

Introduction

Toward a Psychoanalytic Inquiry of Learning

If the other is not to be sold off, it must be
sought incognito, among lost things.

—Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*

The definition of education we will grapple with is one that startles in difficulty and implication. It belongs to Anna Freud, known for her attempts to consider in tandem the demands of psychoanalysis and the demands of education. She takes the child's point of view, arguing that education wants something from the child: "Step by step education aims at the exact opposite of what the child wants, and at each step it regards as desirable the very opposite of the child's inherent instinctual strivings."¹ The wishes of education clash with the wishes of the child. As Miss Freud gradually comes to reach her startling definition of education, she names the relation between the teacher and the student "a never-ending battle" (101). Here we have the institutional drama of teaching and learning as it plays out through the intimate staging of attention, affection, surprise, and chance. Learning and teaching, it turns out, are epic in their force, pressure, twists, reversals and returns. Anna Freud's punch line is that education can be defined as all types of interference. And perhaps from the point of view of the educator—who, after all, was also a child—the definition itself is felt as interference.

This would not be the first time psychoanalytic discussion has seized upon a notion of interference as a volatile and organizing dynamic. Indeed, one might read the entire psychic topology of the ego, the id, and the superego as variations on this theme. We will bring this interference to education as well.

Throughout the chapters of this book, I will be drawing primarily upon the course of such analysts as Sigmund Freud and Anna Freud, bringing their views to contemporary educational problems in an encounter with “difficult knowledge” to explore what psychoanalysis offers to education. We will explore continually the question, the status, and the directionality of interference. We will do so through the play of affect and its attachments, primarily focusing upon love and hate in learning, as we consider the movements, mingling, and force of two simultaneous directions that are difficult to distinguish from one another even as they collapse into one another: the inside or the psychic, and the outside or the social. Before moving on to these troublesome discussions, the thought of education as constituting all types of interference requires some explanation. With what am I comparing this view?

When one attempts to define education, the following associations may take center stage: change, progress, betterment, advancement. We find these terms both in radical and in conservative views, for it is almost impossible to separate the arguments over social engineering, nation building, and economics from the wishes and the institutions of education. We might add that education wishes to be deliberate—conscious really—and that its design and institutional form proceed from the assumption of building incremental knowledge upon the edifice of the learner. That bits and pieces of knowledge may be terrorizing to students and teachers and that the commonly accepted view that learning proceeds from simplicity to complexity may not be comforting, is hardly thought. Instead the big stage of education attempts to build the little stage of individual development. These chapters do not engage this all-too-common story of normal development. The notion of development at work here is far more unruly and fragile. We shall define development, along Anna Freud’s lines of development, as “new editions of very old conflicts” (88).

It would be foolish to insist that education does not make a difference in the lives people live or that knowledge does not matter. But it also would be foolish not to question what sort of difference works within the difference of education. One central difference can be found in Raymond Williams’ dictionary entry on “educated,” which engages with the social tensions from which education is made.² Williams argues that the definition of modern education could emerge only when an idea of “uneducated” became thinkable. More directly, it was through the legislation of compulsory education that the categories of educated/uneducated began to circulate in public discourse. This distinction is now central to contemporary definitions of education that rely upon rationality, certainty, measurement, and control. There must be, in this view, a certain knowledge and a certainty in knowledge, that can be recognized, developed, examined, and urged through incremental measurement, grading schemes, age distribution, and diplomas, and that rest upon fantasies of what every educated person should know.³ The wish is that how one learns, what one learns, and why one learns may be consciously deliberated and controllable, and that, if learning does not occur,

that too may be explained and corrected (or at least that the failure will be accompanied by a suitable category to contain it). This condensed wish makes it almost impossible to separate the question of education from the will to power, the desire for mastery, and the quest for an omnipotent knowledge unencumbered by psychological life.

Whereas Raymond Williams had in mind the burgeoning educational apparatus of the late nineteenth century, our consideration will be how education might be imagined in the twilight of our own. We are not concerned with building a bridge to the new century as much as with placing into question the contingent arrangements of time in learning. But with this trope of time, of what becomes in retrospect a certain historicity, we can ask why the wish that condenses education with mastery has not gone away, even as many do acknowledge that the wish for mastery has gone away. The recognition that the insistence upon mastery raises as many problems as it attempts to settle may partly explain why across the different scenes of institutional education, even in those disciplines whose historical movements have denied their implication in the education of children and in the discipline of education, the subject of pedagogy has emerged as the new object of incitement. The field of education and the fields of humanities and social sciences are preoccupied with the promise and dangers of pedagogy.

In the social sciences and humanities, the turn to pedagogy indicates an acknowledgment that the dilemmas of the university classroom and of what becomes of knowledge in that space are too big to ignore. Specifically, this is a question for university classrooms that center the contested histories of civil rights, identity politics, social change, and cultural discontentment. Various texts, in which pedagogy appears as politics, as culture war, as impersonation, as that which is coming to an end, as deconstruction, as borders, as machine, and as in ruins return to that primal classroom scene to sort through the miniature deliberations between educational design and social justice.⁴ Their arguments vary widely in metaphor, in theoretical stance, in appeal, and in remedy, but they all seem to share an underlying thematic anxiety that continues the long debate over which knowledge is important for which social subjects. And while this critical literature continues to press for new forms of signification offering subjects new narratives for conceptualizing the world, its centering of knowledge, however inadvertently, sustains through reversal the binary pointed out by Raymond Williams between the educated and the uneducated. Not surprisingly, figures of consciousness—whether in the form of the teacher, the student, or the text—loom large in discussions over critical issues in higher education such as power, authority, and agency. But in centering consciousness and in critiquing the normative force of institutional education, we have not yet left a notion of development as progress, nor have we centered the primal scene of learning. Lost in the fault lines of debates on knowledge is the question of education as psychic event.⁵ What else happens when the subject that is the learner meets and uses the object that is

knowledge? Shall we admit that something other than consciousness interferes with education?

