Model of personality structure
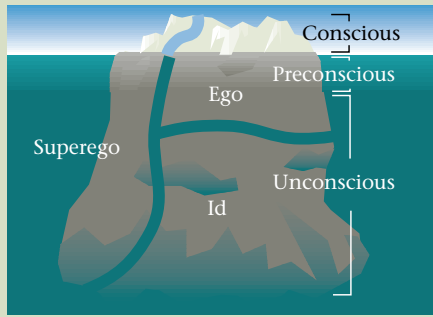
Three interacting components (id, ego, superego) operating at three levels of consciousness

Conscious
Preconscious
Ego
Superego
Unconscious
Id

Hierarchy of traits, with specific traits derived from more fundamental, general traits

Extraversion

Lively   Active   Assertive

Self-concept, which may or may not mesh well with actual experience

Self-concept   **Actual experience**

Congruence

Incongruence

Collections of response tendencies tied to specific stimulus situations

Operant response tendencies

Stimulus situation

R_1

R_2
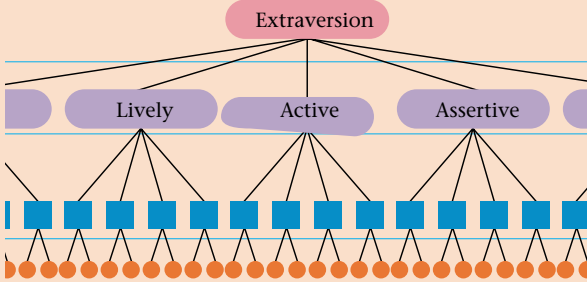
R_3

R_4

View of personality development

Emphasis on fixation or progress through psychosexual stages; experiences in early childhood (such as toilet training) can leave lasting mark on adult personality
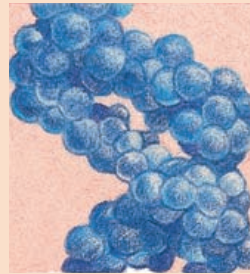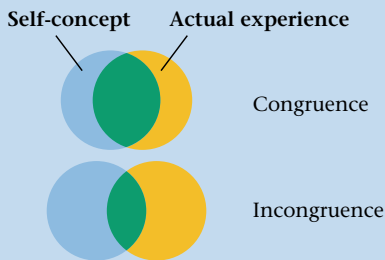

Emphasis on unfolding of genetic blueprint with maturation; inherited predispositions interact with learning experiences
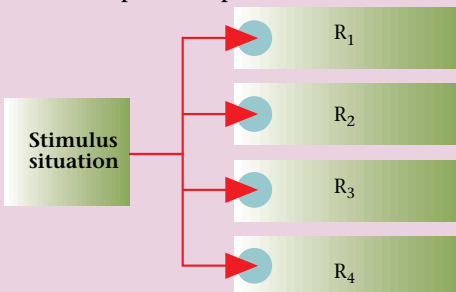

Children who receive unconditional love have less need to be defensive; they develop more accurate, congruent self-concept; conditional love fosters incongruence

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Personality evolves gradually over the life span (not in stages); responses (such as extraverted joking) followed by reinforcement (such as appreciative laughter) become more frequent

Roots of disorders

Unconscious fixations and unresolved conflicts from childhood, usually centering on sex and aggression

Genetic vulnerability activated in part by environmental factors

Incongruence between self and actual experience (inaccurate self-concept); overdependence on others for approval and sense of worth

Maladaptive behavior due to faulty learning; the "symptom" *is* the problem, not a sign of underlying disease

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Theories of Personality

Duane P. Schultz

University of South Florida

Sydney Ellen Schultz

THOMSON

WADSWORTH

To Henry Span
Scholar, teacher, embracer of life

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Preface to the Eighth Edition

Each edition of a textbook must be as vital, dynamic, and responsive to change as the field it covers. To remain an effective teaching instrument, it must reflect the development of the field and continue to challenge its readers. We have seen the focus of personality study shift from global theories, beginning with Sigmund Freud's 19th-century psychoanalytic theory of neuroses, to 21st-century explorations of more limited personality dimensions. And we have seen the basis of personality exploration change from case studies of emotionally disturbed persons to more scientifically based research with diverse populations. Contemporary work in the field reflects differences in gender, age, sexual orientation, and ethnic, racial, religious, and cultural heritage.

New and Expanded Coverage

Major changes for this edition include new biographical material for the theorists, to suggest, where warranted, how the development of their theory may have been influenced by events in their personal and professional lives. This approach shows students that the development of science through theory and research is not always totally objective. It may also derive from intuition and personal experience later refined and extended by more rational, analytic processes. Cultural influences on the theorists' beliefs about human nature are described.

The sections on personality research have been updated to maintain the emphasis on current problems. Considerable material has been added on the effects of gender, ethnicity, and culture on the issues of personality development, test performance, and broader conceptions of human nature. We present the results of cross-cultural research and a diversity of samples of research participants from European, African, and Asian nations throughout the world.

For Freudian theory, we have added research on defense mechanisms, including their application in Asian cultures, and on repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse. For Adler, we present new findings on birth order and on social interest. The need for achievement, as developed by McClelland, has been moved from the chapter on limited-domain theories to the chapter on Murray's theory, reflecting its origin as one of the needs identified in Murray's initial research.

For Erikson, we describe considerable work on ego identity, generativity, and ego integrity, and we include Cross's revised racial identity model on developmental stages of Black identity. The effects of globalization on the formation and devel-

opment of ego identity are described, based on research conducted among diverse national groups.

New biographical material has become available on Allport, and we note the relationships of his life experiences to his theoretical formulations. Our coverage of expressive behavior and facial recognition, as an outgrowth of Allport's theory, has been expanded.

We present considerable new research on the five-factor model of personality and on self-esteem. We introduce the idea of self-determination theory as an extension of Maslow's work. More material is provided on self-efficacy, including the concept of collective efficacy, and the effects of physical attractiveness on self-efficacy.

The chapter on limited-domain approaches to the study of personality includes Rotter's concept of locus of control, Zuckerman's sensation-seeking studies, and Seligman's learned helplessness research, including expanded coverage of optimism/pessimism. We also include the so-called "happy personality," based on Seligman's characterization of subjective well being. This idea reflects the growth of the positive psychology movement, encompassing such issues as happiness, self-efficacy, competence, optimism, creativity, and spirituality.

Organization of the Text

The eighth edition of *Theories of Personality* retains its orientation toward undergraduate students who have had little previous exposure to personality theories. Our purpose is to reach out to beginning students and ease their task of learning about the study of personality. We have chosen theorists who represent psychoanalytic, neopsychoanalytic, life-span, trait, humanistic, cognitive, behavioral, and social-learning approaches, as well as clinical and experimental work. The chapter on limited domain theories deals with conceptions that explore a single personality dimension rather than the total personality. Chapter 17 reviews the seven major perspectives from which to view personality development and suggests ways to help students draw conclusions and achieve closure from their studies.

