

Preface

Personality theory usually focuses on either psychopathology or a trait analysis. Psychopathology is what goes wrong when our mind takes a less than normal course of development or we develop under adverse conditions and experience significant trauma. For many of us, our development is fairly normal so there is a greater interest in normal patterns and individual differences rather than psychopathology.

Trait analysis focuses on alleged measurable traits that influence how we act. Traits are the familiar concepts like assertiveness or extraversion. Many psychologists believe that we can measure a trait and say a person is "85% extraverted." Once the trait is measured, the person should function in an extraverted fashion. But how any trait manifests, why it is that way or what purpose it might serve for the individual are all up to someone else to determine. It is nice to know that a person is aggressive but it is more critical to know what motivates it, how it got that way and when it will show up.

While both of these approaches to understanding the personality are worthwhile for certain applications, what is missing is an overall model that focuses on the dynamics of the normal personality. This effort is designed to address that need and posits five power and four bonding dynamics that interact in a fixed developmental sequence. Each dynamic has a life of its own, builds upon the other dynamics and influences the development of what went before. All dynamics interact and create a changing entity called a Personality. Here is an opportunity to unravel those dynamics and look at their contribution on an individual basis. As you read about each dynamic, its origin and specific development; you will undoubtedly see yourself as well as others.

Some dynamics may seem quite foreign to you personally but will represent others you may know. As the personality grows and develops, the dynamics start to merge and blend, so the personality becomes a chaotic mass where the boundaries between dynamics are hard to see. The goal of the mature and well functioning person is to integrate these dynamics so one has a capacity to utilize each one in the most appropriate setting. However, for most of us, there is an emphasis on three or four dynamics and the others fall into an inferior or underutilized position. By understanding these dynamics, you will better understand yourself as well as others.

This book follows the development of a fictitious, protagonist called Ralph as he struggles and learns about his dynamics and their impact upon his personality. As you read on, you can struggle with Ralph as he tries to define who he is, what is important to him and how he fits "in with" and interacts with his society. You will not agree with everything you see and you may even take offense at some parts. But there is little doubt that you will find yourself and some of your own personal struggles in this book. In any event, how you take the journey and what it does to you, is up to you. Bon voyage!

One option is to take the MAP test on page 251 and discover your "preferred dynamics" before you start the journey. This is a grossly simplified test and only gives you a rough idea of your basic dynamics and says nothing about your defenses or other personality issues but it is a place to start and can make the trip more rewarding.

The Characters that you see in this book are designed to "reify the concepts" and make a potentially boring or complex subject more fun. Even if you feel that you have seen these characters somewhere else at some other time, they are fictitious. There is nothing implied by these characters with the exception that power dynamics are associated with masculine inclinations and bonding or supportive with feminine. Here are the characters.

