

# WHY FREUD MATTERS: SIGMUND FREUD, ANNA FREUD, AND THE SKEPTICAL HUMANIST TRADITION

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“A great part of my life’s work has been spent to destroy my own illusions and those of humankind.”

— Sigmund Freud

“What a distressing contrast there is between the radiant intelligence of the child and the feeble mentality of the average adult.”

— Anna Freud

**O**ver the past half century, some of Sigmund Freud's ideas have been debunked, and he personally has been exposed as a doctor who misunderstood and harmed a good number of his patients.<sup>1</sup> I do not take exception to this evaluation. Especially during the years when he was building his career as a doctor, the founder of psychoanalysis deceived the public, if not himself, about the evidence for his views and his ability to cure. There is, however, another side to Freud's character and to his achievements that the critics overlook. Indeed I believe that Freud belongs up there in the pantheon of great skeptical humanists alongside Socrates, Voltaire, and Hume. Like them, Freud believed that reason could help people undo the hypocrisies and deceptions in their lives, permitting a recovery of sanity and a measure of happiness.<sup>2</sup>

As well, Freud's critics fail to recognize the contributions made over the past century by the psychoanalytic movement that he inaugurated. To make this second point, I'll review the accomplishments of Sigmund Freud's daughter Anna, whose role was pivotal in developing psychoanalysis in an open-minded, evidence-based way. Her work is a telling counterexample to the broad claim that psychoanalysis is an irrational theory and ineffective practice.<sup>3</sup> Anna Freud and her colleagues not only observed assiduously, but also subjected the very concept of "observation" to scrutiny. When adults are observing and interacting with children, Anna Freud recognized, their perceptions may be clouded by their prior expectations: observers see what they wish to see and overlook or push aside everything else.

### **Mistaking Our Own Motives**

Although Sigmund Freud's own professional conduct was marred by the prejudices of his time, some of his concepts do cast light on the sources and nature of human irrationality. Freud believed that the mind is influenced by unacknowledged motives and unspoken memories. And that belief informed not only his "talking cure" therapy but also his social activism on behalf of issues that ranged from free mental health care to the humane treatment of shell-shocked soldiers who had survived the First World War.

Since the early 17th century when Rene Descartes penned his *Meditations*, rationalist philosophy had held that the human mind is unified and transparent to itself. Freud affirmed instead—and this is the premise that still informs psychoanalysis today—that humans are inclined to mistake their reasons—that is to say, the reasons they themselves profess—for believing and acting. That we are fallible in this manner, mentally conflicted and influenced in ways that we only partly understand, is a condition that Freud found illustrated ubiquitously in dreams, slips of the tongue, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, and the foibles of our relationships with others. And he made this “diagnosis” of the human condition the basis for doing psychotherapy in a new way.

Freud perceived himself as following in the footsteps of those who had in the past challenged the pretense that human beings stand exalted as masters of their own fate and the pinnacle of creation:

Humanity has in the course of time had to endure from the hands of science two great outrages upon its naive self-love. The first [ascribed to Copernicus] was when it realized that our earth was not the center of the universe, but only a tiny speck in a world-system of a magnitude hardly conceivable.... The second [ascribed to Charles Darwin] was when biological research robbed man of his peculiar privilege of having been specially created, and relegated him to a descent from the animal world, implying an ineradicable animal nature in him.

Human pride now has to suffer, Freud wrote, a third, “most bitter blow” from empirical inquiry, which discloses “to the ‘ego’ of each one of us that he is not even master in his own house.” This view of the mind’s internal division launched what might be called a “research program” that since the turn of the 20th century has encompassed a great deal of qualitative and quantitative study of human psychology. And much of that study has been skeptical in character, calling into question not only conventional understandings of individual pathology but also wider cultural values and practices.

