

# 8. Freud and the Psychodynamic Approach

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*. . . I have long since known that I am no genius, and I have no longer understood how I could ever have wished to be one. I am not even very gifted; my whole talent for work probably lies in my character traits and in the lack of preeminent intellectual weakness . . . . Do you know what Breuer said to me one evening . . . . He said that he had found out there was concealed in me under the shroud of shyness an immeasurably bold and fearless human being. But I have always believed that and merely never dared tell anybody.*

-Sigmund Freud<sup>1</sup>

*Freud had noted a little melodramatically that psychoanalysis had presented humanity with the third of three historic injuries to its megalomania. Copernicus had established that the earth is not the center of the universe; Darwin had invited mankind into the animal kingdom; now he, Freud, was teaching the world that the ego is largely the servant of unconscious and uncontrollable forces in the mind. Could one expect the world to understand, let alone welcome, such a message?*

-Peter Gay<sup>2</sup>

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An old familiar joke goes like this. Two psychiatrists meet in the hallway. The first says “Hello,” then as he passes as the second pauses and ponders aloud “Hmm, I wonder what he meant by that?”

The source of the humor in this joke is simply the Freudian idea that there are hidden motives in people’s behavior, even in the most mundane of activities, in the things we speak or do. Because these motives are unconscious, the speaker herself is unaware of them. All of us have heard of the Freudian slip (of the tongue). If a college professor says “Today we’re going to talk about Sigmund

*Fraud*,” does that tell us that the professor unconsciously disrespects the famous Viennese analyst? Or is it truly “just” an accidental lapse? Has it no special meaning – as in the saying, often attributed to Freud, that “sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.<sup>3</sup>”? While it is true that there are many writers who consider Freud’s contribution to be of dubious value, many others consider him a true genius (Hunt, 1993). Freud’s ideas are, and always have been, controversial. This chapter seeks not to resolve these controversies so much as to stimulate critical thinking about this man and his ideas.

As most people know, Sigmund Freud pioneered the study of the unconscious mind. He believed that people are largely unaware of their true feelings and motives, especially those having sexual content, or dealing with unacknowledged aggression. Freud considered sex and aggression to be the two basic instincts that motivate all behavior, and he believed that people are largely unaware of these driving forces in themselves.

## **A Preview of Freudian Ideas: Little Hans and The Oedipus Complex**

Consider now one of Freud’s most controversial ideas, that of the *Oedipus complex*. Freud derived his idea from several sources, including self-analysis based on his own childhood dreams and recollections (Demorest, 2005) and on his analysis of patients in psychotherapy, who reported on their earliest childhood memories. Freud believed that the Oedipus complex typically occurred in boys as a part of family relationship dynamics (the counterpart to the Oedipus complex in girls is called the *Elektra complex*). To understand the dynamics of the child/parent interactions in the Oedipal/Elektra situations it is helpful to first relate the myth upon which Freud based his ideas.

### **Oedipus, the Myth**

Oedipus was, in Greek myth and in the play *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, the child of King Laius of Thebes and his wife, Jocasta. In the play, a prophesy by Apollo’s oracle informed Laius that his

infant son would someday kill him and marry Jocasta. To prevent this, the King gave the boy to a shepherd, to be abandoned in the mountains to die. But instead the son was rescued and raised in another land. Years later Oedipus meets Laius on a road, but of course, he does not realize that the man he meets is his father. They quarrel and Oedipus kills Laius, thereby fulfilling half the oracle's prophesy.

Subsequently Oedipus solves the riddle of the sphinx, ending a pestilence in Thebes which was caused by that creature. As a hero, he marries Jocasta, completing the prophecy. When he later learns the truth about his relationship to Laius and Jocasta, he is so overcome with remorse that he blinds and exiles himself. Jocasta hangs herself. As in all good tragedies, the characters' fates are sealed from the beginning. How Freud believed that a similar drama unfolds in childhood is considered next.

[The riddle, incidentally, was this: "What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs in the evening?" Morning, noon, and evening are metaphors for the three stages of life: infancy (a baby crawls on all fours), adulthood (a person walks on two legs), and old age (walking with a cane). Oedipus correctly answered the riddle: "A man." The sphinx then destroyed herself, rather than Oedipus the traveler.]

### **Oedipus, the Complex**

What could be worse crimes than patricide and maternal incest? Such acts are considered taboos and are universally condemned in all societies. Freud believed that young children harbor sexual feelings toward their opposite sex parents – the boy toward his mother and the girl toward her father. But because of strict societal taboos, expressions of these feelings are not tolerated, so children are discouraged from expressing them. Yet Freud believed that such feelings don't just go away; instead they are *repressed*, or forgotten and pushed back into the unconscious. There they express themselves only indirectly and symbolically, in dreams and in fantasies, in which their true meanings are disguised. Between ages three to six children learn to repress such feelings for their parents, but they create conflicts within the child that need further resolution. The child, Freud believed, wishes to

“do away with” the same-sex parent and have an exclusive relationship with the opposite-sex parent. So the girl, for example, sees her mother as competition for her father’s affection, and wishes that the mother could be out of the picture. Freud believed that these feelings of the girl for the father are indeed sexual, although (as will be seen shortly) Freud had a very broad definition of sex.

Actually the situation is considerably more complicated. The child’s feelings toward each parent are not entirely one-sided but are rather characterized by *ambivalence*, as when the boy Hans aggressively punches his father and in the next moment kisses those spots in one of Freud’s better known case studies (Freud, 1909/1959). Indeed, ambivalence is every bit as characteristic of the Oedipal relationship as competition. And Freud recognized that ambivalent feelings are a part of all relationships. In the most loving and committed relationship there are always times during which the partners feel anything but loving feelings toward one another. And what proud parent has never said (or thought) “I’d like to kill my kids!”?

### **The Displacement of Emotions**

In what is perhaps Freud’s most famous work, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud, 1900/1965), he discussed how repressed feelings appear in dreams in which the anxiety producing object is symbolically *displaced* to a different source. In a dream about a fearful figure, such as a wild animal or an ogre, the beast in question actually represents someone else – a boy’s father, for example, whom he is angry with or afraid of. In interpreting dreams and fantasies, Freud distinguished between the dream as recounted by the patient, which he referred to as the *manifest content*, and the unrecognized symbolic meaning as the *latent content*. It is the job of the psychoanalyst to help the patient interpret and understand the latent content (e.g., ogre equals father; it is the father who is the real object of the displaced emotion).

Displacement occurs not only in dreams but also in everyday life. A comic example is that a man is treated unfairly by his employer, then comes home and yells at his wife. If his wife doesn’t feel she has the power to speak up for herself she may

instead vent her anger on her oldest child. The oldest child then takes it out on a younger sibling, who then kicks the dog, who in turn bites the cat, and so on, through an endless chain of displacements of aggression. But as it stands this little scenario misses an important point, which is that for Freud displacement is often an *unconscious* process, and the object of displacement then becomes a *symbolic* representation of the true source. Freud believed that this was the case with a phobia of “Little Hans;” Hans had a fear of horses, and in this phobia the horses were merely symbolic of the true source of the boy’s fears: his father’s wrath.

### **The Case of Little Hans<sup>4</sup>**

Freud (1909) highlighted the Oedipal struggles of a little boy named Hans. Freud began his study of Hans when he was only three, but his observations continued until the boy was five years old. Freud met Hans as a young boy at least once, and was impressed by his precociousness, or in Freud’s admiring words, the boy was “a paragon of every wickedness” (Freud, 1909, p. 15; cited in Gay, 1988, p. 256). But for the most part Freud’s analysis was mainly based on his father’s reports, some of which were conducted by correspondence. (Of interest also is the fact that this was Freud’s only formal analysis based on the study of an actual child – his psychoanalytic theory of development is based mainly on adults’ recollections of childhood experiences.)

Hans’ mother had been a patient of Freud’s and his father, Max Graf – a physician and musicologist – both attended Freud’s Wednesday night psychoanalysis study group. Both parents considered themselves relatively enlightened in their approach to child rearing, or in other words, they were open to Freud’s ideas about frankness concerning sexual matters. But their earlier attempts at parenting with Hans were not as enlightened as the mother, concerned with Hans’ touching his penis, told the boy that if he continued she would send him to the doctor to cut off his “wee-wee-maker.” And before his sister was born the parents could do no better at first for an explanation than invoking the old stork story. As Hans was a bright boy who doubted this account they then explained that the baby developed inside the mother and

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eventually was expelled in the matter of a turd, or “lumpf” as the German slang had it. Needless to say this, too, was a rather poor account of biological pregnancy and childbirth. It led Hans to associate babies with excrement, which he viewed as rather disgusting.

From the father’s reports it seemed obvious that the boy had strong ties to his mother that were both physical and emotional – Hans asked her to touch his penis as well as for other, more characteristically childish, forms of physical affection. But the kinds of anxieties Hans developed were no doubt exacerbated by his mother’s threats to have his father cut off his penis if he continued to masturbate.

Odd though it may seem today, such threats were quite common in European society in those times. Childhood masturbation was – and is – common, but parents were especially embarrassed by its practice in those days. So Hans developed very real *castration fears*, which is one symptom of the boy’s Oedipal complex. But Freud believed that even without such threats, a boy notices that girls and women do not have a penis, hence, he perceives them as castrated or incomplete boys or men, and thus develops castration anxiety.

