



Introducing Psychoanalysis: A Graphic Guide

Ivan Ward , Oscar Zárate (Illustrator)

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How do psychoanalysts conceptualize the mind? Why was Sigmund Freud so interested in sex? How does analysis work? *Introducing Psychoanalysis* offers insights into the nature of psychoanalytic theory and original ways of describing therapeutic practice. In demystifying and explaining psychoanalysis, it is of interest to students, teachers, and the general public.

Introducing Psychoanalysis: A Graphic Guide Details

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Dunya Buzidi says

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Mohamed al-Jamri says

This a short book that was given to me by the Bahrain Reading Challenge group for being the Reader of the Month (February).

The first half or third of the book was somewhat defensive, trying to reply to criticisms that psychoanalysis is a sort of religion or shamanic ritual or pseudoscience.

The latter criticism was of course famously made by Carl Popper who stated that science must be falsifiable and anything that is not so is not science (i.e. pseudoscience), which doesn't necessarily mean false. The author challenges this by redefining science as simply trying to explain the world without appealing to God and that it is hard/impossible for psychoanalysis to make specific predictions or follow the usual procedure of other sciences, because of the complexity of mental development.

That's hardly convincing. A psychic or a homeopath could say the same thing. I also didn't notice any mention of the word falsifiable or Carl Popper despite these being some of the strongest criticisms to psychoanalysis. It is very telling that at one of the last pages the author acknowledges that psychoanalysis as a therapy is only suitable for "more or less" healthy people and that its impact may be nothing more than just supportive.

She then explains what psychoanalysis is and its basic concepts and theories although this could have been done clearer and in a chronological way. I could not stop thinking that Freud and the other psychoanalysts would have benefited much if they had incorporated ideas from evolutionary psychology or cognitive psychology.

For example couldn't the Oedipus complex and incest taboo be better explained by the Westermarch effect which states that "people who live in close domestic proximity during the first few years of their lives become desensitized to sexual attraction". This can be explained from an evolutionary point of view; there are deadly genes which are rare and autosomal recessive by definition (they have to be rare and recessive or

natural selection will not allow them to pass to next generations). So if two siblings marry each other, the chances are higher that their children will have these deadly genes which will cause an evolutionary disadvantage, therefore those who marry from outside their family will on average have an evolutionary advance and therefore be favored by natural selection.

Steven Pinker has quite an amazing quote about this: "The idea that boys want to sleep with their mothers strikes most men as the silliest thing they have ever heard. Obviously, it did not seem so to Freud, who wrote that as a boy he once had an erotic reaction to watching his mother dressing. But Freud had a wet-nurse, and may not have experienced the early intimacy that would have tipped off his perceptual system that Mrs. Freud was his mother. The Westermarck theory has out-Freude Freud."

With that being said, the book did correct some misconceptions I had, and I want to make clear that I do not deny the rule played by psychoanalysis to the development of psychology or its cultural effects.

Spicy T AKA Mr. Tea says

These (the introducing series) can be really hit or miss. The art wasn't bad, but the writing seemed fairly incoherent and didn't come off as a narrative. I maybe got a little closer to psychoanalysis, but I wonder if I haven't hurt myself. I may read a newer edition of this book just to see how it's changed or if a better story is told. It didn't feel like an introduction.

Icon Books says

The ideas of psychoanalysis have permeated Western culture. It is the dominant paradigm through which we understand our emotional lives, and Freud still finds himself an iconic figure. Yet despite the constant stream of anti-Freud literature, little is known about contemporary psychoanalysis. "Introducing Psychoanalysis" redresses the balance. It introduces psychoanalysis as a unified "theory of the unconscious" with a variety of different theoretical and therapeutic approaches, explains some of the strange ways in which psychoanalysts think about the mind, and is one of the few books to connect psychoanalysis to everyday life and common understanding of the world. How do psychoanalysts conceptualize the mind? Why was Freud so interested in sex? Is psychoanalysis a science? How does analysis work? In answering these questions, this book offers new insights into the nature of psychoanalytic theory and original ways of describing therapeutic practice. The theory comes alive through Oscar Zarate's insightful and daring illustrations, which enlighten the text. In demystifying and explaining psychoanalysis, this book should be of interest to students, teachers and the general public.

Ivan Ward is director of education at the Freud Museum, and a part-time lecturer at London Guildhall University. He is the series editor for Ideas in Psychoanalysis, also published by Icon.

Oscar Zarate is a highly acclaimed graphic artist who has illustrated many Introducing Titles

Elliot says

Some ideas came across well but narrative was scrambled and illogical. Made a brief point and didn't

elaborate on it, then moved onto another concept.

Worthwhile and short - read it in a morning, however I wouldn't purchase.

Long live the library!

Jeremiah says

Entertaining introduction to the discipline as a whole; however, it is maybe too caught up in the codification it's attempting to explain, e.g., it fails to give the reader an account of the unconscious. The uninitiated are sort of left out in the cold here.

Bridget says

Seems to have been written by a psychoanalyst more concerned about defending against hypothetical accusations than in explaining core concepts of psychoanalysis. What is transference, for example? I certainly have no better understanding after reading this book. Graphics were mostly weird and did not contribute much to the text.

Simran Khan says

Good

Essam Munir says

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Alexandru says

Probably the format of the book is not suited for this topic. As well there is more emphasis on graphical images and not on the actual contents. Dissapointing.

Oda Ayu says

I've gotten this book for my Christmas gift from "Secret Santa" party at the office. I expected much from this book because 1) I love psychology 2) I have heard about psychoanalysis before and pretty much interested but did not have much time to dig more into the topic.

This graphic introduction book about psychoanalysis is fairly good. I can get the idea and sense of psychoanalysis from the book. The explanation on the later chapter is more coherent compare with the earlier chapter which build the whole outer picture of psychoanalysis.

However, the graphic itself does not do much to the information written in the book. It did not speak anything, neither it was supporting the topic discussed in each chapter to help reader understand the idea. I kinda wish it to be a full text book type.

All in all, I still recommend this book (especially for the later chapter - which is very intriguing) for whoever interested in trying to know about psychoanalysis. It's a good introduction book to open the doors for more books in the future.

Big thanks to my secret santa for the book.

Nitheesh I S says

I usually love graphic guides and am very interested in knowing more about psychology, psychiatry and psychoanalysis. So, I kind of was looking forward to this reading experience. The book tries to introduce you to psychoanalysis but it's not very successful. For one, the narrative is incoherent and the author tends to throw technical terms expecting the reader who is a layman to know it.

At the end of the book, I don't feel much wiser. However, the one thing the book has done for me is to elicit curiosity. I'll probably try out some other books now. The graphic illustrations, by the way, are good.

Julian says

Its ok, doesn't explain the terms in enough detail to be an introduction

Tariq Fadel says

This book is very informative on psychoanalysis. It is definitely more than just an introduction, it attempts to explain some very complex ideas, therefore it deserves more credit than it's name suggests. It's full of technical jargon but it's the graphics and drawings really make it an enjoyable read, if it were just plain text, it would be incredibly boring to read. It doesn't focus on one topic but attempts to convey all the different theories and provide a wide scope for everything related to psychoanalysis.

Di?na says

Extremely simplified introduction to psychoanalysis. The graphic guide did not really work for me on this one.

