

The Culture Of Critique

environment while growing up, his religious education, and his knowledge of Hebrew, Yiddish, and Jewish religious traditions (Goodnick 1993; Rice 1990; Yerushalmi 1991, 61ff).⁹⁶

Deception is also indicated by the evidence that Freud felt that one reason psychoanalysis needed highly visible gentiles was because he viewed psychoanalysis as subverting gentile culture. After publishing *Little Hans* in 1908, he wrote to Karl Abraham that the book would create an uproar: “German ideals threatened again! Our Aryan comrades are really completely indispensable to us, otherwise psychoanalysis would succumb to anti-Semitism” (in Yerushalmi 1991, 43).

Social identity theory emphasizes the importance of positive attributions regarding the ingroup and negative attributions regarding the outgroup. Freud’s strong sense of Jewish identity was accompanied by feelings of intellectual superiority to gentiles (Klein 1981, 61). In an early letter to his future wife, Freud stated “In the future, for the remainder of my apprenticeship in the hospital, I think I shall try to live more like the gentiles—modestly, learning and practicing the usual things and not striving after discoveries or delving too deep” (in Yerushalmi 1991, 39). Freud used the word *goyim* to refer to gentiles in this passage, and Yerushalmi comments, “The hand is the hand of Sigmund; the voice is the voice of Jakob [Freud’s religiously observant father]” (p. 39). It is the voice of separation and estrangement.

An attitude of Jewish superiority to gentiles not only characterized Freud but pervaded the entire movement. Ernest Jones (1959, 211) mentioned “the Jewish belief, which they often impose on other people too, concerning the superiority of their intellectual powers.” As in the case of radical intellectual circles dominated by Jews (see Ch. 3), “The feeling of Jewish superiority alienated many non-Jews within the movement and encouraged many outside the movement to dismiss as hypocritical the humanitarian claims of the psychoanalysts” (Klein 1981, 143)—a comment suggesting self-deception among psychoanalysts regarding their motives.

Freud’s estrangement from gentiles also involved positive views of Judaism and negative views of gentile culture, the latter viewed as something to be conquered in the interest of leading humanity to a higher moral level and ending anti-Semitism. Freud had a sense of “Jewish moral superiority to the injustices of an intolerant, inhumane—indeed, anti-Semitic—society” (Klein 1981, 86). Freud “supported those in the Jewish society [B’nai B’rith] who urged Jews to regard themselves as mankind’s champions of democratic and fraternal ideals” (Klein 1981, 86). He wrote of his messianic hope to achieve the “integration of Jews and anti-Semites on the soil of [psychoanalysis]” (in Gay 1988, 231), a quote clearly

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

indicating that psychoanalysis was viewed by its founder as a mechanism for ending anti-Semitism.

[Freud] was proud of his enemies—the persecuting Roman Catholic Church, the hypocritical bourgeoisie, the obtuse psychiatric establishment, the materialistic Americans—so proud, indeed, that they grew in his mind into potent specters far more malevolent and far less divided than they were in reality. He likened himself to Hannibal, to Ahasuerus, to Joseph, to Moses, all men with historic missions, potent adversaries, and difficult fates. (Gay 1988, 604)

This comment is an excellent example of the consequences of a strong sense of social identity: Freud's powerful sense of Jewish group identity resulted in negative stereotypical thinking regarding the gentile outgroup. Gentile society, and particularly the most salient institutions of gentile culture, were viewed stereotypically as evil. These institutions were not only viewed negatively, but the accentuation effect (see *SAID*, Ch. 1) came into play and resulted in a general attribution of homogeneity to the outgroup, so that these institutions are seen as much less divided than they actually were.

Consider also Sulloway's (1979b) description of the genesis of Freud's self-concept as a hero dating from his childhood and inculcated by his family. Attesting to the intensity of Freud's Jewish identification and his self-concept as a Jewish hero, all of Freud's childhood heroes were related to Judaism: Hannibal, the Semitic combatant against Rome; Cromwell, who allowed the Jews to enter England; and Napoleon, who gave Jews civil rights. Early on he described himself as a "conquistador" rather than as a man of science.

This type of messianic thought was common in *fin de siècle* Vienna among Jewish intellectuals who were attempting to bring about a "supranational, supraethnic world" (Klein 1981, 29), a characterization that, as seen in Chapter 3, would also apply to Jewish involvement in radical political movements. These intellectuals "frequently expressed their humanitarianism in terms of their renewed Jewish self-conception... [They had] a shared belief that Jews were responsible for the fate of humanity in the twentieth century" (p. 31).

Many early proponents viewed psychoanalysis as a redemptive messianic movement that would end anti-Semitism by freeing the world of neuroses produced by sexually repressive Western civilization. Klein shows that some of Freud's closest associates had a very clearly articulated conception of psychoanalysis as a Jewish mission to the gentiles—what one might view as a uniquely modern version of the ancient "light of the nations" theme of Jewish

The Culture Of Critique

religious thought very common among intellectual apologists of Reform Judaism during the same period.

Thus for Otto Rank, who developed a close father-son relationship with Freud, Jews were uniquely qualified to cure neurosis and act as the healers of humanity (Klein 1981, 129). Developing a variant of the perspective Freud used in *Totem and Taboo* and *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Rank argued that whereas other human cultures had repressed their primitive sexuality in the ascent to civilization, “Jews possessed special creative powers since they had been able to maintain a direct relation to ‘nature,’ to primitive sexuality” (Klein 1981, 129).⁹⁷ Within this perspective, anti-Semitism results from the denial of sexuality, and the role of the Jewish mission of psychoanalysis was to end anti-Semitism by freeing humanity of its sexual repressions. A theoretical basis for this perspective was provided by Freud’s *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, in which aggression was linked with the frustration of drives.

Klein shows that this conceptualization of psychoanalysis as a redemptive “light of the nations” was common among other Jewish intimates of Freud. Thus Fritz Wittels advocated complete freedom of sexual expression and wrote “Some of us believed that psychoanalysis would change the surface of the earth... [and introduce] a golden age in which there would be no room for neuroses any more. We felt like great men... Some people have a mission in life” (in Klein 1981, 138-139). Jews were viewed as having the responsibility to lead the gentiles toward truth and nobility of behavior. “The tendency to place the Jew and the non-Jew in a relationship of fundamental opposition imbued even the expressions of redemption with an adversary quality” (Klein 1981, 142). Gentile culture was something to be conquered in battle by the morally superior, redemptive Jew: “The spirit of the Jews will conquer the world” (Wittels; in Klein 1981, 142). Coincident with Wittels’s belief in the mission of psychoanalysis was a positive Jewish self-identity; he described the convert Jew as characterized by the “psychological disability of hypocrisy” (Klein 1981, 139).

The cure for the aggression characteristic of anti-Semitism was therefore believed to lie in freeing gentiles from their sexual repressions. Although Freud himself eventually developed the idea of a death instinct to explain aggression, a consistent theme of the Freudian critique of Western culture, as exemplified for example by Norman O. Brown, Herbert Marcuse, and Wilhelm Reich, has been that the liberation of sexual repressions would lead to lowered aggression and usher in an era of universal love.

It is therefore of interest that when Jung and Alfred Adler were expelled from the movement for heresy, the issue that appears to have been most important to Freud was their rejection of the interrelated ideas of the sexual etiology of neurosis, the Oedipal complex, and childhood sexuality.⁹⁸ Sexual repression in

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

Western societies during this period was highly salient and undeniable. Freud's theory may thus be viewed as an invention whose utility in the assault on Western culture derived from the intuitive plausibility of supposing that the suppression of sexual urges would result in major changes in behavior that could possibly have psychotherapeutic effects. Moreover, the Oedipal complex idea proved to be critical to Freud's thesis for the centrality of sexual repression in *Totem and Taboo*—what Gay (1988, 329) terms some of Freud's "most subversive conjectures" and discussed in more detail below.

This belief in the curative powers of sexual freedom coincided with a leftist political agenda common to the vast majority of Jewish intellectuals of the period and reviewed throughout this book. This leftist political agenda proved to be a recurrent theme throughout the history of psychoanalysis. Support of radical and Marxist ideals was common among Freud's early followers, and leftist attitudes were common in later years among psychoanalysts (Hale 1995, 31; Kurzweil 1989, 36, 46-47, 284; Torrey 1992, 33, 93ff, 122-123), as well as in Freudian inspired offshoots such as Erich Fromm, Wilhelm Reich (see below) and Alfred Adler. (Kurzweil [1989, 287] terms Adler the leader of "far left" psychoanalysis, noting that Adler wanted to immediately politicize teachers as radicals rather than wait for the perfection of psychoanalysis to do so.) The apex of the association between Marxism and psychoanalysis came in the 1920s in the Soviet Union, where all the top psychoanalysts were Bolsheviks, Trotsky supporters, and among the most powerful political figures in the country (see Chamberlain 1995). (Trotsky himself was an ardent enthusiast of psychoanalysis.) This group organized a government-sponsored State Psychoanalytical Institute and developed a program of "pedology" aimed at producing the "new Soviet man" on the basis of psychoanalytic principles applied to the education of children. The program, which encouraged sexual precocity in children, was put into practice in state-run schools.

