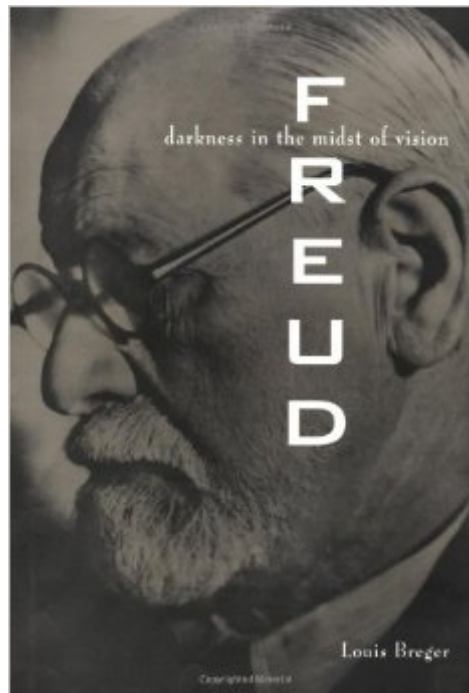


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# Freud: Darkness In The Midst Of Vision--An Analytical Biography



## Synopsis

Advance Praise for Louis Breger's FREUD "Louis Breger's rich and readable study of Freud offers a thoughtfully complex account of a great but flawed man. Everyone with an interest in psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic movement will enjoy exploring, grappling with, arguing about, and learning from this absolutely fascinating book."-JUDITH VIORST, AUTHOR, *Necessary Losses and Imperfect Control* "Written with brilliance and insight, *Freud: Darkness in the Midst of Vision* takes us on a daring, at times chilling, journey to the early years of psychoanalysis, revealing both the human weaknesses and the professional triumphs of its founder. . . . Cutting away the accretions of fabrication and romance cloaking Sigmund Freud, Breger has reinstated historical honesty to its rightful, high place, but the figure who emerges at the end of this breathlessly honest biography is quite as extraordinary as the legend concocted by Freud and perpetuated by his followers. Fresh, vigorous, and lucid."-PHILIP M. BROMBERG, Ph.D., CLINICAL PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY "Louis Breger's fine new biography of Freud is a welcome contribution to the existing literature and a corrective to much of it. It is also one of the best intellectual histories of the origin and development of psychoanalysis I have read in recent years. Breger is to be commended for his original research, the objectivity of his views, and the elegance and grace of his writing."-DEIRDRE BAIR, NATIONAL BOOK AWARD WINNER FOR *Samuel Beckett* AND AUTHOR OF A FORTHCOMING BIOGRAPHY OF CARL JUNG "Finally, the Freud biography we have long been waiting for. With the history of Europe in the background, we follow with fascination Freud's journey from an impoverished childhood filled with losses to worldly fame, ending in exile in England. We come to understand the impact of Freud's difficult personality on the development of his brilliant as well as questionable theoretical ideas. Breger writes with compassion and fairness toward Freud as well as toward the many interesting personalities who cross his life, with their complicated relationships to the great man."-SOPHIE FREUD, FREUD'S GRANDDAUGHTER AND PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF SOCIAL WORK, SIMMONS COLLEGE "Louis Breger's magnificent book is the definitive work on the personal psychology of Sigmund Freud. It brilliantly illuminates how the darkness in Freud's vision has affected psychoanalytic history. This book will be central for psychoanalytic scholarship for decades to come."-GEORGE E. ATWOOD, Ph.D., PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY, RUTGERS UNIVERSITY

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## Customer Reviews

In a major new work on the father of psychoanalysis, Breger, Professor Emeritus of Psychoanalytic Studies at California Institute of Technology, synthesizes seminal earlier books such as Ernest Jones's four volume *Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (1953) and Peter Gay's *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (1988), and provides a new reading of how Freud himself continually altered public and professional perceptions of himself. Breger is adept at reexamining and reinterpreting existing knowledge about Freud, such as how his entrenched pro-militarist feelings about the First World War manifested in his work; his misinformed and conservative disapproval of birth control; and his complicated view of both male and female homosexuality. In addition, Breger fairly evaluates new criticisms of the man and his work, particularly those of Freudian renegade Jeffrey Masson.

Especially astute is Breger's delineation of how Freud's understanding of himself as a Jew, as well as the anti-Semitism of his times, contributed to his theories (although curiously he does not refer to any of Sander Gilman's noted work on this topic). Breger's unique contribution is an analysis of how Freud's own interpretation of his childhood "became the prototype for his understanding everyone, a foundation that he relied on throughout his life." Careful to situate Freud in the political, social and artistic contexts of his time, Breger has produced a provocative, well-written and up-to-date account of the life and career of one of the 20th century's most influential intellectual figures. (Sept.)

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Psychoanalysis is a clumsy tool, not the scalpel Freud envisioned. In this masterly biography and cultural history, psychologist and psychoanalyst Breger (emeritus, California Inst. of Technology) explains why. Previous Freud biographers Ernest Jones, Paul Roazen, Ronald Clark, and Peter Gay lack his combined clinical acumen and objectivity. Breger interprets carefully, guiding the

reader through an oft-told story that has never been made so human. "Sigi," though his mother's favorite, was emotionally starved as a youngster and could not deal with this pain in his creatively evasive self-analysis. His professional frustrations were not caused by Viennese conservatism but by his own way of thinking, working, and treating people. Breger movingly portrays the Great War, Freud's initial enthusiasm for it, his inability to grasp the nature of real trauma, and the resulting death instinct theory. Essential for all public and academic libraries, this landmark work conveys a new sense of one of the great, flawed men and movements of the last century. DE. James Lieberman, George Washington Univ. Sch. of Medicine, Washington, DC Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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