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Theories of Personality

Tenth Edition

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Hill**

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THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

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Gregory J. Feist

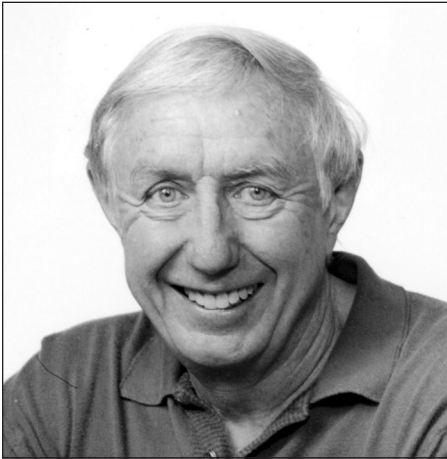
Gregory J. Feist is a Professor of Psychology in Personality at San Jose State University. He has also taught at the College of William & Mary and University of California, Davis. He received his PhD in Personality Psychology in 1991 from the University of California at Berkeley and his undergraduate degree in 1985 from the University of Massachusetts–Amherst. He is widely published in the psychology of creativity, the psychology of science, and the development of scientific talent. One major focus of his is establishing the psychology of science as an independent study of science, along the lines of history, philosophy, and sociology of science. His major efforts toward this end are: *Psychology of Science and the Origins of the Scientific Mind* (2006, Yale University Press), which was awarded the 2007 William James Book Prize by the Division of General Psychology, American Psychological Association (APA); and being founding president of the “International Society for the Psychology of Science and Technology.”

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Preface

What makes people behave as they do? Are people ordinarily aware of what they are doing, or are their behaviors the result of hidden, unconscious motives? Are some people naturally good and others basically evil? Or do all people have potential to be either good or evil? Is human conduct largely a product of nature, or is it shaped mostly by environmental influences? Can people freely choose to mold their personality, or are their lives determined by forces beyond their control? Are people best described by their similarities, or is uniqueness the dominant characteristic of humans? What causes some people to develop disordered personalities whereas others seem to grow toward psychological health?

These questions have been asked and debated by philosophers, scholars, and religious thinkers for several thousand years; but most of these discussions were based on personal opinions that were colored by political, economic, religious, and social considerations. Then, near the end of the 19th century, some progress was made in humanity's ability to organize, explain, and predict its own actions. The emergence of psychology as the scientific study of human behavior marked the beginning of a more systematic approach to the study of human personality.

Early personality theorists, such as Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, and Carl Jung, relied mostly on clinical observations to construct models of human behavior. Although their data were more systematic and reliable than those of earlier observers, these theorists continued to rely on their own individualized way of looking at things, and thus they arrived at different conceptions of the nature of humanity.

Later personality theorists tended to use more empirical studies to learn about human behavior. These theorists developed tentative models, tested hypotheses, and then reformulated their models. In other words, they applied the tools of scientific inquiry and scientific theory to the area of human personality. Science, of course, is not divorced from speculation, imagination, and creativity, all of which are needed to formulate theories. Each of the personality theorists discussed in this book has evolved a theory based both on empirical observations and on imaginative speculation. Moreover, each theory is a reflection of the personality of its creator.

Thus, the different theories discussed in these pages are a reflection of the unique cultural background, family experiences, and professional training of their originators. The usefulness of each theory, however, is not only evaluated on the personality of its author but also on its ability to (1) generate research, (2) offer itself to falsification, (3) integrate existing empirical knowledge, and (4) suggest practical answers to everyday problems. Therefore, we evaluate each of the theories discussed in this book on the basis of these four criteria as well as on (5) its internal consistency and (6) its simplicity. In addition, some personality theories have fertilized other fields, such as sociology, education, psychotherapy, advertising, management, mythology, counseling, art, literature, and religion.

The Tenth Edition

The tenth edition of *Theories of Personality* continues to emphasize the strong and unique features of earlier editions, namely the overviews near the beginning of each chapter, a lively writing style, the thought-provoking concepts of humanity as seen by each theorist, and the structured evaluations of each theory. Annotated suggested readings are now available online with Connect[®], McGraw-Hill Education's integrated assignment and assessment platform. As were the previous editions, the tenth edition is based on original sources and the most recent formulation of each theory. Early concepts and models are included only if they retained their importance in the later theory or if they provided vital groundwork for understanding the final theory.

