Unit X: Personality

Module 56
Psychodynamic Theories
Module 56

Psychodynamic Theories and Modern Views of the Unconscious

Module Learning Objectives

56-1 Identify which of Freud’s ideas were accepted or rejected by his followers.

56-2 Describe projective tests and how they are used, and discuss some criticisms of them.

56-3 Describe the modern view of the unconscious.
Neo-Freudian & Psychodynamic Theorists
The Neo-Freudians

- Alfred Adler believed tensions were social in nature and not sexual.
- A child struggles with an inferiority complex during growth and strives for superiority and power.
The Neo-Freudians

- Karen Horney also believed in the social aspects of childhood growth and development.
- She countered Freud’s assumption that women have weak superegos and suffer from “penis envy.”
Carl Jung believed in the collective unconscious - a common reservoir of images derived from our species’ past.

This is why many cultures share certain myths and images such as the mother being a symbol of nurturance.
Assessing Unconscious Processes

A projective test provides ambiguous stimuli designed to trigger projection of one's inner dynamics.
The TAT is a projective test in which people express their inner feelings and interests through the stories they make up about ambiguous scenes.
Rorschach Inkblot Test

The most widely used projective test.; uses a set of 10 inkblots and was designed by Hermann Rorschach. It seeks to identify people’s inner feelings by analyzing their interpretations of the blots.
Projective Tests: Criticisms

1. When evaluating the same patient, even trained raters come up with different interpretations (lack of **reliability** -consistency of results).

2. Projective tests may misdiagnose a normal individual as pathological (lack of **validity** -predicting what it is supposed to).
Modern Research on the Unconscious

• Current research confirms the importance of the unconscious (parallel processing)
• Research also suggests that we do tend to project our beliefs and behaviors onto others through the false consensus effect