Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis or dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known, including display on the world wide web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis or dissertation. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis or dissertation. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.

Signature: _____ _____

Kira Marie Walsh Date

From Mars to Oprah:
Cryptomnesia as Hidden Memory and Unconscious Plagiarism

By

Kira Marie Walsh
Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts

_____

Sander L. Gilman, Ph.D.
Advisor

_____

Laura Otis, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____

Elizabeth A. Wilson, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Accepted:

_____

Lisa A. Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

_____

Date

From Mars to Oprah:
Cryptomnesia as Hidden Memory and Unconscious Plagiarism

By

Kira Marie Walsh
B.A., Christopher Newport University, 2007

Advisor: Sander L. Gilman, Ph.D.

An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts
2013

Abstract

From Mars to Oprah:
Cryptomnesia as Hidden Memory and Unconscious Plagiarism
By Kira Marie Walsh

From Mars to Oprah: Cryptomnesia as Hidden Memory and Unconscious Plagiarism is a cultural history of the concept of cryptomnesia through a series of case studies from 1891-2006. Cryptomnesia, literally hidden memory was originally used to describe creative reinterpretations of forgotten memories by Spiritualist mediums (i.e., that reported encounters with the supernatural were everyday experiences remembered out of context and attributed to the fantastic). In experimental psychology and literary criticism, cryptomnesia has come to be used almost exclusively to mean unconscious or accidental plagiarism. I argue that the narrowing definition of cryptomnesia from the strange, ghostly, and creative realms of hidden memory towards the more prescriptive and ethically charged accidental plagiarism is reflective of a cultural resistance towards unconscious explanations of mental processes.

From Mars to Oprah:
Cryptomnesia as Hidden Memory and Unconscious Plagiarism

By

Kira Marie Walsh
B.A., Christopher Newport University, 2007

Advisor: Sander L. Gilman, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Institute of the Liberal Arts
2013

Acknowledgements

In advance of beginning my graduate education, I heard stories about how difficult and isolating it could be to write a dissertation. While the writing process has been challenging, I have never felt alone. My committee—Sander Gilman (Chair), Laura Otis, and Elizabeth Wilson—were always available to provide discussion, encouragement, and support. I am happy to have the opportunity to thank them for their generosity. In particular, I appreciate that they provided me with support and space by equal measure. I was allowed to write in sometimes completely strange directions. My committee always seemed to trust that I would find my way to making sense and allowed me to appear and ask questions when needed and to disappear into the writing independently when necessary. I am particularly grateful to Sander for always encouraging me to think of myself as a future scholar and colleague as well as a student. I am thankful to Laura for helping me to place the dissertation into conversation with my creative work and for always understanding what it was I was trying to do discussing sheep at such great length. I am thankful to Elizabeth for frequently helping me to find new ways to think when I felt painted into a corner.

Thank you also to Kevin Corrigan, Robert Paul, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, Deboleena Roy, Steve Levy, Patricia Brennan, Catherine Nickerson, and Claire Nouvet. Thank you to Brenda Crosby, Ruby Buggs, and Jay Hughes in the ILA office. Thank you to my colleagues at Emory for their support: Harold Braswell, Anson Koch-Rein, Franky Abbot, Megan Friddle, Laura Emiko Soltis, Kewsi DeGraft-Hanson, Katie Rawson, Mary Battle, Elizabeth Daley, Jen Sarrett, Claire Clark, Camila Aschner, Melissa Creary, Kazumi Hasegawa, Zeb Baker, Manuel Montoya, Haipeng Zhou, Ajit Chittambalam, Jean-Paul Cauvin, Michael Hall, Brenda Tindal, Sheri Davis-Faulkner, Sarah Melton, Shan Mukhtar (ILA); Nikki Karalekas, Aimi Hamraie, Kristina Gupta, Lizzy Venell, E. Diane Court, Kelly Ball, Stefanie Speanburg, Mairead Sullivan, Samantha Allen, (WGSS) Patrick Blanchfield, Luke Donahue, John Steen (Comparative Literature) Bonnie Kaiser (Anthropology) Alex Alexander, Gil Ben-Herut (GDR) Sandra Navarro (Spanish).

Thank you especially to Nikki for talking me through this process and giving advice on everything from theory to the very sage wisdom of "Just submit it already!" Thank you to Nikki and Sandra Navarro for being the best writing group a person could ask for. Without their support, this project would not have received a sixth year of funding; they helped me to articulate not only what I was doing, but what I planned to do next. Thank you to Aimi Hamraie for helping me to think through many of the ideas in this project when I didn't have direct and concrete ways to express them. Thank you to Alex Alexander for keeping me calm at the bitter end. Without you, the footnotes would not exist and my grammar would embarrass my eighth grade English teacher.

Thank you to the Laney Graduate School for five years of support in the form of an Arts and Sciences Fellowship. Thank you to the Fox Center for Humanistic Inquiry—especially Keith Anthony, Tina Brownley, Colette Barlow, and Amy Erbil—for a sixth year of full funding in the form of a Dissertation Completion Fellowship. I have loved writing in the "stealth house" and imagining its ghostly dimensions has helped me develop a postdoctoral project.

Thank you to my family in Virginia—Mom, Dad, and Brian—and to my Atlanta Family—Pat and Joel— and to my Clarion West family for providing unconditional support. I'm sure I've left people out, and I apologize. Finally, thank you, Millie and Lila for staying up with me during all the late nights of writing and always being willing to take a tennis ball break when the going got rough.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Stolen Stories

> According to a proven convention, the *exergue* plays with citation. To cite before beginning is to give the tone through the resonance of a few words, the meaning or form or which ought to set the stage. In other words, the exergue consists in capitalizing on an ellipsis. In accumulating capital in advance and in preparing the surplus value of an archive. An exergue serves to stock in anticipating and to prearchive a lexicon which, from there on, ought to lay down the law and *give the order*, even if this means contenting itself with naming the problem, that is, the subject.
>
> —Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*: *A Freudian Impression*

Mrs. Goodrich-Freer (b. 1857, d. 1931)[1] was a crystal-seer. In 1889, in London, she described her experience of looking to the crystal and keeping in mind a desire to see words appear. As she looked into the crystal, she was faced with the image of a newspaper announcement reporting the death of a friend. The unexpected presentation of the news, organized in the familiar shape of the "first column of the [London] *Times*" led Goodrich-Freer to consider whether she might have encountered this image in the real world.[2] Eventually, she realized that the announcement had been contained in a paper that she had briefly handled. "I had the day before taken up the first sheet of the *Times*, but was interrupted before I had consciously read any announcement of death."[3] Psychical researcher Fredric W. H. Myers (b. 1843, d. 1901) writes in his account of Goodrich-Freer's testimony

---

1 I have included birth and, if applicable, death dates for the major characters in the text, where possible. When dates were in question or not readily available from reputable sources, they have been omitted. Additionally, I did not provide dates for any of the experimental psychologists cited in the second chapter. These articles were all written from about 1980 onward and relevant information about precedence (for example, when an individual is the thesis advisor or another author) is noted in the main text.

2 Anonymous. "Recent Experiments in Crystal-Vision." *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, vol. V (Society for Psychical Research., 1889), 507.

3 Ibid., 508.

"she had screened her face from the fire" with the newspaper announcement in question.[4] This brief glimpse of the text, apprehended unconsciously, was first consciously experienced in the crystal gazing and only subsequently managed to transmit the knowledge of the friend's death.

Scholars have used the term cryptomnesia to make sense of experiences like that of Goodrich-Freer.[5] Cryptomnesia, literally 'hidden memory', occurs when an experience or idea is remembered independent of the context in which it was initially encountered. In order to make sense of how an idea can be removed from a particular context, researchers found it useful to appeal to the notion of the unconscious. The concept of the unconscious explained how normal memories could be forgotten but still present, reappearing in strange and unexpected forms. Unconscious plagiarism—remembering someone else's work out of context and believing it to be original—is one example of cryptomnesia. Freud, for example, described uncovering his own cryptomnesia. In developing his method of free association, he unconsciously plagiarized a book he had read as a teen.[6]

Investigations of cryptomnesia have focused largely on examples of unconscious plagiarism rather than hidden memory more broadly. Instances of unconscious plagiarism in

---

[4] F W H Myers, L H Myers, and Silvia Myers Blennerhassett, *Human personality and its survival of bodily death* (London, New York [etc.]: Longmans, Green, and co, 1919), 103.

[5] The term first appeared in *From India to the Planet Mars* (1899), a book-length study of the medium Hélène Smith written by the psychologist and psychical researcher Théodore Flournoy. Flournoy's work (and Smith's cryptomnesia) is described in greater detail in Chapter One. After Flournoy's book proved popular, Myers adopted the term and it has been retroactively applied to experiences like that of Goodrich-Freer. I use cryptomnesia to mean the loosely connected phenomena of hidden memory and/or experiences identified as such. Hidden memories are the experience of recalling something out of context without realizing that is has been encountered before, i.e., that it is a memory rather than a new experience.

[6] Sigmund Freud, "A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis," in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology, and Other Works*, The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud (Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1921), 143-4.

literature have been identified even more narrowly as "accidental" rather than unconscious. This dissertation is a chronological cultural history of the term "cryptomnesia" beginning with its first appearance in the late 19th century and moving up to today. I argue that the narrowing definition of cryptomnesia away from the strange, ghostly, and creative realms of "hidden memory" towards the more prescriptive and ethically charged "accidental plagiarism" is reflective of a cultural resistance towards unconscious explanations of mental processes. Through archival reconstructions of cases of cryptomnesia, I show that this attenuation of the possibility for unconscious forecloses understanding the creative and affective dimensions of engagement with memory through cryptomnesia.

From India to the Planet Mars to Oprah

The title of my dissertation—*From Mars to Oprah*—is a play on the title of the first publication to use the word 'cryptomnesia', Théodore Flournoy's (b. 1854, d. 1920) *From India to the Planet Mars*. The book-length study reports on five years of observational research with the medium Hélene Smith (b. 1861, d. 1929), including her reports of traveling to Mars in her séances. If Mars is where Flournoy's book ends, I argue that Oprah Winfrey's (b. 1954) interview couch is where his story about hidden memories has most recently landed. I have encountered Flournoy's book with several different subtitles after the attention-grabbing main title. In the original *Des Indie a la Planate Ma*rs, the subtitle is: "*étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*."[7] In his English translation of 1900, Daniel B. Vermilye renders this subtitle as: "A Case of Somnambulism with Glossolalia."[8] In a more recent English

---

[7] Théodore Flournoy, *Des Indes à la planète Mars: étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1899).
[8] Théodore Flournoy, *From India to the planet Mars: a Study of a Case of* Somnambulism, trans. Daniel B. Vermilye (New York: Cosmino, 2007/1901).

translation by Sonu Shamdasani (b. 1962), published in 1994 by Princeton University Press, the subtitle is given as: "A study of multiple personality with imaginary language."[9] The somnambulism and glossolalia of the original are themselves translated into scientific terms intelligible in late 20th-century context.

My own subtitle refers to a similar process of translation or renaming, that has occurred since the term cryptomnesia came into common usage following the publication of Flournoy's popular book. While the literal translation of the term from the French is 'hidden memory', the word cryptomnesia has come to be used interchangeably with unconscious plagiarism in psychological articles, popular essays, court cases, Wikipedia, blogs, and academic articles. In the dissertation, I construct a capsule history of the meaning of cryptomnesia from Flournoy and Smith's Mars through the experience of the contemporary authors James Frey (b. 1969) and Kaavya Viswanathan (b.1987) with Oprah. By 'capsule history', I mean that I focus almost exclusively on cases of cryptomnesia identified as such rather than on instances of forgetting and repurposing more broadly. My intent in presenting the shifting histories and meanings of the term in this manner is to construct a narrative that begins to suggest how cryptomnesia can act as an excellent, confined case for understanding the motives and meanings behind a general distrust of unconscious explanations of phenomena in scientific and literary knowledge production. Additionally, I argue that this distrust reflects an increasing devotion to mimetic accounts of scientific and emotional phenomena, a devotion that attenuates the possibility for understanding that outwardly similar experiences can occupy very different affective registers.

Phrased more simply, I argue that cryptomnesia has the potential to distinguish

---

9 Théodore Flournoy, Mireille Cifali, and Sonu Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

between originality and similarity based on how things feel. Cryptomnesia as unconscious plagiarism relies on a sense of discrete, bounded objects and ideas that can be clearly misappropriated or stolen. Cryptomnesia as hidden memory organizes experiences based on whether or not they share a similar affective investment. The latter usage connects objects and ideas and affects whether they are concrete or not. Cryptomnesia as hidden memory encompasses the phenomenon of unconscious plagiarism. It also explains how a Martian landscape might be the borrowed, plagiarized, or forgotten memory of childhood.

Plagiarism

Unconscious plagiarism has often been closely associated with plagiarism—defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own; literary theft." This definition uses language that suggests that plagiarism is a crime and implies that plagiarism occurs with malicious intent. I have used allegations of plagiarism—unconscious and otherwise—as a potential marking for incidents that can be read as potential cryptomnesia. However, I make every attempt not to conflate cryptomnesia and plagiarism, using the terms interchangeably only when original sources in my case studies do so, and pointing out when and how this usage of the words happens. The outrage connected to plagiarism, whether it occurs in freshman classrooms or in bestselling novels, provides evidence for the kind of affective investment in the shifting identity of ideas that cryptomnesia helps to organize and explain. However, cryptomnesia could also be used to mean exaggeration or imagination; cryptomnesia always includes elaboration, creativity, and reworking. Allegations of plagiarism have helped me to identify most of my case studies, but this dissertation does not seek to argue for or against the idea of plagiarism itself or the innocence or guilt of its alleged perpetrators. Additionally, my

awareness of cryptomnesia has led me to continually parse the dissertation for anything that may encounter the questionable space between plagiarism, cryptomnesia, and the "original work" that a dissertation is meant to comprise.

Epigraphs

Goodrich-Freer turns to the crystal seeking words rather than images. She needs a familiar frame on which to fix her thoughts and she ends up being faced with the first page of her daily newspaper. This dissertation traces these kinds of entanglements between words and ideas—information—and the familiar and unfamiliar forms in which they are encountered. I show that cryptomnesia appears to describe one of the ways in which objects—newspapers, people, jewelry, books, aliens, tables, shoes—are felt and responded to as knowledge, how they interact with and become ideas.

Tracing this history requires an attention to the act of reading, frequently identified as the origin of hidden memories. The work of describing cryptomnesia also requires attending to acts of "almost reading." As in the case of Goodrich-Freer, cryptomnesia is frequently linked to the moments of reading that go unmarked as they occur. In thinking of my own experience with almost reading—reading quickly, without attention, or "before I had consciously read"—I thought first of epigraphs. As a reader, I almost always skip them. I wonder if I apprehend them, like Goodrich-Freer, without conscious attention. Epigraphs are designed, in part, to provide context. Cryptomnesia elaborates and alters context. Epigraphs are designed, perhaps, to be "almost read." They are apt but not integral to the central story. Failing to apprehend the epigraph of a text might deprive the reader of some contextual link but they are likely to experience the text itself without feeling that they have missed anything.

Each of the three chapters that make up the bulk of the dissertation includes an epigraph. Each of these quotations is taken from a text that might be said to be a work, in part, of cryptomnesia. If a reader skips over them unread, the dissertation will still (hopefully) make sense. In fact, to skip over them "almost read," to turn the page and not stop, or to think of what will occur at the beginning of the chapter while running one's eyes over the words that are *almost* the beginning would come very close to experiencing cryptomnesia rather than only reading about it. Including these epigraphs is, arguably, a manner of including the experience of cryptomnesia alongside historical reconstructions of that experience.

The epigraph that begins the first chapter is taken from Margaret Canby's "The Frost Fairies," a short story initially published in her 1873 collection *Birdie and His Fairy Friends*.[10] In 1891, eleven-year-old Helen Keller (b. 1880, d. 1968) was accused of plagiarizing from "The Frost Fairies" in her story "The Frost King." Chapter One, "The Invention of Cryptomnesia" explores whether it is possible for Keller to have experienced cryptomnesia prior to the invention of the unique term by Flournoy in 1899. I draw on Avital Ronell's (b. 1952) *The Telephone Book* to consider how Keller's plagiarism might "already" be the diagnosis of cryptomnesia coming into being amidst changing contemporary notions of intimacy, just as Ronell describes the historical antecedents of the telephone as "already" developing the objects and affects that lead to its literal invention.[11] I relate this narrative of invention to Karen Barad's (b.1956) account of scientific mattering as constituting and constituted by

---

10 Margaret T. Canby, *Birdie and His Fairy Friends* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1889).

11 Avital Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991).

phenomena.[12]

The second chapter, "Haunting Houses: Cryptomnesia as a Psychoanalytic and Psychological Concept," begins with a quotation taken from M. R. James's (b. 1862, d. 1936) short story "The Haunted Dolls' House."[13] Written specifically for the library of the miniature dollhouse designed for Queen Mary of England (b. 1867, d. 1953) in 1924, the story also involves death, making it particularly appropriate for haunting the beginning of the chapter. The second chapter builds on Barad's account of how things "come to matter" in science to explore instances of cryptomnesia in the early history of psychoanalysis, comparing them to more recent empirical psychological studies of cryptomnesia. Many of the case studies in this section are necessarily more fragmented. I examine the standards of evidence in papers reporting on laboratory experiments that seek to generate cryptomnesia in replicable, observable conditions. Rather than providing anecdotes about individual cases of cryptomnesia, these studies are more likely to recount the conditions under which a group of individuals appear to experience cryptomnesia. However, this chapter does take a more traditional case study approach in analyzing Sigmund Freud's (b. 1856, d. 1939) self-diagnosis of cryptomnesia in the development of free association, placing it within the context of the control and fragmentation of what counts as "knowledge" in the early history of psychoanalysis. Taken together, these case studies provide a picture of the narrowing use of the term cryptomnesia that is focused on scientific—rather than popular—practice and culture. I argue that these psychological studies, while providing adequate accounts of factors influencing unconscious plagiarism, perpetuate a narrow definition of cryptomnesia and reflect an increasing skepticism about the unknowability—and thus the very existence—of

---

12 Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
13 M. R. James, *The Haunted Doll's House*, LitGothic, 2004 (accessed April 1, 2013).

unconscious phenomena as an appropriate object of study in science.

The third chapter, "Cryptomnesia and the Book in the 21st Century," begins with a passage taken from the first volume of the Nancy Drew mystery series, *The Secret of the Old Clock*.[14] The author of the piece is given as Carolyn Keene. However, the chapter that follows uncovers Keene's "ghostly" nature. Carolyn Keene is a pen name for several authors who wrote the early volumes in the series under the direction of Edward Stratemeyer (b. 1862, d. 1930), a pioneer in the "packaging" of books for teens that were written to a defined series template. I explore the role these "book packaging" practices play in policing and making room for the meaning of cryptomnesia as it is applied to literary work by contemporary authors. Specifically, I explore the case of Kaavya Viswanathan (a contemporary author accused of plagiarizing passages of her debut novel) alongside the case of James Frey (a contemporary author who admitted to fabricating large portions of his own rehab memoir.) Viswanathan's case is sometimes called cryptomnesia, notably by the literary critic Jonathan Lethem (b. 1964).[15] Lethem argues that plagiarism of a less-than-intentional nature is not so much accidental as post-modern, reflecting the recursive nature of knowledge and creativity.[16] He uses cryptomnesia to provide context for this claim.[17] By contrast, Frey's work has not been associated with cryptomnesia. However, his elaboration of actual, forgotten experiences into strange and compelling narratives is reminiscent of exactly the kind of cryptomnesia that Flournoy found most frequently in Smith's séances. I consider whether recovering the meaning of cryptomnesia in its broad, historical sense might provide a productive way of responding to creative work that throws conventional notions

---

14 Carolyn Keene, *The Secret of the Old Clock* (Penguin, 1987).
15 Jonathan Lethem, *The Ecstasy of Influence* (New York: Vintage, 2011), 71.
16 Ibid., 59.
17 Ibid., 59.

of authorship and originality into question, leaving open, for instance, the possibility that seemingly derivative or deceitful work presents a unique narrative of an author's experience of previously encountered material.

Objects

The epigraphs that begin each chapter also serve the purpose of introducing the particular object that organizes the discussion of cryptomnesia that follows. The permanence and impermanence of objects as their named "selves" and otherwise is central to understanding cryptomnesia. I argue that this sense of objects—and "affective sense" of boundaries—is central to applying existing theories to an understanding of cryptomnesia in historical and cultural context. Cryptomnesia interacts with theories, affects, 'things', and names as objects. It is a boundary drawing practice and evidence of the failure of boundaries. Cryptomnesia is uniquely suited for tracking the way that objects come into and out of being. Cryptomnesia—the hidden memories of objects—can be used to determine when objects that look wildly different on the outside share an affective resonance and when, alternatively, outwardly similar objects are not affectively congruent.

In the first chapter, the objects of focus are the book and the telephone. The chapter begins with an analysis of "book tests," in which mediums were asked to prove their ability to interact with spirits by asking the spirits to refer to pages of books in far-distant libraries. Psychical researchers considered the connection of the shadowy "spirit realms" to the mimetic object of the book to be suitable evidentiary support for the existence of the spirit world. Support of this kind was potentially powerful enough to prove the usefulness of Spiritualism to less interested members of the scientific community. The potential ability of books to correspond directly with their own description made them suitable scientific tools.

The Victorian interest in mimetic objects ran alongside the development of scientific theory and corresponding tools of observation that stressed the explanatory importance of careful, exact observation and measurement. The photograph, telegraph, and telephone were all tasked with providing access to experiences reflective of face-to-face interaction.[18] These technologies, especially the photograph, also confirmed the status of objects in the world and provided new ways to make these objects of study. Photographs documented nature, medical disorders and discoveries, and even phenomena such as ghosts and fairies. The telephone was remarkable not only because it allowed conversation without regard to spatial constraint but also because it created voices that reproduced the impression of sharing that absent space.[19] Drawing on Ronell's history of the telephone, I also discuss other objects that she uses to locate possible moments when the telephone comes into being before itself including sheep, Skye terriers, phonographs, and Bell's automaton that, furnished with vocal cords taken from dogs, could be said to speak a passable imitation of the word 'Mama'.

The second chapter is organized around houses as objects. Even the use of domestic objects that might previously have been thought of as incidental or representative mainly of status or wealth could be seen as taking on a directly reflective function in the early twentieth century. This state of affairs is in evidence in the lavish, perfectly scaled replica mansion dollhouse constructed for Queen Mary.[20] This chapter also considers haunted houses as yet another potential mimetic tool for Spiritual investigation. Houses with consistent, verified

---

18 Helen Groth, *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
19 Pamela Thurschwell, *Literature, Technology and Magical Thinking, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
20 Royal Collection, *Queen Mary's Dolls' House,* http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle/what-to-see-and-do/queen-marys-dolls-house, n.d. (accessed April 1, 2013); Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1993).

reports of paranormal phenomena were considered yet another tool of possible evidentiary power suitable for proving the reality of Spiritualist experiences. The British Society for Psychical Research conducted a census of potential haunted houses that organized and attempted to verify hundreds of reports. This chapter also uses houses to understand the relation of cryptomnesia to scientific investigations of the nature/nurture binary. In particular, I connect cryptomnesia's ability to come in and out of existence to Susan Oyama's new materialist account of metaphorical "impossible houses" built up by dualistic accounts of the role of evolution on human behavior and development.

The third chapter comes full circle and returns to the investigation of books as objects. But unlike the obscure, out-of-print, and otherwise difficult to trace books of the first chapter, the books in question here are mass produced, desired, widely read, and heavily examined. The two most important examples are Viswanathan and Frey's books. I also look at the role of book packaging in the careers of both authors and the role of the "serial" book. Viswanathan used a book packager—a company that helps prepare books for press with the help of a group of often unnamed editors and authors—Alloy Press, during the development of the initial concept and first four chapters of her book. Since the controversy over *A Million Little Pieces*, Frey has opened his own book packaging business, signing authors to contracts to assist in the creation of books that are meant to be bestsellers with series potential that will earn money in movie deals and merchandising.

Stolen Stories

Each of the epigraphs included before the chapters that follow are connected in some way to "stolen" stories. Canby's story is allegedly plagiarized. Ward's story is a potential self-plagiarism. The story of Nancy Drew is written by an author that already fails

to exist, even before being made ghostly by (mis)appropriation. My work in the dissertation proposes the possibility that the stories of the individuals whose creative expression encounters these texts through cryptomnesia are also, in effect, stolen. When cryptomnesia is described as meaning something more confining than hidden memories" the affect-laden space of unknown memory is in some ways made inaccessible. Throughout the dissertation as a whole, my focus is on attending to the reported experience of individuals engaged with cryptomnesia, whether they identify its possible existence in others or are accused of creating cryptomnesia in their own work. Amidst a varied body of scholarship on this relatively obscure but persistent term, my dissertation contributes to an understanding of cryptomnesia's meaning and meaning-making with attention to cultural, historical, and affective dimensions.

Chapter One

The Invention of Cryptomnesia

> I will tell you how King Frost first thought of this kind of work, for it is a strange story. You must know that this King, like all other kings, has great treasures of gold and previous stones in his palace; but, being a good-hearted fellow, he does not keep his riches locked up all the time, but tries to do good and make others happy with them
>
> —Margaret T. Canby, "The Frost Fairies" from *Birdie and His Fairy Friends*

In the case of Helen Keller, cryptomnesia seems to pre-exist itself. Although the first use of the term cryptomnesia appeared in the book *From India to the Planet Mars* by Théodore Flournoy, published in 1899, Keller's apparent plagiarism in 1891 has frequently been referred to as cryptomnesia.[21] Considering the occurrence of memory phenomena retroactively identified as cryptomnesia, can a concept exist before it is actually named?

Exploring this question, I begin by situating Flournoy's work within the field of psychology and of psychical research at the turn of the twentieth century. I place the emergence of cryptomnesia in Flournoy's work into context with the emergence of the kind of intimate communication made possible by the telephone. Drawing on Avital Ronell's account of the telephone's invention, I consider whether cryptomnesia might be viewed as a method of grappling with the way in which concepts and objects—particularly those imbued with potential scientific "value"—are intelligible only when they are understood as phenomena that continually come into and out of existence in accordance with Karen

---

[21] Kenneth S. Bowers and Ernest R. Hilgard, "Some complexities in understanding memory," in *Hypnosis and Memory*., ed. Helen M Pettinati (New York: Guilford Press, 1988), 3-18; Narinder Kapur, Alvaro Pascual-Leone, and Vilayanur Ramachandran, *The Paradoxical Brain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011);

Barad's account of agential realism.[22] I ask whether cryptomnesia—both the identification and creation of itself—is especially capable of engaging in this process of coming into (and out of) existence.

Book Tests

Cryptomnesia developed as a diagnostic term used to describe the experiences of Spiritualist mediums, men and women who reported an ability to make contact with spirit realms. The beginnings of the Spiritualist movement are generally traced to 1848 in Hydesville, New York where the Fox Sisters, Maggie (b. 1833, d. 1893) and Kate (b. 1837-d. 1892) Fox, reported hearing mysterious noises in the night. The Fox sisters interpreted the noises as spirit rappings, coded messages from a murdered peddlar seeking to communicate from beyond the grave. Maggie and Kate became celebrity mediums, channeling the spirit world in some of the first public exhibitions of spirit communication. Popular interest in spirits contact and "spirit realms" grew throughout the next half of the century. Skepticism grew apace. Harry Houdini (b. 1874, d. 1926)—who dubbed the Fox Sisters "The Founders of Modern Spiritualism"—famously worked to debunk Spiritualist phenomena, including the encounters reported by the Fox sisters.[23]

Alison Winter cautions drawing too fine a line between skeptics and practitioners of "powers of the mind," or, more generally, between science and the supernatural.[24] Focusing on the practice of mesmerism—the name for a "wide range" of techniques used to induce

---

22 Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.*

23 Harry Houdini, *A Magician Among the Spirits* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

24 Alison Winter, *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain*, (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2000).

trance states and related visions or other encounters—Winter writes that in the 1830s and 1840s:

> What counted as a proper science, or as a 'scientific' practice, remained open to dispute. Similar ambiguities surrounded the human body [. . .] Far from being assigned a position on the sidelines of intellectual life, then, mesmerism became a means—or 'medium'—for Victorians to explore and even to forge definitions of authority whenever they were open to question. [25]

Spiritualism and mesmerism were not fringe practices. Houdini, the Fox Sisters, and everyday people across America and Europe encountered, observed, and participated "widely and continuously" in practices related to the unknown realms of the mind.[26] Mediums might themselves be skeptics, seeking proof for their own experiences or those of others. Scientists often funded séances. In 1882, the British Society for Psychical Research was formed:

> [. . .] for the purpose of making an organized and systemic attempt to investigate that large group of debatable phenomena designated by such terms as mesmeric, psychical, and spiritualistic" arguing that "there appears to be, amidst much illusion and deception, an important body of remarkable phenomena, which are *prima facie* inexplicable on any generally recognized hypothesis, and which, if incontestably established, would be of the highest possible value.[27]

The high value of these investigations was related in part to the difficulty scientists had in finding sufficient evidence for the ghostly and mysterious origins of Spiritualist phenomena. The ability to explain something so fantastic would buoy up Spiritualism, and it would prove the usefulness of science for explaining matters of public interest. The Society for Psychical Research's standard for evidentiary support for the paranormal was the replication of phenomena under conditions of sufficient control to rule out trickery.

---

25 Ibid., 6.

26 Ibid., 5; Henri F Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970).

27 The British Society for Psychical Research, descriptive pamphlet, 1882, Box SPR MS1, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

One tool for creating these conditions was the book test. In a book test, a medium would be presented with an unfamiliar or concealed "sitter." The medium would then attempt to contact the spirit world and bring back a book test for the sitter that indicated a message to be found in a specific page or section of a book located in the sitter's home or place of business.[28] The evidentiary strength of the test was that the medium could not stealthily access a book that was not in the room or easily employ other forms of deceptive or accidental knowledge gathering.[29] Information about the book would have to come from the spirit realm. An additional concern that was believed to threaten evidentiary results was information that the medium might glean from the mind of the sitter telepathically. With a book test, the understanding was that a sitter's mind might contain some general knowledge of a previously encountered book, but the memory would not be specific enough for the medium to confuse it with a genuine spirit communication.

In a book test on March 19th, 1918 with a medium reporting contact with a spirit "control" named Feda the sitter received a book test indicating the location of a spirit message.[30]

> Second shelf, counting up, the second shelf, there must be more than one. Counting from left to right, on that shelf, the 6th [sic] book from left to right, that's right, the 6th book; the page called 24, 24th page. Oh, what a funny message. About half way down the page [. . .] It describes there in a sentence what he felt like when he met his father. If you'll go on reading on to next page, 25, but nearer the top of the page not half way down, you'll see a message from both of them telling you what they are trying to prepare for you, describing certain things they're getting ready for you when you pass over. Some peculiar word is applicable in that book, like a mixture of letters

---

[28] Note by U.V.T., research notes on book tests, November 18th, 1918, SPR MS 5/9 Book Tests, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

[29] Note by M.R.H. and U.V.T., research notes on book tests by Feda in 1917, SPR MS 5/9 Book Tests, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

[30] Feda was the spirit control of the medium Gladys Osborne Leonard (b. 1882-d. 1968).

