

CHAPTER ONE

THE VERY THOUGHT

It is almost impossible to imagine the work of thinking, speaking, listening, reading, and writing without stumbling into the history of one's education. The very thought directs a timeless affected world. We may be reminded of how uncertain its certainties felt and then turn to the incalculability of its accidents, mistakes, and unmarked events. Then, too, this transference may multiply disreputable education since, more often than not, education and what becomes of learning tend to be symbolically equated with correction, completion, and with the bringing up of culture, knowledge, and life. Even as we fight against the ways progress is its watchword, goal, vulnerability, and contention, we may find ourselves falling behind. And when memories such as those we felt we had long ago discarded suddenly return what is incomplete in this education, we may find ourselves trying to shrug them off, for, after all, they carry clouds of regret, shame, and even sadness. To wonder how the very thought of this education impresses our desire for meaning, our fantasies of knowledge and the other, our questions of origin and existence, our sense of a profession and its learning, and, from all of this, our relation to the world, imagining this education may find its limit in the capture of compulsory schooling and memories of a child waiting there. It is as if the very thought of education will never let us go beyond what has already happened and so refuses to grow up.

Our childhood of education is one reason the very thought of education cannot seem to leave school and why education feels so concrete. No doubt, compulsory school life—having to grow up there, passing through its grades,

and encountering an avalanche of certainty through its measures of success and failure—configures how we consider literal education. But however adhesive memory life in school turns out to be, the origin of the thought of education cannot be found there. Long before we enter the classroom we have already been written upon by what Hannah Arendt (1993a) simply called “the fact of natality”(61): that we are born and enlivened by our first other’s readings, which leave in its wake our capacity for the transference, nascent interpretations telegraphing our needs, demands, and desires. This impressive education registers our drama of dependency, helplessness, and love, all lost and found in the transference: in hopes for what language, knowledge, and the other can bring. Affected education will take Arendt (1993b) to the problem of beginnings with her claim that “the essence of education is natality, the fact that human beings are *born* into the world” (174). And this will bring us into the paradox that while the needed experience of education somehow forms thought, the very thought of education is difficult to think. The psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion (1997) will make stranger education’s natality when he proposed a constitutive alienation in the name of “wild thoughts,” or “thoughts without a thinker (27).”¹ What could cause the thought of education to take place within us yet leave us feeling as if its events happened without our knowing why?

To bind education to its own unthought, to make a case for the idea that something within education resists thinking, that there is something about education that one knows nothing about, may seem counterintuitive to the project of education since ostensibly, education is a deliberation, a judgment, and, oddly, a result of itself. Yet as both experience and as institution, as training ground and as learning life, and as natality and its repression, people who are both undergoing education as they are directing others in their learning rarely think the thought of education. Instead, they may fall back into their knowledge and its transmission. This is one form of resistance, not to education or what happens to people as they influence one another, but to the incompleteness that education animates and disavows. And nowhere is this tension of incompleteness felt with more force than when we think the thought of education dynamically: as uneven development, as conflict, as promise, and as reparation. To bring into relief the contours of this education leads me to inquire into the particular education of adults: how it is that teachers, university professors, psychoanalysts, philosophers, artists, adult analysts, and even characters from novels confront unconscious life to learn from their inner world and feel that they need to know this world more deeply to overcome inhibitions, interpret reality, and create anew. Our guide to this

world will be “the impossible professions,” a formulation Freud (1925c) first rehearsed when he commented on the creative work of one of his colleagues in education.

Freud saw in the work of psychoanalysis, governance, and education the interminability of trying to influence others who have their own minds and tied these relations to practitioners’ unconscious resistance, to the fact of their natality, and to their psychical life. Education itself will be interminable because it is always incomplete and because it animates our own incompleteness. And one can find “the education of education” within the stammers, conflicts, and dreams of adults who meet their otherness as they encounter the understanding of others. While education then will reference both procedures and unaccountable affects, the registration of education, more often than not, is dissociated from the very thought of education. And nowhere is this problem more poignant than when brought to consideration of the teacher’s world that educates, as she or he is educated. We will see that there is a field called education that typically refers to the training of teachers. Then there is the experience of education that we associate with life’s lessons, the accumulation of knowledge, and maybe the university. How these worlds separate and cut short the ways in which we imagine any education leads me to psychoanalysis, putting the very thought of education—including the one belonging to psychoanalysts—on the couch to invite free association and then read into its congealed matters. I ask readers to entertain the question of what it can mean to think the thought of education as experience, as pedagogy, as affect, as uneven development, as intersubjectivity, and as the basis of the transference and the countertransference. And we will relate these desires for love, recognition, and knowledge to that which resists it: thoughts that we are making too much of education.

