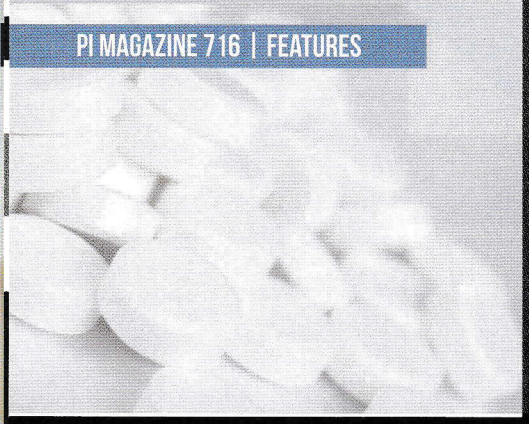
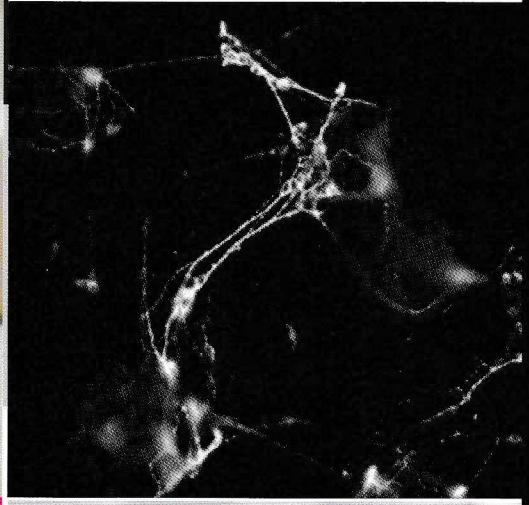
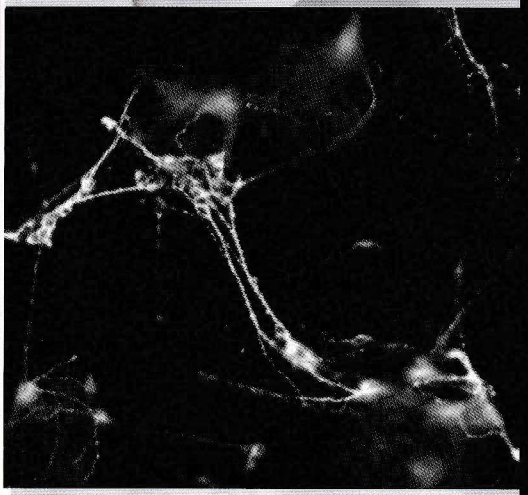
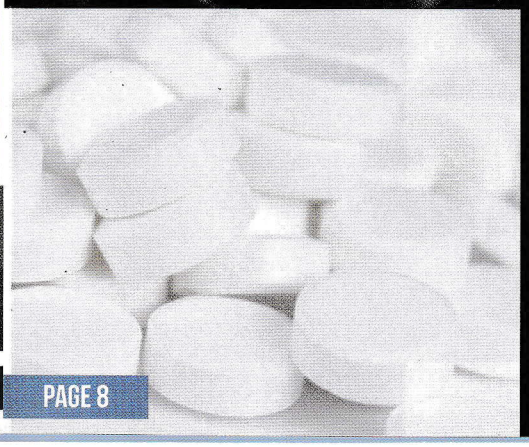










DECONSTRUCTING PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychological treatments and mental health have historically had both negative and positive connotations. As the Mental Health Foundation notes, around 1 in 5 people worldwide suffer from daily mental health issues, but seeking mental health support is still sometimes approached with disbelief and doesn't receive adequate attention despite many high-profile campaigns to change attitudes. However, ideas of treatment are often skirted around and surrounded by many misconceptions, it can seem unapproachable. This is not true at all: therapy is meant for everyone, to help deal with everything. It can be aimed at many different issues and people in different situations. This article will walk through the development of psychology from its roots to modern ideas, focusing on how attitudes and treatments have been transformed.