[. . .][31]

Because the books referenced in the sitting are in a different location, the test must be corroborated after the séance. The initial sitting where the book test was received was funded by the British Society for Psychical Research and the sitter, Mrs. Alice S. Torrance, provided a report on the evidentiary strength of the book test for the Society's records.

> I am satisfied that the book test is quite clear, and enclose copies of lines found on pages 24 and 25 in the sixth book on the second shelf from the floor, in book shelves beside my bedroom window. [. . .] In regard to finding the books I wish to state that my daughter was the only witness. That Mrs Leanord has never entered my house.[32]

Many book tests were not deemed so successful. At times, sitters were directed to bookshelves where none existed or tasked with finding books that had obviously been moved by family members or staff prior to the corroboration of the test. Most disappointing were tests that pointed to a page number that the book did not contain or a passage with no possible significance to the sitter, even when interpreted generously. After one test, a communicator dutifully reported: "There was nothing found anywhere on the next page but one to page ninety three, that appeared relevant [. . .] there is nothing on the page that is the least suggestive of shoes."[33] As in this case of the missing shoes, book tests were at heart attempts to locate objects from the scientific, knowable world within the strange, emotional world of the spirit realms. The nascent and shifting boundaries between science and the spirit realms presented fruitful opportunities for investigation. At the same time, the

---

31 Test Received by Mrs. Torrance, séance transcript, March 19th, 1918, SPR MS 5/9 Book Tests, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

32 Verification of Test Received by Mrs. Torrance March 19th 1918, séance report, March 19th, 1918, SPR MS 5/9 Book Tests, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

33 Book Test, Various Sitters, The Society for Psychical Research Papers, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

persistence of certain known objects—shoes, books, people—began consistently to show the limits of the entanglement between science and the new powers of mind.

Cryptomnesia: An Enduring Test

Throughout its history, Spiritualism oscillated between being a popular and a spiritual movement. Aspects of its everyday practice have in some cases persisted, often divested of any ghostly or faith-based trappings.[34] Cryptomnesia is an example of a persistent "test" derived from Spiritual practice. Cryptomnesia, literally translated as "hidden memory" and today often used synonymously with "unconscious plagiarism," developed as a way of providing a scientific, evidentiary explanation of the reported paranormal communications of mediums. With cryptomnesia, events in the mediumistic trance were connected to previously encountered experiences, people, or objects in the real world. The medium's belief in their spiritual nature, rather than being viewed as trickery, was said to be hidden and forgotten—leading to a strong belief in having experienced something of the spirit realms.

Cryptomnesia itself has taken on the characteristic of forgotten origins that are central to its own development. While cryptomnesia was once explicitly connected with spiritual research, today it is used almost exclusively to mean unconscious plagiarism, without any discussion of its origins as a term connected to psychical research. Rare exceptions where the

---

[34] Psychical research itself is a smaller field than it was at the height of Spiritualism. However, investigations into psychical phenomena do still occur. A recent representative example is Daryl J. Bem's work at Cornell University (see Daryl J. Bem, "Feeling the Future: Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 100, no. 3 (March 2011): 407–425.) The discussions surrounding the publication of this paper in a scientific journal reflect current concerns within the scientific community related to making seemingly paranormal phenomenon material for scientific investigation. For a comprehensive overview of more recent psychical research into cryptomnesia, see Ian Stevenson's article (Ian Stevenson, "Cryptomnesia and Parapsychology," Journal of the Society for Psychical Research 52, no. 793 (February 1983): 1–30.)

history of the term is discussed still tend to focus on instances where plagiarism or forgotten influence has occurred between individuals rather than within the memory of a single person.[35] These plagiarisms are consistently connected to forgotten books or other written work.[36]

Like book tests, cryptomnesia was a psychical tool initially connected to the physical status of books as persistent, scientifically verifiable objects. While a cryptomnesia, or 'hidden memory,' could be uncovered in relationship to experiences with physical sensations, discussions, or other bodily experiences, tracing cryptomnesia to an original memory of a forgotten book was considered to have particular evidentiary value in favor of the mundane origins of paranormal reports. This reliance on the verifiable nature of books as objects in the world is related to the particular context of "the book" at the turn of the twentieth century.

The popular book that emerged in Victorian England and America—coveted, pirated, copied—was one of many mimetic objects that proliferated throughout the

---

[35] Steve Myers, "The cryptomnesic origins of Jung's dream of the multi-storeyed house," *The Journal of Analytical Psychology* 54, no. 4 (2009): 513–531. Myers provides a particularly in-depth analysis of cryptomnesia between Jung and Freud. Although he also mentions that the "modern legal use of the term cryptomnesia tends to be quite limited, referring only to inadvertent plagiarism" his own discussion still focuses on plagiarism. The distinction between Myers's work and modern legal scholarship is that he stresses Jung's view that cryptomnesia was a "normal and common phenomenon" but he does not discuss the original development of the term as a phenomenon within rather than between minds or the specific psychical context of what Flournoy observed.

[36] A representative example that has received a lot of press is the discovery that Nabakov's *Lolita* may have had a predecessor in a strikingly similar short story by a lesser-known author. The possibility of cryptomnesia in this case is briefly discussed by the scholar who unearthed the short story in Maar, Michael, *The Two Lolitas* (London: Verso, 2005). The discussion of cryptomnesia is on pp. 57-58. Maar actually dismisses cryptomnesia as an adequate explanation due to the impossibility of proving that forgetting has actually occurred. However, the word cryptomnesia is frequently linked with discussions of Maar's findings, including in the synopsis of his book available on Amazon.com (accessed January 1st, 2012.)

Victorian Era.[37] Even as books were changing, becoming more widely available in more genres for new and varied audiences, these changes were dependent on technologies that ensured a certain degree of similarity—or at least created the expectation and perception of similarity—between versions of the same physical objects.[38] A book needed to have the same words and ideas, and share the general aesthetic appeal as another copy of the same title. Despite a change in the publishing landscape—more books, more accessible – books continued to derive much of their authority from their sameness, containing knowledge within expected parameters and inviting value judgments—good books, bad books. As a point of contact for scientific tests of notoriously insubstantial psychical phenomena, books were objects to be trusted.

In *The Nature of the Book*, Adrian Johns provides a compelling narrative that reveals the foundations of this expectation of the book's stability. Johns argues that notions of the book as stable and stabilizing—particularly for scientific knowledge—following the invention of mass printing technologies are actually evidence of the inherently destabilized object of the book from the early modern period forward.[39] For Johns, the hard work that makes books themselves "is dedicated to effacing its own traces, and necessarily so: only if such efforts disappeared could printing gain the air of intrinsic reliability on which its cultural and commercial success could be built."[40] Just as the Society for Psychical Research turns to psychical phenomena to shore up science, Johns argues that "the widely accepted status of modern science as the most objective, valuable, and robust kind of knowledge

---

[37] I use the word mimetic to mean "directly reflective of the experienced world" or, more simply, "a copy."
[38] Adrian Johns, *The nature of the book print and knowledge in the making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 2-3.

currently available makes it a peculiarly appealing subject for the historian of printing. This high status means that any conclusions demonstrable for science stand a chance of being accredited a fortiori for other activities now held in lower repute."[41] In a footnote, Johns indicates that he is aware of the controversial nature of claims for science as the "high" standard for legitimate knowledge. He sees the status of science as an established, yet contentious, general perception. Taken together, Johns conclusions and the conclusions of the Society for Psychical Research suggest that the role of the book in psychical research—and of psychical research in the life of the book—is a shared commitment to engaging with and hiding away the "hard work" of making either books or science appear stable, quantifiable, or known.

The Origins of Cryptomnesia

In the entry on "cryptomnesia," the famously exhaustive *Oxford English Dictionary* cites the psychical researcher Frederick William Henry Myers, or F.W.H. Myers, as the originator of the term. In *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, first published in 1903, Myers reports an instance of cryptomnesia and refers to Flournoy's work: "(as again in Professor Flournoy's case)."[42] Myers also includes the term in the glossary that begins the book, defining it as: "submerged or subliminal memory of events forgotten by the supraliminal self."[43] Flournoy, in turn, cites Myers in his own report of a case of cryptomnesia published two years earlier, in 1899, saying that his observation of the medium Hélène Smith has uncovered

> a very beautiful and instructive example of cryptomnesia, well worth to figure among

[41] Ibid., 6.
[42] Myers, Myers, and Blennerhassett, *Human personality and its survival of bodily death*, 279.
[43] Ibid., xiv.

> the instructive cases collected by Mr. Myers, in which the memory of a subliminal perception (i.e., registered immediately without striking the normal personality) appears as a revelation in a dream of ordinary sleep, or under some other equivalent form of automatism.[44]

The confusion over the genesis of the word cryptomnesia seems to derive from the collegial relationship between the two men. The popularity of the specific word cryptomnesia in Flournoy's work marks a particular moment in the history of the term, but not necessarily the first application of its meaning to a problem within psychical research. The point at which cryptomnesia becomes fixed as itself—particularly when it recurs untranslated in foreign-language edition of Flournoy's book—suggests its emergence as a significant and unique explanatory tool rather than a diffuse practice.[45] Flournoy refers to instances of hidden memories described in a serial that Myers published in the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* in 1892.[46] The chapter in the *Proceedings* does predate Flournoy's case study of the phenomenon, but Myers does not actually use the word cryptomnesia.

What was cryptomnesia, as Flournoy defined it? Flournoy coined the term and popularized it with the publication of his case study of the medium Hélène Smith in his 1899 book.[47] Smith reported visions of other worlds, including Mars, and described frequent encounters with deceased historical figures and spirit guides. Skeptical of the paranormal origins of Smith's spiritistic communication, but impressed with their creativity and scope, Flournoy turned to cryptomnesia as a psychological explanation for Smith's experiences.

---

[44] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*, 245.
[45] The text was initially published in French.
[46] F.W.H. Myers, "Hypermnesic Dreams," *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* 8 (1892): 381–92. The hypermnesic dreams reported are congruent with Flournoy's conception of cryptomnesia.
[47] Théodore Flournoy, Mireille Cifali, and Sonu Shamdasani, "Introduction: Encountering Hélène ," in *From India to the Planet Mars: a Case of Multiple Personality with Imaginary Languages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), xi–li.

Flournoy traced key elements of Smith's spiristic visions to experiences in her past. For example, language instruction in childhood and a father who was a "polyglot" explained the complexity of the Martian language and its striking similarity to French. More immediate experiences were also potential fodder for cryptomnesia: the "very beautiful and instructive example" that Flournoy reported alongside his acknowledgement of Myers occurred when Smith lost a favorite piece of jewelry.[48] Later, she reported being awakened in the night by her spirit guide, Léopold, shaking her bedpost and shining a light in her eyes. He revealed to her the location of the lost brooch and, during a séance, she drew on his revelations to lead the assembled sitters into the city and directly to the spot where the pin had presumably fallen from her clothing. Flournoy argued that Smith had actually recalled the submerged memory of the physical sensation of losing the jewelry as it fell. Failing to connect the bodily memory with her later awareness of the location of the pin, Smith experienced it as a message from Léopold (one of her most frequent spirit guides.) Flournoy interpreted this experience as another example of cryptomnesia. Importantly, this particular example establishes that cryptomnesia, in Flournoy's estimation, can be the forgotten encounter of physical experience as well as of language.

Cryptomnesia: A Shifting Psychological and Historical Paradigm?

Flournoy's diagnosis of cryptomnesia provided a purely psychological explanation for phenomena that would otherwise require setting aside the hope of a scientific, knowable world. In the introduction to his translation of Carl Jung's *The Red Book*, Sonu Shamdasani argues that a shift took place with the work of Flournoy, Myers, and fellow psychical

[48] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*, 245.

researcher William James (b. 1842, d. 1910):

> What was novel about Flournoy's study was that it approached her [Smith's] case purely from the psychological angle, as a means of illuminating the study of subliminal consciousness. A critical shift had taken place with the work of Flournoy, Frederick Myers, and William James. They argued that regardless of whether the alleged spiritualistic experiences were valid, such experiences enabled far-reaching insight into the constitution of the subliminal, and hence into human psychology as a whole [. . .] with this shift, the methods used by mediums—such as automatic writing, trance speech, and crystal vision—were appropriated by the psychologists, and became prominent experimental research tools.[49]

The variety of theory and practice in the field of psychical research grew as psychical phenomena proliferated throughout the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. However, almost fifty years after the first sprit rappings were heard in Hydesville, psychical researchers were faced with a practical choice about how to frame the continued attempt to differentiate science and spirit—determining whether they were seeking to debunk phenomena they did not believe in or to prove the existence of phenomena that they did believe in a way that met prevailing standards of scientific rigor. Cryptomnesia did not inherently require proving or disproving the experience of the medium. By taking the experience of the medium as an iteration of a hidden memory, the experience itself—affectively laden, fantastic, mystical—could remain unchanged. The observer could, presumably, avoid allegiance with any expectation of the phenomena they were seeking to study.

Years later in *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, Henri F. Ellenberger (b. 1905, d. 1993) acknowledged another shift inherent in the advent of "cryptomnesiac" explanations for phenomena. After seven hundred pages tracing the development of the concept of the

---

[49] Sonu Shamdasani, "Liber Novus: The 'Red Book' of C.G. Jung by Sonu Shamdasani," in *The Red Book*, ed. Sonu Shamdasani, trans. Sonu Shamdasani, Mark Kyburz, and John Peck (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009), 195-6.

unconscious from animal magnetism to mesmerism to psychoanalysis, Ellenberger appends the following disclaimer to the conclusion of the book: "It is impossible to distinguish in a man's thought what is truly his and what has been suggested by those around him or what he has read. The power of cryptomnesia should never be underestimated, nor that of the stimulation produced by contemporary events."[50]

Cryptomnesia marks a shift in practice of memory science that makes paranormal phenomena tools for psychological investigation. The usefulness of spiritualism and other paranormal phenomena for science was increasingly diluted by unsuccessful attempts to substantiate the paranormal through scientific methods.[51] Science began to distrust spiritualism as attempts to engage with it led either to clear evidence of fraud or, at the very least, to the inevitable conclusion that spirit realm appeared always to retreat before it became fully intelligible. At the same time, the phenomenon of hidden memory requires a calculated distrust of a method that names specific actors and instances as the origin of ideas. For Ellenberger, the legacy of Flournoy's cryptomnesia is an enduring potential for a cut between what is known or created and the origins of that knowledge. Does Flournoy's cryptomnesia provide a term for this disconnect that pre-existed the Smith case study? Or does Flournoy—and the "stimulation produced by contemporary events" that surround him—somehow bring this type of disconnect into being?

The Invention of the Telephone

Asking whether Flournoy creates cryptomnesia or somehow renames, appropriates, or otherwise discovers it is in part a question about how invention happens. This is a

---

[50] Henri F. Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 894.
[51] M Brady Brower, *Unruly Spirits*, 2010.

question taken up by Avital Ronell in *The Telephone Book*. In a section titled "Electric Portraits," Ronell rewrites a biography of Alexander Graham Bell (b. 1847, d. 1922) around the narrative of an existing biography by Catherine F. Mackenzie.[52] Mackenzie documents Bell's "obsession" with finding a way of "sending speech over a wire."[53] Even before the telephone exists, the possibility of the telephone haunts Bell's work and relationships. Ronell, jumping back and forth between events in Bell's life, narrates the invention of the telephone over and over again, describing its coming into being before its official invention.

Ronell begins by quoting from the Mackenzie. "*In a manner of speaking*, Alexander Graham Bell inherited the telephone." [54] Bell's grandfather, Alexander Bell, "was a recognized authority on pure diction, a teacher of speech, and the author of a pop textbook on elocution."[55] Bell inherited from his grandfather an interest in working with words, but in hearing and the way that words are formed and received. Bell's father was also a teacher of speech, which likely led his father to attend a performance of a "speaking machine" on a visit to London. [56] Bell's father returned from this performance with a challenge for his sons: to create a speaking automaton of their own.[57] Ronell, again drawing on Mackenzie, describes the creation of the automation:

> My brother and I went to work; he was to make the lungs and the vocal cords, I was to make the mouth and the tongue. He made a bellows for the lungs, and a very good vocal apparatus out of rubber. I devised a skull and moulded a tongue with rubber, stuffed with cotton wool, and supplied the soft parts of the throat with the

---

[52] Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*. I have consulted the original biography by Catherine MacKenzie, cited in the bibliography. However, I cite Mackenzie *as quoted in* the Ronell within this chapter in keeping with Ronell's deliberate rewriting of the Mackenzie through the contextual and visual presentation of quotes.
[53] Mackenzie, quoted in Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*, 310.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*, 315.
[56] Ibid., 315.
[57] Ibid., 315.

> same material.[58]

The brothers force the automaton to speak, and it makes a sound that they hear as a passable repetition of the word "Mama." Ronell reminds the reader of the influence of their father in encouraging their project, and of the likely impact that their mother's near-deafness had on their desire to make themselves heard through the automaton.

> Between the maternally enfolded ear and the paternal mouth, the pair of brothers are already on the telephone, a project they had begun to construe in a determined fashion since at least the speaking automaton built under the command of the father to utter "Ma-ma."[59]

In Ronell's reading of invention, the genesis of the telephone fractures into these smaller moments—the automaton, the real and imagined experience of speaking to a mother, Bell's father viewing (and hearing) the "speaking machine."[60] Alexander Graham Bell sitting in his parent's garden as a child with "his Skye terrier between his knees, opening and shutting its jaws, trying to oblige the dog to growl 'How-do-you-do'" is already on the telephone.[61] Bell, experimenting with ways to help deaf children hear and speak in his early professional career, using "tuning forks, based on the work of Helmholtz" is already on the telephone.[62] In each of these moments that happen before the official, physical invention of the telephone, Ronell indicates that the telephone exists before itself, bringing itself into being, just as cryptomnesia exists for Flournoy and for Meyers, before it is specifically named.

The Telephone Before Telephones

In a linear reading of invention, rather than narrating the invention of the telephone

---

[58] Mackenzie, quoted in Ronell, 310.
[59] Ronell, 317.
[60] Ibid., 317.
[61] Ibid., 317.
[62] Ibid., 317.

before the telephone, Ronell simply makes an argument for locating the official invention of the telephone in an earlier, admittedly strange iteration of the same technology. However, part of Ronell's focus on these earlier moments is their potential affective importance to Bell and the invention of the telephone that is in part derived from the way in which the telephone does not yet exist as a named instrument when these moments occur. One of these "already on the telephone" moments occurs when Bell purchases land that comes with a flock of sheep. Inspired by the purchase, Bell researches sheep and learns, presumably among other facts, that "these simple creatures [sheep] had no teeth in their upper jaws, that they had—usually—one lamb at birth and that they suckled their young with two nipples."[63] Bell appears to have been most astonished at the sheep's lack of teeth. He developed a habit of asking people if they knew how many teeth sheep had. "*You have never counted them? You have not observed? Next time you come across a sheep, just look and see, and you will find that she has none at all! -- the upper gum is bare*."[64] Bell seems to delight not only in the fact that sheep have no teeth, but in the fact that he is able to confirm again and again that *no one realizes it*. By constantly confronting others with his unusual knowledge of the mouths of sheep, Bell reminds himself again and again that things can exist—or come to exist—that people do not yet know to be true. "In other words," as Ronell puts it, "conclusions can be correct even when unsupported by the mere empiricity of facts."[65] Concepts—sheep, telephones—can operate without being properly named or wholly understood. For Bell, it is this knowledge that helps bring the telephone as itself into being.

---

[63] Mackenzie, quoted in Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*, 337.
[64] Ronell, 338.
[65] Ibid., 314.

The Telephone as Apparatus

In *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Karen Barad provides an explanation for how things come to exist—or, in her words, "come to matter"—as phenomena, linking the expectation of certain kinds of "mattering" in scientific practice with the broad expectation that objects—telephones, sheep—will be concrete, potentially static, and measurable. For Barad, measurement technologies are inextricable aspects of observed phenomena. Measurement and the thing measured interact in a process of mattering. (Barad uses the term intra-act to distinguish her claims from interactionist language that reifies dualisms by suggesting the entanglement of static objects).[66] Measurements do not observe concrete, discrete phenomena. For Barad, "measurement practices are an ineliminable part of the results obtained."[67] The isolation of single causes or the prioritization of certain influences requires an act of observation that is itself part of the boundaries drawn, so that "method, measurement, description, interpretation, epistemology, and ontology are not separable considerations."[68] If measurement cannot be separated from what is being measured, Barad concludes that "measured properties refer to phenomena."[69]

Barad develops this convergence of observer/observed and refers to the "wholeness" of phenomena as an "apparatus." This "gathering together" is as deceptively simple as Ronell's history of the coming to matter of the telephone. Barad states:

> I argue that phenomena are not the mere result of laboratory exercises engineered by human subjects; rather, *phenomena are differential patterns of mattering* ("diffraction patterns") produced through complex agential intra-actions of multiple material discursive practices or apparatuses of bodily production, where *apparatuses are not mere observing instruments but boundary drawing practices—specific material (re)configurings of the*

---

[66] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, 211.
[67] Ibid., 120-1.
[68] Ibid., 121.
[69] Ibid., 197.

world—which comes to matter.[70]

Barad tends to draw on examples of measurement practice and the thing being measured that occur relatively close together in time or even occur simultaneously: a microscope drawing together the observer who looks through the lens and the specimen being observed. She also refers to Bohr's example of looking at "permanent marks" of observation "such as a spot on a photographic plate, caused by the impact of an electron."[71] The selection of examples is appropriate for Barad's focus on scientific practices in the field of quantum physics. However, in drawing together Barad's observation as well as what it is she observes in concert with her own theory of the apparatus, it is possible to question how the theory might extend to phenomena that take place over longer periods of time—if it does, or why it does not. Ronell's history of the telephone suggests that the telephone itself is an apparatus with (producing, produced by) a lengthy history. The observation, action, and objects that intra-act with the telephone are themselves creating and created by this process. Similarly, Flournoy's cryptomnesia appears to provide a nexus for an apparatus that parses out what is original and borrowed, scientific and ghostly, long before the publication of *From India to the Planet Mars*.

In addition to an interest in sheep's teeth, Bell spent a significant amount of time seeking to understand the bodies of ewes: how many nipples they had, how many lambs they generally gave birth to in a single pregnancy, how they nursed, and the relationship between these characteristics.[72] "For Alexander Graham Bell," Ronell concludes, "the sheep take up a significance of affective investment of the same intensity as the telephone."[73] Barad's

---

[70] Ibid., 140.
[71] Ibid., 120.
[72] Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*, 338.
[73] Ibid., 338.

concept of the apparatus is developed—in part--by her observation of scientific practice that attempts to replicate objects, experiences, and phenomena in the world and ignores the complexities of mattering. Set alongside Ronell's narration of Bell's fascinations—sheep, telephones—it seems that Barad, in seeking to avoid the "objective" acceptance of objects and measurements and observers as such, places less emphasis on the problem of the persistence of uncertain objects. And not only because of how they are observed, but in spite of it. The telephone has permanence, a strength as an object that either belies or is derived from its fragmented affective history. Perhaps affect does not map entirely on to objects, and this networking lies like a ghost over Barad's own linked, interconnected, diffracted mattering. The ghost of the sheep in the telephone is not unlike cryptomnesia.

Returning to Bell's fascination with sheep, Ronell writes: "As enthusiastically as he had set out to contract space, as positively as he was to embark on the conquest of the air, Bell began to breed sheep to produce litters of lambs at birth."[74] In his initial work with the sheep, Bell noticed that most lambs were born as singletons, but twin births occasionally occurred. He set about increasing the number of twin births in his flock through a series of breeding experiments. Ronell quotes Mackenzie:

> [. . .] For thirty years Bell's labours over these breeding experiments was prodigious. He worked out a series of earmarks . . . And though the mutton was tough, the wool inferior, and a farmer once complained that the local butchers declines to take them even as gifts, the multi-nippled, twin-bearing sheep did, ultimately, appear regularly in pairs.[75]

The "affective investment" Ronell describes is at odds with measurement and with objects in the world—again, sheep—in a way that matters not only wholly as a phenomena, but crookedly, inconsistently, and without attention to likeness, usefulness, or impossibility. Both

[74] Ibid., 339.
[75] Mackenzie, quoted in Ronell, 339.

Barad and Ronell make room for this strange investment in sheep as part of a process of "mattering." Ronell does not articulate the drawing together, the process of observation is submerged in the stories she tells and, for the most part, draws its specifics from Mackenzie. Barad, on the other hand, provides a theory that is so open to all kinds of unexpected mattering, it does not provide an account of the telephone as a concrete object in the same way as Ronell's narrative makes possible. For Ronell, the telephone is the voice calling for its mother. The telephone is the mother, "ewe", "you" on the other end of the line. But the telephone that literally, physically connects to the site of its first use in a Boston attic can only be the telephone, coming into conceptual existence, a point of contact for all of the stories of its own creation.

Problems of Intimacy

Concepts such as cryptomnesia are not necessarily afforded the material status that makes the telephone become itself at a particular moment amidst an interconnected history of coming into being. However, the creation of cryptomnesia as itself amidst Flournoy's work with Smith places it amidst a particular form of embodied, material intimacy unique to their interaction. Pamela Thurschwell suggests that the turn of the twentieth century saw a proliferation of technologies and "scenarios" that engendered a kind of crisis of intimacy.

> [. . .] these scenarios, form what eventually becomes the most widespread and technologically banal (the telephone) to the most obscure and specific [and] are related to a nexus of nineteenth-century concerns about the shape and configuration of the mind, and the volition of the subject whose mind just might be under attack.[76]

Cryptomnesia itself is a problematic intimacy, a familiarity that lacks the quality of memory,

---

[76] Pamela Thurschwell, *Literature, Technology and Magical Thinking, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 13.

the experience of a past experience without benefit of the boundaries of names, time, place. Through Ronell, the "banal" telephone is itself an outcome of more peculiar problems of intimacy—speech, hearing, motherhood. In a landscape of uncertain intimacies, cryptomnesia as a phenomenon of Barad's intra-action, reflects an engagement with material within the system of its own creation that does not carry with it a sense of name or authorship. While cryptomnesia might have multiple, indeterminate histories, it specifically becomes a named concept in 1899 in part due to the particular cultural context of emerging communication technologies—from telephones to telepathy—that expand the experienced, known boundaries of the human mind and the expectations of communication between minds. Cryptomnesia itself also comes into being alongside the development of the concept of the unconscious, aspects of the mind that are hidden and might emerge in myriad ways.

Cryptomnesia, like the telephone, can be narrated as the product of a fractured history. Cryptomnesia begins to exist around Anton Mesmer's (b. 1734, d. 1815) baquet as the influence of the animal magnetizer flows into and through the bodies of those around him. It is prefigured in the strange device of "iron rods, bent at right angles outwards, and of different heights."[77] Flournoy brings cryptomnesia into existence when he assigns its symptoms to Hélène Smith. But the diagnosis—the purely psychological explanation—derives from a landscape of problems of intimacy that exists before and after cryptomnesia itself. In regard to the question of whether a concept can exist before it is named, cryptomnesia appears to have occurred prior to Flournoy's development of the term. However, the publication of Flournoy's book—so popular, it entered its third edition only three months after it appeared—marked the use of the specific term and a persistence of

[77] Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, 64.

cryptomnesia as an explanation for phenomena that would prove persistent.[78]

What is unique about cryptomnesia as an enduring concept is that it describes the operation of a process that could, in effect, erase itself. There may be a question about *when* the telephone could be said to exist, but *whether* the telephone exists is not really a matter of debate. The telephone may change (cellular), acquire new possibilities (cordless, car phone) and dangers (cancer, hearing loss), but the telephone is itself. The telephone is displayed in the Smithsonian. The telephone can still be purchased in its original form, for novelty value, as an object that still carries two side-by-side bells in homage to the nipples of sheep.[79] Cryptomnesia, by contrast, can cease to be itself. For cryptomnesia to occur, it must be unnamed and unrecognized as itself. Once it is uncovered, it has different consequences or may never have any consequence or existence at all. The strangeness of a concept when it pre-exists itself is a kind of currency that loses its effectiveness with the naming of the concept itself. So, the history of the telephone that is not literally the telephone, as an object, must be recalled in iteration after iteration by Ronell. It is not an easy thing to dig up—it requires pages and pages of words, strange fonts, pictures. Cryptomnesia wraps up the process of forgetting itself into itself. As an apparatus, it contains the possibility of not existing, whereas the observation of a thing as itself normally has an indelible status that might be eroded, but will never be erased.

After the publication of *From India to the Planet Mars* and its ensuing popularity, Flournoy and Smith had a falling out. Smith barred Flournoy from her séances and demanded profits from the book.[80] Flournoy eventually gave her half the profits.[81]

---

[78] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, "Introduction: Encountering Hélène ."
[79] Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*.
[80] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, "Introduction: Encountering Hélène " p.xxxii.
[81] Ibid. p.xxxii.

Ellenberger gives an account of the book's fallout that casts Flournoy as remorseful after learning that his "exposure" of Smith was so upsetting to her that she "restricted her activities to a sterile, autistic life."[82] According to Ellenberger, when Flournoy realized how his popular study had affected Smith, he swore never to provide so close an account of someone's psychological life again. "Though he understood the nature of the medium's feelings toward him he was not cautious enough [. . .] Flournoy came to understand the danger of carrying on prolonged studies of that kind upon one subject."[83] Shamdasani, in his introduction to his 1994 translation of *From India to the Planet Mars*, provides a somewhat different account. Rather than longing to redress the wrong he had done Smith, Shamdasani describes how Flournoy desperately wanted to find another medium who would provide him with such compelling results.[84] Reporting the less convincing results of a later experiment, Flournoy wrote that they showed "nothing for example that approaches the beautiful subliminal imagination, creator of languages and myths, which at the same time I saw unfold in the somnambulisms of Mlle Smith."[85] The implication is less that Flournoy felt he did an injury to Smith, but instead that he felt he may have obtained specious results by relying so heavily on one "beautiful" example. In either case, cryptomnesia, Flournoy's own invention (possibly more so than he realized as he developed it in Smith) provides a possible way of changing what he seemed, for scientific or personal reasons, to regret. Something created as itself cannot be unknown, but it can be divorced from specific naming and removed from putting too heavy a burden on its source. Cryptomnesia provides a way of bringing into

---

[82] Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, 893.
[83] Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, 893.
[84] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, "Introduction: Encountering Hélène " p.xxxiv.
[85] Ibid. p.xxxv.

being what something might have meant: more fantastic, more elaborate. Also: less damaging, less personal.

