G. uses the vertical framing; and his camera angle is tilted up. G. opposes the rounded, old forms against the angular, new buildings.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by his record of the way he sees the world, by his statement.

Formulated meanings :

G. uses the diagonal composition in this photograph, playing the old against the new, the round against the angular in this picture. The tension between opposing forces are balance and integrated in the composition and in some way perhaps in his life.

Photograph #16

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: For a hot time on the Ouiji Board.

Statement: I took a picture of this because it's really cheesy, to cheesy to be true.

Q. Cheesy?

A. Cheesy is something so obvious, so ridiculous. It's getting miles out of it, making money on it. This is real Americana -- commercialism at a real low rent level.

Content and compositional elements:

This is a straightforward shot, horizontally framed of a readers house.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by his comments about the picture.

Formulated meanings:

This is a straightforward shot congruent with a straight forward account of why G. took the picture. He states that the reader's house is an example of "commercialism" at a real low rent level. G. makes a statement of his values. He feels that this is commercialism and voices his disapproval of making money in such a way.

Photograph #17

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: A fun place to pass.

Statement: A cultural monument ... a symbol from way back and it's still there to give me security. (laughs)

Q. Why is it part of your world?

A. It's part of my world because I drive under them and it goes way back. It's like watching Johnny Carson (sarcastic). It's good to know you can turn him on. It's the same. It's good to know you can drive under Howard Johnson's and know someday you can go in and have a good time, but you never will. (laughs) They give impressions of being symbols that you think are one thing, but never are, as you find out when you buy a pack of gum. Howard Johnson's was the first to charge 10 cents for a pack of gum a long time ago. They sold the 7-pack, a consumer ripoff. They advertise and promote concepts and ideas that don't have much to do with anything, but are built up to be.

Content and compositional elements:

This is again a photograph of a view from G.'s truck. It is a straightforward shot, horizontally composed. In the bottom half of the picture is the long vanishing point perspective created by the highway and the traffic ahead. Above the road is a Howard Johnson's oasis. The upper half of the photograph is the flat gray sky.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by this view of the world and the statement of explanation that follows it.

Formulated meanings:

The photograph is a straightforward shot with little distortion from the camera angle, although it is shot through G.'s front windshield. G.'s statement about the photograph reflects his quick wit but it equally expresses his values and concerns quite directly. Howard Johnson's is a symbol of commercialism; "They advertise and promote concepts and ideas that don't have much to do with anything, but are built up to be."

Photograph #18

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: The best burger this side of the photograph.

Statement: One burger, one stand. It's small (ugh) down to earth. It's one store that tries to do what it does best. It doesn't try to sell itself. It's product speaks for itself - fresh meat, fresh french fries. Howard Johnson's is all hype; this is the other end of the spectrum.

Content and compositional elements:

The camera angle is tilted. The composition creates a diagonal, one side of which is empty sky; the other the burger stand and street tilted forty-five degrees.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to the world: suggested by the view of the world he takes in the photo and the statement he makes explaining the photo.

Formulated meanings:

G. photographs a burger stand in contrast to the Howard Johnson's restaurant. A burger stand "tries to do what it does best" and "doesn't rely on hype." He seems to suggest here that this is a valuable trait for a commercial business as well as for an individual and for himself.

The camera tilt as well as the title "The best burger this side of the photo" create again a light mood. Through his sense of humor G. expresses a concern that is important to him.

Photograph #19

Photograph and Significant Statement:

Title: Why pay more?

Statement: This speaks for itself. It's got a paything on a gas station's toilet door - a rare sight! Only on the South Side can this happen.

Q. Did you pay?

A. You better believe it!

Content and compositional elements:

The photograph is a straightforward closeup, vertically framed, men's washroom door. The door has a pay meter on it.

Themes suggested:

Way of relating to world: suggested by his explanation that some things in life should be free.

Formulated meanings:

G. intimates his belief that some things in life should be free and in his tongue-in-cheek manner communicated this conviction.

Chapter V

RECONSTRUCTION AND COMPARISON OF 3 LIFE-WORLDS

Reconstructions

E.

E.'s photographs are, for the most part, self portraits. Ten of thirteen photographs are shot in his apartment. They depict blank walls, windows with shades drawn, and a generally constricted space as the background for those self-portraits. Two are views of the world from his apartment window, views of the world from his present perspective.

The world, as E. experiences it, is a frustrating, constricting place. Relationships or other involvements in life are, for E., the "silver lining" to what he intimates to be the gray cloud of his life or world. They add "mystery"; a mystery that makes life worth living on the one hand, but a mystery that disappears as he approaches it, leaving him understandably unfulfilled and frustrated. His way of responding to this frustration is to control and contain the angry feelings, and the "fiery emotions" he feels. He withdraws and isolates himself to avoid future contact, future relationships, although he knows this too is a prison, a trap. He depicts himself seated or cut off in the photographs, psychologically immobile, and trapped. He is, as he says, helpless without a "map".

