

Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud are two of the most influential thinkers of the past 150 years (1866). They have provided man with important works on laws, ethics, and politics. This book examines their philosophical thoughts and their influence on the growth of civilization, man's disposition, and human development.

Civilization and Its Discontents 2016

by Fred Stinson III

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FRED STINSON III

CIVILIZATION
AND ITS
DISCONTENTS
2016

Where are we Going?



Civilization and Its Discontents 2016

Fred Stinson III

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About the Author

Fred Stinson III, PhD is Clinical Coordinator at Preferred Treatment Center. He received his PhD in psychology from Capella University (2014) and his MS from Georgia College & State University (1997). He is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Master Addiction Counselor, Certified Addiction Counselor II, and Clinical Supervisor. He is a life coach and consultant for Pro-Tech Consulting. Dr. Stinson is CEO of Stinson Enterprises Incorporated (SEI). SEI is a conglomerate that provides media and commercial products aimed at improving human wellness, growth, and development. Dr. Stinson is professor at Middle Georgia State University, where he teaches Introduction to Psychology and Human Development. Dr. Stinson's clinical and research interests encompass the etiology of psychology, human development, and substance use disorders. He has designed and implemented various treatment strategies to diverse populations. He is a change agent and experienced in various models that enhance perception and motivation to change. He is the author of *In Search of Resilience: Developmental and Motivational Perspectives of African American of Men* (2015), presenter of numerous short videos, scientific articles, topics, and books reviews. Dr. Stinson was awarded second place by Division 50 (Society of Addiction Psychology) for outstanding student poster at the 2014 American Psychological Association convention.

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Civilization and Its Discontents 2016

Chapter I

Human Development and Pleasurable Experiences

What I am about to present is the most wonderful, imaginative, vile, deadliest, and hideous monster ever known—man.

– Fred Stinson III

In the opening chapter of *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud asserts that it is impossible to escape the impression that people commonly used false standards of measurement. He asserts that people seek power, success, and wealth for themselves and admire these traits in others. He cites that man (all human beings) underestimate what is of true value in life. He begins to make judgments about the human world and mental life. He talks of things that once were reserved for great men but are now admired and achieved by a multitude of people. The thrust of his essay focuses on the discrepancies between people's thoughts, actions, and wishful impulses (p. 10).

Next, Freud presents a conversation with a friend, Romain Rolland, who debated the book *The Future of an Illusion* (Freud, 1927), in which Freud asserts that religion is an illusion. Rolland cites that Freud had not properly appreciated the true source of religious sentiments confirmed by millions of people. Rolland called religion a sensation of eternity, a feeling of limitlessness, an unbounded article of faith described as "oceanic." Rolland argues that religion bears no assurance of personal

immortality, but it is a source of energy that is seized upon by the various religious systems and disseminated through particular channels. Rolland concludes by saying that this energy is saving people even if they reject every belief and every illusion. Freud was not impressed and inserted that he did not feel this oceanic feeling shared by so many. Freud argued that feelings cannot be studied scientifically and thus are invalid. He asserted that their physiological signs can only describe feelings. He characterized the oceanic feeling as an eccentric, dramatic hero who is facing a self-inflicted death. He concluded the conversation acknowledging that this oceanic feeling existed in others but that he found it hard to understand its *fons et origo* (the source and origin of something) to religion (p. 12).

Freud then presents several psychoanalytical assumptions of civilization and its discontents. First, he states that man connects with the world around him through feelings manifested from the ego. The ego governs autonomous feelings and energy directed inward. The ego is limited to an unconscious mental entity that serves as a kind of façade. The façade declares that a man in love would defend that "I" and "you" are one and is prepared to behave in such a manner. Another assumption is that a dynamic pathology exists between man's ego and the external world. He states there are cases in which parts of a person's own body, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings appear alien to him (p. 13).

