

# FMS Foundation Newsletter

April 18, 1992

Dear Friends,

The Foundation has signed a six-month lease for an office. We expect to move in on May 1.

Suite 128  
3508 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

The space is located in the University City Science Center, a non-profit organization funded by 28 educational institutions to support research organizations and companies that are developing technologies. The space is modest but secure and in a location convenient to Amtrak and buses. Telephones have been requested, and we were told that we can expect to be given the following numbers on May 1:

Phone: 215-387-1865  
Fax: 215-387-1917  
For help: 1-800-568-8882 (just as before)

The space is needed. It will make it possible for the many people in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Maryland who have volunteered to help answer phones and prepare packets of information to do those things efficiently. It will also give us the space to create a library of articles, video tapes and legal material that may be helpful to you.

## Your help is needed

Collecting a body of material to help document the extent of the phenomenon is extremely important, and it requires the help of all of you. The papers and articles you have already sent have been invaluable to us in preparing material to send to the press. The legal papers are treasures for us all. If we are to provide information, we must have at our fingertips all relevant information. Could you please continue to send:

- Video clips of shows relating to our subject that show all sides to the story.
- Local news stories and magazine articles. Please be sure to include the date and the source.
- Flyers and brochures advertising "incest survivor" meetings, workshops and retreats.
- Ads, either paid or classified, in local newspapers. Please note the date and location where the material is found.
- Scholarly articles that you may have come across that you think are important.
- Brochures and material designed for the therapists who are specialists in "incest survivor" techniques. We are looking especially for those that are university sponsored.

Pamela

## FMS Foundation Scientific and Professional Advisors

We are honored that the following distinguished scholars have indicated their willingness to serve as Scientific and Professional Advisors to FMS Foundation. These advisors can speak with authority on many of the issues of memory, repression and hypnosis that pertain to False Memory Syndrome. Please note that this is not an official listing. We are in the process of asking Advisors how they would like to have their names appear and have not yet heard from everyone. We will continue to enlist the support of Scientific and Professional Advisors and will report additional Advisors in future newsletters.

Robyn M. Dawes, Ph.D., George F. Ganaway, M.D., Rochel Gelman, Ph.D., Henry Gleitman, Ph.D., Lila Gleitman, Ph.D., Ernest Hilgard, Ph.D., Philip Holzman, Ph.D., Ray Hyman, Ph.D., John Kihlstrom, Ph.D., Harold Lief, M.D., Elizabeth Loftus, Ph.D., Paul McHugh, M.D., Uric Neisser, Ph.D., John Nemiah, M.D., Martin Orme, M.D., Ph.D., Margaret Singer, Ph.D., Alayne Yates, M.D.

## Media

Several sympathetic producers of outstanding television programs have contacted the Foundation in the last week. Although it is our intention to send out press releases about the formation of the FMS Foundation as soon as we are sufficiently organized to handle the many potential phone calls that such an announcement may bring, news of our existence seems to be spreading like a grass fire.

Television news and talk shows, however, want families to appear in person. They are convinced that is the best way to express the emotional impact of the phenomenon. Please contact us if you would be willing to appear:

- a) with face and voice disguised
- b) with no name or indication of city
- c) identified with your story

This is truly a difficult decision. No families are interested in a public fight with their children. Many have told me that they would be pleased to come forward when their children can stand beside them. The wish is to restore loving family relationships, to end the phenomenon as quickly as possible and to do so in a manner as dignified as possible.

On the one hand, this is a very personal situation that families do not wish to expose, but on the other hand, it is also a growing

**Meetings Scheduled**

**Midwest Area**  
Saturday, April 25, 1992  
1:00 P.M.  
Benton harbor Michigan  
Holiday Inn - Holidayome

If you go: R.S.V.P. Liz at 708-827-1056 so that we can reserve a meeting room that is big enough. A collection will be taken to help offset some of the meeting expenses (\$50). 2860 M 139 South (49022) I-94 exit 28 (Participants should make own reservations. 1-800-HOLIDAY. Ask for room in Holidayome Area. AARP prices.)