Indeed, E.'s photos and verbal accounts indicate a certain "already having been" of existence. It seems that the frustration he experiences in the present is largely based upon his recollections of past unhappiness, and that it is a frustration that he projects onto his future. This being the case, E. is not purely free; he is not at present open to alternatives. His metaphors and images, and hence the possibilities open to him are limited and constricting.

The constricted experience of time is accompanied by an equally constricted experience of space. The photographs are all shot in his apartment. All (except for the two view from his window), are portraits of himself in a corner or seated passively in an empty room with blank walls and shaded windows. E. depicts in these photographs some sense of his own constriction. He senses little movement, change in his life and little possibility of access to or intrusion from outside influences.

The pictures, captions, and discussion of the photos are dominated by symbolic or metaphoric non-literal descriptions of his feeling states. Although the symbolic content focuses on the feelings of constriction, frustration, and containment and control of these feelings, E.'s sensitivity to the symbolic can be a source of strength and creativity as well as insight.

Furthermore, the power of the photographic images, as well as the candor with which he reveals the central or conflicting aspects of his self perceptions, both to himself and to the interviewer, seem to indicate a felt need to move, change, to find the "map", or the way out of his present experience which suggests a good prognosis for future work in therapy.

J.

J.'s images are quite different than E.'s. Twelve of the seventeen pictures are of people, friends, none of which make any eye contact with the photographer or give any recognition of her presence. The remaining four are of what she calls "curiosities", animal or otherwise. No self portrait is included, nor are there any photographs of her personal space, i.e., her apartment, her studio, or her art work, although she had the opportunity to include these.

Unlike E.'s pictures, J.'s are representative rather than symbolic images, The photos, the captions, the discussions are dominated by literal object related images of her friends and their activities. The discussions are straight-forward descriptions of objects and events depicted in the photographs. These relatively literal presentations, however, avoid any discussion of how the object, the person, or the activity is important to J. Photos and discussions focus totally on the momentary activity that caught J.'s attention at that time.

Although J.'s photographs reflect the moment, it is a moment that intimates little connection with a past, or little anticipation for future. She is caught up in peripheral experiences, in the swirling blur of distant lights and nameless faces dancing and drinking (See photo #7). She is moving in a dizzying whirl with little sense of where it is, where it has come or where it is going. If photos #7 and #8 are viewed as metaphors for her experience, the empty chairs, and the empty table in the foreground, suggests an emotional and interpersonal distance between herself and others, as well as between herself and where she is and what she is doing.

Most striking about the people, activities that J. presents as being centrally important to her current perception of herself and her world is her style of relating with and responding to them. J. makes little contact with the friends she photographs. Although she shares her time and space and relates with them around common activities, an emotional and psychological distance is evident throughout the photographs.

The strange or unusual (e.g. the middle age disco bar, the animal curiosities, the record "Sex and the Single Girl, etc.) is a theme emphasized repeatedly throughout the series of photographs. The focus on the strange, or reluctance

to look at and/or disclose central or conflicting aspects of herself, her perceptions, or her experience.

J. is a stained-glass artisan with a studio, as well as an apartment. It is significant that she included no pictures of her living or working places or of her work, opting instead to include photographs of others living, working, and relating. It would prove valuable to explore with her how these "missing" categories may be related to both intrapersonal developmental concerns and/or relationships and conflicts with signficant others in her life. This, however, is beyond the scope of this initial interview and assessment.

G.

Unlike either J.'s or E.'s photographs, G.'s photographs include both a self portrait, and a portrait of one significant other, his wife, as well as photographs of his apartment, his art work, and the world he encounters on his job driving a truck. Two of his thirteen photographs use reflections in mirrors leading the viewer to question, to look again at the scene photographed. Visually, they capture the tongue-in-cheek manner G. expresses verbally. Six of the thirteen pictures are organized around the diagonal which G. uses to pose old against new, the outer against his inner world, man against technology, and which he creates a tension, and balance that characterizes his perception and his experience of the world.

The two self-portraits (Photos #1 and #2), the photographs that begin the series, set the tone for interpersonal relations as well as his interactions with the researcher. In these, G. controls what the viewer sees of him as well as of his world. Photo #2 for example, is a large photo of G. from the

back but with a small reflection of his face in the mirror that faces him. He explains in his characteristic good humored manner, that he uses this perspective "So you can't see what I look like in the morning." Through his use of perspective, humor, and wit, he assumes control over his interaction with viewer and interviewer as he does in his interpersonal relations with others.

