Personality & Social Psychology

• Personality psychology focuses on individual differences
• Social psychology studies how situations and environments affect people
• But different people respond in different ways to certain situations, etc
• Research methods:
  o A lot of developmental research is interested in studying different age groups (cross-sectional method)
    ▪ Drawback: age differences are confounded with time of birth or the cohort
  o Longitudinal
    ▪ Drawback: differences in the environment at different times of measurement
• 2 main journals: Developmental Psychology, and Child Development (80-85% rejection rate)
• Most studies aim to test causal relationships and are derived from theories
• Child effects/child effects hypotheses – can be IVs or DVs (not just DVs)
  o When the IVs and DVs interact with each other (child affects parent’s behavior and vice versa), we tend to refer to them as transactions (to distinguish them from statistical interaction) (e.g., between children and their environments/parents)
• Examples: A → mediator → B (low SE → acts afraid → peer humiliation)
• Ways of measuring behaviors/the environment: interviews, observation, questionnaires, genetics (1. infer them from things like a child’s temperament at the first year or two of life, 2. classifying kids on the basis of known parental behavior like parental aggression, 3. seeing a kid’s reaction to an environmental stimulus as the environment and the kid’s predisposition may reliably interact to produce certain behaviors, 4. Doing genetic testing)
• Types of reliability: temporal (same results on a measure is administered again to the same group), internal (internal consistency - items highly correlate with each other), inter-rater (high agreement among raters/high correlation amongst scores of raters)
• Types of validity - current (when your new measure correlates with an existing measure that measures the same construct), face (if your measure predicts something, e.g., if someone your measure rated as high in aggression predicts this individual’s highly aggressive behavior), construct (if your measure reveals that the construct it measures relates to other constructs the way that theories say it should), face validity (it looks like it measures what it’s supposed to), discriminative validity (when your construct isn’t correlated with something it’s expected to not be correlated with)
  o Eron’s aggression machine study based off Milgram’s electric shock study (kids pressed buttons to deliver sound to a student in another room if they got a problem wrong)
  o Peer Nomination Inventories – assess aggression, etc in one’s peers (usually its boys rating boys and girls rating girls but not always)
  o The faster children/babies/people habituate to a redundant (meaningless) stimuli, the smarter they are/are going to be
• Most research on attachment has focused on either babies or adults, not so much on middle childhood
  o In his lab they developed scales for preoccupied and avoidant, and recently, disorganized attachments for middle childhood
  o Secure, Preoccupied (internalizing problems), Avoidant (internal and externalizing problems) & Disorganized (externalizing problems) → he was able to show that their measures, like with previous measures/research, predicted the latter types of problems for each type of attachment
• Research faux pas:
  o Using the same respondents for the IV and the DV (shared method variance – your predictor and method variables may be – spuriously -correlated because they share the same
- **Reciprocal triadic determinism** – 3 kinds of variables are relevant to psychology: person variables, environment variables & behavior variables; Bandura argues that each of these 3 things can be/are influenced by the other things
  - He doesn’t talk about environment-person interactions much, or about automatic cognition much either.
- Bandura’s book on moral disengagement → why do some people find it easier to disengage than others?

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- **Trait theorists** – measure personality dimensions; try to figure out what the traits, dimensions of personality are, focusing on behavioral expression (understand that people aren’t always equally neurotic across situations, but tend to ignore situational influences, considering these variances to be error; think Mishel & Shoda article)
  - E.g., Big 5 & Hexaco (6, honesty-humility), people evaluated on spectrums of traits & sub-traits (you don’t have to know which to dimensions, e.g.): temperament combines with environmental experiences to create a child’s position on the big 5 and their sub-dimensions; temperament evolves into personalities (e.g., negative affectivity → neuroticism, surgency → extraversion, effortful control → conscientiousness)
  - **Trait** – a person’s average level of exhibiting a certain behavior across many situations; a person’s behavioral average; trait theorists argue that people exhibit cross-situational consistency – the idea that people are expected to retain their ranks (rank-order doesn’t change; if there’s a change resultant from a situation, it equally effects everyone’s say, level of neuroticism) on a behavioral dimension across situations (Shoda argues that people do not retain their ranks across situations and said that there can be cross-overs – e.g., someone who’s the most aggressive with one’s mother, might be the least aggressive with a girl who just teased him/her, perhaps because in the second situation there may be something inhibiting his/her aggression) → situational specificity (behavior is situation specific)
  - Now, Shoda’s (& Mishel’s) theory is called his **CAPS (cognitive-affective personality) theory** & he argues that sometimes people do retain their ranks, but not always; camp study: kids tend to retain their profile (their positions in different situations) over time;
  - **Mishel**: Our understanding of personality cannot be limited to one’s average behavior across situations. Rather, we have to account for consistency in a person’s behavioral patterns in different types of situations.
  - Different people develop different cognitive-affective processing systems (a set of enduring cognitive-affective structures including outcome expectancies, perceptions of self efficacies, outcome values, standards for self evaluation & some in addition to Bandura’s like goals, beliefs, resources, various identities) & these interact with situations in one’s environment, which activate your system and cause you to act a particular way in a particular situation. So, why do kids develop different cognitive-affective processing systems?
    - CAPS interact with different situational cues to influence behavior
• 2 research designs to estimate the relative roles genes & environment play in personality development