Each theory in the text is discussed as a unit. Although we recognize the value of an issues or problems approach that compares theories on specific points, we believe that the issues-oriented book is more appropriate for higher-level students. The theories-oriented text makes it easier for beginning students to grasp a theory's essential concepts and overall flavor. We try to present each theory clearly, to convey its most important ideas, assumptions, definitions, and methods. We discuss each theorist's methods of assessment and empirical research, and we offer our evaluations and reflections. The Questions About Human Nature section for each theorist deals with six fundamental issues: free will versus determinism, nature versus nurture, childhood experiences, uniqueness versus universality, goals, and optimism versus pessimism. These are presented in a bar graph format to simplify comparisons among the theories.

Except for placing Freud first in recognition of his chronological priority, we have not arranged the theories in order of perceived importance. They are presented in nine parts, placing each theory in the perspective of competing viewpoints.

A Note on Diversity

The first person to propose a comprehensive theory of the human personality was Sigmund Freud, a clinical neurologist who formulated his ideas while treating patients in Vienna, Austria, in the 19th century. His work, known as "psychoanalysis," was based largely on sessions with wealthy White European females who came to him complaining of emotional distress and disturbing thoughts and behaviors. From his observations of their progress, or lack of it, he offered a theory to explain the personalities of everybody.

Freud's system was important for the concepts he proposed—many of which are now part of popular culture—as well as for the opposition he provoked, inspiring other theorists to examine and promote their own ideas to explain personality.

Today, personality theorists and researchers recognize that an explanation based on a small, homogeneous segment of the population cannot be applied to the many diverse groups of people sharing living space in our world. The situation is similar in medicine. Doctors and researchers are recognizing that some medications and treatments appropriate for young adults are not suitable for children or elderly people. Some diseases prevalent in certain ethnic groups are rare in others, requiring differences in medical screening and testing for diverse populations.

Contemporary personality theory and research strives to be inclusive, studying the influences of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. We see examples of this diversity in most of the chapters of this text.

Features

For the student, we offer chapter outlines, summaries, review questions, annotated reading lists, margin glossary terms, a cumulative glossary, tables and figures, and a reference list. New to this edition are the Log On boxes, which direct students to Web sites providing information on many of the people and ideas we discuss. We explored hundreds of sites and chose the most informative, reliable, and current, as of the time the manuscript was prepared. Students can also log on to the book companion Web site located at http://psychology.wadsworth.com/schultz8e for tutorial quizzes and other resources.

For instructors, the instructor's manual with test bank offers lecture outlines, ideas for class discussion, projects, useful web links, and test items. The test bank is available both in print and computerized formats. The instructors can also create, deliver, and customize tests and study guides (both print and online) in minutes with ExamView®, an easy-to-use assessment and tutorial system. ExamView offers both a Quick Test Wizard and an Online Test Wizard that guide users step-by-step through the process of creating tests, while its unique WYSIWYG capability previews the test on the screen exactly as it will print or display online. Instructors can build tests of up to 250 questions using up to 12 question types. With ExamView's complete word-processing capabilities, instructors can also enter an unlimited number of new questions or edit existing questions. Also available is an electronic transparency CD-ROM that provides select figures and tables in the text in Microsoft PowerPoint.

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Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the many colleagues and students who have written to us about the book and have offered suggestions for this edition. We are especially grateful to the following reviewers:

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Duane P. Schultz
Sydney Ellen Schultz

Introduction

Y ou are about to begin a fascinating journey over the last 100 years. This book describes various ideas that psychologists and other scientists have advanced to explain the human personality—your personality. It also tells the story of the great theorists' lives and how their own experiences may have influenced the explanations they proposed. You already know how important personality is. Everything you have achieved so far, your expectations for the future, and even your general health are influenced by your personality and the personalities of the people with whom you interact.

We have organized the theories by their outlook on human nature, beginning with Sigmund Freud. We consider extensions of his theory of psychoanalysis and discuss the men and women who revised his ideas or rebelled against his system. These chapters are followed by a life-span approach, tracking personality development from birth to old age. We then discuss theories that focus on individual personality traits, on psychological health, on predetermined behavior patterns, and on cognitive learning from social situations. We also introduce an idea for the 21st century, the happy personality type. The book's final chapter offers conclusions from our exploration of personality.

We also recognize that theorists from the last century rarely considered the importance of diversity. You can readily see that it is not appropriate to generalize to all people from, for example, ideas that one theorist based on clinical observations of neurotic European women or that another theorist based on tests given to American college men. Therefore, when we discuss research conducted on these theories, and describe their use for real-world problems of diagnosis and therapy, we show the influence of age, gender, race, ethnic and national origin, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation.

To make your study easier, we include chapter outlines, summaries, review questions, and reading lists. Important words are defined in the margin, and these definitions are also listed in the back of the book. Those of you who have InfoTrac College Edition will find search terms in the margin. These words link you to an online database containing hundreds of articles that provide additional information about various related topics. Also, you may want to check out the Web sites in our "Log On" features included in each chapter. They contain a wealth of information on personality.

The Study of Personality: Assessment, Research, and Theory

Personality theories are maps of the mind.
—HARVEY MINDESS

The Study of Personality

Everybody Has One

Everybody has one, and yours will help determine the limits of success, happiness, and fulfillment in your life. We're talking about *personality;* it is no exaggeration to state that your personality is one of your most important assets. It has already helped shape your life and will continue to do so in the future.

All you have achieved thus far, all you expect to achieve in your career, whether you will be a good spouse or parent, and even your general state of health can be influenced by your personality and the personalities of the people with whom you interact. Your personality can limit or expand your options and choices in life. It can prevent you from sharing certain experiences with other people or enable you to make the most of them. It can restrict and constrain some people and open the world of experience to others.

How often have you described someone as having a *terrific* personality? By that you typically mean the person is affable, pleasant, nice to be around, and easy to get along with—the kind of person you might select for a friend, roommate, or colleague at work. If you are a manager, you might choose to hire this person. If you are ready to make a commitment to a personal relationship, you might want to marry this person, basing your decision on your perception of his or her personality. You have also known people you would describe as having a *terrible* personality. Such persons may be aloof, hostile, aggressive, unfriendly, unpleasant, or difficult to get along with. You would not hire them or want to associate with them, and they may be similarly shunned, rejected, and isolated by others.

While you are making judgments about the personalities of other people, they are making similar judgments about you. These mutual decisions that shape the lives of both the judged and the judges are made countless times, every time we encounter a social situation that requires us to interact with new people. Of course, the number and variety of social situations you willingly participate in are also determined by your personality—for example, your relative sociability or shyness. You know where you rate on that factor, just as you no doubt have a reasonably clear picture of your overall personality.

Describing Your Personality

Of course, it is glib and facile to attempt to sum up the total constellation of someone's personality characteristics by using such fuzzy terms as *terrific* and *terrible*. The subject of personality is too complex for such a simplified description, because humans are too complex and changeable in different situations and with different people. We need to be more precise in our language to adequately define and describe personality. For that reason, psychologists have devoted considerable effort to developing tests to evaluate, or assess, personality.

You may believe you don't need any psychological test to tell you what your personality is like, and, in general, you may be correct. After all, you probably know yourself better than anyone else. If you were asked to list the words that best describe your personality, no doubt you could do it without too much thought.

Table 1.1 **Adjective checklist**

Make a check mark next to the words you believe apply to your personality.

