

INTEREST GROUPS AND FREUD

Interest Groups and Freud



INTEREST GROUPS AND FREUD

The United States has the greatest number of political interest groups of any democracy.



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Any group can become a political interest group.

Examples of Interest Groups



Interest: The Environment



Interest: British business interests in Japan



Interest: Ontario Dairy Farmers



Interest: Chicago public school teachers



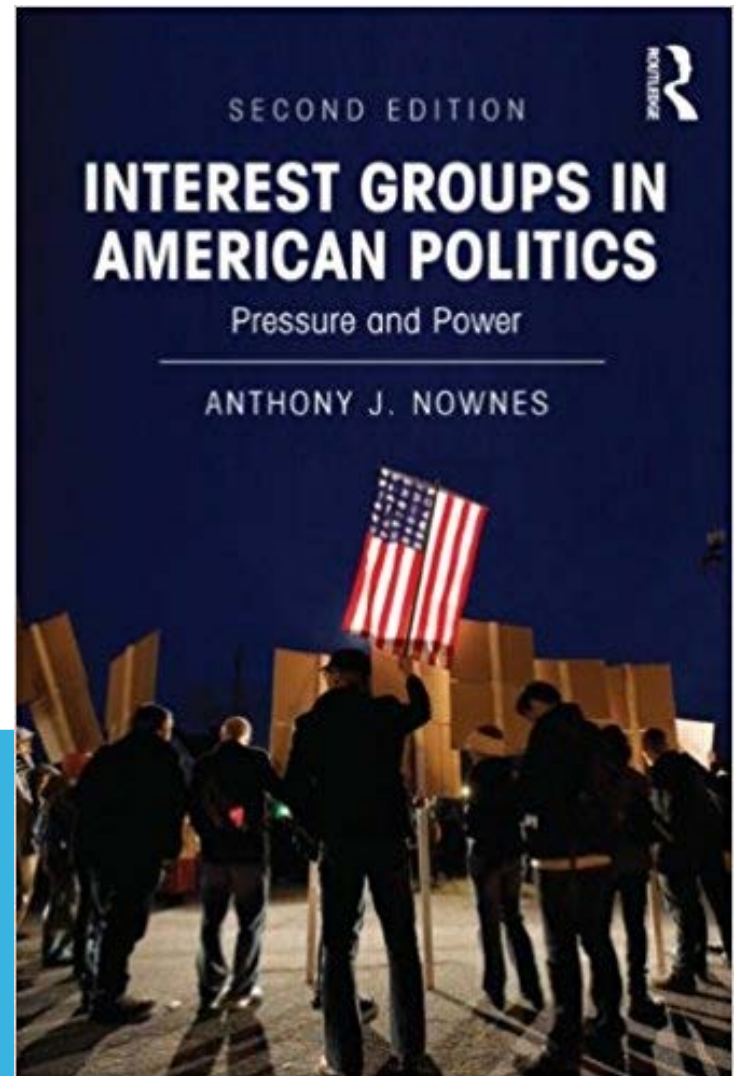
Interest: right to own guns



Interest: Catholic Issues

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Organized interests provide a linkage between public opinion and government policy. Although they play a similar role to political parties, they do not try to capture elective offices.

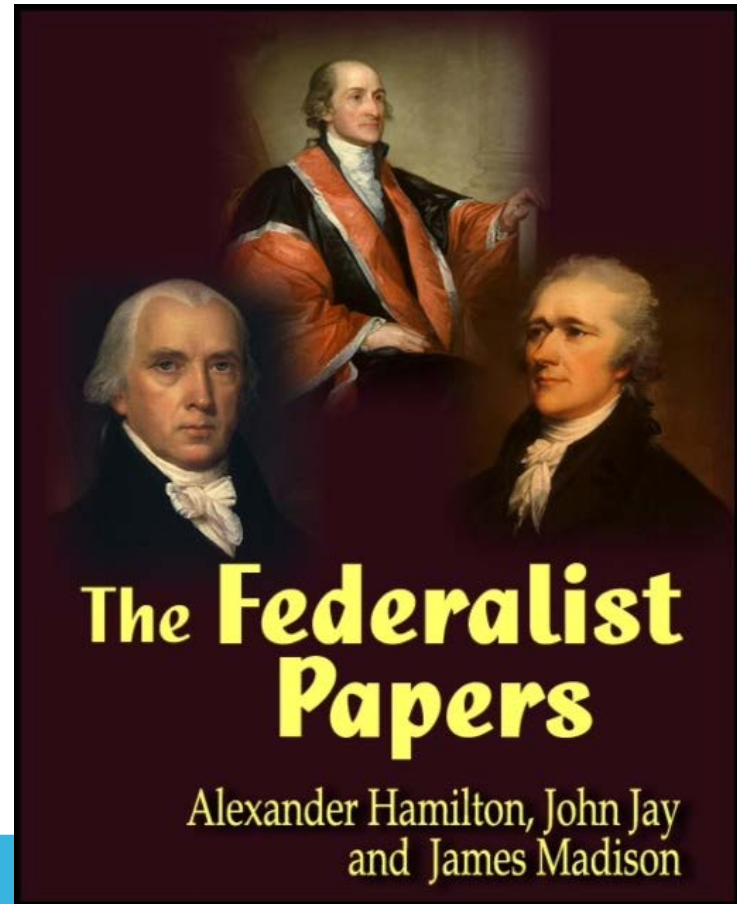


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I. Early Group Theories and Theorists (famous theorists)

