Preface for Instructors

Personality: A Systems Approach (Editions 1.5 and 1.8)

A Vision

When the discipline of psychology was founded in the 1880s, Wilhelm Wundt, who established the first laboratory in the field, conducted experiments on human perception and memory—but he had a vision of the future. Wundt foresaw that one day personality psychologists would integrate findings about psychology into a broad picture of an individual's mental life (Wundt, 1897). As a group, psychology's founders hoped that, from the study of our mental lives, an integrated picture of personality would emerge that would begin to answer important questions such as: "Who am I?" and "How should I live my life?" (Alexander, 1941; Allport, 1937; Greebie, 1932; Wundt, 1897).

Maintaining that vision throughout the field's history has been challenging. The advent of the grand theories of personality during the early part of the 20th century—those of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Henry Murray—captured the imagination of many scholars. Yet as enticing as those grand theories were, they diverted attention from the painstaking, gradual accumulation of research findings in the field. Many courses on personality psychology became courses about the personality theories of Freud, Jung, Maslow, and others (e.g., Hall & Lindzey, 1978). Each theory used a different terminology and many of them denied the validity of the other theories. Moreover, a sense of how to reintegrate the accumulating research in the field—and how to teach it—was lost (e.g., Mendelsohn, 1993).

With so many competing theories, a return to a unified picture of personality and to the original vision of the field became increasingly difficult and for various reasons it would take the greater part of the 20th century to resolve.

To be sure, there were attempts to reintegrate the field: Robert Sears (1950) laid out the topics he believed one should study when looking at a whole system like personality: "Structure, Dynamics, and Development." Unfortunately, the terms he employed went undefined, and even those psychologists who wanted to use his approach were confused as to how to apply his vision (e.g., Messick, 1961).

In the over half-century since Sears' simple formula, several advances occurred that eased the way toward a new integration of the field.

The first advance was the recognition that the grand theories of personality are not as contradictory as they first seemed. In fact, many of the theories have been translated into one another's terminology: as examples, Freudian "transference" has been translated into the social-cognitive idea of significant-other schemas, and Jungian extraversion paved the way for today's dimensions of the broad trait of extraversion (e.g., Dollard & Miller, 1950; Erdelyi, 1980; Mayer, 1993-1994; 1995a; 1995b; 1998; 2001; 2004; Westen, 1991; 1998).

A second advance was the emergence of a new and sizeable research base so that when people describe what is known about personality apart from the earlier grand theories, there is now a fair amount to say.

A third change has been the development of unifying frameworks for the field. My development of the personality framework used in this book is one of those key approaches. The framework allows for personality to be discussed as a system without the constraints of general systems theory, cybernetics, and similar approaches. Rather, talking about personality as a system can be done simply and directly according to four topics: personality's definition, parts, organization, and development (Mayer, 1993-1994; Mayer & Allen, 2013). Other psychologists have kindly reviewed the framework, sometimes expressing reservations, but always helpfully, strengthening it along the way (e.g., Craik, 1998; Emmons, 1998; Funder, 1998; 2002; Hogan, 1998; McAdams, 1998; Singer, 1998; Tennen & Affleck, 1998; Sheldon, 2011).

In 2007, when the first edition of this text was published by Allyn & Bacon (Pearson Education), I wrote that it was my hope that the textbook would become a touchstone in the reorganization—and revitalization—of the field of personality psychology. Changing the discipline from a theories-based to a more integrated approach has taken longer than I had hoped, but it is plainly taking place. Over the past several years, I have gratefully responded to a number of invitations to write further about the framework (Mayer & Korogodsky, 2012; Mayer & Allen, 2013; Mayer & Lang, 2011; Mayer, 2014). Other personality psychologists have offered alternative integrated approaches independent of the personality systems framework, but I continue to believe that personality framework used here provides a well-thought-out and key approach to the discipline.

Organization of the Book and the Course

Personality psychology is often taught today by examining a number of theoretical perspectives on the system such as the psychodynamic, behavioral, trait, and so on. This leads to a fragmented approach—and one that becomes strained when attempting to fit in current research.