Hans came to develop his horse phobia. He was so frightened of horses that he feared leaving his house. While the site of horse-drawn carts and carriages was common in his times, there was no obvious reason for Hans or other children to fear them. But Hans was especially afraid of *white horses with black muzzles and blinders*. His specific fears were that a horse would bite him or would fall over. Freud saw these fears of horses as displaced fear of his father. The father, it happens, wore a black mustache and spectacles. In Freud’s interpretation the blinders thus symbolized his father’s glasses and the muzzle represented his moustache. Hans’s fears that a horse might bite him symbolized his fear of castration by his father, as punishment for his masturbation and his sexual desires toward his mother. The fallen horse symbolized his guilt and fears over “killing” his father out of jealousy.

A discussion of how Hans resolves his Oedipus complex, as well as a discussion of the female equivalent, the Elektra complex (which includes the idea that girls and women experience *penis*

*envy* – roughly the parallel of castration fears in boys), must wait until a more complete discussion of Freud's theory of psychosexual development unfolds. For now it is well to ask whether Freud's ideas resonate at all with readers. Often students of today (just like people in Freud's own times) have a great deal of trouble accepting many of these ideas, but especially ideas like castration fears in boys and penis envy in girls. Regardless of what one thinks of these particular concepts, however, it would be a shame to reject all of Freud's ideas based on the evaluation of just his most controversial ones. To gain a perspective on Freud's own views it will help to look at the times he lived in, and how they may have influenced his thinking.

## **Sigmund Freud: The Man and His Era**

To be certain, Freud had great difficulty finding acceptance in his own times. Freud was born in Moravia – now part of the Czech Republic – in 1856, but his family moved to Vienna four years later, where he spent most of his life. Freud was a brilliant but complex man! The fact that he was a Jew, at a time when anti-Semitism was strongly prevalent in Europe, contributed to this non-acceptance and Freud's feelings of being an outsider. But it was also true that people didn't want to think of themselves in such a base, animalistic way – as not being fully aware of their true motives, and of behaving according to hidden motives which were essentially sexual and aggressive in nature. While today's students might find some of these ideas to be odd or quaint rather than threatening, they, too, often have trouble accepting them.

It does seem obvious that the Oedipal fears of castration observed in Hans appear to have been very real. But consider the times and place in which this boy lived. Hans's parents *did* in fact intimidate him with the fear of castration, and this practice was fairly common in the Victorian society in which Freud himself dwelled as a child (the era ends roughly around the start of the twentieth century, when Freud first began to publish his most important and controversial writings). People *were* in fact inclined to prudishness, and to ignore their sexual feelings and impulses,

which were not openly discussed in “polite” society – a trend that lasted to some extent well into the middle of the twentieth century, when the then shocking Kinsey reports on male and female sexuality appeared (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). Society was then at the threshold of the so-called sexual revolution of the 1960s which was given a hearty boost by the availability of the birth control pill. But in Victorian England it was common to cover piano legs with lace doilies (and much of this prudishness was evident on the European continent as well). This practice seems to have been a form of modesty, for showing bare skin was considered quite immodest and indeed, improper – even on wooden furniture! The demand for modesty was especially pronounced in women, who wore lengthy dresses with tight corsets and bustles, but both sexes wore bathing suits that covered most of their flesh at public beaches or in other areas in which recreational swimming took place. People were not at all open in their discussions of sex, especially with members of the opposite sex, and even referred to the leg euphemistically and generically as a “limb.” In Victorian England, proper women of the upper classes were taught that sex was for reproduction, not for pleasure, which engendered a double-standard: many men sought the services of prostitutes for satisfaction that was often not available to them in their marriages. Abstinence was then the chief form of family planning. Perhaps it is plausible, then, to suspect that the public *suppression* of sexual expression actually lead to private *repression*.

To his credit, Freud conducted a continuing and penetrating psychological self-analysis throughout his years as a practicing psychoanalyst. He realized that he had, indeed, been his mother’s pet (Freud was the first of eight children, not including two adult stepbrothers), and that he developed possessive feelings toward her. He recalled having erotic feelings for his mother at an early age after seeing her without clothing. He also always harbored very ambiguous feelings toward his father. When a brother died in infancy, he felt a great deal of guilt; it was as though he believed that, through his jealousy and secret wishes, he was responsible for the death of this child (Demorest, 2005). Demorest also makes the case that Freud’s break with his early mentor and collaborator,



Joseph Breuer, involved displaced feelings of competition with his father; and that his break with his follower Carl Jung involved displaced feelings of *sibling rivalry* (competition with and jealousy of brothers and sisters); Freud allegedly feared Jung as a usurper to his position of leadership of the psychoanalytic movement. Demorest argues, however, the reality was different: Jung simply disagreed with Freud about the importance he placed upon sexuality, as did many of Freud's successors, and Jung also had his own, differing ideas about the nature of the unconscious mind<sup>5</sup>.

Like Piaget, Freud was very studious as a youngster and he read extensively on a wide range of topics, including philosophy and religion. He decided on medicine as a career because of his interest in research, but also he felt that as a Jew in those times he would (and in fact did) experience discrimination in an academic setting<sup>6</sup>. Despite the dual obstacles of ethnic prejudice and Victorian reserve, Freud's ideas began to gain credence in many circles; increasingly so after 1900. And despite its controversial nature, sexuality was nonetheless a topic of great interest in those times. (Indeed, any topic that is suppressed in a culture assumes an air of extreme interest.) Thus according to Demorest, "Rather than being the first to broach a taboo subject, then, Freud fit in with a prevailing cultural trend in emphasizing the importance of sexual impulses in psychic life" (2005, p. 176). Also, Freud was by no means the first person to grapple with the nature of the unconscious mind as a repository for sexual and aggressive impulses. The way had been led by philosophers going back at least to Schopenhauer, who stressed the importance of the sexual instinct and formulated a concept of an unconscious will (Ellenberger, 1970). But Walter Kaufmann (1980/1992) rightfully proclaimed Friedrich Nietzsche the first *depth psychologist* (one who deals with the psychology of the unconscious<sup>7</sup>). Freud acknowledged his debt to Nietzsche in anticipating many of his own ideas, including the notion of sublimation (discussed below). He also worked with and was influenced by neurologists Jean-Marie Charcot and Joseph Breuer, both important pioneers in the study of the unconscious mind.

Charcot used hypnotism to study the psychological disorder then known as hysteria. This disorder is characterized by physical

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symptoms such as blindness or partial paralysis that have no known neurological cause. Hysteria was much more common in women, and sometimes included false pregnancy. Hysteria, though rare today, was not uncommon in Freud's time. Charcot observed that hysterical patients were highly suggestible because he could induce symptoms of hysteria from them under hypnosis. Freud excelled at languages and translated some of Charcot's work from French to German (he also translated philosopher John Stuart Mill's works from English to German; Kaufmann, 1980/1992).

Working with Breuer, Freud came to believe that hysteria had psychogenic origins. The two men published *Studies in Hysteria* in 1895 (Breuer & Freud, 1895/1955). Freud thought hysteria resulted from guilt over repressed sexual desires. He and Breuer disagreed on the causes of hysteria, however, as Breuer believed that not every case of hysteria was due to repressed sexual feelings (Demorest, 2005)<sup>8</sup>. But it was Breuer who came to recognize that hysterical patients could be relieved of their symptoms by talking through their problems, which influenced Freud in his development of the psychoanalytic method. Breuer noted that when patients came to see the actual psychological reasons for their symptoms they also experienced an emotional release, or *catharsis*. Freud found this "talking cure" a more effective form of therapy than hypnosis and it became the foundation of his method of therapy.

Freud founded the International Psychoanalytic Association in 1910. Its membership included many illustrious names, including Freud's protégé, Carl Jung. Freud installed Jung as president of the society partly because he believed that this man could bring greater respectability as a relative outsider, as Jung was from Zurich, and was neither Jewish nor Viennese. He also promoted Jung as his heir apparent in the psychoanalytic movement. However, the two men failed to see things in the same light. Jung thought himself too independent minded for Freud; he had his own ideas, so a break seemed inevitable. Indeed, many strong minded followers of the psychoanalytic movement also broke with Freud, including Wilhelm Stekel and Alfred Adler. Perhaps Freud's dominant personality and his insistence on ideas about the importance of childhood sexuality made it difficult for others to remain loyal to

him. But Kaufmann (1980/1992) and Gay (1988) also make the case that some of Freud's early followers could themselves be difficult.

But Freud was a great thinker and a prolific writer who did, indeed, change his mind about some of his earlier ideas. He developed the idea that neurosis was often caused by parental seduction of children, but he abandoned this when he came to believe that children had difficulty separating fantasy from reality. In adult recollections of childhood sexual experience, he believed that these reported acts of incest were due to the child's imagination, or really, to the unconscious wishes that patients had experienced as children. (Freud's conclusion, though debatable, at least it shows that he did not cherish his own ideas so greatly that he was incapable of change.)

Another major change in Freud's thinking came when he posited the existence of the *death instinct* (sometimes called *Thanatos*) – the motivating factor behind aggression – in addition to his libido, or sexual instinct. This change in thinking began with his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (Freud, 1920/1950), and appears to have been influenced by negative events that he witnessed or experienced himself, including the first World War and the death of his daughter, Sophie.

As will be seen subsequently, Freud did not have a very positive view of humanity, yet he had a lively sense of humor. In spite of his desire to make sexuality a more open topic, he was himself rather conventional and conservative with respect to morality (Gay, 1988; Hunt, 1993). It is true that he was for a time infatuated with cocaine for personal use as well as for its presumed remarkable medical properties in his youth; but he later came to see that it was an addictive drug that could create more problems than it solved. Freud was, however, very addicted to cigars and was unable to give them up, even when he most needed to, for Freud suffered from cancer of the jaw for the last sixteen years of his life.

