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At home among the Puritans: Sigmund Freud and the Calvinist tradition in America

Rellahan, Jeanne Connelly, Ph.D.

University of Hawai'i, 1988
AT HOME AMONG THE PURITANS: SIGMUND FREUD AND THE
CALVINIST TRADITION IN AMERICA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF
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By
Jeanne Connelly Rellahan

Dissertation Committee:
David Bertelson, Chairman
Floyd Matson
Judith R. Hughes
Reuel Denney
Alison K. Adams
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Abstract

Sigmund Freud's system of ideas that he labelled "psychoanalysis" in 1895 was warmly received in America, particularly New England, between 1900 and 1915 at the same time that it was extensively rejected in Europe. The conventional explanation for Freud's popularity in the United States rests on the perception of this Austrian neurologist as the enemy of American Puritanism. In this context, Freud is perceived as optimistic and pragmatic.

Freud commented that America lacked any "deep-rooted" intellectual tradition that would challenge psychoanalysis. However, he did not consider that his views echoed the concerns of the 17th century American Puritans whose vision of the vitiated state of humanity adumbrated Freud's psychoanalysis by three hundred years. When Freud's ideas were first read by New Englanders such as G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam, these men recognized a moral perspective that looked back to their own Calvinist heritage. However, neither embraced Freud for his traditional ideas. Instead, Hall and Putnam welcomed the European for his "scientific discoveries."
dissertation links many of Freud's "scientific" principles to an earlier worldview held by the Puritans.

The principles that Freud offered in his system of psychoanalysis deeply affirmed the Puritan view of mind and body. Calvinist and Freudian alike rejected the dualistic view that "the body is the prison of the soul." If Freud sought to cure the illnesses caused by repressing the "passions of the id," then he also acknowledged the existence of these unruly affections. Both the Puritans and Freud held that the sexual instinct is problematic and needs to be controlled, but not repressed.

In the 19th century Calvinism experienced a decline, especially with the rise of optimism expressed in Methodist Perfectionism and New England Transcendentalism. The complicated view of human nature that the Puritans had held found its expression in the male Romantic hero. To balance this dangerous but attractive personality, men looked to women to provide moral shelter from their storms of passion. Psychoanalysis revitalized the Puritan view of women. The Calvinist tradition provided a fertile intellectual soil in which Freud sowed his ideas.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Thesis

The first hint of interest in the main idea for this dissertation came during the summer of 1985 when I was preparing for the comprehensive examinations in American Studies at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. At that time, I was struck by the extent to which the Freudian model provided the intellectual underpinnings of various analyses of the American culture. Specifically, I was reading David M. Potter's *People of Plenty*, Lewis Mumford's *The Transformations of Man*, and Leo Marx's *The Machine in the Garden*. Within these discussions of various aspects of life in the United States, the authors used psychoanalytic principles to interpret and illuminate American national character. I wondered why Freud had found such a comfortable home among these cultural analysts. What in America's heritage had prepared its scholars to make facile use of psychoanalytic assumptions?

To answer this question, I turned to the major studies which treated Freud's original reception in the United
States. These include F.H. Matthews' article based on his master's thesis, "The Americanization of Sigmund Freud: Adaptations of Psychoanalysis before 1917" (1957); John C. Burnham's paper adapted from his doctoral dissertation, "Psycho-analysis in American Civilization before 1918" (1958); and Nathan G. Hale, Jr.'s book-length treatment 
Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876-1917" (1972). In addition to these historians, psychoanalyst Clarence Oberndorff wrote A History of Psychoanalysis in America (1953). These authors independently drew the same conclusion—Freud was welcomed by medical people and intellectuals alike during the first two decades of the twentieth century because his ideas were perceived as optimistic and pragmatic. To many people, these words reflect the very essence of the American value system.

In his study, Matthews explains that "some enthusiasts saw... [psychoanalysis] as another proof of the beneficence of the Universe and the limitless potentiality of the human soul: Freud, as it were, validated Emerson." Within the first decade of the twentieth century Freud was linked to both Christian Science and the Emmanuel Movement. These movements were part of the "mind cure" phenomenon that was sweeping New England during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. At the heart of "mind cure" was the belief that people had the capacity within themselves to
overcome both physical and mental problems. Freud was indirectly associated with these organizations by Canadian-born journalist H.A. Bruce, who described psychoanalysis as the new "mind cure." Bruce argued, however, that Freud's ideas were superior to religious treatments because psychoanalysis was "scientific." Bruce and others looked to Freud as the liberator who could free people from their psychological problems by helping them to overcome their "repressions" and "complexes."

Between 1910 and 1920, many American intellectuals seized upon psychoanalytic concepts in order to "free" their fellow citizens from destructive "inhibitions." Emma Goldman explained that "Freud believes that the intellectual inferiority of so many women is due to the inhibition of thought imposed upon them for the purpose of sexual repression." Max Eastman often wrote essays supporting Freudian ideas in the Greenwich Village house organ The Masses. In one article he cited historian Preserved Smith's psychoanalytic interpretation of Martin Luther's break with Rome. Eastman was delighted to note that Luther's repudiation of celibacy was "the result of unmanageable concupiscence and auto-erotic habits in a monk of neurotic temperament. Such...[was] the foundation of Protestantism!"

The conventional explanation for Freud's popularity in the United States rests on the labeling of this Austrian
neurologist as the enemy of American Puritanism. Matthews in his analysis presents this view when he argues that

Freudian ideas were a perfect tool with which to crack the complacent, perhaps defensive veneer of American 'puritanism.'...The 'puritan' was a man whose own sexual conflicts were so strong, whose infantile tendencies so insecurely repressed as to allow no tolerance for free expression, no margin for creativity which might offend his hypocritical morality and upset his delicately balanced 'normality.'

In this context, Matthews supports the interpretation that Americans' initial attraction to Freud lay in his attack on the Puritan morality in which he used the weapons of optimism and pragmatism. Another scholar who agrees with this conclusion is John Burnham, who also considers the legacy of "mind cure" as having paved the way for psychoanalysis. But more than Matthews, he stresses the role the medical community played in accepting Freud's ideas. Burnham finds that without the acceptance of authorities such as Boston psychiatrist Morton Prince and Harvard neurologist James Jackson Putnam, psychoanalytic theory would not have received the full airing that it did between 1900 and 1918.

The role played by the medical community is the basis for the most thorough study of Freud's reception into America, Nathan Hale's *Freud and the Americans*. This ambitious effort carries with it the prospect of further illumination in that Hale labels his study "volume one." He
explains that in the second volume he will take up "the young intellectuals of 1912, the Great War, and the influence of psychoanalysis in the 1920’s." However, as of 1988 only the single volume had been published. At the beginning of this work, Hale poses the question: "Why did America welcome psychoanalysis more warmly than any other country? What was there in the nature of psychoanalysis and what in American conditions that created this affinity?" His inquiry promises an answer. However, Hale does not approach his subject from the perspective of a broad cultural analysis. Instead, he concentrates on a review of "the state of American psychiatry, neurology, and sexual morality before Freud became important." After sketching in this historical background, Hale traces Freud’s acceptance into American medicine. He concludes that Freud was embraced because of the common medical ground he shared with American physicians in which practical solutions were sought for complex problems such as hysteria. Hale never discusses the broader cultural implications of Freud’s ideas that captured the imaginations of many Americans.

Freudian scholar Paul Roazen calls this omission to the reader’s attention in his review of Freud and the Americans. Roazen comments that "Hale’s strength lies in his devotion to the documentary evidence, rather than in any broad-gauged interpretive analysis." This "documentary evidence" details the empirical similarities between Freud and New
England physicians, but Hale does not reach back to discover the historical antecedents that prepared the way for Freud. Roazen further points out "the woefully limited character of...work in this field" prior to Hale's study.14

As I considered the studies concerning the ingress of Freud’s ideas into the American culture, I experienced a growing puzzlement with the major point that was repeatedly made—that psychoanalysis was perceived as essentially optimistic. Matthews and Burnham say as much. Nathan Hale does not specifically cite optimism. Instead he recasts this virtue as the spirit of scientific inquiry which he indicates attracted men such as G. Stanley Hall, President of Clark University, and James Jackson Putnam to Freud’s ideas. Matthews, Burnham, and Hale shape their analyses around the central idea that Americans welcomed Freud because his contributions were in the tradition of nineteenth-century optimism, expressed either as mind cure or scientific discovery. To support this conclusion, they refer to the enthusiastic rhetoric of individuals like Max Eastman who beheld in psychoanalysis the antithesis of Puritanism.

In the course of this inquiry I became doubtful that "optimism" or "pragmatism" were, in fact, the keys used by Freud to gain entrance into the American culture. I had read Freud’s early works beginning with *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) through *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*
(1905), and in light of the ideas presented in these volumes I could not understand how Americans in the first two decades of the twentieth century could gain the impression that his message was optimistic. On the contrary, Freud's "discoveries" pierced to the heart of human depravity and misery. He believed that babies are capable of concupiscent acts, that little children lust after their parents, and that people's wicked thoughts cause painful physical symptoms. In the works read by America's first generation of Freudians, Freud described the workings of the unconscious mind as a labyrinth of tangled desires and seething passions. He posited the theory that people's emotions are shaped by a powerful sexual instinct from which they cannot escape. And he suggested that life itself is a grim, relentless struggle to overcome the dark urges of the mind. To find a cheerful message within the descriptions of confusion, pain, and perversions that Freud offered would have involved a basic misinterpretation of psychoanalysis.

Was it possible, I wondered, that all Americans had, in fact, misread and misunderstood this Austrian Jew? No, I decided, it was not. The pioneers in psychoanalytic thought in New England were men who were both highly intelligent and well-educated. Principally, these were James Jackson Putnam and G. Stanley Hall. Without the efforts of Putnam and Hall, Freud's ideas would not have received the extensive and supportive hearing that they did. It was Hall who
invited Freud to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1909, and it was Putnam who befriended the European for life. Both men were familiar with psychoanalysis before Freud's historic visit, and both wrote works that served to introduce psychoanalytic concepts to Americans.

In addition to sharing an interest in these "new" ideas from Austria, what Putnam and Hall also held in common was their Puritan heritage. Reared in families whose roots descended into the rocky soil of New England Calvinism, they self-consciously struggled with their Puritan background as they recognized in psychoanalysis a scientific answer to the problem of Original Sin. That the "Puritanical" New Englanders would be the first people to embrace his view of humanity rang with an irony that Freud, himself, noted in his amazement that these "prudish" people gave him a liberal hearing. Although immediate heirs to the nineteenth-century's philosophic idealism, religious perfectionism, and political "manifest destiny," these New Englanders readily exchanged their optimism for the dark insights of Freud. They did this because psychoanalysis revived a dormant sense of the dark side of human experience. For them, nineteenth-century optimism was simply an inadequate expression of the human condition.

Considering what Freud actually said and who really listened to his message during the first two decades of the
twentieth century, I came to realize that my dissertation would offer an unconventional explanation for Freud's phenomenal reception into American thought and belief. My thesis is that Freud's idea found a warm welcome in the New England medical and intellectual communities because the American men who first became familiar with these concepts had been prepared for psychoanalysis by the cultural legacy of Calvinism--an influence still felt within New England. It was exactly because of the Puritan heritage that men and women within New England were attracted to Freud's ideas. I do not equate New England with all of America. But the widespread influence of the Puritan tradition and the crucial role played by New Englanders in the reception of Freud in America are central to my dissertation. In contrast to the American experience, Europeans found many of Freud's ideas to be obscene. Medical authorities believed that the usefulness of psychoanalysis was limited to the treatment of the insane. Normal people, contended European psychiatrists, simply did not possess the thoughts or inclinations attributed by Freud to everyone. Many Americans, however, saw in Freud's ideas something familiar and compelling.

My task is larger than simply to link Freud to several Americans of Puritan ancestry. First, I must make connections between Freud's ideas and those of the Calvinists. To do this, I examined the Puritan experience
within colonial America. As I read the sermons, diaries, letters, journals, and histories of these early settlers, conjecture turned to conviction that their ideas and Freud’s overlapped in profound ways. Throughout this work, I cite individuals who, like myself, have detected within Freud parallels with Puritanism. However, all of these people have failed to develop their insights into a systematic linkage of Puritanism and Freudian thought. Moreover, even though certain scholars share my conviction that Freud’s morality coincided with Puritanism, no one has ever offered Freud’s "Puritan" view of the human condition as the most compelling reason for his initial acceptance into the New England intellectual community.

It will be the burden of this dissertation to argue that the ideas Freud offered in his system of psychoanalysis deeply affirmed the Puritan view of mind and body. If Freud sought to cure the illnesses caused by repressing the "passions of the id," then he also acknowledged the existence of these unruly affections. His system corroborated the view held by the Puritans that psychic states are to be freely ascribed to the physical organs and other parts of the human body. Calvinist and Freudian alike rejected the dualistic view that "the body is the prison of the soul." By linking mental states to physical manifestations, both systems were based on a psycho-somatic view of illness and cure. So rather than America’s lack of
"any deep-rooted scientific tradition," that would have impaired the weaving of Freud's ideas into an established scientific fabric, this was the single country whose scientific heritage began with the Puritan view of nature and human nature. The Calvinist tradition provided a fertile intellectual soil in which Freud sowed his ideas.

After nearly a century in which irrational affections were equated with organic brain disease, Sigmund Freud resurrected as the "untamed passions" of the id what Cotton Mather two hundred years earlier had called "the passions of the mind." Both men considered these mental phenomena to be common experiences rather than something extraordinary. Mather's motivating force was original sin, which to "Be sure...has a madness in it; renders us Mad upon our Idols." But whether Freud's id or Mather's inherited sin precipitated irrational behavior, both were described in similar terms. Freud's psychoanalysis and the Calvinists' practice of soul-searching provided for the release of hidden desires that could otherwise wreak havoc within the human heart.

For Puritan and Freudian, alike, spiritual or mental health meant the ultimate sublimation of passion into a "striving toward higher goals." This conversion of psychic energy into sublimated desires echoed Cotton Mather's prescription that "We are never brought into a Right Mind, but in and by a thorough Conversion unto God." Both
systems rested on a dark view of human nature, and yet they both offered illumination to the few souls who possessed the capacity to be reformed. However, Freud held out little hope for most people when he wrote to another physician that "many of the patients we really want to help are incapable of [sublimating their desires]. For the most part, these patients have inferior endowments and disproportionately strong drives." Freud's pronouncement was gloomy. He believed that most of the people he and other analysts were treating were incapable of living a higher life just as the Puritan divines believed humanity in general incapable of overcoming original sin.

Organization

In an effort to highlight the similarities between the American Calvinists and Sigmund Freud, I experimented with several organizational methods. After some consideration, I decided to approach this subject thematically rather than from a conventionally linear perspective. To have begun with the Puritans in the seventeenth century and ended with psychoanalysis in the twentieth, I would have been forced to take inductive leaps between historical periods. However, by coming at the materials thematically, I have been able to juxtapose Calvinist concepts about human nature with
comparable impressions of Freud even though these insights were experienced several hundred years apart.

My approach resembles the musical treatment of various themes. A motif may be strongly emphasized or softly echoed depending on its development. Also, within music a major theme can serve as the basis for several variations without losing its identity. In this dissertation, as in music, important themes assert and reassert themselves. In some contexts, I stress these motifs whereas in others their import is reverberated but not accentuated. Occasionally, a theme becomes the focus of one section so that it can be used later as a bridge, or transition, between ideas that lack historical proximity. Elsewhere, I have introduced a strain of thought in its appropriate historical framework only to hang fire on its development.

For example, in Chapter 2 I first discuss the ideas of Cotton Mather which anticipated psychoanalytic findings. However, his treatment of witchcraft is postponed until it can be directly compared to Freud’s approach to hysteria. Both men expressed an intense interest in physical and emotional symptoms that the Puritans identified as possession and Freud diagnosed as hysteria. In a discussion of these correspondences, Mather’s handling of Martha Goodwin in 1723 is placed alongside Freud’s analysis of Anna O. in 1909 because these men, using similar imagery, reached comparable conclusions about "demonic" influences within a
person’s makeup." By considering in the same passage how Mather’s essentially medieval notions intersected with Freud’s "scientific discoveries," I have tried to maintain the integrity of their shared view of human nature.

Within this dissertation, each chapter provides a separate angle of vision from which to compare psychoanalysis with Calvinism. Altogether my aim is to create a thick texture of images, themes, vocabularies, and concepts woven from Calvinism and psychoanalysis. Both moral system are based upon the belief that within each human being lies a heart of darkness. The overriding goal of both philosophies is to illuminate and reform the tendencies that issue forth from this corrupt fount.
Chapter Notes

1. A more comprehensive review of works that use the psychoanalytic model is included in Chapter 9.


7. Henry Addington Bruce, Scientific Mental Healing (Boston: Little Brown, 1912), passim.


10. Matthews, p. 52.

11. Hale, p. 4.

12. Hale, p. xii.


15. For a discussion about Freud's view of the Puritan character of New Englanders see Chapter 2 in which he comments upon James Jackson Putnam and others.

16. Nathan G. Hale, Jr., ed., James Jackson Putnam and Psychoanalysis: Correspondence with Sigmund Freud, William


19. Anna O. was Josef Breuer's patient. Freud referred to her case in 1909 when he delivered the first of his *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* at Clark University.
CHAPTER 2
SIGMUND FREUD ON AMERICA: PRIVATE
AND PUBLIC VIEWS

Introduction

In this chapter, we will consider Sigmund Freud’s views on America, the country that was so generous in its reception of him. We will see that the gratitude that he expressed publicly toward America was often undermined in his private observations that he made to fellow Europeans. His attitude toward the country that accepted and nurtured his ideas was ambivalent. On the one hand, he was attracted to the freedom to experiment with new ideas that he found characteristic of America. On the other hand, he criticized this country for its lack of an intellectual tradition. In his writings, he attributed the rapid assimilation of psychoanalysis into American thought and belief to the "absence of any deep-rooted scientific tradition in America and the much less stringent rule of official authority there."1

To some extent this chapter will serve as an account of Freud’s responses to the United States. We will review his
relationships with the Americans who first read and approved of psychoanalysis. Because of their positive reactions, Freud found a home among the intellectuals of New England. We will also follow Freud across the Atlantic on his single visit to America in 1909 when he accepted an invitation to speak at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. In 1914, Freud described this appointment in glowing terms in *A History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement*.

In addition to his published accounts, we will consider Freud's private, often acid, opinions of the country that was so liberal in its assessment of him. His negative opinions were shaped by his impression that Americans were "abusing" psychoanalysis. Curiously enough, it was Freud himself who pushed people such as G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam to accept quickly his ideas because he believed that this vote of confidence would help him to gain admission into professional circles in Europe where he was being met with much greater resistance than anything he ever experienced in America.

**Dramatis Personae**

Begrudgingly but shrewdly, Freud grasped from the beginning of his investigations that for his findings to be welcomed, they would need the imprimatur of someone important. Disgusted with the poor reception of
psychoanalysis in Germany, Freud wrote irreverently to his "son and heir" Carl Jung that "Germany probably won't take any notice of psychoanalysis until some bigwig has solemnly recognized it." He added that the quickest way would be to "attract the interest of Kaiser Wilhelm, who is known to understand everything." 

The United States provided Freud with the "big wigs" he needed to present and promote his ideas. Until his death in 1939, Freud graciously welcomed the contributions of a few Americans. However, he often disapproved of American customs and beliefs, and his attitudes concerning the New World were characterized by a deep ambivalence. His sincere regard for some individuals, coupled with his urge to have his theories accepted quickly, provided the impetus for his few favorable impressions. But as deviations from psychoanalysis led to what Freud labeled "abuses," he became increasingly hostile toward American culture. Ironically, America's Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, was the only institution to bestow on Freud an honorary degree, a distinction that provided him pleasure mixed with pain because he felt the European academies had ignored him.

Freud's creation, psychoanalysis, was able to survive a tenuous infancy and fragile childhood in part because his theories were well-received by prominent Americans who possessed both intellectual authority and professional status. The heralding of psychoanalysis in America was the
effort of several individuals who beheld within Freud's beliefs a significant approach to the psyche. Because they found his ideas intriguing, they were willing to extend themselves to bring about his successful reception in their professional communities. The individuals who are treated in this section comprise the cast of characters that acted to introduce psychoanalysis into the context of American ideas. They include Ernest Jones, G. Stanley Hall, James Jackson Putnam, and A.A. Brill. Because of the enthusiastic support of these men, Freud's ideas were much more readily received in America.

Ernest Jones

Although not an American, as Freud's Boswell, Ernest Jones wrote the definitive biography of this man entitled *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work.* He published his three-volume work between 1953 and 1955, and it has served as the point of departure for all serious treatments of Freud's life published in the last thirty years. The tone of this impressive biography is deferential. Jones was clearly in the camp of the master and took his side in all the conflicts that surrounded psychoanalysis, almost from its beginning.

Freud always numbered Jones among his friends and loyal disciples, and Jones remained faithful all his life. Jones was a British psychiatrist, turned psychoanalyst, who joined
Freud's intimate circle of friends and disciples in Vienna in 1908. The "Psychological Wednesday Society," formed in 1902, met every week on that appointed day to discuss psychoanalytic theories resulting from the treatment of hysteria and other neurological and neurotic disorders. The list of individuals who participated in this group by 1909 was distinguished and included Alfred Adler, Karl Abraham, A.A. Brill, Sandor Ferenczi, Max Graf, Ernest Jones, Carl Jung, Otto Rank, William Stekel, Hanns Sachs, and Fritz Wittels, all of whom were either members or guests.

During his long career, Jones became Sigmund Freud's bulldog by spending his life defending psychoanalytic doctrine. His commitment to this movement was reflected in his writings including his autobiography, Free Associations, published posthumously by his daughter Katherine Jones in 1959. In this work, which served as his private journal in which he recorded observations with no eye on the publisher or reader, Jones included his views of Sigmund Freud and America, as well as a personal history of the development of psychoanalysis. Because so much of what we know of Freud as a person has come from Jones' observations, Freud's attitudes cannot easily be separated from his biographer's prejudices. This is particularly true in what Jones reported to be their mutual distaste for North American culture.
These men first met in 1907. Jones found Freud to be an "unaffected and unassuming man" who announced himself as "Freud, Wien," a charming and unnecessarily modest introduction since his reputation had preceded him. Freud further impressed Jones by recognizing him to be Welsh. This first encounter served to establish the basis for their life-long friendship, even though they were often separated geographically.

In September of 1908, Jones sailed for Canada on the Empress of Britain. He moved there to become the Director (and pathologist) of the Clinic for the Government Insane Hospital in Toronto. In Canada Jones proved to be a boon to the "cause" because he became instrumental in forming both the American and Canadian psychoanalytic associations. In spite of his professional success, he never adjusted to his new home, and his deeply negative attitudes lacked the ambivalence that characterized Freud's feelings. Privately admitting in his journal his failure to adapt to Canadian culture, he wrote that

I felt as if I were marooned on an island where one waved a suitable garment to attract the attention of a passing ship....I yearned for a cultured life with an historical background, and the need for this grew stronger instead of less as time went on."

After living in Toronto for several months, Jones sent Freud a long analysis of North American culture and the likelihood of its accepting psychoanalysis. Throughout his
life, Jones lumped Canada and the United States together in his mutual dislike for these separate countries. He believed that Canadians were more influenced by their neighbor to the south than England. He characterized Canada as primitive and America as shallow, qualities that resulted from their lack of tradition. In communicating with Freud, he tended to concentrate on America because it was there, rather than Canada, that they hoped to win approval for psychoanalysis.

Indicating his pessimism about America, a feeling that Freud was to share from time to time, Jones described its citizens as a "peculiar" people "with habits of their own." They possessed a superficial "curiosity" but rarely demonstrated true "interest." This distinction "is the difference between the itch of the neurasthenic and the desire of the normal lover." Americans boasted a "deplorable" view of progress, in which they thought only of the "Almighty Dollar" that would be earned from the "latest" invention or method of treatment. And, although

Many eulogistic articles have been written on Freud's psychotherapy of late, ...they are absurdly superficial, and I am afraid they will strongly condemn it as soon as they hear of its sexual basis and realize what it means.'

Within a year of these skeptical comments, Freud made his one and only visit to America, and Jones was there to meet
him and his traveling companions, Carl Jung and Sandor Ferenczi.

Because it was Jones who so often described Freud's personal reactions about America, we are justified in questioning the extent to which his biases served to influence Freud. Before Freud even arrived, his biographer commented that "Freud had already received an unfavorable impression of the United States, which was to prejudice him strongly...for the rest of his life." Although Jones did not identify the source of these "unfavorable" opinions, his own remarks in a letter written on February 7, 1909, perhaps colored Freud's view seven months before his visit to New England. In this dispatch, Jones grumbled, "There is so much vulgarization and exploitation of everything here, that one has a strong weapon in insisting on the exact scientific side of the subject."

It was in this correspondence that Jones offered his strategy to promote psychoanalysis in America. Because he believed that Americans lacked discretion in their rush to experience something new, he suggested that Freud should "aim at the recognized people first and not popularize too soon." In this way, psychoanalysis could be properly introduced into this culture. Finding this an attractive approach, Freud employed it in his wooing of two important men: G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam.
When Jones left Canada in 1912, he planned never to return. His last impressions of this country were the same as his first. The atmosphere was "Biblical and Victorian," but "It was the dead uniformity that I found so tedious: one knew beforehand everyone's opinion of every subject." He had planned to leave in the spring of 1911 but had been detained by the charge of malpractice in the treatment of an "hysterical" woman. The details of this episode remain vague, but Jones suffered both emotionally and professionally over the allegations. During the additional year he spent in Toronto he was cleared of all blame and actually offered a professorship at the University of Toronto, an appointment that he had vigorously sought upon his arrival. Writing to Carl Jung about Jones's departure, Freud expressed his disappointment: "We shall be at a great loss without him in America." Nevertheless, he was pleased with the academic offer because "that makes his departure from America an honourable one."

G. Stanley Hall

G. Stanley Hall, Clark University's first president, (1889-1920) surprised the Viennese neurologist by enthusiastically supporting many of his innovations. So taken was Hall with these new ideas that he invited Freud and his associate Carl Jung to speak at the celebration of Clark University's twentieth anniversary in 1909. Freud
accepted, and upon returning to Austria, he wrote to his Swiss friend Oskar Pfister, "Who could have known that over there in America, only an hour away from Boston, there was a respectable old gentleman waiting impatiently for the next number of the Jahrbuch reading and understanding it all." Hall considered himself to have been a follower of Freud's for many years. His 1911 work *Educational Problems* owed much to psychoanalysis which served as its theoretical foundation. Hall, however, was not to remain as loyal as several other adherents when in 1914 he proclaimed his allegiance to Alfred Adler. Of this defection, Freud wrote that "For personal reasons I felt this accident sharper than others."

James Jackson Putnam

Hall's efforts to bring psychoanalysis to the United States were intensified by James Jackson Putnam, Professor of Neuropathology at Harvard. Putnam proved to be an amenable convert to many of Freud's tenets, and his stature in Boston society and its medical community pleased his European mentor very much. Understanding his good fortune in attracting the interest and goodwill of this Boston Brahmin, Freud was delighted to gain his support for the "cause."

In 1906 Putnam published the first paper in English to discuss Freudian methods in the *Journal of Abnormal*
Psychology. Thus his interest in this subject preceded his introduction to Freud by several years. Upon meeting in 1909, they established a relationship which would last until Professor Putnam’s death in 1918. The two friends corresponded frequently, often in German, sharing philosophies as well as personal histories. After Putnam’s death, Freud eulogized him as the American who was able to do perhaps more than anyone for the spread of psychoanalysis in his own country, [protecting] it from aspersions which, on the other side of the Atlantic no less than this, which inevitably have been cast upon it. But all such reproaches were bound to be silenced when a man of Putnam’s lofty ethical standards and moral rectitude had ranged himself among the supporters of the new science and of the therapeutics based upon it."

Abraham Arden Brill

A fourth man who helped launch psychoanalysis in the United States was Abraham Arden Brill (1874-1948). Of Freud’s closest American friends, only A.A. Brill was a Jew; the other two, Hall and Putnam, were quintessentially "White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestants." Closer in temperament and background to Brill than to the others, Freud saw no need to court him because the Austrian immigrant remained faithful to psychoanalysis. Brill never split from Freudian orthodoxy, although he did become "peevish" over lay analysis. Freud completely supported the admission of qualified lay people into the ranks of psychoanalysts. But
as leader of the New York Society, Brill prohibiting lay analysts from practicing in any form. Freud described Brill's action as "indefensible."

Brill had emigrated to the United States from Austria when he was fifteen to escape the "Sturm und Drang" of his father's military discipline that made him feel "literally stifled." He arrived in New York in 1889 determined to make a better life for himself than the one he had left in Europe. He became one of the earliest and most active proponents of psychoanalysis in his private practice and professional writings, and he distinguished himself by becoming the first person to translate Freud's works into English.

Taking his M.D. at Columbia University under Frederick Peterson, Brill returned to Europe in 1907 to study with Carl Jung at Burgholzli in Zurich. The same year he met Freud, and together they struck an important agreement that permitted Brill to translate his works, including The Interpretation of Dreams, into English. Brill possessed the proper credentials for this task, adding to them a tremendous energy and frank devotion to Freud. Brill wrote that

The magnitude of this task I hardly appreciated at the time....I was instigated by a strong obsessive sort of drive, which absorbed my leisure time for over ten years. I made no effort to produce literary excellencies; I was only interested in conveying these new ideas into comprehensible English.
Freud remained happy with his choice of translators even though Jones and Putnam severely criticized Brill's prose style, questioning the fluency of his translations of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. Telling Freud he was "horror stuck" by Brill's "undignified and colloquial" style, Jones received the cavalier answer that it was "Better to have a good friend than a good translator." Freud accused Jones of being jealous of Brill, a misconception of which it "took him years to be disabused." Jones persistently believed that Freud, himself an excellent writer having won the Goethe Prize for "his literary merits," should have known better than to employ Brill for this important task. Putnam also challenged Freud's choice by suggesting that because Brill was a "foreigner," his language skills were weak. Correcting Putnam, Freud pointed out that Brill had "crossed the ocean so early in life that one can consider English as his native tongue." In a statement he considered final, Freud called Brill's work "conscientious rather than beautiful."

Initially Carl Jung had suggested to Freud that Brill should translate the Breuer-Freud Studies into English. Jung wrote to Freud that Brill, who was in Switzerland, "wants me to ask you whether you would agree to a translation. The interest in America is very great at
present. So it wouldn't be a bad speculation. The fact that Brill was Jung's choice may explain why Freud stood by the English translations so adamantly in the face of invective discharged by both Jones and Putnam.

In spite of these attacks by native speakers of English, Brill persevered and his translations took on a life of their own as he added to attract an American audience anecdotes and details not in the originals, including a story about Teddy Roosevelt. Freud actually used some of Brill's American additions in his German revisions because they added weight to his own examples. He saw no harm, and probably a great deal of benefit, in allowing Brill to add details that spoke to the American experience and to leave out those passages that could baffle the person uninitiated into European customs. In this way, these translations served as a cultural membrane though which Freud's ideas could be filtered, thereby making psychoanalysis palatable to a wider audience.

The Trip to America

Freud's professional interest in America was aroused when G. Stanley Hall invited him to speak at Clark University's twentieth Anniversary. The event was to be held in July, 1909. But Freud believed that he "he was not rich enough" to leave his patients for three weeks. He
commented to Jones that "America should bring money, not cost money." In December of 1908 Freud gently mocked Hall's invitation when he wrote to Carl Jung: "The occasion: the twentieth (!) anniversary of the founding of the university." Considering the medieval origins of the prestigious European universities, Freud was amused by this jubilee.

Comprehending the significance of this request, Jung replied immediately, "If at all possible, you ought to speak in America if only because of the echo it would arouse in Europe, where things are beginning to stir too." Then Jung offered this shrewd observation: "About America I would like to remark that Janet's travel expenses were amply compensated by his subsequent American clientele. Recently Kraepelin gave one consultation in California for the modest tip of 50,000 marks." Adding that "this side of things should also be taken into account," Jung perceived clearly the revenue-producing possibilities for psychoanalysis." Freud, however, dismissed these calculations by responding that "I can't expect anything of consultations. Kraepelin had an easier time of it."

In March 1909, Hall did two things to alter Freud's mind about visiting Clark University. He changed the date to September of that year, and he sweetened the pot by offering three thousand marks. Freud wrote to Jung that this second bid "has thrilled me more than anything that has
happened in the last five years...and that I have been thinking of nothing else." He indicated that his travel allowance had increased from nothing to 750 dollars." Jung responded, "I must congratulate you heartily on your American triumphs. I believe you will get an American practice in the end...I am all agog for more news."

The additional news, however, came from Jung himself, who also received an invitation from President Hall. Freud was euphoric over this turn of events: "Your being invited to America is the best thing that has happened to us since Salzburg...because it shows what prestige you have already gained at your age." Freud roundly announced to Jones that Jung's involvement "magnifies the importance of the whole affair." The previous year Jung had exclaimed to Freud that "America is on the move." Through Hall, they had been given a first-hand opportunity to assist in this activity.

Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and the Hungarian psychoanalyst Sandor Ferenczi arrived in New York City on August 27, 1909, having sailed on the George Washington. They were met by Jones and Brill. For the next several days these men saw the sights." From New York, Freud and his colleagues journeyed on to Massachusetts where he became the guest of President and Mrs. Hall." When he disembarked from the train at Worcester, he perceived that "some incredible day-dream" had been realized: "psycho-analysis was no
longer a project of delusion, it had become a valuable part of reality." In his autobiography, he described himself during his visit as "young and healthy," although he was a middle-aged fifty-three. His sense of well-being came from his renewed self-respect which the "foremost [American] men" had "encouraged." Freud commented that in Europe he felt "despised," but in the "new world" he felt welcomed.

Freud was to begin his lectures on September 6, but he indicated several times that he had "no idea what to talk about." On June 2, 1909, Jung wrote Freud, "I am very much interested to hear how you think of organizing your lectures in America." Responding the following day, Freud asked for "suggestions," indicating that "It might...be a good idea to concentrate on psychology since Stanley Hall is a psychologist, and perhaps devote my 3-4 lectures entirely to dreams." Jung answered: "I fully agree...that dreams offer the most suitable material." And he reassured Freud that regardless of lecture material "your success is guaranteed in advance for the kudos lie in the appointment itself, and those who appointed you won't go back on it if only for reasons of self-interest."

Apparently unaware of this correspondence, Jones commented that it was Jung, not Freud, who initially suggested dreams. Believing that the Americans would find this subject too unrealistic, Jones discouraged Freud from using it. Jones indicated that Freud accepted his advice
when the latter commented that dreams would not be "practical" enough for Americans. Instead Freud chose the controversial topic of infant sexuality as the basis for the *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* which he delivered in German.

When Freud addressed the Clark University assembly which included such diverse personalities as Emma Goldman and William James, he was delighted to discover the American psychologist Sanford Bell among the distinguished guests because they had both written about sexuality in infants and children. Freud strategically pointed out that his American colleague had actually published his findings three years before Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* appeared in print to stun the medical world in 1905. Freud explained that in 1902 Bell included his study in the *American Journal of Psychology* using "what we in Europe would call 'The American manner,' collecting no fewer than 2,500 positive observations in the course of 15 years, among them 800 of his own" which presented evidence that children experienced sexual feelings." Although Freud saw no virtue in quantity over quality, he offered these numbers as a way to bolster his own insights." In an effort to convince people about the certitude of his own observations, he appealed to his audience to consider Dr. Bell's "children who have fallen in love so early...the tender age of three, four, and five." He acknowledged that "It would not
astonish me if you were to attach more credence to these observations by one of your closest neighbors than to mine."

Upon completion of these lectures, the participants attended a grand reception at which both Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung were awarded honorary doctorates. Freud remarked with pride that "The introduction of psychoanalysis into North America was accompanied by very special marks of honour." In addition to receiving honors, Freud began his "important personal relationship...with James J. Putnam, Professor of Neuropathology at Harvard University."

Never mentioning Jung's honor in his biography, Jones concentrated upon Freud, who was "visibly moved" when he accepted his accolade and acknowledged that "this is the first official recognition of our endeavors." Freud accepted in German, "Dies ist die offizielle Anerkennung unserer Bemühungen." Describing this occasion to his wife, Jung wrote that

Last night there was a tremendous amount of ceremony and fancy dress, with all sorts of red and black gowns and gold-tasseled square caps. In a grand festive assemblage I was appointed Doctor of Laws honoris causa and Freud likewise....Freud is in seventh heaven, and I am glad with all my heart to see him so."

After leaving Worcester, Freud, Jung, and Ferenczi travelled north to Niagara Falls. Freud was impressed with this grand vision, finding the Falls even more magnificent
than he had imagined. However, his visit to the Cave of the Winds was marred by a tour guide's appeal to let "the old fellow" go in before the others."50 Freud experienced increasing sensitivity about his age, an issue that later came between him and Putnam. The three then journeyed to Putnam's camp in the Adirondack Mountains. Writing to his family in Austria from the camp, he shared his ironic reactions to life in rustic America:

Everything, rough but natural in character, seems artificial in a way, yet looks right. Mixing bowls do service as wash basins, mugs as drinking glasses... nothing is lacking—everything is available in one form or another. We have found special books dealing with camping and on obtaining detailed instructions about how to use such primitive appliances."

Freud poked modest fun at the American "practical" approach to living in an artificially provincial environment.

It was during this visit that Freud experienced severe stomach cramps and was disconcerted by the apparent lack of concern expressed by the Putnams. When he told them of his distress, they responded with nothing more than "That's too bad."51 However, Freud acted the gracious guest and cemented his bond with his host during this visit. In his thank you note to Putnam, he described his stay "at your home...[as] perhaps the most interesting part of our American experience, and the exchange of ideas with you... particularly strengthened my hopes that there might be a
future for psychoanalysis in your country." Returning to Europe on the *Kaiser Wilhelm* on October 11, 1909, he enjoyed a sense of triumph about his success in America that he later treated in the *History of Psycho-analysis* and his *Autobiography*.

When Freud first wrote to Putnam upon his return to Vienna, he enthusiastically complimented him on his "open-mindedness and unprejudiced perceptiveness" in regard to psychoanalysis. He hoped that Putnam's professional community "could be the starting point for the formation of a psycho-analytic group" because "I understand that all important intellectual movements in America have originated in Boston." Realizing from the beginning Putnam's strategic value, Freud wrote to a friend: "That old gentleman is a magnificent acquisition." To Jung, Freud described Putnam as "the old Puritan," whose conduct is "absolutely genuine and straightforward," and claimed him as "a precious acquisition for the cause."

Freud's correspondence over the years with Putnam was characterized by a high courtesy. This deference sprang from a deep regard for the Bostonian coupled with an intense desire to have psychoanalysis accepted by American neurologists and psychiatrists. Freud wrote to Putnam on the anniversary of their meeting to thank the American "from the bottom of my egotistical heart" for allowing "your name to be used in America as a protection against the possible
misunderstandings and abuses to which I otherwise would have been subjected." That same year, Freud wrote to Carl Jung that "Putnam seems to be truly ours....My prophecy come true! Our trip to America seems to have done some good, which compensates me for leaving a part of my health there."

In September, 1911, Putnam travelled to Europe to attend the Weimar Congress of Psychoanalysis. Jones commented that Putnam's "support had gone some way to compensating Freud for the way he was ignored in Vienna" by members of his own medical community." The Boston neurologist opened the meetings with his paper "The Importance of Philosophy for the Further Development of Psycho-Analysis" in which he made a "burning plea" to use this new system for moral edification. Resisting Putnam's zeal, Freud sniffed to Jones that this "philosophy reminds me of a decorative center-piece; everyone admires but no one touches it."

The tone of Freud's letters to Putnam lacked the acerbity and wit that he willingly exhibited to fellow Europeans, especially Carl Jung. It is with the latter that Freud shared his most intimate and candid views about Putnam. One of his more interesting revelations concerned his annoyance at Putnam's description of him as "old" in the essay "Personal Impressions of Sigmund Freud and His Work," published in The Journal of Abnormal Psychology. In the
introduction, Putnam indicated that "Though little known among us, Freud is no longer a young man." Perturbed by this reference to age, Freud countered by characterizing Putnam as "the old...splendid fellow" in his correspondence with Jung.

Freud got his chance for a more public retaliation when he translated Putnam's paper "On the Aetiology and Treatment of the Psychoneuroses" into German. In his preface, he indicated that the author was a man who had "left his youth far behind him." In a letter to Carl Jung, Freud revealed his hostility:

I don't know if I have told you or anyone else the core of the Putnam story, which is really delicious. If I have, you must forgive me....My supposed piece of diplomacy was simply an act of vengeance against Putnam. The accent is on the inserted remark 'although he has left his youth far behind him'--because in his article...he had written 'Freud is no longer a young man.' You see, it's my old age complex, whose erotic basis is known to you."

Freud and Jung were to remain confidants until 1912 when cracks began to appear in their relationship; their final break came in 1913 when Jung accepted Freud's "wish that we abandon our personal relations."

After Freud's visit in 1909, many developments took place in the United States. A.A. Brill founded the New York Society for psychoanalysis on February 12, 1911; it began with twenty members. H.W. Frink acted as its secretary. "On
May 9, 1911, Ernest Jones established the American Psycho-Analytic Association in Baltimore with eight charter members including himself, Trignant Burrow, Ralph Hamill, J.T. MacCurdy, Adolf Meyer, J.J. Putnam, G.L. Tannyhill, and G.A. Young. In addition, several journals were founded in which psychoanalytic theory and practice became the focus.

By 1915, Freud’s work on dreams and the psychopathology of everyday life were familiar to many Americans who were not members of the medical community. Mabel Dodge Luhan, Walter Lippmann, Floyd Dell and Christine Ladd Franklin found these new theories provocative and worthy of their attention. Some individuals like Luhan and Lippmann perceived Freud as the liberator, releasing people from the "half-tamed demons" that ravaged their minds, while others including Franklin, believed that his assumptions, particularly concerning sex, were an example of the decadence of German Kultur. But the few negative voices raised were often drowned out by those who believed that Freud had discovered Truth.

Freud’s Ambivalence toward America

How Freud viewed America is revealed on two levels. Within his private sphere his correspondence with others as well as their personal reminiscences about him provide us with an intimate angle of vision. These personal sources
often reflect a spontaneity that is lacking in his professional publications. In the latter, Freud maintained a tone of decorum that fit his instructional purposes. Freud's canon was translated from the German into English by British analyst James Strachey as The Standard Edition of the Collected Works of Sigmund Freud in twenty-four volumes. Strachey worked with Freud during the translation process. As a result of their collaboration, Ernest Jones asserted, "From an editorial point of view...[these translations] will be considerably more trustworthy than any German version."66 Adding a vote of confidence to Jones's contention, Reuben Fine wrote in A History of Psychoanalysis (1979) that "Freud's works are now available in more complete form in English than in German."67,68

Private Views

Freud's attitudes toward America were characterized by an ambivalence that was never completely resolved. As he grew older, however, his divided heart became singularly bitter toward the country that served as the foster parent for psychoanalysis. People who knew him when he was young reported that he found democratic principles attractive. Anna Bernays in her tribute to "My Brother, Sigmund Freud" remembered that at the American Pavilion at the Vienna World's Fair in 1873, he
Was fascinated by an exhibit of President Lincoln's letters in facsimile, and the Gettysburg Address... He obtained copies of those American documents and soon knew them all by heart. I remember him declaiming and explaining the Gettysburg Address to his sisters."

A decade later, Freud received a framed copy of The Declaration of Independence from Edward Bernays. "Treasuring" this document, Freud hung it over his bed in Meynert's Clinic at Wandsbek Hospital where he was interning in neurology in 1882. In 1908 Freud himself recalled his youthful enthusiasm for America in a letter to Carl Jung in which he mentioned his invitation to Clark University:

In 1886, when I started my practice, I was thinking only of a two-month trial period in Vienna; if it did not prove satisfactory, I was planning to go to America and found an existence that I would subsequently have asked my fiancee in Hamburg [Martha Bernays] to share....And now, twenty-three years later, I am to go to America after all."

As he considered ways in which he could bring his ideas to the New World, he communicated them to other people interested in the progress of psychoanalysis in the United States. In these letters, he often characterized America as "prudish," a notion of which he never became disabused. However, in a moment of genuine insight, he pointed out to Jung that "In prudish America it was possible, in academic circles at least, to discuss freely and scientifically everything that in ordinary life is regarded as
objectionable." This perception suggested that Freud was on the road to discovering a deeper layer within American thought that permitted his doctrines to enter into mainstream culture in spite of the fact that they dealt with human sexuality. How, he might have asked, could a country be sexually repressed and at the same time welcome an open discussion about the forbidden topic? Had he analyzed this contradiction, he might have formed a more complicated view of this culture. Instead, his descriptions of America echoed the shallow continental view of this country as "superficial" because it lacked intellectual and artistic traditions.

In this dissertation, I suggest that the Puritan tradition with its emphasis on the compelling nature of the hidden passions prepared Americans to receive Freud because they were already familiar with his view of human nature. But Freud never believed that America had an intellectual tradition. He was convinced that he was hailed in this country because Americans were attracted to the sheer novelty of his ideas. He complained that on a deeper level, however, they never grasped the profundity of psychoanalysis. But, in fact, it was they who truly comprehended Freud's deterministic view of the human condition because it recaptured their own dark heritage.

In contrast to psychoanalysis's "favorable response" in the United States, Freud measured the "increasing hostility"
with which it was met "in German-speaking countries." But his observations provided no vote of confidence for the United States. In fact, America's rapid assimilation of his theories caused him to assert: "It is clear that precisely for this reason the ancient centers of culture, where the greatest resistance has been displayed, must be the scene of the decisive struggle over psycho-analysis." Perhaps America, particularly New England, proved to be too easily conquered to reassure Freud that his victory was a significant one.

In The History of the Psycho-analytic Movement (1914), Freud summarized his reception in Europe. France had rejected him because of her loyalty to Pierre Janet. Italy had several false starts in his direction, but nothing substantial had come from these. Holland had received Freud's theories in a limited fashion because of his personal relationships with several Dutch physicians sympathetic to psychoanalysis. In England, Freud predicted a "brilliant future," and added in 1923 that this "prophecy" had been fulfilled. In Sweden one person, P. Bjerre "gave up hypnotic suggestion, at least for the time, in favour of analytic treatment." Russian application of his theories he believed was not "known widely." He named one Pole who used psychoanalysis, L. Jekels, and lamented that Hungary which was so close to Austria "geographically" was so far from its neighbor "scientifically." In 1923, Freud added a footnote
to his 1914 summary complimenting the Germans and French for allowing the "gradual infiltration of analytic theories into clinical psychiatry," but "in North America it is still true that the depth of understanding of analysis does not keep pace with its popularity."

Because he experienced failure in bringing psychoanalysis to European countries as quickly as he would have liked, Freud directed his energies to wooing Americans who were influential in the medical and psychological communities. But he held grave doubts about the American people. In a letter to Jung, he suggested that American "prudishness we know so well," resulted from "the early dissolution of family ties, which prevents all the erotic components from coming to life and banishes the Graces from the land." He believed that when "they [the Americans] discover the sexual core of our psychological theories they will drop us." Concurring with Freud, Jung anticipated that "one of these days they will creep into a corner, prim and abashed." They proved to be false prophets, but neither ever reconsidered his view of Americans in light of the psychoanalytic explosion that transpired within the United States.

Although Freud attacked "prudish" American sensibilities, his own sex life was consistent with the values that he criticized. Personally eschewing the decadent atmosphere in fin de siècle Vienna, he conducted
his private life in a most conservative manner. In his correspondence with Putnam, Freud argued that "Sexual morality as society--at its most extreme, American society--defines it, seems very despicable to me. I stand for a much freer sexual life." But to this cavalier statement, he immediately added, "However, I have made little use of such freedom, except in so far as I was convinced of what was permissible for me in this area.""

During his marriage, he remained faithful to his wife Martha in a relationship that offered him stability and respectability. Adultery was as unacceptable to him as it was to the morality-laden Americans under attack. Writing to Jung, he rebuked Americans' morality but accepted how close he was to them in his work habits: "Quite against my will I must live like an American: no time for the libido.""10 Freud identified with America's Protestant ethic, even while attacking it.

In regard to Freud's sex life, a curious episode occurred when M. Allen Starr, a well-known New York neurologist, announced publicly on April 4, 1912, that Freud was an example of a "Viennese libertine." Starr claimed to have worked with Freud in Meynert's laboratory in 1883, at which time he observed "the immoral life" Freud led. Starr suggested that "psychoanalysis reflected the intimate knowledge its author had with promiscuous activities.""11 Freud wrote to Putnam that he had never known an M. Allen
Starr, but still "his information about my early years amused me mightily. Would that it were true!"

One American who could attest to Freud's quiet domesticity was Charles P. Oberndorff, a psychiatrist who travelled to Vienna in 1921 to be analyzed. His analysis took place at 19 Berggasse, the address that served as Freud's office and home. Oberndorff was struck by the modest appearance of these apartments, which bore "no resemblance to those small villas surrounded by well-kept gardens in which other European medical men of note...were likely to reside." He was also intrigued by the gentle rhythms of Freud's schedule, which included eating the noon meal with his family.

Another American who visited 19 Berggasse was the Chicago analyst Joseph Wortiz, who in 1934 became an analysand of Freud's for four months. During their sessions, which were conducted in German, Freud, who was seventy-four at the time, made occasional "disparaging" remarks about American culture, particularly its women whom he characterized as "eine kulturwidrige Erscheinung" (a phenomenon going against culture). Freud told Wortiz that in the United States

You have a real rule of women....Young men go to college with girls, fall in love and marry young at an age when girls are usually more mature than men. They lead men around by the nose, make fools of them, and the result is a matriarchy or Frauenherrschaft....The American man steps into marriage without the least experience for so
complicated a business. In Europe, things are different, men take the lead; that is as it should be."

Wortiz responded by asking, "But don't you think, Herr Professor, that it would be best if both partners were equal?"

Freud scoffed, "That is a practical impossibility. There must be inequality, and the superiority of the man is the lesser of two evils." Freud went on to comment that in general,

Women are especially awful in old age, but men are not much better. It is said that women are the best examples of love and human kindness, but that applies at best only to young women. When a woman begins to age she becomes an awful example of malevolence and intolerance, petty, ill-tempered, etc."

American Essayist and historian, Max Eastman also made the pilgrimage to Vienna to meet the master. In his lively portraits of Heroes I Have Known (1942) he recorded a conversation with Freud in which the latter referred to America as a "misgeburt." Questioning this term, Eastman asked, "abortion?" "Not abortion," he answered. Groping for a better word, Eastman offered, "monster?" "Well, that will do," responded Freud, but "the word is 'miscarriage.'" He then suggested that Eastman's next book should be "about the monstrous thing that America turned out to be."
We owe to Eastman the best physical description we have of Freud. Although portraits exist, Eastman's words are worth a thousand pictures:

[Freud] was smaller than I thought, and slender-limbed, and more feminine. I have been surprised at the feminineness of all the great men I have met, including the commander of the Red Army....Freud's nose was flatter than I expected, too, and more one-sided. It looked as if somebody with brass knuckles had given him a good poke in the snoot. It made him, when he threw his head clear back and laughed softly, as he frequently did, seem quaint and gnomelike. His voice was gentle too, gentle and a little thin, as though he were purposely holding back half his breath in order to be mischievous."

In his final analysis, Ernest Jones concluded that "at all events,....[Freud] came later to take the rather cynical view that [America]...was a country whose only function was to provide money to support European culture."

And even though Freud accepted this country's role in fostering psychoanalysis, he revealed to Jones that "America is gigantic, but a gigantic mistake." Interpreting this antipathy, Jones believed that Freud's aversion had something to do with a feeling that commercial success dominated the scale of values in the United States, and that scholarship, research, and profound reflection—all the things he stood for—were lightly esteemed."

To illustrate Freud's unhappiness with America, Jones included an "amusing anecdote" which reflected the racial prejudice of the period. Freud "in one of his fanciful
moods" forecast "the extinction of the white race in a few thousand years and its probable replacement by the black." He added "that America is already threatened by the black race. And it serves her right. A country without even wild strawberries."**

What emerges from the various private memoirs, conversations, and letters is a complex picture of Freud's relationship with America, the first country to comprehend the importance of psychoanalysis. Anecdotal observations, like Eastman's, were balanced by Freud's own writings, in which he both praised and criticized America.

Professional Views.

Before 1914, Freud rarely referred publicly to America. When he did, his comments displayed a superficial and ironic attitude toward this country but also a fascination with what was novel. At best, the United States provided exotica in the form of Indians and rattlesnakes, and at worst this new country appeared trivial and smug. The comments gathered below were written before 1914, the year in which Freud published *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement* in which he affirmed the contributions of the Americans.

Pre-1914. One of Freud's most interesting early mentions of America concerned his patient Emmy von N. in whose treatment he employed massage, a method that would
later be considered unorthodox by psychoanalysts, especially himself. One day while massaging Frau Emmy to relieve her of her stomach ache, Freud heard her descriptions of American Indians that she had seen in an ethnological atlas "dressed up as animals." This image had "given her a great shock." Freud reported that he "got rid of her gastric pains...by stroking her," and that he helped her conquer her fear of Indians by experimenting with a method that would evolve into the word association technique. In the "Rat Man" study, Freud commented on America as the land of exotic phenomena. He indicated that the thoughts of an obsessional neurotic (Rat Man’s diagnosis) could switch "just as in America an entire house will sometimes be shifted from one site to another."

In 1900, Freud published The Interpretation of Dreams in two volumes in which he made several condescending references to America. In Volume I, he related a story about his friend, fellow psychoanalyst, and biographer,

Ernest Jones [who] was giving a scientific lecture on the egoism of dreams before an American audience, [when] a learned lady objected to this unscientific generalization, saying that the author of the present work [Freud] could only judge the dreams of Austrians and had no business to speak of the dreams of Americans. So far as she was concerned, she was certain that all her dreams were strictly altruistic."

Through this anecdote, Freud presented a cultural miniature of the American sensibility which he implicitly criticized
for its naive and self-righteous character. However, today
cultural relativists would certainly agree with the "learned lady’s" point that dreams do not possess universal content.

In this same work, Freud forged an analogy through
which he again mocked Americans. Explaining "preconscious ideas," he compared them to American dentists who could not set up practices in Vienna unless they can got medical practitioners to serve as "stalking horses." However, the more successful physicians would not form such associations just as fully conscious, therefore tolerable, ideas would not act as a cover-up for pre-conscious urgings. From this comparison, we are given the impression that American dentists were hardly welcome in reputable Viennese professional circles.

Officially recognizing the American neurologist G.M. Beard, (1839-1883) in "Sexual Morality," Freud quoted in 1908 Ludwig Binswanger, Director of the Kreuzlingen Mental Hospital, who credited Beard with connecting neurasthenia to the pressures of "modern life, with its unbridled pursuit of money and possessions, and its immense advances in the field of technology which have rendered illusory every obstacle... to our means of communications." This is a description of the American culture with which Freud agreed, understanding why Beard, although mistaken, "believed that he had discovered a new nervous disease which had developed specifically on American soil." In this work, Freud
carefully laid the foundations for his argument that certain aspects of civilized life produce destructive sexual inhibitions. We see the fruition of this idea in 1930 with the publication of *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

**Post 1914.** In 1914, Freud published *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*. His professional writings prior to this year contained scattered allusions to America, but his *History* provided a coherent account of the role played by Americans in the acceptance of his theories. Beginning his narrative by acknowledging President Hall and Clark University, he wrote:

> In 1909, in the lecture-room of an American university, I had my first opportunity of speaking in public about psychoanalysis. The occasion was a momentous one for my work, and moved by this thought I then declared that it was not I who had brought psycho-analysis into existence.¹⁰

In addition to its lively reception, Freud wryly observed that he had read of the demise of psychoanalysis in the United States "at least a dozen times" by 1914, but decided to answer as did Mark Twain: "Report of my death greatly exaggerated." In fact, he commented that the funeral dirge actually benefitted his cause because "after each of these obituaries psychoanalysis regularly gained new adherents and co-workers or acquired new channels of publicity."¹¹

As American men and women became increasingly interested in psychoanalysis, Freud followed their progress
and commented on contributions to the literature, even offering this praise:

The Journal of Abnormal Psychology, directed by Morton Prince, usually contains so many good analytic contributions that it must be regarded as the principle representative of analytic literature in America.102

Freud also mentioned The Psychoanalytic Review, a journal begun by S.E. Jelliffe and William A. White in 1913. It provided articles in English "bearing in mind the fact that most medical men in America who are interested in analysis find the German language a difficulty."103

Freud's paper on "Thoughts on War and Death" published in 1915 again alluded to America in a patronizing fashion. He had been writing about death and people's unwillingness to risk their lives in the pursuit of something extraordinary because they feared death. Their anxiety created a "tendency to exclude death from ...[their] calculations in life bring[ing] in its train many other renunciations and exclusions."104 Drawing an analogy, Freud compared a human life that had become "impoverished" by fear with "an American flirtation, in which it is understood from the first that nothing is to happen, as contrasted with a Continental love-affair in which both partners must constantly bear its serious consequences in mind."105 Freud's sentiments toward America assumed a shallow and mimetic society, in which its citizens did not often experience the
depth or originality of European civilization. Yet his feelings toward the country that received him and his ideas as Europe looked on with suspicion remained ambivalent.

Freud applauded the assimilation of psychoanalysis in the United States between 1907 and 1917 in contradistinction to its slow growth in Germany because of "her morbid craving for authority," and when he published his Introductory Lectures he paid tribute in 1916 to the efforts being made to treat narcissistic disorders in America. He contended that although it would take a "a race of psychiatrists" who have been trained in "psycho-analysis as a preparatory science," to cure this illness, "a start in that direction is now being made in America," where "leading psychiatrists" presented psychoanalytic concepts to worthy students and "directors of insane asylums endeavor to observe their patients in conformity with those theories." In his lecture "University Teaching and Analysis," he credited America with making "successful inroads into...[the] unexplored region" of medical schools' curricula to offer courses in psychoanalysis as an introduction to psychiatry. Freud claimed that no such innovations had taken place in Germany.

But if America was the one country to accept Freud's "cause," it was also the land in which abuses of psychoanalysis "flourished," finding "cover under its name." In his published works Freud referred to the
abuses that occurred in the United States, but his comments were primarily reserved for those amateurs who were practicing psychoanalysis. Some of these individuals such as Andre Tridon, who published *Easy Lessons in Psychoanalysis* in 1921, contributed to the popularity of this new approach, but Freud linked being popular with the regrettable exercise of "watering down" his ideas for general consumption.¹¹⁰

In a remarkable reversal of position, however, Freud proved to be absolutely committed to the practice of lay analysis, even though it was the Americans who took an adamant stand against this profane application. In 1925 Freud's disciple and good friend Abraham Arden Brill announced his strong disapproval of lay analysis in an article he published. To protest this stand, Freud wrote *On the Question of Lay Analysis* in July, 1926.¹¹¹ He presented his argument as a Platonic colloquy between himself and a sympathetic listener in which Freud asked: "Are the authorities so certain of the right path to salvation that they venture to prevent each man from trying 'to be saved after his own fashion.'" Appealing to his reader, he maintained that

*Psycho-analysis is something so new in the world, the mass of mankind is so little instructed about it, the attitude of official science to it is still so vacillating, that it seems to me over-hasty to intervene in its development with legislative regulations.¹¹²*
Freud followed this entreaty not to interfere with the maturing of psychoanalysis with this injunction: "Let us allow patients themselves to discover that it is damaging to them to look for mental assistance from people who have not learnt how to give it."  

Caveat emptor! His strategy would have permitted all who chose to practice his principles to have done so without interference from a regulatory body. To illustrate Freud's position, Ernest Jones related an incident in which an American lay analyst sought training in Vienna where he attended for a brief time the Psycho-Analytical Institute to which Freud had referred him. Upon returning to New York, this individual advertised in the newspapers claiming that he had studied with Freud, Jung and Adler. The American professionals were furious over these assertions and protested to Freud that this was a blatant abuse of psychoanalysis. In response, "Freud merely shrugged his shoulders," and remarked, "Anyhow the man knows more about psycho-analysis than before he came to Vienna."

Freud concluded his discussion of Lay Analysis by taking the American psychiatric community to task. He was not impressed with the claim that his discovery had been put to "all kinds of mischievous and illegitimate purposes," even though this was a position with which he not only agreed, but had taken himself through the years. He felt strongly that the solution advanced would prevent competent
men and women from practicing in the United States. He wrote that the issue of lay analysis cannot be decided on "local conditions in America." He also charged his America colleagues with "an attempt at repression."

But the American psychiatrists remained unmoved. In September of 1926, possibly at Brill's urging, the New York Legislature passed a bill making this form of therapy illegal. To compound Freud's dismay, the American Medical Association warned its membership not to cooperate with any lay analyst. And in May of the following year, the New York Society condemned this practice allowing for absolutely no mitigating circumstances. Freud's relationship with American analysts was severely strained by these events.

Ernest Jones felt that Freud's attitudes complicated his own task of "mediating between America and Europe" on some sticky issues, including lay analysis. Also, he commented that Freud's antagonism was not always "fair" because he formed his attitudes without understanding the conditions in America. Freud, he insisted, did not appreciate the American medical community's compelling need for respectability. In the 19th century, physicians in the United States had fought for and won certain standards to be applied in the training of doctors. Before these measures were enacted, unqualified practitioners, often charlatans, enjoyed the same fees and status as their medically qualified counterparts. In the 1920's, doctors in America
were particularly sensitive to charges of fraud because their profession had been so riddled with quacks only a few short decades before.

