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# 7 Men Who Rule the World From the Grave

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*A Book Study based on the book by Dave Breese*

*#4: Sigmund Freud*

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## A Brief Review

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- Charles Darwin changed the way we look at origins
- Karl Marx changed the way we look at value and necessity
- Julius Wellhausen changed the way we look at the Scriptures

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## Sigmund Freud: A New Look at Ourselves

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- An age-old question: what is man?
  - There is a mystery about man's heart / soul / inner-being that causes an inadequacy of understanding.
  - The prevalence of gurus, fortune-tellers, hypnotists, and psychoanalysis professors is due to man's desire to "know himself."
- Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is the "father of Psychoanalysis," and few in the Western world is are able to escape his influence.
  - From a Jewish family, but "my contribution to the Jewish cause consists solely of the fact that I have never denied my Jewishness" (pg 128).
  - In personal religion: an atheist.
  - By his insistence that cocaine was a drug to be used for everything from depression to indigestion, he started a wave of cocaine addiction in Vienna.
  - "He maintained his theories with astonishing stubbornness" (pg 129).

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## The bottom line: Yesterday made today

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- "The faintest impressions of yesteryear were not to be discounted as influences in a person's overt thinking and covert impressions" (pg 127).
- His practice began as a hypnotherapy practice.
  - He became convinced that "aberrant behavior in the present could be traced to an experience in the past" (pg. 131)
  - He believed that "the cathartic method" was the greatest answer to neurotic behavior.
  - He became convinced that mental illness was caused by some kind of aberrant sexual practice.
  - He eventually became convinced that the repressed memories of his patients actually never happened, so his theory changed from "real" experiences to the unconscious "psychic reality" rather than "practical reality" of a child.
  - He abandoned hypnosis for "free association" techniques to discover the "psychic reality" of a patient.
- An example of his "psychic reality" was the "Oedipus Complex."
  - Freudian thought: A young child's tendency to be attached to the parent of the opposite sex, which creates a fear of the other parent.
  - If this is not resolved, it results in neurosis, pedophilia, or homosexuality.

- Freud's fascination with infant / toddler sexuality is to the point of disgusting, and should bring into question any theories which come from this fascination.

### Freud's Theory of Human Personality

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- The *id* is the mysterious part of our inner being that cannot be grasped
  - Our thoughts, ideas, conflicts, desires, impressions.
  - The building blocks for our personality.
- The *ego* is the *id*'s interaction with the outside world.
  - If *id* is beneath the surface, *ego* is above the surface.
  - *Ego* is the personality of the *id*.
- The *superego* is the conscience that provides guilt or approval of the *ego*.
  - The *superego* is governed by resolution (or lack of) to the Oedipus complex.
- Working on all three of the above are the *life instinct* and *death instinct*, which are in conflict with one another and produce "undifferentiating energy that feeds into the *id* and become accumulated there" (pg 135).
  - These two instincts are what "charge" the "sexual instinct," and thus the expression of sexuality was necessary for human psychological health.
  - "Libido" (a Freudian term) is the *prime mover*.

### Comparing the Christian worldview

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- A critical thinker would ask, "do Freud's parts of the human experience even exist?"
- The Bible's most important concept of man: *he is created in God's image*.
- The Bible defines man as three parts-
  - *Body* – the physical
  - *Soul* – the spiritual
  - *Spirit* – the mental
- The Bible explains man's behavior in the terms of *right and wrong* with no regard to childhood influence.
- The Bible says that being in the will of God should be our pursuit, not some expression of the libido.

### The influence of Freud in education

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- Most behavioral problems in public schools today are problems that are rooted in Freudian psychoanalysis.
- The post-modern mindset of the absence of absolute truth is rooted in Freudian psychoanalysis.
- The permissive society in regards to sexuality is rooted in Freudian psychoanalysis.

Next Week: John Dewey