Freud left Vienna for London due to the threat of Nazism in Vienna, and died a year later in London in 1939.

## **From The Analyst's Couch: Some Tried and True Humor**

*[The following groaners may not improve your mental health, but they may provide a welcome relief from too much studying.]*

### **Oedipus Complex**

A young man goes home to Mom for a nice hot meal. He tells his mother that the psychiatrist says he suffers from an unresolved Oedipus complex. She replies: "Oedipus-shmoedipus, as long as you love your mother you'll be alright."

### **Chicken Complex?**

A man pleads with a psychoanalyst to help his wife, who thinks she is a chicken.

*Doctor:* How long has she had this condition?

*Husband:* For over twenty years now.

*Doctor:* So, why have you waited so long to have her treated?

*Husband:* Because we needed the eggs!

### **Rorschach Test**

A psychiatrist asks his patient to look at some ink blots and make up a story about what he sees. For the first card he reports that he sees a man and a woman who are making love. The next card he sees the same thing, only from a different angle, and so it goes for each of the cards.

*Psychiatrist:* There's nothing wrong with you except that you are obsessed with sex.

*Patient:* What do you mean *I'm* obsessed – these are *your* pictures.

### **Woody Allen Joke (from the film Annie Hall)**

The Allen character (Alvy Singer) tells Annie (played by Diane Keaton) he's been in psychoanalysis for fifteen years.

*Annie:* Fifteen years?

*Alvy:* Yes, I'm going to give him one more year, and then I'm going

to Lourdes.

**Groucho Marx Joke (Later Adopted by Rodney Dangerfield)**

I told my psychiatrist that everyone hated me. He told me I was being ridiculous. Everyone hadn't met me yet.

## **Freudian (Psychoanalytic or Psychodynamic) Therapy**

Freud invented the “fifty-minute hour” which allowed him to see many patients each day with a small break in between sessions, a model for practice still utilized by most psychotherapists. In the final hour of the day he became accustomed to putting himself on the couch (so to speak) for self-analysis. The therapeutic method advanced by Freud is called *psychoanalysis*, or the *psychodynamic* approach.

### **Anxiety and Repression**

The purpose of psychoanalysis is to uncover unconscious material – feelings and motives which exist in the mind of the patient but of which the patient lacks conscious awareness. According to Freud traumatic events and associated anxious feelings become repressed, or buried in the unconscious mind, because they cause so much psychological pain that people simply cannot deal with them. Repression is then a reaction to anxiety; a way of dealing with it by pushing it aside so far that it becomes unconscious, in a kind of motivated forgetting. For Freud repression was the most important of many *defense mechanisms* that protect people from being overwhelmed with anxiety. But a price is paid for failing to recognize unconscious feelings and impulses, as repressing them can lead to *neurosis*, or psychological maladjustment. Hysteria is one kind of neurosis that was previously discussed, but there are many other kinds, such as free-floating anxiety or obsessive-compulsive behavior. Freud used psychoanalysis to reach into the depths of the unconscious, believing that a cure lay in revealing and dealing with its contents.

## Therapeutic Techniques

Freud used two techniques toward this purpose: *free association* and *dream interpretation*. In free association the patient reclines on a couch with the therapist seated behind, out of direct view. The patient then reports whatever comes to mind, freely, and much of the time the therapist simply listens and accepts non-judgmentally whatever the patient reports, which is kept in strict confidence. If the patient relaxes and talks long enough, eventually she or he is likely to touch on unconscious feelings. It is important for the patient to try to avoid self-censorship in relating his/her thoughts and feelings.

In the second technique, dream interpretation, the patient reports the dream (manifest content) after which the therapist may suggest an interpretation, or in other words, the therapist attempts to find the symbolic meaning of the dream (latent content). Freud believed that dreams were “the royal road to the unconscious.” He also believed that dreams represent unconscious wishes, so that a dream becomes a *wish-fulfillment*. The patient helps the interpretation process along by free associating on the content of the dream. But it is usually the therapist, rather than the patient, who deciphers the meaning of all of these associations. That is because of *resistance* on the part of the patient to the interpretation. In resistance, the patient has trouble accepting the interpretation (assuming it is accurate) precisely because bringing the associations to light re-ignites the anxiety that fueled the repression in the first place. Of course Freud thought that resistance was an impediment to progress in therapy. But he also believed that it was also both necessary and inevitable. And resistance itself was unconscious; the patient was aware that he or she was resisting until brought to light by the psychoanalyst.

Freud observed another phenomenon that often occurred in conjunction with resistance, and that is the displacement of feelings for someone else onto the therapist. His term for this special type of displacement was *transference*. Transference can involve any kind of emotion, including sexual attraction or affection, but anger is a very common emotion in transference. If a man’s father was very strict and authoritarian, for example, the

male patient is likely to see the therapist's interpretations as criticisms, which invoke the same kind of angry response that he would typically make to his father. Like resistance, transference was considered to be both inevitable and necessary in the process of *working through* a patient's difficulties.

*Countertransference* occurs when the therapist responds emotionally to the patient, by unconsciously displacing her/his feelings for someone else to the patient. While countertransference is not desirable (remember, the therapist is supposed to be an impartial and accepting listener), it can be helpful to the therapist when recognized. Psychoanalysts should never stop learning about themselves, and may themselves be undergoing therapy at the same time they are practicing it. In fact, being psychoanalyzed is a requisite for being a psychoanalyst, and beginning therapists are supervised in their sessions with clients by more experienced therapists. Part of the job of the supervising psychoanalyst is to detect countertransference.

Transference and other forms of displacement often occur in the course of a person's daily existence, too. Freud himself seemed to have problems with authority (i.e. father) figures, and perhaps transferred these emotions to others, as previously noted.

During the therapeutic process, through interpretation and resistance, the patient eventually acquires *insight* into his/her neurosis. For Freud, insight connoted a deep, emotional understanding of one's situation, as opposed to a kind of intellectual, surface understanding. There is, after all, a difference between the patient saying "I guess you're telling me that I displace my angry feelings toward my mother onto my wife," and him saying "Wow, now I *really see* how I displace my angry feelings about my mother onto my wife!" The difference may seem subtle, but according to Freud, it definitely is not, because insight also implies an acceptance, not a mere acknowledgement, as resistance is finally overcome. The patient who achieves great insight into his/her neurosis is, at last, cured – at least in a relative sense (for who, after all, is perfect?).

## Freud's Psychosexual Theory of Development

### The Basic Instincts: Sex and Aggression

For Freud the source of all human activity is *psychic energy*. Freud believed that this energy is a limited resource in the sense that channeling this energy into one activity prevented it from being used in another. Thus a person who spends a lot of energy venting anger at his or her spouse may have little or no energy left over to spend on the needs of his or her children. Or vesting most of one's energy in one's workplace may leave little left over energy for social activity. The two basic instincts that motivate or propel psychic energy (as introduced briefly above) Freud called *libido* and the *death instinct* or the drive to aggression. In his earliest writings Freud thought that the two basic instincts or drives were self-preservation or survival (e.g., needs for hunger, thirst, shelter, and so forth) and species-preservation. The need to preserve the species was found in the sex drive. But later he merged these two notions – preservation of self and of species – into libido as the single source encompassing both kinds of drive. Libido, then, seeks to preserve life, whereas the death instinct seeks to void it.

But for Freud life affirmation (hence libido) *is* sexual. Freud defined sex in a very broad way that encompasses all physically pleasurable activities, and even constructive non-physical activities (e.g., thinking, sports watching, stamp collecting) as well. To see why this is so requires an understanding of Freud's psychosexual theory of development, for Freud believed that libido attached itself to certain *erogenous zones* of the body that provide the source of pleasure for growing children. This investment of libido in a particular erogenous zone is called *cathexis*. As will be seen shortly, the primary objects of cathexis include the mouth in the first (oral) stage, the anus in the second stage, and the genitals at later stages.

But what can be said about the death instinct and its relationship to aggression? Here (as in certain other places) Freud is a bit vague. Freud famously claimed that “the goal of all life is to die” (1920/1950, p. 38). Perhaps in a sense death is the ultimate



solution to the problem of psychic tension or drive: at last there is nothing more to wish for! But probably his own observations of human beings engaging in constant warfare and other destructive activities led him to view the human drama through a very pessimistic lens. As to the relationship of aggression to the death instinct, Freud simply thought of aggression as self-destructiveness turned outward and displaced onto others. Turning it inward upon oneself is inhibited by the life instinct, part of which is the need for self-preservation. In any case, libido remained paramount among these two basic motivating and conflicting drives in Freud's psychology.

### **The Id and the Pleasure Principle**

The idea that people seek to gain pleasure and to avoid pain (the *pleasure principle*) did not originate with Freud; it is indeed a very old idea. The pursuit of pleasure or happiness was a foundation in the thinking of the Greek Epicurean philosophers, for example, and is a cornerstone of the utilitarian economics of John Stuart Mill – and it even fits in with the survivalist ideas of Charles Darwin. But great thinkers usually disagree as to the relative merits of maximizing individual happiness in comparison to the virtue of bringing happiness to the greatest number of people.

But the pleasure of others is not a concern of the newborn infant in Freud's view. For the very young child is driven by desires of the *id* (or *das es* in German, meaning the “*it*”), the most primitive component of personality that is present at birth and operates solely on the selfish version of the pleasure principle: *it* wants, *it* craves, *it* demands – and *it* wants satisfaction right now! When hungry, the infant wants (and needs) the breast or bottle; when tired, it wants to sleep. Cognition, such as it is at this stage, consists of what Freud called *primary process thinking*, in which a primitive mental image of the desired object (e.g., breast; food) is formed. This mental image represents the infant's symbolic attempt to reduce the psychic tension created by hunger, but obviously, an image alone does not satisfy – instead it becomes an early kind of desire for wish-fulfillment.

