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# The Rorschach Defense Checklist: Rationale and Validity

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**THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE CHECKLIST: RATIONALE AND VALIDITY**

**By**

**Ida A. Parlanti**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate**

**School of Loyola University in Partial**

**Fulfillment of the Requirements**

**for the Degree of**

**Master of Arts**

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## LIFE

Ida Parlanti was born in Chicago, Illinois, on October 14, 1942.

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From September of 1964 to June of 1965 she was teaching and research assistant at Loyola University. She was employed by the Cook County Department of Public Aid--Children's Division as a placement worker from June of 1965 to January of 1966. She completed her clerkship at Loyola University's Child Guidance Clinic in July of 1966 and has since been employed by the Clinical Services Division of Family Court.

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## CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

There has been an increasing effort directed toward the identification and measurement of ego defense mechanisms and their relation to cognitive style (Bosgang, 1962; Gardner, et.al., 1959; Gardner and Long, 1962; Holzman, 1962; Lazarus and Alfert, 1964; Luborsky, Blinder and Schimek, 1965). Various approaches have been employed to facilitate such measurement including combinations of the clinical scales of the MMPI (Byrne, 1961; Fulgenzi, 1965; Haan, 1964; La Forge, 1961; Liberty, et.al., 1964; Lomont, 1965; Pomeranz, 1963; Silber, 1964; Spiesman, Lazarus, Davison and Mordkoff, 1964) and indices utilizing material from the Rorschach test (Gardner, 1964; Gardner, et.al., 1959; Levine and Spivack, 1964; Spivack and Levine, 1964).

Of special relevance to this study is the Rorschach Defense Checklist adopted from Schafer (1954) by Gardner (1964) which successfully differentiated hysterics, obsessive compulsives and paranoids in a clinical sample. In addition, it yielded some significant correlations with certain scales of the MMPI.

Purpose. There is a paucity of validity data associated with Gardner's (1964) RDC. The primary concern of this thesis is to validate those defenses isolated by Gardner using as criteria recently developed defense scales taken from the item pool of the MMPI. Special emphasis will be placed on Byrne's (1961) Repression-Sensitization Scale. This measure grew out of research associated with the MMPI and purports to

tap defenses similar to those uncovered by the RDC, i.e., repression and intellectualization. This study will relate the RDC to the R-S Scale to determine if they are measuring the same thing.

This study will also improve upon previous research in this area in terms of controls. Age, education, sex, race and religion of all subjects will be controlled as well as the sex of the examiners employed. It will also provide RDC norms for a normal college sample.



## CHAPTER TWO

## REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

**Rationale: The Rorschach Test in Terms of Psychoanalytic Ego-psychology**

When Rorschach developed his test--his method of interpretation and administration--he also left a system of scoring the responses. But he pointed out the intuitive and heuristic nature of these scoring categories--he admitted that the theoretical basis of the test was almost non-existent (Holt and Havel in Rickers-Osviankina, 1960). In the more than two decades since he said this great strides have been made in psychological theorizing. And psychoanalysis has made some of the boldest and most outstanding strides of all (Schafer, 1954). Psychoanalytic theory has provided the rationale for Rorschach interpretation since the test was developed (Gardner, 1964). This is not surprising since Freud wished his theory to be an all-encompassing and integrated one ignoring no aspects of man (Klopper, 1954).

Of the recent personality theories ego-psychology has become more and more relevant to the contributions the Rorschach technique makes to the understanding of personality. Psychoanalytic ego-psychology is different from earlier psychoanalytic theory in that it "focuses upon the ego as an autonomous agent which functions to adapt the organism to both its inner and outer environments." (Gardner, 1964, p. 9) Furthermore, it teaches, contrary to the id-psychology that dominated earlier theory, that "the ego does not originate simply out of conflict, but rather that the ego is an inborn apparatus, an ensemble of functions

which at any time may exert their effects outside the regions of mental conflicts." (Hartmann, 1958 cited in Gardner, 1964, p.9) Since ego defenses /those first defined by Freud, and elaborated by Anna Freud (1937)/ are an essential aspect of psychoanalytic ego psychology it can be assumed that they, too, may arise to serve functions which are not necessarily pathological. One may expect, therefore, to uncover such mechanisms in a sample of designated "normal" subjects such as are being employed in the present study (Gardner, et.al., 1959).

Klopfner (1954) points out personal experiences that strengthen his tendency to rely on ego-psychology in his efforts to develop a Rorschach rationale. For example, some cases involved dramatic behavior such as homicide. Yet this dramatic behavior did not show in the Rorschach records of the individuals concerned. He says, "Closest scrutiny of these records... seem to reveal that they were committed in such states as epileptic furor, toxic conditions, or extreme panic. Thus it appeared that these acts were neither ego-alien or ego-syntonic but rather the products of a temporary yet completely disconnected from the ego of the individual." (p.562)

The implications of Klopfner's experiences are these: (1) the Rorschach usually seems to reflect ego organization; (2) ego organization may not always be observable; (3) the breakthrough of archaic forces into behavior is visible in Rorschach reactions only to the extent to which such breakthrough is mirrored in the existing ego organization (1954, p.563).

Defenses are ego functions which attempt to eliminate threatening impulses and their representations. Briefly stated, "defense is understood to refer to any psychological operation that is intended to block discharge of threatening, rejected impulses and thereby to avoid the painful emotional consequences of such discharge." (Schafer, 1954, p. 161) Mechanisms of defense particularly prominent in the psychoanalytic school, and those with which this study is particularly concerned are: repression, intellectualization, projection, denial, isolation and reaction formation.

Concerning the origin of defense mechanisms, Freud would have held that they are mainly inherited but he did not consider heredity the only factor. Modern ego-analysts have suggested that learned response patterns, the conditions that maintain them, and the influence of situational events play a more prominent role in behavior pathology than Freudian theory represented.<sup>1</sup> (Ford and Urban, 1963)

There are numerous data illustrating how defensive operations are seen in the Rorschach (Abrams, 1962; Erikson, 1954; Goldberger, 1962; Schafer, 1954). However, few attempts have been made to validate the many clinical hypotheses regarding the relationship between psychoanalytic ego-psychology and the test response. An important contribution in this direction was made by Gardner, et.al., in 1959, when they

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<sup>1</sup>See Hartmann's discussion on "change of function" and "secondary autonomy"--relative functional independence despite genetic continuity (1964).

attempted to relate cognitive controls (e.g., leveling and sharpening; focusing and scanning, etc.) to defense style. In functionalist terms cognitive style is broadly defined as, "...the means we have for fending off, choosing, and admitting stimulation from the outside world which, with free entrance, would traumatize and overwhelm us." In psychoanalytic terms this is the "ego control system." (Tyler, 1965, p. 226) Individuals who use leveling controls tend to "assimilate new stimuli to an already dominant cognitive organization and thus not to be aware of differences between the old and the new, "while sharpeners, notice changes and keep successive stimulating situations separate from one another." (Tyler, 1965, p. 227)

The assumption underlying Gardner's research was that levelers use the ego defense of repression while sharpeners use isolation. He used the Rorschach as a measure of repression-isolation and administered it to a normal population of 30 males and 30 females. The special relevance of his work to the present study is that the signs he used to tap these two defensive dimensions were taken from Schafer (1954) and Rapaport (1946) and were almost identical to those retained in the final version of Gardner's (1964) Rorschach Defense Checklist. Gardner (1959) however, made no attempt to empirically validate the signs employed. Rather, he had two investigators score each Rorschach protocol several times until they could agree on whether or not it was characterized predominantly by repressive or isolating defenses. The

assumed relationships were borne out. Extreme repressors tend to be levelers and extreme isolators tend to be scanners but the converse is not true, i.e., levelers may or may not be repressors and scanners may or may not be isolators.

Levine's and Spivack's (1964) Rorschach Index of Repressive Style is another attempt at using the sign approach to isolate defensive mechanisms in the Rorschach. Working on the assumption that "the more the verbalizations of the response are stated in specific, affectively toned terms and are characterized by a continued and developing flow of words, the less repressive functioning is indicated," (p. 17) they established seven scoring principles dealing in part with the specificity of the language employed. Every Rorschach protocol was scored on the basis of this point system. The more points a record received the lower was the indication of repressive mechanisms, i.e., the lower the RIRS score the more repression is indicated. However, the converse is not necessarily true, i.e., a high score does not indicate isolation or intellectualizing defenses. Levine and Spivack found that their scale differentiated a clinical sample of hysterics and compulsives.

