

Background of the Case:
An Important Historical Note
On Publication of the Fact that
Freud was a Serial Killer



“Hilary Rubinstein, Literary Agent:

One of Britain's premier literary agents with portfolio including some of the greats of the 20th century”

Director A.P. Watt, Ltd (from *the guardian obituary*)
London's oldest literary agency

died London 22 May 2012.

“Literature was in his blood”

“I have read it myself and found it fascinating. . . the [expert Freudian] reader I sent it to. . . found the book profoundly interesting and in many respects convincing.”

Hilary Rubinstein, on Eric Miller's book

Passion for Murder:

The Homicidal Deeds of Dr. Sigmund Freud

(Letter of July 28, 1982—see below)



In 1982, Michael Timm, a business associate, submitted an early draft of a manuscript of mine on Sigmund Freud, then titled MIRROR OF MADNESS (later renamed, NON VIXIT and finally published as PASSION FOR MURDER), to a prestigious law firm in London, England, Rubinstein & Callingham, specializing in literary law.

A close personal friend of mine, Robert Treash, and an indispensable librarian/co-worker on the Freud book, had recommended the firm as he himself had dealings with the firm on other unrelated matters and well knew of their reputation as the most prominent literary law firm in all of Europe. Mr. Treash, had in fact, dealt personally with Michael Rubinstein, the founder of the firm who had himself personally gained considerable fame for his representation of Penguin Books in defense of their publication of D.H. Lawrence's book, *Lady Chatterley's Lovers*—which had been charged by the State with illegally publishing a pornographic book.

The purpose of Mr. Timm's contact was to retain Rubinstein & Callingham to issue a legal opinion letter on potential liability regarding publication of my work on Freud—which charged Freud with being a serial murderer.

[It is worth noting here that Michael Rubinstein was not only famous for his legal representation but was considered “eminent” and was a contributor of scholarly works dealing with artistic and religious themes to the Institute for Cultural Research, i.e., “Malta’s Ancient Temples and Ruts” (1988) and “Rembrandt and Angels” (1982)]

At the same time that Rubinstein & Callingham was retained, Mr. Timm also asked that a copy of the manuscript be sent to Michael's brother, Hilary Rubinstein, also himself a lawyer, but one who was, additionally, a Director of the world's oldest and most prestigious literary agency, AP Watt Ltd., also of London, England. Hilary in his position at A.P. Watt had inherited representation of the estates of, among others, Robert Graves, HG Wells, WB Yeats, Rudyard Kipling and other famous literati. Hilary was obviously a literary agent of impeccable credentials.

My work on Freud was ultimately published by New Directions Publication (1984, with Michael Timm as Publisher and Editor-in-Chief) as *Passion for Murder: The Homicidal Deeds of Dr. Sigmund Freud*. The early manuscript of *Passion for Murder*, called MIRROR OF MADNESS immediately caused extraordinary interest at the highest level, both with the law firm and literary agency.

On July 2, 1982, Hilary of A.P. Watts literary agency wrote to Michael Timm:

“My brother Michael [of Rubinstein & Callingham] sent me a copy of MIRROR OF MADNESS. I have read it myself, and of course have found it fascinating. But, I would like to have an expert reading before I come back to you in any formal way. So would you please be patient, and I hope to be writing again in a couple of weeks' time.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Rubinstein

Usually, it takes months to get a response from a literary agency of their caliber. It was on June 25, 1982, that Michael Rubinstein received two copies of MIRROR OF MADNESS and one copy he “immediately had delivered to my brother Hilary at A.P. Watt Limited, Literary Agents.” In his letter of the same date, he also noted: “I understand that he expects to be writing to you in the course of next week.” And Michael goes on in his letter to state that he himself immediately read the book (“Meanwhile, I have myself read and finished the book and of course found it quite intriguing.”). Michael next gave his substantive conclusions of the legal issue of potential liability for such a sensational work in a single paragraph and elaborated on his legal opinion over three pages. Concerning my work, MIRROR OF MADNESS (i.e., *Passion for Murder*), he wrote:

“It does not obviously raise any libel issue which, so far as the law in this country is concerned could only be the subject of a claim by someone still living and not on behalf of anyone now dead. It could be argued that there is a suggestion that the Freud family, through inter-marriage or some other course, has a pathological/psychological kink which, it might be inferred, could affect the living descendants of Sigmund Freud notably, in this connection, Clement Freud, M.P. [i.e., Member of Parliament]. If any of them chose to sue for libel, however, it would be less impressive if others also residing in this country were not to do so and on the whole I would discount any serious risk from this source.”

In another paragraph, Michael Hilary mentions, nonetheless, that although he was not concerned with any “serious risk” or adversarial action against my work, he did have a personal “sense of uneasiness” about some things in the manuscript, especially about references he

quoted of mine about “Freud’s real trauma” having occurred at “the age of 17, when he murdered John, not at 2 years of age.”

