Prohibited desire may be defined as desire that undoes patriarchy. In the case of Freud’s friend desire for the Italian woman is not prohibited, because to have amorous adventures in foreign parts with foreign females is part of the colonizing enterprises of patriarchy. On the other hand, to desire to have children by this woman, outside the accepted social structures, and, further, to wish that these children would avenge the wrongs perpetrated upon their father because of the ways that he cannot fit in with dominant social norms, is prohibited. To acknowledge illegitimate children is to break the power of the name of the father. I have tried to show how the friend’s ambivalence about being on both sides of respectability and prohibition leads him to verbalize his dilemma by the use of a foreign language. The idea is that repression is what leads to the use of the foreign language but, then, that the foreign language makes possible a slip that redirects discourse from repression to expression. The use of the foreign tongue is originally meant to stave off prohibited desire, but it ends up abetting it. In part this is because to speak a foreign tongue inevitably produces some kind of feminine identification in its speaker. If the speaker’s native tongue is one that is in a position of cultural dominance relative to the foreign tongue being spoken, then he yields linguistic dominance during the time that he uses the foreign tongue, even if he is using it for colonizing purposes. To speak the language of the “weak” is self-feminizing and perverse in the sense of old-fashioned etiologies of homosexuality, which saw the homosexual as a man who made himself womanly in respect to other men. (This may be why the teaching of languages other than English is seen as so insidious by linguistic nationalists in the United States.) If the
speaker's native tongue is in a position of cultural inferiority to the foreign tongue being spoken, that speaker, too, feminizes himself, because to accede to the grammar of the powerful is to submit, and to submit is feminine.

In this scheme language begins to function as a series of Oedipus complexes, which, instead of determining sexuality, determine positions in political hierarchies. Because of this, women who speak as feminists in patriarchal systems are necessarily seen as speaking foreign languages and only confirm their own foreignness (as femininity). I should clarify here by stating that I am referring to what might be called public speaking, or discourse, that which takes place in the political and intellectual marketplace. It is still true that a woman who, as a feminist authority, makes her words public, whether in her native or a foreign tongue, is rare. Most feminist discourses are foreign languages as far as public speaking is concerned, and women who print their words in public find few interlocutors unless they write or talk like the man. In a recent interview Susie Bright, a lesbian cultural analyst, told the commentator Camille Paglia that plenty of feminists were writing things of import that Paglia had no idea about. Paglia's response was, "But they're not making any impact!"—that is, they had not, like Paglia, been on "Donahue" and "Geraldo" and had not sold their books to Vintage. This is not because feminists have no language or because they have had no access to it or even because what they are saying is dull or trite or politically correct. It is because the dominant society cannot understand what we are saying, because it has not learned the languages of feminism, and it has not learned those languages, because to learn them would put it in the uncomfortable position of Freud's friend, that is, one of challenging its own values. In these terms I find the quest for an écriture féminine, a specific form of women's writing, somewhat beside the point. Feminists are already writing and publishing. What is necessary is listeners and readers who have trained themselves to understand these already published words and to enter into a dialogue with them. Of course, to do this is to risk the feminization that I allude to earlier.

Fortunately, dominance is built on a fiction and, as a text, is subject to analysis. Because it is founded in language, it has seams, places where it can be taken apart and reconstituted, and sometimes it shows them. The political utility of being both inside and outside structures of power is that one can work on the seams from both sides, with
some hope that meanings will pass through in both directions and effect some structural change. The seam and the slip have something in common; in English they both can be read as alluding to clothing. Specifically, a slip is a woman’s undergarment, and, not coincidentally, it is an undergarment that breaks down the distinction between underwear and outerwear. To wear a slip is not to be fully dressed, but it is not to be in a complete state of undress either. A woman in a slip is neither public nor private and, thus (between those overdefined boundaries), may be curiously comfortable. But the slip is not seamless; despite its elasticity, it is part of the preparations for putting on or taking off that specifically feminine garment, the skirt. The slip is a stage in the process of putting on or taking off femininity, and here the meaning of the garment and the slip as parapraxis meet. A woman who knows the slip’s seams, that is, where and how it is put together and how it can be taken apart, can use that knowledge to her own advantage. But a man who finds himself in a slip, especially if he is in the company of other men who are not, is in trouble. If he is in a slip, it is because he put it on, as foreign as that may seem to him. To slip is to miss mastery, to lose control, and to reveal the places where one coincides with or identifies with what has been traditionally defined as the feminine. For this reason it should not be surprising to discover that, in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, so many examples of slips involving foreign words and phrases should involve bodies of women that exceed patriarchal control.

