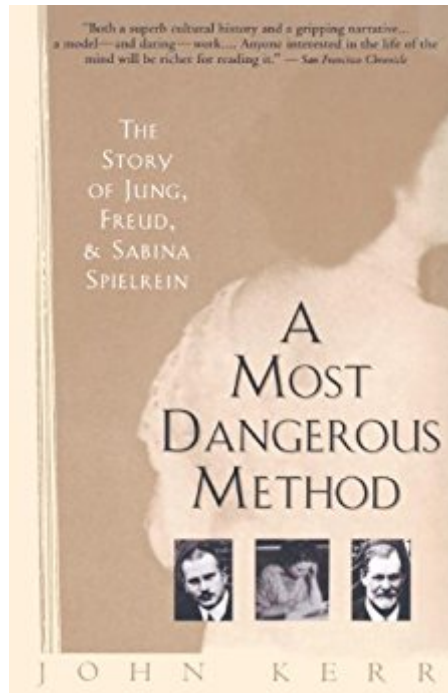


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A Most Dangerous Method: The Story Of Jung, Freud, And Sabina Spielrein



Synopsis

• • • "NewsdayNOW
A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE, Directed by David Cronenberg and STARRING KEIRA KNIGHTLY,
VIGGO MORENSEN, MICHAEL FASSBENDER, and VINCENT CASSEL In 1907, Sigmund Freud
and Carl Jung began what promised to be both a momentous collaboration and the deepest
friendship of each man's life. Six years later they were bitter antagonists, locked in a savage
struggle that was as much personal and emotional as it was theoretical and professional. Between
them stood a young woman named Sabina Spielrein, who had been both patient and lover to Jung
and colleague and confidante to Freud before going on to become an innovative psychoanalyst
herself. With the narrative power and emotional impact of great tragedy, *A Dangerous Method* is
impossible to put down.

Book Information

File Size: 4377 KB

Print Length: 623 pages

Publisher: Vintage; Reprint edition (February 23, 2011)

Publication Date: February 23, 2011

Sold by: Random House LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B004KPM1TE

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #149,174 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #15

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Counseling & Psychology > History
#72 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > History #85 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting
> Psychology & Counseling > History

Customer Reviews

Isn't it strange that although this well-researched and readable book has been out ten years now,
not a single analyst, Jungian or Freudian, has reviewed it here? During my training as a depth
psychologist I heard and read a lot about the Freud-Jung relationship, about its shattering on the

rocks of politicking and father complexes, and a bit about the unfortunate Sabina Spielrein, one-time patient of Jung. At this point nobody in the field is shocked to hear about the Founding Fathers having sex with their patients, however inappropriate or damaging it may have been (Freud seems to have been a rare exception to this kind of acting out). What's troubling to read in this book is not so much Jung's having an affair with Spielrein--harmful enough all by itself--but the casual brutality in how he handled it: the resumption of it after she had attacked him and asked Freud for help, Jung's lame excuses for dropping her (even telling her at one point that he'd displaced an attraction to Freud's daughter onto Sabina--how nice), the coldness of his self-justification to Sabina's mother when she found out via letter from Emma Jung (basically: no fee was charged, so it wasn't really that bad--but if you wish to discuss it, that'll be ten francs an hour).... The shocking, manipulative sadism of Jung's repeated betrayals of Spielrein might make difficult reading for those who revere him, even granting that they took place before Jung's "confrontation with the unconscious." The book also sheds light on the human background of Jung's theories about the anima. Plenty here for feminist critics. Kerr also makes a convincing case for Freud's affair with his sister-in-law Minna, although this reader is not entirely sold on it (allow me to keep at least one post-doctoral illusion!).

I haven't much to add about Kerr's book that hasn't already been said. I am writing to take issue with a virulent slander repeated by a reviewer here under the name "meuberger", claiming Jung was an anti-Semite, etc. Those in a position to know have already dispatched this libel. For the record, Jung was not anti-Semitic and he did not sympathize or collaborate with Nazis--on the contrary his life and work were devoted to freeing the individual from all forms of madness, including collective psychosis such as occurred in Europe in 1914, and again in the rise of Nazism. But anyone who is truly familiar with Jung's life and works knows that. For example Aryeh Maidenbaum in the NY Times: "Analyzing Jung: Neither Nazi Sympathizer Nor Anti-Semite" "To the Editor: I am pleased that, finally, the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung is getting the recognition of your readers (letters March 15, April 15 and May 3). Unfortunately, the messenger has become more important than the message, for there are those who persist in perpetrating secondary sources, innuendoes and out-of-context material to slander a man who, while not without his own "shadow," was certainly neither a Nazi sympathizer nor an advocate of Jewish inferiority...." It is true, I believe, that the timing of Jung's ideas leave a lot to be desired - something acknowledged by Jung himself. But I for one, a committed Jew who was first exposed to Jung's ideas while living in Jerusalem and who subsequently trained as an analyst of the C. G. Jung Institute in Zurich - under the tutelage of Jung's Jewish disciples, among others - do not believe that Jung himself was personally

anti-Semitic.

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