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Psycho-bizarreness: The intuitive rational-choice theory of madness

This presents a new theory, *Psycho-Bizarreness: The Intuitive Rational-Choice Theory of Madness*, which explains the development and treatment of schizophrenia, criminal insanity and neuroses, as rational coping mechanisms. Psycho-Bizarreness Theory (*PBT*) claims that when individuals are confronted with extreme levels of stress, regardless of whether the source of the stress is environmental or neurological impairments that prevent them to satisfy their basic needs, their behavioral options become limited. While some individuals prefer to remain depressed, commit suicide, become drug abusers or use aggression to eliminate the stressor, a minority of people intuitively choose certain mad behaviors that serve their coping needs. Madness, defined by five operational criteria (see Rofe, 2016), is seen primarily as a repressive coping mechanism, which enables patients to block the accessibility of stress-related thoughts. The choice of a specific behavior is determined by the same three principles which guide the consumer's decision-making process when purchasing a certain product (e.g., see Wänke & Friese, 2005). This includes the need to exercise control over the stressor, availability of suitable "merchandise" and cost-benefit analysis. Although the decision to implement the intuitive/unconscious choice is conscious, patients become unaware of the Knowledge of Self-Involvement (KSI), or the True Reason (TR) for acting bizarrely, through a variety of cognitive processes that disrupt the encoding of this knowledge and memory-inhibiting mechanisms that cause its forgetfulness. Subsequently, utilizing their socially internalized beliefs regarding the causes of psychological disorders, patients develop a self-deceptive belief which attributes the cause of their symptoms to factors beyond their conscious control, and thus stabilizes the unawareness of KSI/TR. *PBT* proved its ability to integrate all therapeutic methods pertaining to neurosis into one theoretical framework (Rofe, 2010), explaining all data relevant to the development and treatment of conversion disorder, including neurological findings, which seemingly support the medical explanation of this disorder (Rofe & Rofe, 2013), and resolves the theoretical confusion regarding the explanation of phobia by distinguishing between a bizarre phobia (e.g., agoraphobia, and chocolate phobia) and non-bizarre phobia, such as dog phobia (Rofe, 2015).

Biography

Yacov Rofe is a professor of psychology and former chair of the Interdisciplinary Department of Social Sciences at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel. He taught for the Department of Psychology at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, and was a visiting professor at Rutgers Medical School in New Jersey. He has published influential articles in leading journals, including an article entitled "Utility Theory: Stress and Affiliation", which was published in the prestigious journal, *Psychological Review* (1984). Soon after receiving tenure, while being fully aware that he would most likely be wasting many years of work in vain, he began to develop a new theory of psychopathology, termed Psycho-Bizarreness Theory (*PBT*) (Rofé, 1989, 2000), which proved its ability to integrate research and clinical data of rival theories, and thus, resolve the endless controversy in this area.

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