### **Psychoanalysis as a Research Program**

It’s true that not many studies conducted within a psychoanalytic framework satisfy the gold standard in medical science: the randomized controlled trial based on quantification and statistical analysis. Certainly the activity of observing

a child in a clinic is quite different from that of observing a planet through a telescope or a bacterium on a petri dish. But these forms of inquiry have much in common as well. The qualitative research carried out in Anna Freud's "laboratories"—nurseries, clinics, residential and day care centers—was guided by the same criteria of systematic observation, conceptual parsimony, and explanatory power that guide rational empirical inquiry of any kind.

At the core of the psychoanalytic research program stand not only theoretical propositions but also an ethical principle—a commitment to humane care for people suffering intense psychological distress. Against the centuries-old stigmatization of mentally disturbed people as “mad,” Freud and his followers advocated tolerance and compassion. To be sure, the psychoanalytic profession has not always lived up to these values. In some parts of the world, including the United States, during the 20th century psychoanalysis became an enterprise governed by a medical elite that was self-serving and dogmatic. And psychoanalysts, beginning with Freud himself, indulged in a great deal of unwarranted and harmful speculation: pathologizing homosexuality<sup>4</sup>, attributing women's wishes for independence and equality to “penis envy,” positing metaphysical entities like “the death drive,” etc. When Freudianism became an entire “climate of opinion,” as Auden described it at mid-century, that climate was not universally a liberating one. On the other hand, psychoanalysis did give support to progressive movements during the 20th century that ranged from the Harlem Renaissance and civil rights struggles in the South to gay liberation and the women's movement.<sup>5</sup> Feminists such as Juliet Mitchell, Nancy Chodorow, and Jessica Benjamin rejected the assumptions made by mainstream psychoanalysis about women's and men's “normal” roles and behaviors; yet they found psychoanalytic concepts useful for understanding the childhood origins of gender differences and the devaluation of women's lives. Perhaps psychoanalysis' most consequential contribution, though, has turned out to be its reconsideration of the norms for raising children. The science of this subject was advanced by researchers such as Anna Freud, Margaret Mahler, D.W. Winnicott, John Bowlby, Mary Ainsworth, Selma Fraiberg, and Daniel Stern. These studies influenced Spock, Leach, Brazelton, and other authors of widely read books that give families advice about relating to children.

Another domain impacted by psychoanalysis was jurisprudence: conventional legal assumptions about human free will, responsibility, and punishment were challenged, often successfully, by considerations that pointed to the sometimes exonerating psychological and social origins of criminality. Eminent judges including Holmes, Frankfurter, Cardozo, and Frank even reflected on the possibility of unconscious prejudices entering into their own deliberations.<sup>6</sup>

In brief, as a research program interacting with medical, educational, legal, and other cultural institutions, psychoanalysis has made many important contributions.

### **Sigmund Freud's Critique of Religion: "The Future of an Illusion"**

Sigmund Freud began psychoanalysis by inquiring into individual pathology but later in his life sought to understand civilization's "discontents" as well. Freud believed that religion is one of the domains in which human reason runs aground. In his 1927 essay, "The Future of an Illusion," Freud not only exposes the irrationality of belief in God (others before him had done that) but he goes a step further and aims to *explain* that irrationality. Responding to their experiences of helplessness, Freud suggests, humans seek a benevolent, all-powerful protector who will shelter them from suffering and uncertainty and assure an orderly world. God, as conceived in most biblical traditions, is modeled after an adult authority who towers over a child, promising guidance and reward, but also severe punishment for misbehavior.<sup>7</sup>

In keeping with Daniel Dennett's discussion later in the 20th century of the "intentional stance,"<sup>8</sup> Freud points out that people imbue nature with subjective agency:

Impersonal forces and destinies cannot be approached; they remain eternally remote. But if the elements have passions that rage as they do in our own souls, if death itself is not something spontaneous but the violent act of an evil Will, if everywhere in nature there are Beings around us of a kind that we know in our own society, then we...are still defenceless, perhaps, but we are no longer helplessly paralyzed; we can at least react.... we can try to entreat them [supernatural beings], to appease them, to bribe them, and, by so influencing them, we may rob them of a part of their power.