The id is not a property of just the infant personality. It continues to motivate and influence behavior throughout the life

span. It expresses itself in dreams in the form of wish-fulfillment. Dreams of eating, sexual activity, or other forms of pleasure seeking are obviously quite common in adulthood.

### **The Ego and the Reality Principle**

Eventually the infant learns that fulfillment of its needs (pleasure) can come only through delayed gratification. Freud called this kind of understanding – that the child’s satisfaction must sometimes await a more opportune time – the **reality principle**. It is with the development of a component of personality called the **ego** (in German the words Freud actually used are *das Ich*, or the “I”) that the child learns to cope with such external demands as being hungry when Mom is just not around – but if the child waits it will eventually be fed. In adult parlance, the child simply learns to be rational or reasonable. This kind of thinking, which Freud referred to as **secondary process thinking**, is obviously more advanced. Although the term “ego” has a slightly negative connotation in ordinary usage (“what a big ego she has”) it really means something different in Freud’s system, where a strong ego indicates the ability to effectively deal with life’s pressures (i.e., with reality).

Interestingly Freud saw the ego as growing out of the id but still drawing on the same psychic energy. In essence the ego is in the service of the id and has no independent existence; or in other words, the reality principle is in service to the pleasure principle. This notion appears to conflict with the ideas of the later ego psychologists (discussed below).

Psychoanalysts sometimes refer to the ego as the “organ of reality” but this is only a metaphor. Physiological speaking, the ego is a hypothetical construct and not a literal part of the brain’s anatomy. The ego is a kind of functionality, not a physical structure, hence cannot be located in the brain (nor can the id, nor the superego).

### **The Superego**

Society makes demands on all of us. People are forced to compromise between satisfying their cravings and doing what is right and proper. The Biblical Ten Commandments provide moral

guidelines that are close to those found in most religions and cultures: we ought not to steal from our neighbor, nor should we lie nor kill nor covet, and so forth. The *superego* (or *das Überich* in German; more like the “*over I*”) develops in the child as it becomes aware of rights and wrongs. It is in part an internal moral compass or conscience. It is the last of the three components of personality (id – ego – superego) to emerge. The superego can deny both the id (“I want it now”) and the ego (“I’ll wait until a more opportune time”) with the recognition that some things just aren’t right (“I ought not to have it at all”).

Another part of the superego’s makeup is the so-called *ego ideal*, or the kind of person whom one aspires to be; one’s better moral self. Perhaps a child has an adult figure that she or he admires – such as a Mother Theresa, or a Michael Jordan, or even a parent or a teacher – who serves as kind of model for the ego ideal.

### **Interrelationships Between the Components of Personality**

There are obvious interpsychic conflicts between these three components of personality. If the id wants and the superego says “can’t have,” it is the ego that mediates between the two, and with the demands of reality. Thus the ego balances instinctual or learned demands against societal strictures in a realistic manner. Psychologists often speak of *ego strength*, which is the quality that enables an individual to function effectively and realistically in a complex social world.

### **Levels of Awareness and Their Relationships to Components of Personality**

Freud identified three levels of awareness of the mind: the conscious mind, the unconscious mind, and the preconscious mind. The *conscious mind* consists of all thoughts and feelings of which one is directly aware at a particular moment. The *unconscious mind* consists of repressed thoughts, feelings, and motives of which we are not aware. Freud used the analogy of an iceberg to compare the conscious to the unconscious mind, with the tip (the part showing above the water) representing consciousness, but with the bulk of the mass underwater representing the unconscious.

In other words, Freud thought that most of the psyche is hidden from awareness. The unconscious mind, then, contains an abundance of sexual and aggressive content that people just can't see in themselves without a lengthy time in psychoanalysis.

The preconscious mind consists of thoughts and feelings that are not conscious at the moment, but which are capable of being brought into conscious awareness. In terms of the components of personality, the id desires are unconscious, with ego and superego partly conscious (but mainly preconscious) and partly unconscious.

### **Civilization and Its Discontents: Freud's Bleak Views on Culture**

In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Freud, 1930/1961) Freud puts society itself on the couch. Written rather late in his life when Freud was suffering from cancer of the jaw, Gay (1988, p. 543) calls this work Freud's "most somber book."

The sources of Freud's pessimism about the state of humanity are easy to identify. These include a long history of warfare – most recently for him the first World War – and the disappointment in the collapse of the promise of the era of the enlightenment for a better and more peaceful world through science and technology. Through their laws, religious beliefs, and moral prescriptions, cultures serve to inhibit (suppress and repress) man's instinctual tendencies toward sexual promiscuity and aggression, but never completely so, and the price paid for society's imposition of morality is a heavy one. To escape from the limitations on natural desires imposed by society, and to avoid the despair that comes with aging, the wasting away of the body, and ultimately, death, society provides other means of gratification. Religion, Freud (who was an atheist) believed, was only one of many methods of relief from the harsh realities of life.

Without societal strictures, Freud claimed, mayhem would result in the form of assaults, rape, murder, and incest. With them these horrors are kept in check, though never entirely so. According to Gay (1988, p. 548), Freud thought that "At best,

sensible human beings may arrange a truce between desire and control.” In other words, civilization was, for Freud, a necessary evil. It puts a check on man’s natural instincts so that sexual and aggressive desires are sublimated into socially acceptable forms, including work, hobbies, and artistic endeavors.

Freud’s pessimistic views were not unlike those of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who believed that only submission to a powerful state government could prevent an existence of “. . . continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, nasty, brutish, and short” (Hobbes, 1657/1957, p. 186). Note how far Freud’s views are from the optimistic Rousseau who (recalling from Chapter 3) believed in the “nobility of the savage;” that people could exist happily in a natural state, without the impositions of society.

What would happen if society’s influence were somehow suddenly removed? Would id desires become unleashed with no socially based superego structure in place to keep behavior in check? This hypothetical question was addressed by William Golding in his provocative book *The Lord of the Flies* (Golding, 1954). In this novel a band of boys become deserted on a tropical island. Schooled in the English system, these boys of a privileged class have some indeed developed some superego strengths and clearly understand the difference between rights and wrongs. Yet over time, most revert to a very primitive form of savagery as their little society disintegrates into a chaotic form of tribalism.

Freud himself asked the ultimate question, as though he were uncertain himself, as to “whether in the great struggle between life and death, life would prevail after all” (Gay, 1988).

## **Defense Mechanisms of the Ego**

There are many ways in which the ego protects itself by blocking anxiety. Two of these that have already been discussed are displacement (in which emotional reactions such as anger are transferred from the genuine target or cause of the anxiety to another source) and repression (or the motivated forgetting of

anxious thoughts and feelings). In addition to these, Freud and later depth psychologists<sup>9</sup> (e.g., Adler who wrote on compensation, Anna Freud who identified identification with the aggressor) identified the following:

- **Regression** is a return to an earlier stage of development, when life was simpler and more pleasurable. For example, an older sibling may take to thumb sucking after the arrival of a new baby. The dynamics here include rivalry and imitation resulting from the baby's envious situation with all of the attentions paid to it by the parents and by others. In adults, fingernail biting is a kind of regression to the oral stage (see below) of development. Regressions are usually a temporary response to stress or anxiety.
- **Fixation** is more than just regression; it is being literally stuck at an earlier stage of development. People who are excessive in eating, drinking, smoking, or sucking on hard candies may be fixated at the oral stage of development.
- **Rationalization** is a way of reinterpreting reality in a way that allows a person to save face. Consider the example of a person who claims that, after being dumped from a relationship, that the decision was a mutual one. This defense mechanism is used more than any other to protect one's self-esteem, especially to avoid feelings of rejection or loss. Other examples: "I didn't really want to go to *that* college anyway;" "Brad only won that contest by cheating;" or "She doesn't look that great, that outfit hides her worst flaws."
- **Denial** is a way of avoiding anxiety by failing to recognize the threat. Denial is a common reaction in people who have lost a loved one, such as a spouse, child, sibling, or close friend. In these cases denial isn't always intellectual; one knows at some level that the person has died. But it is the emotional acceptance of this fact that is lacking.

- **Reaction formation** consists of thinking or acting in opposition to one's true feelings. An example is a mother who resents the time demands of her baby, but who then exaggerates her concern for the child by being overly doting or protective.
- **Projection** involves imputing a negative trait or impulse of one's own to someone else. Projection is common among couples where one partner is very jealous of the other, in which the man or woman attributes his or her own desires for another person to his or her partner or mate.
- **Introjection** contrasts with projection in that a person incorporates the values of another person or group (as opposed to attributing one's own negative traits on another). Think of a teenager joining a club or gang whose values they wish to adopt in order to protect themselves from an external threat.
- **Identification** is less extreme than introjection; one identifies oneself with a person, group, or institution that one respects or values. A very common example is to speak of "our" win when one's favorite sports team has just defeated an opposing team.
- **Identification with the aggressor:** Anna Freud (Sigmund's daughter) described this defense mechanism. In one case a boy who was physically abused by a bully adapted his ways by copying his behavior. She noted that "By impersonating the aggressor . . . the child transforms himself from the person threatened to the person making the threat" (A. Freud, 1937/1946, p. 121).
- **Compensation** pertains to the human tendency to make up for inadequacy in one area by developing strength in another, or by a determined effort to overcome one's deficit. Theodore Roosevelt was a sickly child with poor eyesight and asthma. Through a self-induced program of fitness he developed strength and stamina and engaged in activities (hunting; boxing; war) considered very masculine in his times.