Although the scoring principles are based on different assumptions the RIRS resembles the RDC in employing a checklist and formal scoring procedure to reveal defensive mechanisms in the Rorschach.

#### Development of the Rorschach Defense Checklist

Gardner (1964) undertook to empirically validate Schafer's Rorschach sign approach to the identification and appraisal of the organization

of an individual's preferred modes of defense. The signs selected to be studied were repression, reaction formation, intellectualization, isolation, and projection. The signs for each type of defense were grouped in such a way as to compose a checklist. See Appendix A for a sample of the checklist used in the present study. A sample of clinical patients bearing the diagnoses of hysteric, obsessive compulsive, and paranoid psychotic were used because the defenses under study are said to be typically employed by these groups. The RDC successfully differentiated hysterics, obsessive compulsives and paranoids in the clinical sample. However, when the RDC was subsequently used to screen adjusted from maladjusted subjects in a non-clinical sample the results were non-remarkable. Perhaps the small number of subjects in Gardner's non-clinical group may account, in part, for his lack of significant findings. He designated three groups as adjusted, maladjusted and intermediate with an N of 31, 30 and 29 in each, respectively. Furthermore, all subjects were male. The present study will considerably expand the sample (N=120) and use both male and female groups.

#### Ego-defenses as measured by the MMPI

Eriksen (1952, p. 230) points out that "an important way in which defense mechanisms differ is in how they affect the individual's behavior in the presence of threatening stimuli. Mechanisms such as denial and repression produce avoidance...(Others) permit a ready recognition of... threatening stimuli but self esteem is preserved by rationalization.... In one case the emphasis...is on the denial of external reality while

in the other case the denial is in terms of how this reality applies to the individual." The continuum implied here by Eriksen (the extremes being repressors at one end and intellectualizers or sensitizers at the other) was rapidly caught up on subsequent research (Holzman and Klein, 1956; Holzman and Gardner, 1959).

In 1954(a) Eriksen constructed a measure of ego strength based on the Rorschach. Using the Hysteria and Psychasthenia scales of the MMPI he investigated the relations of ego-strength, hysteria and psychasthenia to the recall of completed and incomplected tasks under conditions where self esteem was and was not objectively threatened. Relevant to this study is his finding that scores on the hysteria scale are inversely related to the tendency to recall relatively more in-complected than completed tasks when self esteem is objectively threatened--suggesting a possible measure of repression taken from the item pool of the MMPI.

Expanding on the hypothesis that individuals fall on a continuum in responding to threatening stimuli (repressors who use avoidance and denial and sensitizers who use intellectualization and other obsessional mechanisms) Byrne (1961) developed the Repression-Sensitization Scale. The Repression-Sensitization Scale

The Repression-Sensitization Scale, to be used in this study, was developed by Byrne in 1961 to facilitate convenient, valid and reliable measurement of that defensive dimension. Although he does not interpret his data in terms of psychoanalytic ego-psychology the nomenclature he

uses in defining his variables is essentially similar enough to that theoretical standpoint to warrant its use in the present study.

Expanding and improving on work done by Altrocchi, Parsons and Dickoff (1960), Byrne used a combination of six MMPI scales to measure his variables: D, L, K, Pt, Hy denial and the Welsh Anxiety Scale. He cites research showing how the various scales have been used to measure defenses, e.g., sensitizers score low on K, high on F minus K, low on Hy, high on Pt, high on MAS, etc., while repressors score in the opposite direction. To eliminate the measurement difficulties rising from item overlap he substituted a scoring system in which each item comprising the six scales was scored only once and all inconsistently scored items were eliminated. On a college group of 60 males and 73 females he obtained a split half (odd/even) coefficient of internal consistency of .88. Using 37 males and 38 females he administered the R-S scale at six week intervals and obtained a coefficient of stability of .88. The mean scores for the normative group of 294 males and 230 females were not statistically different.

Subsequent research, in which Byrne (1963) was primarily interested in increasing the homogeneity of the scale and hence, its reliability, reported somewhat different results. He performed an internal consistency item analysis on the original 182 items of the R-S Scale. All items were individually correlated with the total scale and 127 items significant beyond  $p = .0001$ ; these were designated the Revised R-S Scale. Using 58 males and 76 females he computed a coefficient of internal consistency with a Brown-Spearman correction which yielded the following



results: Revised R-S, .91; Original R-S, .94. Coefficients of stability obtained three months later were: Revised R-S, .82; Original R-S, .83. He reports no explanation for the differences in coefficients between the 1963 study and the normative study. He concluded, however, that an internal consistency item analysis shortened the scale but did not effect reliability. Insofar as research associated with the R-S Scale has utilized the original 182 items this study has also retained them.

In his comprehensive normative study Byrne (1961) employed a correlational approach to test validation. He sought, for example, (1) to determine if scores on the R-S Scale were related to Ullmann's (1958) Facilitation-Inhibition Scale which presumably measures the behavior dimension; (2) to show that repressors and sensitizers consistently give positive or negative self descriptions respectively; (3) to relate F scale scores to R-S scores, and (4) to determine if anxiety arousing responses on a TAT task were related to the R-S dimension. These studies, their rationale and results, will be described in greater detail below.

Ullmann (1958) developed an MMPI scale to measure defensive reaction labeled facilitation-inhibition. The former was defined by Shannon (1955) as meaning externalization and acting out, i.e., the avoidance of anxiety by immediate expression of the conflict; he defined the latter as internalization or the avoidance of anxiety by denial. Assuming that Ullmann's Facilitation-Inhibition Scale defined the same variables described by the R-S Scale Byrne (1961) hypothesized a

negative correlation between the two (since they are scored in opposite directions). He administered the R-S and F-I scales to 40 males and 24 female undergraduates several weeks apart. Since 20 items were common to both scales he performed four correlations: (1) using all items of both scales; (2) eliminating the overlapping items from the F-I scale; (3) eliminating the overlapping items from the R-S Scale; (4) eliminating overlapping items from both scales. The obtained correlations ranged from  $-.71$  to  $-.81$  and all were significant at the  $.01$  level. Byrne concluded that the hypothesized relationship was confirmed.

Byrne (1961) cites evidence indicating that repressors describe themselves more positively on Leary's Interpersonal Checklist (Altrocchi, et.al., 1960) and in a Q-sort task (Elock and Thomas, 1955) than do sensitizers (Altrocchi, 1961). On the basis of these findings he hypothesized that the R-S Scale would be positively related to negative self descriptions of self and ideal self and unrelated to negative ideal self description. Two groups were used. There were 48 females and 50 males in the first for whom discrepancy scores on Worchel's Self Activity Inventory (a measure of self-ideal discrepancy) and R-S scores were available. The second group consisted of 37 males and 20 females for whom self, ideal self, discrepancy and R-S Scores were available. In the first sample R-S correlated  $.62$  ( $p=.01$ ) with self ideal discrepancy. In the second group R-S correlated  $.55$  ( $p=.01$ ) with self ideal discrepancy,  $.66$  ( $p=.01$ ) with self description and  $.25$  (ns) with ideal self description. Again, the hypothesized relation-

ships were confirmed. In 1963 Byrne, et.al., replicated this study using the Original and Revised R-S Scales. As with previous data, reported differences between the original and revised scoring systems were negligible and all others results were essentially similar to the above findings.

Repressors have been described as authoritarian individuals who do not accept sexual and aggressive impulses. Conversely, non-authoritarian individuals become easily aware of non-acceptable impulses (Adorno, et.al, 1950). Expanding on this research, Kogan (1956) obtained a negative correlation between F scale scores and auditory recognition scores for sexual and aggressive sentences. Byrne (1961) assumed that Kogan's task was tapping correlates of the R-S dimension and hypothesized that the R-S Scale should also correlate negatively with authoritarianism. Using 36 males and 37 females he administered a modified F scale and the R-S Scale several weeks apart. His obtained correlation of  $-.40$  was significant at the  $.01$  level.