However, Jones pointed out, in Europe many physicians held university titles, as well as degrees, which provided them with a status that could not be undermined by amateurs. Freud's close circle of disciples, some of whom were medical doctors, could freely welcome lay analysts because the position of Austrian physicians would not be threatened by a few creative outsiders. In Vienna immediately following the First World War, several individuals began to practice psychoanalysis without psychiatric training--Otto Rank being the first. Freud encouraged people to become analysts irrespective of their professional and academic backgrounds if they were strong candidates for psychoanalytic training. He included in the membership of lay analysts in the 1920's his daughter Anna and his good friend Hanns Sachs, who abandoned his legal training in favor of the "cause." But in America physicians were self-conscious about their credibility, and they did not want their status or authority undermined by non-professionals.

Although Jones's analysis considered the important difference between the American and European medical communities, his argument does not strike at the heart of the contradiction within Freud that compelled him to reverse his stand on the abuses his ideas had suffered in America.
For years, Freud had worried about certain malpractices that could threaten the legitimacy of his movement. He criticized the facile handling of psychoanalytic concepts within the United States many times between his 1909 visit and his 1926 defense of non-medical practitioners. His insistence on the benefits of lay analysis undermined these vigorous criticisms.

His reluctance to outlaw lay analysts appeared to reflect a liberal or democratic spirit. But his antagonism was rooted in his conservative view that the Americans had become too independent. Instead of listening to him, they had decided for themselves what was in the best interest of psychoanalysis. As a result, they had "resisted" him. In this way, they had hurt the "cause." He expressed this consternation to a trusted European friend: "The movement against lay analysis seems to be only an offshoot of the old resistance against analysis in general." American psychoanalyst Clarence Oberndorff visited Freud in 1929 at which time they discussed this recalcitrance. Freud asked him, "Tell me, what do you really have against lay analysis?" Oberndorff explained that "especially in America quacks and impostors extremely ignorant of the elements of psychoanalysis, presume to hold themselves out as analysts." Dismissing this explanation, Freud exclaimed, "I know all that." Oberndorff interpreted "Freud's annoyance" as the result of "the indifference of the leaders of psycho-
analysis in America to many of his cherished ideals."123 Because Freud's ideas were so quickly assimilated into the American culture, he stood in a particularly luxurious position.

By 1926, the year that he addressed the problem of lay analysis, his theories were so secure within the American intellectual and popular cultures that he could forgive abuses. He, therefore, had little to lose by ostensibly taking the more democratic attitude against members of the American psychiatric community who appeared as martinets in comparison with his magnanimous acceptance of lay analysis. To bolster his position, he even undercut the therapeutic depth and complexity of psychoanalysis by describing its "course" as "most inconspicuous" in that "it employs neither medicines nor instruments and consists only in talking and an exchange of information." And of the people who were practicing without proper credentials he merely suggested, "offer...them opportunities for training. Might it not be possible in this way to gain some influence over them?"134

In his argument, Freud ignored his own judgment that the American popular culture reflected an obsession with fads.

In 1927 Freud wrote and published Future of an Illusion which coincided with the discussion about lay analysis. In this work, he was highly critical of American culture, ironically agreeing with its self-assigned tribute of being "God's own Country." He condemned American piety,
specifically its prohibitionism, as a disastrous result of the "influence of petticoat government." He attacked the ban on alcohol explaining,

That the effect of religious consolations may be likened to that of a narcotic is well illustrated by what is happening in America. There they are trying...to deprive people of all stimulants, intoxicants, and other pleasure-producing substances, and instead, by way of compensation are surfeiting them with piety.135

Dismissing the Volstead Act, Freud wrote: "This is another experiment as to whose outcome we need not feel curious."136

By 1930, Freud was completely disenchanted with America as the land of opportunity for psychoanalysis. He was discouraged by the acceptance many American gave to the ideas of his former disciples Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. In American popular culture a tendency existed to lump Freud together with these men under the rubric of "the new psychology." In this way, the boundaries among these different approaches to the psyche became blurred. Freud believed that this conflation reflected a deep confusion within American thought. In New Introductory Lectures, he attacked the "Individual Psychology," of Adler which he lamented in America "is regarded as a line of thought collateral with our psycho-analysis and on a par with it and which is regularly mentioned alongside of it."137 Regarding this as intellectual bedlam, he spent many pages correcting the impression that psychoanalysis was compatible with the
theories of Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, and others. Freud regretted these secessionist movements and spurned those who confused them with his own beloved psychoanalysis. He was disturbed by "criticism from specialist circles [in America], which is so relentless against psycho-analysis" but "handles [Adler's] Individual Psychology with kid gloves."118

Sigmund Freud was seventy-seven when he wrote New Introductory Lectures, and his barbed attacks against his enemies sharpened as he got older. Like a twentieth-century Jeremiah, he anticipated the destruction of those who had betrayed him and his psychoanalysis. He was not kind to his enemies, and when he believed that he would be chided for this lack of tolerance he appealed to his reader:

What further claims do you make in the name of tolerance? When someone has uttered an opinion which we regard as completely false we should say to him: 'Thank you very much for having given voice to this contradiction. You are guarding us against the danger of complacency and are giving us an opportunity of showing the Americans that we are really as 'broadminded' as they always wish...' In the future, when the misuse of Einstein's relativity has been entirely achieved, this will obviously become the regular custom in scientific affairs.12'

Freud's few professional references to America in the last three years of his life possessed a sour flavor. Barely acknowledging behaviorism during his creative years, he took aim at "this American doctrine" in An Outline of Psycho-Analysis written in 1938 and published posthumously
in German and English in 1940. Freud scolded the behaviorists for neglecting altogether the realm of the unconscious, "think[ing] it possible to construct a psychology which disregards this fundamental fact!" Elsewhere, he commented that Behaviorism was "naive enough to boast that it has put the whole problem of psychology out of court." But Freud's interest with this area of psychology was minimal. He remained far more concerned with his own psychoanalysis and the deviations from it that had occurred over the years.

In 1931, eight years before his death, Freud summarized his attitudes and ambivalence toward America:

I often hear that psychoanalysis is very popular in the United States and that it does not come up against the same stubborn resistance there as it does in Europe. My satisfaction over this is clouded, however, by several circumstances. He indicated that this popularity "signifies neither a friendly attitude to the thing nor any specifically wide or deep knowledge of it." He backed up this assertion by pointing out that he had received no financial support for psychoanalytic research. In addition, he claimed that although "America possesses several excellent analysts and in Dr. Brill, at least one authority, the contributions to our science from that vast country are exiguous and provide little that is new." These "many evils," he believed "arise from the fact that there is a general tendency in
America to shorten study and preparation and to proceed as fast as possible to practical application. "13" Freud never appreciated the reason his doctrines had taken root in the American intellectual soil. He wanted to conquer Europe; instead he wound up with an American notch on his belt. Through the years, he viewed this as a cheap victory. If, however, he had considered that at the core of the American intellectual tradition was a concern as great as his for the unruly forces within the psyche, he might have esteemed his triumph more.
Chapter Notes


4. Any student of the history of psychoanalysis and Freud’s life must rely to some extent on Jones’s three volume biography. The materials that he collected and collated to write this work include letters, both written and received by Freud, anecdotes reported by associates of Freud’s, Freud’s writings, and the published works and recollections of disciples.

5. Jones formed in 1912 the "Committee" which was to create "a bodyguard around" the master.


11. Clark p.260. Certain Americans including Harry Stack Sullivan completely accepted the scientific rationale for Freud’s theories, perhaps, to the point of being oversold on this notion.


17. Jones, *Sigmund Freud*, II, 119. Details of Hall's Puritan home, his seminarian training, and his attraction to psychoanalysis are treated in Chapter 9.


25. *The Freud/Jung Letters*, p. 118. The language of proprietorship occasionally colored Jung's writings with terms such as "speculation" and "acquisition" and was later reflected in Freud's comments.


34. The Freud/Jung Letters, p. 76.
35. L.L. Doctorow fictionalizes this visit to New York in Ragtime (New York: Random House, pp. 9-11) adding rich, intuitive details, that, although they do not appear in any published biography or work, strike at the heart of the relationships among these men.
42. The Freud/Jung Letters, p. 229.
43. Jones, Sigmund Freud, II, 62. Freud's lectures will be treated in Chapter 2.
45. In his publishing career, in all Freud discussed 80 case histories, a number which continues to alarm people who use quantitative methods in their research.
51. Clark, p. 274.

52. Oberndorff, p. 149. Roy Grinker, an American analysand of Freud's, reported in relation to this visit, "Freud did not forget or forgive easily." He recalled that Freud was still annoyed many years after his visit for the Putnams' failure to understand the intensity of the stomach cramps he experienced, "Reminiscences of a Personal Contact with Freud," American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, X, 850.

53. Ernest L. Freud, Letters, p. 89. Jones included a curious contradiction about these reported stomach problems. In Free Associations, he wrote that in spite of protests to the contrary, Freud "had a healthy digestion and it is just as likely that his dislike of the food was simply an expression of other aversions" (p. 191). But in the biography, he affirmed that Freud did have "an intestinal problem for most of his life, [beginning] many years before he went to America and [remaining] many years after" (II, 67).


56. The Freud/Jung Letters, p. 377. The term "acquisition" was employed in 1909 by Carl Jung to Freud in his description of the Swiss clergyman, Oskar Pfister, as "a very fine acquisition" The Freud/Jung Letters, p. 208.


60. Jones, Sigmund Freud, p. 96. Although both moralists, Freud and Putnam never agreed about the spiritual application of psychoanalysis, a subject that will be the focus for discussion in Chapter 8.


64. Jones, Sigmund Freud, II, 98.


68. Mention needs to be made of the first book-length treatment of Freud's life by Helen Puner entitled *Freud, His Life and Mind*, published in 1947. Her biography received more negative reviews than positive ones. Lionel Trilling sniped that Miss Puner as "a woman...had no appreciation of the male heroic spirit." Her work proved to a valuable first effort because in it she raised some important questions that have been addressed by subsequent scholars (see Charles Silberman's *The Chosen People*) concerning Freud's ambivalence about being a Jew, a subject her own Judaism permitted her to address without the self-consciously delicate tone employed by Jones when dealing with this topic.

69. Anna Bernays, "My Brother, Sigmund Freud," *American Mercury*, 51 (Nov. 1940), 339. Ernest Jones took exception to these events when he suggested that perhaps "they got touched up in the course of years" (*Sigmund Freud*,I,26). He commented: "In 1873 there was an International Exhibition in Vienna and Mrs. Bernays has a story about her brother being much taken by the specimens of Lincoln's letters and by the copy of the Gettysburg Address....In the Catalogue of the American Pavilion, however, which is still extant, there is no mention of any documents." However, the Catalogue does include the American Schoolroom Exhibit, in which these materials were probably placed. Because Jones was not an American, it probably did not occur to him that any Schoolroom Exhibit in 1873 would boast the most famous speech of the previous decade. Jones also made this odd comment: "In any event her [Mrs. Bernays's] date of 1879 is incorrect" (*Sigmund Freud*,I,26). Actually, Mrs. Bernays' date of 1873 was correct.


76. The Freud/Jung Letters, p. 223.


81. Clark, p. 57.

82. Clark, p. 324. In his biography, Jones supported Freud's claim that he never knew Starr. However, extant records show that an American named M. Allen Starr had, in fact, trained in Meynert's laboratory during the winter of 1883, a season when Freud, too, was there (Clark, 324).

83. Oberndorff, p. 140.


85. Wortiz, p. 847.

86. Wortiz, p. 847.


88. Eastman, 256.

89. Jones, Free Associations, p. 197.


100. Sigmund Freud, "On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement" (1914), *The Standard Edition*, XIV, 14. In this passage, Freud gave credit to Josef Breuer as the father of psychoanalysis, but said that he (Freud) would take all the blame and leave Breuer's reputation clean, "as I have long recognized that to stir up contradiction and arouse bitterness is the inevitable fate of psycho-analysis.


111. Sigmund Freud, "The Question of Lay Analysis" (1926), The Standard Edition, XX. Ernest Jones characterized this short book composed in haste to answer Brill as "a brilliant exposition to an outsider of what psycho-analysis is and does" (Sigmund Freud, III, 314).


116. Sandor Ferenczi informed on Brill to Freud and Jones insisting that Brill had instigated this action (Jones, Sigmund Freud, III, 315).


119. Barbara Low, Joan Riviere, James and Alix Strachey were also admitted to the ranks of lay analysts.

120. Jones, Sigmund Freud, III, 319, passim.

121. Freud wrote this to Max Eitingon July 19, 1926 when the situation in New York was heating up (Jones, Sigmund Freud, III, 314).

122. Oberndorff, p. 182.

123. Oberndorff, p. 185.


CHAPTER 3
PASSIONS OF THE ID: FREUD'S VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

The ego represents what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions.¹
Sigmund Freud

Introduction

In this chapter, I want to consider the principles of Sigmund Freud’s "Id Psychology." This is the label that has become attached to Freud’s earliest ideas that concerned the unregenerate forces locked within the unconscious mind. Freud called this place of seething passions the "Id." During the first two decades of his career, he "discovered" and charted the unconscious mind which he described as that place "in which all that is evil...is contained as a predisposition."² Id Psychology is contingent upon an acceptance of the unconscious mind, a phenomenon that Freud announced and developed within his ground-breaking work The Interpretation of Dreams that was first published in 1900.

Id Psychology did not arbitrarily begin in 1900, however. Between 1885 and 1900, Freud had been
investigating certain phenomena that coalesced into his conviction that within each person lurked a dark, unregenerate core. Within Id Psychology Freud refined and announced his concepts of the psychosexual stages in infants and children, repression, sublimation, and character formation. After 1914, Freud's development of mental structures became increasingly complex as he moved into the period labelled Ego Psychology. In part, he struggled to understand and explain the complicated reasons that provoked people into waging war upon one another.

In this chapter, my concerns are not with Freud's more mature ideas. Instead, I wish to concentrate on that system of ideas that he published during the first decade of the twentieth century because it was to these concepts that men such as G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam were attracted. Neither man ever became familiar with Ego Psychology or with Freud's dramatic description of the tension between Eros and the death instinct. Putnam died in 1918, five years before Freud explicated his ideas concerning the ego and superego in 1923. Hall died in 1924, the year after Freud published The Ego and the Id and The Ego and the Superego. Freud's pessimistic discussion of Eros and the death instinct is included in Civilization and Its Discontents, a work that was published in 1930. The constructs of the ego and superego are the ones with which Freud is most often identified, but these are concepts with
which the American pioneers in psychoanalysis remained essentially unacquainted, although the rudiments of these ideas can be found in Freud’s early works.

To these pioneers, especially Hall and Putnam, Id Psychology was both provocative in that it used scientific nomenclature to label human frailty and reminiscent of earlier values in that it addressed the same difficulties that had been at the center of the Puritans’ moral system. The Americans understood the philosophic implications in Freud—that human character is complicated because within it the conscious impulse for good is often undercut by the unconscious attraction toward for evil.

When Americans first became familiar with psychoanalysis in the early 1900’s, they began to apply its method of treatment, which Freud called "the talking cure." This method recapitulated the age-old principle of confession. In addition, they recognized that within Freudian principles lay an approach to the human condition that at its heart was moral. Psychoanalysis stressed moral improvement without couching this goal in religious terms. In Freud’s emphasis on confession that he hoped would lead to a rearrangement of physic energies, he restated the philosophic center of the Judaic-Christian tradition. He perceived the mind to be an extremely complicated, often hidden, arrangement of motives and desires. He wanted people to understand the depth of their lustful, corrupt
desires in order to rechannel these desires to achieve more socially productive and personally satisfying ends.

Even though my main concern in this chapter is to treat Id Psychology, I occasionally connect certain of its precepts to those of American Puritanism. By doing this I foreshadow a more explicit discussion of these comparisons, which provide the substance of another chapter. In this discussion, I argue that Freud shared with the Puritans a view of the innate corruption of human nature and a concern with the regenerative possibilities of confession and reformation of self. 6

Id Psychology: 1900-1914

Biographers and historians tend to divide Freud's professional life into four periods of productivity: his early neurological work from 1886-1895 when he studied the etiology of neurosis, his own self-analysis which extended from 1896-1899, the development of Id Psychology which began with the publication of The Interpretation of Dreams in 1900 and extended until 1915, and Ego Psychology which was introduced in 1915 with the publication of The Introductory Lectures and continued until his death in 1939. 7 From his neurological work beginning in 1885 to his commitment in 1914 to "foster and further the science of psychoanalysis ...both as a pure discipline of psychology and in its
application to medicine and the mental sciences," Freud was formulating the concept of the unconscious mind, the foundation upon which psychoanalytic theory rested. But Id Psychology received its designation only in relation to his later work in which he extended his mental map to include the ego, or rational faculty, and the superego, or conscience. The Americans who had been reading Freud’s work before 1909 identified with the principles of Id Psychology without ever hearing it so labelled. As we shall see in Chapter Nine, these principles resonated with a traditional Calvinist moral vitality to which Hall and Putnam responded.

It was Freud’s early mission to show how mental or emotional states influenced the body by producing certain types of illnesses, including hysteria. Other physicians such as France’s Jean Charcot and Pierre Janet had also considered the role the mind played in creating certain symptoms. But Freud, alone, rushed into the area of human sexuality where others feared to tread. Because he concentrated on this unruly area of human nature, he provided a moral framework for his neurological findings. Through "scientific" lenses he inspected people’s concupiscent natures as thoroughly as any theologian ever had. From his investigations he determined that people become ill because of their own "perverted" thoughts, which are then manifested as physical symptoms, including hysterical paralysis. These thoughts, which consist of
sexual fantasies, are often repressed or pushed below the conscious level, for Freud believed that people try to escape looking at their worst desires. But repressed thoughts inevitably surface as somatic problems. He designed a map of the mind that included the dark, uncharted territory of the "id," in which lurk the unregenerate passions.

The term "id" is the Latin word for "it," which Freud designated as the non-personal part of the mind, which he differentiated from the self-conscious ego.' Originally, he lumped the unconscious and the id together; but within the first decade of psychoanalysis (1896-1905) he explained that the id was an area within the unconscious mind that was "a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations." The unconscious is that portion of a person's mind which is hidden from view but which, in fact, is as active as the conscious, or rational, faculty. Freud was not the first to believe in the buried mental life, but he was the most creative in demonstrating its hidden powers. For him, the "conception of the Id was both more comprehensive and more fruitful than the early one of the Unconscious, which...it tended in practice to replace." Within this dark place lurk the mind's intractable "primitive and irrational characteristics" which are always in the pursuit of pleasure, an activity that leads the individual into trouble
in that desires are often thwarted by the demands of reality.

Before 1900, Freud rarely used the word "id," because he had not clearly distinguished it within the unconscious mind or from the other areas of the personality that he would later designate as the ego and the superego. His Id Psychology grew out of his slow abandonment of his neurological background when he began to consider that the etiology of certain neurological illnesses was psychological rather than physiological. But before he could step from physical medicine to psychology, he ambitiously attempted an effort to prove that mental energies were located within specific areas of the nervous system. Had he been able to prove this relationship, then he would have established a somatic basis for mental, or emotional, illness. As it turned out, he came to the opposite conclusion that mental states, in fact, have the power to produce physical illness. He was hunting for a neurological, or material, basis for the emotions, but he never found one. Instead, he came to believe that it is the emotions that actually influence the nervous system in the form of hysterical paralysis, asthma, and other psychosomatic disorders.

In a private document entitled "Project for a Scientific Psychology" written during three intense weeks in 1895, Freud announced that it was his "intention...to furnish a psychology that shall be a natural science: that
is, to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determined states of specifiable material particles." He believed if he were able to accomplish this task, he would have made mental "processes perspicuous and free from contradiction." This "Project" became his single greatest attempt to keep his work within the neurologist's laboratory. Invoking a mechanical model of the psyche in which the affections, in some ways, behave as electrical currents that either flow through conductive materials, "endogenous paths of conduction," or are blocked by "contact barriers with strong resistances," he tried to show that the functional unit of the nervous system known as the neurone is either empty and inert or filled and cathected. He believed that cathesis is a material event, and he based this conclusion on "the recent histological discovery that the nervous system consisted of chains of neurones." These "chains of neurones" can be filled and emptied of sexual excitations that result in mental shifts between anxiety and release. If he could have measured this ebb and flow of neurological energy, he would have been able to demonstrate the material basis of the emotions. But he was never able to do this, and so his interests increasingly turned to psychological explanations for aberrant states.

Freud first conceived of this "project" in "the course of a busy night...[when] the barriers were suddenly raised...and it was possible to see through from the details
of neurosis to the determinants of consciousness. In spite of his visionary moment, he failed to deliver his creation into the world of science, and he wrote to his friend Wilhelm Fliess that "I can no longer understand the state of mind in which I hatched out the Psychology." Out of the ashes of his failure to adhere to a neurological basis for disturbed emotions, he eventually developed his system of psychoanalysis, in which the mind—not the body—became the focus for the etiology of disease. From 1895 until his death in 1939, Freud considered the passions of the id as the forces which produce pathological states in both the mind and the body.

Id Psychology was composed of various subsets which included the sexual instinct and the concepts of repression and sublimation. These ideas were predicated upon the reality of the unconscious mind in which the forces of the id, experienced as sexual energy, reside. Later, as Freud's ideas matured, his mental scheme became increasingly complex. As a neurologist, his initial interest was to determine the way in which irrational emotions cause neurotic responses and produce certain types of illnesses. After he charted the region of the unconscious, he turned his attention to delineating other areas of the mind. By 1914, he had introduced the concept of Ego Psychology in his paper "On Narcissism: An Introduction," and in 1923 he gave this phrase its fullest explication in The Ego and the Id."
In the latter paper, he pitted the irrational forces of the id against the rational powers of the ego, and he also added the superego, or conscience, to explain the role of internalized social and moral values. By this time, he had changed the original goal of psychoanalysis, to flush out the buried desires of the id in order to "sublimate" these energies. Within Ego Psychology he included more comprehensive strategies to "strengthen" the ego, or reason, in order "to widen its field of perception and enlarge its organization, so that it can appropriate fresh portions of the id." He stated his goal as "Where id was, there shall ego be. It is a work of culture--not unlike the draining of the Zuider Zee." But regardless of how he altered his design with the addition of the ego and the superego, his psychic structure remained anchored in the id in which unruly affections exercise a powerful influence on a person's mind and body.

Within Id Psychology Freud offered to the world his view of people as victims of their innate concupiscent natures. No means exist by which these impulses can be rooted out of the soil of the mind; instead people's hope lies in understanding their own buried impulses. But understanding offers only a beginning. People who want to transcend their sexual cravings, identified as libido, have to sublimate their desires. His cure for the illnesses caused by the affections was to purge the unconscious mind
of its repressions. Once repressed passions are released, the civilizing process of sublimation can begin. Using an analogy to explain how the physician could help the patient to unearth submerged desires, he wrote that "Together... [they] may start upon the ruins, clear away the rubbish, and, beginning from the visible remains, uncover what is buried." 19

The Sexual Instinct

In 1905, Freud published his innovative work on human sexuality entitled the Three Essays on Sexuality. In these papers, he shone a light on the dark recesses of the mind in which lurk perverse tendencies that he believed account for a great deal of misery in the world, including the somatic condition of hysteria and the emotional state of anxiety. In his first essay, "The Sexual Aberrations," Freud tried to overcome the prevailing view that aberrant behavior necessarily indicates insanity. He advanced a startling judgment in which he indicated that "disturbances of the sexual instinct among the insane do not differ from those that occur among the healthy and in whole races or occupations." 20 To illustrate how "normal" people are subjected to unruly instincts, he offered as proof the "sexual abuse of children" which is "found with uncanny frequency among school teachers and child attendants, simply
because they have the best opportunity for it." In his indictment of all people as potentially guilty of sexual perversions, he ironically restated the Puritan view of "unregenerate" human beings in whom the capacity for sin was perceived as innate. Freud underscored this perspective when he wrote that "A disposition to perversions is an original and universal disposition of the human sexual instinct."

The neurotic and not the psychotic individual was the focus of Freud's investigations. After having distinguished between aberrant behavior that probably resulted from organic brain dysfunction and that which the average neurotic experienced, Freud concentrated upon describing the perversions that he believed characterize the tendencies of everyone. By generalizing these desires to all people, he developed a theory of human nature in which everyone is equally guilty of perverse inclinations. He described these inclinations as including "inversion (homosexuality)," "fetishism," "buggery (paedicatio)," and "sadism and masochism" in which pleasure is derived from inflicting or receiving pain in sexual circumstances.

As we shall see, Freud's discussions of the sexual instinct involved explicit terminology and pointed references to specific perversions that he delivered as scientific insights. He used words and phrases that assaulted the genteel sensibilities of many Victorians. He
solemnly applied his physician's vocabulary in his provocative descriptions of fetishes and erotogenic zones. What others before him had been willing to write about only under the protective cover of metaphor, Freud wanted to expose to the bright light of the clinic; and underneath his medical nomenclature lay an unflattering picture of concupiscent human nature."

He thought that all people are subject to buried urges that lead to sexual aberrations that he explained as one's "innate" nature: "There is indeed something innate lying behind the perversions but it is something innate in everyone."" Allowing for quirks in the personality that believers in the doctrine of original sin would have confirmed as "natural," Freud commented that "normal people too can substitute a perversion...for the normal sexual aim for quite a time."" He insisted that "No healthy person, it appears, can fail to make some addition that might be called perverse to the normal sexual aim."" In this vein, Freud wrote that "We cannot escape from the fact that people whose behavior is in other respects normal can, under the domination of the most unruly of all the instincts, put themselves in the category of sick persons in the single sphere of sexual life."" With these insights, Freud delivered sexual deviation from the realm of utter degeneracy and placed it within the normal limits of human responses. He believed that it is humanity's common lot to
experience some attraction to the sexual perversions.

However, he drew the line with certain behaviors that he considered completely depraved and "disgusting." He believed that the more one embraces perverted actions, the more disturbed one is. He labeled outrageous perversions such as "licking excrement" and "intercourse with dead bodies" thoroughly "pathological." People who persist in these activities eventually become candidates for the insane asylum because their behavior exceeds the limits of normal morbidity. For him, these examples served to illustrate the depths to which human nature can descend.

During his visit to Clark University, Freud presented his views on sexuality, including his belief that repressed desires are at the basis of many forms of illness. Taking into account the Victorian cultural climate, he explained that people, in general, did not talk freely about their sexuality, but instead "concealed it...[under] a heavy overcoat woven of a tissue of lies, as though the weather were bad in the world of sexuality." He hoped that people would become more willing to talk about their sexual desires in order to free themselves from the various illnesses that result from the repression of such desires. He explained to the assembled Americans his view that the neurotic individual and the healthy person are not different with respect to emotional makeup in that all people experience that same instincts. Healthy people, however, are better
able to cope with life’s demands because they have come to terms with the "passions of the id."\(^{30}\)

Infant and Female Sexuality

Contradicting the popular Romantic view of childhood as that "period of life that is marked by the absence of sexual instinct," Freud told the men and women at Clark University that the "child has its sexual instincts and activities from the first; it comes into the world with them."\(^{31}\) Following this announcement, he traced the development of the sexual impulse through the infant’s first phase of auto-eroticism in which the mouth, anus, urethral orifices, and genitals when stimulated give the baby pleasure. Elsewhere, he explained that after this phase is concluded, the child begins to desire the parent of the opposite sex as his or her "object choice."\(^{32}\) Eventually he illustrated this concept through the story of Oedipus that he indicated represented the classic example of a son’s passion for his mother." Therefore, human sexuality begins with the "powerful wishful impulses of childhood."\(^{33}\)

Freud laid his groundwork for the Clark Lectures in the Three Essays, in which he described various manifestations of infantile sexuality with thumbsucking at the top of the list. He indicated that the "child’s lips...behave like an erotogenic zone."\(^{34}\) From the oral satisfaction of sucking,
children experience the anal gratification of defecating." Once children have discovered the pleasure in these zones, they begin to explore their genitals. This activity results in masturbation, and it serves as the behavior which affords the most enjoyable sensations. Freud called masturbation an "addiction," and he explained that "To break the patient of the habit of masturbating is only one of the new therapeutic tasks which are imposed on the physician who takes the sexual aetiology of the neuroses into account." In this context, the physician joined with many contemporary ministers in carrying the message that this practice was dangerous to one's being.

Freud remained convinced of the damaging effects of this habit when he wrote in 1912 that "We are ...confronted in the neuroses with cases in which masturbation has done damage" including organic injury, a fixation of infantile sexual aims, and setting a pattern for a person's life in which "there is no necessity for trying to alter the external world in order to satisfy a great need." He believed that the

Autoerotic sexual activities of early childhood...predispose to the numerous varieties of neuroses and psychoses which are conditional on an involution of sexual life to its infantile forms. Masturbation...vitiates the character through indulgence....It teaches people to achieve important aims without taking the trouble and by easy paths instead of through an energetic exertion of force."
Seeking to establish that children are born with these sexual inclinations, he wrote that "it is an instructive fact that under the influence of seduction children can become polymorphously perverse, and can be led into all possible kinds of sexual irregularities." Because children seemed to enjoy these "sexual irregularities," he believed that "this show[s] that an aptitude for them is innately present in their disposition."

Using a misogynistic analogy, Freud linked the polymorphous perversions of children with those of the "average uncultivated woman" who "under ordinary conditions...may remain normal sexually." But if her fate is to be "led on by a clever seducer she will find every sort of perversion to her taste, and will retain them as part of her own sexual activities." Presumably, "cultivation" would sublimate a woman's appetite for the perverse. In this context, Freud reflected the superficial social values of his time in that women are considered to be either "good" or "bad." But, in spite of his facile appeal to conventional wisdom, on a deeper level he endowed women with a sexual capacity unseen in the Victorian heroines of this era.

Resisting the prevalent cultural view that "good" women and all children are innately asexual, Freud insisted in the name of science that all women and children were born with certain sexual tendencies that could be "sublimated" under "ordinary" conditions and "perverted" under the influence of
a "clever seducer." He believed that a woman's concupiscent appetite, like a man's, is part of her inherent temperament.

It is a woman's seduction into the joys of sex that leads her eventually to become a prostitute, a role in which she can experience the pleasures that are sublimated to higher ends in a genteel woman. Freud considered women to be on shakier ground than men regarding their sexual natures because females, in general, "overvalued" the sex relation. He did not link this "overvaluation" with the special female role of bearing and rearing children; instead he inadvertently revitalized the traditional religious view of women as daughters of Eve. Because Eve had been their first mother, pre-Victorian women had been considered more susceptible to sexual temptations.

In 1912, when Freud developed his guidelines for conducting psychoanalytic treatment, he warned male analysts of the wiles of female patients whom he considered victims of their "untamed passions." Believing that women characteristically want to seduce their therapists, he wrote that "It is out of the question for the analyst to give way" to this pressure. He warned that

However highly [the analyst] may prize love he must prize even more highly the opportunity for helping his patient over a decisive stage in her life. She has to learn from him to overcome the pleasure principle, to give up a satisfaction which lies to hand but is socially not acceptable, in favour of a more distant one, which is perhaps
altogether uncertain, but which is both psychologically and socially unimpeachable."

Freud believed that when women enter therapy, they "first behave like opponents but later on reveal the overvaluation of sexual life which dominates them." Their goal, therefore, is to "try to make [the analyst] a captive to their socially untamed passions." The analyst's first responsibility was to resist this temptation. Freud uttered no such caveat for female analysts in treating male patients.

By tracing the sexual perversions back to infancy, Freud rejected the nineteenth-century Romantic notion that children are born "trailing clouds of glory." In fact, his views coincided with the Puritans' belief that children are "innocent vipers." Although neither held babies directly responsible for their guilty natures, both accepted a child's tendencies as innate and fixed. Freud believed that infants have active sexual instincts that are expressed as primarily autoerotic behaviors. Fully aware that some people would find his suggestions monstrous because they had no memories of their own precocious desires, he defended his theories on the basis of childhood amnesia. He believed that people tend to "deny" their own sexual history because their memories of infant erotic cravings have been "blocked" or repressed as they mature. Freud explained that amnesia "turns everyone's childhood into something like a
prehistoric epoch and conceals from him the beginnings of his own sexual life."

Accepting that the sexual cravings are part of a person's innate temperament, Freud also believed that feelings of shame and disgust are inherited. He explained that in prehistoric times, these emotions had enabled individuals to "sublimate" urgent and destructive sexual instincts in the interest of protecting inchoate civilization from such irrational drives. He believed that within a child's inherited emotional disposition was the native ability to "suppress" unruly desires through intense feelings of shame."

In an interesting comment on "civilized education," he explained his objections to trying to teach children how to inhibit their desires because "in reality, this development is organically determined and fixed by heredity, and it can...occur without any help from education." Within children's makeup are the "mental dams [of] disgust, [and] shame.""

So as people come by their sexual passion naturally, they also come by the inherent "limits...which have already been laid down organically.""

Freud's children were victims of experiences not necessarily their own in the same way that Adam's and Eve's children had inherited both the tendency to sin and the impulse to suffer shame."

For many decades in America, Freud was credited with developing the "new psychology" in which children's healthy
emotional development was the focus. Psychoanalysts Anna Freud and Erik Erikson concerned themselves with children's needs as did Benjamin Spock, who interpreted and popularized certain Freudian principles for lay people. In their works, these individuals often reflected a sympathy toward children that was lacking in Freud's own writings in that they tended to endow the child with special, almost Wordsworthian capabilities. Children were perceived as being wise about their own needs and limits, and parents were encouraged to consider things from their young daughter's or son's angle of vision. For example, people were cautioned to go slowly and carefully in the delicate matter of toilet training because abrupt or harsh treatment could stifle the child's emotional growth. "On demand" feeding of the infant was considered to be better than following a schedule because the baby was presumed to know when he or she was hungry. As a result, Freudian psychology became labelled as "permissive," a primarily pejorative term employed by critics of psychoanalytic theory.

One such critic was Richard La Pierre, who attacked the permissive spirit in child-rearing in his book The Freudian Ethic, a work that stands as the exemplar of confusion between Freud's ideas and those of the neo-Freudians. The neo-Freudians believed that culture rather than innate disposition plays the greater role in determining a person's nature. What is interesting about La Pierre is that by
confusing Freud's original ideas with neo-Freudian principles, he succeeded in creating a psychological oxymoron. On the one hand, he charged that Freudian psychology was a vicious doctrine infected with a dark determinism and, on the other hand, he blamed this approach for creating the permissive atmosphere that profoundly influenced the American child-care culture beginning in the 1940s. Freud believed in innate tendencies that determine a child's development, whereas the Neo-Freudians assumed some sort of psychological malleability in which the child's emotional nature is created through environmental influences. Unlike his neo-Freudian disciples, Freud wanted adults to understand that children were the natural heirs to sexual perversions and, at the same time, he sought to discourage excessive affection that might further develop these dark impulses. In a reactionary statement he warned parents, particularly mothers,

that an excess of parental affections does harm by causing precocious sexual maturity and also because, by spoiling the child, it makes him incapable in later life of temporarily doing without love or of being content with a smaller amount of it."

These sentiments expressed in 1905 were to remain entirely consistent with Freud's final pronouncements in Civilization and Its Discontents published in 1930 when he was seventy-four. In this work he rearticulated his
economics of scarcity as applied to libidinal love. He believed that people can use up their limited supply of this precious energy on foolish, counterproductive tasks. Ideally, people should seek to conserve their love, sublimating its energies to achieve creative ends. In the area of love, Freud’s ideas were at odds with Erikson’s faith in the power of "love and mastery" to help the child offset life’s painful realities; but what Freud shared with his later "neo-Freudian" disciples was the view that children are complex individuals. This emphasis on a child’s complicated and enigmatic nature offset the nineteenth-century concept of the child as innocent. Through Id Psychology, Freud had unintentionally resurrected important aspects of the Augustinian strain of piety within American Puritanism."

In general, Freud was no particular friend to children although he had good relationships with his own. His theories about infant sexuality echoed St. Augustine’s view that children are never the lovely innocents that some people imagine them to be. Tendencies in babies need, therefore, to be recognized as early manifestations of human perversity. Freud believed that human beings come into this world with their sexuality intact, although exhibited in immature ways such as thumbsucking and masturbating. Accepting that lust is humanity’s special burden, he spent his early professional years attempting to
establish that people's buried childhood perversions precipitate their subsequent episodes of physical illness, including forms of hysteria. To him, human sexuality is nothing to celebrate; rather he believed that within this imperious urge lies the etiology of humanity's sorrow.

The Seduction Theory

Because Freud believed that repressed sexual tensions cause physical problems, he found himself at odds with some of his colleagues who were shocked by his insistence that sex is at the root of many human problems. Freud developed his hypothesis concerning the sexual etiology of hysteria over a period of years based on his observations of patients. In 1896, he finally announced his theory in his paper "Heredity and the Neuroses" (1896). In this publication he swept away one popular view that stresses within the environment produce hysterical symptoms, and showed instead how childhood sexual activity create neurasthenia. Taking on the American neurologist, G.M. Beard, Freud explained that "since Beard declared that neurasthenia was the fruit of our modern civilization, he has only met with believers: but I find it impossible to accept this view." Dismissing Beard's connection between civilization and hysteria, Freud proposed instead that one's "sexual life" is the culprit: "I...maintain that...each of
the major neuroses which I have enumerated... have as their common source the subject's sexual life, whether they lie in a disorder of his contemporary sexual life or in important events in his past life [italics his]."

Since he accepted that physical symptoms such as paralysis often have their origins within the person's mind, Freud believed that by "travelling backwards into the patient's past, step by step, and always guided by the train... of memories and thoughts aroused," he could "finally reach... the starting point of the pathological process." It was from this perspective that he was "obliged to see that at bottom the same thing was present in all cases submitted to analysis... a memory relating to sexual life."

As Freud worked with both male and female hysterical patients, he became increasingly aware of a similar pattern in their childhood sexual experiences; they had all reported to him some sort of seduction by an adult whether it was a family member or an attendant. Wanting to share these dark concerns, he wrote to Fliess that "In my analyses the guilty people are close relatives, a father or a brother," who acting as an "agent provocateur" sexually seduced their offspring or siblings." Freud's belief was dubbed his "seduction theory." This theory has an interesting history in that it turned out to be the only major idea that he completely repudiated.
While still experiencing the first thrills of discovery, Freud shared his provocative ideas with members of The Society of Psychiatry and Neurology in Vienna in 1896 when he presented his paper on the "Specific Aetiology of Hysteria." To the startled group he advanced his theory that adult hysteria was the result of a sexual trauma experienced in one's youth and forgotten as the individual matured. He also explained that children's first sexual encounters are often with members of their own families, including brothers and fathers. Within the group, Freud's conclusions were "met with an icy reception," and Kraft-Ebing, the influential chairman, scoffed at the idea that fathers seduced their children calling it "a scientific fairy-tale."

Freud did not immediately respond to Kraft-Ebing's incredulity, but the following year he wrote to Fliess expressing his own grave doubts about the reality of childhood sexual experiences. He confessed that a "great secret" had been "slowly dawning" on him during "the last few months" in which he "no longer believe[d] in... [the] neurotica [theory of the neuroses]" because "in every case the father, not excluding...[his] own, had to be blamed as a pervert...[and that] is, after all, not very probable." Jeffrey Masson has suggested that Kraft-Ebing's sharp rebuke coupled with the rebuff of the professional community, in
part, precipitated Freud's repudiation of his seduction theory."

The earliest public mention of his renunciation appeared in the *Three Essays* (1905) when Freud admitted to having "overrated the importance of seduction in comparison with the factors of sexual constitution and development." In place of physical seduction, Freud considered the role of fantasy perceived as a memory in which "the infantile tendencies invariably emerge once more, but this time with intensified pressure from somatic sources." The most powerful fantasies are the Oedipal urges in which the child is drawn to the parent of opposite sex. In the maturation process, "these plainly incestuous phantasies are overcome and repudiated," an operation described by Freud as psychically painful." So, he began to consider that certain sexual episodes that people in psychoanalysis believed they had actually experienced turned out to be remnants of their repressed fantasies. Because of the way memory worked, he came to consider that dreams cannot necessarily be separated from reality in a person's recollection of an event.

As he rejected the reality of the actual seduction of children by adults, he replaced this belief with a new theory that individuals who claim to remember childhood sexual experiences have, in fact, created fantasies. He explained that these "phantasies of seduction...[are] attempts at fending off memories of the subject's own sexual
People's innate guilty natures makes them look to others on whom they can lay the blame for their own perverse behaviors. Because patients confuse fantasy with the fact of their own perversity, he reported that he had "thus overestimated the frequency of...the sexual seduction by an adult or older children of a young child." He explained that as adults, these people apprehend their desires as memories of actual sexual events. But as the evidence mounted that these memories could not be trusted, he suggested that these false recollections are the mind's way of transforming overpowering urges into states of mind that can be tolerated.

For a final appreciation of what helped to change Freud's mind about the seduction theory, one had to wait until 1933 with the publication of the New Introductory Lectures. By this time, Freud's tone had become historical as he looked back over the decades to explain his shift in position. Considering his early investigations concerning the etiology of neurosis, he recollected that "In the period [1886-1896] in which the main interest was directed to discovering infantile sexual traumas, almost all my women patients told me that they had been seduced by their fathers." In all, thirteen female patients had reported the same events to him. He began to doubt that all women could have, in fact, been the victims of paternal seduction. He,
therefore, recalled that "I was driven to recognize in the end that these reports were untrue and so came to understand that hysterical symptoms were derived from phantasies and not from real occurrences."

By renouncing his seduction theory, Freud opened the door for a universal application of his ideas about infant sexuality. If he had held to his original observations that hysteria was caused by the fathers' and brothers' seduction of children, his investigations would have been limited to victims of sexual abuse. By shifting from seduction to fantasy, however, Freud widened his net to catch everyone's conscience because he believed that all children experience vivid sexual desires that they hope can be fulfilled. As he let the fathers and brothers off the hook, Freud extended his theory of infant sexuality to include everyone, not just the victims of childhood seduction. And in the process, he shifted the blame from the adults to the children, for it was they who were inventing the tales of sexual activities. Through his repudiation, Freud paved the way for a general theory of human nature in which all children desire incestuous gratification from their parents; these wishes, in turn, provided the foundation for his Oedipal theory. This theory has been viewed as the cornerstone of Freudian psychology by many people.
In *History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement* (1914), Freud wrote that "The theory of repression is the cornerstone on which the whole structure of psycho-analysis rests." Through the process of repression, the mind develops a buried life that he believed needed to be excavated and exposed to the light of reason in order for the patient to experience relief from psychic wounds that often affect the body. Repression is the conscious mind's way of protecting itself against feelings which threaten its equanimity. Freud concluded that all people suffer from enormous sexual desires that must be suppressed in order for them to carry on with their lives. If individuals act out their desires, chaos would reign. Therefore, burial of these affections provides for a semblance of stability.

However, repressed affects continue to contain their original energy even though they have been forgotten by the individual. Freud commented on this when he wrote to his friend Fliess in 1897 to explain repression, Freud used a metaphor to interpret why people force certain thoughts below the surface of the mind. He explained that "The current memory stinks just as an actual object stinks; and just as we turn away our sense organ...in disgust, so do our preconsciousness and our conscious sense turn away from the memory."
In his Clark University lectures, Freud was eager to get his idea of repression across to his audience. Using an analogy to illustrate his conception, he asked people to imagine that within the lecture room in which they were seated one particular member was "causing a disturbance" through his "ill-mannered laughter, chattering and shuffling with his feet." Because of these "distractions," Freud explained that "I cannot proceed with my lecture." At this point three or four strong men grab the trouble-maker and expel him from the room. Thus he has been repressed, and to ensure that he remains outside the confines of the hall, chairs are placed against the door to "establish a 'resistance' after the repression has been accomplished."

Freud concluded his illustration by suggesting that "If you will now translate the two localities [of the lecture room and hall]... into psychical terms as the 'conscious' and the 'unconscious,' you will have before you a fairly good picture of the process of repression."

Freud theorized that repression of unruly thoughts is absolutely necessary for the orderly carrying out of mental affairs just as the expulsion of the heckler allowed him to get on with his lecture. He indicated that without the ability to suppress certain disruptive tendencies, the mind would be so filled with confusion that it would cease to function rationally. Like the unruly intruder, the powers of irrationality are constantly pounding on the mind to be
admitted. But the sentinel of resistance has been posted at the entrance way to keep him out. However, just repressing certain emotions does not ensure mental health. On the contrary, these repressed affects still continue to express themselves, but now they come in disguises including the shapes and shadows of one's dreams. They also surface as physical symptoms of the body. If a person has repressed a distressing sexual episode, it can come back to haunt him or her as a form of hysteria. Considering these destructive aspects of repression, Freud wanted people to unlock their pent-up feelings in order to be able to handle them rationally.

He warned that if the repressed thought cannot gain re-entry into the consciousness through the healthy process of psychoanalysis, it will look for a substitute through which to express itself. This substitute often becomes the physical symptom to which the original "feelings of unpleasure" are attached. "Under the physician's guidance" the repressed thought was brought forth and directed to a "higher...aim." In this way, the patient gains control over hidden impulses. In psychoanalysis, health occurs when powerful passions are sublimated rather than repressed. Within sublimation, reason acts as the conduit through which unruly instincts are channeled. Ideally, if people understand and accept their libidinal wishes, then they can
choose to harness these energies along more productive paths than sexual ones.

Sublimation

When Freud visited New England, he announced that he had come to these shores as a friend of the "highest and most valuable cultural trends" in that he wished to preserve civilization from being undermined by people’s repressed sexual instincts. He offered psychoanalysis as the means by which individuals can release their repressed desires because once these instincts enter the conscious mind then "repression is replaced by a condemning judgement carried out along the best lines." The "condemning judgement" was Freud’s phrase for "sublimation," or the ability of people to rechannel their sexual urges along creative and socially acceptable lines.

Sublimation was defined as the exchange of the original "sexual aim for another one which is...socially valuable." And he added that "It is probable that we owe our highest cultural successes to the contributions of energy made in this way to our mental functions." Several years later, he reiterated this message in the Contributions to the Psychology of Love (1912) when he explained why "civilization" had placed inhibitions on sexual expression. If people were left to their own devices, they "would never
abandon that pleasure and they would never make any further progress." Therefore, "higher achievements" would have been neglected in favor of sexual gratification. Freud believed that a war is constantly being waged in people's minds in which the "irreconcilable difference between the demands of the two instincts--the sexual and the egoistic" remain in conflict. Out of this struggle, a stronger person may emerge "capable of ever higher achievement" through the sublimation of the sex urge. The casualties of this battle are those souls who can not tolerate the heat of fire and so escape into "neurosis...to which...the weaker are succumbing today."  

In 1905, Freud introduced "sublimation" as the way for people to cope in an enlightened manner with their unruly sexual instincts." Although remaining vague about the specific "process" involved, he suggested that sublimation allows people to rechannel their libidinal energies in productive directions. He believed that this redirection is essential to social stability because if people are free to do as they desire, they pursue pleasure at the expense of maintaining cultural institutions. He hoped that as individuals become enlightened through psychoanalytic means, they may understand their concupiscent natures and seek to rechannel these compelling affections to accomplish useful, even creative, ends. Expressing his belief that strong sexual urges can wreck havoc within civilization, he
indicated that "the process of sublimation...enables excessively strong excitations...to find an outlet and use in other fields." He explained that in this way a "disposition which in itself is perilous" can find acceptable releases for its dangerous passions. Within his discussion about sublimation he argued that once libido is rechanneled it can produce creative artifacts. Therefore, through this transformation of the procreative urge "we have one of the origins of artistic activity." Freud told the men and women at Clark University that it is the special nature of the artist to "transform his phantasies into artistic creations instead of into symptoms. In this manner he can escape the doom of neurosis."

In the Three Essays on Sexuality, Freud reflected the conventional wisdom of the Victorian era when he defined the libido, his term for the sexual urge, as masculine. He explained that

If we were able to give a more definite connotation to the concepts of 'masculine' and 'feminine' it would even be possible to maintain that libido is invariably and necessarily of a masculine nature, whether it occurs in men or in women and irrespectively of whether its object is a man or a woman."

In this context Freud's imagery of libido as masculine was compatible with the views held by contemporaries who believed that men possess sexual vitality whereas women remain essentially passive in this realm. However, Freud
parted company with this perspective in an important way because he believed that women do, in fact, experience strong sexual excitation. But in spite of his acceptance of libido in women, he chose to define this energy as masculine. And by defining sexual energy in androcentric terms, Freud was led into the error of generalizing that artists are only men. As we shall see in his following example about sublimation, Freud unwittingly linked gender to creativity—a connection that trivialized his notion of the creative process.

In the paper entitled "The Paths to Symptom Formation," Freud focused on the creativity of the artist, who was described categorically as masculine in that "he desires to win honor, power, wealth, fame and the love of women; but he lacks the means for achieving these satisfactions." According to Freud, the artist "like any other unsatisfied man...turns away from reality and transfers all his...libido...to the wishful constructions of his life of phantasy." This ability, in turn, suggests a "constitution [that] probably includes a strong capacity for sublimation." Explaining the process of sublimation, Freud indicated that the artist rechannels the energy that he might have expended in the pursuit of ordinary lusts into creative expressions from which "other people...[can] derive consolation and pleasure." Freud used the example of the creative person
because this individual's experience showed how to sublimate frustrated libido: when you can't make love, make art.

As a result of his trivialized portrait of the artist as a man whose basic desire is evidently to pursue cheap thrills, Freud upset several people in the art community including the critic Clive Bell. Bell vigorously attacked the author of psychoanalysis in his article "Dr. Freud on Art" (1924) in which he announced that "The artist is not concerned with...the 'sublimation' of his normal lusts, because he is concerned with a problem which is quite outside of normal experience." To Bell the artist is not a "dreamer," who needs to redirect his fantasies, but a creator of a new dimension. Taking aim at Freud's contention that the artistic creation is the result of sublimated sexual desires, Bell scoffed that "this is...a pretty good account of what housemaids take for art" because their romantic novels represent "wish fulfillment in a world of phantasy." But in spite of his objections to Freud's views about art, Bell implicitly agreed that the artist is always a male. By leaving women out of the realm of creative powers, Freud even ignored their reproductive capacity. In formulating his ideas he disregarded the climate of opinion in which the virtues of motherhood were often extolled. One such tribute was Henry Adam's nostalgic portrait of the Virgin as the great procreative force. Adams believed that in his own mechanically-oriented
society, a woman’s fecundity made her the only truly
creative power in a world of male inventions. In this
context, if Freud had reflected the sentiments of his own
age, he might have widened his view of creativity to include
women, albeit only in respect to their reproductive
function.

Years before he began to develop his ideas about
sublimation, Freud had consciously separated sexuality from
reproduction in order to develop his theory of infant
sexuality. Understanding that babies know nothing about
reproduction as the aim of their sexual desires, Freud
rejected conception as the ultimate sexual goal. Instead,
he replaced it with the notion of "object choice" in which
children choose certain people as the aim of their sexual
feelings. These people can include the parent of the
opposite sex (Oedipal wish), a person of the same sex as the
child (inversion), or the child’s own genitals
(autoeroticism). In this way, Freud included infant
sexuality as part of human nature.

For Freud, mental health meant the ultimate sublimation
of the passions into a "striving toward higher goals."
However, he never held out much hope of its being realized
within most men and women. Writing to his American friend
J.J. Putnam, he lamented that people "would like to be
better than they can be, yet this convulsive desire benefits
neither themselves nor society." This gloomy pronouncement
reflected his lack of faith in human nature to achieve genuine reformation.

In the many years that he devoted to psychoanalysis, Freud never developed a true theory of sublimation. In spite of the fact that he believed that rechanneling of libido can transform a person, he never described it as a mental phenomenon in the same way that he defined repression. Therefore, sublimation remained a moral goal rather than the psychological process which he intended it to be." He endowed this concept with the same power that theologians have given to grace in transforming the old lustful affections new creative powers. Through this redirection, people transcend their concupiscent natures as their sublimated desires provide the psychic energy for productive tasks.

Freud's explanation of sublimation may have remained tenuous because as an atheist he could not appeal to some Higher Power to help in character reformation. Through the years, he demonstrated the ameliorating tendencies of psychoanalysis in that people reported "feeling" better as they recognized and admitted their sexual desires. But he offered no "cure" in the sense of people's achieving completely reformed natures. Sublimation hints at the possibility of this, but until the day he died he remained vague on how to accomplish this process.
Perhaps another reason that he did not fully develop a theory about sublimation was that he understood its volitional character would be at odds with his determinism. The conscious decision to improve one's nature by eschewing sexual pleasures for higher achievements implied an act of will on the patient's part that did not fit neatly into Id Psychology. If in his calculations about what makes people tick Freud had included the human will as the agent for psychological transformation, then he would have contradicted his fundamental belief that human nature is shaped by inborn instincts. Therefore, within his image of the mind, he elaborated only those mental structures involved in predetermined psychic transactions. Within the economy of the mind, he included the areas of the id, ego, and superego which exert specific psychic energies that provide the currency of exchange among these separate realms. Presumably the independent will would outside of these psychic limits and therefore beyond determinism.

Because Freud was a determinist, he believed that people are compelled to experience anxieties and physical illnesses owing to what lurks in their unconscious minds. As his Id Psychology developed into Ego Psychology, he admitted that the powers of reason can be employed to offset the ravages of repressed urges. But he never believed that reason can do more than moderate the inner weather in which storms of passion often rage. Despite his appeal to
sublimation as an exalting force, he never believed that people can transcend their innate characters though acts of will.

The Talking and Touching Cure

In 1926, Freud indicated that psychoanalysis was a benign approach to illness because its methods were non-invasive. Whereas the surgeon assaulted the human body with the scalpel to cut out the diseased organ, the psychoanalyst used only words to heal.8 This faith in the edifying powers of verbalization was expressed early in his career when he exalted the "magic" inherent in words. Indicating that the cause of illness was often in the mind, Freud believed that "talking" would provide the cure. He wrote that people must "begin to understand the 'magic' of words" because

Words are the most important medium by which one man is to bring his influence upon another. So that there is no longer anything puzzling in the assertion that the magic of words can remove the symptoms of illness, and especially such as are themselves founded on mental states.8

Before Freud had completed his Medical Degree in 1881, the neurologist Josef Breuer had begun to employ his "cathartic method" to treat a patient known as Anna O. This method combined hypnosis with a patient's willingness to communicate feelings. After completing his training, Freud
began his neurology practice in which he used conventional methods including massage, electrotherapy, and hypnotism. However, he rarely experienced satisfaction with these approaches because they failed to eliminate symptoms. As a result, he became increasingly interested in Breuer's "cure." It was Anna O. who actually labelled this approach the "talking cure," a phrase that reflected Breuer's efforts to get her to reveal the thoughts she harbored that led to "the alteration in her mental states." In perhaps an overly generous statement, Freud pronounced Breuer as the "father of psychoanalysis" because it was he who first encouraged patients to express their feelings. In fact, Breuer's method recapitulated the age-old, theologically sound principle of confession.

When Freud addressed his Clark University audience, he gave Anna O. credit for having "christened this novel kind of treatment the 'talking cure.'" Experiencing it as a form of disclosure in which she purged herself of unclean thoughts, she "used to refer to it jokingly as 'chimney-sweeping.'" Any American familiar with the experience of religious conversion would have found in the principle of "chimney-sweeping" an appropriate metaphor for confession. Freud believed in a form of verbal purgation, and he shared with certain theologians the conclusion that people's suffering is linked to perverted desires that become hidden under the cover of more virtuous thoughts. Through the
"talking cure" he sought to uncover those "pathogenic groups of ideas" that had precipitated people's initial "nervous" complaints such as troubled breathing, an odd sense of smell, or a paralyzed extremity. Because in many cases he could not find an organic basis for these symptoms, he turned to the psychological realm to "discover" both the cause of and the cure for these ailments. Therefore, in place of medical remedies he began to substitute his own ideas which he dubbed "psychoanalysis"; and this analysis of the psyche, or mind, was predicated upon the patient's ability to speak about himself or herself.

In 1895 Freud and Breuer collaborated on publishing the Studies on Hysteria, a work in which the "talking cure" was introduced. In these Studies, Freud first turned his attention to the power of emotions that had been "repressed" but never "confessed." He explained that colloquial expressions such as "blowing off steam" (sich austoben) and "to cry oneself out" (sich ausweinen) demonstrated the folk wisdom about the cathartic effects of emotional release, but he also indicated that many people are unable to set free their repressed affections. These buried feelings in turn often produce physical symptoms of illness when the "affect remain[es] attached to the memory." Arguing that it is essential for people to re-experience their latent sentiments, he wrote that "Language serves as a substitute for action." Freud did not want his patients to relive
their memories physically because most of them were sexual in nature. Therefore, he considered that "Speaking is itself the adequate reflex, when for instance, it is a lamentation or...a confession." He explained that "pathological" ideas which "have persisted with such freshness and affective strength" have done so "because they have been denied the normal wearing-away process by means of abreaction." In psychoanalysis, "abreaction" is the process through which repressed emotions are released by conversing. Freud believed that pent-up affect could be discharged through recall and verbalization. Of himself and Breuer, he wrote that within their treatment of people

We found to our great surprise at first, that each individual's hysterical symptom immediately and permanently disappeared when we had succeeded in bringing clearly to light the memory of the event by which it was provoked and in arousing its accompanying affect, and when the patient had described that event in the greatest possible detail and had put the affect into words."

When he first began to use his new approach on hysterical patients who had not responded to conventional treatment, Freud reported that his "mere insistence" that they remember certain painful experiences was often enough of an incentive to "bring to light" buried ideas and episodes that had been forgotten. People failed to recall certain episodes because the "universal characteristics of such ideas...were all of a distressing nature, calculated to
arouse the effects of shame, of self-reproach and of psychical pain." He explained that these memories, almost always sexual, "were all of a kind that one would prefer not to have experienced," and therefore patients attempted to protect themselves by constructing mental defenses such as the loss of memory against these disturbing events. But Freud believed that a "psychical trace" of the repressed experiences remains, even if "apparently lost to view." This "trace" acts as a barb or hook in the patient's conscious mind to which "shame" and "self-reproach" are painfully attached. Therefore people suffer from these hidden memories even though they remain oblivious to them as actual events. Through the "talking cure," people are prompted to reveal their secrets in order to recover some semblance of their mental and physical health.

Even though he initially "insisted" that people could remember their buried thoughts, Freud discovered that he was not always successful in conjuring up the demon memories. His use of "simple assurances such as 'of course you know it,' 'tell me all the same,' 'you'll think of it in a moment,'" did not "always carry too far." So he resorted to "strange means" by using "a small technical device" that coincided with the biblical practice of the "laying on of hands." He described this device as "apply[ing] pressure to...[the] forehead....I press for a few seconds on the forehead of the patient as he lies in front of me...ask[ing]..."
quietly 'What did you see?' or 'What occurred to you?'" In his first psychoanalytic efforts, Freud found that physical contact with his patients aided them in their ability to remember certain traumatic events. He claimed that "this procedure has taught me much and has also invariably achieved its aim."

Convinced of the necessity to touch his patients, Freud explained that "in every fairly complicated analysis the work is carried on by the repeated, indeed continuous, use of this procedure of pressure on the forehead." The fact that this pressure could help people to remember things that they had completely forgotten provided him with the foundation for his "discovery" of the unconscious mind. When he first began to use this touching technique, he had not articulated his mental structures of the "id" and the "unconscious"; he was aware of the conscious mind only and its peculiar ability somehow to forget, or repress, certain painful memories. The delineation of these darker areas grew out of his observations of patients who recovered lost experiences through the "talking cure," which was aided by the application of pressure. Foretelling his own great breakthrough, he wrote that "The revelations which one obtains through the procedure of pressing...appear in very remarkable form and in circumstances which make the assumption of there being an unconscious intelligence even more tempting." When he made this statement he had not yet
drafted *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). This work served as the empirical basis for Freud's conviction that everyone possesses an unconscious; and he believed that dreams offer the "royal road" to this realm. With the publication of *Dreams*, Id Psychology truly began. But its foundation was laid during Freud's work with patients who responded to his "psycho-analytic" method, a combination of talking and touching.

Twenty years after promoting his "strange device" of applying pressure to patients' heads so that they could better remember important events, Freud outlined a much more rigorous approach than he had used in the beginning. In 1912, he published "Papers on Technique" in which he laid down the rules that were to govern psychoanalysis for at least two generations of psychoanalytic training, and are still employed by traditional Freudian analysts. In these "Papers," he presented his method for conducting a therapy session that involved no touching and very little visual contact; the patient was to lie on a couch, positioned in such a way that Freud could not see his or her face. The couch technique coupled with the following suggestions created a training manual for people who intended to conduct therapy: (1) No notes were to be taken during the session. (2) Psychoanalysts should model themselves on surgeons and perform their operations as skillfully as possible; (3) Therapists should have undergone psychoanalysis as a part of
their own preparation; (4) Analysts were not to share their feeling with patients; (5) Relatives of the patients were not to be brought into the process by giving them books to read—the cure was for the patient and not the whole family; (6) Patients should be seen six days a week by the therapist while in active analysis.” Even after developing these methods that encouraged professionalism and discouraged intimacy with patients, Freud maintained his original faith in communication. At its heart, psychoanalysis remains today the "talking cure" that came about almost one hundred years ago in Vienna. Healing is contingent upon the patient's ability to confess the darkest inclinations of the soul.