Helene Keller and "The Frost King"

Helen Keller experienced cryptomnesia as a child when she wrote her short story "The Frost King." At least, this is the consensus of bloggers and Wikipedia. A simple Google search for her name finds her cryptomnesia referenced frequently.[86] Keller is also a common fixture in psychological articles that mention cryptomnesia (further detailed in Chapter Two of this dissertation) as part of a literature review of past cases. Most of these articles and books reference two of the same articles from printed anthologies of psychological work on memory: *Hypnosis and Memory* and *Memory Attributions.*[87]

The alleged cryptomnesia occurred in 1891 when Keller was eleven years old. She wrote a short story, "The Frost King," and presented it as a birthday gift to Michael Anagnos (b. 1837, d. 1906), the head of the Perkins School for the Blind where she was a student. Anagnos subsequently published the story in the school newsletter and it was then

---

86 Representative examples include: psycofwriting, "Cryptomnesia," *The Psychology of Writing, Reading, and the Creative Process*, July 18, 2009, http://psychofwriting.wordpress.com/2009/07/18/cryptomnesia/ (accessed April 1, 2013); Brian Walton, "5 Ways Your Brain Is Messing With Your Head," *Cracked.com*, March 2, 2009, http://www.cracked.com/article_17103_5-ways-your-brain-messing-with-your-head.html (accessed April 1, 2013). The latter article was later included in a book, Cracked.com. *You Might be a Zombie and Other Bad News: Shocking but Utterly True Facts*. (New York: Plume, 2010).

87 Kenneth S. Bowers and Ernest R. Hilgard, "Some complexities in understanding memory," in *Hypnosis and Memory.*, ed. Helen M Pettinati (New York: Guilford Press, 1988), 3-18; Larry L Jacoby, Colleen M Kelley, and Jane Dywan, "Memory attributions," in *Varieties of Memory and Consciousness: Essays in Honour of Endel Tulving.*, ed. Henry L Roediger and Fergus I M Craik (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 1989), 391–422. Both printed collections and are not readily available online, suggesting perhaps that casual researchers would not be aware of these particular articles when they identify Keller's experience as cryptomnesia.

reprinted in *The Goodson Gazette*, a weekly published by the Virginia Institute for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb and of the Blind.[88] Following the reprint in the *Gazette*, someone came forward with a copy of the children's book *Birdie and His Fairie Friends*, by Margaret T. Canby. A week after the publication of Keller's story, the *Gazette* ran excerpts of it alongside excerpts from Canby's work, marked only with the comment "Comment is unnecessary."[89]

The similarities between the two stories were so striking that plagiarism was believed to be the only possibility, since Canby's book was published years earlier. Keller describes the situation in depth in her autobiography, published in 1903. Of "The Frost King," she writes:

> [. . .] it was discovered that a story similar to "The Frost King," called "The Frost Fairies" by Miss Margaret T. Canby, had appeared before I was born in a book called "Birdie and His Fairy Friends." The two stories were so much alike in thought and language that it was evident Miss Canby's story had been read to me and that mine was—a plagiarism. It was difficult to make me understand this; but when I did understand, I was astonished and grieved.[90]

The plagiarism resulted in academic censure, with Keller being called before a specially convened court of investigation.[91] The court, made up of four blind and four sighted members, was tasked with answering the question of whether Keller knew the story had been read to her. Four decided in her favor: she had not known she had previously heard the story.[92] The question of whether Keller had encountered the story at all had already been decided, even if how it happened was uncertain.

---

[88] Joseph P Lash, *Helen and teacher: the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1980), 133.
[89] Ibid., 133.
[90] Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan, *The Story of My Life: with her letters (1887--1901) and a supplementary account of her education, including passages from the reports and letters of her teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan* (Doubleday, Page, 1921), 64-5.
[91] Lash, *Helen and teacher: the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy*, 141.
[92] Ibid., 141.

How could Keller have experienced cryptomnesia? Despite the frequency with which she is cited as an example of this phenomenon, the Frost King incident occurred prior to the publication of Flournoy's case study. Keller does not mention the term in her autobiography or in any of her other works. Joseph P. Lash's *Helen and Teacher*, perhaps the most exhaustive work on Helen's life, provides an account of the plagiarism controversy that draws on numerous original materials, including previously unseen documents from the Perkins Institute for the Blind (most other discussions of the controversy simply cite Keller's autobiography) but also does not mention cryptomnesia. In light of the history of the telephone, it seems that Helen's authorship of the Frost King is "already cryptomnesia" before the term itself comes to matter.

Helen and the Shakespeare Authorship Controversy

Following the plagiarism incident, Keller felt that she had to police her creative work and was fearful that she could not adequately ensure that anything she wrote was original. *The Story of My Life* with its extensive discussion of the Frost King—including, again, the reprint of Keller's story alongside Canby's, along with an appendix of letters related to the affair—is consistent with the only kind of writing Keller published in the future—autobiographical or otherwise factual. In 1909, she sent an article to *Century Magazine* Editor Richard Gilder, who frequently published her work. The response was a censorious one, with Keller yet again being taken to task for being taken in by the words of another, for making a mistake.

The article described Keller's investigation into the Shakespeare Authorship controversy—the suggestion that Shakespeare did not really write all of the plays attributed to his name—and her support of the "Baconian Hypothesis" that Francis Bacon is the true

author of Shakespeare's works. Gilder feared Keller had been taken in by her reading of popular books on the controversy. In a letter to Keller on April 20th, 1909, Gilder writes: "The development of your mind has been one of the things in this life in which I have been most interested, and I am simply broken hearted over you wasting your talents on the Baconian hypothesis."[93] As Lash reports in *Helen and Teacher* there was also some suspicion on Gilder's part that it was Anne Sullivan and her husband John Macy who were encouraging Helen to research the authorship controversy and to pursue publication of the piece. Lash describes Keller's anger upon learning that her interest in the controversy was implied to be a product of manipulation by "John and Teacher." "How could he dream that they [Teacher and John] would interfere with my right as a free woman to say whatever I liked! I mention this not on account of its importance but because it was the first time that I had let outsiders know I would think for myself."[94]Anne Sullivan had also been suspected in the plagiarism controversy, and Keller had also denied her involvement.

Some readers of the Frost King controversy have drawn comparisons between Helen and Shakespeare. In the frequently cited Bowers and Hilgard chapter, the authors discuss the case of Helen Keller following their discussion of the reliability of information contained under hypnosis. The authors demonstrate that the contamination of "real" memories in question when hypnosis is employed can come about through "imaginal contributions." This is the connection back to the Keller case, as they see her plagiarism as an "imaginal contribution" to a previously encountered text. The authors invoke Shakespeare as a sort of co-conspirator for Keller:

> Occasionally, the results of mnemonic activation precipitate an outcome that is ambiguous regarding how it should be evaluated—whether as a remembrance or as a

[93] Get archival citation.
[94] Keller, quoted in Lash, *Helen and teacher: the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy*, 361.

> creative work of imagination. Such was the case in regard to Helen Keller's short story "The Frost King." It was clearly a work influenced by the earlier story of Margaret Canby, *but Shakespeare, too, borrowed from all sorts of predecessors, dressing up earlier tales with his own unique additions and improvements to the originals.*[95]

Keller, like Shakespeare, is herself imagined to have been working unintentionally but perhaps intuitively to elaborate on a previously published work.

But when Keller herself takes up the question of Shakespeare's work, her focus is not on its elaborative, creative qualities. Instead, she is interested in aspects of Shakespeare's work that are evidence of its connection to another author—Francis Bacon—and are therefore as directly reflective of his work as possible. One of the pieces of evidence that she is most interested in is the alleged appearance of acrostics in Shakespeare's work deliberately inserted by Bacon to indicate his authorship. In an unpublished essay on the controversy, she writes: "[. . .] if we take the first spoken line of each of the plays and write them all down in a continuous line the name of Francis Bacon is spelled from the first initial to the last."[96] Keller's focus is on a search for sameness, for derivative evidence that may be indicative of the true origins of authorship.

> It was the experience of tracing out the acrostic signatures with the ten eyes in my fingers that opened this subject to me. When I found Francis Bacon's name clear and secure, I felt like a swimmer who, with no sense of danger, stands suddenly upright on a rock, and then sees in what a treacherous current he has been floating.[97]

Part of what is clear is that if Helen herself is used as an example for the usefulness and

---

[95] Kenneth S. Bowers and Ernest R. Hilgard, "Some complexities in understanding memory," in *Hypnosis and Memory.*, ed. Helen M Pettinati (New York: Guilford Press, 1988), 16.

[96] "Francis Bacon," unpublished essay by Helen Keller, 1907, box 210, folder 5, Publisher: Century Magazine, Helen Keller Archives, The American Foundation for the Blind, New York, NY. This unpublished essay, titled simply "Francis Bacon." is an extensive discussion of the authorship controversy in favor of Bacon as the true author of Shakespeare. The essay is in draft form and includes handwritten notes. The page numbers are not complete or consistent throughout the essay, but I have indicated them where available. This quote appears on page 21.

[97] Ibid., 2.

ubiquity of creative elaboration, cryptomnesia as more and less than plagiarism, the development of her own sense of authorship, in herself and in others, reveals a dedication to the ideal of the "true author." Helen describes her experience as a reader and clearly narrates her delight at finding sameness and evidence of consistency as opposed to novelty. Describing her ultimate reason for writing her essay on Bacon, she says: "Since I have the proselytizing temperament, I put on my armor and proceed to right the wrongs of literature, cast down idols of stone and clay and set up true gods in their niches."[98] Keller is devoted to an image of Shakespeare as a concrete figure, even if he is a misunderstood one. Keller's admiration of Shakespeare is not an attempt to locate plagiarism in an author with a lofty enough status to exonerate her. Instead, she seeks to celebrate the same qualities in Shakespeare that she sought in her own writing after "The Frost King"—evidence of the true author, reflection of something only the author could know, even if the naming of the text is incongruent with the author. In Keller's own account, Shakespeare's work is excluded from the trajectory of cases marching towards the invention of cryptomnesia.

Keller's Book Test

The search for the book—the encounter with the book and what it meant—is an integral part of the "Frost King" controversy. If Keller experienced cryptomnesia—the recall of previously encountered information out of context—the book was the context, the proof that what she wrote had a mirror image in the known world. In Keller's autobiography, the search for her original encounter with Canby's book is summarized, its result indicating that Canby's story was read to Keller by a friend in the summer of 1888. According to Keller, the

---

[98] Ibid., 2.

friend "Mrs Sophia T. Hopkins had a copy of "Birdie and Friends."[99] On questioning, Mrs Hopkins was unable to find it.[100] "She told me" Keller writes "that at the time, while Miss Sullivan was away on a vacation, she tried to amuse me by reading from various books, and although she could not remember reading 'The Frost Fairies' any more than I, yet she felt sure that 'Birdie and His Friends' was one of them."[101] The book's absence is incidental. "She explained the disappearance of the book by the fact that she had a short time before sold her house and disposed of many juvenile books, such as old school-books and fairy tales, and that 'Birdie and His Friends' was probably among them."[102]

An important aspect of the account is Anne Sullivan's absence. Keller says "Miss Sullivan had never heard of 'The Frost Fairies' or the book in which it was published."[103] During the initial investigation into the incident and Keller's "trial" a major thread of inquiry was whether Sullivan had read the book to Keller or not. Another teacher at the Institute claimed that Keller had told her that Sullivan had read the book. Keller maintained that she had simply told the other teacher that Sullivan had talked to her about the Jack Frost and the seasons, an account repeated in her autobiography, but had not read the book.

Lash follows the thread of a possible alternate account, the suggestion that Sullivan did read the book to Keller and later sought to cover it up.

> The writer of this biography [Lash] believes that Miss Sullivan did know the Canby book and made frequent use of it in talks with Helen, especially in describing what she saw. This does not diminish her remarkable insights and achievements as a

---

[99] Keller and Sullivan, *The Story of My Life: with her letters (1887--1901) and a supplementary account of her education, including passages from the reports and letters of her teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan*, 67.
[100] A problem with book tests: people might move them before the findings can be corroborated as evidentiary. The books might be dusted, rearranged, read.
[101] Ibid., 68.
[102] Ibid., 67.
[103] Ibid., 67. The situation echoes a book test, where it is important that the medium not have read the books in question. It is important that the sitter does not keep a book in mind because the results might be affected by telepathy.

> teacher. She was flawed, which is only to say that she was human. She was deeply conscious of gaps in her own education. The best of tutors frequently stay but one lesson ahead of their charges. It is quite conceivable that Annie Sullivan boned up on fairy tales [. . .] to enrich her communications to Helen and stimulate the child's imagination.[104]

Lash seems to imply that Keller's cryptomnesia is actually inherited—passed down to her by her teacher. The implication of the search for Sullivan's involvement for Perkins was that she might be dissembling about Keller's remarkable accomplishments and manufacturing proof or her intelligence. For Lash, the issue is not trickery. Rather, he sees Sullivan's involvement as further evidence of Keller's own developing intelligence, her sense of and use of books, stories, and words.

Briefly, in Sullivan's early account of the Frost King incident in a letter, we get eleven-year-old Keller's initial report on the status of her story as a "book test." Sullivan's "Supplementary Account" of Keller and her education appears as an appendix to "Story of My Life" and includes the following passage:

> I have now (March, 1892) read to Helen "The Frost Fairies," "The Rose Fairies," and a portion of "The Dew Fairies," but she is unable to throw any light on the matter. She recognized them at once as her own stories, with variations, and was much puzzled to know how they could have been published before she was born! She thinks it is wonderful that two people should write stories so much alike; but *she still considers her own as original.*[105]

Whatever guilt and certainty about having plagiarized that Keller might have professed later, it appears that there was a point where she continued to understand her story as original even in the face of what was presented to her as evidence that it was not. In Keller's account, cryptomnesia is still occurring, still being brought into being, not in the sense that she is obscuring the real origins of her work, but in the sense that the affective experience of

---

[104] Lash, *Helen and teacher: the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy*, 144-5.
[105] Keller and Sullivan, *The Story of My Life: with her letters (1887--1901) and a supplementary account of her education, including passages from the reports and letters of her teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan*.

authorship, her certainty as to when her story occurred and how, is resistant to all other histories. Keller's certainty of her own originality underscores the slight, easily missed difference between cryptomnesia as it first existed and unconscious plagiarism. The identification of plagiarism is only one aspect, and a later one at that, of a phenomenon that first must necessarily include not only forgetting, but an affective experience of certainty, an original experience completely uncolored by previous histories, whether named or known or not.

Hélène's Book Test

The search for the book—the encounter with the book and what it meant—is an integral part of Flournoy's journey *From India to the Planet Mars*. Ellenberger gives an account of the relation between Smith's cryptomnesia and books in *The Discovery of the Unconscious*. *From India to the Planet Mars* is described as follows:

> This book, as entertaining as a novel by Jules Verne or H. G. Wells, is a deep-reaching analysis of some of the subtle processes of the subconscious mind. It brings evidence of subliminal imaging as a creative and continuous activity. Throughout the various sub-personalities of his medium, Flournoy emphasized the fundamental unity of her personality. He also showed the importance of cryptomnesia, the subliminal romances consisting largely of forgotten childhood memories, especially of books.[106]

What is interesting is that Flournoy himself does not appear to have found much evidence that any of Smith's spiritistic reports were based specifically on memories of books. He does expects that this might have been the case, but he finds again and again that he cannot provide sufficient evidence for this suspicion. In regard to the reports of Mars, Flournoy says: "There is nothing of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, fairy stories, or the adventures of Gulliver, no trace of ogres or giants nor of veritable sorcerers in

---

[106] Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*, 781.

the whole cycle."[107] The books that Flournoy mentions are classics, typically encountered through the kind of education Flournoy himself could be expected to have had, but not necessarily representative of what women were expected to read in the era. Mary Hammond describes the difference as one between "good novels" and "bad novels." with good novels being "initially canonical, historical and usually male authored" and bad novels "initially popular, contemporary, usually female-authored."[108] Flournoy's search seems confined to "good" books alone.

Despite the lack of congruence between Smith's visions and the texts Flournoy expects to find them in, he keeps searching. During his analysis of the "Hindoo" romance, he begins by seeking the advice of a "learned professor of history" who, after showing Flournoy "a good-sized bookcase" concludes that the persons and places referred to by Smith are "unknown to me and do not recall to my mind any personage, real or fictitious."[109] Another scholar laments: "I have no recollection of having read anything of this kind, and I know of no work of fiction from which this story might have been taken."[110] Flournoy describes himself as "annoyed" but undeterred: "I continued, on my own account, to search the libraries at my disposal, and here one fine day I accidentally came across, in an old history of India, in six volumes, by a man named De Marlès, the following passages [. . .]"[111] The passages in question describe names and places that are eerily similar to Smith's descriptions and drawings of her "Hindoo" romance. The excitement of the discovery is

---

[107] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*, 122.
[108] Mary Hammond, *Reading, Publishing And the Formation of Literary Taste in England 1880–1914* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2006), 5.
[109] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*, 185.
[110] Ibid., 185.
[111] Ibid., 185.

tempered by Flournoy's subsequent discovery that the author, De Marlès, is not well known or well thought of in learned circles. There are also some small differences in spelling between the names in the passage and the names from Smith's séance. Finally, there is the "objection" that "consists in the impossibility of showing where, when or how Mlle. Smith obtained cognizance of the text of De Marlès [. . .] It must indeed be admitted that the idea of the passage in question having come before the eyes or ears of Mlle. Smith through any ordinary channel seems a trifle absurd"[112]. Flournoy reiterates: "It could only have happened, therefore, by a combination of absolutely exceptional and almost unimaginable circumstances that the work of De Marlès could have found its way into Hélène's hands; and how could it have done so and she not have the slightest recollection of it?"[113]

Flournoy uses the issue of the De Marlès text as an example of the struggle that is central to his work with Smith, a struggle that he sees as shared with anyone who tries to grapple with occult phenomena. The struggle is summed up in two phrases: "I refuse to admit that it could have been through natural means. I believe it was some occult process."/ "I refuse to admit it could have been through occult means. I believe it was some natural process."[114] Flournoy aligns himself with the latter statement, but seems comfortable with the ambiguity of the problem. "The reader may think what he will."[115] In either case, it requires "transposing only two words."[116] Rearranging is presented as a substitute, or perhaps a correlate, of forgetting. As easily done by accident as on purpose. Flournoy's book test is evidentiary, but not because he proves, with many doubts accounted for, that something paranormal or something mundane has taken place. Instead, his book test

[112] Ibid., 189.
[113] Ibid., 189.
[114] Ibid., 190.
[115] Ibid., 190.
[116] Ibid., 190.

confirms again that cryptomnesia can be employed—both as a method and as a phenomenon of memory—without allegiance to a dualistic account of natural/supernatural, observed/observer, true/false.

Flournoy's book test is also an example of what cryptomnesia, briefly, is and how it is different from unconscious plagiarism alone. Despite the description of the forgotten books in Ellenberger and the space that Flournoy himself devotes to it, the use of the term cryptomnesi in *From India to the Planet Mars* is used in regard to instances where "ordinary consciousness" leads to hidden memories and fantastic reappearances of memories. The books are a way of gathering and supporting that this kind of ordinary experience occurs, but the books themselves are not what Smith forgets. More accurately, she forgets the experience of reading. The books are already past cryptomnesia, a tool for recall, implicated in the phenomena as part of the apparatus.

The discovery of cryptomnesia is not necessarily the discovery that things—ideas, objects, languages, songs, memories—are unconsciously borrowed, stolen, remixed. Cryptomnesia might also be a way of naming the discovery that the boundaries of naming, originality, story and memory are permeable and uncertain, that discoveries and invention happen over and over again and are not so much stolen as discovered both again and differently. The cases of cryptomnesia mentioned here—Keller, Smith—are connected at some point to books, but in turn to reading itself. In Susan Stewart's 1984 book *On Longing*, the first chapter entitled "On Description and the Book" includes the following account of what reading does:

> Although reading may give form to time, it does not count in time; it leaves no trace; its product is invisible. The marks in the margins of the page are the marks of writing, not the marks of reading [. . .] reading has inhabited the scenes of solitude:

> the attic, the beach, the commuter train [. . .].[117]

Stewart connects this "profound loneliness" to the absence of the author. Cryptomnesia enhances and erases this absence. As much as the book truly exists as an object in the world, as much as Margaret Canby had evidence of the existence of "The Frost Fairies" in not one, but two, editions—both of which she provided to Anne Sullivan—as much as books are solid, certain, even technological objects, reading does not exist, does not leave a trace. Reading is an encounter that does not easily contain the author. History is an endeavor that does not easily contain itself. Reading seems most analogous to the small moments that history struggles to capture, such as the influence of Flournoy's observations on Hélène's séances or Bell's discovery, over and over again, that people do not usually know—they have not considered!—whether sheep have teeth.

Conclusion

Adequately evidentiary accounts of objects and phenomena require a response to the intimacies and affects intra-connected with those phenomena that brings them into being in specific ways. The telephone is the absence of "already on the telephone," Canby's generous response to Keller's alleged plagiarism is the absence of Keller's conviction that the author must have found a way of knowing her own story before she herself wrote it. The problems of measurements and histories discussed in this chapter are only problematic in regard to their success as evidentiary accounts: objective, mimetic representations of the world. As affective histories, the telephone, Helen's cryptomnesia, Hélène's Martians, are appropriately inconsistent, unexpected, ghostly. They are felt, longed for, curious. Cryptomnesia, despite the fact that it offers a purely psychological explanation for the incongruence of spiritistic

---

[117] Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, 14.

and scientific explanations of the known world, offers a possible method for managing phenomena that are, in essence, a disconnect, a gathering together of things known and unknown, mimetic and affective, in a way that accounts for each without transposing one into the other, accidentally or otherwise.

Chapter Two

Haunting Houses:

Cryptomnesia as a Psychoanalytic and Psychological Concept

> Pages, of course, might be written on the outfit of the mansion—how many frying-pans, how many gilt chairs, what pictures, carpets, chandeliers, four-posters, table linen, glass, crockery and plate it possessed but all this must be left to the imagination. I will only say that the base of plinth on which the house stood (for it was fitted with one of some depth which allowed a flight of steps to the front door and a terrace, partly balustraded) contained a shallow drawer or drawers in which were neatly stored sets of embroidered curtains, changes of raiment for the inmates, and, in short, all the materials for an infinite series of variations and refittings of the most absorbing and delightful kind.
>
> —M. R. James, "The Haunted Dolls' House"

Early in its history, cryptomnesia began to appear as an explanatory term in psychological investigations outside the realm of psychical research. In addition to inhabiting the séance room, cryptomnesia appears on the couch, as an explanatory term in psychoanalytic work and in the laboratories of experimental psychologists. This chapter explores psychoanalytic and psychological work from 1905 through the 1990s. My focus is work that uses cryptomnesia as an operational definition for a phenomenon under study. The material comprising these cases of cryptomnesia includes psychoanalytic case reports, correspondence, dissertations, and articles describing experimental investigations that use the term cryptomnesia. Taken together, these articles describing cryptomnesia in research and clinical practice show the extraordinary breadth of its application. For instance, the term has been used to describe the implicit role of social psychological theory on the practice of marriage counseling and by sociologists to describe minorities' experience of social isolation

and integration.[118]

At the same time, following these articles chronologically shows that the meaning of cryptomnesia has also been narrowing over time. The term, initially used to describe a wide array of ghostly, alien, and embodied experiences as well as forgotten memories of literature, is used almost exclusively to mean unconscious plagiarism in the studies described in this chapter. Over time, cryptomnesia is more likely to be used to mean accidental plagiarism than to mean unconscious plagiarism, further submerging the possibility that cryptomnesia might reveal unknown realms, whether spirit or memory based.[119]

The definition of cryptomnesia as unconscious or accidental plagiarism rather than as "hidden memory" is, I argue, an intentional shift towards making the term a robust tool for psychology as it develops in the twentieth century. As accidental plagiarism, cryptomnesia is focused on sameness: mimetic, replicable phenomena distinguished only by when they occur in time. I connect this narrow interpretation of cryptomnesia to dualistic accounts of phenomena in scientific research, especially the nature/nurture debate. And I look to Susan Oyama's discussion of "impossible houses" as a way of understanding the impact of this expectation of mimesis on affective histories.

---

[118] They are Steven R. H. Beach and Frank D. Fincham, "Marital Therapy and Social Psychology: Will We Choose Explicit Partnership or Cryptomnesia?," in *Applied Social Psychology.*, ed. Marilynn B. Brewer and Miles Hewstone, Perspectives on Social Psychology (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 50–78; and Fabrizio Butera and John M. Levine, eds., *Coping with Minority Status: Responses to Exclusion and Inclusion*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[119] In addition to the articles cited within the text of this chapter, instances of cryptomnesia described in this manner appear frequently in psychology textbooks written for a beginning or general audience. Representative examples: Mark A. Gluck, Eduardo Mercado, and Catherine E. Myers, Learning and Memory: From Brain to Behavior (Macmillan, 2007); Daniel L. Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002).

Queen Mary's House

The passage that begins this chapter is taken from a short story by M. R. James (b. 1862, d. 1936). An author of gothic mysteries, James was asked to write the story for inclusion in the miniature library of the dollhouse built for Queen Mary between 1921 and 1924. The house, still on display at Windsor Castle, is famously detailed, down to the "flushing lavatories."[120] James's was one of the books commissioned for its miniature library. In *On Longing*, Susan Stewart (b. 1952) locates the advent of the miniature book as a reflection of the turning point of the book as an object constituted by the invention of printing.[121] With printing, there was a dwindling need for the manual labor and imperfect copies of crafted manuscripts.

> The appearance of miniature writing at the end of the manuscript era characterizes the transformation of writing to print: the end of writing's particular discursive movement; its errors made by the body; its mimesis of memory, fading and, thus, in micrographia, diminishing through time as well as space.[122]

If the appearance of the miniature book heralded the disruption of the book as a mimetic memory object, what should one make of the appearance of what is arguably the world's most famous miniature house? Stewart quotes from the introduction to the collector's book issued to describe the famous dollhouse:

> The scale of one inch to one foot being precisely maintained throughout, . . . thus there is nothing of the grotesque absurdity of a scene that does not resemble life and has only the interest of caricature. And then there is the *completeness* of the whole. Her majesty [Queen Mary], through all her public life has realized the extraordinary importance of the small details of life . . . . The Queen's House is a symbol of this.[123]

Perfect, mimetic copies are described as resembling life. The implication is that life, when

---

[120] Royal Collection, *Queen Mary's Dolls' House*.
[121] Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, 38-40.
[122] Ibid., 39.
[123] Benson, quoted in Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, and the Collection*, 62.

particularly messy, does not resemble itself. Stewart writes that in this case the house as a "monument against instability, randomness, and vulgarity speaks all the class relations absent from its boundaries."[124] Aligned with the history of the miniature book, the miniature house suggests that something strange might be going on with houses and their ability to represent, or contain, the kind of life that they are expected to mirror. These miniature objects deal with the slippery nature of resemblance in a manner not unlike cryptomnesia. One of their roles is to represent, another to contain.

Mimesis and Science

The expectation of authentic, exact replication as a way of "resembling life" is not confined to the history of the miniature. Science requires methods that produce reliable, reflective results about the qualities of phenomena. The methods of science have often reflected this expectation, from the replicas and actual specimens of natural life arrayed in curiosity cabinets by scientists and laymen alike during the 18th century to a 20th-century psychology textbook.[125]

> Precision is an important criterion, especially in psychology (where it is often lacking). Theories that involve mathematical equations and computer problems are generally more precise, and hence better, than those that use loose verbal statements (all other things being equal, of course).[126]

The description of precision in the quoted textbook—of which the second author is the well-known memory researcher Henry L. Roediger—is only part of the discussion of how

---

[124] Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, and the Collection*, 62.
[125] For a good discussion of the history of "curiosity cabinets" and eighteenth-century classifaction systems in science, see Londa Schiebinger, *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*, (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004).
[126] Kantowitz, Barry H., Henry L. Roediger, and David G. Elmes, Experimental Psychology: Understanding Psychological Research (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2004), 24.

science works. The researchers describe many other variables in the scientific process (parsimony, testability) and their language obviously strives to be fair, if at times condescending, about the limits of a scientific orientation committed to precision. "These humanists, most often clinical and counseling psychologists, claim that it is impossible to evaluate and test objectively much of human feelings and experience by traditional scientific methods."[127] Of course, they admit that "even tough, 'brass instrument' experimental psychologists concur that the domain of science is limited [. . .] However, most scientists hold out hope that scientific analysis eventually might be usefully applied to many such areas."[128]

In memory science in particular the question of what constitutes mimetic, precise, better experimental procedures and outcomes is a complicated question. Much of the focus has been on how memories are formed *in relation to an exact resemblance* of life. The assumption is that there is some original or exact experience that forms memory representations, generally a visual experience.

Many memory experiments draw on the work of Hermann Ebbinghaus (b. 1850, d. 1909). Ebbinghaus published a monograph called *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology* in 1885.[129] In the first chapter, Ebbinghaus defines memory as "mental states of every kind—sensations, feelings, ideas—which were at one time present in consciousness and then have disappeared from it, [but] have not with their disappearance absolutely ceased to exist."[130] Ebbinghaus conducted single-participant experiments in which he was the

---

[127] Ibid., 18.
[128] Ibid. As an example of the unfortunate current limits of science, the authors include "establishing the existence of God."
[129] Hermann Ebbinghaus, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology* (New York: Dover Publications, 1964).
[130] Ibid., 1.

participant. In these he worked to memorize and reproduce stimuli such as words and poems. The goal of Ebbinghaus's experiments was to determine "the moment when the goal is reached—i.e., when the process of learning by heart is completed."[131] The criteria for wholeness is the ability, however lasting, to exactly repeat.

Ebbinghaus and Nonsense

In addition to tracking how many repetitions it took to reproduce a particular stimulus exactly, Ebbinghaus also considered the influence of distributed versus massed practice on learning (distributed practice, over several sessions, was most effective). His results also indicated that order of succession mattered, so that items at the beginning and end of a list were more easily remembered than items in the middle. Ebbinghaus found that oblivesence—the process of forgetting—occurred at a higher rate immediately following initial learning and slowed as time went on. Repeated learning also slowed forgetting, so that stimuli memorized to the point of perfect recall more than once were memorized over again much faster during each successive period of learning. He concluded that association between remembered syllables was the key to enhancing recall. "The non-voluntary re-emergence of mental images out of the darkness of memory into the light of consciousness takes place, as has already been mentioned, not at random and accidentally, but in certain regular forms in accordance with the so-called laws of association."[132] For Ebbinghaus, forgetting is the fading of various associations from memory in favor of other, stronger associations more firmly linked temporally, spatially, or thematically to other memories.

