Personality theories

Perspectives on personality

- Trait theories
- Psychodynamic theory
- Humanistic approach
- Social-cognitive approach

Trait theories

- Describe differences among individuals using a standard set of attributes
  Traits: relatively stable predisposition to behave in a certain way
- Factor-analytic approach
  Grouping of questions
  How many personality dimensions are there?
- Cattell (1957): 16 traits
- Norman (1963): 5 traits
- Eysenck (1952): 3 traits

Thought paper

- Write 5-10 terms to describe your own personality.
- Write 5-10 terms to describe a friend’s personality.

What are the primary traits or fundamental dimensions of personality?
How would you measure these traits? Examples?

Cattell’s source traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reserved</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trusting</td>
<td>Suspicious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed</td>
<td>Tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less intelligent</td>
<td>More intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>Humble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy-go-lucky</td>
<td>Sider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientious</td>
<td>Equable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venturesome</td>
<td>Shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender-minded</td>
<td>Tough-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td>Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrewd</td>
<td>Fortright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimenting</td>
<td>Placid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>Group tied</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eysenck’s superfactors

- Extroversion: How outgoing and social
- Neuroticism: How emotional (stable/unstable)
- Psychoticism: How sensitive toward others
Norman's Big Five

- Extroversion
  - Sociable/reclusive

- Neuroticism
  - Calm/anxious

- Agreeableness
  - Good-natured/irritable

- Conscientiousness
  - Responsible/undependable

- Openness to experience
  - Refined/crude

Sort the following adjectives and label the group with a "factor" name

- Organized
- Curious
- Active
- Generous
- Outgoing
- Tense
- Anxious
- Assertive
- Original
- Forgiving
- Efficient
- Unstable
- Talkative
- Appreciative
- Responsible
- Artistic
- Enthusiastic
- Sympathetic
- Deliberate
- Self-defeating
- Vulnerable
- Imaginative

Adjectives sorted...

- Organized
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- Vulnerable
- Imaginative

- Extraversion
- Neuroticism
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Openness
Allport’s trait theory

- Focus on individual
  - How we are all unique
- Cardinal traits
  - Dominating passion in life (rare)
- Central traits
  - 5-10 descriptive terms
- Secondary traits
  - Other terms (less important, situation specific)

The Seattle Longitudinal Study (NEO)

How personality develops

- Psychodynamic theory
  - Caused by forces originating in unconscious, struggling for control
- Humanistic approach
  - Caused by the unique way we grow and understand self
- Social-cognitive approach
  - Caused by experiences and interpretation of those experiences

Freud’s Psychodynamic Theory

Unconscious irrational forces competing to control behavior
- 3 layers of consciousness
  - Conscious
  - Preconscious
  - Unconscious
- 3 personality structures: shaped by childhood
  - Id = pleasure principle
  - Ego = reality principle
  - Superego = idealistic principle

Ego’s Defense mechanisms

- Unconscious processes used by ego to ward off anxiety due to confrontations with id:
  - e.g.: You missed an exam
- Denial (I didn’t miss it, honestly)
- Displacement (Get mad at roommate)
- Projection (It’s the teacher’s fault)
- Rationalization (I would have failed anyway)
- Reaction formation (I love exams)
- Repression (I don’t remember)
- Regression (Please, pretty please)
- Sublimation (Play a violent video game)
Psychodynamic Theories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Erogenous Zone</th>
<th>Adult Fixation</th>
<th>Symbolic Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1 year</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Oral activities</td>
<td>Overly generous, perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Anal</td>
<td>Anus</td>
<td>Bowel problems, constipation</td>
<td>Gullibility, sarcasm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Phallic</td>
<td>Genitals</td>
<td>Oedipus complex</td>
<td>Sexual deviance dysfunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>Latency</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Sublimation of energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12+</td>
<td>Genital</td>
<td>Genitals</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Mature, healthy individual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Freud’s Psychosexual Development

- Born with unconscious urges and drives
- Move through stages (or get fixated)
- Personality reflects interactions with adults
- Psychological problems reflect when specific experiences occurred
- Problem with theory: biased against women

Humanistic approach

- Positive view of human capacity
- Focus on growth and potential
- Maslow: Hierarchy of needs
  - Develop one’s unique potential
  - Drive toward self-actualization
  - Need to satisfy basic needs first
  - Personality reflects position in hierarchy
- Rogers: Develop self-concept
  - Develop through social interactions
  - Need unconditional positive regard
  - Conditions of worth tend to come from approval
  - Incongruence: self-concept vs. experiences

Maslow: “Toward a Psychology of Being”

- The person in peak-experiences feels himself, more than other times, to be the responsible, active, creating center of his activities and of his perceptions. He feels more like a prime-mover, more self-determined (rather than caused, determined, helpless, dependent, passive, weak, bossed). He feels himself to be his own boss, fully responsible, fully volitional, with more “free-will” than at other times, master of his fate, an agent.

Cognitive Theories

- Orientation to environmental influences
- Personality = responses and reinforcement history
- Social imitation
- Modern theories emphasize both cognition and learning

Social-cognitive approach

- Social side: emphasis on experiences
- Cognitive side: emphasis on interpretation
- Behaviorism:
  - Classical conditioning, operant conditioning, modeling
  - Personality partly based on locus of control
  - Belief about control over environment
- Self-efficacy
  - Beliefs about own abilities
- Self-regulatory systems
  - Delay of gratification studies
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amsqeYOk&feature=related
Bandura’s Reciprocal Determinism

Personality is shaped by this complex interaction.

Birth order and personality

- How has your birth order affected your personality?
- Your siblings’ personality?
- What traits do you possess that can be attributed in part to your birth order?
- Would you be different if your birth order was changed?
- If yes, how so?
- What does this tell you about your beliefs about nature vs. nurture in regards to personality?


Birth order

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birth_order

Summary of the findings of Belmont and Marolla. Scores on Raven’s Progressive Matrices relate to birth order and family size.

Nature or Nurture: Traits

Nature: Genetics
- Twin studies on Eysenck’s PI or MMPI (pp 422)
  - Identical twins: .50
  - Fraternal twins: .21-.23

Nurture: Environment
- For positive emotion: (pp 423)
  - Identical twins together: .63
  - Identical twins apart: .34
  - Fraternal twins together: .18
  - Fraternal twins apart: -.07

Interaction of nature and nurture

Thought paper:
Compare and contrast theories

- Trait theories
  - Psychodynamic theory
  - Humanistic theory
  - Social-cognitive approach

- In what ways are the theories similar? Different?
- What would each say about birth order?

Compare and contrast the theories

Similarities:
- All strive to explain adult personality
- Psychodynamic, humanistic, soc-cog: agree environment plays a role in personality development

Differences:
- Trait theories: personality dimensions from birth
- Psychodynamic: personality developed by unconscious forces
- Humanistic: personality due to unique view of the world; strive for self-actualization
- Social-cognitive: personality solely due to experiences and how we interpret experiences