The transference and countertransference are concepts worked with throughout this book. The psychoanalytic assumption is that there can be no learning without transference, but since the transference is also a needed obstacle to learning, it is subject to analysis, the work of deconstruction. These terms orient, construct, and obscure an understanding of how communication always conveys the otherness of conscious intent, and so touches a history without origin. The transference and countertransference reach into the problem of how language itself comes to gamble with its objects and our perceptions of them by way of wishes, phantasies, and anxieties and defenses. Imagine these words as characters in a psychoanalytic theater, as a play with the dispersal, force, and transformation of our affected unconscious history punctuated by our conscious attitude toward it. Their form will revive and

revise conflicts of love and hate, transferred when we are with important others, when we fall in love, when we try to make the unfamiliar familiar, when we attempt to understand, and when we try to refind in the world images of our own likeness and difference. And the countertransference will be the educator's reply. The transference and the countertransference are also technical terms to understand psychoanalytic events from the perspective of the logic of affect with the question of what else libidinal ties, ambivalence, and scenes of hate made from being with others unconsciously convey. We can think of the transference and the countertransference as composing and decomposing a history of affected education, condensing and displacing time with what is unconscious.

When a sixty-year-old Freud (1914b) was asked how he came to choose his life work and so began by reflecting on his own schoolboy psychology, he presented a story of his transference to the authority of school and teachers, forever linking the transference to the very thought of education. This led him to notice his love affair with knowledge yet to be learned and his incredulity at having learned again that school still tugged on his mind. His opening remarks can be read as what the transference feels like:

It gives you a queer feeling if, late in life, you are ordered once again to write a school essay. But you obey automatically like the old soldier who, at the word "Attention," cannot help dropping whatever he may have in his hands and who finds his little fingers pressed along the seams of his trousers. It is strange how readily you obey the orders, as though nothing particular had happened in the last half-century. But in fact you have grown old in the interval. (241)

In the next paragraph, Freud comments on the authority of these memories to turn the clock back and so "the present time seemed to sink into obscurity" (241) even as it still manages to affect what is remembered and repeated. Yet the repetition of feelings—in the form of needing to obey—is not the same as the old events now long gone: something more is yet to be understood when one tries to account for one's desire and its remainders, when one tries to think the immaterial material that shapes styles of love and hate, and thus of learning. If our capacity for the transference and the countertransference leaves us with the timeless presence of education, it is also the means for symbolizing how it is that education's return turns us into a child.

So difficult is it to imagine this florid scenery of education, so difficult is it to interpret this transference, that we would rather forget its erotic force. We do not typically begin with how identification with instituted education

threads through our object world to affect what we come to call ethics, responsibility, care, and critique, and to how we feel these experiences internally. We may not often think that what resides within the heart of knowledge we either hold dear or attempt to expel into others is a dormant theory of its truth and, too, unconscious instructions as to how it can be or should be learned or avoided. We may not often associate the thought of education with an unconscious history of our infantile relations to theory, knowledge, and to others and as animated again in any educational relation. We may not often notice what else is communicated by the thought that we do not wish to know anything about it. And yet, for there to be any learning at all, our composition of learning begins with what is not a composition but a potential: existence.

Such an expansive sense of education is usually foreclosed by the very thought of education. More often than not, the very thought of education collapses our capacity to think with the thing-in-itself. How does the thought of this education become so small that it is mainly considered as a matter for instructing the inexperienced and as affecting only the young? Why does the thought of education stall in measures of success and failure? How then did this idea transfer to characterize the ways adults learn a profession or attempt self-understanding? Is there something about being educated, about undergoing education, that incurs our regression to infantile dependency and invites defenses against helplessness? If the experience of education overrides thinking the very thought of education, what problems are then inherited by learning the impossible professions? More simply, when it comes to the very thought of education, what is it like to feel one's beginnings over and over and to receive oneself and be received by others as if one has never had to start life?

We have noticed the difficulty Sigmund Freud had with his school assignment, his love and hate with authority, and his race with what remains timeless about his own time. It seems as though education is the transference and we may spend our lives trying to destroy its authority. Fifty years later, his daughter Anna Freud spoke of her education from the vantage of her teachers' countertransference, how she imagined her teachers saw her. Late in life, Anna Freud (1969) received an honorary degree of Doctor of Science from the Jefferson Medical College Medical School. At the time, she was sixty-nine years old. She was surprised at this unexpected turn of events and continually wondered, "Why me?" In her address upon receiving the honor, Anna Freud returned to her own psychoanalytic education that occurred before there were any established psychoanalytic institutes. Her psychoanalytic education relied

on personal analysis, the seeing of patients, participation in study groups, and in a new psychoanalytic society her father, Sigmund Freud, organized in Vienna. By the time she received this award, Anna Freud would have founded her own curriculum on ego psychology in the British Psychoanalytical Society in London, oversaw and helped translate the collected works of Sigmund Freud, served as senior training analyst, and would continue to be in great demand as a consultant in the applied fields of law, education, and psychology, what Freud saw as “the impossible professions.”

Anna Freud was a teacher by background and a “lay analyst” by profession. She did not have medical training and so represented a side of psychoanalysis unhinged from its authority. Both situations—her background in education and her work in psychoanalysis—may have influenced her humane definition of clinical experience as consisting of “practical contact with human beings” (512), a measure without time, credential, or institution. The Vienna Society, however, could not escape putting back into place the authoritative education of its senior members:

For many years the analytic beginner in the Society was looked down on as “inexperienced.” I remember that even the discussion group which we initiated among ourselves for the exchange of opinions was officially called the “Children’s Seminar,” not because child cases were discussed there, but because the discussants themselves were considered to be in analytic infancy. (513)

We can imagine this space of education made small by the teacher’s countertransference, where students are looked down upon and oddly are introjected into the teacher’s old self only to be projected back into the world in the form of needy infants. Is it the case that, even without a formal school setting, those who come before us have a need to send beginners, and thus their education, back to kindergarten?

