“I have no desire at all to leave psychology hanging in the air with no organic basis. But, beyond a feeling of conviction [that there must be such a basis], I have nothing, either theoretical or therapeutic, to work on, and so I must behave as if I were confronted by psychological factors only.

-Freud, Sept 22, 1898
Freud: The Man

• Born in 1856 in Moravia to an impoverished, Jewish trader.
• Freud had lifelong anxiety about money.
• Freud always saw himself as an outsider because of his Jewish heritage.
• Law and Medicine were the two professions open to Jews. Freud chose to study medicine.
• He specialized in Neuroscience and wanted an academic research position, but chose instead to go into practice.

Freud: The Man

• Opened a practice and married Martha Bernays.
• Began treating women with hysteria as if the disorder were neurological (using “electrotherapy”).
• “Seduction Hypothesis”: Freud first believed the women’s problems were the result of sexual molestation.
• This was rejected by the intellectual community and Freud began to formulate his theory on childhood sexuality.
Structures of the Personality

• Id
  – original aspect of personality
  – consists of unconscious sexual and aggressive instincts.
  – Libido
  – Operates according to the Pleasure Principle
  – amoral and unconcerned with the niceties and conventions of society.

Structures of the Personality

• Superego
  – describes the individual’s internalization of societal values.
  – conscience - punitive aspect of the superego; violation of the conscience makes the person feel guilty or ashamed.
  – ego-ideal - positive aspect of the superego, comprising the standards of perfection taught to the child by the parents
Structures of the Personality

• Ego
  – formed to provide realistic direction for the person’s impulses.
  – Mediator
  – Reality Principle
  – Uses defense mechanisms to reduce anxiety

Defense Mechanisms

• rationalization:
  – use of plausible, but inaccurate excuses to relieve anxiety.
• reaction formation:
  – conversion of an unacceptable impulse into its opposite.
• compromise formation:
  – use of contradictory behaviors to attain some satisfaction of an undesirable impulse.
• displacement:
  – unconscious attempt to obtain gratification for id impulses by shifting them to substitute objects.
Defense Mechanisms

• denial:
  – a person’s refusal to perceive an unpleasant event in external reality.

• suppression:
  – the individual’s active and conscious attempt to stop anxiety-provoking thoughts by simply not thinking about them.

• undoing:
  – way of making amends for a socially unacceptable act by performing a socially acceptable act that nullifies the misdeed.

• intellectualization
  – isolating thoughts about painful events from their feelings about them.

• projection
  – attribution of undesirable, personal characteristics to others to ward off anxiety.

• regression:
  – person reverts to infantile behavior to reduce distress.
Defense Mechanisms

- repression:
  - unpleasant memories are situated in the unconscious to keep them from reaching consciousness and causing pain.

- sublimation:
  - form of displacement in which a socially acceptable goal replaces one that is unacceptable.

Theory of Psychosexual Development

- Oral stage - primary gratifications center around the mouth.
  - oral aggressive - an individual who becomes fixated because of under indulgence during feeding.
    - oral aggressive character - as an adult, this person is characterized by envy, manipulation of others, and suspiciousness.
  - oral receptive - an individual who becomes fixated because of overindulgence during feeding.
    - oral receptive character - as an adult, this person is characterized by gullibility, admiration for others, and excessive dependence.
Theory of Psychosexual Development

• Anal stage - primary gratification centers around the anal cavity.
  • anal retentive character - an individual who becomes fixated because of overly harsh toilet training
    – obstinate, stingy, excessively orderly
  • anal expulsive character - an individual who becomes fixated because of too relaxed toilet training
    – messy, disorganized, resist authority figures

Theory of Psychosexual Development

• Phallic stage - main gratifications are derived from manipulation of the genitals.
  – Males:
    • Oedipal complex
    • Castration Anxiety
    • Phallic character: Fixation leads to vanity and egotism, needs to prove continually his sexual adequacy.
  – Females:
    • Penis Envy
    • “Castrating females”
Theory of Psychosexual Development

• Latency stage:
  – period during which libidinal energy lies dormant

• Genital stage:
  – an attempt is made to conduct a mature love relationship with a member of the opposite sex.
  – genital character - a mature, healthy individual who is sexually developed and capable of relating to members of the other sex.

Evaluative Comments

• Comprehensiveness –
  – highly comprehensive theory; extremely broad scope.

• Precision and Testability –
  – not very precise and very difficult to test adequately.

• Parsimony –
  – too simplistic and reductionistic
Evaluative Comments

• Empirical Validity
  – support for the theory is mixed

• Heuristic Value
  – very high; has generated and, in some quarters, continues to generate new theorizing and research.

• Applied Value
  – has very high applied value; used by investigators in many disciplines to understand personal development in the family.