

## IRMA: FEMININE ENTRAPPED

### INTRODUCTION.

In his letter to Wilhelm Fliess, of June 12, 1900, Freud referred to a visit to Villa Bellevue, where on the night of 24 July 1895 the secret of dreams was revealed to him. Freud wondered whether some day a marble tablet would be placed on the villa to commemorate the dream and its interpretation. Freud included the dream in his work, *THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS*, which, in a manner of speaking, re-introduced dream analysis in Western Civilization and ushered in modern depth psychology.

Freud's interpretation of his own dream, within a psychoanalytic framework, cannot be improved. Freud utilized the "objective" approach to dream analysis, that is, individuals in the dream represent themselves. A hundred years later there is opportunity to analyze his dream with a subjective perspective, that is, individuals in the dream represents psychological features of the dreamer.

The value that Freud placed on the dream and its central role in heralding modern psychology suggest that the dream possessed a collective aspect. For a hundred years the dream has been instructing new generations of psychiatrists and psychologists, particularly depth psychologists. It may be safe to conclude that the dream no longer pertains solely to Freud and the individuals found in the dream, but also to Western Civilization.

In this chapter, Freud's dream is interpreted in a subjective manner. The collective characteristics of the dream are also examined. It may be that the dream, although a hundred years old, relates to matters of today.

### THE DREAM'S BACKGROUND.

The dream itself is found in the Appendix. The dream is taken from James Strachey's translation of *THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS*; Avon Books, 1967. The dream concerned Irma, a client of Freud, whose family had an "old-established" friendship with Freud. He claimed that his treatment of Irma "ended in a partial success." She was relieved of her hysterical anxiety, but some somatic symptoms remained. He had proposed "a solution to the patient which she seemed unwilling to accept." There seemed to have been a variance between them and treatment was broken off for the summer vacation. During the day prior to the dream, one of his oldest friends, Otto, who had been staying with Irma and her family, visited Freud. Freud inquired how

he found her. The friend replied, "She's better but not quite well." Freud observed that Otto's comments were annoying. He felt that Otto was siding with Irma's family who "had never looked with favor on the treatment." That same evening Freud wrote out Irma's case study with the intention of showing it to Dr. M., who was a "leading figure" in Freud's circle, in order to justify his treatment. That night he had the dream.

### REPROACHING IRMA.

“A large hall--numerous guests, whom we were receiving.--Among them was Irma. I at once took her on one side, as though to answer her letter and to reproach her for not having accepted my `solution' yet.”

This beginning has a collective atmosphere, and we can note the social connection between Freud and Irma. The "residue of the day" clearly had an imprint on the dream. Freud had been psychologically involved with Irma during the day. A good case can be made to view the dream "objectively," that is, the dream has something to say about Freud's reactions to the objective Irma. The opening sentences also highlight the conflict between Freud and Irma. The disagreement leaves Freud frustrated and he seems to put the burden of fault on Irma.

If we were to view Irma "subjectively," that is, as a projection of his inner woman or anima, then the psychological situation would be quite different. Freud reproaches his inner feminine, which is to say, that the ego wishes to run roughshod over the anima rather than listen to what she is saying. Generally, a man pays a psychological price when he disregards the anima. But there are times when the anima must be "reproached" in order for her to act appropriately. But in this dream, the contents indicate that ego may be treating the anima inappropriately. As a collective dream, Irma represents the collective feminine; she is archetypal and embodies "every woman." In this context, Freud, as representative of the collective masculine, rebukes the feminine or collective anima.

Subjectively, a dreamer should always take heed when his anima projection is ill and particularly, if she is in great pain and choking. A man's anima directs his relationships. A "sick" anima infers a "sickness" in regards to how a man relates. A review of Freud's life indicates that he always had problems with relationships. This dream discloses the cause for such difficulty; his anima, the capacity to relate, is "ill." There is reason to conclude that Freud remained in conflict with the anima throughout his life.