Somehow, the idea of lived education becomes “a wild thought,” a frustration that goes on without a thinker. When thoughts of education are not permitted to leave the classroom, a place that cannot think itself into being without our being there, the concept of education loses its allegorical force, its likeness to the transference and the countertransference, and its nonsemblance with the problem of learning to live with others. When education is reduced to its most literal time, it collapses into phantasy and idealization to foreclose our capacity to think the thought of education. Lost as well is the question of why any education is an encounter with what is not yet, an experience with what is most incomplete in us. To think the force of education in this way

permits one to leave behind our relentless repetition of “inexperience” and attend to the problem of what it is to learn from having experience at all. To think the thought of education as a working through of phantasies of education asks a great deal of us since the character of education itself can neither live without reinstituting its own childhood nor leave that which follows from it: the avalanche of complaints, disappointments, narcissistic injuries, and “queer feelings” that all too often collapse the meaning of education with the classroom and its measures of success and failure and experience and inexperience. Without questions, education sinks into melancholia.

We can, however, interpret this case and be curious why it is so, why the idea of education has been so scaled down that it can only refer to what has already happened to us and then what needs to happen to inexperienced others. By putting something one does not want into the past and projecting these anxieties into others, one maintains the false hope that what has already happened no longer has any force to hurt one today. Anna Freud (1995) considered denial as the ego’s defense against its own vulnerable certainty and as a fight with the nature of truth. Indeed, throughout her discussion of ego defenses, she raises the question of whether education must first invite neurosis to even wonder what lessons it could actually teach. We will see how the ego’s defenses, animated by the fact of having to be educated, churn when educating others. We will see how education begins with the anxiety of dependency, helplessness, and fears of separation. This can mean that our defenses against thinking the thought of education, itself a temporary solution, somehow anticipate our educational dangers: dependency and the anxieties of having to relive the profound helplessness of one’s infancy. Here, the fact of natality is a current of emotional life, electrifying the transference and the countertransference to education.

Whereas Anna Freud noted the infantilizing qualities of her analytic education, we can find this repetition of anxiety and defense in the university as well. It usually comes in the form of teaching, for example, when books that might make a difference to how one lives are treated as a still life (*Natura Morta*). Slavitt’s (2007) translation of the Oedipus cycle carries a little warning to his readers. In his preface to Sophocles’s *Theban Plays*, he writes: “I am mindful of the fact that some of the readers of this book may be students to whom it has been assigned. I apologize to them and hope they can somehow overlook that unfortunate compulsion and find ways to respond to Sophocles’ poetry innocently—as if they had come to these pages voluntarily and even eagerly” (x). That education might ruin the Oedipus story is not without irony since Oedipus refused to be educated by the prophecy that he then

accidentally, or unconsciously, carried out. After all, Oedipus was told that he would be king, but only after he murdered his father and married his mother. It was not until he completed the unspeakable that his tragedy could begin and that he could then think about his own hand in life.

Slavitt, however, is suggesting another fate for Oedipus when sent to school. There is a worry that readers who greet Oedipus may turn away from the problem of knowledge. If the tragedy plays through conventional rules of the pedagogical exchange, if the teacher treats the book as a thought without students, the unconscious dilemma of Oedipus will be strangely cut short: Oedipus will be killed off before he can have his terrible education. Our translator may be anxious about this particular transference, not with Oedipus, but with the authority of the classroom. Poor Oedipus may be lost again, and we may repeat a part of his fate, what will come to be called “the passion for ignorance.” Whether there is any innocence to be recovered in our encounter with Oedipus may be a question of a different order; Slavitt’s apology, however, bears witness to our educational misfortunes and the difficulty of becoming a volunteer in the free association of one’s own learning.

Perhaps the largest misfortune that will concern us has to do with what the philosopher Alain Badiou (2005) in his discussion of art and philosophy saw as “the collapse of the pedagogic theme” (7). We have already noted its collapse in trying to symbolize the childhood of education without having to repeat it. The pedagogic theme is one that can hardly accompany the thought of education because, more often than not, pedagogy is presented as the great controlling emissary opposed to its own struggle for symbolization. With the collapse of the pedagogic theme, Badiou was pointing to a loss of faith in the idea of transmission, whether this transmission takes shape through the science of didacticism, the feelings of catharsis, or the philosophical romance with openings, all of which refer to the decline of Western philosophy to think the limits of its own thematic. The pedagogic theme is a condensation made from the idea that education refers to both the teaching of youth and thus is concerned with the problem of the transmission, and to that which ties knowledge to truth, a more intimate transference registering the Eros of encounter and ordering our desire for knowledge. By its nature, the pedagogic theme places knowledge and truth at odds and so contains a constitutive conflict. If the presence of pedagogy is as much a procedure of knowledge as it is a relation to the other, and as such is always entangled in the problem of truth, the transference to education means that knowledge will have to pass through affect, the residue of our questions of love and hate. And when truth attempts to assert itself through disavowing the love that put it into

place, Badiou argues, it is truth that experiences a powerlessness: there is no truth that can be the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Procedures of knowledge will also contain the excess of affect: we meet exceptions, limits, anxieties, and desire.