*Don't miss this meeting if you are in the Midwest.*

**Southern California**  
Thursday, May 7, 1992  
7:00 P.M.  
Contact Doug Wilson 619-943-7572  
Details to follow.

**Philadelphia**  
Saturday, May 9, 1992  
1:00 P.M.  
Committee Updates  
Guest Speaker

**Florida**  
Saturday, May 16, 1992  
1:00 P.M.  
Contact 800-374-7477  
**Philadelphia**  
Saturday, June 13, 1992  
1:00 P.M.

**For help call**  
1-800-568-8882

phenomenon that families want to have exposed. It is quite remarkable and very sad that so many ordinary families have been put in this position. Is it realistic or even possible to expose the problem and not the individuals who have been so devastated by it?

**WHERE DO 280 FAMILIES LIVE?**

- AK(1) AR(1) AZ(2) CA(16) CO(5)
- DE(1) FL(7) GA(4) IA(1) IL(9)
- IN(6) LA(1) MA(2) MD(2) MI(15)
- MIN(3) MS(1) MT(1) NC(3) NJ(18)
- NY(15) OH(25) OR(3) PA(96) SC(2)
- TX(8) UT(5) VA(2) WA(4) WI(17)
- DC(1) ON(Canada)(2) ABROAD(1)

**Body Memories**

Several of you have asked about "body memories" because your children told you that these memories were part of the evidence of their abuse. A person who has attended many "incest survivor" meetings has informed me that in the sessions she attended two different types of events were referred to as "body memories." In the first case, a certain physical experience (e.g., being touched in a certain way or in a certain place) may trigger a flashback or memory. This is much like Proust's experience with the taste of the petite madeleine bringing back a flood of memories from his childhood. Apparently the memories so evoked are often vivid or the physical sensation is an especially good or unique access cue. In the case of "recovery" memories, the reports are that when people are "in flashback" they may develop peculiar physical symptoms that are again interpreted as "body memories." For example, a part of their body may hurt or even show a mark not ordinarily present in a place where they remember being abused. In extreme cases with multiple personalities, these physical characteristics are said to come and go with different personalities. Body memories of this latter sort seem to be taken by the people who experience them and by "recovery" therapists to be inarguable proof of the accuracy of the associated memories. We are searching for credible sources that discuss "body memories."

# When Can Memories Be Trusted?

The remembrance of things past can be a mysterious process, with realities and myths blending into a vivid picture

By ANASTASIA TOUFEXIS

Less than two weeks ago, Americans were spellbound before their television sets, watching Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas clash over their recollections of events a decade past. The Senate Judiciary Committee hearings are still fresh in our minds, but how many of us remember exactly what the two adversaries said, what they wore, the expressions on their faces and the tone of their voices? And 10 years from now, when we think back, how faithful will our memories be? Will we remember Hill's tears at one particularly painful disclosure of sexual harassment, and Thomas thumping the table as he decried the hearing as a high-tech lynching of an uppity black?

Those with sharp memories will have noticed two errors in the preceding para-

graph: Hill's voice may have sometimes wavered, but she never cried, and Thomas may have thundered with his voice but never with his fist. Even if memory fails to retain these details, how many Americans will accurately retain the essence of the events? Will our memories reflect the truth?

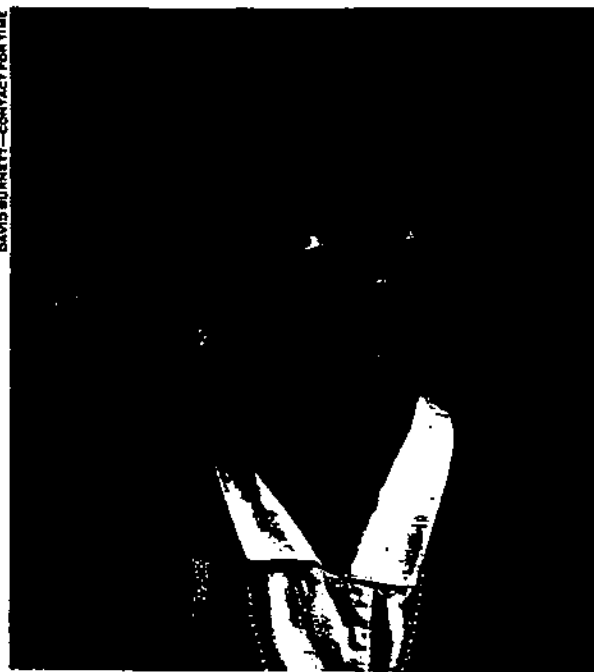
Psychologists and lawyers are finding that more and more cases turn on the question of how reliable memory is. Last November in Redwood City, Calif., George Franklin was convicted of killing an eight-year-old girl in 1969; the case was based largely on the testimony of his daughter Eileen Franklin-Lipsker, who had repressed the memory of her playmate's murder for 20 years. This month in Pittsburgh, Steven Slutzker is scheduled to go on trial for the 1975 fatal shooting of John Mudd Sr.

