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Florence B. Moreno; J. L. Moreno

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ROLE TESTS AND ROLE DIAGRAMS OF CHILDREN

A Psychodramatic Approach to an Anthropological Problem

FLORENCE B. MORENO AND J. L. MORENO

Psychodramatic Institute, Beacon, N. Y.

INTRODUCTION

In the course of psychodramatic research, it has been frequently postulated that the role is the most important single factor determining the cultural atmosphere of personality. "The tangible aspects of what is known as 'ego' are the roles in which he operates. . . . We consider roles and relationships between roles the most significant development within any specific culture."*

In the drama, the taking and playing of roles are natural reference points. One does not refer to the private Mr. *X*, who plays the role, but to the role which he plays. The attitudes which he has as Mr. *A* do not matter to begin with. What matters are the attitudes in the role. The attitudes which may be characteristic of an actor as a private person, for instance, John Barrymore, are not relevant here; what is relevant are the attitudes which are supposed to be characteristic of a specific role, Hamlet.

The recent studies of attitudes, such as dominance and submission, etc., do not seem to the authors as productive as the working with "roles" as points of reference. It appears to be a shortcut and a methodical advantage as compared with personality or ego as points of reference. The latter are less concrete and wrapped up in metapsychological mysteriousness.

The authors have tried to examine this assumption by setting up a specific program for role research. Since Binet introduced a test to measure intelligence, frequent efforts have been made to construct a test measuring "personality". Perhaps no test to study personality shows so much promise as a "role" test because of the close interaction of the role process with personality formation, on the one hand, and the cultural context of situations, on the other hand. As, according to premise, the role range of an individual stands for the inflection of a given culture into the personalities belonging to it, the "role test" would measure the role behavior of an

*Moreno, J. L., "Psychodramatic Treatment of Marriage Problems," *Sociometry*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1940. The authors, consciously, do not try to define what "culture" is. They prefer to let a definition grow out of experiments like these.

individual, and thereby reveal the *degree* of differentiation a specific culture has attained within an individual, and his interpretation of this culture. Just as the intelligence test measures the mental age of an individual, the role test can measure his *cultural age*. The ratio between the chronological age and the cultural age of an individual may then be called his cultural quotient.

PROCEDURE

The project has been set up in two places: one in a small town—project A, and the other in an underprivileged section of New York City—project B.

In *project A*, a jury of five persons in the community where the children live had been formed to determine the characteristic roles of the community, presumably the roles they will have to perceive or act in, in the future. A total of 55 roles were quoted by the jury as follows:

mother-father, brother-sister, doctor, nurse, teacher, gardener, maid, policeman, mailman, minister, taxicab driver, electrician, carpenter, fireman, telephone operator, painter, cook, president, mayor, citizen, post office clerk, railroad ticket agent, expressman, librarian, barber, beautician, waiter, butler, undertaker, pilot, soldier, sailor, general, automobile mechanic, factory worker, factory foreman, bus driver, post-master, coal man, radio entertainer, ice cream salesman, architect (building contractor), lawyer, engineer, conductor, storekeeper, judge, banker, plumber, butcher, baker, druggist, milkman, psychiatrist, gas station man.

The following fifteen roles have received their highest preference scores:

mother-father, brother-sister, policeman, teacher, doctor, taxicab driver, mailman, minister, plumber, banker, lawyer, railroad engineer, conductor, storekeeper, judge.

The set of roles used for the test, it was agreed, may vary from one community to another, and more drastically, from one culture to another. The selection of the roles to be tested is of crucial importance, because if the roles of which the set consists are only incidental to the life of that particular community, no true picture of the child's role behavior and potentialities can be attained. Therefore, the point was to select such roles which are truly representative and operative in the community in which the testees live.

In differential anthropological studies, comparing two cultures, the task would be to determine identical role patterns (such as soldier or priest)

and the *un*-identical role patterns, that is, such roles in one culture for which there are no correspondents in the other (such as scientist and airplane pilot, for which there is no parallel in pre-historic cultures).

