



EXHIBITIONS: PSYCHOLOGY

Expressing Freudian Influences

Julio Licinio

The animated movie *Antz* (DreamWorks/PDI) begins with a psychoanalytic session in which the main character, an ant called Z-4195 (with the voice of Woody Allen), says: "Maybe I think too much. When you are the middle child in a family of five million you never get too much attention. What about my needs? What about me? I feel so insignificant." The psychoanalyst interprets: "You ARE insignificant." And the puzzled ant replies: "I am?" Knowing how insignificant he truly is, Z then goes to the ant colony and successfully struggles for his personal freedom. Although too recent to have been included in the current exhibition *Sigmund Freud: Conflict and Culture* at the U. S. Library of Congress (1), *Antz* offers a graphic example of the influence Freud and his theories have had on 20th-century culture.

Indeed, analysis does not set out to prevent pathological reactions, but should give the patient's ego freedom to decide one way or another.

Freud (1923)

Freud never showed much concern with the destiny of a woman; it is clear that he simply adapted his account from that of the destiny of man, with slight modification.

Simone de Beauvoir (1949)

What does a woman want?

Freud to Princess Marie Bonaparte (no date)

It is the body of Dora which speaks pain, desire, speaks a force divided and contained.

Hélène Cixious (1976)

It still strikes me as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science.

Freud (1895)

As a science, psychoanalysis lies in the dividing line between the social sciences and the natural sciences.

Michel Foucault (1970)

The author is at the Clinical Neuroendocrinology Branch, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health, Building 10, Room 2D-46, 10 Center Drive (MSC-1284), Bethesda, MD 20892-1284, USA. E-mail: licinio@nih.gov

How can an autobiographical writing, in the abyss of an untermiated self-analysis, give birth to a worldwide institution? *Jacques Derrida (1980)*

People did not believe in my facts, and thought my theories unsavory. Resistance was strong and unrelenting. In the end, I succeeded in acquiring pupils and building up an International Psychoanalytic Association. But the struggle is not yet over.

Freud (1938)

Indeed Sigmund, the struggle is certainly not over.

The Library of Congress is the world's largest repository of Freud's materials, which include letters, manuscripts, transcripts, photocopies, oral history, interviews, film, photographs, and printed texts. It is understandable that the Library would arrange an exhibition highlighting its important collection. Like everything related to Freud, however, the plans led to rising passions and controversy, and the exhibit was postponed for two years. (The "conflict" in its title is appropriate.) The delay was officially attributed to a lack of funds, but many concluded that it was a response to the complaints of anti-Freudian scholars that the exhibit as originally planned presented excessive and unbalanced support of Freudian theory. As the exhibition now stands, it is a carefully thought out, more balanced, and truly multilayered display.

I have never attended anything quite like it. The exhibit concludes with a British Broadcast Corporation recording (partially quoted above) that Freud made, in English, shortly before his death in 1939 by euthanasia during the last stages of cancer. The short recording is played continuously, at a level just loud enough to carry an emphatic Germanic voice, making very strong points, throughout the exhibit space. But the words are not clear until one reaches the loudspeaker. So as you go through the exhibit there is always the strong, accented, dogmatic, but not really understandable, voice of Freud in the

background—like a mantra, repeated over and over again.

The exhibit itself has another four dimensions. One is a guided audio tour narrated by the exhibit's curator, Michael S. Roth. It is optional, but worth taking. The exhibit itself has three components. First, there are booths displaying material related to Freud, arranged to illustrate three themes: "Formative Years" covers personal aspects of Sigmund Shlomo Freud's life. "The Individual" presents fundamental concepts of psychoanalytic theory and therapy. "From the Individual to Society" shows how "Freud applied his ideas concerning individual human psychology to the task of understanding the conflicted functioning of society and culture."

Between the booths are video displays that illustrate how specific ideas of Freud, such as dream interpretation, the unconscious, transference, and repression, are represented in popular culture. These include short clips of films and cartoons from Woody Woodpecker and the Flintstones to Fellini and Hitchcock.

Running along the tops of the exhibit booths are panels of quotations, printed in gray ink on a dark green background. These include comments from Freud and his supporters, but most are from his detractors. The critical quotes are, apparently, intended to appease opponents of the earlier exhibit and provide a more balanced view of Freud and his theories. Unfortunately, while these overhead panels were perfectly legible to me with my six foot height, shorter visitors such as my wife (just over five feet tall) found them unreadable. ("Anatomy is destiny.")

The combined effect of my slow walk through the exhibit, looking at the artifacts, reading the quotations overhead, listening to Roth's commentary, and hearing Freud's mantra in the background left me with a clearer understanding of Freud—who he was and his impact on culture—than I had gained through years of psychiatric training. Maybe the exhibit catalyzed the integration of disparate elements of Freudian thought that I had learned over the years. In any event, it gave me a comprehensive view of Freud's life, his work, theories, and legacy. This understanding was also facilitated by the exhibit's outstanding companion book, *Freud: Conflict and Culture*. Editor Roth's introduction provides an overview of the exhibition, and

Sigmund Freud: Conflict and Culture

Michael S. Roth, curator

At the Library of Congress, Washington, DC, until 16 January 1999; future venues include New York; Vienna; Los Angeles; São Paulo and Porto Alegre, Brazil; and Chicago (2).

Freud: Conflict and Culture

Essays on His Life, Work, and Legacy
Michael S. Roth, Ed.

Knopf, New York, 1998.
288 pp. \$26, \$36. ISBN
0-679-45116-1.

the contributors' essays offer a variety of evaluations of Freud's life, theories, and influences.