THERAPY IS FOR EVERYONE

Drugs and Experimental Psychology

Mental health has been considered in many different ways across the centuries: as a medical and biological conditions, demonic possession, or corruption of the spirit. Before psychology was established as an academic discipline in the 19th century, concepts such as psychology, the mind, the psyche, and the subject were discussed as part of the collective imaginary. The late 19th century saw a rise in interest in experimental psychology and attempts to turn the study of the mind into an empirical science. Experimental psychologists of this period – such as Wilhelm Wundt and William James – are typically considered precursors of modern psychology.

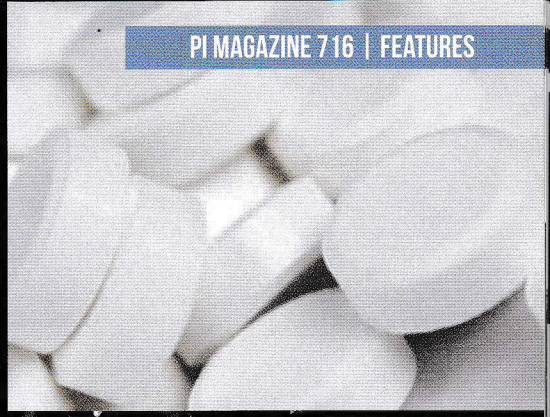
Psychotropic medications were prescribed for all kinds of mental distresses in the 19th century including depression, psychosis, anxiety, etc. It was thought that such disorders were caused mainly by hormonal or physiological causes, like any physical illness and thus curable through similar medication. In many cases, addictive opioids, harmful hormonal treatments and other physical 'cures', including shock therapy, were employed, with many such psychotropic treatments continuing into the 20th century.

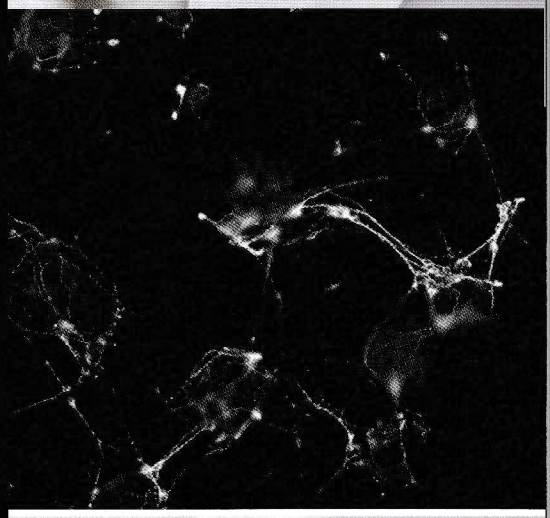
Amongst other ideas, Wundt looked at the mind and consciousness in an individualistic manner, and used concepts such as introspection in psychological experimentation; whereas James examined topics such as emotions and mental perception. One prominent characteristic of psychology in the later part of the 19th century was it connections with physiology (Wundt and James, as well as many others, were graduated physicians). Nevertheless, their findings laid solid foundations for later developments in psychology. As in most sciences, no movement, discovery, or theory in psychology has existed in isolated. Prior to the rise of psychology, these were all dominant approaches, however a more multi-faceted approach to dealing with mental health issues has now developed.
Freudian Psychoanalysis

AS PSYCHOLOGY MADE ITS WAY INTO LABORATORIES AND UNIVERSITIES AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE, INTEREST RAPIDLY GREW

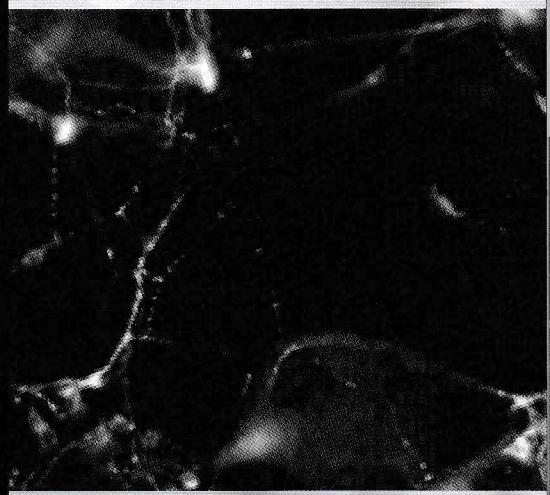
As psychology made its way into laboratories and universities as an empirical science, interest rapidly grew. Toward the turn of the century, psychology underwent a revolution led by none other than Sigmund Freud. However out-dated and clichéd it may appear today, his contributions were undeniably essential to the development of

