"Neo-Freudian" or "Neo-Adlerian"?

*Results of a Survey Conducted Among the Members of the American Psychoanalytic Association.**

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During recent years the term "neo-Freudian" has found increasing acceptance to denote the numerous deviators from Freud who stress social relations rather than biological factors, the self rather than the id and the superego, the striving for self-actualization rather than the sex instinct, and the present situation rather than early experiences. Adlerians have always considered the so-called "neo-Freudians" actually to be closer to Individual Psychology than to Psychoanalysis. However, it was not until recently that we noted dissatisfaction with the term "neo-Freudian" among Freudian psychoanalysts as well and that some of them would prefer the term "neo-Adlerian" as Fritz Wittels had suggested in 1939. To find out the extent of this preference the present survey was conducted.

Between April 19 and 25, 1952, a postcard questionnaire was mailed to the 444 members of the American Psychoanalytic Association with the questions: (1) "Do you consider 'neo-Freudian' the more *correct* designation for the movement in psychoanalysis which today goes by this name, or would 'neo-Adlerian' be more *correct*? (2) "Regarding psychoanalytic theory, do you consider yourself a Freudian or rather a 'neo-Freudian'?" The accompanying letter listed as representative "neo-Freudians" Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, Clara Thompson and several others. By May 8, 197 psychoanalysts, that is 44 per cent, had replied. The distribution of the replies was as follows:

*Abstract of the paper read.

Choice of name	Theoretical orientation of respondent		
	Classical Freudian	Freudian with reservations and "neo-Freudian"	None of these and no answer
"neo-Adlerian"	43%	13%	4%
"neo-Freudian"	5%	54%	
neither or no answer	52%	33%	96%
Number of respondents in each category	125	48	24

The important part of the table is the distribution of the replies by the classical Freudians. Among them only 5 per cent considered "neo-Freudian" to be correct and 43 per cent considered "neo-Adlerian" to be more correct, while 52 per cent approved of neither term. From this we may conclude that if forced to choose between the two terms, classical Freudians would in the large majority prefer "neo-Adlerian." This issue then is an instance where classical Freudians and Adlerians are in considerable agreement. The results represent an acknowledgment by the classical Freudians that the theories which have today been accorded such wide acceptance under another name are actually those which were originally formulated by Alfred Adler.