

**Is Anyone Really Normal?
Perspectives on
Abnormal Psychology**

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Drew Westen received his A.B. in Social Studies, magna cum laude, from Harvard University in 1980, his M.A. in Social and Political Thought from the University of Sussex, and his Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Michigan in 1985.

Before becoming the Director of Psychology at Harvard Medical School in 1991, Westen taught at University of Michigan in Ann Arbor where he also had a private practice. Westen has been the recipient of many honors and awards, including: the 1991 Golden Apple Award for outstanding undergraduate teacher at the University of Michigan, the 1990-91 and 1989-1990 Best Professor Award by the Michigan Daily, the Michigan Psychological Association Master Lecturer Award, 1990, the University of Michigan Teaching Assistant Award, 1985. He also received a Rotary Foundation Fellowship in 1981.

Westen is a frequent contributor to many psychological journals such as Journal of Abnormal Psychology and Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology. He is currently working on two manuscripts: Psychology: Current Perspectives, and Manual of Developmental Psychopathology and has received a grant from The American Psychoanalytic Association to assess dimensions of object relations.

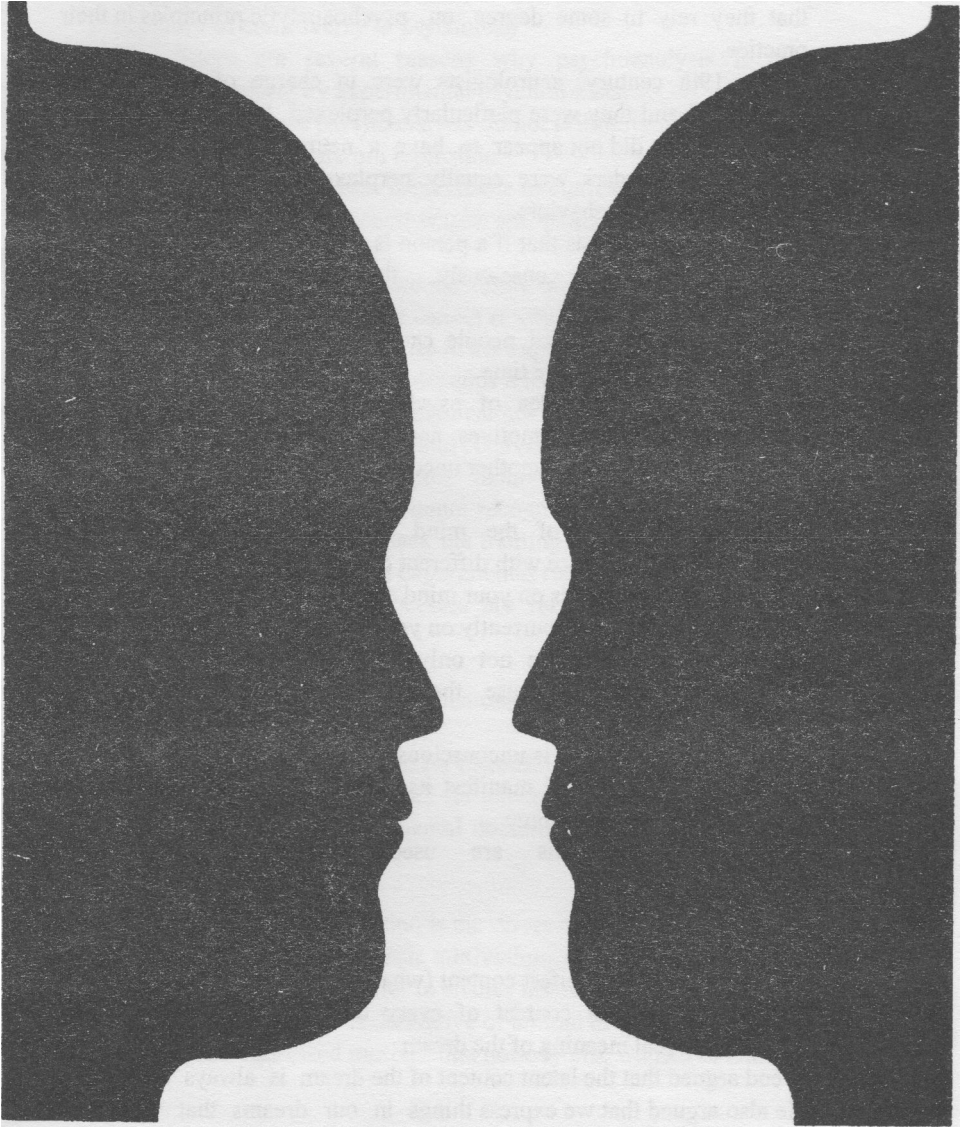
Westen is also the Consulting Editor for Psychological Assessment: A Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, and is an ad hoc reviewer for several publications including American Psychologist, and Psychological Bulletin.