1. Twin studies
   a. A genetic contribution to personality is indicated when the similarity of monozygotic twins’ personalities is greater than the similarity of dizygotic twins’ personalities (“equal environments assumption” – MZ twins have not been treated more alike than DZ twins in was that are related to their personality outcomes; note that some similarities inevitably ensue because MZ twins’ temperaments elicit similar parenting behaviors)
   b. Can show whether environmental experiences influence twin similarity over and above genetic influences (MZ twins should be twice as similar to each other than DZ twins; if this is off, it’s indicative of an environmental influence)
   c. Address the perennial question of why family members differ from each other (If MZ twins are different from each other then it’s “E” = child-specific, nonshared or unique environmental variance)

2. Adoption studies
   a. Correlation between adoptee & biological parent personality → genetic transmission
   b. Correlation between adoptee & adoptive parent personality → social transmission
      (must ensure adoptees were paired with the parents randomly to make this assumption; e.g., the quality of prenatal and orphanage care aren’t correlated with adoptees’ biological backgrounds)

• All the Big Five are strongly influenced by genetic factors to the same extent
• Genetic and environmental factors also affect individual differences in men’s and women’s personalities to the same extent
• Twin studies using peer ratings of personality, rather than self-report personality questionnaires, show genetic influences similar to those found in self-report studies
• Consensus trait measures could eliminate specificities or idiosyncrasies in viewpoints

Attachment
• Early attachment theorists’ work was criticized nearly as much as Freud’s; Bowlby’s work was a blend of Freudian ideas and evolutionary ideas, neither of which were deemed acceptable by behaviorists
• There are still some strange gaps in what attachment theorists do
• At about 5/6 months of age, virtually all infants choose one or more specific others to turn to when they’re upset and then they don’t like to be separated from those attachment figures/objects
  o What’s the significance of this?
  o For a while it was about what type of caregiving was offered
     Go from no specific figure directly to 1 specific figure, usually the mother, then the idea was that there was branching out to maybe 2-3 people kids feel they can reach out to, with some of these being better than other(s) (hierarchy; primary & secondary attachment figures)
     In general you don’t see much behavioral discrimination before month 2, then you see perceptual discrimination – 3 or 4 month olds (distal/affiliative period, they prefer someone distally but are still friendly towards others) smile at parents, etc. (affiliative responses) – then at 5 (or 6) months, they suddenly behaviorally prefer someone/pursue physical closeness with someone (executive attachment responses); they exhibit separation protest, clinging, follow, and aren’t easily calmed by non-caregiver figure
  o Who are the attachment figures? Usually a parent, but note also that different attachment figures don’t serve all functions (think of Mishel & Shoda’s CAPS theory with the gender of the parent determining the child’s response/expectations)
3. Hazan & Shaver did a study (journal: JPSP) in the 1980s where they tried to identify people who had identifiable attachment styles in their romantic relationships. Paper described ways of approaching/relating to romantic relationships.

- *Secures* like everything, report better attachment with their parents as kids (evidence of some type of link between childhood & adulthood)
- *Avoidants* fear intimacy & care about just doing fun things together
- *Preoccupieds/Anxious* persons fear rejection & want lots of intimacy

- Attachment theorists don’t even like to use “attachment” when referring to anything besides the relationship between babies & a bigger stronger other
- Furman believes that in the early couple of years of life children develop a predominant attachment style and they take this model over to their next types of relationships
- No one’s really developed a narrative strategy for assessing attachment between same-sex friends
  - 1. Caregiver-infant
  - 2. Affiliative-friends (peers)
  - 3. Sexual/romantic
  - 4. Infant-caregiver

