

10-1-1974

# Future-Time Perspective in Negro and White Adolescents

Anees A. Sheikh

Marquette University, [anees.sheikh@marquette.edu](mailto:anees.sheikh@marquette.edu)

Michael Twerski

Marquette University

Marquette University

e-Publications@Marquette

***Faculty Research and Publications/College***

***This paper is NOT THE PUBLISHED VERSION; but the author's final, peer-reviewed manuscript.*** The published version may be accessed by following the link in the citation below.

*Perceptual and Motor Skills*, Vol. 39 (1974): 308. [DOI](#). This article is © Perceptual and Motor Skills and permission has been granted for this version to appear in [e-Publications@Marquette](#). Perceptual and Motor Skills does not grant permission for this article to be further copied/distributed or hosted elsewhere without the express permission from Perceptual and Motor Skills.

# Future-Time Perspective in Negro and White Adolescents

Anees A. Sheikh

Psychology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Michael Twerski

Psychology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Numerous studies over the past two decades have investigated the relationship of future-time perspective to a host of variables such as delinquency, social class, deferred gratification, intelligence, and age. However, one variable of current significance, namely, race, has so far escaped the attention of temporally curious Es. This study compared the future-time perspective, as measured through TAT stories, in 19 Negro and 19 white high school students belonging to the lower socioeconomic class. In addition to the socioeconomic status, age, and intelligence were held constant. The TAT administration included three cards from the traditional Murray set (Murray, 1943), as well as three cards from the Thompson version (Thompson, 1949) which has Negro figures. Epley and Ricks' (1963) scoring system was employed to obtain scores for future-time extension. A comparison of the total scores of the white Ss on all six TAT cards with the similar scores of the Negro Ss yielded no significant differences ( $M$  for white Ss = 63.05,  $M$  for Negro Ss = 52.16,  $t = 1.13$ ,  $df = 18$ ). The total scores on the three Thompson cards were compared with the total scores on the three Murray cards separately for white and Negro Ss. The white group showed a significantly different response pattern on the Murray administration and the Thompson, with future-time extension constricted on the latter ( $M$  for Murray cards = 38.42,  $M$  for Thompson cards = 24.63,  $t = 3.81$ ,  $df = 18$ ,  $p < .01$ ). However, the Negro Ss' responses to the

two TAT administrations did not differ ( $M$  for Murray cards = 27.26,  $M$  for Thompson cards = 24.89,  $r = 0.73$ ,  $df = 18$ ).

It is possible that, while Negroes do not see themselves in any way more constricted economically or socially than their white counterparts, the whites do. The white lower social class members, perhaps, perceive greater socioeconomic promise for themselves than for their black peers. In responding to a TAT administration, consequently, the black Ss do not discriminate their time-extension dimension between Negro and white figures. In contrast, the white Ss respond one way when fantasizing about a white figure and in a completely different manner when fantasizing about a black figure.

It also seems plausible that the white Ss are influenced by the prevalent Negro stereotype. The Negroes have often been portrayed by the mass-media as impulsive, present-oriented, and interested in day-to-day living. As a result of this stereotype, perhaps, the white Ss believe that the Negroes have a constricted future-time perspective. Consequently, while responding to the Thompson cards they revealed their beliefs about the Negroes' time-perspective rather than their own future-time perspective.

#### REFERENCES

EPLEY, D., & RICKS, D. R. Foresight and hindsight in the TAT. *Journal of Projective Techniques and Personality Assessment*; 1963, 27, 51-59.

MURRAY, H. A. *Thematic Apperception Test manual*. Cambridge: Harvard Univer. Press, 1943.

THOMPSON, C. E. The Thompson modification of the Thematic Apperception Test. *Rorschach Research Exchange*, 1949, 13, 469-478.