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Against Freud Critics Talk Back

By Todd Dufresne

“It’s true that I’ve been called the vampire slayer of Freud-bashers,” says Todd Dufresne, Chair of the Philosophy Department at Lakehead University of Ontario. “But my research shows that Freud’s theories are fundamentally flawed. This book makes the case ‘against Freud’ very plain and should make open-minded readers shake their heads at the absurdity of his claims.”

Against Freud, published by Stanford University Press (May 2007), is clear, concise and easy to read. It is of interest to educated readers interested in psychoanalysis and also serves as a wake-up call for academics studying and teaching Freud and psychoanalysis.

As Sigmund Freud's 151st birthday approaches this week, it is time to explore the profound impact his work has had on Western society and intellectual life. It is strange that though he is as well-known today as ever, few people know much about Freud’s life and work beyond the legends that he and his adherents created, fostered, and repeated. This has resulted in an enormous cross-disciplinary field, characterized by contradiction and confusion. There are many misperceptions about Freud’s ideas, such as his theories of repression and the unconscious, which are more radical than most people imagine. Only the experts in psychoanalysis could possibly make sense of it all—but not always, since no field is as thoroughly undercut by ideology, acrimony, and bad faith.

Against Freud collects the frank musings of some of the world’s best critics of Freud, providing a convincing and coherent “case against Freud” that is as amusing as it is rigorously presented, while always keeping Freud’s historical context in mind. Hailing from diverse academic backgrounds—history, philosophy, literary criticism, sociology, psychotherapy, and psychiatry—this varied group includes renowned international figures such as Edward Shorter, Frank Sulloway, Frederick Crews, and Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen, as well as those who knew Freud and his family personally.

This book is for lay readers baffled by all the debate and acrimony about Freud's legacy, and for scholars across disciplines who have had difficulty keeping up with the pace of criticism over the last two decades. Listen in on the critics and then decide for yourself whether or not "Freud is dead."

Todd Dufresne is Associate Professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at Lakehead University. He is the author of *Tales from the Freudian Crypt: The Death Drive in Text and Context* (Stanford, 2000) and *Killing Freud*.

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