Two Case Histories: Dora and Hans

Freud wrote many theoretical treatises, including the Three Essays on Sexuality in which he developed his system of ideas. However, it was not in these essays but in his case histories that we see an application of his clinical "discoveries" to people's psychological experiences. Two such cases were already in print by the time he came to America in 1909. The first of these studies concerned an adolescent female named "Dora" and the second a male child named "Hans." In Freud's descriptions of these patients he illustrated the concepts that he had been developing as part
of his Id Psychology since the early 1890s. These two individuals served as living portraits of his psychoanalytic principles.

**Dora**

In 1905, Freud published one of his most famous studies entitled *A Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* in which he described the course of a young woman's therapy. Excited by his discoveries in her case, Freud wrote to Fliess in January of 1901 that this history "is the most subtle thing I have yet written and will produce an even more horrifying effect than usual." Freud had hoped to publish his analysis that year and he anticipated that it "will meet the gaze of the astonished public in the autumn." But for unclarified reasons, he waited four years before he made public his findings. To Freud, Dora's story provided an example of the virtue of confession in psychoanalysis in spite of the fact that she remained a "stubborn" patient. As we shall see, she never responded to his assertions of her guilty participation in certain traumatic activities. But instead of accepting her interpretation of events, he diagnosed her independent judgment as resistance while explaining her recalcitrance as culpability.

Dora was eighteen years old when her father brought her to the famous Viennese doctor for treatment. Concerned
about his daughter’s symptoms, her father filled Freud in about certain sordid episodes in her past. Dora’s parents were close friends of a couple described as Herr and Frau "K." Frau K. had been the mistress of Dora’s father, who was a syphilitic. Herr K., in turn, had attempted to seduce Dora when she was fourteen. She had repulsed him, but this assault had left her with hysterical symptoms. Shortly after this episode, she developed a nervous cough which interfered with her eating and sleeping habits. She had, in desperation, reported Herr K.’s uninvited attentions to her father in the hope that he could correct the situation. But nothing was done until both she and her father went to Freud for help several years after the unhappy experience.

In the course of his treatment, Freud explained that Dora’s revelation to her father about Herr K.’s embrace was, in fact, vicious and self-destructive. Condemning Dora’s sense of false virtue, he wrote that "a normal girl...will deal with a situation of this kind by herself." He accused her of being filled with a "morbid craving for revenge" that precipitated her revelation of Herr K.’s behavior. Freud admitted in his analysis of her motives that she had, indeed, slapped Herr K.; but, he announced, this gesture "by no means signified a final ‘No’ on her part." Freud did not believe Dora’s claim that she was "disgusted" by Herr K., a feeling she insisted she experienced.
Using mental legerdemain, Freud explained that when she reported this "lively feeling of disgust" to him she had actually suffered a severe "leucorrhoeal discharge" of her own genitals that she did not want Herr K. to find out about. So she "transferred" her revulsion toward her own body to the man that had sexually aroused her. Freud insisted that a "healthy" response would have been to acknowledge stimulation, but she traded health for morbid symptoms. He explained that in her situation "Instead of genital sensation which would certainly have been felt by a healthy girl in such circumstances, Dora was overcome by the unpleasurable feeling—that is by disgust." His goal in this analysis was to have her confess that she found Herr K.'s advances pleasurable. In addition, he believed that she had been attracted to her father during her childhood years but had also repressed these urges. Her suppressed passions, therefore, had made her ill.

Dora had experienced hysterical symptoms including tussis nervosa. Of this nervous cough, Freud wrote that it was caused by her "unconscious phantasy" to "suck...at the male organ." This repressed desire, in turn, inhibited the normal movements of her mouth and throat described as "facial neuralgia." No stranger to metaphor, Freud certainly understood the symbolic meaning of a constricted throat as signifying the rejection of the desired, but forbidden, object. However, Freud believed that the mind
can actually influence certain parts of the body that were
directly affected by repressed desires. In this case,
Dora's symptoms were literal, rather than figurative,
expressions of her unruly passions. Along with being
pressured to admit that she desired both her father and Herr
K., Dora was prodded to confess to chronic masturbation as a
child.

During the three months she visited Freud for
treatment, she never acknowledged that he was correct in his
dark assumptions about her unconscious tendencies. But he
remained undaunted by her protestations, and when she
rejected his suggestion that she was excited by Herr K.'s
 attentions he wrote that "My expectations were by no means
disappointed when this explanation of mine was met by Dora
with a most emphatic negative." Dora also denied
masturbating as a child, but Freud was insistent that she
indulged often in this activity; and believing that he had
cought her in his psychoanalytic snare, he offered as proof
an amazing interpretation of her behavior. One day while
visiting him for therapy, she began to play with a "small
reticule" on her belt after he had confronted her with her
sins of childhood masturbation. While he was speaking to
her about her history of self-indulgence, he noticed that
"She kept playing with it [the reticule by] opening it,
putting a finger into it, shutting it again." Oblivious
to the mechanics of clitoral stimulation, he incorrectly
believed that the movements of her fingers recapitulated the motions made during female masturbation. Because he had falsely centered a woman's primary excitement in the vagina, Freud believed that he had caught Dora in the act of unconsciously admitting to this activity. Pleased with his own powers to spy out the secrets of the guilty heart, he wrote:

He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore. And thus the task of making conscious the most hidden recesses of the mind is one which it is quite possible to accomplish.¹⁰³

Concluding his discussion of Dora's masturbating, he announced that "the pride taken by women in the appearance of their genitals is quite a special feature of their vanity."¹⁰⁴

Dora broke off treatment with Freud after only three months. Apparently with no love lost between them, Freud commented that at least in their final session, "Dora listened to me without any of her usual contradictions." Knowing that she would not be bullied by him anymore, she probably refrained from uttering her usual futile protests. Obviously angered by her abandonment of treatment, he labelled her premature departure "an unmistakable act of vengeance on her part." Using religious imagery, he believed that it was his role to exorcise "the most evil of
those half-tamed devils that inhabit the human breast." He wrote that he had been willing "to wrestle with them" for her sake. But she had failed to appreciate his commitment to her. In his closing remarks about her withdrawal, he interpreted her behavior as an attempt to seduce him into showing "a warm personal interest in her"; but he protested, "I have always avoided acting a part."\(^{108}\)

As Freud presented it, Dora's tale was a dark and twisted complex of motives. As a provocative afterthought, he added that this young woman married and lived a normal life, according to reports. In a surprising conclusion, he actually credited himself with her return to health. He indicated that even though she had resisted his many suggestions she did, in fact, benefit from the truth. And because of one of his interpretations of her dreams she became able "to tear herself free from her father and...[be] reclaimed once more by the realities of life."\(^{104}\) Although her analysis lasted only a few months, he stretched the details of her case into a one-hundred-and-twenty page detective story in which he solved the mystery of Dora's hysterical symptoms in spite of her protestations that his interpretations were wrong.

Freud's reaction to Dora's "resistance" echoed certain Calvinist theologians who insisted that people were guilty of crimes of the heart even though they pleaded innocent. In one such case, Puritan divine Jonathan Edwards accused
members of his congregation of harboring a hatred for God, and he warned them that they would try to conceal this perversion from their conscious selves through "a disguise for it, whereby you endeavor even to hide it from your own conscience."197 Freud and Edwards were light years apart in their views about God, but they shared a conviction that people's minds are filled with dark inclinations that need to be confessed. Freud recognized this when he compared the remorseful neurotic to the religious penitent: "The sense of guilt of obsessional neurotics finds its counterpart in the protestations of pious people that they know that at heart they are miserable sinners."198 He may have been insinuating that with both types of people their sense of culpability was exaggerated. But in the case of Dora it was he who charged her with the sins of lust and prevarication; and as she denied her guilt, he became even more convinced of her transgressions. In their struggle, he had the last word in that he published her story from his perspective. But her complete recovery of "the realities of life" suggests that she had never wandered too from them despite Freud's contrary observations.

Hans

Freud published another depiction of his theories in the 1909 Jahrbuch entitled "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy." This analysis served to demonstrate his
ideas about infant and childhood sexuality that he had announced earlier in 1905 in the *Three Essays on Sexuality*. The boy in the title of his essay was named Hans, and it was this child's experiences with his own sexuality that Freud believed offered proof of his startling theory that children did, in fact, possess and express sexual desires. Freud, however, was not the one to analyze Hans; this task fell to the boy's father, identified as Max Graf, who was a supporter of Freud's most radical claims and a devotee of psychoanalysis. As it turned out, Freud saw Hans "on one single occasion," but he believed the absence of contact with the child was mitigated by the fact that his parents were "among my closest adherents." It was Freud, however, who wrote about Hans's analysis based on letters and notes he exchanged with the father.

According to the boy's parents, their son became disturbed during his fifth year when he developed a phobia about large animals—specifically horses, but an occasional giraffe lurked in his dreams. Hans was afraid that a horse would bite him when he went into the street. To this specific fear, Freud instructed his father to tell Hans "that all this business about horses was a piece of nonsense and nothing more." In addition to his anxiety, the child had been intrigued by horse "widdlers" (penises). About this curiosity, Freud commented that Hans "himself had noticed that it was not right to be so very much preoccupied
with widdlers, even with his own, and he was quite right in thinking this."\textsuperscript{111}

His parents reported that before Hans had ever exhibited these worries, he had masturbated a great deal, an activity that neither Freud nor the Grafs condoned. In fact, when his mother found him playing with his "widdler" she told him if he continued this behavior she would cut it off, a threat reported as appropriate under the circumstances.\textsuperscript{112} Freud wrote that "this was the first trace of homosexuality that we have come across in him, but it will not be the last. Little Hans seems to be a positive paragon of all the vices."\textsuperscript{113}

In spite of Hans's sexual inclinations, Freud was pleased to find in him a moral streak exhibited by his desire to stop masturbating. Reporting to Freud, Hans's father said to his son, "You know, if you don't put your hand to your widdler anymore, this nonsense of yours'll soon get better."\textsuperscript{114} In fact, to ensure that he would keep his hands off his penis, his father offered to put him in a bag at night, thus constricting the movement of his extremities. Apparently, Hans's "spirits were visibly raised by the prospect of having his struggles made easier for him" because he rejoiced to his father, "Oh, if I have a bag to sleep in my nonsense'll have gone tomorrow."\textsuperscript{115}

Adding incestuous desires to his other perversions, Hans admitted, under questioning, that he wanted to have his
"beautiful mother" all to himself by replacing his father in the marriage bed. To Freud, this admission verified his belief that children, like Oedipus, desire the parent of the opposite sex. Hans also acknowledged being jealous of his sister Hanna who was born when he was three and one-half. Upon seeing her naked he commented on how small her "widdler" was. His father believed that by this remark, Hans was demonstrating his fear this his own "widdler" might shrink to the size of Hanna's. His father, however, reassured him that "widdlers" grow even bigger. Based on Hans's fears of having his penis shrivel, Freud developed his castration theory. He believed that all male children suffer a special fear of losing their penises, especially when they realize that this fate has already occurred to females.

To Freud, Hans's case justified his theories about infant and childhood sexuality. In reading this "case history," however, one is struck by its contrived nature. Freud was obviously delighted that Hans seemed to act out the "discoveries" he had made about children's natural tendencies. But, in spite of Freud's protests to the contrary, all that this study truly demonstrated was the fact that Hans' parents were familiar enough with psychoanalytic theory to be able to interpret their son's development in light of it. Within this "Analysis," the boy was prompted and cajoled into giving the correct response
which offered Freud proof of his assumptions. He must have anticipated that this study would be criticized for its script-like character when he wrote:

It is true that during the analysis Hans had to be told many things that he could not say himself, that he had to be presented with thoughts which he had so far shown no signs of possessing, and that his attention had to be turned in the direction from which his father was expecting something to come.\textsuperscript{11}

Rather than having put words into the child’s mouth, Freud believed that Hans was being educated by his parents to identify properly his true sexual feelings. Hans’s precocity in exhibiting tendencies from Oedipal’s desires for his mother to fear of castration vindicated Freud, who had been accused within some European circles of sheer casuistry. In fact, he offered Hans’s analysis as scientific confirmation of his theories, a claim that has come under serious attack. Obviously far more humanistic than scientific in its methods, Hans’s analysis served to affirm deeply Freud’s own view of children as possessing capacities for sexual precocity, homosexuality, and incestuous thoughts.

Having shown the worst in this child’s nature, Freud wrote that some might think that Hans’s "degeneracy" came from "bad heredity."\textsuperscript{11} But it was not his intention to indict Hans; on the contrary, he wanted to demonstrate the workings of a normal child’s mind in which lurked the
various demons that were unmasked during the course of this analysis. Freud explained that "Hans was not by any means a bad character; he was not even one of those children who at his age still give free play to the propensity towards cruelty and violence which is a constituent of human nature." Three decades later, Freud wrote a more sweeping indictment in which he charged that it "is well known, young children are amoral and possess no internal inhibitions against their impulses striving for pleasure."

In 1910, Carl Jung called Hans's analysis "indeed the first true insight into the psychology of the child." This endorsement helped to secure for the study a fifty-year reign as the example par excellence of Freud's psychoanalytic theories about childhood sexuality. However, in 1960 it came under a devastating criticism in the Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases from which it never recovered. In their criticism of the Hans study, authors Joseph Wolpe, M.D. (neurologist) and Stanley Rachman, M.D. (psychiatrist) analyzed the work line by line. After they finished their analysis, they concluded that Freud's deductions were completely lacking in substance. Disagreeing with Jung's pronouncement, Wolpe and Rachman charged that the Hans analysis "does not provide anything resembling direct proof of psychoanalytic theories." Based on the conclusion of these physicians, Freud's
"Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-year-old Boy" lost its credibility.

Sigmund Freud's views on children echoed those of the American Puritans who preceded him by several generations. One of the nineteenth-century "old-light" Puritans who remained outspoken about infant depravity and the evils inherent in a child's disposition was Timothy Dwight (1752-1817), President of Yale from 1795-1817. On the eve of American transcendentalism, President Dwight's views on original sin were published in the Christian Spectator. He chided those who "considered children as natively virtuous; or at least possessing a neutral character, on which virtue may without any difficulty be successfully grafted." Brushing aside the tabula rasa theory of John Locke, he contended that anyone who has watched children knows that "they are born with strong propensities; and that these propensities are totally destitute of moral excellence." It therefore became the task of the moral educator "to take this depraved being by the hand, and lead him back to real virtue." Unpersuaded by Methodist perfectionism, Dwight in 1816 wrote that normal children display "infantile selfishness, wrath, revenge, and cruelty....Ingratitude, and rebellion....Unbrotherly and unsisterly coldness and alienation." Dwight's belief in original sin anticipated Freud's own views concerning innate sexual tendencies. Of infants, Dwight wrote:
So faults, in born, spontaneous rise
And doing wax in strength, and size
Ripen, with neither toil, nor care
And choke each germ of virtue there. 126

Dwight labelled the impulse to depravity as a mental force that he called "energy of the mind," and the "controlling cause." For him, this energy manifests itself as certain passions that "perpetually prompt to wrong." Believing that the affections are more powerful than reason, he charged parents with the special task of helping their children to restrain their wilder instincts.

Many years after his discussion of Hans, Freud delivered his final pronouncements on the unregenerate dispositions of children. In 1933, he published his New Introductory Lectures in which he wrote that "A child is psychologically a different object from an adult. As yet he possesses no super-ego." 127 He believed that is the "task of education" to help a child to "learn to control his instincts."

It is impossible to give him liberty to carry out all his impulses without restriction.... Accordingly, education must inhibit, forbid and suppress, and this it has abundantly seen to in all periods of history. 128

Proclaiming that "It is...my opinion that revolutionary children are not desirable from any point of view," Freud answered his critics who charged that "psychoanalytic
education" would subvert traditional goals by making rebels out of young people.129

Conclusion

Within Id Psychology, Freud established to his satisfaction that people are primarily emotional beings. It was in the realm of the affections rather than in the rational faculty that individuals experience their greatest energies. During the years when he was formulating his principles of the unconscious and the id, his goal was to help people to understand their perverse sexual inclinations, which they repress rather than face. He believed that repressed affect produced illnesses including hysteria, and his work established the foundation of twentieth-century psychosomatic medicine. Through psychoanalysis, individuals may understand the inner workings of their hearts and choose to "sublimate" their passionate urges into acceptable channels including artistic creativity. The movement from repressed passions to sublimated ones occurs through reason; however, Freud's view of human nature was not characterized by optimism in that he considered that most people lacking in the ability to overcome the dark tendencies of their own unregenerate temperaments.


6. A more detailed connection between Freud and the Puritans is undertaken in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.


9. In German Freud used common rather than Latin terms though he approved of the Latin for English translations.


11. Ernest Jones, Sigmund Freud: Life and Work, 3 volumes (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953-1955), III, 303. All further references to this work will be cited by author, Sigmund Freud, volume and page numbers.


23. The Puritans would not have been offended by Freud's terminology. In fact, their records often contained explicit references to perverse behaviors including buggery and bestiality. Chapter 4 treats Governor Bradford's account of sexual deviations in the Plymouth Plantation in 1642.


32. Sigmund Freud, "Universality of Oedipus Complex" (1897), Letter 71, *The Standard Edition*, I, 263. This letter to Wilhelm Fliess was Freud’s first recorded mention of the Oedipus complex.


36. Sigmund Freud, "Universality of Oedipus Complex" (1897), Letter 71, *The Standard Edition*, I, 263. This letter to Wilhelm Fliess was Freud’s first recorded mention of the Oedipus complex.


44. In his discussions of children Freud used "suppress" and "sublimation" as words to suggest the
beneficial restraint of libido, as opposed to "repression" which stunted an individual's emotional growth.


48. Freud's version of original sin will be discussed in Chapter 6.


56. Jones, Sigmund Freud, I, 95.


79. Clive Bell, "Dr. Freud on Art," The Athenaeum, XXXV (Sept. 6, 1924), 690. This article was reprinted in The Dial, April 1925.

80. Bell, p. 690.


83. It is not the purpose of this discussion to describe the psychological mechanisms involved in repression and transference. Freud, however, did explain these experiences in quasi-mechanical terms based on the principle of cause and effect. A good treatment of these terms can be found in Freud's works "Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis," (1910), The Standard Edition, XI, and Reuben Fine's A History of Psychoanalysis.

84. See Sigmund Freud, "The Question of Lay Analysis" (1926), The Standard Edition, XX.


92. Mark 16:18. "They [the apostles] shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."


126. Slater, 103.


CHAPTER 4
UNRULY AFFECTIONS: THE PURITANS' VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

Whatever is in man from the understanding to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, has been defiled and crammed with concupiscence. Or to put it more briefly, the whole of man is of himself nothing but concupiscence. 1
John Calvin

Introduction

During his brief three-week visit to New England, Sigmund Freud remained unaware of America's Calvinist roots, which his ideas would revitalize and cause to flourish as psychoanalysis. Using the language of the laboratory, Freud restated the Puritan conviction that at heart people are dominated by aggressive and self-serving instincts—a view largely eclipsed during the nineteenth century by Methodist perfectionism and Emersonian idealism. Even though Freud himself was not aware of the similarities between his system of ideas and the those of American Puritans, others recognized the common focus of both approaches to human nature. In a later chapter, I will deal with the Americans
who were the first to accept in the light of their own Puritan heritage this "new" science of the mind from Europe.

In this present chapter, my purpose is to examine the emotional, or psychological, structures that combined to form the Puritans' view of human nature. This will serve as the basis for an extended comparison between the Puritans' understanding of the psyche and the twentieth-century phenomenon of psychoanalysis. Obviously the Puritans did not couch their insights about temperament in "psychological terms," a relatively modern phrase. Instead, they contemplated the mind and soul from a religious, actually Old Testament, perspective in which certain flaws of character were deemed to produce mental or spiritual aberrations resulting from the fall of Adam and Eve. In the next chapter, I will analyze the approaches of two Puritans divines, Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards, but first we need to consider some fundamental judgments that the Calvinist made about people's emotional constitutions.

The American Puritans and Sigmund Freud shared a common mental terrain shaped by the following features: an emphasis on people's concupiscent natures; a Old Testament or Hebraic heritage which underscored the strength of the affections; a deterministic explanation of the innate capacity for iniquity in all individuals, even children; a belief in introspection as the way to reveal the twists in character; and an effort to restrain the irrational forces within a
person's mind through reason. Not appreciating how closely his view of human nature corresponded to Calvinism, Freud explained that Americans accepted his ideas because they lacked any kind of intellectual heritage that could be summoned to challenge his "discoveries."

But when Sigmund Freud came to Massachusetts bearing his gifts of infant sexuality, innate urges, and unruly affections, the men and women in the audience were prepared for him because they were at least familiar with the moral concerns of their ancestors, the American Puritans. Freud revitalized a cultural legacy that lay buried beneath the optimism of the nineteenth-century. Deep chords were struck as he described the human psyche as the battleground in which the fragile forces of reason are pitted against the potent energies of irrationality. The blows delivered in this struggle of good against evil left the person reeling, staggering to the minister or physician for help in restraining the turbulent emotions. The cure, Freud announced, for this psychic chaos was as old as the hills: introspection followed by confession, two exercises that were at the heart of the Puritan experience. William James, who was in the audience at Clark University, declared that "The future of psychology belongs to...[Freud's] work," as the past belonged to the Calvinists.

A familiar depiction of Puritans shows us men and women whose beleaguered hearts were filled with misery as they
trudged along narrow village paths barely cleared of the forest undergrowth that struggled to reassert itself. Warding off the winds of winter, they shrouded their bodies in dark cloaks against the environment’s terrors, covering their heads with narrow, black hats that later served as a metaphor for their minds. The only color that might have decorated a garment would have been the scarlet A that slashed across the breast of an adulteress. The common destination of all Puritans was the dimly lit church wherein they were greeted with hard benches and even harder words. The only heat they felt cooled their hearts as their preacher presented a horrifying picture of the next world from which the vapors of hell wafted up into the chilly air stinging the nostrils of the guilty with sulfurous fumes.

Jonathan Edwards’ ferocious sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (1741) has served as the example par excellence for the critics of Puritan culture, and his impassioned exhortations have been taken as the measure of all Puritan preaching. This sermon would make the hair on any person’s neck stand on end for its terrifying images that Edwards used to paint a picture of an infuriated God who enjoys lowering his victims over the gaping abyss of hell so that they can see what awaits them should He decide to drop them into the inferno. Considering the impact of this message on the lives of sincere Calvinists, people in later generations assumed that early settlers must have been
dedicated prohibitionists who felt compelled to break up any function where merriment threatened to burst out.

In the 1920's Vernon Parrington summarized Calvinism as "ardently Hebraic, exacting righteousness above love, seeking the law in the Old Testament, and laying emphasis on an authoritarian system." Parrington's persistent critique of the grim Puritan spirit was consistent with other works in which the followers of John Calvin's rigorous, pessimistic doctrines were painted as sullen souls. Eighty years earlier, Nathaniel Hawthorne provided a fictionalized portrait of Cotton Mather leaving the Salem Witch Trial that served as a symbol of the dark zealotry and thwarted potency of American Puritanism:

In the rear of the procession rode a figure on horseback, so darkly conspicuous, so sternly triumphant, that my hearers mistook him for the visible presence of the fiend himself; but it was only his good friend, Cotton Mather...as the representative of all the hateful features of his time.

Indicting the divine, and by implication Puritanism, Parrington remarked that "the diary of Cotton Mather is a treasure-trove to the abnormal psychologist," an occupation unheard of in the seventeenth century.

This morose image of Calvinism still enjoyed a largely unchallenged position when Perry Miller reinterpreted Puritan America in his ground-breaking studies Orthodoxy in Massachusetts (1933) and The New England Mind: The
Seventeenth Century (1939). By reconstructing the concerns of the Puritans through their writings, Miller sought to understand their intellectual system as they had intended their ideas to be comprehended. As a result of his labors, he reached profoundly different conclusions from those historians who viewed the Puritan experience as essentially abnormal in light of their own values and social conditions. Restoring American Calvinism to its original lineaments, Miller removed layers of misconceptions, polished its brighter aspects, and presented it to intellectual world. Explaining that "no 17th century Puritan ever said that food, love, and music were intrinsically bad or that recreation was inherently sinful," he quoted a typical Puritan who thanked God Who "hath given us Temporals to Enjoy...We should therefore suck the sweet of them, and so slack our Thirst with them, as not to be Insatiably craving after more." Miller wrote that

Puritanism condemned not natural passions but inordinate passions, not man’s desires but his enslavement to them, not the pleasures found in the satisfaction of appetites, but the tricks devised to prod satiated appetites into further concupiscence.

Freud recognized this distinction between natural and unnatural appetites, viewing the former as indications of a healthy mind and the latter as the symptoms of psychopathology. Calvinism and psychoanalysis both stressed
the unruly affections and the role they play in shaping human nature. The pressing issues with the Puritans were not the cut and color of their clothes, or whether they should take a drink of ale or stronger spirits; they were concerned with scrutinizing their passions, their intellects, and souls in the hope that they could dimly comprehend the will of God.

Anchoring the Puritans' world view within a medieval framework of Calvinist theology embellished by the teachings of Petrus Ramus (1515-72), Miller focused on the intellectual environment that produced this strain of Protestantism. In addition to the currents of thought in Europe and England during the 16th and 17th centuries, the Puritans relied on an exegesis of the Old Testament to inform their lives and laws. Because their beliefs provided the intellectual and moral underpinnings that supported the culture of New England as it took shape, the Puritans' ideas and values furnished the legacy to which Americans, particularly in New England, became heir. Thus, Vernon Parrington maintained that "common report has long made out Puritan New England to have been the native seat and germinal source of such ideals and institutions as have come to be regarded as traditionally American." Another historian, Roger Burlingame in The American Conscience, suggested that the modern student of Puritan values should accept "the Puritan faults where we find them, and...believe
that with all of them they established a moral basis upon which a goodly part of our later society has been built."

As American thought and belief developed through the centuries, it continued to exhibit elements of the legacy of Calvinism.

People's Concupiscent Natures

Within the Puritan community evil motives and perverse behavior were ascribed to original sin, something that each individual inherited from the first miscreants, Adam and Eve. Because these settlers accepted that all persons, even infants, were naturally depraved and therefore filled with wickedness, they were very open about their personal inclinations toward sin, including sexual misbehavior. Human nature seemed to them shaped by forces beyond the individual's control and restraint of one's lower nature was not easily achieved though always expected. In spite of this determinism, therefore they insisted that it was everyone's duty to God to try to master corrupt impulses before they inflicted damage on oneself and others.

Sex within bounds was seen by the Puritans as something good and positive. They distinguished between obsessive desires that resulted in selfishness and the restrained enjoyment of earthly pleasures. In the latter instance, men and women could experience sexual gratification without
being consumed by it. For the Roman Catholics, the purest state was celibacy. For the Puritans, however, this was utterly unacceptable because it failed to face up to the challenge of living in the world but not being of it. Two early settlers who concerned themselves with people's lusts were Governor William Bradford of Plymouth Plantation and the Reverend John Cotton.

In his History of Plymouth Plantation, Governor Bradford (1509-1657) discussed certain abominations with a forthrightness that would make later generations blush. In fact, not until Freud's work in the late nineteenth-century were people in America to be confronted again with such evidence of perverted cravings within the hearts of ordinary people. Bradford recorded many instances of sexual sins in his history, a chronology of events he kept during his years as governor. He was re-elected to this office thirty times, skipping five years when "by importunity I gat off."

In contrast to the men and women who wanted to purify the Church of England, Bradford was a separatist who fled to Holland from England in 1608 to maintain his religious beliefs. He sailed with his fellow pilgrims on the Mayflower to the New World in 1620, and began in 1621 to keep a record of important events and transactions in which members of his community participated. His history has come to be regarded as one of the most important early American documents because of its treatment of life on this new
frontier and the subsequent conquest of the wilderness. In it, he also commented on certain personal behaviors that caused consternation within the plantation.

During one infamous year, 1642, Bradford described an "outbreak" of libidinous energies among different people that caused him to exclaim:

Marvelous it may be to see and consider how some kind of wickedness did grow and breake forth here in a land where the same was so much witnessed against...and yet all this could not suppress the breaking out of sundrie notorious sins...especially drunkenness and unclainnes."

His circumspect allusion to "unclainnes" was immediately followed by his naked references to "sodomie," "bestiality," and "buggerie." During this year, such behaviors flourished in the Plymouth Colony and became matters for the court because these sins violated biblical injunctions. It was the magistrates' obligation to mete out punishments that were commensurate with the crimes committed according to the Old Testament Book of Leviticus in which incest, called a "confusion," sodomy an "abomination," and bestiality were to be punished by death." The Bible liberally ascribed to humanity an inherent attraction for what God had decreed unacceptable, and no distinction was made between men and women as to which gender has the greater appetite for sin. Both were warned to avoid acts offensive to God:

And if a man lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death; and ye shall slay the beast.
And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman, and the beast."

Lacking the squeamishness about sexual perversions that would later characterize the Victorians, Governor Bradford in his efforts to explain why so many incidents were occurring recounted a tale about a young man named Thomas Granger, servant to Love Brewster of Duxberry, who was accused of "buggerie." His partners included "a mare, a cowe, two goats, five sheep, 2. calves, and a turkey." Bradford admitted that Granger's activities were "Horrible...to mention, but the truth of historie requires it." With this nod to offended sensibilities, however, he described in some detail the young man's "lewd practice" toward these animals, "forbear[ing] particulars" of how Granger was "first discovered" in his relations with animals, but later narrating the accused's identification of the beasts at the trial. Apparently ignoring the turkey, Granger pointed out the sheep, goats, and mare as his sexual partners. Bradford actually described the mare as having a "sad look" about her when she was betrayed. Confessing his crimes "freely," to magistrates and ministers at the beginning of the interrogation and "afterwards upon his indictmente, to the whole court and jury," Granger and the animals were pronounced guilty of abominations against God
and executed on September 8, 1642. Under Old Testament law these sins could not go unpunished."

The Governor's description of Granger's perversions was delivered in a matter-of-fact tone without any suggestion of incredulity, although he did ponder "How came it to pass that so many wicked persons and profane people should so quickly come over into this land?" His answer smacked of a tough realism about human sexuality, as he explained that the "men who came by themselves into the wilderness to build and plant could not have shuch as they would, [and] were glad to take shuch as they could."

Bestiality as practiced by Granger was not a sin against the animals who were his unwitting partners nor against his fellow villagers, but against God who held in His hands the fate of these struggling pioneers. What the Old Testament revealed and indicted in human nature, these people recognized and punished. But these harsh penalties Bradford understood could, and probably did, cause certain repercussions. Anticipating psychic structures that Freud would later "discover," Bradford offered this metaphor that, anachronistically, resonates with psychoanalytic insight:

Another reason [for] things fearfull to name may be that in this case as it is with waters when their streames are stopped or damned up, when they gett passage they flow with more violence, and make more noys & disturbance, then when they are suffered to rune quietly in their owne chanels. So wikednes being here more stopped by strict laws, and the same more nerly looked unto, so as it cannot rune in comone road of liberty as it
would, and is inclined, it searches every where, and at last breaks out wher it getts vente."

This view of human nature acknowledged strong sexual instincts that if expressed on the "comone road of liberty" would have caused fewer problems in a more permissive context. Bradford held an image of the mind in which emotions like the waters in a river either flow freely to reach their proper destination or are damned up to overflow and cause damage. It was the harsh repression of these energies in the Plymouth Colony that presented problems for people such as Thomas Granger.

Freud restated Bradford's image several centuries later when he wrote that "the preponderance of perverse tendencies in psyhno-neurotics...[occur] as a collateral filling of subsidiary channels when the main current of the stream has been blocked by 'repression.'" This hydraulic image was one of Freud's favorites, and he used it to explain what happens when the normal flow of sexual energy is prevented from reaching its desired object. This backed-up force often leads to the "formation of hysterical symptoms" and "perverse activities" because "libido [that] fails to obtain satisfaction along normal lines, behaves like a stream whose main bed has become blocked. It proceeds to fill up collateral channels which may hitherto have been empty."

Using this image in his Clark Lectures, Freud told his audience that in the case of Anna O.
One was driven to assume that the illness occurred because the affects generated in the pathogenic situations had their normal outlet blocked, and that the essence of the illness lay in the fact that these 'strangulated' affects were then put to an abnormal use."

Accepting as common the sexual behaviors that others labelled pathological, Freud explained that bestiality "is by no means rare, especially among country people." Bradford would have agreed with Freud's conclusion that "the extraordinarily wide dissemination of the perversions forces us to suppose that the disposition to perversions is itself of no great rarity but must form a part of what passes as the normal constitution.""

The Puritans' attitude toward sex allowed for precipitous impulses that in some cases could not be controlled. When control was lost and an offense committed, the violator was punished because to do less would be to ignore the word of God. The Puritans' attitude toward sex, Edmund Morgan wrote "never neglected human nature" because "they knew well enough that human beings since the fall of Adam were incapable of obeying perfectly the laws of God.""

Like Bradford, the Reverend John Cotton (1584-1652) recognized the role that concupiscence played in people's emotional lives. Cotton, a Cambridge-educated clergyman and the individual who preached the farewell sermon at John Winthrop's departure from England in 1630 on the Arabella, joined the Puritan community in 1633 and quickly became one
of its leading divines. In his sermon "Wading in Grace," he explained that "the affections of a man are placed in his loynes," and through this provocative arrangement God "tries the reines." Using an image of water as salvation, Cotton urged his congregation to "paddl[e] in the wayes of grace"; but even with strenuous efforts to "wade" to the lord "the unruly affections" and "many distempered passions" have to be constantly resisted. It is not until a person's "loynes bee girt with a golden girdle," that "God hath in some measure healed thy affections." The sexual instinct was considered to be the emotion that overpowered even the most conscientious Puritan, and it was the mission of the minister to offer guidance against succumbing to this mighty temptation, the legacy of original sin. Without constant self-control, a person's sexual nature could easily become the source of spiritual or psychic pain.

The Old Testament Heritage

Because they followed so extensively the laws and customs laid down in the Old Testament, the Puritans were described as Jews by James Truslow Adams in 1921:

Christ did indeed occupy a place in their theology, but in spirit they must be considered Jews and not Christians. Their God was the God of the Old Testament, their laws were the laws of the Old Testament, their guides to conduct were the characters of the Old Testament."
These people in their adversities and wanderings identified with the peripatetic Hebrews with whom they shared the distinction of being God's special people, chosen to found the New Israel or Zion. The Pilgrim separatists, the objects of greater persecution than the more socially powerful members of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, believed that they were experiencing what the Jews had suffered as they made their exodus from the Old World to the New Canaan: England had been their Egypt, James I their Pharaoh, and the Atlantic their Red Sea. Social distinctions between these two groups were greatly diminished in the New World as both communities struggled to survive the harsh physical conditions of the "howling wilderness."

Coming to the New World to build their "citty upon a hill," the Puritans sincerely measured their leaders by standards set by the Israelites. In one such description, Cotton Mather eulogized John Winthrop (1588-1649), founder and first Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, as the American Moses:

When the noble design of carrying a colony of chosen people into an American wilderness, was by some eminent persons undertaken, this eminent person was, by the consent of all, chosen for the Moses, who must be the leader of so great an undertaking: and indeed nothing but a Mosaic spirit could have carried him through the temptations, to which either his farewell to his own land, or his travel in a strange land, must needs expose a gentleman of his education."
Winthrop, who was to serve as governor or deputy until his death in 1649, often looked to the ancient Jews for clarification on certain issues. For example, he cited the Old Testament as his authority for rejecting democracy as a political system, saying that "no such government in Israel" ever existed." Distrusting common people, Winthrop believed that "Democratie is, among most Civill nations, accounted the meanest and worst of all forms of Government...and Historyes doe record, that it hath been allwayes of least continuance and fullest trouble."

John Winthrop was not the only person compared to Moses within his community. When John Cotton died his eulogy resonated with biblical imagery:

But let his mourning flock be comforted,
Though Moses be, yet Joshua is not dead:
I mean renowned Norton; worthy he
Successor to our Moses is to be,
O Happy Israel in America,
In such a Moses, such a Joshua."

Vernon Parrington, always a critic of Puritan sensibilities, was less charitable to Cotton. In spite of his familiarity with Shakespeare and Jonson, "no touch of Renaissance splendor" remained in him, having been "washed out...by the rising tide of Hebraism." The Joshua mentioned in Cotton's epithet was the Reverend John Norton, who fled England when Archbishop Laud launched his attack against Puritan preachers. Norton, surviving Cotton, wrote his biography,
Abel Being Dead yet Speaketh, or, The Life and Death of John Cotton (1658) in which yet another allusion was made to Old Testament leaders.

In addition to their identification with the struggles of the Jews, the Calvinists' desire to learn Hebrew was intense as expressed by Governor Bradford in the preface to his History:

Though I am growne aged, yet I have had a longing desire, to see with my own eyes, something of that most ancient language, and holy tongue, in which the Law, and oracles of God were write; and in which God, and angels, spake to the holy patriarks, of old time....My aime and desire is, to see how the words, and phrases lye in the holy texte."

Many New England ministers knew this language, including Richard Mather, John Eliot, and Thomas Welde. Welde translated in 1640 the Book of Psalms from Hebrew into English as the Bay Psalm Book, the first substantial work to be published in the colonies. Other ardent Hebraists included both Increase and Cotton Mather, the latter writing a disquisition on Hebrew punctuation. The Reverend John Davenport of New Haven insisted that this ancient language be included in the curriculum of that colony's first public school, and students at Harvard were rigorously schooled in "Semitic studies." Two presidents, John Dunster and Charles Chauncy, were proficient in this tongue. Not to be left out, Yale also placed a strong emphasis on this language;
its original seal was inscribed with the Hebrew phrase *Urim Vetumin* (Light and Truth). After the Great Awakening, Harvard and Yale influenced such burgeoning independent institutions as the College of New Jersey (Princeton), Brown, King’s College (Columbia), Queen’s College (Rutgers), and Dartmouth, which all included Hebrew in their curricula. Although an Anglican, Samuel Johnson, first president of King’s College, insisted that this language was "essential to a Gentleman’s education." More importantly, a man who aspired to the ministry needed a thorough grounding in the language of the Old Testament, as well as Greek and Latin."  

Understanding Hebrew and the Old Testament as they did allowed clergymen to make explicit comparisons between their institutions and those of the Israelites. Puritan divine John Stevens certified that "the Christian Church so called is only a continuation and extension of the Jewish church," (Gaer, 25) and clergyman William Brattle said "The covenant of grace is the very same now that it was under the Mosaical dispensation. The administration differs but the covenant is the same."  

James Russell Lowell (1819-1891), looking back at his cultural ancestors, recognized that Calvinists were "fierce enthusiasts [who] could more easily find elbow-room for their consciences in an ideal Israel than in a practical England." He added that "next to the fugitives whom Moses led out of Egypt, the little shipload of outcasts who landed
at Plymouth...are destined to influence the future of mankind.\textsuperscript{36} Parrington summarized Calvinism as "ardently Hebraic, exacting righteousness above love, seeking the law in the Old Testament, and laying emphasis on an authoritarian system."\textsuperscript{37}

The Innate Capacity for Iniquity

The stock of the analyst's trade including madness, melancholy, and unruly affections were common manifestations among the Puritans, and treated as indications of flawed or "unregenerate" human nature that everyone had inherited as original sin. Inherited or innate characteristics provided the underpinnings for both a Calvinist and Freudian view of the mind in which the determinants of one's personality were assumed to be in place before birth. In Chapter Six we will consider more fully Freud's myth of the primal sons against their father, a contest that resulted in the murder of the latter. Because of this heinous crime committed within the first generations of human existence, all later offspring have inherited the tendencies to sin and guilt exhibited within the first pre-historical community. Thus, within both Freud's design and Calvinism the sins of the father have been visited upon all subsequent progeny.

Calvinism comprised a deterministic system in which people were not considered to be acting freely when they
committed sin even though they were held accountable for their actions. These transgressions were deemed the manifestations of their flawed characters, and no actions on their parts—not good works, prayer, or devotion—could of themselves free them from their bondage to original sin. Determinism in Christianity had its origins in the Augustinian doctrine of original sin which assumed that people are born with instincts and desires that make them behave in ways contrary to the laws of God. St. Augustine (345-430AD), himself a confessed sinner, who through a life of devotion became Bishop of Hippo in North Africa, pursued his own troubled theological quest for an explanation for evil. He briefly flirted with the heretical Manichean doctrine that good and evil are equally powerful forces, but he rejected this idea after hearing the sermons of Ambrose, Bishop of Milan. It became clear to him that God in His total majesty is the Author of everything in heaven and earth. He finally accepted that only an inherited tendency to commit sin can explain the universality of this phenomenon.

Augustinian ideas about original sin and absolute predestination provided the doctrinal basis for Martin Luther and John Calvin in their protestations against Rome. Calling all ideas that suggested human beings can determine their own fates heretical, Augustine charged that if people had the ability to save themselves through good thoughts and
deeds then God's almighty power would be circumscribed by
the human will, an intolerable claim. He also rejected the
idea that sin is something a person chooses to commit or to
refrain from committing. He insisted "that sin is not one
in a series of separate acts; sin is a radical defect of
human character, from which no man or woman can escape
through their own efforts." To Augustine and to his
Calvinist followers God's grace alone reforms the sinner.

Probing his own emotions to discover motives for
recalcitrant actions, Augustine looked back to his infancy.
He admitted that his cravings then had never been satisfied
by the adults who loved him and cared for him because "my
wants were within me," buried deeply within his psyche,
which was essentially unpenetrable by his parents. In his
Confessions, he remembered his temper as a baby: "When I was
not satisfied...I grew indignant that my elders were not
subject to me...and avenged myself on them by tears." He
beheld nothing innocent or loving about an infant's will, as
he declared "that even infancy is prone to sin." Adding
envy to wrath, he remarked that "I myself have seen and
known an infant to be jealous though it could not speak. It
became pale and cast bitter looks on its foster-brother." This is a familiar sight in Freud's discussion of children's
jealously precipitated by the arrival of a new sibling.

In his most famous confession, Augustine admitted his
"youthful theft of a neighbor's pears," a sin he recognized
as "gratuitously wanton," because "I plucked them simply that I might steal them." Then cutting to the heart of his behavior, he realized that "I loved my own error--not that for which I erred, but the error itself." Searching his soul, he discovered that through stealing he was liberating himself from the will of God and asserting his own independence. His introspection revealed to him the complexity of his nature and the split in his makeup as he confessed that his greatest error was sinning "for sin's sake," a motivation that defied God's total authority.

Augustine continued to appeal to many people because of the view he offered of his own nature that was full of contradictory impulses and his admission that he was competing with God for authority. As he rivaled his Creator for "imperfect liberty," he exercised his own will and consequently sinned. This struggle with the Father for primacy would be more fully articulated in the sermons of Jonathan Edwards and the Oedipal battles waged in Freud's writings. In his philosophic attempt to understand the human condition, Augustine finally resolved that people possess merely the illusion of autonomy, but their only true course is to follow in the erroneous footsteps of their original parents. Based upon his own emotional conflicts, Augustine remained supremely interested in the human affections because of the power they exerted over people's lives.
In the sixteenth century, Augustinian doctrines fortified John Calvin's tenets. These have been commonly summarized as (1) Unconditional election—God's preordained decisions are in no way influenced by the thoughts or behavior of men and women; (2) Limited atonement—Christ's death was specifically for those whom God has elected to salvation, and not for unregenerate humanity in general; (3) Total depravity—people in their natural, or unregenerate state, are so corrupt that they do not even desire salvation; (4) Irresistible grace—Those whom God has decreed to be saved are powerless to resist salvation; (5) Perseverance of the saints—God helps those whom He has elected to think proper thoughts and behave in certain ways that evidence their saved state. These "Five Points of Calvinism" comprised a deterministic formula that allowed for little, if any, individual freedom. The fact that people can receive grace only through God's arbitrary selection (justification) removed any hope that good works can be the cause of a person's salvation (sanctification). Nevertheless, as we shall see in another discussion, the New England saints stressed good works in part because to have indulged the impulses of their hearts seemed to threaten social chaos within their fledgling communities.

Accepting the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, Calvin explained that infant baptism provides a way to
protect the new-born soul against the transgressions of Adam and Eve which it inherits.

For if they [infants] bear with them an inborn corruption from their mother's womb, they must be cleansed of it before they can be admitted into God's kingdom, for nothing polluted or defiled may enter there [Rev.21:27]. If they are born sinners, as both David and Paul affirm [Eph.2:3; Ps.51:5], either they remain unpleasing and hateful to God, or they must be justified."

Since Calvin defended infant baptism as being in accordance with God's law, the Puritans accepted this as one of two sacraments (the other was the eucharist) to survive the reformation of Catholic doctrine. The saints generally had their children baptized within their first year. They believed that even children are corrupted by their inner cravings, a theme Freud later concentrated on in his "discovery" of infant sexuality. Babies of both sexes were viewed as born into a state of depravity, a condition Puritan children were taught to accept as their natural heritage. Using the New England Primer, the school book that replaced the hornbook, young people learned their alphabet through large illustrated letters, the first of which was: "In Adam's Fall/We sinned all." Boys and girls who attended school thus had their Christian education extended into the classroom where the doctrine of original sin received its share of attention.
Acknowledging that their infants were the inheritors of a depraved nature, the Puritans characterized children in Samuel Willard's words as "innocent vipers," not necessarily aware of their capacity for evil, but, nevertheless fully able to sin. Poet Anne Bradstreet used this image in her verse about the innate treachery in her own offspring, individuals she loved very much as reflected elsewhere in her writing. In spite of her deep affection, however, she recognized the stain of Adam's iniquity even on her own precious brood: "A perverse will, a love to what's forbid,/A serpent's sting in pleasing face lay hid."41

The Calvinists' view of children as "innocent vipers" adumbrated Freud's much later investigations in which he uncovered sexual tendencies in newborns, inclinations that he described as "polymorphous perverse," a phrase that will be discussed in another chapter. Historian Peter Slater in his study of children in colonial New England found that parents believed their offspring possessed "an innocent facade behind which lurked all sorts of wicked desires."42 Slater added that this view constituted a "perspective not unlike the one Freud used later to shatter the nineteenth-century idealization of the very young."43 The Romantics in their portrait of children as creatures possessing "ineffable goodness" reversed the Puritan belief that the young are as "morally flawed as adults." Emerson's declaration that "Infancy is the perpetual Messiah,"
beatified this condition, leading Slater to comment that "the rehumanization of the image of the child had to await the advent of Freudian theory.""\textsuperscript{31}

The Puritans' view of children as Adam's heirs began to soften during the third and fourth generation of colonial parenthood as fathers and mothers experienced the influence of other spiritual doctrines, particularly Arminianism which generally proposed free will in contradistinction to determinism. It became one of Jonathan Edwards' most important tasks to foil the proponents of this heresy as he sought to protect Calvinism from decaying into a ruined theology. He was particularly vehement in his descriptions of children as he sought to strengthen the image of them as treacherous creatures. He persistently warned parents whose authority was being corrupted by notions of infant purity that

\begin{quote}
As innocent as children seem to be to us, yet if they are out of Christ, they are not so in God's sight, but are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition, as well as grown persons; and they are naturally very senseless and stupid...and need much to awaken them.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

Attempting to stem the tide of Arminian optimism, Edwards in his sermon on Original Sin insisted that "infants are not looked upon by God as sinless, but that they are by nature children of wrath." He asserted that God had given proof of original sin through His destruction of the
Infants in Sodom and the neighboring cities....Since God declared, that if there had been found but ten righteous in Sodom, he would have spared the whole city for their sake, may we not well suppose that if infants are perfectly innocent, that he would have spared the old world."

Intellectual historian Philip Greven has sought to reconstruct Puritan "patterns of child-rearing" by grouping Protestants according to their religious orientations. The fiercest of these belonged to the Evangelicals, whose "temperaments were dominated by a virtually inescapable hostility to the self and all of its manifestations." Describing these parents as "authoritarian and rigorously repressive," Greven recapitulated the bleak view of the Puritans in his descriptions of their temperaments:

Parental authority was absolute, and exercised without check or control by anyone else within the household. Obedience and submission were the only acceptable responses for children. Over and over again, from the early seventeenth century through at least the early nineteenth century, the same themes appear in the writings of evangelicals about discipline and family government."

In spite of these somber images, historical investigations of childhood in colonial New England suggest that Puritans lavished as much care and affection on their offspring as parents of other historical eras, even though these attentions did not offset their belief in innate depravity."

However, the prospect of premature death may have made some parents reluctant to become too attached to
any one child as David Stannard suggested in *The Puritan Way of Death*, when he argued that "during the period as a whole, more than one child in four failed to survive the first decade of life in a community with an average births-per-family rate of 8.8." With the expectations for any one person to survive into adulthood diminished by the grim specter of disease, Stannard concluded that adults may have withheld their affections to protect themselves against the inevitable loss." Whatever their feelings toward their children, Puritan parents believed that their offspring possessed the capacity for sin.

**Introspection**

The American Puritans held a view of human nature that incorporated a complex design of motive and behavior as captured in this image by Anne Bradstreet: "As man is called the little world, so his heart may be called the little commonwealth." She developed this analogy by including in the "commonwealth" the courts of justice in which each hidden thought was brought out in the open to be either "absolved" or "condemned" by the great magistrate, conscience. The corrupted mind formed a labyrinth in which polluted motives lurked beneath a virtuous appearance, causing Puritans in their meditations to search the cavities of their souls wherein lurked the ineluctable beginnings of
their misery. Their strength lay in persistent introspection in which they were willing to face the worst in themselves. Calling this habit of mind "psychological vivisection," Perry Miller said that as Puritans came to know their temperaments through unsparing self-scrutiny, they made "repeated discoveries that there is no principle known to man which sinful nature cannot misuse." This "discovery" raised no false hopes, nor did it plunge the penitent into despair. It provided the Puritan with a gritty realism about human character and behavior.

This "psychological vivisection" strikingly resembles the methodology of psychoanalysis, a therapy which depends upon people's threshold for accepting that which is perverse within themselves. Resisting the biblical notion of sin, Freud turned twisted desires and responses into symptoms of psychopathology that infected everyone. Calvinists and Freidians alike objected to religions and philosophies that attempted to ameliorate the hard fact that people could have had it had inherited not on their own rise above their corrupted natures. The Puritan viewed human nature as riddled with sin and concupiscence, but inviting of intense scrutiny because of the many biblical injunctions to do so. Accepting the words of Koheleth, the preacher, the Puritan also declaimed, "I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reasons of things,
and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness."

In their quest to discover the hidden parts of themselves, the Puritans scrupulously exposed the beams and motes in their own eyes with more ruthlessness than any enemy would have been inclined to exercise. Self-searching vitalized their intellectual energies as they pursued the evil impulses that lurked within their minds. Their introspection revealed those sins that had disfigured their original parents and to which they were the heirs. This scrutiny did not absolve their guilt, but it could precipitate an overwhelming sense of their own unworthiness. By knowing themselves, they could then accept their depraved condition. Ipswich clergyman John Wise (1652-1725) wrote that "the spirit of Man is the Candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the Belly. There be many larger Volumes in this dark Recess called the Belly to be read by that Candle God has Light up." People often returned from these internal expeditions with the sense of having stepped into a nest of vipers.

Thomas Hooker (1586-1647) provided vivid interior landscapes in his Meditations and sermons. He advised each Puritan to do as King David had done, using meditation to inspect the soul as one

Lifts up the latch and goes into each room, pries into every corner of the house, and surveys the composition and making of it, with all the
As a young man in England, Hooker received his B.A. from Cambridge in 1608 and his M.A. in 1611. In spite of his staunch Puritanism, he became a fellow of Emmanuel College where he earned a reputation for his outstanding pedagogy and inspiring sermons. Following his years at Cambridge, he established his own congregation in England which was to follow him to the New World. During the tenure of his ministry, he held religious doctrines that so thoroughly antagonized Archbishop Laud that Hooker was cited before the High Commission in 1630. He fled to Holland where he became the minister of the English Puritan Church at Delft for two years. After moving from Delft to Rotterdam he finally made the voyage to Boston in 1633, sailing on the same ship as John Cotton. Demonstrating independence from Governor Winthrop, Hooker and his followers petitioned the Massachusetts magistrates for permission to move to Connecticut, a request that was denied. Nevertheless, they went anyway to found the new community in which Hooker became "virtual dictator of Connecticut."

Using the biblical injunction "Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth" (Job.13.26), Hooker "recalled" and "recounted" his corruptions through the practice of "serious meditation." He appealed to his flock by asking
that they search their souls, "look back to the linage and
pedigree of our lusts, and track the abominations of our
lives, step by step, until we come to the very nest where
they are hatched and bred." He shared with his parishion­
ers the image of the buried past which could be discovered
through recall. "Meditation calls over again those things
that were past long before, and not within a mans view and
consideration." He revealed a place within the mind that
was outside of conscious "view" where instincts and
activities remained hidden as he essentially delineated what
Freud would later call the "unconscious."

In his meditation "Wandering Thoughts," Hooker
confronted his "inordinate and raging lusts" that caused him
to stray from a "stil and quiet composure of mind." In a
description of the darkest part of his spirit Hooker
anticipated Freud’s id, home to the wayward passions, when
he petitioned God to cleanse the "sin and drain of the soul"
by taking off "the poyse and affections, purge away these
noysom lusts which carry and command the head, and send up
dunghill steams which distemper the mind, and disturb it." In
this same meditation, he recognized that his "roving
thoughts are like riven vessels, if the parts be not glewed
and the breaches brought together again by strong hand, they
wil leak out, so here &c." He, like Bradford and Cotton,
believed that the mind contains certain impulses that "leak"
out in untoward directions if not properly channeled.
Within Calvinist doctrine, God has preordained certain people to salvation as His elect. Through the principle of irresistible grace, these "saints" remain powerless to frustrate the majesty of God, and through their perseverance He helps them to think proper thoughts and behave in certain ways that demonstrate their justified state. The rub in this metaphysical formula came from the persistent uncertainty about the state of one's soul. The personal writings of Puritans in which they revealed their private thoughts swung from moments of joyous confidence to periods of tormenting self-doubt. Their letters and journals were intimate epistles to their Creator in which they shared their torments. One person who sought to reveal her darkest thoughts was Anne Bradstreet who, admitting in a letter to her children Satan's seductions, described her soul as the battleground between opposing thoughts:

Many times hath Satan troubled me concerning the verity of the scriptures and many times by atheism how I could know whether there was a God....But how should I know He is such a God as I worship in Trinity, and such a Saviour as I rely upon?...Why may not the Popish religion be right? They have the same God, the same Christ, and same world."

In the spirit of introspection and confession, Governor John Winthrop used his journal as a sounding board for all the vagaries to which his spirit was subject. Admitting how his desire to maintain his reputation had led him into
hypocrisy in his speech and behavior, he openly confessed his weaknesses:

I was wonte to be much disquieted with fear and reproach and of an ill name with the moste when I lived, so as I have been drawn by suche foolish respects to doe or leave undone many things to the woundinge of my conscience; especially to avoide a suspicion of ingratitude, baseness, unfriendlynesse."70

In his view of human nature, Winthrop understood that people think and behave in complex, often contradictory, ways. In his own writings, he kept one eye on the machinations of his heart and the other eye on God's will while he maintained a vigilance toward his appetites because he understood that often they often worked unconsciously to foil his higher aspirations. Seeing the possibility that his corrupt nature would reassert itself after he had experienced spiritual growth, he reflected upon his fickle nature:

I finde a change in my heart and whole man, as apparent as from darknesse to light...I find withall that I was readye upon every object or occasion, to embrace the delight in earthly things againe, which I see plainly will soone gett within me againe, if I slacke my watchfullnesse never so little."71

Like other Puritans who did not trust their own hearts to lead them on the path of righteousness, he kept a close and distrustful watch over his affections.
Using his journal as a spiritual record, Winthrop repeatedly described a habit of heart in which, taking no consolation from religion, he was "ready to frett and storm at God." Following these outbursts, however, he was always restored to his higher sensibilities, a position from which he could then see his previous dark inclinations." In one such passage he described the ambivalence that characterized his nature as he vacillated between virtue and vice:

Remittinge my care and watch, and giving libertie to the fleshe, I was againe unsettled, and then my conscience could swallowe foule faults without any great remorse, when as sometymes it would have stucke at the least evil."

After times of falling away from his good intentions, his spiritual vision was restored as

God in his great mercie brought me to a sight of my sinnes....God opened before mine eyes the state of my soule, O what a poluted conscience found I; what impure affections, what unruly desires, what blindnesse of mind."

Reporting a pattern of affections that Freud would later describe as masochistic, Winthrop wrote:

I have observed that after a gleame of any speciale ioye, whither in heavenly things or in earthly, there hath followed a storme of dumplishnesse and discomfort, that hathe abolished the memorye of former ioye."
willing to face the worst in himself, he demonstrated a capacity for insight that would please any contemporary psychoanalyst. As a good Puritan, he was far more concerned with the efficacy of his thoughts than with the appropriateness of his actions, which he knew smacked of hypocrisy. Restraining his appetites that were expressed as earthly joys, he scrutinized his heart wherein lurked corruptions that could destroy his soul even though his external life was in order. Winthrop’s thoughts, self-consciously rendered in his private writings, reveal his concern with his enduring identity as a visible saint. He was troubled by the duality of his nature, and he sought to overcome his lower instincts that were often exhibited as temptations of the flesh.

Puritans believed that men and women were complex creatures who must use personal meditation to discover the will of God. Soul-searching thus helped them to know themselves, but within their own hearts they made no concessions to perfectibility because human nature had been predestined to corruption. William Haller in The Rise of Puritanism said of Puritan doctrines, in general, that they were "psychologically sound enough" because of the emphasis on self-scrutiny. Puritans and Freudians alike acknowledged the need to examine one’s urges and motives with complete honesty. The individual’s emphasis on the inner life caused Herbert W. Schneider in The Puritan Mind to comment that "to
a Puritan the most natural science was the science of the mind. This inner life included the affections of the heart and the irrationality of certain thoughts. It was each person's duty to know the substance of his or her soul, digging beneath the conscious layers of rationalization to uncover a deeper, more perplexing explanation for certain activities.

Neither Puritanism nor psychoanalysis allowed for a free will, but each emphasized that reason can be employed to understand and resist the innate, intractable instincts. When in analysis if people were to say, "I know all my thoughts and feelings," the therapist would insist that this facile contention merely masked deeper, darker impulses that needed to be searched out and inspected in the light of reason. The Puritans through introspection located their perverted inclinations and subjected them to a harsh scrutiny in order to comprehend their own natures and to understand the will of God.

The Role of Reason

Within Puritanism two moods existed which were basically at odds with each other. The first mood was characterized by an assumption that however imperfect human beings might be, reason could be employed to discover and fulfill the terms of God's Covenant with His chosen people.
Reason was at the root of the Federal or Covenant Theology, the accepted interpretation of Calvinism in New England. The second mood was distinguished simultaneously by a conviction that human beings are hopelessly sinful—at the mercy of all manner of base emotions—and at the same time by a belief in divine grace as an emotional experience that completely transforms one's inner being. Acceptance of total depravity called into question the credibility of reason as a guide in the lives of the unregenerate, while the emphasis upon grace undercut the importance of reason as a means by which the regenerate might know and follow God's will. Both inclinations when pushed to their extremes could lead to heresy. An overwhelming conviction of personal salvation based only on faith in God could lead to a belief in private revelation and a total rejection of the importance of good works. A faith defined in terms of a personal emotional experience was viewed with great misgivings by Calvinists until Jonathan Edwards ushered in the Great Awakening in England in the 1730's. On the other hand, if people believed above all else in their capacity for reason, then they were on the path that led to the heresy of Arminianism. Thomas Shepard wrote:

I heard an Arminian once say, If faith will not work it, then set reason a-work....The Arminians, though they ascribe somewhat to grace,...yet, indeed, they lay the main stress of the work upon a man's own will, and the royalty and sovereignty of that liberty."
An overweening belief in reason led ultimately to a sense that people possess the capacity for free will as demonstrated by their ability to think rationally.

Reason was an essential element of the Federal Theology. But the first generations of American Puritans were aware of the dangers associated with relaying too much upon the rational faculty. In spite of their caution, however, they held that a modicum of reason was necessary to understand God's Covenant with His creatures. This stress on the 'Covenant' distinguished the New England Federal Theology from John Calvin's doctrines. Perry Miller explained in his definitive 1935 essay "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity" that "The word 'covenant' ...presents...a variety of meanings. Possibly suspecting or intuitively sensing these confusions, Luther and Calvin made hardly any mention of the covenant." The emphasis on the Covenant came from the Puritan Divines who established the Federal Theology. In addition to Calvin's doctrines, theologians such as John Cotton and Thomas Shepard stressed the obligations determined by God that would bind His creatures to Him. Miller stated that "The idea of a mutual obligation, of both sides bound and committed by the terms of the document, is fundamental to the whole thought." These obligations were expressed as a legal contract between people and their Creator. Miller explained:
The contract between God and man, once entered into, signed by both parties and sealed, as it were, in the presence of witnesses, is ever afterwards binding. This exceedingly legal basis furnishes the guarantee, not only for the assurance of the saints, but even for their perseverance. 10

Miller's words illustrate the rationalistic basis of the Federal Theology. Within it, the Covenant provided the impetus for good works. By performing well, people could prove to God that they understood His expectations. In this way, good behavior resulted from a rational understanding and acceptance of God's agreement with His creatures. The rationalism of the Federal Theology was challenged very early by a woman who championed the belief in the total efficacy of free grace. From the rationalist angle of vision, this could lead to an erroneous sense that God dwells in the hearts of the elect. Anne Hutchinson (1591-1643) served for them as an example of unacceptable Antinomianism. Attacking what he saw as certain irrational aspects, Governor Winthrop declared:

The Antinomian subversives labored to work first upon women, believing [them]...the weaker to resist; the more flexible...and ready to yield...and if once they could wind in them, they hoped by them, as by Eve, to catch their husbands also. 11

Hutchinson and her followers caught their fellow saints in a conundrum that was resolved only through her banishment from the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Hutchinson disputed what
she believed to be the contention of the leading clergymen of her day that sanctification evidences justification. In this scheme of things, people who are already saved (justification) will manifest their election in good works (sanctification). Since Puritanism was committed to a belief in election by grace alone, it followed that good works have absolutely no redeeming value. Nevertheless, as a community the Puritans were intensely concerned with righteous behavior. How else were the saints to become visible members of God's commonwealth? Presumably an unregenerate soul would be incapable of the good works performed as truly second nature by a member of God's elect. A person's first nature must necessarily remain corrupted by original sin. But the character of those chosen for salvation would slowly become more Christ-like, and this growth could be observed in their sanctified efforts.

