

Whos afraid of
sigmund freud



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Who's afraid of Sigmund Freud? Sigmund Freud was one of the most influential and significant thinkers in modern history. He changed the way we thought about the human mind and the relationships that form the core of who we are. Nevertheless, in recent years his stock has declined. He is no longer thought of as scientific or serious. He is mostly a cartoon character who speaks in a thick German accent while chomping on a cigar. People tend to believe stereotypes about him, such as that he believed childhood trauma was the reason for all problems in adulthood. The author of this article seeks to defend Freud from some of these claims, and to a certain extent succeeds. To be fair to Freud, it is important to recall the time period he was living and writing in. Very little was known about psychology. He was the founder of this discipline. Many of his ideas were educated guesses based on conversations with patients and scientific study he undertook. There were bound to be errors. Few psychologists today would have been anywhere near as successful as Freud was if they had to operate under the same conditions. Even today, his basic concepts are accepted, as Hustvedt writes, "No neuroscientist today would say that the unconscious does not exist, nor would he or she say that we do not have implicit memories (memories outside of consciousness.) No one working in the field would argue against primal emotional drives in human beings either." It is clear that he has a continuing influence, even if it is not as large as it once was. That is not to say Freud was not wrong on many fronts. Much of his thinking about sex is outdated. But all things considered, he was a genius who deserves our respect. An important subject he studied that is very relevant today is the relationship between patient and therapist. He immediately saw the danger of too close an attachment and warned that therapists must watch their

feelings closely in these encounters. In 1915, he wrote: I cannot advise my colleagues too urgently to model themselves during psychoanalytic treatment on the surgeon, who puts aside all his feelings, even his human sympathy, and concentrates his mental forces on the single aim of performing the operation as skilfully as possible . . . A surgeon of earlier times took as his motto the words: ' Je le pensai, Dieu le guerit.' (' I dressed his wounds, God cured him.') The analyst should be content with something similar (Freud). It is ideas like this that show how profoundly in tune he was with the psychological world. Overall, Hustvedt makes a number of important points about Freud. He was clearly a genius whose work bears close scrutiny. The popular idea of him today as a foolish, outdated man is wrong. It can sometimes be hard to come up with a proper perspective of a person who is wrong on some things, but right on others. In this article Hustvedt manages to balance these factors properly. Freud was a great man and he deserves our admiration. Works consulted Hustvedt, Siri. (March 12, 2010). " Who's Afraid of Sigmund Freud?" Psychology Today. <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/reading-minds-method-or-muddle/201003/who-s-afraid-sigmund-freud> Freud Sigmund. (1955). Project for a Scientific Psychology, I (2nd ed.), Hogarth Press.