_____affectionate	_____ambitious	_____assertive
_____boastful	_____cheerful	_____cynical
_____demanding	_____dominant	_____fearful
_____forceful	_____generous	_____high-strung
_____impatient	_____insightful	_____meek
_____moody	_____optimistic	_____opinionated
_____persistent	_____prudish	_____relaxed
_____sarcastic	_____sensitive	_____sociable
_____submissive	_____tolerant	_____trusting
_____uninhibited	_____vindictive	_____withdrawn

OK. Try it. Take a piece of paper and write down as many adjectives as you can to describe what you are *really* like—not how you would like to be, or what you want your teachers or parents or friends to think you are like—but the real you. Try not to use the word *terrific*, even if it does apply in your case.

How many words did you select? Six? Ten? A few more? A widely used personality test, the Adjective Checklist, offers an astonishing 300 adjectives to describe personality. People taking the test choose the ones that best describe themselves (Gough & Heilbrun, 1983).

No, we're not going to ask you to review all 300 adjectives, only the 30 listed in Table 1.1. Place a check mark next to the ones you believe apply to you.

Now you have a description of your personality in greater detail, but remember that in the actual test, you would have an additional 270 items to pick from.

How Does Personality Develop?

Our focus here is not what *your* personality is like. You don't need a psychology course to learn that. What we will be studying are the forces and factors that shape your personality. Later in this chapter, and throughout the book, we consider some basic questions about the nature of personality—for example, whether we are born with a certain type of personality or learn it from our parents, whether personality is influenced by unconscious forces, or whether personality can change after our childhood years.

In this book, we describe a variety of theories that have been proposed to help answer these and related questions about human nature. After we have discussed them—what they are, how they developed, and what their current status is—we will evaluate their usefulness in answering our questions and contributing to our understanding of how personality develops.

We may think of each of these theorists as contributing pieces to a grand puzzle, which is why we study their ideas, even though some of their concepts are decades old. Psychologists continue to try to fit these pieces together to bring forth a clearer image, a more complete picture of what makes us the way we are.

The Place of Personality in the History of Psychology

Because the study of personality is so central to an understanding of human nature, you might assume it has always occupied a prominent position in psychology. For more than half of psychology's history as a science, however, psychologists paid relatively little attention to personality.

Psychology emerged as an independent and primarily experimental science from an amalgam of ideas borrowed from philosophy and physiology. The birth of psychology took place in the late 19th century in Germany and was largely the work of Wilhelm Wundt, who established psychology's first laboratory in 1879 at the University of Leipzig.

The Study of Consciousness

The new science of psychology focused on the analysis of conscious experience into its elemental parts. The methods of psychology were modeled on the approach used in the natural sciences. Physics and chemistry appeared to be unlocking the secrets of the physical universe by reducing all matter to its basic elements and analyzing them. If the physical world could be understood by breaking it down into elements, why couldn't the mind or the mental world be studied in the same way?

Wundt and other psychologists of his day who were concerned with studying human nature were greatly influenced by the natural science approach, and they proceeded to apply it to the study of the mind. Because these researchers limited themselves to the experimental method, they studied only those mental processes that might be affected by some external stimulus that could be manipulated and controlled by the experimenter. There was no room in this experimental psychology approach for such a complex, multidimensional topic as personality. It was not compatible with either the subject matter or the methods of the new psychology.

The Study of Behavior

In the early decades of the 20th century, the American psychologist John B. Watson, at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, sparked a revolution against the work of Wilhelm Wundt. Watson's movement, called **behaviorism,** opposed Wundt's focus on conscious experience. More devoted than Wundt to a natural science approach, Watson argued that if psychology was to be a science, it had to focus only on the tangible aspects of human nature—that which could be seen, heard, recorded, and measured. Only overt behavior—not consciousness—could be the legitimate topic of psychology.

Consciousness, Watson said, cannot be seen or experimented upon. Therefore, like the philosophers' concept of the soul, consciousness is meaningless for science. Psychologists must deal only with what they can see, manipulate, and measure—that is, external stimuli and the subject's behavioral responses to them. According to Watson, whatever happens inside the person after the stimulus is presented and before the response is made cannot be seen. Because we can only speculate about it, it is of no interest or value to science.

Behaviorism presents a mechanistic picture of human beings as well-ordered machines that respond automatically to external stimuli. It has been said that behav-

behaviorism
The school of psychology, founded by John B. Watson, that focused on psychology as the study of overt behavior rather than of mental processes.

iorists see people as a kind of vending machine. Stimuli are put in, and appropriate responses, learned from past experience, spill out. In this view, personality is nothing more than the accumulation of learned responses or habit systems, a definition later offered by B. F. Skinner (see Chapter 14). Thus, behaviorists reduced personality to what could be seen and observed objectively, and there was no place in their conception for consciousness or for unconscious forces. However, the more recent social-learning theorists (Chapters 15 and 16), who offer explanations derived from Watson's and Skinner's versions of behaviorism, have restored to personality some measure of consciousness.

If Watson and the early behavioral psychologists dismissed all those notions, feelings, and complexities that come to mind when we use the word *personality,* then where were they? What happened to the consciousness you know you experience every moment you are awake? Where were those unconscious forces that sometimes seem to compel us to act in ways over which we feel we have no control?

The Study of the Unconscious

Those aspects of human nature were dealt with by a third line of inquiry, one that arose independently of Wundt and Watson. They were investigated by Sigmund Freud, beginning in the 1890s. Freud, a physician in Vienna, Austria, called his system **psychoanalysis.** Psychoanalysis and psychology are not synonymous or interchangeable terms. Freud was not by training a psychologist but was a physician in private practice, working with persons who suffered from emotional disturbances.

psychoanalysis
Sigmund Freud's theory of personality and system of therapy for treating mental disorders.

Although trained as a scientist, Freud did not use the experimental method. Rather, he developed his theory of personality based on clinical observation of his patients. Through a lengthy series of psychoanalytic sessions, Freud applied his creative interpretation to what patients told him about their feelings and past experiences, both actual and fantasized. His approach was thus quite different from the rigorous experimental laboratory investigation of the elements of conscious experience or of behavior.

Inspired by Freud's psychoanalytic approach, a group of personality theorists developed unique conceptions of human nature outside the mainstream of experimental psychology. These theorists, the neopsychoanalysts (Chapters 3 through 7), focused on the whole person as he or she functions in the real world, not on elements of behavior or stimulus-response units as studied in the psychology laboratory. The neopsychoanalysts accepted the existence of conscious and unconscious forces, whereas the behaviorists accepted the existence only of that which they could see. As a result, the early personality theorists were speculative in their work, relying more on inferences based on observations of their patients' behavior than on the quantitative analysis of laboratory data.

The Scientific Study of Personality

We see, then, that experimental psychology and the formal study of personality began in two separate traditions, using different methods and pursuing different aims. We should note that experimental psychology in its formative years did not totally ignore personality—some limited aspects of personality were studied—but there did

not exist within psychology a distinct specialty area known as personality as there was child psychology or social psychology.

It was not until the late 1930s that the study of personality became formalized and systematized in American psychology, primarily through the work of Gordon Allport at Harvard University (see Chapter 9).[1] Following his initial efforts, professional books appeared, journals were founded, universities offered courses, and research was undertaken. These activities signaled a growing recognition that some areas of concern to the psychoanalysts and neopsychoanalysts could be incorporated into psychology. Academic psychologists came to believe that it was possible to develop a scientific study of personality.