- Hazan & Shaver work showed that adults do indeed differ in the attachment styles they bring to their romantic relationships
  - The way to measure adult attachment style (generally, not specific to key, whomever they’re dating at the time) according to Hazan & Shaver: measure how high/low one is on anxiety & how high/low one is on avoidance (interestingly, within a given person, while anxiety level and avoidance level may have significant main effects, they usually don’t interact)
    - *Secure*: low anxiety & avoidance
    - *Avoidant/dismissive*: low anxiety & high avoidance (hallmark: distrust of partner)
    - *Preoccupieds*: high anxiety & low avoidance (hallmark: fear that their partner’s going to do something to them)
    - *Fearful (Type Ds)*: high anxiety & avoidance
  - In romantic relationships...
    - Secures tend to go for secures (when stressed, they tend to be there for each other)
    - Insecures tend to go for insecures (when stressed, )
    - Avoidants actually tend to go for the preoccupieds & vice versa; lots of conflict here but for some reason, these types of relationships (at least with avoidant men with anxious women) tend to endure (though probably not as long as secure-secure relationships)
  - Cassidy & Shaver Handbook covers a broad range of issues on theory of attachment
    - Comorbid kids are both depressed and aggressive (have both internalizing and externalizing problems)

- There are links amongst all 4 stages/types, but there is evidence that there’s a stronger link between 1 & 2 than between 1 & 3, etc.
- A huge amount of the adult psychology relationship literature focuses on the connection between child attachment & adult attachment styles

**The Family**

- Attachment perspective has been influential for the past 30 years, but previously people studied specific child-rearing practices...
  - Freud’s ideas about feeding, toilet training, discipline
  - Learning theorists’ unidirectional model of parental influence: parents as cause & child as effect (then Judith Harris came along and pointed out the flaws in their study methods)
knowledge correlates with positive outcomes. Delinquent adolescents often have parents who don’t know about where the child is, who they’re with, etc. But can we substitute parental knowledge for active parental monitoring? Still under debate

- Steinberg & Patterson argue that you can. Steinberg argued that the Scandinavians were wrong (they argued that parents just needed to establish a good, loving relationship with the child in order to ensure good child behavior) & said that you have to have some degree of behavioral control (“love is no enough”).

- Kerr & Stattin have studied not only parental knowledge but also active monitoring; while the knowledge always predict good things, the same is not true for monitoring, which may actually have negative effects.
  - It’s been argued that parents who score high on knowledge may be obtaining the knowledge not by intruding on their kids’ lives (firm enforcement), but because the parents have a good relationship with their kids and the kids are freely divulging this information to their parents. According to this, if kids start misbehaving, the parent shouldn’t increase active monitoring (which might damage the quality of the parent-child relationship).

- Not too many people have looked at moderators of active monitoring.

- Firm enforcement is different from other forms of controlling behavior. Some argue it’s useful to add another dimension of control. Barber described difference between firm enforcement (aka behavioral control, a good thing according to Bauman), and psychological control, a bad thing according to Bauman). Psychological control refers to trying to get inside kids’ heads and tell them how to think, feel a certain way (e.g., if a parent tells a child she shouldn’t feel sad about something; it’s invalidating the kids’ honest feelings/emotional, cognitive experiences; e.g., guilt instilled by trying to make the kid feel bad about him/her self)

- Kauffman argued that guilt derives from a parental behavioral control coupled with guilt instilling reasoning.
  - But when investigators include multiple measures of parental control and then conducted factor analysis, there’s not consistent model of parental control
  - Another issue: how should demandingness be conceptualized?

The study of parental attachment has now extended to include parental cognitions & how it influenced the parents’ overt behavior toward the child and how in turn this influences the child’s behavior, development & adjustment.

- Eccles studies parental values, how parents communicate these values to children (particularly adolescents & gender cognition), and how this affects the children. Studies parents’ gender stereotypes & expectations and how these influence how they treat their children. Children do turn out differently based on the gender expectations and attributions their parents have for them.

- Dweck studies the kinds of implicit theories that parents have about their kids (& vice versa); there’s 2 different kinds of naïve theories (people tend to have one or the other).
  - 1. Incremental theories – focus more on the individual (not gross gender differences); e.g., if a kid is misbehaving → parent thinks the kid’s behavior can be changed
  - 2. Entity theories – parents tend to gender stereotype their kids environments more, leading to gender stereotype consistent behaviors later; children who have an entity theory of niceness of badness (think dualistically about this) tend to be more aggressive; entity theories tend to have more problems for both parents & kids; e.g., if a kid is misbehaving → parent attributes it to the kid being bad
- **Kohlberg** developed Piaget’s theorizing to a 6-stage sequence of moral development (later eliminated the 6th stage since no one apparently got there).

