Principal Features

Status of Personality Theory

“Lacking a shared theoretical understanding, the field of personality is fragmented, although there are increasing movements toward integration.”

Fragmentation of personality theory. (468)
Status of Personality Theory  
(Continued)

“The field is moving in the direction of a multilevel theory, not only combining insights from traditional personality theories, but also drawing on findings from other fields.”

“Learning approaches and cultural approaches also contribute to the discussion.”

[Description] Multilevel personality theory.  
(468)

[Description] learning and cultural approaches to personality theory.  
(468-469)
“Humanistic and cognitive social theories remind us that a self-aware person is at the heart of personality.”

Individual Differences

“How important are differences among people?”
Adaptation and Adjustment

“Personality can be evaluated along a dimension of health or adjustment.”

[Description] Importance of health or adjustment to personality theory. (469-470)

Cognitive Processes

“Theoretical developments in psychology generally and in personality in particular have often emphasized cognitive processes.”

[Description] Importance of theoretical developments to personality theory. (470-471)
“Personality is expressed through behavior in the social world.”

[Description] Personality, behavior, and the social world. (471)

Biological Influences

[Description] Biological influences on personality. (471-472)
Child Development

“Most theorists agree that important personality development occurs in childhood.”

[Description] Importance of child development in personality theory.

(472)

Adult Development

“Adult personality development builds on the foundation of personality developed in childhood.”

[Description] Foundations of adult personality.

(472-473)
Choosing or Combining Theories

“How many theories or personality are needed?

Should we try to select the one best theory or devise a new single theory to guide the field?

“Or is it better to have the coexistence of several theories?”

Eclecticism

“One way of dealing with the diversity of theories is to advocate eclecticism.”

Pluralism

Question: What is theoretical pluralism?
Unified Theory

“There have been many calls for the development of a multilevel unified theory that incorporates the various levels of explanation that personality psychologists have explored.”

**Question:** What is *unified theory*? (474)

“Several attempts to integrate theories have been made.”

One way to make sense of the diversity of theories is to recognize that they explain different phenomena, often at different levels.”

“A unified theory will then be a *multilevel theory*.”

**Description**

Unified theory.

Multilevel theory. (474-475)
Criteria of a Good Theory: Revisited

**Question:** What are the criteria of a good theory?

Theories as Metaphors

**Question:** What is a root metaphor?

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Table 16.1  Pepper’s Root Metaphors with Examples from Personality Theory

[Page 476]
The Mechanistic Metaphor

Question: What is a **mechanistic metaphor**?

[Illustrations] Mechanistic metaphor.

The Organic Metaphor

Question: What is an **organic metaphor**?

[Illustrations] Organic metaphor.
The Information Processing Metaphor

Question: What is the information processing metaphor?

The Narrative Metaphor

Question: What is a narrative metaphor?

[Illustrations] Narrative metaphor.

The Metaphor of the Emergent Self

Question: What is the emergent self metaphor?
The Metaphor of the Emergent Self
(Continued)

Question: What does the following statement mean?

“(The emergent self metaphor) can be considered teleological?”

Question: What is emergent determinism?

Question: What does the following statement mean?

“Most psychologists maintain that teleology is incompatible with science …”

The Metaphor of the Transcendent Self

Question: What is the transcendent self metaphor?
What Lies Ahead

Question: What does the following statement mean?

“Personality theorists have not yet achieved a coherent, shared paradigm …” (478-479)