



The Finnish Rorschach Association ry

The Autumn Seminars of The Finnish Rorschach Association

November 4 & 5, 2021 (Helsinki time)

Webinar (Zoom)

“CLINICAL AND FORENSIC ASSESSMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAUMA”

&

“THE RORSCHACH IN FORENSIC AND CLINICAL SETTINGS”

F. Barton Evans, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Science (retired), USA



Time: Thursday, November 4, 2021, from 10:00 to 17:00 (Helsinki time)

Friday, November 5, 2021, from 10:00 to 17:00 (Helsinki time)

Place: Zoom (webinar)

Fee: FRA members: **250 €** for both days, **150 €** for one day. Non-FRA members: **380 €** for both days, **230 €** for one day. All fees are VAT 0% and no VAT is added to the fee.

Registration: Registration is open to members of The Finnish Rorschach Association, the Danish Rorschach Society, the Swedish Rorschach Society, The Norwegian Rorschach Society, the Therapeutic Assessment Institute community and the Society for Personality Assessment. Please send an e-mail to our treasurer, Joona Suominen, by November 1, 2021. E-mail: joona.suominen@icloud.com. After registration, you will receive an invoice including a reference number for payment.

Clinical and Forensic Assessment of Psychological Trauma (November 4, 2021)

Psychological trauma [PT] is ubiquitous, highly topical and affects a large number of individuals. PT becomes deeply entrenched in the personality of the victim, yet systematic psychological assessment of PT is frequently not well understood. This workshop will acquaint the participant with core elements of the assessment of PT. First, Dr. Evans will provide a conceptual overview, including history, biopsychosocial processes, and diagnostic issues including presentations of PT other than PTSD, such as complex posttraumatic disorder and dissociative disorder. Proposed DSM 5 criteria for PTSD will be reviewed as well as problems with overdiagnosis of this disorder.

Next, Dr. Evans will discuss how PT presents on the assessment instruments used in evaluation, including major instruments such as the MMPI, PAI, and Rorschach. He will survey trauma-specific scales from these instruments as well as trauma-specific tests such as the CAPS-DX and TSI-2. I will discuss the assessment of malingering and defensiveness.

Last, Dr. Evans will discuss the assessment of PT in two patient groups- combat related PTSD and PT and individuals in the immigration community. He will also discuss how to use these assessment methods in Therapeutic Assessment or collaborative assessment treatment settings.

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will understand that trauma disorders can be more complex than simply PTSD.
2. Participants will learn how to select instruments to assess the effects of trauma and know the research literature on trauma-specific scales and trauma-specific instruments.
3. Participants will know how to use assessment of PT in forensic and clinical settings, including therapeutic and collaborative assessment.
4. Participants will learn how to defend their opinions and their test instruments in court, including how to assess for malingering of trauma effects, given the unique literature on trauma and malingering.
5. Participants will learn to use particular PTSD assessment strategies with combat veterans and immigrants with trauma.

PROGRAM (Helsinki time)

10:00 – 11:30

The Trauma Experience: Biological and psychological reaction to extreme fear
The Manifestations of Trauma: Multiple diagnostic possibilities including DSM 5

11:30 – 11:45

Break

11:45 – 13:15

The Diagnostic Interview
Choosing Assessment Instruments: Broad-band vs. trauma-specific instruments

13:15 – 14:00

Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30

Choosing Assessment Instruments (continued): Projective/performance-based instruments, creating a comprehensive test battery
Assessing Malingering and Defensiveness

15:30 – 15:45

Break

15:45 – 17:00

The Therapeutic Setting: BETA assessment

Case examples: Assessing combat veterans and immigrants with trauma

17:15 – 18:15

General Assembly of The Finnish Rorschach Association (only for FRA members)

The Rorschach in Forensic and Clinical Settings (November 5, 2021)

Despite considerable and growing research demonstrating that the Rorschach is one of the most empirically sturdy of all personality tests, continued polemic criticisms of the instrument have left personality assessors anxious and even reluctant to use it. With knowledge of the current research and a model for presenting Rorschach findings in a straightforward and user-friendly way, the well-prepared personality assessor has little to fear in forensic and clinical settings. The Rorschach is especially valuable in forensic settings because of its unique ability to capture aspects of personality that may be difficult to access with interview and self-report measures.

