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Reflections on War and Death

Sigmund Freud



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Reflections on War and Death, by Sigmund Freud, is an essay Freud wrote during the Great War (World War I) in which he discusses the impact the war has had on how it has changed the way people view the world and death. The essay is not considered to be a part of Freud's major canon of work; however, it gives important and interesting insight into how Freud viewed the war and how he believed war and violence shaped mankind. In the essay, Freud applied his basic psychoanalytic principles to the miserable thoughts and feelings that were expressed by people regarding the violent war. Freud, who was reluctant to be a part of his own country's defense during the war, believed that noncombatant individuals become disillusioned and depressed during wartime because they are confronted with the fact that they previously unconsciously did not recognize their own mortality. Their own inevitable death suddenly seems a very likely prospect. Freud suggests that war strips humans of their civilized natures so that they become primal beings, intent on barbarism. Much of the essay discusses the lack of human desire to suppress evil intentions during wartime. War strips the positive benefits of society, leaving humans primeval, bloodthirsty beasts. Reflections on War and Death is a denunciation of wartime behaviors and a reflection of Freud's disappointment in the lack of civility displayed during war. Written in 1915, it is an honest indictment of basic human behaviors. It is also an interesting contrast to Freud's previous critiques of the cumbersome guilty weight that he believes society places on people. The essay never garnered the recognition of his greater works, but is a valuable look into the mind of one of the greatest thinkers of the 20th century. Title: Reflections on War and Death Author: Sigmund Freud ISBN: 9781775420132 Version: Unabridged Language: English Reader: Solo Male Format: MP3 Audio DVD Tracks / Chapters: 2 Chapters Total running time: 01:13:58

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