Closely following the words of Calvin, Hutchinson argued that because God saves by His grace alone good works cannot be seen as evidence of justification. She adhered to the belief that people are saved by grace, not by works. Most of the ministers seemed to her to be preaching a doctrine of works rather than of free grace. Her ideas so well-grounded in logic were disturbing to those who understood the social value of sanctification, and demonstrated that Hutchinson exhibited a correct understanding of basic Puritan tenets. Finally, however,
she pushed her arguments beyond the limits of orthodoxy and into heresy when she asserted, according to Winthrop, the possibility that "the person of the Holy Ghost dwells in a justified person" and can be discerned through intuition. This outrageous contention was compounded by her followers who "allegedly maintained that God enabled them to tell with absolute certainty whether a man had saving grace or not." The flourishing of these ideas threatened the rationalism of the Federal Theology.

As a result of her insistence on knowing God's will, Mrs. Hutchinson, joined by her husband and other followers, went to Providence after her excommunication from the church and expulsion from the colony in 1637. In 1643 she was killed in an Indian massacre, a death that Winthrop must surely have thought a fitting end for a woman whose spiritual revelations tested the authority of his government. In his journal he included several passages concerning Mrs. Hutchinson, "a member of the church of Boston, and a woman of a ready wit and bold spirit, [who] brought over with her two dangerous errors," her challenge to sanctification and her antinomian tendencies regarding the personal revelation of God's will.

The Puritan experience in New England was characterized by an effort to tread carefully between too great an attachment to reason, on the one hand, and too great an emphasis on the emotions, on the other. Perry Miller
summarized the Puritan split between rationality and passion: "The unregenerate reason, if properly informed, and the natural will, if skillfully guided, might hold affections in check for a time." But this control was temporary because "sooner or later" the passions "were bound to slip any leash that nature could devise." Miller explained that "Puritans had no right to demand rational control from the unconverted, for innate depravity meant precisely that the passions were 'independent.'" Freud, too, held a view that the passions existed independently of reason as expressed in his Id Psychology.

Freud can be seen as somewhat closer to the rationalism of the Federal Theology for he believed that reason is the single weapon people possess in their effort to restrain the irrational inclinations of the id. Floyd Matson in The Broken Image described the relationship between psychoanalyst and patient in terms traditionally reserved for minister and parishioner:

The two partners in the therapeutic act engage in a dialogue predicated upon their mutual faith in the power of reason to know the truth—and upon the further faith that the truth will make men free."

Slender as reason might be, Freud appealed to people to use their intellectual energies to understand their passionate temperaments. He promoted psychoanalysis as the means by which human beings could constrain their lower natures. He
recognized that through the ages religion had functioned in this capacity through such prohibitions as "the commandment that a man shall not kill." However, he believed that religion fostered weakness in that it insisted on a mindless acceptance of doctrine rather than a "rational explanation of the prohibition against murder." Through a psychoanalytic interpretation, Freud demystified the commandments by explaining their social utility.

Since it is an awkward task to separate what God Himself has demanded from what can be traced to the authority of an all-powerful parliament or a high judiciary, it would be an undoubted advantage if we were to leave God out altogether and honestly admit the purely human origin of all the regulations and precepts of civilization....People would understand that they are made, not so much to rule them as, on the contrary, to serve their interests."

Freud concluded: "This would be an important advance along the road which leads to becoming reconciled to the burdens of civilization." He like the Puritans believed that all persons carry cultural burdens as they strive to protect their community through a social code from the ravages of iniquity.

Armed with the Bible, more Old Testament than New, the Puritans established a code of acceptable behavior that demonstrated through sanctification a person's justified state. In spite of their understanding of the evil inclinations of the heart, Puritans sought to live smooth
lives, undisturbed by too many anti-social perturbations. Perverse behavior precipitated by sinful thoughts was recognized to be a common part of the human experience, but it was never condoned even though people were deemed powerless to overcome their own sinfulness. Virtuous behavior did, in fact, as Max Weber demonstrated in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, produce its own civic and material rewards, and depraved conduct was discouraged by every New England clergymen. Recognizing this contradiction, Edmund Morgan asked, "How can we reconcile the Puritans' evident concern for social virtues with their professed contempt for them?" Intellectually the answer was a carefully worked out plan for human redemption that called for good works as an indication of a person's salvation, however imperfect he or she might be. Even though God did not reveal to any one individual his or her fate, within the Puritan community a person could demonstrate a regeneration of spirit by carrying out endeavors that reflected well on the individual, even though it was commonly accepted that exemplary deeds could, indeed, mask a corrupt soul.

Conclusion

Several twentieth-century historians have acknowledged that Puritan Americans would have made good candidates for
the analyst's couch. So, before closing this discussion of
their view of human nature, I would like to consider the
judiciousness of evaluating the characteristics of an
earlier culture in light of today's post-Freudian concerns.
I am not speaking specifically about psycho-history, the
deliberate application of psychoanalytic principles to
reconstruct an historical personality or event. The
historians with whom I am concerned would probably have
dismissed this approach as being methodologically unsound;
but, nevertheless, they have been tempted to describe
certain traditional figures using Freudian imagery. For
example, citing Cotton Mather's "abnormal psychology,"
Vernon Parrington wrote, "What a crooked and diseased mind
lay back of those eyes that were forever spying out
occasions to magnify self." Both Perry Miller and Philip
Greven saw in Jonathan Edwards certain emotional
disturbances that they analyzed according to Freud.

Using the language of psychoanalysis, Greven explained
that Jonathan Edwards and other "evangelical males"
experienced "profound discomfort...with regard to
sexuality." Their "alienation from their bodies and
rejection of their penises suggest an unconscious defense
against erotic impulses and intimacy with their mothers."
Not quite finished, he stated that "The power of unconscious
Oedipal conflicts as a factor shaping the 'feminization' of
young males is nowhere more clearly evident than in the
The diary of Michael Wigglesworth." The idea of intimate relations with one's mother would probably not have startled the Puritans, in that incest was clearly listed in the catalogue of perversions laid down in the Old Testament. Psychoanalysis has allowed contemporary scholars who are sensitive to emotional issues to deal with aberrations in secular terms, whereas the Puritans would have labelled such inclinations as the seeds of sin. Also flirting with Freudianism, Perry Miller apologized that he had "no wish to psychologize," but added, "I think it is striking that Edwards spoke constantly of Timothy Edwards as though of an elder brother, and if ever he showed signs of struggling with what is today called a father-image, Solomon Stoddard was the target."

Intellectual historians of the caliber of Miller, Parrington, and Greven occasionally described their colonial subjects in psychoanalytic terms because Freud's view of human nature at its heart restated that of the American Puritans. To use Freudian concepts, however, to explain people in an earlier culture is essentially anachronistic. The temptation to do this stems from the commonality between the Puritans and Freud, who perceived and described human tendencies in similar terms. In this way, Freud affirmed through his psychoanalytic "investigations" what the Puritans held to be true about the human condition. In the twentieth-century, Freud provided individuals with the means
to illuminate the dark side of human nature, a side that both he and the Puritans found extremely troublesome.

Historians who use Freudian ideas to describe historical figures are essentially reiterating the Puritan model of the complexity of the human spirit. What Freud offers to the student of early New England culture is a secular restatement of the Puritan's view of humanity. Individuals who hold the same moral vision as the Puritans about people's naturally perverse inclinations have found in Freud a way to side-step the presumably outmoded theological explanations of evil. By translating biblical affections into scientific states, Freud rephrased the ancient tension between the forces for good and evil under the rubric of psychoanalysis.

2. Nathan Hale, *Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876-1917* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 18. To Theodore Flournoy, James wrote "I hope that Freud and his pupils will push their ideas to their utmost limits, so that we may learn what they are...[However], I confess that [Freud] made on me personally the impression of a man obsessed by fixed ideas."


5. Silverman, p. 53.


10. William Bradford, *The History of the Plymouth Plantation*, 2 volumes (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1912), I, 240. All further references to this work will be by Bradford, volume number, and page number.


12. Leviticus 10: 12,13,15.
13. Leviticus 20: 15,16.


24. John Cotton, "Wading in Grace," The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings, 2 volumes, Perry Miller and Thomas Johnson, eds. (New York: Harper and Row, 1938), II, 209. All further references to this work will be by author, The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings, volume number, and page number.


27. According to Ralph Barton Perry, "Differences of social condition and wealth lost much of their importance under pioneer conditions" (Gaer, p. 23). In time, Bradford's Plymouth Colony was absorbed into the larger Puritan society, officially merging with the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1691.


34. Gaer, p. 110-113, passim.


38. The doctrine of original sin and absolute predestination had been challenged by Pelagius in 418. This British monk believed that Adam's Fall did not involve his posterity, maintaining that the human will is of itself capable of good without the assistance of divine grace.

39. Philip P. Wiener, ed., Dictionary of the History of Ideas, 5 volumes (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), I, 27. Understanding evil to be a deliberate act, the Pelagians rejected original sin as the cause of human error. Hope is greater in this philosophy, but damnation is more severe because individuals chose wickedness.
40. Saint Augustine, *Basic Writings of Saint Augustine*, Whitney Jones, ed., 2 volumes (New York: Random House, 1948), I, 7. All further references to this work will be by Augustine, volume number, and page number.

41. Augustine, I, 8.

42. Augustine, I, 8.

43. Augustine, I, 25.

44. Augustine, I, 27.


50. Slater, p. 22.

51. Slater, p. 23.


55. Greven, p. 32.

56. This is Peter Slater's thesis.


60. Ecclesiastes 7:26.


74. Winthrop, Life and Letters, I, 120.

75. Winthrop, Life and Letters, I, 112.


77. Quoted in Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," from Errand into the Wilderness (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), 57. All further references to this work will be by Miller, Errand into the Wilderness, and page number.

78. Miller, Errand into the Wilderness, p. 60.

79. Miller, Errand into the Wilderness, p. 61.

80. Miller, Errand into the Wilderness, p. 72.


85. Winthrop, The Puritans: A Sourcebook of Their Writings, Miller and Johnson, eds., I, 134. Traditional historians, including Perry Miller, of this crisis tend to agree with Governor Winthrop that Mrs. Hutchinson posed a dangerous threat to religion in the Massachusetts Bay Colony which, like its social institutions, was under the protection and care of the Calvinist patriarchs. Younger historians and students of Puritan culture have analyzed Mrs. Hutchinson in regard to the antagonism held toward a woman who stepped outside of the bounds imposed on her by religion and society. For a different portrait, see Anne Hutchinson: Troubler of Puritan Zion, ed., Francis Bremer, editor, 1981. In this treatment, Hutchinson is seen as a woman of immense intellectual power who successfully challenged the oppressive doctrines and divines of Calvinism.
94. Greven, p. 132.
95. Greven, p. 133.
CHAPTER 5
COTTON MATHER AND JONATHAN EDWARDS:
THE PASSIONS OF THE MIND

Introduction

Within the American intellectual experience, long before the advent of Freudianism and neo-Freudianism, it was the Puritans who spoke and wrote about the unruly affections that lurk beneath the thin veneer of reason. The colonials who preceded Freud by almost two centuries possessed certain insights that may seem far-sighted to us today, but, in fact, came from a view of the human condition in which people inherit through the sin of Adam and Eve certain tendencies that need to be restrained through their rational efforts. Two divines, born forty years apart, provide us today with the essence of American Puritanism at distinct periods during its grip on the New England mind and soul. The first of these men was Cotton Mather, born in Boston in 1663, and the second was Jonathan Edwards, born in East Windsor, Connecticut in 1703. In this chapter, we will consider how their views of human nature embodied the
Puritan ethos while, at the same time, presaged the psychology of Sigmund Freud. When Freud began to present his ideas, they were treated as revolutionary by friend and foe alike. His linking of the mind to the body (a phenomenon that is at the basis of psycho-somatic medicine), his insistence that people harbor wicked thoughts against their parents, and his emphasis on the "talking cure" were ideas that the Puritans had expressed in writing two hundred years before Freud made his mark on society. Cotton Mather believed in the influence of the mind on the body that anticipated psychosomatic medicine, and Jonathan Edwards adumbrated some of Freud's most provocative "discoveries," such as the Oedipal conflict. These Puritan divines were men of reason and of speculative powers that they applied in their search for knowledge. They were not swept away by superstition, but sought to understand what they experienced through their rational faculties. However, both believed that a emotional nature shapes human destiny, and they considered the affections to be powerful forces within the soul. In their diaries, they made impassioned pleas to God for forgiveness as they revealed their own temperaments in which their sentiments often overwhelmed their intellects. They wanted to be touched by God's sweetness and charity as they prayed to Him for forgiveness. In their private communings with themselves, they shuddered at their own unworthiness while they hoped in their heart-of-hearts for
salvation. Their insights were born of a willingness to encounter the worst in their souls, a characteristic that was valued by Puritan and Freudian alike in their mutual search for the elusive hidden self.

As I explore the beliefs of Mather and Edwards, I make certain connections between these divines and Sigmund Freud. We can see by comparing specific passages from sermons, diaries, letters, and treatises written by Mather and Edwards with examples from Freud’s published papers and private letters that the language employed often overlapped in profound ways. The chances of Freud’s having read these American divines are slender. But he did not have to read their works to have become familiar with their concerns. For their world-view and his were shaped in the same crucible of Western thought that had at its basis the Christian-Judaic heritage.

Cotton Mather: The Affections and the Soma

Diseases that seem Incurable, are easily cured by Conversation...And as long as the Passions of the Mind continue, the Diseases may indeed change their Forms; but they rarely quitt the Patients.

Cotton Mather holds a unique place in American history and letters because of the role he played in shaping the consciousness of the developing New England culture. The writings of this divine in regard to sheer volume and
diversity of topics are rivalled perhaps only by Freud. Both men generated several hundred documents during their lifetimes, and by publishing their ideas they influenced their generation and established an intellectual legacy to which Americans are heir. In his sermons, journals, and treatises, Mather expressed a fascination with what we call the human psychology, although no such expression existed in the seventeenth century. Possessing a curious nature, he explored the relationship between the mind and body and established a connection which anticipated the field of psychosomatic medicine that gained legitimacy with the investigations of Freud. Mather suggested what Freud "discovered" 150 years later—that passions are at the root of many illnesses, including all forms of hysteria, and that the mind and body are linked in such a way that one affects the other. In a tone that foreshadowed our contemporary cynicism about medical doctors, Mather also recognized how little physicians in his day really knew about the etiology of illness: "Physicians talk about the Causes of Diseases. But their Talk is very conjectural, very uncertain, very ambiguous; and oftentimes a mere Jargon; and in it, they are full of contradiction to one another."

Reflecting the intellectual values of his generation, Mather displayed a passion for scientific breakthroughs. Always interested in advancements, he distinguished himself by introducing to Boston a method to prevent smallpox in
which non-infected people were inoculated with a small amount of puss from a diseased individual. He became a believer in the efficacy of this technique as early as 1716, when his "Negro-man Onesimus," whom he described as "a pretty Intelligent Fellow," told his master about a folk cure for this illness. Mather asked his slave if he had ever had the affliction and received the answer "Yes, and No." Onesimus explained that he "had undergone an Operation, which had given him something of the Small-Pox, & would forever præserve him from it."

Actually this testimony served to support what Mather had already been reading about in descriptions of a folk-cure by Dr. Emanuel Timoni. This method was finally tested in Boston in 1721 after a new epidemic had broken out. Most people, however, resisted being deliberately exposed to smallpox and sought instead to cure this condition by isolating those who were ill. Only after these measures failed was Mather able to persuade the famous physician Zabdiel Boylston to inoculate several people. The results were successful, but both men were the objects of an attack led by Dr. William Douglass for their use of a procedure that was perceived as reckless by those who preferred conventional methods. In time, however, Mather and Boylston were vindicated, and their method became the means to save the lives of many people."

A decade before the brouhaha over the vaccine, Mather was elected to the Royal Society in London, and for the next
twelve years, he sent almost one-hundred communications to this distinguished body. In science, he could indulge his faculties for speculation, and in theology he could offer these findings, as did Newton (1642-1727) in the *Principia*, to the greater glory of God. In *Biblia Americana*, Mather applied his knowledge of science and the material world to the interpretation of biblical texts. When his investigations lead him to inquire about the cause of illness, he determined that "Our sin is the root of our bitterness." Sin, wrote Mather, results in "a sickness of the spirit" which "will naturally cause a sickness in the Body." Sin, therefore, begins as a mental or affective state that is then reflected in one's behavior. Essentially denying the older Platonic dualism in which the soul is considered to be trapped within the body, he associated these two by declaring that "the soul and body constitute one Person." Today this relationship would be called psychosomatic.

During the nineteenth century, Mather was regarded as a villain, a view that primarily resulted from his reputed involvement in the Witch Trials of 1693. Hawthorne's gloomy description of him as the "figure on horseback" departing from Salem village in which nineteen people had been hanged and one stoned to death provided Americans with a malignant portrait of this Calvinist divine. But twentieth-century historians tend to agree that he did not approve of the
judgments handed down in Salem, and, therefore, was not one of the authors of this disastrous chapter in the colonial period. However, in his desire to receive recognition from Judges Samuel Sewall and William Stoughton, he agreed to write an account of the trials which was published as *The Wonders of the Invisible World*, a work which attempted to vindicate the bench’s decisions. Perry Miller has called this chronicle "A false book, produced by a man whose heart was not in it," but it served to join irrevocably the name of Cotton Mather to one of the grimmest episodes in New England’s history.

In several important areas, Mather exhibited liberal tendencies that shatter the picture that Nathaniel Hawthorne and Vernon Parrington painted of him as an arch-conservative. Mather was very much impressed with scientific innovations, including spectacles for the eyes and an improved compass. Believing that these improvements came from God, he was often on the frontier of scientific discovery. His interest in his daughters’ training was particularly striking because he wanted them to be educated according to their inclinations, including medicine, and he regretted that his own beloved ministry was closed to them.

Cotton Mather was born to wear the cleric’s robes as had his father, Increase Mather, and his grandfathers, Richard Mather and John Cotton. It would have been difficult for young Mather to have side-stepped this
profession; but had he been so inclined, he could have surrendered to a physical problem with which he was afflicted as an adolescent by using it as the excuse to dodge the ministry. For as Mather matured, he was plagued by a stammer. Both he and his parents understood just how disastrous such an adversity could be to a man who wanted earnestly to preach sermons. So, parents and son, together, prayed to God to do His will regarding young Mather's speech "hesitation." Petitions were buttressed by the advice of Elijah Corlet, "an aged, famous schoolmaster and a sympathetic person," who explained that no one stammered when singing psalms; therefore, young Mather could control his impediment if he were to speak slowly and deliberately, almost as if he were singing.' He must have practiced this therapy because several people through the years, including his father and his son Samuel, commented on the deliberateness he brought to his formal speaking.

In his own analysis of this problem, Mather envisaged the psychosomatic model later suggested by Freud to explain how repressed thoughts influence different organs and extremities of the body. Reflecting upon the many occasions he had broken out in angry speech, Mather decided that his mind had surreptitiously curbed these fulminations by producing a stammer that made clear communication impossible. Of his own condition he wrote that "Stammerers are often of too Choleric a Disposition, and Sooner Angry than they
should be....For anger will cause them to Stammer with unspeakably more of observable, and even Ridiculous Titubation, than they do at other times."10 The cure is to become "meek" so that one's speech slows down. Stammering comes from having too many hostile thoughts pent up; so when they are finally given vent, they explode from the mouth in fits and starts, rather than in smooth-flowing sentences. The stammerer's only protection against anger is to inhibit speech through this disability. As we will see later, Mather believed that inherent within certain mental processes is the power to bring about or alter physical conditions.

A child prodigy, Mather entered Harvard when he was twelve, in 1675, and stayed to receive the M.A. at age eighteen, in 1681. Preparing himself for the ministry, he became his father's assistant at Boston's North Church in 1685, and married the first of his three wives, Abigail Phillips, a year later; they were to have nine children before her death in 1702. In spite of his wives' premature deaths, the fruits of these marital unions resulted in the births of fifteen children. Many of his sons and daughters also died, primarily of diseases including smallpox.

In his sermons, Mather demonstrated a profoundly modern understanding of human psychology, in which he discerned tendencies which are more often ascribed to Freud than to an American divine. Frequently employing descriptions of
physical diseases as analogies for spiritual states, Mather, in one rousing sermon, must surely have gained the attention of even the most apathetic souls when he declared that each "has the palsey of an unsteady mind;...the Feavour of unchastity...the Cancer of Envy;...the Tympanye of Pride."

Taking a final measure of his parishioners, he demanded to know "Where am I preaching, Sirs, but in a Hospital?"

His message was intended for people who were enormously aware of what lay below the surface of their minds, but who also believed that they must learn to control their destructive impulses. His sermons were offered as fortification against one's lower nature. In *Advice from the Watch Tower: A Faithful Testimony against the Evil Customs*, he described human nature as essentially fixed; people can no more change their natures than leopards change their spots. He insisted that "A poisoned nature is conveyed from our first parents unto us all." Accepting that humanity is attracted to the perverse, he explained that "people find rather pleasure than trouble in most horrible customs....If we are accustomed unto any thing, we naturally crave after it." He added his view that emotions are essentially recalcitrant when he wrote that "We don't care to break a custome; tis a strain upon our nature to do so."

Never shirking an opportunity to expose sin, Mather attacked "evil customs," but the solution to these
behaviors is not necessarily to replace them with "good customs," because this exchange merely engenders hypocrisy. The only salvation comes from seeking within oneself a higher knowledge of personal motivation, a process that he explained "would be richly worth the while, for us and everyone to examine himself." To Mather every individual has the responsibility to become his or her own watchman, who remains alert to the baser impulses that lurk in the human heart. The minister, in turn, stood by to help anyone who is willing to examine the darker recesses of the soul. Of himself he wrote, "It was herewithal my Resolution also, to keep a watchful Eye on all my Sinful Inclinations; and Suppress and Subdue still in all their tendencies." If people are ever to overcome their innate dispositions it must be through an emotional conversation which involves "a deep humiliation of Soul," in which one's sins are "confessed." Words are as powerful to Mather as they later were to Freud in that they provided for the release and recognition of unruly affections. Throughout his life, however, Mather's view of the human condition remained essentially pessimistic as he complained that "The most of men lead bad lives." Mather's diary served as the vehicle through which he expressed his own wayward emotions, often exhibited as uncharitable sentiments toward others. In several of his entries, he registered feelings of persecution as he
compared himself to David and complained to God. "of the malice which a number of enemies in this place bear unto me." His diary was also filled with "G.D.'s" (good devised) in which he wrote out his plans to perform certain altruistic acts, including teaching his daughter the "Hebrew Tongue" and being a better "father/husband" at home, that were expected to offset his hostile reactions. Ironically, his private intentions were at odds with some of his sermons in which he cautioned his parishioners against seeking salvation along the Catholic path of good works. And yet he measured his own spiritual progress through the success of each "good devised." Moralists like Mather and Freud were eventually forced to look upon altered behavior as the way to demonstrate a changed heart; but within this moral economy, the heart's reformation must precipitate modified behavior in order for a genuine conversion to take place.

Within his own personality, Mather fluctuated between "ecstasies and raptures" and "ascetic mortifications and vigils," and in his private writings he recorded his endless self-examinations and periods of genuine self-torment. He carried his frenzied prayers to God as today's patients might carry their psychological conflicts to a therapist, and he characterized himself as a "filthy wretch," an "unprofitable creature," and "a vile sinner." But in spite of these ugly depictions, Perry Miller drolly commented that in the divine's "heart of hearts" he never doubted his own
salvation because "the divinity was a being remarkably like Cotton Mather." 22

Often characterized as a morose soul who took no pleasure from life, Mather recorded in his diary emotional outbreaks of pure joy in which he described his certainty that he was loved by God: "I am this Day assured, that my Sins, which are many are forgiven me; and that the glorious word has wondrous Blessings in store for me." 24 Of course, no Calvinist could know that for certain, but scrupulous self-examination entitled the individual to an occasional secure moment in which he or she knew that salvation was granted. These moments of rapture, however, were offset by periods of self-castigation that in our post-Freudian era would be described as masochistic attacks.

Many of Mather's petitions concerned his physical health that he often portrayed as "wretched." He interpreted pain as the bodily manifestation of a soul sickened by sin, exclaiming that he was "as fitt for sickness, as ever any poor creature was.... in the same sense, that a rotten stump is fitt for Fire." 25 Anticipating Freud's contention that certain illnesses experienced by an adult have their incipience in the victim's youthful emotional experiences, Mather wrote that his "later infirmities" had been caused by his former "wanton, slothful Heart" that had dominated him as a young man. 26 By his own lights, Mather believed that his afflictions were the result
of sick thoughts that remained buried in his heart, and he begged God to "awaken" him to his true self. Later, Freud echoed these sentiments in his association of unconscious or repressed energies with disease, particularly neurological impairments. The cure for both men lay in what Mather described as the "miracle" of "freedom of speech," in which "words" were employed to "meet his Heart in secret prayer before the Lord."27

Sexual Passions and Emotional Distress

References to covert sexual behaviors filled the diary of Mather, and he searched for the cause of his own concupiscent desires as thoroughly as any patient in psychoanalysis. He writhed in self-loathing over his intractable habit of masturbating. He described his painful battle against "Unclean Temptations," and prayed that he might "cut of my right Hand" if he continued in his foul "Pollutions."30 He abhorred his "loathsome corruptions, which my soul has been from my youth polluted withal. Lord, wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way."31 He compounded his crime by his "delight in doing it." He confessed, "Altho' I have been kept from such out-breakings of sin, in actions towards others...yett I have certainly been one of the filthiest creatures upon Earth."30

Forecasting the Freudian paradigm in which physical symptoms
correspond to emotional disturbances, Mather indicated that a fitting punishment for his crime of onanism would be "a withered hand."

Mather's contention that a connection exists between a guilty mind and a sick body foreshadowed Freud's explanation of conversion hysteria, an illness brought about by repressed anxiety over surreptitious sexual thoughts or activities. Echoing Mather's connection between guilt and illness, Freud believed that

A hand which has tried to carry out an act of sexual aggression, and has become paralysed hystERICally, is unable...to do anything else...as...the fingers of people who have given up masturbation refuse to learn the delicate movements required for playing the piano or the violin."

Glimpsing the impact of sexual tensions on one's soma, Mather cried that he would "recover a wondrous Degree of Health, if...[he] were not broken by the Distresses, & Grievous Temptations." He referred to the carnal instincts as "special soul-harassing point[s]," "grievous Distresses," "great vexations," "Temptations to Impurities," "horrible temptations," "Tempest of Clamour," and "sorrowful Distresses." Not until the advent of Freudian theory did the sexual instincts again receive so much attention for being at the root of human suffering. Within his own psyche, Mather made a strong connection between repressed erotic impulses and ill health. Freud later affirmed the
Puritan's moral struggles by making such concerns the central issues within psychoanalysis.

Sexual passions constituted a real problem for Mather, one that he admitted to in the privacy of his own journal. His battles with this instinct began with childhood masturbation and resurfaced when he recognized the inevitability of the death of his wife Abigail, who had been sick for some time. He confessed that during his prayers for her "Instead of having my mind replenished and irradiated with the holy Spirit, I found the evil spirit buffeting my mind with impure Thoughts, which exceedingly abased me before the Lord." He was distraught at the thought of losing his sexual partner and even considered sleeping with her as sick as she was, but refrained when he concluded that he, too, might become ill. Upon her death in 1702, Mather experienced a longing for gratification that plagued him. Calling his urges his "dreadful distresses" and describing his eyes as "decaying and weeping," he importuned God to heal him because he was aware of "how frequently and foolishly Widowers miscarry, and by their miscarriage dishonor God." At one point in his supplications, he begged that God should "Kill me, rather than to leave unto anything that might...Dishonour...his Holy Name." Immediately after uttering this plea, Mather became "very ill," exclaiming "I suspected, that the Lord was going to take me at my own Word." But upon further
introspection, he decided that the intensity of his appetites had precipitated a physical response that turned out to be "nothing but vapours."

Soon after his wife's death, Mather received "encouragements" from a "young Gentlewoman of incomparable accomplishments," who has been identified as "almost certainly Katherine MacCarthy." Her young age, "not much more than twenty," her "very airy" disposition, and her "disadvantage[d] reputation," wrapped in a "charming" and "comely" package, caused Mather to wonder "What snares may be laying for me, I know not." His ambivalence reflected his intuition that the yearning he felt for her could lead to trouble. Obviously smitten, Mather announced that "No gentlewoman in English America has had a more polite Education," and he was sorely tempted by his desires even though his wife was barely cold in her grave. He refrained from succumbing to his cravings, however, by seeking to convert her soul: "I did, with all the charms I could imagine, draw that witty Gentlewoman into tearful Expressions of her consent, unto all the articles in the covenant of Grace." In spite of these spiritual efforts, Mather still found himself sexually drawn to her in a violent way. Pleading with God to give "Relief and Succor" for "the Temptations now harassing of me," he struggled to sublimate his passions, promising that in return he would take better care of his "Flock," for whom he "prayed and
wept" all night long. In the course of his conflicts, his affections did not go unnoticed by his family members, especially his father, who expressed "extreme Distaste at the Talk of my Respects for the Person...and fear[ed] lest I should over-value her."

Mather's relationship with MacCarthy was to last six months, but it seemed to him much longer given the emotional energy he expended just to keep her at arm's length. He reported that the result of his resistance to her charms, however, only brought her closer to him as she insisted that his religious life—which included "Tears, Fasts, and macerating Devotions"—was just "that which animated her."

In the middle of his own sexual battles, he also "feared...unsurmountable Oppositions from those who had a great Interest in disposing of" him by finding his behavior unacceptable. However, in spite of these fears coupled with his family's pressures, he still did not send her packing, but determined instead that if he could not "make her my own," he would "make her the Lord's," an effort which involved his spending a great deal of time with her as he made his "Essayes to engage her young Soul into Piety." The fact that MacCarthy already possessed a tarnished reputation led Mather to compare himself with Jesus when he modestly asked how "Christ Himself" would "treat a returning sinner."
After a short respite from his tribulations, on his fortieth birthday, February 12, 1702, he again struggled with his sexual attraction. Writing in his diary, he described himself as "distressed" and "tempted" because "nature itself causes in me, a mighty Tenderness for a person so very amiable." He rationalized these feelings by insisting that "Religion...obliges me, instead of rashly rejecting her conversation, to contrive rather, how I may imitate the Goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ." Once more comparing the power of his struggle with Christ’s own temptations of the flesh, Mather repledged himself to bring MacCarthy’s soul to God. But as before, his ambivalence forced him to see the dark image of "the other side" as "a fearful snare," in which her conversion "may be found, after all, unattainable." The result of this split in his consciousness left Mather with "dreadful confusions" that "do exceedingly break and waste my spirit."

In his closing comments on this woman, Mather remarked that his decision not to see her anymore was persistently undermined by her appeal to his "Flexible Tenderness....to allow some further interviews." Her importuning would precipitate yet another meeting, after which he would throw himself on the mercy of the Lord for "Deliverance from, the Distresses which so exceedingly harass and buffet my mind, and break my Soul to Pieces." His ardent hope was that God would "return...[him] to the married state." Finally his
prayer was answered in the form of the widow Elizabeth Hubbard, "a gentlewoman" of "piety and probity" who lived two houses from Mather's own. In addition to her spiritual virtues, she possessed a "comely appearance, and most importantly "a[n] unspotted Reputation." Marriage to Hubbard released him from the clutches of sexual temptation, and he recorded his exultation in "Return[ing] to the married state...[in which] God...delivered [him] from wonderful Temptations and Confusions." Aware that even conjugal passion could grip him, however, Mather prayed that God would make him watchful against a "sensual, carnal, insipid Frame of Spirit." Mather and Hubbard became husband and wife in August 1703, eight months after the death of his first wife, Abigail. But in psychic time, this period had seemed an eternity as he struggled to control his darkest impulses. As a final triumph over his passions, Mather commented that his father showed his approval of this union by performing the ceremony.

His struggles with sexual passion abated during the years of his marriage to Hubbard. But disaster hit the Mather household during 1713 when he lost his wife of ten years as well as nine of his children; in his diary he recorded this stunning event as "of 15, Dead 9, Living, 6." The ravages of smallpox and influenza completely destroyed the serenity of his home. And once again, he was without a "consort," a situation that was as difficult for him at
fifty as it had been at forty. He was, however, not to remain a widower for long. Within a year of his family's catastrophe, he found himself very much attracted to a woman named Lydia Lee George, a widow whose husband had been a successful business man and a pillar of Boston society. When this man died in 1714, he left his wife with a great deal of property as well as a name of considerable import in the Commonwealth. Although not recovered from Hubbard's death, Mather began to visit the widow in the company of several of his children. He was still reeling from the previous year's tragedies, and his desire was to find a woman who could restore him from his state of "mediomorto, that is, Half-dead" to vitality."

Mather pursued Lydia Lee George with a compulsiveness that was not appreciated by her because his attentions had begun to generate gossip in the community. To offset this talk, she demanded that he stop courting her, a decision that hurt him very much. However, her blunt rebuff did not send him away as she had intended, but served, instead, to make her even more desirable in his eyes. He continued to appeal to her to see him. Finally Mather managed to convince her of his worthiness, and he also offset her fears about the idle chatter that had been generated about them. So persuasive were his importunings that just three months after her initial dismissal, she agreed to marry him, but not before a prenuptial contract could be worked out that
would protect her assets." Following the wedding, the couple moved into the bride's beautiful home.

In the first year of marriage, Mather was completely absorbed by his attraction to his wife. He considered her to be physically beautiful, a factor that again caused him sexual tension. His fascination with her was so powerful that he had to remind himself that "Beauty lies in her having so much of His image upon her." Along with her good looks, she also appeared to have a genuine affection for his six children. But, in spite of his feelings, their wedded bliss quickly soured into a disturbed relationship. The only record of the disintegration of their marriage lies in Mather's diaries, for George left nothing in writing about their troubles. According to him, she began to suffer periods of melancholy punctuated by "paroxysms" of anger in which she hurled verbal abuse at him and the children.

Apparently afraid to speak to her about her behavior, his outlet became his journal in which he secretly registered his confusion, often in a tone of self-pity. But occasionally she discovered his comments and in rage scratched out his unflattering descriptions. By 1718, he had abandoned any mention of her in his conventional diary, preferring, instead, to write about his marital distress in a secret notebook, sometimes in Greek. In one entry he lamented, "The Consort, in whom I flattered myself with the View and Hopes of an uncommon Enjoyment, has dismally
confirmed it unto me, that our Idols must Prove our Sorrows." Ever mindful of his tenuous control of his sexual urges, Mather considered that "The Diseases of my soul are not cured until I arrive to the most unspotted Chastitie and Purity." But fearing that he promised too much, he exclaimed: "I do not apprehend that Heaven requires me utterlie to lay aside my fondness for my lovelie consort." To be healed of his "former pollution," he promised to "examine, what lies at the Bottom of my Designs, my studies, my sorrows, and my angers and my comforts." Sexual passion had again reared its head as he remained torn between his confusion over her treatment of him and his desire for her. His petitions to God suggest that the Mathers continued to have intimate relations in spite of his fear that he was being punished for his previous transgressions and his growing bewilderment concerning her scathing attacks on him.

After more than five years of confounding behavior following an emotional explosion, Lydia Mather left her husband for several days in August, 1723. Mather was beside himself, exclaiming:

She, whom I have perpetually studied in the most exquisite Ways, to serve, and please, and gratify, and have even undone myself to oblige her, not only does by her unaccountable Humours...wherein she expresses the greatest Hatred and Contempt for me, prove the most heavy Scourge to me, that ever I met withal, but also takes, various Methods, all she can to ruin my Esteem in the World, and the Success of my Ministry."
During her absence from their home, Mather received another blow, even worse than her defection. His son, Increase, by his first wife, had been lost at sea, perhaps for as many as five months before anyone received the news. The impact of this information all but crushed Mather, who died four years later at the age of sixty-five. Increase had been a burden, especially because he did not want to wear the cleric's robes of his father and grandfather. But Mather loved his son, perhaps all the more deeply because Increase was survived by only two children from the original brood of fifteen.

What precipitated Lydia George Mather's outbreaks was never made clear in Mather's diaries. He focussed on her attacks on him, but did not seem to understand her motivation. Many historians have accepted Mather's evaluation that she was mad. But other factors may have influenced her attitudes and behaviors. Her social standing in the Boston community was already superior to his, and the terms of her first husband's will made her a rich woman. That she understood what financial independence meant was clear in her insistence that they sign a pre-nuptial agreement in which she was to control her own fortune. Mather's first two wives were the very pictures of humility and obedience in their roles as wives to him and mothers to his children. Lydia George was more worldly and socially prominent than either Abigail Phillips or Elizabeth Hubbard.
In fact, Cotton Mather was not equal to her in respect to money and position. She was aware of these disparities when she sent him away before their eventual engagement.

Why she finally married him is not clear. Perhaps his importunings wore her resistance down, or perhaps she preferred the married state to widowhood. That she experienced a deep unhappiness as his wife comes through in his descriptions of her treatment toward him. But did her abuse of him necessarily mean she was insane, as he believed? Certainly she seemed disturbed to him, but his diagnosis of madness may not have accurately covered what was wrong with his third wife. In spite of his tendency to painful introspection, he never suggested that he played any part in her rejection of him even though he privately admitted to compulsive sexual feelings. It is possible that his urgency regarding sex created anxiety or hostility in Lydia to which he remained oblivious. His persistent needs might have affected his behavior in ways that influenced her reactions. However, he always described himself as the soul of patience and sympathy, virtues to which she left no public testimony.

Psycho-Somatic Adumbrations

In his own soul-searching exercises, Mather persistently linked sinning and perverse thoughts with
disease. Believing that people needed to make this connection during their formative years, he explained how he taught his own sons and daughters to view their own sicknesses: "When any of my children have any illness upon them, I would make it an occasion to put them in mind of the evil in sin, and especially of such Sin, as their Illness may most naturally mind them of." And of his own distempers, he wrote, "God calls me to look inward...and to consider the analogous Maladies in my own Soul, which I am to deprecate." During one such internal inspection, he discovered the advantage of his "Bowels being always kept in a open Frame" because the freedom of movement allowed him to have "compassion to all the miserable in the World." Long before Freud described the "anal retentive" personality as one in which stinginess and greed dominated, Mather had associated "open bowels" with a generous spirit.

Even though Mather used the term "analogous" which suggests that physical illnesses are symbolic of spiritual states, his connections were literal rather than figurative because he believed that disturbed emotions actually produce symptoms within the body. As a student of the Holy Scriptures, he understood biblical typology in which the natural world is filled with shadows of God's intentions. These phenomena such as storms and floods require interpretation is order to make clear their meaning as signs of God's will. But rather than interpreting illnesses as
symbols of spiritual distress, Mather saw in troubled affections provided the origins of certain maladies. And even though his connections between mind and body were not always accurate in light of contemporary medical findings, he, like Freud, was concerned with the mental (emotional) etiology of various diseases and physical conditions.

Mather was always intrigued by his mind's influence on his body. Often the cure for whatever bothered him involved both a physical and spiritual purgation. Regarding his persistent morning cough, he prayed that as he took a "little tussient expectoration" at "first waking and rising in the morning," it would act upon his body as petition acted upon his soul, thereby disgorging "whatever may be inimical to the Health of my Soul! Every Lust, which like this Flegm, should be parted with." He shared with Freud a belief that through the purging action of admitting one's inner lusts, physical health could be restored. In addition to somatic distress, thoughts, too, could cause pain as he realized when suffering from intense headaches. Believing that his "troubled thoughts" had precipitated his physical agony, he prayed to have them cleansed. Echoing Mather's concerns, Freud wrote that within certain patients "the signs of their illness originate from nothing other than a change in the action of their minds upon their bodies and that the immediate cause of their disorder is to be looked for in their minds."
Adumbrating Freud's belief that certain mental states produce symptoms even if a physical etiology for the condition is absent, Mather wrote about husbands "who breed for their wives," a situation he found amusing. These men spend months "puling under the most sickly Indispositions," while "their wives have the satisfactions that they suffer not one moments Disorder." Further chiding them, he jested that whereas the husbands actually "Trivial for their wives...and have the Gossips attending on them," that, in fact "their wives have brought forth the offspring, with scarce a Groan upon it." In addition to these expectant fathers, Mather recognized his own susceptibilities to incur symptoms through reading about illness. At one time, when "studying Physick," he found himself "unhappily led away with Fancies, that I was myself troubled, with almost every Distemper that I read of." As a result, he used medicines to "cure my Imaginary maladies," while recognizing the power of the mind to create somatic evidence.

Concerned with the way in which the mind influences the body, Mather tried to discover this slippery connection by describing an intermediary between the spirit and soma called the "Nishmath Chajim" or vital principle. He suggested that "there is a spirit in man...which may be of a middle Nature, between Rational Soul and the Corporeal Mass....It wonderfully receives also Impressions from both of them; and perhaps it is the vital Ty between them."
Mather, like Freud two centuries later, set up a triumvirate to illustrate how physic forces work on the body. Their maps of the mind are loosely parallel if we consider that Mather’s Rational Soul, in which resides conscience, has its counterpart in Freud’s superego; his Corporeal Mass, roughly equivalent to the id, is home to the passions; and the Nishmath Chajim acts as the ego might in psychoanalysis in that it mediated between one’s higher and lower nature.” To cure sickness, according to Mather, one tries “to brighten, and strengthen, and comfort, the Nishmath Chajim.” In a similar way, Freud believed that healing began as the individual develops ego-strength.

Mather had always exhibited an interest in medical subjects, particularly as they related to theology. It was not uncommon for ministers to combine theology with medicine as had Christ, whose mission was to heal the sick and raise the dead. By the time he turned sixty, the Puritan divine had written extensively on different aspects of the mind and body, but he had never pulled his writings together into a comprehensive document. Finally deciding to draft such a treatise in which he described various illnesses and their cures, he completed in 1724 his Angel of Bethesda, a title that made reference to the biblical healing pool—an allusion that physicians steeped in Calvinism would find meaningful. He never published his manuscript, perhaps because he had made powerful enemies in the Boston medical
community with his impassioned support for inoculation against smallpox. One of his enemies, Dr. Douglass, believed that men of the cloth should confine their views to religious matters, a position he expressed in his attack on Mather entitled *The Abuses and Scandals of some late pamphlets In Favour of Inoculation of the Small Pox*, 1722. This opposition may have discouraged Mather, or possibly he did not have enough money for a first printing. Whatever the reasons, the manuscript lay unnoticed until 1869 when it came to the attention of Dr. Oliver Wendall Holmes, who found it "full of pedantry, superstition, declamation, and miscellaneous folly."

Appreciating Holmes's criticism in light of the Victorian critique of Calvinism, an issue that will be discussed in Chapter 7, we need to consider Mather's contributions from another angle. To be sure, one finds his scientific discourses riddled with medieval imagery, but his analysis of how the mind and body interact to produce disease appears visionary to our post-Freudian generation. Because he used the language of theology, Mather has sounded self-righteous and superstitious, particularly to people in the nineteenth century who were rejecting many of the darker "old fashioned" aspects of Calvinism in favor of the possibility of human perfectibility. But to people in the twentieth century, Mather's insights ring with a psychological clarity because of his emphasis on the role of
the mind in creating illness. On the one hand, in his Angel he looked back to a primitive acceptance of the "unseen world" and, on the other, ahead to the dawn of psychoanalysis.

The Mind's Ability to Create Symptoms

We can see that what Mather consistently expressed in his Angel was the connection between the mind and body in which certain strong emotions precipitate physical symptoms. In almost all of his descriptions of the illnesses suffered by colonial Americans, he began by explaining the spiritual or mental basis for the sickness. For example, his consideration of heartburn included his suggestion that something the victim has felt or thought produces this state. Rather than relying on materia medica, he explained that "the patient vexed and spent with his Heartburn, may do very well, to look further inward, and Enquire, whether the Passions of Anger, and of Envy, do not sometimes give him a worse Heartburn there." To him it is the "passions [that] alwayes bring Troubles with them." And he warned the sufferer to try to control the emotions when he wrote, "Friend, gett the cure of these Passions, and Watch against their operations." Disarming cravings, then, is the ultimate solution to the various diseases described by Cotton Mather in his treatise on medicine. He understood as
well as any Freudian analyst the role of the affections in the disease-producing process when he stated: "It is our Inordinate Passions [that] burn the Thread of Life." Articulating the mind-body connection, he said that "The Soul and the Body constitute One Person; and the Body is unto the Soul, the Instrument of Iniquity." Christianity has always held that a dualism between mind and body is an error. Christian doctrine is predicated upon the idea of life after death, in which the person’s own resurrected body will be reunited with the soul: body and soul together are to be revived."

In his medical treatise, Mather discussed everything from exercise, which he favored, to intestines, of which he wrote, "It is marvelous to see...how the Passions of the Mind, make Impressions on the Intestines." He warned his reader that "Bloody Dealings" with others can result in one's own "Bloody Flux, [or] wasting of the Bowels." If people suffered from diseased "entrails," they were instructed to ask "What Bowels have I had" toward "whom I should have been Compassionately Concerned for?" The answer to this question would reveal any violent emotions which actually caused their intestines to become infected with hatred. In this context, the bowels are an extension of the mind which should be "kept Calm, and Quiet and Easy; and if it be possible, Cheerful." Not until Freud’s reemphasis on the anal region did the bowels again play such a part in a
person’s psychology. Mather believed that the problems with the bowels reflect "Mischiefs of Intestine Discords in Families as well as Nations," and warned in an Aristotelian cum Freudian voice that one "has within his own Bowels that which destroys him." Within Freudian thought, the aggressive instinct first manifests itself in the anal phase in which "satisfaction is...sought in aggression and in the excretory function." Sadism found its home in the bowels, where hostile thoughts actually ripen into savage tendencies. Mather and Freud shared the view that the bowels provide the physical environment in which destructive impulses flourish, and they agreed that people need to become free of these influences in order to curb their own aggressive instincts.

The Emotional Etiology of Paralysis or Hysteria

Commenting that one-third of all diseases are "chronical," Mather said that of this one-third, one-half are forms of hysteria. He wrote: "It is marvellous to see, in how many forms we undergo Splenetic and Hysteric Maladies; the very Toothache itself often belongs to them." He believed that the cure for hysteria is "conversation," a method Freud also propounded after he witnessed some remarkable recoveries brought about by the "talking cure." Mather suggested, "Let the Physician with all possible
Ingenuity of conversation, find out, what matter of anxiety there may have been upon the mind of the Patient. Once the Burden has been discovered, then Lett him use all the ways he can devise to take it off. He recognized that hysteria results from disturbed thoughts, a connection that provided Freud with the impetus to develop psychoanalysis, a method that was dependent upon the patient's ability to recognize and describe certain affective states.

One of Freud's early patients was Frau Emmy von N., whom he described in Studies on Hysteria as having "storms in her head" which resulted in partial paralysis. While treating her, he first determined that repression caused "the inaccessibility to fresh associations of a group of ideas connected...with one of the extremities of the body." This repression was experienced as the loss of memory regarding a certain experience that precipitated the hysterical symptoms. Freud believed that it was his task to help restore his patient's memory and to help her confront her suppressed impulses, regardless of their nature—which he believed to have been carnal. In a similar vein, Cotton Mather had previously cited faulty memory as the cause of paralysis when he suggested that "Paralyticks" need to be reminded of "their sins, which...may be, too much forgotten." Once "Paralyticks" face the sins in their hearts, then they can be restored to sensibility.
Mather understood paralysis in terms similar to those worked out by Freud, and other neurologists, at the turn of the twentieth century. Couching his discussion in religious phraseology, he considered "our SAVIOR" as the great physician who understood that "Paralyticks...brought their maladies upon them[elves]." He made the interesting point that Christ "never intimated any such thing" about "any other maladies." Mather believed that people unconsciously become paralyzed as a result of their degenerate thoughts. And demonstrating the causal relationship for which Freud would later become famous, he explained that people unknowingly deaden a certain part, or parts, of their body because this is the only way they can prevent themselves "from committing [an] abundance of actual sins." In this condition, human beings "are under a necessity of Living so Unactively, that they may perhaps think themselves to live almost Innocently." Inspired by the "Saviour's" knowledge of the troubled heart, the Puritan divine believed that people who become physically numb may have forgotten the thoughts, or sins, that have led to their inhibited condition, and yet these impulses are always "lurking in their Hearts, and ready to break forth, when the chains of the Palsey should be taken off."

The bright side to immobility according to Mather was that "a Paralytick Distemper, does restrain People, from committing...sins." Freud believed that certain neuroses
also constrain the individual who might otherwise have acted on these darker impulses, and he suggested that the inhibitions caused by the Oedipal conflict provide just such curbs on youthful sexual passion. Both Mather and Freud agreed that people cause their own paralyzed condition because in this state their aggressive instincts are inhibited. They further acknowledged that once people became victims of their own hysteria, they would forget their "former sins," or thoughts, that have led to their disabilities in the first place.

Along similar lines, Mather perceived that some forms of blindness are caused by wrong seeing. When people experience the loss of sight, they should implore, "Lord, How much have my Eyes been the Portholes of Wickedness! How often has Death gott into my Soul by these windows." He indicated that people need to "mourn for the Moral Diseases of the Eye," and weep the Tears of Repentance," if they hope to have their eyesight restored to them. Carnal thoughts can actually cause blindness, another form of hysterical paralysis. Mather believed that it is easier for people to punish their bodies for their sins than to search out and confront the passions of the mind. He also linked deafness to a mental etiology when he explained that this defect can be caused by "having thy Ear too open unto things that should not have been received there," including "Obscaenities." People suffer from blindness and deafness
because their sense organs are improperly stimulated by carnal desires; protection resided in closing down the offending organ. However, Mather persistently appealed to the individual to seek self-knowledge to overcome these limits.

It was in his discussion about asthma that Mather came the closest to presaging the contemporary psychosomatic view of this condition. He explained that "Strong Passions of the mind, have often brought a suffocation at once upon asthmatical People." Today, this inability to breathe freely is often ascribed to one's state of mind, and the cure finally lies in the amelioration of emotional tension. In Mather's mental scheme, he felt that "Anger has done it," and "People under an asthma, [should] keep a constant calm of mind as much as ever you can."

In spite of his reputation for intolerance, Mather demonstrated a deep awareness of the emotional complexity of people. As a Puritan, he spoke for those individuals who believed that mental life is far more significant than one's behavior, for it is in the mind that one first sins. Implicit in his view of the human condition was his sense that human beings have a responsibility to restrain their aggressive and destructive impulses for the good of the community as well as the salvation of their souls. Generalizing about human nature, he pointed out that "It has been a nice observation, that every man is mad in some one
point; There is at least one point, where in reason will do nothing with him." Accepting compulsions as the motivator within people for certain behaviors, Mather believed that "He is a very wise man, who finds out his own mad point." He warned, "Man, know thyself; study what it is; and in that one point, keep a singular guard upon thyself." Once the madness is named, generally through confession, the person has a chance to inhibit compulsive tendencies.

Mather often linked madness to melancholia, and in his discussions of this bleak emotional state he exhibited a sensitivity that was, perhaps, born from personal experience with his third wife, Lydia. He insisted that people who suffer from the condition should not be scolded because they "sufficiently afflict themselves," and become "their own tormentors." Understanding the delusions of the sufferers, he wrote that "they create a world of imaginary ones [troubles], and by mediating terror, they make themselves as miserable, as they could be from the most real miseries." His solution anticipated the methods of psychoanalysis when he suggested that instead of trying to brighten the sufferer's mood, the physician should listen carefully to the "tedious way of [their] complaining against themselves" and to "allow that all their complaints may be true." 

Mather continued that if you "trace" the melancholiacs' troubles back to some cause, "you may perhaps find out, that some very intolerable vexation...began their uneasiness, and
first raised that Ulcer in their minds, which now finds New Matter to work upon, and the Old Matter is no Longer Spoken of." Mather's notions of "old matter" and "new matter" anticipated Freud's theory of repression in which original disturbing memories are buried and replaced by "screen memories," which are more tolerable. The "screen memory" acts as a blind that was drawn over the unhappy recollection. Describing a process that Freud later labelled "transference," Mather noticed that "Cured melancholiacs hate their doctors and all others concerned with their illness and recovery."95

Conclusions

Because of his preoccupation with the mental origins of illness, an interest which preceded the age of psychology, Mather has often been referred to as "neurotic" by post-Freudian biographers and historians. In one such reference, Gordon Jones put the psychoanalytic cart before the theological horse when he wrote that Mather's "sickly childhood foretold his neurotic adulthood."96 The fact that this Puritan's view of the human condition proved to be so compatible with Freud's insights has permitted people to use the facile "label" of neurotic when describing him. Because of his emphasis on the hidden, dark powers of the mind, Mather's descriptions often beg to be considered in
psychoanalytic terms. However, Mather came before Freud, and his view of human nature reflected a three-thousand-year-old Judaic-Christian tradition—a tradition to which Freud added another chapter one hundred and fifty years after the Angel of Bethesda. As Cotton Mather displayed a fascination with the impact of mental phenomena on the body, Jonathan Edwards created an interior landscape that was populated with many of the phantoms that later haunted the individuals who came to Freud’s attention.

Jonathan Edwards: Psychoanalytic Adumbrations

Neither Jonathan Edwards nor Freud was primarily interested in a person’s behavior because each believed that actions hide a multitude of desires. It was the interior landscape, that terrain of intricate passages and dark enclosures, that both men wanted to explore through spiritual or psychological means. They accepted as an article of faith the principle of an unconscious mind in which lurk ugly tendencies that can undermine a person’s emotional well-being. Neither the Puritans nor Freud was able to establish the hidden realm of a person’s mind in empirical terms. This area cannot be seen or measured, but its results, they believed, are written in a person’s mental suffering.
In his view of what thoughts people are capable of thinking and what emotions they are capable of feeling, Jonathan Edwards adumbrated several of Freud's most important patterns of pathology, including the Oedipal conflict. Unlike Cotton Mather, who had concentrated on the mind's impress on the body, Edwards considered the nature of one's affections in-and-of-themselves to be important irrespective of their influence on the soma. He believed completely in the inner or private life of the mind that is not discernable through ordinary observation. Within this life, or imagination as Edwards called it, people can act out the deepest, most unregenerate tendencies of their souls, and he believed that one "can't tell from outward behavior who is saved or who is damned." Offering an example that presaged Freud's emphasis on motive rather than actions, Edwards described a man's solicitude about the health of his neighbor's ill wife. He commented that it is possible that the man might be genuinely concerned. But then glimpsing a far darker impetus, Edwards suggested that "perhaps the principle he acts from is no other than a vile and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vigor restored, that he may return to his criminal pleasures, with her." Edwards' emphasis on irrational or evil desires that lurk beneath decorous behavior anticipated Freud's own gloomy
view that a person’s civilized behavior often conceals repressed, unruly passions.

Parricides All

Like Freud, Edwards believed that people harbor the destructive impulse to kill the father, or God; and in a sermon that "Freud might have revelled in," Edwards raised a terrifying specter of people’s anger toward their Creator. He exclaimed, "You object against your having a mortal hatred against God...But if the life of God were within your reach, and you knew it, it would not be safe one hour." He warned his congregation that even though most of them would not admit "That they wish God any hurt, or endeavor to do him any harm," that, in fact, "all natural men" are indeed hostile toward God even if they remained unconscious of their feelings. Natural men "are enemies to God in their affections. There is in every natural man a seed of malice against God...Though it may in a great measure lie hid in secure times."

In his sermon, "Men Naturally God’s Enemies," Edwards described the same aggressive instinct that Freud later discerned in the sons who killed the "primal father" in Totem and Taboo. This mythic tribal murder set men free from their father’s fierce authority, a motive that Edwards anticipated when he explained that people would kill God if
they could because His death would set them "at liberty" from His "strict law." Once freed from God's discipline, a person might say "I take my liberty to walk in the way I like best and need not be continually in such slavish fear of God's displeasure." Freud would have agreed with Edwards that such thoughts are so repulsive to ordinary souls seeking to live stable lives that they keep such "enmity...under restraint ...from...infancy."

Edwards believed that while people seek their independence from their Maker, they also lack the insight to understand their shadowy temptations; they only just barely glimpse their hatred when they whine that "God has not done well by me in many instances....He has shown mercy to others, and refused it to me." Admonishing his congregation that "indeed natural men cannot kill God," and therefore "make no attempts," he explained that lack of action is "no argument that this is not the tendency of the principle." Understanding that many of the people to whom he was speaking could not possibly conceive of themselves as parricides, he interpreted their resistance:

Some natural men may be ready to say, I do not know that I feel any such enmity in my heart against God as is spoken of....If I have such enmity, why do not I feel it?....How can others see what is in my heart better than I myself?....If I hate one of my fellow creatures, and have a spirit against him, I can feel it inwardly working.
But Edwards did not accept that a lack of self-awareness is a sufficient test of purity of heart, and he explained that "If you but observe yourself, and search your own heart, unless you are strangely blinded, you may be sensible of these things wherein enmity does fundamentally consist." So it is not an innocent spirit that restrains people, but their "having always been taught that God is infinitely above" them. He believed that "the heart is like a viper, hissing, and spiting...at God...and however free from it the heart may seem to be when let alone and secure...a change of circumstances will bring out that which was hid before."

Edwards's view of human nature, like Freud's, included the capacity to repress those affections that are so uncivilized as to threaten the well-being of oneself and the larger community. Both men agreed that people experience perversions of thought, but these remain largely unexpressed because of repression, often generated by fear. Interpreting individuals' darkest thoughts, Edwards explained to his parishioners that "You little consider how much your having no more of the sensible exercises of hatred to God, is owing to a being restrained by fear." He continued, "If you do exercise hatred, you have a disguise for it, whereby you endeavor even to hide it from your own conscience; and so have all along deceived yourself. And your deceit is very old and habitual." Edwards's concern
was with the corrupted tendencies within people's souls that drive a wedge between them and their creator. Hope lies in making one's private life or buried impulses apparent through the individual's grasp of the extent of his or her spiritual degeneracy. In his ministry, he wanted to help men and women move from an unenlightened condition into one in which they reflected God's grace.

The Role of the Affections in the Conversion Process

Born into the third generation of American Puritans, in 1703, Edwards was to revive the original spirit of Calvinism among his own parishioners in Northampton, Massachusetts in a movement called "The Great Awakening." Considered by many to have been the last of the great divines, Edwards was described by Perry Miller as the individual in whose person Puritanism "blazed most clearly and most fiercely." Edwards served his God until his untimely death, in 1758, ironically caused by a smallpox inoculation. He received the serum just before becoming President of the College of New Jersey in an effort to ensure his longevity in serving this institution.

At the age of 13, Edwards entered Yale College, and during his first year he read John Locke's Essay on Human Understanding with greater delight "than the most greedy miser finds when gathering up handfuls of silver and gold
from some newly discovered treasure." He was also familiar with the natural philosophy of Newton, and in his reading he added Cicero, Milton, and Addison to his growing library. Scientific inquiry and discovery fascinated him as much as they had Cotton Mather a generation before. After completing the curriculum at Yale and studying theology, Edwards became a minister in 1722. In 1725 he received an invitation to become a tutor at his alma mater, a summons about which he expressed certain misgivings. Writing in his diary, he indicated that this "has been a remarkable week with me, with respect to despondencies, fears, perplexities, multitudes of cares and distraction of thought," because this "week I came hither (to Newhaven) in order to enter upon the office of tutor of the college." In this entry, he reflected a troubled cast of mind, something he was able to recognize in others as well as in himself.

Apparently this appointment carried with it the "troublesomeness and perpetual vexation of the world," and the following year, in 1727, he left New Haven to join his well-regarded grandfather, the Reverend Mr. Stoddard, in Northampton. Stoddard was 84 years old at this time and needed someone younger and more physically vigorous to help him carry on his ministry. After "harvesting" many souls through the years, he died in 1728, leaving his church to his grandson.
By the time Edwards became a cleric, the rigorousness of Calvinism had decayed, and in its place Arminian tendencies began to flourish. It was to become his mission in life to revive the earlier pietistic mood of this theology and its emphasis upon God's grace alone as the means of salvation. Unlike his grandfather Stoddard, who admitted everyone to the communion table and to baptism, Edwards rejected this softened approach to Calvinism. He believed that the liberal reforms, which were designed to encourage greater church membership, amounted to corrupted doctrine. These certainly could not be assumed to produce converted affections. People experience salvation when they become aware in their hearts of the grace of God, he believed, and nothing short of an emotional upheaval would satisfy him that a conversion had taken place.