G. approached the assignment rather systematically, ordering his worlds -- photographing his life at home first, and then the world as he encounters it on the job. He is able to integrate the encounters and interest indicated in the interview, giving the viewer a sense of what is centrally and/or only peripherally important to his world.

What appears to be of central importance to G., is his private world, his personal world, e.g., his art works, "home furnishings", his wife, his office or "think tank", as well as his "time to be alone with his thoughts." It is his refuge from the world that "tampers with his thoughts". His is a world in which "thoughts", in which what he calls his "dreams", play a significant role. Indeed, his dreaming, i.e., the imaginative perspective G. brings to the world he encounters, allows him to see the ordinary with fresh eyes. The perspective he takes on dull flat highway scenes not only makes them visually interesting, but also makes them communicate the deeper personal meanings he gives them. "Dreaming" as he calls it, is his escape as well as his coping mechanism.

Of some significance might be the number of boxes, files, papers piled up, or strewn over his personal world. Indeed, the fact that his personal world seems to be teeming with these "tidbits" (See photo #7) suggests the potential creations, ideas, plans stored, boxed up and filed within him. These unlived possibilities occupy a large portion of his personal world/life.

Organization and Perceptive Styles: A Comparison

At a glance, the three sets of photos show clear contrasts which become more meaningful when considered in the context of each individual's perception and experience of the world. E. looks at the world he finds directly - straight on - his camera rarely tips, he passively accepts what he sees, rarely experimenting with what he finds. E. uses a central ogranization exclusively, placing his central interest, himself, in the center of the photograph.

Ten of his thirteen photographs are self portraits, giving the viewer little sense of any involvements or interests outside himself and his personal concerns. For E. at least in this set of photographs, the organization of peripheral interests and their integration into the schema of his world is not an issue. E.'s photographs and his statements about them reflect concerns of a deeper more personal nature.

Of significance here is the fact that E. ignored the directions to use black and white film and opted instead to use color film he had on hand. The color photos may have influenced the nature of the responses elicited in the interview, and may even have influenced E. in shooting the assignment. In psychological testing, the ability of chromatic drawings to elicit more emotional responses, has been noted and documented in both HTP and Rorschach testing. Indeed, Hammer (1958) notes that "under the impact of color, defenses do not strengthen but crumble" (p. 219). In the chromatic drawing series of the HTP he states:

> The subject will almost inevitably be so emotionally aroused that the chromatic series will reveal still more about his basic needs, mechanisms of defense, etc., than the achromatic (pencil and paper) and points up the disparity between his functioning and his potential pattern of behavior. (Hammer, 1958, p. 208)

It is conceivable that the color photo, like color drawings, can stimulate and elicit more emotional responses, as well as responses from what Hammer (1958) refers to as, "a deeper layer of the personality" (p. 210). This, however, at this point is only speculation. It remains an area for future investigation.

Unlike E., G. rarely uses the central organization, nor does he view the world directly or straight on as E. does. Of his nineteen photographs two pictures use reflections; two look up; two look down; three are tilted forty-five degrees. Seven of the nineteen are organized around the diagonal. Indeed, G. does not accept the world he encounters. He explores it, questions it; looking at it from a variety of angles, he seeks to discover some relationship between what he sees and what he experiences. Indeed the exploration and experimentation evident in E.'s photographs gives the viewer the sense that E. knows what is central in his life and what is of only peripheral significance. Using the diagonal G. is able to pose his inner personal world against the outer world he encounters on the job, but at the same time is able to integrate the two.

In J.'s photographs, this is not the case. Like E., she uses a central organization but gives little sense that she photographs or even knows what is central to her world. Her central interest is the peripheral; it is the moment with little sense of how it relates to herself or her life.

Brockelman (1968) offers an analogy to this discussion. He states:

> If we understand ourselves, we read ourselves as a musical score, we resolve the chaos of different entangled sounds and transform them into a polyphony of different parts. (p. 98)

Applying this analogy to the three subjects, J. seems to be lost in the entangled sounds. Unable to resolve the chaos, she is caught up in a dizzying whirl. Unlike J., G. seems to have sorted the cacaphony. The viewer senses that he knows and recognizes the various lines and colors of the music and that he can follow the progression of a line to its resolution. E., on the other hand seems to hear only one resounding refrain -- the clamor of his disappointment, and frustration in the past. This being the case he withdraws - isolating himself he hopes to shut out the world and this sound.

Problems and limitations of the study

As previously pointed out, the selection of volunteers who had not contracted for therapy with the researcher presented a distinct limitation to the study. This factor presented the researcher from sharing her observations and impressions presented here with the subjects. The participants in the present study were therefore not given the full benefit of the assessment process. The immediate insight afforded by continuous contact with the photographs, with his/her own experience, and with the researcher's perception of these was not adequately illustrated here and remains an area for future research.

