Personality

SSPVB2: The student will evaluate assessment tools and theories in personality.

What is personality?

- An individual's unique patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that persists over time and across situations.
- O Approaches to Measuring Personality:
 - O Trait
 - Psychoanalytic
 - Social-Cognitive
 - Humanistic

The Trait Perspective

- O Goal: to describe an individual's personality in terms of a set of distinct dimensions or traits
- O Little emphasis on how the personality developed
- Approaches:
 - Factor Analytic Approach (What are the basic traits?)
 - © Empirical Approach (Can we differentiate different groups?)

Factor Analysis

- O Cattell's 16 Personality Factors
 - O Used factor analysis to summarize over 4500 different terms used in the English language to describe personality traits
 - O Found 16 source traits/factors
- O Esyenck's Tri-demensional Theory
 - Extroversion—how outgoing or social
 - Neurotism—emotional stability (degree of anxiety, worry, or moodiness
 - O Psychotism—tendency to be insenstive, uncaring, or cruel

Factor Analysis

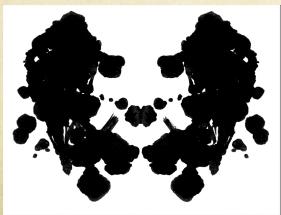
- O The Big-Five Theory
 - Neuroticism vs. emotional stability
 - O Introversion vs. extroversion
 - Nonopenness vs. openness to experience
 - Antagonism vs. agreeableness
 - O Undirectedness vs. conscientiousness
 - O Why 5 instead of 3 or 16?
 - O Depends on how you apply factor analysis
 - Almost all personality terms correlate highly with one or more of the factors
 - O Cross-cultural similarities
 - O High predictive validity

Empirical Approach

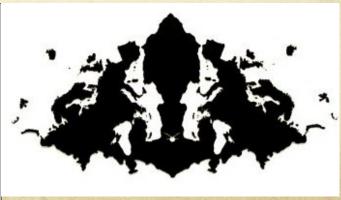
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)
 - O Designed to diagnose personality disorders (1943)
 - 11,000 statements tested on 770 people (true/false/cannot say)
 - O Revised in 1980s
 - O Still popular today
- O Evaluating the Trait Perspective
 - O People can fake desirable responses
 - O Situational influences on behavior

Psychoanalytic Approach

- O Psychoanalysis is both a treatment and a theory of personality
- Assessing the unconscious
 - Free association
 - Slips of the tongue
 - Dream analysis
 - Projective tests
 - O Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)
 - O Rorschach Inkblot Test







Freud's Personality Structure

- O Sigmund Freud (1856-1939): Austrian physician
- o Id
 - Source of all energy
 - Functions entirely in unconscious
 - O Represents instinctual drives present at birth
 - Does not distinguish between reality and fantasy
 - Operates according to the pleasure principle

Freud's Personality Structure

- Superego
 - Represents internalized social and parental standards
 - O Strives toward unrealistic perfection
 - Responsible for guilt
- O Ego
 - The largely conscious, "executive" part of personality
 - Mediates among the demands of the id, superego, and ego
 - Operates on the reality principle

Freud's Personality Development

- "Personality forms during the first few years of life, rooted in unresolved conflicts of early childhood."
- Psychosexual stages
 - Oral stage (birth-1 year)
 - O Mouth, lips, tongue are associated with sexual pleasure
 - O Weaning a child can lead to fixation if not handled correctly
 - Fixation can lead to oral activities into adulthood
 - Anal stage (1-3 years)
 - Anus is associated with pleasure
 - O Toilet training can lead to fixation if not handled correctly
 - Fixation can lead to anal retentive or expulsive behaviors in adulthood

Freud's Personality Development

- Psychosexual stages (continued)
 - O Phallic Stage (3-5 years)
 - O Focus of pleasure shifts to the genitals (masturbation)
 - Oedipus complex and Electra complex: a child's sexual attachment to parent of the opposite sex and jealousy toward the parent of the same sex
 - Fixation can lead to excessive masculinity in males and the need for attention or domination in females
 - Latency Stage (5-puberty)
 - Sexuality is repressed
 - O Children participate in hobbies, school, and same-sex friendships
 - O Genital Stage (puberty-on)
 - O Sexual feelings re-emerge and are oriented toward others—usually marked by mature sexuality
 - O Healthy adults find pleasure in love and work, fixated adults have their energy tied up in earlier stages

Freud's Personality Development

Fixation

- A partial or complete halt at some point in the individual's development
- An attempt to achieve pleasure as an adult in ways that are equivalent to how it was achieved in these stages

Defense Mechanisms

- Repression: banish anxiety from consciousness
- Regression: retreat to infantile psychosexual stage
- O Reaction formation: express feelings that are opposite of their feelings
- Projection: people disguise their own impulses by attributing them to another
- Rationalization: self-justifying explanations instead of real reasons
- O Displacement: redirecting anger or impulses toward a safer outlet

Evaluating the Psychoanalytic Perspective

- Criticisms
 - Too vague to test
 - Little experimental support
 - Focus on disorder
 - Negative view
 - O Does not take into account individual control
- O Praise
 - Unconscious forces
 - Internal conflict
 - O Defense mechanisms
 - Childhood events

Social-Cognitive Theories

- Reciprocal Determinism: interacting influences between personality and environmental factors
- O Bandura's Contribution
 - Personality is shaped through learning
 - Expectancies: what a person anticipates in a situation or as a result of behaving in certain ways
 - O Self-efficacy: the expectancy that one's efforts will be successful
- Personal Control
 - O Internal locus of control: one can control his/her own fate
 - External locus of control: one's fate is determined by chance, luck, or the behaviors of others

Evaluating Social-Cognitive Theories

- Fails to consider unconscious motives and individual disposition
- O Is perhaps the predominant approach to explaining human behavior

Humanistic Perspective

- O Stresses the fundamental goodness of people and their striving toward higher levels of functioning
- Maslow and Self-Actualization
 - O Studied healthy, creative people: Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, and Eleanor Roosevelt
 - O Self-actualized individuals are
 - O Self-aware and self-accepting
 - Open and spontaneous
 - O Loving and caring
 - O Problem-centered not self-centered

Humanistic Perspective

- O Rogers' Person-Centered Approach
 - O Given the right environmental conditions, we will develop to our full potential
 - O Self concept and degree of congruity with experience
 - Unconditional positive reward
- O Evaluating the Humanist Perspective
 - Concepts often vague
 - May promote self-indulgence and lack of concern for others
 - O Does not address reality of human capacity for evil
 - Has impacted popular ideas on child-rearing, education, management, etc.