In the particular case of the aliquis anecdote it is the female bodily function of menstruation that invades and disrupts the conversation between men. The Italian woman’s periods have stopped. That the friend knows this is an indication that, although their liaison is over, he and the woman are still in communication. Her body is still influencing his language. Evidently, the possibility of conception that her stopped periods indicate was not planned by the couple. The man does not want the woman to have become pregnant, but she may have, anyway. Her body is communicating messages by withholding the fluid—menstrual blood—that would signify that it would not disrupt the man’s life. This foreign woman had been scripted as part of an adventure in traveling, but she was not to be more, not to become legally inscribed, as a wife or mother, in the man’s life. Nevertheless, her female body does not participate in the contracts of the male narrative; it has an insistent story of its own to tell. Because of this
other discourse and its potential ramifications, the men’s conversation is interrupted and redirected.

Women’s sexuality and reproduction exceed the rules of patriarchal narrative. The presence or lack of menstrual blood in this example shows the lack of fluency, in the sense of control over a language, that men may demonstrate when it comes to the significations produced by the female body. Menstrual blood is worse than the subjunctive, the ablative absolute, verbs of direction, the optative—pick your worst grammatical nightmare. It is unpronunciable, unrepeetable, impossible to master—but not because it is difficult or irrational. The problem posed by menstrual blood or its absence is the problem of a gender whose etymology is the female body, but which is not defined by, or exceeds the definitions of, patriarchy. Because it exceeds the dictionary, it trips up the grammar.

The first association that the friend has after he decides to analyze his forgetfulness is “the ridiculous notion of dividing the word up like this: a and liquis (9).” The notion (Einfall, or association) is ridiculous because the form is ungrammatical, meaningless according to the rules of Latin. Only someone capable of misunderstanding Latin can make any sense of it: to such a person it might mean “from or by means of liquid or liquidity,” or at any rate having to do somehow with liquid or the lack of it. It is a bad and barbaric pun that signifies the neither present nor absent menstrual blood.³ The signification of the menstrual blood only becomes a problem for the man because he has risked contact with the female body. He can only get what he wants (pleasure or descendants, or both) if he makes that contact. But to do so is to expose himself to the (for him) unmanageable foreign language of the feminine. Sometimes this contact may result in an outcome that serves patriarchy; other times it will not. When it does not, it will interrupt the discourse of dominance and cause it to change. This is evident in the immediate results of the initial associations. After the friend says “a and liquis,” Freud asks him, “What does that mean?” The friend answers, “I don’t know.” Freud asks him to continue, and the friend says:

“What comes next is Reliquien [relics], liquefying, fluidity, fluid. Have you discovered anything so far?”
“No, not by any means yet. But go on.” (9)
Both the friend and Freud confess ignorance before the ungrammatical notions. The men cannot make meaning from them, because they thwart authoritative quotation and grammatical solutions and insist, instead, upon further, tentative dialogue, interdependent questions and responses, and a process of learning together. Mastery will reassert itself in Freud’s narration of the story, but it is not the informing catalyst for the event’s meaning. One might try to use the dialogue produced by psychoanalytic method to obtain mastery over someone else, but it would seem that one does so at one’s own peril, because the ungrammatical will always exceed and displace the interpretive powers of mastery.

I do not wish to suggest by this that the female body as language is ungrammatical or irrational or any of the other adjectives traditionally used to degrade its meanings. What I am trying to say is that the female body can make the discourses of patriarchy and masculinity ungrammatical, that is, can cause them to err. To err, to wander off the approved path, is, literally, deviant: that which, by definition, does not follow the rules. The desire not to slip is the desire to stay within the rules; fear of slipping is the fear of losing one’s way. But to slip is merely to find another way, or to find oneself on a path that one did not know one was already on. When a person refuses to admit having made a slip, Freudian theory says it is because the slip contains information that the person would consciously prefer to repress. But the fact that the slip has made other information apparent indicates that the person has already erred, somewhere, and, rather than having lost the one and only way, is traveling two ways simultaneously. The alternative meaning of the slip is an argument for psychic richness and flexibility. But it is terrifying because it does not come of conscious choice, challenges unitary authority, and breaks down discourses of univocal power. To accept the possibility of slipping, to slip, and to explore the slip’s meanings is to change epistemologies. It allows for the possibility of knowing and not knowing simultaneously. This position can make for some anxiety. It is how a woman feels when her menstrual period has not come on time and she thinks she might be pregnant, or not.