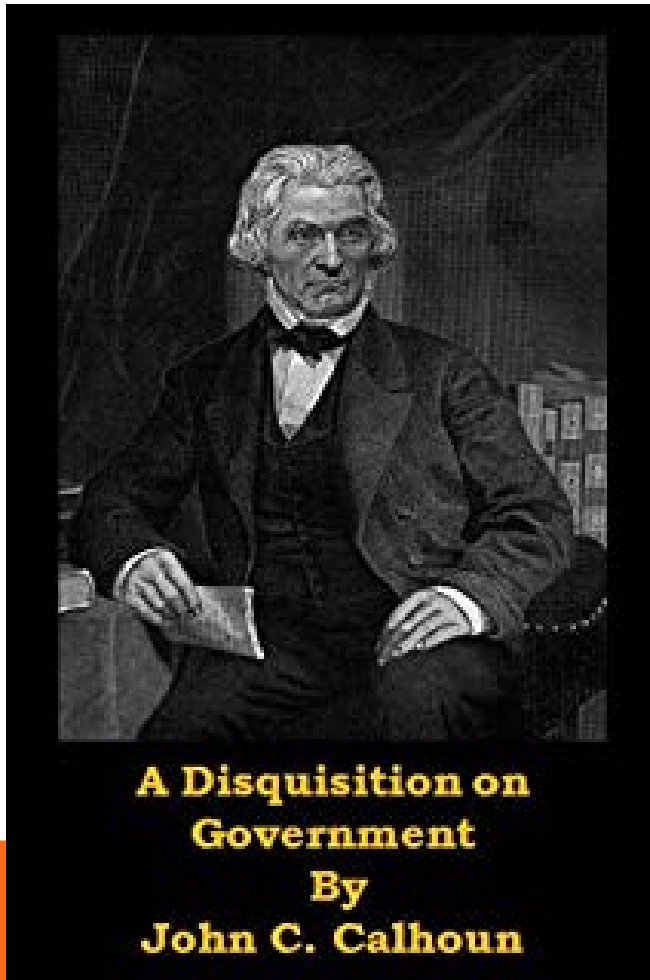
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1. **James Madison** – recognized special interests as “factions” and believed the Constitution and size of the expanding nation would keep them in check (a good thing!)



Book: *The Federalist*, 1787
(especially # 10)

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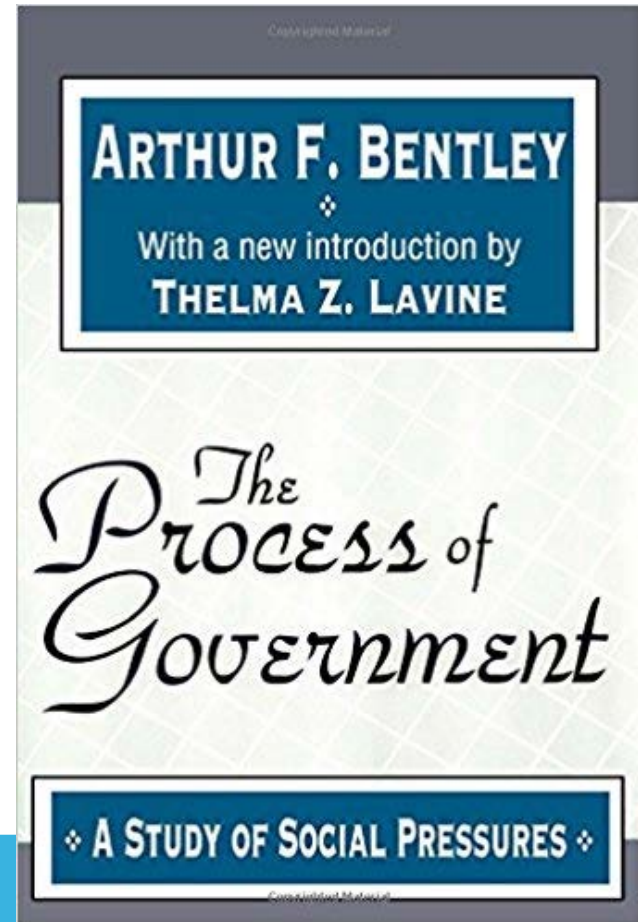


2. **John C. Calhoun** – did not like the idea of a numerical majority and proposed the theory of a concurrent majority. A majority of each interest would have to approve a decision before it could become effective.

Book: *A Disquisition on Government*, 1853

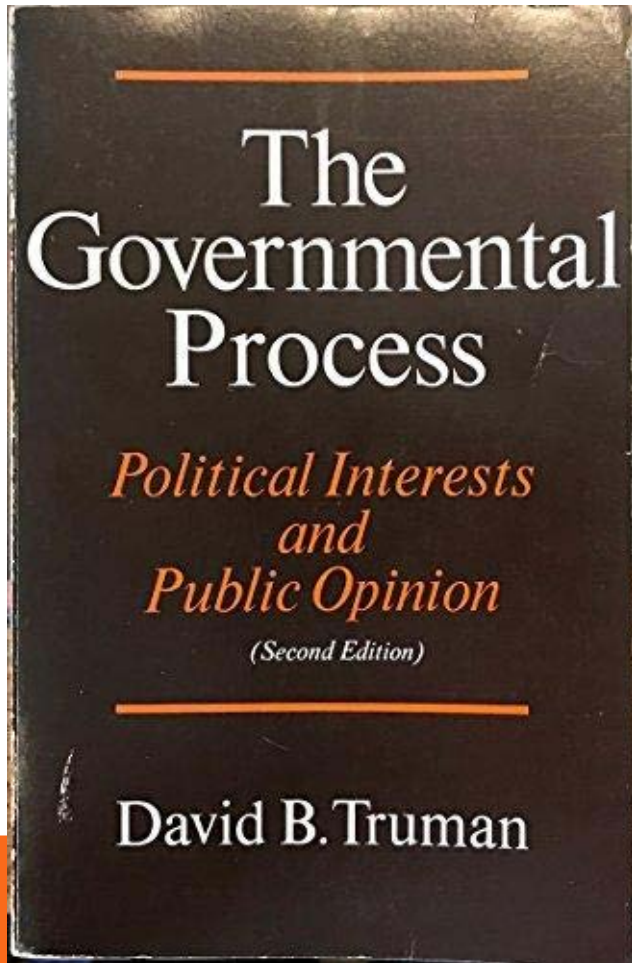
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3. **Arthur F. Bentley** held a belief that group behavior explains everything in political science.