Slutzker was charged after the victim's son, who was 5 when his father died, claimed he had a flashback memory of the murder.

Fueling the debate over the certainty of memory has been the parade of men and women—among them Roseanne Arnold and former Miss America Marilyn Van Derbur—with newly surfaced recollections of being sexually abused as children. Many of the victims are suing their alleged molesters, including parents, relatives and therapists. Paula Pfiel of Monroe, Wash., this spring received \$1.4 million from her church-run school in settlement of her claim that a teacher repeatedly raped and sodomized her two decades ago. As is often the case with repressed memories, the events came flooding back during an emotional, evocative moment. For Pfiel, it was while making love to her husband on their wedding night five years ago.

The validity of such memories has divided psychological and legal circles. "By and large, long-term memory is extremely credible," maintains Jill Otey, a Portland, Ore., attorney whose office receives five calls a week from women saying they have suddenly remembered childhood abuse. "I find it highly unlikely that someone who can remember what pattern was on the wallpaper and that a duck was quacking outside the bedroom window where she was molested by her father when she was four years old is making it up. Why in the hell would your mind do this?" Reflecting that faith, at least a dozen states since 1988 have amended their statute of limitations for bringing charges to allow for delayed discovery of childhood sexual abuse.

People—not to mention juries—place unwavering trust in the human ability to recall events, especially those that have had a strong emotional impact. But such confidence is often misplaced. "Our memory is not like a camera in which we get an accurate photograph," says psy-

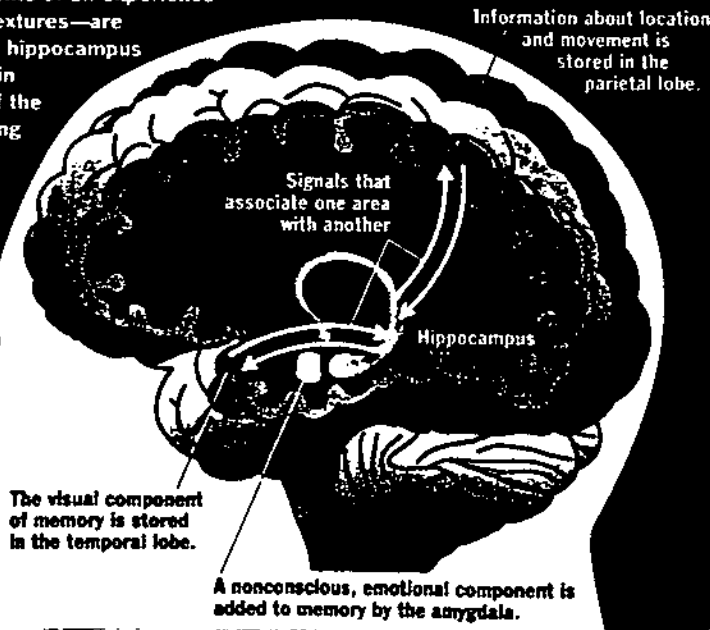


ANITA HILL said she could "vividly recall" specific instances in which she was sexually harassed by Clarence Thomas when she worked for him 10 years ago, even citing phrases he allegedly used at the time.

REPUBLICAN SENATORS attacked Hill's credibility, in part because her story expanded and grew more detailed with each telling. But experts recognize that recollections frequently develop in this way, as one memory elicits another.

## HOW LONG-TERM MEMORIES ARE FORMED

Various components of an experience—sights, smells, textures—are processed in the hippocampus and then stored in different parts of the brain. For a lasting memory to be formed, the information must converge on the hippocampus, where the elements of memory are joined.



**TWENTY YEARS** after the fact, Eileen Franklin-Lipsker suddenly remembered how her father murdered her eight-year-old childhood playmate. Her testimony led to his conviction last November.

