



## ***Jung and Sex: Re-visioning the Treatment of Sexual Issues***

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Available at Amazon: <https://amzn.com/1138919152>

### **JUNG'S CASES INVOLVING SEXUAL CONCERNS FOR REFERENCE AND RESEARCH**

The following list of C. G. Jung's cases involving sexual issues is provided with short descriptions for reference or future research purposes. Given the extent of published material and the amount of still unpublished works, this list is by no means comprehensive. In addition, these cases are listed with just a brief restatement of the information provided by Jung. Further exploration and study are needed to understand these cases in-depth; these snapshots give only a brief glimpse into how Jung treated and viewed these cases. For example, a mere mention of a case in a letter Jung wrote to Freud, does not sufficiently portray the elements of the case nor the time, thought, and care he gave to patients, many of whom were quite vulnerable and ill. In addition, his writings reflect the language and cultural understandings of another era, as well as his biases and judgments—which can be difficult to encounter even as we try to glean many of the important contributions that stemmed from this early pioneering work with the psyche. These cases are summarized and listed merely for the purpose of offering this collection to future researchers. Volumes referenced are from *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*.

- **Volume 1: “On the Psychology and Pathology of So-called Occult Phenomena”** (Jung, 1902/1970, pp. 3-88). Case: Jung described the case of a young female experiencing alternate personalities with somnambulistic attacks. The girl suffered through several secret love affairs and had illegitimate births. The cause was found to be her developing sexuality and her sexual wish fulfillment, which was expressed through split personalities and hysteria (pp. 69-70).
- **Volume 2: “Psychoanalysis and Association Experiments”** (Jung, 1906/1973, pp. 288-317). Case: Miss E was treated for insomnia and anxiety but could not be hypnotized and showed strong emotions to certain aspects of her case history. After lengthy treatment by Jung, word associations showed strong erotic complexes and an obsession with sexual fantasies. The result led to uncovering childhood sexual trauma that was provoked by witnessing sexual encounters. Her repression of obsessive tendencies led to problems in other parts of her functioning. After treatment focusing on uncovering the roots of the complexes, the obsessions subsided and the patient recovered and no longer suffered from insomnia (pp. 304-317).
- **Volume 2: “Association, Dream, and Hysterical Symptom”** (Jung, 1909/1973, pp. 353-407). Case: Jung described the lengthy treatment of a 24-year-old female who suffered hysterical symptoms from several complexes, including a sexual complex. She had repressed sexual feelings and evaded sexual questions. Her word association tests showed strong resistance, suggesting sexual trauma, and her dream analysis revealed a strong erotic complex. After she was

discharged, her physician later reported to Jung that her symptoms were the same as earlier ones. Jung discussed this case in terms of the difficulty and necessity of strengthening the normal ego in the treatment of hysteria (pp. 353-406).

