

**OVERVIEW OF CURRENT THEORIES OF MAINSTREAM ACADEMIC,  
RESEARCH, AND APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY**

Clara B. Jones, Ph.D.  
Fayetteville State University

N.B. Na x Nu-----→ Be

Each theory of combination of theories can be employed to evaluate questions related to behavior, brain processes, and emotions. The information below gives you a sketch of the factors that each theoretical view considers most significant in determining behavioral events in time and space.

<b>THEORY</b>	<b>MAJOR EMPHASIS</b>	<b>THEORIST(S)</b>
Psychoanalytic (Freudian, Psychodynamic)	unconscious motivation, especially sexual and aggressive “drives;” “anxiety” as primary diagnostic criterion of “neurosis;” a <u>stage</u> theoretical view of personality development; “psychoanalysis” is also a technique of therapy (N.B. emphasis on abnormal behavior)	Freud Erikson Fenichel Rank Jung Adler Bowlby
Humanistic	conscious motivation; Emphasis on conscious & aware interpretation of personal experiences; for normal personality assessment, concept of “self-actualization;” in therapy, emphasis on <u>insight</u> (from the Gestalt theorists) and “unconditional positive regard;” generally, theories of personality development, <u>not</u> stage theories; theories generally optimistic, emphasizing capacity to change	Rogers Maslow Goldstein
Cognitive	emphasis on “information processing”[e.g., artificial	Tversky Khanemann

	intelligence (AI)] and rational decision-making (e.g., decision theory & game theoretical analysis); strong emphasis on relationship between learning & memory & rational processes: S---→O---→R models; recent emphasis on neuroscientific analysis	Tulving Neisser Piaget Schachter Anderson
Behavioral Psychology	emphasis on lawful relations between inputs (stimuli) and outputs (responses); S---→R models; most current work investigates relative nature of stimulation and biological basis of behavior	Pavlov Skinner Seligman Thompson Staddon Herrnstein
Social Learning	Modeling= Identification + Imitation; thought to be primary mechanism in transmission of culture	Bandura
Biopsychology	Identifying the biological basis of Behavior (molecular, cellular, Genetic, neural)	Thompson Gazzaniga Plomin Kety