From the 1930s to the present day, a variety of approaches to the study of personality have emerged. In this book, in addition to the psychoanalytic and behavioristic viewpoints noted above, we discuss several others. These include the following: the life-span approach, which argues that personality continues to develop throughout the course of our life; the trait approach, which contends that much of our personality is inherited; the humanistic approach, which emphasizes human strengths, virtues, aspirations, and the fulfillment of our potential; and the cognitive approach, which deals with conscious mental activities.

Finally, we explore the work of theorists who have focused on narrower issues in personality such as the need for achievement, locus of control, sensation-seeking behavior, learned helplessness, and optimism/pessimism. We then examine what each approach can teach us about personality and conclude on a cheerfully positive note with a description of the so-called happy personality.

↖ LOG ON

http://personality-project.org

A large, informative Web site from the psychology department at Northwestern University. Contains discussions of the major approaches to personality theory, recommended readings, academic and nonacademic Web pages, advice for students, and information about personality tests.

http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/perscontents.html

A personality theories e-text with chapters to download. Includes links to other sites on personality.

http://personalityresearch.org/

Includes information on research programs, journals, and professional societies, as well as a glossary and self-quiz for students.

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[1] The publication in 1937 of Allport's book, *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation,* is generally considered to mark the formal beginning of the study of personality within American psychology. In 1987, a number of commemorative events were held to mark the 50th anniversary of this new field (see Lombardo & Foschi, 2003).

The Web site of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology. Contains information for students and links to other relevant sites.

Definitions of Personality

We frequently use the word *personality* when describing other people and ourselves, and we all believe we know what it means. Perhaps we do. One psychologist suggested that we can get a good idea of its meaning if we examine our intentions whenever we use the word *I* (Adams, 1954). When you say *I,* you are, in effect, summing up everything about yourself—your likes and dislikes, fears and virtues, strengths and weaknesses. The word *I* is what defines you as an individual, separate from all others.

As Others See Us

In our effort to define the word more precisely, we can look to its source. *Personality* derives from the Latin word *persona,* which refers to a mask used by actors in a play. It is easy to see how persona came to refer to outward appearance, the public face we display to the people around us.

Based on its derivation, then, we might conclude that personality refers to our external and visible characteristics, those aspects of us that other people can see. Our personality would then be defined in terms of the impression we make on others—that is, what we appear to be. One definition of personality in a standard dictionary agrees with this reasoning. It states that personality is the visible aspect of one's character, as it impresses others.

Our personality may be the mask we wear when we face the outside world.

But is that all we mean when we use the word *personality?* Are we talking only about what we can see or how another person appears to us? Does personality refer solely to the mask we wear and the role we play? Surely, when we speak of personality, we refer to more than that. We mean to include many attributes of an individual, a totality or collection of various characteristics that goes beyond superficial physical qualities. The word encompasses a host of subjective social and emotional qualities as well, ones that we may not be able to see directly, that a person may try to hide from us, or that we may try to hide from others.

Enduring Characteristics

We may also, in our use of the word *personality,* refer to enduring characteristics. We assume that personality is relatively stable and predictable. Although we recognize, for example, that a friend may be calm much of the time, we know that he or she can become excitable, nervous, or panicky at other times. Thus, our personality can vary with the situation. Yet although it is not rigid, it is generally resistant to sudden changes.

In the 1960s, promoted by the psychologist Walter Mischel, a debate erupted within psychology about the relative impact on behavior of such enduring personal variables as traits and needs, as well as variables relating to the situation (Mischel, 1968, 1973). The controversy continued for 20 years and ended in the late 1980s. The outcome of that often contentious debate was the realization that the "long-standing and controversy-generating dichotomy between the effect of the situation versus the effect of the person on behavior . . . is and always was a fake dichotomy" (Funder, 2001, p. 200). And so the issue was resolved by accepting an interactionist approach, agreeing that enduring personal traits, changing aspects of the situation, and the interaction between them must all be considered in order to provide a full explanation for human nature.

Unique Characteristics

Our definition of personality may also include the idea of human uniqueness. We see similarities among people, yet we sense that each of us possesses special properties that distinguish us from all others. Thus, we may suggest that **personality** is an enduring and unique cluster of characteristics that may change in response to different situations.

personality
The unique, relatively enduring internal and external aspects of a person's character that influence behavior in different situations.

Even this, however, is not a definition with which all psychologists agree. To achieve more precision, we must examine what each personality theorist means by the term. Each offers a unique version, a personal vision, of the nature of personality, and that viewpoint has become his or her definition. And that is what this book is all about: reaching an understanding of the different versions of the concept of personality and examining the various ways of defining the word *I.*

Psychologists interested in personality do more than formulate theories in their attempts to define its nature. They also devote considerable time and effort to measuring or assessing personality and to conducting research on its various aspects. Although the primary focus of this book is theories, we will describe for each theory the relevant assessment techniques and research findings.

Ethnic and Gender Issues in Personality

The personality theorists we discuss in this book offer diverse views of the nature of the human personality. Despite their disagreements and divergences, however, they share certain defining characteristics: All are White, of European or American heritage, and almost all are men. There was nothing unusual about this situation, given the period during which most of these researchers and theorists were developing their ideas. At the time, nearly all of the great advances in the arts, philosophy, literature, and the sciences, including the development of the scientific method, were propounded and promoted by White men of European or American background. In most fields, educational and professional opportunities for women and for people of ethnic minority groups were limited.

In addition, in the field of personality theory, virtually all of the patients, clients, and research participants on whom the theories are based were also White. Even the laboratory rats were white. Further, the majority of the patients and research participants were men. Yet the personality theorists confidently offered theories that, by implication, were supposed to be valid for *all* people, regardless of gender, race, or ethnic origin.

None of the theorists stated explicitly that his or her views applied only to males or to Whites or to U.S. citizens, or that their ideas might not be useful for explaining personality in people of other backgrounds. Although the theorists accepted, to some degree, the importance of social and environmental forces in shaping personality, they tended to ignore or minimize the influence of gender and ethnic background.

Our own experiences tell us that our brothers and sisters were exposed to different childhood influences than we were and that, as a result, they grew up to have different personalities. We also know from research in social psychology and sociology that children from different environments—such as a predominantly White Midwestern town, an Asian immigrant community, a Los Angeles barrio, an Appalachian mountain village, a Native-American reservation, or an affluent Black suburb—are exposed to vastly different social and cultural influences. If the world in which people live and the factors that affect their upbringing are so different, then surely their personalities can be expected to differ.

They do, as demonstrated by a rapidly growing body of research. For example, consider a classic study comparing the personalities of Chinese college students in Hong Kong with Chinese students in Canada. Those living in Hong Kong, an Eastern culture, were more introverted than those living in Canada, a Western culture, a finding that supports earlier research showing that Eastern societies, in general, are more introverted than Western societies.

In the same study, recent Chinese immigrants to Canada demonstrated a similarly low level of introversion as the Hong Kong Chinese. However, Chinese immigrants who had lived in Canada at least 10 years, and thus had greater exposure to Western culture, scored significantly higher in extraversion than did more recent immigrants or the Hong Kong research participants. In this instance, cultural forces had exerted an impact on this basic personality characteristic (McCrae, Yi, Trapnell, Bond, & Paulhus, 1998).