In *project B*, a parallel procedure was established. A jury of five, living in the neighborhood from which the children were selected, was chosen. They, too, have each been asked to select the roles which they would consider characteristic for the community in which they live. No limit was set to the number of roles they could list. They listed 105 roles, nearly twice as much as the jury in the small town (*project A*). They proceeded, then, to select from their list the fifteen roles most pertinent, in their judgment, for the children to act in and to understand. Their final list was finally compared with the one listed above for *project A*, and a discrepancy was found between the two lists of roles. Ten roles were the same; the following five were not listed: mailman, plumber, minister (but replaced by priest), banker and railroad engineer.

In *project A*,* the role test, as applied to individual subjects, was divided into two procedures: (a) role enactment, and (b) role perception. The division was made for analytic reasons, although actually, enactment and perception cannot be fully separated.

The test was given to a large number of children. The test results with six children are here presented. (See Table 1 for details.)

Description of Test

A child was asked to enact one after the other of the fifteen selected roles. In order to reduce self-consciousness to a minimum and aid in his warming up to their enactment, the entire procedure was presented to the child as a game. An older child, coached as an auxiliary ego, served as an audience to guess what each role was, after the subject had enacted it. In order that the subject might not feel that attention was being focussed especially upon him, or if he refused to enact the roles, the auxiliary ego enacted a role, *not* included in the selected fifteen, and the subject guessed what role it was. This interaction usually served as a starter for the subject.

The instructions were: (1) *Show* us what he (a policeman, a teacher, etc.) does. (2) If the subject hesitated after a time, or indicated that he had finished the enactment of the role, he was asked: "What *else* does he (the policeman, the teacher, etc.) do?" (3) If the subject was unable to warm up at all to the enactment of a role, he was asked: "If you cannot

*The results of the tests given in *project B* will be presented in a subsequent paper.

act, *tell* us what he (policeman, teacher, etc.) does." (4) If the subject described the role correctly, he was urged again to try and enact it.

Once the roles were established which the subject was *unable* to enact, an effort was made to determine whether they were able to *recognize* them. They were enacted, then, by the same adult in a standardized dramatic form, with each role phase occurring in a standardized sequence. Every role was divided into a series of meaningful acts of which it consisted. One child might *recognize* a role after seeing one or another characteristic act of it, for instance, an attitude of the body or a gesture. Another child might have to see two or more act phases in order to recognize a role. But even among the roles which a child was able to *enact*, there might be a varying degree of inadequacy, for instance, a child might enact only one or two phases of a role, and deem it sufficient, either because she did not warm up to more (although she might have been *aware* of more), or because her awareness was limited.

RESULTS

The following shows samples of results from the role tests given to two of the children, who live in the same community, are neighbors and friends since they were two and a half years old, are of the same chronological age (6 yrs.) and above the average in intelligence (118 and 140). (Every role enactment is broken up (1, 2, 3, etc.) into its significant phases.)

	RITA	KAY
Policeman	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stands still, waving hands as if directing traffic, says, "All right, go this way." Motions with hands. 2. Changes position thus indicating being in another part of town, and says (as if to someone): "You're arrested because you stole something." 3. "If you shoot, I'll kill you." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "What am I supposed to do?" (Child auxiliary ego enacts another role; still does not warm up.) <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>Perception: When the tester enacts the role in all its phases, she recognizes the role.</p>
Teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directing conversation as if to a group, in condescending and serious attitude: "Now children, you may paint and color, or do whatever you wish." 2. "Later, we go out and play." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I don't know." <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>Perception: Recognized role after one phase of enactment.</p>
Street-cleaner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Now we have to clean the streets." 2. "Here is the brush so the road can be clear." Makes motions of sweeping as though using the long-handled brush of the street-cleaner. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I clean streets." To tester: "I don't know what to do."