Related to the above study is one assuming that the R-S measures a general tendency to approach or avoid threatening stimuli (e.g., sexual, aggressive and emotional responses). Byrne (1961) hypothesized that individuals high on the R-S scale (sensitizers) should respond to TAT cards with more sexuality, aggression and more emotional words than those with low scores (repressors). He found that only male sensitizers had significantly ( $p .01$ ) higher sexual scores than male repressors. Results for high and low females were nonsignificant.

Furthermore, there was no relation found for emotional and aggressive responses. He assumes that sexual cues arouse more anxiety than aggressive or emotional ones for males. He suggests further that females might have responded similarly if female examiners had been used.

The results of this last study bring to light two major limitations in Byrne's normative study. The first is that he consistently fails to mention the sex of the examiner employed. Although this may not be a primary concern in studies employing only paper-and-pencil tests, e.g., when using only the F-I and R-S scales, it must certainly effect performance when a subject is asked to structure a more nebulous task such as the TAT.

Also open to criticism is ~~Byrne's~~ failure to differentially analyze the data in terms of sex of the subjects. In combining male and female test scores he may have left untapped important differences relative to questionnaire type inventories and rendered subsequent interpretation of his R-S Scale ambiguous. Heilburn (1961), for example, has shown that the K scale of the MMPI correlates positively with a measure of defensiveness in men and negatively in women. Of special relevance here is work done by Levine and Spivack (1964) with their Rorschach Index of Repressive Style. It is a measure of verbal usage taken from the Rorschach which successfully differentiated obsessives from hysterics. The index is low (i.e., repression is high) when verbalizations are sparse, overly general and unelaborated. It is high (i.e., repression low) when verbalizations are specific.

Spivack, Levine, and Brenner (1964) found, for example, that: (1) high scoring males have a significantly lower mean Welsh Anxiety Scale score than high scoring females; (2) using the Hy minus Pt distribution, high scoring males tend to show Hy greater than Pt, and low males the opposite. There is no relationship between Hy minus Pt and RIRS in females; (3) among low scoring males, there is a tendency for the Pt scale of the MMPI to be coded high more frequently than among the high scoring males. The opposite is true for females. The high RIRS females more frequently code the Pt scale high than do the low RIRS females (Levine and Spivack, 1964, p. 101) which is what one would expect using the R-S scale (since a high Pt score is more representative of a sensitizer than a repressor). These findings take on special importance should the R-S be used as a diagnostic instrument. The sex of the patient would be clearly implicated in differential diagnosis.

Another area of concern which may lead to ambiguity in interpreting the R-S Scale is intelligence and level of education of the subjects employed. Byrne (1961) maintains that neither theory nor empirical findings would lead to the postulation of a relationship between intelligence and the R-S Scale. Using 60 males and 72 females he obtained a correlation of  $-.15$  (ns) between the R-S and the Shipley Hartford Scale. Using 26 males he obtained a correlation of  $.25$  (ns) between the R-S and standard scores on a college entrance test. He does not indicate, however, how he obtained his correlations nor the percent of sensitizers and repressors in each group. Conceivably, a

sample containing primarily sensitizers would indeed reveal a positive correlation between that variable and intellectual level. For contrary to Byrne's assertion that theory would not imply a relationship between defensive style and intelligence Levine and Spivack (1964) maintain that "repressive style is a consistent characteristic of an individual and it is manifested in vague, unelaborated language which is lacking in integration and flow." (p. 14) The implication is that an individual who consistently blocked out ideational processes would consequently function in a very limited sphere---including the intellectual one. In their own work with the RIRS (where low scores indicate repression) they found a low but relatively consistent correlation with that index and measures of intelligence in both sexes with correlations being higher for females than males.

Further elaboration of this problem area is provided by Himmelstein (1965) who constructed seven scales designed to measure, for example, academic achievement, graduate school potential, originality, etc. using items taken from the MMPI item pool. His sample consisted of 281 undergraduates. Five of his seven scales had correlations with academic achievement (grade point average) significant beyond the .01 level. All of the scales were significantly correlated with his measure of scholastic aptitude (ACT). Not only may the MMPI be directly related to intellectual factors, it may be an indirect measure of intelligence.

Highlighting interpretive difficulties associated with the MMPI and its derivative scales when employing a college population is a study

by Applezweig (1953). His primary purpose was to assess the applicability of the original MMPI norms to individuals of higher education and intelligence levels. He used 411 subjects for whom the primary criteria were that they have no history of psychiatric hospitalization and were in attendance in a non-compulsory school situation. All subjects were given the MMPI and the California Capacity Questionnaire. The mean age of all subjects was 24 with a range from 16 to 62; the mean level of education was 13 years with a range of 9 to 17+ years; the mean I.Q. was 115 with a range from 84 to 169. He obtained the following results: differences between his male subjects and the original MMPI norms were significant at .01 in the direction of abnormality on the D, Hy, Pd, Mf, Pt and Ma scales; they were significant at the .05 level on the Hs and Sc scales. Differences between his female subjects and the MMPI norms were significant at the .01 level in the direction of abnormality on the Hy, Pd, Pa, Sc and Ma scales. He recommends caution in interpreting MMPI profiles for individuals in advanced education.

There has been some interest in assessing adjustment-maladjustment using the R-S Scale. However, results in this area are at present inconclusive. For example, it has been shown that sensitizers: give more deviant responses on Gough's Adjective Checklist (Byrne, 1961); have a larger self-ideal discrepancy than repressors (Byrne, 1963); are more anxious than repressors (Joy, 1963); yield lower (more maladjusted) scores on the California Personality Inventory (Byrne, et.al., 1965a). On the other hand there is research indicating that repressors

show less verbalized anxiety but more physiological disturbance than sensitizers (Lomont, 1965; Davison, 1963).

Related to this last conclusion is a study by Byrne and Sheffield, (1965b). They maintained that scores on the R-S Scale have been found to be predictive of response to threat. Compared to sensitizers, repressors are reported to have greater difficulty in recalling nonsense syllables associated with poor performance on an intelligence and personality test (Gossett, 1964) and to have higher perceptual thresholds for words associated with failure (Tempone, 1962). They assumed that sexual stimuli constitute a threat and individuals differing on the R-S Scale should respond differently to that threat. More specifically they hypothesized that sensitizers would respond to sexually arousing stimuli with greater verbalized anxiety than would repressors. The authors designated the upper and lower thirds of a sample of 150 undergraduate males as sensitizers and repressors respectively. There were 44 Ss in each group. One half of each group read vividly descriptive sexual passages from a group of books. The other half read neutral passages from the same books. All Ss were then asked to respond to a rating scale about their feelings while reading the selection. They found that sexual arousal was significantly greater following the sexual passages than neutral passages for both sensitizers and repressors but that sensitizers admitted to more anxiety in the sexual arousal condition than repressors. Pomeranz (1963) also found that subjects scoring high on the R-S Scale reported being more anxious



in response to anxiety producing situations than subjects scoring low. They explore two possible interpretations for these results: (1) that sensitizers do indeed have greater sexual conflicts than repressors or (2) that threat is equally strong at the two ends of the defensive continuum but that sensitizers meet the threat by verbalizing their feelings of anxiety. They recommend that subsequent research attempt to determine whether repressors are unable or unwilling to verbalize anxiety in a threatening situation. A major criticism of the above study is that the authors may have overgeneralized their findings in light of the fact that they used only male subjects. Byrne earlier concluded (1961) that sexual cues arouse more anxiety in males than other types of threatening stimuli (e.g., aggressive and emotional cues), but that male sensitizers were more prone to act out their anxieties (i.e., give more sexual responses to TAT stories) than male repressors. There were no significant differences found for female sensitizers and repressors possibly because of examiner influence. Byrne and Sheffield should have taken these results into consideration in their 1965 study. They do, however, raise a very interesting and crucial question and one that warrants further comment. If, as they suggest, threat is equally strong at the two ends of the defensive continuum but that sensitizers act out the threat by verbalizing their feelings of anxiety does Byrne's scale really measure the repression sensitization dimension or does it measure some consistent manner of viewing the expression of emotionality?