Lecture One: How Perspectives Influence Us

- I.** There are no "facts" in psychology. We are always imposing our own order on the data that we see. Just as perceptual psychologists argue that we naturally integrate isolated bits of information into coherent units, the same appears to be true of science as well.
 - A.** We are always piecing together a broad theoretical framework to understand reality.
 - B.** Science develops as these "paradigms", (broad ways of seeing things within a discipline) change, according to philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn
 - 1.** When a scientific community agrees on a paradigm there is a period of normal science.
 - 2.** Then anomalies show up and scientists must figure out how to make them fit in the paradigm.
 - 3.** When too many anomalies exist, there's a period of revolutionary science where scientists look for an alternative paradigm. Once a new paradigm develops and gains acceptance in the scientific community, a new period of normal science begins and starts the cycle anew.

- II.** Normal variations in personality can be understood through a biological perspective.
 - A.** It is easy not to see ourselves and essentially our personalities as the interaction of neurons in our nervous system.
 - B.** However, biology can influence the development of specific personality traits. Innate temperament appears to influence emotionality, activity level, sociability, and impulsivity.

- III.** Biology can also be important in psychopathology (sickness of the mind).
 - A.** There is strong evidence for the genetics of schizophrenia.
 - B.** The dopamine hypothesis suggests that schizophrenics have an overactivity of the neurotransmitter dopamine.
 - C.** Manic-depression (bipolar disorder) can also be explained by genetics; the vast majority of people who suffer from it have a family history of the disease, which does not appear to be learned.
 - D.** Treating patients from a biological perspective involves medication.
 - E.** Thinking about psychological disorders biologically is often essential to good treatment, but medical interventions can also be used inappropriately.



Lecture Two: Freud: From Dreams to Drives

- I. The psychoanalytic approach to abnormal psychology.
 - A. The vast majority of practicing psychiatrists and psychologists report that they rely to some degree on psychoanalytic principles in their practice.
 - B. In the 19th century, neurologists were in charge, of helping the mentally ill and they were particularly perplexed by hysteria, and by obsessions that did not appear to have a neurological basis. Patients with these disorders were equally perplexed because they could not explain their own behaviors.
 - C. Freud's hypothesis was that if a person is doing something he or she has no desire to do consciously, then the motive must be unconscious.
 - D. Freud also suggested that people can be guided by unconscious motives much or all of the time.
 - E. Freud developed the idea of psychodynamics -- people can have multiple and conflicting motives, and if a force is not expressing itself, then there must be another unconscious force blocking it.

- II. Freud's topographic model of the mind uses a spatial metaphor. He envisions the mind as a space with different components to it.
 - A. Consciousness is what is on your mind at the moment:
 - B. The preconscious is not currently on your mind, but could be.
 - C. Unconscious processes are not only not conscious, but they cannot be made conscious because they would generate anxiety. They are therefore repressed.
 - D. Just because something is unconscious does not mean it is not going to be expressed. It will manifest itself in other ways, such as in dreams or slips of the tongue.
 - E. Compromise formations are used to reconcile competing motives.

- III. Freud's theory of dreams:
 - A. All dreams have a manifest content (what's on the surface).
 - B. Below the manifest content of every dream is the latent content, which is the real meaning of the dream.
 - C. Freud argued that the latent content of the dream is always a wish.
 - D. He also argued that we express things in our dreams that we would be afraid to admit during our waking hours.
 - E. We forget our dreams when we wake up because we would be upset by their content and because they are disguised.
 - F. Behind Freud's dream theory is the notion of psychic determinism.

Lecture Three: Freud's Theories of Motivation and Development

- I. The notion that much of mental life is unconscious has engendered a century of controversy in psychology.
 - A. There are several reasons why psychoanalysis is often rejected, particularly by experimental psychologists.
 - 1. Because psychoanalysts do not primarily rely on experiments, their findings are not replicable.
 - 2. Subjective bias is inevitable in clinical practice.
 - 3. Only the psychotherapist and patient can see the data that emerge in therapy hours.
 - 4. Because there are so many schools of psychotherapy, clinical observation alone cannot resolve theoretical disputes.
 - B. The psychoanalyst's response to the experimentalist:
 - 1. What you believe depends a lot on what you see; brief experiments with college freshman cannot be the basis for complex theories of human mental life and behavior.
 - 2. Trying to interpret behavior takes years of training; if experimentalists cannot recognize certain unconscious processes it is because they lack the training, just as many practitioners cannot fully understand experimental research studies.
 - 3. Unconscious processes are recognized by just about everyone, even children.