Ebbinghaus's focus was exact reproduction. The difference between his

---

[131] Ibid., 9-10.
[132] Ibid., 90.

reproduction of written stimuli and the original word lists was the data: the measurable amount of forgetting. However, in seeking to determine how, why, and when exact memories faded and resisted recall, Ebbinghaus realized he actually needed something free of the associative networks of everyday, mimetic life for him to remember. Stimuli from real life were associated with the "so-called laws of association" in ways that were not immediately clear.[133]

In order to act as his own sole participant, Ebbinghaus needed to develop stimuli to memorize that were as neutral as possible. His solution was to compile lists of "nonsense syllables"—monosyllabic, meaningless "words" that "lacked meaning" to the greatest extent possible.[134]

> Out of the simple consonants of the alphabet and our eleven vowels and diphthongs all possible syllables of a certain sort were constructed, a vowel sound being placed between two consonants. These syllables, about 2,300 in number, were mixed together and then drawn out by chance and used to construct series of different lengths, several of which each time formed the material for a test.[135]

The use of nonsense syllables was meant to control for the way that selections of poetry or prose might be "recalled because of their striking quality, or their beauty and the like."[136] While Ebbinghaus does not explain how he decided to use these nonsense syllables, David Shakow (b. 1901, d. 1981) suggests that he may have been inspired by the nonsense poem "The Jabberwocky" in the popular contemporary novel *Through the Looking Glass*, by Lewis Carroll (b. 1832, d. 1898).[137] Ebbinghaus touted the regularity of his nonsense material, in opposition to prose or poetry where "there is thus brought into play a multiplicity of

---

[133] Ibid., 90.
[134] Ibid., 23.
[135] Ibid., 23.
[136] Ibid., 23.
[137] D Shakow, "Hermann Ebbinghaus," *The American Journal of Psychology* 42 (1930): 511.

influences which change without regularity and are therefore disturbing."[138] While he admitted that some syllables became familiar or invoked a slight affective response, overall the stimuli were deemed adequate, if "still far from ideal."[139]

The method was ingenious. It allowed Ebbinghaus to conduct experiments on himself with reliable results. What Ebbinghaus discovered about memory has been borne out in subsequent psychological studies.[140] However, the way that Ebbinghaus talks about the "disturbing" influences of associations on memory is reminiscent of the potentially "grotesque" dollhouse that does not reflect life.[141] Life, in this sense, becomes one lived in miniature houses and in speaking nonsense to its presumably equally miniature inhabitants. The range of possibilities must be constrained—made small, short, subject to a long list of rules—in order to be useful for parsing out broad and perhaps only partially observable things.

Freud and the Forgotten House

Like Ebbinghaus, Freud found that the strength of associations between content played a role in guiding memory and forgetting. Importantly, Freud observed that:

> All-powerful affects restrict association—the train of ideas. People become 'senseless' with anger or fright. Only the group of ideas which provoked the affect persists in consciousness, and it does so with extreme intensity. Thus the excitement cannot be leveled out by associative activity."[142]

---

[138] Ebbinghaus, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*, 23.
[139] Ibid., 23.
[140] These studies are too numerous to list, but they include research investigating recency effects, the usefulness of distributed and massed practice, and investigations of state and context-dependent memory.
[141] Benson quoted in Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, 62.
[142] Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895, in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume II (1893-1895): Studies on Hysteria, by*

The disturbing "multiplicity of influences" that Ebbinghaus—to the greatest extent possible—extinguishes from his experimental stimuli are exactly the influences on association that Freud sought to better identify and interpret. When association is restricted, Freud found that ideas remained unconscious, often inciting pathological symptoms.[143] Additionally, the "extreme intensity" of these restricted affects manifested itself in Freud's patients in strange and often debilitating ways. While Ebbinghaus insisted that remembering and forgetting do not take place "at random and accidentally," Freud sought seemingly random and "accidental" conscious content as evidence of a kind of affective, restricted memory.[144]

An example of Freud's account of this kind of memory appears in a lengthy footnote in *Studies on Hysteria*, published in 1895 with Josef Breuer (b. 1822-d. 1925). The note is included in the case description of Lucy von R., but Freud says it occurred with a different patient:

> a woman of thirty-eight, suffering from anxiety neurosis (agoraphobia, attacks of fear of death, etc.). Like so many such patients, she had a disinclination to admitting that she had acquired these troubles in her married life and would have liked to push them back into her early youth.[145]

The patient had been experiencing attacks of dizziness and anxiety since the age of seventeen. During the session in question, she describes the first such attack that occurred "in the street in her small, native town."[146] Suspecting that the attacks of dizziness were actually hysterical attacks related to the patient's anxiety neurosis, Freud asked her to

---

Sigmund Freud, James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey, and Alan Tyson (London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955).

[143] Ibid., 111.

[144] Ebbinghaus, *Memory: A Contribution to Experimental Psychology*, 90.

[145] Freud and Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*, 111.

[146] Ibid., 111.

describe the initial attack and the circumstances surrounding her being on the street at that time. The patient recalled that the attack occurred right before a ball that she was looking forward to attending. Freud encouraged her to recall exactly what she was thinking about when the attack occurred.[147]

Freud's footnote is included first and foremost as an example of uncovering the origins of a traumatic memory without the aid of hypnosis. Instead of hypnosis, Freud used the method of pressing his hand against the patient's forehead and insisting that whatever comes to mind will be relevant. Once this technique was employed, the patient recalled:

> I thought of a friend of mine, a girl, who is dead. But she died when I was eighteen—a year later, that is. [. . .] Her death was a great shock to me, as I used to see a lot of her. A few weeks earlier another girl had died, and that had made a great stir in the town. So after all, I must have been seventeen at the time [. . .] I wasn't thinking of anything; I only felt dizzy.[148]

Freud was unsatisfied with her reply to his questions and convinced that the bodily state, with no apparent physical cause, must be linked to some memory his patient had not yet recalled: "That's not possible. States like that never happen without being accompanied by some idea. I shall press once more and the thought you had will come back to you.… Well, what has occurred to you?" The patient replied: "The idea that I am the third."[149] Freud realized that this cryptic thought—"I am the third"—referred to the fear that she would die like her acquaintance and her friend before her. The patient suddenly remembered that she initially thought that the attack of dizziness meant that she actually was dying. She was able to make the connection between the realization that she was not dying and her continued anticipation of the upcoming ball. Unwilling to feel guilty for being alive and looking forward to the ball when her deceased friend could not, she repressed the memory of her

---

[147] Ibid., 111.
[148] Ibid., 111.
[149] Ibid., 111.

friend and her own fear of dying from consciousness.[150]

Freud recognized that the memory of the patient's friend became pathogenic due to "a deliberate repression from consciousness."[151] At the same time, he suspected that something other than the attack of dizziness was at play and tried to discover the precipitating cause of the attack. He described what happened next as the result of a "lucky conjecture."[152] He asked:

> Do you remember the exact street you were walking along just then?'— 'Certainly. It was the principal street, with its old houses. I can see them now.'—'And where was it that your friend lived?'—'In a house in the same street. I had just passed it, and I had the attack a couple of houses further on.'—'So when you went by the house it reminded you of your dead friend, and you were once more overcome by the contrast which you did not want to think of.'[153]

The house was the environmental trigger for the memory of the friend's death and the subsequent attack of dizziness.

Jung's Story of a Forgotten House

In 1905, Carl Jung (b. 1875, d. 1961) tells a similar story about a house in one of his first critical essays, published only three years after the completion of his doctoral dissertation.

> I walk, deep in thought, past the house where my friend X used to live. I pay no attention either to the house or to the street, but am thinking of some urgent business matter I have to attend to. Suddenly an unexpected image thrusts itself obtrusively between my thoughts: I see a scene in which X once discussed similar matters with me many years ago. I am surprised that this particular memory should come up, for the conversation was of no importance. Suddenly, I realize that I am on the street where my friend once lived.[154]

---

[150] Ibid., 111.
[151] Ibid., 111.
[152] Ibid., 111.
[153] Ibid., 111.
[154] C G Jung, *Psychiatric studies* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1957), 95.

In Jung's case, the memory of the friend does not provoke an attack. However, the memory of the friend in this case is also connected to an environmental trigger—the house—that is not initially consciously apprehended. Jung's realization that "I am on the street where my friend once lived" follows more quickly on the heels of his memory of his friend and his emotional response to the memory. Freud's patient only realizes the impact of her deceased friend having lived "in a house in the same street" many years after she encounters the house itself.

Jung tells the story of the house triggering the memory of his friend as an example of indirect memory. "In this case the association of the house with the memory-image is indirect. I did not perceive the house consciously, for my thoughts distracted me from my surroundings too much."[155] Jung says that the distraction of the memory of the friend allowed the house to slip "into the dark background of consciousness."[156] Because the house was therefore only feebly associated with the memory of the friend, the common and apparently more easily accessed memory of the conversation with X was recalled as a mediating association. "This mediating association is the memory-image of the conversation that touched on matters similar to those now being revolved in my consciousness."[157] In contrast, Jung describes how the association between the house and the friend might occur as a direct memory. "You have a direct memory when, for instance, you see a certain house and it then 'comes into your mind' that a friend of yours lived there some years ago."[158] The distinction between direct and indirect memory is one that Jung draws from his study of contemporary psychology. He also suggests that the two types of memory might occur in

[155] Ibid., 95.
[156] Ibid., 95.
[157] Ibid., 96.
[158] Ibid., 95.

correspondence with the way a person thinks. For intuitive thinkers, indirect memory might be more common while those who tend to think in logical sequence will more often consciously encounter direct memories.

Of course, Freud's house story and Jung's have important differences. Freud's is uncovered in the course of an analysis. Jung's might be called a sort of self-analysis and is (arguably) written prior to his deep engagement with psychoanalytic ideas. Additionally, Freud takes the analysis of his patient's dizziness further, suspecting that there is some sexual aetiology related to the repression of the powerful response to the indirect memory of the friend.[159] The connection of a house as the trigger for a memory in each case seems most likely due to coincidence. However, I argue that the associative power of houses is actually an integral part of these two memory events, especially considering that the house stories each appear in early publications by prolific authors who would later be deeply involved in discussions related to the theoretical and clinical foundations of psychoanalysis.[160] How "direct" is the influence of the house as a site of memory? And why might this matter? I am

---

[159] Freud and Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*, 111. Freud eventually determines that the date of the ball coincided with the date of the patient's first period and she recalls her anxiety and confusion surrounding the fact that the period should occur so close to the ball. Freud summarizes his ability to connect the dizziness with the friend, the house, and the first period. "It required complete confidence in my technique on my side, and the occurrence to the patient of a few key ideas, before it was possible to re-awaken, after an interval of twenty-one years, these details of a forgotten experience in a skeptical person who was, in fact, in a waking state. But once all this had been gone through, the whole thing fitted together."

[160] As mentioned in the first chapter, Myers provides a good reading of the house as a conceptual tool later in Jung's development of analytical psychology. He also provides a different reading of the break between Jung and Freud than what I will focus on in this chapter. His ultimate argument is that the split between Freud and Jung was due to their different attitudes "towards sexuality rather than phylogeny." In my reading, I also argue that sexuality in Freud's system is at the root of the break, but from different (but not necessarily competing) evidence. I do not include an in-depth analysis of the Myers article, but it is interesting support for the idea that houses themselves carried a conceptual weight in psychoanalysis at this time. The citation is: Myers, "The cryptomnesic origins of Jung's dream of the multi-storeyed house."

especially interested in Freud's assertion that, by asking fortuitous questions, and taking many seemingly unrelated details together, the "whole thing" might, somehow, fit.

Houses, Real and Imagined

Why houses? Part of the answer might be Stewart's characterization of the miniature as a harbinger of strange in the actual. Houses were in flux at the turn of the century, and they very clearly are in flux as real and imagined objects today. [161]Houses are something that people recognize. In a 1982 study, Annette Karmiloff-Smith asked child participants to draw houses. The children were between four and-a-half and ten years of age and were asked to draw a regular house and then to draw "a house that doesn't exist."[162] Across the age groups, Karmiloff-Smith found that the imaginary houses were changed from the standard, familiar drawing of a house through techniques such as changing the shape and size of certain elements in the drawing, changing the shape of the entire house, or deleting certain elements of the house. Karmiloff-Smith points out that "in most cases, the changes do *not* involve interrupting or re-ordering of the sequential constraints on the procedure."[163] Children who made these kinds of alterations to their "houses that didn't exist" generally made adjustments to the basic structure of their house later in the drawing process, completing the house-drawing "procedure" as usual before making adjustments. In contrast, older children were more likely to draw imaginary houses that interrupted the usual procedure for drawing houses. For example, elements of a usual drawing might be re-positioned or re-arranged

---

[161] Accidental foreclosures, deeds to nowhere, reverse mortgages, houses that are worth less than themselves, etc… Enough material for an entire (other) dissertation.
[162] Annette Karmiloff-Smith, "Beyond modularity: Innate constraints and developmental change," in *The Epigenesis of Mind: Essays on Biology and Cognition.*, ed. Susan Carey and Rochel Gelman, The Jean Piaget Symposium series (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991), 186.
[163] Ibid., 187.

prior to the drawing process. Rather than elaborating on the standard drawing of a house (often a triangle roof over a square) older children were able to bring in non-category elements to their houses. For example, a younger child might draw an imaginary house with a whimsically rounded roof and jagged windows. An older child's house might have a roof underneath it or have a head, arms, or shoes protruding from an oddly shaped base.

Karmiloff-Smith looks at the age-specific differences in the drawings of the houses as evidence of the developmental process through which knowledge acquisition and manipulation occurs. As children learn, they encounter and master procedures—Karmiloff-Smith calls them "I-level representations"—that become automatized and run "in sequence."[164] So, by the age of four, most children have mastered the triangle-roof-on-square-body drawing of a house. Initially, these procedures must be run in their entirety. If they are interrupted, they stop. This characteristic of procedures explains why younger children do not alter their imaginary houses before putting a basic house-structure in place. Without a procedure in place for imaginary houses, they rely on the existing house procedure, and interrupting this procedure would be a roadblock to the creative process. Another characteristic of these procedures for Karmiloff-Smith is that they "only become data to the system after redescription."[165] Only when a process is fully automated can it begin to be recast, for example, towards the task of creating an imaginary house from the beginning. Only after sequential procedures have been mastered can they be interrupted and redeployed with more and more flexibility. The importance of the house as the marker for how successfully a child is deploying memory systems should not be understated. From the philosophy of Cicero to recent work in memory studies, the house has commonly been

[164] Ibid., 191.
[165] Ibid., 191.

invoked as a metaphorical and material site for locating memories.[166]

Karmiloff-Smith's experiment is conducted as a part of her investigation into a paradox that she has encountered in her work on human development, specifically the conflict between "nature versus nurture" accounts of development.

> On the one hand, I was dissatisfied with [Jean] Piaget's account of the human infant as a purely sensorimotor organism with nothing more to start life than a few sensory reflexes and three ill-defined processes: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. There had to be more to the initial human structure than that. Yet I felt that a purely static, radical nativist/maturational position had to be wrong, too. [167]

Karmiloff-Smith reads Piaget's account like Ebbinghaus's—a complete, reliable system, but one without any sense of human—the description calls to mind a reliable robot. At the same time, the processes that are sensory are troublingly ill defined. The nature/nurture account reifies the problem of how the allegiance to mimetic accounts in science creates and submerges a difficulty in accessing the affective dimensions of phenomena. Defining nature/nurture as some percentage of a defined whole requires defined, replicable boundaries to contain increasingly static theories. The dynamic interplay of a multiply determined system already entangled with affects is necessarily excluded from a way of working that requires reliability and an ability to identify like phenomena across multiple cases.

Nature versus Nurture

Susan Oyama grapples with some of the consequences of this paradox between nature and nurture in *The Ontogeny of Information*. Like Karmiloff-Smith, Oyama is a psychologist, and

---

[166] Frances A Yates, *The Art Of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Harry Caplan, "Cicero: Ad Herennium," *Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1952).
[167] Karmiloff-Smith, "Beyond modularity: Innate constraints and developmental change," 171-2.

her task in the 1985 book is to find a way to speak to psychologists about the inflexibilities she sees in their thinking about development.[168] While Oyama questions the value of work that falls strongly into either the nature or the nurture camp, she also highlights and critiques what she sees as a widespread retreat towards a so-called interactionist approach. Oyama is concerned that interactionism—roughly, the idea that nature and nurture are at play in all developmental processes—"emphasizes the necessity of viewing transactions between an entity and its surround as aspects of a single system [. . .] interactionism has too often been treated as an answer or an explanation rather than the statement of a problem for which appropriate methods of investigation must be found."[169] Oyama argues that rather than seeking to determine how much is nature or nurture, development might be viewed as "multiply determined" and systemic.

As an example of how this sort of systems approach disrupts interactionist thinking, Oyama looks at the assumptions underlying various well known studies into "nature versus nurture." Oyama uses the metaphor of a house to critique one such argument that attempts to reconcile nature versus nurture by saying that inherent gene capacities (nature) are expressed and activated through nurture, an example of an interactionist approach. The research in question involves computer models that attempt to simulate development. The research begins

> with the standard presentation of a genetic blueprint as reconciler of preformationist and epigenetic approaches, but continues that the information must be unlocked "in the correct sequence" and that the blueprint must "interact with the environment"

[168] The book was reissued by Duke in 2000 and all quotations in this manuscript are taken from the later edition.
[169] Susan Oyama, *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*, (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2000), 7.

> which will then affect the direction of development."[170]

Oyama argues that the reading of cause and effect in this version of development suggests a kind of intentional control over development, so that order in a developmental system is conflated with cause. Development is broken down into its component parts and

> the prescriptive rules are then projected back into the original process as cognitive agents, programs, accounting for the original order in terms of the simulated order. The working of the original is then said to be "like that of the imitation, and therefore due to the same kind of intentional control that created the imitation."[171]

Taking the idea of blueprints from this research and connecting it, as Ransom does, to the existence of blueprints for houses, Oyama says that these attempts at interactionism come "rather to resemble the exquisitely sensitive and skillful improvisation of a house without blueprints."[172] In a reverie that recalls Freud's rapid and reportedly somewhat random search for the associative origins of his patient's neurosis, Oyama says:

> To carry the fantasy further, it would have to be a house with someone living in it from the very beginning, constructing itself on a continuously changing site with a shifting pool of materials and tools. It would be responsive to some of these changes and unresponsive to others. Ultimately the metaphor is stretched to the point of surrealism and the imagination fails.[173]

Oyama's version of a house fails to orient the mass of possible connections surrounding it as easily as Jung's or Freud's. However, the failure of the idea of the house to contain the workings of a systemic, multiply determined developmental system is exactly her point. The only sort of house that could contain the metaphor is one that is impossible and imagined. At the same time, thinking as Oyama suggests about phenomena makes room for this imagined and impossible house within the broad range of methods for thinking about

---

[170] Robert Ransom, *Computers and Embryos: Models in Developmental Biology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1981), quoted in Oyama, *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*, 70.
[171] Ibid., 72.
[172] Ibid., 70.
[173] Ibid., 70.

phenomena.

Jung's Cryptomnesia

In the 1905 essay in which the example of the indirectly remembered house appears, Jung's main objective is compiling examples of the phenomenon of cryptomnesia. Jung had previously encountered the term in the work of the Théodore Flournoy. Jung's dissertation was heavily influenced by Flournoy's work in paranormal research—he cites liberally Flournoy in the dissertation. His dissertation followed a young medium and described her own experiences of cryptomnesia.[174] In his essay, Jung both explains and expands the term, offering several less fantastic instances of cryptomnesia than those associated with mediums. The indirect memory of the house is given as an example of cryptomnesia, with the house being "hidden" as the trigger for the associative memory of the friend.

Another example Jung provides is the potentially hidden origins of idly singing to one's self. "Somebody asks me what tune it is. I cast round in my memory [. . .] I have no idea how I came to pick on this particular song, which has nothing whatsoever to do with the associations now engaging my conscious mind."[175] In a moment of realization, Jung connects the song about money with his recent preoccupation with settling some personal accounts.

Jung also draws the connection between cryptomnesia and plagiarism. He includes the example of a philosophical rumination, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, by Friedrich Nietzsche (b. 1844, d. 1900), which appears to plagiarize a book that Nietzsche's sister tells Jung the philosopher read as a boy. In Nietzsche's case, Jung believes that the "striking agreement

---

[174] Jung, *Psychiatric studies*. The young woman, Hélène "Helly" Preiswerk, was Jung's cousin.
[175] Ibid., 97.

between the two texts strongly suggests that the reproduction did not come from the sphere of conscious memory."[176] Jung turns to Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*—a text that he also drew on in his dissertation—to make the case that the unconscious "can play the maddest games" and "bedevil the most innocent and decent-minded people with sexual symbols whose lewdness is positively horrifying."[177] Jung continues: "On this treacherous ground wander all who seek new combinations of ideas. Woe to them if they do not continually exercise the most rigorous self-criticism!"[178]

Experimental Psychology and Cryptomnesia

In the history of the use of the term cryptomnesia, Jung's is the first popular account to draw a strong link between cryptomnesia and plagiarism to use the two as basically synonymous. His example of Nietzsche's plagiarism is frequently cited.[179]A body of work in experimental psychology involving reproducing cryptomnesia in the laboratory has essentially dusted off and brought out the idea of cryptomnesia in a version similar to what Jung described, suggesting that difficulties in dealing with plagiarism are due to the fact that nothing is new but everything can be reworked, reappropriated and newly discovered. Following the publication of Flournoy's *From India to the Planet Mars*, cryptomnesia appears to have come into wide use as a versatile psychological term. Jung continued to incorporate cryptomnesia into the development of his work throughout his lifetime, mentioning the Nietzsche incident in the introduction to the well-known collection of essays *Man and His*

---

[176] Ibid., 103.
[177] Ibid., 99.
[178] Ibid., 99.
[179] Despite the fact that it is not clear how reliable some of his sister's accounts of his work actually were.

Symbols.[180] The book, intended for a general audience, was published in 1964. This book seems a likely source for the introduction of the phenomenon to the field of experimental psychology.

A 1989 study by Alan Brown and Dana Murphy called "Cryptomnesia: Delineating Unconscious Plagiarism" is generally cited as the first experimental psychology study to address cryptomnesia.[181] Brown and Murphy attempted to induce cryptomnesia in study participants through a series of three structured cognitive tasks. In the first two experiments, participants generated what the experimenters referred to as "category exemplars," responding to broad, experimenter-provided categories with specific examples (i.e., "dog" and "cat" for "four legged animals").

In the first experimental condition, participants reported were asked to generate exemplars out loud in groups of four participants. Each individual participant was instructed not to repeat their own responses or those of others. Brown and Murphy found that apparent "plagiarisms" occurred during the generation of category exemplars and during the two recall phases.[182] Specifically, 75 percent of participants plagiarized a response when

---

[180] Carl Jung, *Man and His Symbols.* (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1983).

[181] Alan S. Brown and Dana R. Murphy, "Cryptomnesia: Delineating inadvertent plagiarism," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 15, no. 3 (1989): 432–442.

[182] Alan S. Brown and Hildy E. Halliday, "Cryptomnesia and source memory difficulties," *The American Journal of Psychology* 104, no. 4 (1991): 475–490; Brown and Murphy, "Cryptomnesia: Delineating Inadvertent Plagiarism." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 15, no. 3 (1989): 432-442; Richard L. Marsh and Gordon H. Bower, "Eliciting cryptomnesia: Unconscious plagiarism in a puzzle task," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 19, no. 3 (1993): 673–688; P.J. Gruenwald and G.R. Lockhead, "The Free Recall of Category Examples," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning and Memory* 6 (n.d.): 225–240. In Brown and Murphy (1989), any repeated item was considered a plagiarism because the participants were told not to repeat any items (baseline of zero.) However, some later studies have allowed for the fact that participants may not hear or fail to encode certain items. These studies (Brown and Halliday, 1991; Brown and Murphy, 1989; Marsh and Bower, 1993) have used an incidence of repetition above the rate of .016 as a baseline for plagiarism, because this was the average

asked to recall their own original answers. Additionally, 70.8 percent of participants plagiarized during the initial generation phase, with cryptomnesiac responses constituting 7.3 percent of all "original responses" produced during the initial exemplar generation.[183]

A second experiment required participants to repeat tasks similar to those in Experiment One, but increased the cognitive demands during the generation phase in an attempt to more adequately replicate the often chaotic nature of real world conversation. Participants were required to generate category exemplars in larger groups. In another experimental condition, participants provided exemplars for several rotating categories, and some participants did this in larger groups as well. Additionally, the experimenters varied the way that category exemplars were generated. Some participants engaged in orthographic category exemplar generation (generate exemplars where the required first letter of the word is provided) in addition to the semantic (meaning-related) exemplars required in the first experiment. The introduction of orthographic category exemplars led to a significantly higher rate of plagiarized responses than semantic exemplars.

In Experiment Three, participants were shown visual representations of category exemplars—words written on index cards—to determine if unconscious plagiarism would occur with the same frequency with visual as opposed to auditory stimuli. For each category, participants were shown three visual examples and then asked to suggest a fourth. The participants recorded the generated exemplar by writing it on an index card. In the recall task, participants were asked to write down their original responses from the generation phase (comprised of four total, one original response in each of four categories) as well as four additional, unique exemplars. Once again, plagiarism occurred across the generation,

---

incidence of self-plagiarism in a free-recall task conducted by Gruenewald and Lockwood (1980).

[183] Brown and Murphy, "Cryptomnesia: Delineating inadvertent plagiarism," 434-6.

recall-own and recall-new phases, with plagiarized responses occurring most frequently when participants were asked to generate the four entirely new responses at the end of the experiment. Interestingly, participants were significantly more likely to plagiarize the category exemplars presented to them by the experimenters than their own generated responses. In fact, the researchers found only a single incidence of self-plagiarism.[184] In both Experiment One and Experiment Two, Brown and Murphy collected information concerning participants' confidence in the originality of their responses during the recall phase. Participants in both experiments were more confident when recalling their own, generated answers than they were in answers that were inadvertently plagiarized or newly generated.[185]

The Brown and Murphy study has acted as a precedent for experimenters who seek to elicit unconscious plagiarism in a controlled laboratory setting. In 1993, Alan Brown chaired a dissertation by Kristin Michele Soli, "Cryptomnesia and the Visual Task," that added additional tasks to the original three-stage paradigm in the 1989 study.[186] Participants were asked to generate their own category exemplars (A) after studying a sheet of experimenter-produced exemplars, (B) after rating exemplars representative of a category, or (C) while viewing a list of category exemplar examples. Not surprisingly, plagiarism occurred more frequently in the first two conditions. Participants who were viewing category exemplars while producing their own were unlikely to plagiarize. Cryptomnesia was more likely for familiar items, but the effect of familiarity was mitigated when participants had an opportunity to view the experimenter generated items while generating their own. The experimenter attributes this finding, in part, to the fact that the items remained in context (provided items versus generated items) throughout the generation phase. The procedure for

[184] Language in the article is confusing on this point.
[185] Ibid., 438.
[186] Soli, Kristin Michele, "Cryptomnesia and the visual task," PhD diss., 1993.

the rate and study groups required them to think about the experimenter-generated items during a task that involved production characteristics (either to remember the items and try not to repeat them or to rate the items).[187]

In 2005, Louisa-Jayne Stark, Timothy Perfect, and Stephen Newstead inserted a fourth stage into Brown and Murphy's original three state paradigm.[188] Like Brown and Murphy, the experimenters presented participants with category exemplars (in this case, potential uses for an object, such as a paper clip or button) and asked to generate additional uses. Between the generation and recall phases, Stark and colleagues required participants to elaborate on their generated ideas. The elaboration occurred across three conditions. In imagery-elaboration, participants were asked to reflect on and rate both the "imaginability" of the ideas (1 = difficult to imagine, 5 = easy to imagine) and their effectiveness (1 = not effective, 5 = very effective). In the condition referred to as "generative elaboration," participants wrote down three ways to improve a newly presented subset of ideas (i.e., not the ideas they had come up with or the ones presented previously by experimenters). In a third condition, participants were asked to imagine the ideas that a partner came up with in the generative elaboration condition.

The experimenters found that being asked to complete elaborative tasks decreased plagiarism and increased correct recall in the generate-own recall task, but increased plagiarism significantly in the generate-new task. Increased familiarity with ideas did not lead to more plagiarism. So, participants who imagined or rated a partner's idea were no more likely to plagiarize. However, the elaborative task—generating improvements for a presented

---

[187] Ibid.
[188] Louisa-Jayne Stark, Timothy J. Perfect, and Stephen E. Newstead, "When elaboration leads to appropriation: Unconscious plagiarism in a creative task," *Memory* 13, no. 6 (2005): 561–573.

idea—did lead to increased rates of plagiarism. Stark et al. conclude: "Generating improvements to an idea shares cognitive operations with the process whereby participants originally generate an idea."[189] They link this finding with the psychological research on source monitoring, research that considers the generative tasks related to determining the source of an idea or event.[190] For example, the researchers suggest that these findings are in line with Elizabeth Loftus and Daniel M. Bernstein's work on eyewitness testimony where "familiarity misattribution may explain how fictional events may be 'personally experienced as real memories.'"[191] Loftus has famously focused on how eyewitness testimony may be elaborated through this process, so that witnesses experience fictionalized elaborative accounts of crimes as their own real memories.

In a 2006 study, Stark and Perfect included a task where participants imagined elaborative responses of others in addition to the task where participants elaborate on other participants' ideas. Overall, the experimenters found that elaboration requiring the contribution of original ideas to the ideas of others—as opposed to elaboration requiring reiterative imagination without elaboration—was more likely to result in plagiarism in the generate-new portion of the task.[192] In tandem, the two experiments suggest that the perception of autonomous elaboration rather than simply elaborative content in and of itself is important for inducing inadvertent plagiarism.

---

[189] Ibid., 646.
[190] Marcia K Johnson, Shahin Hashtroudi, and D. Stephen Lindsay, "Source monitoring," *Psychological Bulletin* 114, no. 1 (1993): 3–28; Elizabeth F Loftus and Daniel M Bernstein, "Rich False Memories: The Royal Road to Success," in *Experimental Cognitive Psychology and Its Applications.*, ed. Alice F Healy, Decade of behavior (Washington, DC US: American Psychological Association, 2005), 101–113.
[191] Elizabeth Lofus, quoted in Louisa-Jayne Stark, Timothy J. Perfect, and Stephen E. Newstead, "When elaboration leads to appropriation: Unconscious plagiarism in a creative task," *Memory* 13, no. 6 (2005), 646.
[192] Louisa-Jayne Stark and Timothy J. Perfect, "Elaboration Inflation: How Your Ideas Become Mine," *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 20, no. 5 (2006): 641–648.