Lefcourt (1966) presents evidence which lends support to an affirmative answer to the above question. He conducted a two part study. The first part was concerned with subjects' perceptions of the R-S Scale. If, as he hypothesized, performance on the R-S Scale is a function of a subject's interpretation of emotionality then perceptions as to the meaning of the R-S test should reflect the differing evaluations of emotionality by repressors and sensitizers. He used 14 male and 14 female undergraduates. All subjects were given the R-S Scale and then asked questions pertinent to what they felt the test measured. Their responses were categorized as "pertaining to mental illness," or "non-evaluative personality characteristics." Two raters were used for whom there was 98% agreement on blind classification. Results indicated that repressors described the test as concerned with mental illness while sensitizers saw it as measuring personality characteristics. A chi square analysis showed this difference was significant at the .02 level. Although the sample employed in this study was regrettably small the results are provocative. All subjects apparently thought the test pertained to emotionality but repressors viewed the admission of it as an indication of instability while sensitizers saw it as revealing honesty with one's self.

In the second part of his study Lefcourt employed 96 undergraduates (he does not specify the number of males and females nor the sex of the examiner). Thirteen TAT cards used for eliciting affect-ideation responses were given to all Ss. However, one half of the sample

were told that the experiment concerned creative imagination (CI) while the other half was told that the investigation involved collecting norms for contrast with performance of a mentally ill population (MI). He specifically hypothesized that sensitizers would be more expressive than repressors as long as such expressiveness was not seen as having negative effects or meanings. An essential drawback of this study is that the author used the Bendig Emotionality Scale in place of the R-S as he maintained that the two scales correlated at .69 and hence, one served as a reasonable substitute for the other. He does not state the level of significance for this coefficient nor does he cite research associated with how he arrived at it. The present results must be interpreted in light of this limitation. Lefcourt found that in the CI condition sensitizers far exceeded repressors in the use of affect-ideation words. In the MI condition the difference was reduced to statistical non-significance. Repressors showed a stable and low use of affect-ideation words across situations. Evidence that this is more a reluctance rather than an inability to be expressive is provided by a separate analysis of overall number of words emitted by each subject parallel to that with the affect-ideational word count. Sensitizers used only slightly more words than repressors but this did not affect the conditions of the experiment. In other words, even under optimal conditions, repressors are reluctant to express emotionality and view it as a negative factor in adjustment.

Lefcourt tentatively concluded that the R-S scale scores depict the individuals evaluations of emotionality and suggests that it may

be only nominally related to the behavioral referents of repression and sensitization. As such he suggests renaming the R-S Scale!

As if interpretive hypotheses associated with the R-S dimension have not been sufficiently confounded by previously mentioned research findings there is a final line of critical research associated with tapping subjects' test taking attitude on personality questionnaires. These test taking attitudes have been variously termed response sets, dissimulation, acquiescence, etc. Pomeranz (1963) defines "response sets" as "consistencies in an individual's mode of response to questionnaire item independent of the particular content of the item. One type of response is the 'agreeing' response set." (p. 89) Couch and Keniston (1960) established a set of attributes which they felt were descriptive of the personality pattern of subjects who had a tendency to agree or disagree with an item regardless of its content. They termed these "yeasayers" and "neasayers." Yeasayers (1) express emotions freely; (2) are impulsive; (3) readily admit anxiety; (4) desire emotional excitement. Neasayers (1) repress impulses; (2) use denial; (3) present a picture of stability. It will be noted that repressor and sensitizer bear characteristics similar to the neasayers and yeasayers respectively. Approximately 70% of the items of the R-S scale are keyed "true". Therefore, subjects who respond true to most of the items would receive a high score on the R-S scale and would be classified sensitizers and the reverse would be true for repressors.

Liberty, Lunneborg and Atkinson (1964) attempted to clarify

through factor analysis the correspondence between measures of perceptual defense and dissimulation and the relationship of these measures to the social desirability, acquiescence and lie response sets. They gave 150 male undergraduates the MMPI under standard conditions. They isolated three factors identified as response sets which accounted for 54% of the total variance and 70% of the common variance: (1) social desirability; (2) acquiescence or tendency to mark true to personality items; (3) the lie factor. They conclude that the R-S Scale and Ullmann's F-I scale are entirely accounted for by the two factors of social desirability and acquiescence. Negating the conclusions drawn from the work of Couch and Keniston, however, were their finding that repressors score in the socially desirable direction while sensitizers endorse more socially undesirable statements. Jackson and Messick (1962) also accounted for 3/4 of the common variance and half of the total variance of the MMPI in terms of acquiescence and desirability.

It can be anticipated that the controversy over what the R-S Scale measures will rage for sometime. However, the possibility remains that it does indeed define a behavioral dimension relative to repression-sensitization. Furthermore, it's ease in administration and interpretation renders it exceptionally amenable to further research.

#### Other Measures of Defensive Behavior Using the MMPI

Haan (1965) explored the relationship between ego mechanisms and the CPI and MMPI. Although she explicitly defines her variables in terms of psychoanalytic ego psychology her N is small and vaguely defined

and there is a paucity of validity and reliability research associated with her work. She reports no cross validation studies and warns that her scales were conveniently called "scale" but are only in their preliminary stages of development.

The present scales grew out of previous research in which a model of ego functioning was proposed which included both coping and defense mechanisms (Haan, 1963, 1964; Kroeber, 1963). Various relationships of these ego functions to change in I.Q. and to social mobility were reported. In her study employing the CPI and MMPI Haan (1965) used 50 males and 49 females of the Oakland Growth Study. All were about 37 years old. The range of gross emotional adequacy was wide, from efficient and successful individuals to some who had had one or more experiences as hospitalized psychotics. Twenty ratings of ego-functions were made; ten defense mechanisms and ten coping mechanisms, by interviewers and psychologists. The mean reliabilities of the indices of defense mechanisms was .68 for men and .55 for women. Defense mechanism scales were taken from the item pool of the MMPI (see Appendix B for the items used). Item overlap was not great; 122 items were scored on only one of the various defense scales, 2 on 2, 4 on 3 and 2 on 4. This indicates the relative specificity for the various sets of items. Kuder-Richardson reliabilities of the defense scales were: intellectualization, .67; denial, .81; projection, .59; regression, .83; displacement, .75; repression, .54.

Because of the very recent development of these scales further

research related to them is unavailable at the present time. Since there apparently are no other scales utilizing MMPI items which purport to measure intellectualization, projection and denial Haan's scales will be employed and analyzed with their many limitations in mind.

## CHAPTER THREE

## PROCEDURE

Subjects. The subjects consisted of 120 normal college students from Loyola University. Thirty subjects were chosen from each of the four undergraduate levels (i.e., freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior), fifteen of whom were males and fifteen of whom were females. The subjects ranged in age from 17 to 24 with a mean age in months of 245.87 and a standard deviation of 18.28. The mean age for the males was 249.36 with a standard deviation of 19.67; the mean age for females was 242.36 with a standard deviation of 16.18. The mean difference in age for males and females was significant at the .05 level for a two tailed test. All subjects were single, Catholic, Caucasian and none had ever taken the MMPI or the Rorschach before. Within each of the grade level-sex categories one half of the subjects were tested by male examiners and one half were tested by female examiners.

Examiners. Several examiners were used. The total number was 17. Forty percent of the records were given by students who were taking their practicum course in projective testing at the first year graduate level. The major investigator for this study also served as teaching assistant for the first year practicum course and carefully observed all students in their administration of the Rorschach test. Only those student-examiners were chosen who adequately admin-



istered the test. Furthermore, all records were carefully examined by the major investigator to check for such things as accurate scoring, complete inquiry, etc. Sixty percent of the records were collected by four examiners (2males and 2 females) three of whom were using different aspects of the data for their own research. Of the four, one had four years of clinical experience, each of the other three had completed practicum training and two were in various stages of clerkship affiliation. Of the two male examiners one collected 17 records while the other collected 18; of the female examiners one collected 18 records and the other 19.

Early in the study a statistical evaluation of examiner influence on the number of obtained Rorschach responses was obtained. The mean number of responses obtained by the four principal examiners was compared to the mean number of responses obtained by the 13 other examiners. The critical ratio was considerably below that required for significance at the .05 level of confidence. Apparently using a number of examiners does not confound the results of this study.