In 1731 Edwards delivered a sermon in Boston that created a sensation among those who heard him and passed his message on to others, thus beginning "The Great Awakening" in New England. In his preaching, he essentially revitalized the original emphasis within Calvinism upon the majesty and fury of God as all that matters to people hungering for grace. Because salvation is in God's hands alone, good intentions should not be relied upon; instead people were exhorted to find God's grace in their hearts. Evidence of His grace could be found in the changed affections of the believer, maintained Edwards, and "God was
regarded as a sort of spiritual volcano, who when once active might be expected to send down overwhelming showers of holy fire." Much of New England was rocked by this emphasis on the emotions in which conversion was accompanied by trembling, groaning, being sick, crying out, panting, and fainting. Emotional disruptions were thought to exhibit a greater measure of sincerity in the conversion process than reason alone could do.

Two years later, Edwards wrote the Narrative of Surprising Conversions, a subject that concerned his small community of Northampton. By 1733, this town was 82 years old and contained 200 families whose young people were described as disruptive and indifferent to parental influence. They would "frolic" together, boys and girls, all night long. Edwards called these activities "licentious," and frowned on "night-walking" by the youthful members of his community. However, by the end of the year, they appeared "unusually flexible" in listening to advice from the pulpit, and he accepted that a "thorough reformation of these disorders...has continued ever since." Of these people he wrote:

Tis wonderful that persons should be taken so suddenly, and yet so greatly changed: Many have been taken from a loose and careless way of living, and seized with strong convictions of their guilt and misery, and in a very little time old things have passed away, and all things have become new with them.
In analyzing the conversion process, however, Edwards always tried to distinguish between true conviction of spirit and the way in which twisted affections could affect the imagination. In other words, not all dramatic changes of heart were to be trusted. In his sermon True Grace, he warned that "There are many terrors...which are not from any proper awakenings of conscience...but from melancholy...or some groundless apprehensions, and...delusions."111

Before people can hope to be converted, they need to become aware of "their miserable condition by nature." To Edwards, to become awakened spiritually means that "those that...are secure and senseless" were now "made sensible how much they were in the way to ruin in their former courses," and he added that "Some are more suddenly seized with conviction....others have awakenings that come upon them more gradually."112 A capacity for insight in Edwards' mind an important characteristic of conversion, an ability that Freud believed imperative to regaining one's health. For Freud, patients must understand that they have urges and desires formally believed despicable in themselves and others. Edwards described mental phenomena within the conversion process that anticipated certain aspects of Freudian analysis when he wrote that before people can awaken, they must experience "awful apprehensions...of their misery," and the worse they feel "the nearer they have approached to deliverance."
Also recognizing the emotional chaos resulting from a mind excessively absorbed in its own wrong-doings, Edwards believed that too much despair over one's sins can "block" the path to salvation by "entangling" the person's heart in self-loathing that opens it up to the temptations of Satan. In this negative state of mind, the person becomes highly susceptible to the "distemper of melancholy" that "puts an unhappy bar in the way of any good effect." He lamented that "one knows not how to deal with such persons; they turn everything that is said to them the wrong way, and most to their disadvantages." Freud, too, described a person's ability to form a "resistance" to treatment. Edwards' notion of "blocking" adumbrated Freud's concept of resistance, which he regretted "finally brings work to a halt." Pinning this tendency on the individual's "degenerate character," Freud believed that it surfaces during therapy as a way to prevent the psyche from being further explored. Edwards anticipated Freud's idea of "resistance," through his insight that people can actually "block" their conversion by an exaggerated belief in their own degeneracy in which "instead of growing better," they "seem to...grow worse and worse, harder and blinder, and more desperately wicked," as "they are gradually more and more convinced of the corruption...of their hearts."

Fortunately for Edwards's sense of salvation, most people he dealt with did not resist or block their own
spiritual recovery. But before experiencing full conversion, they must become willing to search the cracks and crannies of their souls. Later, Freud indicated that this activity provides the impetus for psychoanalytic healing. Edwards believed that as people seek salvation, they experience a deep ignorance of their true natures and "how little they can do towards bringing themselves to see spiritual things aright" without the help of someone like himself.\textsuperscript{127} Also, as people begin to see the light, they gain insight at different rates. Some "have the sins of their lives in an extraordinary manner set before them, multitudes of them coming just then fresh to their memory," whereas others "continue wandering in such a kind of labyrinth, ten times as long as others, before their own experience will convince them of their insufficiency."\textsuperscript{128}

Freud, also, used an image to suggest how hidden truths are revealed to those who persevere. He explained that in the process of helping patients to recall repressed experiences, the "work becomes more obscure and difficult, as a rule, the deeper we penetrate into the stratified psychical structure." But he remained confident that "once we have worked our way as far as the nucleus, light dawns and we need not fear the patient's general condition will be subject to any severe periods of gloom."\textsuperscript{129} Adumbrating Freud's belief that self-discovery can initially lead to "gloom," Edwards explained that as people explore their
characters, they "are sometimes brought to the borders of despair, and it looks as black as midnight to them a little before the day dawns in their souls." But in both cases, once the "light dawns," individuals are spared more suffering and on the path to delivery. Edwards and Freud alike were suspicious of premature enthusiasm, something that Freud explained happens when people begin to investigate their covert natures and they "enjoy a foretaste...of...approaching liberation." But this initial excitement is not permanent and often not to be trusted because much hard work is ahead.

One major difference between the Puritans' theology and Freud's psychoanalysis concerns the agent on whom the penitent or patient is dependent. Edward's goal was to have his parishioners receive "the spirit of God" who has "made way for" their "conviction of their absolute dependence on his sovereign power and grace." He wanted those on the brink of a conversion to understand the "universal necessity of a mediator," such as himself to whom they can confess their sins, but they were not to confuse human power with the ultimate authority of God. As a minister, he lent a willing ear as he listened to and counseled his parishioners. In a passage from his diary, he explained the role that other people can play in a person's self-discovery if they are willing to listen. He commented that "bystanders always espy some faults which we do not
see...for there are many secret workings of corruption which escape our sight, and others are sensible of."

With this insight, he determined that he himself should learn what "faults others find in me, or what things they see in me that appear any way blameworthy, unlovely, or unbecoming."

In the true spirit of Calvinism, he is always willing to reckon with himself. And he actually solicited the unflattering opinion of others in his efforts to understand what lay beyond his own perceptions.

Freud also indicated that a "mediator" is necessary to help the patient achieve recovery, but he never included an appeal to a divinity. His mediator was the analyst, upon whom the patient developed a strong emotional dependency, labeled "transference." Positive transference, or love of the analyst however misguided, was acceptable as long as patients were helped to understand their hidden temperaments. Ultimately, however, people were encouraged to wean themselves from their mediators, after having experienced insights that would allow them to cope better with their repressed emotions. Implicit within psychoanalysis was the existential apprehension that the universe contains no gods to reform the soul nor rescue the spirit.

For both Edwards and Freud, a person's confession to a minister or analyst provides a necessary step in spiritual conversion or personality reorganization, but it does not,
in and of itself, absolve the individual. God's infinite grace provides absolution for the Puritan, but for Freud this was a more difficult issue in that he spurned the notion of the Higher Power able to restore a person. Edwards noticed that after a personal conversion, the people often "declared that all their former wisdom is brought to nought." Individuals developed humility and self-acceptance after they became willing to have their hearts renewed. But he remained concerned about those persons who possessed an overweening conscience in which they persistently perceived of "themselves...as the objects of God's displeasure." This "blocking," or resistance, troubled him because he believed that these souls deliberately put themselves beyond God's grace, in that they believed all their petitions stirred only false hopes.

Edwards' suggestion that people can prefer their unredeemed state because of faint-heartedness anticipated Freud's notion of "flight into illness." Freud explained that some people choose to remain in their pathological condition because it offers them the comfort of familiar emotional surroundings. Health, on the other hand, demands a thorough investigation of oneself, something not everyone welcomes. Addressing his American audience at Clark University, Freud said that "To-day neurosis takes the place of monasteries which used to be the refuge of all whom life had disappointed or who feel too weak to face it."
According to Edwards and Freud, some people felt more secure in the sanctuary of their unconverted affections than in the vision of better things to come.

Some people described in *Surprising Conversions* accepted their redemptions willingly, and with them Edwards seemed well satisfied. But, in addition to such successes, many people experienced what we would today call a pathological response to their conversions. Initially, having felt a sense of wonder at the removal of their old thoughts, Edwards noted, they are "greatly taken with their new discovery....[that] they are often at first ready to think they can convince others, and are apt to engage in talk with everyone they meet with." But as their initial enthusiasm is tempered by time, these people feel "disappointed...that their reasoning seems to make no more impression." Thus disappointment deteriorates into disillusionment, a state in which they become Satan's targets. Several people "had it urged upon them, as if somebody had spoken to them, Cut your own throat, now is a good opportunity." One person who did cut his throat was "an useful, honorable person...But...prone to the disease of melancholy." The others, however, were completely baffled by this self-destructive urge, and "were obliged to fight with all their might to resist it, and yet no reason suggested to them why they should do it."
This discussion of suicidal compulsions was echoed two centuries later in Freud's famous patient the "Rat Man" who experienced an intense inner voice which commanded him to "kill yourself, as a punishment for...savage and murderous passions." To explain these self-destructive urges, Edwards cited the seductions of Satan whereas Freud believed them the ugly fruits of repressed affections. But in several of Freud's more dramatic passages, he also alluded to the demonic powers within the human psyche.

In his interactions with people who had recently been converted, Edwards believed that unless they became convinced of the authenticity of their changed nature they would backslide into their former state. In his discussion of these men and women, he included an important distinction between false and true affections in which the former are not to be trusted whereas the latter indicate a changed heart. He persistently defended the role played by the affections against the critics who remained suspicious of emotional evidence offered as proof of a proper conversion. He stated: "Many people seem to be prejudiced against affections; particularly if high affections of joy follow great distress and terror." He believed that emotional upheaval is one stage in the process of conversion, but if things end there, then a true transformation has probably not taken place because strong affections need to be guided by even stronger reason. When describing the conversion of
David Brainerd, Edwards chastened those who thought that intense affections fail to demonstrate graciousness of spirit:

If vapors and whimsey will bring men to the most thorough virtue, to the most benign and fruitful morality...then [should not] the world...prize and pray for this blessed whimsicalness and these benign sort of vapors."

He followed this gentle mockery by praising the rational morality often precipitated by emotional convulsions.

The Imagination as Id

When a person experienced a true Calvinistical conversion, he or she was considered to have become a "new creature," a "being renewed in the spirit of the mind." Freud, too, believed that the successful outcome of psychoanalysis could lead to a sense of renewal in which "the patient's capacity for sublimating his instincts...and...his capacity for rising above the crude life of the instincts" are buttressed by the "power of his intellectual functions." In both Christian conversion and psychoanalysis, some people experience a dramatic sense of their reformation, whereas others perceive gradual changes in their characters. Edwards and Freud, alike, believed that one's reason can be the guide to a new sense of self, even if the affections remain relatively unmoved. Reason
remained the final arbiter in the struggle between instinct and conscience for both Puritans and Freudians, who recognized the counterproductiveness of a mind too much absorbed in contemplation of its sins.

In the case of a person who possesses an overly-scrupulous conscience, reason is needed to offset a debilitating sense of guilt. Edwards believed that some people become so obsessed with their culpability that they lose their perspective on the human condition. Some guilt he considered to be good because it can spur a reluctant individual into the spiritual activity of introspection, but too much guilt can lead to moral incapacitation if all one ever unearths are ugly sins. Dealing with a tendency that Freud later labelled as masochism, Edwards believed that a person's self-torture begins with a "particular constitution and temper" and is then aggravated by an overly-active imagination:

Some persons are of such a temper and frame, that their imaginations are more strongly impressed with everything they are affected with, than others; and the impression of the imagination reacts on the affection, and raises that still higher; and so affection and imagination act reciprocally, one on another, till their affection is raised to a vast height, and the person is swallowed up, and loses all possession of himself."

A century-and-one-half after Edwards explained the dangers inherent within an overly active imagination, Freud
described Anna O. as an intelligent woman who was virtually attacked by her lively imagination. Hers was a "monotonous family life" in which she experienced inadequate "intellectual occupation" that left her with a "surplus of mental liveliness [which] found an outlet [in]...her imagination." As a result, she began to daydream—a bad "habit" which inevitably "laid the foundations for a disassociation of her mental personality." This habit "prepared the ground upon which the affect of anxiety and dread was able to establish itself...when once that affect had transformed the patient’s habitual daydreaming into a hallucinatory absence." Anna’s mind had turned on itself as it began to replace her idle daydreams with disturbing hallucinations. She had no release for her mental energies; so they, in turn, provided the devil’s workshop in which she created self-destructive, or masochistic, thoughts. We will see in the next chapter that Freud often used the image of demons or devils to illustrate physic states of confusion and pain.

While Freud conceived of the id as a place, presumably within the brain, in which lurk the most primitive of human instincts, Edwards envisioned the imagination, or "that room of the soul, wherein the devil doth often appear," as providing the hatching area for similar tendencies. The imagination was that "evil place wherein are formed all the delusions of Satan" or the "devil’s grand lurking place, the
very nest of foul and delusive spirits." Both Edwards and Freud therefore believed that within the human mind or soul a spot exists that contains one's primitive urges and degenerate instincts that ripens as individuals matured and often sabotaged their efforts at self-improvement.

In addition, Edwards distinguished between the devil's workshop of the imagination and the lively images precipitated by gracious emotions. He deemed the latter good; but when the imagination creates certain counterfeit excitations that give the person a euphoric sense of false salvation, then great spiritual harm can result because Satan has access to the human soul through this spurious fantasy. This confusion between genuine transformation and seductive emotions often results "in the disease of melancholy...that being a disease which peculiarly affects the animal spirits, and is attended with weakness of...the brain."

Determinism

Jonathan Edwards espoused a kind of determinism that was consistent with the doctrine of John Calvin in which the possibility of free will is obviated by God's election of souls. Within Calvinism, God is the author of everything, so that people's contributions, if they exist at all, amount to minutiae. Edwards' views were formed by his own
experiences as a young boy when he deeply questioned how a
God Who was supposed to be so good could limit His choice to
but a few for salvation. Edwards confessed, "From my
childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against
the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would
to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased.... It used to
appear like a horrible doctrine to me." But as he thought
about the nature of the Author of the Universe, Edwards
became convinced that a belief in God's "absolute
sovereignty" is the only way to understand His infinitude.
His deity was a combination of infinite thought and grand
emotions. To Edwards, the Creator's majesty was expressed
through divine affections that once unleashed shake heaven
and earth. In a description that echoed Governor Bradford's
and anticipated Freud's acceptance of the power of repressed
emotions, Edwards described "The wrath of God... [as being]
like great waters that are damned for the present." But as
mortals continue to infuriate their Maker, these "waters"
eventually "increase more and more, and rise higher and
higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream
is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when
once it lets loose.".

In regard to Edwards's concerns about determinism and
free will, an irony exists. He, along with other
Calvinists, appeared convinced that their wills had no
influence on God, and that all their supplications could not
move Him if they were not already predestined for salvation. In spite of this acceptance, however, they spent an inordinate number of hours during their lifetimes examining the most minute cracks and fissures in their souls in the hope that their discoveries could provide evidence of God's mercy. In the same vein, patients undergoing psychoanalysis are educated to believe that they have no control over the inherited impulses of their id, and yet they, too, spend hours searching for their primitive motivations. If we separate their practices from their beliefs, we see that both Calvinists and Freudians behaved as if human nature were flexible and reformable, even though their systems of thought were contingent upon an acceptance of certain fixed or immutable tendencies within that nature.

In both approaches to the psyche, Puritans and Freudians are fascinated by the complexity of human nature, and this interest was manifested in their emphasis on introspection. Edwards certainly found his own soul or psyche an intriguing territory, although as he willingly explored its uneven contours, he was not always happy with what he found. But his honest self-searching was bound to unearth ugly sins if we keep in mind his belief that all people were stained with original sin. His diary offered many insights about the state of his soul, and what he described was not always a pretty picture. Ringing with self-conscious integrity, his tone was often confessional
when he admitted to God his "decayed" state in which his self-delusion led him to "sometimes...think" that he had "a great deal more of holiness than...[he] really has." In his heart, he found "that abominable corruption which is directly contrary to what I read respecting eminent Christians. How deceitful is my heart! I take up strong resolution, but how soon does it weaken."157 Ironically, in this petition he implied that he had some power over his soul in that he willed a change of heart," although he admitted to falling short of his own "resolution." In another passage from his diary, he again undermined his own deterministic notion of God when he actually begged God to do the will of Jonathan Edwards's. In a fervent petition, he pleaded, "This week I found myself so far gone, that it seemed to me, that I should never recover more, Let God of his mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay!"158 Informing on oneself was perhaps a way for a serious Calvinist to appease God Who already knew the sins of one's soul.

The Will, the Understanding, and the Pursuit of Pleasure

In his essay "The Arminian Notion of Free Will," Edwards explained that when the Arminians speak of will, they "mean the soul willing." They believe that the individual can choose between right and wrong action, and in
this sense the soul becomes a moral agent which can determine its own course. To Edwards, the argument that human beings can ordain their own destinies amounted to heresy because it takes one's fate out of the hands of God. But he did consider, as did Freud, the phenomenon of seeking that which is considered to be pleasurable. In his discussion of the "Determination of the Will," Edwards wrote that "Every volition stemmed from those preceding volitions or acts that seemed most agreeable or desirable, as perceived through the understanding." He explained that the human will always has as its object "the greatest apparent good" even if something more "indirect or remote" results from this act of will. Therefore when the "drunkard has his liquor before him" and wills, or chooses, to drink it, he is seeking that which he understands to be "more agreeable and pleasing to him." In this case, the drunkard's choice is between "the present pleasure of drinking" or the "future misery" resulting from the drink, and Edwards interpreted the results of this decision to be "determined by the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable" as filtered through the understanding which rationalizes this behavior. By using the example of a "drunkard," Edwards demonstrated how the human will can run amuck even when supported by the understanding, which in this case proves to be faulty or pathological. But if the individual has been
in full possession of his reason, presumably his perception of the "greatest apparent good" has shifted in favor of his avoidance of "future misery" by remaining sober. In either case, Edwards considered the human will to be restricted by what it perceives to be for the good, but not free to determine what is truly beneficial, in that this insight remains God's alone. Although Edwards's concern was the ultimate good, or God, Freud offered a similar secular approach to motivation when he explained how behavior is determined by the reality principle acting upon behalf of the pleasure principle.

Freud believed, like Edwards, that people strive to achieve that which is considered to be "agreeable" or "pleasing" to them. Their volition is always directed toward the fulfillment of their instincts which result in the experience of pleasure, but often these impulses are socially unacceptable. So to bring about the ultimate goal, the reality principle is enlisted to help the individual to acquire gratification. Freud explained that the "id's instinctual demands" insist upon being gratified, but that "experience soon shows that these situations of satisfaction can only be established with the help of the...ego."[^1][^2] The id expresses itself as the "pleasure principle" and the ego as the "reality principle," and in a healthy person it is the ego's job to "bridge" the id's "passions."[^2] Freud wrote that "in so far as...[the ego] tames the id's
impulses...it replaces the pleasure principle...by what is known as the 'reality principle,' which "pursues the same ultimate aims," but "takes into account the conditions imposed by the real external world."\[163\] Summarizing these separate forces, he wrote that "the ego stands for reason and good sense while the id stands for untamed passions."\[164\] Both Edwards and Freud thus believed that people are basically engaged in the pursuit of pleasure, and this motivation to achieve gratification consequently determines the behavior which follows. Both men thought that the desire for gratification is mediated by the reason or understanding which seeks to achieve that which is perceived as good by the individual. Edwards's "understanding" and Freud's "reality principle" served for them as the agents through which pleasing ends may be achieved. The pursuit of the "agreeable" needs to be justified through the "understanding" or rationalized through the "reality principle" in order for the individual to be convinced that he or she is following the correct course of action.

Hedonism was as antagonistic to Freud as it had been to Edwards, even though they both held that pleasure is the implicit end in itself. Their moral view did not permit pleasure for pleasure's sake.
Conclusion

Neither Cotton Mather nor Jonathan Edwards would ever have characterized the interior landscape of the mind in Freudian terms. But both Puritans and Freud emphasized the influence of one's buried thoughts on one's mind and body, and both offered emotional purgation as the remedy to restore an equilibrium between the heart and the head. The mind contains an abyss in which many ugly secrets take up arms against reason as they wage the battle for one's soul or sanity. One's irrational nature proves always to be very powerful, and neither the divines nor Freud held out much hope for reformation. Through confession, however, sincere individuals can have their degenerate or pathological tendencies ameliorated. In this way, emotional maturity can be achieved, even though the true Puritan goal of spiritual perfection may never be gained.

When Freud visited New England, he arrived in a region whose social and psychological perspectives were rooted in the soil of self-scrutiny and confession. And although he was welcomed into the American scene as a novelty, he came to stay because his message rang true. Indeed, some people were repelled by his gloomy view of human nature coupled with his explicit references to sexuality. But to the influential New Englanders who listened to him, his theories were considered to be liberating precisely because he did
not present them as religious doctrine but offered them instead as the fruits of scientific discovery. Psychoanalysis coincided with budding technology, and the two were the same in that their basis was scientific rather than theological.
Chapter Notes


3. Otho T. Beall, Jr., and Richard H. Shryock, *Cotton Mather: First Significant Figure in American Medicine* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1954), p. 98. All further references to this work will be by Beall and page number.

4. English physician Edward Jenner first demonstrated his vaccine against smallpox in 1796, seventy-five years after Mather and Boylston’s use of a similar inoculation procedure.


7. See description in Chapter 4.


16. Cotton Mather, *The Diary of Cotton Mather, D.D., for the Year 1712* (Charlottesville, Va.: University Press of Virginia, 1964), p. 74. All further references to this work will be by Mather, *Diary for the Year 1712*, and page number.


22. Cotton Mather, *Diary of Cotton Mather*, 2 volumes, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1952), I, 11-12. All further references to this work will be by Mather, *Diary*, volume number, and page number.


29. Mather, *Diary*, I, 32.


work will be by Sigmund Freud, title, *The Standard Edition*, volume number, and page number.


34. Mather, *Diary*, I, 467-490, passim.

35. Mather, *Diary*, I, 430.


42. Mather, *Diary*, I, 468.

43. Mather, *Diary*, I, 469.

44. Mather, *Diary*, I, 458.

45. Mather, *Diary*, I, 467.


47. Mather, *Diary*, I, 469.

48. Mather, *Diary*, I, 484.

49. Mather, *Diary*, I, 484.

50. Mather, *Diary*, I, 496.

51. As cited in Silverman, p. 274.

52. Quoted in Silverman, p. 284.


54. Quoted in Silverman, p. 287.

55. Quoted in Silverman, p. 309.

56. Mather, *Diary*, II, 523.

57. Mather, *Diary*, II, 532.

64. Beall, p. 49.


67. Descartes suggested the pineal gland as the intermediary, and some have thought that this served as the inspiration for Mather's Nishmath Chajim (Beall and Shryock, p. 80). But Mather's view of the whole person was not iatromechanical, as was Descartes's. Mather was attempting to make the unseen world visible through an illustration of three interconnected areas, so that he could explain disease as resulting from unhealthy mental activities, expressed as thoughts.

68. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 51.

69. Beall, p. 56.

70. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 201.

71. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 120.

72. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 120.

73. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 7.

74. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 7.

75. See Corinthians 15:35.

76. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 211.

77. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. 212.


113. Roback, p. 43.


117. Schneider, p. 118.


144. Freud's use of demonic imagery will be discussed in Chapter 6.


159. Curti, p. 66.


CHAPTER 6
PURITAN ECHOES IN FREUD’S
ID PSYCHOLOGY

Introduction

The American Puritans and Sigmund Freud shared a common intellectual heritage of Western thought that is rooted in the Judaic-Christian tradition. This tradition reflects the concerns of the Old Testament that have been kept alive through the Hebraic influence within Christianity, as well as the Jewish religious and intellectual legacy. Both Calvinism and psychoanalysis are indebted to the Old Testament which informs their respective views of human nature and the human condition. Within this chapter, I want to consider the explicit areas in which Freud reached back to an earlier era for the language and images that could illuminate his system of ideas. At times, his scientific nomenclature limited his ability to explain certain psychic states. In these instances, he used images that reverberated with ancient theological implications.

In spite of Freud’s own protests against religion, several scholars have detected within him deep religious
impressions that helped to shape his psychoanalysis. Professor David Bakan in his treatment of *Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition* linked the Austrian Jew intimately to a spiritual tradition that Freud himself had rejected. Arguing that "the contributions of Freud are to be understood largely as contemporary versions of, and a contemporary contribution to, the history of Jewish mysticism," Bakan explained that "one of the more important characteristics of psycho-analysis [is] that it views evil as a distortion of love. This paradoxical identification of good with evil pervades Freud's writings." A similar paradox was contained within Calvinism in that it held that God, alone, is the singular creative power within heaven and earth. All things, therefore, originated in Him whether perceived as good or evil, including Satan. It was heresy to believe that Satan acts independently of God's will; the generative impulse belongs only to God. As Bakan explained, neither the American Puritan nor Freud, the Jewish mystic, "recoil[ed] before the influence that in a higher sense there is a root of evil even in God...Every attribute [of the Divine realm] represent[ed] a given stage, including the attribute of severity and stern judgement."

In the work *Judaism and Psychoanalysis*, Mortimer Ostrow explored the common ground that Freud shared with the authors of the Old Testament and the Talmud. In each case, they began with the principle that the "meaning of a matter
is not exhausted in its appearances or literal text, but that true knowledge, essential aspects of meaning, can be obtained only by a process of interpretation or exegesis." At one point, Freud acknowledged that his "irresistible" attraction to Judaism came from "the safe privacy of a common mental construction" in which "obscure emotional forces" shape the inner reality of the person. He indicated that within both Judaism and psychoanalysis internal forces became "more powerful the less they could be expressed in words."

Freud revealed to the Society of B'nai B'rith that upon discovery of these hidden forces within the human condition, "I had gained my first insight into the depths of the life of the human instincts; I had seen some things that were sobering and even, at first, frightening." What frightened him was that people tend to harbor dark impulses that often lead to self-destructive behaviors, especially illnesses. Although he recognized that his own "deepest engrossment in the Bible story had...an enduring effect upon the direction of my interest," Freud spent most of his life reinterpreting religious experience in psychoanalytic terms, an effort that amounted to intellectual hegemony. He viewed the Old Testament as an important attempt to understand human motives, but with the advent of psychoanalysis he believed that psychology led the way in understanding and improving the human condition. He equated religion with superstition.
and psychology with science. In the twentieth century, the latter triumphed over the former.

When Freud visited America, the people who received him, including G. Stanley Hall and J.J. Putnam, were men born and reared in a New England atmosphere that resonated with more than hollow echoes from its Calvinist heritage. To them, Freud’s descriptions of people’s unruly passions recalled their own Puritan ancestors’ yearnings to understand the darkest tendencies of the soul. These Calvinist concerns possessed a remarkable tenacity according to Roger Burlingame in *The American Conscience*. In spite of the many social and political changes that occurred during this country’s development, "the Puritan moral core was never seriously weakened....The old Puritan gods were called back at critical intervals all through American history."

In 1909, Freud called them back; and like the Puritans before him, he charted the interior landscape concealing the pitfalls and traps of human nature.

Recognizing similarities in thought between American Puritans—specifically Jonathan Edwards—and Sigmund Freud, A.A. Roback in *A History of American Psychology* wrote:

> The fact is that the American divine and the Austro-Jewish psychoanalyst were united by a common heritage, and probably Freud’s forbearers in Moravia were just as mystically inclined as Edwards, who even obliterated the principle of personal identity to the point of making us all guilty of Adam’s sin."
Roback concluded: "That a religious fanatic and an outspoken atheist would share a point of incidence is illustrative of the French saying *Les extrêmes se touchent.*"

When Freud came to New England, he brought with him twenty years of investigations into the human psyche that resulted in the development of Id Psychology. Even though he labeled his ideas as scientific, Freud often reached back into an earlier past to help illuminate reality for him. Because his ideas possessed historical antecedents, his concerns overlapped with those of the Puritans in several important areas, including dreams, demonology, and original sin. Also, he described the condition of neurosis in terms that were similar to the Puritans' concern with hypocrisy. It is from this traditional perspective that he viewed the human condition. In his heart-of-hearts Freud held to a vision of corrupt humanity remarkably like that of John Calvin and his followers. In his view of human nature, Freud experienced intense alienation from the Victorians of his own age; he was, in fact, much nearer to the colonial divines, who believed that all individuals are swayed by powerful and wayward inclinations, including the sexual. In addition to his "discoveries" about inherent sexuality, he also shared with the Puritans their judgment that each individual possesses a covert nature in which are hidden the darkest but most compelling desires. In part, the New England intellectual tradition was built upon this notion of
the buried self that later manifested itself in the romances
of Nathaniel Hawthorne and the epics of Herman Melville.

Dreams: The Royal Road to the Unconscious

Sigmund Freud's method of dream interpretation
developed under the aegis of science, but many of his
explanations echoed an older exegesis of these phenomena.
In his famous work The Interpretation of Dreams (1900) he
acknowledged that the folk tradition that dealt with this
subject came very close to his own perceptions: "One day I
discovered to my great astonishment that the view of dreams
which came nearest the truth was not the medical but the
popular one, half involved though it still was in
superstition." To some extent his "discoveries"
recapitulated Plato's notion "That in everyone resides a
certain species of desires that are terrible, savage and
irregular, even some that we deem ever so moderate: and
this indeed becomes manifest in sleep." But even closer to
Freud than the ancient Greeks were the medieval Protestants,
including many Puritans, who believed that within the dream
one's hidden tendencies are revealed. The Puritans depended
on the Old Testament's emphasis on dream interpretation.
Recognizing the symbolic nature of dreams, John Calvin
indicated that "It...rarely...happens that a person dreams
without a figure or enigma." Jonathan Edwards interpreted
the "figure or enigma" in a daily routine that Freud himself would have pronounced enlightening:

I think it a very good way to examine my dreams every morning when I awake; what are my nature, circumstances, principles and ends of my imaginary actions and passions in them, to discern what are my chief inclinations, & c."

Working within a traditional perspective, medievalist Manfred Weidhorn in his work *Dreams in Seventeenth-Century English Literature* suggested that "our new knowledge" of dreams that we have acquired since the advent of Freudian theory "is but a restitution, making respectable a primitive superstition by dressing it in a cloak of science." He concluded that Freud's perceptions were not original but "iterate[d] an old insight" that "dreams...[were] among the most revealing of psychic incidents." To illustrate this contention, Weidhorn included the English Puritan Owen Felltham's notion about the hidden life of the mind. In 1709, Felltham wrote:

Dreams are a notable means of discovering our own inclinations....In sleep we have the naked and natural thoughts of our souls....for...the soul, stated in a deep repose, betray'd her true affections: which in the busie day she would either not shew or note."

Several decades before Felltham's insights, Protestant Thomas Tryon (1634-1703) in his writings about madness, "phrensie," and dreams, established connections between
conscious and sleeping states that anticipated Freud. Tryon's view of the human condition was firmly anchored in the religious precept that the human heart is the battleground for the struggle between good and evil. He believed that self-discovery is the antidote to Satan's poisonous insinuations. Reading extensively from the medical works of his time, he held ascetic notions about diet in which he rejected meat while recommending fruit and bread for nourishment and water as the only beverage to be consumed. His ideas were widely read in England and the New World by many people including Benjamin Franklin, who was greatly impressed with his dietary theories. So much of an impact did he make on Franklin that for a while the latter became a "Tryonist." Although fascinated by the effect of different food on a person's well-being, Tryon also addressed certain psychological states including madness and "phrensie," both of which he thought proceed "from various passions and extreme inclinations" within the mind."

In his "Treatise of Dreams and Visions," Tryon approached dreams and dreaming from an angle that was later affirmed by psychoanalytic doctrine. Deeply religious, he believed that the hearts of all people are split between good and evil inclinations. Unlike the virtuous impulses which are easily apprehended, the wicked inclinations tended to hide beneath layers of good intentions. Therefore, a special vigilance must be exercised in order for individuals
to understand their darker sides. Dreams, he hypothesized, provide the avenue of inner exploration. Illuminating this belief, he wrote:

Since the heart of man is deceitful above all things, therefore for him that would truly know himself, it has by the wise Doctors of Morality been always advised to take notice...of his usual Dreams, there being scarce any thing that more discovers the Secret bent of our minds and inclinations to Vertue or Vice,...sensuality or the like, than these nocturnal sallies and reaches of the Soul, which are more free and undisguised and with less reserve than such as are manifested when we are awake."

Tryon argued that "vulgar" people might "fancy" that a nightmare is caused by a "Ghost, or Hobgoblin, yet the truth is, it proceeds from inward courses."  

Cotton Mather included the "Nightmare" or "Incubus" within his catalogue of ailments in The Angel of Bethesda. Superstitious individuals believed, he argued, that the devilish incubus assaults people in their sleep for the purpose of sexual intercourse. Rejecting this supernatural explanation, however, Mather advised his reader to consider that "The Load that lies upon thee, in the Night-mare, will...mind thee of the Sin which lies upon thee and renders thee a Heavy-Laden soul." To reduce these nighttime burdens, he suggested daytime confession.

In 1885, Freud discussed the "night fright" as the release of repressed anxiety that had accumulated within one's unconscious. But in a curious return to an older
vision, he reintroduced sex as the precipitating cause of the nightmare in which people suffer the physical symptoms of "dyspnoea" and "sweating." And although he did not believe in the literal manifestation of the incubus, he felt that repressed desires often behave in a similar way in that they tend to attack their victims during dreams. In the final pages of his work on unconscious fantasies, Freud acknowledged that within "the dream...a part is played by what might be described as a 'daemonic' element." His demons were mental rather than literal, and his theories remained consistent with the earlier notions of Tryon and Mather. All three men looked to the burdens within the mind rather than the environment as the cause of nightmares.

Like Mather and Freud, Tryon surmised that if people would seek self-knowledge from their dreams, they could "free" their conscious faculties "from all the furies and passions." He concluded his treatise with this appeal to know thyself:

It is highly convenient for every one that applies his Thoughts to this science of Dreams...to learn first the mysteries of his own world before he lets his Eyes...ramble into...the great External world....That if he do not in some competent measure know himself...he will never come to understand anything without himself."

In European civilization the roots of dream analysis are buried deep within the Old and New Testaments and the Talmud. The Bible is rich in dream narratives including
Joseph’s interpretations for Pharaoh (Gen.xl,xli), Daniel’s explanation before Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.II,5:1-34), Jacob’s vision of the ladder (Gen.28:10-16), and the warning to Joseph and Mary’s to flee from Herod with the infant Jesus (Matt.1:18-21). Sandor Lorand in his essay "Dream Interpretation in the Talmud" explained that "The Haggadah contains many references to the divine nature and prophetic significance of dreams, as well as to their wish-fulfillment aim. In addition, the Hebrews considered the antagonistic forces in the human mind to be a source of dreams."

Believing in exegesis, Rab Hisda in the Babylonian Talmud said that "an uninterpreted dream is like an unread letter."

In addition to Judaism, Christianity, particularly Protestantism, has regarded the unconscious fantasy as the key to unlock the hidden knowledge of one’s soul. John Wesley (1703-1791), founder of the Methodism, acknowledged the affective nature of dreams when he wrote that "There can be no doubt, but some of them arise from the present constitutions of the body, while others of them are probably occasioned by the passions of the mind." Decades later, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) in his lecture "Demonology" expressed the idea that

Dreams have a poetic integrity and truth.... We learn that actions whose turpitude is very differently reputed proceed from one and the same affection. Sleep takes off the costume of circumstance, arms us with terrible freedom, so
that every will rushes to a deed. A skillful man reads his dreams for his self-knowledge....
However monstrous and grotesque their apparitions, they have a substantial truth.

In this passage, Emerson's understanding of the dream anticipated Freud's in that they both assumed the reality of an inner-person who emerges in sleep stripped of the "costume of circumstance." For both men, truth resides in the unconscious part of the mind in which "monstrous" and "grotesque" forms embody a person's buried inclinations. Self-knowledge comes, then, from a willingness and an ability to interpret properly these frightful verities.

Like a host of people before him, including Owen Felltham, Thomas Tryon, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Freud believed that within a person's psyche lurk the demons that are often released through dreams. If people face these dark inclinations, then they can embark upon a voyage of discovery in which the light of reason can shine upon their buried desires. Freud wrote in the preface to the third edition of The Interpretation of Dreams that "insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime." But he also recognized that this "insight" had fallen to the lot of others who preceded him in the historical quest to understand one's inner being. Echoing what certain individuals had articulated before him, he wrote:

The respect paid to dreams in antiquity is...based upon the correct psychological insight [about]...the uncontrolled and indestructible
forces in the human mind, [and]...the 'daemonic' power which produces the dream-wish and which we find at work in our unconscious.

In this same passage, he described the dream as a "form of expression of impulses which are under the pressure of resistance during the day but which have been able to find re-enforcement during the night from deep-lying sources of excitation." For this reason, he believed that the dream serves to express one's truest, although concealed, desires.

In The Interpretations of Dreams Freud gave his fullest explication of the unconscious as that latent mental structure in which provocative thoughts are buried. He speculated that whatever is hidden in the unconscious mind has a greater impact upon the person than his or her conscious judgments:

Indeed it is a prominent feature of unconscious processes that they are indestructible. In the unconscious nothing can be brought to an end, nothing is past or forgotten....A humiliation that was experienced thirty years ago acts exactly like a fresh one throughout the thirty years, as soon as it has obtained access to the unconscious sources of emotion."

In his early description of the mind in his study of dreams, Freud created a psychological structure that was composed of three parts: the conscious, pre-conscious, and unconscious. Sometimes he suggested that these entities form layers when he spoke of the pre-conscious standing as a screen between the conscious and unconscious." He wrote
that "lurking in our preconscious...there are purposive ideas, which are derived from sources in our unconscious and from wishes which are always on the alert." The preconscious comprised an area that was later subsumed within the id. He also employed the image of spheres to show proximity and relative size of these areas in which "the unconscious is the larger sphere, which includes within it the smaller sphere of the conscious." And in a final effort to make his ideas intelligible he delineated phases of development in which "everything conscious has an unconscious stage...The unconscious is the true psychical reality; in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world." These various conceptions suggest that he was struggling to find a suitable metaphor by which his map of the mind could be envisioned.

Within this metaphor, he characterized "censorship" as the membrane through which only certain appropriate ideas pass. Freud believed that dreams are formed by "dream thoughts" which are "entirely rational and...constructed with an expenditure of all the psychical energy of which we are capable." By reshaping events in the form of a fantasy, the "dream thought" is "above all [able] to evade the censorship of conscious, rational thought." In Freud's system, dreams are precipitated by specific activities of one's conscious life left-over from the day before.
Therefore, when a person falls asleep, a wish within the unconscious proceeds to "link itself up with the day's residues and effect a transference on them." He continued that a "wish now arises" that has its home in the "recent material" and it forces "its way along the normal path taken by thought-processes, through the Pcs...to consciousness." He also proposed that a "conscious wish can...become a dream-instigator if it succeeds in awakening an unconscious wish with the same tenor and in obtaining reinforcement from it." When the dream

Comes up against censorship.... [it] takes on the distortion for which the way has already been paved by the transference of the wish on to the recent material....Its further advance is halted...by the sleeping state of the preconscious....The dream-process consequently enters on a regressive path...and it is led along the path by the attraction exercised on it by groups of memories."

Censorship, like its later counterpart the superego, plays an independent role in which it protects the conscious from the unconscious. During sleep, however, vigilance becomes somewhat relaxed, a condition that allows certain disturbing thoughts ingress to the conscious layer, but only after they are transformed by the "dream work." One purpose of psychoanalysis became to help the patient distinguish between the manifest content of dreams and the latent content, or "dream thoughts" that precipitate dreaming. If this latent content were properly interpreted, it would
reveal the patients' secret passions." Freud explained that the "dream work," or actual dreams, result from the recasting of unconscious concupiscent impulses into symbols that can pass through the censorship without being detected. He argued that in this way the mind habitually deceives itself: First it represses what it really desires; then it invents the dream to release those passions in cloaked forms.

To explain these cloaked forms, Freud developed a set of over-determined symbols that were employed to help patients to understand the real meaning and thus the sexual content of their unconscious fantasies. Within his symbolism, he held that:

All elongated objects, sticks, tree trunks, umbrellas (on account of the opening...might be likened to an erection), and sharp and elongated weapons, knives, daggers, and pikes represent the male member....Small boxes, chests, cupboards, and ovens correspond to the female organ....The dream of walking through a suite of rooms signifies a brothel or harem...of articles of dress, a woman's hat may very often be interpreted with certainty as the male genitals. In dreams of men one often finds the necktie as a symbol for the penis."

Even though he intended his system to be figurative in assuming that wishes are expressed by representative items, Freud has been criticized for the literal way in which he arbitrarily affixed to certain items specific sexual interpretations. Oblivious to any cultural differences that
might have changed the meaning of certain objects, he held that his symbols could be applied universally.

In The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud defined dreams as the "fulfillments of wishes" that "are constructed by a highly complicated activity of the mind." Recognizing that some people would resist his notion of wish-fulfillment because their own dreams included unpleasant elements, he cited the 1896 work of Florence Hallam and Sarah Weed. By quantifying their dreams, these women ascertained that in all only 28.6 were "pleasant," whereas 57.2 had to do with the "disagreeable." Freud used these figures to advance his theory that it was not the "manifest content of dreams" with which he was concerned, "but...the thoughts which are shown by the work of interpretation to lie behind the dreams." As an example of this buried content, he offered the experience of a woman he called "the cleverest of all my dreamers." In their sessions together, he had explained to her his theory of wish fulfillment. She, in turn, dreamed that she was going to her mother-in-law's home for a holiday, a woman she openly admitted she detested. Upon relating her dream to Freud, she questioned how her spending time with her deplorable in-law had, in fact, fulfilled any of her wishes. Perceiving his patient to be competing with him, he explained to her that she had dreamed an "anti-wishfulfillment dream" in order to prove him wrong. In this way, her dream had in fact satisfied her desire. He then
concluded that "even dreams with a distressing content are
to be regarded as wish-fulfillments." 45

As in some of his other writings, Freud shared several
of his own experiences to illustrate his theories. He
related one convoluted dream to show how subtle the mind is
in its conversion of unacceptable affections into
appropriate feelings. One night he dreamed about a man he
called "R." who like himself was a Jew who was being
considered for Professor Extraordinaire at the University of
Vienna. He had called R. his friend, but upon analysis he
realized that his dream cloaked his real feeling of dislike
for this man. To hide these negative emotions he
transformed R. into his own loveable Uncle Josef who was, in
fact, a simpleton. Recognizing that because of his
competition with R. for academic distinction, Freud
interpreted his dream to mean that he wished the other man
to be refused the appointment because he was a fool rather
than on the "denominational grounds" that he was a Jew. For
if R. were refused because of his religion, then Freud
reasoned that he, too, might suffer the same fate. As he
interpreted his dream, he recognized that it "had contained
a slander against R" that he hid under his affection for his
uncle which became the "means of dissimulation." 46 His wish
had been fulfilled in that R. was refused the post, and at
the same time, Freud's true feelings had been protected by
the transformation of his dislike of R. into fondness.
In his treatment of the life of the unconscious, Freud became particularly interested in children's dreams. Citing the common childhood fantasy involving the death of a relative, he expressed his belief that young girls and boys often wish that their siblings or parents would die. He anticipated criticism of this idea by agreeing ahead of time that many people would deny ever having held such wicked thoughts. But he asked his reader's indulgence to consider "the relation of children to their brothers and sisters," when he wrote that "I do not know why we presuppose that the relation must be a loving one." He pointed out that adult siblings are often hostile to one another, and concluded that children are more often rivals than tender companions. In this vein, therefore, "Many people who love their brothers and sisters...harbour evil wishes against them in their unconscious, dating from earlier times; and these are capable of being realized in dreams." To illustrate his point he wrote that

I know of a case in which a little girl of less than three tried to strangle an infant in its cradle because she felt that its continued presence boded her no good. Children at that time of life are capable of jealousy of any degree of intensity and obviousness."

Acknowledging that jealousy constitutes a motive for siblings' wishing each other dead, Freud addressed the stickier question of why children would desire their
parents' death. In children's fantasies, he argued, a recurrent theme is the demise of the parent of the same sex as the offspring. He believed these wishes are the result "to put it bluntly [of] a sexual preference making itself felt at an early age." And he asked that "before this idea is regarded as a monstrous one," people should consider examples from myth and legend in which Kronos "devoured his children...while Zeus emasculated his father." In The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud introduced Sophocles's tale about Oedipus the King as the basis for childhood sexual fantasies. With this story about a son's murder of his father and marriage of his mother, Freud provided psychoanalysis with one of its central theories. Believing that all children experience sexual feelings toward their parents, he offered Oedipus as the incarnation of such desires, for it was within the character of this tragic Greek that humanity's darkest conflicts became manifest. He wrote that each child is "like Oedipus [in that] we live in ignorance of these wishes, repugnant to morality, which have been forced upon us by Nature, and after their revelation we may all of us well seek to close our eyes to the scenes of our childhood." Invoking these sexual passions as "natural," he refused to believe "psychoneurotics differ sharply in this respect [Oedipal tendencies] from other human beings who remain normal....They are only distinguished by exhibiting on a magnified scale feelings of
love and hatred to their parents which occur less obviously and less intensely in the minds of most children."

At the end of The Interpretation of Dreams, Freud explained that it is not "possible to interpret every dream" because this process could be "opposed by the psychical forces which were responsible for its distortion" in the first place. Reiterating his view of the mind at war with itself, he believed that successful analysis remains "a question of... whether our intellectual interest, our capacity for self-discipline, our psychological knowledge and our practice in interpreting dreams [could] enable us to master our internal resistances." In other words, if we could overcome the dark forces at work in our personality, then we could gain the insight necessary to understand our dreams.

The Devil's Workshop

In spite of Freud's insistence that psychoanalysis is scientific and, therefore, presumably free from superstitious beliefs and practices, he cited psychic demons as the tormentors of the people he treated on more than one occasion. In his study of Dora, he used the image of "half-tamed demons" to describe the character of her suffering. And several years before his work with Dora, he had vindicated the "medieval theory of possession" in a letter
to Wilhelm Fliess by signifying that it "was identical with our theory." The theory to which he was referring was the etiology of hysteria. In his reading of medieval confessions, Freud discovered that people who believed that they were being persecuted by demons experienced pains similar to those of his patients. Writing to his friend, Freud expressed these likenesses:

The cruelties [experienced by the victims of witchcraft] make it possible to understand some symptoms of hysteria [including]...the pins which appear in the most astonishing ways, the needles on account of which the poor things have their breasts cut open.51

In his observations, Freud connected the anguished admissions offered by his patients to the emotional distress of people possessed by demons; in both cases, psychic devils had besieged the mind. To him, the devils that most often attack people are those of lust. He illustrated this assault by describing a female who was experiencing the malignant consequences of repressed sexual desires. She was a "dishevelled girl" who had "one stocking hanging down and two buttons on her blouse undone." She complained of a "feeling in her body as though there was something 'stuck into it' which was 'moving backwards and forwards' and was 'shaking' her through and through: sometimes it made her whole body feel 'stiff.'"52 In this case, her psychic demons
mocked the sexual act from which she shrank in horror mixed with passion.

The fact that Freud drew an analogy between medieval possession and the way in which individuals can suffer suggests that he needed an image stronger than anything science could provide to illustrate mental hell. By using this powerful image, he stressed the ancient conflict between good and evil that is fought within the battlefield of the mind. With the advent of psychoanalysis, he entered this battleground to combat the noisome spirits which were torturing his patients. He believed that the hysterics of his day were often mistreated by physicians, who regarded them "as people who are transgressing the laws of...science-like heretics in the eyes of the orthodox. [They]...attribute every kind of wickedness to them, accus[ing] them of exaggeration, of deliberate deceit, of malingering." He considered it to be his mission to shine the light of science on the sources of misery from which hysteria emanates. In this way, he could establish that hysterical symptoms were real for his patients and could be relieved through his "talking cure." It was this message of hope that he brought to New England when he addressed the men and women at Clark University.

Freud began his lectures with a description of Anna O. that was dramatically reminiscent of victims of witchcraft in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. Anna O. "suffered
from a rigid paralysis, accompanied by loss of sensation...on the right side of her body." She experienced trouble with her vision and "her movements were disturbed." Also, "she had difficulties over the posture of her head" and "she had a nervous cough." She could not eat or drink in spite of her enormous hunger and a "tormenting thirst" that plagued her. In addition, "her powers of speech were reduced, even to the point of her being unable to speak or understand her native language. Finally, she was subject to...confusion...delirium, and the alteration of her whole personality."

Several hundred years before Freud's depiction of Anna O., Cotton Mather had described a young woman named Martha Goodwin in similar terms. Martha, a victim of witchcraft, was unable to eat; whenever she attempted to put food into her mouth, "her teeth would be sett." Her vision was also affected, and when "she went to read the Bible her Eyes would be strangely...blinded, and her neck presently broken." Toward the end of her "possession," she suffered from "a twisting...of her eyes...[and] a certain cough which did seem to be more than ordinary." Both Anna O. and Martha Goodwin experienced an inability to eat, had trouble with their eyesight, suffered problems with the posture of their heads, and endured a persistent cough. Mather believed that these characteristics are caused by witchcraft
and Freud by sexual repression, but in either case they
described the same "demons."

Martha Goodwin first came to Mather's attention in 1689
when her father asked the minister to pray with his daughter
who had been behaving in a peculiar fashion. Mather agreed
to the father's request, but when he approached Martha she
became completely deaf; curiously, she recovered her hearing
upon the completion of his prayer. He began to suspect that
this child had been cursed by a witch, and he quickly
learned that Martha had, indeed, become involved with Goody
Glover—a poor Irish Catholic woman who spoke only Gaelic
and was believed to possess magical powers. Glover's
daughter worked as the Goodwins' laundress, and when Martha
discovered that some of their linens were missing she
confronted the servant. Becoming angered by this
accusation, the laundress told her mother, Goody Glover, who
reputedly placed a curse on Martha that caused her to be
"seized with strange Fits" that resembled epilepsy,
catalepsy and the "diseases of astonishment." Following
Martha's "possession," her younger sister and two younger
brothers were also affected. Their symptoms included
episodes of deafness and blindness, lying "in a benumbed
condition" and an inability to control the movements of
their heads as if "their necks would be broken."

Goody Glover, portrayed by Mather as an "ignorant and
scandalous old woman," was arrested and placed in jail where
he visited her two times in the hope of learning more about the "invisible world." But he apparently left disappointed with no further knowledge about the world beyond the physical senses. Goody Glover in time was hanged for witchcraft. Mather hoped that her death would return the children to their normal state; but, in fact, after her hanging, the children behaved in an increasingly bizarre manner. During one episode, they believed that they were geese and were "carried with an incredible swiftness thro the air." Mather experienced both curiosity and compassion at the spectacle of children out of control. With the consent of his wife, Elizabeth, he decided to bring Martha into his home where he could observe and pray for her with the intention of restoring her to spiritual health.

Cotton Mather spent many months with Martha. According to his account in Memorable Providences, he wanted to observe her strange possession without judging her, although he damned the devils that were persecuting her. His methods adumbrated psychoanalysis in that he listened carefully to her to discern clues about what was tormenting her. He also expressed compassion toward her, but he reported that the demons did everything in their power to hinder his efforts to help her. On Martha's part, all of his appeals were met with increasingly obnoxious responses: she would not eat; she stopped her ears at Bible quotations; and she refused to go to bed when asked. In her manifestations of possession,
she swung from epilepsy in which her arms and legs failed to
catalepsy in which her whole body went rigid.

In a tone of charity mixed with self-pity, Mather explained how patiently he tolerated Martha’s "sauciness" and "froliks" because she was not responsible for the "Tormentors" which were forcing her into insufferable activities. For example, she would address him with "multiplyed Impertinencies," "throw small things" at him, and "Hector" him about his sermons. In fact, while he was preparing these sermons, she often interrupted him to deliver false greetings from invisible beings. Also, she exhibited contempt for his scholarly efforts. When she had read his account of her possession in 1689, she told him that he would "quickly come to disgrace" by this document. To modern readers, her prophesy appears insightful because his account of the Salem Witchcraft Trials did indeed "disgrace" Mather in the eyes of future generations of Americans.

Even though Mather treated Martha Goodwin with solicitude, underlying this concern about her was his enormous curiosity about the nature of the unseen world. When he took her into his home, he hoped to discover more about this realm as well as to restore her to her former spiritual health. Firmly believing in devils, he announced that he would never "use but one grain of patience with any man that shall go to impose on me, a denial of devils or of
witches." In the matter of Martha's odd behavior, he acted more like a scientific observer than an exorcist. Summarizing his own contribution to the study of witchcraft, he exclaimed: "I have writ as plainly as becomes an Historian, as truly as becomes a Christian, tho perhaps not so profitably as became a Divine." As a divine, he had hoped to discover some confirmation of Martha's devils, but he failed to produce tangible proof of these tormentors. To him, the "invisible world" remained just that--invisible. But in spite of his disappointment in not seeing into another dimension, Martha finally regained her normal personality--and in that he experienced satisfaction.

Several historians have congratulated Mather on the approach he took with the Goodwin children by suggesting that his methods were contemporary rather than medieval. According to Gordon W. Jones, in Mather's era "in most parts of the civilized world" the children "would have gone directly to the stake." But instead, Mather "treated the girls as ill, and cured them." Kenneth Silverman indicated that Mather's treatment anticipated psychoanalytic techniques in that he watched and listened to the children, but did not try actively to intervene with corporeal punishment or restraints." In talking to Martha, Mather found an alternative to torture; and when she decided to "tell all," he indicated that she began to recover her normal disposition.
Like Cotton Mather, Freud was attracted to the mystique of demonology. So much so, in fact, that he wrote a paper entitled "A Neurosis of Demonical Possession in the 17th Century," in which he affirmed the Puritans' belief that people can become possessed by Satan. Agreeing with those who give credence to possession, he wrote:

Despite the somatic ideology of the era of 'exact' science, the demonological theory of these dark ages has in the long run justified itself. Cases of demoniacal possession correspond to the neuroses of the present day."

In his consideration of demonology, Freud described Christoph Haitzmann, a seventeenth-century artist who had left a diary in which he revealed his pact with the devil. Interestingly enough, this Satanic contract was not drafted so that Haitzmann could become a renowned painter. Instead, he asked the Evil One to remove the chronic melancholia that he began to experience at the time of his father's death. Freud believed that the artist found in Satan a "father-substitute" from whom he could receive inspiration: "Not even our painter's wretched situation in life would have induced his neurosis of demoniacal possession, had...[he not had] a longing for his father." Occasionally glimpsing the horror of the pact, Haitzmann tried several times to switch his allegiance from the devil to Christ and the Virgin Mary. During one such effort he experienced "visions," the "loss of consciousness," and "convulsive seizures accompanied by
extremely painful sensations" including "paralysis of the lower limbs." Freud identified these symptoms as the manifestations of neurosis, but indicated that in the seventeenth-century they were considered to be proof of possession. In the end, Hartzmann's "relations with the Devil had been played out," but "there still remained the conflict between his libidinal pleasure...and his recognition that in the interests of self-preservation he must become a stern...ascetic." In addition to his clinical interest in the correspondence between neurotic symptoms and those of possession, Freud used the image of demons to reveal certain tendencies within himself. Writing to his fiance Martha Bernays, he described his emotions as "violent and passionate with all sorts of devils pent up that cannot emerge, they rumble about inside." In the Bible, demons battle for the soul of a person, and Freud reformulated this struggle through his view of the mind as the place where "the conflict of opposing mental forces" participate in an "active strugg[le] on the part of the two psychical groupings against each other." Both the Puritans and Freud believed that people are possessed by demonical affections, and both believed that confession has the power to expurgate these urges. Explaining this power, Freud told his American audience about one of his patients who secretly fell in love with her
sister's husband. Her sister subsequently died and upon hearing of this death, the patient fleetingly thought "Now he is free and can marry me." Freud labelled this temptation an "odious egoistic impulse" and explained that his patient resisted it with all her might. As the result of her struggle, she "fell ill with severe hysterical symptoms." But with his encouragement, she finally confessed her deepest desire, and "she became healthy once more." As in many religious deliverances, her psychoanalytically induced confession was accompanied "with the signs of the most violent emotions."

The "violent emotions" that attended the release of repressed instincts in Freud's patients had previously been described by Jonathan Edwards as evidence of God's regeneration of a person's soul. Believing that religious conversion is essentially an emotional experience, Edwards explained that when sinners' "affections are moved,...they are full of tears, in their confessions," and consequently saved." But before people "seek salvation, they are commonly profoundly ignorant of themselves; they are not sensible how blind they are" to the "unexpected pollution in their own hearts." So first people must be awakened to their degenerate state before they can be transformed in their emotional natures.

Freud described a similar process to cure hysteria. Like Edwards, he believed that healing is experienced within
the affections. But before health can be restored, the patient needs to recall "the occasion when the symptom first appeared." Often this "really vivid memory" is followed by the most "violent affect" out of which "his pains emerges." As a result of this purgation, "the symptom, in its chronic character, disappears." Once the person is released from the signs of illness, he or she can begin to tolerate the innermost secrets of the heart.

Original Sin

In his personal and professional life, Freud often attacked religious doctrines by treating them as deeply held superstitions tending to limit people rather than free them. Toward the end of his life, he explained his quarrel with religion in The Future of an Illusion. The illusions to which he was referring included certain theological principles such as the return of the "Messiah [who] will come and found a golden age." Of this "false" hope and other beliefs Freud wrote:

All of them are illusions and insusceptible of proof....Some of them are so improbable, so incompatible with everything we have laboriously discovered about the reality of the world, that we may compare them...to delusions....Scientific work is the only road which can lead us to a knowledge of reality."
But in spite of his lifelong repudiation of religious principles, Freud’s own view of human nature as deeply vitiated echoed the theological doctrine of original sin. Within this doctrine and within Id Psychology one finds a firm belief in the unregenerate or inherently flawed state of each person’s psyche. In both cases, certain compelling tendencies predetermine people’s characters regardless of the environment into which they are born; and these tendencies are inherited as part of the emotional baggage handed down from one generation to another.

Because he concluded that people inherit their affective natures, Freud was interested in describing a community of primitive human beings in which the sinful emotions of jealousy and wrath were first expressed. He developed his concept of original sin when he "took into account Darwin’s conjecture that men originally lived in hordes, each under the domination of a single powerful, violent and jealous male." Using metaphysical imagery, Freud revealed that from Darwin’s words "there rose before me... the following hypothesis, or, I would rather say vision." Within this vision:

The father of the primal horde, since he was an unlimited despot, had seized all the women for himself; his sons, being dangerous to him as rivals, had been killed or driven away. One day, however, the sons came together and united to overwhelm, kill, and devour their father, who had been their enemy but also their ideal."
In this mythological state, the first transgression had occurred when the leader of the band was murdered and "devoured" by his sons. Freud wrote that the "original sin [therefore] was an offense against God the Father...the killing of the primal father of the primitive horde, whose mnemonic image was later transfigured into a deity." The sons had committed a staggering crime and their hearts became filled with a sense of shared culpability. As a result, they established the "totem meal" as the "festival commemorating the fearful deed from which sprang man’s sense of guilt (or 'original sin') and which was the beginning at once of social organization, of religion and of ethical restrictions." This meal, prefigured the Christian sacrament of Holy Communion, or the Eucharist, in which the penitent eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Christ.

Through this parricide, the younger men lost far more than they had gained because they had irrevocably stained themselves with their father’s blood. The taint of this sin could never be washed away because it had polluted humanity’s primeval soul, and its foul impress would be stamped upon all subsequent generations. Freud perceived that within all people is a deep sense of alienation—a split in their souls. He attributed this divided self to the violation of the primal father just as Puritans explained the cloven heart as the result of Adam and Eve’s sin against God. And in a concession to Christianity’s
profound recognition of guilt, he wrote that "there can be no doubt that in the Christian myth the original sin was one against God the Father." 10

In a more androcentric vein than Genesis, Freud completely ignored women in his explanation of humanity's predisposition to guilt, but he included them elsewhere in his descriptions of pathological tendencies in that their symptoms often provided the grist for his psychoanalytic mill. His tale of the killing of the primal father appears to have included remnants of the Romantic tradition that had swept Europe during the nineteenth century. Within the Romantic impulse, great suffering belonged within the masculine sphere as witnessed in the struggles of such heroes as Saturn in Keats's Hyperion (1819) and Prometheus in Shelley's Prometheus Unbound (1820). In both cases, the heroes experience grand passions in their efforts to overthrow the Gods. Indeed, Freud's primal horde cast a pale shadow when compared to these mythic giants, but the crimes of conspiracy and parricide are comparable.

Within Freud's group, women were the chattel "on whose account [the men]...had killed their father." He explained that the men "were then driven to finding strange women, and this was the origin of...exogamy." 11 So to him these females were at once trivial in that they had not endured the same passions as the men who were fighting to possess them and extremely important in that competition for them
precipitated the fatal struggle between father and son. Whether we consider the biblical version of original sin in which Eve seduced Adam or Freud’s tale in which the men fought because of the women— it was they who somehow provoked men into the commission of original sin."