For select chapters, we have developed a Web-enhanced feature titled *Beyond Biography*, which is available through Connect.

The tenth edition of *Theories of Personality* uses clear, concise, and comprehensible language as well as an informal writing style. The book is designed for undergraduate students and should be understood by those with a minimum background in psychology. However, we have tried not to oversimplify or violate the theorist's original meaning. We have made ample comparisons between and among theorists where appropriate and have included many examples to illustrate how the different theories can be applied to ordinary day-to-day situations. A glossary at the end of the book contains definitions of technical terms. These same terms also appear in boldface within the text.

The present edition continues to provide comprehensive coverage of the most influential theorists of personality. It emphasizes normal personality, although we have also included brief discussions on abnormality, as well as methods of psychotherapy, when appropriate. Because each theory is an expression of its builder's unique view of the world and of humanity, we include ample biographical information of each theorist so that readers will have an opportunity to become acquainted with both the theory and the theorist.

What's New?

In the tenth edition, we have made changes that both add to and build upon previous editions. In order to provide a more integrative and broad overview of the book, we have added a new section in Chapter 1 that describes and summarizes the five major theoretical perspectives: psychodynamic, humanistic-existential, dispositional, biological-evolutionary, and learning (social)-cognitive. This overview not only provides a roadmap for the book but also helps students with the “big picture” of what theories of personality are and how they differ on fundamental assumptions. The psychodynamic theorists are Freud, Adler, Jung, Klein, Horney, Fromm, and Erikson. Humanistic-existential theorists include Maslow, Rogers, and May. Next, the dispositional theorists covered are Allport, and McCrae and Costa, followed by the biological-evolutionary theorists Eysenck and Buss. Finally, the last perspective is the learning (social)-cognitive theorists Skinner, Bandura, Rotter, Mischel, and Kelly. We arrange the five perspectives in this sequence for historical reasons, moving generally from the oldest to the newest to also provide students with a sense of change and progression in personality theory.

Also new to Chapters 1 and 13 (McCrae & Costa) is the research and theory using social media “footprints” as a way of assessing personality. Our personalities influence whether and how we use social media, and our digital behavior reflects those differences in personality. Another set of additions to the 10th edition is new research that examined whether Maslow ever created his well-known “pyramid” model of hierarchy of needs (he did not) and new measures of Self-Actualization in Chapter 9. As with each new edition, we have also updated the “Recent Research” sections of each of the theories. For example, recent research has lent support to Buss's theory of the evolutionary origins of personality traits, such as extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. Bandura's theory has stimulated research reporting that children who bully are most likely to engage in “moral disengagement”—that is, they minimize the consequences of their actions and do not consider what they are doing as harmful.

The tenth edition of *Theories of Personality* is now available online with Connect, McGraw-Hill Education's integrated assignment and assessment platform. Connect also offers SmartBook for the new edition, which is the first adaptive reading experience proven to improve grades and help students study more effectively. All of the title's website and ancillary content is also available through Connect, including:

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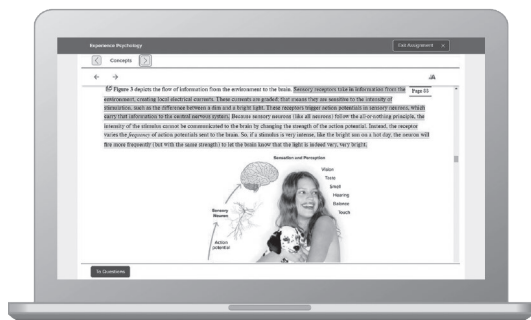
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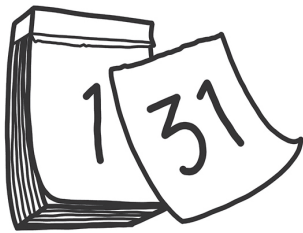
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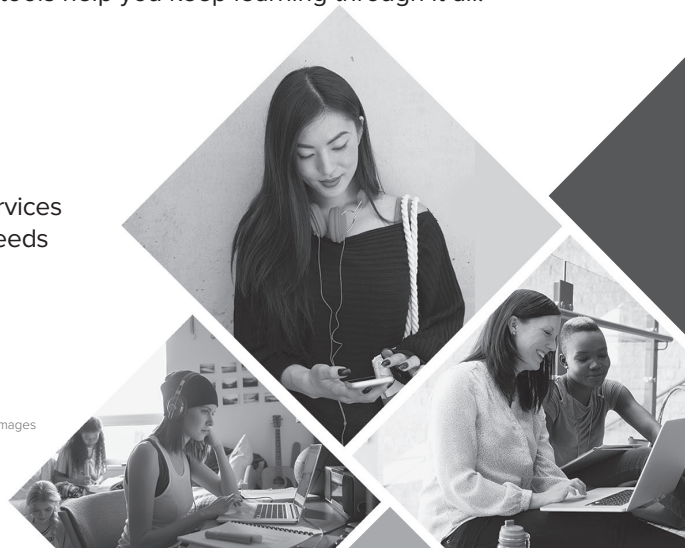
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As always, we welcome and appreciate comments from readers, which help us continue to improve *Theories of Personality*.

Gregory J. Feist
Oakland, CA

Tomi-Ann Roberts
Colorado Springs, CO

PART ONE

Introduction

Chapter 1 *Introduction to Personality*
Theory 2

Introduction to Personality Theory

- ◆ ***What Is Personality?***
- ◆ ***What Is a Theory?***
 - Theory Defined
 - Theory and Its Relatives
 - Why Different Theories?
 - Perspectives in Theories of Personality
 - Theorists' Personalities and Their Theories of Personality
 - What Makes a Theory Useful?
- ◆ ***Dimensions for a Concept of Humanity***
- ◆ ***Research in Personality Theory***
- ◆ ***Key Terms and Concepts***
- ◆ ***References***



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Why do people behave as they do? Do people have some choice in shaping their own personality? What accounts for similarities and differences among people? What makes people act in predictable ways? Why are they unpredictable? Do hidden, unconscious forces control people's behavior? What causes mental disturbances? Is human behavior shaped more by heredity or by environment?

For centuries, philosophers, theologians, and other thinkers have asked these questions as they pondered the nature of human nature—or even wondered whether humans have a basic nature. Until relatively recent times, great thinkers made little progress in finding satisfactory answers to these questions. More than 100 years ago, however, Sigmund Freud began to combine philosophical speculations with a primitive scientific method. As a neurologist trained in science, Freud began to listen to his patients to find out what hidden conflicts lay behind their assortment of symptoms. “Listening became, for Freud, more than an art; it became a method, a privileged road to knowledge that his patients mapped out for him” (Gay, 1988, p. 70).

Freud, in fact, was the first to develop a truly modern theory of personality, based mostly on his clinical observations. He developed a “Grand Theory,” that is, one that attempted to explain all personality for all people. As we see throughout the course of this book, many other theorists from different points of view have developed alternative grand theories. The general trend over the course of the 20th century was to base theories more and more on scientific observations rather than on clinical ones. Both sources, however, are valid foundations for theories of personality.

What Is Personality?

Humans are not alone in their uniqueness of and variability between individual members of the species. Individuals within every living species exhibit differences or variability. Indeed, animals such as octopi, birds, pigs, horses, cats, and dogs have consistent individual differences in behavior, otherwise known as personality, *within* their species (Dingemanse, Both, Drent, Van Oers, & Van Noordwijk, 2002; Gosling & John, 1999; Weinstein, Capitano, & Gosling, 2008). But the degree to which individual humans vary from one another, both physically and psychologically, is quite astonishing and somewhat unique among species. Some of us are quiet and introverted, others crave social contact and stimulation; some of us are calm and even-keeled, whereas others are high-strung and persistently anxious. In this book, we explore the explanations and ideas that various men and women have had concerning how these differences in human personality come about.