### IRMA IS CHOKING.

“I said to her: `If you still get pains, it's really only your fault." She replied: `If you only knew what pains I've got now in my throat and stomach and abdomen--it's choking me.”

Something is choking Irma. Objectively, Freud noted that the pains in the stomach referred to Irma's somatic symptoms but they were "not very prominent." He also noted that "pains in the

throat and abdomen and constriction of the throat played scarcely any part in her illness. Rather, Irma displayed "symptoms of nausea and disgust". He could not think of an explanation for the pains that Irma talked about in the dream. Subjectively, we can ask: Why is the anima choking? In what manner was Freud, that is, his psychological viewpoint/treatment, choking his anima (and collective feminine)? (The dream's appearance in a book and its importance to the founder of psychoanalysis has caused the dream to take on a collective character.)

The choking is being caused by her pains. Subjectively, the pains are psychological. The pain suggests the double blow that women often receive: "it is your fault that you got raped because you were stupid to be there." In Irma's case, Freud seems to be saying: "You're in pain because you're stupid not to follow my suggestions." But we can ask: Is she correct not to follow his treatment? Regretfully, the masculine world keeps blaming the feminine because the former refuses to acknowledge the harm that it is doing. The anima is trying to inform Freud, "if you only knew." But he does not listen, he does not want to know; he wants to blame. If Freud understood this dynamic, he might have taken the effort to discover what his ego was doing to cause such pain and choking in the feminine. There is reason to suspect that Freud's theories have brought pain to the collective feminine.

### ORGANIC TROUBLE.

"I was alarmed and looked at her. She looked pale and puffy. I thought to myself that after all I must be missing some organic trouble."

At this point, Freud says "I began to suspect that someone else was being substituted for her [Irma]." Freud makes an honest attempt to be introspective when he noted that if Irma's symptoms were organic, then "the blame for my lack of success would also have been gotten rid of." At the subjective level, Irma's paleness and puffiness add to the sick psychological condition of his personal anima (and also of the collective feminine). The relationship between somatic symptoms and stress is well known. Was Freud's course of treatment causing Irma stress; was psychological theory put forth by Freud stressful for women?

Freud does not want to be found at fault. He mentioned that he was preparing Irma's case to present to Dr. M., no doubt to receive his approval and discredit Otto's reproach. Freud's attempt to seek out the truth is balanced by his unconscious need to be perceived blameless. This wish to be blameless combined with her choking might have indicated that there were reasons to question his treatment.

### RECALCITRANCE.

"I took her to the window to look down her throat. She showed recalcitrance, like women with

artificial dentures. I thought to myself that there was really no need for her to do that.”

Freud associates recalcitrance with a governess who seemed a picture of youthful beauty, but who, when opening her mouth took measures to conceal her plates. Freud made another association regarding a woman friend of Irma's, "so in the dream I had replaced my patient with her friend." Actually, Freud believed that Irma's friend might also ask him to relieve her of the symptoms that Irma exhibited. (Throughout the analysis of this dream, Freud's free association enables him to substitute one objective person for another. The manner in which he treats Irma's friend indicates that he keeps the interpretation at the objective level and thus avoids the subjective dimension, for example, the Irma in me or the Otto in me.

Subjectively, the anima is recalcitrant to the ego's impositions. Freud takes no notice that the feminine might have a good reason for being recalcitrant. The issue of dental plates is secondary to that of a woman's resistance to unwanted intervention (looking into her mouth). With a century to achieve hindsight, it might be said that the collective feminine has been recalcitrant to open her mouth to psychoanalysis and accept Freud's theories regarding the feminine.

#### QUESTIONABLE ADVICE.

“She then opened her mouth properly and on the right I found a big white patch; at another place I saw extensive whitish grey scabs upon some remarkable curly structures which were evidently modelled on the turbinal bones of the nose.”

