

CLUES TO THE PREFERENCES OF THERAPY STYLES

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship of personality variables to the choice of a psychotherapist. 119 subjects were shown films of three prominent therapists at work with the same patient. The subjects were asked to indicate which of the three they would select if they were to choose a therapist. The subjects were given a battery of psychological tests, and personality differences relating to the choice of therapist were examined.

The results suggest that intelligence and authoritarianism are relevant variables, with more intelligent, less authoritarian subjects tending to choose the therapist (Albert Ellis) who has a markedly rational, problem-solving approach. The lack of additional personality differences in the findings was interpreted in terms of the weaknesses of the psychotherapy analogue employed. It is probably necessary to assess real patients choosing real therapists.

INTRODUCTION

It is widely assumed that there is in people a tendency toward mental health. Rogers (1961) feels that the drive for growth and self-actualization is the most basic striving of the individual. Sullivan stated the position: "[Just as] a person seeks . . . to correct deficiencies in diet, so also one seeks for experience which will correct his [psychological] deficiencies . . ." (Sullivan, 1940, p. 99). Psychotherapy should be such an experience, and the tendency toward health is perhaps the main force in making the process work. But people are also defensive, and resist awareness of certain aspects of themselves. Sullivan observed that almost any interpretation by the therapist may be acceptable to the patient as long as it "does not clarify the problem in point" (Sullivan, 1940, p. 187). The relative success or failure of therapy may hinge on the balance of these conflicting forces.

These processes are at work presumably right from the start of therapy, including the choice of therapist. Clara Thompson remarked about the choice, ". . . a certain number of patients feel secure with us not because we inspire confidence in our ability or wisdom but because we do not disturb their neurotic patterns too much" (Thompson, 1964, p. 132). The choice of therapist may be based on the patient's defensiveness.

In fact, the choice could be influenced by many personality characteristics of the patient. Interpersonal theory, as set forth by Sullivan (1953), posits that people seek relationships with others who are seen as having the characteristics that will meet their particular needs. A dependent person will choose others who are strong and dominant. People who need approval will seek out people who provide it. There is no reason to assume that the choice of a therapist is an exception to this pattern. The choice will be based not simply on the therapist's competence and ability to understand, but on a multiplicity of needs and

characteristics of the patient, only one of which is the need for psychological growth.

There is little research in this area. Most of what has been done is on choice as a function of the therapist's characteristics. Some studies have found a preference for therapists of the same sex (Boulware and Holmes, 1970; Koile and Bird, 1956; Fuller, 1964); others have found male therapists preferred (Kopel, 1972; Levy and Iscoe, 1963). Older therapists tend to be preferred to younger ones (Boulware and Holmes, 1970; Holman, 1955; Levy and Iscoe, 1963; Fuller, 1964). Personal qualities of preferred therapists include warmth (Kumler, 1969; Hiler, 1958), empathic understanding (Cartwright and Lerner, 1963), expressed commitment to help (Price and Iverson, 1969), and a logical, organized approach (Schmidt and Strong, 1970).

With respect to the characteristics of the choosers, it has been found that women are more likely than men to seek therapy in general (Fischer and Turner, 1970; Philips and Segal, 1969). Kopel (1972) found that more autonomous people had a greater preference than less autonomous people for older therapists. Grantham (1973) found that black students preferred black counselors, and Brabham and Thoreson (1973) reported that physically disabled counselors were preferred by disabled and able-bodied students alike, apparently out of a feeling of admiration for someone who had "made it" despite a physical handicap. Heilbrun (1971) found that women with a high readiness for therapy preferred less directive therapists, and vice versa. Boulware and Holmes (1970) reported no relationship between social class and choice of a therapist in terms of age or sex.

All but two of the latter group of studies concerned themselves with demographic variables. It is evident that little is known about the influence of personality variables on the choice of therapist. The present study tried to examine this more thoroughly by assessing a wide range of psychological characteristics of people who indicated their choices of a therapist.

