Chapter 13

Theories of Personality
Personality

• **Personality** – A distinctive and relatively stable pattern of behavior, thoughts, motives & emotions.

• **Character** – value judgments of a person’s moral and ethical behavior

• **Trait** – A characteristic of an individual, describing a habitual way of behaving thinking or feeling
Psychodynamic Theories of Personality*

• **Freud** (1856-1939)
  – Tremendous impact
  – Not hold through the test of time
  – Genius or fraud?

• **Psychoanalysis** – a theory of personality and a method of psychotherapy developed by Freud; it emphasizes unconscious motives and conflicts

• **Psychodynamic Theories** – Explain behavior & personality in terms of unconscious energy dynamics w/in individual
Freud and Psychoanalysis*

• The structure of personality
  – **Id** – the part of the personality containing inherit psychic energy; particularly sexual and aggressive instincts
    – **Libido** – the psychic energy that fuels the life or sexual instinct of Id
  – **Ego** – the part of the personality the represents reason, good sense and rational self-control
  – **Superego** – the part of personality the represents conscience, morality and social standards.

Need to keep these three in check
Controlled by id is impulsive
Controlled by superego is rigid & moral
Weak ego can not balance needs
Id, ego & super Ego

- **Ego**: Contact with the outside world
- **Super-ego**: Material just beneath the surface of awareness
- **Id**: Difficult to retrieve material; well below the surface of awareness
Defense Mechanisms*

- Freud
- 10 of them
- Used by Ego
- To prevent unconscious anxiety or threatening thoughts from entering consciousness.
10 Defense mechanisms*

1) **Repression** – pushing threatening / conflicting events from consciousness

2) **Projections** - placing one’s own unacceptable thoughts onto others as if they belonged to them and not to oneself

   – Someone has sexual feeling about another-they are dirty minded & oversexed

3) **Displacement** – expressing feelings that would be threatening is directed at the real target onto a less threatening substitute target.
10 Defense Mechanisms*

4) **Reaction formation** – forming an emotional reaction or attitude that is the opposite of the one’s threatening or unacceptable actual thoughts.

   - If afraid to admit that she fears her husband may cling to the belief that she loves him deeply

5) **Regression** – fall back to childlike patterns to coping with stressful situation

   - 8 year old may revert to thumb sucking after the divorce of parents

6) **Denial** – refusal to recognize or acknowledge a threatening situation.

   - it preserves self image and illusion of invulnerability.
   - “This can’t be happening to me.”
10 Defense Mechanisms

7) **Sublimation** – turning socially unacceptable urges into socially acceptable behavior.
   - Some who is very aggressive becomes a professional hockey player

8) **Identification** - trying to become like someone else to deal with own anxiety.
   - Mary really admires Suzy the most popular girl in school, and tries to copy her behavior and dress.

9) **Rationalization** – making up acceptable excuse for unacceptable behavior.
   - “If I don’t have breakfast I can have that piece of cake later without hurting my diet.”

10) **Compensation (Substitution)** – trying to make up for perceived areas lacking by becoming superior in some other area.
   - Reggie is not good in sports so he puts all of his energies into academics.
"I'm sorry, I'm not speaking to anyone tonight. My defense mechanisms seem to be out of order."
The development of Personality*

• 5 Psychosexual stages
  • Fixated – stuck in a stage if unresolved
    – **Oral** – (1 yr) – babies experience world through mouth; adults smoking
    – **Anal** – (2-3 yrs) – toilet training & control of bodily wastes
      – Anal retentive – holding everything in, obsessive about neatness
      – Anal explosive – mess and disorganized
    – **Phallic (oedipal)** – (3 to 6 yrs) – child unconsciously wishes to possess the parent of the other sex and sees same sex parent as a rival; girls penis envy
    – **Latency** – non sexual; prep for next stage
  – **Genital** – puberty and leads to adult sexuality
Quick Quiz

Which Freudian concepts do the following events suggest?

