

Psycho iv: the beginning

Psychology



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Psycho IV: The Beginning Psycho IV is a story scripted by Robert Bloch and Joseph Stefano, and later directed by Mick Garris. It's a fictitious story about an individual by the name of Norman Bates. Norman suffers from psychological problems that find the cause in the abusive childhood he suffered in the hands of his mother. This all came about because, when he was five years old, his father died, leaving him in the hands of his mother Norma. Norma abuses him in various ways, and exerts dominance over him by punishing him for disobeying her. She teaches him that sex is bad, and forces him to dress as a girl.

All this is recounted by Norman to a radio talk show host, but he does not tell them his real name, fearing that he may be arrested. Norman marries Connie, and as she tells him that she is expecting a baby, Norman fears that the baby may inherit the psychological problems that his mother had. So he tries to kill Connie so as to prevent this birth. The movie also tells how Norman killed his mother years back, and since then, has had episodes where he pretends to be his mother to the extent of dressing like her, this helps him reduce his guilty feelings of killing her.

The writer of this story is most likely trying to portray that the way we treat our children when they are young can have a lasting effect on them so that, in some instances, the effects may prove impossible to reverse. Parents especially mothers, have a big responsibility in raising their children in the proper manner. The DVD strongly suggests that nurture rather than nature is the cause of Norman's psychopathology. This is because Norman develops these psychological problems after Norma treated him inappropriately when he was young. Some may venture to argue that it is nature, but despite the possibilities of him having inherited his mother's genes, this was not the direct

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reason for his change of behaviour. There have been people that have had similar genes but have not manifested its effects because they were raised up well.

Her mother taught him blind obedience, and disobedience would lead to terrible punishment. This led to his tremendous guilt when he later killed her. To suppress the guilt, he did what came to his mind, and that is dress like his mother. This was not hard for him, because he was taught to dress as a girl when he was young. The lack of a father figure emboldened the mother to continue with her abusive lifestyle. This was a tragedy because Norman did not have a refuge he could seek.

An appropriate DSM-IV diagnosis that would apply to Norman's condition is Split Personality Disorder. This disorder is manifested in Norman because, after the death of his mother, he begins to behave like her, and even goes to the extent of dressing like her even in public. This adaptive response did not occur immediately after the death of his mother, rather it developed gradually. The stress caused by the trauma, together with the childhood abuses gave birth to his split personality.

It was stated by Braun (1986) that, gradually the patient's personality is split because the different adaptive responses to the trauma have become functionally separated by an amnesic barrier, thus, a patient is not aware that he or she is viewed by others as behaving inconsistently. Norman did not fully realize at first that he was beginning to behave like his mother, and after a period of time, he did not see anything wrong with it. This is the nature of split personality; it is both transforming and also dangerous to the individual and the people with him.

References:

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Braun, Bennet G. (1986). Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder.
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