METHOD

A psychotherapy analogue was employed. Subjects were shown films of three therapists, each interviewing the same person for the first time about herself and her problems. The films were *Three Approaches to Psychotherapy* (1965), designed to show three different theoretical orientations and personal styles. The therapists are Carl Rogers, Albert Ellis and Frederick Perls. After seeing the films, the subjects were asked to indicate which of the three they would choose if they were seeking a therapist.

The subjects were students in six Psychology classes — two each of Introductory, Personality and Abnormal Psychology. There were 119 subjects, 101 men and 18 women. Of those who indicated their occupation, 34 were police officers and 43 were civilians. The ages ranged from 18 to 50, with a median age of 23. Each class saw the films in a different order. The subjects completed a battery of psychological tests suitable for group administration. The tests were:

T Scale (Fischer and Turner, 1970. Measures the extent of positive or negative attitudes towards therapy.)

Wechsler Interest Inventory (Masculinity — Femininity).

Eysenck Personality Inventory (Yields scores on Neuroticism, Extraversion and Defensiveness.)

Rokeach Dogmatism Scale (Authoritarianism)

Piven Scale (Piven, 1961. Authoritarianism)

Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values (Strength of Theoretical, Economic, Aesthetic, Social, Political and Religious Values)

Otis Quick-Scoring Mental Abilities Test (Intelligence)

Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey (Strength of ten traits. See Table 5 for a complete listing.)

Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Strength of the 15 needs of Murray's Manifest Need System, and a response consistency scale.)

MMPI Masculinity-Femininity Scale

The subjects also provided demographic data which yielded additional variables. These were age, sex, occupation (police-civilian), number of courses completed, number of Psychology credits, and grade-point average. The grade in the course was also included, for a total of 48 variables.

Forty-two of the subjects chose Rogers, 44 chose Ellis, and 33 chose Perls. This provided three groups which were compared on the 48 variables.

RESULTS

As a preliminary look at the data, separate one-way analyses of variance were performed on each of the dependent variables, the only independent variable in the study being therapist choice with categories Ellis, Perls or Rogers. Of the 48 analyses, only four attained or approached significance (Tables 1 - 4), a result clearly within the ambit of chance, since $(1 - \alpha)$ to the 48th power is .085, taking alpha as .05 for each F-test, and this leaves an experiment-wide alpha-risk of .915. Two variables attained significance at the $.05 < p < .10$ level. They were Eysenck Neuroticism, where Perls > Ellis > Rogers, and grade in the course where Ellis > Rogers > Perls. Two other variables achieved the same sort of credibility at the $.01 < p < .05$ level and both were Edwards scales. On the Achievement scale Ellis > Rogers > Perls. The other was Consistency, where Ellis > Rogers > Perls.

TABLE 1
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR EYSENCK NEUROTICISM

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F	P
CHOICE	2	125.26	62.63	2.59	.05 < p < .10
RESIDUAL	107	2586.33	24.17		
CORRECTED TOTAL	109	2711.60	24.87		

MEANS

Perls = 10.71

Ellis = 9.35

Rogers = 7.97

Overall = 9.20

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TABLE 2

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR GRADE IN COURSE

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F	P
CHOICE	2	8.89	4.44	2.85	.05 < p < .10
RESIDUAL	114	177.87	1.56		
CORRECTED TOTAL	116	186.76	1.61		

MEANS

Ellis = 2.29

Rogers = 2.23

Perls = 1.64

Overall = 2.10

TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR EDWARDS ACHIEVEMENT

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F	P
CHOICE	2	122.96	61.48	3.05	.01 < p < .05
RESIDUAL	105	2115.13	20.14		
CORRECTED TOTAL	107	2238.10	20.91		

MEANS

Ellis = 17.21

Rogers = 15.22

Perls = 14.72

Overall = 15.79

TABLE 4

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR EDWARDS CONSISTENCY

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F	P
CHOICE	2	24.46	12.23	3.27	.01 < p < .05
RESIDUAL	105	392.20	3.73		
CORRECTED TOTAL	107	416.66	3.89		

MEANS

Ellis = 11.60

Rogers = 11.41

Perls = 10.44

Overall = 11.22

It was not possible to perform a multivariate analysis of variance because of ubiquitousness of missing data, and in addition, it would have been difficult to interpret the patterns of latent roots and vectors for 48 variables. Instead the