He reflects on human development from infancy to adulthood. He asserts that an infant's ego continuously evolves throughout its life span, and although the ego is present in adulthood, it is not the same. He describes an infant's first ego excitatory object, his mother's breast milk.

This object is outside of the infant and his screams prompt its reappearance, thus forming a connection between the ego and the object. He postulates that these kinds of frequent experiences enjoin sensations of pleasure and avoidance of pain; the outcome is the formulation of the pleasure principle. The pleasure principle is a tendency to separate from the ego everything that can become a source of pure pleasure. He states that pleasure-ego cannot escape rectification through experience. Here he posits that people are unwilling to give up objects because they get pleasure from not the ego but the object. Therefore, man comes to learn the procedure for obtaining pleasure, both internally and externally, through deliberate direct sensory activities and muscular action. He cites that an infant can differentiate between pleasurable and unpleasurable sensations. In Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality, the reality principle strives to satisfy the id's desires in realistic and socially appropriate ways by weighing the costs and benefits of an action before deciding to act upon or abandon an impulse. At adolescent stages of development, Freud cites that man's inability to cope with unpleasurable excitations leads to pathological disturbances (p. 15).

Using his psychoanalytical model, Freud describes the interaction between the ego and the external world. He cites that the ego fluctuates from a narrow to a sharply demarcated ego-feeling of maturity. Thus, the ideal ego is precisely experiencing limitlessness and a bond with the universe—an oceanic feeling.

A Glimpse at Civilization
Political Relationships

July 21, 2016. The national chairperson of the Republican National Convention, Reince Preibus, states that enough is enough to his party. His rhetoric describes how man has proceeded to lower his virtues and principles to despicable levels. Donald Trump, a party candidate, aggressively attacked other candidates' personalities and families and made racial slurs. Then at the gala convention, candidates were expected to give warmhearted genuine support to the chosen nominee. Can you imagine the mental and psychological discontent if you were in one of these candidates' shoes—he's slandered your name, your family, your ethnicity, and then you have to submit to party conformity? Both parties did not present or unveil any new policy that could take the United States and civilization forward. The country is discontented with government, ethnicity, and the economy, and this sentiment led to a presidential win for the Republican Party, Trump.

Freedom of speech has been exploited to the extreme. US politics, as well as politics in other countries, have become progressively corrupt.

Freud cites that man is the survival of something that was simple and original. He points out the phenomenal development of primitive species and mental life. He cites that what was once primitive is preserved alongside the transformed version of man. He notes that the divergence in

development that is one portion of an attitude or instinctual impulse has remained unaltered, while another portion has undergone further development (p. 15).

At this point, Freud discusses the preservation of mental life and the retention of memories. He cites that memories throughout the life span are not entirely annihilated or destroyed. He introduces the term memory-trace, saying that no memory man has formed can perish—that everything is somehow preserved and can be brought to light in arbitrary circumstances. Freud allows us to grasp this idea using the archeological analogy of the Eternal City and ancient palaces of Rome. The Eternal City was an old Roman settlement on the Palatine. The city was bounded by the Servian wall and transformed by fires and destruction, now lay in ruin. Freud described how ancient places such as the Palazzo, the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the Coliseum, and the Pantheon existed in physical form. Freud's analogy was that as a modern visitor, man can use historical and topographical knowledge (memory-trace) to preserve the ancient still buried in the soil of the city or beneath its modern buildings (p. 17).

This is a wonderful fantasy perseverance Freud cited, things that are unimaginable and even absurd. If we want to represent a historical sequence in spatial terms, we can only do it by juxtaposition in space; the same space cannot have two different contents. He cites there was only one justification for his conjectures: to shows us how far we are from mastering the characteristics of mental life by representing them in pictorial terms. He explains why he chose precisely the past of a city to compare with the past of the mind. The assumption of preservation is only valid if the life organ of the mind has remained intact and its tissues

have not been damaged by trauma or inflammation. Destructive influences are a part of life and cannot be held constant in time; demolitions and replacement of buildings occur in the peaceful development of a city. A city is thus *a priori* unsuited for a comparison of this sort with a mental organism (p. 19).