Psychologists differ among themselves as to the meaning of personality. Most agree that the term “personality” originated from the Latin word **persona**, which referred to a theatrical mask worn by Roman actors in Greek dramas. These ancient Roman actors wore a mask (persona) to project a role or false appearance. This surface view of personality, of course, is not an acceptable definition. When psychologists use the term “personality,” they are referring to something more than the role people play.



No two people, not even identical twins, have exactly the same personalities.
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However, personality theorists have not agreed on a single definition of personality. Indeed, they evolved unique and vital theories because they lacked agreement as to the nature of humanity, and because each saw personality from an individual reference point. The personality theorists discussed in this book have had a variety of backgrounds. Some were born in Europe and lived their entire lives there; others were born in Europe, but migrated to other parts of the world, especially the United States; still others were born in North America and remained there. Many were influenced by early religious experiences; others were not. Most, but not all, have been trained in either psychiatry or psychology. Many have drawn on their experiences as psychotherapists; others have relied more on empirical research to gather data on human personality. Although they have all dealt in some way with what we call personality, each has approached this global concept from a different perspective. Some have tried to construct a comprehensive theory; others have been less ambitious and have dealt with only a few aspects of personality. Few personality theorists have formally defined personality, but all have had their own view of it.

Although no single definition is acceptable to all personality theorists, we can say that **personality** is a pattern of relatively permanent traits and unique characteristics that give both consistency and individuality to a person's behavior (Roberts & Mroczek, 2008). **Traits** contribute to individual differences in behavior, consistency of behavior over time, and stability of behavior across situations. Traits may be unique, common to some group, or shared by the entire species, but their *pattern* is different for each individual. Thus each person, though like others in some ways, has a unique personality. **Characteristics** are unique qualities of an individual that include attributes such as temperament, physique, and intelligence.

What Is a Theory?

The word “theory” has the dubious distinction of being one of the most misused and misunderstood words in the English language. Some people contrast theory to truth or fact, but such an antithesis demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding of all three terms. In science, theories are tools used to generate research and organize observations, but neither “truth” nor “fact” has a place in scientific terminology.

Theory Defined

A scientific **theory** is a set of related assumptions that allows scientists to use logical deductive reasoning to formulate testable hypotheses. This definition needs further explanation. First, a theory is a set of assumptions. A single assumption can never fulfill all the requirements of an adequate theory. A single assumption, for example, could not serve to integrate several observations, something a useful theory should do.

Second, a theory is a set of *related* assumptions. Isolated assumptions can neither generate meaningful hypotheses nor possess internal consistency—the two criteria of a useful theory.

The third key word in the definition is *assumptions*. The components of a theory are not proven facts in the sense that their validity has been absolutely established. They are, however, accepted *as if* they were true. This is a practical step, taken so that scientists can conduct useful research, the results of which continue to build and reshape the original theory.

Fourth, *logical deductive reasoning* is used by the researcher to formulate hypotheses. The tenets of a theory must be stated with sufficient precision and logical consistency to permit scientists to deduce clearly stated hypotheses. The hypotheses are not components of the theory, but flow from it. It is the job of an imaginative scientist to begin with the general theory and, through deductive reasoning, arrive at a particular hypothesis that can be tested. If the general theoretical propositions are illogical, they remain sterile and incapable of generating hypotheses. Moreover, if a researcher uses faulty logic in deducing hypotheses, the resulting research will be meaningless and will make no contribution to the ongoing process of theory construction.

The final part of the definition includes the qualifier *testable*. Unless a hypothesis can be tested in some way, it is worthless. The hypothesis need not be tested immediately, but it must suggest the possibility that scientists in the future might develop the necessary means to test it.

Theory and Its Relatives

People sometimes confuse theory with philosophy, or speculation, or hypothesis, or taxonomy. Although theory is related to each of these concepts, it is not the same as any of them.

Philosophy

First, theory is related to philosophy, but it is a much narrower term. Philosophy means love of wisdom, and philosophers are people who pursue wisdom through

thinking and reasoning. Philosophers are not scientists; they do not ordinarily conduct controlled studies in their pursuit of wisdom. Philosophy encompasses several branches, one of which is **epistemology**, or the nature of knowledge. Theory relates most closely to this branch of philosophy, because it is a tool used by scientists in their pursuit of knowledge.