- **Ethological Theory** (they argue that there are 4 general relationship types through which people move & that all 4 of these are species-wide universals, true for all humans). However, there’s dispute about what the most important benefit of peer relationships is.
  - 1. Caregiver-infant
  - 2. Affiliative-friends (peers)*
  - 3. Sexual/romantic
  - 4. Infant-caregiver

- Are interactions with peers different depending on same-sex versus opposite-sex play? Idea: the extent to which how well kids play with same-sex peers may influence how well they approach sexual/romantic relationships in the next stage (Furman). However, there’s surprisingly little research looking at how early relationships with peers influences their romantic styles/success/behavior (same with peer relationships as predictors of infant-caregiver stage later on).

- **Harlow** first studied monkey’s attachments to others – surrogate mothers – clothe versus food (before that he studied monkey’s cognitive abilities), but later he got into studying depression with monkeys. He found that by isolating monkeys by birth and rearing them by themselves, yes, you can make them depressed (no surprise there).
  - He reared some monkeys in multiple ways...then he’d bring the baby monkey into the monkey common area and then observe how well they got along. Best reared with a peer was more beneficial than being reared with a mother. (i.e. rocking, huddling, urinating, defecating, etc.)
    - **1. Total isolation** ⇒ considerable difficulties when introduced to the colony (e.g., many sat and rocked alone, were picked on, etc.)
    - **2. With mother, but no peers** ⇒ weren’t able to engage in sex games and later reproduce
    - **3. With peers, but no mother** ⇒ were able to engage in sex games and later reproduce
    - **4. With mother and peers** ⇒ did well (almost as well as those reared with their moms and given daily access to the common area)
  - He then continued working with the monkeys in total isolation (give therapy) by being paired with a... The pairing with a younger age peer was far more successful than the others; the younger age peer was a little afraid & shy of the isolate, allowing the isolate to not be afraid (like in the same or older peer categories wherein the isolate was picked on). The younger age peer seemed to draw the isolate out of its shell and the relationship was unthreatening & rewarding for both of them. **Steve Suomi**, in the same lab, found out that younger age peer therapy were more successful, but as adults they did have a vulnerability: when they were stressed, they deteriorated to a greater degree than monkeys that were never isolated (aka, they weren’t perfectly over their problems).

- **Bill Hartup** (Brett Larsen’s mentor) investigated if younger peer therapy would work for children as well (kindergarteners). One treatment group was same age peer, one group was younger age peer, and then one group was no peer (control). Over time, the social behavior of the withdrawn children actually improved the most for kids with having a younger peer therapist.
  - **Same age peer**
  - **Older age peer**
  - **Younger age peer**

- **GST: group socialization theory**
Also, Amanda Rose studies *co-rumination* when kids who are depressed/victimized talk about this with others who are depressed/victimized, which makes them feel worse.

3. **Direct verbal tuition.**

- **3 Approaches to the study of peer social competence** (the idea that some children fare better in peer groups than others and this prepares them for better adjusted lives later). Some people argue that peer social competence is the skills involved in getting along with peers, which then prepares them for later in life. Others argue that it’s a specific correlate. Some define and assess it by how well liked the child is in the peer group.

  - **1. Specific competencies approach** – observes how well kids are at a variety of different social competencies such as the ability to make friends, to enter peer groups (*peer entry* – being able to join a group of children already interacting with each other; most successful strategy is to hang around the group and watch what the group is doing/what the implicit rules are and then slowly merge into the group), conflict management, obeying authority figures (*Dodge* – the best way to describe a child’s social competencies is how well they do on 8 social competencies). Some kids have an abrasive style of peer entry and are often rejected. Another unsuccessful strategy is to watch but not try to join the group (hovering).

  - There are many programs for kids that are socially withdrawn or who struggle with peer relations. (Note the some kids don’t care, while others do want to join in but can’t). Modeling plus trail rehearsal seems to be the best treatment approach but it’s really difficult to teach kids these social skills.

  - Kids differ in emotional arousability as well as how easy it is for them to calm themselves when they are distressed. There’s programs to help kids with this as well.

  - There’s also programs to help kids with communication skills (some kids are just lousy at this).

  - There’s a lot of work on how well kids are at conflict management (they’re constantly getting into fights/arguments); how to make a compromise, etc. (remember Piaget’s idea that compromise is an essential part of growth).

  - Pro-social behavior: sharing, showing empathic behavior (being sympathetic), and being able to down regulate one’s aggression impulses (emotional regulation).