	RITA	KAY
Storekeeper	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Could I have some bananas? How much are they?" (taking the role of customer). 2. Moves around as if coming behind counter, opposite customer: "\$25." 3. Coming back to position of customer: "All right, I'll take some." 4. Offers money to storekeeper. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I don't know." <p style="margin-left: 2em;">Perception: After first phase of enactment, recognizes role.</p>
Judge	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Get out of here. What did you do to that lady?" 2. "Write her name down. She is a naughty lady." 3. Aside to adult: "He's in the court house." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I don't know." <p style="margin-left: 2em;">Perception: Didn't recognize role after complete enactment.</p>
Doctor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Now, children, let me examine you." Makes gesture and motion to hold child's head. Uses doll. Takes a stick (tongue depressor) and attempts to put it into doll's mouth. "Now what's happened to this little girl? She has broken her neck. I will put something in it." Takes scissors and cuts strips of paper. 2. "Now here are some pills for her." 3. Puts pieces of paper on child for bandage, and makes gesture of giving pills. 4. "Now how much is that?" 5. "It's \$50." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In weak voice: "I take care of people when they're sick."
Mailman	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asks for something to represent letters. Is given empty envelopes. Walks towards various spots in the room slipping them behind chairs, saying: "This belongs to Miss Tara. Where's her mail box?" 2. Throws letter behind chair. 3. Takes another, saying: "This is a card for Mrs. Jones. Here's her mail box." Likewise throws it into space behind another chair. 4. "This belongs to Mrs. Sweet," and so on, putting them all in different places. 5. "He now goes back to post office." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "What am I doing? I'm giving letters." Stands still. Makes gestures with her hands as if dealing out letters.
Minister	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I don't like that one." 2. Stands up straight as if facing an audience: "All right, say your prayers." 3. "All right, we're ready to sing." "O.K." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Don't know it." <p style="margin-left: 2em;">Perception: After complete enactment says: "Person in church; priest?" (She is a protestant.)</p>

RITA

KAY

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|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Makes motion of pulling rope of church bell, saying: "Ding, ding, ding." 5. "O.K., everybody out." 6. Makes imitative gesture of opening the doors. 7. "Now he stands there and talks." 8. "They just pray and sing." | |
| Taxicab Driver | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Is this your stop, lady?" 2. "Where do you two ladies want to go? Amusement park?" 3. "Where do you two ladies want to go?" 4. Has hands around wheel, makes motion as if driving, saying: "Honk, honk." 5. "All right, here's your stop." 6. "Toot-toot." 7. "The swimming pool? All right." 8. "Is this your stop? How much money?" | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Puts hands up as if on wheel, driving car: "Chog-a-chog." 2. "I have to stop and let people on." 3. "Now I'm going to pull the brake." Makes motion as though pulling the brake. |
| Lawyer | <p>"Oh, that's too hard. I don't know."</p> <hr/> <p>Perception: "don't know."</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Don't know." <hr/> <p>Perception: "Don't know."</p> |
| Plumber | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gets way down on stomach, saying: "I have to look at this sink. Have to get this ring out of here. Here, little girl, is your ring off the pipe." <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) "Anything else? Pipe is broken? Well, I'll have to go out and get my tools." 2. Goes out of the room, comes back with some sticks. Grunts: "Ooooh!" as she gets down. "Have to get this nail in here." Works on it for some time. 3. "Oh, darn it. There, now." Polishes it. 4. Now I've got to take my tools and everything away." Takes objects and walks out of room. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Don't know; I don't know." <hr/> <p>Perception: "Don't know."</p> |
| Railroad Engineer | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holds hand up as if hanging on to something: "This is the wheel. I'm driving it." Aside to adult: "He doesn't call out the stations. He drives the engine." | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Don't know how to act it." <hr/> <p>Perception: "Train driver." After a pause: "Engineer."</p> |
| Conductor | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Your tickets, please." 2. "Hornell, Hornell, next stop." 3. Walks as if walking up the aisle of train and looks from one | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I take tickets." "What shall I do? I don't know." |

