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Honors Child Development

Freud's Theory

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is bogus is legitimate

Freudian psychology is a field that I find overly interesting. Especially when it comes to the study of processes that there is no physical evidence that can be used to explain. For example, nobody fully understands why and exactly how humans: think, have emotions, or have dreams. Our brain does many things without conscious effort or without our knowledge at all. Some people can falsely recall a memory and they might have no clue that it is not what actually occurred. People breathe, but it happens without any conscious effort. It is this section of Freudian psychology that I would like to focus this essay on, that of dreams, the unconscious, and the agencies of the mind.

As you may have noticed, there is no X placed on the line above to indicate the legitimacy of Freud's theory. This is because I believe that, at least in regards to this portion of Freud's theory, there is no possible way to determine whether or not it is legitimate or bogus. Although to some people it may appear to make logical sense that does not therefore make it the case and vice versa. Since not enough is known about the brain to really know what the source of things such as dreams and desires are, his theories can be neither true nor false, however, his theories can be classified as helpful. During Freud's time, things such as mental disorders were generally classified as inexplicable. Since the source was unknown, it made it very hard for people to truly treat these disorders. Freud's theory gave people an explanation as to why these people act and behave the way they do (Thorton). He theorized that there is a portion of the mind, he called the unconscious that functions automatically and without the effort or knowledge

of the individual. Since the conscious mind itself, in Freud's theory, cannot actually know how and why the individual's unconscious works the way it does, the unconscious can therefore affect the way the conscious part of the mind functions without the conscious part knowing. Freud theorized that this was the reason people have instincts and the reason why some people have mental disorders. Psychologists could now look for an influencing factor in the patient that was causing this behavior through the process of psychoanalysis.

Freud's work on the unconscious serves as a strong foundation for his work and theories on dreams. Freud believed that when dreams occur when the mind is in a state where the super-ego is less active and effective. It is because of this that Freud felt dreams were essential for understanding a person's unconscious desires. He divided the content of dreams into two different categories the manifest and the latent. The manifest is the false theme of the dream while the latent is the true unconscious desires on which the dream is based (Thorton). I find it very intriguing how Freud decided to take dreams and try to make sense of them using his other theories. It all seems to piece together, this idea that there are these different states and agencies of the mind and that some of them work without our knowledge or effort. This explains why dreams just happen and why they don't always make sense, they are our minds trying to achieve their goal of achieving the pleasure from these instinctual desires that are normally suppressed when we are conscious.

Although Freud's theory of the unconscious is probably the most useful of the theories, his theory on the agencies of the mind is also an interesting one that applies to this idea of something that cannot be proven. To me, Freud's agencies of the mind is a concept that I can't understand how he went about determining and explaining. To think that thinking is not just something that happens, but instead is a mixture of three things happening and working together

to create the human mind and personality is a quite abstract and complex thought. These three agencies, that Freud called the id, ego and superego, each held a role crucial to the overall function of the mind. The id was the part of mind that Freud called the unconscious. The id consists of all the natural instincts and drives that people have and its main goal is to obtain pleasure in any form possible. The ego is the part of the mind that considers the reasonable outcome in reality and decides whether or not to engage in a pleasurable activity based on the outcome that will result from it. The superego is the part of the mind that develops morals and stems from societal standards and expectations and decides whether or not the attainment of a certain pleasure will be seen as acceptable either by one's own standards or societies' (Crain, 1980).

It seems very unlikely that Freud was able to determine the exact way that the mind functions, however, it seems to all fit and make logical sense to the point where it is very hard to create another theory that makes equally as much sense. However, there is no way to prove how the mind and thought work and because of this there is really no way to determine whether or not Freud is right. This is why, at least when it comes to these theories, I believe Freud's theories cannot be deemed legitimate or bogus.

Works Cited

Crain, W. C. (1980). *Theories of development: Concepts and applications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Thorton, S. P. (n.d.). Freud, Sigmund. Retrieved October 16, 2016, from <http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud/#H>