In the course of the evolution of the human species as well as in the personal history of each individual, Freud argued, there occurs a kind of thinking that creates imaginary beings and narratives, dispensing with the empirical constraints that govern our everyday practical interactions with our surroundings. Religion in its traditional patriarchal forms exemplifies such thinking when it authors a story such as the one told in the Bible, Koran, or other canonical text, a story that serves the purpose of representing a well-ordered and protective world. Beginning with Freud, psychoanalysis finds a similarity between such religious stories and children's "make-believe"—that wonderful expression in English that conflates imagining with believing. Notoriously, the inconsistencies of these narratives with everyday facts does not make them less real. A child whose imagined companion is a blue creature with five legs needn't be fazed by an adult who points out that all animals encountered in the past have, at most, four legs. "My friend has five, I can count them!" Everything is possible for a creative imagination free of constraints imposed by reality. And for that reason, religion, which Freud believes is developmentally as well as conceptually continuous with children's magical thinking, does not respond to evidence-based objections. "Primary process," the name that Freud gives to thinking of this kind, is associative and metaphorical: "There are in this system no negation, no doubt, no [mere] degrees of certainty." "Secondary process," on the other hand, is cognition that weighs evidence and recognizes a difference between appearance and reality, and that is willing to sacrifice fantasy's immediate gratification in favor of long-term real gains.

This distinction between two ways of thinking about the world is widely recognized today. Daniel Kahneman's book, *Thinking Fast and Slow*, for instance, posits a neurological difference between two kinds of cognition—"System 1" is fast, instinctive, and emotional, while "System 2" is slower, more patient and logical—that is remarkably similar to Freud's distinction elaborated a century ago. Freud's critique of religion anticipates as well the reasoning that would be advanced later in the century by skeptics like Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and Michael Shermer. For instance, in response to the tu-quoque argument—"Sure, religion rests upon ultimately unjustified basic premises and arrives sometimes at mistaken conclusions, but doesn't science too?"—Freud writes:

You will not find me inaccessible to your criticism. I know how difficult it is to avoid illusions; perhaps the hopes I have confessed to are of an illusory nature, too. But I hold fast to one distinction. Apart from the fact that no penalty is imposed for not sharing them, my illusions are not, like religious ones, incapable of correction.... If experience should show...that we have been mistaken, we will give up our expectations.

Freud points out that unlike religion, science evolves in relation to its empirical encounter with reality:

People complain of the unreliability of science how she announces as a law today what the next generation recognizes as an error and replaces by a new law whose accepted validity lasts no longer. But this is unjust and in part untrue.... A law which was held at first to be universally valid proves to be a special case of a more comprehensive uniformity.... a rough approximation to the truth is replaced by a more carefully adapted one, which in turn awaits further perfecting. There are various fields where we...test hypotheses that soon have to be rejected as inadequate; but in other fields we already possess an assured and almost unalterable core of knowledge.

Freud eloquently articulates here a robust empiricism. Of course science is, as Freud recognizes, imaginative too, but, in the words of another Austrian, Karl Popper, scientific “conjecture” is subject to “refutation.” (Freud often failed to “practice what he preached,” however; he notoriously dismissed objections to his own views as psychological “resistance.”)

Freud was aware that rational considerations are unlikely to successfully challenge the grip of religion on believers: “motives based purely on reason have little effect against passionate impulses.” Those impulses, Freud submits, receive cultural encouragement that typically begins with the religious instruction of children:

Think of the depressing contrast between the radiant intelligence of a healthy child and the feeble intellectual powers of the average adult. Can we be quite certain that it is not precisely religious education which bears a large share of the blame for this relative atrophy?