The "normality" of each subject was determined by the clinical judgment of the major investigator who has four years of clinical experience. Questionable cases were reviewed by the project advisor who is ABEPP director of clinical training at Loyola University. Judgments were based on the Rorschach and the MMPI.

A standard MMPI was administered to each subject individually as part of a larger battery including a standard Rorschach and in some cases, the TAT. All tests were administered at Loyola University. The MMPI's were hand scored using keys for the standard clinical scales and the scales employed by Byrne and Haan (see Appendix B for the items used in these scales). The hand scoring was checked and rechecked.

Statistical procedure. Pearson Product Moment Correlations were computed by the data processing center of Loyola University to compare all of the MMPI scales (clinical as well as experimental) to all of the RDC scales. There are no statistical problems inherent in correlating total scores of a checklist with another measure (Cronbach, 1949). Because preliminary frequency distributions indicated that skewed data was being dealt with, means and t tests were abandoned in favor of median analysis and chi-square to test for significance. As Cronbach (1949) maintains, "In skewed Rorschach distributions, the few cases with many responses in a category have a preponderant weight in determining standard deviations and the significance of the difference." (p.361)

Tetrachoric correlations were used as another method of analyzing the relationship between certain scales of the RDC and the R-S Scale. This correlation is especially useful when only dichotomized information is available, as, for example, two items scored as passed or failed

(McNemar, 1962). In the present study subject scores were dichotomized according to whether they fell above or below the median on a particular variable. The observed frequencies of the number of subjects falling above or below the median were then fitted into a fourfold table such as the one seen in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Sample of a fourfold table used in computing  
Tetrachoric R

	Ss below median of R-S	Ss above median of R-S
Ss below median of RDC isolation scale	33	26
Ss above median of RDC isolation scale	33	28

## CHAPTER FOUR

## Results and Discussion

Table 2 presents the intercorrelations between the scales of the Rorschach Defense Checklist and the clinical scales of the MMPI. Significant (albeit low) negative correlations were found between repression and *Mf* ( $p.05$ ), *Pa* ( $p.05$ ) and *Ma* ( $p.05$ ). However, a significant positive correlation was found between repression and *K* ( $p.05$ ); this too is very low but noteworthy since it is in the expected direction. The *K* scale reflects a subject's test taking attitude. A high score indicates defensiveness and motivation to appear normal, while a low score represents frankness and self-criticism or deliberate attempts to make a poor impression (Anastasi, 1961). As such, this positive relationship is not inconsistent with definitions advanced of repressors as wishing to present a picture of stability (Couch and Keniston, 1960; Lefcourt, 1966). On the other hand, sensitizers, who use primarily intellectualization and isolation as defenses, are described as freely expressing anxiety and emotion (Couch and Keniston, 1960) and who see such expression as honesty with oneself rather than instability (Lefcourt, 1966). Isolation correlates negatively with *K* ( $p.05$ ) as would be expected.

There were no significant correlations between the MMPI clinical scales and either the RDC reaction formation or projection scales.

TABLE 2

Intercorrelations between the components of the Rorschach  
Defense Checklist and the Clinical Scales of the MMPI

THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE SCALES	THE MMPI CLINICAL SCALES											
	L	F	K	Hs	D	Hy	Pd	Mf	Pa	Pt	Sc	Ma
Repression	.05	-.17	.20 <sup>a</sup>	-.03	-.16	-.08	-.15	-.22 <sup>a</sup>	-.20 <sup>a</sup>	-.16	-.11	-.25 <sup>b</sup>
R-Formation	.08	.07	-.08	.04	.03	.02	.06	.02	.002	-.08	-.08	.13
Intellect.	-.07	.12	-.08	-.08	-.02	.003	.26 <sup>b</sup>	.20	.05	.03	.09	.15
Isolation	-.05	.10	-.22 <sup>a</sup>	-.07	.05	.13	.15	.003	.20 <sup>a</sup>	.09	.07	.02
Projection	.001	-.02	-.16	.03	-.06	.09	.14	-.09	.09	.01	.01	.17

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .05

<sup>b</sup> significant at p .01

RDC intellectualization shows a significant positive correlation with Pd (p.01). Psychopaths have been described as individuals in whom "reaction formations against hostility are central" and those in whom "ingratiation may be heavily colored by strivings toward impeccable conscientiousness..." (Schafer, 1954, p.60). The intellectualization scale is scored on the basis of a subject's exhibiting a "studious attitude; precision, elegance and complexity of verbalizations." It is to be expected then that psychopathic tendencies toward "impeccable conscientiousness" would be reflected on a scale such as intellectualization.

Using 138 subjects Gardner (1964) computed a similar analysis of his data. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3. Of the 138, 90 were composed of adjusted, maladjusted and intermediately adjusted seminarians and 48 were part of his clinical sample composed of hysterics, obsessive compulsives and paranoids. Gardner does not indicate, however, the percent of each group were contained in the 48. If, for example, they were composed primarily of paranoids this would account in part for the positive correlations he reports between projection and the Pa and Sc scales. Such a loading would reduce the generalizability of his results.

The only similarity between Gardner's results and those of the present study, which employs only a normal sample, is a significant negative correlation between repression and Mf. Appar-

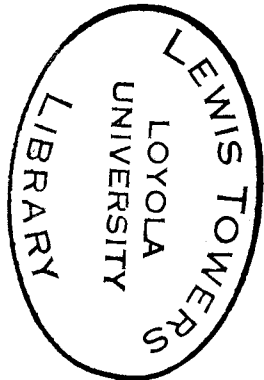
TABLE 3

Gardner's (1964) Intercorrelations between the Components of the Rorschach Defense Checklist and the Clinical Scales of the MMPI

THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE SCALES	THE MMPI CLINICAL SCALES											
	L	F	K	Hs	D	Hy	Pd	Mf	Pa	Pt	Sc	Ma
Repression	.01	.15	-.07	.22 <sup>b</sup>	.19 <sup>b</sup>	.27 <sup>a</sup>	.11	-.18 <sup>b</sup>	.03	.08	.09	.00
R-Formation	.10	-.15	.15	-.16	-.13	-.16	-.03	.01	-.05	-.05	-.06	.06
Intellect.	-.08	-.07	.10	-.14	-.22 <sup>b</sup>	-.14	-.14	.19 <sup>b</sup>	-.05	-.05	-.01	.02
Isolation	-.09	-.03	-.01	-.08	-.13	-.11	-.13	.15	-.06	-.03	.03	.04
Projection	-.09	.21 <sup>b</sup>	-.12	-.08	-.03	-.08	-.01	.04	.27 <sup>a</sup>	.16	.26 <sup>a</sup>	.21 <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .01

<sup>b</sup> significant at p .05



ently the utilization of various defensive mechanisms in a normal population does not correlate with symptoms of psychopathology as measured by the MMPI in the same way that a population composed of adjusted and maladjusted seminarians, obsessive compulsives, hysterics and paranoid individuals does.

Of special interest in Gardner's sample is that many significant correlations are positive, e.g., subjects high in repression are also high on D and Hy; while in the normal sample of the present study subjects high in repression correlate negatively and significantly with Pa and Ma. Perhaps in a normal sample, defenses are effective in reducing anxiety - thus pathology will not be reflected in heightened depression, hysterical symptoms or paranoia.

Table 4 presents intercorrelations between the MMPI experimental defense scales and the Rorschach Defense Checklist. Included in the MMPI scales are Byrne's R-S and Haan's intellectualization, projection, denial and repression [R(H)] scales.

There is a low but significant negative correlation between the RDC repression scale and the R-S. Since the two scales are scored in the opposite direction a negative relationship would be expected. However, no other significant or anticipated relationships are exhibited between the R-S and RDC. It would be expected, for example, that intellectualization and isolation would relate in a significant positive direction with R-S since individuals high on this scale use primarily obsessive compulsive defenses.