**A GLANCE FROM** her own six-year-old daughter, who bears a striking resemblance to the murdered child, brought back scenes of the chilling event. Experts say emotional, evocative moments can often exhume long-buried memories.



chologist Henry Ellis of the University of New Mexico.

Consider the *Challenger* explosion. As with the assassination of John F. Kennedy, most people claim to remember where they were when they heard the news of the shuttle disaster. Ulric Neisser, a psychologist at Emory University, tested that assumption. The day after the 1986 accident he asked 106 students to write down how, when and where they learned the news. Three years later, he tracked down nearly half the group and asked them to describe their memories of the explosion. Though many claimed to recall it clearly, "often the memories were completely wrong," says Neisser. Many students said they had received the news from television, though they had actually heard it elsewhere.

Memory is a complicated physiological phenomenon that is only slowly being deciphered. "Everything we are is based on what we are taught, experience and remember," says neurosurgeon Howard Eisenberg of the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston. "Yet there's no universally accepted theory of how memory works." Some activities, like remembering a number looked up in the telephone directory, are retained for only a brief time. Soon after you dial the number, the brain discards this "working memory."

But other, more momentous events make a biochemical impression in the brain, specifically in a middle portion known as the hippocampus. To file them away permanently, the hippocampus shunts the elements of the experience—the sounds, smells and sights—through a network of nerve cells to different areas of the brain. "It's a whole cascade of processes, physiological and chemical, that sensitizes the neurons to transmit messages," notes Mortimer Mishkin, chief of the neuropsychology laboratory of the National Institutes of Health. The proper stimulus, say,

a whiff of a perfume or a glimpse of a familiar place, trips the relay, firing the neurons and bringing a past event to consciousness.

Disease, alcoholism or an injury to the brain can prevent an experience from being imprinted into the neural network. The Central Park jogger has no memory of being attacked, say neurologists, not because she repressed the event but because her injured brain never had a chance to physically create the memory.

**O**ne of the many controversies concerning memory is how far back people can remember. TV star Roseanne Arnold, for example, claims that she has a vivid memory of being sexually abused as an infant by her mother. This summer Tina Ullrich, 36, a Chicago design-firm executive, abruptly recalled images from her infancy of her grandfather sexually molesting her while he changed her diapers.



"I didn't have any words to describe the experience, so I began drawing my feelings," says Ullrich, who has created 35 surreal pictures. But many researchers are skeptical of such early recall. Most people's earliest clear recollections date back to around age 4 or 5. Before that, they believe, the mind holds at best primitive pictures but no coherent memory. "Under a year, a child doesn't have the mental structure to understand how events hang together," says Neisser. "I wouldn't give you a nickel for memory in the first year of life."

Memory's workings are equally complex on the psychological level. "We see things in a context. We select what we observe, and then we may distort that for a purpose," says neuropsychiatrist David Spiegel of Stanford University. Events can be altered, even as they occur, simply through lack of attention. What is not seen, heard or smelled will not register in the brain. For example, a man might remember being introduced to a woman he finds attractive, but she might not have any memory of him if she did not consider him appealing.

Experiences can be altered as they are hauled out of memory. Remembering is an act of reconstruction, not reproduction. During the process, normal gaps and missing details often get filled in. When Senators asked law professor Joel Paul to describe how Hill sounded years ago when she first told him about being sexually harassed by Thomas, Paul hesitated and then said Hill had sounded embarrassed. "He could have been falling back on a scripted memory of how he would expect someone to act in that circumstance," explains psychologist Douglas Peters of the University of North Dakota. On the other hand, experts are not the least bit disturbed because Hill's story grew and became more detailed as the hearings proceeded. Remembering incidents is an accretion process, psychologists say, and one image evokes another.

**PARTICIPATING IN** a workshop involving self-hypnosis, Tina Ullrich, a design executive and artist, had a flashback of images from her own infancy in which she was sexually molested by her grandfather.

**WHILE OTHERS,** including actress Roseanne Arnold, have claimed to have similar recollections from the first year of life, experts say youngsters under age 1 lack the mental structure to form a coherent memory.