- II. Experimental data clearly demonstrates the existence of unconscious processes.
 - A. There is clear evidence for unconscious thought processes.
 - B. There is evidence as well for unconscious emotional processes.
 - C. There is new experimental documentation of unconscious motivation as well.

- III. Freud's model of motivation is the drive, instinct, or energy model.
 - A. Freud said the two basic motivations are sex and aggression.
 - B. Many in the field refer to wishes instead of drives as basic motives.
 - C. What we pursue is derivative of animal motives.
 - D. Freud addressed motives that nobody else wanted to talk about.

Lecture Four: The Psychoanalytic Theory of Conflict

- I. Freud said the two basic motivations (sex and aggression) get intermingled in complicated ways. It is not always possible to express our sexual and aggressive impulses, so we must sublimate them.
- II. Another one of Freud's models is the developmental model.
 - A. It is a model of psychosexual development and is controversial.
 - B. The way our personality develops is linked to how we develop sexually. (Sex is viewed in the broad sense of pleasure seeking.)
 - C. There are sequential stages in the development of an individual that are tied to particular zones of pleasure.
 - D. In order to understand this theory it helps to see it through the eyes of a child and to think metaphorically as well as concretely.
- III. There are five stages in Freud's theory.
 - A. The first stage is the oral stage (the first year of life).
 1. Primary pleasures come through the mouth.
 2. This is a stage of dependence and developing expectations of trust.
 - B. The second stage is the anal stage (the "terrible twos").
 1. The anal region becomes a source of pleasure.
 2. This stage addresses issues of compliance and defiance, order and disorder, messiness and cleanliness.
 - C. The third stage is the phallus stage (ages 4-6).
 1. Children learn that they can have fun with their genitals.
 2. This a stage of identification (trying to be like someone else, particularly the parents).
 3. This is when the Oedipus complex develops.
 - a. Little boys want to have an exclusive relationship with their mothers, and want to get dad out of the way.
 - b. The male aspect of the complex involves the castration complex.
 - c. The female aspect of the complex involves penis envy.
 4. Males fixated on this stage are often very "macho" and women are usually competitive with other women.
 - D. The fourth stage is the latency stage (ages 7-11).
 1. This is when the live emotional issues are submerged.
 2. The child sublimates urges into socially acceptable behavior.
 - E. The fifth stage is the genital stage (adolescence and beyond).
 1. There is a reawakening of sexual urges.
 2. Strands from the other stages are integrated.

Lecture Five: Contemporary Psychodynamic Thinking

- I. In the genital stage people are capable of mature relationships. The primary sexual aim is sexual intercourse and reproduction, although aspects of all stages become integrated in adult intimacy.

- II. Freud's final model is a structural model.
 - A. The mind has three different structures.
 - 1. The id is the instinct center and presses for satisfaction.
 - 2. The superego is our conscious that develops in childhood.
 - 3. The ego selects choices, and is involved in cognition, perception, behavioral control and regulation of emotions.
 - B. People use different types of defense mechanisms.
 - 1. Repression is when uncomfortable information is blocked from consciousness.
 - 2. Sublimation is when you channel an urge into a socially acceptable behavior.
 - 3. Reaction formation is turning an impulse into its opposite.
 - 4. Projection is projecting an impulse onto someone else.
 - 5. Rationalization is falsely convincing yourself of something.
 - 6. Humor can be a defense as well, to stave off anxiety. Defenses can be healthy as well as pathological.

- III. There are several aims of psychoanalytic treatment:
 - A. Insight is used to help a person change.
 - B. The relationship with the therapist itself may be curative.

- IV. Where has psychoanalysis gone since Freud's time?
 - A. Neo Freudians had an expanded view of motivation.
 - B. They also believed that humans need a sense of meaning in life.
 - C. Erik Ericson argued that Freud underemphasized our social side.
 - D. Neo Freudians believed that culture plays a role in shaping us.
 - E. Ego psychology focuses on how the ego functions.
 - F. Object relations theory describes the way we relate to people interpersonally and the cognitive, emotional and motivational processes that underlie the capacity for intimacy.