There is also evidence that Freud conceptualized himself as a leader in a war on gentile culture. We have seen that Freud had a great deal of hostility to Western culture, especially the Catholic Church and its ally, the Austrian Habsburg monarchy (Gay 1988; McGrath 1974; Rothman & Isenberg 1974a).⁹⁹ In a remarkable passage from the *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud, in attempting to understand why he has been unable to set foot in Rome, proposes that he has been retracing the footsteps of Hannibal, the Semitic leader of Carthage against Rome during the Punic wars.

Hannibal... had been the favourite hero of my later school days... And when in the higher classes I began to understand for the first time what it meant to belong to an alien race... the

The Culture Of Critique

figure of the semitic general rose still higher in my esteem. To my youthful mind Hannibal and Rome symbolized the conflict between the tenacity of Jewry and the organisation of the Catholic Church. (Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*; in Rothman & Isenberg 1974a, 64)

The passage clearly indicates that Freud was self-identified as a member of “an alien race” at war with Rome and its daughter institution, the Catholic Church, a central institution of Western culture. Gay (1988, 132) states, “A charged and ambivalent symbol, Rome stood for Freud’s most potent concealed erotic, and only slightly less concealed aggressive wishes.”¹⁰⁰ Rome was “a supreme prize and incomprehensible menace” (Gay 1988, 132). Freud himself described this “Hannibal fantasy” as “one of the driving forces of [my] mental life” (in McGrath 1974, 35).

A strong connection exists between anti-Semitism and Freud’s hostility to Rome. Freud’s conscious identification with Hannibal occurred following an anti-Semitic incident involving his father in which his father behaved passively. Freud’s response to the incident was to visualize “the scene in which Hannibal’s father, Hamilcar Barca, made his boy swear before the household altar to take vengeance on the Romans. Ever since that time Hannibal had... a place in my phantasies” (in McGrath 1974, 35). “Rome was the center of Christian civilization. To conquer Rome would certainly be to avenge his father and his people” (Rothman & Isenberg 1974a, 62). Cuddihy (1974, 54) makes the same point: “Like Hamilcar’s son Hannibal, he will storm Rome seeking vengeance. He will control his anger, as his father had done, but he will use it to probe relentlessly beneath the beautiful surface of the diaspora to the murderous rage and lust coiled beneath its so-called civilities.”

Rothman and Isenberg (1974) convincingly argue that Freud actually viewed the *Interpretation of Dreams* as a victory against the Catholic Church and that he viewed *Totem and Taboo* as a successful attempt to analyze the Christian religion in terms of defense mechanisms and primitive drives. Regarding *Totem and Taboo*, Freud told a colleague that it would “serve to make a sharp division between us and all Aryan religiosity” (in Rothman & Isenberg 1974, 63; see also Gay 1988, 326). They also suggest that Freud consciously attempted to conceal his subversive motivation: A central aspect of Freud’s theory of dreams is that rebellion against a powerful authority must often be carried on with deception: “According to the strength... of the censorship, [the authority-defying individual] finds himself compelled... to speak in allusions... or he must conceal his objection beneath some apparently innocent disguise” (Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*; in Rothman & Isenberg 1974a, 64).

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

The bizarre argument of Freud's (1939) *Moses and Monotheism* is quite clearly an attempt to show the moral superiority of Judaism compared to Christianity. Freud's hostility to the Catholic Church is apparent in this work: "The Catholic Church, which so far has been the implacable enemy of all freedom of thought and has resolutely opposed any idea of this world being governed by advance towards the recognition of truth!" (p. 67). Freud also reiterates his conviction that religion is nothing more than neurotic symptomatology—a view first developed in his *Totem and Taboo* (1912).

All religions may be symptoms of neurosis, but Freud clearly believed that Judaism is an ethically and intellectually superior form of neurosis: According to Freud, the Jewish religion "formed their [the Jews'] character for good through the disdaining of magic and mysticism and encouraging them to progress in spirituality and sublimations. The people, happy in their conviction of possessing the truth, overcome by the consciousness of being the chosen, came to value highly all intellectual and ethical achievements" (Freud 1939, 109). In contrast, "The Christian religion did not keep to the lofty heights of spirituality to which the Jewish religion had soared" (Freud 1939, 112). Freud argues that in Judaism the repressed memory of killing the Mosaic father figure lifts Judaism to a very high ethical level, whereas in Christianity the unrepressed memory of killing a father figure eventually results in a reversion to Egyptian paganism. Indeed, Freud's formulation of Judaism might even be termed reactionary, since it retains the traditional idea of Jews as a chosen people (Yerushalmi 1991, 34).

Freud's psychoanalytic reinterpretation may be viewed as an attempt to reinterpret Judaism in a "scientific" manner: the creation of a secular, "scientific" Jewish theology. The only substantial difference from the traditional account is that Moses replaces God as the central figure of Jewish history. In this regard, it is interesting that from an early period Freud strongly identified with Moses (Klein 1981, 94; Rice 1990, 123ff), suggesting an identification in which he viewed himself as a leader who would guide his people through a dangerous time. Given Freud's intense identification with Moses, the following passage from *Moses and Monotheism*, ostensibly referring to the ancient prophets who followed Moses, may be taken to apply to Freud himself: "Monotheism had failed to take root in Egypt. The same thing might have happened in Israel after the people had thrown off the inconvenient and pretentious religion imposed on them. From the mass of the Jewish people, however, there arose again and again men who lent new colour to the fading tradition, renewed the admonishments and demands of Moses, and did not rest until the lost cause was once more regained" (pp. 141-142). *Moses and Monotheism* also links monotheism with the superiority of Jewish ethics, but nowhere does Freud make clear how an ideology of monotheism could possibly result in a higher sense of ethics. As indicated in

The Culture Of Critique

PTSDA (Chapter 3), Jewish monotheism is closely linked to ethnocentrism and fear of exogamy. Also, as indicated in *PTSDA* (Ch. 6), Jewish ethics is fundamentally a tribalistic ethics in which there are major differences in how individuals are treated depending on whether or not they are Jews.

As I have noted, perceived anti-Semitism would be expected to exacerbate the tendency to subject gentile culture to radical criticism. There is excellent evidence that Freud was intensely concerned with anti-Semitism, perhaps dating from the anti-Semitic incident involving his father (e.g., Rice 1990; Rothman & Isenberg 1974a,b; Yerushalmi 1991). Indeed, as expected on the basis of social identity theory, Gay (1987, 138) notes that Freud's Jewish identity was most intense "when times were hardest for Jews."

Freud's theory of anti-Semitism in *Moses and Monotheism* (Freud 1939, 114-117) contains several assertions that anti-Semitism is fundamentally a pathological gentile reaction to Jewish ethical superiority. Freud dismisses several surface causes of anti-Semitism, although he gives some credence to the view that anti-Semitism is caused by Jewish defiance of oppression (obviously a cause in which Judaism is portrayed in a positive light).

But *Moses and Monotheism* traces the deeper causes of anti-Semitism to the unconscious: "The jealousy which the Jews evoked in other peoples by maintaining that they were the first-born, favourite child of God the Father has not yet been overcome by those others, just as if the latter had given credence to the assumption" (p. 116). Further, the Jewish ceremony of circumcision is said to remind gentiles of "the dreaded castration idea and of things in their primeval past which they would fain forget" (p. 116). And finally, anti-Semitism is said to result from the fact that many Christians have become Christians only recently as the result of forced conversion from even more barbarically polytheistic folk religions than Christianity itself is. Because of the violence of their forced conversions, these barbarians "have not yet overcome their grudge against the new religion which was forced upon them, and they have projected it on to the source from which Christianity came to them [i.e., the Jews]" (p. 117).

A more self-serving, far-fetched theory of anti-Semitism is difficult to imagine.¹⁰¹ The general scholarly community has tended to regard *Moses and Monotheism* as "recklessly fanciful" (McGrath 1991, 27), but this is certainly not the case for Freud's other works. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Freud's highly influential (and equally speculative) *Totem and Taboo* and *Civilization and Its Discontents* present the view that the repression of sex, so apparent as an aspect of Western culture during Freud's life, is the source of art, love, and even civilization itself. However, neurosis and unhappiness are the price to be paid for these traits because neurosis and unhappiness are the inevitable result of repressing sexual urges.

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

As Herbert Marcuse (1974, 17) writes concerning this aspect of Freud's thought: "The notion that a non-repressive civilization is impossible is a cornerstone of Freudian theory. However, his theory contains elements that break through this rationalization; they shatter the predominant tradition of Western thought and even suggest its reversal. His work is characterized by an uncompromising insistence on showing the repressive content of the highest values and achievements of culture."

Western culture has been placed on the couch, and the role of psychoanalysis is to help the patient adjust somewhat to a sick, psychopathology-inducing society: "While psychoanalytic theory recognizes that the sickness of the individual is ultimately caused and sustained by the sickness of his civilization, psychoanalytic therapy aims at curing the individual so that he can continue to function as part of a sick civilization without surrendering to it altogether" (Marcuse 1974, 245).

As was the case with some of Freud's close associates described above, Freud viewed himself as a sexual reformer against this most Western of cultural practices, the suppression of sexuality. Freud wrote in 1915: "Sexual morality—as society, in its extreme form, the American, defines it—seems to me very contemptible. I advocate an incomparably freer sexual life" (in Gay 1988, 143). As Gay (1988, 149) notes, it was an ideology which "was deeply subversive for his time."