- **Undoing** is an act of reversal of a previous deed. In Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth compulsively washes her hands uttering "Out, damned spot! out I say!" as she attempts to rid herself of guilt over her role in Duncan's murder. More commonly, undoing can be seen in any act of contrition, in which an aggressive act is countered later with pleasantries – but without formal acknowledgment of a wrong having been committed.
- **Intellectualization** is a way of minimizing a threat by couching it in objective terms. As an example, a person who is bitter about a love affair gone wrong might say: "What is love, anyway, except a series of hormonal reactions in response to a conditioned stimulus?"
- **Sublimation** is a kind of displacement in which the displaced act is socially useful or acceptable. Freud believed that so much of our psychic energy was sexual (i.e., libido); but people can't spend all their time having sex! Instead, this energy can be redirected or sublimated into useful, creative or work activities.

Remember, defense mechanisms are *unconscious* processes! Everyone uses defense mechanisms and doing so does not necessarily indicate the presence of a neurosis. Indeed, except in extreme cases these have obvious adaptive functions: they can protect an individual's self-esteem or keep a person from being overwhelmed by anxiety. Denial is a good example. When bothered by an ailment such as a headache or stomach upset, a person who has a crucial task to perform, such as competing in an athletic event or delivering an important speech, may choose to simply deny that pain and temporarily push it away into the background of one's consciousness. This kind of denial can be a problem, however, when a person refuses to acknowledge a physical pain for long periods of time, as the pain may indicate a



serious condition that needs medical treatment sooner rather than later.

## **Rationalization and The Two Flavors of Grapes**

*“The tartness of his face sours grapes.”* –Shakespeare<sup>10</sup>

How do people deal with situations when the outcomes are not to their liking? One strategy is suggested by Aesop’s fable of the fox and the grapes. It seems that a grapevine was just too high to reach. The fox jumped and jumped but simply could not reach the tasty morsels. The animal finally gave up, convincing himself that the grapes must be sour anyway.

The *sour grapes* rationalization, as it is called, is made much worse when the ego is involved. Then perhaps the sorority one didn’t get accepted into as a pledge is seen as a bunch of stuck up juveniles.

Another version is called the *sweet lemon* rationalization. After achieving a long-sought goal, and struggling hard to achieve it, could a person doubt the value of the experience? If one is accepted into that sorority, then those stuck-up so-and-sos virtually define the standard for good times and comradeship. After all, to think less of them would imply a lot of hard work for naught.

In an empirical study of these two “flavors” of rationalization, Aaron Kay, Maria Jimenez, and John Jost (2002) conducted a political survey during the 2000 presidential campaign. With Democrats and Republicans they manipulated the perceived likelihood randomly that one or the other would win, and then measured the respondents’ desirability of each outcome (i.e., Bush wins or Gore wins). In each case preferred candidates were rated as more desirable as their odds of winning seemed greater (sweet lemon), and less desirable as the odds decreased (sour grapes).

## The Freudian Stages of Development

Freud stressed the importance of early childhood experience in the formation and development of later personality, including development of neuroses. Like Piaget, Freud believed that certain behaviors appear at certain stages according to the child's readiness, but whereas Piaget was concerned with cognitive development, Freud's interests were with personality development. And whereas Piaget studied "typical" children Freud studied neurotic adults.

At each stage Freud believed that libido was centered primarily on a particular erogenous (or pleasure) zone, which is noted in the description of each stage below, along with the approximate ages and defining psychological characteristics of that stage.

### Oral Stage (Birth to About Two Years)

At this stage the child's libido is centered on the mouth and sucking or feeding, from breast or bottle. The child gains not only nourishment but pleasure from the act of nursing. The child's oral eroticism extends as well to sucking of the thumb, or even to other objects within reach. As with Piaget, Freud believed that very young infants are unaware of the mother or of others existing independently of the self. He called this state of affairs *primary narcissism*. But later on in the oral stage the baby develops a sense of others, especially the mother, and anxiety develops in the child if the mother is anxious. (This observation was shared by later attachment theorists.)

Freud's work was enhanced by his colleague Karl Abraham (1927) who identified two sub-stages of the oral stage, the *oral erotic* and *oral sadistic* stages. In the earlier erotic stage the child is receptive and totally dependent on the mother for both feeding and comfort. In the later stage, teething occurs, and the child's biting of the breast is likely to bring on a demand for weaning.

*Oral Fixation.* Fixation at the oral stage occurs, according to Freud, if the infant is either *overindulged* by the mother (the child gets too much attention and coddling) or becomes very *frustrated*

(not enough nurturing). Both create problems, but the effects of these two extreme parenting practices produce different results.

Fixation at the early oral stage due to overindulgence results in a passive but optimistic personality. If the child's every need was met by the mother in early infancy then the adult continues to see the world as a friendly place where needs will continue to be provided for. This type of personality can be described as "happy-go-lucky."

The great showman P. T. Barnum claimed "there's a sucker born every minute." And he should have known, having sold tickets to his sideshow freaks and circus wonders to hapless curiosity seekers. The word *sucker* definitely applies to a person with an oral fixation of this type as the adult person parallels the happy infant, blissfully suckling. But the individual who is instead frustrated at this early stage develops the opposite kind of personality: she or he becomes pessimistic and passive/dependent, expecting that her/his needs from others will not be met. This kind of helpless person is sometimes called (in Yiddish) a *nebbish*, or somebody who thinks "it's no use" or "what can *I* do?"

Freudians believe that fixation at the later oral stage ("sadistic") due to frustration can lead to a cynical, hostile personality. But overindulgence will lead to an aggressively striving person.

Most of us have known people who fit the description of these Freudian oral characters. What many psychologists doubt, however, is whether such types are really formed by parental practices, or whether there are other explanations for them. The Freudian explanations of personality development and their ties to parental practices are indeed open to question, as will be seen subsequently.

### **Anal Stage (About 2 – 3 Years)**

The anus is the primary focus of libido at the anal stage, which also can be divided into two sub-stages, the earlier *anal sadistic (or anal expulsive)* stage and the later *anal erotic (or anal retentive)* stage. The young child at this stage increases its gross motor abilities by learning to crawl then walk, and also develops its finer motor capabilities, such as learning to grasp and

manipulate objects with its hands. The child's need for increased control and coordination goes along with the need for increased independence. Up until this stage the child has been relatively more passive, its basic needs having been largely satisfied by its mother. But now the child wants to exert him/herself as he/she attempts to master the environment. If the child was happy and content during the oral stage she or he becomes much more volatile and difficult in the "terrible twos." At this age the child's desire for mastery ("let *me* do it") is often at odds with the parents' needs to get things done quickly and efficiently. It is important to let the child learn to put on his or her clothes or use a spoon to eat, but it can also take all day. Both parents and child can easily become frustrated with one another, and so family life can become a sort of a battle of wits and wills between parents and children.

***Anal Fixation.*** Learning to control bowel movements is obviously part of the child's desire for mastery. Here Freud believed that toilet or potty training affected the child's psyche. If parents are either too severe or too lax in their toilet training demands, the child's personality can be permanently affected. Parents who are too severe lead the child to become ***anally retentive*** (controlling), but being too lax leads to ***anal expulsiveness*** (messiness). These two types of anal characters (retentive and expulsive) are evident in Felix and Oscar, Neil Simon's incompatible roommates in the play *The Odd Couple* (which also became a motion picture then later a television series a number of years ago). Felix is "tightly wound" and extremely fastidious whereas Oscar is "loose" and very disorderly in appearance and in his surroundings.

That such types exist should be obvious. If students walk into a professor's office for help or advice with schoolwork they will often find one of two extremes. Some offices are just a mess of clutter whereas others are neat as a pin, with books carefully organized on the shelves and the desk looking clean and spare. (Readers can probably also rate themselves on a scale of, say, 1 to 10 of order versus disorder by surveying their own homes and workplaces.) But whether these traits are related to early parental potty training practices or not is controversial.

### **Phallic Stage (About 3 – 6)**

At this stage of development Freud believed that libido was centered on the penis (or phallus) in both sexes. This is the Oedipal stage that was illustrated in the opening section of this chapter with the case of Little Hans. At this age boys feel that they are in competition with their fathers over their affection for their mothers (and Freud included real sexual longings here, too). And likewise, girls are sexually attracted to their fathers and wish to displace or even do away with their mothers (though in both cases these desires are tempered by equivocation). The boy is threatened by fears of castration because he notices that females do not have a penis, so he imagines that girls have been castrated. He becomes fearful of his father's wrath. These feelings can be compounded by threats from the parents in response to children's masturbation (recall the case of Little Hans). On the other hand, the little girl notices that boys have penises but they do not; and as a result (according to Freud), girls develop penis envy. For reasons not clearly specified, Freud believed that the girl blames her mother for her lack of a penis.

***Resolution of the Oedipus/Elektra Complex.*** How do children get by these fears and jealousies? Freud declared that they do so via the dual processes of repression (of these sexual feelings) and identification with the same-sex parent (i.e., boys with father, girls with mother). The process of identification seems to include something like the rationalization that, "if I can't beat him (or her), I will join him (her)." Note that this is not unlike Anna Freud's concept of identification with the aggressor (or powerful person, in terms of the child's perception of the adult). Thus boy becomes an ally of the father and girl of the mother. In a way, then, the boy comes to share his mother with his father, and the girl shares her father with the mother. But the Oedipal (Elektra) feelings don't go away but are now largely repressed. Through these processes of repression and identification the development of the superego takes place in both sexes. By this Freud meant that the child incorporates the parents' values as his or her own. The possession of the mother by the boy is now vicarious (and likewise the father by the girl).