	RITA	KAY
	side to another, leaning over as if taking tickets from passengers.	
	4. He says: "Come on the train. Hurry up." (An aside to adult.)	
Mother-Father	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I shall wash the dishes and make the house tidy." Moves about making motions as though sweeping. 2. Changes her voice to lower pitch: "I shall work and go to work hard in factories—earn some money and gold. I go out to chop wood and saw it." 3. Changes position again and voice: "I mop the floor; cook for the kiddies. I shall go out and sweep the floor." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Don't know." <p style="text-align: center;">Perception: "Mother and father." Recognized the role after complete enactment.</p>
Banker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "How much money do you earn? I have to." 2. "Now I can get my checks out. Here's my own checking desk. I'll give out money to people." 3. Takes up telephone and says: "Are you coming to the bank, too?" 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Don't know." <p style="text-align: center;">Perception: "Don't know."</p>

The foregoing sample of responses show the two extreme reactions of children both above the average in intelligence, the one, Kay, of the superior intelligence being unable to warm up to enacting most of the roles, along with having a surprisingly low level of role perception. This same child showed also a comparatively low *s* factor in spontaneity tests. She is a sensitive, intuitive child with superior musical ability. She was from early childhood fearful of other children, and until the age of four, cried continuously when approached by other children in a group. An early sociometric study (1) had been made of the particular nursery school of which she was a member, and her position was that of an extreme isolate.* In the last two years, her development has changed considerably. She has become the aggressor, has appeared anything but inhibited in her social relationships, and, upon superficial observation, one might call her "much more spontaneous." However, when placed in specific spontaneity tests recently, her *social* spontaneity still seemed to lag. In the role tests, she reacted enthusiastically to the "game" idea, and although she saw a sample of a performance, and could *describe* what some of the various roles were, she was

*In the article, "Sociometric Status of Children in a Nursery School Group," *Sociometry*, Vol. 5, No. 4, November 1942, Kay goes under the name of Mildred, and Rita, under the name of Florence.

unable to warm up to their enactment. Rita, in contrast, is not so capable in musical ability as Kay, nor so meticulous in writing and manual dexterity, but has shown a high *s* factor on other spontaneity tests. Her sociometric position in the same nursery school was neither that of isolation nor extreme popularity. She had, however, a far greater number of incoming choices, but reciprocated the choice of only one child, with whom she appeared to play the most throughout the study. In sum, Kay is far less resourceful in meeting emerging situations, particularly social, is much more bound to stereotypes, as is apparent in her musical expression and in drawing tests. Taking Kay's low role score and the foregoing factors into account, there are indications that a low *s* score goes hand in hand with a low sociometric and a low role score.

TABLE 1
 ROLE SCORES
 (Number of Roles Scored: 15)

	Number of role enact- ments	Number of role percep- tions	Enactment below level of recog- nition	Partial enact- ment	Distorted enact- ment	Adequate enact- ment
Rita (6 yrs., 4 mo.) I.Q. 118	14+ 1—	13+ 2—	1	7		5
Ella (6 yrs., 9 mo.) I.Q. 135	13+ 2—	13+ 2—		9½	½	2
Jerry (6 yrs., 2 mo.) I.Q. 108	9+ 6—	9+ 6—	1	7	1	
Freddie (8 yrs., 6 mo.) I.Q. 85	7+ 8—	5+ 8—	3	3		1
Kay (6 yrs., 2 mo.) I.Q. 140	2+ 13—	7+ 8—	1	1		
Jean (4 yrs., 10 mo.) I.Q. 120	0	7+ 8—				

Key: 9+ means that nine out of the fifteen roles were enacted.

