

PERSONALITY *and the* BEHAVIOR DISORDERS

A HANDBOOK BASED ON EXPERIMENTAL
AND CLINICAL RESEARCH

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VOLUME I

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

The study of personality and its development draws heavily upon nearly all of the life sciences. In the recent past, anyone endeavoring to become familiar with the scientific knowledge about the behavior of whole individuals inevitably found himself wandering back and forth across the traditional boundaries between the sciences. This work brings together forty contributors representing the life sciences and seeks to present the major portion of theory, investigative fact, and clinical practice from all those scientific fields that have contributed to this knowledge.

This is not a work feasible for the pen of any one man, for the topics covered range through the structure and assessment, the dynamic development and determinants, and the disorders and therapy of personality. Furthermore, many of the thirty-five chapters survey developments of the last decade in subfields where the details of theory and research are known only to small coteries of workers. Each chapter has been written by one or more authorities in the subject concerned. Each author has endeavored to survey his field with technical jargon minimized or defined immediately, and with ample documentation to serve as a bridge to the original literature, so that his expositions may serve both as a text for students beyond the elementary level and as a reference work for mature clinicians, investigators, and teachers.

Understanding the individual person, until almost the last half-century, was left largely to the artist, or the moral philosopher. Whole organisms, and especially human beings as molar objects, were unadapted to traditional laboratory approaches. The various scientific subjects bit off their diverse parts to chew them in isolation. Only as the inductive implications of clinical observation were gradually clarified did it become possible to design experimental studies of the whole organism and its development. Due partly to the growing impact of the work of Galton and of Freud, and partly to the cumulative effects of the application of the scientific method, the volume of scientific output on personality has snowballed. It has recently become clear, moreover, that the traditional boundaries between the sciences have obstructed progress in this field, and that a cross-disciplinary approach is required. To assemble this literature and gather the results of this investigation into more compact exposition and to foster this cross-disciplinary approach to the study of personality have been the two principal aims in the design of this work.

It is unreasonable to expect uniformity of terminology and point of view at this time in this dynamic field. In fact, the editor has deliberately invited contributors who represented not only various life sciences but even divergent points of view within these sciences. Yet this work is not a symposium of systematic views, for each author gives a survey of the fact and research strategy of his subfield. For instance, no account of psychoanalytic doctrine as such appears, but several authors are analysts, and psychoanalysis is described as a clinical method of research. Moreover, its influence upon many of the subfields may easily be discerned. Again, no exposition of the tenets of the psychobiological schools appears, but several authors were trained in this school and its influence may be noticed in many of the subfields. The same goes for behaviorism, etc.

Because the emphasis of this book is upon the whole organism or person, the first term in the title is *Personality*. The term, however, is not limited to its common cross-sectional connotations; instead, a person is understood to be a socio-biological process beginning with conception and ending with death. Accordingly, both the cross-sectional problems concerned with description, assessment, and classification of present characteristics and their interrelationships must be considered, as well as the longitudinal problems concerned with the dynamic relationships between behavioral events and characteristics at one time, and those at a later time in the life of the individual. Within each of these two classes of problems, many perfectly valid systems of relationships may be abstracted for study which may account for some of the differing meanings given to the term personality. It is admitted that *personality* is not altogether a fortunate term with which to designate the scientific study of persons—in fact, the editor would prefer the term *personology* were it in current use.

It is fitting that *Behavior Disorders* should form a coordinate term in the title of this book. In the past, and even today, a large portion of our knowledge of persons has derived from the clinical observation and treatment of the abnormal. We use *behavior* instead of *mental*, also, to avoid implying dualism. Like this postulate of a monistic person, other postulates growing out of clinical study foreshadow a systematic science of molar behavior in which the individual organism will be the focus of concern. For instance, the convictions that normal and abnormal personalities differ only in degree, that the distinction between them is relative, and that the fundamental dynamic laws of behavior and personality development are the same for the normal and the abnormal have been gaining adherents rapidly. Furthermore, it is becoming more and more apparent that the dynamic laws of the life process are broader than the human species. Thus, in the strategy of research, it becomes entirely feasible to utilize infrahuman forms. Several chapters are here devoted

to the uncovering of these dynamic laws by way of experiments with animal subjects. Clinical observation, however, will probably continue indefinitely to be the final testing ground for these laws at the human level.