Freud abandons his contrast of a city and human development and embarks on a comparison of the body of an animal to that of a human being. Immediately, he is jolted by the fact that the earlier phases of development are not preserved but absorbed into the later phases of human development. As examples, he cited the fact that the embryo cannot be discovered in the adult; the thymus gland of childhood is replaced by connective tissue after puberty; that inside the bones of the grown man, the outline of the child's bone can be traced, but the bone has disappeared, having lengthened and thickened until it has attained its definitive form; and the feet remain a preservation of all the possible earlier stages alongside the final form (p. 19).

A Glimpse into Discontent *Social Relationships*

Ghostbusters star Leslie Jones has returned to Twitter after a two-day hiatus, prompted by a series of hateful and racist tweets directed at her account. "I leave Twitter tonight with tears and a very sad heart," she wrote on Tuesday. "All this 'cause I did a movie. You can hate the movie, but the shit I got today...wrong. OK, I have been called Apes, sent pics of their asses, even got a pic with semen on my face. I'm

tryin' to figure out what human means." Dan Aykroyd showed his support for Jones: "These people are insignificant gnats. They have no lives of their own, they can barely pay for the Wi-Fi, probably no jobs. I would say you're looking at obese, white men between fifty and sixty, who are active Klan members or members of the Aryan Nation, and there are millions of them" (Schillaci, 2016).

Finally, Freud reasserts that what is the past in mental life is preserved and not destroyed. His analogy is that what is old is effaced or absorbed in the normal course of development. However, he cites that at some points, mental life cannot be restored or revived by any means, thus preservation is dependent on certain favorable conditions. He acknowledges that an oceanic feeling can be traced and preserved in humans through ego-feelings, yet he questions it as a source of religious needs. Freud then relates an infant's source of energy as a derivation of religious needs to an infantile, helpless child who strongly needs a father's protection. He compares the oceanic feeling to limitless narcissism. He exclaims that the oceanic feeling is an absurd and intangible quantity that attempts to find consolation with threats from the external world (p. 21).

Summary

In each of the following chapters, I will contrast and compare Freud's past views on civilization and its discontents to a 2016 progression. My assessment is a critical thinking analysis of man (all human beings) and man's

mental life, just as Freud provided during his time. Along with Freud's book, I will be referencing two major psychology textbooks: *Psychology is Everyday Life* (Myers & DeWall, 2014) and *Experiencing the Lifespan* (Belsky, 2016). These two books provide up-to-date research on human development. As Freud cited in his work, there are many men who may agree with my analysis of *Civilization and Its Discontents*, more would possibly agree with my judgment, but the backlash for a right-hand liberal would quiet their voice. My objective henceforth is to show how man has grown wonderfully but at other times acted barbarically, as is often described in Freud's essay.

Well, Freud, man continues to seek power, success, and wealth for themselves, and we continue to admire these traits in others. These traits are not without conditions, however. The holder of the traits must be similar (such as in age, ethnicity, race, etc.) to the beholder. These false measurements are continuously used to value man's success and his influence on civilization. Today, man is using mega commercial entities to influence government, military, private investment, and religious ideology. The true value of life is lost to narcissist activities that emulate power, success, and wealth. A multitude of people continue to show discrepancies and disturbances between their thoughts, actions, and wishful impulses.

The jury is still out on Freud's argument that religion is an illusion. Nevertheless, religion remains a source of spiritual strength, assurance, and happiness for millions of people around the world. Although many people report rarely or never going to church, more than 50% of people report experiencing a religious revival (Green, 2016). Half of the people who reported recently going to services

more often explained the change in terms of their beliefs: They become more religious; they found that they need God in their life; they were acting more mature as they have aged. Religious systems continue to disseminate their messages through high-tech channels such as round-the-clock religious broadcasting throughout the world.