Also encountered was the researcher's difficulty in remaining objective in observing and analyzing photographs and statements. By referring back to the data the researcher tried to keep the imputation of her own meanings to a minimum. Without the constant feedback from the participant-subject in formulating the meanings and reconstructions however, an important check on this imputation was eliminated.

Ultimately the purpose of the study was to demonstrate how photographs reflect the experience and perception of the photographer and how they can be used in psychological assessment. For this purpose the dialogic process of this study even in its interrupted form is sufficient.

Chapter VI

IMPLICATIONS FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Implications

This study demonstrates a method of assessment that respects the worth and dignity of the individual. It is a health oriented, non-psychiatric approach to human exploration, that is concerned with the whole spectrum of human existence. Because phenomenology provides an expanded existential view of man phenomenologically based phototherapy cannot be equated with traditional psychotherapy. Seskin (1977) contends that phototherapy, or photobiography as he calls it, is "more than a technique for exploring an individual's problems and conflicts, although it is that, too" (p. 254).

In contrast to evaluative methods of assessment, this method of using client created photographs enhances the interconnected process of assessment and therapy. Rather than employing an interpretive scoring mode of evaluative assessment models (i.e. HTP, Rorschach), this method involves both the client and the therapist-interviewer in an active process of discovering and creating the dimensions along which the client's creations have personal meaning. As therapy begins, the emphasis shifts from assessment to exploration and change. The set of photographs offers a visual guide to and reminder of the client's previously discussed strengths and weaknesses. The set provides the starting point from which the transition into therapy and further exploration is easy.

Unlike art therapy and the art therapy assessment, phototherapy begins before the client and therapist meet for the initial assessment. The client must venture out into the world to record a description of his/her world before the assessment begins. This process points out to the client his/her responsibility for co-constituting the direction and meaning of the assessment and/or the therapeutic process.

Additionally, phototherapy offers the therapist considerable advantages over traditional interviews and assessment procedures. The familiarity of the photographic medium reduces the initial apprehension of the client in the interview. The medium and hence, the interview seem less threatening. Contributing significantly to this may be the implied task of the descriptive assessment, which is the mutual exploration of the experience of the individual rather than his/her diagnosis and personality assessment. Furthermore, sharing the responsibility for co-evaluating the data insures that the therapist remains with the client's experience. Given this, as Seskin (1977), points out, the client's defenses are understandably less likely to be mobilized in this process.

Indeed, many of the advantages of using client crafted stimulus materials are advantages phototherapy shares with other expressive art therapies, (e.g., art therapy, music, poetry, and dance therapies). Seskin (1977), provides a schema (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2) comparing the descriptive assessment provided by client crafted stimulus materials with traditional evaluative assessment processes. As the schema shows, the dialogic process that the client crafted stimulus creates insures that the client-participant is in constant contact with his/her own productions and with the researcher's perceptions of these productions. It is as previously pointed out, this continuous access that provides the opportunity of immediate personal insight for the client.

In the paradigm for traditional assessment, this is not the case. It is only through the filter of the examiner's interpretations that the testee may later gain access to his/her productions.

Questions for further research

Further elaboration and exploration of new uses for the photographic assessment and for phototherapy is needed. Obviously, this study represents only a demonstration of phototherapy assessment. The individuals selected for this study were few in number and of similar age, education, and socio-economic backgrounds. A logical extension of this research, then, would be a wide-ranging application of the process. Using the method with people of varying diagnostic categories, or various socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, and of different age groups in an effort to determine with what populations photo-therapy would be most or least effective is an essential direction for further research.

Perhaps, before determining the efficacy of the therapy with various populations, more fundamental questions about the medium should be addressed. What happens to the individual psychically, emotionally, and cognitively in the picture making process?...in the phototherapy interview? Is verbal articulation necessary for insight or meaning to be discovered?...for the emotional response to be elicited?

Especially intriguing would be the investigation of these questions from the conceptual framework of Sandra Kagin and Vija Lusebrink's "Expressive Therapies Continuum" and "Media Dimensions Variable." (Kagin and Lusebrink, 1978)

Finally we must ask if there is anything unique about the photographic medium regarding its applicability to therapy. How does this descriptive phototherapy analysis compare with traditional projective assessments (i.e., with HTP, Rorschach, etc.)? Does information it reveals complement traditional assessment? If so, how? Is the phototherapy experience notably different from the art therapy experience? If so, how? Does phototherapy deserve its own field, or can it be seen as one of the many useful media within art therapy?

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