SYSTEM MODEL OF THE MIND

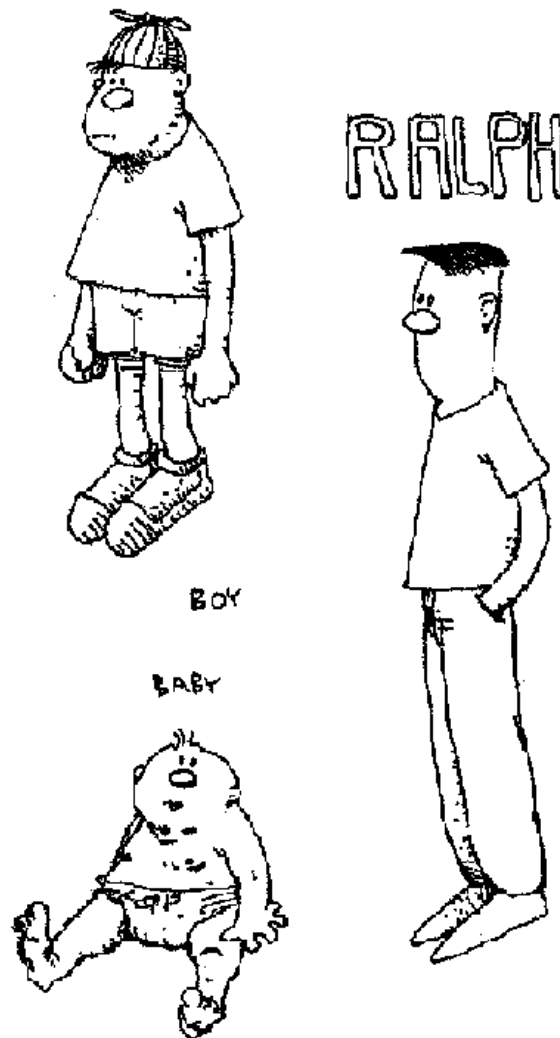
WRITTEN BY
ED MURRAY

ARTWORK BY
JEFF BROWN
1991



You have to love Ralph as he struggles to find himself.

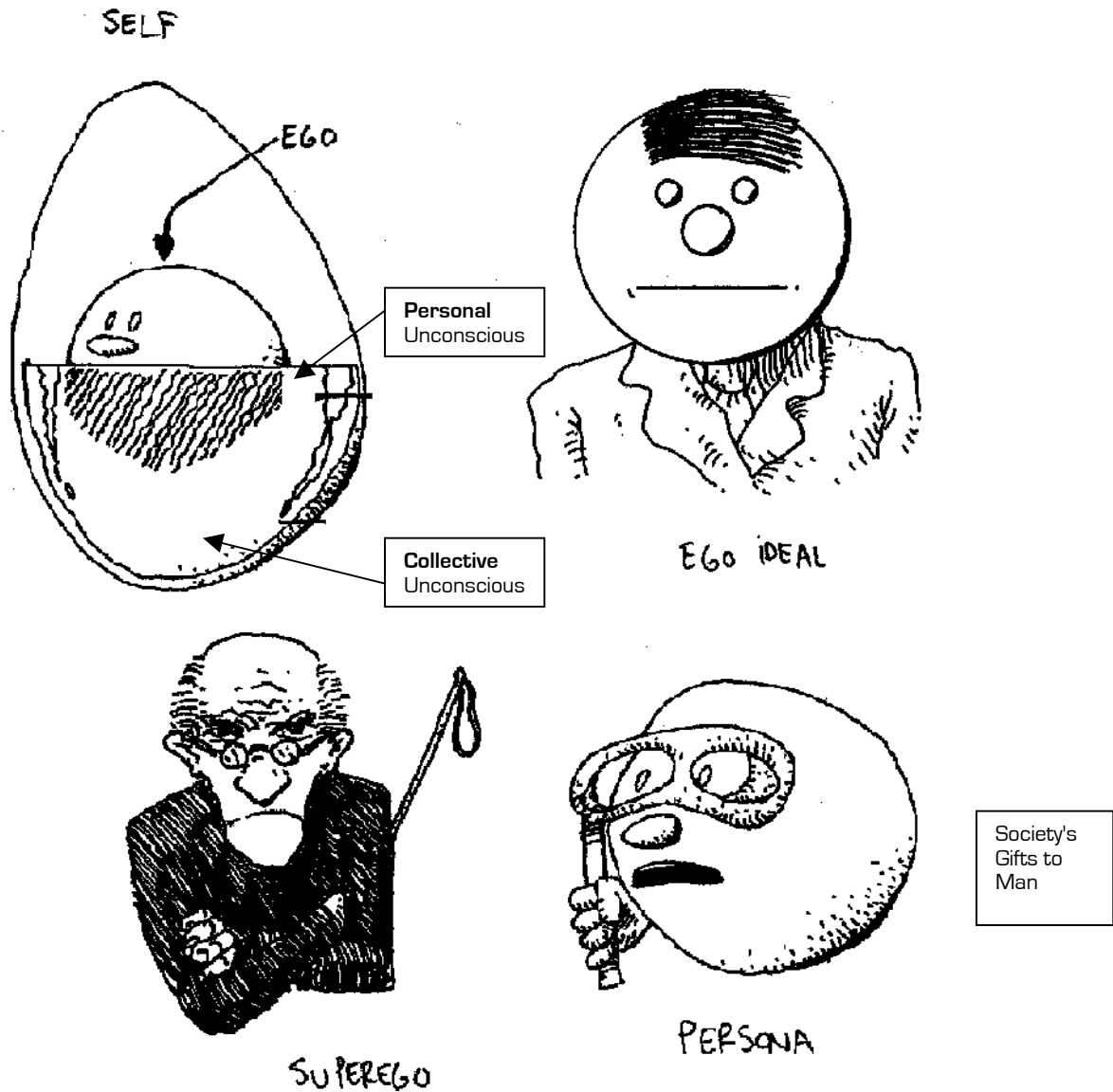
He takes us through the uncharted areas of the Normal Personality



The Art work was done by Jeff Brown from my stick drawings.