TABLE 4

Intercorrelations of the MMPI Defense Scales and the RDC

THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE SCALES	R/S	THE MMPI DEFENSE SCALES			R(H)
		Int.	Proj.	Den.	
Iso.	.11	.06	.33 <sup>a</sup>	-.13	-.08
Pro.	.06	.05	.21 <sup>b</sup>	-.05	-.05
M	.03	-.01	.07	-.09	-.06
R	.18 <sup>b</sup>	.12	-.14	.23 <sup>b</sup>	-.03
R-F	.04	.01	.19 <sup>b</sup>	.01	.04
Int.	-.01	.02	.28 <sup>a</sup>	-.03	-.15

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .01<sup>b</sup> significant at p .05

The use of repression as a primary mode of defense is characteristically accompanied by denial. This is borne out by the significant, albeit low, correlation between RDC repression and Haan's denial scale. The RDC projection scale relates positively (p.01) with Haan's projection scale. However, her projection scale also relates positively to all of the obsessive compulsive defenses - the highest correlation being with the RDC isolation scale (p.01). It will also be noted in Table 2 that RDC isolation has a low but positive correlation with the Pa scale of the MMPI. Relative to these findings it must be recalled that although one defense may predominate in maintaining stable ego functioning it most likely appears in a constellation of other lesser defenses. In this connection Schafer (1954) maintains that projection is rarely used alone as a defense. "Indeed," he says, "paranoid pathology is very often found in predominantly obsessive compulsive contexts." (p.282) In light of this and relative to the relationships shown in Tables 2 and 4 between obsessive compulsive defenses and projection the case for the RDC may be argued in either of two directions: (1) the RDC scales purported to measure obsessive compulsive defenses are dynamically and theoretically related to that defensive structure and are valid measurements of it or (2) obsessive compulsive defenses as measured by the RDC are only nominally related to that defensive framework and are contaminated by another measure - namely, that of projection. Because the relationship between the RDC obsessive compulsive defenses and other measures claiming to isolate the same defenses (i.e., MMPI measures)

TABLE 5

Tetrachoric R correlations between the R-S Scale and the  
isolation, intellectualization and repression scales  
of the RDC

	Ss below mdn. on R-S	Ss above mdn. on R-S	$r_t$	P
Ss below mdn. on RDC isolation	33	26		
			.02	ns
Ss above mdn. on RDC isolation	33	28		
Ss below mdn. on RDC intell. scale	33	27		
			.00	ns
Ss above mdn. on RDC intellectual.	33	27		
Ss below mdn. on RDC repression	27	24		
			-.05	ns
Ss above mdn. on RDC repression	39	30		

are only minimal, i.e., correlations are low, and because there is a paucity of validity and reliability data associated with the MMPI scales a resolution in favor of either the former or the latter of those two statements does not seem warranted. The data, however, are provocative and clearly suggest the need and advisability for future research using the RDC.

Table 5 presents tetrachoric correlations (rather than Pearson Product Moment Correlations as employed in the other tables presented thus far) between the R-S Scale and the isolation, intellectualization and repression scales of the RDC. There is no relationship shown between the R-S and the isolation and intellectualization scales of the RDC. This is consistent with the findings shown in Table 4. RDC repression, although insignificantly related to R-S, is in the expected direction, i.e., many subjects who score above the median on RDC repression score below the median on R-S. Since the two scales are scored in different directions a negative correlation would be anticipated.

Table 6 shows intercorrelations (Pearson Product Moment) with themselves. A significant negative correlation was found between the repression scale and isolation ( $p.01$ ), projection ( $p.01$ ), mixed defenses ( $p.01$ ), intellectualization ( $p.01$ ) and reaction formation ( $p.05$ ). These correlations argue well for the position that the RDC repression scale is tapping a mode of defense at the other end of the continuum from isolation and intellectualization, which is consistent

TABLE 6  
Intercorrelations of the RDC

	IS	P	M	R	RF	IN
IS		.29 <sup>a</sup>	.17	-.32 <sup>a</sup>	.40 <sup>a</sup>	.55 <sup>a</sup>
P			.21 <sup>b</sup>	-.34 <sup>a</sup>	.26 <sup>a</sup>	.27 <sup>a</sup>
M				-.31 <sup>a</sup>	.10	.21 <sup>b</sup>
R					-.19 <sup>b</sup>	-.31 <sup>a</sup>
RF						.53 <sup>a</sup>
IN						

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .01

<sup>b</sup> significant at p .05

with both theoretical discussions of these two defenses and recent research associated with them (Byrne, 1961). They also suggest that individuals who use repression as a primary mode of defense do not use reaction formation or projection.

As would be expected the intellectualization scale related positively to isolation (p.01) and reaction formation (p.01); however, it also correlates positively with projection (p.01) and mixed defenses (p.05). Again, obsessive compulsive defenses are related to projection (n.b. Table 4 and the discussion associated with it). Apparently the RDC repression scale indicates something distinct from what is tapped by the intellectualization scale in a normal population but either (1) all RDC scales (save repression) contain many elements common to the intellectualization and other scales and should be re-defined (n.b. that projection correlates positively at the .01 level with isolation, reaction formation and intellectualization and at the .05 level with mixed defenses) or (2) a normal population does not employ intellectualization exclusive of projection as implied in the earlier discussion.

Gardner also computed intercorrelations of the RDC with itself. The results of this analysis are found in Table 7. The most outstanding similarity to be noted is that the RDC repression scale correlates negatively with all other scales although significantly only with isolation (p.001), mixed defenses (p.01) and reaction formation (p.01). This again highlights repression as a mode of defense

TABLE 7

Intercorrelation of the RDC found by Gardner (1964)

	IS	P	M	R	RF	IN
IS		.05	.24 <sup>b</sup>	-.30 <sup>a</sup>	.51 <sup>a</sup>	.49 <sup>a</sup>
P			-.03	-.12	.04	.16
M				-.26 <sup>b</sup>	.20 <sup>c</sup>	.06
R					-.24 <sup>b</sup>	-.14
RF						.49 <sup>a</sup>
IN						

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .001<sup>b</sup> significant at p .01<sup>c</sup> significant at p .05

distinct from the others and also lends further support to the RDC's capacity to isolate it. As is true in the present study Gardner found that intellectualization correlates positively with isolation (p.001) and reaction formation (p.001). He does not, however, find the same relationship between the obsessive compulsive defenses and projection as does this study.

Table 8 represents the intercorrelations of the various MMPI scales with themselves. There is a significant negative correlation between the R-S Scale and Haan's denial scale (p.01). Denial is closely related to repression. Since the two scales are scored in different directions a negative correlation of the magnitude reported would be expected. It should be pointed out that item overlap between the two scales is negligible, i.e., only two of Haan's denial items are the same as Byrne's but are scored in a different direction. As such, their contribution to a negative correlation is minimal. At the very least this indicates that what Byrne (1961) calls the repression end of his scale's continuum is indeed tapping some consistent defensive tendencies. The R-S Scale also correlates significantly with Haan's intellectualization scale in the expected direction. Since there are only two items common to both scales item overlap does not contribute heavily to this correlation.

Looking only at the correlations of Haan's scales with themselves it can be seen that repression  $[R(H)]$  correlates significantly and in the expected direction with denial (p.01) and intellectualization (p.01).



TABLE 8  
Intercorrelations of the MMPI Defense Scales

R/S	Intell.	Proj.	Den.	R(H)
R/S	-.13	.39 <sup>a</sup>	-.62 <sup>a</sup>	-.12
Intell.		-.05	.04	-.32
Proj.			-.09	.0002
Den.				.22 <sup>a</sup>
R(H)				

<sup>a</sup> significant at p .01

The above suggests that subjects who show repression on Haan's scale tend also to show denial but not intellectualization. Again, this is theoretically consistent with and lends support to the repression-sensitization dimension.

There were no significant differences between males and females on the R-S Scale. (See Table 9). This corroborates Byrne's (1961) findings. Noteworthy, however, are the findings associated with Haan's intellectualization and repression scales. Males fall significantly ( $p.001$ ) more often above the median than females on the intellectualization scale; while females fall significantly ( $p.001$ ) more often above the median than males on the repression scale. Extensive use of repression is associated with conversion hysteria commonly referred to as hysteria. Although hysteria constitutes only a small percentage of neurotic reactions it is much more frequent among women than among men (Coleman, 1964). The difference between males and females on the R(H) reflects this tendency for women to employ repression more than men.