Freud was one of the first to outline human development. His theory is founded on psychosexual stages in which personality traits are formed throughout childhood and end at adolescence. Freud's theory begins with the ego. The ego is a person's sense of self-esteem or self-importance. It is also synonymous with self-worth, self-respect, self-image, and self-confidence. It is the part of the mind that mediates between the conscious and the unconscious and is responsible for reality testing and a sense of personal identity. The ego mediates the desires of the id and the superego. The superego can stop one from doing certain things that one's id may want to do. To manage our desires, the ego employs defense mechanisms. The defense mechanisms lessen the tension by covering up our impulses that are threatening. Ego defense mechanisms are often used by the ego when id behavior conflicts with reality and either society's morals, norms, and taboos or the individual's expectations as a result of the internalization of these morals, norms, and taboos. Freud identified them as denial, displacement, intellectualization, fantasy, compensation, projection, rationalization, reaction formation, regression, repression, and sublimation.

The superego represents man's ideal self, his perfect self and image. It internalizes cultural rules taught primarily by parents, then by educators, teachers, and other ideal models. This concept is a combination of the ego ideal and

performs the task of narcissistic satisfaction, which Freud also called man's conscience. The superego aims for perfection. It forms the organized part of the personality structure that includes man's ego ideals, spiritual goals, and the conscience. This mechanism criticizes and prohibits man's drives, fantasies, feelings, and actions. The superego can be thought of as a type of conscience that punishes misbehavior with feelings of guilt. Guilt is experienced when personal moral standards are breached or when hurtful actions to another human being occur. In moderation, guilt causes connections and attempts to make amends. Shame is the primitive sense felt when one is personally humiliated and can cause withdrawal, fury, and feelings of revenge (Belsky, 2016). Before I go further into human development, I want to update you on the latest technology.

Today, twenty-first-century life expectancy revolutions have reduced infectious diseases and chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes. In addition, the new old age for man is 80 years old and beyond (Belsky, 2016). Man's community relationships have transferred into cyberspace and online relationships, which have changed how people relate. Since the 1930s, man has endured many economic and financial hardships, but we have overcome these challenges. We are now rethinking the standards of adult markers and the effects of economics on our life span. Other significant impacts since Freud's time are the growth of socioeconomic status on individuals and nations, the development of world nations, gender differences, human development shaped by culture's values, cultural differences (collectivist and individualistic cultures), and ethnic hazards due to diversity within nations and ethnic groups. Each of these impacts has influenced the

psychological development of man and how he responds to biological factors.

We have learned much from evolutionary psychology, which theorizes about the nature of human similarities, basic human needs, and action-oriented behavior. In addition, we have learned from evolutionary psychologists how biological predispositions, inborn species-specific behaviors, and genetics influence survival of the fittest. Today, we are debating the nature and nurture controversy. There are two principle stances here (Belsky, 2016): Principle One states that our nature (genetic tendencies) shapes our nurture (life experiences); Principle Two states that nurture (life experiences) express our nature (genetic talents). These and other theories have expanded our understanding of man's life span development.

Erik Erikson and Jean Piaget (Belsky, 2016) have criticized Freud's theory and claim that development does not end at adolescence but continues throughout the life span. Erikson identified eight core developmental tasks from infancy (birth to 1 year) to old age (late 60s and beyond). He theorized that people needed to master each task in order to progress healthily to the next. Of the eight stages, two stages are very interesting: the adolescence (teens to early 20s) in which the task of identity versus role confusion has to be achieved, and young adulthood (20s to early 40s), in which intimacy versus isolation has to be achieved. Piaget's theory (Myers & DeWall, 2014) is based on four stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. Piaget (Belsky, 2016) recently added *postformal* thought (adults) to his stages. Postformal is an adult's ability to form intelligence that involves being sensitive to different perspectives (relativistic), making

decisions based on one's inner feelings (feeling-oriented), and being interested in exploring new questions (question-driven).

