

Sigmund freud ideology

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Sigmund Freud explored many new concepts in the human mind during his lifetime. He was the scholar who discovered an immense new realm of the mind, the unconscious. He was the philosopher who identified childhood experience, not racial destiny or family fate, as the vessel of character, and he is the therapist who invented a specific form of treatment for mentally ill people, psychoanalysis. This advanced the revolutionary notion that actual diagnosable diseases can be cured by a technology that dates to the dawn of humanity: speaking.

Sigmund Freud, writing more than 320 books, articles and essays on psychotherapy in his lifetime, forever changed how society viewed mental illness and the meaning of their dreams. However, controversy over Freud's theories surrounded his experiments in whether or not they were wholly accurate scientifically. By not being able to correctly recreate the experiments, the actual "success rate" of his theories cannot be tested for their accuracy in accordance to what Freud stated about his work.

Thus, many scientists and influential scholars believe that "Freud brings the techniques of introspection employed by early nineteenth century poets but lacks aspects of nineteenth century science" (Hutton 62). Overall, the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud are difficult to access scientifically as far as helping mentally ill people recover in reference to treatments outlined in his work. On May 6, 1856 in Freiberg, Moravia, Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, was born as the first child of Jakob and Amalia Freud.

Freud had seven siblings, and described himself as his mother's special favorite- her "golden Siggie" (Thornton). In his early life, he enrolled at the <https://assignbuster.com/sigmund-freud-ideology/>

University of Vienna in 1873 where Freud did research in physiology for six years under the German scientist Ernst Brucke and received his medical degree in 1881. He then became a doctor at Vienna General Hospital and set up a private practice center for the treatment of psychological disorders in 1886.

During World War II, his books were burned along with those by other famous thinkers. "What progress we are making," Freud told a friend. "In the Middle Ages they would have burnt me; nowadays they are content with burning my books" (Thornton). Freud was interrogated by the Gestapo before his friend, Marie Bonaparte, was able to secure their safe passage to England. Bonaparte also tried to rescue Freud's four younger sisters, but was unable to do so. All four women later died in Nazi concentration camps. During this time, Freud was married to Martha Bernays, and the couple would have six children in their lifetimes. One of them, Anna, who was also interrogated by the Gestapo, was to become a distinguished psychoanalyst herself. Ultimately, after having undergone more than twenty surgeries, Sigmund died in September 1939 due to cancer of the mouth and throat from excessive cigarmoking. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, originally published under the title of 'Die Traumdeutung' in November of 1899, perfectly portrays Freud's theories from Freud's point of view.

His other works, including *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, do not compel Freud to look into himself like in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, for "The Interpretation of Dreams is the primary documentation of Freud's self-analysis" (Parsons). Furthermore, he considered this novel to be his greatest work, even though it was his first. To

modern scholars, however; " His autobiography is rather a record of his public accomplishments. On the whole he presents himself as he wished to be viewed by the world, not as he struggled in his interior life with his personal dilemmas" (Hutton 62).

Many important ideas that contributed to the theories in Freud's novel came from influential academic scholars such as Joseph Breuer, Jean Charcot and Ernst Brucke. Even then, the ideas portrayed in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, are controversial due to their authenticity. Sigmund Freud and his mentor Brucke wrote on hysteria. They explained their theory: Every hysteria is the result of a traumatic experience, one that cannot be integrated into the person's understanding of the world.

The emotions appropriate to the trauma are not expressed in any direct fashion, but do not simply evaporate: They express themselves in behavior that in a weak, vague way offers a response to the trauma. These symptoms are, in other words, meaningful. When the client can be made aware of the meanings of his or her symptoms (through hypnosis, for example) then the unexpressed emotions are released and so no longer need to express themselves as symptoms. With Charcot, many of Charcot's patients suffered from a bizarre array of physical and emotional problems, symptoms of a puzzling affliction doctors called " hysteria. Freud became deeply interested in the plight of patients, typically women, who suffered from hysteria. Through the study of hysteria, Charcot would introduce young Freud to the mysteries he would spend the rest of his life trying to fathom - the power of mental forces hidden away from conscious awareness. Furthermore, " Freud's father died four years prior to the publication. Painful and disturbing,

the long run effect of freeing Freud from his inhibitions impeded his work” (Parsons).

The death of Freud’s father most likely had a significant effect on his mind for the topics stated in *The Interpretation of Dreams* included a great sense of loss of a parental figure, relating to Freud’s ideas of infantile sexuality. To Freud, this sexuality covers a much wider concept other than genital intercourse between a male and female. But whatever shape or form of sexuality one eventually takes, Freud asserts, it inevitably has its roots in the infantile sexuality, which is described in terms of sexual development in the first few years of a life of an infant.

He may have written about this topic unaware that he was relating his thoughts to the loss of his father. This also goes hand in hand with Freud’s theory of the unconscious. Freud viewed the unconscious mind as a reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that is outside of our conscious awareness. Most of the contents of the unconscious are unacceptable or unpleasant, such as feelings of pain, anxiety, or conflict. According to Freud, the unconscious continues to influence human behavior and experience, even though they are unaware of these underlying influences.

In the end, “ He never ceased to extend and modify his theories” even when disagreements about Freud’s work erupted in the scientific community (Davis). The controversy surrounding Freud’s theories today occurs for many reasons. For example, he stated that his method of psychoanalysis cured mental illness; however, there is no way to prove that a patient has become mentally stable, for the patient’s symptoms may have simply been alleviated

for a time. Even now “ There is difficulty in specifying what counts as a cure for a neurotic illness, and what counts as a neurotic illness” (Davis).

