

Cyber Psych Links for

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY: WITH SPOTLIGHTS ON DIVERSITY

Chapter 9

A confirmation of our point that defining personality is a difficult task can be confirmed when one tries to search the Internet for websites related to “personality.” You can find all sorts of things that deal nothing whatsoever with the sorts of issues addressed in psychology texts. Indeed, the most common usage of the term implies that personality is something that one can have to greater or lesser degrees and can be evaluated on a scale from good to bad. When your goal is to do nothing more than waste time, you might just enter the term “personality” in your favorite search engine and take a (brief) look at what turns up. Here are some of the more academic sites related to personality theory.

THE PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH (pp. 317-324)

In a chapter on theories of (or approaches to) human personality, is it any surprise that we begin with Sigmund Freud? The truth is, everybody does. In many ways, Freud began the enterprise of writing about personality issues, and surely no one since has produced a greater reaction or had a greater impact on Western civilization than did Sigmund Freud. I tell my students that reading about Freud and his work is all well and good, but no matter what one thinks of his personality theory, nearly everyone credits his writing skills. His writings are not all that technical. You can handle it. And think about all those topics Freud wrote about—sex, aggression, love, lust, slips of the tongue, defense mechanism; great stuff!

<http://www.psyoanalysis.org>

The homepage of “The New York Psychoanalytic Institute and Society”—and a nice site it is. The innocent appearing “about us” link provides a good summary of psychoanalysis. There also are good links to “resources” and “journals.”

<http://www.freud.org.uk>

A site worth a visit. Its focus is the Freud Museum in London, but it provides many other links.

<http://users.rcn.com/brill/freudarc.html>

Simply, "Sigmund Freud and the Freud Archives." Lots of good stuff.

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/beystehner.html>

A good, thorough summary/review of Freud's approach to personality.

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/plaut.html>

A paper, "Psychoanalysis: From Theory to Practice, Past and Present."

THE BEHAVIORAL-LEARNING APPROACH (pp. 325-327)

When you consider that the major thrust of the behavioral/learning approach to personality might be summarized by the observation that there is no need for a theory of personality—learning theory will be quite adequate—it is not surprising that there is not much to be found on the Internet on this subject. Still, a little careful looking and you can find a few sites that add to our discussion in the textbook.

<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Watson/Battle/watson.htm>

A classic 1929 paper on Watson's approach, by Watson himself.

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/naik.html>

A paper, "Behaviorism as a Theory of Personality: A Critical Look."

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/behaviorism.html>

A great site on behaviorism, with great links.

<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/skinner.html>

An article treating B. F. Skinner as if he were a personality theorist.

THE COGNITIVE APPROACH (pp. 327-328)

The cognitive approach to personality is not unlike the behaviorists' approach in that no one (with the possible exception of Kelly) ever tried to write a full, comprehensive theory of personality as such. What we have is a series of tidbits.

<http://www.enquirewithin.co.nz/HINTS/skills2.htm>

An excellent summary of the position of George Kelly.

<http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/CogApp.htm>

A list of websites that discuss the cognitive approach to personality.

<http://www.geocities.com/CollegePark/1150/psych5.html>

A brief but intriguing comparison of the cognitive and psychoanalytic approaches to personality.

<http://www.wilderdom.com/personality/L11-0CognitivePerspectivesPersonality.html>

A very concise, reasonable statement of the cognitive approach to personality theory.

THE HUMANISTIC-PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH (pp. 328-331)

This approach to personality theory—even as much as psychoanalysis—grew with a parallel approach to psychotherapy. There are others involved in the humanistic approach, but the major contributors are Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow.

<http://www.ahpweb.org>

You'll love it! The homepage of the "Association for Humanistic Psychology." Check out the links, particularly "a brief history...".

<http://allpsyh.com/personalitysynopsis/humanistic.html>

A nearly over-simplified summary of humanistic theory.

<http://www.revision-notes.co.uk/revision/72.html>

A set of study notes on Rogers and Maslow and self-actualization.

<http://www.wynja.com/personality/rogersff.html>

A great piece: "An Analysis of Carl Rogers' Theory of Personality."

<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/maslow.html>

A wonderful article on Maslow and personality.

<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/rogers.html>

Dr. Boeree again, here on Carl Rogers.

<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Rogers/personality.htm>

Some observations on the nature of personality from Carl Rogers himself, 1947.

THE TRAIT APPROACH (pp. 331-335)

Those psychologists who favor a trait approach to the study of personality are not so much interested in explaining personality as they are in adequately describing it. There is a very long tradition in psychology of attempts to measure personality traits. What keeps this approach in the limelight these days is the so-called “Big-Five Personality Traits.”

<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Allport/concepts.htm>

A classic by Gordon Allport, 1927—“Concepts of Trait and Personality.”

http://inside.salve.edu/walsh/allport_3.html

A nice little summary of Gordon Allport’s trait theory.

<http://www.ship.edu/~cgboeree/genpsytraits.html>

A short article on trait theories, describing a few that are not covered in the text.

<http://www.psy.pdx.edu/PsiCafe/KeyTheorists/Cattell.htm>

Raymond Cattell “visits” the Psi Café.

<http://www.cattell.net/devon/rbcmain.htm>

A most touching website, “A Memorial to Raymond Bernard Cattell,” hosted by his family members. What a wonderful use of the Internet!

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/papers/popkins.html>

A paper explaining the five-factor model of personality.

<http://test.personality-project.org>

A real, live Internet test on the Big Five personality traits; you take the inventory and results will be emailed to you. Not to worry, this one is safe.

IS THERE A PERSONALITY? (pp. 336-338)

Of course there is a personality. Personality, as the term is used in psychology, may not be as powerful a force as was once thought, but surely everyone does have a system of relatively stable dispositions that he or she brings to any endeavor. What psychologists have come to appreciate is that the power of the situation may override internal, personal dispositions. As you know, this issue of disposition vs. situation has been resolved in favor of an interactionist position of disposition-AND-situation as determinants of actual behaviors. There is really not much new on this issue on the Internet.

<http://www.personalityresearch.org/courses/B15/notes/situation.html>

A short summary—with a good link at the end.

<http://cycad.com/cgi-bin/Brand/quotes/q01.html>

An interesting approach—personality and the person-situation debate presented as a series of quotations from the experts.

<http://www.princeton.edu/~harman/Papers/Character.pdf>

A wonderful essay in pdf format on the presence/absence of character or personality.

PERSONALITY MEASUREMENT OR ASSESSMENT (pp. 338-343)

It is for this section that my warning about being careful with some of the “personality test” websites becomes relevant. That being said, I also suggest that—when time allows—you check out some of the weird sites that are available. I would argue that the sites below are significantly not weird.

<http://www.guidetopsychology.com/testing.htm>

This site is rather “wordy,” and not very “pretty,” but it provides a good summary of some important concepts: the reliability and validity of psychological tests.

<http://www1.umn.edu/mmpi>

Dr. James Butcher is an expert of the first order on the MMPI. He spent a celebrated lifetime researching and developing this test. This is his website. There is a good bit of technical material here, but you should find the link to “Selected available articles,” an interesting place to explore.