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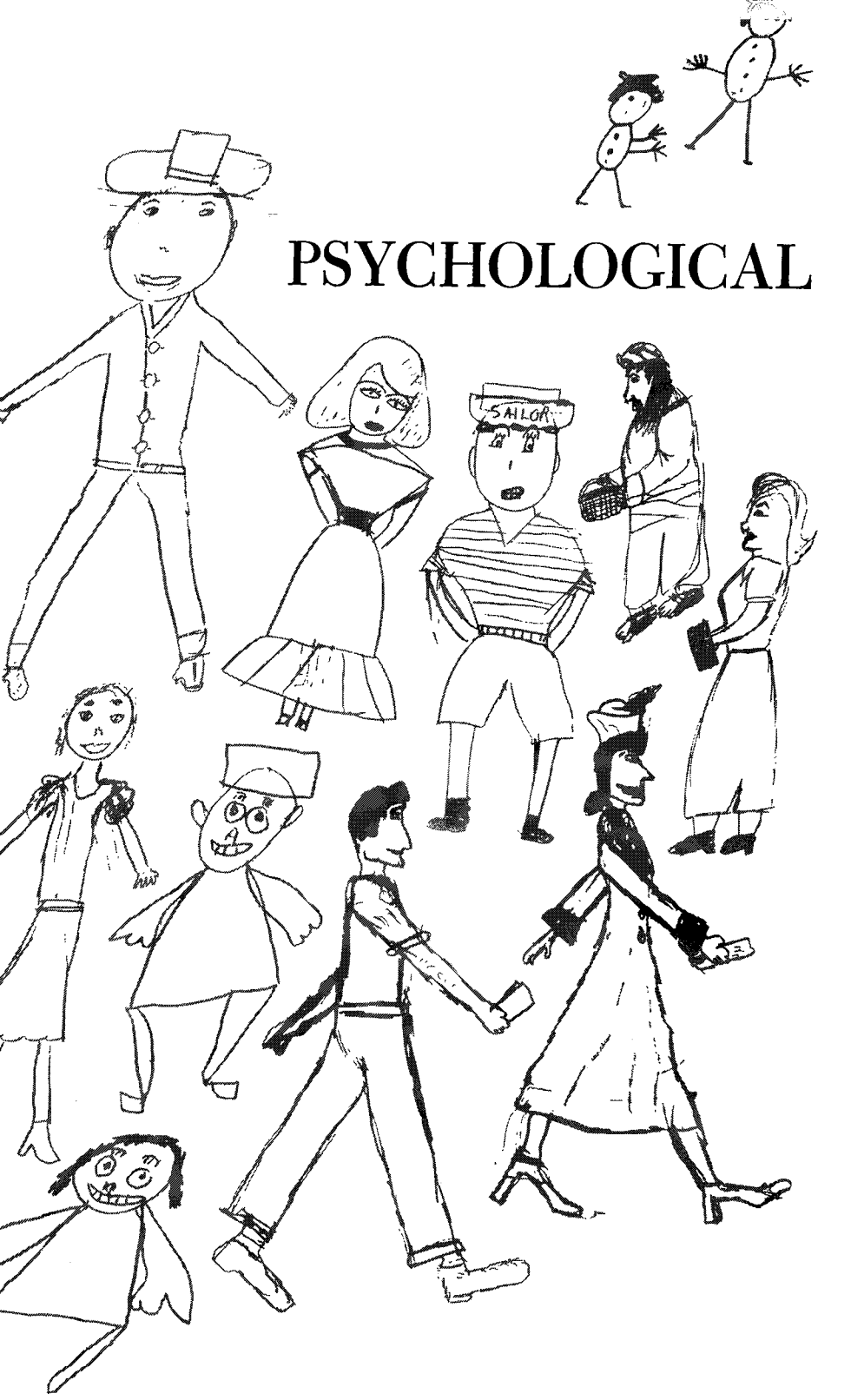
is concerned with deep-seated psychological patterns, encompassing the cognitive, personality and social functioning of the individual. It also deals with the stability of these patterns during development and with their origin in early experience in the family. A conceptual framework, supported by an extensive body of research evidence, is offered, interrelating the areas of functioning represented in these psychological patterns.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFERENTIATION seeks particularly to bring together cognitive and personality aspects of development, in contrast to most books in the field, which have not given particular attention to the interrelation between these areas. The authors have also contributed to the development of controlled experimental procedures for the study of personality. Included is an extensive bibliography and a comprehensive survey of the literature in the field.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFERENTIATION

PSYCHOLOGICAL



DIFFERENTIATION

Studies of Development

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FOREWORD

The psychological approach to the problem of human growth, from its inception in the last century as a topic of empirical inquiry up to the present, has undergone remarkable shifts which mirror the changing interests of the students of behavior. Emerging within the evolutionary framework of nineteenth century thought, the notion of human development was enthusiastically promoted by philosophically minded investigators such as Mark Baldwin, G. Stanley Hall, and others who looked upon ontogenetic inquiry as holding a key to the understanding of man. Soon, however, experimental work concerned with child growth fell prey to certain trends which, though not without merit in themselves, were rather adverse to the integral understanding of human development: we refer, in particular, to the trend toward an atheoretical collecting and ordering of detailed empirical data, and the trend toward practical ends such as entailed in mental testing.