Additional studies have shown that laboratory-induced cryptomnesia varies across age, with older adults more likely to plagiarize category exemplars than younger adults in both the generation and recall phases of the experiment.[193] Older participants were also significantly more likely than younger (college-age) participants to falsely recall exemplars that had not previously appeared during the recall-own task (i.e., identify new items as old). Other studies have considered cryptomnesia as a phenomenon related to misattributed effort.[194] For example, Jesse Preston and Daniel M. Wegner conducted a 2007 study that placed participants into groups of two to solve anagrams. The paired participants took turns solving anagrams as they appeared on a computer screen. Participants were able to see the anagrams presented to their partners, but were unable to hear their partner's responses. After participants solved an anagram, the solution was displayed on the screen. The experimenters manipulated the perception of effort by asking participants to occasionally squeeze a handgrip or to read anagrams presented in a difficult-to-see yellow font. Participants were more likely to believe that they had solved an anagram that had really been solved by their partner (defined as cryptomnesia) if the anagram was presented in a high-effort (yellow font or hand-grip) condition while its solution was presented in a low-effort condition (dark font or no hand-grip task).[195] The experimenters suggest that the high-low effort condition effectively replicates the "eureka" feeling associated with mental insight, a feeling that

---

[193] David P McCabe, Anderson D Smith, and Colleen M Parks, "Inadvertent plagiarism in young and older adults: The role of working memory capacity in reducing memory errors," *Memory & Cognition* 35, no. 2 (2007): 231–241.

[194] Jesse Preston and Daniel M Wegner, "The Eureka Error: Inadvertent plagiarism by misattributions of effort," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no. 4 (2007): 575–584; Marisela Torres and Miguel Roig, "The Cloze Procedure as a Test of Plagiarism: The Influence of Text Readability," *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied* 139, no. 3 (2005): 221–231.

[195] Preston and Wegner, "The Eureka Error: Inadvertent plagiarism by misattributions of effort."

participants remember and use in making the decision that they must have generated the feeling through actually solving an anagram. This experiment suggests that real, but ineffectively sourced, effort may play a role in the occurrence of unconscious plagiarism, belying the laziness stereotype that many studies attribute to plagiarizers.

While research by experimental psychologists in various generation paradigms has certainly shown that unconscious plagiarism—defined as repetition of previous category exemplars—can be induced in the laboratory, the external validity of plagiarizing exemplars and plagiarizing in everyday life is a potential concern in the application of these studies. On the other end of the spectrum are experiments like the one conducted by Anne-Catherine Defeldre in 2005 in which cryptomnesia was explained to participants and they were asked to provide an anecdote of a previous experience involving the phenomenon.[196] The majority of participants in the study were able to provide an anecdote about cryptomnesia, either their own or that of an acquaintance or colleague. Additionally, Defeldre notes that:

> Participants did not only comply with our definition and suggestions of inadvertent plagiarism. They retrieved original, personal cases of the phenomenon. Inadvertent plagiarism is a diversified phenomenon that may occur in a wide range of creative activities in everyday life such as inventing a cocktail for a party or finding a present for your best friend's birthday.[197]

While the study was unable to account for possible biases—stories being manufactured to please the experimenter or altered to cast the participant in a good light, for example—the results do suggest that people are able to recognize the concept of cryptomnesia when it is described as "unconscious plagiarism" and generate anecdotes about the phenomenon. In turn, this further suggests the crystallization of the term cryptomnesia as used to mean unconscious plagiarism rather than hidden memory more generally.

---

[196] Anne-Catherine Defeldre, "Inadvertent Plagiarism in Everyday Life," *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 19, no. 8 (December 2005): 1033–1040, doi:10.1002/acp.1129
[197] Ibid., 5.

Experimental and Cognitive Psychology Studies and "Historical" Cryptomnesia

Brown and Murphy cite a study by F. Kraupl Taylor, published in 1965, as the source for their definition of cryptomnesia as " [. . .] the presence of phenomena in normal consciousness which objectively are memories, but subjectively are not recognized as such."[198] Taylor does reference Flournoy, placing him in the category of "what one may call pre-Freudian psychoanalytic explanations" for cryptomnesia.[199] Flournoy is not credited with the popularization of the term, either. He is credited only with presenting:

> the case of an uneducated almost illiterate young woman who, in a febrile delirium, uttered long sentences in ancient Greek and Hebrew. It was discovered that she had once been a maid in the house of a scholar who was apparently in the habit of loudly declaiming passages in ancient Greek and Hebrew. It was assumed that rote memories of those phrases had been retained in her unconscious mind and were reactivated during her delirium.[200]

Flournoy's account is compared to Morey Bernstein's *The Search for Bridey Murphy*.[201] The book tells the story of "a 30-year-old American housewife by the name of Mrs. Virginia Tighe" who suddenly began speaking in an Irish brogue and reporting experiences from an apparent past life.[202] As Taylor relates, Tighe was later found to have been close with an Irish family in the neighborhood where she grew up and was reported to have entertained neighbors as a child with her imitation of an Irish brogue.

While Brown and Murphy reference Taylor, they do not directly reference Flournoy. They do mention Jung, specifically in connection to Nietzsche's cryptomnesia. With these

---

[198] F Kräupl Taylor, "Cryptomnesia and Plagiarism," *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 111, no. 480 (1965): 1111; quoted in Brown and Murphy, "Cryptomnesia: Delineating inadvertent plagiarism," 432.
[199] Taylor, "Cryptomnesia and Plagiarism," 1111.
[200] Ibid., 1111.
[201] Morey Bernstein, *The Search for Bridey Murphy* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1956). Published in 1956 and reissued, among other instances, in 1989.
[202] Taylor, "Cryptomnesia and Plagiarism," 1111.

exceptions, references to the historical development of cryptomnesia are generally absent in the experimental psychology literature. This may be, in part, because of the tone of Taylor's article. Taylor characterizes the connection between cryptomnesia and spiritualism as one contributing to the disrepute of the term by "those people," meaning Spiritualists and others who believe in paranormal or occult phenomena. According to Taylor, cases such as that of Smith and Tighe, where apparent spiritual phenomena were shown to be the result of forgotten memories, "make it clear why medical opinion looked askance at cryptomnesiac manifestations produced in trance states and other conditions of altered consciousness."[203] He calls studies into the phenomenon "too full of uncertainties, self-deceptions, fraud and histrionics."[204]

For Taylor, the phenomenon is a component of normal memory that needs to be rescued from any relationship with phenomena of trance states. He describes this careful characterization of cryptomnesia as separate from the paranormal:

> In an attempt to salvage the term cryptomnesia for medical usage, its meaning was changed so that no hint of any connection with spiritualist beliefs or trance states was left. It now denotes the presence of phenomena in normal consciousness which objectively are memories, but subjectively are not recognized as such.[205]

In explaining how cryptomnesia operates as a salvaged term, Taylor distinguishes between "reminiscences"—memories of discrete events—and "logical memories"—general memories of specific events that are not directly organized in time. According to Taylor, when "reminiscences" become generalized as "logical memories," the individual doing the remembering is experiencing "partial cryptomnesia."[206] The other instance in which cryptomnesia might appear for Taylor is in cases of unintended plagiarism. Taylor's

---

[203] Ibid., 1111.
[204] Ibid., 1111.
[205] Ibid., 1111.
[206] Ibid., 1112.

definition of plagiarism focuses on the repetition of borrowing of literary works such as novels or poems.[207] The orientation of essentially every experimental psychological study on cryptomnesia suggests that the term is not only caught up in the paradox of mimesis/affect, but is also being used to justify the allegiance to rigorously precise, medicalized accounts of memory phenomena. The influence of Ebbinghaus in the field of memory more generally is likely a factor. Ebbinghaus develops what is essentially a theoretical precursor to technologies that provide an actual image of brain activity, such as MRI and fMRI.[208] The alternative is the unconscious mind of psychoanalysis, a model of the mind that is unacceptable to many psychologists, to the point that Freud is sometimes excised from a role even as a historical figure in the discipline. The attenuation of the possibility for unconscious content in psychological and medical accounts of the mind and the impossibility of a psychoanalytic model is undoubtedly a reflection and a consequence of the trajectory of cryptomnesia from the broad phenomena of hidden memory to unconscious plagiarism.

Freud's Cryptomnesia

Considering the potential influence of Taylor on Brown and Murphy, it is not surprising that experimental psychology articles about cryptomnesia rarely reference Flournoy or the historical connection between spiritualism and cryptomnesia. Taylor and Brown and Murphy do mention Freud's report in *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* where he realizes that he has potentially stolen his theory of inherent bisexuality from Wilhelm Fleiss. The story, which is not quoted by either Taylor or Brown and Murphy, appears in the Freud

---

[207] Ibid., 1113-5.
[208] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*.

as follows:

> One day in the summer of 1901 I remarked to a friend with whom I used at that time to have a lively exchange of scientific ideas: 'These problems of the neuroses are only to be solved if we base ourselves wholly and completely on the assumption of the original bisexuality of the individual.' To which he replied: 'That's what I told you two and a half years ago at Br. [Breslau] when we went for that evening walk. But you wouldn't hear of it then.' It is painful to be requested in this way to surrender one's originality. I could not recall any such conversation or this pronouncement of my friend's. One of us must have been mistaken and on the 'cui prodest?' principle it must have been myself. Indeed, in the course of the next week I remembered the whole incident, which was just as my friend had tried to recall it to me; I even recollected the answer I had given him at the time: 'I've not accepted that yet; I'm not inclined to go into the question.' But since then I have grown a little more tolerant when, in reading medical literature, I come across one of the few ideas with which my name can be associated, and find that my name has not been mentioned.[209]

Taylor cites *Everyday Life* in his references, as do Brown and Murphy. The same story appears in several other psychological articles.[210] Some of these articles reference the original Freud, others reference secondary sources that mention Freud's story. The implication in articles that do not seems to be that the story is commonly known (possibly apocryphal). In the 1999 article "May the Source be with You," Freud's case of cryptomnesia is referred to in the same breath as a Beatle and a Hollywood movie: "From Freud to George Harrison to the makers of the recent movie *The Full Monty* (1997), many have been castigated for allegedly stealing other people's creative products."[211]

---

[209] Sigmund Freud, "A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis," in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology, and Other Works*, The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud (Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1921), 143-4.

[210] C. Neil Macrae, Galen V. Bodenhausen, and Guglielmo Calvini, "Contexts of cryptomnesia: May the source be with you," *Social Cognition* 17, no. 3 (1999): 273–297; Stark, Perfect, and Newstead, "When elaboration leads to appropriation: Unconscious plagiarism in a creative task;" Soli, *Cryptomnesia and the Visual Task*; Brown and Murphy, "Cryptomnesia: Delineating inadvertent plagiarism;" Christine Elizabeth Pivetta, "A Process-dissociation Approach to Cryptomnesia: On what Basis Do Individuals Inadvertently Plagiarize? " (master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1994).

[211] Macrae, Bodenhausen, and Calvini, "Contexts of cryptomnesia: May the source be with you," 274.

Freud provided a more complete account of his apparent cryptomnesia in the development of the theory of free association. This example is detailed in Freud's "A Note on the Pre-History of the Technique of Analysis," published in 1920.[212] The essay, as a footnote by Strachey indicates, was first published anonymously. The short piece looks at another essay by Ludwig Börne called "The Art of Becoming an Original Writer in Three Days."[213] The secret to the technique hinted at in the title, according to Börne, is to engage in free writing.

> Take a few sheets of paper and for three days on end write down, without fabrication or hypocrisy, everything that comes into your head. Write down what you think of yourself, of your wife, of the Turkish War, of Goethe, of Fonk's trial, of the Last Judgment, of your superiors—and when three days have passed you will be quite out of your senses with astonishment at the new and unheard-of thoughts you have had. This is the art of becoming an original writer in three days.'[214]

After the essay was brought to Freud's attention by his colleague, Sándor Ferenczi, he did realize that his own technique of free association owed its inspiration to Börne. After some investigation, he realized that he owned a copy of a book of Börne's essays that contained the essay in question. Freud, reporting on himself as an anonymous third-party observer, writes that he did not remember the relevant essay but did remember several others in the volume. Upon re-reading them, he was also "astonished" to find that the essay on writing in particular included "some opinions which he himself had always cherished and vindicated."[215] Freud concludes that the influence of the essay combined with its similarities to his own descriptions of free association suggests that the development of free association was itself a cryptomnesia of the technique for becoming a creative writer. As he puts it:

---

[212] Freud, "A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis."
[213] Ludwig Börne, "How to Become an Original Writer in Three Days," trans. Leland de la Durante, *Harvard Review* 31 (n.d.): 63–70.
[214] Freud, "A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis," 265.
[215] Ibid., 265.

"Thus it seems not impossible that this hint may have brought to light the fragment of cryptomnesia which in so many cases may be suspected to lie behind apparent originality."[216]

While Freud is careful not to make too much of the correlation between his thinking and that of Börne, he does suggest that the correspondence between the two has meaning. The case is not presented as plagiarism because Freud's idea of free association has different applications and intentions than Börne's. Freud also uses the essay to respond to the critical work of the author who uncovered the similarities between himself and Börne, Havelock Ellis. Ellis had included an essay in his recent book that argued that psychoanalysis should be viewed "not as a piece of scientific work but as an artistic production."[217] Freud allows for the argument that one of his tools may be the same as Börne's. However, he contradicts the rest of Ellis's argument. Just because psychoanalysis shares order and tools with art does not mean that it is art rather than science. The mutability and associative, systemic practice of psychoanalytic work resists the comparison on the ground of cause but not components. Out of the same blueprint, Freud and Ellis get entirely different theoretical worlds.

A Haunted House

A meeting in a different house marks a possible way of tracing the unraveling of the friendship between Freud and Jung and the clash of another set of blueprints with the workings of Freud's system. In a footnote to the collected letters of Freud and Jung, the story is given as follows:

> While Freud and Jung were discussing precognition and parapsychology in the former's study, and after Freud had rejected the subject as "nonsensical," there was a loud report in the bookcase. Jung predicted that another would follow in a moment, and that indeed happened [. . .] It is debatable whether another experience related

[216] Ibid., 265.
[217] Ibid., 263.

> by Jung occurred during the same visit: According to Jung, Freud told him that they must make an unshakable bulwark of the sexual theory, "against the black tide of mud of occultism."[218]

Freud and Jung continued their friendship and correspondence for several years after this incident, although it appears there was no further discussion of the event between them. Kerr connects the incident with Jung's reading of occult literature, especially E.T.A. Hoffman's *The Devil's Elixir*. He writes that "Spielrein had yet to be heard from at this point, and the ultimate denouement of the Freud-Jung relationship was still years away. But, transparently, the fateful event had already occurred: Jung had drunk very deeply indeed from *The Devil's Elixirs*."[219] The possibly ghostly noise, especially the prediction that it would be repeated, introduces the ghostly into Freud's experience and, by connection, into his system of the human mind, in an unacceptable manner. The supernatural cannot be the answer to what occurred. The supernatural cannot be an aspect of what Freud is trying to uncover. There is only room for so much in the strange space between what occurs and the possible meanings behind that occurrence. Freud is determined that the ghostly space in psychoanalysis will uncover the influence of sexual desires and drives. Allowing actual ghosts into the space would risk excluding what Freud's work, so far, has proved to be vitally important—the sexual origins of neuroses. There is only so much space. The "loud report in the bookcase" is encountered as the houses are encountered—as a real and an associative event. In a letter following the visit, Freud writes to Jung and reports that he has commenced further examinations of the bookcase.

> In my first room there is constant creaking where the two heavy Egyptian steles rest on the oaken boards of the bookshelves. That is too easy to explain. In the second,

---

[218] Sigmund Freud and C G Jung, *The Freud/Jung Letters*, ed. William McGuire, Abridged. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 217.
[219] John Kerr, "The Devil's Elixirs, Jung's 'theology,' and the dissolution of Freud's "poisoning complex," *Psychoanalytic Review* 75, no. 1 (1988): 22.

> where we heard it, there is seldom any creaking. At first I was inclined to accept this as proof, if the sound that was so frequent while you were here were not heard again after your departure—but since then I have heard it repeatedly, not, however, in connection with my thoughts and never when I am thinking about you or this particular problem of yours.[220]

Repeated observation suggests a mundane cause for the worrying noise. Additionally, Freud suggests that it was Jung's presence and his own misguided belief in the supernatural that created an atmosphere in the room that led them to be taken in by the mundane noise.

> My credulity, or at least my willingness to believe, vanished with the magic of your personal presence; once again, for some inward reasons that I can't put my finger on, it strikes me as quite unlikely that such phenomena should exist; I confront the despiritualized furniture as the poet confronted undeified Nature after the gods of Greece had passed away.[221]

Kerr connects Freud's hostility surrounding Jung's belief in the supernatural to his work on the development of the "core complex" that would organize the "burgeoning field of complexes in general."[222] At the time that Jung and Freud faced off over the potential meaning of the sudden noise in Freud's study "the 'core complex' was not yet synonymous with the Oedipus complex; it was still an essentially elastic concept that could accommodate a number of subsidiary themes."[223] Freud's psychoanalysis was, in all of its incarnations, an attempt to draw together many disparate afflictions, memories, experiences. He needed to encompass patients whose neuroses were, ghost-like, seated in houses, death, all manner of what Jung described as "sexual symbols whose lewdness is positively horrifying."[224] Indeed, in the case of Katharina in the *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud's seduction theory is faced with interpreting the "ghastly face" that plagues Katharina and triggers her anxiety attacks. To

---

[220] Freud and Jung, *The Freud/Jung Letters*, 218.
[221] Ibid., 218.
[222] Kerr, "The Devil's Elixirs, Jung's 'theology,' and the dissolution of Freud's "poisoning complex."," 25.
[223] Ibid., 25.
[224] Jung, *Psychiatric studies*, 99.

invite the supernatural into the system would be to risk forcing out the sexual that Freud is certain is of central importance. As in cryptomnesia, Freud grapples with phenomena that are at once everything and nothing, new and not new.

Katharina

The Katharina case, dated 1893, details Freud's interaction with a young woman he meets while vacationing in the mountains. The woman discovers that Freud is a doctor when she views his signature in the hotel guest book and seeks him out to ask for help with her symptoms. At first, Freud does not consider Katharina's reports of severe and sudden shortness of breath to be pathological, but as Katharina explains: "I get so out of breath. Not always. But sometimes it catches me so that I think I shall suffocate" Freud realizes that what she is describing could be an anxiety attack.[225] With further questioning, Katharina reveals that her attacks are accompanied by the vision of a frightening face. "I always see an awful face that looks at me in a dreadful way, so that I'm frightened."[226] In accordance with what he has learned from his other case studies, Freud suspects that some event must have occurred round the time that Katharina began having her symptoms of shortness of breath and seeing the "awful face." Katharina realizes that her symptoms did, in fact, begin around the time that she had the experience of finding her "uncle" in bed with her cousin. Katharina admits: "I was so frightened that I've forgotten everything."[227] The experience, restricted from becoming associated with anything else in Katharina's memory instead persisted in her physical symptoms and the frightening vision of the "awful face."

Despite the general lack of associative content surrounding traumatic memories, Freud

---

[225] Freud and Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*, 125.
[226] Ibid., 125.
[227] Ibid., 128.

does find that traumatic events often derive their affective content from memory content which, rather than being restricted, was actually mostly forgotten until a new association arose with traumatic content. In the case of Katharina, Freud continues to question her following the revelation of how much finding her uncle—who, a footnote reveals, is actually her father—in bed with her cousin upset her. Katharina eventually allows that the more recent event recalled for her another memory of her father where he made "sexual advances" towards her.[228] The discovery of her father with her cousin imbued this initial, pre-sexual experience with erotic meaning. The traumatic nature of Katharina's new understanding of these advances caused her memory of the earlier event to become restricted and was the underlying cause of the anxiety attacks. Ebbinghaus's carefully "affect-less" nonsense syllables may be predictable, but memory laden with affect—especially those derived sexual content—is unpredictable in its reappearance. Like Flournoy's cryptomnesia, the recovery of the congruence between the symptoms and the event is the explanation and, in Freud's case, the cure. But the recovery is only effected in its working on Katharina's body—her breath comes back to her, the floating, angry face is exorcised.

Another Haunting

In 1907, years after the case studies chronicled in *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud writes a psychoanalytic analysis of a fictional instance of forgetting, "Delusion and Dream in Jensen's *Gradiva*." The novel *Gradiva*, by Wilhelm Jensen (b. 1837, d. 1911), is about a man who has a strong response to the aesthetic qualities of a work of art. The protagonist, Norbert Hanold, becomes obsessed with a bas-relief that depicts a woman walking. The bas-relief depicts "the

[228] Ibid., 129.

complete female figure in the act of walking; she was still young, but no longer in childhood, and, on the other hand, apparently not a woman, but a Roman virgin about in her twentieth year."[229] Hanold is especially enamored of the unusual way of walking suggested by the placement of the girl's foot:

> The left foot had advanced, and the right, about to follow, touched the ground only lightly with the tips of the toes, while the sole and heel were raised almost vertically. This movement produced the double impression of exceptional agility and of competent composure, and the flight-like poise, combined with a firm grip, lent her the peculiar grace. [230]

The name that Hanold applies to the bas-relief, "Gradiva," means "the girl splendid in walking." Hanold attempts to physically mimic the style of walking depicted in the bas-relief, and when he finds it difficult, proceeds to conduct "observation from life," wherein he actually takes to the streets to observe—presumably surreptitiously—women walking. Of the women Hanold observes on the street, "not a single one presented to view Gradiva's manner of walking." Hanold is therefore able to conclude that the "lingering foot" that he finds so stirring "had been created by the imagination of arbitrary act of the sculptor and did not correspond to reality." [231]

Perhaps unwilling to take his scientific observations for a final answer, Hanold proceeds to travel to Pompeii, where he believes the girl in his bas-relief would have lived. In the ruins of the once-buried city, Hanold finds more tourists than answers. However, late in the afternoon, when the streets of Pompeii become quiet, Hanold unexpectedly comes across the ghostly figure of the Gradiva, recognizable from her "unreal" gait. Hanold follows her into the ruins of Pompeii and eventually converses with her, surprised to learn that she

---

[229] Sigmund Freud, Philip Rieff, and Wilhelm Jensen, *Delusion and dream and other essays,* http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/5191688.html, 1956, 147.
[230] Ibid., 148.
[231] Ibid., 153.

speaks German, his own language, rather than Greek.

It is only when Hanold catches sight of his "ghost" again on the street outside his hotel that he realizes there is an explanation for her apparently supernatural appearance. The girl introduces herself to him and reveals that she is a German girl, the daughter of a friend of Hanold's whom he had met when she was a child. In Freud's reading of the story, Hanold had no conscious memory of the girl, Zöe, because his feelings for her were sexually charged. The erotic nature of his attachment to Zöe was repressed from his conscious memory and instead displaced onto the image of the Gradiva.

In *The Case of Sigmund Freud*, Sander Gilman (b. 1944) provides a reading of Freud's analysis of the Gradiva that considers what Freud himself may have submerged behind his interpretation of Hanold's "forgetting" as purely erotic. An important detail of Jensen's story is the moment when Hanold realizes that Zöe Bertrang, the ghost Gradiva, is, in fact, German. "we [the reader] shared the protagonist's conviction that Gradiva was the relic of some lost past; she is now shown to us to be just as 'real,' that is, German, as the honeymooners who the protagonist (and we) thought so ludicrous with their Germanic billing and cooing." [232]

Zöe suddenly becomes real to Hanold not just because he has literally met her in his own past, but because she is a German citizen, just like the honeymooners who used to seem strange and "ludicrous" to him… and just like Hanold himself.

> For [Jensen's *Gradiva*] is a tale of appropriate marriage within the race, or permitted—indeed, encouraged—endogamous marriage; it is about the memory of the foot, the distant past, the appropriate object of desire [. . .] This is the theme of Jensen's tale, and it is one that Freud does not notice."[233]

---

[232] Sander L Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin de Siècle* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 145.
[233] Ibid., 146.

Freud, grappling with his own Jewish heritage, passes over the part of the story that is about being the "right" race. As in the case of his patients, Freud's inability to access his feelings about race presents the symptom: his inability to recognize the influence of race on his own thought amidst an otherwise incisive analysis. Gilman compares this to an instance where Freud briefly believed that he had experienced a similar kind of ghostly return, when the relative of a deceased patient caused him to believe he was seeing the patient herself. "The face of the dead patient and the gait of the fictive Gradiva thus become observable, definable symptoms, like the impaired gait of the hysteric. But they evoke the past rather than the present."[234]

Memory Research in Psychology and Psychoanalysis

Ebbinghaus, with his nonsense syllables, demonstrates that memory is rational, predictable, governed by associations. Freud, through his hysteric patients and later through his analysis of Jensen's *Gradiva,* shows that even things that have been forgotten can appear in bodily, aesthetic memory—Katharina's shortness of breath, Gradiva's peculiarly raised foot. It is the affective excess of the unfamiliar and the strange that restricts associations and leads to forgetting. Ebbinghaus only avoids it by stripping his stimuli of anything recognizable, stirring, or strange. All he is left with are 2,300 syllables. The moment he strings together a poem, recognizes a sound, or hears a rhyme, their effectiveness is lessened.

As the science of memory opens up new possibilities for what is unknown within one's own mind, it becomes more difficult to say what it means to forget. Forgetting is not neat; it rarely achieves the orderly extinction of Ebbinghaus's oblivisence. Material that is forgotten persists in bodies, in objects, in the appearance of an "awful face." The process of

---

[234] Ibid., 148.

forgetting can paralyze individual lives—Katharina loses her breath. Freud, so on guard for the influence of the sexual, submerges race and the supernatural and, in doing so, relinquishes much of his "data" on Hanold and Jensen. These individual experiences of forgetting and recall might be viewed as a negotiation of what, exactly, constitutes the realm of the sexual at the turn of the 20th century, a negotiation of what the erotic can come to encompass as it takes over not just the bas-relief of Gradiva or the memory of a house, but anything else different, strange or uncertain. However, forgetting can also keep what is uncertain or inadmissible—usually, sexual—from taking over lives. After all, for Katharina, the trade off for the cure of her panic attacks is the recognition of the possibility of abuse at the hands of her father. For Hanold, embracing happiness with Zöe means giving up the ghostly Gradiva for the human, familiar version.

In his preface to the translation of *From India to the Planet Mars*, Shamdasani notes that the original publication of the book and the zenith of its popularity fall in between *Studies in Hysteria* and Freud's repudiation of the seduction theory in favor of the Oedipus complex.[235] Much of the focus on this shift (and rightfully so) is on what it means for the reality of memories of abuse and the victims of actual abuse. It is important to note that the "wholeness" of the Oedipal drama—while itself a complex and multifaceted system—is also a departure from a theory of an unconscious whose strange excesses are not necessarily sexual. Flournoy's theory that allows Smith to have, for all intents and purposes, encountered Martians and her own storied, mystical past is more strongly connected to Pierre Janet's unconscious, which Flournoy was in closer conversation with than Freud.[236] The trajectory of cryptomnesia from hidden memory in the broad, strange sense to only

[235] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, "Introduction: Encountering Hélène ," xxvi.
[236] Ibid., xxv-xxvi.

unconscious plagiarism, while accepted wholesale by many experimental psychologists, may also be a reflection and consequence of how large Freud's influence looms over psychoanalysis. For some psychologists, the movement away from Freud is as necessary to protecting the evidentiary nature of psychological experimentation as moving away from the supernatural as an object of study.

Cryptomnesia at the Foundations

Freud's work before and after his friendship with Jung provides the foundations for the dynamic, varied study and practice of psychoanalysis. While aspects of this work certainly remain in use today, there are facets of the current psychoanalytic toolbox that Freud might not immediately recognize. However, I would argue that Freud's development of psychoanalysis—the actual historical work of this development—suggests an aspect of Freud's theory that remains important both to historians and clinicians. Psychoanalytic discovery happens systemically. One thing connects to another, connects to another. While it is a task of every new student of psychoanalysis to recognize that the structures of Freud's ego psychological model are not literal, embodied structures—even if we may feel that our ego lists "a little to the left" or that our superego is at the back of our heads, looking over everything we do—the many iterations of Freud's theory of mind continually suggest that conscious and unconscious content are contained in a defined system. The system can be anything. Houses can become the memory of a friend without conscious knowledge of the transmutation. Walking sticks can become the trauma of a beating. The brush of a hand across the table can become a full-blown fantasy of the planet Mars, as in one of Flournoy's examples. However, there is only so much "stuff" that encounters this kind of becoming, that makes up the system. Or, at least, a suspicion, a working belief, that there is only so

much available to become houses, touches, fears, desires, seems to drive the successful operation of Freud's method. It matters when Freud uncovers the meaning behind the music that Anna O. could hear, "coming from a neighboring house" outside her father's sick room not only because it reminded her of her father's illness, but because it recalled a desire for his death, quickly masked.[237] The recovery of what she desired is possible because there is only so much to be dug up. For Katharina, the horrible face does not exist in the same way once Freud uncovers the hidden memory of her father's anger and, even deeper, his attempted abuse. The forgotten house in the example of his neurotic patient does not exist in the same way once the origins of the dizziness it induces are uncovered.

After a certain point in their contentious intellectual relationship, Freud and Jung never reconciled, but the blueprints for the early iterations of their theoretical systems include inevitable traces of influence. Psychoanalysis as it develops is, arguably, a house. It is a house where one might engage in "chimney sweeping." It is a house with an open window, music straining through from the night air. It is a house that might be forgotten—might be seen as an old acquaintance, a spirit house, a haunted house, a ghost house. It is a house that reinvents itself, that has blueprints that change, walls that move. It is a house that is confined by how many things there are in the world—in the mind—and how many things they might become. But it is never more or less than a house.

The lack of a predetermined plan does not mean there is not anything constraining the system. It simply means that recognizing these constraints is a process of seeking strangeness and coincidence—and finding strange connections at times important and at times superfluous in their potential for affecting the system. Going back to Oyama, she argues that in these "impossible houses"—nature vs. nurture arguments that try to reconcile

---

[237] Freud and Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*, 40.

the two by suggesting the expression of a predetermined plan—there is a fear in asking how what makes up development operates instead of how much of either nature or nurture operates in development, a fear that suggesting development does not advance but instead continues to rework the same stuff will impoverish the concept. Oyama suggests instead that giving up on breaking the systemic nature of development—and, perhaps, phenomena more generally—into imposed components allows it to "take on substance in the real world, richer and fuller than the phantom outlines, constraints, potentials, or norms of reaction it is normally granted."[238] Taken together, the various iterations of Freud's psychoanalysis seem to be enhanced if they are viewed as the same kind of substance—at-times cryptomnesiac re-workings of all the potentials of the mind. This does not mean that there are not real constraints and theoretical tools within any version of psychoanalysis. It simply allows for whatever may come into contact with those tools. Speaking about development and a movement away from interactionism, Oyama writes:

> There are no ghosts in machines, only people in the world, thinking, feeling, intuiting and sensing, deciding, acting, and creating. And there are therefore no ghosts in these ghosts, no programs in the operators of the machines, making them feel as their ancestors felt, making them act or want to act as gorillas or chimps act. But there are many ghosts in the psychological, social, and cultural machines that create and re-create the body machine and the ghost in it and the ghost in it.[239]

Cryptomnesia is perhaps, just this sort of ghostly inhabitant of the "haunted" houses that occur early in the development of psychoanalysis.