TABLE 5

VARIABLE	FACTOR				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Age	1. 0.051	-0.134	-0.374	-0.125	-0.547
T Scale	2. 0.166	0.355	-0.184	-0.111	-0.235
Wechsler	3. -0.151	-0.137	0.189	-0.125	0.230
Eysenck:					
Neuroticism	4. -0.766	0.160	0.036	0.145	0.088
Extroversion	5. 0.090	-0.108	0.665	-0.035	0.006
Lie	6. 0.471	-0.067	-0.128	0.285	0.020
Rokeach Authoritarianism	7. -0.236	-0.182	-0.011	0.610	0.375
Miven Authoritarianism	8. -0.244	-0.086	-0.035	0.616	0.393
Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Values:					
Theoretical	9. 0.337	-0.159	-0.493	0.109	0.238
Economic	10. -0.107	-0.603	-0.099	0.158	0.167
Aesthetic	11. -0.160	0.689	0.001	-0.087	0.111
Social	12. 0.210	0.502	0.164	-0.070	0.111
Political	13. 0.041	-0.661	0.027	-0.185	0.040
Religious	14. -0.190	0.072	0.266	0.063	-0.565
Otis I.Q.	15. 0.154	-0.046	0.067	-0.635	0.143
Guilford-Zimmerman:					
G. General Activity	16. 0.441	-0.217	0.309	0.030	0.336
R. Restraint	17. 0.050	-0.008	-0.585	0.004	-0.233
A. Ascendance	18. 0.631	0.153	0.304	-0.119	0.138
S. Sociability	19. 0.685	0.103	0.435	0.080	-0.100
E. Emotional Stability	20. 0.711	-0.178	0.026	-0.151	-0.354
O. Objectivity	21. 0.669	-0.050	0.018	-0.142	-0.463
F. Friendliness	22. 0.312	0.027	0.048	-0.003	-0.675
T. Thoughtfulness	23. -0.108	0.443	-0.516	-0.128	-0.004
P. Personal Relations	24. 0.290	-0.050	0.105	-0.316	-0.651
M. Masculinity	25. 0.415	-0.674	-0.133	-0.211	0.032
Edwards:					
Achievement	26. -0.025	-0.350	-0.392	-0.317	0.167
Deference	27. 0.004	-0.112	-0.198	0.158	-0.521
Order	28. -0.149	-0.125	-0.444	0.122	-0.175
Exhibition	29. -0.095	-0.037	0.067	-0.331	0.188
Autonomy	30. 0.086	0.077	-0.154	-0.393	0.433
Affiliation	31. 0.150	0.218	0.591	-0.106	-0.109
Intracception	32. 0.221	0.458	-0.508	0.051	-0.200
Succorance	33. -0.467	0.064	0.445	-0.047	0.083
Dominance	34. 0.294	-0.436	-0.050	-0.202	-0.101
Abasement	35. -0.313	-0.040	0.223	0.531	-0.155
Nurturance	36. 0.043	0.183	0.538	0.379	-0.152
Change	37. 0.197	0.307	0.102	0.016	0.297
Endurance	38. 0.258	-0.072	-0.370	0.367	-0.214
Heterosexuality	39. -0.169	-0.158	0.030	-0.369	-0.072
Aggression	40. 0.052	-0.171	0.081	0.007	0.504
Consistency	41. 0.303	0.057	-0.093	-0.168	0.185
MMPI M - F	42. 0.077	-0.611	0.148	0.076	0.042
Sex: Male = 1 Female = 0	43. 0.210	-0.586	-0.212	-0.083	-0.064
Grade in Course	44. -0.047	-0.170	-0.069	-0.605	-0.016
Courses Completed	45. 0.058	0.322	0.112	-0.378	-0.048
Police (0) vs. Civilian (1)	46. 0.034	0.479	0.228	0.195	0.477
Grade Point Average	47. 0.029	-0.042	0.037	-0.658	-0.074
Number of Psychology Credits	48. 0.049	0.189	0.020	-0.528	-0.041
Eigen Values	5.913	4.550	3.973	3.558	2.877
% Variance	12.320	9.480	8.279	7.420	5.995
Cumulative % of Variance	12.320	21.800	30.079	37.491	43.486