Example: 6— means that six roles out of the fifteen roles were unenacted

TABLE 2
ROLES ENACTED
(Total Number of Roles: 15)

	Jerry	Jean	Freddie	Kay	Ella	Rita
Policeman	x		xx		xx	xxx
Teacher	x				xx	xx
Lawyer			x			
R.R. Engineer			x		xx*	xx
R.R. Conductor			x		xx*	xxx*
Storekeeper	xx		xxx*		xxx*	xx*
Judge						x
Mother-Father	xx				xx	xxx
Brother-Sister	xx				xx*	xx
Doctor	x				xx	xx*
Banker					xx	xx
Taxicab driver	xx		xxx	xx*	xxx*	xx*
Mailman	xx		xx	xx	xx*	xxx*
Minister	xx*				xx*	xx
Plumber					xxx*	xxx*

Key:

x means enactment *below* the level of recognition.

xx means *partial* enactment.

xxx means *complete* enactment.

* means that this particular role has been enacted with the greatest degree of dramatic quality, that is, the intensity of warming up to the role, the longest duration of enactments, or the greatest amount of details with respect to gestures and verbalizations.

ANALYSIS

For the purposes of refining the scores, and in order to give as much credit as possible to all attempts at enactment, the scoring has been divided into various levels of performance, as follows:

(a) *Enactment below the level of recognition* means the inclusion of elements remotely related to the role but not sufficient for its recognition.

(b) *Partial enactment* means including one or two recognizable phases of the role.

(c) *Distorted enactment* means the enacting of characteristics largely unrelated to the assigned role. The child may include bizarre formations of the role.

(d) *Adequate enactment* means the inclusion of all significant phases of the role as evaluated by the jury.

Role Stability

Ella and Rita have the highest role range, 14:1 and 13:2. Both are above the average in intelligence with Ella leading by about ten points.

Although Ella is a few months older than Rita, and of higher intelligence, Rita is about equal to her in role performance. These figures, however, do not reveal the great qualitative differences in their performances. For instance, in certain roles, Ella was far more dramatic than Rita, in the sense that she chose to elaborate upon one or two phases of a role with extensive gestures, movements, and verbalizations, rather than to include all phases of the role as Rita did. This excessive dramatization on the part of Ella led into role instability; the fact that she was unable to contain herself within the roles enacted shows that the thresholds between her roles were thin. She was so carried away by the dramatic aspect of her spontaneity that she did not visualize a complete pattern of the role with its closures; that is, her undisciplined spontaneity carried her, upon the suggestion of a role, from one role to another. This produces, furthermore, an uneven *clustering of roles*. The following is just a sample of this point in her role of the "teacher":

"Children, you must read today. You must learn your lessons well and everything else. If you do your lessons well, we will go to the museum. We will have to ask our principal, Mrs. Brown." She then became slightly grotesque, swayed back and forth with her arms raised up, still facing the audience, however, and said: "I'm the biggest fat-test lady in the circus." And then, became a barker in the circus, and shouted: "Right this way to see the elephants and clowns, right this way, etc."

Rita, on the other hand, in certain roles, included all significant phases briefly and finished in half the time of Ella's performance of one or two aspects of a role. However, in other roles, Rita was highly dramatic and enthusiastic, but at no time on an *uncontrolled* spontaneous level.

Relationship of Intelligence to Role Scores

The results are not complete enough to draw any definite conclusions concerning the relationship of intelligence to cultural maturity. However, Table 1 indicates that high intelligence *may* cause a higher role score, but not necessarily, as is evident in the situation of Kay, who, though only seven months younger than Ella, is disproportionately inferior to her in role performance. This strengthens, furthermore, our previous assertions that the Binet intelligence test is limited, insofar as it is not able to measure role behavior. As the study is in progress and is extended to a larger number of children, more refined role scores will be derived, and eventually role quotients, which can be correlated with intelligence quotients.

