

Understanding Suicide: A Brief Psychological Autopsy of Robert E. Howard.

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Abstract:

This paper examines suicide from two perspectives: William Glasser's choice theory psychology and Jean Baechler's categories of suicidal meaning. While choice theory psychology explains total behavior in terms of motivation and Baechler's types are understood as neither motives nor causes but as problem solving strategies. These strategies are examined with an understanding of how basic needs are fulfilled in choice theory psychology. These two lenses are used to examine how basic needs of choice theory may be fulfilled by the act of suicide, a behavior generally understood to be at odds with survival. As a case in point, the suicide of the fantasy writer, Robert E. Howard will be examined and analyzed from both perspectives. Implications for the practice of reality therapy are discussed.

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