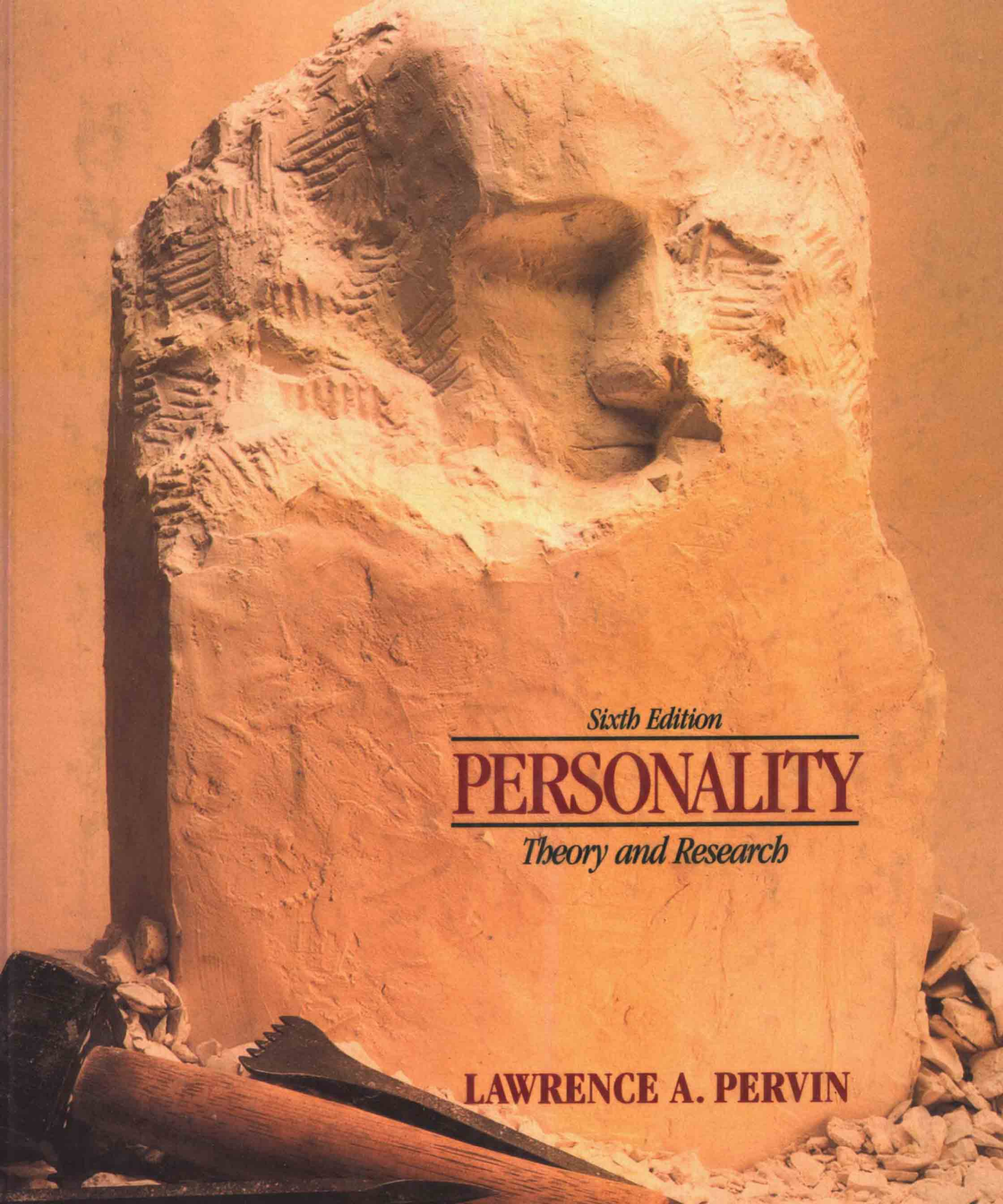

Sixth Edition

PERSONALITY

Theory and Research

LAWRENCE A. PERVIN

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Theory and Research

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PREFACE

Personality, in individuals and in the field of psychology that studies it, is always in a state of evolution. The sixth edition of *Personality: Theory and Research* continues my long-standing attempt to capture this dynamic aspect of people and the field and to present it to students effectively. The current edition retains the four major goals of earlier editions:

1. *Presentation of the major theories of personality current in the field.* My intent is to give in-depth coverage to the major theoretical approaches rather than to cover many theories in a more superficial manner.
2. *Integration of theory with research.* My intent here is to demonstrate the linkage between personality theory and personality research; that is, to show how developments in one can, and should, be part and parcel of developments in the other.
3. *Integration of case material with theory.* Here my intent is to provide a case illustration of each theory and then to show how the various theories relate to the same person. The question asked and examined in the text is: Are the pictures of a person gained through the lens of each theory of personality totally different from one another, or are they expressive of different angles of the same person?
4. *Objective, unbiased treatment of each theoretical approach.* My effort always has been to understand each theory on its own terms and then to evaluate it in relation to standard criteria. Thus, discussion of each major theory is followed by an analysis of the strengths and limitations of that approach. Rather than persuade the student of the value of one theory over all others, I attempt to present an accurate statement of each and have the student come to his or her own conclusion.

