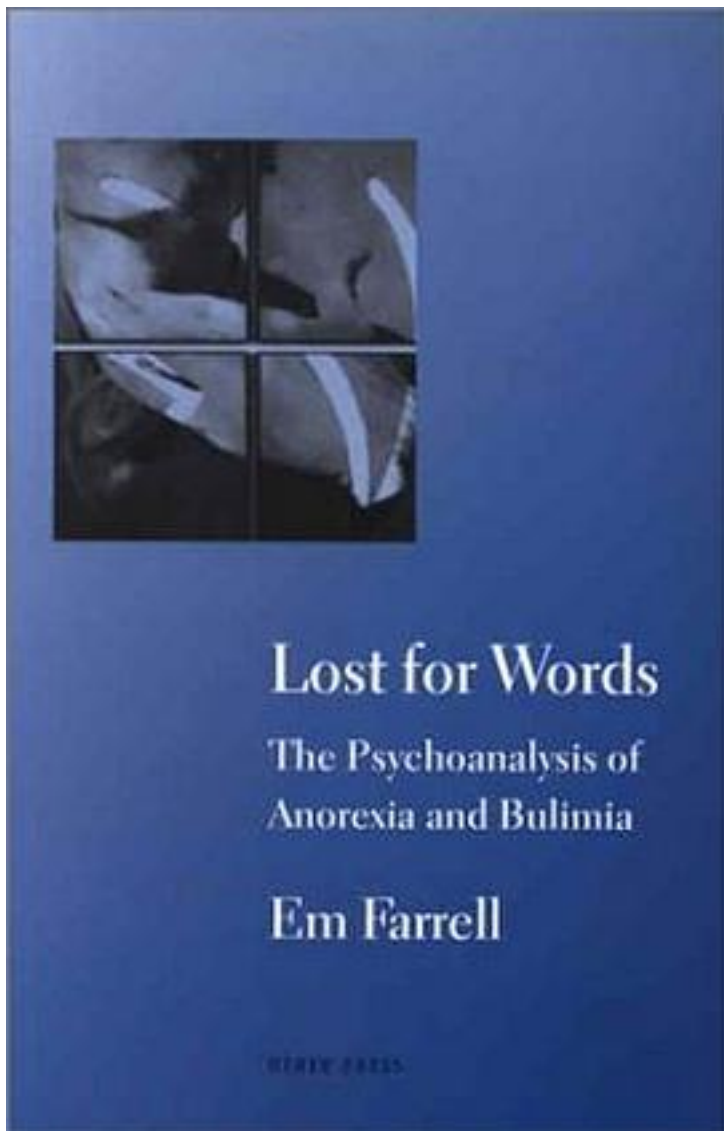


Lost for Words



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出版者:Yale University Press

出版时间:2005-05-10

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780300106992

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) holds a cherished position in English literary culture. Indisputably the greatest dictionary in the language, the story of its creation has become a popular fascination. This book looks at the history of the great first edition of 1928, at the men (and occasionally women) who distilled words and usages from centuries of English writing to capture the spirit of a civilization. The task of the dictionary was to bear full and impartial witness to the language it recorded. But behind the immaculate typography of the finished text, the proofs tell a very different story. This vast archive, unexamined until now, reveals the arguments and controversies over meanings, definitions and pronunciation, and over which words and senses were acceptable and which were not. *Lost for Words* uncovers the fascinating process by which this great dictionary came into being, tracing - through letters and archives - the personal battles involved in charting a constantly changing language. Seeking to determine correct usage, lexicographers reveal themselves vulnerable to the prejudices of their own linguistic preferences and to the influence of contemporary social history.

作者介绍:

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