- **Volume 3: “The Psychology of Dementia Praecox”** (Jung, 1907/1960, pp. 1-151). Case: Jung provided a very brief overview of a case of a young lady who could not bear to watch as dust was beaten from her overcoat. The woman was found to have a masochistic disposition. Her father used to spank her, causing sexual excitement; anything that resembled this act would send the patient into a frenzied sexual complex and she would masturbate compulsively. Jung provoked the complex in treatment by telling the patient she would have to obey him, resulting in the patient becoming sexually aroused in a therapy session (p. 46).
- **Volume 3: “The Psychology of Dementia Praecox”** (Jung, 1907/1960, pp. 1-151). Case: Jung treated a middle-aged woman dressmaker suffering from hallucinations and paranoid delusions. Her erotic wishes and crude sexual symbols were revealed and addressed by Jung through dream analysis. Jung posited that the unconscious sometimes finds no outlet and hallucinations are the only means by which symptoms can be expressed. He also noted how the case gave ample weight to criticism of his method of treatment, for the case showed many weaknesses in the psychoanalytic approach (pp. 99-151).
- **Volume 4: “The Freudian Theory of Hysteria”** (Jung, 1908/1961, pp. 10-24). Case: Jung described an intelligent young woman in her twenties with psychotic hysteria, who at ages 3 or 4 held back defecating until painful. This was replaced by masturbation at age 7. Once, her father smacked her “bare buttocks” (p. 20) causing sexual excitement in her, which she felt every time she saw his hands or her brother being disciplined. She later developed compulsive sex fantasies and alternated between periods of depression and hysterical fits. Her case was an early example to Jung of Freud’s concept of infantile libido transference, which was discovered as a part of her strong negative father complex. She felt disgust and unbearable difficulty in showing any affection to her father (pp. 20-22).
- **Volume 4: “The Theory of Psychoanalysis”** (Jung, 1913/1961, pp. 83-226). Case: A young man drawn to same-sex attraction had no interest in girls for long phases of his life but eventually began to date women. The young man was later jilted by a girl he wanted to marry. After this painful episode, the man took a strong dislike to any women and turned toward men again. For Jung, the case seemed to reveal the transitory nature of libido (though this is quite questionable as it seemed to prove the opposite) (pp. 109-110).
- **Volume 4: “The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual”** (Jung, 1949/1961, pp. 301-323). Case: Jung described his treatment of a 34-year-old man suffering from depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts. The man also suffered from repeated impotence at brothels. At age 15, an older boy sexually molested him in the woods. He also was severely bullied as a youth. His father was extremely domineering and strict; Jung felt the patient’s relationship with his father had a fateful impact, which resulted in masochistic and homosexual tendencies. Jung understood the case as an example of the man’s failure to individuate and leave the strong bonds of his family. It demonstrated to Jung the potency of the family constellation to override the need to separate from the family for the purposes of individuation and to recover from multiple traumas (pp. 308-311).
- **Volume 5: “The Transformation of Libido”** (Jung, 1952/1967, pp. 142-170). Case: Jung saw a woman who suffered from catatonic depressions and mild psychosis. At the beginning of treatment, the woman told Jung of a very painful memory and fell into a hypnotic, dream-like state, showing signs of sexual excitement. Jung said she became completely unaware of his presence and began to perform the act of masturbation in the therapy room. Her hand gestures replicated early childhood behaviors, suggesting early infantile sexual development (p. 142).
- **Volume 5: “Symbols of the Mother and of Rebirth”** (Jung, 1952/1967, pp. 207-273). Case: Jung’s patient, Miss Miller, was a woman whose symbols in hymns, visions, and poems were studied for their importance in channeling libido through imagery and as a means for converting

secrets or other forms of neurotic energy. Jung's writings on the treatment of this case are lengthy and provide detailed analysis of the patient's psychic material (p. 207).