Urie Bronfenbrenner (Belsky, 2016) used a developmental systems approach. His ecological model states that multiple complex forces shape development. He asserts that family, church, peers, and the classroom form the core of a child's daily life. At the broadest macro level, we consider that child's culture the prevailing economic and social conditions of society as well as the developing person's cohort. He emphasizes the need to monitor the interaction between developmental processes, which includes genes, environment, society, and culture.

In recent studies, sensory interaction shows how, throughout his life span, man is biologically influenced by sensation and perception (Myers & DeWall, 2014). Sensory interactions help us to understand our senses better. Senses are not totally separate information channels; transduction is made up of multiple interactions. For example, smell + texture + taste = flavor; vision + hearing = distance and judgment. Transduction is the process of converting one form of energy into another; in this case, from photons and sound waves into neural signals. We know from embodied cognition that our preferences and judgments are influenced by bodily sensations, gestures, and other cognitive states. For example, when it comes to warmth, we now know that physical warmth may promote social warmth, and social exclusion can literally feel cold. In addition, political expressions may mimic body positions.

Sensation is a bottom-up process by which the physical sensory system receives and represents stimuli at the very basic level of sensory receptors and works up to our

brain for interpretation. Man's other system of perception is a top-down mental process of organizing and interpreting sensory input from experience and expectations. Sensory adaptation is a reduction in sensitivity in response to constant stimulation. Sensory adaptation also helps focus on informative, environmental change through bypassing background chatter, and it influences perceptions of emotions. Research findings show that effects of sensory restriction on infant cats, monkeys, and humans suggest there is a critical period for normal sensory and perceptual development. Social perception is when man takes from outer energy and interprets it into inner brain activity. Man's perceptual knowledge of aggression is inborn, as such aggression represents visual interpretation. Hence, we come equipped to process sensory information. Research shows that we learn to perceive the world through our experiences. For example, we learn to associate distance with size. It is clear that nurture sculpts what nature has endowed man with.

Freud's theories on the pleasure principle and reality principle have continued to provide insight into man's internal and external experiences and interpretations. The pleasure principle is an instinctual drive that seeks pleasure and avoids pain; its purpose is to satisfy biological and psychological needs. It is a psychic force that motivates man's tendency to seek immediate gratification from the external world. The pleasure principle is the driving force of the id. The id is the only component of personality that is present from birth. It is the unconscious source of our bodily needs, wants, desires, and impulses, particularly our sexual and aggressive drives. The id contains the libido, which is the primary source of instinctual force that is unresponsive

to the demands of reality. On the other hand, the reality principle controls the ego's pleasure-seeking activity of the id. It is man's ability to assess the reality of the external world as opposed to acting on the pleasure principle. The reality principle can defer instant gratification; thus, it can cause reason to triumph over passion, head over heart, rational over emotional mind. We can see evidence of these unconscious instinctual drives among us daily. They represent the largest and most influential part of the mind; they are drives, instincts, and motives that man is forced to deny or disguise.

Freud's analogy of man's mind and ancient monuments is intriguing. Memory-trace remains an interesting topic for research. As man continues to develop, he passes along residual memories to the next generation, and this memory-trace appears to reduce the rate of trial and error learning. We know today from B. F. Skinner's operant conditioning that learning is determined by any voluntary response due to reinforcement. Man behaves in ways that are reinforced (rewarded), whereas any behavior that is not reinforced is likely to be extinguished (Belsky, 2016). Alan Baddeley's (Myers & DeWall, 2014) model of working memory shows how visual and auditory rehearsal of new information impact learning. We know that part of the brain functions like a computer, a central executive focusing attention and pulling information from long-term memory to help make sense of new information. Cognitive behaviorism, social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997), has shown that man learns by modeling (imitating) others. Man models people who are nurturing, whom we perceive as being like us and involved with us, as within our family or community.

