

THEORY

CLASSIFICATION OF POSITIONS

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The descriptive classification of games has so far failed to yield consistent clinical results. The repertoire favored by an individual patient cannot be predicted by classifying according to number of players, sociology (middle-class, Italian, etc.), or even, surprisingly, by zone (phallic, anal, oral), or nosology (hysterical, obsessive, paranoid); indicating some conceptual forcing or artificiality in each of these sorting systems. The indications are stronger than ever that the natural classification will be based on the patient's position, and that this is the fundamental variable of human living. Position is based on a simple predicative absolute (e. g., "All men are evil." "All women are untrustworthy." "I am never lovable"). The position is taken in early childhood (third to seventh year) in order to justify a decision based on early experience: e. g. "Never again will I love a man, because father beats me unfairly (when he is drunk);" "Never again will I love a woman, because mother deserted me for my baby brother;" "Never again will I risk loving anyone because mother showed me I was unlovable." On this position are based scripts and their derivative games: e. g. Second degree Rapo, If It Weren't For Her, and They'll Have To Take Me As I Am, respectively.

Since positions are difficult to elicit and verify in clinical practice, it will take some years to assemble the two or three hundred reliable examples necessary to form a useful empirical classification. Meanwhile a logical classification would be useful as a basis for a consistent theory of game analysis, and such a classification in fairly rigorous form is readily available. The subjects of all positions are particulars of the polarity I-Others, and their predicates are particulars of the polarity OK - not OK. The basic predicates for all positions are then the following four:

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|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. I (we) am OK | 111. You (They) are OK |
| 11. I (we) am not-OK | 1V. You (They) are not-OK |

These predicates yield the cadre for all possible positions thus:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. I am OK, you are OK | 111. I am not-OK, you are OK |
| 11. I am OK, you are not-OK | 1V. I am not-OK, you are not-OK |

Every game, script, and destiny then, is based on one of these four basic positions. It is evident that only one of the four is intrinsically constructive (1); one is futile and probably terminates in schizophrenia (1V); one is intrinsically paranoid (11); and one is intrinsically depressive (111). Derivative games would be (1) Successful Businessman; (11) I'm Only Trying to Help You; (111) Cops and Robbers; (1V) Look What They Did To Me.

A LIVING PROBLEM

"The Tokyo Taxi"

It is difficult for the American visitor to remain counter-phobically impassive during his first ride in a Tokyo taxi. The available alternatives are to shrink into a corner in a state of acute apprehension, or to keep laughing all the way in from the airport. This raises several interesting structural-transactional questions.

(1) If it were you and there were other people in the taxi, would you counterphobe, shrink, or laugh? Why?

(2) If someone else complained about a similar situation, would you advise him to counterphobe, shrink, or laugh? Why?

(3) If you would not advise him, state three reasons why not. Discard these, and state a fourth reason, which must be original with you.