

EUROPEAN MAN ON DR. FREUD'S COUCH
(a CVSP appraisal of Freudian Man)

- **The Age of Einstein, Marx, & Freud...**
- **Facts – Theories – Method of Therapy – *Philosophy of Man* (our focus)**

I. FREUD: PHILOSOPHER OF HUMAN UNHAPPINESS

- A. **Three-headed monster:** Body – External world – Relations with Others (society).
- B. **Fleeing the monster:** nine ways to seek ‘**happiness**’: **unrestricted satisfaction**; isolation, Science, intoxication, Yoga, work, illusions (Imagination, Art, Religion), being-in-love, Aesthetic attitude.
- C. **Freudian Man:** self-preservation; love of aggression; need for love; impulse to attain pleasure & avoid pain (Epicurean).
 - 1. **Id:** unconscious, libidinal, sexual, aggressive
 - 2. **Ego and Super-Ego:** derivative, survival, disciplinary
 - 3. **Happiness:** direct, unrestricted satisfaction of basic instincts; not part of “plan of Creation”; three-headed monster, **society as main enemy**
 - 4. **Blind Evolution:**
 - **structural incompatibility** of man and society
 - **nasty and sadistic:** *sublimation and sense-of-guilt*
 - **Civilization:** built on **human sacrifice** and **feeling guilty**
 - 5. **Guilt:** external and internal origins: **Oedipus complex** and primordial murder of the father
 - 6. **Oedipus-Prometheus:** tragic vs. rationalistic atheism; **moral indignation / victory**
 - **Freudian Man:** moral sense **not original / no victory.**

II. FREUD: DEFLATOR OF EUROPEAN “CIVILIZED” MAN

- A. **Triple blow to Self-Image :** Copernicus – Darwin – Freud.
- B. **On-the-couch :** rationalist – romantic – spiritual Man.
- C. **Analysis:**
 - 1. **Civilization a thin veneer :** progeny of frustrated parents, letting-off-steam, compensation prize, compromise, mediocrity; slave-labor, **nature-renunciation**
 - 2. **Three-fold Delusion of Grandeur:**
 - **rationalist man :** truth, beauty, goodness, in classical splendor and harmony
 - **romantic man :** rebel-creator, master morality, creativity, adventure, depth of feeling, self-fulfillment
 - **spiritual man :** joy, freedom, communion, spontaneous generosity and mercy, mutual service, delight in fulfilment of others, love of enemies.
- D. **The not-so-flattering truth: Freudian ‘wisdom’**
 - 1. **avoid** being seduced by **grandiose** images of Man
 - 2. **forget** about **inherent goodness and purity**
 - 3. **you are not** the **master** of your destiny
 - 4. **your greatest achievements** are mere **palliatives**
 - 5. [Siduri as Sage (a pretty clever chick for someone so ancient!)]
 - 6. **“the adjustment is all”** (apologies to the **ripeness** man - Bill Shakespeare) .

III. APPRAISAL - DIALOGUE- FOOD FOR CVSP THOUGHT

- A. **Positive contribution: “Critique of Un-Reason”**- a powerful **corrective** to **shallow** intellectualism and **naïve** optimism; **deeper** awareness of **instinctive life...**
- B. **Debate** revolves around his **“Image of Man”**: unduly **pessimistic ethos**; no *eye* for **authentic positive** aspects of human life: **reductionist; partial** theories...***
- ❖ **Example of an alternative “vision of humanity”**: **existential therapy** focus on *freedom, responsibility, dignity, empathy*, as **“true humanity”** ; **ID** as merely **“unachieved humanity”** (reductionism of an oak tree to an acorn)...
- **neglect of this perspective gives rise to aberrations and does not help the patient to realize full identity / freedom :**
 - **victim-mentality (society is the enemy) :** academic **excuse** for **mediocrity** ; **over-permissiveness: self-control** is neither **repression** nor a **necessary evil**
 - **cynicism:** assumption of **hidden motives /self-deception** (leading to **facile** negativity and **tortuous** obfuscation, **debilitating** complexity); **the real challenge** - provide **solid basis** for **human trust and transparency** based on **authentic dignity/responsibility**
 - **neglect of Reason, Will, Conscience, the Imagination** as **autonomous, creative** powers of the Human: **reductionist** even in depiction of *instinctual* makeup (e.g. alternative theory: **seven** basic instinct-clusters)
 - **over-generalization** of results of his own specialization : *partial* theories : *biased sample* of the human race
 - **inadequate** analysis of the phenomenon of **guilt** : can be seen **as the objective counterpart** of human **freedom, solidarity, empathy, responsibility, dignity...**
 - **a travesty** of the **infinitely rich** human reality and experience of **love**
 - **reductionist** analysis of **Art, Science, and Religion** as mere **palliatives**
 - **cavalier treatment** of opponent views : the only **unforgivable sin** in CVSP!
 - **self-defeating philosophy of man** ; **status** of Freud’s views reduced to **sublimation, compensation, self-deception, etc...**: **obvious loss of power to compel**
 - **Karl Popper** and **falsification**
 - **woman ...**