There are two types of learning: associative and cognitive (Myers & DeWall, 2014). In associative learning, we learn that certain events occur together. An example of this would be a puppy learning that it will be rewarded with a treat when it sits. In cognitive learning, we gain new information that affects how we behave, like learning how to cook by watching and helping your mother. Lev Vygotsky (1978) calls the daughter learning how to cook by watching her mother, scaffolding. Scaffolding is an effective way of developing skills, cooperative learning, and various strategies. This type of competent learning is also called the zone of proximal development in which a child improves his ability to achieve the task. Learning can keep us safe, healthy, and save us time. However, this type of heuristic learning is error prone and can have negative, even fatal consequences such as thinking it is OK to text and drive or have unprotected sex.

Man has not completely learned how to deal with another man's feelings without stirring his emotions. Our feelings remain an indissoluble bond with the external world. Emotions are synonymous with feelings and are an affective state of consciousness. On the other hand, consciousness is our sensation and perception of our environment. Carson (2003) also cites that emotions fall into five categories: joy, sorrow, fear, anger, and love. Izard (1977) isolated 10 emotions, seven of which are present in infancy: joy, anger, interest, disgust, surprise, sadness, and fear. Contempt, shame, and guilt evolve after 2 years of age; love and pride show up much later in development. When one of these emotions is conjured up, man's response is habitual and generally based on primitive roots. When we block these emotions, they can lead to guilty expressions

such as acting immature, weak, promiscuous, or cowardly. Carson (2003) states that habitual patterns can be broken once we begin to simply notice them and the way we express them in our daily lives. Conscious or unconscious anger is often suppressed by shortening your breathing, talking yourself out of your anger, rationalizing it, ranting and raving, eating, drinking, or fighting. Powerful experiences of anger can be expressed as scary, as sexy, or disgusting; you may become energized, nauseous, vengeful, super nice, sarcastic, placating, attacking, or very analytical of other outrageous lengths. Simply noticing these feelings is one of many ways man can learn how to respond in a different and healthier way (p. 46).

I have observed that man's discontents induce Thanatos. The Thanatos instinct (Hunt, 1993) is an alleged death that compels humans to engage in risky, aggressive, sadistic, and self-destructive acts that could lead to their own death. Acts of Thanatos mystify us as evidenced by inserted passages of glimpses into civilization and discontents scattered throughout this book. Man's feelings continue to be misinterpreted by society. Even feelings with strong religious sentiments have succumbed to narcissism. Misinterpreted narcissism can be observed while scanning Mark Zuckerberg's enterprise, Facebook. Today, Facebook is an obsession, and it sometimes evokes feelings of universal connectivity as if we were a Borg collective (Borg, 2016). Millions of people are using Facebook or other social media (Twitter, Snapchat) to portray an ideal self and their indulgences. Many are likely suffering from social anxiety or a sense of rejection and find solace in cyberspace. Many others are self-absorbed in left-wing or right-wing propaganda while highlighting their life, freedom, and

happiness. Through social media, man has developed an animated connection with the world; this is a unique phenomenon that fits neatly into today's progressive psychology of human development.

In today's culture, there is nothing more inalienable than the feelings of our ego. The ego once appeared autonomous and unitary. This appearance is deceptive; the ego is a kind of façade, a representative of who I am. Freud's discovery of the ego, id, and superego tells us about the influential relationship between these three forces. As we develop, we recognize our bodily organs and gradually experience fixations in various erogenous zones. Erogenous zones have been shown to influence fixation, which is an intense psychological association with a past event or series of events that triggers certain feelings or behaviors within a person. These explanations reveal how man develops reinforced habits and why habits and impulses are hard to break.