Irma eventually accommodates Freud and opens her mouth. In his associations pertaining to these images, Freud referred to his use of cocaine. He wrote: "I was making frequent use of cocaine at that time to reduce some troublesome nasal swellings, and I had heard a few days earlier that one of my women patients who had followed my example had developed an extensive necrosis of the nasal mucous membrane." He continued, "I had been the first to recommend the use of cocaine, in 1885, and the recommendation had brought serious reproaches down on me. The misuse of that drug had hastened the death of a dear friend of mine." Freud did not follow up on this insight. The association of nose with cocaine and the death of a female patient who followed his example could have led Freud to question whether his suggestions to Irma were also harmful.

#### DR. M., THE POSITIVE SHADOW.

“I at once called Dr. M., and he repeated the examination and confirmed it...Dr. M. looked quite different from usual; he was very pale, he walked with a limp and his chin was clean-shaven.”

Freud commented that Mr. M. held an esteemed position in Freud's circle. Freud noted that "I had on one occasion produced a severe toxic state in a woman patient by repeatedly prescribing what was at that time regarded as a harmless remedy (sulphonal), and had hurriedly turned for

assistance and support to my experienced senior colleague [Dr. M.]." He added, "my patient... succumbed to the poison.....It seemed as if I had been collecting all the occasions which I could bring up against myself as evidence of lack of medical conscientiousness." These associations provided further grounds for Freud to have questioned his "psycho-medical" treatment of Irma.

Freud related that Dr. M.'s "unhealthy appearance often caused his friends anxiety." But Freud felt that the limp and clean-shaven aspects meant that they could only apply to someone else. He then referred to his brother who was clean-shaven and who recently acquired a limp and commented that he was "ill-humour with each of them [Dr M. and brother]: they had both rejected a certain suggestion I had recently laid before them."

In the dream, the subjective Dr. M.-in-Freud symbolizes a positive undeveloped shadow aspect in Freud. The Dr. M.-in-Freud confirms what the ego-core (Freud in the dream) found in Irma's mouth: Irma's symptoms of an affliction. How would the "clean-shaven" Dr. M. have treated Irma? Would the Dr. M.-in-Freud have changed the treatment? Would he have continued to reproach Irma?

We can only speculate what "clean-shaven", psychologically speaking, meant to Freud. A beard was common among men at the turn of the past century. It may be said that the "clean-shaven" appearance emerged in the 20th Century with the rise of modern technology and shift in bourgeois mannerisms. There is reason to believe that the 20th Century "clean-shaven" and the 19th Century beard-laden, in general, would reflect different mind-sets. And why is Mr. M. limp? Is the Dr. M. positive shadow somewhat cripple? If so, it will not be as easy task for Freud to access the Dr. M.-in-Freud.

### LEOPOLD.

"My friend Otto was now standing beside her as well, and my friend Leopold was percussing her through her bodice and saying: 'She has a dull area low down on the left.' He also indicated that a portion of the skin on the left shoulder was infiltrated. (I noticed this, just as he did, in spite of her dress.)"

Freud mentioned that Otto and Leopold were related and were fated to be in competition with each other. They behaved differently, Leopold was more "slow but sure" and "prudent." Otto was "quick." Freud mentioned that Leopold on occasion would re-examine a case and then, while Freud discussed the case with Otto, Leopold would make "an unexpected contribution." Subjectively, the Leopold-in-Freud is the capacity to come upon the correct diagnosis in a slow but prudent manner. Such is inferred from the manner in which Leopold made the diagnosis even though Irma kept on her bodice. Freud referred to a celebrated physician who "never made a physical examination of his patients [females] except through their clothes." Such sensitivities no doubt reflected the "Victorian" reactions to the female body. But they also set up situations for ill informed diagnoses of women. (Freud hints of some apprehension in this area when he wrote that he "had no desire to penetrate more deeply" the manner in which doctors physically examine adult females.)

## ELIMINATING THE TOXIN.

“Dr. M. said: ‘There's no doubt it's an infection, but no matter; dysentery will supervene and the toxin will be eliminated.’”