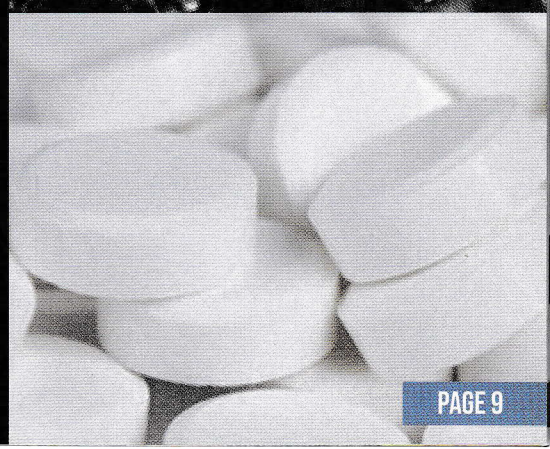
LUNA CAMPOS EXAMINES HOW OUR UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ITS TREATMENT HAS TRANSFORMED OVER THE CENTURIES











psychotherapy as we know it. Freud, and his successors, helped reshape the way the western world understood and treated mental ailments across the 20th century.

Freud did not invent psychotherapy. Treatments of the sort were used by psychiatrists throughout and before the 19th century in asylums in western Europe and the United States. But the reality was far harsher than the ideal: mental asylums were often negligent and used cruel treatments to fix so-called insanity. Even 'therapeutic' practices would disregard concepts such as subjectivity and personal history – concepts central to the Freudian approach. Michel Foucault argued that such institutions were a method of 'hygienisation' of those believed to be mad by removing them from society. However, there were very few places where medical care and therapeutic treatment could be sought. A rise in criticism towards psychiatric institutions' methods provides an example of the way in which attitudes towards mental health started to change and were reshaped in the late 20th century.

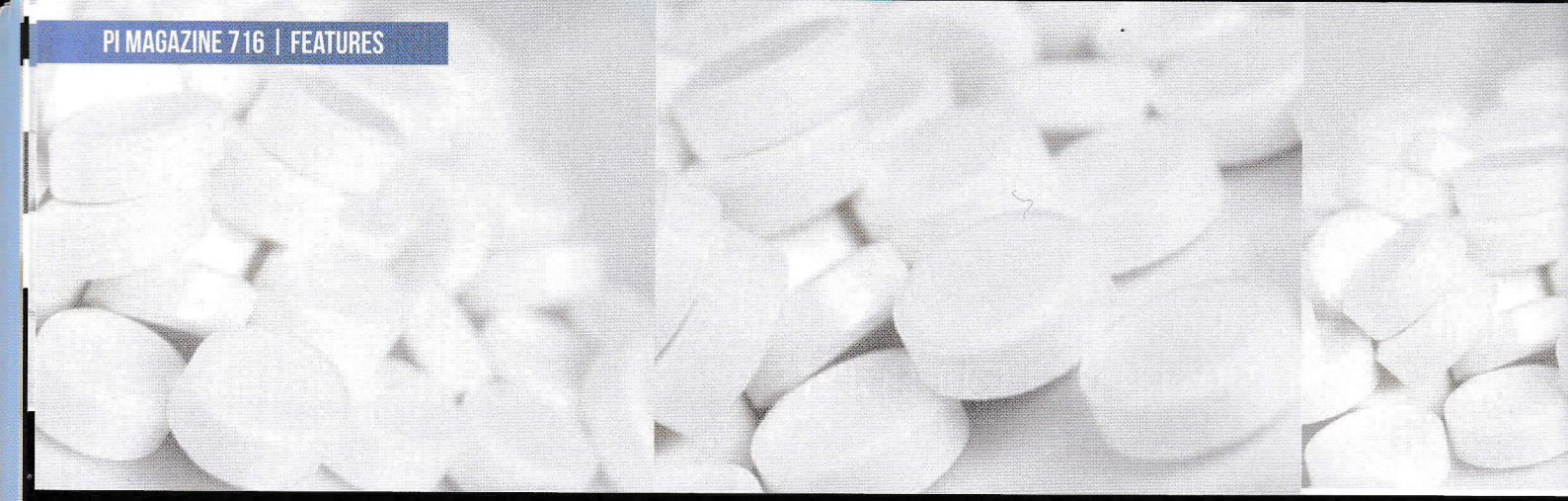
Freud's role in this shift is critical. He and Josef Breuer, when developing the psychoanalytic method, proposed the concept of the 'talking cure' as the main ingredient in therapy. Freud recollected how his method was perfected and changed to best delve into the unconscious mind. Breuer (who first used this method for the 'talking cure') believed that via hypnosis and catharsis the subject could recall a trauma and identify with its causes and emotions – and recognising it would then lead to its cure. However, these methods were abandoned for not being able to long lasting, positive results. Thus, a method of free association was crafted instead, a technique still used in psychoanalytic therapies today in which the patient focuses on whatever is on their mind at present, bringing censored unconscious elements to the surface of the patient's mind, which can then be worked through. The main idea in this approach is that patients will freely express their thoughts and emotions to deeper understood ideas or memories they may have repressed.