Glimpse at Discontent
Desensitized Children I

Boy doesn't want to go to school, kills grandmother. A 14-year-old Pennsylvania boy has been charged with fatally shooting his grandmother during an argument over school. Hunter Riley Reeser, of Harborcreek Township, has been jailed without bond or an attorney on charges including criminal homicide and first-degree murder. State police say he shot 60-year-old Sandra Orton in the head then called her husband Tuesday morning claiming he found the woman

wounded. Police responded after Reeser called 911 and say Reeser later acknowledged shooting her. Police say Reeser told them he shot the woman because he didn't want to go to an unspecified school meeting (WTAE, 2016).

Desensitized Children II

One of two girls accused of stabbing a 12-year-old classmate to please the online horror character Slender Man has pleaded not guilty in a US court on the grounds of mental illness. A judge appointed two doctors to evaluate Morgan Geyser. She and Anissa Weier, both now aged 14, are being tried as adults, charged with attempted murder.

Their victim was stabbed 19 times but survived. She was found crawling from woods by a cyclist. The two girls plotted for months to kill their victim in "dedication" to Slender Man, a fictional horror website character. They desired to become the paranormal figure's "proxies" by killing to demonstrate their loyalty.

Following the attack, both suspects were found walking near a local highway, and a knife was found in one of their backpacks, police said. The girls had planned to stab their friend during a sleepover at Ms. Geyser's house where they had been celebrating her birthday. But instead, they decided to commit the crime the next morning in a nearby park. After the murder, they reportedly intended to walk to Slender Man's mansion, which they believed was situated in Wisconsin's Nicolet National Forest (BBC News, 2016).

Kids are desensitized to violence and therefore commit murder and other hideous acts with no conscience. They are

desensitized to their neuroses by overexposure through man's art of entertainment and fantasy.

Freud discovered that pain is enjoined by the pleasure principle, which exercises unrestricted domination of other principles such as the love of God, country, and family. We have a tendency to separate our ego from everything that can become a source of pain, which includes reality. Through social media, we tend to create a pure pleasure-ego that is not restrained by outside threats or boundaries. Modern sufferings such as giving up cell phones, Facebook, or TV watching have pushed many people to acknowledge or deny that their ego and the object are inseparable. Virtues are constantly being surrendered for pleasure. Counterproductive learned activities have become daily deliberate sensory activities that are not easily differentiated between that which is natural and that which is external.

In my book *In Search of Resilience: Developmental and Motivational Perspectives of African American Men* (2015), I found many of Freud's theories persuasive. I researched prior crack cocaine addicts and looked into their mental life. I found that if a response to a sensation does not serve a practical purpose, one will defend against the threat of removal of the sensation. Freud's defense mechanisms have been shown to reduce certain unpleasurable excitations arising from within. I agree that reduction in unpleasant experiences can lead to pathological disturbances if not clinically treated. Many people are detaching from the external world, leading to delusional thoughts and

fragmented egos that are fighting the superego to reduce anxiety from within civilization. As a result, many people do not feel a bond with the universe around us. The ego desire for universal love appears linked to man's pathology. We are still researching how man's outward representation of mental life, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings appear alien to him.

Although many species have become extinct, man has continued to evolve magnificently. As Freud pointed out in his analogy, at one time in the past, there were three or four early human species living at the same time, even in the same place. As of 60,000 years ago, *Homo sapiens* are now the sole surviving species in this once disparate family tree (National Geographic Society, 2016). Like most other mammals, we are part of a large and diverse family tree. Fossil discoveries show that the human family tree has many more branches and deeper roots than we knew about even a couple of decades ago. In fact, the number of branches on our evolutionary tree and the length of time measured have nearly doubled since the famed Lucy fossil skeleton was discovered in 1974 (Smithsonian Institution, 2016). The scientific research shows that we are more alike than not. In this century, man has explored, described, and recreated important aspects of human development, mental life, and memory retention. Since the advent of data storage and cloud technologies, the memory-trace of man's progress is secure. Man has shown that mental presentations continue to exist on a sub-nucleus level. Pavlov's research has demonstrated that spontaneous recovery can happen after years of extinction (Myers & DeWall, 2014). Even at the point of extinction, our species will likely be preserved through