Only relatively recently are we witnessing a "spiral" turn in the approach to child behavior and the formation of personality: that is, a return to the earlier view of the necessity of a theoretical network within which ontogenetic facts must be placed and evaluated—coupled, however, with the utilization of modern tools provided by general experimental psychology and quantitative methods of analysis. The pioneering work of Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, and Karp, presented in this book, truly reflects that new spirit.

As their basic conceptual framework Witkin and his co-investigators

adopt the tenet of developmental theory that human ontogenesis progresses in terms of an increasing polarity between the self and the nonself; implied in this view is the notion of a reciprocal relation of self-differentiation and nonself(social, objective)-differentiation. In synthesizing the empirical data by developmental conceptualization, the authors avail themselves of a powerful intellectual device for the understanding of cognitive behavior and the individual differences in cognitive mode.

As I see it, the application of a developmental notion such as differentiation to the study is of fourfold significance: Firstly, the concept of differentiation refers to *formal* rather than to *material* properties of organization; it thus makes it possible to interrelate the various functional areas and their unfolding in an individual in terms of formal as against content characteristics. Secondly, it is a concept dynamic rather than static in its essence; it thus makes possible the study of ways of experiencing and behavioral patterning in terms of processes rather than achievement. Thirdly, it implies a temporal element: it ties together present behavioral and experiential characteristics—of individuals or groups—with those of the past; in other words, it binds the state of being to that of becoming. Fourthly, it is a concept capable of defining ways of behavior in terms of their universality and generality as well as in terms of their specificity and individuality; that is, it makes it possible to characterize behavior by a developmental principle which, defined as a basic law, refers to the uniform nature of genetic change—but, at the same time, allows for multiformity of experience and articulation.

Now, the developmental conceptualization to which the authors subscribe is for them not a mere means of post-hoc theoretical interpretation of gathered facts; with the instinct of the explorer bent toward the acquisition of empirical knowledge they transform the genetic-theoretical axiom of self-nonself-differentiation into a hypothesis—the "differentiation hypothesis"—which in their skillful hands becomes capable of channeling the inquiry toward significant particular questions, as well as recruiting powerful and relevant experimental methods; moreover, in spite of its generality, the hypothesis is sufficiently incisive to be validated and tested against the findings without undue ambiguity.

For this undertaking the authors did not have to build on virgin ground; they brought to their task an already impressive array of evidence discovered in many years of previous experimentation by Witkin and co-workers, and summarized in the book *Personality through Perception.*

For one who—as the writer of this foreword—has always been fasci-

nated by the genesis and the formation of fertile ideas in the history of scientific thought, it is interesting to follow the development of the notions underlying the work of Witkin and his collaborators and the interaction of these notions with concrete experimentation briefly referred to in the introductory chapter of this book.

The beginnings of these investigations can be traced back to the work of Gestalt psychologists who were in constant search for perceptual situations that would demonstrate the dependency of perceptual properties of parts of the field on the (visual) field structure as a whole. In exploring such situations involving the perceptual property of the "upright" and using (in collaboration with Dr. Asch) the famous mirror set-up of Wertheimer, Witkin soon discovered that neither the interpretation in terms of universal visual Gestalt principles, such as that of part-whole relation, nor the interpretation in terms of postural factors (Gibson) suffices to account fully for the behavioral effects in the subjects. Moving away from an orthodox Gestalt-view as one "encapsulated within the organism" (Brunswik), Witkin showed that a rather satisfactory explanation could only be attained through an analysis in terms of individual differences. Thus the findings reported in the earlier book clearly pointed to the existence of two individual modes of perception, labeled "field-dependent" and "field-independent." Now, in order to arrive at the position reflected in the more recent work, two more steps had to be taken. One consisted in the extension of the early work, far beyond the rather restricted inquiry into different modes of perceptual orientation; these later studies aimed at a differential analysis of a comprehensive variety of cognitive functions as they pertain to the articulation of the inner self and the outer world, as well as the interaction between both. The other important step entailed the placing of the inquiry explicitly within a developmental framework: this made it possible to bring the dichotomy in mode of orientation under a uniform principle. That principle of differentiation has guided Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, and Karp in their quest toward such important problems as self-consistency in functional patterning, the contribution of early life experience to the establishment of individual patterns, the stability and constancy of such patterns during growth.

This is a book of prime importance. It gives reassurance to those of us who believe that the understanding of man cannot advance through the mere gathering and ordering of data, but only through the search for facts under the guidance of theoretical notions. These explorations into the little-known represent an achievement of no mean proportions: solid in method, exciting in outlook, profound in meaning.