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variables were intercorrelated using means for missing values and the resulting R-matrix was subjected to a principal component analysis, inserting squared multiple correlations in the diagonal and iterating for communalities. The results were then subjected to a Varimax rotational procedure and the results appear in Table 5. Various solutions were tried and five factors were retained as yielding the clearest structure. These five factors accounted for 43 percent of the variance which seemed a good compromise with 48 variables. Factor I would have been called "Health" except for the curious loading of +.47 on the Eysenck Lie Scale, suggesting a "faking good" component. Factor II is clearly a kind of aesthetic-feminine interest dimension. Factor III is unequivocally extraversion. Factor IV combined stupidity and authoritarian values, while Factor V represented a kind of rebellious youthfulness. Subjects were assigned factor scores on each of these five factors. This was done using a feature of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie *et. al.*, 1975) which estimates factor scores for those Ss with missing data by taking a weighted product of the existing data. This new, much smaller set of variables should be relatively uncorrelated and served as the basis for subsequent analyses. The prime research question became whether these new variables could explain therapist choice.

The initial test was a multivariate analysis of variance with therapist choice as group membership and the five factor scores as dependent variables. The Manova procedure yields no great evidence that therapist choice relates systematically to the five factors. Indeed, the individual analyses of variance, Tables 6 - 10, show only Factor IV, authoritarian stupidity, approaches

TABLE 6

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE, REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS, AND STATISTICS OF FIT FOR FACTOR I

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F VALUE	PROB of F	R-SQUARE
REGRESSION	2	2.918	1.459	0.759	0.525	0.013
ERROR	115	221.226	1.923			
CORRECTED TOTAL	117	224.145				

TABLE 7

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE, REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS, AND STATISTICS OF FIT FOR FACTOR II

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F VALUE	PROB of F	R-SQUARE
REGRESSION	2	3.111	1.555	1.783	0.171	0.030
ERROR	115	100.297	0.872			
CORRECTED TOTAL	117	103.409				

TABLE 8

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE, REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS, AND STATISTICS OF FIT FOR FACTOR III

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F VALUE	PROB of F	R-SQUARE
REGRESSION	2	1.968	0.984	0.963	0.614	0.016
ERROR	115	117.455	1.021			
CORRECTED TOTAL	117	119.423				

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TABLE 9

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE, REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS, AND STATISTICS OF FIT FOR FACTOR IV

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F VALUE	PROB of F	R-SQUARE
REGRESSION	2	5.801	2.900	2.909	0.057	0.048
ERROR	115	114.647	0.996			
CORRECTED TOTAL	117	120.449				

TABLE 10

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLE, REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS, AND STATISTICS OF FIT FOR FACTOR V

SOURCE	D.F.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F VALUE	PROB of F	R-SQUARE
REGRESSION	2	2.651	1.325	0.993	0.625	0.017
ERROR	115	153.387	1.333			
CORRECTED TOTAL	117	156.038				

significance with $F = 2.909$, $P = .0569$. The means for the various factor scores appear in Table 11, and suggest that subjects who are brighter and less authoritarian prefer Ellis with no difference between those choosing Rogers or Perls. This finding harks back to the preliminary finding from the 48 individual analyses of variance. In addition, the first canonical variate, Table 12, gives the greatest weight to Factor IV.

TABLE 11

MEANS OF FACTOR SCORES BY GROUP

N	CHOICE	FACTOR I	FACTOR II	FACTOR III	FACTOR IV	FACTOR V
44	Ellis	-0.44	-0.16	-0.37	-0.31	-0.37
33	Perls	-0.50	0.06	-0.51	0.13	-0.29
41	Rogers	-0.14	0.21	-0.18	0.15	-0.03

TABLE 12

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN EACH CANONICAL VARIABLE AND THE DEPENDENT VARIABLES

CANONICAL VARIABLES	FACTOR I	FACTOR II	FACTOR III	FACTOR IV	FACTOR V
VARIABLE 1	0.267	0.577	0.206	0.703	0.393
VARIABLE 2	0.559	0.034	0.782	-0.469	0.372