Is it possible that making a Freudian slip makes a man feel pregnant with unwelcome meanings? Feminized and oversignifying? Three other anecdotes in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life might amplify these questions. They come from the chapter “Childhood and
Screen Memories” (chap. 4), which appeared for the first time in the second (1907) edition of the book, and are the only anecdotes that appear in that chapter. Freud included information on screen memories in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life because both screen memories and the forgetting of names “have to do with mistakes in remembering: what the memory reproduces is not what it should correctly have reproduced, but something else as a substitute” (45).

Two of the three screen memories analyzed in the chapter have to do directly with a little boy’s reaction to his mother’s being with child; the third is less explicitly about a mother’s pregnancy but, nevertheless, helps explain the way that slips narrate themselves over the semiotic field of a woman’s body. None of the three examples in the chapter on screen memories deals with the responses of girl children to their mothers’ pregnancies. I am explicating the representation of the reactions of boy children in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life as a step toward a feminist psychoanalysis of Freudian psychoanalysis. (This book itself might be read as one grown girl child’s response to this and other issues raised by The Psychopathology of Everyday Life.) The order in which I will consider the anecdotes is the reverse of that in which they are presented in Freud’s narration; I will start with the last and end with the first because that order will help show the connotative coherence of the three anecdotes.

The last anecdote in the chapter is an autobiographical one that Freud dates to before he turned three years old:

I saw myself standing in front of a cupboard [Kasten] demanding something and screaming, while my half-brother, my senior by twenty years, held it open. Then suddenly my mother, looking beautiful and slim, walked into the room, as if she had come in from the street. (50)

His briefest explanation of the episode is that he

had missed his mother, and had come to suspect that she was shut up in this wardrobe or cupboard; and it was for this reason that I was demanding that my brother should open the cupboard. When he did what I asked and I had made certain that my mother was not in the cupboard, I began to scream. This is the moment
that my memory has held fast; and it was followed at once by the appearance of my mother, which allayed my anxiety or longing.

The reason he thought that his brother might have put his mother in the cupboard [Kasten] is that this same brother had caused a theiving nurse of little Freud’s to be locked up, or “boxed up” (eingekastelt) (51): the child Freud was afraid that the brother had boxed his mother up in a cupboard, too. The importance of the slimness of the mother is that “it had just been restored to her”; she had just given birth to a child, a sister two and a half years younger than Freud. The little boy did not want any further additions to the family to emerge from his mother’s inside, whose meaning he had conflated with cupboard. (51 n. 2).

The child prefers his mother slender; largeness is ugly because it rekindles the memory of a pregnant mother and a new sibling, who will displace the primacy of the older child. The mother’s pregnancy destroys the child’s belief that he is all that matters to her and that she is his alone. The father is noticeably absent from this narration; it is the brother who is thought to have “had in some way introduced the recently born baby into his mother’s inside” (51 n. 2). But oedipal and sibling rivalry are developments of the fundamental problem, which is, even for the two-and-a-half-year-old, not so much that his own but, rather, that his mother’s body contradicts the child’s wishes and is an unpredictable and uncontrollable producer of excessive meanings that impact upon the child’s position in and ways of understanding his world. Furthermore, the surprises that her body produces are invisible until, with little or no warning, they burst onto the scene. The child cannot ever master them. They appear of their own accord. (And the threat of the pregnant mother persists—how long? Even until the grown child receives some unhoped-for news from a former girl-friend?) The father or other male figure who is supposed to have introduced the baby into the mother is incidental, at least at this point. The problem is specifically the mother’s body and its (for the boy child) excessiveness.