THE SCIENTIFIC STATUS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

He [Nathan of Gaza] was an outstanding example of a highly imaginative and dangerous Jewish archetype which was to become of world importance when the Jewish intellect became secularized.¹⁰² He could construct a system of explanations and predictions of phenomena which was both highly plausible and at the same time sufficiently imprecise and flexible to accommodate new—and often highly inconvenient—events when they occurred. And he had the gift of presenting his protean-type theory... with tremendous conviction and aplomb. Marx and Freud were to exploit a similar capacity. (*A History of the Jews*, Paul Johnson 1988, 267-268)

There is a long history of well-argued claims that psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience. Even ignoring the long-standing objections of experimentally inclined researchers in mainstream psychology, there is a distinguished pedigree

The Culture Of Critique

of highly critical accounts of psychoanalysis that began appearing in the 1970s by scholars such as Henri Ellenberger (1970), Frank Sulloway (1979a), Adolph Grünbaum (1984), Frank Cioffi (1969, 1970, 1972), Hans Eysenck (1990), Malcolm Macmillan (1991), E. Fuller Torrey (1992), and perhaps most famously, Frederick Crews (1993; Crews et al. 1995). The following passages sum up this tradition of scholarship:

Should we therefore conclude that psychoanalysis is a science? My evaluation shows that at none of the different stages through which it evolved was Freud's theory one from which adequate explanations could be generated. From the beginning, much of what passed as theory was found to be description, and poor description at that... In every one of the later key developmental theses, Freud assumed what had to be explained...

None of his followers, including his revisionist critics who are themselves psychoanalysts, have probed any deeper than did Freud into the assumptions underlying their practice, particularly the assumptions underlying "the basic method"—free association. No question whether those assumptions hold in the therapeutic situation; none has attempted to break out of the circle. (Macmillan 1991, 610-612)

What passes today for Freud bashing is simply the long-postponed exposure of Freudian ideas to the same standards of noncontradiction, clarity, testability, cogency, and parsimonious explanatory power that prevail in empirical discourse at large. Step by step, we are learning that Freud has been the most overrated figure in the entire history of science and medicine—one who wrought immense harm through the propagation of false etiologies, mistaken diagnoses, and fruitless lines of inquiry. Still the legend dies hard, and those who challenge it continue to be greeted like rabid dogs. (Crews et al. 1995, 298-299)

Even those within the psychoanalytic camp have often noted the lack of scientific rigor of the early psychoanalysts, and indeed, lack of scientific rigor is a continuing concern even in psychoanalytic circles (e.g., Cooper 1990; Michaels 1988; Orgel 1990; Reiser 1989). Gay (1988, 235), who clearly regards psychoanalysis as a science, states of the first-generation psychoanalysts that they "fearlessly interpreted one another's dreams; fell on the others' slips of the

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

tongue or pen; freely, much too freely, employed diagnostic terms like ‘paranoid’ and ‘homosexual’ to characterize their associates and indeed themselves. They all practiced in their circle the kind of wild analysis they decried in outsiders as tactless, unscientific, and counterproductive.”

Gay (1988, 543) calls *Civilization and Its Discontents* “one of [Freud’s] most influential writings.” It now seems apparent that the theory Freud developed in *Civilization and Its Discontents* and his earlier work, *Totem and Taboo*, rests on a number of extremely naive, prescientific conceptualizations of human sexual behavior and its relation to culture. It is noteworthy that in arriving at his views Freud was forced to summarily reject Edward Westermarck’s theory of incest, which is the basis of modern scientific theories of incest (see MacDonald 1986).

However, by means of these speculative leaps, Freud managed to diagnose Western culture as essentially neurotic while apparently, on the basis of the argument in *Moses and Monotheism*, holding the view that Judaism represents the epitome of mental health and moral and intellectual superiority. Freud appears to have been well aware that his highly subversive conjectures in *Totem and Taboo* were entirely speculative. When the book was called a “just so” story by a British anthropologist in 1920, Freud was “amused” and stated only that his critic “was deficient in phantasy” (Gay 1988, 327), apparently a concession that the work was fanciful. Freud stated, “It would be nonsensical to strive for exactitude with this material, as it would be unreasonable to demand certainty” (in Gay 1988, 330). Similarly, Freud described *Civilization and Its Discontents* as “an essentially dilettantish foundation” on which “rises a thinly tapered analytic investigation” (in Gay 1988, 543).

Peter Gay terms Freud’s proposal of the Lamarckian inheritance of guilt, which runs through these works, as “sheer extravagance, piled upon the earlier extravagance of the claim that the primal murder had been an historic event.” However, even this assessment fails to get at the incredible rejection of the scientific spirit apparent in these writings. It was more than extravagance. Freud was accepting a genetic theory, the inheritance of acquired characteristics, which had, at least by the time *Civilization and Its Discontents* reaffirmed the doctrine, been completely rejected by the scientific community. This was a self-consciously speculative theory, but Freud’s speculations clearly had an agenda. Rather than provide speculations that reaffirmed the moral and intellectual basis of the culture of his day, his speculations were an integral part of his war on gentile culture—so much so that he viewed *Totem and Taboo* as a victory over Rome and the Catholic Church.

Similarly, Freud’s *Future of an Illusion* is a strong attack on religion in the name of science. Freud himself acknowledged that the scientific content was weak, stating, “the analytic content of the work is very thin” (in Gay 1988, 524).

The Culture Of Critique

Gay (1988, 537) finds that it “fell short of his self-imposed standards,” which, as we have already seen, were hardly averse to speculation in the service of a political agenda. Again, however, Freud engages in scientific speculation in the service of an agenda of subverting the institutions of gentile society. This type of posturing was typical of Freud. For example, Crews (1993, 57) notes that Freud advanced his theory that Dostoevsky was not an epileptic but a hysteric suffering from having witnessed a primal scene “with a typically guileful show of tentativeness; but then, just as typically, he goes on to treat it as firmly settled.” Dostoevsky was in fact an epileptic.

The theory of the Oedipal complex, childhood sexuality, and the sexual etiology of the neuroses—the three central doctrines that underlie Freud’s radical critique of gentile culture—play absolutely no role in contemporary mainstream developmental psychology. From the standpoint of evolutionary theory, the idea that children would have a specifically sexual attraction to their opposite sex parent is highly implausible, since such an incestuous relationship would result in inbreeding depression and be more likely to result in disorders caused by recessive genes (see MacDonald 1986). The proposal that boys desire to kill their fathers conflicts with the general importance of paternal provisioning of resources in understanding the evolution of the family (MacDonald 1988a; 1992): Boys who had succeeded in killing their fathers and having sex with their mothers would not only be left with genetically inferior offspring, but also be deprived of paternal support and protection. Modern developmental studies indicate that many fathers and sons have very close, reciprocated affectional relationships beginning in infancy, and the normative pattern is for mothers and sons to have very intimate and affectionate, but decidedly nonsexual, relationships.

The continued life of these concepts in psychoanalytic circles is testimony to the continuing unscientific nature of the entire enterprise. Indeed, Kurzweil (1989, 89) notes “In the beginning, the Freudians tried to ‘prove’ the universality of the Oedipus complex; later on, they took it for granted. Ultimately, they no longer spelled out the reasons for the pervasiveness of childhood sexuality and its consequences in the cultural monographs: they all accepted it.”¹⁰³ What started out as a speculation in need of empirical support ended up as a fundamental *a priori* assumption.

Research inspired by these basic Freudian tenets ceased long ago and in a sense never started: Fundamentally, psychoanalysis has not inspired any significant research on these three basic Freudian constructs. Interestingly, there is evidence that Freud fraudulently portrayed the data underlying these concepts. Esterson (1992, 25ff; see also Crews 1994) convincingly argues that Freud’s patients did not volunteer any information on seduction or primal scenes at all.

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

The seduction stories that provide the empirical basis of the Oedipal complex were a construction by Freud, who then interpreted his patients' distress on hearing his constructions as proof of the theory. Freud then engaged in deception to obscure the fact that his patients' stories were reconstructions and interpretations based on an *a priori* theory. Freud also retroactively changed the identity of the fancied seducers from nonfamily members (such as servants) because the Oedipal story required fathers. Esterson provides numerous other examples of deception (and self-deception) and notes that they were typically couched in Freud's brilliant and highly convincing rhetorical style. Both Esterson (1992) and Lakoff and Coyne (1993, 83-86) show that Freud's famous analysis of the teenage Dora (in which her rejection of the pedophilic sexual advances of an older married man is attributed to hysteria and sexual repression) was based entirely on preconceived ideas and circular reasoning in which the patient's negative emotional response to the psychoanalytic hypothesis is construed as evidence for the hypothesis. Freud engaged in similar deceptive reconstructions in an earlier phase of his theory construction when he believed that seductions had actually occurred (Powell & Boer 1994). It was a methodology that could produce any desired result.