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But getting to this point is not easy; the child is faced with strictures and disapproval and criticism and even punishment before this can occur. And part of this process is learning the ability to censure one's own desires, thoughts, and feelings. But in resolving the Oedipal/Elektra crises that appear at this age, the child secures the love and acceptance of *both* of her or his parents.

If the reader wonders why Freud called this the phallic stage as opposed to the phallic/vaginal stage the answer is fairly obvious: Freud saw the penis or lack of a penis to be the crucial element in this psychodrama for both the boy with his castration fears and the girl with her phallic envy. (Perhaps it seems odd that Freud did not see the vagina as simply a different type of structure, which is a physiological marvel in itself, as opposed to a lack of something else: a vagina, after all, is not "nothing.") But crucial the phallus was in Freud's thinking because he believed that the boy's resolution of his oedipal crisis was more complete than the girl's. That was because the girl had "less to lose" (so to speak) by conforming to the parents' controls and authority. The girl fears merely the loss of her mother's love while the boy fears his father's wrath and the seemingly terrible physical consequences as well. As a result, he thought that women were always fixated to some extent at the phallic level whereas boys could move on. And to the extent that the female resolution was less complete, so was the woman's sense of morality: she has, in effect, a weak (or at least weaker) superego. Yet Freud by his own admission did not understand the psychology of women well, as in the statement often attributed to him: "What do woman want?" (Or more exactly, he asked: "What does a woman want?"; Gay, p. 501). Needless to say, Freud's ideas on women's development raised the ire of many.

Freud also thought that men sought women who were like their mothers, but if a woman was too much like her, a man could suffer impotence because of unconscious Oedipal guilt. On the other hand, he thought that women with an unresolved complex sometimes became overly competitive, aggressive, and masculine.

### **The Latency Stage (About 6 years to Puberty)**

Freud believed that sexual development entered a period of dormancy in this pre-teenage stage of life. This dormancy, he

believed, was due to repression of sexual desires in the typical child by parental restrictions. Sexual desires don't just disappear, however; rather, they are redirected (sublimated) into socially constructive activities such as school learning, learning social skills, and athletics. Because so much happens developmentally during this period – the interval between childhood and the sexual maturation of the teenage years – the term latency might seem a misnomer: a great deal happens in the child's development! It may not seem surprising, then, that so many of Freud's successors (the neo- and post-Freudians) took exception to his insistence on the sexual nature of all human enterprise.

### **Psychoanalysis and the Feminine: Horney Had a Different View**

**Karen Horney** (HORN-eye) was a trained psychoanalyst who was herself analyzed by Karl Abraham. Horney was one of a number of neo-Freudians who de-emphasized the importance of sexuality in childhood and the pervasive influence of the id in psychological development in favor of cultural factors. She left Germany in 1932 for a position at a psychoanalytic institute in Chicago, but moved on shortly thereafter to the New School for Social Research in New York. Eventually she founded her own influential organization, the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis. She found her own voice in writing a number of books on the childhood origins of neurosis. She developed a theory of neurosis due to parental abuse or neglect that led (via repression) to a condition she called *basic anxiety*.

Horney (1939) believed that men and women in her contemporary society were often in competition, but that this competition was due to social forces to a much greater extent than biological ones. Women of her time often believed they were inferior to men because this is what they were taught, a belief, incidentally, that was shared with Horney by Alfred Adler. Female feelings of inferiority were thus socially based rather than being attributable to a universal, biologically based penis envy. If women

strove to be like men and competed with them it was because they were denied male privileges in society. For example, women were seldom allowed into professions like medicine and law. Women's career choices (if they chose to have careers outside the home at all) were usually limited to occupations such as teaching, nursing, and child care. In short, Horney was both a strong culturist and a feminist.

If penis envy did exist in some girls, however, Horney also believed that boys could sometimes exhibit envy of women's unique ability to bear children; a condition she described as "womb envy."

### **The Genital Stage (Teenage Years)**

Because of the physical changes that occur with sexual maturity, libido returns in full force during these years. The adolescent's concern is once again on the genitals and on heterosexual activity (at least in most cases). It is the time of sexual reawakening, characterized by strong sexual impulses and desires.

Both boys and girls desire independence from their parents during this period, yet this goal is not yet entirely attainable. Both desire sexual relations with persons of the opposite sex, but societal restrictions prohibit such unions prior to the legal age of consent. This is a difficult period of life in which the teen often feels controlled by hormonally driven sexual desires. Oedipal conflicts once again appear as well as both girls and boys must learn to separate themselves from their same-sex parents and assume adult identities of their own. In some ways this task is never complete – many people have particularly strong parental dependencies that continue well into adulthood – and overcoming these dependencies in many cases involves psychotherapy!



## Anna Freud on Adolescent Coping

Many psychologists agree with Freud that adolescence is a time of “storm and strife” that fairly erupts following the quiescence of the pre-adolescent stage (Freud’s latency period) which precedes it. Freud’s daughter, Anna Freud, was one of the first to write extensively on this period and on the ways in which teens learn to cope with the struggles caused by their budding sexuality and desires to achieve independence. Some of the coping strategies she identified (A. Freud, 1958) were:

- **Escape from/disdain for parents:** Sometimes escape literally means running away from home, but more often it takes the form of avoiding one’s parents as much as possible. This is due (in Freudian terms) to oedipal feelings, or (in other terms) the simple desires for independence coupled with a feeling that associating with one’s parents is terribly embarrassing, especially in the presence of one’s peers. Sometimes teens shut themselves up in their rooms while at home, adopting what Anna Freud termed “a border attitude” (or “pardon me, it seems I must live here, but I don’t have to put up with my parents while doing so”). If an attitude of disdain or even contempt is noticeable this merely reflects a desire to be one’s own, independent person; hence the attitude is one of self-distancing.
- **Asceticism:** This is the denial (that oft-used defense mechanism) of desire. A teen may turn instead to physical fitness, dieting, vegetarianism, religious philosophies, or other means of becoming “pure” while denying sexual feelings.
- **Intellectualism:** This is a kind of sublimation (and once again a defense mechanism) in which sexual feelings are turned into abstractions. Such ideas often have to do with the nature of love and relationships. Crain (2005, p. 263, citing A. Freud, 1936) notes that “While such theories may be brilliant and

original, they are also thinly disguised efforts to grapple with oedipal issues on a purely intellectual level.”

## Evaluating Freud and Psychoanalysis

### Freud’s Influence on the Field of Psychology

*Psychodynamic Approaches to Therapy.* Freud’s lasting contributions include his many ideas about psychotherapy and the therapeutic process, such as transference and resistance, countertransference, and insight. These are all phenomena that tend to occur in psychotherapy. But many newer forms of therapy (see, for example, the methods of Carl Rogers in Chapter 16) stress the client’s current state of mind, personal adjustment problems, thoughts and feelings, or perhaps address specific problem behaviors, usually without focusing on one’s childhood traumas and on the identification of unconscious processes. Freud should be remembered as perhaps the greatest influence in the study of unconscious feelings and motives, even if he was not the first to undertake such studies. But without Freud there might never have been any form of relational psychotherapy, or what Breuer called “talking therapy.” Though Breuer was the originator of that concept he failed to fully develop the method; it took Freud’s special genius to shape Breuer’s discovery into an effective form of therapy.

*The Dynamics of Development.* Today the psychodynamic approach to development includes an emphasis on the importance of early childhood experience on individual development and, to at least some extent, the role of unconscious motives and feelings in personality and neurosis. But in contrast to Freud, most contemporary psychodynamic therapists place little or no importance on childhood sexuality. Although few psychologists today agree with Freud’s emphasis on the sexual nature of the developmental stages of personality, most still credit him for his many useful observations about the developing child during these periods of life. For most, the Oedipus complex is simply not a

realistic way of viewing the path of children's development, even though many of Freud's observations still seem to hold regarding children's ambivalent feelings about their parents, sibling rivalry, identification with same-sex parents, "puppy love" for the opposite sex parent, and the like. Freud's recognition that a child (or adult) can experience an entire range of emotions toward the same person – from love to anger to hostility – also defied the conventional wisdom of his time. Of course different explanations can be given for the dynamics of the so-called phallic stage of development (e.g., role identification theory per Chapter 11), and the universality of ideas like castration fears and penis envy is no longer assumed, although these phenomena may have been widespread during Freud's own era for the reasons discussed earlier.

In defense of Freud's Oedipal views, Kaufmann (1980/1992) states that merely finding counterexamples (e.g., per the cross-cultural studies of Malinowski, discussed below, or children reared in single family environments) is not enough to invalidate a psychological theory, which might still be true in many or most cases. Kaufmann further states that "The Oedipus complex is often misunderstood as if Freud had suggested that boys at about the age of four desired to have intercourse with their mothers. In fact, he said explicitly that children at that age have no clear understanding of sexual intercourse . . . . What they want, according to Freud, is sole possession of their mothers, while they experience their fathers as rivals" (p. 113). Kaufmann himself recalled a personal incident when at approximately this age he said "If Daddy goes to prison, I'll marry Mommy" (p. 113) which he saw as a typical childhood fantasy.

One might refer to the following example as "Elektra-Lite": developmental psychologist Kathleen Stassen Berger (2001) states that "As a woman, and a mother of four daughters, I have always regarded Freud's theory of sexual development as ridiculous, not to mention antifemale" (p. 291). But she admits that her view of Freud became modified after not one, but all four of her daughters (at different times) made statements like "When I'm grown up I'm going to marry Daddy" (p. 291). When Berger replied "But Daddy's married to me" little Bethany replied "That's all right.

