

*Turning  
Freud  
Upside  
Down 2*

MORE GOSPEL PERSPECTIVES ON  
PSYCHOTHERAPY'S FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS

edited by Lane Fischer  
and Aaron P. Jackson

BYU Studies  
Provo, Utah

Copyright © 2017 Brigham Young University. All rights reserved.

Opinions expressed in this publication are the opinions of the authors and their views should not necessarily be attributed to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brigham Young University, or BYU Studies.

No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, digital, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording or in an information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. To contact BYU Studies, write to 1063 JFSB, Provo, Utah 84602, or visit <http://byustudies.byu.edu>.

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Fischer, Lane, 1955– editor. | Jackson, Aaron P., 1960– editor.

Title: Turning Freud upside down 2 : more gospel perspectives on psychotherapy's fundamental problems / edited by Lane Fischer and Aaron P. Jackson.

Description: Provo, Utah : BYU Press, [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017029503 | ISBN 9781942161479 (pbk.) | ISBN 9781942161486 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Pastoral counseling. | Pastoral psychology. | Psychotherapy--Religious aspects--Christianity. | Psychotherapy.

Classification: LCC BV4012.3 .T87 2017 | DDC 253.5/2--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2017029503>

Printed in the United States of America

# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

- Once More unto the Breach, Dear Friends 7  
*Lane Fischer*

## CHAPTERS

- The Freedom and Determinism of Agency 10  
*Richard N. Williams*
- The Relational Moral Agent and Its Implications for Practice 26  
*Kristin Lang Hansen*
- Justice: The Foundation of Forgiveness 56  
*Robert L. Gleave*
- Truth and Values in Counseling: 72  
Beyond Positivism, Relativism, Values Clashes, and  
Crypto-proselytizing  
*Aaron P. Jackson*
- Contracts, Covenants, and the Meaning of Marriage 92  
*Edwin E. Gantt and Stan J. Knapp*
- A Gospel Challenge to Psychology's Culture of Suspicion: 114  
Assumptions, Alternatives, and  
Psychotherapeutic Implications  
*Jeffrey S. Reber*
- On the Need to Acknowledge Good and Evil 146  
*Lane Fischer*
- The Ideals of Pistis, Elpis, and Agape: 160  
Implications for Counseling in Diverse Settings  
*Matthew R. Draper and Mark S. Green*

	The Foundational Principle of Faith	180
	<i>Timothy B. Smith</i>	
<i>Turning Freud Upside Down 2</i>	CONCLUSION	
	Psychotherapy Vis-à-vis the Gospel	222
	<i>Aaron P. Jackson</i>	
	CONTRIBUTORS	229
	CITED SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES	233
	NAMES INDEX	235
	SUBJECT INDEX	237

# Once More unto the Breach, Dear Friends

LANE FISCHER

*Turning Freud Upside Down* (2005) began a process of considering fundamental issues in psychotherapy through the lens of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. It was well received and continues in publication. We were grateful to BYU Studies for its willingness to publish and distribute the book. We were grateful to the authors who generously contributed their thoughts and insight. We knew the task was far from complete.

When *Turning Freud Upside Down* was first conceived, we had concerns that we could easily go astray. There were so many pitfalls. We are not authorized to define the gospel. We have limited wisdom. I was particularly concerned that simply applying the labels “gospel” or “BYU” or “Freud” would inadvertently stop people from thinking. I was concerned that positive stereotyping would be as detrimental as negative stereotyping. Based on the reception of the book and general feedback we have received, my particular concerns were unfounded. Readers have been thoughtful and reflective about the work. Students especially have studied the text and been forthright in their challenges and questions about the concepts. Readers have not seemed to accept or reject the text wholesale or to assume that we have presented an authorized completion of the entire question. It has stimulated further thought and discussion.

The overall objectives have remained the same. We recognized that psychotherapy is built on philosophical foundations that are often unspoken but nevertheless omnipresent. Many of those assumptions, when elucidated, were not consistent with the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. It seemed that we had enough understanding to begin to build our psychotherapy from the foundation of the restored gospel. Richard Williams’s (2003) essay “The Restoration and the ‘Turning of Things Upside Down’: What Is Required of an

LDS Perspective?” was a seed crystal and an impetus to begin. But it is not as easy or concrete a task as it might seem. Having some understanding and faith in the restored gospel is necessary but insufficient for the task at hand. There is the ongoing need to deepen and refine our understanding of and faith in the gospel. There is also the simultaneous demand to deepen and refine our observation of how humans develop. There is the sequential demand to then integrate the best of our understanding into interventions that are well founded and efficacious. Continuing forward to address those demands requires humble gumption. This volume of essays represents the ongoing exploration, questioning, contemplation, and courageous efforts by our contributors to step into that complex gap.

