

Male children develop an Oedipus complex, says Freud, as a result of having to compete with their fathers for their mothers' affection. During this time, they are still dependent on their mothers and they haven't learned to accept their fathers' authority. According to Freud, this is a stage boys in general have to go through as part of developing into emotionally and sexually mature adults.

Many men, though, have difficulty getting through this stage. They never achieve independence from their mothers and never learn to deal with authority. Dealing with authority, says Freud, is the price we pay for living in a civilization. It isn't pleasant, but we have to do it despite the stress it exerts on our psyches.

Psychoanalysis

The Oedipus complex is just one example of how Freud interpreted things—in this case, the Oedipus story—in terms of what they say about sexuality. He also interpreted dreams, jokes, myths, and other stories in this way. Freud's way of reading things gave rise to the practice of psychoanalysis—interpreting what people say and do in order to figure out what their problems are.

In fact, Freud would claim that anything people do can be interpreted as a weird act that somehow expresses repressed infantile fantasies, from model train collecting to bungee jumping. Many of Freud's ideas suggest that there is no reliable distinction between "perverse" and "normal" behavior. As a result, amateur psychoanalysis has become a favorite pastime.

Jung

Freud's ideas were controversial, especially since he suggested that most things come down to sexual problems and infantile cravings. One of those who objected to the emphasis Freud placed on sex and on emotional trauma was the psychologist Carl Jung (1875–1961). Jung worked with Freud before falling out with him and developing his own psychological theories.

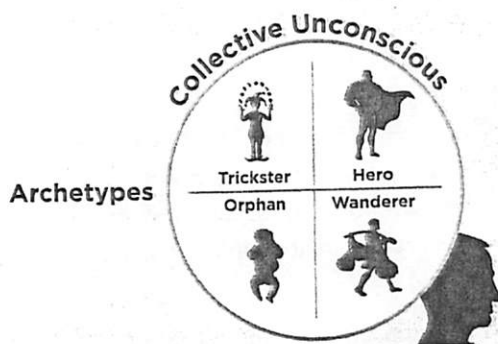
Instead of emphasizing the traumas that mark people's characters, Jung modified Freud's idea of the unconscious by saying there are unconscious ideas everyone has in common. These ideas are part of what Jung called the *collective unconscious*.

Jung believed that the unconscious is shaped not only by things that happen to you while you develop, but also by instinctual ideas that everyone inherits from early humans. Jung said that mythic and religious ideas are filled with symbolism from the collective unconscious.



Lexicon

The **collective unconscious** is the body of symbolism and mythic images inherited from early humans that people have imbedded in their unconscious minds. Included in the collective unconscious are **archetypes**, patterns of images for different approaches to life.



Included in the collective unconscious are what Jung called *archetypes*—recurring images in stories and dreams that stem back to ancient myths. Sometimes there are patterns in archetypes that subtly influence people's behavior.

For example, one of the archetypes Jung identifies is "the Trickster." The Trickster, says Jung, has been around for centuries and is in the collective unconscious to this day. Sometimes people tap into the collective unconscious and act in strange and inappropriate ways characteristic of the Trickster, without realizing it.

Some other archetypal figures are the Hero, the Orphan, and the Wanderer. Jung identified these archetypes by noticing common ideas in the dreams of his patients that can be found in old myths and legends.