PERSONALITY: A SYSTEMS APPROACH evolved from an intentional re-focusing on the central mission of personality psychology: To describe directly the personality system and its major psychological subsystems. The framework that organizes this textbook divides the study of personality into four areas. These proceed from: (a) describing personality and the discipline of personality psychology, to (b) examining personality's parts, (c) personality's organization, and (d) personality's development. The framework's four topics, and the chapters that accompany each, appear in Table PF-1.

Table PF-1: The Four Topics of This Book and the Organization of Chapters Within Them			
Introductory Issues	*Parts of Personality*	*Personality Organization*	*Personality Development*
1. What Is Personality? 2. Research in Personality Psychology 3. Perspectives on Personality	4. Motivation and Emotion 5. Interior Selves; Interior Worlds 6. Mental Abilities and Navigating the World 7. The Conscious Self	8. How the Parts of Personality Fit Together 9. Dynamics of Action 10. Dynamics of Self-Control	11. Personality Development in Childhood and Adolescence 12. Personality Development in Adulthood

> "The counterpoint of specialization is always organization—organization is what brings specialists…into a working relationship with other specialists for a complete and useful result." – John Kenneth Galbraith (1908-2006)

Using the Book

One natural concern for an instructor is: How much time will it take to use this new book, and how easy is it to convert to this new organization? Two qualities make it relatively easy to convert to this new approach. First, the book represents change primarily in the organization rather than content of the course. This means that instructors can use many materials from their existing course—just in a new order. Second, a variety of materials are available to assist instruction with the course that make the switch as easy as possible—including a complete set of lecture outlines in PowerPoint.

Using Current Lectures in a New Order

The first aspect of the book that makes a switch convenient is that most lectures commonly employed in a theories approach can be used with this new book. Examples of some common lectures from personality psychology that can be employed with only modest modification are shown in Table PF-2. Topics as lectures on Freudian defense mechanisms, Murray's Thematic Apperception Test, Jung's archetypes, and Costa and McCrae's Big Five fit into Chapters 10, 4, 5, and 8, respectively.

Table PF-2: How Perspectives-Oriented Lectures (e.g., Psychodynamic, Trait, Humanistic, etc.) Can Be Used With This Book	
Common Perspectives-Oriented Lecture Topic(s) in Personality Psychology	*The Lecture Topic Can Be Used in Chapter:*
Defining personality and describing the field	1: What Is Personality?
Reliability and validity	2: Research in Personality Psychology
Introduction to psychodynamic, trait, humanistic, socio-cognitive, and other perspectives	3: Perspectives on Personality
Murray's TAT; Eysenck's model of neuroticism and extroversion	4: Motivation and Emotions
Kelly's personal constructs; Jung's archetypes; Markus' possible selves; Higgins' ideal and actual selves	5: Interior Selves; Interior Worlds
Adler's creative personality; standard lecture on intelligence	6: Mental Abilities and Navigating the World
Freud's ego; Jung's ego; free will versus determinism	7: The Conscious Self
The Big Five traits; Mischel's model of person-situation interactions; MacLean's Triune brain; the conscious versus unconscious	8: How the Parts of Personality Fit Together
Mood-congruent phenomenon; Interaction of motives; personal strivings; personal projects; latent versus manifest content of behavior	9: Dynamics of Action
Freud's mechanisms of defense; hypnotic phenomena; feedback loops; auto-suggestion	10: Dynamics of Self-Control
Erikson's eight stages of development; attachment theory; birth order; the identity crisis	11: Personality Development in Childhood and Adolescence

Levinson's stages of adult development; adult relationships and marriage; Maslow's self-actualized person; Erikson's generativity versus despair	12: Personality Development in Adulthood

Advantages of the Organization

The new outline employed here permits a rational progression of study that focuses on the best elements of the field, while employing a clear, organized pedagogy. The resulting advantages include holding student interest, coping with students from different majors, and focusing on the best of the field. Examples of how the text addresses the challenges of teaching the personality course are outlined in Table PF-3.