We structured the first volume of *Turning Freud Upside Down* around five very specific topics: the nature of law, the nature of suffering, the nature of agency, the nature of truth, and the nature of being. We invited authors to respond to one of those topics. We were much more open-ended in this volume. We asked authors to continue their thinking in the same area or respond to other constructs according to their preference. Hence, this volume ranges a bit more broadly around the common theme of exploring the foundation of psychotherapy through the lens of the gospel. There is notable diversity among the authors’ ideas. We certainly have not come to a consensus view. Nevertheless, the consistency within these faithful essays is significantly higher than would be found in a potpourri of ideas not based on the restored gospel.

It is overly simplistic to summarize any of the essays as having a unitary focus. As they examine primary areas of interest, they invariably reference other correlated concerns. The original five topics are inextricably intertwined, and to ask one is to eventually ask them all. Two of the essays, by Tim Smith and by Matt Draper and Mark Green, deal with issues of faith. They range in their definitions and applications but are working to understand similar constructs. Three of our authors, Lane Fischer, Jeffrey Reber, and Richard Williams, engage in the issues that surround moral agency, and a fourth author, Kristin Hansen, considers moral agency and its implications for practice. Two essays (one by Ed Gantt and Stan Knapp and the other by Aaron Jackson) focus on the fundamental issues embedded in relationships, Jackson at an ontological level and Gantt and Knapp at a more applied level. Robert Gleave focuses

on justice and forgiveness. Throughout all of the essays, the issues of being, truth, agency, suffering, and law interplay with each other.

In the end, I am left with admiration for the intelligence and faith of the authors. I have never constructed a bifurcation between faith and intelligence. Nor do I see that the restored gospel should not be considered as a viable philosophy. My opinion is that the restored gospel has more intellectual heft than any other philosophy. Similarly, the prophets, while being holy, also tend to be brilliant thinkers. I don't restrict the implications of their writings to "religious" issues. I find that they have wrestled with the same fundamental issues as any other so-called philosopher. I am impressed by their inspired answers to fundamental questions. Treating them as philosophers does not discount their holy callings as prophets, seers, and revelators.

I have always been deeply impressed by Mormon. He was perhaps one of the most brilliant people to ever live on earth. He was identified by age ten as the next keeper of the national archive. By age fifteen, he was appointed as the military leader of the nation's armies. He simultaneously then led the military, abridged a thousand years of records, and was the prophet and spiritual leader of the church. He was brilliant! Given all of Mormon's brilliance, I have no problem trusting his approach to fundamental questions that must underlie our psychotherapy. For example, one of the curative factors in group psychotherapy is "instillation of hope." When people experience hope through group psychotherapy, they tend to improve their lives. Mormon had ample reason to lose hope. His sad task was to watch his culture self-destruct. If anyone had justification to become cynically despairing, it would have been Mormon. He had to wrestle with the nature of life and hope. He asked, certainly from his own pondering and grief, "What is it that ye shall hope for?" His response was, "Ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise" (Moro. 7:41). Mormon was no modern existentialist dealing with despair and the nothingness of death. He understood human existence very deeply with all of its anguish and terror, and he resolved our common plight with a philosophy that rested on the Savior and the universal resurrection. I find that the truths of the restored gospel are more powerful foundations for life than any others. I am grateful to the authors in this book for their faith and intelligence.

*Once More  
unto the  
Breach,  
Dear Friends*

RICHARD N.  
WILLIAMS

*The  
Freedom  
and  
Determinism  
of Agency*

It has been suggested, with good reason, that of all the profound and marvelous doctrines of the restored gospel, agency (what we often call “free agency”) is most fundamental. While this essay does not defend this claim, there is a good case to be made for the centrality of agency to any understanding of the meaning and purpose of the plan of salvation and the Atonement of Jesus Christ, which is its essential core. After all, if we were not moral agents, no atonement would be necessary, because we could not really sin, since sin requires purposive action. Simple behavioral control would be sufficient to overcome or prevent negative compartment and its consequences. Indeed, if there were no agency, controlling or preventing anyone’s behavior could take one or more of three forms: (1) intrusive control of persons’ spheres of action exercised in the world where behavior takes place, (2) somewhat less intrusive control of all the environmental circumstances that produce behavior, or (3) control of the biological makeup of persons so that only certain behaviors are produced. By the same token, if we were not moral agents, we would not be the sort of beings that are perfectible in the first place—unless by “perfectible,” we are content to mean something like “without design flaws,” or “perfectly (re)engineered.” Indeed, if human beings are simply natural organisms, created or evolved, parts of a completely deterministic natural material universe, “free will” could only be, at best, a comforting illusion, and, at worst, a significant design flaw.