To what degree did female patients "suffer" because of his advice? The possibility that dysentery might eliminate the toxin struck Freud as ridiculous. Although Freud considered Dr. M. a very competent physician, in this situation he viewed Dr. M. as an ignoramus. Freud went on to associate dysentery with diphtheria (in German both words sound similar). Finally, Freud concluded "I could no longer feel any doubt, therefore, this part of the dream was expressing derision at physicians [to include Dr. M.] who are ignorant of hysteria." (A topic that Freud thought he mastered). He added: "But what would be my motive for treating this friend of mine [Dr. M.] so badly? That was a very simple matter. Dr. M. was just as little in agreement with my 'solution' as Irma herself. So I had already revenged myself in this dream on two people: on Irma with the words 'If you still get pains, it's your own fault,' and on Dr. M. by the wording of the nonsensical consolation that I put into his mouth [dysentery will supervene]."

Freud missed the profundity of depth psychology: it is not just the ego that puts words in the mouth of dream figures. Often these words come from the deeper psyche, or archetypes. Because Freud's interpretative approach is objective, he views Dr. M. objectively and derides Dr. M. for making an incorrect medical statement. Thus, Freud shuts out the Dr.M.-in-Freud and fails to recognize a "deeper" psychological value in the Dr.M.-in-himself (who perhaps contains aspects of the archetypal "wise old man"). By keeping to the subjective level of analysis, we can grasp that the Dr. M.-in-Freud represents not only the medically competent side of Freud, but archetypally, a more profound psychological knowing. In this sense, credence can be given to Dr. M.'s wise solution: defecate the toxin. (It is common for dysentery to cause frequent passage of stool or diarrhea.)

Symbolically, Dr. M. is acknowledging that dysentery will cause Irma (Freud's inner Anima) to 'shit' out the toxin that Freud is giving to her and also to the collective feminine. Dysentery is not pleasant, but it will produce a lot of feces or much 'shitting' and that is what the collective feminine must do. Freud is imposing a treatment of hysteria on Irma, but the anima is choking on it and needs to 'shit' it out. Clearly, the issue is not an objective medical explanation, but of lending symbolic meaning to the dream's content.

## OTTO, THE DARK SHADOW.

“We were directly aware, too, of the origin of her infection. Not long before, when she was feeling unwell, my friend Otto had given her an injection of a preparation of propyl...propionic acid...trimethylamine (and I saw before me the formula for this printed in heavy type)...”

The Leopold-in-Freud, the slow but sure Freud, initially identifies the problem, and the Dr.M.-in-Freud, the expert physician, confirms the presence of an infection. The latter also assures that the involuntary organic process (emptying of the bowels) associated with a disease in the "guts" that is characterized by abdominal pains (which Irma reports), will eliminate the toxin brought on by the infection. But what role does Otto play?

Freud associated propyl with a liqueur that Otto had earlier given to him. The liqueur had a smell of fuel oil and Freud refused to touch it. When his wife recommends that he give it to the servants, he vetoed the suggestion "adding in a philanthropic spirit that there was no need for them to be poisoned either." Freud associated Trimethylamine with "sexuality, the factor to which I attributed the greatest importance in the origin of the nervous disorders which it was my aim to cure." A friend, several years earlier, "mentioned [a sexual theory] among other things that he believed that one of the products of sexual metabolism was trimethylamine." In the dream, the formula is given in heavy print. At the psychological level of analysis, careful attention should be given to this point. On the one hand, Freud links propyl with "liqueur," "fuel oil" and "poison," and on the other hand, he associates trimethylamine with a sexual theory. Symbolically, the formula can be re-typed: "bad smelling, poisonous sexual theory = toxin given to the collective Irma."

In the dream Otto injects Irma with the toxin that when interpreted subjectively, it is the Otto-in-Freud who does the injecting. The Otto-in-Freud, the quick reacting physician who perhaps is somewhat obsessed with female sexuality, reflects the objective Freud who has to "cure" the sexually-caused nervous disorders in women.

