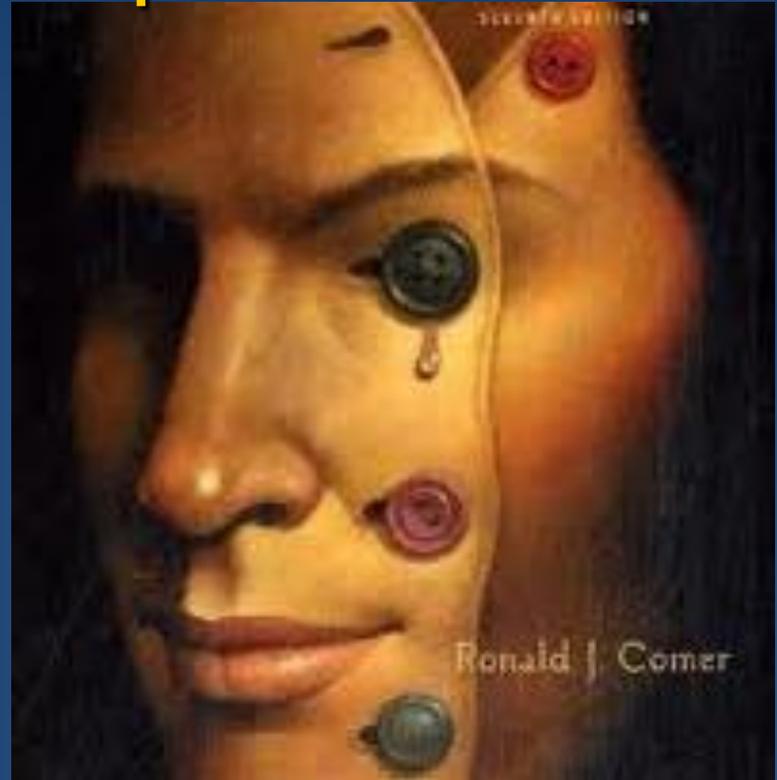


# Schizophrenia

## Psychological Explanations



PJ Waller

Psychologist

Curriculum Leader for Psychology & Criminology

## Information to know

### *Clinical characteristics of Schizophrenia (Sz)*

Issues surrounding the classification and diagnosis of including reliability and validity

Biological explanations of Sz, for example, genetics, biochemistry

Psychological explanations of Sz; behavioural, cognitive, psychodynamic and socio-cultural

Biological therapies for their chosen disorder, including their evaluation in terms of **appropriateness and effectiveness**

Psychological therapies for Sz, for example, behavioural, psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural, including their evaluation in terms of **appropriateness and effectiveness**

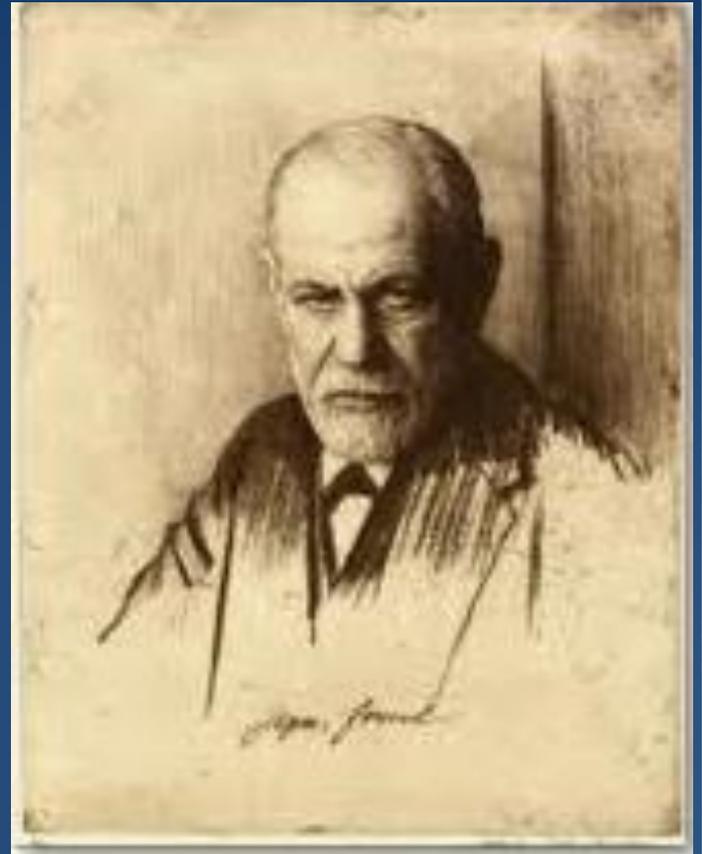
# Schizophrenia

- Psychological theories
  - Psychodynamic
  - Behaviourist
  - Cognitive
- Socio-Cultural Factors
  - Family systems theory
  - Psychosocial & environmental stress

