The Psychoanalytic Paradigm
Sigmund Freud

Who is Sigmund Freud?

- Proposed the first grand theory of personality
- Psychoanalytic theory
  - Unconscious motives influence personality (a core element)
  - Personality structure is made up of three interacting and conflicting systems
  - Personality develops during psychosexual stages
  - A person's thoughts and behaviors emerge from tension generated by unconscious motives and unresolved childhood conflicts
  - Defense mechanisms help relieve anxiety arising from personality conflicts

Biographical Sketch
- Born 1856 in Freiberg, Austria (now Pribor, Czech Republic)
- Entered medical school at University of Vienna at 17 years of age, earned medical degree in 1881
- Entered private practice as a clinical neurologist in 1886
- Married Martha Bernays in 1886
- Published the Interpretation of Dreams in 1900
- Died in September 1939, in London

Studied with Charcot (1885)
- Experiments with hypnotism
- Implications for the treatment of hysteria*
  - A variety of symptoms such as paralysis and disturbances of sight and speech
  - Hysteria is the Greek word for uterus
- Charcot demonstrated that physical symptoms could have a psychological origin. He observed that while a patient was hypnotized, he could create and remove paralysis in the patient at will.

Early Influences on Freud’s Theory

Who is Sigmund Freud?

The Cocaine Incident

- Visited with Bernheim (1889)
  - More experiments with hypnotism
- Posthypnotic amnesia
  - Inability or difficulty remembering what one did under hypnosis
- Posthypnotic suggestion
  - Freud learned that behavior could be caused by unconscious ideas
Early Influences on Freud’s Theory

- Collaboration with Josef Breuer (late 1870’s)
  - The case of Anna O.
  - Treatment of hysteria
    - Catharsis: Condition improved when she openly expresses her feelings
  - Transference
- Countertransference
  - Analyst forms emotional attachment to patient

Early Influences on Freud’s Theory

- Tried and abandoned the use of hypnosis in his private practice
- Developed the use of free association
  - The fundamental rule of psychoanalysis

Freud’s Self Analysis

- Interpretation of his own dreams

Freud’s Theory

- A Hedonistic theory
  - Assumes that humans continually seek pleasure and avoid pain
- All aspects of personality are derived from biological instincts
- Main motive – obtain steady state of having all biological needs satisfied

Instincts and Their Characteristics

- Characteristics of instincts
  - SOURCE (biological deficiency)
  - AIM (correct the deficiency/restore balance)
  - OBJECT (the experience or object that reduces or eliminates deficiency)
  - IMPETUS (strength and direction of motive)

Instincts and Their Characteristics

- Life and Death instincts
  - Eros – the life instincts (sex, food, drink)
  - Libido – the psychic energy associated with life instincts
  - Thanatos – the death instinct
    - Aim of all life is death
    - Aggression is the most important derivative
Divisions of the Mind

**ID**
- Pure, unconscious instinctual energy
- Governed by the "Pleasure Principle"
- Acts through reflexes and wish fulfillment (primary processes)

**EGO**
- Brings individual into contact with real world objects
- Governed by the "Reality Principle"
- Identification (matching ID images with real objects)
- Reality testing (secondary processes)

**SUPEREGO**
- The moral arm of personality
- Conscience (from past punishments)
- Ego Ideal (from past rewards)

The ID
- Primary processes
  - Reflex action
  - Wish fulfillment
    - Innately conjures up images to temporarily satisfy or reduce the tension associated with a need
    - Ex: thinking about food when hungry

The EGO
- Identification
  - Attempts to match the images of the id with objects and events in the real world.
- Secondary processes
  - The effective granting of the wishes of the id (vs. primary processes which are based in fantasy)
    - Ex: Eating when hungry

The SUPEREGO
- Constantly strives for perfection
- Conscience
  - Internalized experiences for which the child had been consistently punished
- Ego Ideal
  - Internalized experiences for which the child has been consistently rewarded

The EGO
- Must find objects that
  - Satisfy needs of the id
  - Cannot be attained by primary processes
  - Do not violate the values of the superego