A systems approach fits surprisingly well with the theoretical concerns surrounding cryptomnesia. Cryptomnesia is often cast as a player in the debate over plagiarism. On the one hand, there are arguments that original work is something people recognize when they see it. On the other hand, repurposing and borrowing happening so often—and so often

---

[238] Oyama, *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*, 128.
[239] Ibid., 128.

unconsciously—is seen as evidence that there is "nothing new under the sun." If the only options are these two extremes—plagiarized or completely original—the only answer becomes a retreat towards something akin to interactionism. Everything and nothing is new, and nothing has been decided.

Cryptomnesia offers an interesting alternative that I would argue avoids taking the interactionist middle ground. Cryptomnesia happens systemically, incorporating the idea of new and not new into a system of influences, causes, namings, and unnamings that is not the sum of how much is new and how much is borrowed and forgotten. Cryptomnesia incorporates indirect and direct memories, but it also includes the associations that make up the network in which these memories are encountered or not encountered. In the case of Freud's patient, this network includes the forgotten experience of the house, the friend's death, the first period, but it also includes a neurosis that has persisted for "an interval of twenty-one years."[240] To reduce this experience of indirect memory to only what was forgotten (Freud would argue it was, most importantly, the first period) and the direct trigger for what was forgotten (the house) the phenomenon is unrealistically constrained from its associations. Instead, cryptomnesia seems very much like Oyama's version of an impossible house: "a house with someone living in it from the very beginning, constructing itself on a continuously changing site with a shifting pool of materials and tools [. . .] it would be responsive to some of these changes and unresponsive to others."[241]

Postscript: The Haunted Dolls' House

"The Haunted Dolls House," it turns out, is a plagiarism. The story borrows from the

---

[240] Freud and Breuer, *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*, 111.
[241] Oyama, *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*, 70.

author's past work in its details, especially the death of the children for the sins of the parents—a grisly scene played out by the haunted dolls' house in front of the eyes of its unsuspecting buyer, Mr. Dillet. In a note appended to the end of the story, the author writes:

> [It will be said, perhaps, and not unjustly, that this is no more than a variation on a former story of mine called *The Mezzotint*. I can only hope that there is enough variation in the setting to make the repetition of the *motif* tolerable.][242]

At least Queen Mary's House itself is not haunted. In a discussion of the extent to which "perfection" can be demanded in scientific sampling, the authors note: "Our own researches have revealed that neither Queen Mary's Doll House exhibited at Windsor Castle nor Colleen Moore's Fairy Castle in the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago have their own still smaller doll houses. [243] The houses do not plagiarize themselves. The houses do not infinitely regress, smaller and smaller versions of each other. The houses, therefore, do not make Oyama's metaphorical houses material. But their absence suggests that the metaphor might just work.

---

[242] James, *The Haunted Doll's House*.
[243] William Kruskal and Frederick Mosteller, "Representative Sampling, I: Non-Scientific Literature," *International Statistical Review / Revue Internationale de Statistique* 47, no. 1 (1979): 18-19.

Chapter Three

Cryptomnesia and the Book in the 21st Century

> Nancy watched the tire marks which the van driven by the thieves had evidently made in the dirt road. But a few miles farther on a feeling of dismay came over her. She had reached a V-shaped intersection of two highways. Both roads were paved, and since no tire impressions could be seen, Nancy did not know which highway the thieves had taken.
>
> —Carolyn Keene, *The Secret of the Old Clock*

Kaavya Viswanathan was eighteen years old and a freshman at Harvard in 2006 when her debut novel, *X*, was published.[244] When she was a sophomore, her college newspaper broke the story that passages in the novel appeared to have been lifted from books by chick lit author Megan McCafferty (b. 1973).[245] James Frey's 2005 memoir *A Million Little Pieces* became a bestseller but was later the subject of a class-action lawsuit after "The Smoking Gun" website reported that he had fabricated his own life story.[246] Viswanathan's case has been linked to cryptomnesia while Frey's has not.[247] The removal of Viswanathan's book from store shelves has been treated almost as a way of protecting her genre—women's or "chick lit"—from being tarnished while Frey's book has at times been

---

[244] Kaavya Viswanathan, *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2006); Joshua Foer, "Kaavya Syndrome," *Slate*, April 27, 2006, http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2006/04/kaavya_syndrome.html (accessed April 2, 2013).

[245] David Zhou, *"Mehta-"Morphosis," The Harvard Crimson*, June 7, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/6/7/mehta-morphosis-although-her-plagiarism-plagued-novel-how/(accessed April 1, 2013).

[246] James Frey, *A Million Little Pieces*, 1st ed. (Anchor, 2005); William Bastone and Barbara Glauber, *Smoking Gun: A Dossier Of Secret, Surprising, And Salacious Documents Form The Files Of The Smokinggun.com* (Boston: Little, Brown, 2001).

[247] Lethem, *The Ecstasy of Influence*; Russ Juskalian, "You Didn't Plagiarize, Your Unconscious Did," *Newsweek Magazine* July 6, 2009, ttp://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2009/07/06/you-didn-t-plagiarize-your-unconscious-did.html (accessed April 1, 2013); Richard A Posner, The Little Book of Plagiarism, Edition First Printing (New York: Pantheon, 2007).

described, at times, as necessarily stretching the boundaries of the genre of memoir.[248] While both authors have been ousted by their literary communities, Frey's book is still available in bookstores while Viswanathan's is no longer in print.[249] In Viswanathan's case, the identification of cryptomnesia precludes the possibility that her work is original and therefore palatable to the reading public. Removing her book—along with any stolen, forgotten, or plagiarized content—from print suggests that creative work is adequately policed and always original. The continued availability of Frey's book complicates this narrative. I argue that Frey's book is actually a more classic example of the phenomenon of cryptomnesia than Viswanathan's' in terms of its similarity to what Flournoy observed in Smith. Returning to an understanding of cryptomnesia in its most broad historical sense might provide a path for allowing memory to interact with fiction in new and interesting ways without invoking lawsuits. Additionally, connecting Viswanathan's cryptomnesia to the phenomenon of cryptomnesia more generally might make room for understanding her own experience as a unique work of unconscious memory rather than accidental or stolen creativity.

---

[248] Nicole Dudukovich, "Are All Memoirs Fiction?," *Psychology Today*, June 17, 2008, http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/remember-the-alamo/200806/are-all-memoirs-fiction (accessed April 3, 2013); Liz C. Goodwin, "Appropriating Authority," *The Harvard Book Review* 7, no. 2 (2006), http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~hbr/issues/7.2winter06/articles/memoirs.shtml (accessed April 1, 2013); Edward Wyatt, "Fact or Fiction, It's His Story," *The New York Times*, January 11, 2006, sec. Books, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/11/books/11memo.html (accessed April 1, 2013).

[249] David Zhou, "Publisher Recalls Viswanathan's Novel," *The Harvard Crimson*, April 27, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/27/publisher-recalls-viswanathans-novel-p-alignleftfour/(accessed April 1, 2013).

Oprah

In 2005, the one thing you absolutely did not want to do as an author was to make Oprah angry. (It's still probably not the best idea.) Admittedly, it worked out okay for Jonathan Franzen (1959-) in 2001. In an interview with NPR, Franzen voiced the concern that the Oprah's book club sticker on his novel associated his book with women to the point that it might be keeping him from reaching a male audience, and in turn keeping men from reading instead of "golfing or watching football on TV or playing with their flight simulator."[250] His rejection of the value of Oprah's endorsement caused a furor—media reports tracked Franzen's derisive comments about the quality of Oprah's previous book club selections, Oprah publicly rescinded Franzen's invitation. The fallout does not appear to have demonstrably affected his already-popular novel *The Corrections*, published in 2001, but it has also not been forgotten.[251] In a way, the blue-and-yellow Oprah sticker that Franzen worried about has left an indelible mark on the way the history of *The Corrections* is told.

Franzen had the honor of being the first author selected for Oprah's Book Club to be uninvited from visiting her show.[252] When James Frey's book was selected in 2008, it was also an Oprah's Book Club first. Or, Oprah at least described it as a "radical departure." Frey was described as "The Man Who Kept Oprah Awake At Night." Other than Oprah's lack of sleep, it is difficult to say what made the book's selection so "radical" prior to the breaking of the scandal that would later surround it. The episode in question has disappeared

---

[250] Terry Gross, "Novelist Jonathan Franzen." *NPR.org*, October 15, 2001, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php (accessed March 26, 2013).
[251] Juli Weiner, "The Corrections: Oprah and Jonathan Franzen Revisit Feud," Vanity Fair, December 7, 2010, http://www/vanityfair.com/online/daily/2010/12/the-corrections-oprah-and-jonathan-franzen-revisit-feud (accessed April 1, 2013).
[252] David D Kirkpatrick, "Winfrey Rescinds Offer to Author for Guest Appearance," *The New York Times*, October 24, 2001, https: //www.nytimes.com/2001/10/24/business/winfrey-rescinds-offer-to-author-for-guest-appearance.html (accessed April 1, 2013.

from obvious corners of the Internet—legal and questionably legal. Oprah's website does not host a transcript or even a short clip.[253] Video and transcripts for several many other episodes are readily available. After the truth about the book came out, Oprah described feeling duped and embarrassed. If you embarrass Oprah, it is entirely possible that evidence of having done so will disappear.[254] In her article on the controversy, Leigh Gilmore points out that the Frey controversy challenges the power of Oprah's central redemptive narrative.[255] Remembering and archiving the smoke-and-mirrors aspects of Frey's story of redemption threatens Oprah, the reader, as much or more than Frey the writer. This sort of practice—the lack of an archive—begins to make room for the kind of forgetting that cryptomnesia might provide. Like Flournoy, Oprah seems to desire a way to set aside what was created by her interaction with another person.

What did Frey do to deserve being disappeared? He started by publishing his book, *A Million Little Pieces*, with Random House as a memoir of his own experiences as a drug addict. The book follows Frey's story of hitting bottom as an addict, ending up in jail, and entering rehab. Oprah announced her selection of Frey's memoir in a show that aired on October 26th, 2005. On January 8th, 2006, "The Smoking Gun" website announced the results of a six-week investigation into the events described in the memoir: "The Smoking Gun reveals that there may be a lot less to love about Frey's runaway hit, which has sold more than 3.5 million copies and, thanks to Winfrey, has sat atop The New York Times nonfiction

---

[253] Harpo Productions, "Oprah Winfrey's Official Website - Live Your Best Life - Oprah.com," *Oprah.com*, http://www.oprah.com/index.html (accessed February 10, 2012).
[254] "The Smoking Gun" website does include a partial synopsis with more substantial quotes from the episode, but still no video.
[255] Leigh Gilmore, "American Neoconfessional: Memoir, Self-Help, and Redemption on Oprah's Couch," *Biography* 33, no. 4 (2010): 657–679.

paperback best seller list for the past 15 weeks."[256] "The Smoking Gun" was founded in 1997 by a former reporter for *The Village Voice*, Daniel Glauber, a freelance journalist, Daniel Green, and Barbara Glauber, a graphic designer. The website's "bread and butter" is its pursuit of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. The website brings to light information that is publicly available but often, in practice, relatively well hidden.[257]

Still in operation today, it might be viewed as a law-abiding precursor to groups such as Anonymous and WikiLeaks. "The Smoking Gun" revealed that much of Frey's memoir was extremely exaggerated and even outright fabricated. The worst of the lies, according to "The Smoking Gun", centered around the description of a crash involving a train and a car that resulted in the death of two high school girls: "While Frey's fabrications and embellishments of his criminal "career" and jail time are patently dishonest, the section of "A Million Little Pieces" that deals with a tragedy that took place while he was a high school student is downright creepy and detestable."[258] In the book, Frey says that the crash could not have happened if he had not pretended to be on a date with one of the girls so that she could sneak off to spend time with her actual boyfriend, the driver of the car. He talks about her as the only friend he truly had in high school, and describes having imagined conversations with her in the shower in the rehab facility as he goes through the agonizing pain of detox, telling her that he loves her because he never told her when she was alive.[259] The relationship recalls Smith's séance-bound romances, particularly their inclusion of characters whose

---

[256] Bastone and Glauber, *Smoking Gun: A Dossier Of Secret, Surprising, And Salacious Documents Form The Files Of The Smokinggun.com*, 1.

[257] The Frey reveal is one of The Smoking Gun's most famous reports. They also maintain a catalogue of celebrity mug shots. One of their more famous cases prior to the Frey was their reveal of a restraining order against reality star Rick Rockwell that, according to the jacket copy of The Smoking Gun book published by Bastone et al. in 2001 "brought his marriage -- as well as the T.V. show "Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire?" -- to an abrupt end."

[258] Ibid., 5.

[259] Ibid., 5.

behavior in the séance room mysteriously and persistently echoed the details of even her smallest interactions with Flournoy.[260] It is impossible to say whether Smith loved Flournoy—and in fact, this reader personally thinks it is unlikely. However, this makes the erotic nature of writing fantasy into small moments even more important and risky. Was there some connection between Frey and Melissa—perhaps as small as the brush of an arm across the table—that made her inclusion in his fantasies at one of his lowest moments possible?

The family of the victim, when contacted by "The Smoking Gun," denied any knowledge of a close relationship between their daughter and Frey. They contradicted his story of driving the two to the movies as part of Melissa's "cover" and instead stated that she went out with a girlfriend and said she would be home by midnight.

> As for driving Frey and her daughter, who was not a cheerleader, to the movies the night Melissa died, Sanders said that did not happen. "When I read that I figured he was taking license...he's a writer, you know, they don't tell everything that's factual and true." She added, "I just figured he embroidered a few things...I mean I'm sure not every single thing he said in there is gonna be true, do you think?[261]

After the "The Smoking Gun" report became national news, most people and, most importantly, Oprah, believed that the answer to Sanders's question was "no."

Kaavya Viswanathan

Kaavya Viswanathan's book was never an Oprah pick. However, she was understandably aware of the value of Oprah's literary endorsement. In the first chapter of *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life*, the titular character panics in the middle

---

[260] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*.
[261] Bastone and Glauber, *Smoking Gun: A Dossier Of Secret, Surprising, And Salacious Documents Form The Files Of The Smokinggun.com*, 6.

of a Harvard admissions interview when she is asked what she does for fun and finds herself unable to answer.

> "Um. .. I like to read," I said. I shifted around in my chair. My butt was turning numb." All right. What was the last book you read?"
>
> Well, at least that was easy. Anna Karenina. Surely he would be impressed with Tolstoy.
>
> He wasn't.
>
> "How about pleasure reading?" he asked, completely ignoring my fondness for the Russian classics.
>
> Suddenly I remembered the shiny sticker on the cover of the book. "It was for pleasure. It's part of Oprah's Book Club!"[262]

Even as a mere specter, a character off-screen, Oprah wields huge influence over the life of authors and of readers. Opal uses Oprah to signal to the admissions counselor that she is mainstream, popular, and fun. The value of Oprah's book club adds to the value of her entertainment empire and provides everyday readers with ways of signaling their understanding of and investment in a particular form of reading as a shared and intelligible practice. When authors disrupt Oprah's book club, either through plagiarism or through a dismissal of its value, readers, too, are threatened.

Much of the attention surrounding Viswanathan's book, from *The New York Times* to the *Harvard Crimson*, focused on the reported size of Viswanathan's advance—$500,000. An entire article in the *Harvard Crimson* dissected her movie deal with DreamWorks.[263] With the similarities between Viswanathan and Mehta, and the media attention received by the book, it is easy to suspect that the mention of Oprah's Book Club was as much a request for admission to the club (and the contested sticker) as an acknowledgement of its popular, hit-making profile. With the Frey scandal having recently made headlines, it also seems possible

---

[262] Viswanathan, *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life*, 13.
[263] Sarah Mortazavi, "Sophomore's Book Is Headed to Hollywood. *The Harvard Crimson*, February 2, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/2/17/sophomores-book-is-headed-to-hollywood/# (accessed April 1, 2013).

that Viswanathan would not have sought the media attention if she suspected that her book could also be unraveled.

In April 2006, shortly after the publication of *Opal Mehta*, *The Crimson* published an article called "Sophomore's New Book Contains Passages Similar to 2001 Novel."[264] The paper was the first to publish reports of the similarities between Viswanathan's book and a novel by fellow chick lit author Megan McCafferty. McCafferty had been made aware of the correspondence between her book and *Opal Mehta* through an e-mail from a fan. By April 26th, Harvard had commenced a "gathering of information" about the apparent copying ("investigation is not a term that we have used").[265] On April 27th, Viswanathan's publisher, Little, Brown and Company, announced that the book had been recalled from store shelves. "We are pleased that the matter has been resolved in an appropriate and timely fashion," McCafferty's publishers announced.[266] By May 2nd, the movie adaptation had been cancelled.[267] That same day, Little, Brown and Company announced that the novel, initially recalled so that questionable passages could be removed or rewritten for a new edition, announced that the novel "will never return to shelves."[268]

---

[264] David Zhou, "Sophomore's New Book Contains Passages Strikingly Similar to 2001 Novel," *The Harvard Crimson*, April 23, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/23/sophomores-new-book-contains-passages-strikingly/ (accessed April 1, 2013).
[265] Crimson Staff, "Trying Opal at Harvard?" *The Harvard Crimson*, May 4, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/4/trying-opal-at-harvard-perhaps-one/ (accessed March 31, 2013).
[266] David Zhou, "Publisher Recalls Viswanathan's Novel," *The Harvard Crimson*, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/27/publisher-recalls-viswanathans-novel-p-alignleftfour/(accessed April 1, 2013).
[267] Paras D. Bhayani and David Zhou, "'Opal' Similar to More Books," *The Harvard Crimson*, May 2, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/2/opal-similar-to-more-books-kaavya/ (accessed April 1, 2013).
[268] Crimson Staff, "'Opal Mehta' Gone for Good; Contract Cancelled," *The Harvard Crimson*, May 2, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/2/opal-mehta-gone-for-good-contract/(accessed April 2, 2013).

Viswanathan's Alleged Plagiarism

Confronted with the similarities between her book and McCafferty's, Viswanathan admitted that as a fan of McCafferty's, she may have "internalized" aspects of the books.[269] Following the initial plagiarism allegations, reports in *The Crimson* referred to additional similarities between Viswanathan's book and the work of other authors. Viswanathan was accused of plagiarizing not only from McCafferty but from Meg Cabot, Sophie Kinsella, and Salman Rushdie.[270] In an interview with *The Today Show*, Viswanathan claimed that she had a "photographic memory" and had unintentionally included the similar passages in her own, original work. As her case became more and more well known, Viswanathan's assertion that the similarities were unintentional inspired skepticism from some and sympathy from others. Her school newspaper was largely critical, publishing multiple calls for her to be brought before the school honor board. Nearly at the same time, major literary critics defended her, listing examples of similar mistakes made by authors of greater age and stature. Part of what makes it difficult to determine exactly when the initial application of the term cryptomnesia as Viswanathan's diagnosis occurred is that it is applied so authoritatively. Cryptomnesia is presented as an alternative to plagiarism or as a sub-genre of plagiarism. The question of what cryptomnesia itself means is not in question. The term is presented as correct and direct, although obscure. Cryptomnesia is something that has already occurred rather than the creation of cryptomnesia itself. The distinction is that the role of the naming of the phenomenon in its creation is not articulated. Cryptomnesia is not only something that occurs and is uncovered. It is something that happens *in* the uncovering. Before something is identified as cryptomnesia, its status as original—or as something that does not need to

---

[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid.

be—is left untroubled.

> But could some alleged plagiarists—like Maureen Dowd, Chris Anderson, Elizabeth Hasselbeck, and even Viswanathan, who all either deny the charge, or blame their copying on unconscious mistakes—be guilty of psychological sloppiness rather than fraud? Could the real offense be disregard for the mind's subliminal kleptomania? And if it is real, is unconscious copying (or "cryptomnesia" to those who study the phenomenon) preventable? Or, seeing as Nietzsche ripped off a passage of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* from something he'd read as a child, and former Beatle George Harrison was found guilty, in court, of unconsciously copying the music for his hit song, "My Sweet Lord"—is cryptomnesia both unavoidable, and the perfect excuse?[271]

In this representative passage from *Newsweek*, the onus for proving whether cryptomnesia exists is placed on the authors and artists in question. Was it "really" plagiarism, or was it cryptomnesia? Remember that for Flournoy, the diagnosis of cryptomnesia depended upon his own role as observer, and its existence in the first place depended on the acceptance of its unintentional nature.

An example (book test!) of similarities between Viswanathan's novel and McCafferty's, taken from the first *Harvard Crimson* article on the controversy:

> From page 14 of Viswanathan's novel: Priscilla was my age and lived two blocks away. For the first fifteen years of my life, those were the only qualifications I needed in a best friend. We had first bonded over our mutual fascination with abacus in a playgroup for gifted kids. But that was before freshman year, when Priscilla's glasses came off, and the first in a long string of boyfriends got on."[272]

> From page 7 of McCafferty's novel: Bridget is my age and lives across the street. For the first twelve years of my life, these qualifications were all I needed in a best friend. But that was before Bridget's braces came off and her boyfriend Burke got on, before Hope and I met in our seventh-grade Honors classes.[273]

It seems important to note (not least because writing about this particular controversy makes

---

[271] Juskalian, "You Didn't Plagiarize, Your Unconscious Did," 1.
[272] David Zhou, "Sophomore's New Book Contains Passages Strikingly Similar to 2001 Novel | The Harvard Crimson," accessed April 1, 2013, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/23/sophomores-new-book-contains-passages-strikingly/, para 15.
[273] Ibid., para 14.

a person nervous about accurate citation) that McCafferty's passages appear before Viswanathan's in the original article. Although the Crimson does not comment on this particular editorial decision, to me it feels very much like a deliberate decision to establish a timeline for a potential theft.

Viswanathan on Trial

A major feature of the *Crimson* articles on Viswanathan following the discovery of her alleged plagiarism is the question of whether or when she will be called before the "Ad Board."[274] Plagiarism is a violation of Harvard's Honor Code. However, Viswanathan did not write her book to fulfill any kind of course requirement. Ultimately, the investigation that was not an investigation appears to have been decided in Viswanathan's favor. She finished out her college career at Harvard. A subsequent report in *The Crimson* speculates about her transition to the role of normal student.[275] None of the cases of cryptomnesia (or, cases referred to as cryptomnesia) discussed in this dissertation resulted in an official trial. Keller's experience before the special committee at Perkins is the closest example. The case of George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord," mentioned in the *Newsweek* article, is probably the best example of a case where the unconscious nature of alleged creative borrowing from the song "He's So Fine" was discussed in the courtroom.[276]

A book by legal scholar and judge Richard A. Posner (b.1939) offers a legal explanation for why more cases of alleged plagiarism do not end up in the court system.

---

[274] Crimson Staff, "Trying Opal at Harvard?"
[275] David Zhou, "'Mehta'-Morphosis," *The Harvard Crimson*, June 7, 2006, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/6/7/mehta-morphosis-although-her-plagiarism-plagued-novel-how/(accessed April 1, 2013).
[276] The court case is *Bright Tunes Music v. Harrisongs Music.* The case is also cited as an example of cryptomnesia in: Wayne Weiten, Psychology: Themes and Variations (Belmont: Cengage Learning, 2008).

Plagiarism, unlike copyright infringement, is not illegal. "Though there is no legal wrong called "plagiarism," plagiarism can become the basis of a lawsuit if it infringes copyright or breaks the contract between author and publisher."[277] Posner writes that a more common outcome of plagiarism is the loss of a job or of academic censure. "By far the most common punishments for plagiarism outside the school setting have nothing to do with the law. They are disgrace, humiliation, ostracism, and other shaming penalties imposed by public opinion by people who violate social norms whether or not they are also legal norms."[278] The public seems to take this task quite seriously at times, less so at others. In Keller's case, well-known public figures were some of her greatest defenders.[279] In Viswanathan's case, the fan community connected to the chick lit genre were the first to reach out and suggest she deserved to be chastised.

Posner discusses Viswanathan's case at length. The first line of the physically small book called, appropriately, *The Little Book of Plagiarism* is "At age seventeen, Kaavya Viswanathan signed a two-book contract with Little, Brown."[280] A mention of the $500,000 advance and the movie rights immediately follows.[281] The money appears to have established a value to Viswanthan's work that makes her plagiarism, if not illegal, at least quantifiable.[282] He does not refer specifically to her case as cryptomnesia. Posner repeats the allegation that

---

[277] Posner, *The Little Book of Plagiarism*, 34.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Mark Twain, *The Letters of Mark Twain*, vol. 5 of *The Letters of Mark Twain* (Fairfield, IA: 1st World Publishing, 2004), 45-7.
[280] Ibid., 1.
[281] Ibid., 1.
[282] The recent experience of the Knight Foundation when they agreed to pay a $20,000 speaking fee to confessed plagiarist Jonathan Lehrer seems to bear out the assumption that money paid out for the work of writers associated with plagiarism justifies a more vitriolic response. During the $20,000 speech, Leher was situated at the podium next to a Twitter stream filled largely with comments criticizing his fee and his thoughts as presented in the speech, all in real time.

Viswanathan's plagiarism was an outgrowth of her desire for achievement, especially the desire, like Opal, to get into a good college.[283] He suggests a "kindlier explanation," citing Harold Bloom's (b. 1930) *The Anxiety of Influence*: Viswanathan was understandably upset at the fact that she had appeared on the scene too late and did what she did because she felt the unfairness of McCafferty having done it first.[284] In either account, the plagiarism is imagined as conscious and intentional.

Later, Posner mentions cryptomnesia and says "Viswanathan pushed this excuse aggressively. There is even a word for unconscious plagiarism—*cryptomnesia*."[285] Posner does not provide a citation for his definition of cryptomnesia. Additionally, despite his apparent disdain for Viswanathan, he suggests that she did not go so far as to use the word herself. Posner dismisses the explanation. "Psychologists have investigated the phenomenon and have found no evidence that people can recite entire passages written by someone else yet believe they are their own—no evidence of photographic memory that forgets the act of photographing."[286] Posner does not mention when or how cryptomnesia has been applied to Viswanathan's case. The first mention of the cryptomnesia in regard to her case appears to be a Slate article by Joshua Foer published April 27th, 2006, "Kaavya Syndrome."[287] Foer suggests cryptomnesia as an alternative to Viswanathan's claim of a photographic memory: his seems like as good an opportunity as any to clear up the greatest enduring myth about human memory. "Lots of people claim to have a photographic memory, but nobody actually does. Nobody."[288] Viswanathan's name makes its first appearance on the Wikipedia page for

---

[283] Ibid., 5-6.
[284] Ibid., 6.
[285] Ibid., 97.
[286] Ibid., 97.
[287] Foer, "Kaavya Syndrome."
[288] Ibid., 1.

the term on November 30th, 2009.[289]

Cryptomnesia and Anxieties of Influence

Posner vacillates between a reading of Viswanathan's plagiarism as concealed, intentional plagiarism and a suggestion that plagiarism itself is an inextricable aspect of our current culture. It is true that if her work in *Opal Mehta* is viewed as plagiarism, Viswanathan is not unique. College students plagiarize. Often, they plagiarize from Wikipedia. A recent *New York Times* article gave the example of a student who didn't include a citation because a website didn't list an author. Another student faced with questions about "purple" formatted text that was clearly lifted from a website merely wanted a writing tutor to explain "how to change the purple text to black."[290] The title of the New York Times article—"Generation Plagiarism"—suggests that stories like these are indicative of a new kind of borrowing.

> Digital technology makes cheating easier—whether it's texting exam answers to friends, sharing homework online, or downloading ready-made term papers from the Internet. But it may also be redefining how students, who are used to music file-sharing and Wikipedia, understand the concepts of authorship and plagiarism.[291]

The suggestion is that the way information is accessed and presented leads to plagiarism rather than the character of information itself. Plagiarism is seen as something that has increased in frequency over time, and this is related to the presentation of information through digital technology.

---

[289] The change is visible on the "edits" log for the article at http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cryptomnesia&oldid=328748463. The Viswanathan case originally appeared in the "Controversies" section of the article as an example of when cryptomnesia was uncertain. It now appears in its own section of the article as an example of cryptomnesia.

[290] Trip Gabriel, "Lines on Plagiarism Blur for Students in the Digital Age," *The New York Times*, August 1, 2010, sec. Education, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/02/education/02cheat.html (accessed February 1, 2012), para 2.

[291] Ibid., para 8.

An article by Susan Blum in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* argues that neither of the two main approaches to teaching about plagiarism within higher education—treating it as a "moral wrong" or as a "crime"—is effective.[292] According to Blum, these approaches fail for myriad reasons. For one, students may ignore moral arguments against plagiarism in response to peer pressure and doubt the severity of the "crime" as they see other crimes—Blum mentions underage drinking and illegal downloading specifically—go unpunished. Blum also suggests that changes in the way information is accessed and shared make plagiarism a different issue to students today than it may have been in the past, suggesting that:

> [. . .] our notion of the originality of utterance as the product of the unique, isolated, authentic self had its peak in the 1960s and 1970s. Students today have been immersed in a culture that revels in trying on different personae and sharing freely. There is no inviolable connection between words and the self that produces them. Students are not wedded to the integrity of their own writing and do not necessarily assume that others are either.[293]

Like Gabriel and many other authors (both the *Chronicle* and the *Times* have published a series of similar articles, dating back to the 1990s), Blum does not believe this change in the way information is treated should mean that students are not held to traditional academic citation standards. Instead, she suggests that education surrounding issues of citation and plagiarism should include addressing the historical context of citation and originality, acknowledging inherent ambiguity in the rules of conventional citation and distinguishing between types of plagiarism.

Within the constellation of articles treating the problem of modern plagiarism, several have, in a sense, dusted off and trotted out the idea of cryptomnesia. The best known is

---

[292] Susan D. Blum, "Academic Integrity and Student Plagiarism: a Question of Education, Not Ethics," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 20, 2009, sec. Commentary, http://chronicle.com/article/Academic-IntegrityStud/32323/(accessed April 5, 2013).
[293] Ibid., para 7.

probably Jonathan Lethem's 2007 Harper's article "The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism."[294] The article coincides with Maar's discovery of the "two Lolitas." Lethem opens the article with a discussion of these similarities and uses the two apparent versions of Lolita as an example of cryptomnesia.

