Freud And Surrealism

Part 1

Freud is recognized as the founder of psycho analysis; his theory of art was centralized around the theme of motivation in relation to creative writing. His comprehension of art focused on the craftsman's mind and purpose behind molding his medium into its last form. In order to get a better understanding of this, Freud tries to relate child's play to creative writing. Freud says "The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of fantasy which he takes very seriously–that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion–while separating it sharply from reality" (Freud). A child creates a world of their own and link their imagination with real objects in the world. This is related to Freud's view on art because his theory involved using what was hidden in an individual's mind and combining it with real life. His view on art was what was in a person's mind that caused them to create the artwork that they have created.

Part 2

Surrealism was an artistic and literary movement started by writer André Breton from 1924 through World War II. Andre Breton was tired of the Dada movement and didn't support it like he used to anymore. He was inspired by Sigmund Freud's concepts and wanted to incorporate it into the Dada movement (Gompertz, 239-240). According to the book What Are You Looking At by Gompertz, regarding Breton he says "His new idea was to tap into their unconscious mind in order to dredge up unseemly secrets that had been suppressed for the sake of decency. Once out in the open, the plan was to place "rational" reality alongside his altogether nastier version of "reality" in an ill-matched union designed to create disquiet" (Gompertz, 240).

The idea of the movement was to cause an outburst in society by the expression of surrealism which allows surrealist to incorporate elements from their unconscious mind which may not be viewed as logical in the society they lived in.

Breton defined Surrealism as "Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express…the actual functioning of thought…in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern." (André Breton, Manifestoes of Surrealism, translated from the French by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1969), 26). The foundation of Surrealism relies on the process for creating art known as automatism, which illustrates the minds deepest thoughts automatically as they come up in your head. Surrealism is focused on depicting the subconscious and this is a reason why people did not favor Surrealism compared to traditional art movements. It uses ordinary objects out of their normal function and exposes psychological truth. Due to this concept, abstract images are created with the intention to evoke empathy from the individual viewing it. The movement depended on the component of the foreseen which was borrowed from Dadaist techniques. Surrealism was a way to represent what many people experienced living during the war.

An example of Surrealist art is The Persistence of Memory by Salvador Dali. This painting is

one of the most famous Surrealist painting ever. The painting starts of normal with landscapes of the Mediterranean Sea and a cliff. There is a dark shadow across the shore that looks deadly and decays anything in its path. The painting shows pocket watches that look like they are losing power, ants swarming over a timepiece and another time piece over a jelly fish type creature. Dali's intention of the painting was to disturb anyone who looked at the painting and that was accomplished. Gompertz says "The Persistence of Memory is a painting about sexual impotence (Dali's great fear), the relentlessness of time and the indignity of death" (Gompertz, 249-250).

The painting may have been inspired from a dream that Dali experienced. The watches could be used to represent time passing in a dream state and the ants represent decay. The creature cannot be identified but this might be because the creatures form couldn't be identified in the dream, so it is drawn as seen in the unconscious state. Dali's painting is a perfect example of Surrealist art because it illustrates Dali's thoughts deep in his mind and he explores his unconscious mind to create art that appears weird and dreamlike.

Part 3

There are many similarities between Freud's Psychoanalysis and Breton's Surrealism because the movement was inspired by Freud's theories. Due to this, they both deal with the subconscious mind and depend on psychoanalysis for automatic writing and painting. This is where the relationship between Surrealism and Psychoanalysis start. The conscious mind is that part of the brain where one can easily access and talk about when we need, but the unconscious mind is the part of the brain that stores up feelings and emotions and influences behavior. Psychoanalytical theory was created by Sigmund Freud and focuses on uncovering the feelings that are in the unconscious mind. Sigmund Freud has expressed that the emotions that result from the encounters all individuals go through are in some cases stored in the subconscious mind and impacts the way individuals translate circumstances that they go through in life without being mindful that the subconscious mind is the one driving them to act and think in such a way.

Surrealist art was painted in a way that would change the way society thought, therefore their work intended to use the unconscious mind for creativity and thinking to express in their art which would cause an outburst. Breton referred to the psychoanalytical theory of Sigmund Freud in his work and would use the theme in his paintings. Surrealists were known to be influential and they were very aggressive with their artwork because it was a way of expressing anger and question society's thinking. This is done through visual art that is unique and creative and allows surrealists to express the emotions they are truly feeling. Surrealist art involves the use of abstract images and objects that can be used in any way outside their regular functions. An example of this was Dali's use of a sliding wall clock on top of a table, art like this were used with the intention of influencing the subconscious, very similar to how psychoanalysis attempts to understand the feelings that are deep in our subconscious mind.

Even though there are many similarities between the two, there are also differences. Surrealism seeks to influence the thinking of the human mind by evoking the feelings of the unconscious mind and expressing it through art. Psychoanalysis, on the other hand, tries to explain how the unconscious mind influences an individual's behavior by past events that are stored in the unconscious mind. The motivation between the two movements are different even though they

share some techniques. Another difference is that Surrealism was made with the intention of attacking society's backbone of thinking while Freud’s theory was involved with his research as a neurologist.