- **Volume 6: “The Type Problem in Poetry”** (Jung, 1921/1971, pp. 166-272). Story: Jung used Wagner's myth of Parsifal to discuss how the character rescued his libido from the demands of instincts and their compulsive nature. He said the sexual symbolism in the tale was undeniable and that the grail represented a release of sexuality. He believed the tale held important indications of how one should direct one's compulsive, animal nature into symbolic functions rather than express it in brutish attitudes and actions (p. 219).
- **Volume 6: “The Type Problem in Psychopathology”** (Jung, 1921/1971, pp. 273-288). Case: Jung referred to the case of a split and neurotic sex-addicted male, who navigated between introverted and intellectual idealism and spending time in dirty brothels without any admission or sense of moral conflict. Jung saw this split as an acute compulsion neurosis, as if the two parts of the man were completely distinct (p. 281).
- **Volume 7: “Psychoanalysis”** (Jung, 1943/1966, pp. 9-18). Case: Jung discussed a young female patient with a strong erotic disruption in the form of an early trauma that unconsciously created a neurosis. The erotic sphere was impacted by the earlier event and, through psychoanalysis, the patient was able to remember the unconscious event and link it to her developmental issues (pp. 16-18).
- **Volume 7: “The Synthetic or Constructive Method”** (Jung, 1943/1966, pp. 80-89). Case: In his writing on the case, Jung referred to his patient as the “friend of Mrs. X.” Dream analysis revealed a secret and repressed erotic desire that was denied by the conscious personality of the patient. By analyzing the dream symbols, Jung was able to bring unconscious same-sex desires into consciousness and provide explanation for the patient's extreme anxiety around this particular friend (pp. 83-87).
- **Volume 7: “On the Psychology of the Unconscious”** (Jung, 1943/1966, pp. 1-119). Case: Jung described a case of a man with same-sex attractions and the interpretation of his dreams. He used the case to describe what he felt was a positive example of how the unconscious brings forth material for integration with consciousness to benefit and support the patient. In this case, the patient came to therapy with the objective to convert his sexual desires toward heterosexuality. Jung interpreted his dreams and pointed the man in the direction of marrying a woman. The patient became hesitant, resistant, and antagonistic toward Jung (pp. 102-109) and left the treatment. (Jung's own bias toward heterosexuality caused him to wrongly interpret the man's dreams and his unconscious desires.)
- **Volume 10: “The Love Problem of a Student”** (Jung, 1928/1970, pp. 97-112). Lecture: In a lecture to students in December 1922 at the University of Zurich, Jung discussed at length how students should go about integrating sexual instincts within the whole personality, as well as through acceptable forms of social and psychological development. He spoke extensively about his, often contradictory, views on masturbation, homosexuality, marriage, promiscuity, and women (pp. 97-112). (Lecture delivered 1922)
- **Volume 16: “Appendix: The Realities of Practical Psychotherapy”** (Jung, 1937/1966, pp. 327-338). Case: Jung mentioned a case that caused him great trouble. The patient was a 25-year-old woman with high emotionality, extreme sensitivity, and hysterical episodes. He described her as highly argumentative and intelligent. Behind her resistances, Jung discovered elements he said surpassed anything he had clinically encountered. She revealed perversions, appearing to him like nymphomaniac possessions, and highly charged erotic fantasies. She lost hope in treatment, but then Jung came forward with a dream he had of her. Her symptoms abated, but new and more somatic ones emerged. Jung felt lost in the case and gave up hope, though the patient felt the treatment was going well. His encounter revealed to him that in some strange way this woman had a strong attachment and positive relationship with her neurosis, which was a new and mysterious phenomenon for Jung (pp. 330-333).