This work is truly a collaborative product. As the editor, I am deeply grateful for the suggestions and counsel I have received from the authors and from many others, and for the fine cooperative spirit I have met consistently. Nevertheless, I must stand responsible for the general pattern of organization in this Handbook. Thanks are due the many publishers, foundations and associations who granted permission to quote from material previously published under their several auspices. I am greatly indebted to Professor Walter S. Hunter for encouragement and counsel from the time this work was first considered. I am also very greatly indebted to my wife, Esther Dahms Hunt, who has compiled the index of authors, and who has edited all of the bibliographies and made them conform to the system of citation given in the *World List of Scientific Periodicals* (2nd ed.) and used, for example, by the *Psychological Abstracts*.

If this work serves to disseminate existing knowledge of persons, to foster the cross-disciplinary approach in the several related fields, to save bibliographical effort for busy clinicians, scholars, and teachers, and to broaden the coverage of the textbooks of the future, the authors and the editor will have been amply rewarded.

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PART I

**THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO
PERSONALITY**

Chapter 1

THE STRUCTURE OF PERSONALITY

By DONALD W. MACKINNON, Ph.D.

THE TRUTH OF William James's dictum that "the history of philosophy is to a great extent that of a certain clash of human temperaments" (1907, p. 6) is nowhere more apparent than in man's attempt through the ages to describe his own personality, character, and temperament. The present chapter which seeks to summarize what man has thought about these problems is, then, of necessity in large measure a record of clash of opinion and conflict of theory rather than a survey of a large body of established fact concerning the structure of personality.

History of the Concept of Personality

The meanings of the term personality are almost legion. The early history of the classical Latin word *persona* from which the word personality is derived has been discussed by a number of writers. Allport (1937) has summarized this literature and collated it with the subsequent meanings which the term personality has acquired in theology, philosophy, law, sociology, and psychology. In all, 50 meanings are distinguished by this author. Yet in spite of the diversity of connotative significance to be found among these definitions, two basic and fundamentally opposed meanings occur again and again. They are, on the one hand, the definition of personality in terms of outward superficial appearance, and on the other, in terms of the inner, essential nature of man. Two meanings could hardly be more antithetical yet both have found acceptance, not only in the past, but in the present writings of psychologists. The former, often referred to as the mask definition of personality, has been derived from the original meaning of *persona* as the mask worn by the ancient actor to signify his role in the drama, while the latter, known as the substance definition of personality, derives from the emphasis which has been placed upon the inner nature or substance of man in the various juristic and philosophical but especially theological discussions of person and personality. Although it is perhaps fair to say that in philosophical discussions of personality the emphasis has been upon the inner aspects of the self and that in psychology it has been upon the outer aspects—a difference revealed in the more frequent use of the term *Personalität* in German philosophy and of *Persönlichkeit* in

German psychology (Ehrlich, 1930) and in Stern's (1930) distinction between *Personalismus*, the abstract philosophical inquiry, and *Personalistik*, the concrete psychological inquiry—nevertheless, reviews of the psychological definitions of personality reveal clearly the influence of both meanings upon psychological thought (Allport and Vernon, 1930; Allport, 1937).

Mask definitions of personality which emphasize the most superficial aspects of behavior have been offered most often by behaviorists. Personality is "the sum of activities that can be discovered by actual observation over a long enough time to give reliable information. In other words, personality is but the end product of our habit systems" (Watson, 1924, p. 220). "Personality is the characteristic behavior of an individual" (Sherman, 1928, p. 174).

Substance definitions of personality, on the other hand, have been written by psychologists who have been willing to conceptualize inner psychological states, processes, and structures and relationships among them in order to make the observed behavior of the individual more meaningful. Typical definitions of this sort are: "Personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of his development. It embraces every phase of human character: intellect, temperament, skill, morality, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of one's life" (Warren and Carmichael, 1930, p. 333), and "Personality is the sum-total of all the biological innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, appetites, and instincts of the individual, and the acquired dispositions and tendencies—acquired by experience" (Prince, 1924, p. 532). In many ways the psychoanalysts, and more recently Murray (1938), have contributed most to the substantive conceptualization of personality but they have not sought to condense their extensive writings on personality into brief definitions of the term.

Types of Definition of Personality.—In their survey of the literature in this field Allport and Vernon (1930) have distinguished five types of definition of personality.

1. *Omnibus or rag-bag definitions* consider personality a mere summation of parts or units of some sort. From this viewpoint personality is an "und Summe," not a configuration, a resultant, not an emergent. Valentine's definition of personality as "the sum-total of one's habit dispositions" (1927, p. 21) and Prince's definition cited above are good examples of this type of definition, expressive, as are all such definitions, of an atomistic and elementaristic psychology.

2. *Integrative definitions* of personality stress the organization of the factors which make up personality and consequently are usually also substance definitions. Warren and Carmichael's definition quoted above falls in this class.