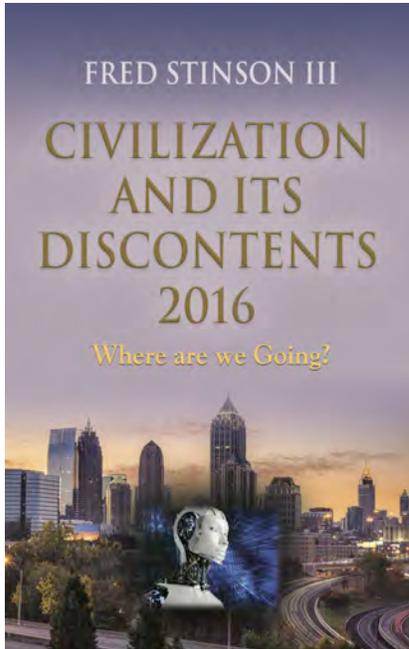
deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) cloning; likewise, biological programming of fear, love, anger, and joy will be preserved.

Freud's analogy is significant in that it allows us to visualize how memory-trace works. Today, we can not only present historical sequences in spatial terms; we can stimulate the senses with vivid recreations of ancient time, space, human development, and mental activities. Through the aid of video production, magnetic resonance imaging, and 3D ultrasound, we bring fairy tales to life, display ancient cities, and peek into the uterus to see a zygote. Recent studies into human development allow us to better understand, trace, and interpret man's mental processes in all four cerebral cortex lobes (the frontal, parietal, occipital, and temporal). We know today that plasticity can regenerate new neural pathways that were previously damaged by disease, trauma, or inflammation in different brain regions. It is a confirmed fact that many features of development, from zygote to late adulthood, are absorbed into the mature human being. We can trace this fascinating process with magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). MRI is a medical imaging technique used in radiology to image the anatomy and the physiological processes of the body. MRI is used to uncover health issues, neurological disease, and to assess the musculoskeletal system.

We embrace the juxtaposition of mammals and *Homo sapiens*. We can precisely trace embryonic transformation into late adulthood. Scientists can now diagram the dynamic development of our species. Using today's technology, a man's journey from the womb to the tomb can be traced with stages of certain mental and behavioral processes. We can now better understand the feelings between ego, religious needs, and social activities.

The bonding between the mother and father is incontrovertible, and an infant's mental life is more than just fate but, rather, is one of resilience. The growing need to feel a oneness with our universe remains an ideal contentment of man. Protection from external threat appears to be increasingly a social condition that leads to man's submergence in religious zeal and social media. Let me not discount the numerous intangible quantitative and qualitative variables that exist within one's mental life. Many insatiable human beings continue to satisfy their craving for quietness through yoga, and the latest meditation is mindfulness, which helps man transcend the hassles surrounding daily mental life.

Freud's opening chapter is an interesting and acceptable theory of human development. Likewise, his psychoanalytical assumptions laid the groundwork for contemporary psychology. His controversial remarks of childhood experiences, the three amigos, pleasure, and the avoidance of pain, have on many days stirred my thoughts on man and mental life. The contrast Freud provides between man's mind and the ruins of an ancient metropolis is amazing. Regardless of the theory applied (psychoanalytical, person-centered, choice theory, reality theory, humanistic, positive psychology), we can appreciate fragments brought forward from earlier civilizations and man's interaction with progress, whether illusionary or real. Freud did not mention a famous piece of advice inscribed on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi: "Know thyself" (Hunt, 1993).



Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud are two of the most influential thinkers of the past 150 years (1866). They have provided man with important works on laws, ethics, and politics. This book examines their philosophical thoughts and their influence on the growth of civilization, man's disposition, and human development.

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by Fred Stinson III

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