He was a very talented High School student in 1991.

These are the secondary characters who show up and give us a few insights into who we are:



The **SELF** is large and is all potential. Inside the Self is the **EGO** and most of that is probably Unconscious. Some of it is our personal unconscious (i.e., things Repressed) and some of it is about all of humanity and is called the Collective unconscious.

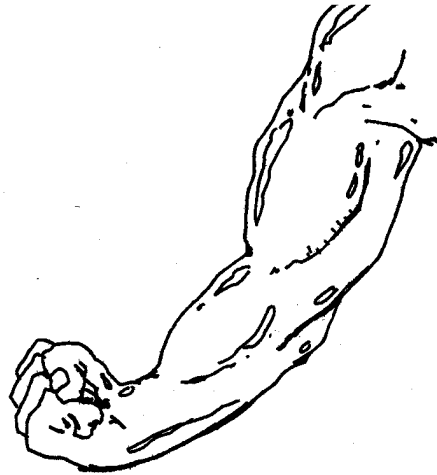
The **EGO Ideal** is the model of who we want to become.

The **Superego** holds the Ego Ideal (i.e., when we fall short, we experience guilt and shame) that drives us to do better and houses the Conscience (if we have one).

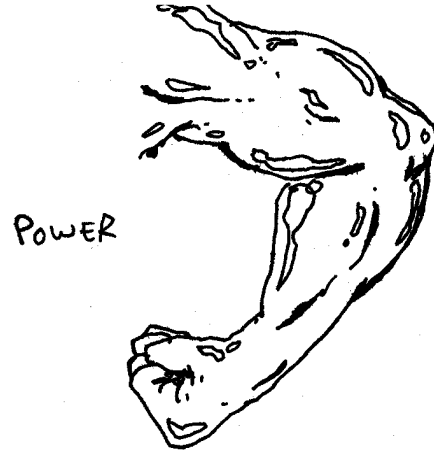
The **Persona** is a repository of what we should look like in public.

The Forces that are inside of us and "outside of us", all fight for control. They are:

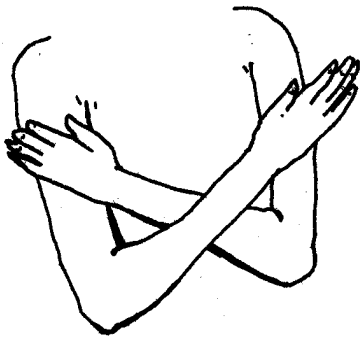
FORCES



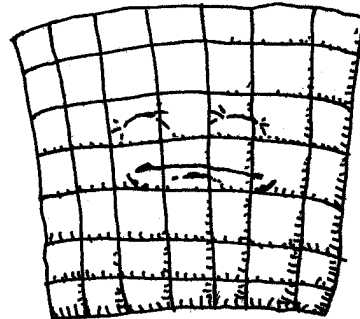
BONDING



POWER



UNCONCIOUS MATRIX

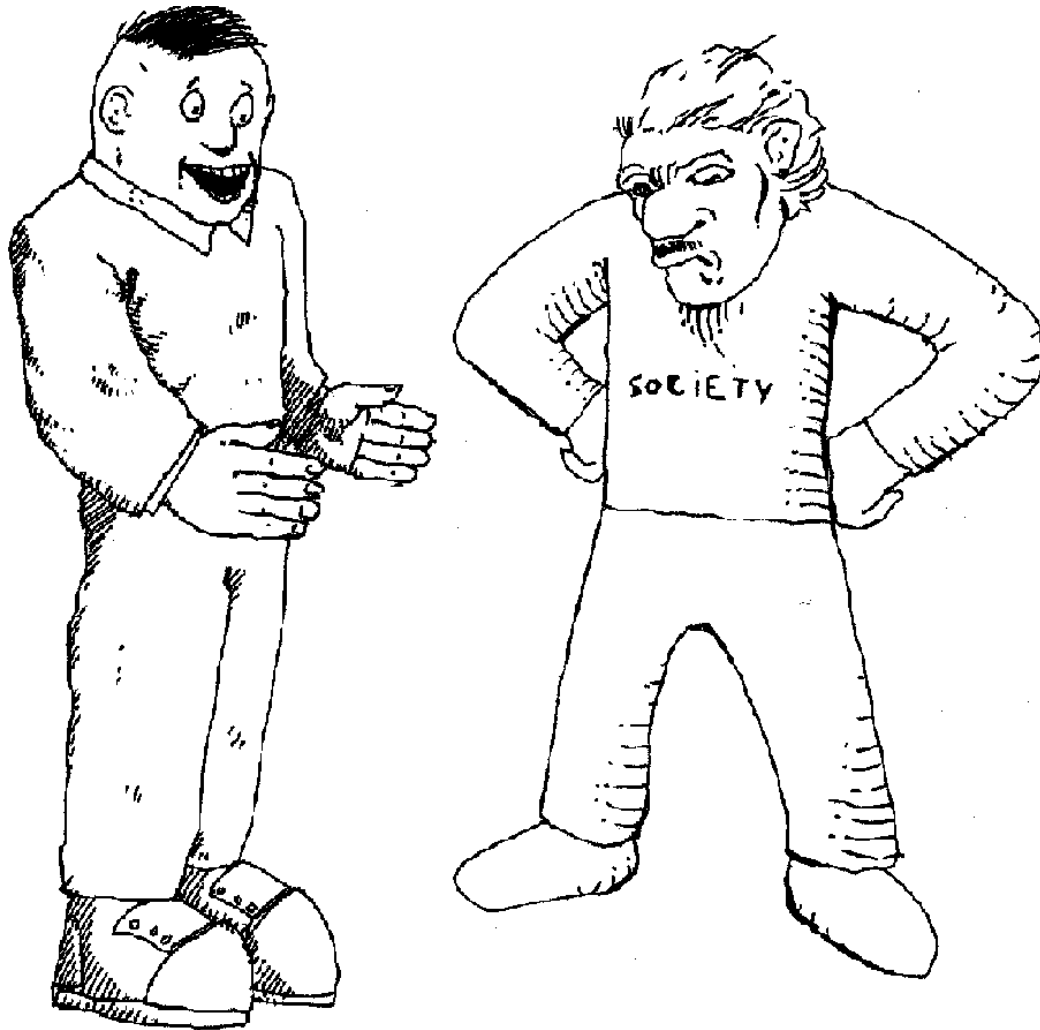


The **Power** is the masculine, taking, controlling and destroying.

The **Bonding** is the feminine, supporting, giving and creating.

The **Unconscious Matrix** is a giant Grid of Power (i.e., from the collective unconscious) that is greater than who "we appear to be." At any point in time, it can take over (it is asexual, more primitive and doesn't look like a human dynamic) and either crush the individual or save his butt.

These last two characters are simultaneously pushing against the individual by trying to control him and supporting and guiding his development. They can also give the person a sense of who he is (e.g., role) and a sense of meaning. It is the struggle for autonomy and freedom on one hand versus belonging and feeling part of something on the other.



They may be the same person. It is hard to know. There is the **Culture** on the left who is everything about who you are in space and time. It is all the social structure, history, beliefs, religion, art, law, technology and organizations. Through your culture's eyes you see your "culture's world." It gives you your language and philosophy of life. You can never fully escape its presence. You will never know how much it is truly who you are.

Society is simpler and tends to be the concrete expectations that try to control your behavior and tell you who you should be (a potential source of the ego ideal). You may be able to escape from this guy, Thoreau thought he did. I doubt it.

These are the major players that are inside of you. Some are very well-developed and others are barely utilized. These are the only possible inhabitants of your ego. They come in pairs, except for the first one. They are easier to see if you turn the book.