Theories do not deal with “oughts” and “shoulds.” Therefore, a set of principles about how one should live one’s life cannot be a theory. Such principles involve values and are the proper concern of philosophy. Although theories are not free of values, they are built on scientific evidence that has been obtained in a relatively unbiased fashion. Thus, there are no theories on why society should help homeless people or on what constitutes great art.

Philosophy deals with what ought to be or what should be; theory does not. Theory deals with broad sets of *if-then* statements, but the goodness or badness of the outcomes of these statements is beyond the realm of theory. For example, a theory might tell us that *if* children are brought up in isolation, completely separated from human contact, *then* they will not develop human language, exhibit parenting behavior, and so on. But this statement says nothing about the morality of such a method of child rearing.

Speculation

Second, theories rely on speculation, but they are much more than mere armchair speculation. They do not flow forth from the mind of a great thinker isolated from empirical observations. They are closely tied to empirically gathered data and to science.

What is the relationship between theory and science? **Science** is a branch of study concerned with the observation and classification of data and with the verification of general laws through the testing of hypotheses. Theories are useful tools employed by scientists to give meaning and organization to their observations. In addition, theories provide a fertile ground for producing testable hypotheses. Without some kind of theory to hold observations together and to point to directions of possible research, science would be greatly handicapped.

Theories are not useless fantasies fabricated by impractical scholars who are fearful of soiling their hands in the machinery of scientific investigation. In fact, theories themselves are quite practical and are essential for the advancement of any science. Speculation and empirical observations are the two essential cornerstones of theory building, but speculation must not run rampantly in advance of controlled observation.

Hypothesis

Although theory is a narrower concept than philosophy, it is a broader term than hypothesis. A good theory is capable of generating many hypotheses. A **hypothesis** is an educated guess or prediction specific enough for its validity to be tested through the use of the scientific method. A theory is too general to lend itself to direct verification, but a single comprehensive theory is capable of generating thousands of hypotheses. Hypotheses, then, are more specific than the theories that give birth to them. The offspring, however, should not be confused with the parent.

Of course, a close relationship exists between a theory and a hypothesis. Using *deductive reasoning* (going from the general to the specific), a scientific investigator can derive testable hypotheses from a useful theory and then test these hypotheses. The results of these tests—whether they support or contradict the hypotheses—feed back into the theory. Using *inductive reasoning* (going from the specific to the general), the investigator then alters the theory to reflect these results. As the theory grows and changes, other hypotheses can be drawn from it, and when tested they in turn reshape the theory.

Taxonomy

A **taxonomy** is a classification of things according to their natural relationships. Taxonomies are essential for the development of science because without classification of data science could not grow. Mere classification, however, does not constitute a theory. However, taxonomies can evolve into theories when they begin to generate testable hypotheses and explain research findings. For example, Robert McCrae and Paul Costa began their research by classifying people into five stable personality traits. Eventually, this research on the Big Five taxonomy led to more than a mere classification; it became a theory, capable of suggesting hypotheses and offering explanations for research results.

Why Different Theories?

If theories of personality are truly scientific, why do we have so many different ones? Alternate theories exist because the very nature of a theory allows the theorist to make speculations from a particular point of view. Theorists must be as objective as possible when gathering data, but their decisions as to what data are collected and how these data are interpreted are personal ones. Theories are not immutable laws; they are built, not on proven facts, but on assumptions that are subject to individual interpretation.

All theories are a reflection of their authors' personal backgrounds, childhood experiences, philosophy of life, interpersonal relationships, and unique manner of looking at the world. Because observations are colored by an individual observer's frame of reference, it follows that there may be many diverse theories. Nevertheless, divergent theories can be useful. The usefulness of a theory does not depend on its commonsense value or on its agreement with other theories; rather, it depends on its ability to generate research and to explain research data and other observations.

