MODULE 55 – Frued's Psychoanalytic Perspective: Exploring the Unconscious

Psychoanalytic Theory's Core Ideas	- Freud's Victorian era was a time of sexual repression, male dominance and defined gender roles - Freud "discovered" the unconscious and tended to relate medical issues with people's unconscious fears and desires - Treated patients with **free association** – told them to relax, say whatever came to mind - thought it would allow him to retrace their train of thought to their unconscious and their painful repressed memories - His theory of personality/treatment was called **psychoanalysis** "Iceberg theory:" Our conscious awareness is at the surface, while most of our mind is hidden below the water - below the water our **unconscious** mind has thoughts, wishes, memories, etc… - some thoughts are stored temporarily in a **preconscious** area where we can bring them to conscious awareness - we **repress** unacceptable passions and thoughts which influence us and are expressed in disguised form - the id is totally unconscious, but ego and superego operate both consciously and unconsciously - Viewed jokes as expressions of regressed sexual/aggressive tendencies - Remembered dream content (**manifest content**) is a censored version of the unconscious wishes (**latent content**) - Personality arises from our efforts to resolve a conflict between impulse an restraint, bringing satisfaction without guilt/punishment - The **id** wants to satisfy basic survival desires: reproduction, aggression *pleasure principle* – immediate gratification - The **ego** seeks to gratify the **id**'s impulses in realistic ways which bring long-term pleasure *reality principle* - The **superego** is the voice of our moral compass which forces the ego to consider the *ideal* - focuses on how we should behave, and strives for perfection (produces feelings of guilt for mistakes and pride for success) - The ego reconciles the id and the superego. - Freud thought personality forms in the first few years as children pass through **psychosexual stages** - the id focuses on *erogenous zones*

Table 55.1 **Freud's Psychosexual Stages**

Stage	Focus
Oral (0–18 months)	Pleasure centers on the mouth—sucking, biting, chewing
Anal (18–36 months)	Pleasure focuses on bowel and bladder elimination; coping with demands for control
Phallic (3–6 years)	Pleasure zone is the genitals; coping with incestuous sexual feelings
Latency (6 to puberty)	A phase of dormant sexual feelings
Genital (puberty on)	Maturation of sexual interests

- During the phallic phase, boys seek genital stimulation and develop

unconscious sexual desire for their mother/jealousy towards their father
- called this the **Oedipus complex** (some psychoanalysts called the female version of this the **Electra complex**)
- Children cope by trying to be like the rival parent (**identification** – they incorporate parental values, largely b/c of the superego)
- Identifying with a same-sex parent provides *gener identity*
- Conflicts unresolved in psychosexual stages could surface later
  - at any point in the first 3, somebody could **fixate** their pleasure-seeking energies because of a conflict, experiencing a lifelong dependence
    - e.g, too much/little oral stimulation as a child –> addicted to food, or always acting like they don't want food, for example.
- When the ego feels a loss of control, anxiety is a result
- Ego protects itself with **defense mechanisms** which reduce anxiety by distorting reality (they function indirectly and unconsciously)
  - **Repression** banishes wishes and feelings which create anxiety from the conscious mind
    - underlies all other defense mechanisms

Table 55.2 Seven Defense Mechanisms

Freud believed that *repression,* the basic mechanism that banishes anxiety-arousing impulses, enables other defense mechanisms, seven of which are listed here.

Defense Mechanism	Unconscious Process Employed to Avoid Anxiety-Arousing Thoughts or Feelings	Example
Regression	Retreating to a more infantile psychosexual stage, where some psychic energy remains fixated.	A little boy reverts to the oral comfort of thumb sucking in the car on the way to his first day of school.
Reaction formation	Switching unacceptable impulses into their opposites.	Repressing angry feelings, a person displays exaggerated friendliness.
Projection	Disguising one's own threatening impulses by attributing them to others.	"The thief thinks everyone else is a thief" (an El Salvadoran saying).
Rationalization	Offering self-justifying explanations in place of the real, more threatening unconscious reasons for one's actions.	A habitual drinker says she drinks with her friends "just to be sociable."
Displacement	Shifting sexual or aggressive impulses toward a more acceptable or less threatening object or person.	A little girl kicks the family dog after her mother sends her to her room.
Sublimation	Transferring of unacceptable impulses into socially valued motives.	A man with aggressive urges becomes a surgeon.
Denial	Refusing to believe or even perceive painful realities.	A partner denies evidence of his loved one's affair.