Individual Responses of the Same Role

We are able to study the degree of cultural differentiation to a great extent from Tables 1 and 2. Highly important, too, is the cultural differentiation with respect to its interpretation. In the role of the policeman, for example, he was regarded by two of the children as a sort of robot director of traffic. Rita has presented him as a traffic policeman (with more flexibility than that of a robot), as one who has the power to arrest people, and as one who deals with gangsters, involving shooting and killing. Freddie emphasized only arresting and going to jail. In the mother and father roles, Ella, Rita, and Jerry respectively emphasized the maternal-paternal-child relationship, hinting at the conflicts involved; the specific duties of each parent, such as domestic and the role of supporter; and the mother alone, particularly the maternal and domestic aspects. The following illustrations confirm this:

ELLA

In a high voice: "Now honey, you must sit down and have your breakfast. Susan, *do* it. Daddy said to *do* it. I'm going to turn you over my knee and spank you. You're going to bed." She changes her voice to normal, and says: "Now I'm dad." Changes her voice to a lower pitch: "Mother, what are we going to do with this girl? She's not good at all. Now you go to bed; now, say your prayers . . ." (uses teddy bear) Pretends to put it to bed. Changes voice: "Now, I'm Mom." "I have to fry an egg. Darling, hold your plate out. I spent a long time at it."

RITA

"I shall wash the dishes and make the house tidy." Moves about as though sweeping. Changes her voice to lower pitch: "I shall work and go to work hard in factories—earn some money and gold. I go out and chop wood and saw it." Changes position again and voice: "I mop the floor; cook for the kiddies. I shall go out and sweep the floor."

JERRY

"Come on, baby, you have to go to sleep, now. Rest your legs." Makes motions as though laying a baby down. "I guess I'll straighten the house up." Starts to pick things up in the room, losing herself completely in the role, as she goes about systematically to clean and rearrange the room she is in. Spends considerable time at this, and would have gone on doing so if tester did not terminate this particular scene. She was prompted by tester: "What about father?" She answered: "Oh, he does the work with things. Comes home, eats his lunch and eats again. Goes back to work shop to fix things." Tester says: "Show us." Seems unable to warm up to action in role of father.

Role Dominance as a Factor Influencing Interpersonal Relations

We see from Table 2 that all the children, with the exception of Jean, enacted the roles of the taxicab driver and the mailman. In the role of

the taxicab driver, three of the children were particularly strong. The storekeeper was enacted by four of the children. The lawyer and judge were out of the present cultural range of all of the children. Diagram 1 shows the interrelationship of roles, pointing out the clashes of dominant roles, which is an important explanation for the attractions and repulsions of Rita, Ella, and Kay. It can be seen here that Ella and Rita are mutually strong in certain roles. It is not surprising then that when the three girls are together, there is bitter conflict between Ella and Rita for role dominance over Kay, who has only two roles which are important to her and at the same time to her two companions. When Kay is alone with only *one* of the other two girls, their strong roles realize their fulfillment in Kay's passive responses to them. When the three girls are together, Rita and Ella are struggling to overcome the counter-spontaneity and counter role dominance of each other, and competing to exercise their role powers over the weaker Kay. The conflicts among the other children are less noticeable possibly because of their weak role ranges and weaknesses in warming up to enactments altogether. Jerry and Rita appear quite compatible in their play; this may be attributed to Jerry's strong mother role being complemented by Rita's weak mother role, and Jerry's strong minister role being balanced somewhat by Rita's verbal rejection of the role, even though she attempted to enact it. Thus, it can be seen, due to the findings of the role test, that the charting of attractions and repulsions can be further elaborated by role diagrams. It reveals a deeper interpersonal structure, breaking up, on the one hand, the individual into the roles in which he manifests himself, and, on the other hand, giving the attractions and repulsions phenomena a socially tangible reality.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

One of the outstanding features of this study is the problem of *enactable* and *unenactable* roles. Why is it, for instance, that in some cases the most easily enacted roles come from the more remote social experiences rather than in the immediate primary experiences, such as in the home and/or school? Why is it that some children appear to derive a certain thrill or excitement out of experiencing the roles of the taxicab driver, mailman, or conductor rather than the mother-father roles? Why is it that some children need to objectify the roles and define them within themselves, perhaps verbally or pictorially, before they are able to enact them, while other children warm up immediately to certain portions of the role with no apparent plan of action?

