

## THE 16 PF: PERSONALITY IN DEPTH

Heather B. Cattell

(1989)

Champaign IL: Institute for Personality and Ability Testing.

354 pp. \$19.95 (paperback)

Review by

Fred H. Wallbrown

Kent State University

In my opinion, *The 16 PF: Personality in Depth* represents the culmination of the first phase of providing clinicians with access to R. B. Cattell's contributions to psychology. This book was obviously written by a brilliant clinician with a profound knowledge of Cattell's personality theory. She writes in a language that clinicians can understand, and, at the same time, presents R. B. Cattell's formulations with flawless precision. It is a truism to assert that the major problem with Cattell's contributions is that they have not been accessible in a form that is intelligible to most practitioners. The landmarks in the process of dissemination are clearly discernible beginning with the publication of the *Handbook for the 16 PF* (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970) and extending through the publication of *A Guide to the Clinical use of the 16 PF* (Karson & O'Dell, 1976) and *Functional Psychological Testing: Principles and Instruments* (Cattell & Johnson, 1986). All of these earlier works provide valuable tools for familiarizing students and colleagues with Cattell's work. However, none of the books are serious rivals for Heather B. Cattell's *The 16 PF: Personality in Depth* insofar as either scope or depth are concerned. This book is clearly the definitive work on the clinical interpretation of the 16 PF.

My assertion that this book represents the culmination of the first phase in the dissemination of Cattell's ideas is not meant to imply that H. B. Cattell's ideas are complete and cannot be expanded or improved upon. Quite the contrary. In fact, she herself frequently acknowledges that many of her ideas are tentative and based on case histories, interview data, and clinical impressions rather than "hard data" from multivariate research. There is plenty of room for researchers and clinicians to refine, enhance, and modify the insights suggested in this work. This assertion is rooted in different grounds.

Adequate resources are now available so that instructors can do a good job of introducing the clinical interpretation of the 16 PF to their students. Practitioners with a reasonable degree of initiative will also find that the clinical interpretation

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of the 16 PF is within their grasp. Yet, this is only one part of the picture. Hopefully, the second phase in the dissemination of R. B. Cattell's contributions will involve familiarizing clinicians with the use of the Clinical Analysis Questionnaire (CAQ) (Krug, Cattell, & IPAT Staff, 1980), which not only includes all the primary and secondary factors from the 16 PF, but also provides scores for twelve dimensions of psychopathology and four additional secondaries. The measurement of psychopathology is a must for clinicians in many settings. It is not likely that the CAQ will receive the attention that it deserves until clinicians are provided with more specific instructions about how it can be used in differential diagnosis, planning intervention programs, and monitoring the progress of counseling/psychotherapy. Clearly, the second phase in the dissemination of R.B. Cattell's work should include a series of works devoted to the clinical interpretation of the CAQ.

There are those who believe that Cattell's motivational theory represents his most brilliant contribution to psychology. The assessment procedures generated from his motivational theory are available in the form of the Motivational Analysis Test (MAT) (Cattell, Horn, Sweeney, & Radcliffe, 1964) for adults and the School Motivational Analysis Test (SMAT) (Krug, Cattell, & Sweeney, 1976) for adolescents. Both of these tests warrant much more attention than they have received from either researchers or clinicians. Hopefully, the second phase in the dissemination of Cattell's contributions will include works devoted to the clinical interpretation of the MAT and SMAT.

Looking at this work from another perspective, it is well worth noting that its subtitle, "Personality in Depth," does a useful job of conveying its essence. The depth of H.B. Cattell's insights about the clinical interpretation of the 16 PF go much beyond what is available elsewhere. The guts of this book are to be found in chapters 2-17, which are devoted to explaining and interpreting the sixteen dimensions of normal personality development measured by the 16 PF. The first chapter, entitled "Introduction," provides a very brief overview of the 16 PF along with the author's description of her experience with this test and the sample that she used in developing her ideas and insights. The last chapter, "The Second-Order Factors: The Underlying Organizers of Temperament," contains some worthwhile ideas that will be of interest to practitioners. In comparison with other available sources, however, the material on the interpretation of the secondaries in chapter 18 is not so distinctly superior as the material presented in the chapters devoted to describing the primaries. In fairness, one must acknowledge that this chapter would come across as being longer as well as stronger if the author confined all of her ideas and insights about the secondaries to Chapter 18. She chose to do otherwise, however. Some of the author's best insights about the secondaries are scattered through the earlier chapters.