Book: *The Process of Government*, 1908

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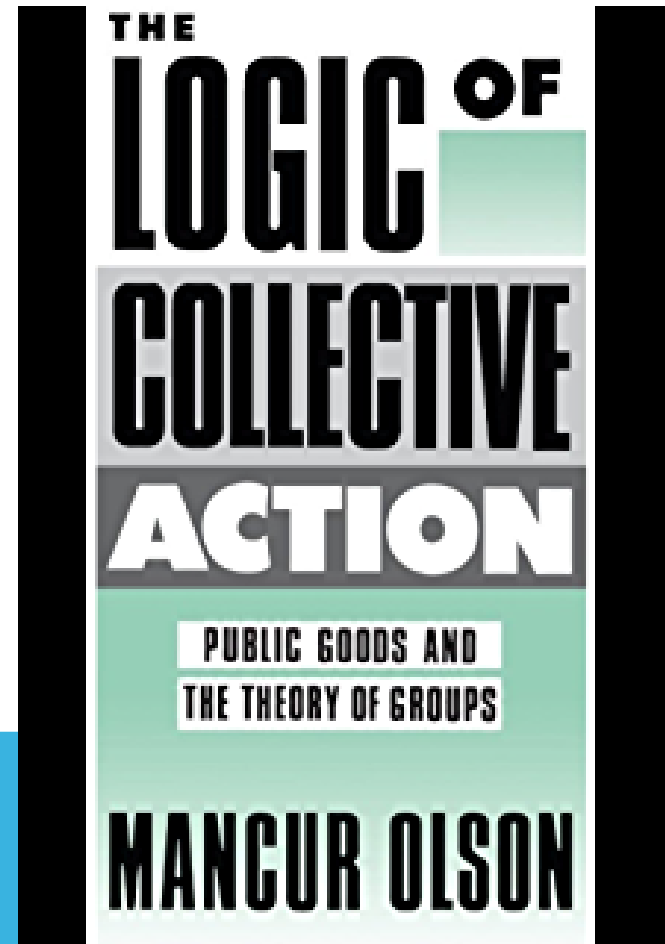
4. **David B. Truman** – similar to Bentley, added the idea of a “latent” group which will form in response to “offending” groups and the theory of “overlapping” group memberships.

Book: *The Governmental Process*, 1951

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5. **Mancur Olson** – approached the idea of interest groups from the rational self-interest perspective.

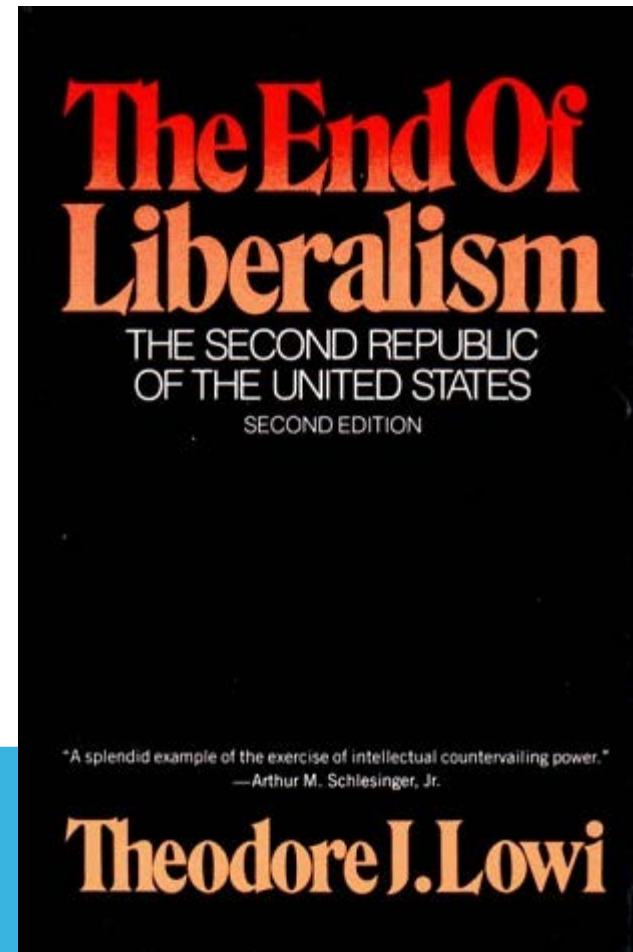
He was more concerned with *why* individuals join groups and the “free rider” problem. Unlike Truman, who believed they arise spontaneously, Olsen suggested groups must attract members by providing tangible benefits.



Book: *The Logic of Collective Action*, 1971.

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6. **Theodore J. Lowi** – charged that American government has become so intertwined with the influence of political interest groups, it can no longer assert its legitimacy as a government, and cannot provide guidance of impartial, authoritative laws or render final, definitive decisions.



Book: *The End of Liberalism*, 1979

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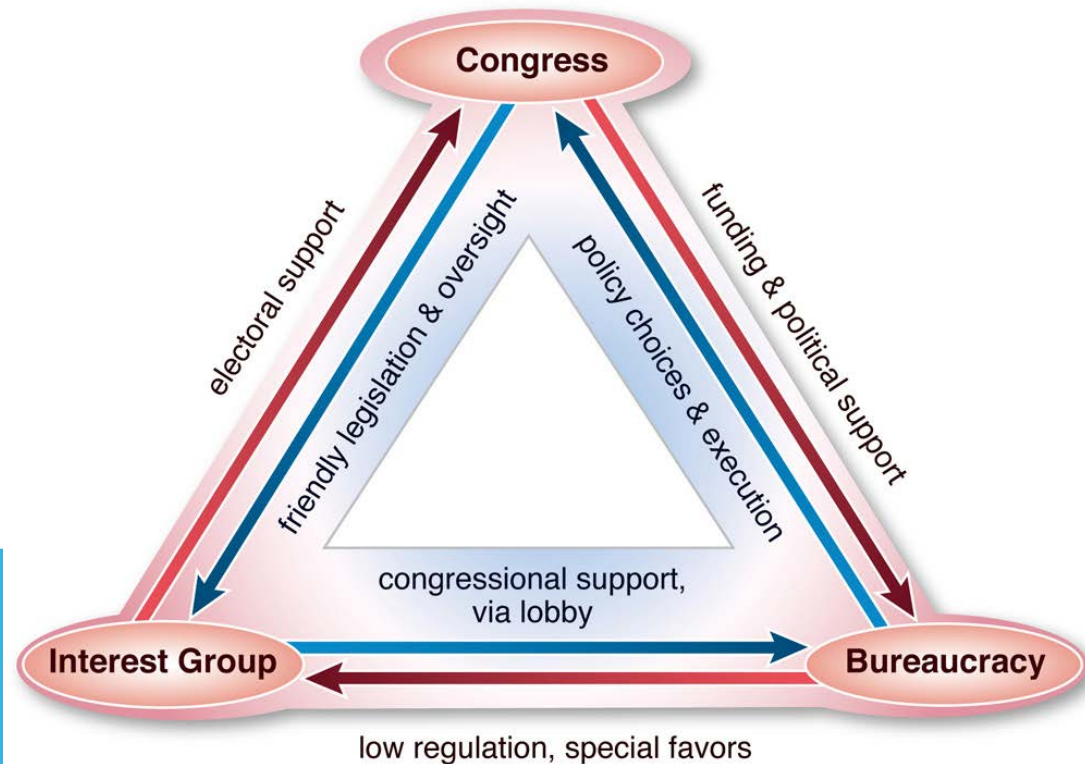
Newer Theories