1) A very aggressive male becomes a professional hockey player.
2) A man who is angry at his boss shouts at this kids for making noise.
3) A woman whose father was cruel to her when she was little insists over and over that she loves him dearly.
4) Kiesha is attracted to her sister’s husband she denies this and thinks he is attracted to her.
5) A Sally admires Jane, a fellow classmate and dresses just like her and start behaving like her.
6) A 9 year old boy who moves to a new city starts having tantrums.
Other psychodynamic Approaches*

Jungian Theory – Carl Jung
- One of Freud's closest friends

- **Collective unconscious** – The universal memories and experiences of humankind, represented in the symbols, stories and images (archetypes) that occur across all cultures

- **Archetypes** – universal, symbolic images that appear in myths, art, stories and dreams; they reflect the collective unconscious
  - Shadow – prehistoric fear; Dracula, Darth Vader, Valdemort
  - Hero – Van Helsing; Harry Potter; Luke Skywalker
  - Earth mother – Glenda “good witch of the East”
  - Anima - feminine
  - Animus - masculine

- Introversion/extraversion
- Dark side but positive about forward moving strengths
- Motivated by past and future goals
Other psychodynamic Approaches*

**Object relations** – the emphasis of the infant’s first 2 years of life & the baby’s formative relationships especially w/ mother

- Why object vs human or parent –
  - **Mental representation** – of what mother is…..fierce, protective or rejecting

  - This representation of important adults is carried on throughout life & influences how the person relates to others

  - Both boys and girls first bond with mother then father

  - Girls are seen as an extension of mother
  - Boys need to “break away” from mother to develop masculine indentify

  - Boys are encouraged to be independent and separate
  - Men develop more rigid boundaries btw themselves & other people than woman
Evaluating Psychodynamic Theories

• **Violating the principle of falsifiability**
  – a theory that is impossible to disconfirm in principle in not scientific
  – Disagree- “denial” or “defensive’

• **Drawing universal principles from the experiences of a few atypical patients**
  – Freud and followers generalized from a few individuals
  – assume that if a child masturbates or is sexually curious = sexual abuse

• **Basing theories of personality development on retrospective accounts and the fallible memories of patients.**
  – Memory can be inaccurate
Quick Quiz

1) An 8 year old boy is behaving aggressively, hitting classmates and disobeying his teacher. Which of the following explanations of this behavior might come from a Freudian, Jungian or object-relations analyst.
   a. The boy is expressing his shadow archetype
   b. The boy is expressing the aggressive energy of the id and has not developed enough ego control
   c. The boy has had unusual difficulty separating from his mother and is compensating by behaving aggressively.

2) What criticism of all three of the preceding explanations might be made by psychological scientists?

3) In the 1950’s and 1960’s many psychoanalysts, observing unhappy gay men who had sought therapy, concluded that homosexuality was a mental illness. What violation of the scientific method where they committing?
Modern study of Personality*

- **Objective tests (inventories)** – standardized questionnaires requiring written responses they include scales on which people rate themselves. (reliability and validity)

  - Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)
  - Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ)
  - Myers – Briggs – business; not valid

- **Projective Tests**
  - Rorschach Inkblot
  - TAT (Thematic Apperception Test)
Core Personality Traits*

• Gordon Allport
  – 5 – 10 central traits; reflect the characteristic way of behaving, dealing with others and reacting to new situations.
  – Secondary traits; are changeable aspects of personality; music preference

• Cornell Cattell
  – **Factor analysis** – a statistical method for analyzing the intercorrelations among various measures or test scores clusters of measures or scores that are highly correlated are assumed to measure the same underlying trait or ability (factor).
“Can’t you give him one of those personalities in a bottle I keep reading about?”
The Big 5* (Ocean)

1) Openness to experiences v. resistance to new experiences
   – Curious imaginative & creative v. conforming, unimaginative & predictable

