



Chapter 13 Psychoanalysis: In the Beginning

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The Development of Psychoanalysis

● Background

- The term *psychoanalysis* and the name Sigmund Freud are recognized throughout the world
- Psychoanalysis was not an academic product, nor was it pure science
 - It arose from medicine and psychiatry and attempts to treat clients labeled mentally ill
 - Not comparable to the other schools of thought
- Subject matter=psychopathology
- Primary method=clinical observation
 - Also deals with the unconscious, which other schools neglected

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Freud and Personality



● Freud's life

- Much of Freud's theory is autobiographical
- Freud was actually a neurologist by training
- In 1885, Freud studied under **Jean Martin Charcot** who was investigating the usefulness of hypnosis as a treatment of hysteria
 - Charcot suggested that hysterical symptoms were caused by psychological trauma
 - Freud was really impressed with Charcot's work and this sparked an even greater interest in problems of the mind
 - Charcot became "like a father figure" to Freud
 - Charcot alerted Freud to the role of sex in hysterical behavior

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Freud and Personality

- After studying with Charcot, Freud returned to Vienna and opened his medical practice with **Josef Breuer**
 - Together, they published *Studies of Hysteria*
 - **Anna O.**
 - Anna O. was treated by Breuer 12 years before he and Freud published their book. She suffered from an incredible number of hysterical symptoms, including loss of speech, disturbances in vision, headaches, and paralysis and loss of feeling in her right arm
 - Breuer used hypnosis to treat Anna
 - This was the first experience of **catharsis**: release of pent-up psychic energy that relieves hysterical symptoms
 - Anna called this chimney sweeping or the talking cure
 - The case of Anna O. is one of the most reported cases in the annals of psychotherapy
 - However, Breuer's original description appears to be inaccurate in some of its most important respects
 - Apparently the woman was not at all cured by Breuer's hypnosis and psychotherapy
 - Hospital records were later discovered

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Freud and Personality

- Freud soon grew disillusioned with hypnosis
 - Too many patients continued to have symptoms resurface
 - Many could not be easily hypnotized
- Created the technique of **free association**
 - Client lies on a couch and is encouraged to talk openly and spontaneously, expressing every idea that comes to mind, no matter how silly or trivial it may seem
 - Therapist looks for slips of the tongue or inappropriate reactions to indicate where the unconscious conflict lies
 - Freud believed there was nothing random about what invaded the client's mind; these topics were determined by the unconscious conflict the client experienced
 - Through free association, Freud found that this clients' memories reached back to childhood and that many of the repressed experiences they recalled involved sexual issues

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Freud and Personality

- ☛ The Childhood Seduction Controversy
 - By the mid-1890's Freud had convinced himself that sex played the determining role in neuroses
 - He observed that most of his women clients reported traumatic sexual experiences in childhood, often involving family members-usually the child's father
 - Freud believed the converse-that neurotic conditions could not arise in a person who had not experienced sexual trauma
 - Revealed this hypothesis to the Viennese Society of Psychiatry, who received the news with skepticism
 - About a year later, Freud reversed his position
 - Now said that the experiences his clients recalled were not real

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Freud and Personality

● Dream Analysis

- Freud believed that a client's dreams could be a rich source of significant emotional material and could contain clues to the underlying causes of a disturbance
- Dreams have symbols
 - Manifest content-what happened in the dream
 - Latent content-what the dream meant
 - Focused around male and female genitalia and the sexual act

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Freud and Personality

● Freud's theory of personality

- *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901)
 - First described **Freudian slip**-an act of forgetting or a lapse in speech that reflects unconscious motives or anxieties
- Crucial assumptions
 - Psychoanalysis rested on 3 assumption
 - Childhood experiences determined adult personality
 - Unconscious mental processes influence every day behavior
 - Unconscious conflict underlies most human behavior
- Structure of consciousness
 - Freud stated that consciousness has three levels
 - **Conscious**-what we are aware of at each particular moment
 - **Preconscious**-information that is stored but that is able to be retrieved
 - **Unconscious**-thoughts and desires that are below the individual's level of awareness