If we were not morally perfectible agents, no “infinite and eternal” sacrifice (Alma 34:14) would be necessary. It is even unclear how Christ’s sacrifice might affect us under such circumstances unless it were something like a cosmic force able to control all our behaviors in the way just discussed. Indeed, one wonders why a certain quantity of suffering might be necessary to “pay for” behaviors that were the inevitable products of that same cosmic force or one very much like it. The whole language of redemption becomes a hollowed-out metaphor. The best we could hope for would be to not be who (or what) we have been due to the operation of forces we do not control, but rather to be subject to other forces we do not control but which do not make God angry with us.

It seems that, while perfection may be a contextual state (because we never live completely alone but are always with others and among

things), it is certainly not a contingent state (one dependent on the existence of some other independent state)—since contingent beings arise out of and are dependent on extraneous originating conditions. No “infinite and eternal” atonement (Alma 34:14) would be necessary to make us contingently “good,”—control of contingencies would suffice. And any type of “contingent perfection” is a logical contradiction, especially if we take into account the notion of perfection as “completeness,” or “lacking nothing.” As contingent beings, we would lack autonomy and the power to *be* perfect rather than to simply be *made* perfect by contingent circumstance. In such a case, it would be the contingencies that were first perfect, and we would be just their product. This argument goes at least as far back as the early Patristics and their reading of Aristotle.

Finally, if we take seriously one of the defining characteristics of “intelligence,” that it is “independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself” (D&C 93:30), moral agency is integral to intelligence, sin, and perfectibility. It is the real possibility of both sin and perfection that makes necessary the supreme atoning act of our Savior. Nonintelligent (nonagentic) beings need no Savior, but they do require a good technician. The fact is that in a completely determined (and therefore closed) universe, it is not at all clear what sin, justice, or mercy could mean. It does not make a lot of intuitive sense to thank a Savior for suffering for sins that absolutely could not have been avoided or thank him for his gift of mercy to compensate for acts that were not my fault and to which I made no meaningful contribution. At best, such thanks would be perfunctory; after all, someone apparently had to do the suffering. It is not even clear to whom—or to what—suffering and atonement are owed when predetermined “sins” are committed. If the answer is “law,” then one wonders what sort of cosmic reality could or would exact payment for inevitable acts, or how such acts could offend a cosmic reality responsible for the hard determinism of those very acts in the first place. Clearly, we can do better than this in our understanding of the moral character and quality of mortality. And the key to such understanding is agency.

Any serious discussion of agency must be clear about what agency is—and what it is not. While this is not a simple matter, I want to begin with a fairly generic sense of agency. That human beings are agents means that we—and, importantly, our actions—are not just

products of substances, forces, or other things extraneous to us, whether these things be outside us or inside us. It is in being agents that we make intentional and definitive contributions to those actions and to who and to what we really and fundamentally are at every moment present and future. In other words, agency must affirm profoundly that “people are not things.”

This is not to say that we must stand apart from all forces or “things” or be totally unaffected by them, nor is it to say that there is nothing “thinglike” about us (such as our weight). It is to say, however, that whatever things may be influential in our lives, and however they may affect us, this whole process of influence and effect cannot be sufficiently understood by theories, models, or constructs that are adequate to understanding nonagentic things and how forces act upon them. For the most part, we are not affected by the same kinds of forces or factors that affect mere things. But, more importantly, not being mere things, we are not affected by what is around us and in us *in the way* (nonhuman) things are thus affected—by what is around and in them. The processes, models, and theories that describe things (animate or inanimate), and what works in them or on them, don’t suffice for us, and in the most fundamental sense, they don’t apply to us. Mere things have some types of contingent relationships with the things that affect them and determine them. Agents do not have those same sorts of contingent relationships with any things. We relate to what is around us and in us very differently from the way nonagentic things do. Relations of mere things to their environments do not hold for us. A man and a stone caught in the same landslide do not relate to the event and the environment of gravity and other rocks and trees the same way. There is an undeniable qualitative difference. Human beings and their experiences are, unlike rocks and the things that happen to them, “saturated” phenomena (Marion, 2002). There is an “overflowing” in our humanity that cannot be captured by a complete list of physical, environmental, and biological factors even though such a list suffices for natural objects and events. This overflowing is the manifestation of agency, not only our own agency but also the agency of others because we experience them as overflowing as well.

