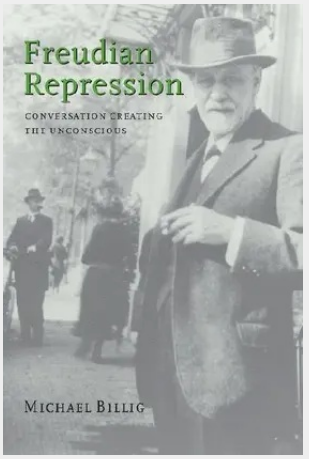
Billig

Freudian Repression

In Freudian Repression, Michael Billig presents an original reformulation of Freud's concept of repression, showing that in his theory of the unconscious he fails to examine how people actually repress shameful thoughts. Drawing on recent insights from discursive psychology, Billig suggests that in learning to speak we also learn what not to say: language is thus both expressive and repressive. He applies this perspective to some of Freud's classic case histories such as 'Dora'and the 'Rat Man' and the great psychologist's own life to show the importance of small words in speech. By focusing on previously overlooked exchanges, even Freud himself can be seen to be repressing. Freudian Repression also offers new insights on the current debate about recovered memories and the ideological background to psychoanalysis which will guarantee its interdisciplinary appeal to psychologists, language theorists, discourse analysts, students of psychoanalysis, literary studies and sociologists.

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