We recall that for the same children—when they were three to four years old—the exciting thing was to play mother, father, brother and sister. Now, little more than two years later, these roles are apparently taken for granted. In their expanding world other roles, like policeman and mailman seem much more adventurous. But these observations have a deeper and more fundamental explanation still. It is based on the theory of the matrix of identity.*

Before elaborating upon an explanation, a summing up of our conclusions drawn in an earlier paper may be appropriate. According to spontaneity theory, the infant is not thrown into the world without his participation. He plays a fundamental part in the act of birth. The factor by means of which the infant is self-propelling himself into life is called spontaneity. This factor is aiding the infant during the first days to maintain himself in a strange new world against great odds. At a time when memory, intelligence, and other cerebral functions are yet little developed or non-existent, the s factor is the mainstay of the infant's own resourcefulness. To his support come the auxiliary egos and objects with whom he forms his first environment, the matrix of identity. We differentiated between (a) a period in the child's infancy for many phases of which he has later a true amnesia, and (b) a period in the child's infancy in which the function of dreaming develops and in which the functions of memory and intelligence gain in strength. It is probable that for certain children the matrix of identity is extended beyond its usual time point of termination. They apparently need a prolonged period of psychological incubation (mother, father, and other auxiliary egos being the helpers).

Due to the co-experiencing of the maternal or paternal roles, the roles become so much a part of the child's self, that it is easier for him to "be" them in a spontaneous casual activity than it is for him to act the roles out, on the spur of the moment, when presented with the verbal stimulus "act the mother". The more these roles have become a part of the self, the more difficult it will be in later years for the child to enact them, particularly when he attempts to put them on the level of conceptual learning, for it is in the earliest stage of role assimilation (matrix of identity) that the child is experiencing a form of living which is pre-unconscious as well as it is pre-conscious; it is strictly act living. The later way of assimilation

*Moreno, J. L. and Moreno, F. B., "Spontaneity Theory of Child Development," *Sociometry*, vol.

lating a role is through conditioning, perception, and objectification. Since one of the first role experiences is the mother role, it can be seen how difficult it might be for a child to reproduce it when he attempts to put it on the level of objectification and perception. It is difficult to give birth to a role which is fully integrated into the self. It is with the parts which are *unintegrated* that he is able to act out a role, carrying with them the parts of the role which have been apparently dissolved within the self. Social roles such as policeman, doctor, etc., are obviously more or less unintegrated into themselves to start with. In principle, at least, the difficulty of enactment is less great. Children are far more dependent here upon their ability to perceive their social significance. However, the spontaneity with which they warm up to them, they apparently draw from older role connections (mother, father roles) which are deeply integrated into themselves. For the child, furthermore, who attempts to put such roles as the mother and father on the conceptual level, the clustering of roles within the mother and father roles complicates warming up to their enactment. However, although unenactable, there seems to be a transfer of spontaneity from these role clusters to other roles, for example, from father to policeman, etc.

Therefore, children who enact the maternal or paternal roles, for example, easily without any preparation are those who have been greatly impressed with the social and more immediate aspects of the role and are able to keep these fairly well apart from the older and deeper experiences of it. Since "the mother" is not a single role but a cluster of roles,* certain of its older manifestations may be deeply disturbing to a child and so puzzling that she is not able to enact them; for other parts she may have a true amnesia (not merely "forgetting" because of repression in the psychoanalytic sense). This sums up to the following: Certain children are able to confine the mother experience to its social and surface manifestations, and thus they can objectify and enact the role. Other children cannot confine the role to its immediate social context. They are, at least within themselves, if not also externally more deeply dependent upon co-acting with the mother in a mutually developed matrix of identity, so that these children are, perhaps, less mature, and, for this reason, more spontaneous. By this trick of their minds, they can draw also from the spontaneity of the mother as if it would be their own.