The connection made here between religion and childhood “atrophy” was, not surprisingly, poorly received by civil and political authority in the country Freud was living in. Invested in the preservation of traditional “family values” and staunchly opposed to liberal reforms in education and mental health services stood the Roman Catholic Church, a bastion of reaction in Austria, Italy and elsewhere in Europe. In the 1920s, Austria’s Social Democratic Party competed for political power against the Christian Social Party, which received strong clerical support. And in Austrian schools, religious instruction and practices, including priest-administered mass, confession, and processions, were mandatory. Quite aware of this reactionary context, Freud recognized that undoing the hold of religion would require, ultimately, transforming religion’s institutional foundations.

### **Sigmund Freud the Social Activist**

Although Freud believed that the fundamental cause of irrational belief is the *individual’s* wish to believe, he was acutely aware that cultural norms and practices also predispose us to view the world irrationally—not only in the domain of religion but elsewhere in our lives as well. Hence Freud came to accept the view advanced by his social democratic colleagues and friends that private life is linked to social circumstance. In 1927, the year in which Freud’s “Future of an Illusion” was published, he signed on to a public manifesto announcing support for social democratic ideals and aims. But his progressive political affiliations began long before that. Freud’s close friend and collaborator Sandor Ferenczi was a social democratic activist, as was Margarete Hilferding, the first woman member of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, and many other early psychoanalysts. Victor Adler, widely regarded as the “father of Austrian social democracy,” was Freud’s lifelong friend. Under Adler’s leadership, reformist and revolutionary tendencies in Austria united following the world war to create a democratic path forward that was independent of both Russian Communism and unfettered Western capitalism. In keeping with this hopeful vision, a passion was kindled in Freud for social justice. In 1918 he gave a speech in Budapest that was radically egalitarian in its aims and advocated for a militant social welfare program:

It is possible to foresee that at some time or other the conscience of society will awake and remind it that the poor men should have just as much right to assistance for his mind as he now has to the life-saving help offered by surgery.... When this happens, institutions or outpatient clinics will be started ... such treatment will be free.

Europe's psychoanalytic community welcomed this initiative. In cities such as Budapest, Vienna, Berlin, and London, clinics were set up that provided mental health services on a sliding scale and that, in Vienna for example, reached out to counsel the poor whose neighborhoods were distant from the wealthy and glamorous Ringstrasse at the center of the city.

**Berliner Psychoanalytische Vereinigung e. V.**  
(Ortsgruppe der „Internationalen Psychoanalytischen Vereinigung“)

**Mitgliedskarte.**

*Frau Dr. Theres Benedek*

hat an ordentlichen Beiträgen für das Jahr 1924..

Beitrag an die „Berl. Psychoanalyt. Vereinigg.“	M. 10.-
Beitrag an die „Internat. Psychoanalyt. Vereinigg.“	„ .....
Abonnementgebühren für die Zeitschriften . . . . .	„ .....
Sonstiges: <i>Poliklinikkarte</i>	<u>5.-</u>
	<u>M. 15.-</u> entrichtet.

deren Empfang durch diese Karte bestätigt wird.

Berlin, den *14. 2.* ..... 1924

Der Schriftführer Kassawart  
*Ernst Zetkin*

Therese Benedek's membership card for the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society, including a 5 Kronen fee for support of the Society's free Polyclinic. (Danto, Elizabeth Ann Danto. 2005. *Freud's Free Clinics: Psychoanalysis and Social Justice, 1918–1938*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 148)<sup>9</sup>

Among those whom the free clinics served in Austria and Germany were veterans returning from the First World War, many suffering from what we call today

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): terrifying flashbacks, chronic insomnia, tremors, loss of speech, inability to work, loss of affection for family and friends. These soldiers became scapegoats, accused by politicians and physicians alike of faking their symptoms and shirking their duties off as well as on the battlefield. Right-wing leaders and the popular press believed that Germany and Austria had lost the war because of a “Dolchstoss” (stab-in-the back) by domestic “enemies” who included not only social democrats but also these psychologically injured soldiers, whose symptoms were attributed to weakness of will and poor moral character. The standard treatments for these traumatized soldiers included solitary confinement, straight jackets, electrotherapy, and even brain surgery, aiming allegedly to restore them to sanity.

