

HYSTERICAL GIRL: A CONVERSATION WITH KATE NOVACK

CONTEXT NOTES

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SIGMUND FREUD'S A CASE OF HYSTERIA (DORA): BACKGROUND AND NARRATIVE

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) treated Ida Bauer (Dora) from October to the end of December 1900, the same year in which he published *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He wrote her case history as "Fragment of An Analysis of a Case of Hysteria" in 1901 but did not publish it until 1905.

Philip Bauer, who had previously been treated by Freud for syphilis, brought his daughter Ida to Freud for analysis of her "hysterical symptoms." Ida claimed that her father was having an affair with Frau K., a close friend of the family, and that Herr K. had pressed himself on her (forcing a kiss) when she was fourteen. When she was sixteen, Herr K. actively propositioned her. Although Ida's father and Herr K. both denied these claims, Freud believed Ida. However, he maintained that she was "in love" with Herr K. and (far from feeling repulsed) had been sexually aroused by his advances. Ida cut off treatment on December 31, 1900.

Philip Rieff, in his 1963 Introduction to the Collier paperback edition of the Dora case history, summarized this tangled set of relationships as follows:

"The sick daughter has a sick father, who has a sick mistress, who has a sick husband, who proposes himself to the sick daughter as her lover. Dora does not want to hold hands in this charmless circle—although Freud does, at one point, indicate that she should" (x).

SEXUAL ASSAULT, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND #METOO TIMELINES

1964: Rape and Sexual Assault prohibited by civil statute, as a part of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

1980: US Supreme Court affirms that Title VII's prohibition on sex discrimination includes sexual harassment. Note: Sexual harassment" term coined in mid-1970s.

1991: Anita Hill testifies against Clarence Thomas' Supreme Court nomination.

2006: Term "Me Too" coined by civil rights activist Tarana Burke.

2017: Harvey Weinstein accused of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape. Hashtag #MeToo goes viral.

2018: Christine Blasey Ford testifies against Bret Kavanaugh's Supreme Court nomination on grounds of sexual assault.

Event details >