

FREUD'S LAST SESSION

BY MARK ST. GERMAIN

SUGGESTED BY *THE QUESTION OF GOD*
BY DR. ARMAND M. NICHOLI, JR.



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

FREUD'S LAST SESSION
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FREUD'S LAST SESSION
by Mark St. Germain
suggested by *The Question of God* by Dr. Armand M. Nicholi, Jr.

The following acknowledgments must appear on the title page in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play:

Originally produced at Barrington Stage Company, Pittsfield, MA,
Julianne Boyd, Artistic Director; Richard M. Parison, Jr., Producing Director.

Off-Broadway Production produced by
Carolyn Rossi Copeland, Robert Stillman and Jack Thomas.

SPECIAL NOTE ON CD

A CD with cue sheet of the original sound design by Beth Lake is available through the Play Service for \$35.00, plus shipping and handling. The nonprofessional fee for the use of this music is \$25.00 per performance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Playwright wishes to thank the many people who volunteered their time and talent in developing FREUD'S LAST SESSION since its first draft: Dr. Armand M. Nicholi, Jr.; Julie Boyd and the Barrington Stage Company who did a four-day workshop of the play last summer; HB Playwrights Foundation, Donna de Matteo Executive Director, the HB Playwrights Unit; William Hayes and Palm Beach Dramaworks; and Mary Ann Quinson and the Cosmopolitan Club's Drama Committee. Much appreciation goes to Maureen Anderman, Matthew Conlon, Laura Shaine Cunningham, Donna DeMatteo, Rasa Allan Kazlas, Rene Lutz, Marlene Mancini, Giovanni Villari, Fritz Weaver, Robert Zukerman.

Most especially, he would like to thank his invaluable critic, wife and best friend, Maggi St. Germain.

FREUD'S LAST SESSION received its world premiere at the Barrington Stage Company's Stage 2 (Julianne Boyd, Artistic Director; Richard M. Parison, Jr., Producing Director) in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, opening on June 10, 2009. It was directed by Tyler Marchant; the set design was by Brian Prather; the lighting design was by Clifton Taylor; the costume design was by Mark Mariani; the sound design was by Beth Lake; the press representative was Charlie Seidenburg; the casting was by Pat McCorkle, CSA; and the stage manager was Kate J. Cudworth. The cast was as follows:

C.S. LEWIS Mark H. Dold
SIGMUND FREUD Martin Rayner

Carolyn Rossi Copeland, Robert Stillman and Jack Thomas presented the Barrington Stage Company production of FREUD'S LAST SESSION Off-Broadway at the Marjorie S. Deane Little Theater in New York City, opening on July 22, 2010. It was directed by Tyler Marchant; the set design was by Brian Prather; the lighting design was by Clifton Taylor; the costume design was by Mark Mariani; the sound design was by Beth Lake; the press representative was Jim Randolph; the casting was by Pat McCorkle, CSA; and the production stage manager was Kate J. Cudworth. The cast was as follows:

C.S. LEWIS Mark H. Dold
SIGMUND FREUD Martin Rayner

CHARACTERS

SIGMUND FREUD, age 83

C.S. LEWIS, age 40

TIME

September 3, 1939

PLACE

Freud's study
20 Maresfield Gardens
Hampstead, NW London

FREUD'S LAST SESSION

September 3, 1939. Morning.

As lights dim, the voice of a BBC announcer is heard.

BBC ANNOUNCER. There is still no official response to the Prime Minister's ultimatum that all troops be immediately withdrawn from Poland. The German Ministry continues to assert Chancellor Hitler's claim that the Polish state has ignored all offers of peaceful settlement and refuses to respect the frontiers of the Reich. (*Lights slowly up on the study of Dr. Sigmund Freud. The room is filled with books, the walls with artwork. Dr. Freud sits behind his desk, listening to his radio. The desk is crowded with antiquities from around the world; reliefs, statues and busts. A leather chair faces the doctor's desk. Upstage, a couch, covered by a richly embroidered quilt.*) Prime Minister Chamberlain is expected to address the nation shortly. Regular programming will be interrupted to bring you his broadcast. (*Sound of a barking dog offstage.*) We have just received confirmation that Slovakian troops have joined the German invasion — (*Freud turns off his radio. He calls offstage to his dog, Jo-Fi, who continues to bark.*)

FREUD. Jo-fi! You hear someone coming? Smart dog! Come here, Jo-Fi! Run to Papa! (*A bark. No dog.*) Or just sit there. (*Sound of doorbell. Freud looks at his watch and exits. Offstage, he opens the front door.*)

LEWIS. (*Offstage.*) Dr. Freud; I'm Professor Lewis.