Table PF-3: Some Advantages of the Systems Approach in the Classroom		
The issue in brief	*How it plays out in the course*	*How this text addresses the issue*
Raising the interest level…	Students become bored with coverage of one theorist after another, or one experimental research topic after another.	This book shifts the focus from theory and research to the personality system itself. The book's organization covers favorite student topics from emotions to hypnosis to the unconscious. It also includes the liberal use of case examples to illustrate material.
Different student interests…	Some students want to understand theories of personality. Others, with more science background, want to learn about research studies.	Both the theory and empirical research of personality are integrated and applied to the topics of personality.
Improving the presentation of the field…	Students feel let down by contradictions among theories.	The book selects the most plausible and best-supported theoretical work in the discipline and the research relevant to it.
Addressing commonly used statistics in the field…	A lot of personality psychology nowadays involves discussion of advanced mathematics such as factor analysis.	The book teaches students how to read mathematical techniques such as factor analysis. The "reading research" treatments are carefully worked over to ensure their clarity, and are presented at a level accessible to most students.
Students want to learn something about their lives…	Students face the developmental task of fitting into the world occupationally, and of creating bonds with others. They look to this course for answers…	Students learn about how personality relates to life throughout the book. They learn about relationship themes, attachment theory, and more. They learn about traits, and then about the trait profiles of individuals in many different careers.

Outstanding Features

The most outstanding feature of this book is how its cumulative approach integrates theory and research in the field. This is best appreciated by carefully examining actual selections from the book itself. That said, a few central advantages also can be summarized here.

A Cumulative Approach. Each part of the book lays the groundwork for the next. The study of the field's scope, methods, and theories (Part 1) lays the groundwork for the study of the parts of personality (Part

2). The study of personality's parts prepares students to understand structural divisions and dynamic processes of personality (Part 3). Finally, students are prepared to appreciate how personality's parts and its organization develop and grow over time (Part 4).

A Balanced, Considered Use of Theories. Personality perspectives are introduced in Chapter 3, as part of the book's first section. Thereafter, the book draws upon parts of those theories on an as-needed basis to explain how a part of personality functions, rather than the theories being covered as whole topics in and of themselves. Relevant portions of different theories often appear together where their complementary perspectives often enrich discussion of a given topic. For example, the discussion of models of the self draws on the concepts of Freud's ego-ideal, Higgins' actual, ideal, and ought selves, and Markus' possible selves, and integrates such ideas with contemporary research.

Personality theories that are no longer making important research contributions to the field are de-emphasized. If a theory is of some historical interest but no longer motivates contemporary research, it is mentioned along with the new research that now carries along its tradition or addresses the same questions. Portions of older theories that are of continued research interest are dealt with fully; this includes studies of defense mechanisms as well as the study of transference. The narrative guides students through the complexities and contradictions of the field, commenting freely on them. This eases the students' way and enhances the learning experience.

Contemporary Research Coverage. The personality systems organization makes it easy to fully integrate contemporary research in personality. Nearly 1,300 original sources of theory and research are cited across the 12 chapters of the book. This is competitive with that of any other textbook of its length. Moreover, a large portion of those sources date from 1980 forward, with many articles from the past several years. Contemporary research is carefully matched to the appropriate areas of coverage of personality's parts, its dynamics, or its development. The textbook covers personality research that has not often appeared in personality texts before despite its obvious relevance to the field, including research on hypnosis, cognition and affect, intelligence, creativity, and self-regulation.

The Liberal Use of Case Examples. Wherever possible, the discussion of personality is clarified and enlivened by the use of examples from real people's (and occasionally, fictional people's) lives. Some of these are historical and some are contemporary. For example, intelligence in the context of personality is illustrated with real-life selections from an autobiography of an individual suffering from *trisomy-21*, as well as by the writings of individuals who have been judged to possess high intelligence.

Addressing Contemporary Issues. The book is sensitive to such current issues of concern as personal versus social responsibility, group and ethnic diversity, cross-cultural psychology, and evolutionary psychology.

Pedagogical Features

There are many good ways for faculty to teach and for students to learn. This book supports different ways of teaching and learning favored by faculty and their diverse students (Benassi & Fernald, 1993). Each chapter contains:

An advanced organizer for the chapter: Each chapter begins with a Chapter Preview that presents a brief sketch of what the chapter will cover.

A glossary at the end of each chapter: Key terms are defined in a glossary at the conclusion of each chapter.

Quotations: Relevant quotations are arranged in the text to stimulate thinking about a topic.

A chapter summary. The narrative of each chapter concludes with a Chapter Summary that briefly reviews its coverage and poses questions with which students can test their knowledge.

Tables and Figures. The book makes liberal use of diagrams and tables so as to support visual presentation of the material in the text.