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Freud and Personality

- Two types of thinking:
 - Primary process
 - Secondary process
- Structure of personality
 - Instincts-mental representation of internal stimuli, such as hunger, that motivate personality and behavior
 - 2 general categories of instincts
 - Life instincts: energy of the life instincts is the **libido**-the psychic energy that drives a person toward pleasurable thoughts and behaviors
 - Death instinct: destructive force that can be directed inwards, or outward

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Freud and Personality

- 3 levels of personality
 - **Id**: primitive, instinctual, animal-like part of the personality-present at birth-contains the libido-work according to the **pleasure principle**: immediate gratification
 - **Superego**: internalization of rules of conduct taught by the parents-develops early in life-**conscience**: internalization of the rules and restrictions of society-punishes wrongdoing with feelings of guilt
 - **Ego**: self-rational part of the personality devoted to mediation-driven by the **reality principle**: the ability to delay immediate gratification-the ego uses **defense mechanisms** to do this mediation

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Freud and Personality

■ Anxiety

- The ego has to try to delay the id's sexual and aggressive urges, perceive and manipulate reality to relieve the resulting tension, and cope with the superego's demands for perfection
- When the ego is too greatly stressed, the result is anxiety
- Anxiety functions as a warning that the ego is being threatened
- Three types of anxiety
 - **Objective anxiety**-arises from fear of actual dangers in the real world
 - **Neurotic anxiety**-comes from recognizing the potential dangers in gratifying the id's instincts
 - **Moral anxiety**-arises from fear of one's conscience

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Freud and Personality

■ Defense mechanisms

- Behaviors that represent unconscious denials or distortions of reality but which are adopted to protect the ego against anxiety
- Begin to function as early as 6 months of age
- Function indirectly and unconsciously
- Decrease the anxiety that is inherent in the conflict between the id and the superego by disguising threatening impulses
- **Repression**: a way of preventing an idea, feeling, or memory from reaching consciousness
- **Rationalization**: inventing an acceptable, plausible reason for behavior that is really being performed for another, less acceptable, reason

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Freud and Personality

- **Regression:** retreating to an earlier, more infantile stage of development
- **Denial:** that which you do not want to see or acknowledge ceases to exist
- **Sublimation:** diversion of erotic energy away from an unacceptable drive to a more acceptable one
- **Isolation:** form of partial repression, rather than the entire event being placed into the unconscious, only the emotional aspect of the event is placed into the unconsciousness
- **Projection:** the denial of your own feelings by attributing them to someone else
- **Displacement:** similar to projection, but you take your feelings out on someone or something else
- **Reaction formation:** replacing a threatening idea with its opposite

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Freud and Personality

- **Psychosexual stages of development**
 - Freud was convinced that his patients' neurotic disturbances originated in childhood
 - Child pass through a series of psychosexual stages
 - Each stage centers on a specific erogenous zone
 - Oral stage (birth – 18 months)
 - Because a new born can do little more than suck and drink, its sexual drive finds an outlet in these activities
 - Even as the baby becomes able to engage in more complex behaviors, it continues to receive most of its sexual gratification orally
 - Beginning of the stage is characterized by passive sucking
 - Later stage by aggression-biting and chewing

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Freud and Personality

- **Anal stage (18 months – 3 years)**
 - Baby begins to enjoy emptying its bowels
 - Early part of this stage is called the expressive period
 - Later part of this stage is called the retentive period
- **Phallic stage (3-5\6)**
 - Children discover it's fun to play with their genitals
 - Children begin to attach themselves to the opposite sex parent
 - Oedipus complex and Electra complex
 - In boys, the Oedipus complex normally becomes repressed by age 5.
 - Identification
 - A girl's re-identification with her mother is a little different. First, what caused her to begin identifying with her father is what Freud referred to as penis envy.