The letter of opinion concludes, somewhat unexpectedly, with a personal comment that he himself had personally known and gone to school with members of the Freud family!

By July 28th, less than a month since receiving a copy of my manuscript from his brother, Michael, Hilary (the literary agent) wrote to say he would like to get an “experts” opinion on the contents of the work. He wrote:

“I am sorry to have taken a little while to react to this fascinating book, but I was keen before replying, to get some kind of expert view. Obviously the book is hugely controversial, and there will be plenty of Freudians who will be bitterly hostile. But the reader I sent it to wasn’t that sort of Freudian, and she found the book profoundly interesting and in many respects convincing.”

So, the “expert” Hilary trusted to read and evaluate my work on Freud was herself a “Freudian.” Presumably Hilary would have called on a very knowledgeable person for a professional opinion—presumably she was a psychoanalyst, or professor in a related field. In any case, Hilary must have put great stock in her opinion for he went on to ask if we would be interested in having A.P. Watt represent the book in other countries besides in the United Kingdom and Commonwealth: “whether you would also welcome the services of A.P. Watt in offering the book for foreign language rights.”

Hilary ended his written comments with a very nice compliment that my manuscript was a “remarkable work”:

“Anyway, I greatly appreciate being given the chance to read this remarkable work, and look forward eagerly to a reply.”

But, by September 3, 1982, Hilary was starting to get “cold feet” and this, avowedly, primarily because of the issue of my claim that Freud murdered his nominal “nephew” (or as my work has it, actually his “half-brother”). In this context it is worth quoting Hilary’s next letter in full:

“Dear Mr. Timm,

I thought I should write some kind of confirming letter following our telephone conversation last week. I am very keen to read a revised version of Eric Miller’s book and would prefer to defer a commitment to being the agent until that point. As I said, more than anything else the book suffers at present – at least in my view – from the lack of convincing evidence that Freud actually murdered his half- brother as distinct from the evidence in letters and dreams that he nurtured homicidal thoughts. I would hope very much that Eric Miller is able to meet this kind of criticism in his revision.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Rubinstein [signature]”

Of course, Hilary was less than honest in his remark that he had informed us that the book “suffers” a “lack of convincing evidence that Freud actually murdered his half-brother as distinct from the evidence in letters and dreams that he nurtured homicidal thoughts.”

[It can be noted, however, in passing, that lawyer/literary agent Hilary obviously “bought” my argument that John was Freud’s half-brother, not his “nephew”—as the “official” version has it in *all* Freud biographies prior to my work. And here, I can’t resist mentioning one other pertinent fact. Actually, months before dealing directly with the Rubinsteins about my manuscript, Rubinstein & Callingham, had been requested to examine the 1881 Census for the City of Manchester for any evidence of John’s continued existence in Manchester as claimed by Freud (recall, my claim

was that Freud murdered John in 1873/later corrected to 1875). Rubinstein & Callingham on February 18, 1982 (months before their reported reservations about the murder of John Freud) the firm wrote to Mr. Treash the results of its own evidentiary investigation:

“I am glad to be able to send you the enclosed copy entry from the 1881 Census for the City of Manchester showing the family of Emanuel Freud of 59 Shakespeare Street, Chorlton-on-Medlock, as you had requested. There was no separate entry for John Freud, which is what you had in fact anticipated.”

In fact, we were able to confirm that there was no business license, no telephone, nor any information whatsoever indicating John’s existence in Manchester or anywhere else. Though the same was found for every other member of the Freud family. This fact specifically puts the lie to Freud’s claim that John was continuing to live in Manchester as late as 1900, as claimed by Freud in private correspondence and in his famous book *Die Traumdeutung* (*The Interpretation of Dreams*, published in 1900). Apparently Michael Callingham failed to consider the importance of this material evidence concerning John’s continued existence uncovered by their own law firm—or if he did not “fail” to consider it at all, he rather chose not to consider it).

In any case he had to lie about the matter in his assertion that he had previously told us that the book “suffers” lack of convincing evidence—which begs the fact of what was really behind their rejection.

Fair enough. The question is on the table, set there by two brothers, both members of a famous Jewish family in England, with exceptional expertise in literary law and literary property agency representation. Of course by the time Hilary read my book Freud was considered, along with Einstein, one of the two most important Jews in the world. As the reader can see, unless there were other factors *primarily* influencing the ultimate decision of Hilary on the matter, the murder of John Freud was

central to both brothers declared reservations about the early manuscript, which later became *Passion for Murder: The Homicidal Deeds of Dr. Sigmund Freud*.

