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A History of Psychological Theories

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cational aspirations, and generally gives the lie to the fantasy of personal freedom. As Skinner wrote in *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971), scientific determinism conflicts with the theory that human beings are free, autonomous individuals.

Despite pointing out these contradictions within the culture, Horney came out as being more optimistic than her colleagues. As Ruth Munroe (1955) wrote about Horney, "Self-interest in the true sense involves the satisfaction of *all* the powers of the individual, which automatically include love and consideration for his fellows" (p. 350). This optimism undoubtedly influenced Maslow (who acknowledged Horney as one influence on his thinking) in his development of the idea of self-actualization as a major motive (see Chapter Seventeen). At least Horney found the major conflicts out there in the environment, not inside the biological organism; as the behaviorists have pointed out, it is a lot easier to change the milieu than to change the biological unit.

Significance of Horney

Horney will be remembered for her vigorous attack on Freud's masculine-centered doctrine, as well as for her keen observation of the internal contradictions of our society. Although many of her ideas mirror those of Alfred Adler, she wrote more clearly and more persuasively, and (unlike Adler) she did not change the focus of her theorizing even though she wrote many books.

Horney will also be remembered for another contribution. In her books *New Ways in Psychoanalysis* (1939) and *Self-analysis* (1942), she opened up the possibility that intelligent individuals could analyze their own emotional problems. (After all, Freud claimed to have done so.) When we consider the number of neurotic vestiges that Freud manifested after his analysis was ostensibly complete, we may have doubts that Horney's recommendation of self-analysis is sound. At any rate, she evoked a storm of criticism from the orthodox analysts, who had been indoctrinated with the belief that one must be analyzed by someone who has been analyzed. This counterargument would be more persuasive if there were some evidence that trained analysts are, in fact, better adjusted and more mature in their decisions and actions than people who have not undergone psychoanalysis. Such evidence, regrettably, is hard to come by.

Erich Fromm

The last of the neoanalysts to merit special discussion here is Erich Fromm (1900–1980). Like Rank, he was not a medical doctor; he earned a Ph.D. in sociology and, also like Rank, was at first welcomed into the analytic circle as a bringer of a new perspective, only later to be criticized as heretical.

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Fromm's first contribution—and in the eyes of many judges, his most brilliant work—was *Escape from Freedom* (1941), a penetrating examination of the German people's acceptance of Nazism. As the title implies, the main theme is that the Weimar Republic had brought freedom from the authoritarian controls of the empire, but also economic disaster and widespread suffering. The typical German, Fromm concluded, sought to regain a kind of infantile security by complete submission to Hitler's "New Order." In this kind of escape from freedom, what the citizen escapes is the obligation to make decisions and so to be responsible if these decisions lead to failure. Following Rank, Fromm held that in times of trouble, people will abandon freedom to regain a feeling of security. (This idea also has a detectable resemblance to Horney's "neurotic need for a protector," that is, someone who will make the tough decisions and guarantee the followers' security.) In a rigidly hierarchical society, people know their places and their obligations. Everything which is not compulsory is forbidden. This, incidentally, is the kind of security envisioned by those who admire the Middle Ages, with their feudal structure of obligations and responsibilities. There is no ambiguity and (supposedly) no anxiety.

Fromm also shared Horney's cultural determinism: "The most beautiful as well as the most ugly inclinations of man are not part of a fixed and biologically given human nature, but result from the social process which creates man. . . . Man's nature, his passions, and anxieties are a cultural product" (Fromm, 1941, pp. 12–13). He followed Adler and Horney in his concern with the felt helplessness of the individual: "This very helplessness of man is the basis from which human development springs; *man's biological weakness is the condition of human culture*" (1941, p. 33; italics in original). All three, then, were at odds with Freud's thesis that the repression of sexual impulses was the foundation of culture.

The foundation of human freedom, Fromm argued, is actually in freedom from instinctual demands. If individuals are, as Freud held, doomed by their instincts to seek certain goals, to perform certain acts, and to encounter certain conflicts, they are not free. True *human existence begins as instincts weaken*, "when the way to act is no longer fixed by hereditarily given mechanisms. In other words, *human existence and freedom are from the beginning inseparable*. Freedom is here used . . . in its negative sense . . . namely freedom from instinctual determinism of his actions" (Fromm, 1941, p. 32; italics in original!). Fromm denied that this position was anti-Darwinian; rather, he held that flexibility and freedom from mechanical actions had been a positive value for the survival of the human species.

Social Theorizing Given his sociological background, it is no surprise that Fromm's reputation is largely based on his acute perception of social problems. I can describe only briefly some of his books examining insti-



tutions and practices, which show the range of his knowledge and the courage of his convictions. *Man for Himself* (1947) is not, as it sounds, an apologia for selfishness, narcissism, and greed; rather, it is an appeal for an openness to others, a loving and cooperative relationship as opposed to exploitation and rivalry. *The Sane Society* (1955) sets forth arguments for Fromm's ideal of a humanistic-communistic society, in which everyone would labor happily for the common welfare. *Revolution of Hope* (1968) deals with humans' relations with their natural environment, a kind of human ecology. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973) focuses on aggression, not in Freud's instinctual terms but on a frustration-aggression basis.

Marx Versus Freud An interesting angle on Fromm's way of thinking is given by his comparisons of Karl Marx with Sigmund Freud. In his last book, *Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought* (1980), Fromm criticized Freud on the grounds that he diverted attention from the "real" problem of modern life: Freud's "concentration on sex actually deflected from the criticism of society and hence had in fact partly a politically reactionary function" (p. 134).

Fromm scolded Freud for failing to follow through on his own discoveries: "Freud's discovery was potentially revolutionary because it could have led people to open their eyes to the reality of the structure of the society they live in and hence to the wish to change it in accordance with the interests and desires of the majority. . . . The concentration on sex actually deflected from the criticism of society" (p. 134). Freud, Fromm said, was not truly radical. The "real" source of psychopathology was our sick society, our sick economic system, our exploitative interrelationships. People needed to be awakened to the fact of industrial slavery. Fromm even went so far to compare Marx and Freud, and to conclude that Marx was the better psychologist, a conclusion that suggests that even a brilliant person like Erich Fromm can make an enormous mistake occasionally.

Psychoanalysis and Neoanalysis

Freud's great contribution came as a corrective to the psychological tradition that had treated conscious experience as the central topic of psychology, without providing a place for unconscious modifiers of consciousness. The neoanalysts deserve a place in history for their modification of Freud's biological, instinct-based theory into a cultural, social-psychological theory. Thus we see a dialectical relationship in which one poses a thesis, others state an antithesis, and later observers devise one or another synthesis of these contradictions. The advance of theory, especially in psychology, seems to follow Hegel's principle of dialectics, that the



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- 1921. *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. SE 18 [316]
- 1923. *The Ego and the Id*. SE 19 [313, 316]
- 1925. *Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction Between the Sexes*. SE 19 [307, 311, 312]
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