> Literature has always been a crucible in which familiar themes are continually recast. Little of what we admire in Nabokov's *Lolita* is to be found in its predecessor; the former is in no way deducible from the latter. Still: did Nabokov consciously borrow and quote?[295]

In three sentences, Lethem sums up this particular kind of reading of cryptomnesia. *Literature always borrows. Even when it does, there are factors that set some works apart from others. Finally, did it happen on purpose?*[296] Cryptomnesia is not mentioned again in the essay. However, the argument throughout the piece—which is itself composed largely of lines borrowed from other works—is that "reappropriation," "influence," and "plagiarism," purposeful or not, are integral modes through which creativity operates.[297]

In June 2011, Rachel Toor published an article in *The Chronicle* referencing Lethem. Her appreciation for the way that Lethem "looked carefully, historically, and smartly at this phenomenon called 'cryptomnesia,' and at related concepts of plagiarism, collage art, and the limits of copyright" seems tempered by a belief that there are limits to whether plagiarism, conscious or not, is acceptable and that these limits are connected to whether what is stolen

---

[294] Lethem, *The Ecstasy of Influence*.
[295] Ibid., para 2.
[296] Lethem's account is among those that references Harold Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence*, an important foundational text in the creation of this argument surrounding literature in post-modern theory. For a related account involving Nietzsche, see Sander Gilman's *Nietzschean parody: an introduction to reading Nietzsche*.
[297] See Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc*, ed. Gerald Graff, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman and Samuel Weber, 1st ed. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988) for an account of a similar debate on influence, authorship, and plagiarism between Derrida and John Searle.

is "something that mattered."[298] For Lethem, this "mattering" seems to be connected to how being borrowed from feels to the alleged originator, with "rage" being a good indicator that an appropriation was, indeed, inappropriate.

On the one hand, nothing is original—new uses can be found for old ideas, and appropriation is the source of art. On the other hand, original work and, therefore, plagiarism as stealing exists, and we know it when we see—or, rage-filled, feel it. Perhaps the rage is due, in part, to the way that plagiarism appears to hide the feeling of connection one might have with a previous work. In parapsychological research, cryptomnesia is often mentioned in the same breath as déjà vu, when something is imbued with the feeling of "being known" despite the fact that it has never been encountered before.[299] Cryptomnesia might be viewed as the opposite—something that tries to keep from invoking these feelings, that hides or possibly changes them. The rage and righteous indignation levied at plagiarists is perhaps on behalf of the "owner" of what is stolen and the person who feels what has been lost, concluding their own connection to the borrowed (stolen, appropriated, recast) thing in the material world. Faced only with the option of rage or postmodern acceptance, the two extremes risk encompassing each other. Everything and nothing is new, and it is as difficult to say whether a college freshman has stolen her seminar paper as it is to say

---

[298] Rachel Toor, "Unconscious Plagiarism," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 20, 2011, sec. Advice, http://chronicle.com/article/Unconscious-Plagiarism/127928/(accessed April 1, 2013).

[299] In Alan S. Brown, *The Déjà Vu Experience* (New York: Psychology Press, 2004), 110, Brown discusses the differences between déjà vu and cryptomnesia from the perspective of psychology. Ian Stevenson discusses both phenomena at length in many of his books from a psychical research perspective. Some relevant titles: Ian Stevenson, *20 Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1980); Ian Stevenson, *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation* (North Caroline: McFarland, 2001); Ian Stevenson, *European Cases of the Reincarnation Type* (North Carolina: McFarland, 2008).

whether Shakespeare ever wrote anything original or, in fact, even was himself. The inability of cryptomnesia, as defined in these articles, to sit between these extremes suggests the difference between current definitions and Flournoy's version of the term, which allowed the option of the paranormal and the scientific to persist alongside each other to the point that he was patently aware (no unintentional work here) that he would have to make a choice to forget either option.

A new pedagogical approach?

The Chronicle's interest in plagiarism as a theoretical and pedagogical issue has yielded a sustained discussion that occasionally accounts for the way that punitive and permissive approaches to plagiarism do, at times, intersect. Paula Marantz Cohen's "Creative Plagiarism," published in October 2012, explores the task of making space for understanding plagiarism that appears to occur without malicious intent—and perhaps with creative purpose.[300] Cohen describes becoming attuned to the problem of plagiarism when faced with student writing that contains vestiges of works previously read within the context of her own class. She feels that the plagiarism is too blatant to be viewed as either entirely intentional or unintentional.

> Almost every time I teach fiction-writing, one or two students seem compelled to write a story that closely resembles a published work we've read. These students are not trying to perpetrate a deception, since the material they incorporate has been previously discussed by the class, usually only a week or two earlier.[301]

Cohen investigates the intersection between the assigned texts and her students' fiction by assigning a class exercise that involves reading two short stories by different authors that

---

[300] Paula Marantz Cohen, "Creative Plagiarism," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 22, 2012. http://chronicle.com/article/Creative-Plagiarism/135158/ (accessed April 1, 2013).
[301] Ibid., para 1.

have been compared to each other as possible plagiarism. The texts she chooses are "'Mrs. Adis,' by the British writer Sheila Kaye-Smith, published in *The Century Magazine* in 1922, and 'Sanctuary,' by the African-American writer Nella Larsen, published in the magazine *Forum* in 1930."[302] The latter text was "quickly viewed" as a potential plagiarism. Cohen's article proceeds to reproduce similar sections from each text one after the other within her own article. Kaye-Smith's work appears ahead of Larsen's. Implicitly, Cohen seems to be adhering to the importance of linear timelines in organizing allegations of plagiarism. The stories are presented in a form that suggests at least some allegiance to the narrative of the possibility that they are illicitly connected. The quick response of readers to their potential similarities is also one of the qualities that makes them useful for her students to investigate.

Cohen reports that a class discussion of the stories yielded a lively back-and-forth among her ten students. "Although they acknowledged the similarities between [the stories], they initially seemed more interested in the differences."[303] In particular, the students found the style of the stories to be different, describing Kaye-Smith's as more traditional and Larsen's as "modern and dramatic."[304] When Cohen makes the timeline of the publication between the two stories explicit, the conversation shifts: "now they were being assigned the role of moral judges."[305] Eight of the ten students determine that Larsen's story is a plagiarism. Cohen describes the eight moral judges' attitudes, noting that they hardened in their opinions against Larsen as the discussion progressed.

The story of Cohen's investigations into "creative plagiarism" diverges with the response of the two dissenting students. Each of the students felt that Larsen had borrowed

---

[302] Ibid., para 3.
[303] Ibid., para 8.
[304] Ibid., para 8.
[305] Ibid., para 9.

from Kaye-Smith. The students agreed that Larsen had likely read Kaye-Smith's work. But neither one was ready to call the later work a plagiarism.

> As I pressed them to elaborate, one of the two dissenters observed: "Perhaps it has something to do with our being the only brown people in the class."
>
> Both of the students were Indian-American in an otherwise white class. Their ethnicity had never come up before, and they had not shown any special identification with each other until now. Both students were from middle-class backgrounds, while several of the white students were from working-class backgrounds.[306]

The response of these two students highlights a possible consequence of responses to plagiarism taken by moral judges. In their experience of the class, the similarities between the two stories served to highlight important differences that telegraphed aspects of a potentially marginalized experience of the outwardly similar material. The students described being drawn into Larsen's story in a unique way in response to her use of the term "brown gaze" to describe one of the characters. The phrase set in motion a range of associations that created an experience for the students as readers that helped them to develop a sense of the story itself as original despite its association with the charge of plagiarism. Cohen argues that "This chain of receptivity mirrored what had worked the other way for the rest of the class in lining up in condemnation of Larsen. The two students were receptive to difference, the others to sameness, at least once the issue of plagiarism was raised"[307] Cohen goes on to connect this lens of "sameness" to the treatment of Kaavya Viswanathan. She is particularly critical of Posner's analysis of Viswanathan in *The Little Book of Plagiarism*, arguing that he pays undue attention to her age and gender and to the not-unusual conditions of her work with a book packager. Cohen goes on to highlight a difference between Viswanathan and McCafferty's work that few critics, even those who defend Viswanathan, have focused on at

---

[306] Ibid., para 10-11.
[307] Ibid., para 13.

any length. She appears to argue, without directly stating her case, that Viswanathan is a better writer than McCafferty:

> [. . .] McCafferty's *Sloppy Firsts*, from which many of the borrowed passages were taken, is a conventional coming-of-age novel, while Viswanathan's novel pushes the boundaries of humorous realism into the realm of farce and social satire. It is a slapstick account of the dizzying heights that an overachieving Indian-American girl, egged on by her pushy immigrant parents, will go to in order to gain admission to the sacred citadel of the Ivy League.[308]

Cohen argues that the ability of a reader both to identify and to sympathize with an author's perspective—or not—is ultimately what determines whether similar works will be responded to as plagiarism. She does not use the term "cryptomnesia." However, this call for attending to the affective dimensions of experiencing texts that may share similarities is in keeping with what Flournoy's cryptomnesia initially intended to do. Attempting to understand and identify with an author opens up the opportunity to make an assessment of their work that takes their experience seriously without completely setting aside the possibility of plagiarism. Taking this approach to plagiarism within the classroom, I would argue, has the potential for training students who are prepared to read and write in a way that is attuned to the possibilities of influence rather than simply guarded towards its potential moral trespass. At the end of the essay, Cohen specifically states that she is unwilling to do away with the category of plagiarism entirely.

> I am not willing to go as far as some theorists, who say that the term "plagiarism" should be discarded altogether. Extremism in this area seems ill-advised. As an author, I am attached to the idea of intellectual property. And yet there must be a way to disapprove of uncredited borrowing while being empathetic toward writers struggling to find a creative path through the thicket of existing expression.[309]

Reclaiming cryptomnesia as a term that can mean something very different from plagiarism provides a potential path towards bringing this kind of empathy into the classroom. Viewing

---

[308] Ibid., para 19.
[309] Ibid., para 31.

cryptomnesia as a co-created reading of a work rather than a diagnosis of its inherent originality and merits would invite relevant works into the classroom on equal footing rather than as representative specters of plagiarism.

James Frey: A Book Test?

After "The Smoking Gun" report was published, Oprah initially defended her author. His publisher, Doubleday and Anchor books, a division of Random House, gave a statement that they saw no reason to investigate.[310] She famously called to defend Frey during his appearance on *Larry King Live* to discuss the allegations that he had fabricated the best-selling memoir. The call was a surprise to Frey, and Oprah explained why she had waited to release a statement on the controversy: "I wanted to say because everyone's been asking me to release a statement. I first wanted to hear what James had to say and I didn't want to have that colored by any personal conversation that I had." She went on to explain why she still supported the book:

> So the truth is this. I read and recommend books based on my connection with the written word and its message. And, of course, I am disappointed by this controversy surrounding "A Million Little Pieces," because I rely on the publishers to define the category that a book falls within and also the authenticity of the work.
> So, I'm just like everybody else. I go to the bookstore. I pick out a book I love. If it says memoir, I know that—that maybe the names and dates and the times have been compressed, because that's what a memoir is.
> And I feel about "A Million Little Pieces" that although some of the facts have been questioned—and people have a right to question, because we live in a country that lets you do that, that the underlying message of redemption in James Frey's memoir still resonates with me. And I know that it resonates with millions of other people who have read this book and will continue to read this book.

---

[310] Some of the information in this section comes from the episode of *Larry King Live* featuring Frey, his first interview after the Smoking Gun allegations came to light. A transcript of the interview is available and is listed in the citations for this chapter. It is available at: CNN, "Interview with James Frey," *Larry King Live*, January 11, 2006 (accessed February 1, 2012).

Larry King clarifies Oprah's sentiment. "One quick thing, Oprah. So, therefore, you hold him no ill will, have no less regard and still recommend the book?" Oprah reiterates her position. "Yes. Yes."

The interview took place on January 11th, 2006. While many readers seemed sympathetic to Frey and his book continued to sell, Oprah's support for the book did little to stem the tide of allegations against Frey and his publisher. Oprah invited Frey back to her show after the *Larry King* appearance in an episode that aired on January 26th, 2006.[311] Her tone was much less friendly. As Frey gave many of the same explanations he had given to King, Oprah consistently answered him with "That's a lie, James." Frey and his editor, Nan Talese, later claimed that the *Oprah* show had lied to get them both to appear that day, telling them that they would be part of a panel discussion on "Truth in America" when they were in fact the only panelists.[312] Frey continued to defend himself. He maintained that the memoir was mostly true and that "not very much" was fabricated. "I don't feel like I've conned anyone," Frey told Oprah. "Because I still think the book is about drug addiction and alcoholism and nobody's disputing that I was a drug addict and an alcoholic. And it's about the battle to overcome that." Oprah's reply: "I think you presented a false person." Along with the unconscious and the hidden, the possibility of holding together two versions of one's self—of having past selves and lives known and unknown—is unacceptable. To not be oneself is a crime. To always be oneself, never hidden, seems like a particular burden. If cryptomnesia is never acceptable, the unconscious itself, which sometimes mercifully and

---

[311] Quotes from the *Oprah* show are taken from a transcript available at the *Oprah* show website. Harpo Productions, "Oprah's Questions for James - Oprah.com," *Oprah.com*, http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Oprahs-Questions-for-James (accessed February 2, 2012).

[312] Belinda Luscombe, "World's Most Shocking Apology: Oprah to James Frey," *Time.com,* May 13, 2009, http:// www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1897924,00.html (accessed April 1, 2012).

necessarily hides, is a space where authors must be afraid to go.

Book Packaging

Unlike *Opal Mehta*, Frey's book is still available today, along with its sequel *My Friend, Leonard*. Editions of the book printed after the Oprah selection include a publisher's note and an author's note as a disclaimer. Viswanathan's book has never been republished, and she has not written additional books. Interestingly, the history of her book implicates another author/creator in the work of her book who is still publishing today. When Viswanathan first had the idea for her novel, she ended up being paired with Alloy Entertainment through her editor. Posner describes the relationship in his book: "A company involved in the heretofore obscure trade of 'book packaging' had helped Viswanathan to 'conceptualize and plot' her book, but there is no indication that the company shares responsibility for her plagiarisms."[313]

"Book packagers" work with authors to create books. They are not exactly editors, publishers, or agents, although they may employ people with any of these titles. The first book packager was founded in 1905 by Edward Stratemeyer.[314] Through his "Stratemeyer Syndicate," Stratemeyer "devised concepts for series books and hired ghostwriters to develop his outlines into complete manuscripts, which he published under a variety of pseudonyms."[315] Some of Stratemeyer's most well-known creations were the Bobbsey Twins, the Hardy Boys, and Nancy Drew. By the 1910s and 1920s, the Stratemeyer Syndicate was

---

[313] Posner, *The Little Book of Plagiarism*, 3.
[314] Ilana Nash, "Teenage Detectives and Teenage Delinquents," in *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, ed. Catherine Ross Nickerson and Catherine Ross Nickerson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 72–85.
[315] Ibid., 73.

"the leading producer of series fiction for children."[316] In comparison, the *New York Times* describes the work of Alloy: "In many cases, editors at Alloy—known as a book packager—craft proposals for publishers and create plotlines and characters before handing them over to a writer (or a string of writers)."[317] An example of Alloy's recent success is the *Gossip Girl* series and its related spin-offs, including a television show. One of its early successes was the *Sweet Valley High* series.[318] In Viswanathan's case, Alloy describes their role as that of a consultant. Viswanathan's agent introduced her to Alloy, and they "worked with her on the book's first four chapters, making what Ms. Viswanathan described as very minor suggestions."[319] Alloy holds a copyright on *Opal Mehta* alongside Viswanathan. The company has continued to be very clear about the fact that they were not responsible for the issues with her book. They are entangled with both Viswanathan and McCafferty in another way. "The same editor, Claudia Gabel, is thanked on the acknowledgements pages of both Ms. McCafferty's book and Ms. Viswanathan's *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life*."[320]

What do book packagers actually do? And why is their role brought up in more than one treatment of Viswanathan's plagiarism, as if the information is the clue to one of Stratemeyer's mysteries? I would argue that the involvement of the book packagers is, like

---

[316] Ibid., 73.
[317] Motoko Rich and Dinitia Smith, "First, Plot and Character. Then, Find an Author," *The New York Times*, April 27, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/27/books/27pack.html (accessed April 1, 2013); Dinitia Smith, "A 'How to Get Into College by Really, Really Trying' Novel," *The New York Times*, April 6, 2006, http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/06/books/06opal.html (accessed April 1, 2013).
[318] A recent essay in the *Kenyon Review* by Amy Boesky called "The Ghost Writes Back" gives an excellent account of the development of *Sweet Valley* and the emotional and practical experience of working as a ghostwriter. It is: Amy Boesky, "The Ghost Writes Back," *Kenyon Review Online* Winter 2013, http://www.kenyonreview.org/kr-online-issue/2013-winter/selections/amy-boesky-656342/(accessed March 2, 2013).
[319] Rich and Smith, "First, Plot and Character. Then, Find an Author."
[320] Ibid.

Viswanathan's plagiarism, something that disrupts the expectations for what the object of a book will be. Imagine the trouble that book packagers could have caused for mediums and the Society for Psychical Research (and likely did, considering their rise was contemporary to the majority of the book tests conducted by the Society). In an attempt to avoid contamination, mediums would have to avoid not only the books, but their network of authors, editors, outliners, and other creators. Book packagers underscore a danger of books. In the reliability of their composition and physical presentation, they suggest a "coming into being" that should be equally consistent. However, the history of the book as it is produced and disseminated underwent a change in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, just as cryptomnesia was developing. Books became more widely available. Additionally, a distinction developed between books that were solid and dependable and books that were insubstantial, seeming to have come together in suspect ways and easily disposable. As mentioned in the first chapter, Mary Hammond sums up this difference, and its gendered dimensions as the distinction between "good" and "bad" books. Hammond describes the changing publishing landscape as one that increasingly produced "hybrids" of these good or bad categories. As a result, the "policing" of novels moved from an overtly religious, moral enterprise to one that involved "a far subtler form of policing through the pages of the critical journals."[321] Drawing on Lyn Pykett, Hammond also describes the confusion over books and their relation to gender: "the gendered terms of this critical discourse was bound up with a desire to fix gender boundaries and categories at a time of profound anxiety about the nature and fixity of these categories."[322]

Frey's book, about addiction, a root canal without Novocain, a suicide, two violent

---

[321] Hammond, *Reading, Publishing And the Formation of Literary Taste in England 1880–1914*, 5.
[322] Pykett, quoted in Hammond, *Reading, Publishing And the Formation of Literary Taste in England 1880-1914*, 5.

deaths, jail time, sex, and recovery was male-authored and so realistic as to have fooled Oprah. Viswanathan's book was "too realistic"—a romantic depiction of a girl a lot like her. The book is about getting kissed. Frey's book, bad though it may seem, is still in print. Viswanathan's book, recalled from its one and only printing, is, in the publishing sense, gone. Similarly, Hélène Smith retires from her mediumship. Similarly, Helen Keller's last published piece of fiction was that controversial story printed in the school newsletter. If cryptomnesia—and its consequences—come out of entanglements, negotiations, a co-created dynamic of creating, observing, and knowing—there is a point where that entanglement narrows and young women storytellers are escorted out. The persistence of this exclusion begins to suggest that cryptomnesia is only visible and unacceptable for authors and other individuals who are not in a position to defend their perspective as original, new, or otherwise legitimate.

Frey's Cryptomnesia

Rather than (or in addition to) suggesting that the difference in treatment between Frey and Viswanathan is about gender, the case could be made that it is about the differing severity of their transgressions. Frey's book was the subject of a class-action lawsuit alleging fraud. Random House settled the suit. Readers who bought the book on or before the date "The Smoking Gun" report went live could receive a full refund if they submitted proof or purchase in the form of a piece of the book in question—hardcover book, tear out and send in page 163; paperback, send the cover; audio book, a piece of the packaging; e-book, receipt required. Additionally, individuals wishing to make a claim were required to send in a signed

statement that they *would not have bought the book if they had known it was not true*.[323]

Viswanathan did not suffer any legal consequences, although her contract with her publisher for future books was terminated. This may be the best measure of how differently Viswanathan and Frey's crimes were viewed. While his follow-up book to *A Million Little Pieces* was already in print when the allegations of fabrication came to light, his next two books were only in the idea stage. In the Larry King interview, King asked Frey if he had started writing the books.

> Frey: I haven't started yet. I am going to start relatively soon.
> King: Do you think this will affect you?
> Frey: Of course this is going to affect me.[324]

Bright Shiny Morning, a novel, was published in 2008 and is still in print. *The Final Testament of the Holy Bible* appeared in 2011.[325] Additionally, Frey is partly responsible for the success of the best seller *I Am Number Four* that was recently made into a movie by DreamWorks, the same studio that cancelled the *Opal Mehta* movie. The book was created by Frey and the author Jobie Hughes through Full Fathom Five. Full Fathom Five is a book packaging company founded by Frey.[326] What Frey did, at least in the publishing world, was considered forgivable, even replicable. What Viswanathan did was not. Posner is clear on this matter. Plagiarism is not a crime, but, he implies, it should be. Only when plagiarism approaches pastiche is it at all acceptable. With cryptomnesia, the imaginary element—Keller's "imaginal

---

[323] Peter Lattman, "The Unbelievable "A Million Little Pieces" Settlement," *Wall Street Journal*, October 24, 2006, http://blogs.wsj.com/law/2006/09/07/the-unbelievable-a-million-little-pieces-settlement/ (accessed April 1, 2013).
[324] CNN, "Interview with James Frey," *Larry King Live*, January 11, 2006 (accessed February 1, 2012).
[325] James Frey, *The Final Testament of the Holy Bible* (New York: Gagosian Gallery, 2011). The book, which appears to compare Frey to Jesus, does not appear to be doing terribly well. Its Amazon sales rank is lower than Frey's other books.
[326] Suzanne Mozes, "James Frey's Fiction Factory," *NYMag.com*, November 12, 2010, http://nymag.com/arts/books/features/69474/(accessed January 25, 2012).

contributions"—is the only thing that could possibly make it acceptable. POD-dy Mouth a self-identified mid-list author and anonymous blogger about the book world, especially self-publishing, summed up the difference between Frey and Viswanathan. "If only Kaavya Viswanathan were more like James Frey. It seems James Frey can't stop making things up—and it seems like Kaavya Viswanathan can't make up much at all."[327]

Cryptomnesia is the only thing that makes Kaavya Viswanathan's work close to acceptable. If, in the sense of unconscious plagiarism, it is possible she did not realize what she was doing. But in terms of cryptomnesia as Flournoy used it, Frey's work is a much better example than Viswanathan's. The issue for Flournoy was not that Smith had copied the memories that triggered her visions (although he was struck by the strong similarities between Martian and French). His focus was not even so much on her lack of awareness of the mundane origins of her visions as it was on her belief that the visions were real. He sought to uncover how what had actually occurred had been elaborated so creatively and so completely that it felt to Smith like nothing else than the experiences she reported. He describes a cryptomnesia that occurred during her work as a shop assistant:[328]

> Mlle. Smith being charged with the duty of making ready the merchandise sent out from her department, was handed a telegram one day from a customer who asked that four yards of No. 13,459 be dispatched to him immediately. "This brief order," said Hélène, "was not calculated to hasten the forwarding of the goods. How could I readily find this No. 13,459, in the midst of six or seven thousand others in the store? Pondering, telegram in hand, I was wondering how I could find it, when a voice outside of but very near me said to me: 'Not there, but here,' and involuntarily I turned round, without knowing why, and my hand laid itself mechanically on a

---

[327] Poddy Mouth, "If only Kaavya Viswanathan were more like James Frey, " *Pod-dy Mouth*, April 25, 2006, http://girlondemand.blogspot.com/2006/04/if-only-kaavya-viswanathan-were-more.html (accessed September 19, 2011).

[328] Smith was an unpaid medium, although she later accepted money for her services after the publication of Flournoy's book made her famous. Flournoy sought an unpaid medium for his study because mediums who did not accept money were thought to have less of a motive to fabricate spirit communication.

piece of goods which I drew towards me, and which actually bore the No. 13,459."[329] Flournoy considers the experience to be of those "everyday happy reminiscences or inspirations which sometimes come to free us from embarrassment by shining forth like a light at an opportune moment."[330] Although Flournoy is pleased to have realized an explanation for what Smith experienced as a voice from the spirit world, he does not see his explanation as changing the affective character of her experience. For Flournoy, Smith must have already known where the order was and forgotten it. However, he attributes Smith's belief in spirit intervention not to lies, trickery, or a mistake but to her "mediumistic temperament."[331]

Oprah asked Frey: "Why did you lie? Why did you have to lie about the time you spent in jail? Why did you do that?" He responded:

> I think one of the coping mechanisms I developed was sort of this image of myself that was greater, probably, than—not probably—that was greater than what I actually was. In order to get through the experience of the addiction, I thought of myself as being tougher than I was and badder than I was—and it helped me cope. When I was writing the book ... instead of being as introspective as I should have been, I clung to that image.[332]

In the interview with King, he seemed to cling to the same image. In response to the question of why he didn't seek out a publisher willing to sell his book as fiction, Frey answered: "They might have, but they didn't. But they didn't. To be honest, I still stand by the book as being the essential truth of my life. I'll stand by that idea until the day I die."

Flournoy describes making an attempt at explaining the concept of "subliminal consciousness" to Smith. "We parted good friends, but the conversation left me with a very

---

[329] Flournoy, Cifali, and Shamdasani, *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*, 243.
[330] Ibid., 244.
[331] Ibid., 244.
[332] Harpo Productions, "Oprah's Questions for James."

clear impression of the complete uselessness of my efforts to make Mlle Smith share my conceptions of the subliminal consciousness. But this, however, neither surprised nor grieves me, since from her point of view it is perhaps better that she thus believes."[333] An aspect of cryptomnesia is that it erases something else. Cryptomnesia as unconscious plagiarism is an excuse. Cryptomnesia as the elaboration of something forgotten is the exchange of something that is not *felt* psychically for something that *is*.[334]

Nietzsche

Cryptomnesia is, accurately, at its foundations not simply—or even at all—a problem of plagiarism. However, the connection between cryptomnesia and the narrower phenomenon of unconscious plagiarism has been so immediate and persistent, that it would also be inaccurate to continue to say that this is what cryptomnesia is not. Frey's million little lies, taken as the best, most direct expression of his experience, better than the truth, may be a more accurate example of cryptomnesia than Kaavya Viswanathan's borrowings from Megan McCafferty and others. However, cryptomnesia is unalterably a part of the response to what Viswanathan did.

Flournoy coins the term cryptomnesia in 1899. We do not know when he first thought of it or used it, written or spoken. The trajectory of his relationship with Smith after the publication of the book suggests that he never used the word in her presence or successfully explained to her what he thought it might mean. In either case, he coined it, and his name is

---

[333] Ibid., 167.

[334] In his introduction to the 1994 translation of *From India to the Planet Mars*, Sonu Shamdasani points out that Flournoy published *From India to the Planet Mars* in the period in between Freud's private rethinking of the seduction theory and the role of fantasy and his development of the Oedipus complex. Following this shift, Freud's system was arguably more dedicated to placing imagined and elaborated memories firmly in the realm or fantasy.

used to coin it again and again, as it gathers different forms of mattering into its meaning.

In his essay "On Truth and Lying in an Extra-moral Sense," Nietzsche considers how concepts come into existence and how they fade. "Truths are illusions about which it has been forgotten that they are illusions [. . .] coins which have lost their image and now can be used only as metal, and no longer as coins."[335] To borrow Ronell's methodology again, I am struck by the way that the word "coin" plays into the naming of concepts. Flournoy coins the term cryptomnesia, his colleague Myers coins the term telepathy. Nietzsche seems to be saying that, for a while, the stuff that is tied up in these terms post-naming could be said to be used only as coin—something solid, like Flournoy's diagnosis of Smith. The strangeness of concepts pre-existing themselves—as automatons, sheep, telephones, fairy stories—is a kind of currency that loses its effectiveness with the naming of a concept. The history of cryptomnesia before it exists as a concept might be all the more difficult to uncover, because even when cryptomnesia is named, it operates by hiding. Cryptomnesia as an apparatus, rather than an accusation or diagnosis, operates both as the metal of lost, transfigured, alien, forgotten memories and of a way of coining them over again into themselves.

Another First for Oprah

Part of what made Oprah's show so successful during its run is that she was very good at explaining to her audience what was new, shocking, or surprising about each episode. *Time* magazine borrows that same tactic in their headline for a 2009 article about the

[335] Friedrich Nietzsche, "On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense." in *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, ed. Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, and David J. Parent (New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1989), 250.

Frey controversy: "World's Most Shocking Apology."[336] The article reveals the circumstances surrounding Oprah's decision to apologize to Frey: "she told him that she'd been meditating and suddenly realized that part of her reaction to his mendacity stemmed from her personally feeling duped and betrayed [. . .] she said 'I feel I owe you an apology.'"[337]

Like Flournoy, Oprah regretted what her revelations about Frey's cryptomnesia had revealed. She recognized her own role in the process and apologized. A network of observers and phenomena—not just Frey, but Melissa, his possibly imaginary girlfriend, Lilly, the dentist who (maybe didn't really) perform surgery without Novocain, the handful of readers who chose to submit their declarations to the class action suit and collect their money back, the pieces of books they sent away to do it, Oprah, the Harpo employees who cried over Frey's book, the survivors who felt it helped put them back together, the train, "The Smoking Gun". Also, Kaavya Viswanathan. Opal Mehta. And the bewildered séance participant in 1920 who tries to corroborate a book test and cannot find anything indicative of shoes.

Cryptomnesia

The differences between Frey's and Viswanathan's cryptomnesia, and in their treatments in the media and their successes in the publishing industry, underscore the differences Flournoy's hidden memory cryptomnesia and contemporary notions of unconscious plagiarism. With plagiarism the focus is on congruence, similarity, and the consequences—evidentiary, financial, artistic—of these qualities. In Flournoy's version of

---

[336] Luscombe, "World's Most Shocking Apology: Oprah to James Frey."
[337] Ibid.

cryptomnesia, the content of material as it reappears in cryptomnesia is not the same as when it was first encountered. Showing the similarities between the two is possible proof of a connection between them, but the connection is one where what is different contains an affective resonance that has developed its own enduring qualities, its own histories. The difficulty is not only saying whether these histories, these objects that persist, are original or true. The difficulty that has been consistently skipped over by unconscious plagiarism is in saying whether these histories can be linked to the hidden memories that preceded them and what the link does. Rather than saying whether one or the other or both parts of a cryptomnesia are true or legitimate, the question is about what they mean, how they matter together, what apparatus they employ and are employed by.

Conclusion

Stolen Affects

It wasn't as surprising as it should be that the computer could invent the cat. In June of 2012, Google's Google X research lab and Stanford University announced that a series of computers connected to create a "neural network" that appeared able to "learn" certain objects based on context. One of these objects was a cat, which the computer was able to name as such despite the fact that the researchers never actually told it what a cat was. The images that the computer uses to make its identifications are black and white and blurry. They look incredibly similar to the smudged, eerie spirit photographs of Spiritualism. The *New York Times* report on the computer's ability to identify the cat calls the images "dreamlike." From the June 25th article:

> Despite their success, the Google researchers remained cautious about whether they had hit upon the holy grail of machines that can teach themselves.
>
> "It'd be fantastic if it turns out that all we need to do is take current algorithms and run them bigger, but my gut feeling is that we still don't quite have the right algorithm yet," said Dr. Ng.[338]

The cat does not quite "feel" original yet. I would argue that the cat is, potentially, cryptomnesia coming into being.

Again.