FREUD WAS UNEQUIVOCAL IN HIS AFFIRMATION THAT HIS 'DISCOVERY' WAS THE "THIRD NARCISSISTIC WOUND" IN THE HISTORY OF HUMANITY

However, while there are more nuances to this technique, the notions of the unconscious mind and the Id were still clearly revolutionary in Freud's approach. His theory revolved largely around his different triads of the mind – the Id, Ego, and Superego; and the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious. This was the turning point in psychology's history in the 20th century. Freud did not discover the unconscious per se – the concept had already been used and cited by philosophers and theorists before him. Yet, Freud was unequivocal in his affirmation that his 'discovery' was the "third narcissistic wound" in the history of humanity, after Copernicus and Darwin (thanks to whom the earth was no longer the centre of the solar system, nor humans the centre of evolutionary history respectively). His own contribution with the "third narcissistic wound" was to demonstrate, with the "discovery of the unconscious", that an individual is not their own master.

Beyond Freud into the 20th century?

Since then, critics of Freud have reconsidered many of his theories and perspectives. In the 21st century, concepts of Freud's are still used, ideas of subjectivity and psychodynamics, but have been adapted it fit a modern methods and audience. Certain



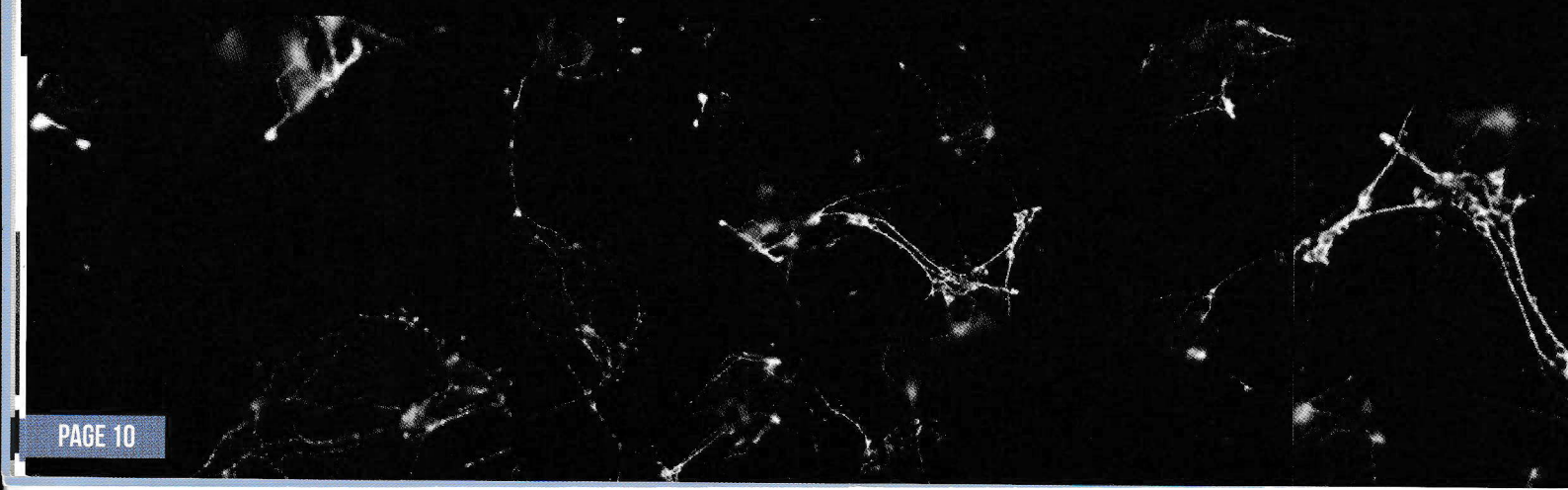