A particularly egregious tendency is to interpret patient resistance and distress as an indication of the truth of psychoanalytic claims. Of course, patients were not the only ones who resisted psychoanalysis, and all other forms of resistance were similarly an indication of the truth of psychoanalysis. As Freud himself noted, "I am met with hostility and live in such isolation that one must suppose I had discovered the greatest truths" (in Bonaparte, Freud & Kris 1957, 163). As we shall see, resistance to psychoanalytic "truth" on the part of patients, deviating psychoanalysts, and even entire cultures was viewed as a sure sign of the truth of psychoanalysis and the pathology of those who resisted.

Because of this reconstructive, interpretive manner of theory construction, the authority of the psychoanalyst became the only criterion of the truth of psychoanalytic claims—a situation that leads quite naturally to the expectation that the movement, in order to be successful, would *necessarily* be highly authoritarian. As indicated below, the movement was authoritarian from the beginning and has remained so throughout its history.

Notice that the interpretive, hermeneutic basis of theory construction in psychoanalysis is formally identical to the procedures of Talmudic and Midrashic commentaries on scripture (Hartung 1995; see *PTSDA*, Ch. 7). Psychoanalysts have tended to suppose that consistency with observable facts is an adequate criterion for a scientifically acceptable causal explanation. Psychoanalysts "inhabit a kind of scientific preschool in which no one divulges the grown-up secret that successful causal explanation must be *differential*, establishing the

The Culture Of Critique

superiority of a given hypothesis to all of its extant rivals” (Crews 1994, 40; italics in text). As indicated in Chapter 6, the development of consensual theories consistent with observable reality but without any scientific content is a hallmark of twentieth-century Jewish intellectual movements.

Any theorist on the contemporary scientific scene who proposed that children are normally sexually attracted to their opposite sex parent would be ostracized for providing a psychological basis for supposing that children would seek such contact. A glaring mistake that persists throughout Freud’s writings is the systematic conflation of sexual desire and love (see MacDonald 1986): “From the very first, in psychoanalysis, it has seemed better to speak of these love impulses as sexual impulses” (in Wittels 1924, 141)—a comment that suggests the self-conscious nature of this conflation as well as indicates the casual manner in which psychoanalysts have framed their hypotheses. Indeed, Freud conflated all types of pleasure as fundamentally different manifestations of an underlying and unitary but infinitely transformable sexual pleasure, including the oral gratification resulting from breast feeding, anal gratification resulting from defecation, sexual gratification, and love. Contemporary researchers have often proposed that affectional ties between parents and children are developmentally important and that children actively seek these ties. However, modern theory and data, and certainly an evolutionary approach, provide absolutely no support for identifying affectional ties with sexual desire or with supposing that affectional ties are sublimated or redirected sexual desire. Modern approaches support instead a discrete systems perspective in which sexual desire and affection (and other sources of pleasure) involve quite separate, independent systems. From an evolutionary perspective, the powerful affectional (love) relationships between spouses and between parents and children function as a source of social cohesiveness whose ultimate purpose is to provide a high level of support for children (see MacDonald 1992).

This conflation between sexual desire and love is also apparent in many of Freud’s psychoanalytic successors, including Norman O. Brown, Wilhelm Reich, and Herbert Marcuse, whose works are reviewed below. The common thread of these writings is that if society could somehow rid itself of sexual repressions, human relations could be based on love and affection. This is an extremely naive and socially destructive viewpoint, given the current research in the field. Psychoanalytic assertions to the contrary were never any more than speculations in the service of waging a war on gentile culture.

In his insightful ruminations on Freud, Cuddihy (1974, 71) traces Freud’s views in this matter to the fact that for Jews, marriage was completely utilitarian (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 7). A disciple of Freud, Theodore Reik stated that the older generation of Jews held the conviction that “love is to be found only in novels

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

and plays.” “Love or romance had no place in the Judengasse [Jewish quarter].” Love was therefore viewed by Freud as an invention of the alien gentile culture and thus morally suspect. Its true hypocritical nature as a veneer for and really only a sublimation of the sexual instinct would be unmasked by psychoanalysis. As described more fully below, it was a devastating analysis—an analysis with important consequences for the social fabric of Western societies in the late twentieth century.

Finally, another general mistake, and one that illustrates the political nature of Freud’s entire agenda, is that sexual urges are viewed as having a powerful biological basis (the id), while traits such as responsibility, dependability, orderliness, guilt, and delay of gratification (i.e., the conscientiousness system of personality theory) are imposed by a repressive, pathology-inducing society. In a comment indicating the usefulness of these psychoanalytic notions in the war on gentile culture, James Q. Wilson (1993a, 104) correctly states that the belief that conscience “is the result of repression is a useful thing to believe if you would like to free yourself of the constraints of conscience—conscience becomes a ‘hang-up’ that prevents you from ‘realizing yourself.’” It fact, conscientiousness is a critical biological system which has been under intensive eugenic selection within the Jewish community (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 7). An evolutionary perspective implies, rather, that both systems have a powerful biological basis and both serve critical adaptive functions (MacDonald 1995a, 1998c). No animal and certainly no human has ever been able to be devoted entirely to self-gratification, and there is no reason whatever to suppose that our biology would solely be directed toward obtaining immediate gratification and pleasure. In the real world, achieving evolutionary goals demands that attention be paid to details, careful plans be made, and gratification be deferred.

The continued life of these notions within the psychoanalytic community testifies to the vitality of psychoanalysis as a political movement. The continued self-imposed separation of psychoanalysis from the mainstream science of developmental psychology, as indicated by separate organizations, separate journals, and a largely nonoverlapping membership, is a further indication that the fundamental structure of psychoanalysis as a closed intellectual movement continues into the present era. Indeed, the self-segregation of psychoanalysis conforms well to the traditional structure of Judaism vis-à-vis gentile society: There is the development of parallel universes of discourse on human psychology—two incompatible worldviews quite analogous to the differences in religious discourse that have separated Jews from their gentile neighbors over the ages.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A POLITICAL MOVEMENT

While Darwin was satisfied with revising his work after further reflection and absorbing palpable hits by rational critics, while he trusted the passage of time and the weight of his argumentation, Freud orchestrated his wooing of the public mind through a loyal cadre of adherents, founded periodicals and wrote popularizations that would spread the authorized word, dominated international congresses of analysis until he felt too frail to attend them and after that through surrogates like his daughter Anna. (Gay 1987, 145)

Scholars have recognized that this self-consciously oppositional, subversive stance characteristic of psychoanalysis was maintained by methods that are completely contrary to the scientific spirit. The really incredible thing about the history of psychoanalysis is that Freud should be the object of such intense adulatory emotions 60 years after his death and 100 years after the birth of psychoanalysis—another indication that the entire subject must carry us well beyond science into the realm of politics and religion. What Grosskurth (1991, 219) says about herself is the only important scientific question: “I am fascinated by the fact that thousands of people continue to idealize and defend [Freud] without really knowing anything about him as a person.” It is the continuation of this movement and the veneration of its founder, not the pseudoscientific content of the theory, that are of interest.

I have already noted the self-consciously speculative nature of these subversive doctrines, but another important aspect of this phenomenon is the structure of the movement and the manner in which dissent was handled within the movement. Psychoanalysis “conducted itself less like a scientific-medical enterprise than like a politburo bent on snuffing out deviationism” (Crews 1994, 38). It is not surprising, therefore, that observers such as Sulloway (1979b) have described the “cultlike” aura of religion that has permeated psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis has often been compared to a religion by outsiders as well as by insiders. Gay (1988, 175) notes the “persistent charge that Freud had founded a secular religion.” Although Gay disputes the charge, he also uses words such as “movement” (p. 180 and *passim*), “conversion” (p. 184), and “the Cause” (p. 201) in describing psychoanalysis; and he uses “strayed disciple” (p. 485) to describe a defector (Otto Rank) and “recruit” (p. 540) to describe Princess Marie Bonaparte. Similarly, Yerushalmi (1991, 41) speaks of Freud as bestowing on Jung “the mantle of apostolic succession.” And I can’t help noting that the

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

staunch Freud disciple Fritz Wittels (1924, 138) reports that during the period when Freud and Jung were close, Freud often said of Jung, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased.”

Wittels (1924) also decried the “suppression of free criticism within the Society... Freud is treated as a demigod, or even as a god. No criticism of his utterances is permitted.” Wittels tells us that Freud’s *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* is “the psychoanalyst’s Bible. This is no mere figure of speech. The faithful disciples regard one another’s books as of no account. They recognize no authority but Freud’s; they rarely read or quote one another. When they quote it is from the Master, that they may give the pure milk of the word” (pp. 142-143). Freud “had little desire that [his] associates should be persons of strong individuality, and that they should be critical and ambitious collaborators. The realm of psychoanalysis was his idea and his will, and he welcomed anyone who accepted his views” (p. 134).

The authoritarianism of the movement repelled some. The influential Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler left the movement in 1911, telling Freud that “this ‘who is not for us is against us,’ this ‘all or nothing,’ is necessary for religious communities and useful for political parties. I can therefore understand the principle as such, but for science I consider it harmful” (in Gay 1987, 144-145).