The format for chapters 2-17 is relatively uniform. Each chapter begins with a description of the personality dimension described in that chapter. What makes the subtitle, "Personality in Depth," appropriate for this book is the richness of H.B. Cattell's clinical insights about what the 16 PF primaries are measuring. Each chapter begins with a description of R. B. Cattell's ideas about what the dimension is measuring. The ideas of other 16 PF authorities (e.g., Karson & O'Dell, 1976) are also brought forth and given full consideration and fair treatment. But what makes this book truly outstanding is the bridging which

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H.B. Cattell achieves between R.B. Cattell's work and that of "mainline" clinicians and clinical theorists. The main bridging thrust is toward Freud (e.g., 1946, 1961) and his followers (e.g., Hartman, 1939; A. Freud, 1936; Winnicott, 1964; and Erickson, 1968) along with Jung (1928), but the ideas of others are sometimes considered (e.g., Adler, 1957; Witkin, 1962; and Shapiro, 1965). The author not only bridges, but she does so with skill and fluency. This is clearly one of the features of this book that justifies the subtitle, "Personality in Depth."

The chapter format also includes discussions of heritability, sex differences, and developmental changes across the life span. This information is useful, but it is neither so impressive nor so unique as H.B. Cattell's descriptions of high and low scores on each of the primaries. She offers a wide range of creative ideas about the dynamics and etiology involved in high and low scores on the different 16 PF primaries. Here H.B. Cattell is definitely at her best as she draws on interview data and clinical experience to generate promising ideas, insights, and hypotheses. In numerous cases, she offers several alternative hypotheses for use in interpreting high and low scores. All of the sixteen chapters on the primaries contain sections devoted to the "clinical relevance" of both high and low scores. The chapters are organized quite well, with the general information about the construct presented first followed by separate sections devoted to the understanding and interpretation of high and low scores. This, of course, means that the clinical relevance of high and low scores is covered in separate subsections of the chapter. The material covered in the "clinical relevance" subsections varies from treatment suggestions and ideas for differential diagnosis through suggestions for care management and predictions concerning emotional adjustment/behavioral problems.

Another distinct feature of this book which warrants the subtitle, "Personality in Depth," is to be found in the author's care in showing how scores on one primary personality dimension can interact with scores on one or more other dimensions to refine and enhance the interpretation of all of the primaries involved. An excellent example of this is to be found in the author's discussion of the "clinical relevance" of O+ (Guilt-Prone) scores in the chapter devoted to that primary (pp. 228-231). Here H. B. Cattell discusses five score configurations that can combine with O+ scores to alter the meaning of that score. Another excellent example of this type of configurational analysis is to be found in the chapter on E (Dominance), where the author (pp.82-86) describes five patterns resulting from the interaction of E-scores with other 16 PF primaries. These are but two instances pulled out to illustrate a trend that is evident throughout all sixteen chapters devoted to the primary personality dimensions. Such consistent use of configurational interpretation of the 16 PF primaries brings that test to a new level of clinical sophistication that has been attained by few personality tests.

Still another commendable feature of H.B. Cattell's *The 16 PF: Personality in Depth* is that it comes in paperback and carries a reasonable price, which puts it within the reach of graduate students as well as practitioners. I have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending this book for clinicians and advanced graduate students who are reasonably familiar with the 16 PF and Cattell's personality theory. *A Guide to the Clinical Use of the 16 PF* by Karson and O'Dell (1976) is still my preference for rank beginners who are not already familiar with the 16 PF. These two books are quite different and should not be

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regarded as competitors. As I see it, the H. B. Cattell text takes up where Karson and O'Dell (1976) left off. These two books are complementary and should be on the shelf of any psychologist who practices or teaches in the area of personality assessment. Needless to say, both books have their place in graduate training programs for counseling psychologists and clinical psychologists. Persons in related areas such as counselor education will find this book invaluable in their work.

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