Badiou imagines education as the link between art and philosophy, since both modes of expression suffer a pedagogical theme. Yet he also sees in art a possibility for education:

Art is pedagogical for the simple reason that it produces truths and because “education” (save in its oppressive or perverted expressions) has never meant anything but this: to arrange forms of knowledge in such a way that some truth may come to pierce a hole in them.

What art educates us for is therefore nothing apart from its own existence. The only question is that of *encountering* this existence, that is, of thinking through a form of thought [*penser une pensée*]. (9)

What educates us is our existence, which is perhaps why Badiou places in scare quotes the concept of education. Another question is hinted at by both Anna Freud and the translator Slavitt. Can education be saved from its perverted and oppressive tendencies, or must the pedagogic theme collapse in order for us to think it?

To encounter existence is another way of speaking about thinking. Badiou’s education appears not as a thought of itself but as thinking thought itself, as existence. And one quality of thinking is that it arranges thought in such a way that doubt bothers knowledge procedures, tears truth with another truth. Here is where the pedagogic theme may collapse into what Slavitt (2007) saw as “that unfortunate compulsion” (x) of education, itself a feature of thought. The paradox comes after the collapse: when we analyze our history of education, we experience uneven development, regression, and repetition and education cannot direct itself to this existence, to what it is like to need education and to think what happens to thought within its own unfolding. What collapses this theme is education’s forgetting of its own natality.

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEMATICS

Our theme involves the concept of education with the intimate problem of trying to encounter affected and affecting existence as our transference to learning to live. For psychoanalysis, education is both a human condition and the means to symbolize our conditions. It is both a force of depression and its antidepressant. Yet education poses a dilemma for psychoanalysis because

however different these fields of practice are, however much psychoanalysis is concerned with freeing the mind from our educational illness, psychoanalysis is not immune from its own education. Conceptions of education will also be the psychoanalyst's illness, even as its therapeutic mode attempts to propose an education without authority or suggestion. With the help of Badiou's view of art, we will try to grasp the concept of education wherever it can be lost and found, and, indeed, claim that the refinding of education is predicated on its loss and negation. There will be conflicts in judgment's polarities, a fight between objectivity and subjectivity and between affirmation and destruction, and an odd thought called negation that comments on not thinking (Freud 1925b). Thus, a deep dilemma for any education will concern how to symbolize its work of refinding its lost objects.

To think the thought of education, I draw upon philosophy, literature, and psychoanalysis. Literature serves as my third term, used to open questions of loss, desire, and freedom. Since literature cannot be in charge of itself but charges us to think, a theory of reading will be needed to contain the problem of resistance to these subjective adventures. From psychoanalytic speculations, beginning with Freud and moving on to the formulations of the mind created by the object relations' theories of Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott, and Wilfred Bion, we will explore the unworldly world of love and hate in thinking. On occasion, one of the psychoanalysts who had a great deal of criticism toward the epistemology of psychoanalytic education, Jacques Lacan, will be given his due. The field of psychoanalysis will also be pressured, with understandings of subjectivity drawn from philosophers, novelists, poets, and musicians, from the vantage of their creative dilemmas and inhibitions. This approach not only places psychoanalysis in the world of others but also opens psychoanalytic views to its own potential literary education. Education, then, will serve as the fragile bond and the transitional space. There, in its various guises and in confrontation with art, education will lead us to the problem of learning to live from conflicts among love, hate, and ambivalence, affects of great force and persuasion needed to think. Affects without their symbolization are also where thought collapses, since they entangle need, demand, and desire with a terrible absence. Our greatest pedagogical theme will then collapse with the question of affect and from this ruin we will consider the urge toward reparation.

I have mentioned a few times, the conception of education, the thought of education, and thinking education. These conditions and points of vulnerability all turn on the question of emotional pain. Bion (1993a) understands thinking to be secondary to the advent of thoughts and, as noted earlier, he

considered thoughts without a thinker from the vantage of “wild thoughts.” He also believes this problem is insolvable and thus can only be met with care, humility, and curiosity. In Bion’s view, thinking contains the emotional pain of thoughts, but also is the means for tolerating affect. Bion classified thoughts into three areas: preconceptions, or innate ideas, conceptions, or the linking of preconceptions to a realization or satisfaction, and concepts, having to do with a greater freedom of symbol formation. Concepts open elaboration, metaphor, reverie, and creativity. They come after. On this view thoughts impose themselves on the mind and thinking is the apparatus for digesting thoughts. “I repeat,” Bion writes, “thinking has to be called into existence to cope with thoughts” (111). Bion sees thoughts as akin to the frustration of trying to know something unknown at the precise point where one must also encounter absence. The choice is stark: one either thinks thoughts or evacuates them.