The chapter on screen memories also presents two ways that older male children, those who have already embarked on their oedipal journeys, might deal with the anxieties provoked by the mother’s body. In the second of the three anecdotes Freud tells of a man of forty,
the eldest of nine children, who maintained that he never noticed any of his mother’s pregnancies. Finally, he remembered that

at the age of eleven or twelve he had seen his mother hurriedly *unfasten* her skirt in front of the mirror. He now added of his own accord that she had come in from the street and had been overcome by unexpected labour pains. The unfastening [Aufbinden] of the skirt was a screen memory for the confinement [Entbindung]. We shall come across the use of “verbal bridges” of this kind in further cases. (49)

This man’s reactions to his mother’s pregnancies is an almost total repression of any knowledge of them; he cannot consciously see them and then replaces his sight of them with the sight of something else, much as a fetishist replaces his knowledge of his mother’s castration with a fetish meant to take the place of her “missing” penis. The attention to the unfastening of the skirt in front of the mirror, in particular, has fetishistic overtones, but, instead of covering up the perception of a *lack* in the mother’s body, it covers up the perception of an *excess*. The mother’s bulging body pushes castration as lack aside but poses an analogous problem. If fetishism is founded upon the boy’s idea that his mother has been castrated and that it can happen to him, too, then might the repression of the sight of a mother’s pregnancy stem from the idea that, if it can happen to her, it can happen to me, too? When it is not complicated by the desire to have a female body and a baby by the father, it is possible that the mother’s pregnant body signifies castration *by its excess*. In this example her pregnancy causes the mother’s body to exceed the clothing that it is supposed to fit inside; the constructions that cover it up and determine how and what it may signify in society come apart at the seams because of the pregnancy—thus, both excessiveness and lack become defining terms of femininity.

The fact that the mother unfastens her skirt hurriedly “in front of the mirror” adds a further dimension to the scene. If the mother is in front of the mirror, then she is not looking at her son; she is looking at herself. The mother looking at herself, and not at the son, sets up a system of gazes in which the son may not participate; her attention is withdrawn to something that is out of his sight. The demands of the labor pains utterly displace whatever needs or concerns the boy may
have had at the moment, and this is true of either the moment of unfastening (Aufbinden) or actual confinement (Entbindung). Also, if the mother is in front of the mirror, then the boy cannot see himself in it; the mother’s pregnancy with a younger sibling interrupts the pleasures of narcissism. It puts an end to the boy’s fiction of his own priority.

A similar process is at work in the anecdote I will discuss last, which is the first in Freud’s arrangement. It is of particular interest because it links questions of sexual difference with writing and reading:

A man of twenty-four has preserved the following picture from his fifth year. He is sitting in the garden of a summer villa, on a small chair beside his aunt, who is trying to teach him the letters of the alphabet. He is in difficulties over the difference between $m$ and $n$ and he asks his aunt to tell him how to know one from the other. His aunt points out to him that the $m$ has a whole piece more than the $n$—the third stroke. (48)

Freud explicitly links this memory to the boy’s desire “to find out the difference between boys and girls” and to have this same aunt teach him; his final discovery is “that a boy, too, has a whole piece more than a girl.” This anecdote traces the development of the fiction of the priority of the male. The first step in learning to record language in writing, and to read the written records of others, is to learn the alphabet. $M$, the letter of masculinity, precedes $n$ in the order of the letters. But when the letter $m$ is written, $n$ precedes it. $N$ is, inevitably, the first part of $m$, every time. In the act of writing, the existence of $m$ derives from $n$ and also depends upon it. The fact that $m$ has “a whole piece more” than $n$ cannot disturb $n$’s priority. The symbolic economy that privileges that which has a whole piece more over that which has a whole piece less is the same economy in which that which comes first (is born first) is better than that which comes after. But the relationship between $m$ and $n$ in terms of their construction and the mechanics of writing mangles the logic of a hegemony based on priority.

The presence of $n$ in $m$ also reorients the alphabet of gender. To continue with Freud’s analogy, the standard notion that the male is superior to the female because of its whole piece more, and that the woman consequently envies that extra piece, is displaced in the rela-
tionship between the two letters. If (let us continue to learn the alphabet from a woman) every m contains an n, and yet n is different from and thus inferior to m, then m must do everything possible to negate its dependence upon, and descent from, n. N is the not-me that, I uncomfortably discover, is not only part of me but also essential to my being. The fear, then, is not so much of losing the whole piece more but, rather, of acknowledging that the n is present inside me all the time.

