



Into the Ego

Ernest Wallwork offers some Freud for thought.

You see your best friend's husband dining with another woman. You think you should tell your friend about it, but she'll be devastated. Do you tell her?

You're a politician being persuaded by colleagues to help legislate a certain law. It's not a policy you agree with, but these colleagues are important. Not helping them could mean political suicide. What do you do?

You're an executive with a big corporation, but are unhappy with your work. You've always wanted to teach. You're about to quit your high-paying job when your wife tells you she's pregnant. Do you keep your job for the money or follow your dream?

These aren't just questions from the game of *Scruples*. They're real-life dilemmas that happen to real people. At certain points in our lives, we are all faced with tough moral choices.

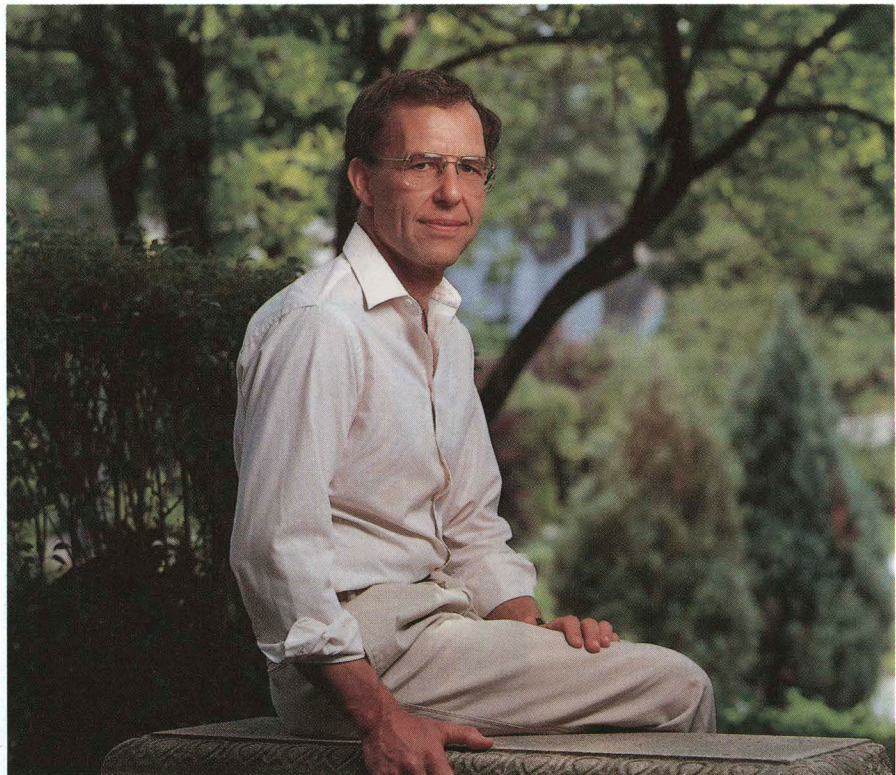
How do people make decisions? What are the reasons behind people's behavior? These are questions philosophers have pondered for centuries.

Sigmund Freud shed some light on the mystery of human behavior early in this century. His writings and clinical psychoanalytic research revealed that much of our behavior and decision-making is determined by motives that lie in our subconscious.

Traditional Freudian theory concludes people are selfish and act only in ways that will satisfy their inner needs and desires. Morality, say traditional Freudian theorists, is a learned behavior, socialized by our upbringing.

But "Freud never said that unconscious motives determined behavior," says Ernest Wallwork, a professor of ethics at SU who believes people have been misreading Freud for years. Correcting that misreading is the goal of his new book, *Psychoanalysis and Ethics*.

Wallwork believes we are not ruled



WALTER CALLAHAN

Psychoanalyst and ethicist Ernest Wallwork boldly reinterprets Freud in his book *Psychoanalysis and Ethics*. Being a good person and doing good works, he argues, are more than simply socialized behaviors.

by the unconscious motivations present in us. "To understand there are unconscious motives doesn't mean that they determine our behavior," he says. "They only have strong impact on behaviors if they remain unconscious. But if they become conscious, one can then choose among conflicting motives which to follow."

While Wallwork retains the Freudian view that the self is always in conflict with mixed motivations, he argues that behavioral choices can still be made intelligently.

He also rebuffs the idea that, as egotists, people behave only in ways that promote their own self-interests. Altruism can be a pleasurable pursuit, he says.

"The mature, loving person is capa-

ble of loving others and acting for them," Wallwork says. In other words, people do nice things for other people because it makes them feel good.

