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Abstract

The historical basis of personality assessment that led to the development of today's approaches and applications is described. The modern era of personality assessment began in late nineteenth-century Europe. Early twentieth-century highlights included the development of projective techniques like the Rorschach and several early self-report inventories, culminating in the development of the most widely used measure, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). The most recent 30-year period showed expansions into personnel screening; clinical assessment, including wide use in forensic settings; and therapeutic assessment. However, contemporary controversies are apparent with two of the most widely used measures, the Rorschach and the MMPI instruments. These controversies are described, including concerns about the Exner Comprehensive System for the Rorschach and the last five years of changes to the MMPI-2, including the introduction of the Restructured Clinical (RC) Scales, the adoption of the Fake Bad Scale (FBS) into the instrument, and the release of the MMPI-2 Restructured Form (MMPI-2-RF). Current challenges facing psychologists in personality assessment are highlighted.