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Freud and Personality

- Latency (6 – puberty)
 - The child's sexual drive is mostly submerged. At the onset of puberty, the person begins to form adult sexual attachments.
- Genital stage (puberty on)
 - Forming adult sexual relations
- Fixations
 - People become fixated at a given stage when they experience psychological trauma during that stage
 - Oral stage fixations
 - Anal stage fixations
 - Phallic stage fixations

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Criticisms of psychoanalysis

General targets

- Freud's methods of data collection
 - Conditions were unsystematic and uncontrolled
 - Data consisted of what Freud recollected
 - Freud may have reinterpreted patients' words
 - Freud may have recalled and recorded primarily the material consistent with his theses
 - Discrepancies exist between Freud's notes and the published case histories
 - Freud destroyed most of his data (patient files)
 - Only six case histories were published, and none provides compelling support
 - Accuracy of patient's reports not corroborated

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- Undisclosed reasoning process and method for deriving inferences and making generalizations from data
 - Data not quantified or analyzed statistically
 - Not possible to determine their reliability
- Freud's assumptions about human nature
 - Often contradicted himself
 - Definitions of key concepts are unclear
 - Freud's response: evolution of his system necessitated revisions

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■ Freud's views on women

- Lack of penis as cause of women's alleged weak superegos and feelings of bodily inferiority
 - Karen Horney's defection and ultimate retort: men have womb envy
- Verdict by contemporary analysts:
 - Freud's views regarding psychosexual development of women unproven and wrong
 - *Social forces must be taken into consideration*

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❖ Criticisms of neo-freudians

- The denial of free will
- The focus on past behavior and exclusion of hopes and goals for the future
- Theory based on neurotics, not on normal people

❖ Consequences: rise of alternative theories and increasing divisiveness within psychoanalysis

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Scientific validation of psychoanalytic concepts

❖ Major analysis of 25,00 studies from psychology and other relevant disciplines

- Difficult to experimentally test some concepts: e.G., Id, ego, superego, libido
- Some support for
 - Aspects of oral and anal personality
 - Castration anxiety
 - Relationship between dreams and emotional processes
 - Those parts of the Oedipus complex dealing with rivalry with father and sexual fantasies regarding mother

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■ No support for

- Satisfaction of repressed motives, wishes, desires through dreams
- Link between male oedipal complex resolution and identification with and acceptance of superego standards of father through fear
- Inferiority of women's bodily conceptions, morality, and sense of identity

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❖ *Later research and perspectives*

- Support for multiple influences of unconscious processes as well as evidence that such influences are even greater than Freud thought
- Cognitive psychology: affirms existence of mental processes outside of conscious awareness
- Support for repression and Freudian slips
- Lack of support for personality formation by age 5, role of instincts in human motivation

- ❖ **Most important learning: some psychoanalytic concepts can be operationally defined and tested by scientific methods**

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Contributions of psychoanalysis

❖ *Strong impact on American academic psychology*

- Attention to Freudian concepts continues at a high level
- Interest in psychoanalytic therapy has decreased both in terms of clients and of trained analysts
 - Freudian therapy: expensive, long-term investment
 - Alternative therapies: less expensive, briefer
 - Contextual forces: cost-cutting of health management organizations and development of psychoactive drugs

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- ❖ **Enormous impact on popular culture**
- ❖ **Misinterpretation of Freud's message about sex**
 - **did not advocate sexual freedom but instead thought that inhibition of the sex drive was essential for the continuation of civilization**
 - Regardless of his intention, Freud's emphasis on sex led in part to increase in sexual liberation and to the popularity of his ideas
- ❖ **Focus on childhood**
- ❖ **Stages of development**
- ❖ **Notwithstanding concerns about lack of scientific accuracy and methodological problems, Freudian psychology vitally affected contemporary psychology**

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References

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