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1. Subgovernments – a.k.a. “iron triangles” or “cozy” triangles.

This occurs when interest groups form alliances with Legislative communities and agencies that deal with issues of importance to them. These triangular relationships have become subgovernments in which all parties work to protect each other.



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2. New Politics – tends to be working away from the notion of explaining American politics by looking at self-interested groups. Fragmentation of government institutions has made it possible for policy entrepreneurs to free themselves from the interest group struggle and to activate wider public interest.



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Policy Entrepreneurs

- Willing to invest resources in return for future policies
- Can be elected officials, career civil servants, lobbyists, academics, journalists
- Entrepreneurs:
 - Highlight problem indicators to dramatize problem
 - Push for one kind of problem definition or another – invite electeds to see for themselves
 - “Soften up” by writing papers, giving testimony, holding hearings, getting press coverage, meeting endlessly.....

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II. Interpretations of the Political System



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1. Pluralism – many interests are active politically and compromise between them leads to policy decisions.



The spirit of the Knowledge Society is the spirit of Pluralism—a readiness to accept the Other, indeed to learn from him, to see difference as an opportunity rather than a threat.

(Aga Khan IV)

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2. Hyperpluralism

What happens when these same interests become politically powerful and unwilling to compromise.

Theories of Democratic Government

- **Hyper-pluralism theory:** Democracy is a system of many groups having so much strength that government is often “pulled” in numerous directions at the same time, causing gridlock and ineffectiveness (negative view, government is weakened)



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3. Elitism – political systems are actually dominated by only a powerful few.

a. Pareto – non-governing elites fighting with governing elites; non-Marxist in orientation.

b. Mills – elite class comprised of 3 institutional orders: government, military, and business. Criticized for not defining or identifying the ruling elite.

c. Parenti – solved the problem with his 1995 book, *Democracy for the Few*.

If “elitist” just means “not the dumbest motherfucker in the room,” I’ll be an elitist!



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4. Corporatism – describes a system of formal relationships that have developed between economic organizations and government agencies.



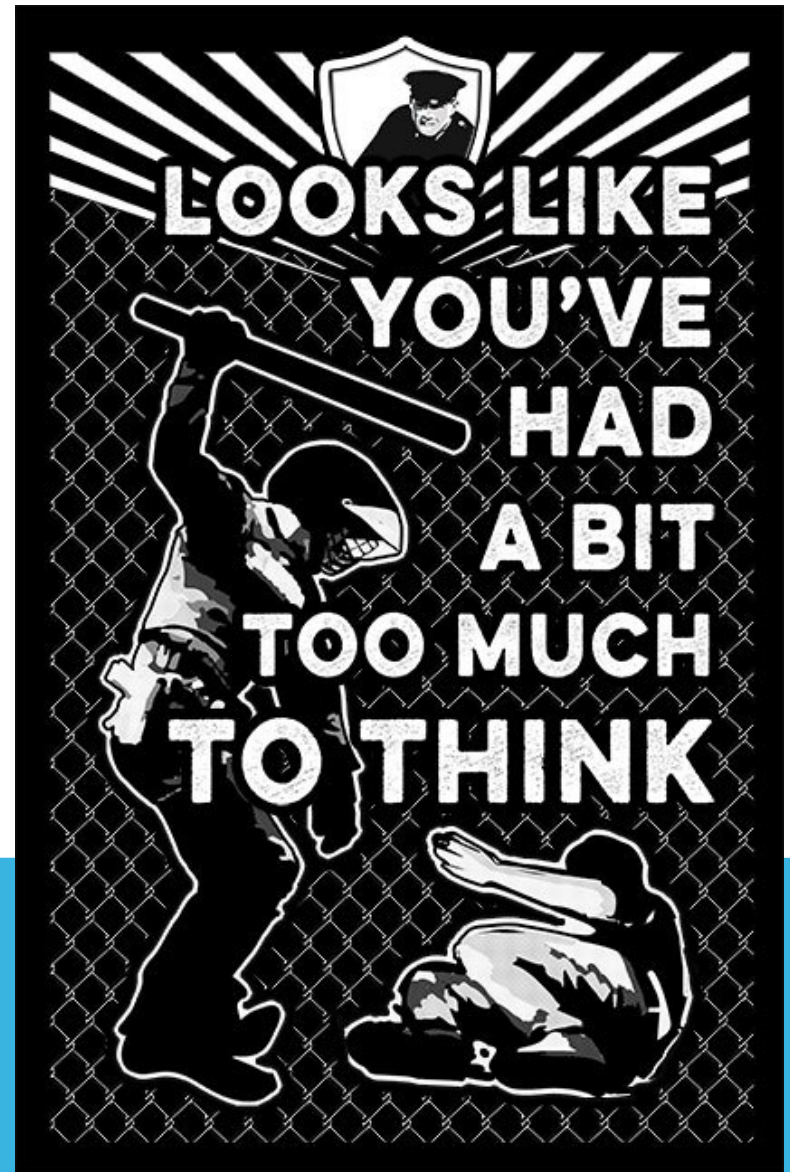
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III. Internal Group Dynamics



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1. Leadership – in-sync with the rest of the group? Too many “mavericks”?