Evaluating Freud's Psychoanalytic Perspective	- Recent research contradicts a lot of his specific ideas
	- Developmental psychologists think development is lifelong, not just when we're children
	   - also, infants don't have strong enough neural networks to sustain emotional trauma
	- Freud overestimated parental influence and underestimated peer influence
	- Doubt that conscience/gender identity form through the resolution of the Oedipus complex at age 5-6
	   - gender identity comes early, and event without a same-sex parent
	- People dispute that dreams actually disguise and fulfill wishes
	- There's little to support the idea that defense mechanisms disguise sexual and aggressive impulses
	   - or that suppressed sexuality causes psychological disorders

	- Freud's theory rests on few objective observations
	- Freud's theory fails to predict behavior and traits (it only explains them)
	- Modern research challenges the idea of repression
	    - most modern researchers content that repression is a <u>rare</u> mental response ot terrible trauma
	    - some researchers believe that extreme, prolonged stress might disrupt memory by damaging the hippocampus, but it usually enhances memory

MODULE 56 – Psychodynamic Theories and Modern Views of the Unconscious

The Neo-Freudian and Psychodynamic Theorists	- Pioneering psychoanalysts, **neo-Freudians**, accepted Freud's basic ideas but broke off in some ways:
	    - more strongly emphasized the conscious mind's role in interpreting experiences and coping w/ environments
	    - doubted that sex and aggression were actually huge motivators (emphasized less vulgar motives and social interaction)
	- Alfred Adler and Karen Horney
	    - agreed that childhood is important, but thought social tensions were much more crucial than sexual ones
	    - Adler proposed *inferiority complex* – behavior driven by efforts to conquer childhood inferiority, triggering strivings for superiority and power
	    - Horney – childhood anxiety leads to a desire for love and security
	        - countered Freud's assumption that women have weak superegos
	- Carl Jung
	    - put less emphasis on social factors, but thought the unconscious contains more than repressed things: we have a **collective unconscious**
	    - **collective unconscious** contains images (*archetypes)* derived from our species' universal experiences

Assessing Unconscious Processes	- Objective assessments are inadequate because they only tap the conscious surface
	- **Projective tests** ask test-takers to describe an ambiguous stimulus
	    - Henry Murray's **Thematic Apperception Test** (make up a story about an ambiguous picture, shows ones own inner feelings/conflicts)
	    - Herman Rorschach's **Rorschach inkblot test**
	- Clinicians disagree over the usefulness of these tests
	- Only a few Rorschach-derived scores (hostility, anxiety) have demonstrated *validity* (predicting what they're supposed to)

The Modern Unconscious Mind	- Freud was right: we have limited access to what goes on in our minds
	- To modern researchers, the unconscious involves:
	    - schemas which control perceptions/interpretations
	    - priming by stimuli which we aren't conscious of
	    - split-brain activity (right hand does what left brain can't say)
	    - implicit memories operating without conscious recall
	    - instantly activated emotions
	    - self-concept and stereotypes
	- Roy Baumeister's **false consensus effect**: tendency to overestimate the extent to which others share our beliefs and behaviors

	- Baumeister thought defense mechanisms are more to protect self-image than to act on inner desires - Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszcyzynski: **terror-management theory**: terror resulting from awareness of death/danger results in anxiety. thinking about one's morality provokes terror-management defenses like contempt for others and esteem for oneself.

MODULE 57 - Humanistic Theories

Abraham Maslow's Self-Actualizing Person	- Maslow proposed that we are motivated by a *hierarchy of needs*
	- Physiological needs > personal safety > love > self-esteem > **self-actualization** (fulfilling our potential) > self-transcendence (meaning, purpose beyond the self)
	- Studied people notable for rich and productive lives, with problem-centered, not self-centered, interests
	    - enjoyed a few, deep relationships
	    - moved by spiritual *peak experiences*

Carl Rogers' Person-Centered Perspective	- Carl Rogers agreed with much of Maslow's thinking
	- People are basically good and have self-actualizing tendencies which may be thwarted by an environment that inhibits growth
	- Rogers' *person-centered perspective* said a growth-promoting climate has three requirements:
	    - Genuineness
	    - Acceptance (**unconditional positive regard**)
	    - Empathy
	- For Maslow and Rogers, one's **self-concept** is important to our personality (having a positive one makes us see the work more positively)
	    - if we don't see ourselves as close to our *ideal self*, we become sad