Other independent thinkers were simply expelled. There were emotionally charged, highly politicized scenes when Adler and Jung were expelled from the movement. As indicated above, both individuals had developed perspectives that clashed with those aspects of psychoanalytic orthodoxy that were crucial to developing a radical critique of Western culture, and the result was a bitter schism. In the case of Adler, some members in the movement and Adler himself made attempts to minimize the differences with Freudian orthodoxy by, for example, viewing Adler’s ideas as extensions of Freud rather than as contradictions, “But Freud was not interested in such forced compromises” (Gay 1988, 222). Indeed, Jung stated in 1925 that Freud’s attitude toward him was “the bitterness of the person who is entirely misunderstood, and his manners always seemed to say: ‘If they do not understand, they must be stamped into hell’” (in Ellenberger 1970, 462). After Jung’s schism with Freud, Jung stated: “I criticize in Freudian psychology a certain narrowness and bias and, in ‘Freudians,’ a certain unfree, sectarian spirit of intolerance and fanaticism” (in Gay 1988, 238).

The defections-expulsions of Jung and Adler were an early indication of the inability to tolerate any form of dissent from fundamental doctrines. Otto Rank defected in the mid-1920s, and again the problem was disagreement with the importance of a fundamental Freudian doctrine, the Oedipal complex. This defection was accompanied by a great deal of character assassination, often

The Culture Of Critique

consisting of attempts to show that Rank's behavior was an indication of psychopathology.

Most recently Jeffrey Masson has been expelled from the movement because he questioned the Freudian doctrine that patients' reports of sexual abuse were fantasies. As with the other dissenters, such a view entails a radical critique of Freud, since it entails the rejection of the Oedipal complex. As with Talmudic discussions, one could question Freud, but the questioning had to be done "within a certain framework and within the guild. Stepping outside of the framework, being willing to question the very foundations of psychoanalysis, is unthinkable for most analysts" (Masson 1990, 211). Masson's expulsion was characterized not by scientific debate about the accuracy of his claims but by a Stalinist show trial complete with character assassination.

In the history of psychoanalysis, character assassination typically involves analyzing scientific disagreement as an indication of neurosis. Freud himself "never tired of repeating the now notorious contention that the opposition to psychoanalysis stemmed from 'resistances'" arising from emotional sources (Esterson 1992, 216). For example, Freud attributed Jung's defection to "strong neurotic and egotistic motives" (in Gay 1988, 481).¹⁰⁴ Gay (1988, 481) comments, "These ventures into character assassination are instances of the kind of aggressive analysis that psychoanalysts, Freud in the vanguard, at once deplored and practiced. This... was the way that analysts thought about others, and about themselves." The practice was "endemic among analysts, a common professional deformation" (Gay 1988, 481). One might also note the similarity of these phenomena to the Soviet practice of committing dissenters to mental hospitals. This tradition lives on. Frederick Crews's (1993, 293) recent critique of psychoanalysis has been portrayed by psychoanalysts as "composed in a state of bitter anger by a malcontent with a vicious disposition." Crews's behavior was explained in terms of botched transferences and Oedipal complexes gone awry.

Perhaps the most astonishing case is Otto Rank's letter of 1924 in which he attributes his heretical actions to his own neurotic unconscious conflicts, promises to see things "more objectively after the removal of my affective resistance," and notes that Freud "found my explanations satisfactory and has forgiven me personally" (Grosskurth 1991, 166). In this matter "Freud seems to have acted as the Grand Inquisitor, and Rank's groveling 'confession' could have served as a model for the Russian show trials of the 1930s" (Grosskurth 1991, 167). Freud viewed the entire episode as a success; Rank had been cured of his neurosis "just as if he had gone through a proper analysis" (in Grosskurth 1991, 168). Clearly, we are dealing with no ordinary science here, but rather with a religious-political movement in which psychoanalysis is a form of thought control and an instrument of domination and interpersonal aggression.

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

The apex of this authoritarian aspect of the movement was the creation of “a tight, small organization of loyalists” whose main task was to prevent departures from orthodoxy (Gay 1988, 229-230). Freud accepted the idea with enthusiasm. “What took hold of my imagination immediately, is your [Ernest Jones’s] idea of a secret council composed of the best and most trustworthy among our men to take care of the further development of [psychoanalysis] and defend the cause against personalities and accidents when I am no more... [The committee would] make living and dying easier for me... [T]his committee had to be *strictly secret*” (Freud, in Gay 1988, 230; italics in text).¹⁰⁵

The workings of the Committee have been extensively documented by Grosskurth (1991, 15; italics in text) who notes that “By insisting the Committee must be *absolutely secret*, Freud enshrined the principle of confidentiality. The various psychoanalytic societies that emerged from the Committee were like Communist cells, in which the members vowed eternal obedience to their leader. Psychoanalysis became institutionalized by the founding of journals and the training of candidates; in short an extraordinarily effective political entity.”

There were repeated admonitions for the Committee to present a “united front” against all opposition, for “maintaining control over the whole organization,” for “keeping the troops in line,” and for “reporting to the commander” (Grosskurth 1991, 97). This is not the workings of a scientific organization, but rather of an authoritarian religious-political and quasi-military movement—something resembling the Spanish Inquisition or Stalinism far more than anything resembling what we usually think of as science.

The authoritarian nature of the psychoanalytic movement is exemplified by the personalities of the members of the Committee, all of whom appear to have had extremely submissive personalities and absolute devotion to Freud. Indeed, the members appear to have self-consciously viewed themselves as loyal sons to Freud the father figure (complete with sibling rivalry as the “brothers” jockeyed for position as the “father’s” favorite), while Freud viewed his close followers as his children, with power to interfere in their personal lives (Grosskurth 1991, 123; Hale 1995, 29). To the loyalists, the truth of psychoanalysis was far less important than their psychological need to be appreciated by Freud (Deutsch 1940).

These relationships went far beyond mere loyalty, however. “[Ernest] Jones had grasped the fact that to be a friend of Freud’s meant being a sycophant. It meant opening oneself completely to him, to be willing to pour out all one’s confidences to him” (Grosskurth 1991, 48). “Jones believed that to disagree with Freud (the father) was tantamount to patricide (father murder),” so that when Sandor Ferenczi disagreed with Freud on the reality of childhood sexual abuse, Jones called him a “homicidal maniac” (Masson 1990, 152).

The Culture Of Critique

Regarding Ferenczi, Grosskurth (1991) notes, “The thought of a disagreement with Freud was unbearable” (p. 141), “There were occasions when he [Ferenczi] rebelled against his dependency, but always he returned repentant and submissive” (pp. 54-55). The situation was similar for Kurt Eissler, the closest confidant of Anna Freud’s inner circle in the 1960s: “What he felt for Freud seemed to border on worship” (Masson 1990, 121). “He held one thing sacred, and hence beyond criticism: Freud” (Masson 1990, 122). It was common among the disciples to imitate Freud’s personal mannerisms, and even among analysts who did not know Freud personally there were “intense feelings, fantasies, transferences, identifications” (Hale 1995, 30).

This authoritarian aspect of the movement continued long after the dissolution of the secret Committee and long after Freud’s death. Anna Freud received a ring from her father and kept a “special group” around her whose existence was not public knowledge (Masson 1990, 113). “Psychoanalysis always was, from the moment Freud found disciples, a semisecret society. This secrecy has never disappeared” (Masson 1990, 209).

The tendency to stifle dissent has continued in psychoanalysis long after the well-documented tendencies of the founding father and his disciples (Orgel 1990). “Psychoanalysis demanded loyalty that could not be questioned, the blind acceptance of unexamined ‘wisdom.’”

“Success as a psychoanalyst meant being a team player and not questioning the work of other analysts on one’s team” (Masson 1990, 209, 70). Intellectual dissent was stifled with statements by superiors that doubters had a further need for analysis or simply by removing dissenters from training programs.

Further evidence for the essentially political character of psychoanalysis is the unique role of disciples able to trace themselves back to Freud in a direct line of descent. “The idea of being a chosen disciple, privileged to have direct contact with the master, has survived and is continued in the procedures of many of the training programs of the institutes” (Arlow & Brenner 1988, 5; see also Masson 1990, 55, 123). “The intensely filial relationships to Freud of the first generation were gradually replaced by highly emotional relationships to a fantasied Freud, still the primal founder, but also to organizations, to peers, to superiors in the institute hierarchy—above all—to the training analyst, the training analyst’s analyst, and, if possible, back to Freud and his circle became a determinant of psychoanalytic prestige” (Hale 1995, 32).

Unlike in a real science, in psychoanalysis there is a continuing role for what one might term the sacred texts of the movement, Freud’s writings, both in teaching and in the current psychoanalytic literature. *Studies of Hysteria* and *The Interpretation of Dreams* are almost 100 years old but remain standard texts in psychoanalytic training programs. There is a “recurrent appearance in the

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

analytic literature of articles redoing, extending, deepening, and modifying Freud's early case histories" (Arlow & Brenner 1988, 5). Indeed, it is remarkable to simply scan psychoanalytic journal articles and find that a large number of references are to Freud's work performed well over 60 years ago. The 1997 volume of *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* had 77 references to Freud in 24 articles. Only five articles had no references to Freud, and of these, one had no references at all. (In keeping with psychoanalytic tradition, there were no empirical studies.) There thus appears to be a continuing tendency noted by Wittels (1924, 143) long ago: "The faithful disciples regard one another's books as of no account. They recognize no authority but Freud's; they rarely read or quote one another. When they quote it is from the Master, that they may give the pure milk of the word."