*The mother role might include a clustering of such roles as wife to the father, companion to him, homemaker, nurse to the child, etc.

For certain children, even socially facile roles, such as the plumber, storekeeper, etc., seem difficult to enact. It seems that their ability to transfer the s factor from earlier configurations is weak. On the other hand, their dependence upon their perception, via memory and intelligence, is an insufficient impetus to enactment. They will have to become much older and more mature until their weak spontaneity will be amply compensated by a fuller comprehension and assimilation of role-stereotypes and conserves. For all children of this study, it remains to mention that certain roles have been unenactable, such as the lawyer and the judge, because they have not yet entered their orbit of experience.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The role test is based upon the premise that roles are the most important single factors which determine the cultural character of individuals.

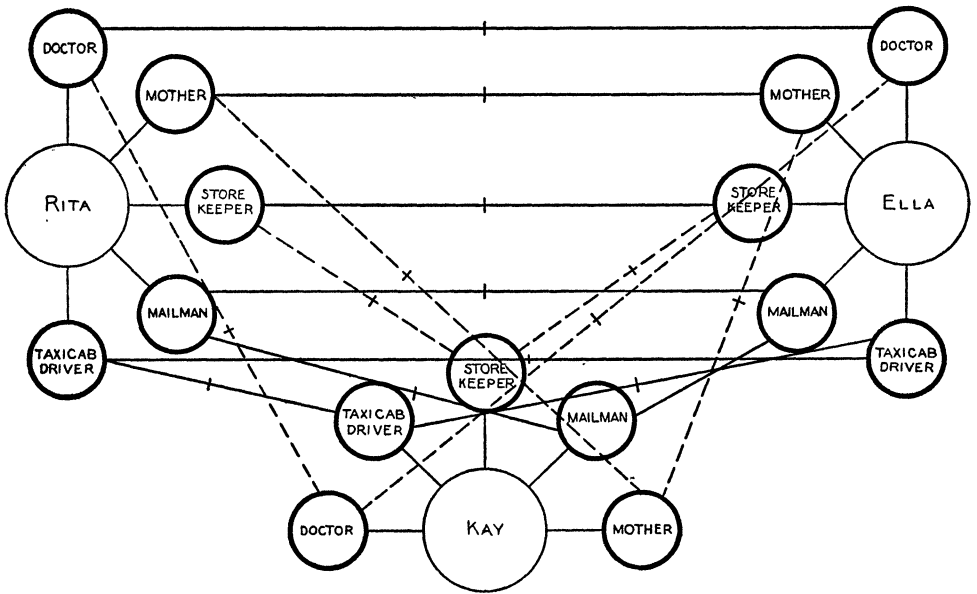
Working with the "role" as a point of reference appears to be a methodical advantage as compared with "personality" or "ego." These are less concrete and wrapped up in metapsychological mysteriousness.

2. In the two processes examined, role enactment and role perception of children, it was found that the perception of a role does not automatically mean the ability to enact it. On the other hand, there are children who are spontaneously able to enact a role beyond the degree of perception; the s (spontaneity) factor is operating.

3. Roles are not isolated; they tend to form clusters. There is a transfer of s from unenacted roles to the presently enacted ones. This influence is called *cluster effect*.

4. There were roles with which the subjects were intimately acquainted, but still, when put to the test, they were unable to enact them.

5. The set of roles considered pertinent varies in the two projects, A and B, studied. The results indicate that anthropological studies will profit from comparing the findings of role tests given to primitive societies and to ethnical minorities and ruling groups in our own country.



ROLE DIAGRAM

KEY:

- |—: MUTUALLY ANTAGONISTIC
- - - : MUTUALLY COMPATIBLE

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