When I grow up, you'll probably be dead" (p. 291). Another daughter, Elissa, sent her father a "cute," illustrated valentine card which read: "To Pop – Dump Mom and have me – I love you" (p. 291). Berger concludes: "I still think [Freud] was wrong on many counts. But Freud's description of the phallic stage now seems less bizarre than it once appeared to be" (p. 291).

Perhaps all of these anecdotes will bring to mind once again that old punchline: "Oedipus-shmoedipus – as long as you love your mother!"

***Neo- and Post-Freudians.*** Erik Erikson (next chapter), while not overtly rejecting Freud's ideas, expanded them considerably by placing more emphasis on the social nature of personal development and elaborating on the kinds of developmental challenges that are presented to each individual during these stages; Erikson also identified stages of personality development that extended throughout the entire life span and not just through adolescence.

Freud lost some of his early followers – for example, Jung, Adler, and Stekel – because they had trouble accepting his pervasive emphasis on the sexual basis of development. Adler and Jung formed their own schools of psychology, but the Freudian influence on these is unmistakable. Many neo-Freudians were known as ***ego psychologists***. They accepted some but not all of Freud's ideas. As with Jung and Adler, they rejected Freud's strong emphasis on infantile sexuality, but stressed instead the importance of social relations on the developmental stages. Among these were Karen Horney, Harry Stack Sullivan, Erik Fromm, and Heinz Hartmann. These psychologists downplayed the importance of the id and stressed instead the role of the ego in personality development. Unlike Freud who, it may be recalled, saw the ego as a component of personality that grew out of the id and acted in its service, these later psychodynamic theorists viewed the ego as more autonomous.

Freud's strongest influence today can be seen in what is known as ***object relations theory*** and in ***attachment theory***. Drew Westen and Glenn Gabbard (1999, p. 63) state that ". . . object relations theory stresses the impact of actual deprivation in infancy and

early childhood, the importance of self-representations and representations of others (called “object representations”) in mediating interpersonal functions, and the primary need for human relatedness that begins in infancy.” This definition covers a lot of ground – it includes the importance of social relations, especially early ones (per the ego psychologists), and emphasizes the attachment bonds between child and caregivers. Object relations theorists are also very concerned with development of self-concept (self-representations) and the cognitive processes inherent in forming one’s view of others – and even one’s world view. Melanie Klein was a pioneering figure in the formulation of early object relations theory; Margaret Mahler became known as a leading figure later on.

The attachment theorists also place importance on early childhood social experience, the attachment bond between mother and child, and the role of separation anxiety on development. These theorists, which include John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (see Chapter 13) were also very strongly influenced by ethologists (scientists who study animal behavior in the natural environment) in addition to psychoanalytic influences.

***Role of Defense Mechanisms.*** The defense mechanisms of the ego identified by Freud are still recognized as important ideas, but today psychologists do not see them in quite the same light as did Freud. Freud believed that defense mechanisms were responses to anxiety and that they were largely repression and displacement of sexual and aggressive tendencies. Instead most psychologists now think of these as methods of protecting or enhancing one’s self-esteem (e.g., Baumeister, Dale, & Sommer, 1998), although anxiety is still a motivating factor, or more specifically the threat of loss of esteem.

### **The Unconscious Mind in Psychology Today**

Freud viewed the unconscious mind using the analogy of a submerged iceberg representing a vast store of feelings and motives that were sexual and aggressive in nature, a “seething cauldron” of emotion, all of which lies beyond conscious awareness. In one sense it is difficult to disprove such an assertion,

for how can one carefully study that which is unseen, and only shows itself indirectly through one's dreams? But consider once again the times in which Freud lived as compared to today. People today are probably much more self-aware or one might even say "psych-aware," due in no small portion to Freud's own influence. Could it be that psychology courses and self-help books have put people more in touch with themselves and people simply have a better grasp of who they are or today? Also contemporary society is less "repressive" (actually suppressive) of sexuality – it seems as if no subject is any longer taboo.

Cognitive neuroscientists view the unconscious in a different light than did Freud. They emphasize not the dark continent of repressed desires that Freud addressed. The unconscious mind is not even close to being such an autonomously functioning force that drives behavior which is motivated by repressed desires. Rather, the role of the unconscious can be seen as facilitating many "automatic" processes that are beyond our awareness. These processes are not conscious simply because they do not demand our undivided attention. The unconscious as seen from the perspective of modern cognitive neuroscience is discussed more fully in Hassin, Uleman, & Bargh (2004). Kihlstrom (1999, p. 437) concludes his chapter on research on the psychological unconscious with the following summary: "This body of research has revealed a view of nonconscious mental life that is . . . kinder, gentler, and more rational – from the seething unconscious of Freud." In Kramer's harsher view, "Our understanding of the unconscious is about *where it was before Freud began to write*" (2006, p. 208, emphasis added).

### **Freud's Method of Clinical Observation**

Freud utilized one primary research method, which is that of clinical observation or the case study in formulating his theories. These observations came mostly from his interactions with his patients. The strength of this method is its ability to discover new insights about behavior, but a crucial weakness is that one can all too easily fall prey to the *confirmation bias* in which one tends to see only things that confirm one's existing theoretical ideas. In this sense it might be helpful to compare Freud to Piaget. Piaget's

major bias seems to have been his notion that a child is a “little logician.” He was interested in cognitive development and wished to see how children’s cognitive processes worked through observation of their behavior. In the small scale experiments he did he presented children with certain challenges, but otherwise did not try to influence their actions or responses. On the other hand, Freud came to the consulting room with many pre-existing ideas about the influence of sexual and aggressive motives. Think of the case of Little Hans, for example, and how the child’s behaviors nicely fit into Freud’s ideas about the Oedipus complex. Under such conditions it may be all too easy to find confirmation of one’s biases. But a telling criticism is given by Kramer (2006), who unearthed the little known fact that *Hans had in fact witnessed an incident in which a horse fell down in a carriage accident.*

To what extent can Freud’s observations be generalized to other individuals in other times and other places? Erik Erikson found that early toilet training (in the anal stage of development) is far from a universal practice. Other anthropological (Malinowski, 1927) studies also show that the conditions deemed necessary by Freud for the Oedipus complex do not occur in all culture, due to the absence of the nuclear family as known in Western culture.

Drawing conclusions about human behavior based on the presumed latent content of their dreams and interpretations of free associations is at best a very difficult task, which is also tied to problems of measurement and the reliability of the measures. The fact is that different psychologists evaluating or diagnosing the same individuals can reach radically different conclusions when objective criteria are not available (Meehl, 1954), and there simply were no objective tests for diagnosis in Freud’s time. Even today it is extremely difficult to make diagnoses based on presumed unconscious tendencies that are just not directly observable. Projective tests that were designed to do so, such as the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test are really quite unreliable (refer to the evaluation of these tests in Chapter 14). Not only did Freud lack such tests when he was formulating his ideas but no measuring instruments for assessing the contents of the unconscious – objective or otherwise – existed at the time in which he formulated his basic theory.

Peter Kramer, perhaps the most recognized name in American psychiatry today and a man who received training in classical psychoanalysis, today takes a very critical view of Freud as a scientist as well as a practitioner. He argued that “[Freud] had altered fact to fit theory, conducted therapies in ways that bore scant relationships to his precepts, and claimed success in treatments that had failed” (2006, p. 2).

### **Further Critiques of Freudian Psychoanalytic Theory**

*Is Psychoanalytic Theory Scientific?* Critics claim that Freud’s theory can be stretched too far, so as to explain almost any outcome. For example, suppose it is assumed that a child’s parents were too severe with toilet training. The outcome can be a person who is overly controlled, like the “Felix” character in Simon’s *The Odd Couple*. But on the other hand, if the child strongly rebels against this training, he could become like the “Oscar” character who is impossibly disorganized. But parents with more than one child often realize that two children can be remarkably different – a little Felix *and* an Oscar can sometimes appear in the same family environment, given essentially no difference in parenting practices. In any case the fact that siblings – even fraternal twins – can sometimes be so different suggests that other explanations (most notably genetic inheritance) might at least in part account for such differences.

Unfortunately psychoanalytic theory tries to explain so much of human behavior that it over-reaches its goal. Much of it is descriptive, based on a limited number of case studies, and it is difficult to put the theory to the test of scientific scrutiny. The philosopher Karl Popper (1959) stated that good theories in science must be falsifiable, at least in principle. In other words, there must be some way to be able to disconfirm a scientific hypothesis if, in fact, it is untrue. Popper (1963) did not believe that psychoanalysis was a science at all, for if opposite outcomes can both be seen as confirmation (as in the case of the anal character, above), where is the falsifiability?

Although Freud came from a respectable scientific tradition in medicine and neurology, he himself questioned whether psychoanalysis was truly a science. Indeed, Kaufmann



(1980/1992) goes so far as to call Freud's psychoanalysis "poetic science." But perhaps one problem is that psychology in general and psychoanalysis in particular in those early days were so different from the physical sciences. Freud believed that science begins with description (as in the case studies of psychoanalysis), and proceeds from that point. Granting that this is so then Freud made a truly remarkable beginning.