Assessing the Self	- When the ideal and actual self are nearly alike, the self-concept is positive - Some humanistic psychologists saw standardized personality assessments as depersonalizing, preferring intimate conversation/interviews
Evaluating Humanistic Theories	- Humanistic psychologists influence a lot of popular psychology - Criticism: it has vague and subjective concepts, and its descriptions of self-actualizing people reflect the theorists own values and ideals (spontaneous, accepting, productive, etc…) - Theorists describe self-actualizing people as close to their own idols - The individualism encouraged by humanists can lead to self-indulgence, selfishness and lack of morality

MODULE 58 - Trait Theories

Exploring Traits	- Gordon Allport described personality in terms of fundamental **traits** – characteristic behaviors and conscious motives
	    - defined personality in terms of identifiable behavior (described traits but didn't explain them)
	- Isabel and Katharine Briggs sorted people into the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* personality types through 126 questions
	    - most people agree with the type they recieve

	- despite the test's popularity, it's not scientifically proven and is not a scientific predictor
	- *Factor analysis* is a statistical procedure which identifies clusters of items which tap components of intelligence
	   - correlated clusters of behaviors reflect a basic trait (e.g, enjoying excitement and practical jokes, being outgoing, etc… may reflect *extraversion*)
	- Hans and Sybil Eysenck thought we can reduce variations to 2–3 dimensions: *extraversion–introversion*, *emotional stability–instability*
	   - *Eysenck Personality Questionnaire*
	- Studies show that extroverts seek stimulation because their normal *brain arousal* is low
	   - have higher dopamine, dopamine–related neural activity
	   - behavior inhibition is less active
	- Genes help define our personality
	   - Jerome Kagan attributed differences in shyness/inhibition to *autonomic nervous system reactivity*

Assessing Traits	- **Personality inventories** are long questionnaires which asses several traits at once
	   - **Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI)** created by Starke Hathaway
	   - items were **empirically derived** and tested using abnormal patients
	   - scored objectively, not subjectively (but this doesn't guarantee validity, since individuals can choose to fake socially desirable answers)

The Big Five Factors	- Today's researchers believe that simple trait factors can't tell a whole story: the *Big Five* do a better job - Conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness and extraversion **Table 58.1 The "Big Five" Personality Factors** (*Memory tip:* Picturing a CANOE will help you recall these.) | Disorganized Careless Impulsive	Conscientiousness	Organized Careful Disciplined
Ruthless Suspicious Uncooperative	Agreeableness	Soft-hearted Trusting Helpful
Calm Secure Self-satisfied	Neuroticism (emotional stability vs. instability)	Anxious Insecure Self-pitying
Practical Prefers routine Conforming	Openness	Imaginative Prefers variety Independent
Retiring Sober Reserved	Extraversion	Sociable Fun-loving Affectionate	 *Source:* Adapted from McCrae & Costa (1986, 2008). Steve Wisbauer/Getty Images - These traits are very stable

	- conscientiousness increases during people's twenties - agreeableness increases during people's thirties throughout their sixties - Heritability is about 50% - Big five traits do predict actual behaviors
Evaluating Trait Theories	*Person-situation controversy* - Studies show that personality traits are a good predictor of mortality, divorce and job status - While personality traits are stable, consistency of behavior varies - this makes personality test scores weak predictors of behavior, but good for predicting the average of people's behaviors - Genetically influenced personality traits: music preferences, bedrooms and offices, personal websites, electronic communication

MODULE 59 – Social-Cognitive Theories and Exploring the Self

Social-Cognitive Theories	- Bandura's **social-cognitive perspective** emphasizes how our traits interact with our situations - The **behavioral approach** emphasizes the effects of learning: we're conditioned to repeat certain behaviors, and imitate the behaviors of those around us - Social cognitive theorists consider both behavior and mental processes - Bandura viewed the person-environment interaction as **reciprocal determinism** (behavior can influence preferences, which can influence current behavior) - it's an interlocking cycle - Three ways we interact with environments: - different people choose different environments - personalities shape how we interpret/react to events - personalities create situations to which we react - Sense of *personal control* – do we see ourselves as controlling, or controlled by, our environment *Attributional style* – those who attribute poor performance to their lack of ability tend to continue doing poorly - Excessive optimism is also bad – we need enough optimism to provide hope and enough pessimism to prevent complacency - People are usually most overconfident when most incompetent (it takes competence to recognize competence) - it pays to invite outside assessment - The best means of predicting future behaviors is a person's past behavior patterns in similar situations - Critics say that social-cognitive theories focus so much on the situation that they fail to appreciate our inner traits