Perspectives in Theories of Personality

One of the primary functions of scientific theory is to describe and explain how the world works. Psychologists attempt to explain how human thoughts, emotions, motives, and behaviors work. Yet human personality is so complex that many different perspectives have developed on how to best explain them. These perspectives make different assumptions and focus on different aspects of behavior. In psychology, there are at least five major theoretical perspectives on what personality is and how it develops. We have organized the book around these five perspectives, one for each section of the book (see Table 1.1).

Psychodynamic Theories

Beginning with Freud, psychoanalytic and then the more general psychodynamic approaches have focused on the importance of early childhood experiences and on relationships with parents as guiding forces that shape personality development. Additionally, this view sees the unconscious mind and motives as much more powerful than the conscious awareness. Psychoanalysis traditionally used dream interpretation to uncover the unconscious thoughts, feelings, and impulses as a main form of treatment for neurosis and mental illness. After Freud, these theorists moved away from the importance of sexuality and more toward social and cultural forces.

Humanistic-Existential Theories

The primary assumption of the humanistic (currently known as “positive psychology”) approach is that people strive toward meaning, growth, well-being, happiness, and psychological health. States of positive emotion and happiness foster psychological health and prosocial behavior. Understanding these evolved positive aspects of human behavior provides just as much insight into human nature as does understanding the pathological aspects. Existential theorists assume that not only we are driven by a search for meaning but also negative experiences, such as failure, awareness of death, death of a loved one, and anxiety, are part of the human condition and can foster psychological growth.

Dispositional Theories

Dispositional theorists argue that the unique and long-term tendencies to behave in particular ways are the essence of our personality. These unique dispositions, such as extraversion or anxiety, are called traits. The field has converged on the understanding that there are five main trait dimensions in human personality. Traits serve the function of making certain behaviors more likely in some people.

Biological-Evolutionary Theories

Behavior, thoughts, feelings, and personality are influenced by differences in basic genetic, epigenetic, and neurological systems among individuals. The reason some people have different traits, dispositions, and ways of thinking stems from differences in their genotype and central nervous system (brain structures and neurochemistry).

Because they are based on evolved brain systems, human thought, behavior, and personality have been shaped by forces of evolution (natural and sexual selection) over millions of years. The body, brain, and environment coexist and coevolve, and so more than any other psychological perspective, this one emphasizes that what we think, feel, and do is always an interaction between nature (biological) and nurture (environment).

Learning-(Social) Cognitive Theories

If you want to understand behavior, then focus only on behavior, not on hypothetical and unobservable internal states such as thoughts, feelings, drives, or motives. All behaviors are learned through association and/or its consequences (whether it

is reinforced or punished). To shape desired behaviors, we have to understand and then establish the conditions that bring about those particular behaviors.

The cognitive perspective argues that how we think about ourselves and other people, as well as the assumptions we make and the strategies we use for solving problems, are the keys to understanding differences among people. Whether we believe we can do something successfully or not influences our behavior as well as our personality. In short, what personality we have is shaped by how we think and perceive the world.

TABLE 1.1

Overview of Five Major Theoretical Perspectives in Personality Psychology

| Perspective | Primary Assumptions | Focus/Key Terms | Key Figures |
|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Psychodynamic</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First 5 years of life most shape personality • Unconscious forces are most important • Neurosis results from unhealthy moving toward, against, or away from others | Unconscious Early recollections Collective unconscious Archetypes Object relations Identity crises Relatedness | Freud Adler Jung Klein Horney Erikson Fromm |
| <i>Humanistic-Existential</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People strive to live meaningful, happy lives • People are motivated by growth and psychological health • Personality is shaped by freedom of choice, response to anxiety, and awareness of death | Meaningful life, psychological well-being and growth | Maslow Rogers May |
| <i>Dispositional</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are predisposed to behave in unique and consistent ways; they have unique traits • There are five trait dimensions in human personality | Traits Motives | Allport McCrae & Costa |
| <i>Biological-Evolutionary</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The foundation for thought and behavior is biological and genetic forces • Human thoughts and behaviors have been shaped by evolutionary forces (natural and sexual selection) | Brain structures, neurochemicals, and genes Adaptive mechanisms | Eysenck Buss |

(Continued)