# Schizophrenia

## Psychodynamic

### Explanation



PJ Waller

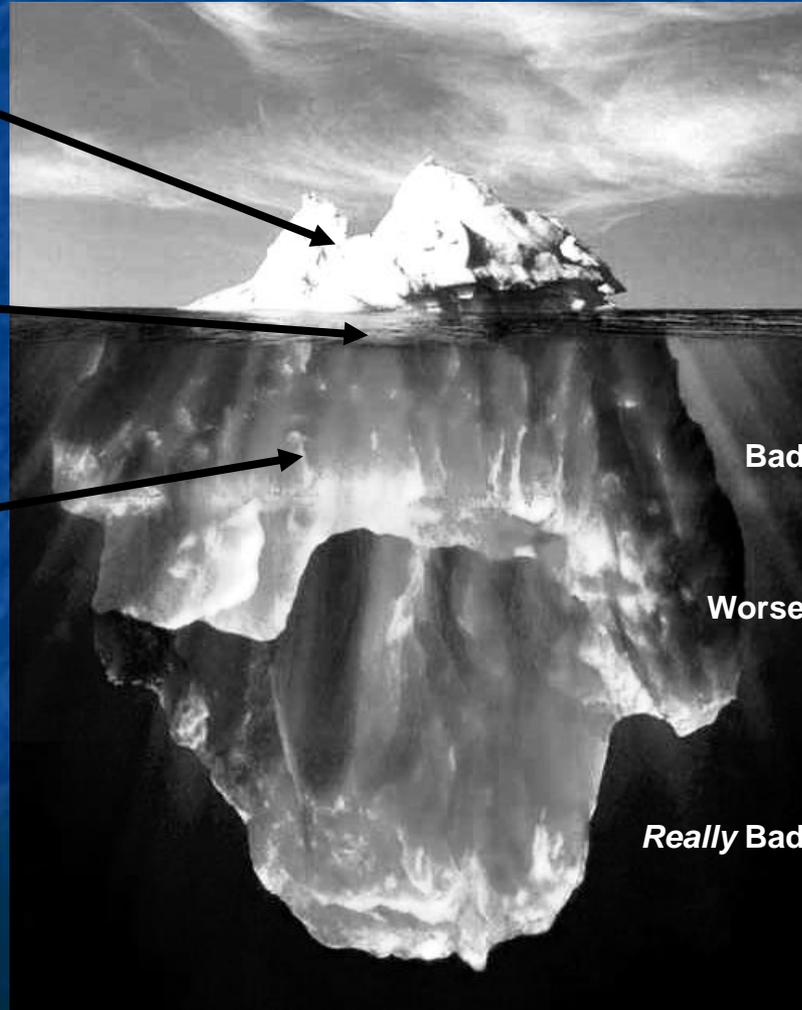
Head of Psychology

# The Unconscious Mind

**The conscious.** The small amount of mental activity we know about.

**The preconscious.** Things we could be aware of if we wanted or tried.

**The unconscious.** Things we are unaware of and can not become aware of.



Thoughts  
Perceptions

Memories  
Stored knowledge

**Bad**

Fears  
Unacceptable sexual desires

**Worse**

Violent motives  
Irrational wishes  
Immoral urges

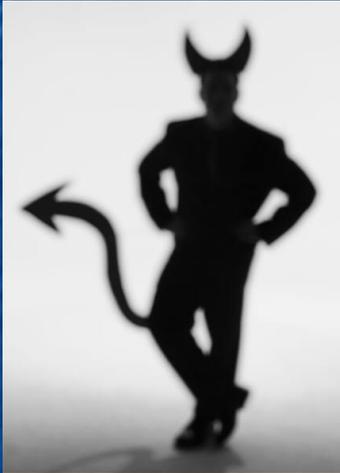
**Really Bad**

Selfish needs  
Shameful experiences  
Traumatic experiences

# Psychodynamic Explanation

- Psychological disorders assumed to be manifestations of:
  - Imbalance between id, ego & superego
  - Attempts to deal with unacceptable repressed material

