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For PG-II F S S
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Date: Unit-3
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Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)

A different projective approach was taken by Christina Morgan and Henry Murray (1935) in developing the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). The TAT is based on Murray's theory of needs. It is designed to ferret out people's basic needs by having them tell stories. To guide story production, the tester presents a series of pictures, some like the one, and asks the subject to make up a story about what is happening, what went before, what is going to happen, and what the people involved are thinking and feeling.

The TAT includes a standard set of 30 pictures, but it is rare that all 30 are included in any one testing. Instead, the tester selects pictures involving themes of special significance to the test-taker. For example, a person who worried about the

future, whereas a person whose difficulties are family-oriented might be given pictures that involve parent-child relationships or larger family-like scenes. The test is built on the assumption that people's stories reveal important aspects of their needs and self-perceptions as well as their views about "significant others" in their lives. Indeed, the stories given do often seem to be quite revealing. Consider, for example, these segments of stories

Story A: This is sad. This man is remembering the past 20 years of his life, his failed career, his broken marriage, and the rotten way his children have turned out. He knows that he tried his best, and tries not to blame himself, but he can't help it. One thing he has learned, though. You can't count on people;

as soon as we really trust them, they let- ~~they~~ them down.

Story B: Here is this guy - he's tired, rough day at- the office and all that. But- it's a good kind of tired, if you know what I mean. I mean, he knows he's working hard, and it's really paying off. He's rising fast- in his company. People have treated him well. They appreciate his work, and they show it- with promotions, raises, and respect. He's daydreaming now. If he keeps doing good work, he figures it's only a matter of time before he's in the "inner circle." and someday, maybe not- too far away, he's going to be running the whole show.

With stories as dramatically different as these two, it is tempting to infer some basic-personality differences between the person who ~~had~~ told story A and the person who told story B. Story A seems to

reveal a pessimistic outlook on life, a feeling that life is unfair, and also a need to trust others, but a real reluctance to do so. Story B seems to show an upbeat outlook, a belief that life rewards those who do good work, and also a need for achievement. Sometimes stories are closely related to the personality of the storyteller, but sometimes they are only fantasy productions with little assessment value. Even when the stories relate to the inner state of the storyteller, that inner state may change over time - from depression to elation, from warmth to hostility, and so on.

An enquiry is done on every story or picture after its recording. There are many methods popular for inquiry and scoring. Any one of the method is selected according to the requirement of the aim of interpreter. After

Scoring and conclusion is drawn from the results gathered. The reliability coefficient of this method is .91.