

Freudianism Outline

I. Background/Pre Freud Psychoanalysis

- a. Classical Theory was that humans acted on purely on the concepts of reason, will, and passion.
- b. Romantic Period redefined psychology to decide that humans acted merely upon reason and their emotional will.
- c. Freud drew upon both periods in the development of his psychoanalytic theory.

II. Freud the Person

- a. Born in 1856 in what was then the Austrian Empire. Raised Jewish, he attended the University of Vienna. Began to study law but ended up in the medicine dept.
- b. "Jewishness" allegedly contributed heavily to his work and influenced his theories.

III. Freud's Theory

- a. Developed the idea of the "Superego", which Freud believed influenced human nature. He wrote about human sexuality and decision making in relation to the Superego.
- b. He confirmed that humans acted on reason and their will, but added that passion had an even greater influence on the mind. This was the idea that triggered modern psychology.
- c. Freud developed theories branching off from the idea of the Superego. He looked to examine an individual's past to find out about his/her unconscious motives in their personality such as sexual desires.

IV. Freudianism in Relation to Metamorphosis and Others

- a. The Superego affects Gregor because one of his main focuses is himself and his relationship with others, specifically his parents. Also his major concern is his job.

b. When analyzing Gregor, one must look at his underlying Superego. He clearly has motives that are not what he thinks about. But regardless he still has a conscious which he thinks about.

c. In relation to literature in general, Freudianism has lead critics of literature to look at it from the vantage point of a so-called psycho-biography of both the author and the protagonist. This, in turn, would lead literary critics to look at an author's personality traits or traumas that have rubbed off on the literary work.

d. Comparisons between Freud and Marx have been made because of their stance as social critics and interest in human nature. Both buried near each other in London and both were Jews exiled from their original home. Both also offered sciences to remove human misery from the face of the earth. However Marx looked at problems outside the individual and Freud looked mainly at problems inside the individual, such as how human instincts create an irrational world.