At the point at which the boy is learning the alphabet, he cannot distinguish between m and n. That is why he asks for help from his aunt. He wants his aunt to help him to recognize difference so that he can participate in written language. Thus, for him, the source of written language, the key to it, and the way of understanding it is intimately linked with the body of a woman that he desires: the aunt who teaches him to read and write by teaching him the difference between the letters is the same one from whom he would like to learn the difference between the sexes. In this example the body is textualized as a letter of the alphabet and transmuted into something to be written and read. Freud’s interpretation of the screen memory theorizes gender difference as based on the anatomy of language, on the bare bones of it, the letters that make it up.

But language is as paradoxical as human anatomy is—the difference between m and n is less reassuring than it first appears to be, since, instead of distinguishing clearly between the two letters, it shows where they run together and how the one that claims superiority in fact always carries inside it a sign that it comes from that which it denies. Gender slips in Freud’s theorizing of the Freudian slip; the feminine is always slipping into the masculine in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, just as n twines in and out of m. The chapter on screen memories depends upon a constant building of theory on the narration of pregnancy as a sign of excessive meaning: first with Freud’s disappearing mother; second, with the mother whose pregnancy obscures her son’s view of himself in the mirror; and, finally, with the biologized letters of the alphabet, which show a boy how m comes out of n. In this regard m is the mark of an excessive masculinity, one that is capable of containing, or is impregnated with, unwanted feminine meanings that may slip out at any time—that is, a masculinity that is not reliably manly at all. In this chapter a theory built on boys’ narra-
tions of female bodies demonstrates the possibility and actuality of the presence of the foreign inside them and the men that they wish they had become.

This is what happens, too, back in the *aliquis* anecdote in chapter 2, in which Freud’s friend “end[s] a speech of impassioned fervour with the well-known line of Virgil’s in which the unhappy Dido commits to posterity her vengeance on Aeneas” (9). Because the friend cannot control the internal multiplicity of his lover, his own gender slips; he expresses himself with the words of a wronged woman, Dido, and feminizes himself. The words he is using are foreign, since they are in Latin, and feminine, because they are identified with the character Dido. He turns himself into the foreign woman abandoned by the traveling man and then finds himself unexpectedly full of unanticipated meanings; his whole process of slipping identifies him with the possibly pregnant Italian woman whom he left behind, and he becomes foreign to himself. What began as a rhetorical flourish in a political speech ends up as “a brilliant allusion to women’s periods.” Political and sexual ambivalences are played out over the body of a woman and narrated through the processes of menstruation and pregnancy. The woman is seen as foreign, but her femininity and foreignness become a mirror in which the man may notice his own otherness and signifying excess.

For this reason it will come as no surprise that the question of abortion plays a part in the theorizing of the slip, too. Near the end of their dialogue the friend asks:

“...And you really mean to say that it was this anxious expectation that made me unable to produce an unimportant word like *aliquis*?”

“It seems to me undeniable. You need only recall the division you made into *a-liquis*, and your associations: *relics, liquefying, fluid*. St. Simon was *sacrificed as a child*—shall I go on and show how he comes in? You were led on to him by the subject of relics.”

“No, I’d much rather you didn’t.” (11)

The friend does not say whether he would want the Italian woman to have an abortion or not. All that he does is to stop dialogue relating to abortion. But the allusion to Saint Simon is interpreted by Freud as
signaling at least some wish to eradicate any possibility of descendants from the liaison with the Italian woman. In the discourse of theory the woman's choice in the matter is irrelevant. Here and elsewhere the female body and the woman have no voice at all, and any signifying system ordered by their experience is absent. The woman's body exists only insofar as it can help the men to talk about each other. As many critics have noted, it would seem that this is still the structure of debates about abortion in the United States in the late twentieth century: at the levels of power in which legal and religious decisions are made, they are a way for men to interact passionately with one another over the bodies of women.

It is difficult but not impossible to find in Freud's writings indications that might point the way to a way of making theory (whether psychoanalytic, political, or literary) that does not so traduce the female body. One such example might appear in an earlier essay in which Freud published an example of another autobiographical memory, again from before his third birthday. In this anecdote Freud reports being a little boy and, with another little boy, stealing a bunch of bright yellow flowers, which he thinks must have been dandelions, from a little girl. The little girl runs for consolation to a peasant woman, who has been talking in front of a cottage with a children's nurse, and receives from the peasant woman a big piece of black bread. Little Freud and his accomplice drop their flowers and run to get some bread, too. The woman gives them each a piece, "cut[ting] the loaf with a long knife." Freud analyzes this anecdote as a screen memory produced in adolescence, when he had a strong crush on a young woman from the same area, who wore a bright yellow dress. He realizes that to take her flowers is to deflower her, a wish on the part of the enamored boy. The bread is a reference to Freud's desire for different and easier career and life circumstances, which would have made it possible for him to stay in the country (the scene of the screen memory) and to marry the girl with the dandelion dress.

