

Parentheses come in use when some things can or cannot go without saying. A parenthetical phrase (Webster's defines the parenthetical phrase as: "a. An amplifying or qualifying phrase occurring within a sentence in such a way as to form an interpolation independent of the surrounding syntactical structure. b. A comment departing from the theme of discourse: DIGRESSION," or "An interruption of continuity.")<sup>1</sup> is a qualification or explication, an interruption in the text that does not necessarily affect it. Perhaps due to my photographic training, I use parenthesis often in my writing. They enable a reader to further participate in the text: providing an opportunity to (not) acknowledge a small detail that has consciously been included by me, the author.

Recently I stumbled upon a curious personal artifact on a random internet search. It was my father's listing on a family tree. I found it on page four of a thirteen page pdf. (He's in the green.)

+Leopold MARKS b: Oct 12, 1911 Newark NJ d: Dec 07, 1971 Charles City VA  
10 Lee (Marks) LEOPOLD b: Oct 31, 1935 d: Jun 08, 1990 Philadelphia, PA

I never really knew my father as he never knew his father before him. Born Leopold Franklin Marks Jr., his parents divorced when he was a year old and a short time after my grandmother remarried. Due to social mores at the time (it was 1937), my grandfather officially adopted my father and he became: Leo Bamberger Leopold (he would go on to change his name to Lee after years of Leo-prefix based teasing). Interestingly, my father took to history and became a genealogist and archivist in Philadelphia. Three decades later, he was able to locate and make contact with his father who had been working as a post master in Virginia. They met exactly two times in the year that followed before Leo Marks Senior died of a sudden heart attack. This was over twelve years before I was born.

After finding this digital artifact I changed my name to rebecca (marks) leopold. It is not my biological grandfather I wish to honor, so much as the erasure of his existence from both my father and my family's history. I came to know the story of my father's life, but it was always told in vague detail and with astonishing stoicism. Seeing the name Marks, placed so deliberately (in parentheses) by an unknown recorder of history made all the darkened years (untold stories) finally real to me. It is the events and legacies we come to forget that interests me; the parts of ourselves that are there without ever really *being* there. I am here because my mother's husband was Lee Bamberger Leopold, but it is the life he (never) lived as Leo Franklin Marks that invisibly acts on the present and informs the person I am today.

Excerpt: *Finding The Memorable in the Forgotten*, 2008.  
Published 2017, for/after: danah michele boyd's what's in a name?

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<sup>1</sup> Berube, Margery S. *Webster's II New College Dictionary*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1996.

..... 8 Edgar BAMBERGER b: Feb 14, 1883 Baltimore MD d: Jun 28, 1952 W Orange NJ  
..... +Mildred FOX b: 1885 m: Oct 18, 1910 d: Jul 1935 W Orange NJ  
..... 9 Mildred BAMBERGER b: May 21, 1913 Newark NJ  
..... +Leopold MARKS b: Oct 12, 1911 Newark NJ d: Dec 07, 1971 Charles City VA  
..... 10 Lee (Marks) LEOPOLD b: Oct 31, 1935 d: Jun 08, 1990 Philadelphia, PA  
..... +Jean WELLS b: Oct 06, 1942 m: Jun 29, 1969  
..... 11 Caroline LEOPOLD b: Jul 07, 1970  
..... 11 Jennifer LEOPOLD b: Jun 06, 1972  
..... 11 Rebecca LEOPOLD b: Dec 20, 1982  
..... \*2nd Husband of Mildred BAMBERGER:  
..... +Emanuel LEOPOLD b: Nov 24, 1906 Altoona PA m: Jul 16, 1939  
..... 10 Bertram LEOPOLD b: Jul 12, 1940 Altoona PA d: Jul 27, 1987 Altoona PA  
..... +Susan KLATKIN b: Mar 02, 1941 Altoona PA m: Jun 16, 1963  
..... 11 Ann LEOPOLD b: Jun 02, 1964 Altoona PA  
..... +Richard HOJEL b: Nov 15, 1965 m: Oct 09, 1993  
..... 12 Richard HOJEL b: Oct 23, 1995  
..... 12 Natalie HOJEL b: Mar 29, 1998  
..... 11 Meg LEOPOLD b: Aug 22, 1966 Altoona PA  
..... +Jess MANDEL b: Sep 26, 1964 m: Jun 01, 1991  
..... 12 Emily MANDEL b: Apr 30, 1994  
..... 12 Jonathan MANDEL b: Jan 24, 1998  
..... 11 Beth LEOPOLD b: Jun 30, 1969 Altoona PA  
..... 11 David LEOPOLD b: Nov 06, 1973 Altoona PA