In order to explore further any predictive efficacy of the factor scores, a discriminant analysis was performed on the three groups. The matrix of generalized distances, Table 13, shows that those who chose Perls versus Rogers are most similar while those who chose Ellis versus Rogers are most unlike, with Perls versus Ellis being intermediate. Ss were then 'predicted' into groups using the discriminant function. The summary of this is in Table 14. The percent

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TABLE 13

DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS PAIRWISE SQUARED GENERALIZED DISTANCES BETWEEN GROUPS
GENERALIZED SQUARED DISTANCE TO CHOICE

FROM CHOICE	Ellis	Perls	Rogers
Ellis	0.000	0.281	0.492
Perls	1.281	0.000	0.181
Rogers	0.492	0.181	0.000

TABLE 14

SUMMARY OF CLASSIFICATION PERFORMANCE USING GENERALIZED SQUARE DISTANCE

Number of Observations Classified

FROM CHOICE	Into Choice			Sum
	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	
Ellis	24	8	12	44
Perls	10	11	12	33
Rogers	12	10	19	41
Sum	46	29	43	118

TABLE 15

PERCENT AND PERCENT EXPECTED BY CHANCE ON MAIN AGREEMENT DIAGONAL^a

Into Choice by Discriminant Function

FROM CHOICE	Ellis	Perls	Rogers
Ellis	.203 (.145)		.372
Perls		.093 (.068)	.279
Rogers			.161 (.126)
	.389	.245	.364

^aThe first number is P_o , observed percent. The number in parentheses, P_e , is P_o of row i times P_o of column j where $i = j$

$$\text{kappa} = \frac{\sum P_o - \sum P_e}{1 - \sum P_e}$$

$$\sum P_o = .457$$

$$\sum P_e = .339$$

$$\text{kappa} = 11.8\%$$

$$\sigma_k = \frac{P_e}{N(1-P_e)} \quad z = \frac{\text{kappa}}{\sigma_k} = 1.787, p = .0367 \text{ one-tailed}$$

for H_o : kappa = .00 in the pop.

TABLE 16

CHI-SQUARE TABLE FOR FACTOR I VERSUS THERAPIST CHOICE

THERAPIST CHOICE

Factor I	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	Totals
Highest Quartile	11.00	11.00	7.00	29.00
2nd Highest Quartile	13.00	5.00	12.00	30.00
2nd Lowest Quartile	8.00	8.00	14.00	30.00
Lowest Quartile	12.00	9.00	9.00	30.00
TOTALS	44.00	33.00	42.00	119.00

TOTAL CHI-SQUARE = 6.30 WITH 6 D.F. PROB = 0.3906

Cramer's R = .163

TABLE 17

CHI-SQUARE TABLE FOR FACTOR II VERSUS THERAPIST CHOICE

THERAPIST CHOICE

Factor II	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	Totals
Highest Quartile	16.00	7.00	6.00	29.00
2nd Highest Quartile	8.00	8.00	14.00	30.00
2nd Lowest Quartile	10.00	10.00	10.00	30.00
Lowest Quartile	10.00	8.00	12.00	30.00
TOTALS	44.00	33.00	42.00	119.00

TOTAL CHI-SQUARE = 7.25 WITH 6 D.F. PROB = 0.2981

Cramer's R = .174

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TABLE 18

CHI-SQUARE TABLE FOR FACTOR III VERSUS THERAPIST CHOICE

Factor III	THERAPIST CHOICE			Totals
	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	
Highest Quartile	9.00	10.00	10.00	29.00
2nd Highest Quartile	14.00	9.00	7.00	30.00
2nd Lowest Quartile	10.00	7.00	13.00	30.00
Lowest Quartile	11.00	7.00	12.00	30.00
TOTALS	44.00	33.00	42.00	119.00

TOTAL CHI-SQUARE = 4.06 WITH 6 D.F. PROB = 0.6711

Cramer's R = .131

TABLE 19

CHI-SQUARE TABLE FOR FACTOR IV VERSUS THERAPIST CHOICE

Factor IV	THERAPIST CHOICE			Totals
	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	
Highest Quartile	15.00	7.00	7.00	29.00
2nd Highest Quartile	11.00	9.00	10.00	30.00
2nd Lowest Quartile	12.00	5.00	13.00	30.00
Lowest Quartile	6.00	12.00	12.00	30.00
TOTALS	44.00	33.00	42.00	119.00