Freud clearly associated Irma's illness with sexual issues. He commented: "if I wanted to find an excuse for the failure of my treatment in her case, what I could best appeal to would no doubt be this fact of her widowhood." His strong convictions in this area caused Freud to ridicule physicians, to include his esteemed senior colleague Dr. M., who cannot diagnose hysteria or detect the sexual dynamics associated with hysteria. This same part of Freud, most likely the Otto-in-Freud, cannot accept that women know what ails them and thus, he is apt not to listen to them.

Freud did not disclose what he proposed to Irma as his solution, but we can speculate, given his sexual imperative, that it conveyed sexual overtones. Irma resisted the solution. Perhaps, she resists overtures regarding re-marriage. For the moment, she possesses a single status that may provide avenues toward self-empowerment and gender identity. (This of course, upsets the patriarchal order.)

Freud evinces a naiveté; he seems oblivious of the role that the patriarchal-oriented culture plays on feminine self-image and sexual identity. Rather, he blames the pains that the feminine experiences on the feminine, the victim of patriarchal repression, rather than blame the patriarchal-imposed culture that infects the feminine. In this regard, the Otto-in-Freud-in-the-patriarchy infect the collective feminine with a "bad smelling, poisonous sexual theory." Both the objective Irma, and collective feminine resist the "solution."

## DISDAIN.

“Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly.... And probably the syringe had not been clean.”

Psychologically, failure to clean the syringe hints of total disdain for Irma, and collectively, for the feminine. If nothing else, the syringe should be clean. Much better, of course, would be a clean syringe and an appropriate formula. In short, the dream ends revealing the contempt that exists when the Ottos-in-Freud/ Patriarchy treat the feminine, the collective Irma.

## OBJECTIVE INTERPRETATION.

Once Freud finished with giving associations to the dream content, he provided an interpretation:

“I was not responsible for the persistence of Irma's pains, but that Otto was. Otto had in fact annoyed me by his remarks about Irma's incomplete cure, and the dream gave me my revenge by throwing the reproach back on to him. The dream acquitted me of the responsibility for Irma's condition by showing that it was due to other factors--it produced a whole series of reasons. The dream presented a particular state of affairs as I should have wished it to be. **THUS, ITS CONTENT WAS THE FULFILLMENT OF WISH AND ITS MOTIVE WAS A WISH.**”

Freud felt that the dreams cleared him of reproach. He summarized:

“I was not to blame for Irma's pains, since she herself was to blame for them by refusing to accept my solution. I was not concerned with Irma's pains, since they were of an organic nature and quite incurable by psychological treatment. Irma's pains could be satisfactorily explained by her widowhood which I had no means of altering. Irma's pains had been caused by Otto giving her an incautious injection of an unsuitable drug.”

Freud's theory of dream interpretation is based on an "objective" level of analysis. It also links dreams with wish fulfillment. In his commentary, we can also detect the role that the "residue of the day" and "free association" play in dream interpretation. There is no doubt in Freud that Irma's pains come from her failure to obey his solution. The ego is so sure of itself that it cannot broach any questioning of its conclusions. Regardless of Freud's failure to consider the subjective level of dream interpretation, the interpretation of his first dream and, more specifically, his work, **THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS**, were remarkable accomplishments. They demonstrated the existence of the unconscious and, as such, they ushered in modern depth psychology.

Freud mentioned that certain "considerations" restrained him from pursuing further the interpretation of a personal dream. He ended by writing: "For the moment I am satisfied with the achievement of this one piece of fresh knowledge." He also wrote in a testy manner: "If anyone



should feel tempted to express a hasty condemnation of my reticence, I would advise him to make the experiment of being franker than I am." Those who follow their dreams know well the problem that Freud brings up in regards to being "frank." The issue of interpretation here is not one of being "franker," but of the approach that the interpreter utilizes. Freud employed the objective method. A subjective approach produces another interpretation. It is expected that subjective and objective ways of interpretation will diverge. Theoretically, it is beneficial to interpret dreams by using both approaches.