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2. Cohesion – leadership avoids “group dividing” positions; the dangers of moving too close to political parties.

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3. Structure – unitary or federal?



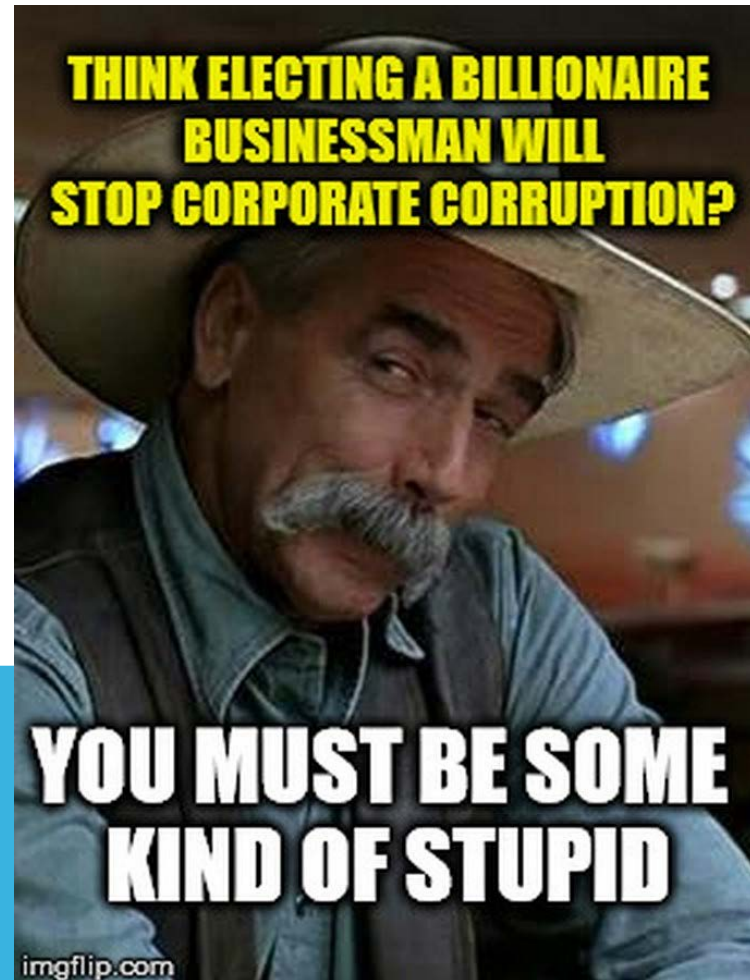
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IV. Group Tactics



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1. Access – primary goal is to obtain access to those who make policy decisions affecting them by:
 - 1) locating the decision point for an issue;
 - 2) making contact; and
 - 3) trying to influence the decision maker.



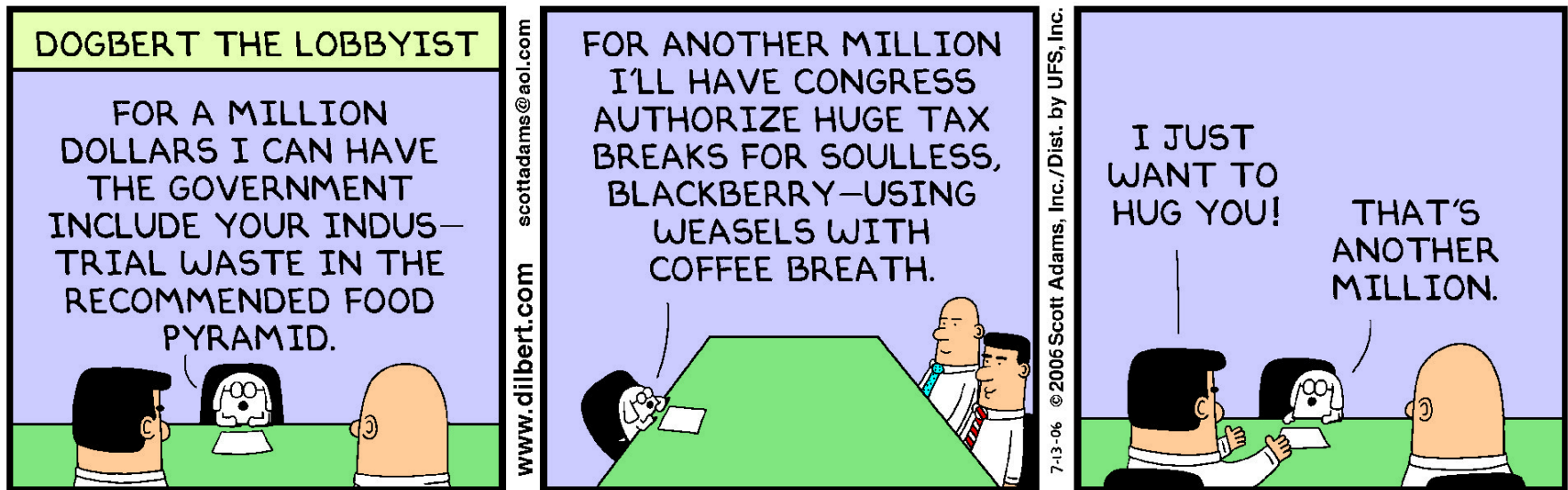
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2. Grass-roots Activity – large established political institutions may not be able to meet the needs of a certain group which creates “grassroots” activism.



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3. Working with Political Institutions – group efforts ideally begin early on; *lobbying* is the preferred method.



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4. Direct Action – a “newer” tactic for influencing public opinion and affecting government action; tactics range from peaceful demonstration to terrorism.