To a certain degree, the exhibit covers many of the conflicts that have arisen from Freud's thinking and the impact of his ideas on his, and now our, contemporaries. The material on Freud's family, personal, and professional relations brings him to life as a person. His ideas, interests, and ways of working are clearly and elegantly displayed. A fascinating set of objects from Freud's office and study includes a replica of the iconic psychoanalytic couch and ancient artifacts from his collection, which



Antz angst. Z on his psychoanalyst's couch.

suggest that Freud was interested in unearthing the past in more than one way.

Nevertheless, the most controversial aspect of Freud's work (and the one with the highest potential to generate controversy) is entirely ignored. This aspect is the role of Freud's theories in the treatment of the mentally ill today. There is a general feeling that science is poised to unravel the biology of major mental disorders; with each issue of *Science* or *Nature* one expects an article reporting a genetic mutation that causes schizophrenia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or bipolar disorder (manic-depressive illness). But as yet, in spite of an enormous amount of research, the causes of all major mental disorders are still unknown and, consequently, today's treatment strategies in psychiatry are not based on attacking known causative agents, either at a biological or psychological level.

Biological treatments (drugs or electroshock, for example) work to alleviate symptoms, but they do not cure mental illness. Some types of structured psychotherapy also work. To my knowledge, there are no scientific studies proving the efficacy of psychoanalysis for psychiatric disorders. Very few practitioners of psychiatry or psychology, however, will deny the existence of the unconscious (which has now been captured by functional brain imag-

ing), that patients develop a transference to the doctor or therapist, or that those in turn develop a countertransference to the patient. Thus, the degree (if any) to which Freud's theories are applicable to psychiatric treatment today is a key point for discussions of Freud's work and his legacy. Regrettably, this important issue was left out of the exhibit. I would have enjoyed reading about the controversies between psychodynamically oriented practitioners and biologically oriented psychiatrists that such a topic would have created. Maybe it would have been too provocative to give these factions such an obvious bone of contention, but Freud himself never refrained from saying something because he was afraid it would be provocative.

We are left with a superb, albeit non-controversial, exhibit on controversy. The exhibition is undoubtedly worth attending, and I highly recommend the companion book. As Jacques Derrida might have said, the problems are not with what is there, but with what is not there, and why it is not there. Sadly, the curator and organizers (and maybe all of us, as individuals and as a society) are still unable to let dyadic opposites play in a non-hierarchical way.

Notes

1. A Web site devoted to the exhibition is at <http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/freud/>
2. Future dates and venues: the Jewish Museum, New York, April to September 1999; the Sigmund Freud Museum and Austrian National Library, Vienna, October 1999 to February 2000; the Skirball Cultural Center, Los Angeles, March to June 2000; Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil, summer 2000; Museu de Arte do Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, Brazil, fall 2000; the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, early 2001.

NEW MEDIA: SOFTWARE

Statistical Buddy

Brian R. Shmaefsky

Identifying the kind of statistical analysis appropriate for a given data set is crucial for any scientific investigation. Data Desk can help with this problem. It is a basic statistical analysis and plotting package that provides a useful statistical environment and recognizes the needs of neophytes. Although lacking some features of comprehensive statistical packages, such as database storage or spreadsheet displays, the program allows rapid calculations in an easy-to-understand manner.

The author is in the Department of Biology/Environmental Sciences, Kingwood College, Kingwood, TX 77339, USA. E-mail: bshmaefsky@nhmccd.edu

Data Desk was designed initially as an educational accessory, but grew to become a useful research tool. The program's author, P. F. Velleman, also designed the tutorial program called ActivStats that accompanies Data Desk. Using the multimedia capability of the CD-ROM to its fullest, ActivStats provides videos and hands-on demonstrations of computer-based statistical analyses. It can also assign practice exercises and provide access to preinstalled Internet software. ActivStats is especially useful for the novice.

Data Desk's startup window provides functions that guide the user through the program. HyperView windows pop up for each command and permit the user to perform operations by clicking on icons. A quick review of the Data Desk handbook is recommended, however, before attempting to understand the subtleties of the HyperView windows.

Data can be entered in the data table window, imported in text formats from Microsoft Word or Works or in spreadsheet format from Excel, or pasted from the clipboard. Statistical analyses are performed by assigning variables to the data. Users can then access the program's calculation and plotting options. Several parametric and nonparametric analyses can be performed with the "calculate" function. Data Desk provides common statistical functions for researchers in the physical, biological, and social sciences, including data summaries, measures of central tendency, analysis of variance, and moments.

Output can be in the form of bar charts, histograms, line graphs, pie charts, plots, or tables. Graphical displays are simple white-on-black backgrounds that can be modified with colors. Selected parts of a plot can also be isolated, cropped, and rescaled. Data summaries and analyses can be stored as collections (folders) or templates for later work. Templates provide an unalterable framework for repetitive analyses and can also store pictures and notes. The program can be used to create slide shows and contains powerful "what if" analyses that allow the user to see how small, defined changes in data can alter the results.

Data Desk 6.0 runs on Windows 95, Windows NT, or Macintosh operating systems, but not on Windows 98. At least 8 Mb of RAM is required for efficient operation, but only 3 Mb of hard drive space is used. The well-written Data Desk 6.0 handbook and reference manuals provide detailed information about the program. Online help is available at techsupport@datadesk.com.

Data Desk 6.0
Data Description Inc.
Ithaca, NY. \$650;
\$795 (with ActivStats).
(607) 257-1000
www.datadesk.com