

TWO UNUSUAL CASES OF NARCISSISTIC ARREST

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Dynamic psychiatry is familiar with the acceptance of bisexuality of various degrees and the arrest of sexual development at lower levels but the cases to be described here must be admitted to be unusual ones.

Case 1.—V. R., white male, age 22, single, 6th grade education at 16 years, laborer but dependent on parents. Admitted to State Hospital on Sept. 25, 1940. One maternal cousin psychotic. Father has Bright's disease, is in very poor health, unable to work. "Adverse habits" in family. Head injury right side at age of 6 years. Scar, otherwise negative. Had difficulty in keeping up classes. Reading, spelling most difficult. Headaches, nervousness.

Patient was never known to have anything to do with women. Liked shows, new clothes, disliked drinks and cards. Held minister as his ideal. Usually stayed around home, did not get around like the others. Up to 4 or 5 years ago he had a terrible temper, he kicked and threw things; now is very quiet, and will not talk nor answer; of late has a kind disposition and will talk more.

Patient asked if it would be a sin to kill anyone or to commit suicide. Fears he will die. Is sad and unhappy, restless, silent, at times very dull. No insight. Religious trend. He doesn't know if he is saved or not and wants God to forgive him. Sleeps fairly well, walks the floor.

He thinks he is pregnant, feels pain in pelvis, breasts swell and pain him. He seemed unconcerned about his admission to the hospital or how long he would have to remain. Agreeable, cooperative, coherent, scant, simple, well oriented. Physical findings are negative. He is well developed and well nourished. Average male sex characters.

When questioned about his pregnancy he explained he had been careless with himself and permitted the intromission of his own semen into his rectum.

Questioning about homosexuality is answered by a "no" movement of his head but after a longer pause than his other answers.

When asked about the fear of getting a girl pregnant he says: "They won't get that way if you keep away from them."

The I.Q. on the Stanford Binet Test (Form L) was 73 with a mental age of 11 years. Upon this basis the patient can be considered as being of low borderline intelligence. There is no indication of loss from a higher level. One of patient's brothers shows a very high degree of illiteracy.

July 22, 1941 Sterilization (vasectomy) performed. Nov. 12, 1941, patient interviewed at parole staff at request of his sister. He is rather apathetic, complacent, states that he is not certain whether he is a man or a woman and he is not positive whether he is still pregnant. He denies having had hallucinatory experiences, has made good adjustment with other patients and the personnel and has been working in the hospital laundry steadily. Parole approved.

Nov. 16, 1941. Questioned by woman physician alone, he says smilingly that he cannot be pregnant because he is a man and that now he is sure he is a man.

Diagnosis: psychosis with mental deficiency, the psychosis being of schizoid type.

Case 2.—F. W., admitted to State Hospital on May 5, 1932. White male, 28 years, farm laborer, 7th grade education, married, 4 children, dependent. One paternal and one maternal grand uncle were also patients in State institutions.

Mental status upon admission: fear of people stabbing him. Thinks that his father-in-law was responsible for a conspiracy to kill him and to separate him from his wife. Thinks there is a state contest on to decide whether or not he shall look after his family, thinks that people consider him a criminal for not supporting his wife. Rational intervals. Duration of this attack four months.

Had measles, mumps, smallpox, scarlet fever, whooping cough, influenza. Acute gonorrhea in 1932. Was treated for it. Married at 19 years. Home life not pleasant. Never stayed with job very long. Always worrying and nervous, pessimistic. Lacked judgment. Asks if wife is married again when he knows she has not been divorced. Thinks he was brought here to be trained as one of the law enforcing agents of the state as this is a state institution.

Poor sleep, chronic constipation, trouble with urination. Slight trace of sugar that clears up. Speckled irides, hyposthenic thorax, leptosome. Stopped, anemic.

Report from Psychopathic Hospital, State University, dated April 22, 1932: fears of being hung, cremated or harmed in some manner. Became excited and panicky at night and rushed downstairs as he thought that someone was after him. On one occasion he said that he had been pierced by a knife. Spoke of the Klu Klux Klan as closing in on him. Thought that airplanes and rags were omens of a fate which was in store for him. Bizarre behavior. He stood in one position for long periods of time because, he said, there was a contest between him and another patient to see whether he would have his family or not. This contest was to see who could stand in one position the longest. He was quite suspicious. Seemed to smell his food before eating it. Once he thought his food was doped as he felt quite queer.

Does not want to admit he heard "voices" from a distance for fear he will get into trouble although he "took it all in" what "they" said but paid no attention to it. He is fairly well oriented to place and time.

He did not like to go to school. Liked to play. Pupils teased him. Arithmetics and spelling was hardest. Did not attract girls. Made no friends.

He is seclusive, evasive, apprehensive, restless, overtalkative, suicidal. Very low intelligence. I.Q. 52.

Diagnosis: Psychosis with mental deficiency, the psychosis being schizophrenia.

January 30, 1942—Active pulmonary tuberculosis since 1940. No work. Playing with the dishes in a silly manner, putting one cup on top of the other one or trying to put one cup into another one. Talks about an orange and a torpedo. He thinks he is a woman. Thinks he is not pregnant now but was before. Ties a peculiar knot in his shirt in front. Mannerisms. Silly grimacing. Untidy, sloven. Washes his face in toilet bowl and drinks water out of it. Much mental deterioration.

His previous fears of having been stabbed, pierced by a knife, his symbolism in playing with the dishes and his frequent talking about an orange and a torpedo represent psychodynamic material as does his delusion that he is a woman.

Ontogenetically-phylogenetically the delusion of pregnancy in a male and his uncertainty about his own sex, present a high degree of psychic bisexuality if not atavistic traits back to certain rodents (squirrels) of ambivalent sex function.

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