

Hettema, J. & Deary, I.J. (1993). *Foundations of Personality*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht. Published in cooperation with NATO Scientific Affairs Division.

PREFACE

A burning question that has occupied man throughout history is "where do I come from?" The roots of human individuality have always fascinated philosophers and scientists as well as the man in the street. An area especially occupying itself with this question is personality psychology. The explanations forwarded by personality psychologists put special emphasis on biological and social determinants. The relative contributions of biological and social determinants to personality as well as the relationships between the determinants are central issues in personality psychology. However, during the history of personality psychology, the attention paid to biological and social determinants of individuality has waxed and waned in opposition to each other. When emphasis on social factors was popular, interest in biological factors was minimal, and vice versa. Currently, there appears to be a 'coming together', the beginning of a dialogue on how to conceptualize the biological and social foundations, and how to best integrate the existing biological and social approaches to personality. Accordingly, this seems to be the right moment for bringing together those working from a biological perspective with those working from a social point of view, with the special aim to exchange views and develop ideas on how to proceed.

The initiative for an expert workshop to study the biological and social approaches to individuality was taken by the European Association of Personality Psychology (EAPP). The organization of a meeting of this scope requires dedicated teamwork and special funding. An international committee, consisting of Joop Hettema (The Netherlands, Director), Ian J. Deary (Scotland), Jan Strelau (Poland), and Gian Vittorio Caprara (Italy), took on the preparation of the workshop. Funding was acquired from NATO, who admitted the meeting as an Advanced Research Workshop in its International Scientific Exchange Programme. The workshop was held in Oisterwijk (The Netherlands) in August 1992.

Speakers for the ARW were invited with the special aim to obtain presentations from those working from a biological perspective as well as those working from a social point of view. Other speakers included those explicitly emphasizing both perspectives. The international nature of the workshop was stressed by inviting speakers from the USA and Canada as well as from several European countries. To obtain a clear view of the several positions advanced, a major intention of the workshop was to create an atmosphere of discussion. To that effect, for each paper a separate discussant was invited to prepare a commentary.

The character of several contributions -from speakers as well as discussants- was polemic. Discussions were vivid and many classical issues in personality were touched upon. For instance, while some of the discussants had a profound commitment with the dominant current trait approach, a sizable portion of the discussions was devoted to the Big Five against the background of the main issue.

Obviously, the workshop did not solve all the problems and controversies in personality psychology. However, on the central topic of the workshop -biological and social approaches to personality- a great deal of consensus became manifest. This permitted us to draw a rough outline of a new paradigm, integrating biological and social approaches to personality. The first chapter of this volume gives an overview. The book is organized in a way to facilitate reading. The order of presentation of the contributions roughly reflects a sequence from biological to social approaches. Each chapter is followed immediately by its commentary.

As stated earlier, a workshop like this requires special effort and financing. As editors we feel obliged to the NATO Science Committee for supplying the funds necessary for a successful workshop. We also want to express our gratitude to NWO, the Netherlands' Organization for Scientific Research, for supplying additional funds. And, finally, we are due thanks to Sandra Schruijer for organizational assistance, and to Francine Van Remunt and Rinus Verkooijen for carefully preparing the manuscripts of the workshop.

Joop Hettema
Tilburg University
The Netherlands

Ian J. Deary
University of Edinburgh
United Kingdom