FREUD. (*Offstage.*) Good morning, Professor.

LEWIS. (*Offstage.*) Good morning.

FREUD. (*Offstage.*) I had given you up for lost. Come this way; we can speak in my study. (*Freud enters, followed by Lewis.*)

LEWIS. I am terribly sorry to be so late.

FREUD. If I wasn't eighty-three I would say it doesn't matter.

LEWIS. The rail schedules are useless with the evacuations. All the trains are leaving London, not coming here. I watched coach after coach pass through Oxford Station with children they're taking to the countryside. They're emptying hospitals as well.

FREUD. And prisons.

LEWIS. Really?

FREUD. Anywhere air attacks are likely. Thousands of convicts near the end of their sentences are being released.

LEWIS. You've been listening to the radio?

FREUD. Yes. I find it convenient to be warned before being bombed. Chamberlain is due to make an announcement. I must tell you that my doctor will be coming shortly, so our visit must be brief. Let me take your coat. My wife and our housekeeper are out shopping for any canned goods they can find. We must prepare for the worst. *(Freud takes Lewis' coat; Lewis removes a small cardboard box from his pocket.)*

LEWIS. Of course. Perhaps under the circumstances we should simply postpone it.

FREUD. Until when, Professor? Do you count on your tomorrows? I do not. *(Freud exits with Lewis' coat; sound of Jo-Fi barking.)*

LEWIS. What kind of dog is he?

FREUD. *(Offstage.)* A Chou. He stays with me through all my sessions. *(Freud returns.)* Jo-Fi is my emotional barometer. If a patient is calm, he stretches out at my feet. But if a patient is agitated, Jo-Fi stands at my side and never takes his eyes off him.

LEWIS. So what should I make of him running away at the sight of me?

FREUD. He, too, is a stickler for punctuality.

LEWIS. I see. What a marvelous study.

FREUD. My daughter Anna decorated it to be a replica of my office in Vienna.

LEWIS. *(Looks through the French doors.)* You have a beautiful view.

FREUD. The garden, yes. When I looked out my window at home I saw only Nazis burning my books. Please sit. *(Lewis stares at Freud's famous couch. Freud indicates the chair before his desk.)*

Not there. Here.

LEWIS. Thank you.

FREUD. Since we have so little time perhaps we should come to the reason I wrote you.

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FREUD'S LAST SESSION centers on legendary psychoanalyst Dr. Sigmund Freud who invites the young, rising Oxford Don C.S. Lewis to his home in London. On the day England enters World War Two, Freud and Lewis clash about love, sex, the existence of God, and the meaning of life, just weeks before Freud took his own life. FREUD'S LAST SESSION is a deeply touching play filled with humor and exploring the minds, hearts and souls of two brilliant men addressing the greatest questions of all time.

"Delightful! A brainy fencing match of olympic caliber."

—**Bloomberg News**

"It's a sharp, lively discourse, and audience members searching for engaging debate will be pleased ... Mark St. Germain's script is astute, and the humor is plentiful."

—**The New York Times**

"A gem ... great theatre ... intellectually thrilling with both humor and insight in abundance ... the kind of nuance that breathes life into history."

—**New York 1**

"... lively, plausible and provocative ... dynamic, often comical."

—**Associated Press**

"Riveting theatre! In FREUD'S LAST SESSION, Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis engage in a battle of wits that is exciting and thought-provoking ... their extraordinary debate comes alive [in] Mark St. Germain's crisp, carefully calibrated script. FREUD'S LAST SESSION is a theatrical and intellectual delight."

—**The Huffington Post**

"... a juicy intellectual debate between two great minds ... food for thought."

—**The New York Post**

"The play takes on an irresistible intensity."

—**TheaterMania.com**

"Bracing theater! Intractably analytical and amusingly conversational ... wittily and compassionately dramatized clash of personalities and ideologies."

—**CurtainUp**

Also by Mark St. Germain

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