For Freud, this primal murder led to humanity’s inheriting ancestral guilt in a way that strongly resembles the Puritans’ belief that all people inherit Adam’s and Eve’s culpability. He wrote in the "Return of Totemism" that "An event such as the elimination of the primal father by the company of sons must inevitably have left ineradicable traces in the history of humanity." He buttressed this statement with a manifesto that amounted to the psychoanalytic doctrine of original sin:

The primaeval history of mankind is filled with murder. Even today, the history of the world which our children learn at school is essentially a series of murders of peoples. The obscure sense of guilt to which mankind has been subject since pre-historic times, and which in some religions has been condensed into the doctrine of primal guilt, or original sin, is probably the outcome of a blood-guilt incurred by prehistoric man."

He explained that the capacity to inherit guilt is inborn and passes down from one generation to the next through the "collective mind" in which "traces" of the original sin still remain and serve as the basis for humanity’s sorrowful legacy. In a passage within Totem and Taboo, he illuminated just how a person who is essentially
innocent of the original crime comes to inherit the shame and suffering associated with this heinous act:

No one can have failed to observe that I have taken as the basis of my whole position [on original sin] the existence of a collective mind, in which mental processes occur just as they do in the mind of an individual. In particular, I have supposed that the sense of guilt for an action has persisted for many thousands of years and has remained operative in generations which can have had no knowledge of that action.5

In this passage, Freud echoed the Puritans who were as convinced as he that people are born with basically flawed natures as part of the legacy of the human condition. Sin, then, has already spotted a person's soul before any human experience has taken place.

The Puritans and Freud believed that corruption within the human being begins before the birth of the individual. Instead of religion, Freud employed Darwinian theories to explain how certain psychological and social phenomena develop. He was not concerned with natural selection; but he was very excited by Darwin's description of the first human community. And he explained that as he brought "together the psycho-analytic translation of...the totem meal with Darwin's theories of the earliest state of human society, the possibility of a deeper understanding emerges" of the origins of guilt and suffering." Freud believed that human consciousness begins when people recognize their crime
of the murder of the leader; out of this act grows the moral awareness of right and wrong.

Guilt within Freud's system provides the socializing impulse just as it does within Calvinism. A sense of culpability can keep the heart from hardening as well as inspire people to confess their sins. An awareness of their blameworthiness makes people more morally conscious of their thoughts and behaviors; in this way they can make an effort to follow the righteous path. To Freud, this inherited predisposition is instrumental in the building of civilization because it curbs people's sexual desires. This restraint, or sublimation, of libido leads to the establishment of necessary and useful social institutions. However, neither Puritan nor Freud believed that people are actually improved by having committed the original sin in the sense that this act can be termed "fortunate."

The notion of the "fortunate fall" provides an optimistic explanation of original sin. God had forbidden his innocent creatures to eat from the tree of knowledge. But according to those who have perceived the fall as felicitous, if people had obeyed Him they would have remained forever ignorant of the knowledge of both good and evil. The bright side of Adam and Eve's sin is that the world into which they had been hurled is more interesting and complex than the Garden of Eden. This interpretation takes an evolutionary approach to the human condition
because it assumes that post-lapsarian creatures are improved by their exposure to the knowledge of the world. Within the garden, Adam and Eve had been spiritual neonates; but once they were expelled they had to rely on their own resources, a process which deepened and ennobled them and their descendants. For Freud and the Calvinists, however, too much psychic pain has been attached to humanity's corrupted nature to claim this condition as advantageous.

To counter such claims, the theological or psychoanalytic doctrine of inherited guilt illuminates the gratuitous suffering that characterizes the human condition; but at its heart, it affords a gloomy view of people as the predetermined heirs to a crime they have not personally committed.

Hypocrisy and Neurosis: Necessary Evils

The Puritans consistently denounced the hypocrite who appeared to be chaste but in whose heart they believed lurked the most loathsome inclinations. Hypocrites were censured for their deceitful natures rather than their behavior which remained, for the most part, commendable. Ironically, because they conducted themselves in a civilized manner, these falsely pious people actually strengthened society rather than undermined it. For this reason, hypocrites were accepted as a necessary evil within the New
England community of saints in spite of the vehemence with which they were denounced.

In a similar manner, Freud understood the social utility of neurotic people who by repressing their sexual desires preserve the tranquillity of society. Nathan Hale in his work on *Freud and the Americans* writes that Freud "believed that civilization and progress depended directly on the control of sexuality and on the stable monogamous family." The price paid to achieve this stability is neurosis, something that he ostensibly sought to remedy just as the Puritans attempted to correct hypocrisy. But in both cases, the suppression or hiding of antisocial inclinations was aimed at helping to ensure the stability of the group.

In this section, I want to consider how on one level, "civilized man" was attacked for his deceitful nature, but on another level how this deceit was tacitly recognized as beneficial to the community. In this way, the hypocrite became an essential element in Puritan society in the same way that the neurotic is necessary to the evolution and maintenance of Freud's conception of civilization.

Within the Puritan community, Thomas Hooker characterized the "civilman" as a person who appears to be

> Outwardly just, temperate, chaste, careful to follow his worldly business, will not hurt so much as his neighbours dog, payes every man his owne, and lives of his owne; no drunkard, adulterer, or quarreller; loves to live peaceably and quietly among his neighbours."
If the significant word "outwardly" were removed from this description, it would become a eulogy. But rather than a testament to the strengths of this "civilman," this portrait was meant to depict false virtue. Puritan divine Thomas Shepard believed that the more people exhibit pride in their "smooth, honest, civil life," the greater is their crime of hypocrisy. For, he warned, "God looks to the heart" in which he finds "heart whoredom, heart sodomy, heart blasphemy, heart drunkenness, heart buggery, heart oppression, heart idolatry."

With this judgment of seemingly pious individuals, Shepard joined the chorus of voices which vociferously attacked such "whited sepulchres" as people whose decayed natures are concealed within righteous shells. The problem with this "civil man" wrote Edmund Morgan was that he "did the right deed for the wrong reasons: he was obedient because of education and social restraints." As part of their mission, ministers admonished their flocks to overcome hypocrisy so that people's true hearts might be revealed. But within these exhortations to overcome false goodness lay a paradox: If people were to unleash their hidden sins upon society, then chaos would ensue. On the other hand, as people restrained their natures they made the "smooth, civil life" possible. In this contradictory fashion, hypocrisy fostered well-being in that it served to protect one's
personal reputation as well as to ensure the stability of the larger community.

When Shepard censured people for the sins of their hearts, he did not intend for those transgressions to become manifested in behavior. Instead, he hoped for a reformation of character. But everyone within the Puritan community understood that a reformed character and a hypocritical nature looked and behaved the same. The danger to the community came not from the hypocrites who decorously behaved themselves, but from the active sinners who blatantly broke the commandments. The tension between righteous behavior and corrupt desires produced hypocrisy among the Puritans in the same way that civilization’s expectations produced neurosis among Freud’s patients.

As the Puritans lamented hypocrisy as a spiritual infirmity, Freud regretted its twin malaise of neurosis. He explained that

Neurotics have approximately the same innate dispositions as other people, they have the same experiences and they have the same tasks to perform...[Therefore] quantitative disharmonies are what must be held responsible for the inadequacy and suffering of neurotics.”

These “disharmonies” caused neurotics to handle differently from normal people the stresses of everyday life. The former repress their genuine responses to difficulties, whereas the latter release the tensions produced by
environmental disturbances. Because neurotics stifle their desires, they experience a host of symptoms that are pathological substitutes for their affections. Whereas Catholicism encourages the suppression of sexual instincts in some instances, both Freud and the Puritans believed that it is unnatural and intolerable to repress one's true nature. Control rather than suppression was their mutual goal.

Of neurotics, Freud wrote that "Each of these excessively virtuous individuals passed through an evil period in his infancy—a phase of perversion which was the forerunner or precondition of the later period of excessive morality." Hypocrites and neurotics are alike in that they feel constrained to hide from everyone the inherently perverse aspects of their personalities. Freud recognized that the demands of "civilized society" produce these analogous states when he wrote that

Anyone...compelled to act continually in accordance with precepts which are not the expression of his instinctual inclinations, is living psychologically beyond his means, and may objectively be described as a hypocrite, whether he is clearly aware of the incongruity or not."

As Hooker and Shepard assailed the "civilman" in the seventeenth century for possessing twisted virtue, Freud launched a similar strike against neurotics in his 1908 essay "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness." Taking an historical look at the human condition,
Freud hypothesized that when people first began to interact sexually their goal was to seek pleasure rather than to reproduce themselves. He commented that if this state of affairs had continued, humanity would have withered away from an erroneous kind of sexual activity in which the aim was gratification rather than reproduction. Therefore, the suppression of the sexual instinct became necessary for the building of civilization. But the process of repression produced neurosis as people buried their true desires. He described three stages of civilization including:

The first one, in which the sexual instinct may be freely exercised without regard to the aims of reproduction; a second, in which all of the sexual instinct is suppressed except what serves the aims of reproductions; and a third, in which only legitimate reproduction is allowed as a sexual aim. This third stage is reflected in our present-day 'civilized sexual morality.'

He explained that "civilization is built upon the suppression of instincts," and he believed that the "renunciation" of passion was necessary if people were to emerge from savagery. Defining "normal sexuality" as that "which is serviceable to civilization," he believed that "the forces that can be employed for cultural activities are thus to a great extent obtained through the suppression of what are known as the perverse elements of sexual excitation." In this passage he dealt gingerly with the activities of homosexuals because he indicated that these
individuals possess "a special aptitude for cultural sublimation," in which their contributions add to the healthy maintenance of culture. However, he did make a case against sexual activities that are substitutes for the "union of the genitals of the two opposite sexes."

Understanding that because "normal intercourse has been so relentlessly persecuted by morality," he indicated that "perverse forms of intercourse...in which other parts of the body take over the role of the genitals" have become important. But he admonished people that

These activities cannot, however, be regarded as harmless....They are ethically objectionable, for they degrade the relationships of love between two human being from a serious matter to a convenient game, attended by no risk and spiritual participation."

In the case of neurotics, he described them as "the class of people who...only succeed, under the influence of cultural requirements, in achieving a suppression of their instincts." Like hypocrites, neurotics respond to social pressure to inhibit their behavior, and Freud ironically observed that they "would have been more healthy if it could have been possible for them to be less good." In the same vein, Shepard's "civil man" would have been more honest if he appeared less virtuous.

Based on this observation, Freud would appear to be actually calling for freer self expression. And, in fact,
at the end of his paper on "'Civilized' Sexual Morality" he argued for fewer restrictions upon "the sexual activities in a community" because inhibitions are "generally accompanied by an increase of anxiety about life and of fear of death." These negative emotions in turn create "a diminished inclination to beget children." It was this "diminished inclination" to reproduce offspring that alarmed Freud. Originally, people suppressed gratification in order to reproduce; but when neurotic inhibition becomes stronger than the desire to procreate, then repression becomes dysfunctional and destructive. This is a theme that he developed more thoroughly in his 1929 work Civilization and Its Discontents. Two decades earlier he was only beginning to explore the connection between civilization and the neuroses, but he never abandoned the conclusions that he reached in 1908 about the inherent antagonism between sexual expression and the demands of civilization. For him, the tension between these two impulses within the average individual often results in neurosis if not handled well.

Although he believed that the sexual drive is characterized by its independent nature, Freud never espoused permissiveness in this area. He wrote that "the sexual instinct behaves in general in a self-willed and inflexible fashion." In this specific context he was speaking only of masculine sexuality. Women, he wrote, are more successful in repressing their desires because of the
education they receive which calls for harsh inhibitions. In a passage that suggested his enlightenment about the consequences of the woman's separate cultural legacy, Freud wrote: "It is clear that education is far from underestimating the task of suppressing a girl's sensuality till her marriage, for it makes use of the most drastic measures." He prefaced this criticism with his observation that the "undoubted intellectual inferiority of so many women can rather be traced back to the inhibition of thought necessitated by sexual suppression." Aside from his misogynistic comment about the general diminished intelligence of females, Freud can be seen as on the path to the realization that culture, rather than biology, constitutes destiny.

But in his further remarks Freud revealed what lay behind his ostensible concern about females' sexual repressions. While reproving "education" as the instrument that "suppressed a girl's sensuality [by placing a] high premium on...female chastity," he lamented that the bride is kept "ignorant of all the facts of the part she is to play in marriage." Her ignorance more often than not results in frigidity, a condition that Freud deplored because it deprives "the man of any high degree of sexual enjoyment." His sympathies therefore, were with the husband who experienced a loss of pleasure and not with the wife whose sexual vitality was prematurely withered through cultural
repression. To Freud, an inhibited wife offered little or no gratification to her husband, and for this reason, he believed that a woman's education should be broadened to include the joys of the marriage bed.

Although Freud went against the social grain by denouncing the instruction received by women, in his own courtship with Martha Bernays he had cautioned her against acquiring too liberal an education. In her reading, Bernays had become acquainted with the writings of John Stuart Mill in which he denounced the subjugation of women. Alarmed by his fiance's interests, Freud responded that Mill "lacked the sense of the absurd on several points, for instance the emancipation of women and the question of women altogether." Freud charged that in Mill's works "it never appears that the woman is different from the man, which is not to say she is something less, if anything the opposite." Unsettled by this demystification of the distinction between the genders, Freud charged that the Englishman "finds an analogy for the oppression of women in that of the Negro," and he argued that "Any girl, even without a vote and legal rights, whose hand is kissed by a man willing to risk his all for her love, could put him right on this."106

Romanticizing the separate spheres, Freud wrote to Bernays that "It seems a completely unrealistic notion to send women into the struggle for existence in the same way as men. Am I to think of my delicate, sweet girl as a
competitor?" And he worried that it was even "possible that a different education could suppress all women's delicate qualities--which are so much in need of protection and yet so powerful." Uttering private words that he would later publicly contradict, he attacked "all reforming activity, legislation and education" for women which he believed "will founder on the fact that...nature will have appointed woman by her beauty, charm, and goodness...to be an adored sweetheart in youth, and a beloved wife in maturity."107

Many years after this correspondence, Freud criticized the socialization process that forces women to suppress their sexual passion in his treatment of "'Civilized' Morality." However, if he had been completely serious about wanting women to enjoy sex more than he believed they did, he could have actively pushed for a change in the education of pubescent and adolescent girls by suggesting specific details to be included in this instruction. But he never aggressively advocated this. Instead, he essentially blamed the victim for the failure of her marriage because of "the retardation in the wife's [sexual] development." And he added that even if she were able to "overcome" her inhibitions and "awaken...at the climax of her life as a woman, her relations to her husband have long since been ruined." Thus "as a reward for her previous docility, she is left with the choice between unappeased desire, unfaithfulness or a neurosis."108 In the end, Freud placed
the "ruined" sexual relation at the doorstep of the "docile" wife who has only frustration, immorality or illness to look forward to in her maturity. The presumably sexually-experienced husband remains a shadowy creature in Freud's disparagement of "'Civilized' Morality" as he pointed out the culpability of the wife. All we know is that husband after husband suffers grave disappointment because of the wife's infelicitous ignorance.

In spite of Freud's condemnation of the destructive aspects of repressed sexual desires, neither he nor the Puritans considered it desirable that people overthrow the restraints of civilization that keep their passions under control. Admittedly, neurotics might become healthier if they could vanquish their inhibitions and hypocrites might exhibit greater sincerity if they could behave less piously, but these genuine reactions would result in moral chaos. In the end, hypocrisy and neurosis conceal a multitude of sins. Among the Puritans, the hypocrite was indistinguishable from the saint, and within Freudian psychology the neurotic remains remarkably like the normal person until physical symptoms develop. Civilized morality prevails as an oblique deterrent to indulgence among hypocrites and neurotics.

Both the Puritans and Freud believed that the passions are just barely under control; so they tolerated even the false dominion exercised by spurious piety and repression as an alternative to pandemonium.
Conclusion

Sigmund Freud shared with the Puritans their dark view of the human condition in which hope was dimmed by people's innate propensity to sin. Believing that religions are unrealistically optimistic about the good that resided within the human breast, Freud would have found himself at home among the Puritans concerning certain fundamental beliefs including the instinctual character of the affections, the sense that many aspects of life are already determined by pre-existing conditions beyond the control of the individual, and the appeal to reason, however slender, as fortification against the reckless and unruly passions. Arm-in-arm with Puritan patriarchs, Freud shunned optimism as thoroughly as John Winthrop attacked the antinomian beliefs of Anne Hutchinson and Jonathan Edwards vociferated against the doctrine of Arminianism. In the twentieth-century, Freud reiterated the doctrine of original sin from a psychological perspective.

He believed that all people are innately "aggressive," and that this destructive capacity obviates most individuals' chances for psychological salvation. Freud explained that people's instinctive pursuit of destruction "contradicts too many religious presumptions and social conventions" that insist that "man must be naturally good or at least good-natured." In his final years, he became
completely soured toward the human experience when he announced "that the belief in the 'goodness' of human nature is one of those evil illusions."¹⁰⁹

Rejecting the notion of perfectibility within individuals, Freud offered limited grace for those people able to follow his psychoanalytic path. Recognizing that his goal echoed some religious assumptions, he explained that

Psychoanalytic work is continually confronted with the task of inducing the patient to renounce an immediate and directly attainable yield of pleasure. He is not asked to renounce all; that could not, perhaps, be expected of any human being, and even religion is obliged to support the demand that earthly pleasure shall be set aside by promising that it will provide an incomparably greater amount of superior pleasure in another world.¹¹⁰

The objective that he described for his patients resonated with spiritual overtones when he asked that they "make a sacrifice" through the "provisional renunciation of some pleasurable satisfaction...to show readiness to accept some temporary suffering for the sake of a better end."¹¹¹ These aspirations were consistent with the Puritans ministers' hopes that people would sacrifice their pride and lust as they walked the road of righteousness. Puritans and Freudians alike held out hope for the "better end" to be attained through self-abnegation. However, an irony remains that in spite of this noble goal neither the Calvinists nor
Freud believed in people's free will to bring about their own transfigurations. Individuals are limited by their innate tendencies to err, and nothing they do can bring about the kind of metamorphosis promised by the people such as John Wesley who believed in the human potential for perfectibility. In spite of the hope held out by Calvinism and psychoanalysis, most souls from both perspectives are unable to transcend themselves as they stumble blindly toward perdition.
Chapter Notes


3. Mortimer Ostrow, *Judaism and Psychoanalysis* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1982), p. 8. All further references to this work will be by Ostrow and page number.


9. Certain of these authors’ works will be discussed in Chapter 8.


23. Tryon, p. 36.

24. Tryon, p. 46.


51. Sigmund Freud, "Letter 56," The Standard Edition. This letter referred specifically to their mutual patient, Emma Eckstein. For an intriguing analysis of the bizarre malpractice on this woman by Fliess, one should read Jeffrey Masson’s The Assault on Truth, 1984.


56. Mather, Memorable Providences, p. 121.

57. Mather, Memorable Providences, p. 112.

58. Mather, Memorable Providences, p. 113.


60. Mather, Memorable Providences, p. 123.

61. Mather, Memorable Providences, p. 123.
62. Mather, Angel of Bethesda, p. xiii.


69. Jones, II, 482.


78. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (1915), The Standard Edition, XIV, 293.
79. Sigmund Freud, "An Autobiographical Study" (1925), The Standard Edition, XX, 68. Freud introduced his definition of the primal or original sin in his quasi-ethnological work Totem and Taboo.


82. Freud's views about women, including female sexuality, are found in Chapters 3 and 8.


87. The "fortunate fall" will be discussed in Chapter 7 in respect to Henry James, Sr.

88. Nathan Hale, Freud and the Americans: The Beginnings of Psycho-Analysis in the United States, 1876-1917 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 25. All further references to this work will be by Hale and page number.


90. Thomas Shepard, Works, 2 volumes (Boston, 1853), I, 29.


112. Wesley’s theology will be discussed in Chapter 7.
Introduction

The death knell rang for Puritanism during the nineteenth century as New England's spiritual sensibilities shifted from the pessimistic doctrines of Calvinism to the more optimistic beliefs expressed within a variety of Protestant faiths, from the intellectual approach of the Unitarians to the enthusiasm exhibited by the Methodists. Announcing the demise of the Puritan faith of his ancestors, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. (1809-1894) in his satiric poem "The Deacon's Masterpiece" compared it to a worn-out "one-hoss-shay." The chaise ran well for one-hundred years, but on the morning of November 1, 1855, at exactly 9:30 a.m. "it went to pieces all at once," spilling the parson "upon a rock." The Deacon had built his faith upon Calvinist tenets, or "logic," which in the middle of the century disintegrated and left him with no means of conveyance for his old ideas.
Holmes's judgment of Calvinism has been rearticulated by modern scholars who have tended to link its decline to the nineteenth-century evangelical revivals of ministers such as Charles Finney and Dwight Moody, whose unbridled zeal obscured the dark logic of Puritanism. In spite of the declension of its doctrines, however, the Puritan view of human nature still gripped the imaginations of men and women in the nineteenth century.

In this chapter, I want to consider which aspects of Calvinism were transcended by a brighter view of God and humanity and which survived to influence a new generation of liberals including William Ellery Channing and William James. One major shift occurred in the view of God and humanity in which deterministic doctrines were replaced by an emphasis on the Creator's charity and children's purity. This change helped to produce the mood of optimism that largely characterized the nineteenth century.

But even as optimism flourished in many religious and social groups, it was especially undermined in New England by the residual knowledge of evil that William James addressed in his discussion of religious experiences. For the most part, I am dealing with just the story of New Englanders--their rejection and reaffirmation of Puritan ways of thinking. My major concern is to consider what was happening in the minds of key heirs of Puritanism within the larger framework of optimism that influenced nineteenth-
century American thought. One of the best images for this era was provided by Henry James, Sr., who pronounced Adam's fall from grace to be fortuitous because it permitted people to develop their ability to distinguish good from evil, a discrimination not possible in paradise. James, Sr., did not deny the dark side of the human condition, but he believed that people can overcome earthly sorrows by discovering their own higher natures and finding comfort in God. In this way, he combined elements of Emerson's philosophy of self-reliance with the Calvinists' emphasis on human misery to produced an optimism flawed by an awareness of suffering.

God's Benevolence and Children's Innocence

The early Puritan's God was majestic, arbitrary, and wrathful. In His fierce grandeur, He presumably remained unmoved by the prayers of human beings deeply influenced by original sin. As Calvinism lost spiritual energy, however, its imperious God was transformed into an avuncular deity who was always willing to hear the penitent's plea. God's awful vengeance was replaced by charity and forgiveness among those Protestants who saw their Creator as a kind of Father of a bourgeois family. This cozy patriarchal portrait provided the inspiration for Henry Ward Beecher's sermon to his Congregationalist parish entitled "The
Comforting God." He explained that as people are able to conceive of God as a "tender Father, who thinks of men, and cares for their infirmities, just as a father in the household thinks of his children," they experience "a source of great cheer and comfort." His God even found that people's "very mistakes [were]...in some sense dear to him."1

We can appreciate the magnitude of Beecher's transfiguration, when we compare his sympathetic God to Jonathan Edwards's indignant Deity Who "holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire." This God "abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked...[and considers] you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire."2 Reflecting the ameliorating spirit of his age, Beecher believed that "What men need in their discouraged state, is a view of God, who, though holy, though ideally perfect...is nevertheless a Father in tenderness, in gentleness, in sweetness, and in persevering and patient industry of recovery."3

As the breath of hope inspired people in the nineteenth century to perceive God as kind and tolerant, it also blew away the doctrine of infant depravity that had remained a fixed idea within Puritanism. The decline of this religious concept coincided with the Romantic impulse which emphasized the "natural" goodness of children. Poets such as William Blake compared children to the lamb of Christ:
He is meek and he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child and thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.

Within this innocence lies a spiritual wisdom that William Wordsworth described as "natural piety" in his poem "My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold." In this tribute to the beauty of nature, he perceived that "The Child is father of the Man." The joy experienced by children as they "behold a rainbow in the sky" becomes the special instruction that they offer to adults. In this way as people mature, they can look back to the earliest stirring of their hearts to re-experience their exaltation in God's creation. Of his own spiritual continuity, Wordsworth wrote that as his heart had leaped "when my life began;/So is it now I am a man." Romantic idealists believed that people are born innocent and can remain that way as long as they nourish the child within their hearts. But as they enter the competitive world of commerce and industry, they surrender their purity; therefore, social pressures—not original sin—account for the corruption of souls.

Between the John Calvin's harsh view of people as inveterate sinners and the Romantics' exaltation of the power of the human spirit fell the tabula rasa psychology of John Locke. Eschewing the doctrine of original sin, Locke postulated that the souls of infants are morally neutral. The child is born with a blank mind upon which the
environment would make certain impressions; it was outside influences that shape one's moral sensibilities. Children, therefore, are creatures of their surroundings rather than victims of some inherited spiritual deformity. Locke never argued that the child is intrinsically good, but neither did he affirm the Augustinian doctrine of original sin. Locke's "blank slate" provided an important transition from the gloomy characterization of children as "innocent vipers" by the Puritans to their depiction as adorable "innocent lambs" by the Romantic poets. Within the lamb metaphor lay an implicit comparison between the purity of Christ and the innocence of the child, an affinity that the Puritans would have found blasphemous. However, as the image of the Deity became transfigured from the God of condemnation to the God of forgiveness, the conception of humanity underwent a similar transformation in which people's sinful natures were assumed to be softened by their desire to seek moral perfection.

Human Perfectibility and the Spirit of Optimism

Although perfectionism was a doctrine that was specifically embraced by the Methodists, I am using the term in a larger and more general sense. Within Calvinism, the earliest glimmerings of perfectionism can be detected in the writings of the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560-
1609), who believed in the doctrine of election but opposed its counterpart predestination because it obviated freedom of choice. Jonathan Edwards pronounced the Arminian notion of "free will" both heretical and impossible, but its growing popularity disturbed him. During the middle third of the eighteenth century, Edwardsean Calvinism withstood the Arminian threat because of the passion connected with "The Great Awakening." In spite of their reinvigoration, however, the basic elements of Puritanism were finally undermined toward the end of the century by a radical shift in the way human nature was perceived. Moving away from original sin and predestination, theologians such as John Wesley (1703-1791) began to emphasize perfectionism.

Wesley, the founder of Methodism, accepted the doctrine of election in that he believed that not everyone would achieve grace; but he rejected the belief that God had elected only certain individuals for salvation. Unlike the Calvinists, he considered the individual's will to be an important impetus to seek salvation. He also believed that Christians who follow Christ's injunction "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48) can achieve this state. In his Plain Account of Christian Perfection he indicated that people experience redemption through their faith in God coupled with their practice of good works. He described the perfect human being as
One in whom is the mind which was in Christ, and who so walketh as Christ also walked: a man that hath clean hands and a pure heart, or that is cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; one in whom is no occasion of stumbling, and who accordingly does not commit sin....[Such a person is] sanctified throughout.5

Wesley's emphasis on the spiritually beneficial nature of good works clashed with Calvin's reliance on God's gratuitous grace alone for salvation. Methodist Perfectionism paved the way for a broader interpretation of salvation. In addition, it gave rise to the optimistic promise that people can participate in their own redemptions by following their convictions about what is good. Reflecting this new mood of confidence, Ralph Waldo Emerson took aim at the Puritan tradition which continued to affect people. He charged that its doctrines of despair were causing "our young people" to be "diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination and the like." These "problems," he insisted,

Never presented a practical difficulty to any man,--never darkened across any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps and measles and whooping-coughs....A simple mind will not know these enemies.4

Emerson would have agreed with Vernon Parrington that to vanquish the remnants of Puritanism proved to be "no summer campaign" because its adherents remained "tough of
fiber and tenacious of opinion." Parrington later summarized the goal of this struggle as one of "intellectual emancipation" from the doctrines of "theological conservatism" in which the potential of humanity was believed to be undermined by everyone's inherent tendency toward self-destruction. As the "emancipation" process took place, the New England mind became absorbed in the notion of perfectionism that Emerson had introduced as "self-reliance" and William Ellery Channing had expressed as "self-culture." Intellectuals began to stress individualism as a virtue; and people were perceived as possessing the power to shape their own salvation rather than being limited by predestination and original sin.

A theologian who imbued his religion with the spirit of optimism was William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), the chief spokesman of early nineteenth-century Unitarianism. After having completed his seminarian studies at Harvard, Channing was ordained as a Congregationalist minister in 1803. During his ministry, the religious tensions that had been simmering within the church between the "old light" Calvinists and the Arminians reached the boiling point. Entering into this controversy, Channing placed himself on the side of the liberals when he rejected the doctrine of original sin in favor of free will. He disseminated his ideas in an important sermon in Baltimore in 1819 in which he stressed the basic dignity and spiritual autonomy of each
human being; these views, in turn, provided Unitarianism with its humanistic underpinnings. Six years later he founded the American Unitarian Association, an action that ensured his recognition as the leader of the new denomination.

In his writings, Channing developed the concept of "self-culture" through which people can willfully reform their own characters. To begin this reformation, they need to identify and nurture the "divine germ" within each soul that God had planted as the inspiration to improve the self. The supreme goal of people who struggle for self-improvement is to achieve perfectibility as God, Himself, is perfect. Channing's optimistic message provided the basis for the Unitarian movement which began within the Congregationalist Church. Emerson favored this new approach because its principles coincided with his own sanguine metaphysics. Unlike their Calvinist progenitors, Unitarians and Transcendentalists agreed that the spiritual limits that people experience are self-imposed; God never seeks to confine human potential.

However, as a means to achieving "self-culture," Channing retained the Calvinist emphasis on introspection which he considered to be one of the "two powers of the human soul." The soul's other "power" is its "self-forming" capability to overcome the destructive tendencies revealed through self-scrutiny. Using imagery that
recaptured the virulent inner world of the Puritans, Channing wrote that when people "happen to cast a glance inward, they see there only a dark, vague chaos. They distinguish, perhaps, some violent passion which has driven them to injurious excess." But even if this dark interior was Calvin's legacy, Channing explained that it can be transformed through the person's efforts to achieve excellence. In this way, individuals can perfect themselves through an exertion of their spirit that "transcends in importance all our power over outward nature."

Extolling spiritual independence, Ralph Waldo Emerson offered his essay on "Self-Reliance," as the path to human perfectibility. To illustrate this goal, he chose a stanza from Beaumont and Fletcher's Honesty Man's Fortune:

Man is his own star; and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Command all light, all influence, all fate,
Nothing to him falls early or too late.

He sanctified this credo through the personal conviction to
"Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string."

This injunction carried with it the implicit faith that people's inner selves are, in fact, trustworthy, a notion that was at odds with the Puritans' view of human nature. Rather than locating the impulse to evil within the heart of the individual, Emerson found that corruption stems from the social environment. He believed that the "self-reliant"
individual is the incarnation of good, whereas the world embodies the forces of "Chaos and the Dark." Reflecting the values of the Romantic Movement that stressed independence, he wrote that "Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of everyone of its members." He envisioned humanity in the ferocious grip of the community's "unintelligent" will that was motivated by "brute force."

The greatest threat to self-reliance comes from the pressure to accommodate oneself to the mindless conventions that sap people of their individuality. Emerson wrote that within society "The virtue most in request is conformity."

Persons who reject the group's demands as either shabby or ruthless express their self-reliance. Once they discover and maintain their inner integrity, they exhibit what he called "the essence of virtue...the essence of life...Spontaneity or Instinct." He viewed each person's deepest tendencies as essentially good if they have not been warped by the demands of others, whereas the Calvinists perceived the inner self in opposite terms.

The metaphysics of Emerson's optimism were ardently expressed in his essay "The Over-Soul," in which he recorded his principal statement about human perfectibility. People are capable of perfection because they are "at one" or in "unity" with God; therefore, they can claim His glory and excellence. Undercutting the Calvinist view that humanity consists of loathsome creatures completely separate from
their Creator, Emerson bound creature and Creator together into the "Over-Soul." In this way, all individuals "rest" in

That Unity, that Over-Soul, within which every man's particular being is contained and made one with all other; that common heart of which all sincere conversation is the worship, to which all right action is submission."

Elaborating on his theory of unity, Emerson explained that "within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One." His ideas provided the basis for New England Transcendentalism in which people's apprehension of God resides in their intuitive capabilities rather than in their adherence to doctrine. Within his idealistic framework, he described "genius" as the capability to believe the goodness of one's own thoughts. He explained that people can seek their own perfectibility through the "deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is accessible to us." To illustrate the power of this beatitude, he wrote that the individual who experiences transcendence over his or her mortal limits rejoices that

I am born into the great, the universal mind. I the imperfect, adore my own Perfect. I am somehow receptive of the great soul.... More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me....So come I to live in thoughts, and act with energies which are immortal."
With a final metaphysical flourish, Emerson claimed that "the simplest person who in his integrity, worships God becomes God." This declaration would have been considered an odious presumption by orthodox Puritans who believed that creature and Creator are to remain separate beings even after the Last Judgment. Emerson, however, challenged the orthodox separation of God from humanity by combining them into the Over-Soul.

In this gleaming cosmos in which people and God share the same spiritual substance, Emerson did not altogether cancel evil; however, it cast a pale shade when compared to the Calvinists' dark specter of innate depravity or Freud's passions of the id. By linking destructive impulses to compensatory benefits in which "every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good," Emerson diluted the virulence of their impact. Evil at its worst was for him merely the shadowy opposite of good. Understanding that the issues of suffering and unhappiness would raise some difficult questions, Emerson offered his insights into the nature of human misery in his essay "Spiritual Laws." His explanation involved the calculus of metaphysics in which he separated the mortal plane of existence from the infinite domain of God. Disconsolations can only be experienced by the flesh—not the spirit—because God had created "the soul [which] will not know either deformity or pain." Within Emerson's benign universe, no real infelicities exist. If a person
experiences sorrow or pain, it is because he has imported
into "his mind difficulties which are none of his." 23

Entertaining no such metaphysical distinctions between
mortal appearances and divine reality, the Puritans accepted
afflictions, whether they took the form of a violent storm
or serious illness, as manifestations of God's will. They
deemed themselves sturdy realists who understood that the
problems they encountered constitute part of God's grand
design. But as an idealist, Emerson rejected the notion
that human afflictions are authored by either Heaven or Hell
when he wrote that

"All loss, all pain, is particular; the universe
remains to the heart unhurt....Neither vexations
nor calamities abate our trust. No man ever
stated his grief as lightly as he might....For it
is only the finite that has wrought and suffered,
the infinite lies stretched in smiling repose."

In this passage, he equated "finite" to the material or
sensual level of existence.

By repudiating the reality of human misery, Emerson
dismissed the suffering endured by generations of Puritans
who believed in the evil inclinations within their own
natures. To him if evil exists at all, its home is in the
imagination and not the passions. And he protested that

Our life might be much easier and simpler than we
make it; that the world might be a happier place
than it is; that there is no need of struggles,
convulsions and despairs, or the wringing of hands
and the gnashing of teeth; that we miscreate our
own evils. We interfere with the optimism of nature."

Emersonian idealism, or Transcendentalism, matured in the heart of Puritan Massachusetts. Emerson, himself, was well acquainted with Calvinist doctrines through his seminarian studies at Harvard as well as his commitment to Unitarianism. In 1826 he was "approbated to preach" by the Middlesex Association of Unitarian Ministers. Within three years, he had assumed full charge of the Second Unitarian Church of Boston where he ministered to its flock until 1832 when he resigned in protest over the sacrament of bread and wine. Believing Communion to be void of spiritual content, Emerson conscientiously refused to offer the Lord's Supper. After leaving the church, he turned his mind to the development of Transcendentalism as a spiritual alternative to organized religion, and in 1834 he and Henry David Thoreau founded the Transcendental Club. But Emerson was to experience one more important encounter with formal religion when he delivered the "Divinity School Address" at Harvard in 1838 in which he thoroughly attacked the clerical establishment. Because of his remarks he remained persona non grata there for the next thirty years. This religious background meant that when he set out to slay the orthodox dragons he knew them by name. He never rejected the idea of a Creator, or Divine Mind, but he disagreed with the doctrines of election and original sin. Within his own
heart, however, he found peace through a personal contact with God that he expressed in his essay "The Over-Soul":

> When I sit in...[God's] presence, who shall dare to come in? When I rest in perfect humility, when I burn with pure love,—what can Calvin...say?

In spite of his metaphysics of perfection, Emerson did not completely dispel the view of human nature that had informed the theology of his Puritan ancestors. Refusing to accept the idea that every person is born into a state of sin, he nevertheless admitted that people in general experience pernicious thoughts that undermine their well-being. These evil judgments flourish in proportion to a person's inability to grasp the beneficence of the Universe. Emerson never addressed the root of this inability; but if he had concerned himself with the origin of evil, some of his speculations would probably have pressed him into the Puritans' spiritual landscape where the passions contend with reason for supremacy. Instead, he appealed to a benevolent Nature that would not abide hypocrisy: "Dreadful limits are set in nature to the powers of dissimulation. Truth tyrannizes over the unwilling members of the body. Faces never lie." In this context, he argued that a wicked person can not hide because his inner corruption is etched on his face: "His vice glasses his eye, cuts lines of mean expression in his cheek, pinches his nose, sets the mark of
the beast on the back on his head, and writes O fool! fool! on the forehead of a king."

Emerson’s canon formed an inspirational literature that encouraged people to reshape their plastic natures to correspond to God’s perfect being. Dismissing malevolence as an illusion, he believed that individuals can attain perfection if they exercise their wills and imaginations in transcending their mortal limits. But if their wills are weak, then they will fail. In this equation, evil was reduced to being merely a faint heart lacking conviction and hope. And goodness was equated with a person’s simple grasp of God not bogged down in painful "self-reproaches." In spite of his preference for a "simple-mind," however, Emerson revealed his own attraction to intellectual reflection in many of his essays.

In the third quarter of the 19th century, Emerson’s optimism was sustained in the carefully wrought theology of Mary Baker Eddy, who published the first edition of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* in Boston in 1875. Growing up in Bow, Massachusetts, Eddy’s intellectual sensibilities were shaped by New England’s theologians and scholars. In her description of her education, she acknowledged reading the Transcendentalists including Emerson thereby acquainting herself with his idealism. Her "discovery" of Christian Science had at its core the same optimism that informed Emerson’s metaphysics. However, Eddy
forged these ideas into a religion that people began to practice; whereas, Emerson's notions remained on the philosophical level.

She became inspired to found a new religion after she experienced the restoration of her own physical health. Having been sick on and off for years, Eddy sought treatment from a variety of people. Finally, in despair she turned to the Bible to begin a thorough exegesis of both the Old and New Testaments. As a result of "correctly understanding" what she read, she experienced a restoration of her physical health and well as a cleansing of her spirit. For the rest of her life she sought to re-establish "primitive Christianity," and her goal became Christ's work of healing the sick and raising the dead.

Within Christian Science, Eddy provided her followers with a completely optimistic vision of God and humanity. Like Emerson, she believed that the universe and everything in it constitute God's flawless creation. However, many people can not comprehend this perfection because they believe in "error." She countered that sin and evil have never existed because God, upon completion of His creation, pronounced everything in Heaven and Earth as "very good." What people perceive as evil is only an illusion called "Adam's Dream" that emanates from "mortal mind." "Mortal mind" is synonymous with "error" in which exist the fallacious notions of sin and sickness; but these states
cannot be real because God did not create them. Through Christian Science, Eddy wanted people to abandon the evidence of their senses which erroneously report sin and sickness and, in their place, to develop a correct understanding of God. As this is accomplished, individuals can expect to experience excellent health and eternal life. Within the American experience, the potential for human perfectibility reached its zenith through Christian Science.

The spirit of optimism that informed American spiritual principles during the nineteenth century did much to eliminate the grip of Calvinist doctrines. People deeply inhaled the new atmosphere of confidence as they put behind them the deterministic notions of infant depravity and original sin. However, the dark character of the Calvinist heritage—particularly in New England—could not be erased by the unabashed welcome that perfectionism received. Individuals continued to feel its philosophical impact even after its religious principles declined.

The Decay of Optimism in William James

At the end of the nineteenth-century, William James wrote his pioneering study of the psychology of religion in which he exposed the shallowness of his era’s "sky-blue optimism," at the same time that he contemplated the
positive aspects of melancholy. Throughout his life, James, who had received his training in neurology at Harvard, expressed an even greater interest in psychology than his chosen medical field. When he first developed his fascination with human nature, psychology did not constitute a separate discipline but remained within the purview of natural philosophy and theology; and in his own studies he did not comprehend the academic background prescribed for someone interested in the life of the mind.

Nevertheless, William James came to epitomize American psychology through his monumental work Principles of Psychology, published in 1890, in which he included chapters on the "self," "habit," "stream of consciousness" and "the will." In this work, he championed "introspection" as the avenue to self-revelation, a practice consistent with the beliefs of his Puritan forbearers. Of the role that James played in establishing the relevance of humanistic psychology, A.A. Roback comments that

Even if James had not contributed a single idea that is now accepted in psychology, he not only tilled the soil but planted the seed. At a time when the search for general laws obscured everything else from view, James was sympathetic to the deviations and exceptions.... He taught us to read between the lines and note relations, interstices, and blank spaces. He brought the heart into psychology, which previously had been ruled altogether by the head."
Pursuing his interest in the psychology of the spiritually-inclined individual, James delivered the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion at the University of Edinburgh in 1900 in which he displayed a sympathetic attitude toward his subject. These lectures were published the following year as *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*. In this work, he expressed his sense that the Divine Presence is often experienced on a subconscious level. He also made an important distinction between spiritual predispositions in that he believed some people are natively optimistic whereas others suffer from an inborn melancholy. In his analysis of these personalities, he expressed his compassion for those individuals who tend to possess a gloomy cast of mind because they experience the sorrow he believed to be an inherent part of the human condition.

James began his discussion by mocking a popular theory that certain "psycho-physical connections" produce specific states of mind. He proposed that if a person's bodily organs could have any impact on his or her beliefs, then

> We should doubtless see 'the liver' determining the dicta of the sturdy atheist as decisively as it does those of the methodist under conviction anxious about his soul. When it alters in one way the blood that percolates it, we get the methodist, when in another way, we get the atheist form of mind."
By rejecting the notion that religious affections are in some way the offspring of somatic processes, James was free to summon the "empiricist criterion" of "By their fruits ye shall know them" as the true test for a spiritual disposition. Employing a pragmatic view, he explained that "Our practice is the only sure evidence, even to ourselves, that we are genuinely Christians."

In his analysis of human nature in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, James balanced the optimism of his age with his appreciation of the "sick soul." But before turning to this individual, he began with a consideration of the religion of healthy-mindedness as a preparation for his deeper appraisal of the wisdom born from the despair of "the sick soul." In this lecture, he asked his audience "to consider the simpler kinds of religious happiness" experienced by people who innately possess the "cosmic emotion" of happiness. He noted that "It is to be hoped that we all have some friend, perhaps more often feminine than masculine, and young than old, whose world is of this sky-blue tint." These people experience "enchanting innocencies" as their daily spiritual bread rather than "dark human passions" reserved for the gloomy-mind."

To illustrate significant differences within human nature, James used Cardinal Newman's characterization of the "once-born" and the "twice-born" personalities. It was James's observation that the "once-born" tended to flourish
within the "Romish Church," whereas the "twice-born" find their home in "Protestantism, whose fashions of feelings have been set in the minds of a decidedly pessimistic order." However, he believed that "recent liberal developments" specifically within Unitarianism, have permitted "minds of this [negative] order" to make contributions. Among the "once-born," he placed Emerson and the abolitionist-minister Theodore Parker in whom

One can recognize...the presence of a temperament organically weighted on the side of cheer and fatally forbidden to linger, as those of the opposite temperament linger, over the dark aspect of the universe."

James found Emerson’s and Parker’s combination of optimism and rationalism to be attractive, but he remained chary of individuals in whom "optimism may become quasi-pathological." In these people, "the capacity for even a transient sadness or a momentary humility seems cut off from them as by a kind of congenital anaesthesia." To illustrate this "quasi-pathology," he offered the poetry of Walt Whitman in which "What is called good is perfect and what is called bad is just as perfect." In contrast to those earnest souls concerned with the complexity of life, Whitman’s exuberance appeared to James to be "mere silliness.""40

In spite of his criticism of Whitman’s simple-minded faith, James viewed as positive those individuals who
deliberately foster a "healthy" attitude toward life's complications. Of this tendency, he wrote that "the systematic cultivation of healthy-mindedness as a religious attitude is...consonant with important currents in human nature, and is anything but absurd." And he believed that within the nineteenth century, liberal ministers had contributed to the spirit of "healthy-mindedness" by "making little of sin" instead of "magnifying" it; in this way they dispelled "the morbidness with which the old hell-fire theology was more harmoniously related."

Within his description of the "once-born," James included an analysis of "mind-cure," a phenomenon that swept through New England during the last several decades of the Victorian Era. Proponents of this method of healing relied on the spiritual powers buried within their minds to cure physical illness and to overcome calamities. He explained that the "doctrinal sources" for this approach to health included "Emersonian or New England Transcendentalism," "Berkeleian idealism," and "Christian Science." Of these creeds, he wrote that Christian Science was the "most radical...in its dealings with evil." He described mind cure as "wholly and exclusively compacted of optimism: 'Pessimism leads to weakness. Optimism leads to power,'" and he placed its initial impulse within Methodist Perfectionism." In regard to Calvinism, James explained that it had failed to satisfy the "religious needs of the
healthy-minded." In its place, some individuals had turned to the secular "theory of evolution" which "lends itself to a doctrine of general meliorism and progress" consistent with the optimism reflected in mind cure."

James observed that mental healing "has made what in our Protestant countries is an unprecedently great use of the subconscious life." Within mind cure, the subconscious was believed to hold spiritual powers that could be invoked to heal an illness or to mend a broken bone. Simply put, this power amounted to mind over matter. By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Americans had begun to link mind cure with the new ideas of Sigmund Freud. Bruce Addington made this connection in the 1910 October issue of The American Magazine when he wrote that Freud, along with Boris Sidis and Morton Prince, operated on the body without using a "surgeon's tool"; instead, he employed the "the new mind cure based on science." Five years later in Everybody's, Max Eastman asked Americans: "Do you suffer from headaches, nausea, 'neuralgia,' paralysis?... It may be that your trouble is a mental cancer which can be dissected out by this new method" called psychoanalysis. Suggesting that this sounded like "magic," Eastman reassured his reader that "It is a science of healing which is believed and practiced by many leading nerve-specialists and alienists both in the United States and Europe."
By acknowledging that healthy-mindedness can constitute an attractive mental state in certain individuals, William James had played the role of devil's advocate. He drew a careful portrait of the "once-born" so that he could dramatically compare the relatively shallow "sky-blue tint" to the soul-stirring passions suffered by the "twice-born," toward whom he extended his understanding and compassion. The weakness of the optimistic temperament lies; James concluded, in its "constitutional incapacity for prolonged suffering" and its "outright denial" of the existence of evil. He rejected the simplistic definition that "Evil is a disease, and worry over the disease is itself an additional form of disease." In an ardent appeal, he implored his audience:

Let us then resolutely turn our backs on the once-born and their sky-blue optimistic gospel....Let us see rather whether pity, pain and fear...may not open a profounder view and put into our hands a more complicated key to the meaning of a situation."

In spite of their dark character, the negative affections seemed more real to James than the cheerful affirmation that everything is all right. He followed his remarks on optimism with the "profounder view" of life experiences by "The Sick Soul," in which he concluded that every thoughtful person, however happy, often experienced a deep sense of dread not necessarily related to the events of
his or her life. Accepting that this awareness constitutes normal experience, he quoted Goethe’s observation that life "at bottom...has been nothing but pain and burden." The "burden" that disturbed James the most was the certitude of death; and in a dark acknowledgement of life’s futility, he anguished over the finality of death:

"Let sanguine healthy-mindedness do its best with its strange power of living in the moment and ignoring and forgetting, still the evil background is really there to be thought of, and the skull will grin at the banquet."

James argued that the contemplation of death "will bring the worm at the core of all our usual springs of delight into full view, and turn us into melancholy metaphysicians." By recognizing the victory of the "grinning skull," he challenged the buoyant atmosphere of his era as he reintroduced the most perplexing and disturbing of all philosophical issues—the mortality of every individual. He believed that as people grasp the temporalness of life, they face a natural despair that no amount of cheerful denial could overcome. In his discussion about the sick soul, James attacked the complacency of optimists who hold that malevolence is merely an illusion. By ignoring evil, these people exhibit an unsettling inability to comprehend the grimness of the danse macabre. He held that it falls to the "twice-born" who have been awakened from their naive state through suffering to
comprehend the verity of death; these people's facile hopes are tempered by reality.

To illustrate the temperament of the wiser soul, he offered the example of John Bunyan (1629-1688) author of The Pilgrim's Progress whose "original optimism and self-satisfaction [got] leveled with the dust." Committed to his Puritan faith in which God's grace alone offers salvation, Bunyan described himself through a corrupt heart: "I was more loathsome in my own eyes than was a toad...Sin and corruption...would naturally bubble out of my heart as water would bubble out of a fountain." James believed that this expression of extreme alienation provided the spiritual preparation necessary for Bunyan's surrender to God. His "inward pollution" had caused his despair, but it had also softened his heart in readiness for his conversion. Once he experienced a sense of grace, Bunyan felt compelled to preach, an activity that he pursued without a license. For this breach of English law he went to prison for twelve years. During this period he wrote many of his books including Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners in which he described his fervent religious transformation; it was this spiritual experience that inspired James to include Bunyan's life as an illustration of the "twice-born's" deep apprehension of hopelessness followed by a sense of God's grace.
Until his death, however, Bunyan never overcame the innate melancholy that colored all his insights. James believed that it was actually Bunyan’s gloomy temperament that enabled him to find the courage to meet the harsh realities of life. "Twice-born" individuals never transcend their dark emotions; rather they use them as the impetus to seek God. By including the religious experience of this man, James implicitly confirmed the potency of the Puritan view of flawed human nature. His preference for the insights of the "twice-born" precipitated his conclusion that

Healthy-mindedness is inadequate as a philosophical doctrine, because the evil facts that it refuses positively to account for are a genuine portion of reality; and they may after all be the best key to life’s significance, and possibly the only openers of our eyes to the deepest levels of truth."

Reality for James is predicated upon the recognition of evil, and he believed familiarity with "sorrow, pain and death" to be necessary instruction for a more profound appreciation of life than what the healthy-minded hold. He accepted these tribulations as "genuine parts of nature" possessing some "rational significance." Undermining the perfectionist impulse within certain faiths, he offered his conviction that

The completest religions would...seem to be those in which the pessimistic elements are best developed....They are essentially the religions of
deliverance: the man must die to an unreal life before he can be born into the real life."

In this passage, he declared spiritual allegiance to those faiths that acknowledge the dark facts of life. James arrived at this vindication of pessimism after a struggle to balance the "once-born" with the "twice-born" experience. However, he was not able to satisfy himself that the religion of the "once-born" includes the emotional depths necessary to understand life because optimism ignores the reality of misery and death. He believed that if the "once-born" were ever catapulted from their shallow cheerfulness into the depths of tragedy, their faith would shatter like glass. To him, faith grows stronger through suffering as people turn to God to understand the murky abyss of their souls."

When James wrote The Varieties of Religious Experience, Freud was working out his theory of human instincts in The Interpretation of Dreams. Sharing neurological backgrounds coupled with an overriding interest in psychology, both men addressed evil; but Freud took a more pessimistic approach to this subject than did James. Living three decades longer than the American, Freud experienced the horrors of the First World War which further embittered his already sour view of humanity. Responding to optimistic claims that his contemporaries in general were good and that it was only their military leaders who were corrupt, Freud asked:
Do you really believe that a handful of ambitious and deluded men without conscience could have succeeded in unleashing all these evil spirits if their millions of followers did not share their guilt?... Do you venture, in such circumstances, to break a lance on behalf of the exclusion of evil from the mental constitution of mankind?

His most powerful condemnation of human nature is to be found in Civilization and Its Discontents which he wrote when he was seventy-four. In this work, he identified evil as an aggressive state of mind in which the more powerful individuals brutalize the weaker ones by exploiting their "capacity for work without compensation," using them "sexually without... consent," seizing possessions, causing them humiliation, pain, and finally, death. Perceiving people as basically vicious, he argued that the Christian ideal "to love one's neighbor as oneself" runs "strongly counter to the original nature of man."

He admitted that his insistence that people possess an innate "instinct of death or destruction" alarmed the community in general and even "met with resistance... in analytic circles." People refused to accept the "inborn human inclination to 'badness'... and destructiveness" because "nobody wants to be reminded how hard it is to reconcile the undeniable existence of evil... with [God's]... all-powerfulness or His all-goodness."

Confessing his own reluctance to accept these thoughts, he wrote: "I remember my... defensive attitude when the idea of
an instinct of destruction first emerged in psychoanalytic literature, and how long it took before I became receptive to it." Even though it took Freud decades to name this instinct, it appeared in embryonic form in 1905 in his description of sadism in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. In Freud's definition, sadism is sexually based. He believed that it is within this sadistic impulse that prompts the person to feel his or her first desire to inflict pain on another human being. The shocking horrors of the war only served to validate his earliest perceptions that he expressed within his Id Psychology.

William James and Sigmund Freud reinitiated Americans at the beginning of the twentieth-century into the "evil facts" of reality. James held that suffering deepens people's spirit, whereas Freud pushed beyond this edifying view to expose the corrupt nature of humanity itself. These two philosophers of human nature cast long shadows across the optimism of the age. Both would probably have denied that their views had anything in common with the gloomy doctrines of Calvin: James on the basis of compassion and Freud on the grounds of science. But when placed together, their beliefs revitalized the Puritan world view as the Victorian era yielded to the twentieth century.
Conclusion

As religious sensibilities shifted in the nineteenth century, Americans perceived of themselves as a new people, optimistic and innocent; whereas the Puritans, who helped to establish the "New World," conceived of themselves as the ancient bearers of Adam’s sin. Within the new optimism, however, many heirs of the Puritan tradition, who faced the reality of evil in an ostensibly benign universe, expressed a deep ambivalence toward the human condition. This was evidenced in an intriguing re-evaluation of Adam’s fall by Henry James, Sr., patriarch of the clan that exercised its intellectual influence over the New England mind between 1850 and 1910 through the ideas of Henry, Jr., William, and Alice.

R.W.B. Lewis describes Henry James, Sr., in The American Adam as "perhaps the most energetically hopeful man of this generation," whose "hope, so to speak, explod[ed] out of the tensions lying behind it." These tensions reflected the failure of optimism to contend with the anguish produced by life’s vicissitudes. It was to this issue of mortal suffering that James, Sr., turned his powers of imagination as he perceived the human condition in terms that combined the aspirations of his era with the insights of the Puritans. It was true, he admitted, that humanity’s problems began with Adam and Eve’s commission of the
original sin of disobedience against their Creator, and for this they deserved to be expelled from Paradise. But unlike the Calvinists, who believed that their banishment initiated the human race's natural legacy of sin and suffering, James saw their expulsion as a shining opportunity for men to develop a rugged and admirable self-reliance of which God, Himself, would approve. To him, God's curse became humanity's challenge. He pronounced the fall from prelapsarian bliss to earthly realities, in fact, a fortunate beginning for people who want to shape their own destinies.

In this way, James approached the original sin of disobedience from the perspective of the "fortunate fall," or felix culpa. His hope was concentrated in his view of humanity as intellectually curious, a condition that resulted in Adam's desire to sample the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. Consistent with the nineteenth century's notion of separate spheres of influence between the sexes, James concentrated on the intellectual freedom developed by Adam to shape his destiny outside of Eden, whereas he ignored Eve's new status as an independent mortal. Instead, he mocked her role of "help-mate" as he facetiously observed that "the first and highest service which Eve renders Adam is to throw him out of Paradise."

Omitting the troublesome consequences of original sin, James argued that Adam's awakened sense of good and evil in his fallen state was preferable to his pre-lapsarian bliss
in which he comprehended only perfection. In his previous condition, he remained ignorant of the difference between good and evil. To James, it was the ability to distinguish one from the other that has provided people with the choice of whether to walk the high moral ground or to sink into a brutish disregard of their spiritual natures. Because he believed that people are better off in their conscious recognition of their fate, James offered Adam as the prime example of an heroic individual who preferred to struggle in an earth filled with sorrows than remain in a blissful heaven where his capabilities would have gone unchallenged and undeveloped.

Although James, Sr.'s version of the fall provided his generation with an image of human courage, this interpretation would hardly have edified Cotton Mather or Jonathan Edwards, who saw Adam as the parent of human misery rather than the father of self-reliance. To the true Calvinist, Adam's error blotted out any hope of redemption except through God's grace, a channel ignored by James. Subscribing to a form of Emersonian compensation, he wrote that although Adam had lost his initial "state of blissful infantile delight unperturbed as yet by those fierce storms of the intellect," he had gained the knowledge "of that Divine and halcyon calm of the heart in which these hideous storms will finally rock themselves to sleep." If he had remained in his pre-lapsarian condition he would have been
nothing more than "a mere dimpled nursling of the skies...without ever realizing a truly Divine manhood and dignity." By releasing Adam from his "sleek and comely" state, James romanticized the fall by brightening its darkest doctrine with the vision of self-reliance and furnished his era with a proper hero.


4. cf. "state of nature"


13. Emerson, "Self-Reliance," In Essays (1903), p. 49. His view of society is similar to the one expressed by Wordsworth in his sonnet "The World is Too Much with Us."


22. Emerson, "Spiritual Laws," The Portable Emerson, p. 188.
23. Emerson, "Spiritual Laws," The Portable Emerson, p. 188.
24. Emerson, "Spiritual Laws," The Portable Emerson, p. 188.
30. In this discussion, I have mostly treated Emerson's earlier essays. As time passed, his views darkened and changed somewhat. However, his basic optimism remained intact in his later essay "Fate" (1860). In this work, he argued that people can tolerate their fates through "thought" and "moral sentiment" which "makes free." "Fate involves the melioration. No statement of the Universe can have any soundness which does not admit its ascending effort" ("Fate," Viking p. 365).


35. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 79.


38. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 82.

39. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 82.


41. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 89.

42. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 93.


44. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 90.


52. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 158.


57. Some of these insights may have grown out of James's own struggle with depression. Never one to condemn the melancholic, he believed that this individual is closer to understanding the true nature of life than those who have never experienced suffering.


63. Lewis, p. 58.

64. Lewis, p. 59.
CHAPTER 8
THE TRANSFORMATION OF CALVINISM: ROMANTICISM AND
THE DOCTRINE OF SEPARATE SPHERES

Introduction

As the spirit of optimism expressed in religion as perfectionism and in philosophy as idealism replaced the Puritan view of human nature in nineteenth-century New England, what became of the Calvinist's "natural man"? Within this complex person, whether male or female, the unruly affections were combined with an introspective nature that sought release by confessing the wayward impulses. On a superficial level this perspective was attenuated by popular notions that dismissed sin as illusion. On a deeper plane, however, the Puritan temperament was preserved in the male Romantic hero.

The Calvinist view of human nature was supported by certain suppositions about humanity and culture. Basically it assumed that human beings' selfish tendencies and passionate natures must be curbed in order to create an orderly society. However "natural" the sexual passions may be, they are also potentially very antisocial. The
Calvinists believed that each person has a responsibility to keep the passions under control. However, as they considered the compulsive nature of these instincts, they realized that people can not always control them. No distinction was made between men and women among Calvinists in terms of natural inclinations because sexual differences were assumed to be socially construed.

However, in the wake of the emergence of an egalitarian ethic in America during the late eighteenth century, people were in a new position to try to justify distinctions that could no longer be supported by appealing to custom and settled practice. They groped for some time to establish a different basis than the old hierarchical way of distinguishing people from one another. This is a problem unique to a democratic society that espouses equality and yet treats people differently. Finally, they turned to Nature to explain "innate" differences between men and women, as well as blacks and whites. They assumed that women are naturally endowed with a greater capacity for self-sacrifice. On the other hand, men are born with more passionate temperaments. In a similar way, blacks were assumed to have been given smaller intellectual capacities than white people but greater capacities for childlike merriment.

The nineteenth century moved in the direction of innate differences to justify distinctions that egalitarianism had
threatened. The view of masculinity—particularly in the eyes of New England cultural leaders—remained fundamentally Calvinist, but the evaluation became much more positive. What lay behind this change was a looser and more individualistic conception of the social order. The traits that an earlier age had considered so dangerous were now seen as socially beneficial in many respects, and it was assumed that masculinity could be accommodated by a society that permitted its free expression.

Still there was a good deal of uneasiness about the masculine hero, which is why he was often viewed with awed fascination. Possibly as a kind of antidote to the dangers masculinity presented, perfection gained its appeal. It was a nineteenth-century version of grace; only now the power of salvation lay in the hands of the individual and not God. While perfectionism may have been appealing, it was also understood on some level to be unrealistic given the social realities of the period. Also, in many respects it was unmasculine. Making women the true embodiment of perfectionism solved the dilemma. They could be praised even if they were not taken altogether seriously.

These distinctions between men and women provided the rationale for the doctrine of separate spheres. This doctrine held that the emotional distinctions between the sexes were reflected in contemporary women's roles as mothers and men's as protectors. The idea that people's
emotional makeup is sexually based provided important grounds for segregating the sexes into individual realms of influence. These separate spheres deeply influenced American culture during the last century; and even today we experience the impact of this social heritage when women are presumed to be the better caretakers of children because of their "maternal instincts" and men conduct the affairs of state because of their capacity to defend home and country. This division of feelings opposed the Calvinists' belief that all creatures "naturally" experience the same passions. They did not consider some instincts to be female and others male; nor did they believe that the soul possesses a sexual identity.