### SUBJECTIVE INTERPRETATION.

Subjectively, the dream addresses Freud's treatment of his anima as projected by Irma. The subjective approach permits us to observe Freud's conflict with his inner feminine. If nothing else, this knowledge could have guided him to inquire about the conflict. The dream further instructed Freud to develop a stronger psychological contact with a positive shadow aspect which is projected through Dr. M. The Dr.M.-in-Freud suggests the part of Freud that "knows" the right solution.

Most important, the dream instructed Freud that he possessed a dark shadow, the Otto-in-Freud. It is most probable that Freud's sexual complex inhabited this shadow figure. The dream drew attention to the manner in which the Otto-in-Freud did harm to the feminine. Interpreting the dream subjectively would have given Freud the opportunity to confront his sexual complex. Perhaps, this might have altered his understanding of feminine sexuality and psychology.

Rather than keep to the primary content of the dream, why Irma (his anima) chokes, Freud in his interpretation proceeds to clear himself of reproach. The dream infers that Freud projects blame outwardly onto others, such as the objective Otto. An ego defense of "projection" precludes him from gaining greater insight from the dream. (It should be added that the objective level of analysis comports with Freud's theory of "projection" as a defense mechanism.)

In his objective interpretation, Freud views his conduct as exemplary and cannot accept that he is responsible for Irma's pain. Objectively it is correct to blame Otto. Bringing the analysis to the subjective level would have meant that Freud would have had to address and blame the Otto-in-himself. This shadow character in Freud impacts adversely on Irma's actual treatment. The dream clarifies that Otto-in-Freud (as shadow figure) is responsible for the pain that Irma suffers, and his injection of trimethylamine (sexual theory) is the precise cause for Irma's afflictions.

In contrast to the negative shadow that inflicts the wrong treatment or solution, the positive shadow figure, Dr.M.-in-Freud, pronounces the correct treatment or solution: a wrenching process of defecation that, although distressing (pain caused by dysentery), will eliminate the toxin. Clearly, this requires that the injections (impositions) of trimethylamine (sexual theory) cease.

## COLLECTIVE INTERPRETATION.

Freud was a product of the European turn of the century patriarchal order. As such, he was similarly unconscious of the degree to which the patriarchal order oppressed the feminine psyche. He probably considered himself helpful to the feminine and not a doer of harm. At the collective level of analysis, Irma symbolizes the collective feminine that receives toxin from the collective Otto-in-the-patriarchy. Freud, as representative of the collective patriarchy, cannot observe that his sexual theory of feminine psychology is spurious and "infectious".

Because Freud ridiculed Dr. M.'s contention that dysentery would "cure" Irma of the toxin, Freud discards the symbolic meaning of dysentery, that is, "cure" the collective feminine of toxin by elimination. Notwithstanding Freud's ridicule, the collective Dr. M. recognized the truth, a bodily elimination of the collective toxin out will bring the cure. In short, the collective feminine has to "shit" away, on her own, the toxin/infection brought about by the Ottos-in-the-Patriarchy.

One hundred years ago the collective feminine could only choke and await the coming of collective dysentery among women. But there is reason to believe, one hundred years later, that a collective dysentery is on the brink of onset. We can note increasing discontentment among women in regards to masculine impositions and the patriarchy's continuing attempts to control feminine sexuality. These impositions and controls are the "injections" that cause "infection" among women. Less women are choking and more are beginning to "shit" away the poisons that the Ottos-in-the- patriarchy dispense. The dream infers that the "cure" of the collective Irma will come when women end their choking by discarding the sexual theories put forward by Freud.

## CONCLUSION.

Freud's interpretation of his dream of 24 July 1895 represents a bench mark for recording the birth of modern Depth Psychology. Indeed, it can be said that the dream, as a creative urge from the collective unconscious, sought collective light (which it obtained in THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS). After interpreting this dream Freud went on to develop the theory of psychoanalysis which has enabled humanity to understand better the depths of the psyche.