Memory integrates the past with the present: desires, fantasies, fears, even mood can shade the recollection. People have a tendency to suppress unpleasant experiences and embellish events to make themselves feel more important or attractive. "Some of us like to see ourselves in a rosier light," observes psychologist Elizabeth Loftus of the University of Washington, "that we gave more to charity than we really did, that we voted in the last election when we really didn't, that we were nicer to our kids than we really were."

Loftus, co-author of *Witness for the Defense* (St. Martin's Press; \$19.95) and an expert witness on memory in the cases involving the McMartin Preschool, Oliver North and the Hillside Strangler, speculates that such prestige-enhancing revisionism by Thomas could be one explanation for why his memory differs so radically from Hill's. Thomas is a "rigid person who insisted on the prerogatives of his position," observes Emory's Neisser; such people can be "good repressors" of unpleasant memories. As for Hill, Loftus suggests that it is possible she unconsciously confused some past experiences. "Could she have gotten the information elsewhere and created this story?" asks Loftus.

**S**uggestion is a potent disrupter of truth, as Jean Piaget once noted. The renowned child psychologist wrote that for years he recounted the memory of how his nurse foiled an attempt to kidnap him from his carriage when he was two years old. But years later, the retired nurse sent his parents a letter saying she had made up the incident to impress her employers. The young Piaget had heard the story so often that he had created his own memory of the event.

In the same vein, witnesses can be led astray—intentionally or inadvertently—by the questions posed by police or lawyers. "If you ask a person who has just witnessed an accident how fast the green car was going when it slammed into the parked UPS truck, you have said it was a green car," notes Peters. Chances are the witness will declare that the car was green even if it was blue. Critics charge that misleading questions as well as the publicity given childhood sexual abuse frequently plant the idea of molestation in the minds of susceptible children and adults, though no abuse has taken place.

Alas, there is no easy way to distinguish fact and fiction in many memories. The best method is to find corroborating evidence, from witnesses or written records say, diaries or hospital charts, that can document the event. Years from now, videotapes of the Hill-Thomas hearings may verify the sights and sounds of their testimony, but the heart of their dispute is likely to remain unresolved. Whose memory told the truth?

—Reported by Ann Blackman  
Washington, Barbara Dolan/Chicago and D. Blake Holleran/San Francisco

# Biases of Retrospection<sup>1</sup>

Robyn M. Dawes

*Memory belongs to the imagination. Human memory is not like a computer which records things; it is part of the imaginative process, on the same terms as invention (Alain Robbe-Grillet, 1986).*

While memory from our experience is introspectively a process of "dredging up" *what actually happened*, it is to a large extent determined by our current beliefs and feelings. This principle has been well established both in the psychological laboratory and in surveys. What we have at the time of recall is, after all, only our current state, which includes fragments ("memory traces") of our past experience; these fragments are biased by what we now believe (or feel) to be true to an extent much greater than we know consciously. Moreover, the organization of these fragments of past experience into meaningful patterns is even more influenced by our current beliefs and moods—especially if we are particularly depressed or elated.

Memory is basically a "reconstructive" process. Thus, our experience is often recalled inaccurately, even that selectively biased and possibly irrelevant experience discussed in the previous sections. The problem is particularly acute because our recall is often organized in ways that "make sense" of the present—thus reinforcing our belief in the conclusions we have reached about how the past has determined the present. We quite literally "make up stories" about our lives, the world, and reality in general. The fit between our memories and the stories enhances our belief in them. Often, however, it is the story that creates the memory, rather than vice versa.

For example, Greg Markus (1986) studied stability and change in political attitudes between 1973 and

1982. Specifically, a national sample of 1,669 high school seniors in the graduating class of 1965, along with at least one parent in nearly every case, was surveyed in 1965, 1973, and 1982. Fifty-seven percent of the parents (64% of those still living) and 68% of the students (70% of alive) were personally interviewed all three times. All subjects were asked to indicate on a seven-point scale (with verbal anchors at the end) their attitudes towards five issues: guaranteed jobs, rights of accused people, aid to minorities, legalization of marijuana, and equality for women. In addition, they were asked to characterize their political views as generally liberal or generally conservative. Most important for analysis of the retrospective bias, Markus asked the respondents in 1982 to indicate how they had responded to each scale in 1973.