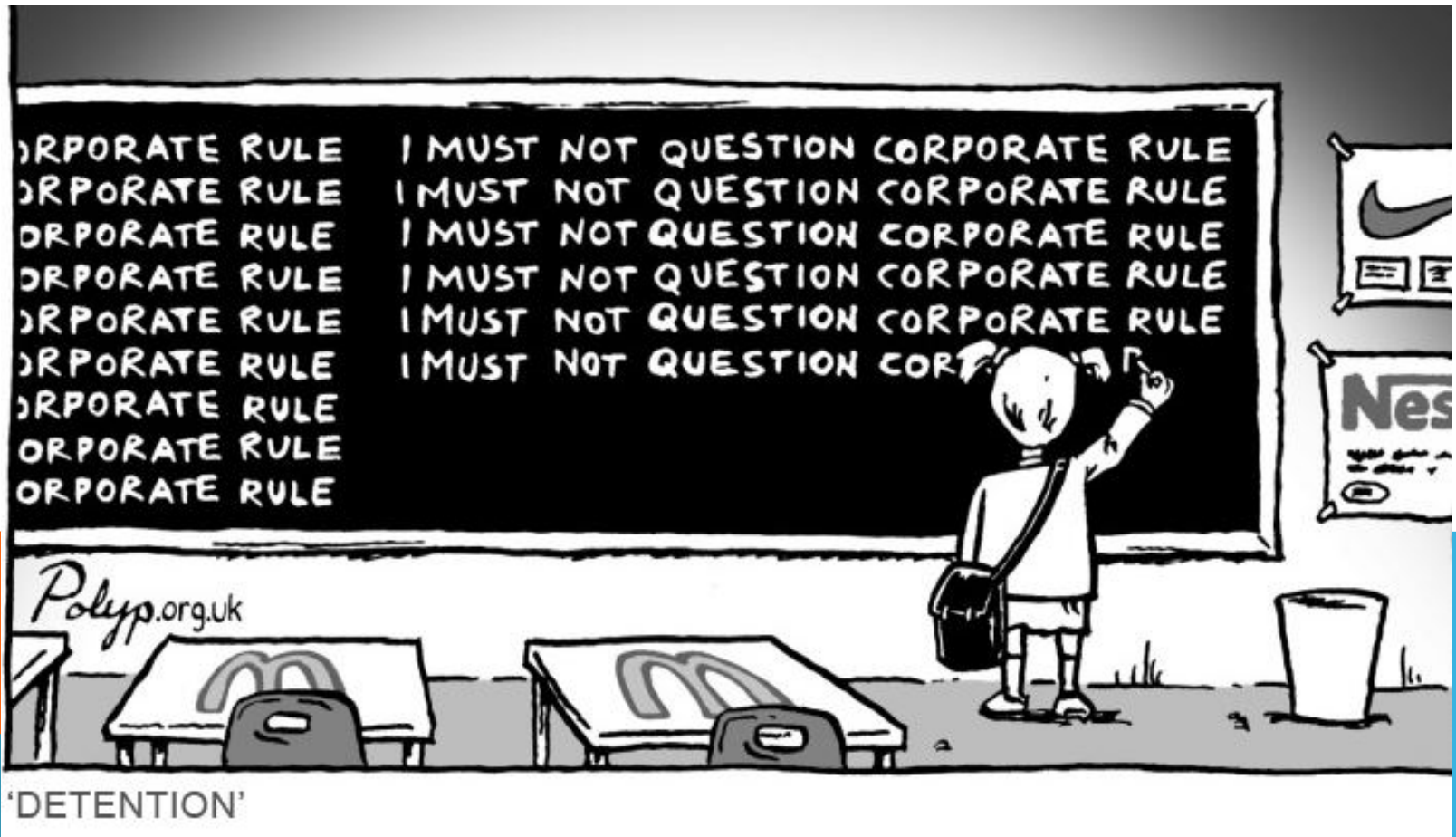
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V. Typology of Interest Groups



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1. Self-Interested Groups – these represent predominately *economic* interests.



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a. Business



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b. Labor



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2. Altruistic or Attitudinal Groups – promote goals that do not directly benefit their members (except maybe in terms of psychic satisfaction); they may promote the interests of the less fortunate, general public issues, such as the environment or peace, political reform, or a specific cause like capital punishment.



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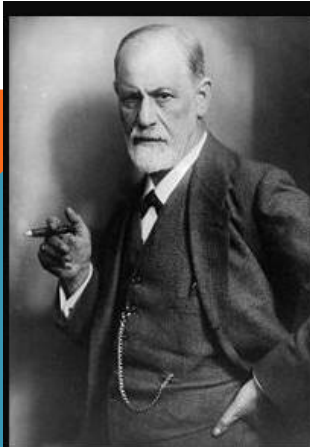
Freud and Psychology



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The Three Phases of Freud's Career

1. Psychoanalysis of neurosis
2. Psychoanalysis of normal mental life
3. Psychoanalysis and social questions
 - a. "Death" instincts (aggression and self-destruction) and "life" instincts (self-preservation and sexuality)
 - b. Tripartite structure of the mind (the id, ego, and superego)



The tendency of aggression is an innate, independent, instinctual disposition in man... it constitutes the most powerful obstacle to culture.

(Sigmund Freud)

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I. Theory of the Universe (Background Theory)



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1. All phenomena derived through *scientific* laws. He thus made no assumptions about theology, transcendent metaphysics, or historical progress.

SCIENTIFIC THEORY vs. SCIENTIFIC LAWS

THEORY

- Evidence-based explanation based on observations of events
- Tested and supported with multiple lines of evidence
- Widely accepted and strongly supported by the scientific community
- Can be used to make predictions
- Can be modified if new evidence becomes available

Theories explain WHY something happens



LAW

- Patterns in nature derived from scientific fact
- Describe how the natural world behaves under certain conditions
- Describes an event but it does NOT explain it!
- Can be expressed as a mathematical equation

Laws describe WHAT happens

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✚ THE MOST POWERFUL FORCES ON EARTH ARE THE UNIVERSAL LAWS OF PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, AND BIOLOGY.

- ❖ Ignoring or violating the universal laws of physics, chemistry, and biology will result in severe consequences for both individuals and nations.
- ❖ Conforming to these universal laws must be humankind's top priority, not economic growth, war, or ideologies.
- ❖ If some nations refuse to take these universal laws seriously, *Homo sapiens* will have an increased mortality and might well become extinct.
- ❖ If humankind cannot follow these universal laws, it will have to adapt to many new conditions, some that are predictable and some that are not.

