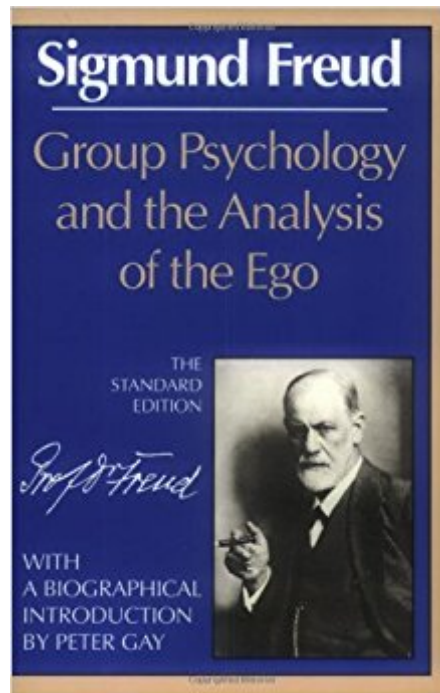




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# Group Psychology And The Analysis Of The Ego (Norton Library)



## Synopsis

To Freud, individual and social psychology were virtually identical. The question he addresses here is, What are the emotional bonds that hold collective entities, such as an army and a church, together? It is a fruitful question, and Freud offers some interesting answers. But Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego stands chiefly as an invitation to further psychoanalytic exploration.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Text: English, German (translation)

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) is one of the twentieth century's greatest minds and the founder of the psychoanalytic school of psychology. His many works include The Ego and the Id; An Outline of Psycho-Analysis; Inhibitions; Symptoms and Anxiety; New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis; Civilization and Its Discontent, and others. Peter Gay (1923-2015) was the author of more than twenty-five books, including the National Book Award winner The Enlightenment, the best-selling Weimar Culture, and the widely translated Freud: A Life for Our Time.

This book is in the public domain and I downloaded it for free. As with all of these public domain works of Freud's that I've read so far the translation leaves a lot to be desired. I'm certain that Freud's message was clear and lucid in the original German, but here it's obscured by

unnecessarily complicated sentence structure that often requires re-reading before it can be fully understood. Here is an example of one of the shorter sentences: "Contagion is a phenomenon of which it is easy to establish the presence, but that it is not easy to explain." To say that a sentence like this requires editing is an understatement. This might be one way to improve it: "The presence of Contagion is easy to identify, but not so easy to explain." I could have given much worse, and far longer, examples, but the point of it all is that the readability of the entire book could be better. On the other hand, Freud gives a good description of group-think, and identifies the problems associated with groups. This is one insight (and I won't attempt to edit these examples): "...the individual forming part of a group acquires solely from numerical considerations, a sentiment of invincible power which allows him to yield to instincts which, had he been alone, he would perforce have kept under restraint." I think that it's worthy to note here that this shows that even otherwise reasonable persons can form up into unruly, destructive mobs. The reasoning power of a mob usually devolves to the lowest level of the members within the mob. "He possesses the spontaneity, the violence, the ferocity, and also the enthusiasm and heroism of primitive beings...then dwells especially upon the lowering in intellectual ability which an individual experiences when he becomes merged in a group." "...goes directly to extremes; if a suspicion is expressed, it is instantly changed into an incontrovertible certainty; a trace of antipathy is turned into furious hatred." I think we can easily see how this applies to wide ranging events, whatever the place or time. Freud also illustrates how group-think also extends to politics and religion, often combining the two: "If another group takes the place of the religious one and the socialistic tie seems to be succeeding in doing so then there will be the same intolerance toward outsiders as in the age of the Wars of Religion." And to social networking: "We have only to think of the troop of women and girls, all of them in love in an enthusiastically sentimental way, who crowd round a singer or pianist after his performance." Keep in mind that this book was written in 1921, but identifies group behavior that would accurately apply today. To Freud's insight, logic, and clarity of thought I would of course give five out of five stars. To the translated version, four stars only. I still recommend it to anyone who would like to get some insight into groups and group behavior.

Yes, this book is translated. No, group psychology is not my favorite. However, this book has the name Freud all over it. It has his thoughts on ego, id, and superego. Freud was my gateway into psychology almost 15 years ago. I'll read anything with his names on it. Yes, he is misunderstood, but psychology geeks like myself will understand the fandom. If you are a Freud lover, this is for you.

I came across this little tome when I was in college. Exploded for me. Made me go on to read much of the Strachey editions in the library. Just reread it again. Still think it's amazing. In the beginning, Freud makes a couple statements that are pretty fascinating: that almost no one has written about group psychology and that perhaps there is no such thing as individual psychology. And you could argue that Group Psych is even more important today than when Freud wrote this in the 1920s. Finally, Freud is one of those writers who is rarely read, but often (mis)characterized by other writers. If you have never read an original Freud work, this is a great place to start. You'll be surprised.

This book was required reading at Pacifica Graduate Institute. Like most of Freud's written work it is biased and outdated. If you read German, read his works in German not English. I only recommend this book if it is required reading. Reading Freud in order to understand psychology is not my recommendation, there are better ways to go....

I did like this in terms of understanding group dynamics from a psychoanalytic perspective. Once does need to infer and analytically think about the topics introduced so this is a deeply thought provoking book.

so I might be biased. But, this book tells in wonderful detail how group psychology works from a Psychodynamic point of view. It is accurate and helpful.

Excellent product and excellent seller, a real asset for

Great purchase.

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