2) Conscientiousness v. impulsiveness
   – Responsible or undependable or persevering or quick to give up

3) Extroversion v. introversion
   – Outgoing or shy

4) Agreeableness v. antagonism
   – Good natured or irritable; cooperative or abrasive; secure or suspicious

5) Neuroticism v. Emotionally stability
   – Anxiety; inability to control impulses; feel negative emotions or not
   – Mature out of neuroticism by age 30
Neuroticism and Maturity

**FIGURE 13.1 Consistency and Change in Personality over the Life Span**

Although the Big Five traits are fairly stable, changes do occur over the life span. As you can see, neuroticism (negative emotionality) is highest among young adults and then declines, whereas conscientiousness is lowest among young adults and then steadily increases (Costa et al., 1999).
Rate your Traits

• For each of the ten items, write a number from 1 to 7:
  1 = I disagree strongly that this trait describes me”
  7= I agree strongly that this trait describes me”
  4= Agree nor disagrees

1. Extroverted, enthusiastic
2. Critical, quarrelsome
3. Dependable, self-disciplined
4. Anxious, easily upset
5. Open to new experiences, complex
6. Reserved, quiet
7. Sympathetic, warm
8. Disorganized, careless
9. Calm, emotionally stable
10. Conventional, uncreative
Get Involved

• To score yourself on The Big Five traits, use this key:

Extroversion: High on # 1, low on # 6
Neuroticism: High on # 4, low on # 9
Agreeableness: High on # 7, low on # 2
Conscientiousness: High on # 3, low on # 8
Openness: High on # 5, low on # 10
Quick Quiz

• What is the advantage of inventories over projective tests?

• Cattell advanced the study of personality by:
  A. Developing case-study analysis
  B. Using factor analysis
  C. Devising the Myers Briggs Type Inventory

• Which of the following are not among the Big Five personality factors?
  a. Introversion
  b. Agreeableness
  c. Psychoticism
  d. Openness to experiences
  e. Intelligence
  f. Neuroticism
  g. Conscientiousness

• Which one of Big Five typically decreases by age 30?
  a. Agreeableness
  b. Extroversion
  c. Openness to experiences
  d. Neuroticism
Heredity*

- Heredity and temperament
  - **Temperament** – physiological dispositions to respond to the environment in certain ways; they are present in infancy and in many nonhuman species and are assumed to be innate.
  - **Heritability** – a statistical estimate of the proportion of the total variance in some trait that is attributable to genetic differences among individual within a group.

1. Predisposition is NOT inevitable
2. Human temperaments
3. The Big Five = 50%
4. Animal personality studies
   - When food put in cage
     - Some aggressive
     - Some not so much

"There's another hereditary disease that runs in the royal family. Your grandfather was a stubborn fool, your father was a stubborn fool, and you are a stubborn fool."
The Jim twins
Identical twins Gerald Levey (left) and Mark Newman were separated at birth and raised in different cities. When they were reunited at age 31, they discovered some astounding similarities. Both were volunteer firefighters, wore mustaches, and were unmarried. Both liked to hunt, watch old John Wayne movies, and eat Chinese food. They drank the same brand of beer, held the can with the little finger curled around it, and crushed the can when it was empty. It’s tempting to conclude that all of these similarities are due to heredity, but we should also consider other explanations: Some could result from shared environmental factors such as social class and upbringing and some could be due merely to chance. For any given set of twins, we can never know for sure.
Identical Twins and the Big 5

The bar chart illustrates the correlation of scores for Identical twins and Fraternal twins across the Big Five factors:

- Extraversion
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Emotional stability
- Openness to experience

The chart shows higher correlations for Identical twins compared to Fraternal twins.
Quick Quiz

• What 3 broad lines of research support the hypothesis that personality differences are due in part to genetic differences

• In behavioral-genetic studies; the heritability of personality traits including the Big Five is typically about:
  a).50
  b).90
  c).10
  d) zero