Freud and the first generation of psychoanalysts in Vienna took strong and public exception to these treatments. Freud wrote the introduction for the 1918 book *Psychoanalysis and the War Neuroses*, authored by four of his colleagues, which disputed the conventional victim-blaming account of war trauma. Then in 1920 Freud provided written and oral testimony in a court case involving mistreatment of war veterans. His judgment was unequivocal: Military doctors, not the foot soldiers, were the “immediate cause of all war neurosis.” During the war, Freud said, psychiatrists had “allowed their sense of power to make an appearance in a brutal fashion.” They had “acted like machine guns behind the front lines, forcing back the fleeing soldiers.” Freud did not shy away from the wider political implications of his public testimony: he vigorously supported Vienna’s progressive public health agenda and allied psychoanalysis with the wider social democratic movement that moved the city leftward in the post-war years.

### **Anna Freud’s Critique of Child-Raising Practices**

Education as well as psychotherapy fell within the purview of the psychoanalytic movement Freud founded. His psychoanalytically-minded colleagues in the 1920s set out to reform all of the institutions in Vienna that were involved in raising and educating children. Among these activists was Freud’s own daughter Anna. From 1922 to 1927 she taught in an elementary school, and then followed in the footsteps of her father and became a psychoanalyst. With a declared commitment to serving Viennese families of all ethnic origins and class

backgrounds, Anna Freud and the psychoanalytically minded community to which she belonged participated in the cultural revolution that became known as “Red Vienna.”



In the 1920s, Vienna’s municipal government became the largest landowner in the city and funded a massive project to provide public housing for the poor. Among the 370 so-called “people’s palaces” that were built, this one, Bebelhof, contained 301 apartments. Its interior courtyard, shown above, encouraged cooperative activities. Some of those served by the Psychoanalytic Association’s free clinic lived here. (Photo by Buchhändler [Public domain], [via Wikimedia Commons](#))

In 1925 Anna Freud co-founded an institute for the preparation of teachers in Vienna whose mission was to replace authoritarian methods of education with psychoanalytically-informed, more permissive ones. While Anna Freud was an admirer of educational reformers such as Maria Montessori, her psychological perspective went a step further: she took into account that, as her colleague D.W. Winnicott famously put it, “there is no such thing as a baby, there is always a baby and someone.” Anna Freud recognized the distorting influence of “countertransference” in adult-child relationships: parents, counselors, and

teachers bring into their interactions with children their own unmet needs and anxieties.

In 1927 Anna Freud started a nursery for impoverished or neglected children under the age of three. Its mission was to learn directly from the children themselves and to develop humane, effective methods of treatment. Such treatment required, she believed, careful observation to confirm and disconfirm assumptions, staying alert to preconceptions about “what children need,” empathizing with children to understand their experience, and defending them when necessary against state, religious, and even parental authority. For over a decade Anna Freud was a leader in a “Children Seminar” in Vienna that discussed clinical cases and tested psychoanalytic theory against them. Although she remained largely loyal to her father’s language—language that did sometimes narrow her vision—she used that language more empirically, disregarding metaphysical implications of the orthodox terminology.



In “Lectures for Teachers,” Anna Freud referred to “Struwwelpeter” (Slovenly Peter), a children’s storybook immensely popular in Austria and Germany, to illustrate conventional ideas about raising children. (Heinrich Hoffmann [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#))

First in Vienna and then in London where she relocated in 1938, Anna Freud moved psychoanalytic theory and therapy in new directions. She took into account the wide diversity of circumstances that shape human lives and disagreed with the view that all psychopathology originates in early sexual experience. Her approach to working with children was, of course, not unique. During the first half of the 20th-century, progressive education became in Europe and America a social movement embraced not only by teachers but also by psychologists, psychoanalysts, social workers, and parents. Although psychoanalytic principles, including an emphasis on family circumstances that influence children's capacities to relate and learn, were not universally accepted within that movement, they contributed a great deal to the revolution.