It is the rejection of the thesis that all human action can be wholly explained by extraneous contingent relationships that leads people to conclude that agency stands in opposition to determinism. They suppose that to claim human agency is real is to claim that human

actions are not determined (especially by things outside human beings themselves). We cannot circumvent this problem by claiming that we are agents in that we are determined by things *inside* us because the principle at stake here is not the *source* or *origin* of the causes and influences that may affect our lives, but the nature of the causes and influences and the *way* they affect our lives—in other words, the nature of determinism itself. Whether from outside or inside, if our actions arise from factors or causes that are thinglike, or if the actions are affected by the same kinds of processes by which mere things are affected, or in the *way* mere things are affected, agency is impossible. It cannot exist. Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude (wrongly) that agency and determinism cannot both be operative in genuinely human activity. The reasonable (though wrong) conclusion from this analysis is, then, that agency requires, or that it just *is*, indeterminism.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, most textbooks in the social sciences—if they deal with agency at all—deal with it as a species of indeterminism. This makes agency seem unscientific, mystical, and indefensible, totally incompatible with an empirically minded, scientific psychology. And I must agree that they are right about that—if agency is indeterminism, it is indeed mystical and indefensible. This is also why agency has been so hard to defend—and thus why the agentic side loses so many arguments about agency. Indeterminism is an indefensible position. It must ultimately hold that there are no causes of actions or events—that is, no strong ties between events and their antecedents. Any conceptually consistent indeterminism must hold, therefore, that events are ultimately just random.<sup>2</sup>

This equation of agency with indeterminism is problematic on two accounts. First, even casual observation is sufficient to persuade us that events in the world are not random. There are indeed strong relationships between events and their antecedents. It also seems like a weak argument to hold that while most or all of the

---

1. In fact, this essay will argue that it is precisely in human activities that both agency and determinism operate, even though they both do not operate in such a way in the nonhuman world—the world of nonhuman things.

2. We will leave aside here any facile indeterminism (or any soft determinism) that holds that mere ignorance of the causes of events is sufficient to make a place for agency. If the causes are not known, then there is room for freedom. However, this makes agency just a form of ignorance, and freedom an illusion. Albert Bandura (1989) among others has actually made this argument.

physical/observable world is deterministic, human action is not. Our observations, not to mention our reflective sense of ourselves, tells us that our actions are indeed tied to meaningful antecedents. This leads us to the second problem. It is that, even if it were true that indeterminism rules in the sphere of human action, this would not allow for any meaningful agentic human action. If human actions have no antecedents, then they have no context, they reveal no order, and tend toward nothing and have no meaning. This is not the sort of agency that any rational human being might want. If, as our scriptures and doctrine suggest, a war was fought in heaven over the issue of agency, it was a senseless war if the outcome is merely the right and privilege to behave randomly and without regard for history, context, or even desire.

There have been many arguments to the effect that freedom (or agency) is not only compatible with determinism, but that it requires determinism (see, e.g., an example in the work of Foot, 1957). All such arguments must be based in, and then offer a response to, some form of the two arguments noted above. If there is no determinism (of any sort), then acts have no meaningful antecedents; they come from nowhere and lead nowhere and are thus not agentic—produced by agents—since, in the act of production, the agent becomes the antecedent. Agency under an indeterminist regime might be adequately modeled by an unpredictable nervous twitch that interferes with otherwise normal stimulus response sequences.

Because of this line of analysis, I have argued (Williams, 1992) that agency should not, indeed must not, be tied to indeterminism. Positions arguing that agency is compatible with determinism are known as “compatibilist” positions. In assessing whether compatibilist positions preserve genuine agency, everything depends on how “determinism” is understood. Most positions that seek to reconcile agency and determinism end up redefining agency to be compatible with a classically hard form of determinism, but lose what is essentially agentic in the process.

I submit that rather than redefining agency, trying to make it compatible with a classically hard mechanical determinism, we need to re-understand determinism in such a way that it is compatible with agency—without losing what is essential in determinism. I have suggested (e.g., Williams, 1992) that the solution to this problem lies in carefully examining what a deterministic understanding of life and world really requires. I believe it is simply this: that there