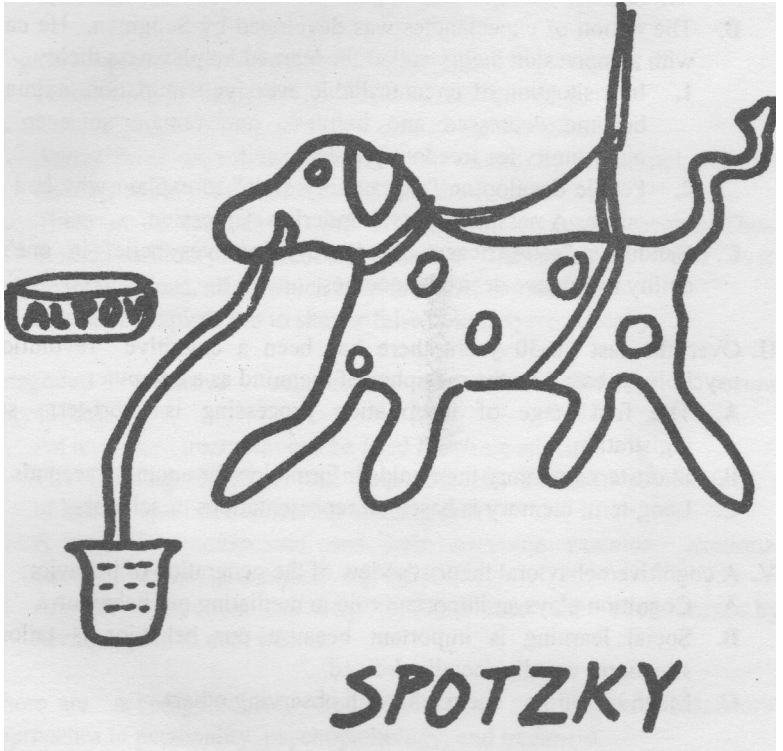
- V. Psychoanalysis has accomplished many things.
 - A. It examines mental operations in a comprehensive way.
 - B. Key assumptions of psychoanalysis have been found to be true.
 - C. Freud broke down the them/us distinction in mental health: we all have pockets of adaptive as well as maladaptive functioning.

Lecture Six: The Behaviorist Alternative

- I. There are limits to the psychoanalytic approach.
 - A. Empirical verifiability is a problem.
 - B. Many people are skeptical about Freud's theory of motivation.
 - C. Freud's theory of female sexuality is also a problem.
 - D. Aspects of everyday adaptive functioning are not explained well.
 - E. Psychoanalytic treatment has limits.

- II. An alternative to psychoanalysis is the cognitive-behavioral perspective.
 - A. This theory has a research orientation.
 - B. Behaviorism emerged as a reaction against a philosophical school called Cartesian dualism and against introspective psychology.
 - C. Behaviorism accents the contention of the philosopher John Locke, who argued that we start out with a blank slate and then develop a history of learning experiences that shape who we are.
 - D. Laws of learning apply to human and animal behavior.

- III. Developments in behaviorist theory:
 - A. The first major behaviorist was Ivan Pavlov, who discovered classical conditioning.
 - B. Skinner developed the theory of operant conditioning.
 - 1. An operant is a behavior that is emitted, not elicited (voluntary).
 - 2. A reinforcer is something in the environment that increases the probability that an action will be performed again.
 - 3. Negative reinforcer occurs when an aversive stimulus is removed, increasing the likelihood of repeat performances.
 - 4. Punishment decreases the probability of an action occurring.
 - 5. Punishment and reinforcement tend to be reciprocal in social life.
 - 6. Punishment can have paradoxical and unwanted effects: physical punishment can make children aggressive, and punishing the right operant is crucial.
 - C. There are other offshoots of behaviorist principles.
 - 1. Shaping involves reinforcing behavior progressively.
 - 2. Chaining is when you get someone to produce a series of behaviors in sequence, rewarding them along the way.
 - 3. Schedules of reinforcement are usually such that you will not be reinforced or punished for every action.



Lecture Seven: Cognitive-Social Approaches: The Role of Situations and Thought

- I. There are several implications of behaviorism for psychology.
 - A. We can develop a psychology that is applicable to humans and animals that we can test rigorously with experimentation.
 - B. Environmental events predict certain behavioral responses.
 - C. Autonomy does not exist because our behavior is always controlled.