Along with Arendt’s (1993a) understanding of natality, thinking, and responsibility, the philosopher of modern critical theory, Theodor Adorno, who wrote on art, philosophy, and music, will be used as counterpoints to psychoanalytic views. Both wrote passionately about education and its responsibility. Like Arendt, Adorno (1998) writes with force about the destruction left in the wake of the evacuation of frustration: when the human destroys her or his own capacity to think humanely and exchanges this vulnerability for instrumental reason. Adorno, however, never spoke of infant development. He never noted, for instance, what the infant or child needed from others to become a proper human. Except for his letters to friends and family and his recently published dreams, Adorno rarely spoke of parents—the mother and father’s love, or the son’s disappointments and fears. Yet Adorno was concerned, even obsessed, with the problem of uneven development and our tendency toward regression to an archaic state: not of infancy, for the infant cannot know its own duration and, as Arendt saw it, infancy represents both our beginnings and reception into an already made world of others. In her sense, the infant is the original stranger and the question is whether adults could tolerate the vulnerable nature of this being.

Adorno’s notion of what we could call backward development leaned on the psychoanalytic idea of thoughtlessness, a terrible identification with and projection of the destruction of the death drive. The regression he spoke of was cultural and found its home in education: that whole societies could enact a horror of the other, regressing to what he saw as an archaic state of superstition, then murderous rampage in the name of totalitarianism and fascism. The human, he insisted, was subject to inhumanity. Adorno’s (1998)

picture of development then begins with the devastating occurrence of adult regression—not to an earlier state—but to a terrible aggression where nothing would matter. And while he made this argument in many of his essays, his most devastating critique came under the title, “Education after Auschwitz.” And this will lead him to pressure education: “The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again” (191). The essay drew from Freud’s (1930/1929) *Civilization and Its Discontents* with the view that the speakable and the unspeakable go hand in hand and that it is the responsibility of education to symbolize these conflicts rather than repeat them.

While these philosophers saw the world in education, the psychoanalysts saw in the internal world something unworldly. Bion gave his attention to the paradox of internal frustration—whether it is tolerated or evaded and as that which ushers in the need to think and the force that destroys thinking. He owes a great deal to the theories of Melanie Klein who saw frustration, or what she called “phantasies,” as conveying an original anxiety and defenses against this as the reason for why thinking is associated with mental pain. While Klein’s views are discussed more fully in chapters three, four, and seven, her understanding of the relation between the infant and mother as the basis of psychical life, and so of object relations carried on and elaborated throughout one’s life, are introduced here to raise startling questions of what it feels like to think at all.

Klein’s (1937) turn to the infant, she maintained, was one way for her to “study the interaction of all the various forces which go to build up this most complex of all human emotions which we call love” (57). The mother is the first object of the infant’s love and hate and Klein believed that the infant’s urge for love is first felt through the bodily experience of satisfaction from the breast and that this experience begins the infant’s capacity for phantasies of goodness. Phantasies of badness are made when the infant feels the mother’s absence: no breast. This anxiety is the infant’s reality and these phantasies feel as if they make the world, even as this anxiety fragments the world into bits and pieces. Klein (1937) simply termed this ongoing struggle as “the emotional situation of the baby” (58).

Klein’s (1952) later description of what is emotional about this emotional world is vivid and shocking, specifically when she imagines the raging infant caught in its own riotous phantasies of frustration and hatred:

In his destructive phantasies he bites and tears up the breast, devours it, annihilates it; and he feels that the breast will attack him in the same way. As urethral- and anal-sadistic impulses gain in strength, the infant in his mind attacks the breast with poisonous urine and explosive faeces, and therefore

expects it to be poisonous and explosive toward him. The details of his sadistic phantasies determine the content of his fear of internal and external persecutors, primarily of the retaliating (bad) breast. (63)

Klein believed these first horrific impressions of the infant were permanent, in the sense that our human situation is always emotional, that it mirrors our bodily helpless, which feels persecutory, and that it is absolutely beholden to the other's love. So original is the force of conflicts between goodness and love, and badness and hate, that they compose the internal world and set it to work with phantasies of destruction, anxieties over loss of love, archaic defenses against pain, and feelings of guilt and gratitude. Almost inexplicably—from such remorse and anguish, from a constitutive negativity—a desire for reparation will emerge. Klein will see this movement as the depressive position and the form it will take is symbolization, the gradual capacity to differentiate phantasy from the whole object. But because symbolization leans on absence, every perception, every blink of the eye, will pose the question of mourning or melancholia. Tolerating the emotional pain of existence will usher in the depressive position: feelings of pining, sadness, and loss joined with desires for love, reparation, and gratitude.

Yet before symbolization there is the power of bodily affect and what absence feels like. Joan Riviere (1964) put such feelings into memorable words:

The baby cannot distinguish between 'me' and 'not-me'; his own sensations are his world, the world to him; so when he is cold, hungry or lonely there is no milk, no well-being or pleasure in the world—the valuable things in life have vanished. And when he is tortured with desire or anger, with uncontrollable, suffocating screaming, and painful, burning evacuations, the whole of his world is one of suffering; it is scalded, torn and racked too. . . . It is our first experience of something like death, a recognition of the non-existence of something, of an overwhelming loss, both in ourselves and in others, as it seems. And this experience brings an *awareness of love* (in the form of desire), and a *recognition of dependence* (in the form of need), at the same moment as, and inextricably bound up with, feelings and uncontrollable sensations of pain and threatened destruction within and without. (9)

From these bodily affects, both Klein and Riviere brought to our consideration a genealogy of love and an understanding that to love is to come into existence.

