

“Examining the Evidence”

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Eighty-eight years after the publication of Jung's *Psychological Types* (1921), the core assumptions and propositions about his model continue to capture the imagination of researchers, writers, and practitioners in human development around the world. Initially made accessible to the general public through the practical work of Isabel Myers and her instrument, there are numerous successful and effective assessment methods growing in use. Growth of use of instruments, which are presumed to be based on Jung's theory, has witnessed a concurrent increase in published research articles supportive and critical of both the tools and the model.

It is reasonable to say that experimental psychologists have declared Jung's work “irrelevant” and trait explanations of behavior as “verifiable facts,” as most noted in the five-factor model. In the light of this history, there is an increasing awareness of the need for focused, critical, analytical, and scholarly attention to the theory and measurement of psychological type. To this end, a research forum is being held entitled, “Examining the Evidence,” to provide for a serious discussion of these issues.

You are invited to participate in three ways:

- (1) Offer comments, questions, and suggestions to the developing research agenda on the special blog set up at <http://typeresearchforum.blogspot.com/>. You can offer research suggestions and ask questions, and follow topics on the blog.
- (2) Think about research you can do, download the Call for Research pdf from the APTi homepage, or contract me at Pearman@qualifying.org.
- (3) Share the call for research material with as many people as you can to encourage substantial research efforts.

Preparations are being made to have the event delivered over the web for those who cannot travel to the actual event. The success of this effort will depend on our energies to support research initiatives.

Jung set the stage for this important event. He wrote in the *Preface* of his work:

“..the psychological views presented in this book are of wide significance and application, and are therefore better treated in a general frame of reference than left in the form of a specialized scientific hypothesis.”

He seems to be alerting the reader that the scope of the work should be understood in context rather than formalized into a scientific perspective. Yet this urge to test the model with scientific

methods is precisely what emerged as measurement tools became available. To remind us that he was writing during a time of transition in the emerging field of psychology, he wrote in the first chapter:

“So long as the historical world has existed there has ways been psychology, but an objective psychology is only of recent growth. We could say of the science of former times that in proportion to the lack of objective psychology there is an increase in the rate of subjectivity. (Paragraph 1).

The tension between a subjectivity and objectivity in exploring psychological type continues today. He even predicted the Tower of Babel that would ensue without attention to rigorous analysis when at the end of the book he wrote:

“The typological system I have proposed is an attempt, grounded on practical experience, to provide an explanatory basis and theoretical framework for the boundless diversity that has hitherto prevailed in the formation of psychological concepts. In a science as young as psychology, limiting definitions will sooner or later become an unavoidable necessity. Some day psychologists will have to agree upon certain basic principles secure from arbitrary interpretation if psychology is not to remain an unscientific and fortuitous conglomeration of individual opinions.”(Paragraph 987)

So with Jung’s frame as our platform, fifty years of research in the “bank,” and a world-wide scope of researchers and analysts, we hope to arrange a benchmark event to give the question its due: **Is there sound evidence for the validity of type theory, especially type dynamics and type development?**

Read the details in the Call for Research you can download from the APTi homepage or contact me, Pearman@qualifying.org. Follow the emerging discussions and questions on the blog as noted above.

Jung, C.G. (1921). Psychological Types.