Hilary, on February 21, 1983 wrote to Michael Timm that he had to deliver the news that A.P. Watt Ltd. was, suddenly, no longer interested in the Freud project:

Dear Michael Timm

Thank you for your letter of February, 9th. I have now read the new version of Eric Miller's book, NON-VIXIT, [another tentative title for exactly the same book] and have already had a reading from a colleague of mine. Alas, I am afraid neither of us feel sufficiently convinced to offer to represent the book. I am very sorry to have had to reach this decision, and certainly wish you very good luck with it.

Please let me know if you would like us to forward the work to some other literary agent or to a publisher in this country.

Yours sincerely,

Hilary Rubinstein.

Mere politeness, as Hilary was famed for. The letter itself is interesting. A.P. Watts, own Freudian expert, had declared the book "profoundly interesting" and "convincing." Hilary, a Director of the company, had been almost fawning in his praise of the work; he himself had declared it "fascinating" and both he and his brother were aware that minor revisions and refinements were on-going. Even the then latest version of the editing process, *NON VIXIT* (the draft copy itself was copyrighted with the Library of Congress, 1983) was replete with many original documents and an extensive bibliography—significant

enhancements from what either of them first read, but essentially the same in other regards.

A “rejected” author should well wonder if politics had anything to do with the sudden finding that the work was unconvincing—it was not the view of the expert they consulted. If anything, *more* evidence was brought to the table with each new draft manuscript, not less! The new title, *Non-Vixit*, specifically highlights the issue of the mysterious disappearance of John Freud—the very issue both Hilary and Michael claimed was the weakest—which is all about Freud’s “dream-claim” that John had not “never” even existed at all! I cited in my work, for the *first time* in all of the thousands of articles and books written on Freud and his family, John’s actual birth entry, which I obtained with the special cooperation of Czechoslovakian state officials—which was then a communist country!

The Rubinsteins, as said, were/are a very prominent old Jewish family in England, and one of their forefathers was even credited with helping to save the life of an English King (“in the reign of George III, an ancestor who worked as a quill-maker was rewarded for saving the king from an attempted assassination by being given a royal warrant for quills” –see *the guardian* obit). Indeed, their own father, Harold Fredrick Rubinstein was not only one of the two original founders of Rubinstein & Callingham, but was a literary man deeply dedicated to Jewish causes. He wrote various plays on the subject of Judaism, *Israel Set Free* (1936), *Shylock’s End*, (1970), was the editor of *Four Jewish Plays* (1948), etc. He is listed in the ***Jewish Virtual Library***.

(It is worth recalling that Freud himself was on the First Board of Governors (along with Albert Einstein, Martin Buber and Chaim Weizmann, the first President of Israel) of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Just maybe, Freud being a serial murderer was something the family, after due consideration, just didn’t want to get into it).

In any case, it is argued in *“Freud in Zion: Psychoanalysis and the Making of Modern Jewish Identity* (Karnac Books) that Freud played a profound role in the very shaping of modern Jewish immigrant’s consciousness:

The coming of Freudian psychoanalysis to pre-state Israel, where it rapidly penetrated the discourse of pedagogy, literature, medicine, and politics, becoming a popular therapeutic discipline, could thus be regarded as an integral part of a Jewish immigrant society’s struggle to establish its identity in the face of its manifold European pasts and its conflict-ridden Middle Eastern present

There is no doubt at all that the revelation that Freud was a serial killer conflicts with many (certainly not all) individual and various group perceived Jewish cultural and financial interests—independent of the fact that Freud himself was, in the words of the very prominent Jewish scholar, Yahuda, one of the greatest fanatical “haters” of Judaism (Freud was actually an anti-Semite, a fact I have put in evidence with my published book, *Passion For Murder: The Homicidal Deeds of Dr. Sigmund Freud*). Indeed, Freud became for many a *religious figure* himself, indeed a cult, and is to this day lionized and worshiped as one of the greatest men who ever lived—on a plane with or surpassing Moses himself!

These matters will be dealt with at greater length in the proper time and context. Here we are to show that Sigmund Freud was one of, if not the most famous of all Jewish serial killers. We will next turn to Freud’s own confessions to having habitual preoccupations with murdering people, people “who could be got rid of if one wanted.” Freud’s murder mania condition was so obsessive that, in addition to Freud’s own confessions, of his condition, we will also offer his own personal doctors’ testimony that Freud’s condition was one of “moral insanity” and the murder complex called the “Cain-complex” (i.e., Brother-Murder Complex), “in addition to the Oedipal Complex” (which, of course, is an Incest-Father-Murder complex)

Hilary Rubinstein observation, at the outset, that “there will be plenty of Freudians who will be bitterly hostile” was certainly correct, but, as Shakespeare counsels:

LAUNCELOT:

Nay, indeed if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me. It is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. Give me your blessing. Truth will come to light. Murder cannot be hid long—a man’s son may, but in the end truth will out.

SHAKESPEARE

John Freud, for one, is “a man’s son” whose murder has been too long hid and now “in the end truth will out.”

Note by Eric Miller, Jan. 2014