The results were quite striking. With the exception of the ratings on the overall liberal-conservative scale, the subjects' recall of their 1973 attitudes in 1982 was more closely related to their rated attitudes in 1982 than to the attitudes they had *actually* expressed in 1973. Retrospecting, they believed that their attitudes nine years previous were very close to their current one, much closer than they in fact were. This bias was so strong that an equation set up to predict subjects' recall of their 1973 attitudes gives almost all weight to their 1982 attitudes, and virtually none at all to the attitudes they actually expressed in 1973 (with the important exception of the students' overall liberal versus conservative ratings).

In addition, what discrepancy there was between 1982 attitudes and recall of 1973 attitudes could primarily be explained in terms of stereotypic beliefs about how general attitudes in the culture had changed; the subjects believed that they had become more conservative in general, but that (again in general) they had favored equality for women all along. Subjects whose attitude had changed in the direction counter to the general cultural change tended to be unaware of such change. Finally, the parent group attributed much more stability to their attitudes than did the student group, which is compatible with the belief that the

attitudes of older people change less. In fact, however, the attitudes of the parent group *were less stable*.

Attitudes are, of course, somewhat amorphous and difficult to determine. Linda Collins and her colleagues found quite similar results for actual behaviors when they surveyed high school students about their use of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal "recreational" drugs (Collins, Graham, Hansen, & Johnson, 1985). They repeated the survey after one year and again after two and one-half years. At each repetition, the students (many of them then in college) were asked how much usage they had reported on the original questionnaire. (Collins and her colleagues had established strong rapport with this group and had reason to believe that their guarantees of confidentiality, which they honored, were in fact believed.) Again, the subjects' belief in lack of change introduced severe retrospective bias. For example, the recall of alcohol use for those subjects whose drinking habits had changed over the two-and-one-half-year period was more highly related to their reported use at the time of recall than to the reports they had made two and one-half years earlier.

Thus, change can make liars of us, liars to ourselves. That generalization is not limited to change in an undesirable direction. As George Vaillant (1977), who has studied the same individuals for many years throughout their adult lives, writes: "It is all too common for caterpillars to become butterflies and then to maintain that in their youth they had been little butterflies. Maturation makes liars of us all."

But not always. Sometimes, when our belief is in change, we recall change even when it has not occurred. In order to make our view compatible with this belief, we resort (again not consciously) to changing our recall of the earlier state. We can, for example, reinforce our belief in a nonexistent change for the better by simply exaggerating how bad things were before the change. Certainly there have been times before a religious or psychiatric conversion, for example, when the individual was badly off (we all are at times), and memories of those times persist; recall can be organized around the traces of these memories. A dieter who has not succeeded in losing a single pound can certainly recall periods of time prior to embarking on a diet when he or she was heavier than when he or she completes the ineffective diet; by carefully not recording his or her weight before starting the diet, those times can be recalled as an evidence for its success.

Experimental evidence supports the contention that when we believe a change has occurred we are apt to distort the past in the direction compatible with the change. For example, in two separate but similar

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from *Rational Choice in an Uncertain World* by Robyn M. Dawes, copyright © 1988 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Robyn M. Dawes is the Head of the Department of Social and Decision Sciences and Professor of Psychology at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

experiments, Conway and Ross (1984) randomly selected participants for a university program designed to improve study skills and a control group of students who had indicated a desire to be in the program and were on the waiting list for it. Participants and controls were questioned before the study skills program began and at its conclusion. At both times they were asked to assess their study skills (e.g., how much of their study time was well spent, how satisfactory their note-taking skills were, etc.) and the amount of time they studied. At the second interview they were also asked to recall what they reported during the first session concerning their skills and study time.

At the initial interview, participants and controls did not differ significantly on any measure of skill, study time, or other variables. Both groups performed equally well and—most important to the study—the program itself was not found to improve study skills. Nor did it improve grades. When asked to recall their situations before the program started (or before they were put on the waiting list), however, the subjects did differ. There was no difference between the two groups in their memory of the amount of time they spent studying, but their recall of their skills was markedly different. Program participants recalled their study skills as being significantly worse than they had initially reported, while on the average, waiting-list subjects recalled their skills as being approximately the same as they had reported initially. Thus, program participants exaggerated their improvement in a direction consistent with their beliefs of what *ought* to be (improved skills due to taking the course), not by exaggerating their current skills, but rather by reconstructing their memory of the past to fit with the belief that they should have improved. In short, they recalled themselves as having been worse off before they entered the program than they had in fact been. There was no such distortion on the part of the subjects who had been put on the waiting list.