Female Perfectionism and the Woman's Sphere

The culture's dark view of sex and human nature, however compelling, called forth the need of an alternative. For the Calvinist it was grace. For the nineteenth century male it was Woman and all the perfection she stood for. By being perfect women fulfilled men's needs and in some respects found ways to fulfill their own. If they were never as perfect or as passionless as social convention dictated, they nevertheless stood for something totally different from masculinity.
James C. Fernald, author of *The New Womanhood* (1894), expressed the conventional wisdom of his generation that women are perfect angels and men creatures of desire. He held that the soul like the body possesses the stamp of sex. When people fall in love, therefore, it is with someone whose spirit is "nobly and beautifully differentiated from their own." Believing in differentiation, he described woman as "man's best hope" because men possess "duller sensibilities," and a "tougher skin."

In terms of the separate spheres, male qualities were considered necessary to be successful in the rugged world of nineteenth-century capitalism "where the moral matches the physical exposure." But, Fernald suggested, some males are of such a "great, stubborn, sullen mass" that in spite of woman's "power... [they] refuse to be transformed." Even so, he discouraged them from seeking "a calm spiritual retirement" in which their brutish natures would be softened. Exhorting each male to claim his virility, Fernald directed him to enter the world where the "plough, the anvil, the shop, the ship, the railroad" await. Once finished with the day's business, he can return to the "safe harbor" of the domestic sphere. This realm "with its blessed inspiration" provides him with the "moral and the physical hardihood to breast the storm." Within this sanctuary, woman "will keep a clearer mind as well as a more
quiet heart" so that her husband will not "linger" in the "moral swamps."

As the deterministic features of Puritanism yielded to idealism, a representation of man and woman emerged. In these portraits, different tendencies illustrated what was ideally masculine and feminine. Men were described as aggressive, passionate and competitive. In addition, they possessed powers of reason that could be employed in calming their tempestuous hearts. Henry Ward Beecher described man's temperament as "a mixed character...[in which] under great excitement the physical qualities predominate, but in times of quiet, and away from temptation, there grow up milder influences, nobler sentiments." In other words, only nineteenth-century men inherited the complex and divided natures that the Puritans thought men and women hold in common.

While man's character was acknowledged to be highly complicated, woman was portrayed in terms of the perfectionist ideal in that she is gentle, loving, self-sacrificing, and simple. In fact, she was often compared to Christ because of her desire to sacrifice herself for those whom she loves. Indicating that this is the mission of a wife and mother, William Ellery Channing urged her to

Open the long disused page of the beatitudes among us, for manly energy rots among its husks, having dismissed reproofing meekness and poverty of the spirit. Let woman offer them an asylum; let her
rise and take the beautiful shape of the Redeemer."

Among the Puritans, Channing's idealistic resemblance would have constituted blasphemy in that women were not considered to possess a closer affinity to the Savior than men; in fact, as daughters of Eve they have the better claim to sinfulness.

Shrewd observer that he was, Alexis de Tocqueville commented on the power that women in the United States wielded in the home where they "enjoy[ed] a high station." But he also recognized that it was the impact of "inexorable public opinion [that] carefully keeps woman within the little sphere of domestic interests and duties" rather than her own instincts. However, he believed that her status constituted an improvement over European females who were regarded as "seductive but incomplete beings." He concluded that while "the American woman is never allowed to leave the quiet sphere of domestic duties, she is also never forced to do so." This Frenchman clearly understood the extent to which the doctrine of separate spheres had influenced the culture.

More than a social convention, the elements of this doctrine informed state laws which prohibited women from holding professional positions. In Illinois, the State Assembly had ruled that women could not become lawyers. In 1869 Myrna Bradwell, who had studied the legal system while
working in her husband's law office, challenged this statute. She applied to the Legislature to admit her to the bar, but she was refused. Not satisfied, she petitioned the Illinois Supreme Court to overturn the Assembly's ruling, but its justices maintained they did not have the authority to change state law. They also lectured Bradwell that it was unbecoming for a woman to "engage in the hot strife of the bar, in the presence of the public,...with momentous verdicts the prizes of the struggle." These men feared that if woman steps outside of her sphere she will lose "the deference and delicacy with which it is the pride of our ruder sex to treat her."

In her final effort to seek fulfillment, Bradwell appealed the state's decision to the United States Supreme Court which also denied her request. The High Court turned her down on a technicality rather than on the merits of her plea. However, it did not miss the chance to remind women of their "natural" place when the concurring minority wrote that

The civil law, as well as nature herself, has always recognized a wide difference in the respective spheres and destinies of man and woman. Man is, or should be, woman's protector and defender. The natural and proper timidity and delicacy which belongs to the female sex evidently unfits it for many of the occupations of civil life."
By implication, the man's sphere included the rigors of competition for which his constitution has prepared him.

In an effort to adjust to this disparity, women claimed for themselves the special role of moral guardian of their family. This claim to purity was justified by the perfectionist impulse which encouraged a spiritual view of females. With the support of poets and ministers, they became paragons of domestic virtue. In a short story, Washington Irving described feminine perfection as simply "The Wife." Mary possesses a lovely nature in contrast to her young husband who exhibits an aggressive drive to succeed. In spite of his enormous energy, the man fails at his business and consequently loses his fortune. Deeply distressed by these reverses, he hesitates to tell his beloved Mary because in her maidenhood she had become accustomed to the refinements of wealth. Driven "almost to madness" by his fear of her response, he finally asks a friend for advice. The friend reassures him that his bride will stand by him because she is a "good wife." Swallowing his pride and anguish, the husband confesses his sorrows to Mary who bears the news "like an angel," even though they are forced to move from their elegant home into a humble cottage. Her sacrifice saves their marriage, but her husband still experiences anxieties. This time he worries that her refined nature will be undermined by the primitive environment into which he has dragged her. But she remains
undaunted by their vicissitudes, and with a deft touch she transforms the shabby cabin into an idyll. In addition, she puts aside her fancy frocks to wear "a pretty rural dress of white [with] a few wild flowers...twisted in her fine hair." When her husband returns to his pastoral home, she "came tripping forth to meet" him with "a fresh bloom ...on her cheek, [as] her whole countenance beamed with smiles." 13

Irving's "The Wife" served to idealize femininity as well as to offer a practical lesson about how women should respond if their husbands fail them. Never reproaching her husband, Mary turns their earthly disaster into a heavenly experience. How she develops this magical ability we are not told. But just when life seems blackest, she is able to wave her gentle hand over a sea of troubles and calm her husband's bitter self-reprimands. Irving described Mary's transformation from "a soft and tender female, who had been all weakness and dependence and alive to every trivial roughness while treading the prosperous paths of life" to a woman with the "mental force to be the comforter and support of her husband under misfortune." Pointing to the wife's exemplary conduct, the author encouraged all women for their families' sake to "abid[e] with unshrinking firmness the bitterest blasts of adversity." 14

An 1834 "Essay on Marriage," reflected a similar view of the perfect wife. This essay served to educate young women about their wifely role. As the husband struggles "on
in the path of duty, the thought that it is for her
[that]...he toils will sweeten his labors....Should he meet
with dark clouds and storms abroad, yet sunshine and peace
await him at home." The wife's gentle nature "will calm the
tumult of his passions, and bid him struggle on, and find
his reward in her sweet tones...[and] the bliss of home."

Nineteenth-century poets were joined by the clergy to
exalt womanhood. These men often counselled the female to
forbear for the sake of those she loved. Horace Bushnell
instructed his daughter to be "above all...unselfish." This
minister ironically asked woman "to have no needs, almost no
character of her own," so that she could meet the selfish
demands of men. Of the female presence Bushnell wrote:

> We demand that she shall seem to have alighted
> here for the world's comfort and blessing...all
> the ways of selfishness are specially at variance
> with her beautiful errand."

Exalting female perfection, William Ellery Channing
placed woman above man on the moral ladder when he urged
every mother to "breathe into her son a deep sense of the
wrongs which man inflicts upon man." Increasingly, the
domestic sphere was considered to be the moral center for
the human race. When men transgressed against this realm,
Channing believed that women should expose "the ten thousand
homes which have no defence against licentiousness, against
violation of the most sacred domestic ties." Echoing these
insights, Emerson believed that the woman’s eyes are on higher goals as "she treads her upward path...[and] convinces the coarsest calculators that another road exists than that which their feet know." He explained that where the female "is present all others will be more than they are wont."

But Emerson undermined woman at the same time that he attempted to exalt her when he described the "bias of her nature" as "not to thought, but to sympathy." Considering his sentiments from a feminist perspective, we are tempted to ask "What kind of a person would enjoy having her mind exchanged for a heart?" However, he believed that this constituted a fair substitute because woman is "so perfect in her own nature" that as she meets "intellectual persons" she will "warm" them "by the fullness of her heart." We can assume that he meant men when he referred to "intellectual persons." In describing the impact of the feminine mystique on men, he wrote that women have it within their power to "unloose our tongues and we speak; [to]...anoint our eyes and we see." Exhibiting an attitude of noblesse oblige toward the opposite sex, he believed that male "chivalry" will "give rise" to "Woman’s Rights," and he urged that females should be "much better placed in the laws and in social forms as the most zealous reformer can ask."
In addition to its spiritual aspects, men promoted the philosophy of separate spheres because underneath its idealistic rhetoric lay its pragmatic value for husbands and sons who were the objects of a woman’s devotion. By encouraging the segregation of realms, men were free to participate in the exciting world around them without female interference. When the business day with its challenges and social contacts was finished, the husband returned home to enjoy his dinner and his wife’s solicitude. In this way, women became privatized in contradistinction to men whose affairs were conducted in public. To justify keeping women sequestered, men explained that the gentleness of the female sensibility would suffer if exposed to the male world.

But women, as well as men, found important reasons to promote the separation of the spheres. Elizabeth Cady Stanton believed that this separation benefitted women in their efforts to become better educated and politically enfranchised. In her famous 1848 "Address Delivered at Seneca Falls," she challenged the idea that males are intellectually superior to females, but pointed out that until woman "shall first educate herself," "instead of being taxed to endow colleges where she is forbidden to enter-- instead of forming sewing societies to educate 'poor, but pious,' young men," she will remain ill-prepared to contest "this boasted superiority." Stanton resolved that females need the "freedom to find out our own sphere" in which we
will "have our colleges, our professions, our trades."

Although Stanton used the domestic realm to advance women's rights, she remained thoroughly conventional in her glorification of motherhood as a "power [that] is second only to that of God himself." Using sentimental rhetoric, she insisted that "there is no such sacredness and responsibility in any other human relation as in that of the mother," who "in self-denial" in her "pure chaste beautiful life" can offer to the world "one noble, healthy, happy man or woman," through her protection and love."

In the nineteenth century, women were characterized as inherently more virtuous than men and, therefore, less lustful by nature." Many evangelical reformers encouraged this belief because it substantiated their faith in perfectionism as demonstrated through female morality. "The Evangelicals linked moral agency to female character with a supporting link to passionlessness." Furthermore, "Their insistence on sincerity or 'simplicity,' accompanying their emphasis on women's moral potential, caused them to imply that women were virtuous by nature." Wearing their virtue as a badge both of honor and protection, women initiated reforms aimed at inhibiting male concupiscence; for as author Sara Grimke explained, "The sexual passion in man is ten times stronger than in woman."

One goal of female moral reform became to resurrect the woman who had "fallen" into prostitution. Her chaste
sisters were waiting to help her if she would leave her wicked ways. The very notion of being "fallen," however, suggested that within their natures, women reflected only two facets--chastity or corruption. No such reductionism existed in the consideration of men's characters. Ironically, as the view of the woman shrank to the single issue of her virtue, the definition of man expanded to include many fascinating complexities and contradictions within his nature. In discussions that follow, I will consider how these separate views were reflected in the literature of the period.

The Heroine and the Harlot

Calvinists believed that men and women are equally capable of sinning. So when a woman committed fornication or adultery, her crime was considered commensurate with that of a man who had engaged in the same behavior. As religious and social sentiment shifted away from Calvinism, females gained moral ascendancy over males. But they paid a price to achieve this ennobled position. Their previously irreducible humanity became dichotomized into separate moral makeups. Thus, women were either chaste or they were "fallen." When a woman lost her virtue, whether through seduction or her own volition, she could not reclaim this priceless treasure. We can see the fate of fallen women in
the literary characters of Edna Pontellier in *The Awakening* and Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*. If, on the other hand, a woman struggled to protect her chastity, she became a heroine such as Isabel Archer in *The Portrait of a Lady*.

Isabel Archer

In Henry James's novel, his American heroine Isabel Archer sacrifices her opportunity for personal happiness when she chooses to remain with her odious husband, Gilbert Osmond, instead of sharing her life with Casper Goodwood, a man who lives up to his name. Painting Archer as innocent but spiritually tough, James provided his lovely protagonist with a financial fortune and an independent mind. With these assets, she travels to England and Europe to broaden her cultural horizons. There she encounters Gilbert Osmond and his former mistress Madame Merle. Not aware of the past relationship between these two, Archer accepts Osmond's proposal to wed because he appears to need her, a characteristic that she finds endearing. What Archer does not realize is that Madame Merle has masterminded their marriage because she knows that it will provide her lover with financial security.

The Osmonds establish their life together in his elegant home in Rome where he quickly tires of his wife's unsophisticated friends. One day he arrogantly asks her "to
make a new collection," to which he adds: "It's as if you had taken the trouble to pick out the people in the world that I have least in common with." By implication he suggests that she belongs among these unsophisticated fools who, as he suspects, find him equally intolerable. In spite of her husband's contempt, however, Archer stays with him out of a sense of wifely duty and a deep devotion to her stepdaughter Pansy, Osmond's secret child by the scheming Madame Merle.

Eventually, Archer discovers the truth about Pansy's real mother, and this revelation combined with an urgent plea to come to England to minister to a dying friend forces her to leave Rome. On the way to London, she visits Pansy in a Paris convent where she has been sent by her father. Upon seeing her stepchild, Archer becomes deeply moved when Pansy reveals how frightened she is of both Osmond and his friend. To calm these fears, Archer promises the child, "I won't desert you." And when the girl pleads, "You'll come back," she answers "Yes--I'll come back." To Archer, these words constitute a pledge.

Once in England, she is confronted by her old admirer Casper Goodwood, who senses her desperate unhappiness. He has heard about the relationship between Osmond and Madame Merle and considers it a horror. Begging Archer to stay with him, he urges: "You don't know where to turn. Turn straight to me... Why should you go back--why should you go
through that ghastly form?" He beseeches her, "You must save what you can of your life....It would be an insult to you to assume that you care for the look of the thing, for what people will say, for the bottomless idiocy of the world."28 Defying all social conventions, he heroically announces:

I swear, as I stand here, that a woman deliberately made to suffer is justified in anything in life--in going down into the streets if that will help her!... We can do absolutely as we please; to whom under the sun do we owe anything?... If you'll only trust me, how little you will be disappointed! The world's all before us--and the world's very big."

Goodwood's passionate words combined with an even more passionate kiss that "was like white lightning, a flash that spread, and spread again, and stayed" almost convince Archer to abandon her family and run off with him.30 But after she recovers from the impact of his embrace, "she darted from the spot" to escape his "hard manhood."31 Rushing away from the brink of passion, she becomes a true Archer when she discovers that "there was a very straight path" back to her marriage with the selfish Osmond.

By choosing to honor her responsibilities instead of indulging her desires, Isabel Archer achieves the ideal of womanhood in nineteenth-century letters. She is beautiful, graceful, tender, spiritual, maternal, self-sacrificing, and ultimately "passionless" in that her sexual yearnings do not
overwhelm her as they had Goodwood. Her tender sympathies toward Pansy override her impulse "to let...[Goodwood] take her in his arms....This belief, for a moment, was a kind of rapture, in which she felt herself sink and sink." Coming to her senses, she "panted" for him to "Do me the greatest kindness of all...I beseech you to go away." One literary critic suggests that by "sacrificing her own freedom of action in order to make freedom of choice possible to Pansy, Isabel asserts her inner freedom from material and emotional states of dependence."

Edna Pontellier

In contrast to Henry James's male-defined heroine, Kate Chopin offered a portrait of a lady who is caught between the passions of her soul and the expectations of her society. Chopin's novel *The Awakening* (1899) produced a storm of controversy which some critics claim "ended her literary career, because readers of the time were shocked by the realistic treatment of morbid psychology...and adultery." However, it was the novel's depiction of female sensuality and indifferent mothering that alarmed that public far more than any revelation of "morbid psychology," which had been consistently exhibited in male characters from Roderick Usher to Roderick Hudson without excessive protest.
In her picture of Edna Pontellier, Chopin described what resides in a woman's heart beneath the layers of domestic piety. Pontellier "was not a mother-woman...fluttering about with extended, protecting wings when any harm, real or imaginary, threatened their precious brood." Attacking the mystique of women who "idolized their children, worshipped their husbands, and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals," Chopin's New Orleans' protagonist was fond of her children in an uneven, impulsive way. She would sometimes gather them passionately to her heart; she would sometimes forget them.... [During one summer] their absence was a sort of relief.... It seemed to free her of a responsibility which she had blindly assumed and for which Fate had not fitted her.”

In the novel, Pontellier recklessly steps outside of her sphere to set up her own residence independent of her husband's home. She takes with her "everything she had acquired aside from her husband's bounty," but leaves the children who are visiting their grandmother. When Leonce Pontellier discovers his wife's abandonment, he writes a letter in which he "begged her to consider first, foremost, and above all else, what people would say.... He was simply thinking of his financial integrity.... It might do incalculable mischief to his business prospects." Ignoring his insensitive anxieties, Edna quickly finds herself in the sensual clutches of Alcee Arobin, an attractive ladies' man.
who finds that "she had become supple to his gentle, seductive entreaties" to make love. On Arobin's part, "He had detected the latent sensuality, which unfolded under his delicate sense of her nature's requirements like a torpid, torrid, sensitive blossom." After she begins her affair with Arobin, however, Robert Lebrun, Pontellier's young admirer from the previous summer, returns from Mexico. It is Robert who initially "awakened" her sexual feelings which she impulsively expresses with Arobin.

Thrilled by Robert's homecoming, she passionately confesses, "It was you who awoke me last summer out of a life-long, stupid dream.... Now you are here we shall love each other.... We shall be everything to each other. Nothing else in the world is of any consequence." With this declaration, she abandons completely her family even though her friend Adele has begged her to "Think of the children; think of them." Pontellier "meant to think of them, that determination had driven into her soul like a death wound--but not to-night. To-morrow would be time to think of everything." To-morrow never comes for Pontellier, however, because Robert in a crisis of conscience leaves her with only a note saying "I love you. Good-by--because I love you." He cannot accept her genuine independence or her rejection of her sphere.

His betrayal leads to her self-revelation that "To-day it is Arobin; tomorrow it will be some one else." With
these thoughts, her heart becomes filled with despondency which only the image of Robert can banish. But she "realized that the day would come when he, too...would melt out of her existence, leaving her alone." Instead of returning home where her family awaits her, she decides to commit suicide by swimming beyond her limits in the Gulf of Mexico. Her dying thoughts turn to her children who "appeared before her like antagonists who had overcome her; who had overpowered her and sought to drag her into the soul's slavery for the rest of her days. But she knew a way to elude them." With her last breath, she reproaches her husband and children: "They were a part of her life. But they need not have thought that they could possess her, body and soul." By claiming her body and soul as her own, Pontellier utters the final blasphemy against the religion of domesticity.

Probably more than anything else, Pontellier's notion of children as millstones around a woman's neck outraged Chopin's Victorian readership. In her desire to escape from her offspring, Pontellier violates her sacred responsibility of motherhood. Her ambivalent emotions were simply unacceptable to a generation reared on the sentimental notions of the cult of domesticity. Responding to the hostility with which The Awakening was greeted, Chopin commented, tongue in cheek: "I never dreamed of Mrs. Pontellier making such a mess of things and working out her
own damnation as she did. If I had had the slightest intimation of such a thing I would have excluded her from the company."

In the end, Chopin satisfied the historic demand for poetic justice in which crimes must be punished. Pontellier's crime is of passion, and for her transgressions into the realm of the senses she drowns herself.

In the portraits of Archer and Pontellier we see two women who chose different types of self-sacrifice. Based on the morality of the woman's sphere, Archer's is noble and Pontellier's tragic, but both acts end in the extinction of the self. If Edna Pontellier had been a man, we might have witnessed a different denouement in which she atones for her sins of adultery and neglect before meeting her maker as does Arthur Dimmsdale in *The Scarlet Letter*. However, at the end of the nineteenth century with its prohibitions against female sexuality, Pontellier's passionate soul goes unshriven into the next world."

From a psychoanalytic perspective, Freud would have found her affections to be consistent with his view that women experience powerful sexual excitation.

**Freud's View of Female Sexuality**

In spite of his patriarchal views about women, Freud did a great deal at the turn of the century to re-establish passion within women. In fact, rather than regarding
females as passionless, he accused them of "over-valuing" the sex relation. He did not classify certain instincts as male or female any more than did the Calvinists. And because he did not identify instincts as sex-related, he rejected the assertion that women are innately less sexual than men. I do not mean to suggest that Freud considered the psychological makeup of the sexes to be similar. But the differences he observed between women's and men's dispositions, he ascribed to environmental influences. In fact, his own statement that "anatomy is destiny," was made in the context of explaining how females were socialized differently from males. Still reflecting the values of his generation, he defined libido as masculine. However, he explained that this energy also stirs women's desires.

Through his assertion that people possess a "bi-sexual" nature, Freud challenged the doctrine of the separate spheres. In his description of the sexual instinct, he wrote that

> Without taking bi-sexuality into account I think it would scarcely be possible to arrive at an understanding of the sexual manifestations that are actually to be observed in men and women."

This statement reflects his belief that within females, certain masculine characteristics are present; and that within males, feminine tendencies are present. In this way, neither sex has the better claim to integrity. In terms of infancy, he called this tendency "polymorphous perverse," a
phrase he used to indicate that a baby’s sexual feelings are not related to the sex of its object.

In his "Three Essays of the Theory of Sexuality" (1905), Freud explained that the only "utilizable" difference between the sexes occurs when "one uses masculine and feminine...in the sense of activity and passivity." But he insisted that, "there is no pure masculinity or femininity" embodied in one individual, but rather "every person shows a mixture of his [her] own biological sex characteristics with biological traits of the other sex and a union of activity and passivity."

Over the years of his observations, Freud made important distinctions between the way men and women express their sexuality. In his description of female development, he explained that "how a little girl turns into a woman" involves certain "vicissitudes" that boys are spared. He was speaking specifically of how contemporary girls were victims of rigorous social expectations that repressed their sexuality when they reached puberty. This repression, in turn, led to women’s passive reception of sex in adulthood. In the notorious essay, "Some Psychical Consequences of Anatomical Distinctions Between the Sexes," he presented his theory of penis envy. Because he observed that contemporary society valued males more than females, he believed that when little girls discovered they were missing a penis they developed inferiority feelings.
These ideas have been discredited by research in which children fail even to identify the genitals of the opposite sex—let alone show any disappointment that they do not possess this magic part. Nevertheless, Freud's theory was based on environmental influences rather than inherent characteristics that determined a person's sexual development. Regarding the passions as innate, he believed that all people are born with essentially the same instincts. As people mature, however, some are better able than others to cope with environmental influences. He expressed a consistent view that women are less able to cope because they are more restricted by social attitudes. Toward the end of his life, he described women as enemies of culture because their sexuality distracts men from building civilization. But even from this adversarial perspective, he still perceived in women the same passions that men experience.

Psychoanalysis has consistently maintained a poor reputation among feminists from Charlotte Perkins Gilman who spotted its inherent patriarchal bias to Mary Daly who pointed out how "enthralled" the male medical community has been with Freud's invention of the vaginal orgasm. In 1970 in *The Dialect of Sex*, Shulamith Firestone blasted the neo-Freudian emphasis on female "adjustment" to intolerable social and domestic conditions. Even psychoanalysts such as Clara Thompson and Karen Horney have taken Freud to task.
concerning his views of female sexuality. Since the mid-1970s, however, several feminists have begun to look at certain aspects of Freudian theory in a more favorable light. In *Feminist Theory* (1985), Josephine Donovan considers the important studies to have come from this re-evaluation including Juliet Mitchell’s *Psychoanalysis and Freudism* (1974) and Nancy Chodorow’s *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978). In these works, both scholars accept that certain ideas of Freud’s provide an important basis for examining the development of psychological differences between men and women. These distinctions are rooted in his view that society treats men and women differently.

**Power and the Man’s Sphere**

In his enduring look at *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville acclaimed the American male for his "ruthless disposition...and an excessive love of independence." The French aristocrat commented that although within European society these "propensities" were considered "very dangerous," in the New World masculine vigor was needed to conquer the frontier." Visiting the United States in 1833 during Andrew Jackson’s Presidency, Tocqueville saw in this leader "of violent character" the imprint of American manhood. "Power," according to David Bertelson "is a traditional attribute of masculinity that still retains its
hold upon men's imaginations. Within the nineteenth century, this attribute became the special male virtue that was comparable to perfection in females. Masculinity was reflected by many facets including physical strength, moral courage, sexual passion, political ruthlessness, and intellectual brilliance. These qualities were admired even if they led to combat, the ultimate expression of aggressiveness.

During the first several decades of its existence, this country's political reigns rested in the genteel hands of the Virginians, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. But when Jackson took the oath of office in 1828, a fresh vigor gripped the nation because democracy had been extended to many men who had long remained disenfranchised. The democratization of American society had taken place in the generation that preceded Jackson's presidency, which was the product of this process. This new President was characterized as a "natural man," because of his powerful personality and his reliance on his masculine instincts to guide him. When Jackson aspired to the office in 1824, Thomas Jefferson confided in Daniel Webster that the Senator from Tennessee "is one of the most unfit men I know of for such a place.... He is a dangerous man." Fortunately for Jefferson, he did not live to see Jackson's installation as the seventh President of the United States. To the horror of many individuals, the White
House was almost ruined by the destructive antics of the "common people" who turned out to welcome the new tenant.

As Jackson rode to the White House on horseback, he received resounding cheers of approval for being both a decorated soldier and a courageous frontiersman. These qualities dazzled people in an era in which Napoleon was considered to be among the greatest heroes of all time. Many Americans were proud to claim a warrior as their national leader. His Vice-President Martin Van Buren compared him to the Duke of Wellington in "moral and physical courage." In addition, Van Buren noted that Jackson considered the people to be "his blood relations" and that "to labour for the good of the masses was a special mission assigned him by his Creator." The "masses" rewarded this affection by returning their hero to the White House for a second term in 1832.

The reputation Jackson enjoyed during the nineteenth century was based on traits that were glorified as inherently masculine. Nathaniel Hawthorne summarized these qualities when he described the President as

Surely...a great man...[whose] native strength, as well of intellect as of character, compelled every man to be his tool that came within his reach; and the more cunning the individual might be, it served only to make him the sharper tool."

Emerson described the French Emperor in images similar to those used for Andrew Jackson. In his tribute entitled
"Napoleon, or the Man of the World," the essayist announced that this hero "was a citizen before he was emperor" and that through his democratic vision "the old, iron-bound, federal France was changed into a young Ohio or New York." Emerson claimed that "Every one of the million readers of anecdotes or memoirs of the life of Napoleon, delights in the page, because he studies in it his own history." Placing himself among this throng, Emerson admitted that he enjoyed Napoleon's bold assertion that as a military leader he lacked principles which might have inhibited a lesser man's grab for power. Because the general claimed many victories, Emerson concluded that "All the sentiments which embarrass men's pursuit of these objects, Napoleon...set aside. Those sentiments were for women and children."

Applauding this "natural man," Emerson proclaimed that within his country, "Such a man was wanted, and such a man was born; a man of stone and iron;...a man not embarrassed by an scruples; compact, instant, [and] selfish." Was ever a woman's treachery described in such glowing language? However, in the man's sphere, ruthlessness was admired when it had as it object a monumental goal. In Napoleon's case, this goal was achieved through an intellectual "vigor [which] was guarded and tempered by the coldest prudence.... His [thunderbolt] attack was never the inspiration of courage, but the result of calculation." Glorifying the warrior's emotions which were "singularly destitute of
generous sentiments," Emerson wanted to "Leave sensibility to women.... Men should be firm in heart and purpose or they should have nothing to do with war and government."60

Napoleon's intellectual prowess coupled with physical courage formed for people of the nineteenth century the essence of masculine excellence. William Ellery Channing also raised his voice to honor the French Emperor in his "Remarks on the Life and Character of Napoleon Bonaparte." Especially attracted to the crucible of battle in which men like Bonaparte strengthened their courage, Channing wrote:

We are willing to grant that war, abhor it as we may, often develops, and places in strong light, a force of intellect and purpose which raises our conceptions of the human soul. There is perhaps no moment in life in which the mind is brought into such intense action, in which the will is so strenuous, and in which irrepressible excitement is so tempered with self-possession, as in the hour of battle.61

Fearing that his salute to the man-of-arms might undermine his Christian mission, however, Channing added this single qualification: "Still the greatness of the warrior is poor and low compared with the magnanimity of virtue."

Nowhere were the virtues of the male sphere better captured than in the papers of adventurer and historian Francis Parkman (1823-1893). Early in his life, Parkman contracted what he called "injuns on the brains." He spent his boyhood near Boston on the Middlesex Fells where he hunted, trapped, and learned tribal lore. As a young man he
read Ephraim George Squire's pamphlet about "Aboriginal Monuments in the State of New York." His imagination was so stirred by Squires's vivid description that he wrote the author, "you kindled in me a burning desire to get among fevers and volcanos, niggers, Indians and other outcasts of humanity, a restless fit which is apt to seize me at intervals." After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1846, Parkman expressed his restlessness when he and his cousin Quincy Adams Shaw began their historic expedition to the West Coast. He published the record of his adventures in 1849 as The California and The Oregon Trail.

Essayist Henry David Sedgwick wrote that with Parkman "manliness was an essential characteristic of everything that found favor in his eyes." But Parkman, himself, did not possess the personal vigor that was needed to be a great warrior, a role to which he aspired. Historian Kim Townsend in her treatment of the man and his works describes him as being preoccupied with his health which he monitored for signs of deterioration. She concludes that his obsession with manliness amounted to psychological compensation for his many failures which included his inability to fight in battle. Because his eyes could not tolerate prolonged exposure to light, he never experienced the excitement of the military campaign for which he yearned. This deprivation led to his "exceptionally loud saber-rattling during the civil war."
In addition to his poor physical condition, Parkman struggled for many years to overcome dark moods which debilitated him as they had his father. Expressing his will to conquer his morbid states, he chose Byron's image of triumph to introduce his first edition of *The Oregon Trail* (1847):

Let him who crawls enarmor'd of decay;
Cling to his couch.
Ours-the fresh turf, and
Not the feverish bed.

As he sought to master his unruly emotions, he created for himself a persona, or "manly self," that reflected his culture's intolerance toward passivity and cowardice. In his writings, he projected his sense of independence by seeking the primitive refuge of the wood; here he could invent an heroic world uncontaminated by effeminacy.

Exhibiting the characteristic racism of his time, Parkman described blacks and immigrants as creatures of "idleness" and "laziness." Compounding his bigotry, he referred to the typical Indian as one whose "soul is dormant."" But beyond the rank and file of wretched primitives, a few majestic fighters stood out to thrill his fancy: The Indian warrior, he wrote, "is hewn out of rock."" These heroes inspired Parkman to develop his posture of ruggedness that he self-consciously turned to the world to offset his anxieties about his fitness.
Considering his romantic portrait of the noble savage, Townsend concludes that it provided him with a way to "ascend out of danger....by assuming the stoical position he equated with manhood." She indicates that today we would describe Parkman as "psychoneurotic"; and in an interesting comparison, she finds that his symptoms were

Remarkably close to those of Andrew Jackson before him: speech difficulties, slobbering, dysentery and constipation, breast pains; a violent temper; the need to idealize and thus infantilize women; above all, the urge to destroy Indians.... Parkman, and more obviously and more destructively Jackson, were fulfilling their culture's prescriptions for the achievement of manhood."

Of course, during their lifetimes neither man was perceived in these pathological terms. The nineteenth century provided a cultural gap between the descriptions of sin by the Calvinists and the diagnoses of pathology by Freud. In this period, both Jackson and Parkman fit their community's standards of manliness which exalted courageous deeds such as mastering the frontier or slaughtering Indians. As for men who did not participate in overtly masculine exploits, they became "arm-chair" adventurers like Emerson and Channing, who were attracted to the power of warriors but preferred the tamer life of the home and village.

At the end of the century, Henry Adams expressed his fascination with the power generated by the "mindless"
dynamos that he saw on display in 1893 at the Chicago Exhibition. He wrote that he "began to feel the forty-foot dynamo as a moral force, much as the early Christian felt the Cross." Amazed at its silent energy, he described it as "barely murmuring--scarcely humming an audible warning to stand a hair’s breath further for respect of power." Finally,

One began to pray to it; inherited instinct taught the natural expression of man before silent and infinite force. Among the thousand symbols of ultimate energy, the dynamo was not so human as some, but it was the most expressive.

Although Adams never explicitly linked this energy to manliness, he implied this connection by contrasting its brute force to the fecundity of the Virgin. In this way, he split energy into masculine and feminine expressions. Indicating that the power of the Virgin was a match for the dynamo, he described her as a "goddess because of her force; she was the animated dynamo; she was reproduction--the greatest and most mysterious of all energies; all she needed was to be fecund." Disgusted by the "monthly-magazine-made American female," he argued that this creature possessed "not a feature that would be recognized by Adam." In woman’s natural state she was "ignorant of fig-leaves." Blaming the Calvinists for this damage to womanhood, he lamented that "anyone brought up among Puritans knew that sex was sin." Ironically, it was Henry’s brother Charles
who wrote: "I think it not unsafe to assert that during the 18th century the inhabitants of New England did not enjoy a high reputation for sexual morality." He reached these conclusions in his analysis of "Some Phases of Sexual Morality and Church Discipline in Colonial New England" (1891).

Notwithstanding his brother's contentions, Henry Adams believed that the Puritan heritage ill-prepared people to accept his vision of a woman's "sex as strength." Indicting his culture, he claimed that "An American Virgin would never dare command; an American Venus would never dare exist" because Americans had reduced the potency of female reproduction to a tender portrait of motherhood in which the artist "used sex for sentiment, never for force." In spite of these criticisms in which he adopted a European, ergo Catholic, view of fecundity as power, Adams's offered nothing to challenge the definition of womanhood that existed in the nineteenth century. He may have believed that by refusing to euphemize the word "sex" in relationship to females he was altering the existing portrait. But instead of being novel, his ideas echoed Rome's historic reverence for fertility. Reflecting the values of his generation, he treasured woman for the vitality of her reproductive organs rather than the force of her intellect. In 1900, Adam's powerful dynamo and fecund Virgin stood as
the culminating symbols for a century shaped by separate spheres.

The Calvinist Spirit with American Romanticism

Although many people abandoned Puritan congregations to flock to denominations in which perfectionism, rather than grace, was offered as the spiritual goal, the Calvinist view of corrupted humanity did not wither away. In fact, it gained a new vitality and glamor in the nineteenth-century Romantic hero. In this figure, the Puritans' passions of the mind were preserved as emotional emblems of masculinity. Sometimes the hero's challenge in life was to control his vehement emotions as in Byron's Manfred (1817). Elsewhere, he exhibited a tendency to overreach his mortal limits as in Goethe's Faust (1808,1832) and Melville's Captain Ahab (1851). Both of these characters suffer for their prideful ambitions, but readers' sympathies remained with these desperate souls. The hero constantly struggles to subdue his ardent emotions through his quest for spirituality. But even when he fails to conquer himself, his uneven nature was admired as the ultimate expression of masculine complexity. In this section, we will consider three American heroes in whom the Calvinist view of human nature was reflected.
Wieland

In Charles Brockden Brown's Gothic tale Wieland; or The Transformation (1798), his emotionally unstable protagonist served as a transitional figure between Calvin's "natural man" and the Romantic hero. With the publication of this novel, Brown began a literary career which established him as the first American author to make his living solely through writing. Intrigued by the origin of mental disturbances, he wrote in the Preface that he looked to "the known principles of human nature" to explain within his hero "the latent springs and perversions of the human mind."

Through this image, he recapitulated the Puritan view of human nature as well as anticipated psychoanalytic theory. In addition, Wieland's dark moods are dramatic and tragic, characteristics that portended the Romantic hero. For the narrator of this tale, the author chose the hero’s sister Clara, who maintains her composure as she witnesses one horror after another.

Clara begins her story by relating the death of her father, who possessed a melancholic temperament in which "sadness constantly attended him" that he expressed as religious fanaticism. To ease his suffering, he built a temple where he went often to meditate and worship. One evening while he was in his sanctuary, his wife noticed "a gleam [that] diffused itself over the intermediate space."

This odd light was immediately followed by "loud report,
like the explosion of a mine”; he had become a victim of spontaneous combustion. Explaining this incredible occurrence, Clara comments that “Such was the end of my father...the prelusive gleam, the fatal spark, the explosion heard so far, the fiery cloud that environed him.”

After this bizarre event which shaped their childhood, Clara and her brother Wieland are sent to live with a maiden aunt who introduces the children to Catherine and Henry Pleyel with whom they form deep friendships. As they mature, Clara falls in love with Henry, but he has become engaged to a woman in Germany. Wieland, however, succeeds in marrying his beloved Catherine. Together, they establish their home near Clare and Henry and start a family.

Except for their father’s horrifying death, the Wielands’ lives remain normal until the mysterious stranger Carwin enters the scene. Coinciding with his arrival, Wieland begins to hear peculiar warnings that are being issued by disembodied voices. Greatly disturbed by these messages, he starts to experience the same melancholia that haunted his father. He tries to ward off the hideous suggestions made by the chilling spirit-voices, but in his own mentally deteriorated state, he finally succumbs to their demands by murdering his wife and children. Overwhelmed by confusion, he flees the scene of his massacre into which the unsuspecting Clara stumbles.
Clara’s first thought is for her brother’s well-being; she hesitates to tell him about his wife’s death because she believes the tragedy will kill him. Lamenting that "no husband ever doted more fondly," she cautiously informs him of the horrible murders. She is alarmed to see that his features are "pervaded by a new expression:... [as if] some joyous occurrence had betided" him." Believing that he is in shock, she watches him closely to see if he comprehends her remarks. She notices that "His countenance suddenly became troubled...[and] his breath was stifled into groans." She exclaims in dread that "I have never witnessed the hurricane of human passions.... I was unconversant with the altitudes and energies of sentiment, and was transfixed with inexplicable horror by the symptoms which I now beheld."

Clara’s bewilderment is compounded by Wieland’s confession in which he cries out for his slain Catherine, "This is too much! any victim but this." Following his passionate revelation, he is charged with murdering his wife and five children.

When Clara begs him to explain why he has committed such appalling crimes, Wieland reveals the same religious fanaticism that possessed his father in which they "burnt with ardour to approve...faith and obedience" to God." On the night of the murders, he claims to have seen the Creator Who orders him to prove his faith by "rendering" his wife. Shocked by the command, he begs "O God! Substitute some
other victim. Make me not the butcher of my wife." But at the actual moment of murder, Wieland believes that he has overcome his resistance to God by following His orders. Therefore, as he plunges the knife into Catherine's flesh he feels exultant because he has "successfully subdued the stubbornness of human passion" that would disobey the Divine will. This ecstasy is immediately shattered, however, as "the breath of heaven that sustained me was withdrawn, and I sunk into mere man." Leaping from the floor, he is plunged back into "torment and pain...[that made] eternal fire, and the bickering of hell...[seem like] music and a bed of roses." Throughout the novel, Wieland struggles to overcome his lower nature, but with eyes blinded by fanaticism he confuses his moral decay with spiritual redemption when he exclaims, "I thank my God that this degeneracy was transient,—that he deigned once more to raise me aloft." Once "aloft" he possesses new demonic energy that compels him to perform the another "sacrifice" for God—the slaughter of his children. For his sins, he is confined to an insane asylum for the rest of his life. Within his melancholic state, Wieland responds to two sets of voices, one from outside and one within him. The inner commands are the result of his insanity; however, the origin of the external voices remains a mystery until the end of the tale.
when it is revealed that they are the consequences of Carwin's ventriloquism.

For reasons that remain obscure, Carwin confesses that he wants to test the stamina and moral restraint of the Wielands by using his "dangerous gift." But instead of establishing their excellence, Carwin's voices precipitate Wieland's descent into madness. Despite the part he plays, the ventriloquist protests, "I have slain no one; I have prompted none to slay; I have handled a tool of wonderful efficacy without malignant intentions, but without caution." By explaining the weird voices as natural phenomena, Brown satisfies the formula for the Gothic novel in which events can appear to have supernatural causes; but underneath appearances, a natural explanation exists.

In the final scene, Carwin's actions are vindicated as he rescues Clara from her brother's last outburst of madness. Wieland, who has escaped from the asylum, returns home with the intention of killing his sister. Once again he experiences a fanatical compulsion in which he rushes at his sister, crying out "Poor girl!...Thy life is demanded as a sacrifice. Prepare to die." Hidden from view, Carwin uses his ventriloquism to command Wieland to stop his attack. Obeying the voice, he experiences a moment of clarity in which he glimpses his abominable acts; and overwhelmed by his crimes, he kills himself. Confounded by her brother's insanity, Clara finally concludes that if he
had "formed juster notions of moral duty and of the divine attributes...the doubled-tongue deceiver would have been baffled and repelled."

Wieland provides a study in the dark and violent emotions that certain men experience even while searching for divine guidance. Within the temperaments of the father and son lurked the "passions of the mind" that both the Calvinists and Freud attempted to subdue through a rational understanding of humanity's primitive nature. Wieland, himself, longs for spiritual strength to overcome his "latent...perversions." But within his character, he lacks the powers of reason necessary to curb his degenerate impulses. His sins may be products of his madness; but even before the onset of his insanity, he fails to question the origin of the demonic voices. Brown's portrait of Wieland as a man possessed by passionate impulses over which he has no power serves as an important literary link between the Puritan's grim acknowledgement of unruly affections and the Romantics' glorification of these same impulses.

Arthur Dimmsdale

The quest motif informs the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville whose heroes experience spiritual convulsions as they seek to overcome the darkest inclinations of their souls. In The Scarlet Letter (1850), Arthur Dimmsdale represents the Puritan's "civil
man," in that he hypocritically hides his relationship to Hester Prynne. Throughout Hawthorne's romance, the minister tries to recover the piety that he has sacrificed to protect his public image. In the end, his search leads him to God with Whom he becomes spiritually reunited.

In the preface to The Scarlet Letter separately entitled "The Custom-House," Hawthorne invents an "autobiographical" persona to relate how the details of adultery and hypocrisy in Puritan New England were supposedly uncovered. "Poking and burrowing into the heaped-up rubbish in the corner" of the Custom-House, the narrator discovers a package in which are folded "several foolscap sheets" that contain the story of Hester Prynne "who appeared to have been rather a noteworthy personage in the view of our ancestors." In addition to the manuscript, the package yields "a rag of scarlet cloth" shaped like a "capital letter A." With these historic treasures in his possession, the story-teller explains that

It will be seen...how a large portion of the following pages came into my possession...as offering proofs of the authenticity of a narrative therein contained.... This, in fact,—a desire to put myself in my true position as editor...is my true reason for assuming a personal relation with the public."

In the preface, the narrator alludes to the cruel acts of his Puritan forbears for whom he feels guilty." The symbol for his inherited guilt is "The figure of that first
ancestor, [who was] invested by family tradition with a dim and dusky grandeur.... It still haunts me, and induces a sort of home-feeling with the past." As spiritual heir to their "original sin," he seeks to atone for the crimes of his progenitors:

I, the present writer, as their representative, hereby take shame upon myself for their sakes, and pray that any curse incurred by them—as I have heard, and as the dreary and unprosperous condition of the race, for many a long year back, would argue to exist—may be now and henceforth removed.

By assuming the persona of an historiographer, the narrator creates a sense of verisimilitude within The Scarlet Letter. But in spite of its elaborate historical setting, this story reflects the values of Hawthorne, the mid-Victorian romancer. Filtering the Puritan experience through the moral lenses of his generation, he superimposes the sexual sanctions of his age onto the Puritan community of Salem. Within the nineteenth century, Americans expressed a greater preoccupation with the social consequences of adultery and illegitimacy than had their Calvinist ancestors. Consequently, Hawthorne stressed Prynne's "fallen" status as an anomaly, whereas the Calvinists would have looked upon her behavior as evidence of her "natural" state.

The Puritans, unlike the Victorians, made an important distinction between adultery within marriage and
cohabitation before wedlock, which happened on a regular basis within the New England colonies. Within Hawthorne's era, no significant distinction was made between the adultery of a married woman and the fornication of a single female. In either case, the individual was considered to have "fallen" from chastity. In The Scarlet Letter, Hester Prynne is married to Roger Chillingsworth. But within the context of specific behaviors, Hawthorne stresses the consequences of her passionate fornication with Dimmesdale far more than he does her adulterous betrayal of her husband. Throughout the novel, her name remains different from that of her husband to suggest her independent status.

Within colonial America once a couple became "espoused," or planned to marry, they often enjoyed sexual relations. Of this practice, Edmund Morgan explains that if betrothed adults

Could not restrain their sexual impulses, they were forgiven more readily than couples who were not espoused (and the number of cases in which couples confessed to fornication during the period of their espousals suggests that Puritans possessed no more restraint than other human beings)."

Making a critical distinction between fornication and adultery, the Calvinists severely punished adulterous men and women through whippings, brandings, and the wearing of the letter A. In addition, occasionally the guilty partners were symbolically hanged by standing "on the gallows with a
rope about the neck." Hawthorne employs several of these historical treatments in the chastisement of Prynne. However, her harshest punishment of social ostracism is more consistent with the Victorians' discomfort with female immorality than with the Calvinists' perception that all sins reflect humanity's fallen state. Through the social expulsion of Hester Prynne, the author attacks his era's uncharitable response to illegitimacy.

Conception out of wedlock among Puritan parishioners happened with enough frequency to cause Charles Francis Adams's to conclude:

The illegitimate child was more commonly met with in the last than in the present century, and bastardy cases furnished a class of business with which country lawyers seem to have been as familiar with then as they are with liquor cases now."

Reflecting the social prohibitions regarding human sexuality within his era, Adams held that "in the matter of sexual morality, vice in the nineteenth century as compared with the seventeenth or even the eighteenth has lost some of its evil in losing much of its grossness." The "grossness" to which he referred resulted from the frank approach to adultery and fornication taken by Puritan magistrate and citizen alike." Within the Massachusetts Bay Colony, couples often admitted their sin in order to have the children of their union baptized. In a fourteen-year span, Adams cited sixty-six cases of confessed fornication out of
the two-hundred couples that sought baptism for their babies in Norfolk County."

Reflecting the morality of the separate spheres, Hawthorne allows Prynne to recover some of her lost virtue through a life in which she "had no selfish ends, nor lived in any measure for her own profit and enjoyment." As she matures in her cottage on the edge of the community, "people brought all their sorrows and perplexities, and besought her counsel, as one who had herself gone through a mighty trouble." She promises those who come to her that "in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness." But when she "vainly imagined that she herself might be the destined prophetess" appointed by God, she realizes the "impossibility that any mission of divine and mysterious truth should be confided to a woman stained with sin, bowed down with shame, or even burdened with a life-long sorrow." Interrupting her thoughts, the narrator assures his readers that

The angel and apostle of the coming revelation must be a woman, indeed, but lofty, pure, and beautiful; and wise, moreover, not through dusky grief, but the ethereal medium of joy; and showing how sacred love should make us happy, by the truest test of a life successful to such an end! In this passage, Hawthorne supports his generation's quasi-pathological insistence on woman's chastity. His sentiments reinforce the view that women must be sexually pure to
possess moral authority. The townspeople, primarily women, respect Prynne for her wisdom born from experience, but she never reclaims her lost virtue as Dimmsdale does during his last moments on earth.

In the age of Emersonian idealism, the practice of confession was often viewed as morbid self-reproach. Hawthorne, however, separates himself from his Transcendental companions, when he makes Dimmsdale’s confession the moral centerpiece of his romance. In this respect, the author looks to an older spiritual order in which God, alone, can recover the lost soul. But it is only the hero who experiences redemption; Prynne’s transformation remains subordinate to her lover’s anguished quest for his own soul. Commenting on The Scarlet Letter from the perspective of the man’s sphere in the 1870’s, Henry James observed:

The story, indeed, is in a secondary degree that of Hester Prynne; she becomes, really, after the first scene, an accessory figure; it is not upon her the denouement depends. It is upon her guilty lover that the author projects most frequently the cold, thin rays of his fitfully-moving lantern, which makes here and there a little luminous circle, on the edge of which hovers the livid and sinister figure of the injured and retributive husband.102

Like other nineteenth-century heroines, Prynne’s character remains simple. Through the years, she acquires wisdom: but she never experiences the moral transfiguration
that occurs to Dimmsdale. His agonizing conflict between
the impulses of his lower nature and the yearnings of his
soul provide the spiritual tension within this tale of
hypocrisy and suffering. Through the passions of the
minister, Hawthorne revitalizes the Puritan exercise of
soul-searching that had been neglected in the age of
perfectionism. Dimmsdale agonizes in the grand manner of
the Romantic hero, and he staggers under his spiritual load:

To...[the] high mountain-peaks of faith and
sanctity he would have climbed, had not the
tendency been thwarted by the burden,...of crime
or anguish, beneath which it was his doom to	
totter. It kept him down, on a level with the
lowest; him the man of ethereal attributes, whose
voice the angels might else have listened to.102

In the final scene, the minister completes his painful
odyssey when he acknowledges that he is the father of
Prynne's child, Pearl. Standing on the scaffold of guilt,
in his last moments he reaches "tremulous solemnity," a
state necessary to be worthy of God's forgiveness. After
his confession, he sinks onto the platform where his head
rests against Prynne's. In a moment of agony, he says his
"Farewell" to her. She whispers "Shall we not meet
again?... Shall we not spend our immortal life together?
Surely, surely, we have ransomed one another, with all this
woe!" But rather than redeeming their love, he begs her to
understand:
The law we broke!—the sin here so awfully revealed!—let these alone be in thy thoughts! I fear! I fear! It may be, that, when we forgot our God,—when we violated our reverence each for the other's soul,—it was thenceforth vain to hope that we could meet hereafter, in an everlasting and pure reunion. God knows.

With his dying breath, he turns to God. Revealing his spiritual conversion, Dimmsdale exalts, "Praised be his name! His will be done! Farewell!"

In the end, Dimmsdale emerges as the idealistic hero who desires to do God's will rather than be reunited with his lover. His jubilant moment of faith spiritually separates him from Prynne and prepares him for salvation. After years of stumbling in the wilderness, he confesses his sin. Through this act of contrition, he achieves a manly understanding of his error. In contrast, Prynne never reaches this moment of triumphant insight. Ironically, because her sin showed in the form of her child she is never able to confess its dark secret. Therefore, she remains caught by her passion for Dimmsdale.

Within *The Scarlet Letter*, Hawthorne searched the interior landscape for its "enigmas, mysteries, and secret retreats." Because he dealt with the dark side of human experience, his ideas have been considered a transition between Puritanism and psychoanalysis. Believing that the world of appearances often hid a more frightening reality, he treated the themes of guilt and repression in ways which
anticipated Freud. American psychoanalyst Clarence Oberndorff writes that Hawthorne showed a "preoccupation with guilt, from Fanshawe...to his unfinished Doliver Romance." Oberndorff concludes that all of Hawthorne's literary works were his efforts to "write...out" his guilt. The Scarlet Letter, for example, reveals a "psychoanalytic slant" in which "the psychological situation...pictures the Puritan conscience and concern with guilt." This work, suggests the analyst, is "prophetically illustrative of the psychoanalytic method" and can be uses "as an introduction to the spirit of psychoanalysis."

Dimmsdale's psychology adumbrated Freud's definition of the unconscious mind. Hawthorne never used this phrase, but he does describe the minister's "inner man [which] gave him...evidences of a revolution in...thought and feelings." In his "interior kingdom," Dimmsdale experiences temptations to think evil thoughts that "grew out of a profounder self than that which opposed the impulse." This vitiated self "incited" him "to do some strange, wild, wicked thing." Thus, when he meets a venerable deacon of his church, Dimmsdale wants desperately to utter "certain blasphemous suggestions that rose into his mind, respecting the communion-supper." And when he encounters a goodwife to whom he has given counsel for many years, he tries to whisper in her ear an "unanswerable argument against the
immortality of the human soul" that had she heard would have caused her to "drop down dead, at once."

Blaming these impulses on Satan, the minister gasps, "Have I then sold myself...to the fiend?" The narrator, however, takes a rational approach to these wicked thoughts when he explains that "Tempted by a dream of happiness, he [Dimmsdale] had yielded himself with deliberate choice, as he had never done before, to what he knew was deadly sin." By consciously choosing to sin, Hawthorne suggests, Dimmsdale set into motion unconscious passions that prompt him to go against his higher nature. He recovers his higher nature only when he confesses his sin.

In "Young Goodman Brown" (1835), we see what happens to the hero who never is able to reclaim his soul. In this early effort, Hawthorne allegorically challenged the spirit of perfectionism that had begun to pervade the intellectual atmosphere of New England. In the figure of Brown, the author portrays the stunted masculinity of a man who is unable to develop charity or wisdom because he holds to the unattainable standard that people should be perfect. He forms this conviction based on his own youthful flirtation with evil from which he precipitously pulls back. For the rest of life, he expects all individuals to behave as he has. These expectations cause his sour view of humanity and his emotional isolation. In his long years on earth, Brown exhibits the spiritual corruption of the hypocrite who
believes in his personal virtue while condemning its absence in others.

Hawthorne's allegory begins with Brown's kissing his new bride Faith and telling her that he must "tarry away from thee." Leaving his Faith at the threshold of his home, he starts his mission that he admits is of "evil purpose." As he walks into the wilderness, he realizes that "He had taken a dreary road, darkened by all the gloomiest trees...which barely stood aside to let the narrow path creep through." On this gloomy path, he meets the "sable figure" of the Devil who is accompanied by Goody Cloyse. This is the woman who catechized Brown as a child. Together they encourage him "to make good speed" toward his errand. But he begins to experience grave doubts about any enterprise that involves the Devil. Finally, he "sat himself down on the stump of a tree" and refused to go any further with his fiendish companions. After this decision, he smugly congratulates himself for returning to the "arms of Faith."

It is during these moments of "pleasant and praiseworthy meditations," that the hero either dreams or actually witnesses a Witches' Sabbath in which his wife, Faith, is involved. Hawthorne's narrator is characteristically ambiguous about the reality of events. But in spite of this ambiguity, something definitely twists Brown's spirit, for he becomes "A stern, a sad, a darkly
meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate man." Within the coven he recognizes many of the townspeople who are gathered to welcome two new members into their group. Apparently, the couple are to be Brown and his wife, who has mysteriously joined him. At the very moment when he is tempted to enter into wickedness, he commands his Faith to "Look to Heaven." Through this petition, he believes that he has been spared the initiation into evil. In holding to the letter of his salvation, however, he forfeits the spirit of compassion toward his fellow human beings.

For the rest of his life, he criticizes others' corruption. He never grasps that his lack of charity constitutes an even greater sin. He despises humanity because it has failed to live up to his ideal. However, his idealism proves to be no protection against his vision of evil in the forest. By witnessing the dark heart in others, he becomes blinded to his own corruption. To have achieved spiritual manhood, Brown would have had to repair his shattered view of humanity and to admit to the wayward impulses of the heart. The character's ultimate tragedy lies in his inability to appreciate God's blessings of a long life, a good home, and friends:

And when he had lived long, and was borne to his grave, a hoary corpse, followed by Faith, an aged woman, and children and grandchildren, a goodly procession, besides neighbors, not a few, they carved no hopeful verse upon his tomb-stone; for his dying hour was gloom.
Captain Ahab

The year after Hawthorne wrote of Dimmsdale's atonement for his sins, Herman Melville described the majestic figure of Captain Ahab struggling to overcome the passions that drive him to destroy the great white whale. Ahab's conflict in *Moby Dick* (1851) becomes the symbol of passionate male courage even though his mission ends in disaster for all but Ishmael, who survives to tell the tale. In the male world of *Moby Dick*, the quest is reflected in the thrill of the chase as well as the spiritual search to destroy evil. Both experiences are intensified by the compulsive overreaching of the hero, Captain Ahab.

Ann Douglas in her discussion, "Herman Melville and the Revolt," argues that Melville "conceived masculinity...essentially as resistance to sentimentalism," a protest in which he used his novels as weapons against the feminization of American culture. When *Moby Dick* was published, he warned women: "Don't you buy it--don't you read it." In addition to his antagonism toward female readers, he tended to avoid female characters. In *Moby Dick*, he includes no woman except for the landlocked widows of Nantucket who disappear from view when the Pequod sets sail. Ahab is married, but only once does he ever mention his wife when he sadly recollects that "I wedded past fifty, and sailed for Cape Horn the next day, leaving but one dent in my marriage pillow.... Aye, I widowed that poor girl
when I married her."116 When women do appear as in *Pierre, or the Ambiguities*, they are responsible for creating the emotional chaos which envelops the hero. The subtitle reflects Pierre's view toward the opposite sex, particularly in his incestuous desires for the alluring Isabel, who convinces him that they are siblings.

In *Moby Dick*, the mysterious union between man and the sea is reflected in the oil painting that hangs in the Spouter-Inn. When Ishmael, the narrator, first glances at the scene, he describes it as a "boggy, soggy, squitchy picture truly, enough to drive a nervous man distracted."117 However, upon further scrutiny, he discovers that "There was a sort of indefinite, half-attained, unimaginable sublimity about it that fairly froze you to it, till you involuntarily took an oath with yourself to find out what that marvelous painting meant."118 Finally Ishmael sees certain shadows take the more concrete form of a "half-foundered ship" with "its three dismantled masts" that was weltering in a "great hurricane." It is a wild scene of nature gone mad; but the *coup de grace* is delivered by an "exasperated whale," which is in the "enormous act of impaling himself upon the three mast heads."119 Within these images, Melville foreshadows Ahab's insanity that produces the catastrophe that awaits the crew of the Pequod when they finally meet the great white whale.
Before Ishmael meets Captain Ahab, he hears gossip about him from Captain Peleg, who comments that he is a "queer man...but a good one.... Ahab's above the common; Ahab's been in colleges, as well as among the cannibals; been used to deeper wonders than the waves." When he finally encounters his captain, Ishmael is struck by his passionate appearance; Ahab looks as if he has been "cut away from the stake, when the fire has overrunningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them." In the opening passage of the novel, Father Mapple delivers a forceful sermon in which he describes the true Calvinist as one "who gives no quarter in the truth, and kills, burns and destroys all sin though he pluck it out from under the robes of the Senators and Judges." Ahab's ravaged aspect reflects this Puritan desire to destroy evil.

Ishmael describes his Captain's fierce temperament in Romantic language that suggests his majesty:

My Captain, still moves before me in all his Nantucket grimness and shagginess....Oh, Ahab! what shall be grand in thee, it must needs be plucked at from the skies, and dived for in the deep and featured in the unbodied air.

In this glorification, he resembles more a god ruined than a mere man. Like a god, he demands vengeance toward the Creature that has maddened him. In his wrath and sorrow, he searches the seas for Moby Dick, who ripped one of his legs from his body. In this wounded condition, Ahab's "torn body
and gashed soul bled into one another." His injury is not only to his flesh; his spirit becomes diseased as he seeks to destroy the evil being that attacked him. Of his destructive obsession, Ann Douglas comments that "Ahab's mind may be diseased, but it is a sickness he caught from God, not man." In his violence, Ahab is reminiscent of Jonathan Edward's "Angry God," from Whom there is "no refuge."

Glimpsing the hidden darkness in his soul, Ahab demands of himself:

What is it, what nameless, inscrutable, unearthly thing it is; what cozening, hidden lord and master, and cruel, remorseless emperor commands me....to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare?" Occasionally, his vehement nature is tempered by exquisite flashes of contrition. Ishmael witnesses one such instant in "The Symphony," when his Captain's charred heart is salved by the "enchanted air [that] did at last seem to dispel, for a moment, the rankerous thing in his soul." Then, "from beneath his slouched hat," Ahab lets one precious tear fall into the ocean, "nor did all the Pacific contain such wealth as that one wee drop." In Moby Dick, Melville re-affirmed an older order of morality in which unruly affections struggle to gain ascendancy within the human soul.
Douglas makes the point that "Ahab cannot be understood at all without some knowledge of Calvinism; it is essential to his masculinity." In contradistinction to Douglas, Alfred Kazin suggests that it was Freud who held the key to understanding Ahab's character because his symptoms of "bitterness, ... unrelentingness, ... [and] inability to rest in that uncertainty," represents the portrait of the "modern man" described in psychoanalysis. In another passage, Douglas also supports a psychoanalytic reading of *Moby Dick* when she connects the Puritan view of human nature with Freud's: "Part of the essential Calvinism of these narratives is Melville's implicit insistence...that the fundamental struggle in American culture is the Oedipal one of son against father." As one who has tried to make the same point, I agree with Douglas's comparison between the concerns of the Puritans and those of Freud. However, I believe that the purpose of her conflation is to use the imagery of psychoanalysis to elucidate Melville and the Calvinists. I argue for the contrary view; that is, we can understand Freud by first understanding the Calvinists. Within the nineteenth-century, Calvinism found its expression in the romantic hero. In his complexity, he reflected the Puritan view of human nature at the same time that he foreshadowed Freud's psychoanalytic portrait of the divided self.
In the literary characters of Wieland, Dimmsdale, and Ahab, the Puritan view of the human heart as the battleground between good and evil impulses was preserved. In a profound shift away from the Calvinist doctrine that sin stains all of God's creatures including women and children, people in the nineteenth century considered the tragic passions to be the province of great men who became their Romantic heroes. Women and children were seen as incomplete individuals whom God may have favored with beauty and innocence, but to whom He denied the male virtues of physical fortitude and spiritual complexity.
Chapter Notes


2. Fernald, p. 218.


11. Harris, p. 112.

12. For an excellent treatment of the role ministers played in helping to shape the woman's sphere, see *The Feminization of American Culture* (1977) by Ann Douglas.