While Klein (1930) will speak a great deal about tolerating the actual world, in her discussion of the work of symbol formation, she considered these early phantasies of destruction and reparation as the means for developing a

sense of reality: "As the ego develops, a true relation to reality is gradually established out of this unreal reality. . . . A sufficient quantity of anxiety is the necessary basis for an abundance of symbol-formation and of phantasy; an adequate capacity on the part of the ego to tolerate anxiety is essential if anxiety is to be satisfactorily worked over" (221).

The paradox Klein presents the baby with is that to encounter reality there must first be something that is not reality. Reality goes on without us, is painful to encounter, and, in this sense, may be linked to an original absence. To approximate any meaning will be to know one's emotional relation to reality and to retroactively symbolize that encounter. Yet this work depends on phantasies that also set meanings loose from the confines of the thing. These procedures are a part of reality itself since reality never stays the same and, if it does, then there is no reality at all. And so a great deal of the ego's work will be a working through or tolerating both the loss of the world as it wished it to be and feeling the anxiety that signals absence and the ego defenses. In Klein's view, and in much of what follows from it, thinking will be conceptualized as the creative transformation of affect into symbolization. And symbolization, or putting things into words, will be our greatest substitute for the original object and thus our most enigmatic resource.

The work of Klein and Bion on the emotional meaning and poetics of thinking thoughts and the understanding that thinking involves emotional pain revised Freud's view of how we come to think at all. Freud (1911) thought of this conflict through the divisions made between pleasure and reality. In his "Formulations on Two Principles of Mental Functioning" Freud described our earliest attempts to think our thoughts through primary and secondary processes made from the movements of pleasure and unpleasure and an encounter with what he called the reality principle. The large question for Freud concerned the action of "turning away from reality" (218), but also how we come to know the world and judge the difference between experience and event if thinking begins within the primary processes, or the "[*Lust-Unlust*] principle . . . the pleasure principle" (219). At the origin of thought, Freud placed a wish for pleasure into a hallucination of satisfaction. This wish is inevitably disappointed, and so another method will be used to form what Freud called a conception of the world beyond the wish. The baby will cry out for the other. In the name of pleasure, bodily action will then be the next attempt to affect one's world. The conflict between phantasy or hallucination and the need for satisfaction will set in motion a new principle: "what was presented in the mind was no longer what was agreeable but what was real, even if it happened to be disagreeable. This setting-up of the *reality*

principle proved to be a momentous step” (219). What is momentous is that consciousness of the world comes into being from the wish for this world, a wish that is in some way a defense against what Freud called “motor discharge” (221) or the bodily force of affect: cries, screams, kicking, pushing away, and clinging, but also holding, grabbing, listening, and looking. These bodily actions that insist on presence are eventually, through symbol formation, transformed into what is most abstract about us: thinking thoughts and accepting psychological reality as an enigmatic wish to communicate without knowing what this communication brings. Thinking is how the body tolerates its needs, wants, and desires; it is the means for symbolizing absence and refinding the lost object.

When Freud placed the conflict between pleasure and reality principles as the basis of mental functioning, he made a relation to a nonrelation, and so kept thinking close to the *as if* world of imagination. His description of thinking says as much: thinking as “an experimental kind of acting” (221). What comes before this experiment, however, is its combustible material: the loss of the object, anxiety, hallucination, bodily affect, and doubts over ever refinding that first experience of satisfaction and bliss. As a part of the same mental process, thinking and phantasizing become “our weak spot” (223) because both emerge from anxiety over loss of the object, touching unpleasure and cueing the ego defenses. The eventual conflict that thinking will catch itself in is this: “Just as the pleasure-ego can do nothing but wish, work for a yield of pleasure, and avoid unpleasure, so the reality-ego need do nothing but strive for what is useful and guard itself against damage” (223). The perpetual trouble, however, is that what is useful and what incurs damage cannot be known in advance, that reason itself will be on the side of ego defenses and the negation of them, and that the reality ego will always experience uncertainty over meaning as it tries to refind its lost objects. Thinking, then, will never be so far way from the absence that calls it forth.