Cathexis and Anticathexis
- Influenced by Helmholtz’s principle of conservation of energy, Freud applied this principle to ‘psychic’ energy
- Cathexis
  - Investment of psychic energy in wish images as ideas or fantasies
  - Persists until the wish is satisfied (need is met)
- Anticathexis
  - Investment of psychic energy to prevent undesirable cathexes
- Displacement
  - Superego and ego divert undesirable cathexes to alternate objects
Anxiety

- All anxiety derived from the birth trauma
- Function is to warn us if actions or thoughts are dangerous
  - Reality anxiety -- related to real world dangers
  - Neurotic anxiety -- fear that ID will overpower the EGO
  - Moral anxiety -- fear of actions or thoughts contrary to SUPEREGO
    - Guilt, an internal punishment, results when the dictates of one's superego are violated

Ego Defense Mechanisms

- Irrational attempts to protect against anxiety
  - All ego defenses are unconscious
  - All ego defenses falsify or distort reality

Repression

- The basic defense mechanism—must occur before any of the others
- Prevention of ego-threatening thoughts from entering consciousness
  - Primal repression: Protects against id impulses that overwhelm us or put us in danger
  - Repression proper: Protects us from unacceptable behavior (substitutions of original id impulse)

Displacement

- Substitution of one goal/activity for another that provoked anxiety
- Sublimation: Displacement that is advantageous for society
  - Ex: Physical impulse displaced in work, creativity
  - Ex: Cultural development via science, art, idealogy
- All types of life and death impulses can be displaced

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Repression proper: Protects us from unacceptable behavior (substitutions of original id impulse).

Repression is the "cornerstone" of psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalytic procedures attempt to discover repressed thoughts "so effects on personality can be determined".

Note that not all information in the unconscious is the result of repression!

Repression

- Id provokes anxiety from repressed experiences occurring in one's lifetime AND from anxiety provoking experiences of our ancestors *
  - Phylogenetically inherited endowment ("Freud was a Lamarckian")
- Repressed thoughts influence our personality even though they are not available in consciousness
- Repression is the "cornerstone" of psychoanalysis
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## Ego Defense Mechanisms

### Identification
- Self-protection through affiliation with powerful persons or groups
- The tendency to increase personal feelings of worth by taking on characteristics of someone who is viewed as successful

### Denial of reality
- Denial of facts despite evidence to the contrary
  - Ex: refusal to believe that a loved one has died

### Projection
- Anxiety-provoking truths about the self are attributed to others
  - Ex: The criminal who says “the world is filled with crooks”

### Undoing
- Using ritualistic acts to atone for past actions that provoke anxiety
  - Can include apologizing

### Reaction formation
- Overt actions that are the opposite of anxiety-provoking thoughts
- Extreme extravagance in expression of feelings

### Rationalization
- Logically explaining anxiety-provoking actions or thoughts
Ego Defense Mechanisms

- Intellectualization (isolation of affect)
  - Stripping emotional content from anxiety-laden thoughts via analysis

- Regression
  - Returning to an earlier mode of gratification or anxiety relief

- Altruistic surrender
  - Living in accordance with the values of a person perceived as superior
  - added by Anna Freud

Ego Defense Mechanisms

- Identification with the aggressor
  - Internalizing the values and mannerisms of a feared person
    - Maybe why some hostages develop affection toward their captors (similar to Stockholm Syndrome)

Psychosexual Stages of Development

- Believed the adult personality was formulated by the end of the fifth year of life
- Each psychosexual stage has an erogenous zone associated with it, which is the greatest source of stimulation and pleasure during that stage of development
- In order to make a smooth transition from one psychosexual stage to the next, the child must not be:
  - Fixed
  - Undergratified
  - Overgratified

Freud’s Psychosexual Stages of Development

- Oral
  - 0-2
  - Infants achieve gratification through oral activities such as feeding, thumb sucking and babbling

- Anal
  - 2-3
  - The child learns to respond to some of the demands of society (such as bowel and bladder control).

