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LETTERS

To the Editor

Freud: review reviewed

Dear Sir:

I welcome Patricia McBroom's excellent and pertinent review of the Wilson book and even more her basic re-evaluation of the present crisis in psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis is at the crossroads. To realize its potential, it has to free itself from its 19th century imprints. It has to become a truly alive, dynamic and humanistic theory and therapy.

Frederick A. Weiss, M.D.
New York, N.Y.

(*Dr. Weiss, past president of the Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis, is an attending psychoanalyst at the Karen Horney Clinic.*)

Dear Sir:

The article on Freudian analysis in the Jan. 28 issue of SCIENCE NEWS is a broader attack on Freud than I think the evidence will support, and it seems to suggest that I hold anti-Freudian views which I do not in fact entertain.

It is my belief that the doubtful portion of Freud's great and enduring contribution to human knowledge should be reexamined, not that his work should be dismissed.

The statement, attributed to me, that "for some analysts, Freud has served 'as a substitute for curiosity, and has fostered mental laziness and poverty of imagination,'" is an overstatement of my views. What I believe and actually wrote in the Nov. 5, 1966, AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY (A critique of Freud's Theory of Infantile Sexuality) was:

"Finally I would like to suggest that there has been a tendency in psychoanalysis for the concept of infantile psychosexuality to have lost the original freshness and vigor with which it was presented, and to have become a dogma, and even a panchreston, a kind of vacuum cleaner gobbling up many varieties of behavior and reducing them all to the same tired explanations; that, for some analysts, it has served as a substitute for curiosity, and has fostered mental laziness and poverty of imagination. For someone who 'knows' the meaning of a piece of human behavior even before it occurs, there is no need for inquiry or even for real thought."

Sincerely,
Paul Chodoff, M.D.
Washington, D.C.

(*Dr. Chodoff is a professor at George Washington University and a consultant to St. Elizabeths Hospital.*)