- II. Cognitive-behavioral or cognitive social learning approaches:
 - A. Rotter developed the concept of "expectancies". An animal (or person) will respond based on how it perceives its has been conditioned.
 - B. The notion of expectancies was developed by Seligman. He came up with a depression theory called the learned helplessness theory.
 - 1. In a situation of uncontrollable aversive stimulation, animals will become depressed and helpless, and remain so even if the opportunity for freedom presents itself.
 - 2. People develop an "explanatory style" to explain why bad events occur. A pessimistic style underlies depression.
 - C. Bandura's "self-efficacy expectancy" involves belief in one's own ability to achieve desired outcomes.

- III. Over the last 20-30 years there has been a cognitive revolution in psychology, based on the metaphor of the mind as a computer.
 - A. The first stage of information processing is short-term sensory registration.
 - B. Short-term memory then holds information for about 30 seconds.
 - C. Long-term memory is based on representations or schemas.

- IV. A cognitive/behavioral theorist's view of the generation of behavior:
 - A. Cognition plays an important role in mediating our behavior.
 - B. Social learning is important because our behavior is tailored to situations, usually socially defined.
 - C. Much of learning occurs through observing others.

- V. These procedures can be used in treating people psychologically.
 - A. Maladaptive behaviors are relatively specific and are learned.
 - B. You must create new contingencies of reinforcement if you want to change the behavior.
 - C. An important tool to alter dysfunctional emotional reactions and phobias, based on classical conditioning, is systematic desensitization.

Lecture Eight: Cognitions, Social Behavior and Cognitive Behavioral Therapies

- I. Many treatment techniques rely on behaviorist principles of classical and operant conditioning.
 - A. "Flooding" involves massive exposure to the frightening stimulus.
 - B. "Graded exposure" is gradual exposure to the phobic stimulus.
 - C. One aversive conditioning technique involves visualizing something unpleasant.
 - D. In a "token economy" the patient is rewarded for good behavior.

- II. Cognitive approaches to therapy emerged to treat depression.
 - A. Problems in feeling stem from problems in thinking.
 - B. To change the feeling, you must change the thoughts.
 - C. Aaron Beck says that depression is caused by irrational, negative feelings about the self, the world, and the future.
 - D. There are distortions in the thinking of depressed people. These include arbitrary inferences, selective abstractions, and over-generalizations, all of which help maintain depression.
 - E. It is the therapist's job to shatter false beliefs systematically.

- III. Integrated cognitive behavioral treatments combine several approaches.
 - A. An integrated treatment can be used for panic attacks.
 - B. The flooding technique can help someone get used to the feeling of being breathless, or having a racing heart.
 - C. A cognitive component can help someone examine irrational catastrophic thoughts underlying the anxiety.
 - D. Another component can help someone face the circumstance by having a plan to deal with it.

- IV. There are accomplishments and limitations of cognitive-behavioral approaches to personality, psychopathology, and treatment.
 - A. Accomplishments include that it is theoretically straightforward and easy to apply, it allows rigorous experimentation, and it can lead to an effective mode of treatment.
 - B. Limitations include that it underemphasizes motivation and unconscious processes, it is based only on what is readily testable, and the treatment can leave many stones unturned.

- V. Many factors lead psychologists to see things the way they do, and there is much resistance among psychologists to see things in ways they do not want to see them, for both cognitive and motivational reasons.

SUGGESTED READINGS TO ACCOMPANY

Is Anyone Really Normal? Perspectives on Abnormal Psychology

Bandura, A. Social Foundations of Thought and Action. Not an easy book to get through, but if you want to understand cognitive social learning theory, this is the book to read.

Beck, A.T. Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders. A well written account of why Beck abandoned psychoanalysis and developed cognitive therapy for depression.

Freud, S. Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis. A very readable and interesting introduction to Freud's view of the mind.

Freud, S. An Outline of Psychoanalysis. A concise but very comprehensive summary of Freud's theory of personality. This was Freud's last work and is dense but well worth the effort.

Westen, D. "Psychoanalytic Approaches to Personality" in L. Pervin (ed.), Handbook of Personality: Theory and Research. A summary of contemporary psychoanalytic thinking about personality, including a review of its empirical basis.

Westen, D. Self and Society: Narcissism, Collectivism, and the Development of Morals. Not the easiest book in the world to read, but it's got a few good parts, particularly on the relationship between personality and culture, and I agree with most of what the author has to say.

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The Self Under Siege: Philosophy in the Twentieth Century

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