Mood also affects recall. It has, for example, been strongly established experimentally by Gordon Bower (1981) and others that recall of material learned in a particular mood is facilitated by recreation of that mood. Does the same principle apply to our recall of our own lives? Is our recall of events that occurred when we were in a bad mood—which are usually negative events—facilitated by a current bad mood, and vice versa for good moods? The answer is yes.

Lewinsohn and Rosenbaum (1987) studied the recall of parental behavior by acute depressives, remitted depressives (that is, people who had once been depressed and were no longer depressed), nondepressives (people who had never been depressed), and "predepressives"

(people who were to become depressed) in a group of 2000 people over a three-year period. One focus of this research was on the relationship between current mood states and memory; one possibility is that recollections of one's parents are influenced by a current state of depression or nondepression; another is that people who are *prone* to depression recall their parents differently from those who are not (the nondepressives). Theories that depression follows from childhood problems would predict that the childhood of those of us who are depression-prone is different from that of those who are not and hence would be recalled differently, while theories about the effect of current mood on past recall predict that the primary difference in recall should be between people who are *currently* depressed and those who are not.

The results were consistent with the hypothesis that recollection of one's parents as rejecting and unloving is strongly influenced by current moods; it is not a stable characteristic of depression-prone people. "Whereas the currently depressed subjects recalled their parents as having been more rejecting and as having used more negative controls than the normal controls, the remitted depressives did not differ from the never depressed controls in their recall of parental behavior. Similarly, the subjects who were about to become depressed shortly after the initial testing did not differ from the controls in their recollections of the degree to which their parents used negative control methods (Lewinsohn & Rosenbaum, 1987). One particularly important aspect of this study was that the subjects were drawn from the general population; they were not sampled on the basis of having any particular psychiatric problems.

(Note: There is no way of determining the *accuracy* of this recall. It is possible, for example, that when the depression-prone people become depressed, their memory of their parents' behavior loses the "rosy glow" that appears to be a concomitant of "good mental health," and that the reports are in fact more accurate than when the people are not depressed. Some evidence supports that depressed people are more accurate in their perceptions—of themselves anyway than are people judged to be in good psychological health; these latter people tend to become "Pollyannish" as they get over their depression. See Lewinsohn, Michel, Chaplin, and Barton, 1980.)

This study of depression is particularly important in that it casts doubt on the degree to which adult problems are related to childhood ones. Given a biasing effect of mood on memory, people who are distressed as adults tend to remember distressing incidents in their childhood. One result is the view that the sources

of the problems encountered lie in early life is reinforced. To the degree to which the people accept this view, it may serve as an organizing principle for even greater distortion of recall, which in a circular way reinforces the "child is father to the man" view of life. (Freud himself emphasized that he knew people who had childhood problems similar to those of his patients but who never became distressed. One view of Freudian psychology is that when adults become distressed, the form of the distress will mirror childhood problems. That is not the same, however, as saying that these childhood problems *cause* adult distress. These problems may even be necessary for adult neurosis and psychosis, but again that does not make them sufficient. The idea that childhood problems necessarily lead to adult ones [i.e., are sufficient to cause adult problems] is due more to the neo-analytic followers of Sigmund Freud than to Freud himself—particularly those who have popularized their view of neo-Freudian psychology; see, for example, Harry Overstreet's book *The Mature Mind*.)

Finally, our retrospective bias that we (usually) haven't changed can lead us to expect that we will not change with changing circumstances; in particular, that our intentions and motives—which serve as background in our judgment of our experience—will not change. For example, consider the statement, "You have nothing to fear from me now that I have this power over you; I have always been benign." (Reagan administration officials assert that the Soviets have nothing to fear if "we" develop an invulnerable "star wars" defense, because "our" intentions have always been peaceful, mainly defensive. First, we must remember that we are not always the best judges of our own intentions, particularly not of what they have been in the past. Second, intentions can change as capabilities do, and the person who changes is often "the last to know." Third, and most importantly, the Soviets have no way of knowing who "we" in charge of U.S. policy will be when and if such a defense system is ever perfected; nor do we.)