



Self Psychology and Diagnostic Assessment: Identifying Selfobject Functions Through Psychological Testing (Lea's Personality and Clinical Psychology)

Marshall L. Silverstein

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The self psychology of Heinz Kohut has been an important force in contemporary psychoanalytic thought and its ramifications for therapy have been extensively explored. Now, Marshall Silverstein offers the first analysis of the application of self psychology to projective diagnostic assessment. Differentiating the self psychological approach from an ego psychological interpretation of classical drive theory, he clearly outlines the principal contributions of Kohut, including the concepts of selfobject functions, empathy, transmuting internalization, and compensatory structure. Providing numerous clinical examples, he shows how the major selfobject functions of mirroring, idealization, and twinship can be identified on projective tests. Silverstein then demonstrates how conventional assessment approaches to grandiosity, self-esteem, and idealization can be reconceptualized within the framework of self psychology, and he also contrasts ego psychological interpretations with self psychological interpretations.

This book makes a strong case for the importance of the clinical identification of self states. It will help practitioners understand their patients' varied attempts to repair an injury to the self to restore self-esteem (compensatory structure) and the clinical consequences of self-disorders, including disintegration products such as narcissistic rage and affect states characterized by empty depression, chronic boredom, and lack of zest.

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