Book Review of *Personality, Its Study and Hygiene* by Winifred V. Richmond

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In this ungraded review for Davis's Religious Development of Personality course, King discusses his positive reactions to the theories of Sigmund Freud and John Watson. He notes that "this is the first time that I was able to read the psychologies of Freud and John Watson with a degree of objectivity" and admits that "I have been somewhat converted to many of their theories." Davis remarked: "This is an excellent review. It is exactly the type I desire. It shows a basic understanding of the volume and your reactions to it. The questions you raise concerning personality development can be asked about any area of psychological inquiry. Have you ever explored the field of 'learning'?"

Personality, Its Study and Hygiene, by Winifred V. Richmond, New York, Farrar & Rinehart, 1937

After reading about two hundred pages of Gardner Murphy's definitive work on personality, I turned to this work by Winifred Richmond with the sole purpose of clarifying some of the complex ideas and terminology found in the former work. After reading a few pages of Richmond's work I became so enamored of it that I read the whole book. I guess I had certain predilections for Richmond's book because of the simplified manner in which it was presented. Richmond has the rare ability of taking the basic theories of psychological research and presented them in a manner readable to the laymen.

The work by Gardner Murphy, although elaborate and probably the most authoritative work in the field of personality, is written for the expert not the laymen. I was somewhat attracted by his chapter on "Heredity and Individual Growth," but other than that I was often lost behind the dim fog of psychological obscurities. (Am I just dumb?"

One of the greatest influences that Richmond's book made on me was the deeper insight it gave me into psychological theories that I heretofore scorned. Richmond does a marvelous job in presenting the various theories of personality development, and although he never sets forth his personal theory, he is quite convincing. For an instance, this is the first time that I was able to read the psychologies of Freud and John Watson with a degree of objectivity. I had read Joshua Liebman's *Peace of Mind*, and even he was

1. John Broadus Watson (1878–1958) began a new school of psychology, behaviorism, with his 1913 article entitled "Psychology as a Behaviorist Views It."
3. Davis wrote in the margin, "Very interesting comment."
4. Davis answered, "I think not."
unable to convince me that there was any truth in Freud. But now I am convinced. It is probably true to say that the basic facts of Freud and Watson are correct, notwithstanding the fact that their bias had conditioned what they observed. I am now willing to admit that they discovered new continents and new areas that had for centuries been overlooked. No one can observe human personality objectively without admitting the truth of many Freudian and Watsonian theories. (Most of us read them with a religious bias as I did in years gone by). I could point out many examples, too numerous to cite in this brief review, of personality traits which are quite in accord with Freudian and Watsonian analysis. This is not to imply that my reading of this book has caused me to accept all of Freud and all of Watson. (I am too much of a religionist for that) I think that much in Freud and Watson which seems to be facts will turn out on examination to be interpretations. Moreover, I am perfectly willing to admit that Freud and Watson didn't go far enough. For an instance, Watson comes to some amazing facts in describing the patterns of behavior of a human organism, but to say that this is describing the person himself is to me a one sided generalization. Man transcends his behavior, if for no other reason than the fact that he knows what he is doing. No matter how completely men succeed in describing all of the patterns of change in the human nervous system, there will remain completely untouched another process which may be called mind or consciousness or the self, and which can be observed only by introspection. This Watson would not accept and similar generalizations can be found in Freud.

From the above discussion one is likely to get the impression that Richmond only adduced the theories of Freud and Watson in personality development. This is by no means the case, but it so happens that my previous disdain for Freud and Watson causes me to spend more time on them. (especially since I have been somewhat converted to many of their theories) Jung and Adler were given quite a bit of attention in Richmond's book, but it so happens that I have always has certain predilections for their theories over against those of Freud and Watson, for this reason I have not said much about them.

As I came to the end of Richmond's book many questions pertaining to the validity of psychological analysis arose in my mind. What theory of personality development is correct? Can psychology be an objective science? These questions inevitably arise because of the diverse theories of personality development. There are at least four different schools of modern psychology with totally different approaches to the problem of personality development, and even some psychologists within the same school differ among themselves. For an instance, Adler, Jung and Freud have totally different approaches to psychoanalysis, albeit they are within the same school. May we not conclude that we have a long way to go in this whole area of the psychological analysis of personality development.

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6. Davis remarked, "That's something."
7. Davis wrote, "I agree."