But not all of Freud's ideas are untestable. For example, Weston (1999) cites research conducted in the 1940s and 1950s by the "New Look" psychologists who studied perception, discovering that what is seen and reported is affected by one's defenses and motives, suggesting that we see the world to a great extent as we are, rather than as it is. Much of this early work, according to Weston, has been forgotten (probably because it didn't fit in with the behavioristic influence that was so strong in American psychology at the time). In other words, New Look psychologists argued that unconscious motives and feelings can and do influence our perceptions. In a tradition at least as old as the experimental work of Frederick C. Bartlett (1932), cognitive psychologists have argued that memory is a *reconstructive* activity – people do not recall complex events as they were so much as they reconstruct the past in line with present perceptions without conscious awareness that they are doing so. Other findings in support of the existence or workings of unconscious processes are also discussed by Weston.

*Lack of Universality of Developmental Phenomena.* Clearly the Oedipus complex is not observed in all cultures, as anthropological evidence suggests. For example, Malinowski (1927) documented family life in Trobriand Islanders in which children do not live exclusively with father and mother but are, rather, wards of an extended family constellation. But the Oedipus complex may even be less general than Freud thought. Castration anxiety and penis envy may be strictly a product of the cultural practices of Freud's own time and place, where threats issued in response to masturbatory practices were common (leading to castration anxieties) and women's diminished power in Victorian society was probably the real force behind so-called penis envy. It

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is probably true that many little girls develop fantasies of marrying their fathers, and that a parallel situation exists in the case of little boys. Ambivalent feelings toward both parents and sibling rivalry are also common, as Freud noted. But the mini-drama that he so carefully described in the case of Little Hans does not seem to hold for all children. Remember, too, that Freud based his ideas on a very small number of case studies; that his psychoanalytic patients were generally considered neurotic and therefore not typical of the average person; and finally that many of his ideas – including that of the Oedipus complex – were based partly on his self-analysis.

As for child rearing practices generally, children in Freud's day were probably more likely to have endured strict toilet training practices than are typical of today's families. Also, as previously mentioned, Erikson found that some cultures do not enforce strict toilet training practices. Lakota children, for instance, learn such habits on their own, through observation of adults.

***Gender Bias.*** Freud clearly failed to adequately address the psychology of women, as Horney and many others (e.g., Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Thomson, 1943) have also noted. In stating that the resolution of the Elektra complex in girls was incomplete in terms of superego development, Freud was no feminist! Yet Freud himself did not discriminate against women in his own field, as many intelligent and talented women, including Freud's own daughter Anna, became accepted members of the psychoanalytic community as practitioners.

Freud also believed that there were two types of female orgasm, one that is induced by the external stimulation of the clitoris and another that is induced by stimulation of the vagina by the penis during intercourse. Immature women with an incomplete resolution of the Elektra complex, Freud believed, preferred the former whereas mature, well-adjusted women preferred the latter, which was also thought to be more intensely satisfying. The psychological implications of Freud's ideas about orgasm are obvious: once again the presence of a penis (and the necessity of a man) is required for greatest sexual and emotional satisfaction in women. Alas for Freud, later physiological research has shown that there is only one kind of female orgasm, which may be induced by

either external or internal means (Masters & Johnson, 1966). Emotional satisfaction depends more on a woman's state of mind than on the specific method of inducing orgasm.

### **A Final Word on Freud**

Freud clearly had his detractors in his own day, and today many of his ideas, particularly concerning the Oedipus/Elektra complex, the almost exclusively sexual nature of human development, the primacy of the id over the ego, and the extensiveness of people's unconscious awareness, have all been questioned and in many cases, abandoned. Further, many (though by no means all) of his theoretical ideas seem to be incapable of being empirically tested through the research process. Why, then should Freud be considered a great name among psychologists, if so many of his ideas have been rejected or have waned in their influence?

To adequately address this question several points should be considered. To begin with, Freud achieved a major personal goal in taking the taboo out of the open discussion of sex. Freud also popularized in psychology a new way of dealing with psychological disorders – his psychoanalytic “talking therapy.” Although the number of practicing therapists who literally follow all of Freud's original ideas and procedures for psychoanalysis is extremely small, his basic format for therapy sessions is still employed by many practitioners, though in modified form. And even though most people reject the literal interpretation of Oedipal dynamics, Freud focused an interest on family dynamics in an innovative way, introducing concepts that still have validity, such as sibling rivalry and feelings of ambivalence toward family members. Further, if erogenous zones and the so-called libidinal cathexis to them are disregarded, his observations on stages and problems of development were still original and many people regard them as at least descriptively valid (cf., Erikson's theory in the following chapter, or Freud's influence on the attachment theorists per Chapter 13). Also, most of his defense mechanisms of the ego retain a kind of validity of their own when taken out of the classic psychoanalytic context. Finally, Freud must be remembered as a very original thinker and gifted writer whose works are readily

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accessible to lay persons as well as to professional psychologists – one needs no advanced degree to study them.

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## For Thought or Discussion

1. Think back to your very early childhood. (Some people can do this, others cannot. If you are in the latter category don't worry that you may have repressed your memories. Often people simply forget!) If you can, try to remember the first time that you became aware of the anatomical differences between boys and girls or between men and women. What were your thoughts or reactions? Did they confirm or disconfirm Freud's ideas about castration fears or penis envy?
2. To continue the above exercise, can you recall ever being jealous of your same-sex parent over the affection of your opposite-sex parent in your childhood? Or, if you have children of your own, did they ever say anything that would reveal such jealousy?
3. Finally, can you think of any examples of cases of sibling rivalry in your family involving yourself, or your own children?
4. Does Freud's explanation of the symbolism (horse representing father; muzzle as father's glasses) seem reasonable as an explanation of the phobia he observed in Little Hans?
5. As was seen, Freud had a rather pessimistic view of human nature. Do you agree with him, or would you align yourself with more optimistic philosophies, such as those of Rousseau or perhaps Piaget? More broadly, what is your own view of human nature?
6. Which defense mechanisms characterize the following situations:
  - a. An unscrupulous businessman incorrectly believes his accountant is trying to cheat him.
  - b. A child reverts to bed wetting following the birth of a younger sibling.
  - c. In a famous advertisement from many years ago, a man becomes a body builder after a powerful man kicks sand in his face at the beach.

- d. Due to extreme fatigue and stress, a soldier develops amnesia and for a time cannot recall his recent events in combat.
  - e. A young man has a frustrating argument with a female friend. When his mother tries to sympathize he yells at her for interfering.
  - f. Prisoners in a hostage situation who are treated badly begin to adopt the attitudes of their captors.
  - g. A woman sets a new swimming time record in crossing Lake Erie. She experienced extreme abdominal pain but mentally blocked it out and continued.
  - h. A teenage boy develops strong physical feelings for a girl of the same age. He tells her (and also convinces himself) that what appeals to him most about her is her intellect.
  - i. A woman asks a man to attend a weekend event with her. He coldly refuses, so she calls her second choice, who accepts her invitation. She confides in a friend that the first man was not as likeable or physically attractive as the second, who is, after all, the man desired by most of the women she knows.
  - j. A small girl keeps telling her mother how much she just *loves* her new little sister.
  - k. An older, unmarried woman is critical of most of her friends. She thinks that they are always obsessed with sex.
    - l. A child who loved to throw eggs at people's windows on Halloween becomes a "spatter" painter as an adult, in the style of the artist Jackson Pollack.
7. Describe someone you know who is very "anal" (neat and compulsive). Describe someone else you know who is quite the opposite. Are you, yourself, excessively neat or, at the other extreme, messy and unorganized?
  8. Despite the many criticisms of Freud in this regard do you think it may be true that, in some sense, children have a sexual nature? If so, what can be said about such sexuality?
  9. What do you make of the quote by Freud at the very beginning of this chapter in contrast to the following one by Peter Gay?

What does it reveal to you about his personality and character, in light of the other information given about him in this chapter?

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## Notes

1. From a letter from Freud to his fiancée dated February 2, 1896, translated by and reproduced in Kaufmann (1980/1992, p. 45).
2. Gay (1988, p. 449).
3. Whether or not Freud actually said this is, unfortunately, unclear. (Perhaps if he did not, he should have!)
4. This account is taken mainly from Gay (1988).
5. Jung appears to have thought of Freud as a father figure, and was himself greatly disappointed at Freud's rejection of his own ideas – so much so that he went into a deep depression which was due to a significant degree to their falling out (Jung, 1961; also see Chapter 15).
6. Time and again in the history of psychology (or indeed, in other fields) it seems that prejudice in the form of anti-Semitism militated against the acceptance of the ideas of some very notable thinkers. As was already seen (chapter 5), this was true of Vygotsky in Russia. An eminent American psychologist, Harry Harlow, even changed his name (it was Harry Israel) because he believed it would keep him from achieving success in academe – and he was not, in fact, even Jewish!
7. The fact that Nietzsche regarded himself as a psychologist (“Who among philosophers was a *psychologist* before me . . . ?” Nietzsche, as translated by Kaufmann, 1980/1992, p. 15) has often been overlooked by historians of psychology. Nietzsche also believed that psychology should be recognized as “the queen of sciences” (Kaufmann, 1980/1992, p. 79). Also see Ellenberger (1970) on pre-Freudian notions of the unconscious mind.
8. Freud claimed that the break with Breuer was over the latter's refusal to recognize the sexual origins of hysteria. Demorest (2005) notes, however, that Breuer did in fact acknowledge that repressed sexual feelings underlay many cases, just not all of them.



9. The list has grown over the years; see, for example, *101 Defenses: How the Mind Shields Itself*, by Jerome S. Blackman (2003).
10. Quotation was downloaded from:  
[http://en.thinkexist.com/keyword/sour\\_grapes/](http://en.thinkexist.com/keyword/sour_grapes/), November 1, 2004.

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