*** **“With few exceptions, my dear fellow humans are good-for-nothing”**

PSYCHOLOGY 101

Right or wrong, Freud's theories revolutionized modern psychology and changed the way we think about the way we think. Here, the impact of his influence on some of the major movements in the field:

—MARC BAIN

GESTALT THERAPY

Starting from the premise that the mind is more than a collection of its parts, Gestalt (German for "whole") encourages patients to relieve anxiety by releasing and acknowledging their emotions.



JOSEPH CAMPBELL

MYTHOLOGY

Campbell's popular writings on the hero myth, like Jung's collective-unconscious theory, suggest that all people share a set of psychic symbols.

HUMANISTIC

Originally called client-centered therapy, the focus is placed on the experience of the patient. Rogers later used the term counseling.



CARL ROGERS



J. L. MORENO

PSYCHODRAMA

Through studying how people interact in groups, Moreno devised Psychodrama, a technique that stresses role playing, creativity and spontaneity in reaching a catharsis.



ALFRED ADLER

INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY

The first of Freud's inner circle to defect, Adler argued that neuroses arose not from libidinal forces but from overcompensation for feelings of insecurity.



SANDOR FERENCZI

ACTIVE THERAPY

In direct contrast with Freud's nondirectional methods, Ferenczi helped develop Active Therapy, which allowed the analyst to play an active part in the session.



OTTO RANK

BIRTH TRAUMA

Rank's theory of the "pre-Oedipal complex" held that the trauma of being born was actually at the root of neurotic anxiety.



CARL JUNG

ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Breaking from Freud over their differing views on sexuality, Jung formed his own movement, asserting that people could generally be classified as introverts or extroverts.



JOHN WATSON

BEHAVIORISM

Largely influenced by Pavlov's experiments with his dog, Watson wanted a method based more on empiricism than subjective interpretation.



B. F. SKINNER

STIMULUS AND RESPONSE

Skinner followed Watson in ignoring unconscious motivations and focusing chiefly on observable behavior.

DEVIATING BRANCHES

PSYCHOANALYSIS

The Symptoms Have Meaning

Freud's legacy is the idea that, by observing a patient's symptoms, the therapist can discover their cause. Even today that notion lies at the heart of psychotherapy.

FREUDIANS

MODERN FREUDIAN PSYCHOANALYSIS

Anna Freud used free association and transference in order to uncover unconscious motivations and find the past conflicts causing current emotional problems. Reclining on a couch may or may not be involved.



ANNA FREUD

the irrational and the unconscious find application in the corporation, where even high-level executives may bring transference issues into the office, seeking from their boss the approval they once craved from their parents. Freud's writings on group dynamics and sibling rivalry can serve the thoughtful CEO well, Sulkowicz adds. It helps, though, if the source is somewhat obscured. "I hardly ever talk about Freud by name," he says.

In the shadows, the tip of the cigar wiggles up and down in agitation. *Americans!* he seems to be thinking. *A money-grubbing*

—GRAPHIC BY KARL GUIDE NEWSWEEK

SIGMUND FREUD

SOURCES: DR. MANUEL FURER AND THE NEW YORK PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE; DR. JEFFREY NASON AND THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE

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