Boys and girls are still typically reared according to traditional stereotypes, and this upbringing influences personality in different ways. Research has documented many instances of differences between men and women on specific personality factors. Let us note a few examples. One large-scale study of the intensity of emotional awareness and expression compared male and female college undergraduates at two U.S. universities and male and female students at medical schools in the United States and in Germany. The results showed that women from both cultures displayed greater emotional complexity and intensity than did men (Barrett, Lane, Sechrest, & Schwartz, 2000).

A study of stress on the job found that women managers reported more frequent headaches, anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, and eating disorders than did men managers. Women also reported a higher incidence of smoking and of alcohol and drug use in response to workplace stress (Nelson & Burke, 2000).

Another study compared the death rates of men and women 45 years after they took various psychological tests. The tests, given in the year 1940, measured vocational interests, degree of masculinity-femininity, and occupational preferences. The average age of the research participants when they were tested was approximately 30. The results showed clearly that those who selected occupations that in 1940 were considered "masculine," such as airline pilot, engineer, judge, chemist, or lawyer, had a higher mortality rate than those who selected other occupations. The researchers concluded that certain typical gender-related traits correlated highly with death rates (Lippa, Martin, & Friedman, 2000).

Cross-Cultural Psychology

The influence of cultural forces on personality is now widely recognized in psychology. A specialty area called cross-cultural psychology developed in the late 1960s, as reflected in new publications such as the *Cross-Cultural Psychology Bulletin* and the *Directory of Cross-Cultural Psychological Research*. In 1970, the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* began, and in 1980, the *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* first appeared, revised in 1997. In 2002, an article entitled "Cultural influences on personality" was published in the influential *Annual Review of Psychology*. The authors noted that "personality is shaped by both genetic and environmental influences. Among the most important of the latter are cultural influences" (Triandis & Suh, 2002, p. 135).

All this attention sounds impressive and represents a major advance after years of neglect. However, the importance of cross-cultural issues has been slow to infiltrate the mainstream personality journals. During the 1990s, some 15 percent of the articles published in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* dealt with personality. In contrast, leading personality journals, such as the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* devoted less than 2.5 percent of their articles to the effects of culture on personality (Lee, McCauley, & Draguns, 1999).

In addition, research on cross-cultural psychology has yet to cross many of the world's cultures. Little research has been conducted on personality in African, South American, and Asian nations. Consider, for example, India and mainland China. Although they account for more than 45 percent of the world's population, relatively

few studies dealing with personality in those cultures have been published in English-language sources.

Another problem limiting the applicability of cross-cultural personality research is that most studies use college students as research participants. It is questionable whether we can generalize the results of such research to the population as a whole (a criticism made of much psychological research based on college students).

◤ LOG ON

http://socialpsychology.org/cultural.htm

Provides links to diverse sites related to racial, ethnic, and multicultural issues, especially African, Asian, Hispanic, Jewish, and Native-American cultures.

Ethnic and Gender Influences in American Psychology

The situation is more optimistic with regard to the study of ethnic and racial influences on personality. Over the last few decades, there has been an increasing recognition in American personality research of the importance of racial and ethnic differences. In 1986, the Society for the Psychological Study of Racial and Ethnic Minority Issues was established as Division 45 of the American Psychological Association (APA).

In the years between 1988 and 1995, the APA published bibliographies on African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. This strong interest in ethnic and racial issues is reflected in an increase in relevant research. A survey of 14 psychology journals over a 5-year period found that 61 percent of the articles noted the ethnic identities of the research participants. Whereas previous surveys had found that ethnic minority groups were underrepresented in research, relative to their proportion of the U.S. population, the current survey reported conflicting results. African Americans were overrepresented as research participants in psychological studies, and Hispanic Americans were underrepresented. One explanation suggested for the latter finding is that nearly 40 percent of Hispanics living in the United States are not fluent in English, and therefore they are unlikely to be selected as research participants (Case & Smith, 2000).

The amount of research conducted on the effects of gender on personality has increased substantially. The rapid growth in the number of women Ph.D.'s and the lessening of academic barriers to their promotion and tenure may be partially responsible for the greater attention paid to male–female differences in personality. In addition, the Association for Women in Psychology was established in 1969, and in 1973 the Society of the Psychology of Women became a division of the American Psychological Association. The latter organization publishes the journal *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. These developments also reflect increased recognition of the influence of gender on personality.

Thus, overall, it is fair to state that personality researchers have become more aware of and sensitive to the substantial impact of gender and ethnic identity. Psychologists

expect that this greater recognition will continue to promote the inclusion of people of different backgrounds in subject pools for psychological research, thus improving and extending the applicability of the research findings.

Assessment in the Study of Personality

To assess something means to evaluate it. The assessment of personality is a major area of application of psychology to real-world concerns. Consider a few everyday examples.

Clinical psychologists try to understand the symptoms of their patients or clients by attempting to assess their personalities, by differentiating between normal and abnormal behaviors and feelings. Only by evaluating personality in this way can clinicians diagnose disorders and determine the best course of therapy.

School psychologists evaluate the personalities of the students referred to them for treatment in an attempt to uncover the causes of adjustment or learning problems. Industrial/organizational psychologists assess personality to select the best candidate for a particular job. Counseling psychologists measure personality to find the best job for a particular applicant, matching the requirements of the position with the person's interests and needs. Research psychologists assess the personalities of their research participants in an attempt to account for their behavior in an experiment or to correlate their personality traits with other measurements.

Thus, no matter what you do in your life or your working career, it is difficult to avoid having your personality assessed in some way. Indeed, much of your success in the workplace will be determined by your performance on various psychological tests. Therefore, it is important that you have some understanding of how they work.

Standardization, Reliability, and Validity

Assessment techniques differ in their degree of objectivity or subjectivity; some techniques are wholly subjective and therefore open to bias. The results obtained by subjective techniques may be distorted by the personality characteristics of the person making the assessment. The best techniques of personality assessment follow three principles: standardization, reliability, and validity.

standardization
The consistency or uniformity of conditions and procedures for administering an assessment device.

Standardization. **Standardization** involves the consistency or uniformity of conditions and procedures for administering a test. If we want to compare the performance of different people on the same test, then they must all take that test under identical conditions. Everyone taking the test must be exposed to the same instructions, be allowed the same amount of time in which to respond, and be situated in an identical or highly similar environment.

Any variation in the established testing procedure can affect the test-takers' performance and lead to an inaccurate assessment. Suppose, for example, that the air-conditioning system in the university's counseling center failed on an unusually hot day. The people taking tests that day would be operating under a disadvantage. In their desire to escape the heat, they might answer the questions more quickly and thus less carefully than people who took the test the day before, when the room temperature was more comfortable.

If an inexperienced tester failed to read aloud the complete test instructions to a group of people, those test-takers would not be taking the test under the same conditions as people tested by a more conscientious test administrator, one who did read the complete instructions. The psychologists who develop a test can design appropriate standardized testing procedures into it, but if those procedures are not followed precisely, an otherwise excellent test can be rendered useless.

reliability
The consistency of response to a psychological assessment device. Reliability can be determined by the test-retest, equivalent-forms, and split-halves methods.