On the RDC isolation scale males fall above the median significantly more often ( $p.01$ ) than do females. Here as on Haan's intellectualization scale, males tend to fall in the sensitization end of the repression-sensitization dimension. Obsessive compulsives (who as has been mentioned, use sensitizing defenses) as a whole tend to have high intellectual ability (Gardner, 1964; Levine and Spivack, 1964). Perhaps male college students are simply brighter than female college students

Table 9

The Median tests for the Rorschach defense scales and  
the MMPI defense scales for males and females

Variables		Males Above Median	Fem. Above Median	$\chi^2$	P
R-S	(MMPI)	28	26	.13	ns
Int.	"	45	17	26.16	.001
Proj.	"	32	29	.30	ns
Denial	"	26	36	3.33	.10
R(H)	"	17	41	19.22	.001
Isol.	(Rorschach)	37	24	5.63	.01
Proj.	"	40	26	6.59	.01
Rep.	"	37	32	.85	ns
R-F	"	14	20	1.47	ns
Intell.	"	32	29	.30	ns

and are thus more prone to obsessive compulsive defenses.

The tenability of the assumption that brighter individuals use obsessive compulsive defenses, however, is thrown into question by median tests between the RDC isolation, intellectualization and repression scales and the R-S Scale for the four undergraduate levels. Simply through the principle of "survival of the fittest" it would be expected that seniors as a whole would have more intellectual withdrawal than college freshmen and would be more prone to use obsessive compulsive defenses. This assumption is not borne out by the data. There were no significant trends indicated in the use of obsessive compulsive defenses. (See Table 10).

Table 10

Median tests for the RDC isolation, intellectualization and repression scales and for the R-S Scale for the four undergraduate levels

	Fresh.	Soph.	Jun.	Sr.	$\chi^2$	P
Above median on isolation	13	17	16	15	1.16	ns
Above median on intellect.	13	14	16	17	1.13	ns
Above median on repress.	18	15	16	20	2.00	ns
Above median on R-S	13	15	13	13	.40	ns

## CHAPTER FIVE

## Summary and Conclusions

Research trends in the last few years have witnessed a growing interest in the identification and measurement of ego defenses. Only recently, however, have there been attempts to empirically measure such defenses. Various approaches have been employed including combinations of the clinical scales of the MMPI and indices utilizing both the content and determinant aspects of responses to the Rorschach test. The Rorschach Defense Checklist developed by Gardner (1964) is an example of the latter approach. In essence, what he attempted to do was empirically validate the Rorschach signs that Schafer (1954) defined as being most representative of ego defense mechanisms. Concentrating on repression, reaction formation, intellectualization, isolation, projection and mixed defenses Gardner found that his scale successfully differentiated hysterics, obsessive compulsives and paranoids in a clinical sample. However, the RDC failed to distinguish adjusted from maladjusted seminarians in a non-clinical sample. But recent studies have indicated that defenses can indeed be isolated and measured in a non-clinical sample. Furthermore, psychoanalytic ego psychology, with its emphasis on the more healthy aspects of ego functioning, lends rationale and support to such findings. One of the concerns of this thesis was to cross validate the RDC on a normal college sample and to improve on Gardner's work in this area in the following ways: (1) expand the number of subjects; (2) use both male

and female subjects with equal representation from the four undergraduate levels; (3) control for age, education, race and religion of all subjects and (4) control for sex of examiner.

The primary purpose of this thesis, however, was to validate those defenses isolated by Gardner using as criteria recently developed defense scales taken from the item pool of the MMPI. There was special emphasis placed on Byrne's (1961) Repression-Sensitization Scale. This measure purports to tap defenses similar to those uncovered by the RDC, i.e., repression and intellectualization. The R-S Scale has generated much interest in the six years since its development - as such considerable space was devoted to a review of the validity and reliability data associated with it.

In the present study the RDC repression scale correlated positively with the MMPI K scale (p.05), negatively with the R-S Scale (p.05), non-significantly but in the expected direction with the R-S Scale using tetrachoric r; negatively with the RDC scales of isolation (p.01), projection (p.01), mixed defenses (p.01), intellectualization (p.01) and reaction formation (p.05) and positively with Haan's denial scale (p.05). Although the above correlations are significant they are low. They are noteworthy, however, because most are in the expected direction. The data argue for the facts that the RDC repression scale: (1) identifies individuals who view the expression of anxiety and/or emotion as an indication of instability (which is consistent with the descriptions of repressors advanced by previous

research); (2) bears a resemblance to what Byrne classified the repression end of his repression-sensitization continuum; (3) is related to the defense of denial which is to be expected on theoretical grounds and (4) suggests that individuals who use repression as a primary defense rely only minimally on reaction formation and projection and are distinct from those who use intellectualization and isolation. The results are provocative and suggest that with more clearly defined scoring procedures the RDC can be used effectively in identifying the use of repression in a non-clinical sample.

Findings associated with the RDC intellectualization, isolation and projection scales are equivocal. Intellectualization correlated positively with the Pd scale of the MMPI (p.01) and positively with the RDC scales of isolation (p.01), reaction formation (p.01), and projection (p.01). Isolation related positively with Haan's projection scale (p.01), positively with the RDC projection (p.01) and intellectualization scales. In summary, the present data show intellectualization, isolation and projection to be consistently related. This can be expected on theoretical grounds, at least, since paranoia (characterized by the defense of projection) is very often found in the obsessive compulsive context (where intellectualization and isolation are primary defenses). In light of this, the case for the RDC can be argued in a number of ways: (1) the RDC intellectualization, isolation and projection scales are dynamically and theoretically related and can be called a valid measure of those defenses;



(2) the isolation and intellectualization scales of the RDC need re-defining, since they are contaminated by items characteristic of projection; or (3) a normal population does not employ intellectualization and isolation to the exclusion of projection. The obtained data do not warrant a conclusion as to which of the three statements is the most tenable. However, because there is a theoretical basis for relating the three defenses, future research geared toward their clarification and refinement using the RDC may prove fruitful.

Gardner's results and the present data have the following things in common: (1) there is a negative correlation between RDC repression and the MMPI Mf scale; (2) repression also correlates negatively with the other RDC scales of isolation (p.001), mixed defenses (p.01) and reaction formation (p.001). Present findings indicate that RDC repression correlates negatively with Pa and Ma on the MMPI; Gardner found that repression correlated positively with D and Hy.

The above findings lend further support to the RDC repression scale tapping something distinct from obsessive compulsive defenses. The data also suggest that defense mechanisms in a normal population (as measured by the RDC) do not correlate with indications of psychopathology (as measured by the MMPI) in the same way that a population composed of adjusted and maladjusted seminarians, obsessive compulsives, hysterics and paranoid individuals does. However, there are no consistent patterns apparent on the MMPI to suggest in what specific ways a normal population does differ from a clinical one. The most important point warranted from the data is that the RDC does reflect the difference.

RDC isolation and projection are sensitive to sex differences, with males falling significantly more often above the median on these scales than females. There were no significant differences between the sexes on the RDC repression, reaction-formation or intellectualization scales.

On Haan's intellectualization scale, however, males scored significantly more often above the median than females, while females fell significantly more often above the median than males on the denial and repression scales.

The above results bear witness to the necessity of considering the sex of subjects in the analysis of data obtained on defense mechanisms. They also suggest that men in a non-clinical sample are more prone to use obsessive compulsive defenses than women and that women tend more toward the use of hysterical defenses, i.e., denial and repression.

No such distinction was noted relative to levels of education. Chi-square analysis indicated no significant difference in the use of obsessive compulsive or hysterical defenses between freshmen, sophomores, juniors or seniors.

The repression-sensitization dimension, because it has been so emphasized by research on defenses, bears special consideration.

Pearson Product Moment correlations between the RDC and Byrne's R-S scale are low but in the expected direction, i.e., RDC repression correlated negatively ( $p .05$ ) with it while isolation correlated

positively (although non-significantly) with it. Tetrachoric correlations, however, show no relation between the R-S scale and the intellectualization and isolation scales of the RDC, while RDC repression shows some relationship to R-S (albeit a non-significant one). About 32% of the subjects who were low on R-S (indicating repression) were high on RDC repression. R-S also correlated significantly and in the expected direction with Haan's denial scale; however, there were no significant correlations with either her intellectualization or her isolation scales.