Wallwork's theories came from years of research, as well as practical training in psychoanalysis.

As an ethicist, he was bothered by an absence of material on moral decision making in ethics literature. He knew, however, this topic was addressed in readings on psychoanalysis.

These readings, coupled with courses he taught at SU involving both analysis and ethics, sparked his interest about what psychoanalysis could contribute to ethics.

"The more I taught Freud, the more

I began to appreciate the complexity of his thought," says Wallwork. "I began to think there were aspects of Freud's thought—deep sophisticated aspects of his thought—that hadn't been appreciated." Many of these aspects, he says, were particularly important because they concerned moral decision-making and ethics.

Wallwork began to take an avid interest in Freud's clinical work and the process of psychoanalysis.

While psychoanalysis provides rationalizations for certain behaviors, it also broadens the concept of moral responsibility, he says. Patients are then challenged to take responsibility for their revealed unconscious motivations.

"One of the things I'm doing in this book is bringing out the ethical conditions for the possibility of psychoanalytic knowledge," says Wallwork. "Analysis only takes place in an ethical setting, and ethics is part of the whole analytic relationship."

As part of research for his book, Wallwork became a psychoanalyst, studying at the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute. "I discovered in the process of doing research that I couldn't really talk to analysts unless I was also an analyst," he says.

Today, Wallwork weaves together his understanding of ethics and psychoanalysis. "My practice of psychoanalysis is also my practice of ethics," he says.

Wallwork divides his time among three positions—as an ethics professor in SU's religion department, as a psychoanalyst in private practice in Washington, D.C., and as a bioethicist at the clinical center for the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. This fall, he'll make semi-monthly trips to the University of Chicago, where he has been asked to give an endowed lectureship and seminar series.

He'll also try to gain an even deeper understanding of how people make tough choices by bringing together the study of his clinical work with his philosophical understanding of ethics.

"A lot of people have problems making decisions because they only see part of the issue," says Wallwork. "They don't allow themselves full access to their feelings and the implicit evaluations that are part of the full range of human feelings."

—ANDREA C. MARSH

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

This year the College for Human Development celebrates its 75th anniversary. The college has been a leader in its field, evolving from a School of Home Economics—which accepted only women—to the fifth-largest college on campus, with eight undergraduate programs.

Long before Syracuse University shifted its focus to becoming a "student-centered" research University, the College for Human Development took pride in nurturing its students. As the University strives to create a more student-centered culture, it turns to the college for example. We asked Susan J. Crockett, who became dean of human development in 1990, about the college's vision.

We understand the College for Human Development has been innovative in the way it instructs freshmen students?

We instituted small-group teaching last year for the first time, with the idea of introducing students to the skills they need to succeed in their remaining years of college. The course is called "Human Ecology." That is not new. But we've revised it using extensive input from the students. All freshmen took it last year. All freshmen will take it this year. We really are making an effort to mentor these freshmen students, help integrate them into the University.

It really just anticipated the Chancellor's guidelines. We started a year ahead of time on our own initiative and I feel really good about that. It correlates with the college's philosophy. This has always been a student-centered culture. Now the University philosophy is evolving so it matches in more distinct ways.

The college was identified under the Chancellor's restructuring plan as one that would undergo mid-level budget cuts. How will those cuts affect the school?

We've had to decrease the number of faculty. As all over the University, our enrollment is projected to go down. So the faculty load should remain relatively steady as the number of students declines.

What do you see as the college's greatest strength right now?

Students who come to this college get a wonderful liberal arts education at a fine research University. But they also get relatively specific professional skills



STEVE SARTORI

Susan J. Crockett, dean of the College for Human Development since 1990.

that lead them to entry level jobs upon graduation, at rates that are really quite impressive. We teach them in their specific interest areas, but we also give them lifetime skills that can be applied to any profession. I think it's a nice combination.

What would you identify as your greatest accomplishment as dean?

I think I've changed the feeling about research and extramural funding in the college. Faculty are now doing some more research and more faculty are submitting proposals for extramural funding for their work. That's a distinct change.

Why is that important?

It enhances the reputation of the college. It enables us to attract higher quality faculty. It means there's more money to support graduate students who do better research in their particular projects, either at the master's or doctoral level. Better students at the graduate level improves the education for undergraduates. So it is a positive synergism that helps to improve the overall quality of the college.

What's on your priority list for the future of the college?

Few private universities offer the kind of applied programs that the College for Human Development makes available at Syracuse. I think it's a unique niche. I would like to see us market that more assertively.

—RENÉE GEARHART LEVY