concepts of Freud's of course have become obsolete, such as penis envy and ideas of the heteronormative. Gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and other elements have therefore shaped psychology and been incorporated into current ideas of psychoanalysis. Yet, the power and truths in some of Freud's arguments should not be overlooked. The idea that there is a part of the mind outside of one's control, where most symptoms of mental health issues originate from changed the perception of mental health and has shaped ideas up to today. After psychoanalysis became more accepted, mental health problems became less mysterious and misunderstood – people realised that the dynamics of the psyche were more complex than previously thought and old solutions were reconsidered.

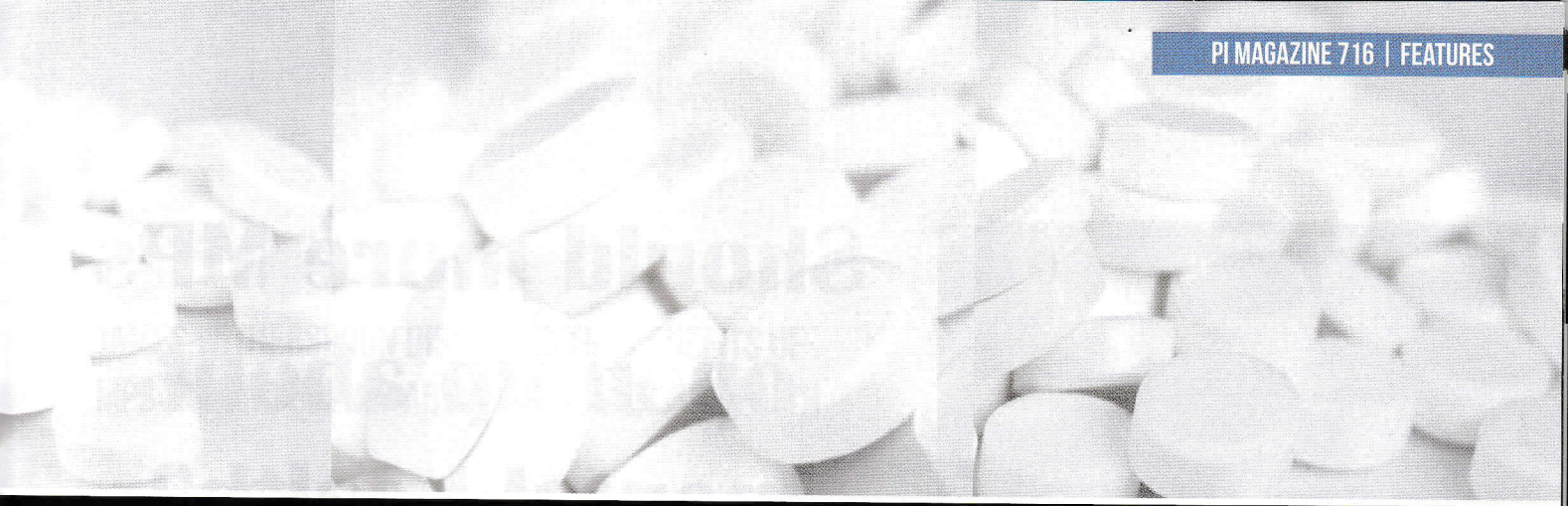
Freudian theory has received its share of criticism, but it should be kept in mind that a theory originating in an entirely different zeitgeist and period cannot be taken without a grain of salt and the fact that any of Freud's ideas can be applied today is unprecedented. However, of course Freud is not the only name of significance in the history of therapy. Carl Jung (who incorporated elements of spirituality, religion, and innovative personality concepts into his theory), Jacques Lacan (who used and critiqued many Freudian ideas and influenced fields such as linguistics and post-structuralism), and Melanie Klein (a main influencer in English psychoanalysis and child psychology) all provided necessary critiques to the original ideas of psychoanalysis and contributed towards its development, helping to create more interdisciplinary approaches to mental health.