This dream, if examined at the subjective level, might have enabled Freud to observe that his theory of feminine psychology was causing harm. The dream at the subjective level could have encouraged him to develop his Dr.M.-in-Freud, and to become conscious of the Otto-in-Freud. Apparently, such did not occur and a hundred years later, a strong indictment rests on Freud's legacy for its imposition of a narrow patriarchal viewpoint of feminine sexuality and psychology. At the same time, the baby should not be thrown out with the dirty water. Freud's contributions are enormous. But his glaring deficiency already was noticeable in his dream of one hundred years ago.

In a manner of speaking, Freud was no worse than other representatives of the patriarchal Western World at the turn of the century. In fact, he was in character with his times. In upholding and affirming patriarchal supremacy, Freud disempowered and suppressed the feminine. At the

same time, he sought psychological understanding in a systematic manner. His contributions in the larger field of depth psychology eventually came to influence much of Western civilization. The analysis of his own dream, regardless of the serious limitation of not grasping the subjective approach, and his theory of dream interpretation were great achievements and gave Western society the opportunity to re-open the door to the unconscious.

Freud's dream, one hundred years later, permits us to probe into the psychological past. It allows us to perceive what impositions a masculine psychology placed on the feminine. One hundred years later, the dream clarifies why the Western collective feminine, for the most part, continues to choke. Fortunately, there exists Dr. M.'s assurance that the organic process of "shitting" will cure the infection produced long ago by the patriarchal Ottos-in-Freud. Irma's pains in the abdomen and stomach signaled one hundred years ago the onset of collective symbolic dysentery among women.

Irma, in a manner of speaking, is the collective woman who refuses to cooperate with a false patriarchal theory. Irma suggests the women who awaits the patriarchy to finally "listen." Irma is the heroic feminine who would rather bear the pain and choke than acquiesce to patriarchal narrowness and thoughtless theoretical assumptions about feminine sexuality. It now requires modern day "Irmas" to take up the struggle less with choking but more with "bitching." As such, the contemporary women may let go of Irma's pains and eliminate the toxin imposed on them by the patriarchal-Freudian inaccurate theory of feminine sexuality and psychology.

#### APPENDIX: Freud's Dream of July 23-24, 1895

A large hall--numerous guests, whom we were receiving.--Among them was Irma. I at once took her on one side, as though to answer her letter and to reproach her for not having accepted my 'solution' yet. I said to her: 'if you still get pains, it's really only your fault.' She replied: 'If you only knew what pains I've got now in my throat and stomach and abdomen--it's choking me'--I was alarmed and looked at her. She looked pale and puffy. I thought to myself that after all I must be missing some organic trouble. I took her to the window and looked down her throat, and she showed signs of recalcitrance, like women with artificial dentures. I thought to myself that there was no real need for her to do that.--She then opened her mouth properly and on the right I found a

big white patch; at another place I saw extensive whitish grey scabs upon some remarkable curly structures which were evidently modeled on the turbinal bones of the nose.--I at once called in Dr. M., and he repeated the examination and confirmed it...Dr. M. looked quite different from usual; he was very pale, he walked with a limp and his chin was clean-shaven...My friend Otto was now standing besides her as well, and my friend Leopold was percussing her through her bodice and saying: 'She has a dull area low down on the left.' He also indicated that a portion of the skin on the left shoulder was infiltrated. (I noticed this, just as he did, in spite of her dress.)...M. said: 'There's no doubt it's an infection, but no matter; dysentery will supervene and the toxin will be eliminated.'...We were directly aware, to, of the origin of her infection. Not long ago before, when she was feeling unwell, my friend Otto had given her an injection of a preparation of propyl...propionic acid...trimethylamine (and I saw before me the formula for this printed in heavy type)...Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly...And probably the syringe had not been clean.

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