The continued use of Freud's texts in instruction and the continuing references to Freud's work are simply not conceivable in a real science. In this regard, although Darwin is venerated for his scientific work as the founder of the modern science of evolutionary biology, studies in evolutionary biology only infrequently refer to Darwin's writings because the field has moved so far beyond his work. *On the Origin of Species* and Darwin's other works are important texts in the history of science, but they are not used for current instruction. Moreover, central features of Darwin's account, such as his views on inheritance, have been completely rejected by modern workers. With Freud, however, there is continuing fealty to the master, at least within an important subset of the movement.

One rationalization for the authoritarian character of the movement was that it was necessary because of the irrational hostility psychoanalysis aroused in the scientific and lay communities (e.g., Gay 1987). However, Sulloway (1979a, 448; see also Ellenberger 1970, 418-420; Esterson 1992, 172-173; Kiell 1988) finds the supposedly hostile reception of Freud's theories to be "one of the most well-entrenched legends" of psychoanalytic history. More-over, one might note that Darwin's theory also provoked intense hostility during Darwin's life, and recently there has been a great deal of public hostility directed at recent elaborations of Darwin's theory as it pertains to human behavior. Nevertheless, these theoretical perspectives have not developed the authoritarian, separatist traits of psychoanalysis. Indeed, evolutionists and behavioral geneticists have attempted to influence mainstream research in anthropology, psychology, sociology, and other fields by publishing data in mainstream journals and often by using mainstream methodologies. Controversy and hostility by itself need not lead to orthodoxy or to separation from the university. In the world of science, controversy leads to experimentation and rational argumentation. In the world of psychoanalysis, it leads to expulsion of the nonorthodox and to splendid isolation from scientific psychology.

The Culture Of Critique

Indeed, in works such as Grosskurth's (1991) *The Secret Ring* and Peter Gay's biography of Freud, much comment is made on the authoritarian nature of the movement, but discussions of the need for authoritarianism as resulting from external pressures on psychoanalysis are extremely vague and almost completely absent. Instead, the drive for orthodoxy comes from within the movement as the direct result of the personalities of a small group of loyalists and their absolute commitment to their master's cause.

Reflecting the utility of psychoanalysis as an instrument of psychological domination and thought control, Freud himself refused to be analyzed. Freud's refusal resulted in difficulties with Jung (Jung 1961) and, much later, with Ferenczi, who commented that the refusal was an example of Freud's arrogance (Grosskurth 1991, 210-211). In contrast, Freud used psychoanalysis to sexually humiliate two of his most fervent disciples, Ferenczi and Jones. Freud's analysis of the women involved in relationships with Ferenczi and Jones resulted in the women leaving the men but remaining on friendly terms with Freud (see Grosskurth 1991, 65). Grosskurth suggests that Freud's actions were a test of his disciples' loyalty, and the fact that Jones continued in the movement after this humiliation indicates the extent to which Freud's followers showed unquestioned obedience to their master.

An ethologist observing these events would conclude that Freud had behaved like the quintessential dominant male, which Freud mythologized in *Totem and Taboo*, but only symbolically, since Freud did not apparently have a sexual relationship with the women (although he was "captivated" by Jones's gentile female friend [Grosskurth 1991, 65]). To have refrained from killing the father under these circumstances was to have successfully passed through the Oedipal situation—an acknowledgment of fealty to Freud the father figure.

Besides controlling his male underlings, Freud used psychoanalysis to pathologize female resistance to male sexual advances. This is apparent in the famous analysis of the teenage Dora, who rejected the advances of an older married man. Dora's father sent her to Freud because he wanted her to accede to the man's advances as an appeasement gesture because the father was having an affair with the man's wife. Freud obligingly attributed Dora's rejection to repressing amorous desires toward the man. The message is that 14-year-old girls who reject the sexual advances of older married men are behaving hysterically. An evolutionist would interpret her behavior as an understandable (and adaptive) consequence of her evolved psychology. Reflecting the generally positive accounts of Freud in the popular media of the 1950s, Donald Kaplan (1967), a lay analyst writing in *Harper's*, wrote that Freud had "exercised his finest ingenuity" in the case of Dora: "Three months with Freud may have been the only experience with unimpeachable integrity in her long, unhappy life." Lakoff

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

and Coyne (1993) conclude their discussion of Dora by arguing that in general psychoanalysis was characterized by thought control, manipulation, and debasement of the analysand. Crews (1993, 56) also describes a “scarcely believable” case in which Freud manipulated Horace Frink, president of the New York Psychoanalytic Society, into a disastrous divorce and remarriage to an heiress, the latter event to be accompanied by a sizable financial contribution to the psychoanalytic movement. Frink’s second wife later divorced him. Both divorces were accompanied by episodes of manic depression.

An important corollary of these findings is that psychoanalysis has many features in common with brainwashing (Bailey 1960, 1965; Salter 1998).¹⁰⁶ During training sessions, any objection by the future psychoanalyst is viewed as a resistance to be overcome (Sulloway 1979b). Many contemporary analysands feel that their analysts behaved aggressively toward them, turning them into devoted and passive followers of their highly idealized analyst, a role facilitated by the “unquestioned authority” of the analyst (Orgel 1990, 14). Masson (1990, 86) describes his training analysis as “like growing up with a despotic parent,” since the qualities it requires in the prospective analysts are meekness and abject obedience.

I suggest that the inculcation of passive and devoted followers via the aggression and thought control represented by psychoanalysis has always been an important aspect of the entire project. At a deep level, the fundamentally pseudoscientific structure of psychoanalysis implies that disputes cannot be resolved in a scientific manner, with the result that, as Kerr (1992) notes, the only means of resolving disputes involves the exercise of personal power. The result was that the movement was doomed to develop into a mainstream orthodoxy punctuated by numerous sectarian deviations originated by individuals who were expelled from the movement. These offshoots then replicated the fundamental structure of all psychoanalysis-inspired movements: “Each major disagreement over theory or therapy seemed to require a new validating social group, a psychoanalytic tradition that recent splits within Freudian institutes seem only to confirm” (Hale 1995, 26). Whereas real science is individualistic at its core, psychoanalysis in all its manifestations is fundamentally a set of cohesive, authoritarian groups centered around a charismatic leader.

Despite the complete lack of support by a body of scientific research and the authoritarian, highly politicized atmosphere of the movement, psychoanalysis has at least until recently “maintained a considerable place of honor within residency and medical student curricula and teaching.” The American Psychiatric Association (APA) “over many years has been led primarily by medical psychoanalysts, both as medical director in the person of Dr. Melvin Sabshin and through a succession of psychoanalyst presidents” (Cooper 1990, 182). The APA

The Culture Of Critique

has supported the American Psychoanalytic Society in many ways directly and indirectly. The intellectual credibility of psychoanalysis within the wider psychiatric community and a considerable portion of its financial resources have therefore been achieved not by developing a body of scientific research or even being open to alternative perspectives, but by political influence within the APA.

Another source of financial support for psychoanalysis derived from its acceptance within the Jewish community. Jews have been vastly overrepresented as patients seeking psychoanalytic treatments, accounting for 60 percent of the applicants to psychoanalytic clinics in the 1960s (Kadushin 1969). Indeed, Glazer and Moynihan (1963, 163) describe a Jewish subculture in New York in mid-twentieth-century America in which psychoanalysis was a central cultural institution that filled some of the same functions as traditional religious affiliation: “Psychoanalysis in America is a peculiarly Jewish product... [Psychoanalysis] was a scientific form of soul-rebuilding to make them whole and hardy, and it was divorced, at least on the surface, from mysticism, will, religion, and all those other romantic and obscure trends that their rational minds rejected” (p. 175). Patients and analysts alike were participating in a secular movement that retained the critical psychological features of traditional Judaism as a separatist, authoritarian, and collectivist cultlike movement.

Finally, it is reasonable to conclude that Freud’s real analysand was gentile culture, and that psychoanalysis was fundamentally an act of aggression toward that culture. The methodology and institutional structure of psychoanalysis may be viewed as attempts to brainwash gentile culture into passively accepting the radical criticism of gentile culture entailed by the fundamental postulates of psychoanalysis. Draped in scientific jargon, the authority of the analyst depended ultimately on a highly authoritarian movement in which dissent resulted in expulsion and elaborate rationalizations in which such behavior was pathologized.

Indeed, the following passage, written to Karl Abraham, shows that Freud thought that in order to accept psychoanalysis, gentiles had to overcome “inner resistances” resulting from their racial origins. Comparing Abraham to Jung, Freud wrote, “You are closer to my intellectual constitution because of racial kinship [*Rassenverwandschaft*], while he as a Christian and a pastor’s son finds his way to me only against great inner resistances” (in Yerushalmi 1991, 42).

Gentiles’ acceptance of psychoanalysis would thus, in a sense, represent the Jews’ conquering the “innate” tendencies of the Christians—the victory of the Semitic general against his hated adversary, gentile culture. Indeed, Kurzweil (1989) shows that the tendency to pathologize disagreement not only occurred within the movement and in reference to defectors but also was often applied to whole countries where psychoanalysis failed to take root. Thus the early lack of a

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

positive reception for psychoanalysis in France was ascribed to “irrational defenses” (p. 30), and a similar situation in Austria was attributed to a “general resistance” to psychoanalysis (p. 245), where “resistance” is used with psychoanalytic connotations.

**PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A TOOL IN THE RADICAL
CRITICISM OF WESTERN CULTURE: THE WIDER
CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF FREUD’S THEORY**

Because Freud’s ideology was self-consciously subversive and, in particular, because it tended to undermine Western institutions surrounding sex and marriage, it is of some interest to consider the effects of these practices from an evolutionary perspective. Western marriage has long been monogamous and exogamous, and these features contrast strongly with features of other stratified societies, especially societies from the Near East, such as ancient Israel (MacDonald 1995b,c; *PTSDA*, Ch. 8).

Freud’s views in *Totem and Taboo* and *Civilization and Its Discontents* represent a failure to grasp the uniqueness of Roman and later Christian institutions of marriage and the role of Christian religious practices in producing the uniquely egalitarian mating systems characteristic of Western Europe.¹⁰⁷ In Western Europe the repression of sexual behavior has fundamentally served to support socially imposed monogamy, a mating system in which differences in male wealth are much less associated with access to females and reproductive success than in traditional non-Western civilizations where polygyny has been the norm. As elaborated also in *PTSDA* (Ch. 8), polygyny implies sexual competition among males, with wealthy males having access to vastly disproportionate numbers of women and lower-status men often being unable to mate at all. This type of marriage system is very common among the traditional stratified human societies of the world, such as classical China, India, the Muslim societies, and ancient Israel (Betzig 1986; Dickemann 1979). While poor males cannot find a mate in such a system, women are reduced to chattel and are typically purchased as concubines by wealthy males. Socially imposed monogamy thus represents a relatively egalitarian mating system for men.

Moreover, because of higher levels of sexual competition among males, the status of women in non-Western societies is immeasurably lower than in Western societies where monogamy has developed (MacDonald 1988a, 227-228; J. Q. Wilson 1993a). It is no accident that the recent movement toward women’s rights developed in Western societies rather than in the other stratified societies of the

The Culture Of Critique

world. The massive confusion characteristic of psychoanalysis is also apparent in Freud's close colleague, Fritz Wittels. Wittels expected an era of liberation and sexual freedom to be ushered in by a group of Jewish psychoanalytic messianists, but his expectation was based on a profound misunderstanding of sex and human psychology. Wittels condemned "our contemporary goddamned culture" for forcing women into "the cage of monogamy" (in Gay 1988, 512), a comment that completely misunderstands the effects of inter-male sexual competition as represented by polygyny.

There are sound reasons for supposing that monogamy was a necessary condition for the peculiarly European "low-pressure" demographic profile described by Wrigley and Schofield (1981). This demographic profile results from late marriage and celibacy of large percentages of females during times of economic scarcity. The theoretical connection with monogamy is that monogamous marriage results in a situation where the poor of both sexes are unable to mate, whereas in polygynous systems an excess of poor females merely lowers the price of concubines for wealthy males. Thus, for example, at the end of the seventeenth century approximately 23 percent of individuals of both sexes remained unmarried between ages 40 to 44, but, as a result of altered economic opportunities, this percentage dropped at the beginning of the eighteenth century to 9 percent, and there was a corresponding decline in age of marriage (Wrigley & Schofield 1981). Like monogamy, this pattern was unique among the stratified societies of Eurasia (Hajnal 1965, 1983; MacFarlane 1986; R. Wall 1983; Wrigley & Schofield, 1981).

In turn, the low pressure demographic profile appears to have had economic consequences. Not only was marriage rate the main damper on population growth, but, especially in England, this response had a tendency to lag well behind favorable economic changes so that there was a tendency for capital accumulation during good times rather than a constant pressure of population on food supply:

The fact that the rolling adjustment between economic and demographic fluctuations took place in such a leisurely fashion, tending to produce large if gradual swings in real wages, represented an opportunity to break clear from the low-level income trap which is sometimes supposed to have inhibited all pre-industrial nations. A long period of rising real wages, by changing the structure of demand, will tend to give a disproportionately strong boost to demand for commodities other than the basic necessities of life, and so to sectors of the economy whose growth is especially important if an industrial

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

revolution is to occur. (Wrigley & Schofield 1981, 439; see also Hajnal 1965; MacFarlane 1986)

There is thus some reason to suppose that monogamy, by resulting in a low pressure demographic profile, was a necessary condition for industrialization. This argument suggests that socially imposed monogamy—embedded in the religious and cultural framework of Western societies—may indeed be a central aspect of the architecture of Western modernization.

Another important effect of Western institutions of sex and marriage was to facilitate high-investment parenting. As already indicated, perhaps the most basic mistake Freud made was the systematic conflation of sex and love. This was also his most subversive mistake, and one cannot overemphasize the absolutely disastrous consequences of accepting the Freudian view that sexual liberation would have salutary effects on society.

Contrary to the psychoanalytic perspective, evolutionary theory is compatible with a discrete systems perspective in which there are at least two independent systems influencing reproductive behavior (MacDonald 1988a, 1992, 1995a): One system is a pair bonding system that facilitates stable pair bonds and high-investment parenting. This system essentially brings the father into the family as a provider of resources for children by providing a basis for close affectional ties (romantic love) between men and women. There is good evidence for such a system both in attachment research and personality psychology.

The second system may be characterized as a sexual attraction-mating system that facilitates mating and short-term sexual relationships. This system is psychometrically associated with extraversion, sensation seeking, aggression, and other appetitive systems. Psychological research supports the hypothesis that individuals who are high on these systems tend to have more sexual partners and relatively disinhibited sexual behavior. Highest in young-adult males, this system underlies a low-investment style of mating behavior in which the male's role is simply to inseminate females rather than provide continuing investment in the children. Many human societies have been characterized by intense sexual competition among males to control large numbers of females (e.g., Betzig 1986; Dickemann 1979; MacDonald 1983). This male pursuit of large numbers of mates and sexual relationships has nothing to do with love. It is the defining characteristic of Western culture to have significantly inhibited this male tendency while at the same time providing cultural supports for pair bonding and companionate marriage. The result has been a relatively egalitarian, high-investment mating system.

The psychoanalytic emphasis on legitimizing sexuality and premarital sex is therefore fundamentally a program that promotes low-investment parenting

The Culture Of Critique

styles. Low-investment parenting is associated with precocious sexuality, early reproduction, lack of impulse control, and unstable pair bonds (Belsky, Steinberg & Draper 1991). Ecologically, high-investment parenting is associated with the need to produce competitive offspring, and we have seen that one aspect of Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy has been a strong emphasis on high-investment parenting (*PTSDA*, Ch. 7). Applied to gentile culture, the subversive program of psychoanalysis would have the expected effect of resulting in less-competitive children; in the long term, gentile culture would be increasingly characterized by low-investment parenting, and, as indicated below, there is evidence that the sexual revolution inaugurated, or at least greatly facilitated, by psychoanalysis has indeed had this effect.

In this regard, it is interesting to note that an important aspect of the social imposition of monogamy in Western Europe has been the development of companionate marriage. One of the peculiar features of Western marriage is that there has been a trend toward companionate marriage based on affection and consent between partners (e.g., Brundage 1987; Hanawalt 1986; MacFarlane 1986; Stone 1977, 1990; Westermarck 1922). Although dating this affective revolution in the various social strata remains controversial (Phillips 1988), several historians have noted the prevalence and psychological importance of affectionate parent-child and husband-wife relations in Western Europe since the Middle Ages (Hanawalt 1986; MacFarlane 1986; Pollack 1983), or at least since the seventeenth century (e.g., Phillips 1988; Stone 1977, 1990). Stone (1990) notes that by the end of the eighteenth century “even in great aristocratic households mutual affection was regarded as the essential prerequisite for matrimony” (p. 60).

In view of Freud’s animosity toward Western culture and the Catholic Church in particular, it is interesting that the Church’s policy on marriage included a largely successful attempt to emphasize consent and affection between partners as normative features of marriage (Brundage 1975, 1987; Duby 1983; Hanawalt 1986; Herlihy 1985; MacFarlane 1986; Noonan 1967, 1973; Quaife 1979; Rouché 1987; Sheehan 1978). Anti-hedonism and the idealization of romantic love as the basis of monogamous marriage have also periodically characterized Western secular intellectual movements (Brundage 1987), such as the Stoics of late antiquity (e.g., P. Brown 1987; Veyne 1987) and nineteenth-century Romanticism (e.g., Corbin 1990; Porter 1982).

From an evolutionary perspective, consent frees individuals to pursue their own interests in marriage, among which may be compatibility and conjugal affection. Although affection can certainly occur in the context of arranged marriages (and this has been emphasized by some historians of Republican Rome

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

[e.g., Dixon 1985]), all things being equal, free consent to marriage is more likely to result in affection being one criterion of importance.