Also, “ Freud’s theory could have been generated by logical confusions from long standing addiction to cocaine” (Girard). Before the harmful effects were discovered, cocaine was often used as an analgesic and euphoric. It was used in household products, and even soda and throat lozenges. Freud developed an interest in the potential antidepressant effects of cocaine, and initially advocated its use for a variety of purposes. This frequent use of the narcotic drug could have effected how Freud treated his patients, and how accurately he conducted his experiments.

Disagreements over whether Freud was dependent on the drug shroud the scientist’s credibility as well, however; it is certain that he used the narcotic drug himself, not just for his patients. As for the science within Freud’s groundbreaking discoveries, “ There was something in his method akin to that of the magi of the Renaissance” (Hutton 61). Freud even stated that during his adolescent years, he was fascinated by dreams, and that allure drove him to study the human mind.

It was for a purely individual appeal to discover himself that Freud started his lifelong career. Furthermore, most academic scholars today see Freud’s work as “ Lacking scientific evidence, overemphasizing sex, and having frequent chauvinistic viewpoints” (Parsons). Freud’s infantile sexuality theory is based on data collection from the samples of only a particular group of people in Vienna. Many then argue that the infantile sexuality should differ from one society and culture to another.

For example, in eastern societies where the family is not a nuclear one, unlike most western families, the Oedipus Complex should not be as Freud suggests since there are more objects to which love and hate may be directed. This is indeed true but again, even if Freud's work is just a representation of the western society, it still gives a lot of credible explanations for what happens in the western society in terms of neuroses, behaviors and psychology. Researchers are tapping into the chemistry of the unconscious, exploring the theory of repression, even testing ways to block traumatic memories.

What they are finding does not necessarily prove Freud right or wrong but after decades of polarization between neuroscience (the study of the brain) and psychoanalysis (exploration of the mind), the two fields are beginning to find common ground. Dr. Eric Kandel, a Columbia professor, Howard Hughes Medical Institute senior investigator and Nobel Prize winner for his work on learning and memory speaks on Freud's greatest contributions: Much of what we do is unconscious. That is a revelation that largely comes from Freud.

The fact that dreams have psychological meaning, that infants are active, thinking individuals who have sensual as well as painful experiences also comes from Freud. The fact that by listening carefully to a patient, you can get a lot of insight into what the unconscious is talking about. This is revolutionary stuff. (Kandel) Kandel perfectly outlines the relevance of Freud's ideas to the common man's life. However brilliant though, the discussion on whether Freud's ideas are literary or scientific continues. The topic of Sigmund Freud's theories being literary or scientific shadows the debate upon whether Freud's ideas are authentic. For instance, " If a theory

is incompatible with all possible observations, it is scientific," but, "[c]onversely, a theory which is compatible with all possible observations is unscientific" (Girard). In other words, if there is no way to disprove a theory's findings, it cannot be scientific, and if the observations lead you to further insight about the topic that can be proven with specific results, then you have a true scientific theory.

As far as being in favor of a literary theory, Freud's ideas are always intriguing, and *The Interpretation of Dreams* is probably the best known book on dream interpretation. Also, "Freud thought of research on the workings of the psyche as a new frontier of science, but psychoanalysis, for all of its originality as a paradigm for understanding the psyche and its efficacy in curing troubled souls, was essentially a technique for retrieving lost memories" (Hutton 61).

This concept from Freud contains ideas that are more poetic than systematic, so far as being in favor of a scientific theory; it provides a glimpse into psychoanalytic work from a man who devoted his whole life to discovering how the human mind functions. The consequences of believing Freud's work was literary is that it did not fare well in the last few decades with the general public. Society did embrace the idea; however, once they look into the details of Freud's ideas, flaws begin to occur in the logical reasoning.

Consequences for believing Freud's ideas are scientific are that they lack scientific rigor and have little or no substantiation in the scientific community. Freud deemed his work correct and scientific, even through the controversy. All the same, his evidence was biased for he based all examples

in *The Interpretation of Dreams* directly to his life. Overall, “Freud’s theory-it is not falsifiable” due to the lack of true evidence supporting psychoanalytic experiments with Freud (Thornton). In context to how Freud’s ideas helped the mentally unstable, there is no way to portray exactly how well his methods worked.

It is known that he used dream analysis, para praxes, word association, projective tests and hypnosis; however the “success rate” for these measures varies because “success” in curing a mentally unstable person cannot be exactly measured. In society at the time, these methods of helping the mentally ill were widely accepted among the general public after Freud brought the idea of psychoanalysis to civilization. Freud honestly thought he was helping society by psychoanalyzing mental patients to discover what was vexing them emotionally.

Nonetheless “The cure is affected essentially by a kind of purgation, a release of psychic energy” in which the patients must undergo a deep self-analysis to find the cause of their illness with the help of a psychoanalytic doctor (Girard). In Freud’s own words directly from *The Interpretation of Dreams* “The patient himself must become conscious of unresolved conflicts buried deep in the recess of the unconscious mind” (Freud 58). It was this very idea that made his work “Influential today so that when people speak of psychoanalysis, they frequently refer exclusively to clinical treatment” (Thornton).

On the whole, there is no doubt that Freud’s theories about psychoanalysis and the unconscious mind were influential. However when dealing with mentally ill patients, his theories were unscientific by the experiments he

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conducted. Freud's psycho dynamic model may seem opaque to us today because he explained it in terms of the technology metaphor of his day. It is as if a scientist today used a current technology such as computers as a metaphor for things that one cannot explain easily.

However, Sigmund Freud, although criticized, is a highly respected pioneer of psychology. The dominant paradigm of clinical work of psychiatry and psychology is Freudian work. Overall, Freud's theory of the unconscious assumes a personal mind; a mind inhabited with wishes, desires, and needs that have a biological, intra-psychological origin. Due to this point, the psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud are difficult to access scientifically as far as helping mentally ill people recover in reference to treatments outlined in his work.