Reliability.   **Reliability** involves the consistency of response to an assessment device. If you took the same test on two different days and received two widely different scores, the test could not be considered reliable because its results were so inconsistent. No one could depend on that test for an adequate assessment of your personality. It is common to find some slight variation in scores when a test is retaken, but if the variation is large, then it is likely that something is wrong with the test or with the method of scoring it.

Several procedures are available to determine the reliability of a test before it is used for assessment or research.

■   The **test-retest method** involves giving the test twice to the same people and statistically comparing the two sets of scores by calculating the correlation coefficient. The closer the two sets of scores are to each other (the higher the correlation coefficient), the greater the test's reliability.

■   In the **equivalent-forms method,** instead of taking the test a second time, the research participants take two equivalent forms of the test. The higher the correlation between the two sets of scores, the greater the test's reliability. This approach is more expensive and time-consuming than the test-retest method because it requires that psychologists develop two equal forms of the test.

■   In the **split-halves method,** the test is administered once, and the scores on half the test items are compared with the scores of the other half. This is the fastest approach because the test is given only one time. Also, there is no opportunity for learning or memory to influence performance.

validity
The extent to which an assessment device measures what it is intended to measure. Types of validity include predictive, content, and construct.

Validity.   **Validity** refers to whether an assessment device measures what it is intended to measure. Does an intelligence test truly measure intelligence? Does a test of anxiety actually evaluate anxiety? If a test does not measure what it claims to, then it is not valid and its results cannot be used to predict behavior. For example, your score on an invalid intelligence test, no matter how high, will be useless for predicting how well you will do in college or in any other situation that requires a high level of intelligence. A personality test that is not valid may provide a misleading portrait of your emotional strengths and weaknesses.

As with reliability, validity must be determined precisely before a test is applied. Psychologists use several kinds of validity, including predictive validity, content validity, and construct validity.

From a practical standpoint, the most important kind of validity is **predictive validity**—how well a test score predicts future behavior. Suppose you apply for flight training to become an astronaut. As part of the selection process, you are given a lengthy paper-and-pencil test to complete. If the majority of the applicants over the last 10 years who scored above 80 percent on the test became successful astronauts, and

the majority of those who scored below 80 percent failed as astronauts, then the test can be considered a valid predictor of performance in that situation. In establishing predictive validity, we must determine the correlation between a test score and some objective measure of behavior, such as job performance. The higher the correspondence between the two, the greater the test's predictive validity.

Content validity refers to the test's individual items or questions. To determine content validity, psychologists evaluate each item to see if it relates to what the test is supposed to measure. For example, the Sensation-Seeking Scale (see Chapter 16) is a test designed to measure the need for stimulation and excitement. One of the test items is the statement "I would like to try parachute jumping." A content analysis would ascertain how well this statement (and all other statements) distinguishes between people high in sensation-seeking behavior and people low in sensation-seeking behavior.

Construct validity relates to a test's ability to measure a construct—a hypothetical or theoretical component of behavior, such as a trait or motive. Anxiety is one example of a construct. How can we tell if a new test that promises to measure anxiety really does so? A standard way to determine this is to correlate the scores on the new test with other established and validated measures of anxiety, such as other psychological tests or some behavioral measure. If the correlation is high, then we can assume that the new test truly measures anxiety.

Methods of assessment. The personality theorists discussed in this book devised unique methods for assessing personality, ways that were appropriate for their theories. By applying these methods, they derived the data on which they based their formulations. Their techniques vary in objectivity, reliability, and validity, and they range from dream interpretation and childhood recollections to paper-and-pencil tests. In psychology today, the major approaches to personality assessment are:

- Self-report or objective inventories
- Projective techniques
- Clinical interviews
- Behavioral assessment procedures
- Thought-sampling assessment procedures

It is important to note that assessment for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes should not be based solely on a single approach. Ideally, multiple assessment measures are used to provide a range of information about a person.

Self-Report Inventories

self-report inventory
A personality assessment technique in which research participants answer questions about their behaviors and feelings.

The **self-report inventory** approach involves asking people to report on themselves by answering questions about their behavior and feelings in various situations. These paper-and-pencil tests include items dealing with symptoms, attitudes, interests, fears, and values. Test-takers indicate how closely each statement describes their characteristics or how much they agree with each item. Two widely used self-report inventories are the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the California Psychological Inventory (CPI).

Table 1.2 Simulated items from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)

Answer "true" or "false."

At times I get strong cramps in my intestines.
I am often very tense on the job.
Sometimes there is a feeling like something is pressing in on my head.
I wish I could do over some of the things I have done.
I used to like to do the dances in gym class.
It distresses me that people have the wrong ideas about me.
The things that run through my head sometimes are horrible.
There are those out there who want to get me.
Sometimes I think so fast I can't keep up.
I give up too easily when discussing things with others.

Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). The MMPI has been translated into 140 languages and may be the world's most widely used psychological test. First published in 1943, the MMPI was revised in 1989 to make the language more contemporary and nonsexist (Buchanan, 1994). Items were also rewritten to eliminate words that over the years had acquired alternative meanings or interpretations (Ben-Porath & Butcher, 1989). The 1989 revision, the MMPI-2, is a true-false test that consists of 567 statements. These items cover physical and psychological health; political and social attitudes; educational, occupational, family, and marital factors; and neurotic and psychotic behavior tendencies. The test's clinical scales measure such personality characteristics as gender role, defensiveness, depression, hysteria, paranoia, hypochondriasis, and schizophrenia. Some items can be scored to determine if the test-taker was faking, was careless, or misunderstood the instructions. Examples of the types of statements in the MMPI can be found in Table 1.2.

The MMPI-2 is used with adults in research on personality, as a diagnostic tool for assessing personality problems, and for vocational and personal counseling. In 1992, the MMPI-A was developed for use with adolescents. The number of questions was decreased from 567 to 478, to reduce the time and effort needed to administer it (Butcher et al., 1992).

Both forms of the test have their shortcomings, however, one of which is length. It takes considerable time to respond diligently to the large number of items. Some people lose interest and motivation long before they finish. Also, some of the items on this and other self-report personality tests deal with highly personal characteristics, and some people consider the questions an invasion of privacy, particularly when someone is required to take the test to get a job. Nevertheless, despite the length and privacy issues, the MMPI-2 is a valid test that discriminates between neurotics and psychotics and between emotionally healthy and emotionally disturbed persons. Thus, it remains a highly valuable diagnostic tool.

California Psychological Inventory (CPI). Developed in 1957 and revised in 1987 (Gough, 1987), this test is designed for use with normal people age 13 and older. It consists of 462 items that call for a "true" or "false" response. The CPI has three

scales to measure test-taking attitudes and provides scores on 17 personality dimensions, including sociability, dominance, self-control, self-acceptance, and responsibility. The CPI has been successful in profiling potential delinquents and high school dropouts and in predicting success in various occupations, such as medicine, dentistry, nursing, and teaching.