Indeed, one sees in these findings a fundamental difference between Judaism as a collectivist group strategy, in which individual decisions are submerged to the interests of the group, versus Western institutions based on individualism. Recall the material reviewed in *PTSDA* (Ch. 7) indicating that until after World War I arranged marriages were the rule among Jews because the economic basis of marriage was too important to leave to the vagaries of romantic love (Hyman 1989). Although high-investment parenting was an important aspect of Judaism as a group evolutionary strategy, conjugal affection was not viewed as central to marriage with the result that, as Cuddihy (1974) notes, a long line of Jewish intellectuals regarded it as a highly suspect product of an alien culture. Jews also continued to practice consanguineous marriages—a practice that highlights the fundamentally biological agenda of Judaism (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 8)—well into the twentieth century whereas, as we have seen, the Church successfully countered consanguinity as a basis of marriage beginning in the Middle Ages. Judaism thus continued to emphasize the collectivist mechanism of the social control of individual behavior in conformity to family and group interests centuries after the control of marriage in the West passed from family and clan to individuals. In contrast to Jewish emphasis on group mechanisms, Western culture has thus uniquely emphasized individualist mechanisms of personal attraction and free consent (see *PTSDA*, Ch. 8).

I conclude that Western religious and secular institutions have resulted in a highly egalitarian mating system that is associated with high-investment parenting. These institutions provided a central role for pair bonding, conjugality, and companionship as the basis of marriage. However, when these institutions were subjected to the radical critique presented by psychoanalysis, they came to be seen as engendering neurosis, and Western society itself was viewed as pathogenic. Freud's writings on this issue (see Kurzweil 1989, 85 and passim) are replete with assertions on the need for greater sexual freedom to overcome debilitating neurosis. As we shall see, later psychoanalytic critiques of gentile culture pointed to the repression of sexuality as leading to anti-Semitism and a host of other modern ills.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE CRITICISM OF WESTERN CULTURE

Psychoanalysis has proved to be a veritable treasure trove of ideas for those intent on developing radical critiques of Western culture. Psychoanalysis

The Culture Of Critique

influenced thought in a wide range of areas, including sociology, child rearing, criminology, anthropology, literary criticism, art, literature, and the popular media. Kurzweil (1989, 102) notes that “something like a culture of psychoanalysis was being established.” Torrey (1992) describes in some detail the spread of the movement in the United States, originally through the actions of a small group of predominantly Jewish activists with access to the popular media, the academic world, and the arts, to a pervasive influence in the 1950s: “It is a long road from a beachhead among New York intellectuals to a widespread influence in almost every phase of American life” (p. 37)—what Torrey terms an “assault on American culture” (p. 127).

And as Shapiro (1989, 292) points out, the vast majority of the New York Intellectuals not only had Jewish backgrounds but also strongly identified as Jews: “The surprising thing about the Jewish intellectuals is not that their expressions of Jewish identity were so pale but that they rejected the easy path of assimilation. That supposedly ‘cosmopolitan’ intellectuals should concern themselves with such a parochial matter as Jewish identity reveals the hold which Jewishness has had on even the most acculturated.” As indicated in Chapter 6, the New York Intellectuals were politically radical and deeply alienated from American political and cultural institutions.

Psychoanalysis was a major component of the *Weltanschauung* of these intellectuals. Torrey’s (1992) study indicates a strong overlap among psychoanalysis, liberal-radical politics, and Jewish identification among the American intellectual elite since the 1930s. Torrey (1992, 95) describes Dwight Macdonald as “one of the few *goyim* among the New York intelligentsia” involved in this movement which was centered around the journal *Partisan Review* (see Ch. 6). Given this association of psychoanalysis and the left, it is not surprising that Frederick Crews’s (1993; Crews et al. 1995) critique of psychoanalysis has been analyzed as an attack on the left: Writing in *Tikhun*, a publication that combines liberal-radical politics with Jewish activism and is regarded as a journal of the New York Intellectuals (see Ch. 6), Eli Zaretsky (1994, 67) noted that attacks like that of Crews “are continuous with the attack on the Left that began with the election of Richard Nixon in 1968... They continue the repudiation of the revolutionary and utopian possibilities glimpsed in the 1960s.” Psychoanalysis was an integral component of the countercultural movement of the 1960s; attacks on it are tantamount to attacking a cornerstone of liberal-radical political culture.

Moreover, the material reviewed by Torrey indicates that the preponderance of psychoanalytically inclined Jews among the intellectual elite continued in the post-World War II era. Torrey studied 21 elite American intellectuals identified originally by Kadushin (1974) on the basis of peer ratings as being the most

Jewish Involvement in the Psychoanalytic Movement

influential. Of the 21, 15 were Jewish, and questionnaires and analysis of the writings of these 15 indicated that 11 had been “significantly influenced by Freudian theory at some point in their careers” (p. 185). (This includes three cases in which the writings of Wilhelm Reich, the leader of the Freudian left, were more influential than those of Freud: Saul Bellow, Paul Goodman, and Norman Mailer.) In addition, 10 of these 11 (Saul Bellow excepted) were identified as having liberal or radical political beliefs at some period of their career.¹⁰⁸

The link between psychoanalysis and the political left, as well as the critical role of Jewish-controlled media in the propagation of psychoanalysis, can be seen in the recent uproar of Frederick Crews’s critiques of the culture of psychoanalysis. The original articles were published in the *New York Review of Books*—a journal that, along with *Partisan Review* and *Commentary*, is associated with the New York Intellectuals (see Ch. 6). Publication in the *NYRB*, as Crews notes, is “almost like pet owners who had negligently or maliciously consigned their parakeet to the mercies of an ever-lurking cat” (Crews et al. 1995, 288). The implication is that publications like the *NYRB* and the other journals associated with the New York Intellectuals have been instrumental in propagating psychoanalytic and similar doctrines as scientifically and intellectually reputable for decades, and it also suggests that had Crews published his articles in a less visible and less-politicized medium, they could have been safely ignored, as has commonly been the practice over the long history of psychoanalysis.

Several prominent Freudian critiques of culture remained fairly true to Freud’s original premises.¹⁰⁹ Herbert Marcuse, a countercultural guru of the 1960s, was a member of the first generation of the Frankfurt School whose activities are discussed extensively in Chapter 5. In *Eros and Civilization* Marcuse accepts Freud’s theory that Western culture is pathogenic as a result of the repression of sexual urges, paying homage to Freud, who “recognized the work of repression in the highest values of Western civilization—which presuppose and perpetuate unfreedom and suffering” (p. 240). Marcuse cites Wilhelm Reich’s early work approvingly as an exemplar of the “leftist” wing of Freud’s legacy. Reich “emphasized the extent to which sexual repression is enforced by the interests of domination and exploitation, and the extent to which these interests are in turn reinforced and reproduced by sexual repression” (p. 239). Like Freud, Marcuse points the way to a nonexploitative utopian civilization that would result from the complete end of sexual repression, but Marcuse goes beyond Freud’s ideas in *Civilization and Its Discontents* only in his even greater optimism regarding the beneficial effects of ending sexual repression.

The Culture Of Critique

Indeed, Marcuse ends the book with a ringing defense of the fundamental importance of sexual repression in opposition to several “neo-Freudian revisionist” theorists such as Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, and Henry Stack Sullivan. Interestingly, Marcuse proposes that neo-Freudianism arose because of the belief that orthodox Freudian sexual repression theory would suggest that socialism was unattainable (pp. 238-239). These neo-Freudian revisionists must thus be seen as continuing the psychoanalytic critique of culture, but in a manner that deemphasizes the exclusive concern with sexual repression. These theorists—and particularly Erich Fromm, who had a very strong Jewish identity (Marcus & Tar 1986, 348-350; Wiggershaus 1994, 52ff) and very self-consciously attempted to use psychoanalysis to further a radical political agenda—can be viewed as optimistic-utopian.

Like Marcuse, Fromm was a member of the first generation of the Frankfurt School. A cornerstone of this approach is to view contemporary society as pathogenic and the development of socialism as ushering in a new era of loving human relationships. These writers were highly influential: For example, “A whole generation of college-educated Americans was deeply influenced by Erich Fromm’s argument, in *Escape From Freedom*, that National Socialism was the natural outcome of the interplay between a Protestant sensibility and the contradictions inherent in capitalism” (Rothman & Lichter 1982, 87). Fromm (1941) essentially viewed authoritarianism as resulting from an unconscious fear of freedom and a consequent need to seek certainty by joining fascist movements—an example of the tendency among Jewish intellectuals to develop theories in which anti-Semitism is fundamentally the result of the individual or social pathology of gentiles. Fromm, like the other Frankfurt School theorists reviewed in Chapter 5, developed a view in which psychological health was epitomized by individualists who achieved their potentials without relying on membership in collectivist groups: “Progress for democracy lies in enhancing the actual freedom, initiative, and spontaneity of the individual, not only in certain private and spiritual matters, but above all in the activity fundamental to every man’s existence, his work” (Fromm 1941, 272). As indicated in Chapter 5, radical individualism among gentiles is an excellent prescription for the continuation of Judaism as a cohesive group. The irony (hypocrisy?) is that Fromm and the other members of the Frankfurt School, as individuals who strongly identified with a highly collectivist group (Judaism), advocated radical individualism for the society as a whole.

John Murray Cuddihy emphasizes that a common theme of psychoanalytic critiques of Western culture is to suppose that surface Western civility is a thin veneer overlying anti-Semitism and other forms of psychopathology. Wilhelm Reich is an exemplar of this trend—the violent encounter of the ‘tribal’ society