# The Psyche



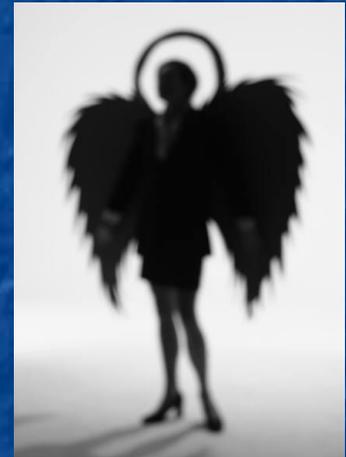
**Id:**

Instincts



**Ego:**

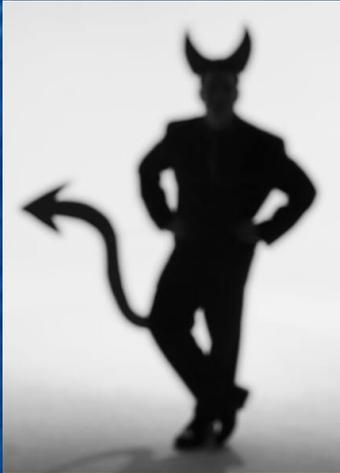
Reality



**Superego:**

Morality

# Healthy Psyche



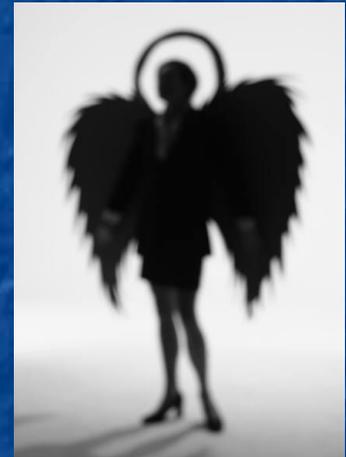
**Id:**

Instincts



**Ego:**

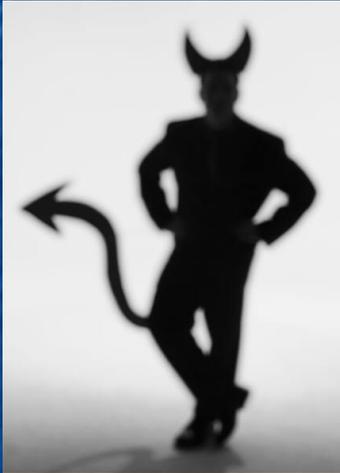
Reality



**Superego:**

Morality

# Neurotic



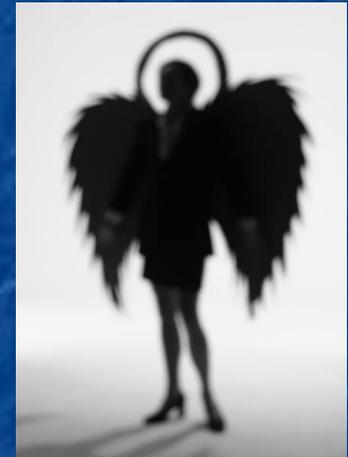
**Id:**

Instincts



**Ego:**

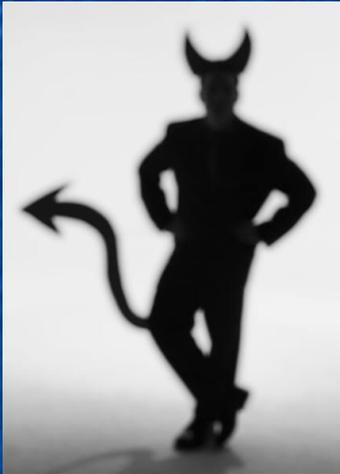
Reality



**Superego**

Morality

# Psychotic



**Id:**

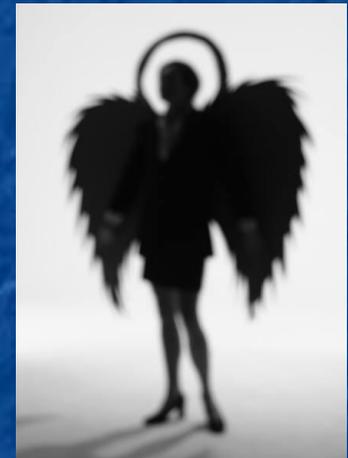
Instincts

Pleasure



**Ego:**

Reality



**Superego:**

Morality

# Psychodynamic Explanation

- **Freud** claimed that schizophrenia is caused by over whelming **anxiety**.
- It's a **defence mechanism** involving **regression** into an **early stage** of development.
- **Hallucinations** are the **ego's** attempt to **restore contact** with **reality**

# Psychodynamic Explanation

## ■ Regression to primary narcissism

- Id takes over
- No distinction between reality & fantasy, self & others
- Inability to function; delay gratification

## ■ Assumed to be due to maternal behaviour

(Schizogenic mother)

link to Socio-Cultural, Family Dysfunction

# Example Psychological Disorders

Depression



Aggression against the parents turned back in on the self

Anxiety



Fear of something (e.g. sex) that is projected onto something innocuous

# Psychological Disorders

- Psychological disorders are ***defence mechanisms*** against repressed emotional problems and impulses
- The symptoms of a disorder have a hidden meaning that can be decoded

# Psychodynamic Explanation

## Evidence for...

- Laing (1967) argued that schizophrenics lose control with reality as a way of coping with social pressure.
- He claimed that it was wrong to encourage schizophrenics to conform

## Evidence against...

- There isn't any research evidence to support Freud's theory.
- Psychoanalysis isn't an effective treatment.
- Which suggests that psychodynamic theory doesn't explain what causes schizophrenia

# Psychodynamic Explanation

## Issues for Evaluation

- Testability
  - The model relies heavily on ideas and constructs whose existence is difficult to test.
- However
  - That doesn't mean that it is necessarily wrong, we just don't know how to test it.

# Psychodynamic Explanation

## Issues for Evaluation

- Evidence

- Lots of evidence from clinical case studies links childhood trauma with adult psychological problems

- However

- Much of the evidence is **retrospective** – difficult to validate and possibly unreliable



# Psychodynamic Explanation

## Issues for Evaluation

### ■ Blame

- The psychodynamic explanation tends to put the blame for psychological disorders on the parents of sufferers.

### ■ However

- As scientists we should not avoid saying something just because people's feelings might get hurt – **we should follow the truth**