29. James, Portrait, p. 434.

30. James, Portrait, p. 436.


32. James, Portrait, p. 436.


38. Chopin, p. 645.
40. Chopin, p. 651.
41. Chopin, p. 651.
42. Chopin, p. 653.
43. Chopin, p. 545.
44. Theodore Dreiser's novel *Sister Carrie* constitutes an important exception to this literary convention, but it is not within the scope of this section to discuss this work.


54. Schlesinger, p. 126.

55. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 326.

56. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 326.

57. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 328.

58. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 329.

59. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 333.

60. Emerson, "Napoleon; or, the Man of the World," in The Portable Emerson, p. 343.


63. Townsend, p. 99.
64. Townsend, p. 101.
66. Townsend, p. 111.
67. Townsend, p. 111.
68. Townsend, p. 105.


75. Henry Adams, p. 385.


77. Brown, p. 175.


80. Brown, p. 188.


82. Brown, p. 197.


86. Brown, p. 248.


90. Hawthorne had an ancestor who had been a judge at the Salem witch trials. This Judge Hathorne served to influence the nineteenth-century author’s view of Puritan Massachusetts.


94. Morgan, *The Puritan Family*, p. 41. Because adultery was a capital offense, death could be administered as an appropriate punishment. However, this sentence was carried out only three times in the history of New England.

96. Charles Francis Adams, p. 516.

97. For an example of Adams's sense of "grossness," see Governor Bradford's 1642 descriptions of Thomas Granger's sexual crimes in Chapter 4.

98. Charles Francis Adams, 496-97; years from 1761-1775.


117. Melville, p. 36.
118. Melville, p. 36.
119. Melville, p. 36.
120. Melville, p. 119.
121. Melville, 169.
122. Melville, p. 81.
123. Melville, p. 199.
126. Melville, 685.
127. Melville, p. 682.


CHAPTER 9
PSYCHOANALYTIC PURITANS: G. STANLEY HALL
AND JAMES JACKSON PUTNAM

Introduction

At the beginning of his Clark Lectures, Freud assured the people sitting in the audience that "you have no need to be afraid that any special medical knowledge will be required for following what I have to say." Although he always contended that psychoanalysis is scientific, he also sought from the beginning of his speculations to make his theories intelligible to educated lay people. Therefore, he often disengaged himself from the jargon of psychiatry and neurology to extend his ideas beyond the ken of medicine into social and cultural areas. However, in the cases of G. Stanley Hall, the psychologist, and James Jackson Putnam, the neurologist, Freud could have used specialized language. As members of the group assembled to hear Freud, they followed his lectures, delivered in German, effortlessly.

Both of these men were born and reared in Protestant homes in Massachusetts. They shared a Puritan heritage that was kept alive in Hall's family by his mother, whereas
Putnam's parents had become Unitarians. In this chapter, I will describe how their cultural background prepared them to recognize in psychoanalysis issues that had been of concern to people in New England for generations. Without their assistance, Freud's reception in America would have been more problematic in that many people were offended by the sexual content of psychoanalytic theory. However, because these well-respected professionals accepted his ideas, psychoanalysis was launched in New England with very little resistance. Not all of the responses to Freud were positive, but the men and women who embraced his beliefs were more influential than the skeptics and critics.

By 1915, Freudian ideas had become firmly enough established in the Eastern United States to cause New York psychiatrist John T. MacCurdy to observe that psychoanalytic terms had replaced the older Calvinist idiom. In his essay "Ethical Aspects of Psychoanalysis," he explained that William James's phrase "the religion of healthy-mindedness" had "largely done away with the doctrine of original sin." "Now it returns in a jargon of 'complexes,' 'repressions,' and 'sublimations','" he noted. Given Freud's view of the human condition, MacCurdy asked:

Is it any wonder that this teaching should be opposed with more emotion than logic, that it should be called a 'pest'; its publication placed on a German scientific Index purgatorius, and its followers in many parts of Europe exposed to ostracism?"
His response was to attack the "opponents of psychoanalysis" for their limited vision in which they "restrict science to what can be weighed in a balance or seen with the eye." He believed that Freud's ideas had admitted into science the reality of the "unseen world." Of psychoanalysis, he insisted that "its very basis is ethical" because it holds the "promise of a more honest form of thinking."

G. Stanley Hall

Born in 1846 on his family's farm in Ashfield, Massachusetts, G. Stanley Hall reminisced in his autobiography Life and Confessions of a Psychologist (1923) about the childhood joys he experienced when playing in rural fields, which contained wild animals, including skunks and a lynx. In this work, he described his grandfather's "very old-fashioned New England farm" as a working establishment in comparison with "such museums as those in Salem, Plymouth, Deerfield, and Boston." This homestead "made an almost ideal environment for the boys." In retrospect, Hall believed that the farm atmosphere allowed him to breathe in the Puritan spirit of his forbearers, for at Ashfield "we went back to sources and made contact with the fresh primary thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and modes of life of the race." Besides the traditions that were
preserved within Hall's home, the Congregational Church was the religious and social center for the community. Perceiving that his church provided him with "the foreschool of psychology and especially characterology," he described its members' "incessant discussion of real motives and much analysis of personality, and endless criticism which, on the whole, favored public and private morals." Based on these lessons, he began to look beneath the surface of people's actions and words to discover what he considered to be a deeper reality.

His New England heritage began with the arrivals of William Bradford and John Winthrop. Explaining his family tree, Hall indicated that "On my mother's side, my great-grandmother was Abigail Alden, a direct descendant in the fifth generation of John Alden (b. 1599) of Plymouth fame," and "on my father's side we trace the name Hall through nine generations to John Hall who at twenty-one came from Coventry, England, to Charlestown, Massachusetts, in 1630, in the fleet with Governor Winthrop." Pilgrim and Puritan came together in the lineage of G. Stanley Hall.

In Hall's childhood home, the Calvinist spirit of his ancestors was expressed in the conscience of his mother. In her diary, she recorded ecstatic moments of joy as well as episodes of estrangement from God. Her introspective, ambivalent nature, shaped by the doctrines of her church,
suggests to the reader the Calvinist temperament of an earlier age. On the one hand she proclaimed:

I sometimes get such a glimpse of God’s perfect character—so good, so wise and just, that I rejoice to be under His government and feel that I could bear whatever He should see fit to lay upon me with cheerfulness and more—with pleasure—assured of His kindness even in adversity.9

On the other hand, she did not always apprehend this spiritual security when she revealed that

The closet bears testimony of my estrangedness from God. And when I review the brief record of my experience in religion I find but little evidence that I love or have been loved by Him 'whose favor is life.' If I love, why am I thus?10

In his Life and Confessions, Hall described his mother as a devout women who desired above everything else harmony and love in the home. She suffered when his father levelled "harsh censure and occasional punishment." Hall's father "had a quick temper...of the inflammable kind and expressed itself most commonly in tongue-lashings and not infrequently in sudden slaps and cuffs."11 As the result this abrupt and angry behavior, Hall developed "antagonisms" that eventually were expressed as his struggle for independence. Underlying his resentment, he admitted his deep affection for his father but lamented that the "very atmosphere of Puritanism chilled almost every manifestation of it."12 As an adult, his tendency "to be not only critical but severe and sometimes to give way to temper" was his "father's diathesis
voiced...in my soul." In contrast, he received from his mother an "even and sunny temper...and her exquisite sensitiveness" that "makes it hard for me to disagree with anyone, especially to his face."

In his memoirs, Hall recorded details about his childhood initiation into sexual awareness. Describing precocious inclinations among his schoolmates at grammar school in Worthington, Massachusetts, he recited a list of "rotten" behaviors including "homosexuality, exhibitionism, fellatio, onanism, relations with animals, and almost every form of perversion" to which a young person could be subjected. He remarked that "it was common for the older boys to catch us younger ones...and to strip and exhibit us to older boys and even girls." And he vividly remembered the shock he experienced when an older girl exposed her genitals to him.

Hall was not unacquainted with anatomy because on the farm he had often witnessed the breeding of livestock. As a "small boy" he was asked to keep an account of the ewes "that had been reddened by the madder daily rubbed under the forequarters of the buck hired for a week or two to run with the flock till all were covered." In addition, he was "given detailed instruction" on how to mate the sows with the boar, and "often saw and not infrequently helped in the castration of pigs, lambs, calves, and colts." To him, genitals were a common sight. In spite of his knowledge of
animals, however, he was unprepared for the "perversions" of the children at school.

At the same time that Hall found his classmates' behaviors threatening, he developed morbid fears of masturbation and of females based on the horror stories his father told him about men who "abused" themselves and sinned "with lewd women." God had punished these men by afflicting them with disease in which their noses were eaten away. This image stunned the young Hall. Consequently, he "rigged an apparatus and applied bandages to prevent erethism" while he slept." He confessed: "If I yielded to any kind of temptation to experimentation upon myself I suffered intense remorse and fear, and sent up many a secret and most fervent prayer that I might never again break my resolve." As a child, he thought that his infrequent episodes of masturbation were signs of his inherently "corrupt" nature. In his confusion over his sexual desires, he refrained from "associating with girls" because he wanted to protect himself from sin." As a result, he explained that he turned into a "boy's boy and a man's man."

Although Hall matured in Victorian New England, his observations and introspections lack the delicate tone often reserved for sexual subjects. His confessions reveal the concerns of a Puritan like Cotton Mather rather than the repressed sensibilities of his own generation. Hall's biographer, Dorothy Ross, explains that "the moral world
created by Congregationalism and the rocky New England soil had formed his mind." Because these forces shaped his youthful perspective, Hall was able to behold in Freud's theories the secular extension of Calvinism.

Leaving home in 1863, Hall attended Williams College until his graduation in 1867. In contradistinction to the Congregational atmosphere of this institution, he described the "veritable Emersonian craze" that "ran rampant," over the campus during his freshman year. And when the great man spoke in the village of Williamstown, college students filled to overflowing the lecture room. Hall doubted, however, that Emerson was "ever alluded to by the faculty in the classroom for his ultra-Unitarianism was thought to be a very subtle and dangerous thing."

Although attracted to this liberalism, Hall did not pursue it. Instead he entered Union Theological Seminary in 1867 primarily to please his mother. At that time, the Seminary was in the hands of conservative clerics. Included in this group was Dr. Shead whose writings were "rigidly Calvinistic." While studying in New York, Hall attended and "joined by letter" Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Church in Brooklyn Heights. Beecher personally catechized Hall and asked the seminarian if his studies had made him "more or less devout?" Hall replied "less," and the pastor "passed" him with a "commendation for...honesty."
Although becoming a minister reflected his mother's dream, Hall admitted in his Confessions that he had never wanted this career. He wrote: "I had no aptitude for parish work, no gift of pulpit oratory...[and] was far too skeptical on the fundamentals of doctrine to hold my place in any orthodox church." In spite of his growing skepticism, however, he found it inconceivable "to have 'turned Unitarian'" because this defection from orthodoxy "would have broken my mother's heart and shamed all my relatives, for that creed was quite beyond the pale." 

At the end of his first year at Union, Hall "went or rather was sent to preach" in Couderport, Pennsylvania, although he had not been ordained nor was he licenced. His term lasted "nine consecutive weeks," and he reported that he "'labored' and did my best." His activities included listening to a dying woman's prayers and then conducting her funeral service. When he returned to New York, Beecher presented Hall with the money to study in Germany. Beecher's single concern was that his parishioner might become "less religious"; however, Hall reassured him that he would become more religious in a "larger sense." This satisfied the pastor, and Hall was dispatched to Germany in good standing with his mentor at Plymouth Church. His parents, however, "did not favor Europe but wished me to become a clergyman." In spite of their protests and the
fact that "no one saw...[him] off," he arrived in Bonn during the summer of 1868 in a positive frame of mind."

Although Hall's moral values were grounded in Calvinism, his intellectual interests were concentrated in the natural science and philosophy of the nineteenth century. As he extended his education beyond the religious curriculum of Union, he noted that "had I not set out from so narrow and saturated an orthodoxy my sense of progress would have been far less." Studying abroad, Hall measured his "progress" by his exposure to "Darwin, Spencer and Tyndall, Renan, Strauss, Emerson, and Carlyle." He also acknowledged the influence of "Coleridge, Feuerbach, Comte, Schwegler, Hagenbach, Theodore Parker, Tom Paine, Lessing, and Goethe." From his reading, he added the intellectual riches of his age to his Puritan heritage.

Returning to New York in 1871, Hall completed his studies at Union. In 1872 he accepted a teaching position in literature at Antioch College, an institution he described as "a Western outpost of Unitarianism." During his stay in Yellow Springs, Ohio, Hall read Wilhelm Wundt's Foundations of Physical Psychology. He became very excited by this new science and left Antioch in 1876 to enter Harvard. He studied under William James, and within two years he had completed the Ph.D. in psychology." In 1878 he returned to Germany, this time to work with Wundt at Leipzig. Upon his homecoming in 1882, Hall was appointed
Professor of Psychology and Pedagogics at The Johns Hopkins University by its president, Daniel Coit Gilman. Gilman permitted the newcomer to set up his own laboratory, as James had done at Harvard. Among Hall’s students were John Dewey and Woodrow Wilson. In 1887, Hall founded the American Journal of Psychology.

Hall’s most important appointment came in 1888 when he was invited by the philanthropist Jonas Gilman Clark to become the first president of the newly founded Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. His primary responsibility between 1888 when he accepted the post and October of 1889, when the university opened its doors, was to recruit an outstanding faculty, a task he accomplished by selecting men who were to distinguish themselves as preeminent scholars. Among those who joined Hall were Franz Boas in anthropology, Arthur Michael in chemistry, and A.A. Michelson in physics. The last was quickly stolen away by William R. Harper as he put together the founding scholars of the University of Chicago.

Hall was one of the first American psychologists to take an interest in the theories of Freud. In Life and Confessions, Hall commented that he had "long been predisposed to certain special interests in sex psychology besides those which every human being has had since man became man." Recalling his own youthful sexual misadventures, he explained that "perhaps my prepubescent
observations in one of the schools I attended had opened my eyes to the possibilities of precocious evil in this field." Hall held a view of children that was closer to the Puritan image of "innocent vipers" than the Romantic picture of innocence. In this way, his views were compatible with Freud's "discoveries" about infant and childhood sexuality. By inviting the Viennese neurologist to speak, Hall facilitated the introduction of Freudian ideas to many Americans. Dorothy Ross comments in her biography of Hall that Clark's anniversary celebration initiated "a major acceleration of interest in Freud in all public and professional spheres" in America."

Although Hall is, perhaps, most dramatically remembered for bringing Freud to New England, he exerted a persistent influence in psychology and education through his contributions. When Hall published Adolescence in 1904, he acknowledged having read Studies in Hysteria (1895) but seemed not to have been familiar with The Interpretation of Dreams (1900). As the decade progressed, Hall became increasingly receptive to Freud's ideas, and in 1908 he offered a graduate course in Freudian psychology at Clark University. Hall's second two-volume work Educational Problems (1911) owes much to psychoanalysis which provided the theoretical underpinnings for this study. Hall and Freud were both interested in human sexuality, especially its expression in children and adolescents. But more than
this specific area, they shared a common view of human
nature in which impulses of the unconscious mind determine
conscious reactions and behavior. When Hall wrote to Freud
in 1908 to invite him to Clark University he explained, "I
have for many years been profoundly interested in your work,
which I have studied with diligence, and also that of your
followers." 33

Hall’s first major work Adolescence: Its Psychology
(1904) was reviewed in Science by the American psychologist
E.L. Thorndike, who commented that "To realize the material
presented one must combine his memories of medical text-
books, erotic poetry and inspirational readings." 34 In
private correspondence to his friend James Cattell,
Thorndike was not so charitable. Discerning Hall’s
theological background, the critic exclaimed that
Adolescence was "chock full of errors, masturbation and
Jesus." And he concluded that Hall "is a mad man." 35

Hall, like Freud, believed that masturbation produces
serious emotional problems for the person who indulges in
it. Addressing this "perversion" in Adolescence, he cited
F.S. Brockman’s late nineteenth-century study of the moral
and religious life of 232 college and theological students.
Of this number, 132 individuals admitted that they
masturbated. Even after religious conversion, 75 men
continued this activity in spite of the fact that 24 members
of this group had decided to become ministers." Of all the
sexual "vices," Hall held that masturbation presents the greatest "temptation." And even though he hoped that Brockman's findings were "exaggerated," he used them to offer evidence of the "appalling prevalence" of this practice.

Dismayed by people's indulgence, Hall indicted his own society along with the decadent East: "The Occident has little, if any, advantage over the sad records of the Orient, and civilized man is, on the whole, no better, if not far worse, in this respect than his savage brother." He was disturbed by reports that "children of tender years" had indulged in this "easiest and most spontaneous of all vices," and he added that some "now think it a disease more frequent among girls than boys." Besides people, Hall listed other creatures that masturbate including "monkeys, dogs, blood stallions, [and] elephants."

Moralizing about the effects of masturbation upon character development, Hall linked this behavior to melancholia, a connection that Freud also made. Hall believed that a young man's "consciousness of a vice so hated and despised" predisposes him to "youthful melancholia" in which he "sometimes plunges into discouragement culminating in a sense of utter despair." He explained that the "onanistic psychosis" was often diagnosed as "neurasthenia," in which "weakness always brings more or less depression."
Ten years before Hall published Adolescence, Freud in private correspondence with Fliess observed this same connection: "Melancholia is generated as an intensification of neurasthenia through masturbation." In this letter, Freud included a "schematic picture of sexuality" that shows how "excessive masturbation" brings about a "lasting reduction" in "somatic sexual excitation" which, in turn, produces "neurasthenic melancholia." Both Freud and Hall concluded that this habit weakens the male both emotionally and physically. Freud charged that masturbation "vitiated" a man's character, whereas Hall warned that "one of the direct moral effects is lying, secretiveness, and hypocrisy...[and that] self-control and will-power...are certain to decline."

Within Hall's intellectual development, theological doctrines were combined with psychological investigations to form his view of human nature. Seminarian echoes can be heard in his discussion about the "Adolescent Psychology of Conversion" in Adolescence. In this chapter, he outlined the history of Christian conversion in America in which the goal had been a "radical" and "transforming" change in an individual's character. Describing the revivals that took place in Northampton when "Jonathan Edwards first and alone seems to have grasped the whole situation...that all persons not specifically converted are sinners," Hall agreed with Edwards that religious conversion is often experienced
as a spontaneous upheaval within the affections.

Articulating an Edwardsean determinism, Hall wrote:

> We shall all, even the best of us, find sooner or later that our imperfections of nature and nurture are too many and great to be overcome by any effort we can possibly make. Habits and instincts are too much for our will."

Buttressing "modern psychology" with a "Christian solution," Hall believed that the "only course is to stop special and multifarious striving [onanism] and fall back on more generic and unconscious impulsion: with a changed heart and a new affection, having fallen in love with righteousness, surrender to this new love.""

Shaping his own doctrine of original sin in which he united his ancestral Calvinism with certain premises from Darwin, Hall suggested that "in our biological age," we should not fight the "fact that we suffer for the sins of our forbearers or mid-parents back to Adam, or the amphioxus or even amoeba." He argued that "even if we could conceivably apply antidotes for the evils we ourselves have brought upon our own nature, we can never hope to neutralize those of all our ascendants."" Using poetic images, he explained that

> We are influenced in our deeper, more temperamental dispositions by the life-habits and codes of conduct we know not what unnumbered hosts of ancestors, which like a cloud of witnesses are present throughout our lives, and that our souls are echo-chambers in which their whispers reverberate."
Within the unconscious mind of each individual resides "the story of primitive man [which]...is a long passion history." Hall asserted that "the best of us carry a heavy handicap of biological sin from our ancestors. Tragic guilt...exhibits the physiological effects of the errors or vices of the past." Revitalizing a Hobbesian view of the human condition, Hall declared that

At best, life is short; man is preyed upon by hundreds of diseases...death is sure and often comes as a relief.... The high aspirations and ambitions of adolescence shrivel as life advances.... If man be not an utterly lustful and fallen creature, he is at least wretched and an object of pity to himself.

In Adolescence, Hall’s mission was to encourage young people to seek out the new "Christology" through which they would gain self-understanding. In the work, he offered Jesus’s suffering on the cross as the highest expression of self-sacrifice through which "the older, lower selfish self" can be conquered. Hall hoped that to the young person the life of Jesus would become the most "dramatic representation [of how to] make catharses of our lower nature and to attain full ethical maturity without arrest or perversion; this is the very meaning of adolescence."

Like Freud, Hall created an "archeology of the mind" which includes "zones or strata which precede consciousness as we know it." Describing these, Hall wrote that each person’s "remote physic pedigree" is captured in primordial
He explained that they "penetrate at times up to consciousness" where they are expressed as aggressive or destructive actions. Although never directly citing Freud's work on the structure of the mind, Hall's descriptions in Adolescence often beg to be considered in light of certain images included in The Interpretation of Dreams. Hall stated that the mind is built layer upon layer of partly isolated yet strongly interacting strata. Very ancient hereditary tendencies often push up perhaps even into consciousness.... There are sudden resurgences of long-forgotten facts, and feelings and impulses of an immeasurable past, while recent salient occurrences often appear to sink to fathomless oblivion.

He also included images that coincide with Breuer's and Freud's descriptions of patients' overcoming their illnesses in Studies in Hysteria. Hall held that memories of sin are buried far below the conscious level, but as they begin to push upward they cause "pain, guilt [and a] craving for punishment." These uncomfortable symptoms often precipitate confessions in which

The very act of putting our sins into words and acknowledging them to others means that the long-festering sores have suppured into consciousness and are now come to a head, broken and discharging, and healing processes are already under way."

Hall's cure for the "defects we inherit," was for people to admit that within their temperaments they possess
powers of destruction." This admission prepares the individual to receive the good news of conversion.

Reflecting his theological training, he rejoiced that "It is...our great...fortune to live in an age when our Bible is being slowly re-evaluated as the best utterance and reflex of nature and needs of the soul of man, as his great textbook in psychology." Promoting Christianity as the means to heal the sinner, he explained that the "psychology of confession...is deep and complex."

Hall called his system of ideas, which included his interpretation of original sin, "genetic psychology." From this perspective, he posited that inherited instincts and affections constitutes the psychology of the modern individual. In his evolutionary scheme, he held that children are closer to the vital root of life than are adults who have experienced "over-schooling, 'city-fication'...and repressions." Within each child "lies the great animal world, where...each species seems essentially...embodied, as the carnivora's cruelty, the rabbit's timidity, or the peacock's ostentation." As children develop, the "character type...is based on unconscious, instinctive, prehuman, or animal traits."

In 1911, Hall published his second two-volume work entitled Education Problems. In this study, he employed many of Freud's theories." Seven years earlier in Adolescence, Hall's only significant mention of Freud
concerned the "talking cure" which the American psychologist
enthusiastically compared to the religious experience of
confession." The years between 1904 and 1911 reveal Freud's
marked influence on Hall's psychological principles. For
example, in 1904 Hall ignored female passion as he referred
to the doctrine of separate spheres: "To be a true woman
means to be yet more mother than wife. The Madonna
conception expresses man's highest comprehension of woman's
real nature." By 1911, however, the Madonna image had been
undermined by the "budding girl" whose passionate nature
needs to be guided toward the reproductive role. When he
accepted Freud's heterodox views on the all-inclusiveness of
the sexual instinct, Hall's theories formed a continuum that
began with his Calvinist heritage, which admitted sexual
appetites in both men and women, and ended with id
psychology that reintroduced concupiscent human nature.

In his 1895 essay "Pedagogical Methods in Sunday
School," Hall limited sexual passion to the masculine sphere
in which it is the experience of young men "to...feel
emotion. They must tingle, burn. The erectile tissues must
be brought into exercise." Writing only of boys in
Adolescence, Hall explained that youth constitutes the time
for arousal and carousal: "It is the age of natural
inebriation without the need of intoxicants.... It is a
natural impulse to experience hot and perfervid psychic
states, and is characterized by emotionalism...because youth
must have excitement." He warned educators that if a young man cannot obtain satisfaction in the moral or intellectual realm, he will find it "in sex or in drink."

In *Educational Problems*, Hall dealt with the sexual instincts of both boys and girls. In a chapter entitled "The Budding Girl," he beheld in teen-aged girls the same vigorous sexual curiosity and desires that he had earlier depicted in boys in *Adolescence*. Indicating that although it is "normal" for females to appreciate their sexuality as they mature, he suggested that this innocent appreciation needs to be protected by a moral "vaccination" against "the chance infection by a more dangerous virus." This vaccination amounted to a proper education, "if possible by their mothers," through which girls would gain the understanding that "reproduction plays a far greater role in the life of woman than it does in that of man." When properly instructed, the "girl will be anchored betimes to what is really the essential thing, viz., reproduction and the carrying beneath her heart and then bearing children which are the hope of the world."

Even though Hall explained that girls, like boys, must have their excitements, for the most part he saw these as innocent preparations for motherhood. But among the female flowers are, unfortunately, to be found a few sexually precocious "buds" who possess "an inordinate love of pleasures of appetite and dote almost incessantly upon
sweetmeats and intoxicants. His psychological insights into female sexuality were often cast in a moralistic tone when he described the "degenerate type" of girl who is "steeped in vice and disease, body and soul." He advised that only "physical restraint...can prevent [her] from sinking upon the first occasion into the lowest depths." He believed that this girl had been "branded with bad heredity and handicapped by low home environment." He seemed to be both fascinated and horrified by the vision of a passionate adolescent girl. So intense was his interest in her sexuality that in a review of Educational Problems, Hall was charged with voyeurism because he "dwell too long and lovingly upon the theme, too caressingly upon its nastiest aspects." While noting Hall's protests that the "The Budding Girl" and her "precocious iniquity" were "painful to write" about, the reviewer held to the conviction that the author was intrigued by this provocative issue.

The criticism Hall received for his treatment of "the bud" upset him. As a consequence he abandoned his discussions of the sexual activities of both boys and girls as he headed for the safer ground of educational psychology and religious instruction. In his work Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology (1917), he combined these two areas. Between 1911 and 1914, G. Stanley Hall shifted from the "Freudian emphasis on sex," to Adler's ideas in which sex is de-emphasized. In spite of his switch in
psychological loyalties, Hall remained faithful throughout his life to elements within his Calvinist heritage. His major works reflect his debt to this tradition in which he developed psychological counterparts for original sin, confession, and redemption. It was his hope that the gospel would be used to help people, particularly youth, overcome their temptations and undisciplined affections.

James Jackson Putnam

At the turn of the twentieth century, G. Stanley Hall was not the only New Englander who admired Sigmund Freud's work. James Jackson Putnam began reading about Freud's "discoveries" in 1906 in German journals. But it was not until their meeting in 1909 that the aristocratic Putnam became friends with the Austrian physician. In *A Memoir of Dr. James Jackson* (1905), his maternal grandfather, Putnam traced his family's New England heritage to the founding of the Massachusetts Bay Colony when his ancestor Edward Jackson settled in 1643 in Cambridge, where he took an interest in the development of Harvard College. Dying in 1681, he left a comfortable estate to his son Jonathan who, like his father, was a staunch Calvinist and a prominent member of the community.

James Jackson Putnam was born in Boston in 1846. He graduated from Harvard at the age of 20 in 1866, and he was
reared as a Unitarian by his parents who had exchanged the stricter Congregationalism of their forbearers for this more liberal denomination. Putnam was from an elite Boston medical family. His father specialized in obstetrics and women's diseases. His grandfather James Jackson enjoyed the reputation of being the city's premier physician, and he helped to found Massachusetts General Hospital. Continuing in the tradition of the men in his family, Putnam entered Harvard medical school in 1866. Neurology attracted him because he was interested in the brain and nervous system as well as the diseases that affected them. At Harvard, he established a permanent friendship with William James, one of his classmates, and upon completing his studies in 1869, Putnam went to Germany where he added electrotherapeutics to his neurological background.

In 1870, neurology was a relatively new field in which the brain was considered to be the organ of the mind. Certain organic conditions such as an injury to brain tissue, a lesion within the brain, or a disease like syphilis were thought to precipitate affective states, and the cure involved operations or drugs. *Materia medica* was, however, undermined when certain neurologists began to investigate the role psychological states played in precipitating physical illnesses. In Europe Putnam studied with two neurologists—Theodore Meynert at the University of Vienna and Jean Charcot in Paris. Over a decade later,
Freud unwittingly followed Putnam's path as he, too, studied with these specialists.

During Putnam's years in Europe, neurologists had not seriously begun to investigate the emotional etiology of illness but were still trying to discover an organic basis for nervous symptoms. However in the 1870's, Charcot ventured to establish certain connections between mind and body when he experimented with hypnosis in the treatment of hysteria. It was from him that Freud learned this technique in 1885.

Fluent in German and familiar with the latest neurological findings, Putnam returned to Boston in 1872 to join the Harvard medical faculty. In addition, he established a private practice. For many years, he continued to believe that nervous ailments were caused by organic brain dysfunction. Using this material basis, he had hoped to find a link between damaged brain tissue and emotional symptoms, but his investigations yielded nothing that would shed light on this connection. Slowly he began to defect from the strict materialism of organic causation as he became willing to contemplate the possibility that within the mind certain psychological states produce physical symptoms. This in turn led him openly to consider the viability of mental therapeutics. In this interest, he joined Josiah Royce, Hugo Munsterberg, and his old friend William James who, together, formed the Boston "school."
They "developed the most sophisticated and scientific psychotherapy in the English-speaking world." As a group, these men met regularly between 1890 and 1909, the year of Freud's visit.

The Boston "school" owed no debt to Freud for its therapeutics. In fact, in 1906 Putnam believed that Freud would be remembered primarily for extending the theories of Pierre Janet rather than for contributing something original to medicine. However, these views began to change when Putnam met Ernest Jones in 1907. Jones personally presented the case of psychoanalysis to the Boston Brahmin. Initially offended by Freud's theory of infant sexuality, Putnam began to take an interest in psychoanalysis when he became familiar with its "talking cure." He found this non-invasive approach an attractive method by which to treat some patients' nervous complaints.

After Putnam met Freud at Clark University, the two men discovered that they shared a common medical background, which became the foundation upon which they built a personal friendship. The Putnams were Freud's hosts when he visited their camp in the Adirondacks, and through the years the two men maintained a prolific correspondence. Their relationship was marked by a moral earnestness on the part of Putnam and a political shrewdness on the part of Freud. However, his evaluation of Putnam as a "magnificent acquisition" for the "cause" was always tempered by warmth."
Freud appreciated the American's influence in New England's social and professional circles, and he also prized their rapport.

Putnam's first tribute to Freud followed quickly on the heels of his visit. In "Personal Impressions of Sigmund Freud and His Work" (1909), Putnam reflected the warmth that developed between these two men. In this essay, he attempted to dispel the "prejudice" that he perceived would greet psychoanalysis as Americans began to grasp its dark core. Attempting to prepare people for this view of human nature, Putnam wrote that even the "most harmonious and best balanced" individual "is complex enough to furnish the material for many a romance, for many a study of the conflicting tides of feeling." He thanked Freud for reinstating a complicated view the heart, and he pointed out that although the "detective novel is welcome at every fireside...the scientific student of human acts and motives is considered a disseminator of morbid tendencies."

In this recognition of the contradictions within the normal psyche, we see Putnam's endeavor to balance the idealism of his age with what he perceived as Freudian realism. Rejecting the perfectionist notion that "introspection is of the devil," he argued that those who believe this would naively "press constantly forward into...more abundant light...[forgetting] those who have had a dark history." He added that it is "narrow intolerance"
to cry "'introspection'" in an effort "to prevent an unfortunate invalid... from searching, even to the death, the causes of his misery." In his acceptance of people's inherently wicked tendencies, Putnam's views were at odds with the conventional wisdom of his era, which stressed the possibility of perfection for all who aspire to this goal.

Having been reared a Unitarian, Putnam rationally rejected the doctrine of original sin which he believed negatively colored the Calvinism of his ancestors. So when he mentioned the similarity between this doctrine and Freud's theories on infant sexuality in his 1915 work Human Motives, Putnam sought to clarify his own position:

If anyone should imagine that it was my intention to characterize the period of infancy and childhood as one of gross sensuality--of such a sort, for example, as really to justify in a psychological sense the term 'original sin,'...he would be very much mistaken."

In a stunning contradiction, however, Putnam almost immediately slipped into a description that smacks of native depravity: "A striking fact about the infant is that he comes into the world as the inheritor of tendencies which had their origin and usefulness in the dark periods of his development." His image of "dark periods" recalls Freud's view of children, and his phrase "immaturity of the race" suggests Darwin's theory of evolution. Putnam added that "Childhood, consecrate it and admire it as we may, corresponds to the period of immaturity of the race. It is
the Unshapen Land of the Greeks, the home of fantasies of power and longing." Five years before his publication of *Human Motives*, Putnam had acknowledged the legacy of Darwin when he wrote that "babyhood with its animal instincts and emotion," suggests a "biological basis of the doctrine of 'original sin.'" In the ensuing years, Darwin's and Freud's theories provided Putnam with "scientific" justification for original sin in which residues of passion and aggression, acquired during the "dark periods," still taint human affections.

Psychoanalysis gave Putnam a way to reveal the hidden mind: "From birth onward our lives are built on a double principle. We have ostensible personalities and concealed personalities." Believing that many people are afraid to admit to evil thoughts, he argued that "it is the half-consciousness of their presence [repressed instincts] ...that induce such emotions...as anger and depression and envy and prejudice and jealousy and fear." Using the techniques of psychoanalysis to induce character transformation means that "the cure" for psychic and somatic disturbances "consists in bringing...unconscious processes to the light of reason. In their own nature they are imps of darkness," but once exposed a "new and reformed personality" will follow."

When Putnam became familiar with psychoanalysis he welcomed it as a purely scientific approach, and he
applauded other neurologists who had "followed the scientific method exclusively [because] if they had not done so they would probably...still be urging our patients to get well solely by dint of will and conscience." But to neglect the role of the human spirit in favor of Freud's determinism went against his grain. In his "Plea for the Study of Philosophic Methods in Preparation for Psychoanalytic Work," he combined the traditional moralism of his religious background with Freud's "genius."

Delivering his "Plea" at the 1911 Psycho-Analytic Congress held in Weimar, Putnam stated that "The main service of the psychoanalytic investigations which have been made so far, under the impulse of Freud's genius, has been that of forcing us to recognize the repressed devils that lurk within us." Freud himself often used the image of devils to illuminate psychic states. But unlike Freud, Putnam feared "the [deterministic] world to which natural science" pointed. Reflecting the optimistic spirit of his age, he contended that within the unconscious mind more can be found than just the "shady" side of human nature. "The mind itself contains a real, permanently abiding element...of which the life of the universe, itself is made." He held that if a scientific system fails to recognize the "world of the spirit," then it cannot, in and of itself, explain everything about the personality."
Putnam urged the men and women at the Congress to consider the moral significance of psychoanalysis. He believed that the analyst, like the poet-philosopher Virgil, has a responsibility to explore both the darkest abyss and the highest peak within an individual's temperament. As he closed his appeal, he advocated the Jamesian notion that the human will can shape a person's destiny. Putnam offered his comments to offset the determinism inherent in Freud's ideas. He told the people in the audience that he hoped that psychoanalysis would eventually include God as the "ultimate truth," as well as the "world of the spirit" in which "the things unseen...are eternal."

Attending the Congress, Freud listened respectfully to the American's "Plea." But when Putnam had finished, Freud commented to Ernest Jones that it reminded him of a lovely "centerpiece" that receives polite admiration but no serious attention." In the introduction that Freud wrote to Putnam's Addresses on Psycho-Analysis in 1921, he described the mind of this Bostonian as "pre-eminently ethical and philosophical." But Freud was never sympathetic to Putnam's attempts to interpret psychoanalysis as quasi-theological. Throughout their relationship, he was always careful not to offend Putnam, but occasionally he challenged his friend's conclusions. Writing to acknowledge that he had received Human Motives, Freud queried Putnam: "Surely you do not expect praise and commendation for me." This was exactly
what Putnam expected. Not a hypocrite, Freud refrained from offering an endorsement. Instead he commented that the book's virtue lay in its ability to "make an impression on your countrymen" by "shaking" their "deep rooted resistance" to psychoanalysis."

In spite of his desire to apply psychoanalysis as a spiritual remedy in which he deemed the soul is central, Putnam remained dependent upon Freud's mental map which includes the conscious, unconscious, and the id, but excludes a spiritual realm. Having been reared in the atmosphere of moral perfectionism, Putnam never openly rejected this heritage. But he did long for a profounder view of the human condition than that which was embodied within Emersonian idealism. Freud's ideas, therefore, provide Putnam with the "scientific" principles that allowed him to refer to "dark woods," "imps of darkness," and "dark periods" without having to resort to the "term 'Original Sin' which our fathers used so freely to cover such facts." For Putnam, psychoanalysis revitalized certain aspects of the human experience that had been neglected since the decline of Calvinism. He seized upon Freud's "discoveries" of the unconscious mind, innate tendencies, and hidden motives as the way to approach certain problems. It was upon a Freudian foundation that the American physician built his moral edifice to shelter the individual against the dark urgings of the soul.
In the same year that Putnam delivered his "Plea" in Germany, he presented "On Freud's Psycho-Analytic Method and Its Evolution," to the Medical Society of New York. In his remarks, he pointed out that psychoanalysis provided a way of "treating...faults of characters," a phrase that possesses theological overtones. He stated that the "practical aim" of psychoanalysis

is to enable persons who are hampered...to shake themselves free from the subtle web of delusive, misleading, half-conscious ideas and feelings by which they are bound and blinded as if through the influence of an evil spell."

It was Putnam's intention to promote the "cause" to his fellow physicians. To do this, he suggested that at the core of Freud's ideas lies a moral vision. Explaining psychoanalysis's emphasis on dreams, Putnam held that the "hidden portions" of the mind are concealed like "evil spirits in Pandora's box." The dream acts as the key by which the "locks are loosened" and the dark impulses are released." Once these "evil spirits" are interpreted, people experience a fresh understanding of themselves.

He admitted that when he first read Freud's work in *Neurologisches Centralblatt* in 1896 he "laid the paper down with a distinct feeling of disgust" because of the insistence that some "disturbances of sexual life" could produce nervous symptoms. But he came to understand what Freud's "statements really mean." He acknowledged that his
understanding had resulted, in part, from having "made a personal acquaintance of the author...and his supporters." Putnam indicated that psychoanalysis makes it possible for patients to "turn inward the searchlight of self-knowledge on a large scale." He explained that once people uncover their evil impulses, they can "replace repression by condemnation." Putnam agreed with Freud that a patient's condemnation of certain impulses constitutes an important step toward the goal of sublimation.

Until his death in 1918, Putnam explicated psychoanalysis to an American readership. In his papers devoted to Freud's ideas, he sought to temper determinism with hope. In "A Clinical Study of a Case of Phobia," he explained that "the inner cravings, rooted in infancy...make some persons criminals or perverts...[or] an invalid." However, through introspection coupled with a sincere desire to improve oneself, these "inner cravings" can be overcome. Putnam consistently concurred with Freud that it is "the apparently forgotten years" of one's early childhood that establish the "tendencies of mental reaction from which it is exceedingly difficult afterward to depart." As a convert to Freudianism, Putnam believed that childhood, "that mysterious and eventful period," shapes character. But as a Unitarian, he also believed that people can overcome--not just curb--their lower natures through the positive power of their souls.
In Putnam's writings, one detects a persistent ambivalence in the way he applied Freud's ideas to maintain a balance between the instincts and the spirit. On the one hand, Putnam agreed with Freud that the child possesses incipient sexual cravings that quickly bloom into sexuality. The cravings may also "induce...over-sensitiveness, morbid self-consciousness or self-reprehension." But Putnam reassured his American reader that "the dangers and the liability to go wrong" would be greater "were it not that...the better forms of evolution have developed an instinctive power of surmounting these dangers with relative success." In this passage, Putnam cited evolution as the creative power. But in his "Plea" he implied the existence of a Higher Power, or God. However, he did not try to link these two creative energies by suggesting that God is the author of evolution.

We can conclude that inherent within Putnam's contradiction was a strategy to present psychoanalysis to the New England medical community as well as a way for him to remain faithful to his theological heritage. In part because of the efforts of Putnam, psychoanalysis was ushered into American thought through the front door of intellectual respectability. Putnam may have dressed up Freud's ideas in a somewhat idiosyncratic fashion. But by draping some spiritual ideas over psychoanalysis's more disturbing features, Putnam helped to insure for this "science" of the
mind a felicitous reception among the more moralistic members of his community.

Putnam always believed that the passions, cravings, and instincts are the common emotional expression of humanity. He, like Freud, shuddered at the prospect of the free expression of these impulses. For both men, the process of sublimation provides the reforming principle. Putnam explained that the "great task [that] lies before every child [is] to make himself a useful member of the community." He presented to the Association of American Physicians in 1913 the case that Freud’s ideas included a "treatment" that "unmasked the 'confidence game' played by...[a person’s] lower nature on his higher nature." Putnam made Freudian psychology more palatable to himself and his New England peers by introducing into id psychology the notion of a "higher nature." In this respect, Putnam anticipated the psychoanalytic construction of the superego, which Freud introduced in 1914 in its embryonic form as the "self-observing agency." The superego received Freud’s fullest explication in 1923 in his paper "The Ego and The Superego." In a meeting of the Suffolk District Medical Society in 1914, Putnam again used this forum to reassure his audience that

There is no necessary hostility between [psychoanalysis]...and any genuine agency for good.... On the contrary, in so far as it sets the patient free from the tyranny of his less good impulses, [it] should make him more susceptible to
influences corresponding to the better elements of his nature."

In psychoanalysis, Putnam saw the reaffirmation of the vital habit of introspection through which one learns "to ticket, as with a red tag, the beginnings of evil." Therefore, as one comes to understand his or her "massive longings and personal affections," these impulses act "as bridges to something better." By "something better" Putnam meant emotional peace and spiritual harmony.

Returning to a theme that had drawn fire from Freud in 1911, Putnam discussed spiritual goals in his presentation entitled "The Necessity of Metaphysics," which he delivered to the American Psychopathological Association in 1915. In this address, he redefined "sublimation." Initially, he viewed sublimation as the way to restrain effectively the "dark urgings" of the soul. His emphasis was on adjustment rather than transcendence. Later, however, he saw it as "the logical end of a psychoanalytic treatment" in which the patient experiences "a full sense of one's highest destiny and origin and of the bearings and meanings of one's life." Believing in certain a priori truths that must be "recovered," Putnam promoted psychoanalysis in enthusiastic terms. Freud never agreed with Putnam's emphasis on the spiritual quest. In addition, he viewed enthusiasm with suspicion.
Putnam often linked Freudian ideas to spiritual or religious experiences. To him the psyche remained a battleground in which instincts fight for supremacy over one's "higher nature." But he believed that a person's instincts can be transcended by his or her higher nature. Although Putnam claimed to have rejected original sin as the explanation for wicked tendencies, to illuminate their power he often reached back to an earlier (Calvinist) belief in innate inclinations. Psychoanalytic tenets provided him with the scientific nomenclature he could use in place of religious doctrines to analyze sinful proclivities. In the late nineteenth century when intellectuals looked to science rather than theology to explain the personality, he too sought to reflect this progressive spirit in his treatment of the psyche. For Putnam, the Calvinists' insistence on the power of innate tendencies remained a vital one. However, he also reflected a temperament consistent with his era when he expressed his optimism about the human condition.

In spite of his spiritual leanings, Putnam remained loyal to Freud. Unlike his peer G. Stanley Hall who joined Adler, Putnam staunchly supported Freud in spite of the slings and arrows occasionally cast by those who were offended by the significance he placed on sexuality. Understanding that some of Adler's attraction lay in his rejection of biological instincts as the root of human
misery, Putnam believed that Freud possessed the profounder view of the human condition. In 1915, Putnam beseeched members of the New York Psychoanalytic Society to resist defecting to Adler because of a "great longing...to find some way to escape from accepting Freud's conclusions." Charging Adler with "narrow reasoning," Putnam explained that "Adler, brilliant and ingenious though he is, has followed a method which is much less safe than that of Freud's." Putnam believed that Adler's methodology was in jeopardy because he "exploited one element in character-formation." This single "element" was the "inferiority complex." Crediting Freud with "clear-eyed" genius, Putnam remarked that "unless the old [Freud's] doctrines were false in the sense of having been made by a man who was false to his own sense of accuracy and truth, they surely stand as data to be explained or dealt with with respect." He said that Adler had failed to prove Freud false. Instead he had chosen a more benign and, therefore, less problematic approach to personality formation. In 1918, Putnam paid his final tribute to Freud in an address presented at the Eight Annual Meeting of the American Psychopathological Association. Putnam told the group that his friend "stands out as a courageous, unflinching, pioneer-investigator and a man of genius." But, he confessed, "as a philosopher...[Freud] is weak." Implicit in this comment is Putnam's defense of his own metaphysical tendencies.
Conclusion

When G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam encountered Freud’s ideas at the beginning of the twentieth century, they found themselves irresistibly attracted to certain elements within psychoanalysis. These included the unconscious mind, innate depravity, the role of the affections in causing illness, and the sublimation of instincts. Hall and Putnam recognized that their Calvinist heritage had predisposed them to accept the reality of these concepts. However, they did not treat them as religious notions; instead they claimed them in the name of psychoanalysis. By replacing the doctrine of original sin with the instincts of the id, they accepted Freud’s "discoveries" in the spirit of progress.

It was fortuitous for Freud that Hall and Putnam could read German. Particularly in Hall’s case, his fluency with this language was necessary in order for him to have become acquainted with Freud at the end of the nineteenth century. His regard for Freud’s ideas led him to invite the Austrian neurologist to Clark University. It was during this visit that Freud met Putnam. Together, Hall and Putnam paved the way for psychoanalysis to be established in America. And although Freud never appreciated the reasons that his ideas received such an enthusiastic greeting in this country, his
inexperience with the New England intellectual tradition
does not cancel its influence.

One wonders if Freud had been a guest of William Rainey
Harper at the University of Chicago (founded 1891) instead
of G. Stanley Hall at Clark University (founded 1889), would
he have found the same support in the Mid-west that was
waiting for him in New England?" Probably not. For Freud
to be enthusiastically approved of, his ideas needed to
strike a responsive chord in people. And because of its
Calvinist inheritance, this chord was found in New England.
Chapter Notes


8. Hall, Confessions, p. 22.

9. Hall, Confessions, p. 36.


11. Hall, Confessions, p. 74.

12. Hall, Confessions, p. 86.

13. Hall, Confessions, p. 87.


15. Hall, Confessions, p. 133.


19. Hall, Confessions, p. 163.
28. Hall was the first student to receive a Ph.D. in psychology at Harvard.
33. Cited in Ross, p. 385.
34. Ross, p. 385.
44. Hall, Adolescence, II, 43.
45. Hall, Adolescence, II, 314.
47. Hall, Adolescence, II, 61/
49. Hall, Adolescence, II, 354.
50. Hall, Adolescence, II, 354.
52. Hall, Adolescence, II, 337.
53. Hall, Adolescence, II, 337.
54. Hall, Adolescence, II, 61.
55. Hall, Adolescence, II, 65.

56. See Chapter 6 for a discussion of Freud's mental structures which he depicted in The Interpretation of Dreams, pp. 594 and 613.

57. Hall, Adolescence, II, 68.

58. See Chapter 3 for a discussion about the "talking cure" initiated by Josef Breuer in conjunction with his patient Anna O. and used by Freud in his subsequent treatment of hysteria.

59. Hall, Adolescence, II, 314.
60. Hall, Adolescence, II, 309.
61. Hall, Adolescence, II, 321.
62. Hall, Adolescence, II, 60.
63. Hall, Adolescence, II, 60.
64. Hall, Adolescence, II, 60.

65. One can detect signs of Hall's impending defection from Freud in this work. However, Hall's indebtedness to Freud is more apparent than his few criticisms.

66. Hall, Adolescence, I, 279.

68. Ross, 104.


73. Hall, *Educational Problems*, II, 26-27. For several years, Hall served as President for the Watch and Ward Society—an organization that attempted to rehabilitate young people who had behaved in socially unacceptable ways. Perhaps some of the girls he described as the "buds" to whom "a short life and a merry one appeals" were individuals that he had heard about during his tenure of office.

74. *The Nation* (July 1911).

75. Nathan G. Hale, Jr., ed., *James Jackson Putnam and Psychoanalysis: Correspondence with Sigmund Freud. William James, Ernest Jones, Morton Prince and Sandor Ferenczi* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 67. All further references to this work will be by Hale, *James Jackson Putnam*, and page number.

76. A discussion of Freud's delight in "acquiring" Putnam for his "cause" is in Chapter 2.


94. Hale, James Jackson Putnam, p. 188.

95. Hale, James Jackson Putnam, p. 189.

96. Putnam, Human Motives, p. 95.


101. For Freud’s views on condemnation of inappropriate instincts and behaviors, see his treatment of Hans.


117. Several decades after Freud's solitary visit to America, Chicago later became the home of Neo-Freudians, or "culturists," such as Franz Alexander and Karen Horney who sought refuge from a fascist Europe in a more democratic environment.
Summary.

Within this dissertation, I have argued that Sigmund Freud’s ideas were accepted by intellectuals in New England between 1900 and 1915 because Americans perceived within psychoanalysis a profound concern with the same moral problems that troubled their Puritan forbearers. The fact that Freud was quickly accepted in New England when he was rejected in important centers of learning in Europe baffled him and led him to conclude that America lacked an intellectual tradition that could challenge psychoanalysis. On the contrary, I contend that a certain cast of mind prevailed within New England that responded naturally to Freud’s ideas because they were consistent with the intellectual heritage established by the Calvinists in New England in the seventeenth century.

Although this tradition underwent significant changes in the nineteenth century when the Calvinist impulse was preserved primarily as the experience of men, rather than
women, it still held its grip on the American imagination. As passion became identified as a male emotion, women were seen as more spiritually evolved than men. In this way, perfectionism and idealism became linked to women. However, perfectionism developed its critics in that it came to be thought of as an unrealistic goal—particularly for men. At the end of the nineteenth century, William James restored a "profounder" view of humanity when he argued that the "twice-born" individual possesses a deeper temperament than the "once-born."

Echoing William James's disillusionment, Lewis Mumford in the twentieth century in *Interpretations and Forecasts* linked the Calvinists' view of the human condition to Freud's. Deeply dissatisfied with the optimism of the nineteenth century, Mumford explained that Freud's "id psychology" restored "the heart of darkness in modern man."

The id is that part of the spiritual anatomy which Christian theology habitually refers to as the Old Adam; and it is, perhaps, significant that the Old Adam was rediscovered at the end of a century when men blandly supposed that the primitive elements in life had been wiped out by the advance of science and mechanical industry. Like his contemporary, Joseph Conrad, Freud discovered the Heart of Darkness...in the soul of modern man himself."

While denying the religious connection, Freud would probably have accepted this comparison on its metaphorical merits in
that he located the destructive impulses within the id, his "heart of darkness."

Sigmund Freud's system of ideas, first labeled "psychoanalysis" in 1896 in "Heredity and the Aetiology of the Neuroses," developed in Emperor Franz Joseph's fin de siècle Vienna, a city and a culture known for extravagance in the arts and the lavish style of life of many of its citizens. In an environment that produced many famous people, no one in Viennese history has ever received as much attention as Freud. For the last seven decades, his theories have influenced the ideas and creations of graphic and literary artists, clinical psychologists, anthropologists, psychiatrists, historians, educators, theologians and others throughout the Western world. But nowhere are Freud's ideas more thoroughly assimilated into the intellectual fabric of a culture than in the United States.

Even before his 1909 visit, Freud was well received by many Americans; but after his Clark Lectures, his fame spread rapidly as his ideas were enthusiastically greeted by many people. This acceptance was exemplified by Walter Lippmann, who eulogized the Viennese physician as a man for all seasons:

From anthropology through education to social organization, from literary criticism to the studies of religions and philosophies, the effect of Freud is already felt. He has set up a reverberation in human thought and conduct of which few as yet dare to predict the consequences.
Beyond this versatility, Lippmann saw in psychoanalysis the way to illuminate the hidden recesses of the mind in that "Freud has a way of revealing the corners of the soul which we believed were safe from anybody's knowledge. This uncanny wisdom is to most people both fascinating and horrible."

Traditionally, it had been the role of religion to help people to uncover their wicked desires, but in the age of Nietzsche's pronouncement that "God is dead," Freud offered his ideas in place of religious precepts. He identified himself as an atheist, and from this perspective he committed his energies to a scientific exploration in which he sought to understand certain psychic demons that had long been the concern of orthodox creeds. He defined psychoanalysis as the "Psychology concerned with the exploring of the predispositions, the instinctual impulses, the motives and aims of an individual man." Psychoanalysis offered to elucidate and, to some extent, improve human nature in much the same way that Judeo-Christian religions in the West had long done, through self-searching and confession.
Implications

Within this study, I have primarily confined my analysis of the reception of Freud's ideas in America to the years between 1895 and 1915. In this way, the discussion has concentrated on Id Psychology and the people in New England who were first attracted to Freud's view of the human condition. These individuals, particularly G. Stanley Hall and James Jackson Putnam, interpreted psychoanalysis in a moral light. Consequently, they introduced Freudian ideas as essentially moral concepts that could be used to reform one's personality. Based on the vision of these psychoanalytic pioneers, the way was marked for several generations of social scientists to use psychoanalytic concepts to critique the American culture.

Before social scientists could extend psychoanalysis into their fields of study, however, they needed a paradigm that was culturally broader than the model with which the pioneers were familiar. Hall and Putnam primarily perceived psychoanalysis as a personal treatment for individuals. After 1915, Freud provided his followers with a scheme in which he extended his ideas beyond the individual psyche to the culture at large. Included in this diagram were his constructs of the ego and the superego, which he added to the id. In addition, he developed the concept of the death instinct. Freud pitted the death instinct against Eros, or
the love instinct, in an effort to explain humanity’s destructive inclinations, especially war. As the application of Freud’s ideas moved out of the clinic and into the social arena, cultural analysts used psychoanalytic definitions to describe and interpret American “national character.”

As early as 1911 Edward Sapir saw the cultural possibilities in psychoanalysis because it was "broader" and "more interesting" than orthodox psychology, which "abstracts driblets of mental experience for the purpose of classifying them and examining them under the microscope." Sapir paved the way for the work of Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict and Abraham Kardiner. Mead’s work *And Keep Your Powder Dry: An Anthropologist Looks at America* (1943) was based on a psychoanalytic interpretation of American culture. Political scientist Harold Laswell and historian Max Lerner found many of Freud’s ideas intriguing as they used them as metaphors to explain cultural phenomena. These men and women laid the groundwork in the 1930s and 1940s for an even broader application of Freudian principles in the 1950s and 1960s.

By the end of the 1950s, Freudian and neo-Freudian ideas had spread into the public domain of American social thought, and their originality was replaced by an instant recognition of the psychoanalytic image. Lionel Trilling commented that Freudian terms had become the slang of our

Although it will be the focus of a separate study to analyze the ways in which cultural analysts have employed the psychoanalytic model, I offer briefly the example of *The Culture of Narcissism* in which Lasch uses the Freudian concept of "narcissism" to expose what he perceives to be the state of decay within American society. Freud published his paper *On Narcissism: An Introduction* in 1914. In this work, he considered how self-absorption, or narcissism, limits the responses available to individuals in their relationships with others. Freud explained that whereas some degree of narcissism is "normal," he was concerned with
those individuals who display extreme tendencies in this direction. These people are handicapped by their inability to relate in a loving fashion to others. His focus was on the sexual development of individuals. He concluded that narcissistic individuals are sexually fixated on their own bodies, and he believed that this autoeroticism stunts their emotional development. In his treatise on narcissism, Freud did not extend this term to include social-psychological patterns of interaction. Instead, he concerned himself with stages of sexual development within the individual.

Lasch does not employ Freud's sexual focus, but he does use Freud's implicit moral expectations as the agency of personal and social reform. Lasch is concerned with people's absorption with themselves at the expense of commitment to society. Specifically, he is criticizing the "me generation" of the 1970s. He explains that because individuals within this generation are self-absorbed, they are losing the emotional capabilities to extend their intellects and imaginations beyond what narrowly concerns themselves. He believes that society is withering because people are not extending their sympathies and capabilities beyond their own slender interests.

Lasch is a social millenarian. He believes that the end of the American culture is at hand because its moral basis has collapsed at the center. This basis was characterized by the work ethic, a genuine regard for the
individual, and a sense of community. Narcissism has rushed in to fill the sink hole left by the disintegration of these values. He writes that "in a dying culture, narcissism appears to embody—in the guise of personal 'growth' and 'awareness'—the highest attainment of spiritual enlightenment." Out of the decay of the old order, Lasch expects that certain people will survive to establish a "new order." Presumably, among the legions of narcissists, these people comprise a hidden remnant who will some day lead Americans out of their moral confusion into a new age. These individuals "knew the old order only as a broken promise, yet...took the promise more seriously than those who merely took it for granted."10

To deliver his message, Lasch writes that he "employs psychoanalytic ideas not to make a 'sermon' more palatable...but to uncover patterns, both cultural and psychological, that remain far from obvious and largely inaccessible to common sense."11 Acknowledging the moral content of his treatise, Lasch suggests that psychoanalysis offers him a way to recapitulate the values inherent within the Christian-Judaic tradition. He writes that "psychoanalysis...[is] the true successor to both Calvinism and Judaism in its unflinching insistence of the darker side of human nature."12 Lasch never mentions the reforming power of God—the center of the Judeo-Christian tradition—and he ignores Freud’s emphasis on the sexual instinct. Instead,
Lasch picks certain words and phrases from the lexicon of psychoanalysis to interpret according to his own lights. The most important term is, of course, "narcissism."

In biblical language, Lasch's "narcissism" amounts to the sin of pride. This sin is often manifested in the breaking of the first commandment of the Decalogue when people worship empty idols instead of God. Lasch does not offer a counterpart to God in his social analysis, unless it is his sense of community. Instead, as the antidote to self-absorption he suggests that people should strive to recover "the will to build a better society." He adds that "The moral discipline formerly associated with the work ethic...[is] indispensable to the task of building a new order."

For the purposes of my study, Lasch has provided a contemporary analysis that is grounded in the religious values of self-sacrifice and reformation. He suggests that society is decaying because people are no longer repressing their libidinal energies. He calls this phenomenon the "desublimation of sexuality," and he believes that this behavior creates a dangerous situation because "sex valued purely for its own sake loses all reference to the future and brings no hope of permanent relationships." In this statement, Lasch recapitulates Freud's point that if people could make love as they pleased, they would fail to commit themselves to the institutions of marriage and family
through which culture is perpetuated. Writing from an androcentric point of view, Lasch ties promiscuity to the "the demystification of womanhood." He laments that "efficient contraceptives, legalized abortion, and a 'realistic' and 'healthy' acceptance of the body have weakened the links that once tied sex to love, marriage, and procreation." He concludes that "sexual liaisons, including marriage, can be terminated at pleasure."

Using an amended definition of Freud's term, Lasch identifies the social behavior of Americans as deeply narcissistic. In one section, he focusses on the approach to personal relationships taken by men and women. He believes that people are often "determined to manipulate the emotions of others while protecting themselves against emotional injury"--a classically narcissistic strategy. As a result, "both sexes cultivate a protective shallowness, cynical detachment they do not altogether feel but which soon becomes habitual." He thinks that "the most prevalent form of escape from emotional complexity is promiscuity: the attempt to achieve a strict separation between sex and feeling." A conventional religious moralist would recognize in Lasch's analysis the sins of pride and lust.

Without the psychoanalytic model, Lasch's critique might have been couched in traditionally moral phrases. But by using Freudian concepts and elements of Freud's philosophy, Lasch is able to indict American society without
resorting to the language of harsh moralism. Had he chosen to use the religious phrases of "the sin of pride" and "the sin of lust" instead of the Freudian concepts of "narcissism" and "libido," his book would have reached a different readership. As it was, The Culture of Narcissism attracted students of culture rather than believers in the Bible.

In addition to cultural analysts who have depended to a large extent on Freudian ideas, the interest in psychoanalysis coincided with the scholarly revision of Calvinism that took place from the 1930's onward with the work of Perry Miller and Edmund Morgan, among many others. Although these men were not "psycho-historians" by any stretch of the imagination, their interest in Calvinism came at the same time that many intellectuals were using Freud's ideas to explain the vitiated state of humanity. Perhaps Calvinism's resiliency can to some extent be explained by the emphasis on psychoanalysis that dominated the American intellectual climate during middle decades of this century. It will be the work of another study to link the ideas of Freud with a subsequent revision of American Calvinism.
Chapter Notes


4. Lippmann, p. 10.

5. Sigmund Freud, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920), The Standard Edition, XVIII.


10. Lasch, p. 236.


12. Lasch, p. xviii.


15. Lasch, p. 191.

16. Lasch, p. 192.

17. Lasch, p. 194.

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