2. All phenomena derived by the laws of physics, chemistry, and biology and that humans are also subject to these.

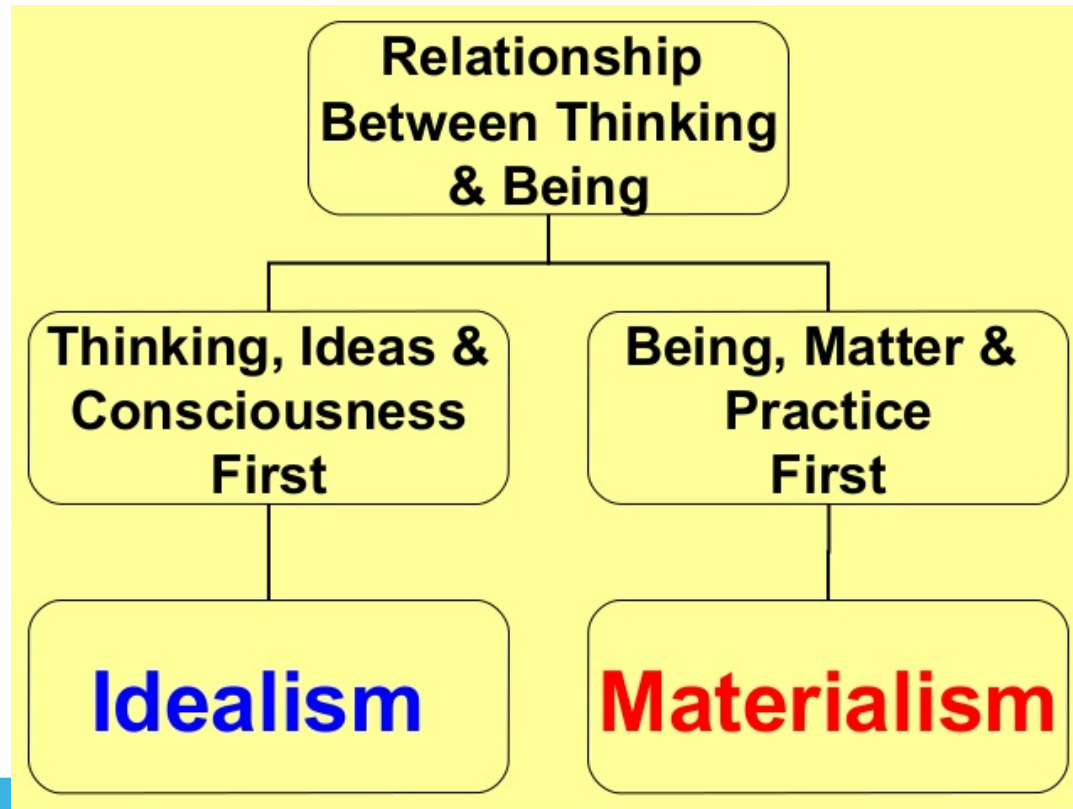
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II. Theory of Human Nature (Five Assumptions)



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1. Materialism – All complicated mental states and processes have at least *some* physiological basis.



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2. **Determinism – every event has a preceding cause. Nothing a person thinks or does or says is haphazard or accidental; everything can be explained by something in a person’s mind.**



Free will and determinism are like a game of cards. The hand that is dealt you is determinism. The way you play your hand is free will.

(Norman Cousins)

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3. Unconscious Mental States – the mind as “iceburg”

- a. Id – instinctual drives (pleasure principle)
- b. Ego – conscious mental states (reality principle)
- c. Superego – conscience (moral principle)

The concept of these three was as a direct result of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theory



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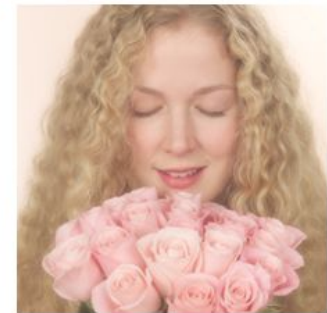
4. Instincts and Drives – motivating forces of the mind.

a. “Life” instinct
or *eros* (libido,
hunger)

b. “Death”
instinct or
thanatos
(sadism,
aggression)

Dual instinct theory

- Motivated by two forces.
- Eros, life instincts.
- Maintains life of self and species (biological drives).
- Primary emphasis to sex.
- Thanatos, death instincts.
- Rest, energy conservation, total rest is death.
- Primary emphasis on aggression.



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5. Developmental Account of the Individual Human Character – psychological facts about one's early childhood (the oral, anal, phallic, latency, adulthood stages)

► Freud's Psychosexual Stages of Development



ORAL 0-2
Infant achieves gratification through oral activities such as feeding, thumb sucking and babbling.



ANAL 2-3
The child learns to respond to some of the demands of society (such as bowel and bladder control).



PHALLIC 3-7
The child learns to realize the differences between males and females and becomes aware of sexuality.



LATENCY 7-11
The child continues his or her development but sexual urges are relatively quiet.



GENITAL 11-Adult
The growing adolescent shakes off old dependencies and learns to deal maturely with the opposite sex.

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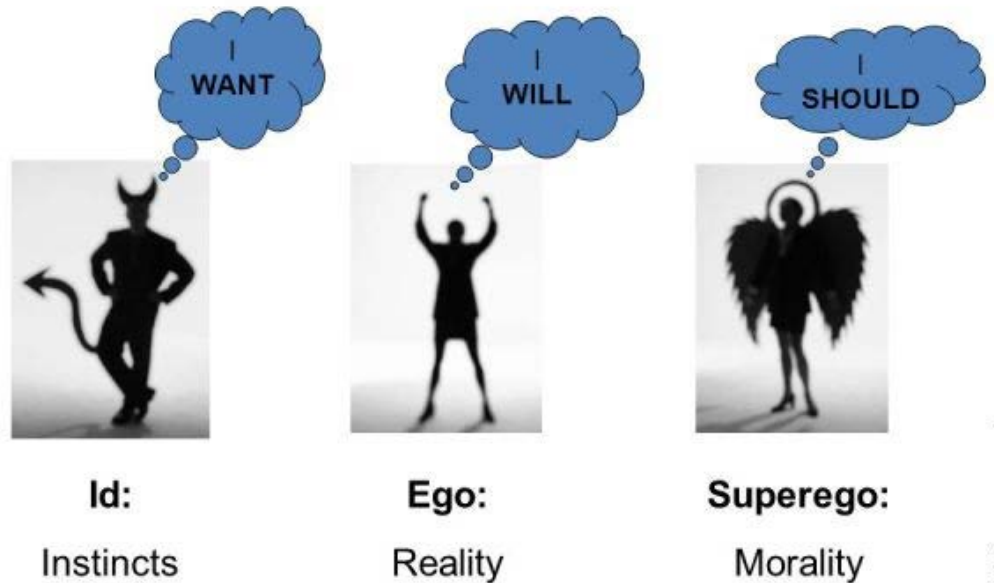
III. Diagnosis