  - Play & different types of play throughout development. **Parton’s stages:** *solitary play* in infancy $\rightarrow$ *parallel play* (kid plays alongside another kid but not with that kid) $\rightarrow$ *associative play* (kids interact with each other but don’t necessarily cooperate/work on the same project/play a game with rules) $\rightarrow$ *coordinated play* (playing with rules, etc.). It used to be believed that these stages were successive, but **Rueben** showed that they don’t really replace one another; kids who do best tend to have a broader repertoire of play competencies, suggesting that at each stage, a play style(s) is *added*, not replaced. One can also divide it up not in terms of stages but in types of play: *pretend/fantasy/symbolic play* (very predictive of academic performance and social abilities later, correlated with IQ and inversely with disadvantaged kids) versus play. Treatments have had some success in teaching kids how to fantasy play.

  - Mothers spend more time playing with their kids than fathers, but fathers spend a larger proportion of their time with kids in play. Mothers tend to do distance play while fathers are more likely going to engage in physical contact play (hide and seek, tag). **The more that fathers play and play physically with kids, the more attractive that kid is to its peers** (unlike mother’s play; here’s a unique contribution of the father to the kid’s social success). When in this kind of play, kids learn that high intensity play can be fun and not scary, they learn that you can say and do things that are funny but not dangerous; learn to both express (produce facial expressions better) and interpret emotional cues (read nonverbal facial cues) from others (note that genetics could be at play here).
develop theories to explain individual difference within individual factors → minitheories – small theories intended to explain mini phenomena, phenomena on which there is not much data

- Sometimes researchers are interested in sex differences in a domain, sometimes in say, why is it that males as a group differ from females as a group in their nonverbal stylistic attributes, etc. Others look at why is it that some boys engage in many or few male activities? What causes differences among girls in terms of girly activities?
- The factors that can create a sex difference don’t necessarily equal the factors that differentiate members of the same sex.
- Minitheories of gender-typing sometimes address multiple domains.
- **Daryl Bem** = father of self-perception theory; ppl judge how interested they are in something by reviewing in their mind how often they’ve approached/avoided the thing in question and the reason for how much they approached/avoided the thing in question. If you can attribute it to something external, you do and then reason that you don’t have much intrinsic interest in it. Among his interests, he advanced his **EBE theory of sexual orientation** (a minitheory): sexual orientation results from a chain of events that originate in people’s temperament. For straight people, temperament is a fundamental determinant; it doesn’t code directly for sexual orientation but it gets the ball rolling by determining toy and activity preferences (e.g., most boys prefer rough and tumble play and prefer playing with other boys, etc.) → heterosexuals have sex-typical toy preferences, which cause them to interact primarily with same-sex peers (influences social preferences) which in turn causes the children to perceive themselves as similar to same-sex peers and as dissimilar to other-sex peers (a cognitive thing). Eventually, as adolescents, they perceive other-sex peers as exotic and exotic becomes erotic. For gay and lesbian kids, they’re born with gender atypical temperaments, which causes them to develop atypical toy and activity preferences which causes them to interact with other-sex peers more & perceive themselves as different from same-sex peers leading to their later perceiving same-sex peers as exotic & erotic. He spoke of sexual orientation as something that arose in adolescents but later research has shown that kids tend to know their sexual orientation around age 10 (with a lot of variation with some kids as early as 6 years old and others even as old as 14 years old; true for males and females and across all sexual orientations). However, Bem’s theory ignores how female sexual orientation is a little different from males. The course of development of females’ sexual orientation is often looser/freer than boys: females are more likely to switch back and forth between attraction to boys and attraction to girls.
  - Criticisms: The sequence that events he outlines is more the case for boys than girls (later research showed this criticism was accurate). It is more valid for males than it is for females.
- **Sandra Bem** argued that being high on male and female socially desirable attributes was most desirable/best for mental health, etc. (androgyny).
- **Perry** did a study looking at felt similarity (measure of how similar they feel to their peers) to same-sex peers and expectation of future heterosexual lifestyle. Followed kids for 6 months. According to Bem’s theory, the more similarly you feel to same-sex peers at time 1, the more that will predict heterosexual behaviors over time. They found that this was not the case. It didn’t predict future heterosexual interest. However, they did find that the measure of future of heterosexual activity (higher feelings of future heterosexuality) at time 1 did predict (higher) feelings of similarity to one’s peer group. (A didn’t predict B like Bem thought. Instead, B predicted A).
- **Jackie Eccles** studies how boys and girls differ in their academic pursuits – looks at within-gender individual differences as well as between-gender differences. Looks at whether parents encourage/discourage kids’ pursuits.