Anna Freud became involved in legal reform as well: her writings on child custody issues, for example, which distinguish between a biological parent and what Anna Freud calls a "psychological parent" (an adult who is raising a child in a loving, thoughtful way and whom the child regards as a parent) were influential in revising family law in England and the United States.

An atheist like her father, Anna Freud confirmed his view in "Future of an Illusion" that humans can live fulfilling, altruistic lives without needing guidance from religion. She provided moral as well as intellectual guidance to her colleagues and students, and was considered by those who worked with her the warmest heart a child could ever hope to meet.

### **Anna Freud the Scientist**

In Vienna's Jackson Nursery, which opened in 1937 and was directed by Anna Freud, new staff members received not only a uniform but also pencil and paper which they were to use to record observations of the children they encountered: how they reacted to separations from their parents or other caretakers, how they related to other children, how they dealt with staff, how they coped with disappointment and anger, etc. These observations were then pooled and discussed by workers in the clinic—during breaks when the children were napping, for example. Gathered into case histories, these observations formed a basis for reflecting on explanatory constructs and for revising nursery policy.

When Anna Freud moved to London and administered the Hampstead War Nurseries and Clinic, she continued to emphasize direct and systematic observation. (Methodical child observation was pioneered as well by psychoanalyst Esther Bick, working at the Tavistock Clinic in London. Like Anna Freud, she was a Jewish refugee who came to England from Vienna.) The result was what we would today call a “database” consisting of thousands of individual case histories, broken down into distinct data fields and indexed by subject matter. Anna Freud explained:

What we hope to construct by this laborious method is something of a “collective analytic memory,” i.e., a storehouse of analytic material which places at the disposal of the single thinker and author an abundance of facts gathered by many, thereby transcending the narrow confines of individual experience and extending the possibilities for insightful study, for constructive comparisons between cases, for deductions and generalizations, and finally for extrapolations of theory from clinical therapeutic work.

Although Anna Freud recognized that observation is always theory-laden, she worked under the assumption that it is possible to suspend belief in one’s own views sufficiently to describe human situations in experience-near terms that are neutral between competing hypotheses. And in the Hampstead War Nurseries and Clinic, the detail in such observational description was sometimes quite fine-grained. For children impacted by “Blitzkrieg” air-raids during the London war years, for example, the observational protocol distinguished five kinds of anxiety, ranging from fear of a “real danger” to feelings that derived from other causes, including the emotional responses (calm/panicked, caring/self-centered) of parents to their children’s and to their own vulnerability. Beginning in the 1940s, many researchers made use of evidence provided by Hampstead clinical data. Anna Freud joined with Dorothy Burlingham in writing, for instance, *War and Children* (1943) and *Infants Without Families* (1944)—books that draw on Hampstead research and that refute common misconceptions about children’s responses to violence and loss.

### **Anna Freud on Human Irrationality**

Like her father, but not captured as he was by metaphysical ideas about the nature of the mind, Anna Freud sought to understand the psychological

mainsprings of reasoning gone awry. In 1936 she published *The Ego and The Mechanisms of Defense*, which elaborated ways in which people deny and disavow evidence they do not wish to see. Such machinery of the mind helps to explain collective as well as individual behavior. The concept of denial, for example, is exemplified today in the refusal to recognize the dangers of global warming and climate change. Projection and displacement are common in the scapegoating of immigrants. Anna Freud's discussion of another defense, "identification with the aggressor," is relevant to the popular appeal of fascist ideology. "By impersonating the aggressor," she writes, "assuming his attributes or imitating his aggression, the child transforms himself from the person threatened into the person making the threat." For example, a child who gets a shot in a doctor's office goes home and, pretending to be the doctor, gives a shot to a doll or stuffed animal. By becoming the powerful agent who inflicts pain, the child masters feelings of smallness, fear, and anger.<sup>10</sup>

Such a dynamic, reproduced politically, can lead adults who feel victimized and powerless to identify with a charismatic, reassuring leader. Anna Freud's book was published just as the forces of the extreme right were taking over in Austria. Her analysis of aggression would later be incorporated into psychoanalytic studies of "the authoritarian personality," and it enters as well into the work of George Lakoff on the psychological origins of liberalism and conservatism. In such contemporary efforts to understand how deep fears and longings motivate political allegiances, the influence of the psychoanalytic tradition is unmistakable.