- Phallic
  - 3-5
  - The child learns to realize the difference between males and females and becomes aware of sexuality.

- Latency
  - 5-11
  - The child continues his or her development but sexual urges are relatively quiet.

- Genital
  - 11-adult
  - The growing adolescent begins to form sexual relationships and learns to deal with reproduction and the opposite sex.
Psychosexual Stages of Development

- **Oral stage**
  - Pleasure from stimulation of mouth, lips, and tongue
  - Early fixations result in oral-incorporative character
    - Eating, drinking, smoking, kissing
  - Later fixations result in oral-sadistic character
    - Sarcasm, cynicism, ridicule

- **Anal stage**
  - Pleasure from stimulation of anus/buttocks
  - Early fixations result in anal-expulsive character
  - Later fixations result in anal-retentive character
    - Stinginess, parsimony, orderliness, perfectionism

- **Phallic stage**
  - Pleasure from stimulation of penis/clitoris
  - Oedipus complex occurs during this stage
    - Male resolution – identify with father
    - Female resolution – desire for father generalizes to other men
  - Sexual preferences are determined

- **Latency stage**
  - Sexual interests are repressed and displaced to substitute activities such as learning, athletics, peer group activities

- **Genital stage**
  - Characterized by adult, heterosexual interests

- **Freud’s Views on Feminine Psychology**
  - Viewed women as failed or inferior men
  - Penis envy
  - Believed women to be morally inferior due to weak superego development
  - Admitted failure to understand women

- **Tapping the Unconscious Mind**
  - Free association
    - “say whatever comes to your mind”
  - The signs of resistance during free association are especially important
    - Not what is said per se, but what is not said
Tapping the Unconscious Mind

- Dream analysis
  - Condensation
    - One dream element can represent several things at the same time
  - Displacement in dreams
    - Ex: sexual intercourse symbolized as dancing
  - Manifest Content
    - What we recall about a dream (symbols)
  - Latent Content
    - For Freud, the most important part of the dream
    - What the symbols represent
    - "Consists of the repressed thoughts seeking expression"

- Parapraxes
  - Manifestation of repressed thought in a variety of "mistakes" in everyday life
    - Accidents
    - Slips of the tongue
    - Lapses of memory
  - Humor
    - Jokes invoke anxiety in order to be funny

Freud’s View of Religion

- Religion to prevent anxiety
  - Will probably always be needed
  - Is an illusion
  - Should be replaced by rational principles

Freud’s View of Human Nature

- A pessimistic, biological view of human nature

Modifications of the Freudian Legend

- Problems with revision of the seduction theory
  - 1896, "The Aetiology of Hysteria, seduction theory included seducers by adult strangers, nursemaids, slightly older brothers (not parents)
  - Seduction theory as origin of hysteria claimed that the seduction resulted from a real sexual attack during childhood
  - Abandoned this theory for reasons that are unclear and still a matter of speculation
  - Was it because he lacked personal courage (J. Masson)?

- Problems with repression of memories
  - Therapists often strongly suggest the existence of such memories (E. Loftis)
    - Reason why so many patients enter therapy without memories of sexual abuse but leave with them
- Problems with distortion of the "Freudian History"
  - According to Henri Ellenberger
    - Freud was only slightly hampered by anti-semitism
    - Not nearly as original as he and his followers claimed
    - Did not experience abnormal amounts of hostility from peers
Evaluation

- **Empirical Research**

- **Criticisms**
  - Engages in post diction rather than prediction
  - Popper would not qualify Freud's theory as being scientific because it is not falsifiable

Evaluation

- **Contributions**
  - Praise for
    - *Most of mental life is unconscious*
    - Demonstrating the importance of anxiety as a determinant of human behavior
    - Showing that conflicts from childhood have lifelong consequences
      - *Stable personality begins in childhood*
      - Showing the importance of childhood sexuality in personality development

What Freud Got Right

Freud in our Mist

[http://www.newsweek.com/id/46977](http://www.newsweek.com/id/46977)