The presence of the boy cousin helping Freud to take away the girl's flowers—"'can you make any sense of the idea of being helped in deflowering someone? or of the peasant woman and the nurse in front of the cottage?' 'Not that I can see.'"(319)—is seen as not symbolically relevant to the analysis and, as such, a confirmation of the memory's genuineness. In terms of self-analysis, this setting aside of
information may make sense, but, in terms of a psychoanalytic reading of the anecdote, it looks like an evasion. The two boys first take the girl’s flowers for themselves and then throw them down in favor of a piece of the bread that the girl was eating. The fundamental fact of the anecdote is that, this time, the boys want what the girl has—first the flowers and then the bread. They take the flowers from her, even though each of them has a bunch and the field is full of them. When they see that the peasant woman has given her bread, they want that, too, but this time each is satisfied with his own piece; perhaps the presence of the long knife enforces that satisfaction. It is possible to read the anecdote as a fable of matriarchy, of a preoedipal stratum in Freud’s development (the anecdote relates to Freud’s “birthplace, and therefore date from [his] second and third years” [309]), in which the female body is the source and root of meaning. The first “birthplace” is the mother’s body. And here the long knife does not castrate but, rather, resolves a conflict by transmuting a unitary, single piece of bread (the loaf) into enough pieces to provide for everyone’s satisfaction. The female is the primary signifier, and so castration is irrelevant. In this fable lack has ceased to operate, and the knife, instead of mutilating, nurtures.

It is interesting, too, that no parent is present in the scene and no siblings; the oedipal is absent. Perhaps the memory might be read as an awareness on the part of the adult (forty-three-year-old) Freud of the existence of the preoedipal period, upon which he would touch tangentially but which he would never fully theorize. To Freud’s perpetual regret his family was forced by financial problems to leave his birthplace for good when he was only three. Freud’s adult memories of the journey from Freiberg through Breslau to Leipzig, where the family spent a year before moving on to Vienna, become crucial to his self-analysis; he invokes them, in particular, in letters to Fliess about his work on dissipating his intense “travel phobia.” Ernest Jones reports that this fear, from which Freud suffered for twelve years, “turned out to be connected with the fear of losing his home (and ultimately his mother’s breast)—a panic of starvation which must have been in its turn a reaction to some infantile greed.”6 The motivation for this first voyage away from home is the will of the father; because of his father’s power, he was forced to leave his birthplace and the body of his mother. He says that he
never felt really comfortable in the town . . . [and was] never free from a longing for the beautiful woods near our home, in which (as one of my memories from those days tells me) I used to run off from my father, almost before I learned to walk. (312–13)

The birthplace is a place where it is possible to escape the rule of the father and where the freedom of running is easier than walking.

The little Freud had no choice but to go where he was told to go, but it is notable that the adult writer so strongly senses that having left makes it feel impossible to go back. The privileges of the postoeidal makes it impossible for most people to sustain a knowledge of home simultaneously with a knowledge of the way stations on the voyage out. Because survival in reality is so dependent upon going with the father, the legal residence, paradoxically, becomes where he is, and “home,” the preoedipal space of freedom conditioned by the mother’s bounty and body, becomes foreign: Oedipus means that it is no longer legal to lay your head there. The lesson of the uncanny is that

whenever a man dreams of a place or a country and says to himself, while he is still dreaming: “this place is familiar to me, I’ve been here before,” we may interpret the place as being his mother’s genitals or her body. In this case too, then, the unheimlich is what was once heimisch, familiar; the prefix un- is the token of repression.  

Yet, despite the analytic knowledge that the mother’s body is the homiest place of all, the theory of the slip depends upon making the pregnant—that is, the most specifically motherly body—uncanny. The theory insists upon calling home a lost and foreign place. But the native and the foreign are not as far apart as they seem. The connection between them is evident in the way that the mother’s body asserts itself as a constant and necessary coordinate in reference to which psychoanalysis is written.