

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Cult of Personality by Annie Murphy Paul
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In a well-documented and highly readable critique of personality tests, Paul examines how the development flaws in, and applications of, personality tests are leading us to miseducate our children, mismanage our companies, and misunderstand ourselves.

Paul, Mind/Body columnist for *Shape* and former senior editor of *Psychology Today*, maintains that personality tests “cannot begin to capture the complexity of human beings.”

Perhaps no other personality test has achieved the cult status of the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator**, an instrument created in the 1940s by a Pennsylvania housewife.

Fiercely proud of the test she called “my baby,” Isabel Myers believed that it could bring about world peace – or at least make everyone a little nicer. The Myers-Briggs, which assigns each test taker a personality type represented by four letters, is now given to 2.5 million people each year, and is used by 89 of the companies in the Fortune 100.

Employed by businesses to “identify strengths” and “facilitate teamwork,” the Myers-Briggs has also been embraced by a multitude of individuals who experience a revelation (what devotees call the “aha reaction”) upon learning about psychological type.

Their enthusiasm persists despite research showing that as many as three-quarters of test takers achieve a different personality type when tested again, and that the 16 distinctive types described by the Myers-Briggs have no scientific basis whatsoever.

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