One curious turn concludes Freud’s essay on these two mental principles and, in my view, interferes with the essay’s circuitous meanings and Freud’s thinking about thinking. He leaves his study of the internal world to comment on the conflict between art and education, as if to say the same dynamics of interiority repeat in the objects of perception, in our creative work, in our knowledge procedures, and in the institutions we place into the external world. Yet the repetition is never the same since our own self-difference cannot be completed by what we put into the world. With this idea of repetition, Freud’s narrative style breaks into a list that introduces otherness into the heart of the reality principle: sexuality, neurosis, and the unconscious. The

unconscious will be the scene of all havoc, affecting even the work of writing it into a sentence:

(8) The strangest characteristic of unconscious (repressed) processes, to which no investigator can become accustomed without the exercise of great self discipline, is due to their entire disregard of reality-testing; they equate reality of thought with external actuality, and wishes with their fulfillment—with the event—just as happens automatically under the dominance of the ancient pleasure principle. (225)

So measures of reality suffer from symbolic equation, leading Freud to remark on the nature of the inquiry: “One is bound to employ the currency that is in use in the country one is exploring—in our case, neurotic currency” (225). Just as the very thought of education is about to enter Freud’s essay, he seems to imply that to explore the nature of our reality we must use its neurotic currency to exchange it with something better, an education that no longer needs its neurotica.

Freud will place art on the side of the pleasure principle; it need not obey any rules of reality and so frees itself to create possibility. Yet he will also insist that art does something with the reality principle that makes it pleasurable since the artist’s phantasies “are molded into truths of a new kind . . . as precious reflections of reality” (224). Education does not have this flexibility and Freud places it on the side of attempting to instill the reality principle. Yet, in so doing, education creates for itself a new contradiction because of how the reality principle comes to be a principle at all. While education tries to side with reality, what brings the reality principle to our side is the promise of refinding love, which then disturbs our perception of reality. Freud left us a clue as to a constitutive impossibility of education, a kernel of which will disorient education and become caught in the throat of an impossible profession:

Education can be described without more ado as an incitement to the conquest of the pleasure principle, and to its replacement by the reality principle; it seeks, that is, to lend its help to the developmental process which affects the ego. To this end it makes use of an offer of love as a reward from the educators; and it therefore fails if a spoilt child thinks that it possesses that love in any case and cannot lose it whatever happens. (224)

The problem is that education is not a conquest of reality but only a fragile tie to the uncertainties reality entails. It cannot proceed without the transference love, yet its procedures are vulnerable to the educator’s pleasure principle, the countertransference.

Freud, Klein, and Bion leave us with the great problem of what it can mean to think at all and whether education is a solution or a problem. Each will bind thinking to a frustration, a wish, a lost object, and an object relation. Adorno will remind us of the traumatic collapse and art will serve as our radical hope. Each will suggest that thinking is a working through of that which resists yet is in need of symbolization in order to think. Love and hate will never be so far away, nor will our wishes to do away with the mental pain incurred from trying to know what can bring satisfaction. But without the wish to know, there will be no thinking at all. These are also the dilemmas made from education's offer of love. It cannot be unconditional because love is vulnerable to education and to the transference that makes it absurd. All that education has to give is the offer of the transference (Kohon 2005). The wish to know will also be where the pedagogical theme will collapse. As for the educator's paradox, it begins in a confusion of time. The educator was once a child with frustrated thoughts and fears over loss of love and is now in the position to frustrate others with an offer of love that cannot really be given without incurring loss, anxiety, defenses, and phantasies. Could it be that education, like psychoanalysis, is an attempt to cure by love?

LINES OF INQUIRY

In the chapters that follow, education will have a psychic life through transference and countertransference and a social life with its impossible insistence on adapting to reality. Sometimes education will appear as instituted education: schools, training institutes, and pedagogical exchange. At other times, education will take shape between the play of mothers and infants, where both will be subject to a future they cannot know but nonetheless, in their different ways, anticipate and act upon. The strangest education will take place in the psychoanalytic session: as catharsis, as mystery, as transference and countertransference, and as a love of language. The education we cannot know but that nonetheless insists will be associated with the unconscious. This will be our most accidental education and will contain resistance to learning. We will see education struggle with its unnameable qualities; times when what is unspeakable within its procedures destroys its promise for a future and leaves in its wake a terrible betrayal. This "bad education" will certainly be the problem in chapter three, a meditation on reading a novel, where education itself contains a phantasy of murdering its students, and where teachers resign themselves to their passion for ignorance, to not wanting to know anything about it.

We will also see that education is affected by the desire of the educator, yet this presents a problem for how we come to know our educational acts as distinct from and in conflict with the wishes they presuppose. Chapter five will consider this dilemma through the psychoanalytic concept of the countertransference and the problem will be reformulated in chapter seven with a focus on the status of conflict in learning the impossible professions. In both chapters, responsibility becomes caught in cycles of blame, guilt, and anxiety over fault and accountability. We will also see that the educator is a figure of learning as much as she or he symbolizes the procedures of knowledge. Here is where psychoanalysis enters with its question of where responsibility begins and how it comes about, taking as its focus the capacity, interest, and resistance created within the relationship between psychical life and the actual world. We will ask: what does our capacity for symbolization mean for recognition and self-understanding? The ways in which understanding the self and the world come about in this scene compose our first difficulty: we feel before we learn and affect carries a desire for its own truth, following the logic of the pleasure/unpleasure binary. Uneven development is the concern of chapter two, where the focus is on the education of teachers.