TOTAL CHI-SQUARE = 9.05 WITH 6. D.F. PROB = 0.1694

Cramer's R = .195

agreement corrected for chance agreement (Cohen, 1968) was 11.8 percent. Given the standard error of kappa (Table 15), 11.8 percent yields a z score of +1.787, $p = .0367$ one-tailed. The most that can be said is that the five factor scores can predict therapist choice significantly better than chance but not very much better. 11.8 percent is clearly different from zero but not by a lot.

A final attempt was made to link factor scores and therapist choice. Each factor score set was divided as nearly as possible into quartiles and each such divided factor score was compared to therapist choice via chi-square to capitalize on the high power of chi-square to detect slight departures from chance. The results appear in Tables 16 to 20. Only Factor IV remotely approaches significance with chi-square = 9.055, $p = .169$, Cramer's $R = .20$. The direction of the results suggests, as before, that more subjects low on this factor, authoritarian stupidity, choose Ellis than would be expected by chance. This last sentence could be a summary of the results. The only clue is that brighter Ss seem to prefer Ellis as a therapist.

TABLE 20

CHI-SQUARE TABLE FOR FACTOR V VERSUS THERAPIST CHOICE

THERAPIST CHOICE

Factor V	Ellis	Perls	Rogers	Totals
Highest Quartile	12.00	10.00	7.00	29.00
2nd Highest Quartile	10.00	8.00	12.00	30.00
2nd Lowest Quartile	14.00	8.00	8.00	30.00
Lowest Quartile	8.00	7.00	14.00	29.00
TOTALS	44.00	33.00	42.00	118.00

TOTAL CHI-SQUARE = 5.58 WITH 6 D.F. PROB = 0.4937

Cramer's $R = .152$

DISCUSSION

The tentative finding that smarter, less authoritarian people prefer Ellis is consistent with Ellis' theoretical framework and personal style. He calls his approach Rational-Emotive Therapy, and it is aimed at getting the patient to examine logically the assumptions underlying his behavior and reactions. He comes across in the film as logical and rational, going about things in an

orderly, problem-solving way. The problem-solving approach he offers might well evoke the interest of the more intelligent, achievement-oriented subjects.

But more striking is that therapist choice is so little predictable by the battery of tests administered. Evidently these personality characteristics were not, with the possible exception above, related to the choices made here. One possibility is that the three therapists were not different enough, or seen as different enough, to generate preferences based on central personality characteristics. The authors doubt, however, that this is what occurred. These films were made to show different approaches to psychotherapy, and these three men are widely regarded as substantially different in theoretical orientation and personal style. Certainly the woman interviewed by them saw them as different and reacted to them differently.

The most likely reason is the use of a therapy analogue. The subjects were not real patients and did not go through an actual therapeutic encounter. A person seeking therapy is in pain and need, and often feels that he is placing his life in the therapist's hands. For such a person, what the therapist says and what he is like are of great consequence, and so is the choice of a therapist. For the subjects in this study the choice was probably not so important. Also, observing an encounter is very likely a less powerful experience than being in one, especially where the encounter involves the most important things about a person. Becoming aware of something previously unknown about oneself can be frightening or exhilarating; it is doubtful that the subject-observers had comparable experiences. For this reason, too, the subjects' choices were probably of less consequence to them than are the choices of actual patients. The subjects' choices were apparently based not on central psychological characteristics but rather on more incidental and trivial factors — perhaps their moods that day, how they felt about being subjects, and so on.

This study suggests that the choice of therapist cannot be profitably explored with a therapy analogue. It is probably necessary to assess real patients choosing real therapists. This is not easy. Patients who choose a therapist privately are not usually available for this kind of extensive psychological assessment, and clinic patients, who can be more easily studied, are rarely given a choice of therapist. But these obstacles may have to be overcome if the problem of the choice of therapist is to be accurately understood.

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