• A news paper headline announces “Couch Potatoes Born, Not Made: Kids’ TV Habits May Be Hereditary.” Why is this headline misleading? What other explanations of the finding are possible? What aspects of TV watching could have a hereditary component?
Environmental Influences on Personality*

• Situations and Social learning
  – Although traits are consistent across situations why behave differently
    – Concerts
    – Parents
    – Peers
  – Different behaviors are rewarded, punished or ignored in different contexts

• **Reciprocal determinism** – the two way interaction between aspects of the environment and aspects of the individual in the shaping of personality traits.
  – Bandura
  – Social learning

• **Non-shared Environment**
  Unique aspects of a person’s environment & experiences not shared with family members.
Who is the “real” Madonna—doting mother or flamboyant performer? By understanding reciprocal determinism, we can avoid oversimplifying. Our genetic dispositions and personality traits cause us to choose some situations over others, but situations then influence which aspects of our personalities we express.
Parental Influences & Limits*

• The shared environment of the home has little if any influence on personality
  – Adoption studies show little correlation

• Few parents have a single child-rearing style that is consistent over time and that they use with all their children.
  – Stresses, mood, marital satisfactions

• Even when parents try to be consistent in the way they treat their children there may be little relation between what they do and how the children turn out.
  – Some from abusive homes are resilient & do not suffer long term
  – Some with supportive loving parents have mental illness, corrupt
    • Columbine
Whatcha doing, Marcy? Keeping tabs on our kids.

It's our job as parents to know what's going on at all times.

How long are you going to do this? Eighteen years, we'll work in shifts.
Peers

• Study: 275 freshman at Cornell University
  – Most had “secret lives” from parents
    • Commit crimes
    • Drinking
    • Doing drugs
    • Having sex without parents knowing

• Children live in two environments
  – Home
  – Peers
    • Breakfast Club
      – Jock
      – Nerd
      – Prom queen
      – Rule breaker
      – Quiet one

• Study of 15,000 students in 9 American High Schools
  – Asians Americans- highest performance – high level of peer support
  – African Americans – w/academic success =little peer support
    • View academic success as “sell out” to white culture
Have you ever been in this situation, as the excluded student or the one doing the excluding? Being rejected by peers is one of the most painful experiences that adolescents report having.
Quick Quiz

• What three lines of evidence have challenged the belief that parents are the major influence on their children's personalities?

• Which contributes most to the variation among siblings in their personality traits?
  A. The unique experiences they have that are not shared with their families
  B. The family environment that all of them share
  C. The way their parents treat them
Cultural influences*

- **Culture** – a program of shared rules that governs the behavior of members of a community or society and a set of values, beliefs and attitudes shared by most members of that community
  
  - If invited to dinner at 7pm... when are you likely to get there
  - Vast impact on behavior......in Spain; dinner after midnight

Cultures, Values & Traits

- **Individualist cultures** – self is regard as autonomous & individual goals & wishes are prized above duty & rls w/ others

- **Collectivist cultures** – self is regarded as embedded in rls & harmony w/one’s group is prized above indv. goals & wishes
Individual or Collective?
**Some Average Differences Between Individualist and Collectivist Cultures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members of Individualist Cultures</th>
<th>Members of Collectivist Cultures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define the self as autonomous, independent of groups.</td>
<td>Define the self as an interdependent part of groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give priority to individual, personal goals.</td>
<td>Give priority to the needs and goals of the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value independence, leadership, achievement, self-fulfillment.</td>
<td>Value group harmony, duty, obligation, security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give more weight to an individual’s attitudes and preferences than to group norms as explanations of behavior.</td>
<td>Give more weight to group norms than to individual attitudes as explanations of behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend to the benefits and costs of relationships; if costs exceed advantages, a person is likely to drop a relationship.</td>
<td>Attend to the needs of group members; if a relationship is beneficial to the group but costly to the individual, the individual is likely to stay in the relationship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Triandis, 1996.
Culture and Traits*

• Western expectations
  – Be “on time”; rude if not
  – Time is a valuable thing
  – Not waste it

• Mexico and Southern Europe
  – Family more important than time
  – May wait hours or days for someone
  – The thought of time over people is unthinkable
  – Cuban...2 hours late for wedding
    • Late compared to what?