Meanwhile, in another Google lab, books are being scanned. Despite a series of court battles, the Google Books digitization project continues scanning books to make them available as searchable, digital editions through the Google Books search engine.

---

[338] John Markoff, "In a Big Network of Computers, Evidence of Machine Learning," *The New York Times*, June 25, 2012, sec. Technology, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/26/technology/in-a-big-network-of-computers-evidence-of-machine-learning.html (accessed April 1, 2013).

The scanner sometimes manages to capture one elaborative consequence of this "coming into being" in digital form. A search for "Google Book Fingers" uncovers a slew of images of disembodied fingers and hands captured inadvertently by the scanner. Red nails, rings, alien-looking pink finger cots to protect fingers from pages, and pages from oily fingers. Occasionally, other vestiges emerge—stamps from library editions, dog-eared corners, creases or pages set at crooked angles. Myer's *Human Personality* has appeared in multiple editions since it was first published in 1903. In a 1918 edition that I retrieved from Google Books and consulted for use in the introduction, a scan of the title page shows a binder clip lying across the bottom edge. These books are constructed and solid. Sufficient evidence. Consulting them in digital form provides stark and strange evidence of their material nature, just as Smith's cryptomnesia suggests the material nature of her relationships and memories. These images and objects and ideas are something coming into being.

Again.

In my dissertation, I have considered how cryptomnesia has come to be narrowly applied only to cases of accidental plagiarism in literature rather than in a broader sense that includes hidden memories of objects, experiences and people as well as of literary texts. In chapter one, I show what this more expansive definition of cryptomnesia could encompass—spirits, aliens, childhood memories—while also illustrating the attenuation of the term towards "only plagiarism" that begins to occur practically before it is established as a concept. In the second chapter, I connect these competing trajectories of cryptomnesia's meaning to the process of defining truth in psychoanalysis and psychology, especially in regard to troubling inconsistencies in outwardly concrete objects and ideas. In the third chapter, I connect these differing narratives of cryptomnesia to two specific stories of disputed literary works. This conclusion picks up on questions of agency, ability, and access

to ideas, objects, and even to the diagnosis of cryptomnesia itself that are also referenced in the first chapter. These chapters show that the persistence of cryptomnesia might be evidence for an equally persistent uncertainty about the status of objects in the world and the way that memory mediates our ability to understand and manipulate them.

Plagiarism, Intent, and the Law

The playfulness and strangeness of some of the early examples of cryptomnesia is largely absent when it is invoked in court cases, instances of literary "theft" or in laboratory exercises. The main concern is whether plagiarism can occur without malicious intent and, if so, how the occurrence of inadvertent plagiarism can be mitigated. In this dissertation, my focus is on whether cryptomnesia can be employed as a method for understanding the way that people respond to ideas, objects and people in the world. The dissertation does not substantially engage legal definitions of plagiarism or literary theft. This is in large part because the vast amount of work that has already been done on intellectual property, copyright, and patent law tends to respond to cryptomnesia as "only" plagiarism. A future direction for this project involves considering the influence of legal precedents on the development of cryptomnesia and, in turn, considering whether cryptomnesia might offer new ways of thinking about controversies over copyright and fair use.

The Book and Cryptomnesia

In summarizing the many stories about cryptomnesia contained in the dissertation, I would argue that tracing the presence of the book in various iterations offers a possible way of gathering together. In the first chapter, forgotten books are sought in their physical forms, and even used as criteria for book tests. In these stories, the book is a certain, solid object,

where ideas are understood to be captured in a form suitable for measuring them against themselves—how far is Smith's version of India from the printed version? How and when did Keller encounter "The Frost Fairies?" The book, solid, even read aloud, is the most sought-after evidence of truth. Does cryptomnesia endanger the book? When books contain unexpected revelations of plagiarism or fabrication, cryptomnesia can provide a narrative of what occurred and how it fits. When books fail to contain expected information, such as exact evidence of Smith's memories of India, cryptomnesia can help to explain the space between the written word and the reported, lived experience to which it connects. Cryptomnesia contains books when books fail to contain themselves.

A future direction of this project is to consider the implications of cryptomnesia for changes in the publishing industry, especially with regard to e-books and other new formats for book distribution. Another potential contribution would be to consider how cryptomnesia might help to track changing expectations of originality and truth in books. Accusations of plagiarism that are tempered or explained by cryptomnesia might be more likely to involve ideas that are in the process of becoming widely known and more likely to be encompassed by a process of memory such as cryptomnesia. Cryptomnesia also has important implications for authors, helping to indicate a possible process through which creative work is realized.

Cryptomnesia and Affect

Most immediately, I plan to develop my own work with cryptomnesia in new directions by placing cryptomnesia into context with the emergence of affect theory, beginning with psychoanalytic theories of affect in the work of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Melanie Klein and moving towards more recent work in affect theory by Brian Massumi,

Eve Sedgwick, and Silvan Tomkins. I have focused in the dissertation in showing some possible reasons for an apparent discomfort with the possibility that cryptomnesia shows evidence of a common unconscious memory phenomenon. I would argue that cryptomnesia also appears to mark instances where seemingly similar treatments of the same material occupy unexpectedly dissimilar affective registers. Rather than reading cryptomnesia solely as unconscious plagiarism, I will argue that understanding cryptomnesia in affective context suggests that unconscious plagiarism has come to be used to mark a form of affective discontinuity that is difficult to access or describe. Returning to the broad, historical definition of cryptomnesia would help to frame this discontinuity rather than to criminalize it only as a stolen or plagiarized form of experience.

Understanding cryptomnesia in this more expansive sense is particularly important because of the power dynamics that exist between those who experience cryptomnesia and those who identify and often condemn it. From its earliest form in the work of Flournoy, cryptomnesia has often been identified by men observing women. In his first publication on cryptomnesia, Flournoy hints at the way in which the dynamic of observation is actually one of interaction, involving the co-creation of disparate forms of desire. Flournoy writes about his own desire to confine and explain the psychical world. Hélene Smith incorporates Flournoy into her own experience even as he seeks to explain it away, making Flournoy a character in her mediumistic "romances." In each of the case studies I examine, the role of this emotional and sometimes erotic interchange is mediated by the identification of an original source and/or the decision over which account of an experience is original and which is evidence of cryptomnesia. I argue that cryptomnesia must be viewed as the inextricable relation between two or more seemingly similar ideas, objects, or experiences rather than a way of parsing out originals and their reproductions.

An affective account of cryptomensia would also rely on objects to organize accounts of cryptomnesia. Mimetic objects in particular play an important role in defining affective experiences of information. From the telegraph to the computer, the object components of modern information systems act as a frame for understanding the anxieties about authorship, originality, and authenticity that animate investigations of cryptomnesia and other forms of reproduction. Continuing to attend to the presence of the book, the house, the telephone—as well as other forgotten objects implicated in cryptomnesia—will show that cryptomnesia with its equal accounts of objects and experiences in their expected and unexpected iterations—might help to account for the material aspects of forgetting. By highlighting the material nature of cryptomnesia, I will show that the outwardly similar experiences connected as cryptomnesia have important differences in an affective and a material sense. Drawing on feminist new materialism, such as the work of Karen Barad and Susan Oyama, I will argue that concepts and experiences themselves are always both material and affective, subject to the same kind of co-creation of existence, experience, and desire that cryptomnesia makes intelligible.

What is Cryptomnesia?

Cryptomnesia provides a concise explanation for a complicated process. The word itself is a useful touchstone for discussing its various applications and permutations from 1899 to now. Cryptomnesia acts as a point of contact to bring together everything from Spiritualist practice to book packagers, from the psychoanalyst's couch to Oprah's couch. Cryptomnesia is useful. Even when the word itself is not immediately applied to an instance of forgotten or borrowed memory, its eventual descriptive use makes sense. The controversy over cryptomnesia involves the question of whether forgetting has actually occurred. The

term itself is not controversial—it describes a version of events. In Jonathon Lethem's essay, referenced in chapter three, he introduces the term as follows: "The history of literature is not without examples of this phenomenon, called cryptomnesia."[339]

It is hard to imagine another common currency of Spiritualist practice, the spirits themselves, getting such an unworried, unequivocal introduction. An essayist writing "The history of literature is not without examples of this phenomenon, called ghosts," had better be quick with a defense of their certainty, or at least with a punch line. Cryptomnesia, by contrast, is scientifically defensible, acceptable, solid. It is an uncommon term with an easily understandable, broadly applicable meaning. Therefore, it's easy to lose track of an important aspect of cryptomnesia's long history as an obscure explanation for a frequently occurring process: cryptomnesia does not actually work all that well. Following the publication and popularity of *From India to the Planet Mars*, Flournoy and others tried to duplicate his success in tracing the origins of paranormal phenomena, linking supernatural events to mundane memories or experiences. Few succeeded, but cryptomnesia persisted. Cryptomnesia, like the telephone, brings itself into being.

Cryptomnesia is messy. The memories that allegedly reappear prove difficult to find in their original iterations. Plagiarized stories outpace the originals in fame and profit. Ideas appear to occur to lots of people at the same time. As in the case of addicts—recovered, recovering, current—and their response to James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces*, made up stories are hailed as uniquely, perfectly representative of personal experience.

I argue that the broad range of stories about cryptomnesia contained in this dissertation suggest that cryptomnesia is effective in large part because of its messiness. Cryptomnesia acts as a container without limiting what something is or what it can become.

---

[339] Lethem, *The Ecstasy of Influence*.

Cryptomnesia is a method and a phenomenon, a way of investigating and something to investigate. The trajectory of cryptomnesia over time toward becoming more and more concrete, object-like, and descriptive is reflective of how the fate of the term also contains and reflects shifting expectations of scientific evidence. Distinguishing cryptomnesiac fictions from the scientifically definable truth of remembered, "actual" experiences is acceptable within a fairly dominant scientific system. Cryptomnesia works well as a focus of a neatly organized experimental psychology paper. However, it also "works" as a way of exploring Karen Barad's agential realism, referenced in chapter one, or Susan Oyama's "impossible houses," explored in chapter two. The ability of cryptomnesia to operate as object and to object-ify makes it uniquely suited to speak to a wide range of theories and practices without foreclosing them.

Because cryptomnesia explains the unexpected iterations of memories, tracing the history of the term requires allowing lots of strange things into the mix. Although the chapters of the dissertation move chronologically, they cover broad ground—and leave other areas unexplored. Despite the fact that the dissertation relies on primary sources in French and German, I have not conducted a linguistic exploration—although I have searched non-English sources for substantial mentions of cryptomnesia. Rather than an omission, I would argue that this focus on the reception of cryptomnesia in sources available in English or English translation is appropriate for searching for ideas as cryptomnesia suggests they will be found. Cryptomnesia does not respect boundaries of authorship and language. Cryptomnesia is ideas appearing again and again until they are accessible, translatable—emotionally, physically. My dissertation does take seriously the boundary of when cryptomnesia emerges—Europe in the late 19th century. The trajectory of cryptomnesia, especially in regard to controversy in the dominant English-language

publishing industry, reflects the movement of ideas across language boundaries, especially ideas that act as scientific tools, as cryptomnesia does. These problems of translation are central to understanding how cryptomnesia intervenes in traditional academic discourse, suggesting that ideas in imperfect, unattributed, or otherwise altered or inaccessible forms might be brought to bear on knowledge production through the process of cryptomnesia.

Cryptomnesia and Dissertations

It is appropriate that this dissertation is, in part, a search for "the book" and what it means. The act of writing the dissertation is itself often described as "not a book" and, also, moving towards what will eventually be a book. Taking that space seriously, I would argue that the dissertation is the perfect medium for beginning a unique discussion of cryptomnesia as both an active concept and a history of meaning. Some of the most useful resources included in this dissertation come from books that were derived from dissertations and even from the dissertations themselves—notably, Carl Jung's "On the Psychology of Occult Phenomena" and the many dissertations on cryptomnesia in experimental psychology from students who worked in the laboratory of Alan S. Brown at Southern Methodist University.

Part of the story of this dissertation is that it seeks to understand what happens to people who write about things for the first time. Cryptomnesia happens to people who are learning how systems work or how ideas already operate in the world. The gap in previous studies of cryptomnesia is their focus on the assumption that this is a type of interaction with ideas that is less correct or complete than work that fully acknowledges, understands, and takes for granted as permanent its hidden influence. Helen Keller's potential cryptomnesia occurred at the age of eleven, her first published piece of fiction. Both Kaavya

Viswanathan and James Frey were first-time authors. At least, the books that made them famous, and then infamous, were their first published book-length works. Hélène Smith, still employed in her "day job" as a shop assistant, still refusing to take money for participation in her séances, could be considered a "beginning medium" at the time that her allegedly cryptomnesiac visions occurred. Even the freshman plagiarists, so central to the discussions of how and why plagiarism occurs in the third chapter, are probably invoked in discussions of plagiarism, in part, because as beginners, they are more likely to commit plagiarism. Or, more likely to get caught. Or, perhaps, more acceptable as perpetrators than people who should know better.

Bibliography

Anonymous. "Recent Experiments in Crystal-Vision." *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*. Vol. V. Society for Psychical Research., 1889.

Barad, Karen. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007.

Bastone, William, and Barbara Glauber. *Smoking Gun: A Dossier Of Secret, Surprising, And Salacious Documents Form The Files Of The Smokinggun.com*. Boston: Little, Brown, 2001.

Beach, Steven R. H., and Frank D. Fincham. "Marital Therapy and Social Psychology: Will We Choose Explicit Partnership or Cryptomnesia?" In *Applied Social Psychology.*, edited by Marilynn B. Brewer and Miles Hewstone, 50–78. *Perspectives on Social Psychology*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004.

Bem, Daryl J. "Feeling the Future: Experimental Evidence for Anomalous Retroactive Influences on Cognition and Affect." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 100, no. 3 (March 2011): 407–425.

Bernstein, Morey. *The Search for Bridey Murphy*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1956.

Bhayani, Paras D., and David Zhou. "'Opal' Similar to More Books." *The Harvard Crimson*, May 2, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/2/opal-similar-to-more-books-kaavya/, accessed April 1, 2013.

Blum, Susan D. "Academic Integrity and Student Plagiarism: a Question of Education, Not Ethics." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 20, 2009, sec. Commentary. http://chronicle.com/article/Academic-IntegrityStud/32323/, accessed April 5, 2013.

Boesky, Amy. "The Ghost Writes Back." *Kenyon Review Online* Winter 2013.

http://www.kenyonreview.org/kr-online-issue/2013-winter/selections/amy-boesky-656342/, accessed March 2, 2013.

Börne, Ludwig. "How to Become an Original Writer in Three Days." Translated by Leland de la Durante. *Harvard Review* 31 (n.d.): 63–70.

Bowers, Kenneth S., and Ernest R. Hilgard. "Some complexities in understanding memory." In *Hypnosis and Memory: Integrative Summary and Future Directions.*, edited by Helen M. Pettinati, 3–18. New York: Guilford Press, 1988.

Brower, M. Brady. *Unruly Spirits*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010.

Brown, Alan S. *The Déjà Vu Experience*. New York: Psychology Press, 2004.

Brown, Alan S., and Hildy E. Halliday. "Cryptomnesia and source memory difficulties." *The American Journal of Psychology* 104, no. 4 (1991): 475–490.

Brown, Alan S., and Dana R. Murphy. "Cryptomnesia: Delineating inadvertent plagiarism." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 15, no. 3 (1989): 432–442.

Butera, Fabrizio, and John M. Levine, eds. *Coping with Minority Status: Responses to Exclusion and Inclusion*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Canby, Margaret T. *Birdie and His Fairy Friends: A Book for Little Children*. Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1874.

Caplan, Harry. "Cicero: Ad Herennium." *Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard UP* (1952).

CNN. "Interview with James Frey," *Larry King Live*, January 11, 2006. http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0601/11/lkl.01.html, accessed February 1, 2012.

Cohen, Paula Marantz. "Creative Plagiarism." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 22, 2012. http://chronicle.com/article/Creative-Plagiarism/135158/, accessed April 1,

2013.

Cracked.com. *You Might Be a Zombie and Other Bad News: Shocking but Utterly True Facts*. New York: Plume, 2010.

Crimson Staff. "'Opal Mehta' Gone for Good; Contract Cancelled." *The Harvard Crimson*, May 2, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/2/opal-mehta-gone-for-good-contract/, accessed April 2, 2013.

———. "Trying Opal at Harvard?" *The Harvard Crimson*, May 4, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/5/4/trying-opal-at-harvard-perhaps-one/, accessed March 31, 2013.Defeldre, Anne-Catherine. "Inadvertent Plagiarism in Everyday Life." *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 19, no. 8 (December 2005): 1033–1040.

Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Translated by Eric Prenowitz. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1998.

———. *Limited Inc*. Edited by Gerald Graff. Translated by Jeffrey Mehlman and Samuel Weber. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.

Dudukovich, Nicole. "Are All Memoirs Fiction?" *Psychology Today*, June 17, 2008. http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/remember-the-alamo/200806/are-all-memoirs-fiction, accessed April 3, 2013.

Ebbinghaus, Hermann. *Memory: a Contribution to Experimental Psychology*. New York: Dover Publications, 1964.

Ellenberger, Henri F. *The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry*. New York: Basic Books, 1970.

Flournoy, Théodore. *Des Indes à la planète Mars: étude sur un cas de somnambulisme avec glossolalie*. Geneva: Slatkine, 1899.

———. *From India to the planet Mars: a Study of a Case of Somnambulism.* Translated by Daniel

B. Vermilye. New York: Cosmino, 2007.

Flournoy, Théodore, Mireille Cifali, and Sonu Shamdasani. *From India to the Planet Mars: A Case of Multiple Personality With Imaginary Languages*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Foer, Joshua. "Kaavya Syndrome." *Slate*, April 27, 2006. http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science/2006/04/kaavya_syndrome.html, accessed April 2, 2013.

Freud, Sigmund. "A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume XVIII (1920-1922): Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Group Psychology and Other Works, by Sigmund Freud, James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey, and Alan Tyson, 1-283. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955.

Freud, Sigmund, and Josef Breuer. *Studies on Hysteria: 1893-1895*. In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Volume II (1893-1895): Studies on Hysteria, by Sigmund Freud, James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey, and Alan Tyson. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955.

Freud, Sigmund, and C. G. Jung. *The Freud/Jung Letters*. Edited by William McGuire. Abridged. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Freud, Sigmund, Philip Rieff, and Wilhelm Jensen. *Delusion and dream and other essays*. http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/5191688.html, 1956.

Frey, James. *The Final Testament of the Holy Bible*. New York: Gagosian Gallery, 2011.

Frey, James. *A Million Little Pieces*. New York: Doubleday, 2005.

Gabriel, Trip. "Lines on Plagiarism Blur for Students in the Digital Age." *The New York Times*, August 1, 2010. http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/02/education/02cheat.

html, accessed February 1, 2012.

Gilman, Sander L. *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin de Siècle*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Gilmore, Leigh. "American Neoconfessional: Memoir, Self-Help, and Redemption on Oprah's Couch." *Biography* 33, no. 4 (2010): 657–679.

Gluck, Mark A., Eduardo Mercado, and Catherine E. Myers. *Learning and Memory: From Brain to Behavior*. New York: Macmillan, 2007.

Goodwin, Liz C. "Appropriating Authority." *The Harvard Book Review* 7, no. 2 (2006). http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~hbr/issues/7.2winter06/articles/memoirs.shtml, accessed April 1, 2013.

Gross, Terry. "Novelist Jonathan Franzen." *NPR.org*. October 15, 2001. http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php, accessed March 26, 2013.

Groth, Helen. *Victorian Photography and Literary Nostalgia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Hammond, Mary. *Reading, Publishing And the Formation of Literary Taste in England 1880–1914*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006.

Harpo Productions. "Oprah's Questions for James - Oprah.com." *Oprah.com*. n.d. http://www.oprah.com/oprahshow/Oprahs-Questions-for-James, accessed February 2, 2012.

———. "Oprah Winfrey's Official Website - Live Your Best Life - Oprah.com." *Oprah.com*. n.d. http://www.oprah.com/index.html (accessed February 10, 2012).

Helen Keller Archives. American Foundation for the Blind. New York, NY.

Houdini, Harry. *A Magician Among the Spirits*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Jacoby, Larry L., Colleen M. Kelley, and Jane Dywan. "Memory attributions." In *Varieties of*

Memory and Consciousness: Essays in Honour of Endel Tulving., edited by Henry L. Roediger and Fergus I. M. Craik, 391–422. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, 1989.

James, M. R. *The Haunted Doll's House*. LitGothic, 2004. http://www.litgothic.com/Texts/james_haunted_dolls_house.pdf, accessed April 1, 2013.

Johns, Adrian. *The nature of the book print and knowledge in the making*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Johnson, Marcia K., Shahin Hashtroudi, and D. Stephen Lindsay. "Source monitoring." *Psychological Bulletin* 114, no. 1 (1993): 3–28.

Jung, C. G. *Psychiatric studies*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1957.

———. *Man and His Symbols*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1983.

Juskalian, Russ. "You Didn't Plagiarize, Your Unconscious Did." *Newsweek Magazine*, July 6, 2009, http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2009/07/06/you-didn-t-plagiarize-your-unconscious-did.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Kantowitz, Barry H., Henry L. Roediger, and David G. Elmes. *Experimental Psychology: Understanding Psychological Research*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2005.

Karmiloff-Smith, Annette. "Beyond modularity: Innate constraints and developmental change." In *The Epigenesis of Mind: Essays on Biology and Cognition.*, edited by Susan Carey and Rochel Gelman, 171–197. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1991.

Keene, Carolyn. *The Secret of the Old Clock*. New York: Penguin, 1987.

Keller, Helen, and Annie Sullivan. *The Story of My Life: with her letters (1887-1901) and a supplementary account of her education, including passages from the reports and letters of her teacher,*

Anne Mansfield Sullivan. New York: Doubleday, Page, 1921.

Kerr, John. "The Devil's Elixirs, Jung's 'theology,' and the dissolution of Freud's "poisoning complex." *Psychoanalytic Review* 75, no. 1 (1988): 1–33.

Kirkpatrick, David D. "Winfrey Rescinds Offer to Author for Guest Appearance." *The New York Times,* October 24, 2001. https://www.nytimes.com/2001/10/24/business/winfrey-rescinds-offer-to-author-for-guest-appearance.html?src=pm, accessed April 1, 2013.

Kruskal, William, and Frederick Mosteller. "Representative Sampling, I: Non-Scientific Literature." *International Statistical Review / Revue Internationale de Statistique* 47, no. 1 (1979): 13.

Lash, Joseph P. *Helen and teacher: the story of Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan Macy*. New York: Addison-Wesley, 1980.

Lattman, Peter. "The Unbelievable 'A Million Little Pieces' Settlement." *Wall Street Jounal*, October 24, 2006. http://blogs.wsj.com/law/2006/09/07/the-unbelievable-a-million-little-pieces-settlement/, accessed April 1, 2013.

Lethem, Jonathan. *The Ecstasy of Influence*. New York: Vintage, 2011.

Loftus, Elizabeth F., and Daniel M Bernstein. "Rich False Memories: The Royal Road to Success." In *Experimental Cognitive Psychology and Its Applications*., edited by Alice F. Healy, 101–113. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2005.

Luscombe, Belinda. "World's Most Shocking Apology: Oprah to James Frey." *Time.com*, May 13, 2009. http://www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,1897924,00.html, accessed April 1, 2012.

Maar, Michael, and Perry Anderson. *The Two Lolitas*. London: Verso, 2005.

Mackenzie, Catherine Dunlop. *Alexander Graham Bell: the man who contracted space*. Boston:

Grosset and Dunlap, 1928.

Macrae, C. Neil, Galen V. Bodenhausen, and Guglielmo Calvini. "Contexts of cryptomnesia: May the source be with you." *Social Cognition* 17, no. 3 (1999): 273–297.

Markoff, John. "In a Big Network of Computers, Evidence of Machine Learning." *The New York Times*, June 25, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/26/technology/in-a-big-network-of-computers-evidence-of-machine-learning.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Marsh, Richard L., and Gordon H. Bower. "Eliciting cryptomnesia: Unconscious plagiarism in a puzzle task." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 19, no. 3 (1993): 673–688.

McCabe, David P., Anderson D. Smith, and Colleen M. Parks. "Inadvertent plagiarism in young and older adults: The role of working memory capacity in reducing memory errors." *Memory & Cognition* 35, no. 2 (2007): 231–241.

Mortazavi, Sarah. "Sophomore's Book Is Headed to Hollywood." *The Harvard Crimson*, February 2, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/2/17/sophomores-book-is-headed-to-hollywood/#, accessed April 1, 2013.

Mouth, Poddy. "If only Kaavya Viswanathan were more like James Frey." *Pod-dy Mouth*, April 25, 2006. http://girlondemand.blogspot.com/2006/04/if-only-kaavya-viswanathan-were-more.html, accessed September 19, 2011.

Mozes, Suzanne. "James Frey's Fiction Factory." *NYMag.com*, November 12, 2010. http://nymag.com/arts/books/features/69474/, accessed January 25, 2012.

Myers, F. W. H., L. H. Myers, and Silvia Myers Blennerhassett. *Human personality and its survival of bodily death*. London: Longmans, Green, 1919.

Myers, Steve. "The cryptomnesic origins of Jung's dream of the multi-storeyed house." *The*

Journal of Analytical Psychology 54, no. 4 (2009): 513–531.

Kapur, Narinder, Alvaro Pascual-Leone, and Vilayanur Ramachandran. *The Paradoxical Brain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Nash, Ilana. "Teenage Detectives and Teenage Delinquents." In *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, edited by Catherine Ross Nickerson, 72–85. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. "On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense." In *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, edited by Sander L. Gilman, Carole Blair, and David J. Parent, 246–257. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Oyama, Susan. *The Ontogeny of Information: Developmental Systems and Evolution*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000.

Pivetta, Christine Elizabeth. "A Process-dissociation Approach to Cryptomnesia: On what Basis Do Individuals Inadvertently Plagiarize?" MA Thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1994.

Posner, Richard A. *The Little Book of Plagiarism*. New York: Pantheon, 2007.

Preston, Jesse, and Daniel M. Wegner. "The Eureka Error: Inadvertent plagiarism by misattributions of effort." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no. 4 (2007): 575–584.

psycofwriting. "Cryptomnesia." *The Psychology of Writing, Reading, and the Creative Process*. July 18, 2009. http://psychofwriting.wordpress.com/2009/07/18/cryptomnesia/, accessed April 1, 2013.

Ransom, Robert. *Computers and Embryos: Models in Developmental Biology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1981.

Rich, Motoko, and Dinitia Smith. "First, Plot and Character. Then, Find an Author." *The New York Times*, April 27, 2006. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/27/books/27pack.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Ronell, Avital. *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.

Royal Collection, The. *Queen Mary's Dolls' House*. http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/windsorcastle/what-to-see-and-do/queen-marys-dolls-house, n.d., accessed April 1, 2013.

Schacter, Daniel L. *The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002.

Shakow, David. "Hermann Ebbinghaus." *The American Journal of Psychology* 42 (1930): 505–518.

Shamdasani, Sonu. "Encountering Hélène ." Introduction to *From India to the Planet Mars: a Case of Multiple Personality with Imaginary Languages*, by Théodore Flournoy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

———. "Liber Novus: The 'Red Book' of C.G. Jung by Sonu Shamdasani." In *The Red Book*, edited by Sonu Shamdasani, translated by Sonu Shamdasani, Mark Kyburz, and John Peck. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2009.

Schiebinger, Londa. *Nature's Body: Gender in the Making of Modern Science*. New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

Smith, Dinitia. "A 'How to Get Into College by Really, Really Trying' Novel." *The New York Times*, April 6, 2006. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/06/books/06opal.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Society for Psychical Research Manuscript Collection. Special Collections. Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, England.

Soli, Kristin Michele. "Cryptomnesia and the visual task." PhD diss., 1993.

Stark, Louisa-Jayne, and Timothy J. Perfect. "Elaboration Inflation: How Your Ideas

Become Mine." *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 20, no. 5 (2006): 641–648.

Stark, Louisa-Jayne, Timothy J. Perfect, and Stephen E. Newstead. "When elaboration leads to appropriation: Unconscious plagiarism in a creative task." *Memory* 13, no. 6 (2005): 561–573.

Stevenson, Ian. *20 Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1980.

———. *Children Who Remember Previous Lives: A Question of Reincarnation*. North Carolina: McFarland, 2001.

———. "Cryptomnesia and Parapsychology." *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research* 52, no. 793 (February 1983): 1–30.

———. *European Cases of the Reincarnation Type*. North Carolina: McFarland, 2008.

Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press Books, 1993.

Taylor, F. Kräupl. "Cryptomnesia and Plagiarism." *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 111, no. 480 (1965): 1111–1118.

Thurschwell, Pamela. *Literature, Technology and Magical Thinking, 1880-1920*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Toor, Rachel. "Unconscious Plagiarism." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 20, 2011, sec. Advice. http://chronicle.com/article/Unconscious-Plagiarism/127928/, accessed April 1, 2013.

Torres, Marisela, and Miguel Roig. "The Cloze Procedure as a Test of Plagiarism: The Influence of Text Readability." *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied* 139, no. 3 (2005): 221–231.

Twain, Mark. *The Letters of Mark Twain*. Vol. 5 of *The Letters of Mark Twain*. Fairfield, IA: 1st

World Publishing, 2004.

Viswanathan, Kaavya. *How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life*. Boston: Little, Brown, 2006.

Walton, Brian. "5 Ways Your Brain Is Messing With Your Head." *Cracked.com*, March 2, 2009. http://www.cracked.com/article_17103_5-ways-your-brain-messing-with-your-head.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Weiner, Juli. "The Corrections: Oprah and Jonathan Franzen Revisit Feud." *Vanity Fair*, December 7, 2010. http://www.vanityfair.com/online/daily/2010/12/the-corrections-oprah-and-jonathan-franzen-revisit-feud, accessed April 1, 2013.

Weiten, Wayne. *Psychology: Themes and Variations*. Belmont: Cengage Learning, 2008.

Winter, Alison. *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2000.

Wyatt, Edward. "Fact or Fiction, It's His Story." *The New York Times*, January 11, 2006, sec. Books. http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/11/books/11memo.html, accessed April 1, 2013.

Yates, Frances A. *The Art Of Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

Zhou, David. "'Mehta'-Morphosis." *The Harvard Crimson*, June 7, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/6/7/mehta-morphosis-although-her-plagiarism-plagued-novel-how/, accessed April 1, 2013.

———. "Publisher Recalls Viswanathan's Novel." *The Harvard Crimson*, April 27, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/27/publisher-recalls-viswanathans-novel-p-alignleftfour/, accessed April 1, 2013.

———. "Sophomore's New Book Contains Passages Strikingly Similar to 2001 Novel." *The Harvard Crimson*, April 23, 2006. http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/4/23/sophomores-new-book-contains-passages-strikingly/, accessed April 1, 2013.