

Traits and Personality

Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Big Ideas

Nomothetic vs. Idiographic Distinction

- Nomothetic research refers to the study of large groups to determine the frequency with which certain events occur
- Idiographic research centers on one individual at a time that attempts to document distinctiveness and uniqueness

Henry Murray

The Study of Personality

- Proceedings
- Serials

Human Needs

Human Needs and Press

- Alpha Press
- Beta Press

Murray's 20 Needs

Thematic Apperception Test

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Assessment and Research

Nomothetic vs. Idiographic Distinction

- **Nomothetic research refers to the study of large groups to determine the frequency with which certain events occur**
 - Normalcy = high frequency
 - Infer common traits, universal principles
- **Idiographic research centers on one individual at a time that attempts to document distinctiveness and uniqueness**
 - Complex research, often used to answer specific questions about individuals

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Henry Murray



- 1893-1988
- Born & raised in NYC
- Privileged family
- Medical school first, then psychology
- Meeting with Jung provided inspiration
 - Experienced the unconscious
- Had affair with Christiana Morgan who did not get appropriate credit for TAT

The Study of Personology

- Murray emphasized the complexity of personality
- Personology defined as the study of "human lives and the factors that influence their course"
 - Normal people and natural settings
 - Study of individual human lives

The Study of Personology

- Wanted to separate the total of a person into manageable units
- The basic unit, the proceeding refers to a short significant behavior pattern that has clear beginning and ending
 - Interactions of the person with other individuals or objects
 - Picking up a book, writing a letter, pacing back and forth
- Proceedings chained together into serials
 - A planned series of proceedings leading to a goal is a serial program

Human Needs

- Murray's most significant contribution to study of personality
- Needs are "forces within the brain that organize our perceptions, understanding, and behavior in such a way to change an unsatisfying situation or increase satisfaction"
 - Aroused by internal states (hunger) or external stimuli (food)

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Human Needs and Press

- Derived and articulated 20 basic human needs
- Not all needs present in all people
- Needs are in varying strength and intensity
 - These fundamental needs are ordered into a hierarchy by Maslow
- Press refers to forces from objects or persons with the environment that help or hinder an individual in reaching goals

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Alpha vs. Beta Press

- Alpha Press refers to actual properties or attributes of the environment
- Beta Press refers to the individual's perception of the environment
 - Beta presses are the real determinants of behavior

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Murray's 20 Needs

Dominance	Sentience	Nurturance
Deference	Exhibition	Defendance
Autonomy	Play	Counteraction
Aggression	Affiliation	Harmavoidance
Abasement	Rejection	Order
Achievement	Succorance	Understand
Sex	Infavoidance	

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Thematic Apperception Test

TAT

- Murray's most enduring contribution
- Projective Test still used in clinical psychology assessment
- Patients respond to cards with ambiguous drawings by telling a story and describing the needs of the characters therein
- Patients "project" their own needs onto the card

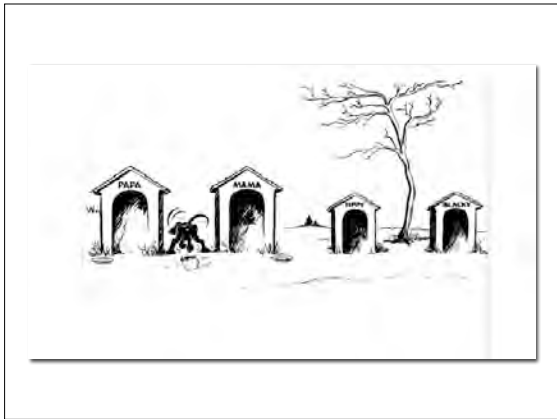
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TAT: An Example



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TAT: An example

1. What story does the picture tell?
2. What led up to the event in the picture?
3. How are things going to work out?
4. What are the people in the card thinking and feeling?

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Thematic Apperception Test

- Extensively used
- Limited empirical evidence
- Poor reliability when scored
- Used primarily for the narrative themes that patients describe

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