Chapter 13: Personality Psychology

What is personality?
- Most generally how a person thinks, acts, and feels throughout life
  - Character
  - Temperament
- Major schools of thought:
  - Psychodynamic
  - Social Cognitive
  - Humanistic
  - Trait perspective

Schools of Thought
- Psychodynamic Perspective
  - Freud's background
  - Unconscious mind
  - Construction of personality
    - Id – drives; pleasure principle
      - "If it feels good, do it."
    - Ego – reality principle
      - "If it feels good do it, but only if you can get away with it."
    - Superego – conscience
      - "Do the right thing."
Psychological defense mechanisms

- Denial: refusal to recognize a trauma or threat
- Repression: pushing a trauma or threat out of conscious awareness
- Reaction Formation: dealing with a threat by forming an opinion opposite to what one actually thinks
- Compensation: trying to make up for some weakness by becoming superior in another area
- Sublimation: taking an unacceptable drive and diverting that energy into a more acceptable behavior.

Stages of personality development

- Psychosexual stages
- Each stage is associated with a particular part of the body to obtain pleasure
- Fixation
- Id – at birth
- Ego & Superego through the stages of psychosexual development
- 5 stage theory
Schools of Thought
Psychodynamic Perspective

- Stage 1: Oral Stage (1-1½)
  - Pleasure center: mouth
  - Due to weaning
  - Personality:
    - Needs are over-indulged: dependent & optimistic
    - Needs are denied: aggressive & pessimistic
    - Over-eating/Drinking/Smoking

- Stage 2: Anal Stage (1-3)
  - Pleasure center: anus
  - Due to toilet training
  - Personality:
    - Demands of toilet training:
      - Rebel (going anywhere)
        - Messy = personal control
        - Destructive & hostile
      - Conform (refusing to go)
        - Messy = punishment
        - Stingy, stubborn, excessively neat

- Stage 3: Phallic Stage (3-6)
  - Pleasure center: genitals
  - Discovering gender differences
    - Castration anxiety
    - Penis envy
  - Sexual curiosity
    - Little boys: attraction to their mother; jealousy of the father (Oedipus complex)
    - Little girls: attraction to their father; mother as rival (Electra complex)
  - Resolution: identification with same sex parent
Schools of Thought
Psychodynamic Perspective

Stage 3: Phallic Stage (3-6)
- Fixation:
  - Promiscuous behavior (superego failure)
  - Vanity (cover up for feeling inept)
  - Boys: “mama’s boys”
  - Girls: “father figures”

Stage 4: Latency Stage
- Latency: sexual feelings are unconscious
- Develop in other ways: socially, physically, intellectually
- This is the “cooties” stage
- Boys play with boys
- Girls play with girls

Stage 5: Genital Stage
- Pleasure center: genitals
- Focus: other adolescents; iconic movie or music stars
Schools of Thought
Neo-Freudians

- Jung
  - Personal unconscious/collective unconscious
  - Folktales
  - Religious stories
  - Archetypes – collective memories
    - Concept of the devil (dark side of personality, the shadow)

- Alfred Adler
  - Supremacy; importance
  - Birth order

- Karen Horney
  - Female perspective
  - “womb envy”
  - Basic anxiety

Schools of Thought
Critique of Freud & Psychoanalysis

- Unconscious & defense mechanisms
- Not based on scientific experimentation
- Difficult to substantiate with science:
  - Dreams
- Strong cultural influence/small group
- Freud's contribution: movies, literature, common vernacular
  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7AaKohtp9c
  &feature=related
  
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVvKBC6ZG Dk
Schools of Thought
Social Cognitive View

- Behaviorist: focused on learned responses or habits

- Social Cognitive View: personality is developed both by external stimuli but internal ones as well

Albert Bandura:
- The environment
- The behavior itself
- Personal/cognitive factors of the person

- Reciprocal determinism
- Ex: bungee jumping

Julian Rotter:
- Law of effect
- Personality: relatively stable set of possible responses to various situations (ex: you would expect the class clown to crack jokes in the future)

- Guiding principle: locus of control
  - Internal or external
  - High achievement
Schools of Thought
The Third Force: Humanism

- Humanistic perspective: focus on personal experience and belief systems; the purpose is to fulfill human potential
- Self-actualizing tendency
- Carl Rogers
  - Unconditional positive regard
  - Self actualizing: a person in touch with their feelings; transparent and honest

School of Thought
The Third Force: Humanism

- Maslow
- Hierarchy of needs culminating in self actualization
- Empirical support

School of Thought
Trait Theories

- Trait theory – focus is on:
  - Describing behavior
  - Predicting based on that description
- Gordon Allport
  - 200 traits
  - Biological support
School of Thought
Trait Theories

- Raymond Cattell
  - Compacting personality
  - Surface traits
  - Source traits
  - Ex: introversion; being quiet, disliking crowds

- Statistical analysis:
  - The Sixteen Personality Factor

School of Thought - Trait Theories

- 1. Reserved
- 2. Concrete thinker
- 3. Easily upset
- 4. Submissive
- 5. Serious; sober
- 6. Rule-defying
- 7. Shy
- 8. Tough-Minded
- 9. Trusting
- 10. Practical
- 11. Forthright
- 12. Self-assured
- 13. Conservative
- 14. Group-dependent
- 15. Undisciplined
- 16. Relaxed

- 1. Outgoing
- 2. Abstract thinker
- 3. Emotionally stable; calm
- 4. Dominant
- 5. Happy-go-lucky; enthusiastic
- 6. Conscientious
- 7. Bold
- 8. Sensitive; tender-minded
- 9. Suspicious
- 10. Imaginative
- 11. Shrewd; worldly
- 12. Apprehensive; insecure
- 13. Experimenting
- 14. Self-sufficient
- 15. Self-controlled
- 16. Tense

Schools of Thought
Trait Theories

- McCrae & Costa
  - The Big Five
    - Openness
    - Conscientiousness
    - Extraversion
    - Agreeableness
    - Neuroticism
Other ways to assess personality

- Behavioral assessments
  - Direct observation
  - Rating scales
  - Frequency count

- Problems with behavioral assessments:
  - Observer effect
  - Observer bias

- Interviews (qualitative assessment)
  - Survey, mostly unstructured

Other ways to assess personality

- Problems with interviews:
  - Lying; report socially acceptable answers
  - Halo effect – impressions of participant bias
  - Interpretation of the results

- Projective tests:
  - Projection – placing one's thoughts onto others
  - Projective tests - ambiguous stimuli is presented to get at unconscious thought processes

Other ways to assess personality

- Types of projective tests:
  - Rorschach inkblots: personality, diagnose mental disorders, and predict behavior
  - Responses are compared to common responses
Other ways to assess personality

- Types of projective tests:
  - The Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
  - 20 pictures; tell a story

- Problems with projective tests:
  - Subjective interpretation
  - Not scientifically based
  - Issues with validity and reliability