Thinking within psychoanalysis, just as thinking the thought of education, begins with the problem of resistance, or turning away. We have glimpsed why the thought of education is difficult to think, but now need to ask how psychoanalysis, as well, may appear as “a thought without a thinker.” Four obstacles to thinking psychoanalytically in any education will illustrate the problem. The most obvious one is that psychoanalysis is actively avoided, even in psychoanalytic institutes. We will see how these avoidances constitute a commentary on the limits of our preconceptions of education as opposed to characterizing the problem of whether there can be a psychoanalytic conception of education that can analyze its own unfolding.

A second obstacle is intimate and has to do with what it can mean to represent the emotional force of education: what it feels like, the avalanche of worries involved, the sudden responsibilities entailed, and the convoluted relations that teachers and students and analysts and analysands find themselves entangled in and at times defeated by. Any attempt made to stabilize the object and the subject can be considered as a defense against the registration of difference that education brings and that psychoanalysis must posit (Bass 2000). The irony psychoanalysis proposes is that its words at once acknowledge our erotic ties—through the psychoanalytic terms of the transference, identification, and empathy, for example—and sensitize our need to resist them. Yet our terms for understanding cannot be known once and for all

and this means that psychoanalysis as well is subject to its own unknown. Our third obstacle to psychoanalysis is internal. It involves the double idea that language itself may act therapeutically and that it may also collapse into a concreteness that forecloses the difference needed for the capacity to think. Some of these dilemmas are discussed in chapter six, through Freud's work with artists during times of war when the body censors words and so turns into inhibition in creativity: writer's block, arm paralysis, and stage fright.

Our fourth obstacle: psychoanalysis itself poses the greatest difficulty to thinking psychoanalytically. It founders on its own collapse of the pedagogical theme. We glimpsed the internal resistance of psychoanalysts to their own knowledge through Anna Freud's psychoanalytic education, when her teachers felt they needed to look down on her beginnings and where no matter how she expressed her interests, her teachers could only hear a child speak. This internal resistance to psychoanalysis forms the backdrop of chapter seven in which the drama of learning an impossible profession is staged and the question raised is whether any education can analyze its own unfolding.

Neither psychoanalysis nor education can come into being without their respective obstacles and conflicts and thus without our divided self. And nowhere is the problem of learning, thinking, and teaching more compellingly addressed than in psychoanalytic thought, specifically from the vantage of its clinical work and the questions that follow from it. How does a theory of learning become an experiment in therapeutics? Two lines of inquiry emerge from this question. In terms of the clinic, how does psychoanalytic theory affect its own practices and the analyst's conceptualization of the work? The interminable problem is whether the uniqueness of the psychoanalytic encounter can be maintained to affect its theories of the mind, the theorist's mind, and the transference of theory. The tension resides in the anxieties of theory and practice, how this conflict is symbolized, and whether the defense of splitting them into opposing forces continues to require us to take one side only to destroy our need for both. Just as our theories of life posit the difference among our actions in the world, our wishes for meaning, and what becomes of them, theory is that which pokes a hole in experience. Practice is not immune. It pokes a hole in itself through its own knowledge procedures, through what is unknowable in the truth it attempts to put into place. What is left is the hope that words matter. They promise a gap between the symbol and the thing and may betray that promise of containing the unknown. Words serve as a substitute for what cannot be present, yet nonetheless their own force must remind us of absence. But how do words matter to their own theory? Chapter three is a story of words that act like copycats. Chapter four

describes this problem from the vantage of learning psychology in the midst of a collapse of the pedagogic theme.

Whereas our first line of inquiry concerns what could be called the psychic life of education from the vantage of its logic of affect and the phantasies that represent it, a second line will follow the psychoanalytic clinic into the clinic of education. We will see how the language of clinical psychoanalysis lends a hand to clarifying what our minds make of learning from the vantage of the impossible professions. Psychoanalytic narratives link education to the beginning of life, when communication promises satisfaction before understanding. This attuned mistiming, what may later be thought of as needed accidents, is continued throughout life; such uncertainty may have led Freud to his paradoxical formulation of education as one of the impossible professions. These professions have a common interminability—their education. They will always be needed and this need for them will constitute and be constitutive of the radical incompleteness in their practices and theories.

The idea that a profession is impossible proposes to link the limits of practice to the complexity and uncertainty of its subjects. After all, the human professions have as their object others who are subjects. It is an intersubjective world we cannot know in advance of its event since its qualities are unstable, unrepeatable, and capable of movement, transformation, fixation, and regression. These professions are subject to both their own mind and to the minds of others that they cannot read. They are subject to their own secret thinking and to thoughts without a thinker. The reason these different histories of learning render these professions so impossible is that their theories and practices repeat the very difficulties of the subject/object divide made from the principles of mental functioning. If we stay close to Freud's admission of the impossible professions, we can also bring into this formulation problems within the education of the professions. What may be most impossible is the education of the impossible professions, particularly as the transference to education, because those who carry out the education of others convey both the experience of their own education and their experience of what is impossible in the profession itself.

What happens when we approach an education we have already had and the one not yet experienced as composing a quality of the impossible professions? Lacan's (1998a) formulation of the impossible posits a gap between demand and desire. Whereas when one makes a demand it appears to have its own object (namely, the other's attention), the field of desire is atmospheric, without an object. Desire, then, is only the desire to desire, yet without this desire the subject turns itself into an object. Consequently, impossibility is