Assessment of self-report inventories. Although there are self-report inventories to assess many facets of personality, the tests are not always appropriate for children or elderly people, for people whose level of intelligence registers below normal, or for people with limited reading skills. Research has shown that even minor changes in the wording of the questions or the response alternatives on self-report measures can lead to major changes in the results. For example, when adults were asked what they thought was the most important thing for children to learn, 61.5 percent chose the alternative "to think for themselves." But when adult research participants were asked to supply the answer—when no list of alternatives was provided—only 4.6 percent made that or a similar response (Schwarz, 1999).

Despite such problems, self-report inventories remain the most objective approach to personality assessment. Their greatest advantage is that they are designed to be scored objectively. Virtually anyone with the proper answer key can score these tests accurately. The test results do not depend on the scorer's personal or theoretical biases. This objectivity in scoring, combined with the widespread use of computers, has led to automated personality assessment programs for the MMPI-2, the CPI, and dozens of other tests. Computerized scoring provides a complete diagnostic profile of the test-taker's responses.

Studies have also shown that people are significantly more likely to reveal sensitive (even embarrassing) information when responding to computerized self-report inventories than to paper-and-pencil tests given by a live test administrator. Apparently, many people feel a greater sense of anonymity and privacy when interacting with a computer and so will reveal more personal information (Butcher, Perry, & Atlis, 2000; Feigelson & Dwight, 2000).

Projective Techniques

projective test
A personality assessment device in which research participants are presumed to project personal needs, fears, and values onto their interpretation or description of an ambiguous stimulus.

Clinical psychologists developed **projective tests** of personality for their work with emotionally disturbed persons. Inspired by Sigmund Freud's emphasis on the importance of the unconscious, projective tests attempt to probe that invisible portion of our personality. The theory underlying projective techniques is that when we are presented with an ambiguous stimulus, such as an inkblot or a picture that can be understood or interpreted in more than one way, we will project our needs, fears, and values onto the stimulus when asked to describe it.

There are two kinds or levels of interpretation problems with projective techniques, both of which contribute to their subjectivity. The first problem is interpreting the responses to the individual test items, which make up the final score. The second problem is interpreting the final score to provide a personality profile of the test-taker.

Because the interpretation of the results of projective tests is so subjective, these tests are not high in reliability or validity. It is not unusual for different test admin-

Figure 1.1
An inkblot similar to a
Rorschach inkblot
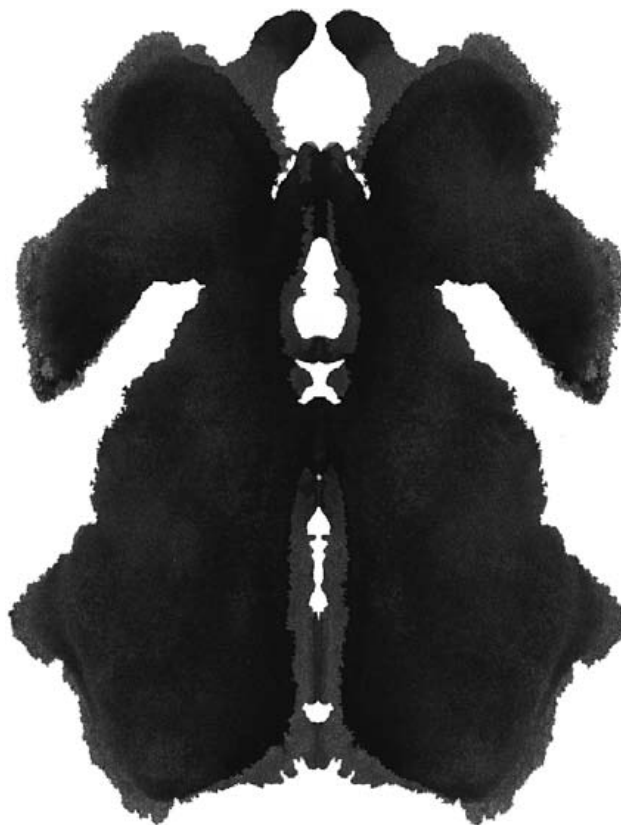
istrators to form different impressions of the same person, based on the results of a projective test; in such a case, the interscorer reliability of the test is considered to be low. Nevertheless, such tests are widely used for assessment and diagnostic purposes. Two popular projective tests are the Rorschach Inkblot Technique and the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT).

Rorschach Inkblot Technique.   The Rorschach was developed in 1921 by the Swiss psychiatrist Hermann Rorschach (1884–1922), who had been fascinated by inkblots since childhood. As a youngster he had played a popular game called *klecksographie,* or *blotto,* in which children gave their interpretations of various inkblot designs. Rorschach was known to be so intensely interested in inkblots that as a teenager, he acquired the nickname *Klecks,* which means, in German, blot of ink. Later, when Rorschach was serving a hospital residency in psychiatry after receiving his M.D., he and a friend played *blotto* with patients to pass the time. Rorschach noticed consistent differences between the responses of patients and the responses offered by school children to the same inkblots (Ben-Porath & Butcher, 1991; Ellenberger, 1993; Popplestone & McPherson, 1994).

In developing his inkblot test, Rorschach created the inkblots by dropping blobs of ink on blank paper and folding the paper in half (see Figure 1.1). After trying numerous patterns, he settled on 10 blots because he could not afford to have more than 10 printed. He wrote about his work with inkblots, but the publication was a failure. Few copies were sold, and the few reviews it received were negative. Although the

test eventually became immensely popular, Rorschach became depressed and died nine months after his work was published.

The inkblot cards (some black, others using color) are shown one at a time, and test-takers are asked to describe what they see. Then the cards are shown a second time, and the psychologist asks specific questions about the earlier answers. The examiner also observes behavior during the testing session, noting test-takers' gestures, reactions to particular inkblots, and general attitude.

Responses can be interpreted in several ways, depending on whether the subject or patient reports seeing movement, human or animal figures, animate or inanimate objects, and partial or whole figures. Attempts have been made to standardize the administration, scoring, and interpretation of the Rorschach. The most successful of these, the Comprehensive System, claims, on the basis of considerable research, to lead to improved reliability and validity (Exner, 1993). Since the 1980s, there has been renewed interest in the Rorschach, primarily because of the usefulness of the Comprehensive System.

It should be noted, however, that there is not universal agreement about the usefulness and validity of the Rorschach, even with the Comprehensive System for scoring. Some researchers have concluded that there is no scientific basis for the Rorschach; others insist that the test is as valid as any other measure currently used to assess personality. For an overview of the problems involved, see the special issue of *Psychological Assessment* (2001, volume 13, number 4), which includes several articles devoted to the controversy.[2] Nevertheless, the Rorschach remains the second most frequently used assessment technique in personality research and clinical practice; only the MMPI is more popular (Ganellen, 2002; Meyer, 2001).

Overall, we may conclude that validity research is generally more supportive of the MMPI than the Rorschach. Thus, the MMPI can be used with greater confidence, especially for ethnic minority groups and diverse cultural groups (Wood, Garb, Lilienfeld, & Nezworski, 2002).

↖ LOG ON

http://www.phil.gu.se/FU/ro.html

Serious information sources about Hermann Rorschach and the Rorschach test.

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). Henry Murray (see Chapter 7) and Christiana Morgan developed the TAT (Morgan & Murray, 1935). The test consists of 19 ambiguous pictures, showing one or more persons, and 1 blank card. The pictures are vague about the events depicted and can be interpreted in several ways. A sample TAT picture and a possible interpretation are shown in Chapter 7 on page 207. Persons taking the test are asked to construct a story about the people and objects in the picture, describing what led up to the situation shown, what the people are thinking and feeling, and what the outcome is likely to be.