This workshop is designed to provide personality assessors with information on how to intelligently present the value of the Rorschach in forensic and clinical settings in clear and positive ways. Using the first the Rorschach White Paper (SPA 2005) and then the Rorschach meta-analytic study (Mihura et al 2013), Dr. Evans will review the underlying empirical evidence of reliability and validity the instrument, discussing its strengths and weaknesses, as well as guidelines for competent practice. Next, he will evaluate the current criticisms of the Rorschach with an emphasis on revealing the often unscientific basis for the criticisms. He will provide strategies for effectively presenting the value of the Rorschach, and for dealing with challenges of its use, in court and in clinical practice. Finally, Dr. Evans will present a two cases- one in which the use of the Rorschach in a child custody evaluation was challenged by two major critics and a second in which a Building Empathy through Assessment (BETA) (Smith & Evans, 2017) Therapeutic Assessment model was used with high conflict parents in lieu of a traditional custody model.

OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss concerns about using the Rorschach in clinical and forensic practice arising from published critiques by Rorschach detractors, including their beliefs and the basis of their beliefs.
2. Review key empirical research related to the Exner Comprehensive System's (CS) and Rorschach Performance Assessment System (R-PAS) reliability and validity.
3. Develop strategies for dealing with criticisms of the CS in clinical and forensic practice
4. Present two case studies of the Rorschach demonstrating its value in clinical and forensic practice.

PROGRAM (Helsinki time)

10:00 – 11.30

Introduction/Overview

Implications of the Rorschach White Paper and Meta-Analysis on practice

11:30 – 11:45

Break

11:45 – 13:15

Addressing the critics of the Rorschach in court, in practice, and in institutions. An analysis of their thinking errors. Key Resources.

13:15 – 14:00

Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30

Case Presentation. The Rorschach in a child custody case and how to deal with legal challenges

15:30 – 15:45

Break

15:45 – 17:00

Case Presentation- Using BETA/Therapeutic assessment in a case of an adolescent with high parental conflict

F. Barton Evans, Ph.D., received B.S. *magna cum laude* in psychology from Tufts University and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from The American University. He completed a clinical psychology internship at the Brentwood VA Center for Psychosocial Medicine in West Los Angeles, CA and a NIMH Post-Doctoral Fellowship in clinical psychology at the Yale University School of Medicine. He is a graduate of the Clinical Training Programs at the Washington School of Psychiatry and the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. He is a retired Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and Director of Psychological and Forensic Assessment Services, College of Medicine, East Tennessee State University. He previously worked as a clinical psychologist for the Veterans Administration where he has conducted over 2400 forensic disability evaluations of PTSD, mental disorders, traumatic brain injury and competency. Before working for the VA, he was in private practice in clinical and forensic psychology for 20 years in Washington, DC and Bozeman, MT.

Dr. Evans is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (Clinical Psychology) and Fellow of the Society for Personality Assessment. He previously taught at George Washington University School of Medicine, The American University, Georgetown University Medical School, Washington College of Law, University of North Carolina-Greensboro, University of Washington School of Medicine, and Montana State University.

Dr. Evans has presented nationally and internationally, including over 200 workshops and papers, on topics including psychological trauma, psychological assessment, forensic psychological evaluation, and personality disorder. Dr. Evans has four books, *Forensic Psychological Assessment for Immigration Court* (2018) with Giselle Hass; *Harry Stack Sullivan: Interpersonal Theory and Psychotherapy*; *Handbook of Forensic Rorschach Assessment* with Carl Gacono; and *The Rorschach in Multimethod Forensic Assessment* with Robert Erard. He has published 45 book chapters and articles on topics of forensic assessment in immigration court, psychological trauma, and psychological assessment.

Dr. Evans conducted over 3200 independent forensic evaluations for various U.S. Federal, state and county courts, which include domestic and child custody matters, criminal matters, personal injury matters, and Veterans disability. He was qualified as an expert witness in immigration, federal, state, and county courts over 100 times. Dr. Evans was also very active in the Collaborative/Therapeutic Assessment community and served as a founding member of the Therapeutic Assessment Institute Board.