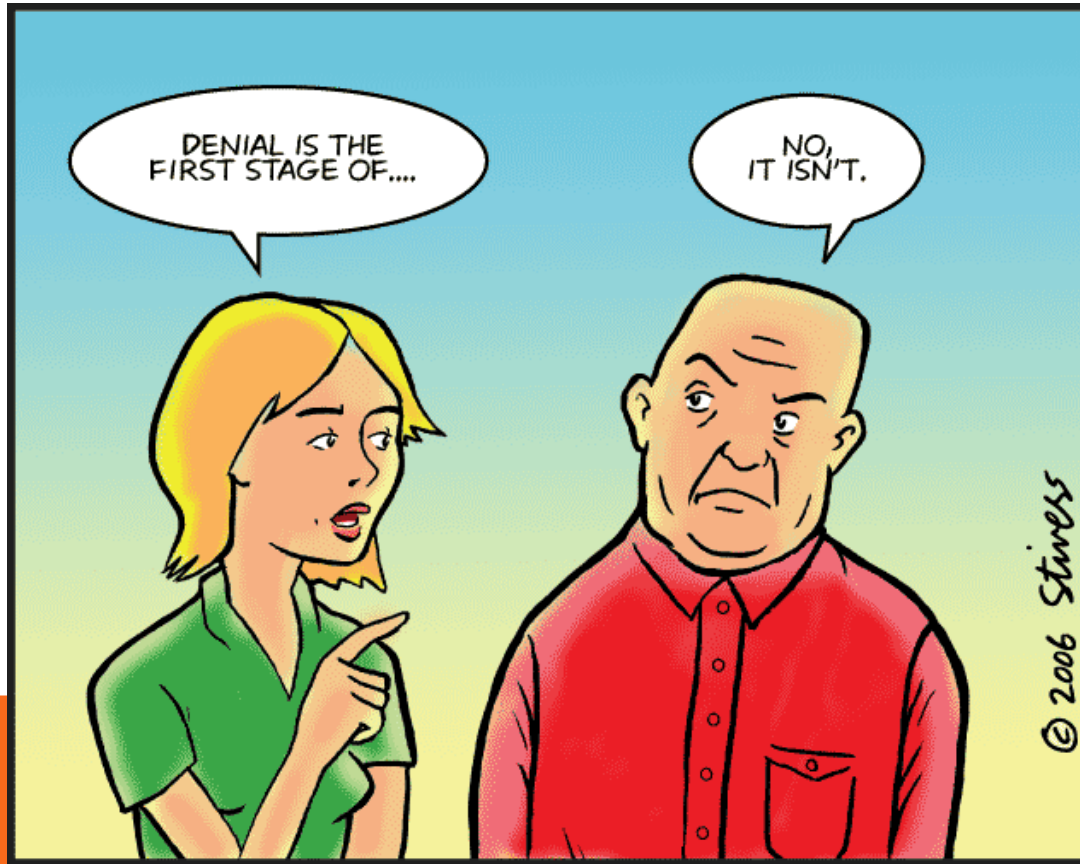
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1. We have trouble reconciling the three important unconscious mental states (id, ego, superego).

The Psyche (Personality)



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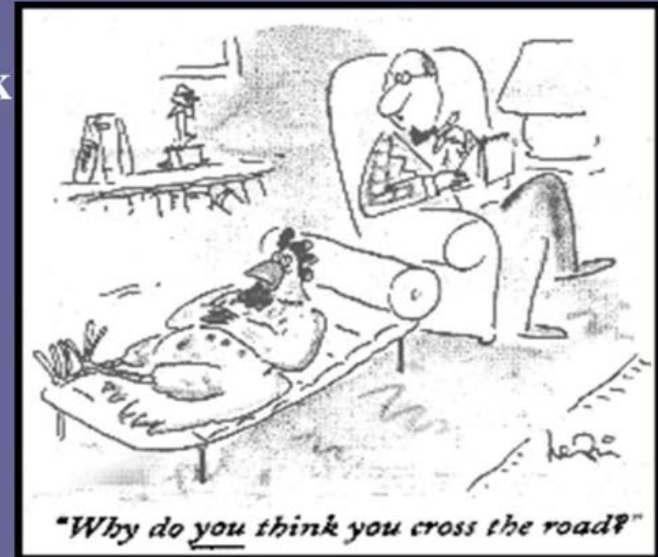
2. Some mental conflicts are so extreme we *repress* them, put them out of consciousness, and flee from them by pretending they do not exist.

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3. Thus, human nature consists of various states of mental neuroses, which cause us to act irrationally and lose self-control.

It is the job of a psychoanalyst to:

- bring repressed feelings into conscious awareness
- have the patient “work through” the feelings
- release the negative, repressed energy



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IV.

Prescription



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1. Restore the harmonious balance between the parts of the mind and find ways to improve an individual's adjustment to the world.



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2. This could be accomplished through *psychoanalytic treatment* which might bring the individual to a higher state of self-knowledge.

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V.

**Critical
Discussion**



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1. Does psychoanalytic therapy work more through the power of suggestion (brainwashing, witchcraft) than through scientific principle?



The Manchurian Candidate – watch it!

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2. Are any of his theories empirically testable?

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**3. How applicable
is scientific
investigation
and
explanation to
human beliefs
and actions?**

The “X” Factor?

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4. What exactly is it that does the repressing, and how does it know which items to select for repression?