Ego Analytic Psychology

Chapter 6

Anna Freud

- 1895 – 1982
- Only member of family to follow Freud's profession
- Psychoanalyzed by Freud
- "Guardian" and intellectual heir
- Focus on children and the ego
  - Beyond "normal," average experience (war, violence)
  - Anna 19 at outbreak of WW 1

Refinements to Classical Psychoanalytic Theory

- Stressed protective, supportive, and educational attitudes
- Expanded use of psychoanalysis to children age 4 and older
  - Change techniques (free association, dream analysis) to meet developmental level of child
  - Neurotic symptoms of children differ from those of adults
- Importance of initial positive transference stage of therapy

Anna Freud: Contributions

- Diagnostic Profile: A psychoanalytic framework used to organize and integrate the information obtained during a diagnostic assessment
  - “Complete” view of personality functioning
  - Developmental level
  - We still do this today
- Developmental line: series of id-ego interactions characterized by a shift from external controls to an increase in self-control and ego mastery
  - Lines are very psychoanalytic (wetting/soiling to bladder/bowel control)

Anna Freud: Contributions (cont).

- Ego
  - To understand unconscious drives of the id, essential to make ego aware of defense mechanisms
  - Observation
  - Identification w/aggressor
    - "Victim" responds to captor/aggressor with gratitude and admiration

Erik Erikson

- 1902-1994
- Born near Frankfurt, Germany
- Born of extramarital affair
  - Family Jewish
  - Biological father was Norwegian
- Adopted status kept from him for years
  - Teased and tormented by peers
- Became American & Christian
- Trained by Anna Freud
Enhancing the Ego

- Expanded on debate between Anna Freud and Heinz Hartmann
- Elaborated on concept of ego
  - Coherence and consistency
    - Vital, positive force
  - Dysfunction is NOT the best way to understand the ego
  - Adaptive responses to environment
  - Ego develops, matures, in stages

Psychosocial Stages of Development (p. 168)

- De-emphasized Freud’s sexual focus
- General correspondence to Freud
- Emotional polarity or conflict
- Stages associated with life crises
  - A crucial period in which an individual must make an either/or decision
  - Upon resolution, ego virtues develop
  - Strengths, enhanced capacities

Trust versus Mistrust: Hope

- Corresponds to Freud’s Oral Stage
- Children naturally dependent on adults
- “Can I trust these people to give me what I need?”
  - Frustrations natural
  - “When should I trust?” (balance)
- In trust, there is hope
  - Sense that, despite disappointments, our wishes and needs can be satisfied

Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt: Will

- Corresponds to Freud’s Anal Stage
- Conflict: Trust, now must explore autonomy
  - Mastery of body through toileting one opportunity to gain autonomy
  - Independence of movement, exploration
  - “No” and the terrible twos
  - Doubts about self control lead to shame
- With autonomy comes will
  - Determination to exercise freedom/self-restraint

Initiative versus Guilt: Purpose

- Corresponds to Freud’s Phallic Stage
- Active in the environment, children *intrude* into the spaces of others
  - Movement, play, “Why”
  - Voluntary, spontaneous, goal-orientation
- Referred to Oedipus Complex as generational complex
  - Emergence of identities and identification with adults
- Sense of purpose emerges
  - A view of the future giving purpose and direction
  - What is real, what can be obtained

Industry vs. Inferiority: Competence

- Corresponds to Freud’s Latency Stage
- No longer loved unconditionally—expected to
  - Master new skills, abilities
  - Broaden one’s self
  - Experience the world
- Emergence of competence or else...
  - Ability to use intelligence/skill to complete tasks valued by society
  - Comparisons to others, poor self-image
Ego Identity vs. Role
Confusion: Fidelity

- Expansion of Genital stage into 4 parts
  - Importance of adult years
  - Ages 12-18
  - Emergence of relatively intact ego
    - “Who am I”
    - Sense of self-continuity and “sameness”
- Role Confusion
  - Occupational identity
  - Failure to find meaningful place in society
  - Identity crisis: temporary failure to establish a stable identity → drop out of society?

Ego Identity vs. Role
Confusion: Fidelity (cont.)

- Emergence of negative identities
  - Identity opposed to dominant values of childhood and upbringing
  - If inner resources are limited, only way to express mastery in the culture
    - Social pathology, crime, prejudice (fidelity to deviant group)
    - Importance of society’s contribution of positive ideas to the growth and development of adolescents
  - With ego identity comes fidelity
    - Ability to sustain loyalties despite contradicting value systems

Intimacy versus Isolation:
Love

- Young adulthood (18-24)
  - Intimacy associated with ability to develop close & meaningful relationship
  - Isolation associated with self-absorption and inability to connect
    - Fear of ego loss, ego engulfment
- Emergence of love
  - Care for others, mutual devotion transcending mutual antagonism of the sexes (cooperation)

Generativity vs. Stagnation:
Care

- Middle years (25-64)
  - Becoming productive & creative person in variety of contexts
    - Active participation
    - Parenthood, career, art, etc.
    - Must procreate, perhaps not children
    - Contribution to future, future generations
  - Otherwise boredom, stagnation
  - Emergence of care
    - Needing to be needed—doing something for somebody

Ego Integrity versus Despair:
Wisdom

- Final years (65-death)
  - Reflecting on one’s life with satisfaction
    - Death is accepted, not feared
    - Gaining closure
  - Otherwise, despair and regret
    - Focus on missed opportunities
  - Emergence of wisdom
    - Ability to stand back and reflect on one’s life in the face of death

Psychosocial Stages: Solid Foundations

- Stages are epigenetic
  - One stage forms on top of the next in a rigid, hierarchical, fashion
- Increased complexity of personality
- Cumulative
  - Qualities from early stages linger into the stages that follow
- Critical periods
  - Not strictly chronological
  - Periods of developmental readiness, heightened potential
- More consistent with scientific findings
Erikson and Western Values

- Hallmarks of white, Western, patriarchal society
  - Autonomy, mastery, power \rightarrow dominance
  - Apply well to other cultures? Societies?
- Do stages occur differently for women than for men?
  - Connection, responsibility, care?
  - What other differences might there be?