- **Volume 18: “The Question of Medical Intervention”** (Jung, 1950/1976, pp. 347-348). Case: Jung was asked to review the decision of a doctor on the permissibility of a gender transition case. Jung responded he felt nothing could be done psychotherapeutically to help the patient and, because it was not illegal and the patient wanted it, he saw no issue regarding its permissibility. However, Jung cautioned about the social and cultural taboos, and highlighted potential concerns for the reputation of the medical profession (pp. 347-348).
- **Freud/Jung Letters: Letter to Freud from Jung dated November 26, 1906** (Freud & Jung, 1974, pp. 9-10). Case: Jung described a case he was currently seeing involving a German colleague with obsessional neurosis stemming from sexual complexes dating back to the age of 7. Jung noted the anxiety at first disappeared in analysis, but then returned in reaction to traumas. Jung questioned if analysis would work for the “habitual hysteric” (pp. 9-10). (Letter, November 26, 1906)
- **Freud/Jung Letters: Letter to Freud from Jung dated April 17, 1907** (Freud & Jung, 1974, pp. 35-38). Cases: Jung shared several cases with Freud that involved a “hellish compulsion to autoerotism” (p. 36) and remarked that he saw more than one patient who died as a result of these symptoms. He viewed these cases as having developmental issues involving inhibition, when no grave anatomical issues were to be discovered. He also mentioned a case of an “educated young catatonic” (p. 36) who began masturbating early in life and had sexual relations with his sister. Jung remarked that a deterioration set in with intense hallucinations. He detailed that the patient had episodes of “mounting excitement, masturbates incessantly, sticks his finger rhythmically into mouth and anus alternately, drinks urine and eats stool” (p. 37). He believed several cases demonstrated how feelings of sexual excitement frequently are displaced (pp. 36-37). (Letter, April 17, 1907)
- **Freud/Jung Letters: Letter to Freud from Jung dated May 13, 1907** (Freud & Jung, 1974, pp. 43-45). Case: Jung treated a 6-year-old girl for “excessive masturbation and lying after alleged seduction by her foster-father” (p. 45). He described the case as very complicated and questioned how such a young girl could make up such stories or have such knowledge. Though he considered that the account might be false, he was puzzled and asked Freud if he had ever seen such a young child in this situation. Jung regarded the hypnosis as effective but that the child with “utmost innocence” evaded all requests to reenact the trauma. He mentioned that during the first session the girl hallucinated spontaneously about a woman telling her about a sausage that “would get fatter and fatter” (p. 45). He wondered if someone was telling the girl sexual stories and further described the young girl as not having any affect that represented consciousness of trauma (p. 45). (Letter, May 13, 1907)
- **Freud/Jung Letters: Letter to Freud from Jung dated June 19, 1908** (Freud & Jung, 1974, pp. 155-157). Case: Jung and Freud exchanged several letters concerning their fellow colleague and psychoanalyst Otto Gross, whom Jung was treating for a case of obsessional neurosis. The analysis consumed significant amounts of Jung’s time and at times he felt that Gross was analyzing him (for which he actually felt some benefit). He wrote, “The Gross affair has consumed me in the fullest sense of the word. I have sacrificed days and nights to him” (p. 155). Jung said that Gross showed no sign of a developmental past and “no psychological yesterday” (p. 155). He saw the patient as stuck in the infantile sexual complex, which remained completely autoerotic. Jung described to Freud how this was one of the “harshes” (p. 156) experiences in his life because he saw in Gross’ illness some of the most challenging aspects of himself and his own nature, such that Gross often seemed to Jung like a twin brother (pp. 155-157). (Letter, June 19, 1908)
- **Freud/Jung Letters: Letter to Freud from Jung dated December 21, 1908** (Freud & Jung, 1974, pp. 188-190). Case: Jung treated a 40-year-old woman who had been interned because she solicited every man on the street demanding coitus. Previously, her libido had decreased for years with her husband but then returned some years later after difficult childbirth. The husband was

disinterested in this renewed sexual energy. She became convinced her husband was saving his erotic energy for other women, so she demanded, through forceful means, that he have coitus with her up to four times per night and more during the day. She was insatiable and demanded sex even with her brother and brother-in-law; she also went into the streets begging for sex. For Jung, the case seemed a convincing example dementia praecox, hallmarked by a failed or empty attempt at compensation (pp. 189-190). (Letter, December 21, 1908)

- **Memories, Dreams, Reflections: “Psychiatric Activities”** (Jung, 1961/1989, pp. 114-145). Case: Jung described the treatment of a Jewish woman suffering from severe anxiety that manifested in strong flirtations and sex; she had already been in analysis with another therapist but was transferred because a strong erotic transference had developed, and her former therapist was concerned about the destruction of his marriage. Jung had a series of dreams about a Jewish girl that symbolized the issues the patient was encountering. He identified a severe father complex and shared these dreams with her, which released her from an unconscious neurosis in service to the father complex. Jung said the neurosis left and a cure was accomplished, noting the treatment required no method except attention to the numinous aspects of the patient’s unconscious (pp. 138-140).
- **Interviews and Encounters: “Men, Women, and God”** (Jung, 1955/1977, pp. 244-251). Case: Jung briefly referred to a case of a couple he saw in treatment for low sex drive who were so compatible and similar that they had an ideal relationship but one totally lacking any sexual desire. Jung made the case that some degree of tension was required for intimate relations and that their problem was as challenging as couples that were extreme opposites (p. 247).
- **Visions: Notes of the Seminar Given in 1930-1934** (Jung, 1997). Case: Jung presented a series of seminars in English over a four-year period to his circle in Zurich that was based on the active imagination experiences and paintings of his patient, Christiana Morgan. She was a 28-year-old American who had an impassioned and turbulent analysis with Jung, as she embarked on a lengthy engagement with the depths of her unconscious including its strong erotic contents. She chronicled her individuation process in writings and drawings.

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