• Children’s roles: Building altruism
  – Children expected to work for survival of family
  – If value individual achievement & self advancement;
    • Taking care of others has less importance
    • Altruism not cultivated to the same extent
Culture and Testosterone*

• Why do rates of male aggressiveness vary enormously across cultures and throughout history?
  – Agricultural v herding (greater economic threat)

• Northern v Southern
  – 173 males
  – Measure cortisol & testosterone
    • Northerners laughed
    • Southerners became inflame

• 2 Big Factors
  – Cultures of honor
  – Danger a culture faces (herding greater economic threat)
Quick Quiz

• Cultures whose members regard the “self” as a collection of stable personality traits are (individualist or collectivist)?

• Which cultural practice tends to foster the traits of helpfulness and altruism?
  a) Every family member “does his or her own thing”
  b) Parents insist that children obey
  c) Children contribute to the family welfare
  d) Parents remind children often about the importance of being helpful

• Why, according to one study, do men in the American South and West respond more aggressively to perceived insults than other American men?
The inner experience*

- **Humanistic psychology** – the emphasizes personal growth, resilience & the achievement of human potential.

- **Abraham Maslow** – “peak experiences” – joy, laughter & love
  - Self actualized person – one who strives for a life that is meaningful, challenging and satisfying

- **Rollo May** – free will and the inherent difficulty of the human condition
  - Existentialism – philosophical approach that emphasizes the inevitable dilemmas & challenges of human existence
The Inner Experience

- **Carl Rogers** – subjective reality
  - Unconditional positive regard - love and support without strings
  - Congruence – harmony btw the image they project & their true feelings
Narrative approaches

- **Life narrative** – the story that each of us develops over time to explain ourselves & make meaning what has happened to us.
  - People need to tell their story

- Evaluating humanistic and narrative approaches
  - Not able to test
  - Intuitively appealing ....hard to define operationally
  - Humanistic has added balance to the study of personality
  - Telling stories is researched to be important

- All three agree:
  - We have the power to choose our own destinies even when fate delivers tragedy
If you were an iceberg...

The part everyone gets to see

All the great aspects of your personality

S. Harris
Quick Quiz

• According to Carl Rogers, a man who loves his wife only when she is looking her best is giving her positive regard that is:

  
  conditional or unconditional

• The humanist who described the importance of having peak experiences was:

  A. Abraham Maslow  
  B. Rollo May  
  C. Carl Rogers

• A humanist and a Freudian psychoanalyst are arguing about human nature. What underlying assumptions about psychology and human potential are they likely to bring to their discussion: How can they resolve their difference without either / or thinking?
# The Major Influences on Personality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychodynamic</th>
<th>Unconscious dynamics shape human motives, guilts, conflicts, and defenses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genetic</td>
<td>Children are born with particular temperaments, and most traits are highly influenced by genes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Learning, situations, and unique experiences affect which traits are encouraged.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Modify and shape a child’s temperament and genetic predispositions; affect gender roles, attitudes, self-concept; affect the quality of the relationship with the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer group</td>
<td>Influences an individual’s values, behavior, ambitions, goals, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>Determines which behaviors are rewarded and which are punished or ignored, thereby shaping the expression or suppression of particular traits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chance events</td>
<td>May influence a person’s experiences and choices in unexpected ways, thus encouraging the development of some traits over others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Cultural norms specify which traits are valued, affect basic notions of the self and personality, and shape behaviors from aggressiveness to altruism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanist</td>
<td>Despite genetic, environmental, cultural, and psychodynamic influences, people can exercise free will to become the kind of person they want to be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>