

## Lecture 17 – Freud

**The Abstract:** Freud didn't believe in dissociation. In this lecture, we will start to examine what he did believe. In his view, the mind was a unitary thing (hence, no MPD). Parts of the mind are not open to our conscious inspection. The Freudian unconscious is different from the cognitive unconscious in that it contains not only material that we cannot access but material that we would be deeply disturbed by if it did rise to consciousness. This is "repressed" material, much of it linked to our early childhood. The Freudian unconscious is rather like a prison that needs to be guarded to avoid having repressed thoughts rampaging through the rest of the castle of the self. Pathology can result from the failure of these "defense mechanisms" or from their excessive success.

## Lecture Notes

If MPD (DID) is a real disorder, why is it a new North American diagnosis?

*Argument adapted from* Ross, C. A. (1989). Multiple personality disorder : diagnosis, clinical features, and treatment. New York: Wiley.

1. Dissociation is not new
2. The mind chooses its pathology from the options presented by culture.
3. Dissociation became an unpopular diagnosis because Freud made a mistake.

MPD patients often report a history of severe childhood abuse - often sexual abuse.

Freud's patients told him stories of childhood abuse, too, but he decided they were delusions.

How could Freud NOT believe in MPD?

### Freud

The Official Academic Psychology Line

I prefer Drew Westen's line

"Freud, like Elvis, has been dead for a number of years but continues to be cited (*ooo...bad pun*) with some regularity"

(first line of: Westen, D. (1998). The scientific legacy of Sigmund Freud: Toward a psychodynamically informed psychological science. *Psychological Bulletin*, 124(3), 333-371.)

Freud didn't "see" MPD because Freud believed in the unity of the mind.

Freud was trying to understand why we think things and do things that we do not seem to want to do or think?

Freud thought his patients were using the defense mechanism of **projection**

What is it?

How weird is it?

What did Freud have in the place of dissociation?

A bit of history: What did Freud want to cure?

hysterical symptoms

Hysteria – where does the word come from?

Mesmerized – where does the word come from?

Charcot, in France, revived hypnosis as a psych treatment

In 1885, Freud came to Paris to learn from Charcot.  
Back in Vienna, Joseph Breuer and the patient, Anna O.

catharsis as a treatment for hysteria

Anna coins the terms "talking cure" & "chimney sweeping".

What did Breuer do?

What did Freud do?

### **The Freudian Unconscious: Freudian "Depth Psychology"**

Consciousness

Preconscious

Unconscious

Freud saw infants as essentially amoral creatures.  
*Not the same as immoral (What is the difference?)*

Governed by the pleasure principle

Repression

The defense mechanisms protect you from repressed thoughts

How? Let's return to projection

Others include rationalization, denial, reaction formation

IMPORTANT POINT: This is all completely normal. Why?

### **Freud & Psychopathology**

How do you get from these ideas to hysterical symptoms?

How would you treat it?

What is the point of "free association"?

What is a "Freudian slip"?

What is transference?

What is counter-transference?

A quick word about Freud's theory of development (more later)

1. Oral Stage: pleasure centered around feeding, sucking  
Conflicts center around this issue
2. Anal Stage: Issues of control  
E.g. conflicts around toilet training
3. Phallic/Oedipal Stage: Issues of identity.  
Conflicts around relations with same and opposite sex parent