Chapter 12: Personality: Theory, Research, and Assessment
Personality:
There is no man, who is not, at each moment, what he has been and what he will be”- Oscar Wilde

Overview of personality
Much of psychology studies some part of personality/ human behavior (biological, developmental, learning motivation emotion and health) but this chapter delves into theoretical ideas and historic theories to describe human personality. Many early ideas offer sweeping perspective on human nature but combined with today’s science, personality study has become more specific, focused on dimensions of personality, impact on behavior, biological roots, concepts of self, personal control and interactions of person and environment. Studies of self esteem, self serving bias and cultural influences also are focused on in modern personality concepts.
**Personality:**

**Weiten Text:** Pattern of enduring characteristics that differentiates a person. Personality is defined by two criteria: P.470 Distinctiveness Consistency of traits

Other: Individuals characteristic pattern of thinking, feeling and acting.

Main perspectives: trait, psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic, evolutionary/biological more current, social cultural
Defining Personality: Consistency and Distinctiveness

• Personality Traits
  – Dispositions and dimensions

• The Five-Factor Model
  – Extraversion
  – Neuroticism
  – Openness to experience
  – Agreeableness
  – Conscientiousness
Psychodynamic Perspectives (Psychoanalytic)

- Freud: Story of Anna O
- Freud’s psychoanalytic theory
  - Structure of personality
    - **Id** - Pleasure principle
    - **Ego** - Reality principle
    - **Superego** - Morality
  - Levels of awareness
    - Conscious
    - Unconscious**
    - Preconscious
Psychodynamic Perspectives

• Freud’s psychoanalytic theory
  – Conflict
    • Sex and Aggression
    • Anxiety
    • Defense Mechanisms
Figure 12.3  Freud’s model of personality dynamics
Table 12.1 Defense Mechanisms, with Examples
Freud on Development: Psychosexual Stages

- Sexual = physical pleasure
- Psychosexual stages
  - Oral, Anal, Phallic, Latency, Genital
    - Fixation = Excessive gratification or frustration
    - Overemphasis on psychosexual needs during fixated stage
Table 12.2  Freud’s Stages of Psychosexual Development
Other Freud

- Little Hans
- Thanatos and Eros
- Dream Analysis
- Therapy Methods
- Legacy of Freud?
Other Psychodynamic Theorists

- **Carl Jung: Analytical Psychology**
  - Personal and collective unconscious
  - Archetypes
  - Introversion/Extroversion

- **Alfred Adler: Individual Psychology**
  - Striving for superiority
  - Compensation
  - Inferiority complex/overcompensation
  - Birth order

- **Karen Horney:**
  - 10 Neurotic Needs
  - Ideal and despised self
  - Womb envy
Figure 12.4 Jung’s vision of the collective unconscious
Evaluating Psychodynamic Perspectives

- Pros
  - The unconscious
  - The role of internal conflict
  - The importance of early childhood experiences
- Cons
  - Poor testability
  - Inadequate empirical base
  - Sexist views
Behavioral Perspectives

• Skinner’s views
  – Conditioning and response tendencies
  – Environmental determinism

• Bandura’s views
  – Social leaning theory
    • Cognitive processes and reciprocal determinism
    • Observational learning
    • Models
    • Self-efficacy

• Mischel’s views
  – The person-situation controversy
Figure 12.5 A behavioral view of personality

Stimulus situation

- Large party where you know relatively few people

Operant response tendencies

1. Circulate, speaking to others only if they approach you first
2. Stick close to the people you already know
3. Politely withdraw by getting wrapped up in host's book collection
4. Leave at the first opportunity
Figure 12.6  Personality development and operant conditioning
Figure 12.7  Bandura’s reciprocal conditioning
Evaluating Behavioral Perspectives

• Pros
  – Based on rigorous research
  – Insights into effects of learning and environmental factors

• Cons
  – Over-dependence on animal research
  – Fragmented view of personality
  – Dehumanizing views
Humanistic Perspectives

• Carl Rogers
  – Person Centered Theory
    • Self-concept
      – Conditional/unconditional positive regard
      – Incongruence and anxiety
  • Abraham Maslow
    – Self-actualization theory
    – Hierarchy of needs
      • The healthy personality
### Characteristics of self-actualizing people

| Clear, efficient perception of reality and comfortable relations with it |
| Mystical and peak experiences |
| Spontaneity, simplicity, and naturalness |
| Feelings of kinship and identification with the human race |
| Problem centering (having something outside themselves they “must” do as a mission) |
| Strong friendships, but limited in number |
| Detachment and need for privacy |
| Democratic character structure |
| Autonomy, independence of culture and environment |
| Ethical discrimination between good and evil |
| Continued freshness of appreciation |
| Philosophical, unhostile sense of humor |
| Balance between polarities in personality |
Figure 12.9 Rogers’s view of personality structure

**Congruence**
Self-concept meshes well with actual experience (some incongruence is probably unavoidable)

**Incongruence**
Self-concept does not mesh well with actual experience
Figure 12.10 Rogers’s view of personality development and dynamics
Figure 12.11  Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

- **Physiological needs:** Hunger, thirst, and so forth
- **Safety and security needs:** Long-term survival and stability
- **Belongingness and love needs:** Affiliation and acceptance
- **Esteem needs:** Achievement and gaining of recognition
- **Cognitive needs:** Knowledge and understanding
- **Aesthetic needs:** Order and beauty
- **Need for self-actualization:** Realization of potential

Progression if lower needs are satisfied
Regression if lower needs are not being satisfied
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**Figure 12.12**  Maslow’s view of the healthy personality
Evaluating Humanistic Perspectives

- Humanistic theories are credited with highlighting the importance of a person’s subjective view of reality. They are also applauded for focusing attention on the issue of what constitutes a healthy personality.

- They are criticized for lacking a strong research base, poor testability, and what may be an overly optimistic view of human nature (Maslow had a hard time finding live people who had self-actualized).
Biological Perspectives

• Eysenk’s theory
  – 3 higher order traits
  – Extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism
    • Determined by genes
• Twin studies
  – Novelty seeking and genetics
• The evolutionary approach
  – Traits conducive to reproductive fitness
Figure 12.14 Twin studies of personality
Evaluating Biological Perspectives

- **Pros**
  - Convincing evidence for genetic influence

- **Cons**
  - Conceptual problems with heritability estimates
  - Artificial carving apart of nature and nurture
  - No comprehensive biological theory
Contemporary approaches

- Social cognitive approaches:
  - Bandura- you know him reciprocal determinism)
  - Mischel self control
  - Cognitive affective personality system (CAPS)
  - The situation determines our personalities..
  - Rotter- locus of control (Internal, External)
  - George Kelley-personal construct theory
  - Socio-culturally- We look at self-efficacy and collective efficacy
Contemporary Empirical Approaches: Terror Management Theory

• Conflict between self-preservation and ability to foresee death
• Culture and self-esteem
• Anxiety buffer
Figure 12.15  Overview of terror management theory
Contemporary Empirical Approaches: Terror Management Theory

• Increasing subjects’ mortality salience causes them to:
  – Punish moral transgressions more harshly
  – Be less tolerant of criticism of their country
  – Give greater rewards to those who uphold cultural standards
  – Respect cultural icons more