### **The Moral Arc**

The voice of reason is a soft one," wrote Sigmund Freud, "but it does not rest until it has gained a hearing." The European skeptical tradition has for centuries exemplified that voice and stood against false hope and illusion, recommending instead a clear-minded encounter with reality that is capable of grasping and changing the circumstances of our lives. Since its invention at the turn of the 20th century in Vienna, psychoanalysis at its best has advanced this humanist project. And if certain cities in the past have been stars in a historical "moral arc" that "bends toward truth, justice, and freedom,"<sup>11</sup> then Vienna in the years 1918–1934 must be counted as one of the most brilliant.

That star was extinguished when the Nazis came to power in Austria. But at the end of the Second World War, social democracy rose from the ashes and once again became influential in Europe. Psychoanalysis evolved too. Ironically, the dispersal during the 1930s of Vienna's psychoanalytic community, which included many Jewish refugees, helped to distribute the theory and practice of "the talking cure" worldwide. In the many countries where these exiles settled, psychoanalysis developed in new directions. A fair evaluation will recognize the failings, but also the insights and accomplishments, of the research program that Sigmund Freud launched over a hundred years ago. **S**

## References & Notes

1. Schaefer, Margret. 2017. "The Wizardry of Sigmund Freud." *Skeptic*, Vol. 22, No. 3. <http://bit.ly/2BrO9Cb>
2. There is indeed something of a Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde character to Freud, who eloquently espoused ideals of human reason and scientific method, but then often failed to apply them. His life illustrates a basic psychoanalytic principle: human beings are apt to misperceive their own motives, powers, and prejudices.
3. Although this article focuses on the contributions made by Anna Freud, the broad case against psychoanalysis is contradicted also by the achievements of other "pioneers" of psychoanalysis: Karen Horney, D.W. Winnicott, and Margaret Mahler, for example.
4. The psychoanalytic tradition is shot through with contradictions on the subject of homosexuality. Anna and Sigmund Freud viewed homosexuality as deviant. Yet she, with the at least tacit approval of her father, lived with her partner Dorothy Burlingham for over five decades.
5. Zaretsky, Eli. 2004. *Secrets of the Soul*. Alfred A. Knopf.
6. Dailey, Anne C. 2017. *Law and the Unconscious: A Psychoanalytic Perspective*. Yale University.
7. Freud considers religion only in its mainstream forms. He has little to say about theology—Spinoza's pantheism, for example—that dispenses with a "God-the-Father" conception of the divine.
8. Dennett, D. C. 1987. *The Intentional Stance*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

9. Benedek exemplified the unorthodox paths that, from the very beginning, women psychoanalysts would take. When Benedek was criticized for being too informal with those she saw in therapy (she said hello and goodbye and shook hands with them), she replied, "If I did not do that I would not be myself and that would not be good for my patient." She wrote books on personality, depression, parenthood, and women's sexuality.
10. In the television series *Breaking Bad*, Walter White explains to his wife: "A guy opens his door and gets shot, and you think that's me. No, I am the one who knocks!"
11. Shermer, Michael. 2015. [\*The Moral Arc: How Science Makes Us Better People\*](#). New York: Henry Holt.

#### About the Author

**Raymond Barglow** has doctorates in philosophy from UC Berkeley and in psychology from the Wright Institute in Berkeley. He has taught at UC Berkeley and Trinity College and writes on science, ethics, and political issues.

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