Table 59.1 Comparing the Major Personality Theories

Personality Theory	Key Proponents	Assumptions	View of Personality
Psychoanalytic	Freud	Emotional disorders spring from unconscious dynamics, such as unresolved sexual and other childhood conflicts, and fixation at various developmental stages. Defense mechanisms fend off anxiety.	Personality consists of pleasure-seeking impulses (the id), a reality-oriented executive (the ego), and an internalized set of ideals (the superego).
Psychodynamic	Adler, Horney, Jung	The unconscious and conscious minds interact. Childhood experiences and defense mechanisms are important.	The dynamic interplay of conscious and unconscious motives and conflicts shape our personality.
Humanistic	Rogers, Maslow	Rather than examining the struggles of sick people, it's better to focus on the ways people strive for self-realization.	If our basic human needs are met, people will strive toward self-actualization. In a climate of unconditional positive regard, we can develop self-awareness and a more realistic and positive self-concept.
Trait	Allport, Eysenck, McCrae, Costa	We have certain stable and enduring characteristics, influenced by genetic predispositions.	Scientific study of traits has isolated important dimensions of personality, such as the Big Five traits (conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness, and extraversion).
Social-Cognitive	Bandura	Our traits and the social context interact to produce our behaviors.	Conditioning and observational learning interact with cognition to create behavior patterns.

Table 59.2 Comparing Research Methods to Investigate Personality

Research Method	Description	Perspectives Incorporating This Method	Benefits	Weaknesses
Case study	In-depth study of one individual.	Psychoanalytic, humanistic	Less expensive than other methods.	May not generalize to the larger population.
Survey	Systematic questioning of a random sample of the population.	Trait, social-cognitive, positive psychology	Results tend to be reliable and can be generalized to the larger population.	May be expensive; correlational findings.
Projective tests (e.g., TAT and Rorschach)	Ambiguous stimuli designed to trigger projection of inner dynamics.	Psychodynamic	Designed to get beneath the conscious surface of a person's self-understanding; may be a good ice-breaker.	Results have weak validity and reliability.
Personality inventories, such as the MMPI (to determine scores on Big Five personality factors)	Objectively scored groups of questions designed to identify personality dispositions.	Trait	Generally reliable and empirically validated.	Explore limited number of traits.
Observation	Studying how individuals react in different situations.	Social-cognitive	Allows researchers to study the effects of environmental factors on the way an individual's personality is expressed.	Results may not apply to the larger population.
Experimentation	Manipulate variables, with random assignment to conditions.	Social-cognitive	Discerns cause and effect.	Some variables cannot feasibly or ethically be manipulated.

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Exploring the Self	- The **self** is an organizer of our thoughts, feelings and actions, and is the center of personality - Hazel Markus proposed the idea of multiple possible selves - Thomas Gilovich demonstrated the **spotlight effect** – we think more people notice us than the amount of people that actually do - High **self-esteem** and **self-efficacy** (sense of competence) are good for us - experiments show that low self-esteem makes us more likely to disparage others and express racial prejudice - makes us more likely to be oversensitive and judgemental, and to overly criticize others - Most people have relatively high self-esteem

	- Our **self-serving bias** is our readiness to perceive ourselves favorably
	  - we're more likely to take responsibility for good deeds and successes
	  - we usually see ourselves as better than average
	  - *threatened* egotism predisposes aggression more than low self-esteem
	    - those with high self-esteem become extremely aggressive after criticism
	- **Narcissism** is excessive self-love and self-absorption
	  - people disparage themselves too: disparaging comments can: make people say nice things to you, prepare you for failure, help you learn from your mistakes, make you critical of your past self
	- For most people, thinking is naturally positively biased
	- *Defensive self-esteem* focuses on sustaining itself itself but feels threatened by failure and criticism
	- *Secure self-esteem* values external assessments, and encourages us to accept ourselves and focus on other aspects of life
	- **Individualism** is prioritizing one's own goals, and defining one's identity based on personal attributed instead of group/social attributes
	  - individualists share the need to belong but are less committed to the group
	- **Collectivists** define themselves based on their community and their connections
	  - they're more deeply attached to their groups and the customs of their groups
	  - avoid direct confrontation, blunt honesty and uncomfortable topics
	  - tend to defer to the wishes of others
	- Between cultures, people are both individualist and collectivist (there is diversity)
	  - it can also be related to region, religion and socioeconomic status
	- Individualist cultures have people with more freedom, who are less bound to their families, more private, and more proud of personal achievements
	  - they prefer unusual names
	- Individualism leads to more loneliness, higher divorce/homicide rates, and more stress-related disease