The 20th century welcomed a myriad of new approaches including things like cognitive psychology and behaviorism. Behaviourism, created by B. F. Skinner's, was concerned with the analysis of behaviour and learning processes through conditioning (most remembered in Pavlov's experiment with his dogs – the food and the bell; and the reinforcement or punishment of one behaviour in order to increase or decrease its frequency). Cognitive therapy similarly dealt with processes of learning and unlearning, but with a bigger focus on thoughts and cognition. Both are goal-oriented types of therapy, as opposed to the psychoanalytic or psychodynamic traditional Freudian therapies, which are lengthier, sometimes intensive processes that can go on for years.

The major differences, however, emerged in approaches. While behaviourist therapy was popular and focused on rewarding desirable behavioural patterns and punishing undesirable ones into extinction it did not regard internal mental processes or examine the psychical apparatus with the same attention that psychoanalysis does – the concepts of mind and psyche, for example, do not matter here as much as behavioural patterns.

AS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES HAVE BECOME MORE ACCEPTED AND LESS CLOUDED IN CONFUSION AND STIGMA IN SOCIETY THERE HAS BEEN A SHIFT AWAY FROM THE DISCOURSES OF 'PERFECT SOLUTIONS' TOWARDS MUCH MORE DIVERGENT, PROGRESSIVE APPROACHES.





In contrast, it was humanistic therapies that were concerned with an individual's experience and emotions. These theories focused on individuality and subjectivity. Most prominently the 'Person-Centred Approach' was developed by Carl Rogers, and this epitomises this important step towards a therapy made personally for the individual rather than one approach to fit society as a whole.

Modern trends

In the 21st century, psychology has moved on from many of these debates on treatment towards a varied, nuanced approach shaped around the individual. It has invariably been concerned with the human psyche and, accordingly, its health. As mental health issues have become more accepted and less clouded in confusion and stigma in society there has been a shift away from the discourses of 'perfect solutions' towards much more divergent, progressive approaches.

A useful metaphor to understand this modern change is how doctors treat patients. Modern mental health treatment revolves around understanding causes rather than tracing symptoms. Although anti-depressions and other medicinal drugs are used to reduce the immediate danger, the process of understanding the issues of mental health are now much broader and less prescriptive. It is now widely accepted that mental health issues are not uniform and thus any treatments require a nuanced approach.

LOOKING AT THE INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTIVELY, AND RESPECTING THE COMPLEX DYNAMICS OF THE MIND – INSTEAD OF REDUCING IT TO BIOLOGICAL PROCESSES OR TO BROAD, STIGMATISING VIEWS – ARE BOTH IMPERATIVE IN MODERN APPROACHES TO PSYCHOLOGY

Throughout all of these developments, theories, and viewpoints, people have obviously received attention and reaction to mental health problems in different ways. Looking at the individual subjectively, and respecting the complex dynamics of the mind – instead of reducing it to biological processes or to broad, stigmatising views – are both imperative in modern approaches to psychology. Psychology and psychotherapy have come a long way and still has a way to go but this need for constant development and individualisation is now accepted: approaches to understanding and helping the psyche are things we are still learning and developing.