Each new edition of *Personality: Theory and Research* provides me with an opportunity to capture new theories of personality and new approaches to the study of personality while retaining the important contributions made by earlier approaches. Preparing the revision is a personal learning experience, in the sense of determining major developments in the field that should be presented in the new edition and in determining new ways to present the material in order to enrich the student's own learning experience.

The sixth edition of *Personality: Theory and Research* retains coverage of the contributions made by theories covered in previous editions of the text. It also presents developments on the cutting edge, which lie in two particular areas. First, a consensus appears to be emerging among trait theorists concerning the fundamental units of personality. Important developments also are occurring in relation to the inherited aspects of personality traits and the possible biological and evolutionary bases of these traits. These new developments are presented in Chapters 9 and 10. Second, important developments are occurring in the closely related social cognitive and information-processing approaches to personality. These approaches have always been strong in their focus on systematic research, but recently the scope of research has broadened to consider important aspects of human emotion and motivation. These developments are discussed in Chapters 12 to 14.

Pedagogical changes in the sixth edition make the material more available to the student. The study of a single case from the standpoint of the various theories has always been a part of the text. In the past, this case—the Case of Jim—was presented at the end of the text. In this edition, the relevant portions of the case are presented in association with each theory so that the student can trace the development of an emerging picture of the whole individual. Also, the Current Applications boxes, which illustrate the relevance of emphasized concepts to issues we face in our daily lives and draw the connections between theory and application, have been retained and updated. In addition, illustrations from daily life and tables summarizing the theories give increased emphasis to the major concepts and theoretical points of each approach. Improved readability, additional subheadings to clarify chapter coverage, a glossary at the end of each chapter, and outlined chapter reviews serve to enhance student comprehension.

It is my hope that in reading the sixth edition of *Personality: Theory and Research*, students will gain an appreciation of three things: (1) the mystery of human personality and the efforts of psychologists to unravel this mystery; (2) the contributions that come from clinical case studies and from systematic research; and (3) the contributions of alternative approaches to the field. I also hope that students will both discover a particular theory of personality that makes personal sense to them and gain respect for the insights offered by alternative approaches.

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INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE GUIDE

The instructor's resource guide for *Personality: Theories and Research* is a full teaching resource for the instructor. It includes (1) suggested lecture topics and resource materials; (2) instructional aids; (3) questions for thought and discussion; and (4) multiple-choice and true-false test items.

Suggested lecture topics in each chapter either expand upon the material presented in the text or bring in new material directly related to the text. In following this format, the lectures remain integrated with the text without duplicating it. In most cases, the suggestions include a brief description of the content that might be included in the lecture and a number of references (bibliography included at the end of the manual) that can be reviewed for discussion of the issue under consideration.

The instructional aids include films, tapes, and demonstrations that can be presented in conjunction with the texts and lectures. For the films and tapes there is a brief description of the content, a listing of the distributor, and, in most cases, price information. Distributors' addresses are given at the end of the manual.

The questions for thought and discussion include items designed to challenge the student to make use of what has been learned and to think critically about its implications for further inquiry. The questions require the student to build on and go beyond the information presented. They may serve as a basis for lecture material, as a foundation for large or small group discussions, or for essay test questions.

Finally, the test items provide a testing resource to check on the progress being made by students. The number of items is greatly expanded and improved over the fifth edition, and the items are also available to instructors on disk in both IBM and Macintosh versions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In my efforts to present a comprehensive, scholarly, and interesting textbook I have been assisted by many people. Students in my classes have been a constant source of stimulation and useful feedback. In terms of recent developments in trait theory, I am particularly appreciative of the comments of Robert R. McCrae and Lewis Goldberg. The helpful reviews and suggestions for revision of the following professors are gratefully acknowledged:

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Finally, I am especially grateful for the efforts of the staff at Wiley who contributed their skills and talents to the sixth edition, in particular editors Deborah Moore and Karen Dubno.

Lawrence A. Pervin
Rutgers, the State University

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