



Chapter one lays out the basics of Freud's theory, the immigration of the theory to America, and the characteristics of Freud himself: his relationship with sexual freedom, social reform, his orientation toward fame and cocaine, and his strong belief in occultism. Chapter two discusses the nature–nurture debate and the issues of immigration and race in America during his time.

Chapter three concentrates on the efforts of Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict in popularizing sexual freedom, including bisexuality, homosexuality, and lesbianism. In chapter four, the author shows how Freud and Marx joined forces in order to stand against Hitler's resolution of the nature-nurture debate. Chapter five pictures the shining days of Freud in America after the postwar propagation of his faith. It shows how Freud became the star of stage, screen, and radio.

Chapters six, seven, and eight deal with Freud's effect on American life—in nurseries, schools, jails, and prisons as well as among the intellectual elite, in political parties, mental health centers, universities, and the publishing and film industries.

Chapter nine presents an indepth discussion of the scientific bases of Freudian theory and challenges these bases, especially after the evidence for genetic determinants of personality had been well-established. It presents Freud's credits and debits. The chapter ends with a discussion of Freud's theory as a religion.

Freud's central theory revolves around the idea that early childhood experiences and practices (especially those related to the mother) are very crucial in determining the adult personality later. According to Freud, the core of those experiences is that of sexual development. In addition to his interest in sex, Freud was interested in fame, occultism, and cocaine. Nevertheless, in the beginning of the twentieth century most Americans were introduced to Freud as an apostle of sexual freedom (p. 13). The author contests that this achievement is a major asset of Freud's effect on American life (p. 257).

Journalists, social reformers, physicians, and anthropologists contributed to the popularization of Freud's ideas. Some of the well-known names are Abraham Brill, the first psychoanalyst in New York; Max Easman, editor of the *Masses*; Walter Lippman, a famous political analyst; Mable Dodge, a well-known businesswoman; and Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, the renowned anthropologists.

In the last decade of the nineteenth century, the idea that Anglo-Americans were the chosen people dominated the American landscape. Its racial scapegoats were the Negroes, Irishmen, Italians, and Jews. Laws implementing immigration restriction, eugenics, and compulsory sterilization emerged as the basic tools for improving the American race. Freud's ideas, that the principle

determinant of human personality was early childhood experiences and not genes, confronted these well-established ideas of the importance of genetic influence. Before World War II, many factors weakened the position of eugenics enthusiasts—the emergence of genetics in universities, the increase in the number of veterans and unemployed, and the increase of poverty.

Due to the Nazi practices of sterilizing and killing the Jews in Germany, many physicians and psychologists left Germany for America, Western Europe or Palestine. To stand up to this Nazi antisemitism, many specialists, like Edmund Wilson, one leading member of the New York intelligentsia, developed a fondness for Freud's and Marx's ideas. Franz Boas threw himself into the nature–nurture debate and concluded, “There is not the slightest proof that race determines mentality, but there is overwhelming evidence that mentality is influenced by traditional culture” (p. 101).

For a number of reasons, Freud's ideas were easily disseminated in America: the bloody struggle between Stalin and Lenin made Freud a surrogate for Marx. This led to a decline in the “nurture” theories and the preeminence of the “nature” ideas of Freud, who became more like a savior of mankind instead of a plaything of intellectuals. After World War II, Freud's ideas entered the realm of schools and child care, in addition to journalism, universities, theaters, television, and radio. Although Watson's ideas first exerted greater influence on American child rearing than Freud's, eventually some Freudian-oriented books came to dominate the field. The most famous of these were Spock's *Baby and Child Care*, Buxbaum's *Your Child Makes Sense*, and Spock's *The Magic Years: Understanding and Handling the Problems of Early Childhood*. After 1960, however, the influence of Freud on the American schools increased mainly through the concepts of progressive education and free schools. Freud's influence concentrated in the area of counseling, since academic achievements were measured by standardized tests that did not depend on Freud's untested theory.

In the area of jails and prisons, Freud's proponents like William Healy, Bernard Glueck, and William White introduced the idea that criminals were “psychological hostages being held by their unconscious [and in that case were neither truly responsible nor blameworthy for their crimes]” (p. 151).

Such ideas created a lot of violence in American life. Every crime could now be attributed to the subconscious mind or to the unconscious and, therefore, the criminal could not be held responsible for it. A proponent of Freud's ideas about crimes and criminals, Karl Menninger, started implementing Freud's theory to child care and rearing. Freud's theory continued to influence American criminology and corrections in three important areas: the concept of responsibility, the idea of crime prevention, and the use of punishment.

Freud's theory offered golden opportunities for criminals to avoid being held responsible. It was believed that criminals suffered from "transient situation reactions," or "experienced extreme emotional disturbances." In short, "insanity defense became the exonerating umbrella covering virtually all crimes" (p. 167); crime prevention and criminal rehabilitation were coined instead of punishment, although many reports and studies proved that pragmatically oriented therapy, which concentrated on personal and vocational issues, was more successful than psychologically oriented therapy in reducing recidivism. According to 1986 data, "nearly 63% of the inmates released from state prisons were reasserted for a serious crime within three years" (p. 171).

In the 1960s, the trinity of campus gurus that disseminated Freud's ideas were Margaret Mead, Paul Goodman, and Norman Brown, who believed that the key word to Freud's thought is "repression." From this intellectual elite, Freud's ideas spread across American universities after the 1960s. Many of these intellectuals received their Ph.D.'s on the basis of teaching and publishing research. A good example is Erik Erickson, who had no education beyond secondary school, but who became a well-known lay analyst and later was appointed professor of human development at Harvard University. Politically, most intellectuals shifted from Marxism toward the Democratic left. Democrats and Republicans had different political interests: the first supported the increase in social security payments, the increase in the minimal wages, the improvement of health insurance; while the second concentrated on material things and fought psychiatry, linking it to the political left. Freud's theory, which was closer to Democratic interests, developed many enthusiasts in universities, especially among anthropologists, and was incorporated into most academic curricula.