3. *Hierarchical definitions* of personality, like integrative definitions, emphasize the organization of personality but place particular stress upon

the vertical rather than the simple horizontal organization of personality. The classical example is James's discussion of the four levels of the Self: the material Self, the social Self, the spiritual Self, and finally the Self of Selves or Pure Ego (James, 1890). Shand (1914) and McDougall (1923, 1926, 1933), however, have developed this type of definition most fully. A hierarchy of sentiments dominated by the enduring sentiment of self-regard constituted for McDougall the very core of personality which he designated character. "The native propensities are the chief part of the raw material which becomes organized to form character. The process of organization is of two stages. The first stage is the formation of sentiments. The second stage is the building of the sentiments into an harmoniously cooperating system. Such a system of sentiments is character. The strength of character is a matter of the degree of harmony and integration attained by the system, and perhaps also by the degree to which the whole organization is solidified by exercise" (1933, p. 188).

4. *Definitions of personality which emphasize adjustment* have usually been behavioristic. Some of them, such as "Personality means the definitely fixed and controlling tendencies of adjustment of the individual to his environment" (Bowden, 1926, p. 152), are free from evaluative connotations. But it is a curious fact that the behaviorists who were so intent on being rigorously scientific have often introduced into their definitions of personality considerations of social approval and evaluative criteria in general. Thus, for example, J. B. Watson suggested that personality be considered "an individual's total assets (actual and potential) and liabilities (actual and potential) on the reaction side" (1924, p. 417) and Rexroad defined personality as "the balance between socially approved and disapproved traits" (1929, p. 355).

5. *Definitions of personality in terms of distinctiveness and uniqueness* have been offered in part as a corrective for the confusion which has resulted when personality and culture have been treated as essentially synonymous. In the writings of some anthropologists the cultural patterning of personality has been stressed to the point of ignoring almost completely the problem of individual differences. The paradox of this position is clearly expressed in Marcuse's statement that "Personality is the convergence of all essential cultural tendencies in one mind. The more culture one has, the harder it is to be a single personality" (1926, quoted from Allport and Vernon, 1930, pp. 684-688). As Schoen has written, "If all the members of any one social group acted alike, thought alike, and felt alike, personality would not exist" (1930, p. 397). With these considerations in mind personality has been variously defined as "the organized system, the functioning whole or unity, of habits, dispositions and sentiments that mark off any one member of a group as being different from any other member of the same group" (Schoen, 1930, p. 397) and as "that combination of behavior forms in the individual . . . which distinguish that individual from others of a group" (Yoakum, 1924, p. 442).

Closely related to this type of definition is Woodworth's well-known adverbial definition which emphasizes the quality or style of the unique personality. "Personality refers not to any particular sort of activity, such as talking, remembering, thinking or loving, but an individual can reveal his personality in the way he does any of these things" (Woodworth, 1929, p. 553).

Allport's own definition of personality, developed in the light of his extensive review of the literature, is that "Personality is the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment" (1937, p. 48).¹

American vs. German Conceptions of Personality.—A comparison of the traditional approaches to the problem of the structure of personality in American and European, especially German, psychology reveals an interesting opposed emphasis in the two streams of thought.

American psychologists have tended to emphasize the parts or units which, summed or integrated, could be thought to constitute personality, especially those elements which they had reason to believe were common to all individuals. By assuming the existence of common elements they made their problem of measurement easier. It is probably fair to say that the insistence in American psychological thought upon the primary place of measurement in science has favored the widespread acceptance of atomistic definitions of personality. The emphasis upon the measurement of traits of personality common to all individuals and normally distributed in the population has led to a critical attitude toward the scientific validity of the study of the single case. To most American psychologists it has seemed clear that the study of configurations, each of which is unique, cannot constitute science. Even the assumption of discrete classes or types of personality has been looked upon with suspicion. As Allport (1937) has pointed out, American psychologists have been concerned with a nomothetic approach to problems of personality almost to the exclusion of idiographic considerations. Finally, American psychologists as natural scientists have assumed that the problems of structure and function of personality are ultimately to be explained in terms of mechanisms, whether these be conceived of as physiological, neurological, or psychological.

German psychologists, on the other hand, have been more inclined to think of personality as a unique whole which cannot fruitfully or legitimately be analyzed into smaller component parts. Not only have they not been interested in measuring aspects or traits of personality; they have believed it impossible to do so, for while qualitative differences may be described the uniqueness of each personality precludes any commonality to which units of measurement may be applied. With what to most

¹ The definitions which have been included in this section are only illustrative. For a thorough review of this field, see Allport and Vernon, 1930, and Proceedings of the second colloquium on personality investigation, 1930.