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[2] See especially the articles by Garb et al., Hunsley & Bailey, Meyer & Archer, Viglione & Hilsenroth, and Weiner.

In clinical work, psychologists consider several factors in interpreting these stories, including the kinds of personal relationships involved, the motivations of the characters, and the degree of contact with reality shown by the characters.

There are no objective scoring systems for the TAT, and its reliability and validity are low when used for diagnostic purposes. However, the TAT has proven highly valid for research; for that purpose, scoring systems have been devised to measure specific aspects of personality, such as the needs for achievement, affiliation, and power.

Other projective techniques. Word association and sentence completion are additional projective techniques that psychologists use to assess personality. In the word-association test, a list of words is read to the subject, and he or she is asked to respond with the first word that comes to mind. Response words are analyzed for their commonplace or unusual nature, for their possible indication of emotional tension, and for their relationship to sexual conflicts. Speed of response is considered important. The sentence-completion test also requires verbal responses. Research participants are asked to finish such sentences as "My ambition is . . ." or "What worries me . . ." Interpretation of the responses with both of these approaches can be highly subjective. However, some sentence-completion tests, such as the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank, provide for more objective scoring.

Clinical Interviews

In addition to the specific psychological tests used to measure an individual's personality, the assessment procedure often includes clinical interviews. After all, it is reasonable to assume that valuable information can be obtained by talking to the person being evaluated and asking relevant questions about past and present life experiences, social and family relationships, and the problems that led the person to seek psychological help. A wide range of behaviors, feelings, and thoughts can be investigated in the interview, including general appearance, demeanor, and attitude; facial expressions, posture, and gestures; preoccupations; degree of self-insight; and level of contact with reality.

Armed with the results of psychological tests such as the MMPI, which are usually administered before or during a series of interview sessions, the psychologist can focus on problems indicated by the test results and explore those areas in detail. Interpretation of interview material is subjective and can be affected by the interviewer's theoretical orientation and personality. Nevertheless, clinical interviews remain a widely used technique for personality assessment and a useful tool when supplemented by more objective procedures.

Behavioral Assessment

In the behavioral assessment approach, an observer evaluates a person's behavior in a given situation. The better the observers know the person being assessed, the more accurate their evaluations are likely to be. Psychologists Arnold Buss and Robert Plomin (Chapter 10) developed a questionnaire to assess the degree of various temperaments present in twins of the same sex (Buss & Plomin, 1984). The mothers of the twins were asked, on the basis of their observations of their children, to check those items on the

**Table 1.3 Sample items from the Buss and Plomin EASI
Temperament Survey**

Child tends to cry easily.
Child has a quick temper.
Child cannot sit still long.
Child makes friends easily.
Child tends to be shy.
Child goes from toy to toy quickly.

questionnaire that best described specific and easily discernible instances of their children's behavior. Sample items from the questionnaire are listed in Table 1.3.

As we noted in the section on clinical interviews, counselors routinely observe their clients' behavior—considering, for example, facial expressions, nervous gestures, and general appearance—and use that information in formulating their diagnoses. Such observations are less systematic than formal behavioral assessment procedures, but the results can provide valuable insights.

Thought Sampling

In the behavioral approach to personality assessment described in the preceding paragraphs, specific behavioral actions are monitored by trained observers. In the thought-sampling approach to assessment, a person's thoughts are recorded systematically to provide a sample over a period of time. Because thoughts are private experiences and cannot be seen, the only person who can make this type of observation is the individual whose thoughts are being studied. In this procedure, then, the observer and the person being observed are the same.

In one study, 88 men and women college students recorded their most positive and negative experiences at intervals every day for 2 weeks. The students, along with two trained judges, then grouped the experiences around common themes. These themes were compared with the results of objective and projective tests administered to the same research participants. The validity of the thought-sampling procedure was found to be as high or higher than the other assessment techniques and to uncover material that was difficult (or impossible) to obtain by other methods (Hanson, 1992).

The thought-sampling assessment procedure is typically used with groups, but it has also been applied to individuals to aid in diagnosis and treatment. A client can be asked to write or tape-record thoughts and moods for later analysis by the psychologist.

A variation of thought sampling is the experience sampling method. This is conducted similarly to thought sampling, but the participants are asked also to describe the social and environmental context in which the experience being sampled occurs. For example, research participants might be asked to note whether they were alone or with other people when the electronic beeper sounded, alerting them to record their experiences. Or they might be asked precisely what they were doing or where they were. The goal of this method is to determine how one's thoughts or moods may be influenced by the context in which they occur.

Current thought sampling research relies on relatively recent technological developments such as pagers and "smart" wristwatches that emit a signal when research participants are supposed to record their thoughts, experiences, or moods. Handheld computer devices such as personal digital assistants (PDAs), Palm Pilots, and electronic diaries, also allow participants to record their assessments quickly and easily. These devices are especially familiar to younger research participants and thus are readily accepted. Electronic entries can be timed and dated. Thus, researchers can determine whether assessments are being recorded as requested; if they are entered too late, they could be influenced by the vagaries of memory (Bolger, David, & Rafaeli, 2003; Fahrenberg, 2001; Fahrenberg, Huttner, & Leonhart, 2001; Hufford, Shiffman, Paty, & Stone, 2001).

Gender and Ethnic Issues in Assessment

Gender. The assessment of personality can be influenced by a person's gender. For example, women tend to score lower than do men on tests measuring assertiveness, a difference that may result from cultural sex-role training that traditionally teaches girls and young women not to assert themselves. Whatever the cause, however, personality test data do show differences between men and women on a number of characteristics.

In addition, considerable data from personality tests, clinical interviews, and other assessment measures indicate differential rates of diagnosis based on gender for various emotional disorders. Women are more often diagnosed with and treated for depression, anxiety, and related disorders than are men. Several explanations have been offered. There actually may be a higher incidence of these disorders among women, or the differential rate may be related to gender bias or gender stereotyping in interpreting the assessment results. Also, the therapists who recommend treatment options based on the assessment results may exhibit a bias against women. The average course of therapy for women tends to be longer than that for men, and doses of psychoactive medications prescribed for women tend to be higher than those for men (Pilkington & Lenaghan, 1998).

Asians. The Asian-American population in the United States is particularly large in states such as California and Texas. By the year 2020, the Asian-American population is expected to increase by as much as 175 percent over their number in the 1970s. It is a complex, heterogeneous population and includes people of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Thai, Korean, and Vietnamese extraction, among others.

A psychological test such as the MMPI, which has been validated in a major city in China, may not be valid for Chinese people living in the United States, or even for Chinese people living in other parts of China. Although the MMPI and other personality tests have been translated into Asian languages, little research has been conducted on their reliability and validity for use with Asian Americans (Okazaki & Sue, 2000).

We know that there are substantial and consistent cultural differences between people of Asian and non-Asian background. For example, research has shown that people of Asian heritage tend to hold strong beliefs about the common good of society as a whole. To them, individual competitiveness and assertiveness are undesirable and are contrary to Asian cultural standards. American culture is usually