There was an enormous increase in the number of professional psychoanalysts, psychologists, and social workers between 1948 and 1990 (their number increased by twenty-two times), while the population of the nation did not quite double. Primal therapy and psychoanalysis, in particular, were very popular and expensive, with a fee reaching to \$6,000 paid in advance. Freud's theory, at first sold only to wealthy customers, became in the 1960s "repackaged and available to everyone at 'McFreud outlets'" (p. 209). Once again, Freud's theory invaded every aspect of American life and became "an integral part of American culture with the freedom to blame parents and childhood experiences as American as the freedom of speech and freedom of the press" (p. 213).

Freud's followers claimed that his theory is scientific, but many opponents and critics described it as "a scientific fairy tale," well-founded neither theoretically nor empirically, likened to astrology, palmistry, and dream interpretation. Freud himself believed the theory needed no validation. Mead's work, like

Freud's, was described as nonscientific. Likewise, the anthropological research done by Benedict was criticized for being "oversimplified and misleading" (p. 80). Both direct and indirect tests of the Freudian theory were disappointing for his followers. Only four out of twenty-six studies, geared to test the theory directly, met the minimal acceptable scientific criteria. The results of all these studies showed no relationship between toilet training practices and later personality characteristics. In fact, most studies did not provide evidence for any of the basic ideas of the theory.

There was another factor that threatened Freud's theory—the growing evidence of the importance of genetics. It was well-proven that genetics has a big role in criminal behavior, intelligence, and brain function. It was found that the normal events of childhood development do not necessarily shape later personality traits. Some children may be greatly influenced by natural disasters, others barely. Even those who believed in the importance of nongenetic determinants of human behavior now contested that personality traits are determined by "genotype environment interaction rather than [by] a pure environmental source of variance." In other words, "it is not the childhood experiences per se that are important, but these experiences in the light of the individual's genetic endowment" (p. 233).

The last chapter discusses the assets and liabilities of Freud's theory and presents a number of ironies on the dissemination of Freud's ideas in America. First, Freud himself never liked or respected the American people, who received his theory with all respect and acceptance. Second, the name of Freud in America was associated with social reform and liberal politics, although he was not a politician and supported the dictatorships in Austria and Italy. Third, Freud's name was associated with humanism and egalitarianism in America, although he was a strong believer in the theory of the elite. He expressed an extreme derogation of all human beings and often violated the ethics of a healer.

According to Fuller Torrey, Freud's credits are summarized in his interest in dreams and the unconscious, his role in the growth of humanistic and egalitarian thought, the popularization of counseling and psychotherapy, and his important role in the sexual liberation of America. The debits of the theory include the promotion of narcissism (one's happiness is the greatest good), the promotion of irresponsibility, the denigration of women, and misallocation of resources. Freud's followers believed that his theory resembled religion. One of them noted that "psychoanalysis in the hands of the physician is what confession is in the hands of the therapist" (p. 253). This comment, however, is not very accurate, for Freud was influenced by Jewish Talmudic traditions rather than by Christianity. This religious flavor, however, was an important factor

for the religious, scientific Americans who believed in the theory for it promised a scientific base for their spiritual interests.

Except for the last two chapters and the appendices, the book seemed more like a novel than a history, with the first eight chapters concentrating on the scene (political, geographical, and scientific) of a certain act. Chapter nine presented the scientific bases of criticizing Freudian theory, while chapter ten can be conceived of as a summarizing chapter of all that preceded. Looking objectively at the audit of Freud's American account, it can be noticed that the debits overcome the credits. Actually, this same conclusion can be drawn concerning Freud's account everywhere in the world, not only in America.

The conclusions that the author derives from analyzing certain texts are accurate and precise, with very few exceptions. For example, critic Walter Kaufmann, comparing Freud and Abraham Lincoln, says, "like no man before him [Freud] lent substance to the notion that all men are brothers" (p. 246). The author had no comment on this citation although it is mentioned somewhere that "In my (Freud) experience most of them (human beings) are trash. . . . The unworthiness of human beings, even of analysts, has always made a deep impression on me" (p. 243). It can't be easily conceived that, on the whole, Freud lent substance to the notion of equality (p. 246). Equally inconceivable is the fact that Freud is looked at as a hero of sexual liberation in America. The fact is that Freud's ideas were not sex-liberating, but they were sex-damaging or sex-derogating. There is a great overlap between sex liberation and sex distortion. The author notes that "Freudian theory played an important role in extending the frontiers of morality at a time when abstinence was still a virtue" (p. 245). As another observer stated, "Freud found sex an outcast in the outhouse, and he left it in the living room, an honored guest." It is not clear whether Freud did actually leave sex an honored guest in the living room, or as a rotten corpse left for every kind of prey to eat. Freud's ideas about sex (and American ones as well) do not distinguish between legal and illegal sexual activities. Every sexual activity is considered legal as long as it is not repressed in the unconscious.

The Islamic view of sex, on the other hand, is more objective and rational, for sex is looked at as a human activity that is guided by rules (personal, social, and spiritual) that help the human being attain satisfaction and fight the repression of his sexual instincts.

It is difficult to associate Freud with social reform and the rights of women. How can a man who looks down upon women and criticizes American egalitarianism (especially that related to the equality of men and women) be a supporter of women's rights? And how can an open violator of the ethics of a healer be associated with social reform? Unfortunately, the author fails to present