The above data are suggestive of two things: (1) that the RDC and R-S Scale are both tapping a defensive tendency in a normal population that both scales call repression and (2) that the repression end of the repression-sensitization continuum, as measured by the R-S, has more in common with other measures of repression in a non-clinical sample than the sensitization end has with obsessive compulsive defenses. A conclusion as to why this should be so is not warranted by the present data.

It has been suggested that the response tendency to score "true" on paper and pencil tests such as the MMPI and its derivative scales, i.e., the R-S, tends to contaminate any correlations obtained between them and other scales purporting to measure the same thing. Approximately 70% of the R-S items are scored in the true direction. As such, one would expect that chance correlations between the R-S and other scales would more often be positive than negative if the response

tendency to score "true" were in operation. This was not found to be true in the present study. It seems, then, that at least within the limits of this study, a response set to score true did not alter the correlations between the R-S Scale and other scales attempting to measure the same variables.

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**APPENDIX A**

CODE \_\_\_\_\_

## THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE CHECKLIST

60.

DEFENSE INDICATOR	RORSCHACH CARD NUMBER	CHECK SPACE WEIGHT
<b>ISOLATION</b>		
1. More than 3 M		2½
2. Color used as F/C, F C, C/F or C F		3
3. Machine or mechanical content		3
4. Large number of objects in content		1½
5. Emphasis on exactness and symmetry		2½
6. Images with subjective feelings of coldness		2½
7. Noteworthy awareness of own thought processes		2½
8. Emotionally loaded percepts given without affect		2½
9. Attitudes of detachment and objectivity		1

**TOTAL**

<b>PROJECTION</b>		
1. Dd 20% with overelaboration of tiny detail		1½
2. Low CF		1½
3. More than 3 card rejections		2½
4. 4 or less P or near P		2½
5. Profile concentrated in areas of M,m,FM, and P		3
6. Constricted EB or one heavily weighted on the M side		2½
7. Images denoting surveillance and detection		3
8. Images of projected hostility		3
9. Questions as to what the test is "really" about		1½
10. Hd+dAd H+A		½
11. Questions about what the examiner is recording		1½

**TOTAL**

CODE \_\_\_\_\_

## THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE CHECKLIST (cont'd)

61.

DEFENSE INDICATOR	RORSCHACH CARD NUMBER	CHECK SPACE WEIGHT
<u>MIDDED</u>		
1. Overelaboration of tiny detail	_____	1½
2. Evasive-defensive inquiry	_____	1½
3. Content with hostile threat	_____	3
4. Themes of omnipotence and status	_____	1½
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<u>REPRESSION</u>		
1. 15 or less responses	_____	3
2. Poor integrative efforts	_____	2½
3. 1-3 card rejections	_____	2½
4. Expressive reactions	_____	2½
5. C+CF FC	_____	1½
6. Unreflectiveness	_____	3
7. Phobic verbalizations	_____	1½
8. Notable lack of specificity	_____	2½
9. Infantile content	_____	1½
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<u>REACTION-FORMATION</u>		
1. R 40 in a spirit of duty and obedience	_____	2½
2. Rejects upper red D on Card 2 as heads of humans	_____	1½
3. High FC, Fc, FC', Fk	_____	2½
4. Minimization or prettying up hostile imagery	_____	3
5. Benign, dutiful card criticism	_____	2½
6. Volunteering inquiry information	_____	½
<b>TOTAL</b>		

CODE \_\_\_\_\_

## THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE CHECKLIST (cont'd)

62.

DEFENSE INDICATOR	RORSCHACH CARD NUMBER	CHECK SPACE WEIGHT
<b><u>INTELLECTUALIZATION</u></b>		
1. Test viewed as intellectual challenge with virtuosity	_____	2½
2. Cultural content	_____	3
3. Exceptionally wide interest content	_____	2
4. Arty-abstract version of emotional expression	_____	1½
5. Studious attitude	_____	3
6. Systematic card rotation	_____	2
7. Precision, elegance, complexity of verbalizations	_____	3
8. Low W with pedantic attitude	_____	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		

**APPENDIX B**

TABLE 1

Items of Haan's Preliminary Defense Scales Taken from the MMPI

<u>INTELLECTUALIZING</u>		<u>DENIAL</u>		<u>PROJECTION</u>		<u>REPRESSION</u>	
Scoring Direction		Scor. Direct.		Scor. Direct.		Scor. Direct.	
TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE
59	34	57	45	73	45	74	6
81	77	65	55	130	128	407	15
112	99	112	109	146	212	408	28
120	208	240	138	171	258	423	45
126	217	258	147	240	319	536	145
221	322	309	162	382	428		155
373	435	329	165	404	513		158
401	450	409	172	406	540		167
415		441	215	418	561		212
432		479	267	506			215
438		498	307	563			320
454		548	308				447
552		556	342				486
563			411				522
			416				542
			437				
			438				
			442				
			491				
			560				

TABLE 2

64.

Items of Byrne's Repression-Sensitization  
Scale Taken from the MMPI

ITEMS SCORED TRUE				ITEMS SCORED FALSE		
5	148	292	389	2	98	241
6	150	301	396	3	107	242
10	158	304	397	8	122	248
12	159	305	398	9	131	253
15	162	316	406	18	145	263
22	165	321	411	36	152	270
26	170	322	414	46	153	271
32	171	336	418	51	154	329
41	172	337	431	57	155	353
43	180	340	443	58	164	379
45	182	342	461	64	178	
52	183	343	465	80	191	
60	189	344	499	88	207	
67	193	345	502	95	208	
71	195	346	511	96	233	
75	201	349	518			
76	213	351	544			
86	217	352	555			
90	225	356				
93	234	357				
94	236	358				
102	238	359				
104	255	360				
105	259	361				
106	265	362				
109	266	374				
120	267	382				
124	278	383				
129	279	384				
130	288					
134	289					
135	290					
136						
138						
141						
142						
147						



**APPENDIX C**

TABLE 1

Median Scores for Male and Female Groups Combined for  
all Grade Levels on the MMPI Defense Scales

GROUPS	THE MMPI DEFENSE SCALES				
	Repression (Haan)	Projection (Haan)	Denial (Haan)	Intell. (Haan)	Rep.-Sens. (Byrne)
Freshmen	11.30	6.75	20.50	12.07	53.50
Sophomores	11.50	7.50	20.50	11.56	52.16
Juniors	11.38	7.76	21.50	11.56	52.16
Seniors	12.03	7.42	20.10	11.34	50.50

TABLE 2

Median Scores for Males, Females and  
Total N on Five Scales of the RDC

<b>RORSCHACH DEFENSE SCALES</b>	<b>FEMALES</b>	<b>MALES</b>	<b>TOTAL N</b>
Isolation	2.71	4.25	3.42
Projection	3.15	5.92	4.25
Repression	5.33	5.61	5.48
R-Formation	.13	.08	.10
Intell.	.25	2.88	2.25

TABLE 3

Median Scores for Males, Females and Total  
N on the MMPI Defense Scales

MMPI DEFENSE SCALES	FEMALES	MALES	TOTAL N
Repression (Haan)	12.7	10.41	11.24
Projection (Haan)	7.05	7.63	7.42
Denial (Haan)	21.53	19.78	20.69
Intell. (Haan)	10.58	13.43	11.75
Repression- Sensitization (Byrne)	51.33	53.27	52.50

TABLE 4

Median Scores for Male and Female Groups Combined for  
all grade levels on Five Scales of the RDC

THE RORSCHACH DEFENSE SCALES					
GROUPS	Repression	R-Formation	Intell.	Isolation	Projection
Freshmen	5.75	.06	2.19	2.75	4.5
Sophomores	4.75	.11	.25	3.63	6.25
Juniors	5.85	.08	2.5	3.92	4.25
Seniors	5.50	.17	4.0	3.25	1.5

APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Ida A. Parlanti has been read and approved by the director of the thesis. Furthermore, the final copies have been examined by the director and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

April 25, 1967  
Date

Frank J. Hobler  
Signature of Adviser