HEINZ WERNER

PREFACE

The last decade and a half has witnessed a strong revival of interest in problems of cognition. Research has centered particularly on functional aspects of cognitive processes. The renewed concern with cognition has had many sources. These have been as diverse as, for example, the growing attention of psychoanalytic theory to problems of ego psychology; the accumulating evidence, from laboratory studies, of stable individual differences in perception; and the increasingly successful use of cognitive techniques in many kinds of personal assessment. The channels through which interest in cognition has found expression have been as diverse. One line of interest, in which considerable research effort has been invested, has been in styles of cognitive functioning as related to individual patterns of adaptation. The research of our laboratory, described particularly in an earlier book, *Personality through Perception,* has been in this tradition.

The present research has substantially confirmed the work reported in that book and has extended it in several directions. The main new departure has been the pursuit of problems of cognition in the context of development, maintaining, however, the concern with individuality that characterized the earlier work. The path followed has led far beyond cognition, both in research and conceptualization. In time particular clusters of complexly interrelated characteristics (including cognitive characteristics) in children became the main concern. The nature and basis of these clusters and their origin during development are the central issues of the present book.

We deal in this book with a wide range of areas of psychological functioning, a fact apparent in the list of chapter headings. Furthermore, a large body of evidence is presented, derived from our own studies, and also from numerous studies by others, concerned with the field-dependence-independence dimension of perception with which our work began. In addition, a theoretical framework is offered, dealing with relations among diverse aspects of individual functioning. Though the scope of the areas, evidence, and concepts dealt with is thus extensive, we have sought to make the book as a whole readable, regardless of the background of the reader. As an aid to this objective we have put in small type material of a more technical nature for readers with special interests in particular areas.

Our work has been greatly aided by many individuals and groups. It is a pleasure to acknowledge their help.

We wish, first of all, to express our gratitude to members of the staff of the Psychology Laboratory who, at different times, contributed, in a variety of ways, to the conduct of these studies. Hanna Marlens, Jane Schick, and Meta Steiner aided us in the development and application of a number of rating scales and served as independent judges in several analyses. Their specific contributions, as well as that of Elaine Karp, who also acted as an independent judge, are identified at appropriate places in the text. To Meta Steiner also goes our very warm appreciation for bringing her rich clinical knowledge and sensitivity to bear, in numerous discussions with us, upon the theoretical problems we were seeking to clarify. A special debt is acknowledged to Hanna Marlens, who, over a period of five years, helped very creatively in devising scales for evaluating several kinds of complex qualitative data. The large tasks of test administration and statistical analyses were greatly aided by our research assistants, Lillian Conn, Carol Johnson Eagle, Marvin Frankel, Beverly Goodman, Sheila Hafter, Richard Loeff, Shifra Nathan, Frank Plumeau, and Peggy Plumeau. The special quality of their relationships to the children we studied was of incalculable value in maintaining the cooperation of the children during the extended periods of testing required of them. Peggy Plumeau, over an eight-year period, helped particularly in preserving contacts with the children in the longitudinal studies and in dealing with the innumerable details which such studies inevitably entail. Carol Johnson Eagle was responsible for organizing and carrying out the testing program, in Topeka, Kansas, of the children who were the original subjects in the Topeka Infancy Study. Arno Gruen and Zelda Klapper, staff members from 1952 to 1954 and 1952 to 1955, respectively, participated in the initial preparation for some of the studies and in the testing of children in several of the early investigations. We are indebted to our secre-

taries, especially Wilhelmina Fleming, Sally Schneeweis, and Lillian Woronoff, who patiently and skillfully worked with the manuscript through its many revisions. Shifra Nathan aided greatly by her perceptive work on the index.

To Dr. Howard W. Potter, Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Dean of the Medical School during the time these studies were carried out, we are indebted for the warm support he gave our work.

A number of colleagues have helped us greatly by their critical reading of all or parts of the manuscript-in-progress. We are especially indebted to Abraham Edel, Rosalind Gould, Norman Harway, Bernard Kaplan, Sheldon Korchin, Weston La Barre, Helen Lewis, Gardner Murphy, Walter Riss, Leonard Saltzman, T. C. Schneirla, Meta Steiner, Edmund Weil, and Edith Weisskopf-Joelson; however, the authors alone take responsibility for the final work.

The studies we have done would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Board of Education of the City of New York. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Eleanor Harrington, principal, and Miss Fannie Cohen, former principal, of P.S. 152, Dr. Irwin Sulo Hecht, former principal of Andries Hudde Junior High School, and Dr. Jacob Ross, former principal of Midwood High School, who helped us make the initial contacts with the children and their parents, and who in many ways assisted us in maintaining our relations with the families.

This work has been supported by a grant (M-628) from the United States Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health. That support is gratefully acknowledged. The apparatus for the tilting-room–tilting-chair test was originally constructed under a grant from the Office of Naval Research, and its use in the present studies made possible by an equipment-loan contract.

Finally there are the indispensable collaborators in a study of this kind, the children who were our subjects and their parents. The boys and girls gave freely of their time and afforded us much pleasure as we worked with them. Their parents were most generous in sharing with us the unique experiences they had with their growing children.

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