Educational studies seem to take a different tact even as, in their maneuvers, they end with the same plea. Their preoccupation is still the question of incremental knowledge, as if the time of education could set precisely the time of learning. Their assumptions are still that learning proceeds by way of direct apprehension, that experience is always conscious experience, and that identity organizes political consciousness. We can find the same insistence upon the need to fix the learner through the centering of identity, the focus upon the building of self-esteem, and the offering of role models and heroes. Perhaps for the sake of polemics, but certainly to draw attention to the issues of violence in education, some studies refuse to distinguish the arbitrary violence of the street from the defensive and aggressive dynamics of the classroom. And it seems as though the only audiences that can be imagined are those who are in agreement with such remedies and those who refuse them. The proposed remedies and narrative styles constitute an attempt to make visible the significant exclusions and monocultural prejudices that largely structure educational encounters throughout North America. Still, what cannot be thought about in this literature is that more is at stake than beginners and that education does not solely reside in the teacher's efforts, the good curriculum, and the question of locating the source of empowerment.⁶

Education is best considered as a frontier concept: something between the teacher and the student, something yet to become. The work of learning is not so much an accumulation of knowledge but a means for the human to use knowledge, to craft and alter itself. But as we shall see throughout this volume, the view of the human psychoanalysis offers to education is difficult and fragile. Analyst Michael Balint poses the human as "an intimate mixture of extremes" made from the conditions of growing up. Balint names three extremes: "(1) extreme dependence [upon others]; (2) extreme bliss—the satisfied child is still the prototype of happiness; and, (3) extreme swings of emotion from love to hate, from complete confidence to dire suspicion or paralyzing fear."⁷ These, it will be argued throughout, are also the extremes of learning, of history, of the social bonds, and of love. As dynamics, these extremes repeat in epistemology in the very construction and use of knowledge. And like matters of love, this strange mixture of extremes cannot, as Freud suggests, "be measured by the same standards as other things; it is as though they were written on a page by themselves which would not take any other script."⁸

New, unacknowledged problems emerge, having to do with the question of how one learns from one's own difficulties and pleasures in learning as one learns as well something from the difficulties and pleasures of others. By not admitting this tension, the advocacies of educational studies still seem lopsided, weighed down by the force of the social bearing down upon subjects, even as this work also contributes to discussions of feminist pedagogy, antiracist curriculum,

and multicultural education. However, given that strange mixture of extremes, even when the weight of the social is acknowledged, there is no easy measure as to how its burdens and obstacles are noticed, felt, and used. One of the most puzzling effects of these progressive initiatives, that must now be addressed, is that these transformatory gestures are implicated in the repressed of resistance, resentment, and accusation. New editions of the old educated/uneducated conflict return, this time in the guise of high and low consciousness.

When all these fields are considered most generally, when education *writ large* questions its relation to social justice with the suggestion that education can be made from the proper teacher, the proper curriculum, or the proper pedagogy so that learning will be no problem to the actors involved, we might note that for there to be a learning there must be conflict within learning. In this view, we have changed the directionality of interference: from interference that bears down upon the learner to those within the learner. Learning is a problem, but it has to do with something other than the material of pedagogy. We might begin to pry apart the conditions of learning from that which conditions the desire to learn and the desire to ignore. We might wonder how one comes to be susceptible to the call of ideas. Within this other space, we might think of learning as a dynamic psychical event, made from our capacity for extremes. What seems lost in these very different discussions on pedagogy is the sense that learning is a relearning of one's history of learning—new editions of old conflicts—and that it is precisely this unconscious force that renders the work of learning so difficult in intimacy and in public. If learning is a relearning and hence an unlearning of old strategies (as opposed to a repetition of one's own history of learning in the guise of new strategies), then the questions at stake in educational efforts are simultaneously those that can think the force of history within the force of learning. The chapters that follow reside within such contradictions by setting into tension instances of cultural history embodied in a series of debates within communities with comments on psychic histories embodying that other debate, the world of internal conflicts. What attaches the psychical to the social and the social to the psychical are matters of love and hate in learning. Each of the chapters that follow meditates on this interminable "inside/outside" encounter, an encounter here named "education." The question of interference, then, raises something more: How does education live in people and how do people live in education?

Any notion of education depends upon a theory of knowledge, but one of the central arguments in this text is that such a theory must begin within the tensions exercised when the knowledge offered through pedagogy meets the knowledge brought to pedagogy. These are the passionate tensions of love and hate, of learning to love and of love of learning. Within this exercise, yet another sort of history must be admitted: that of the unconscious. When ontology meets epistemology, when the subject of education can be extended to what is barely perceptible but still exerts its own force, the appearance of education can become complicated by its own others: the incognito, the unapparent, the contested,

indeed the “what else” and the “elsewhere” of learning. In positing education as a question of interference (as opposed to an engineered development), we have a very different epistemology and ontology of actions and actors: one that insists that the inside of actors is as complicated as the outside, and that this combination is the grounds of education. Not only does the world impinge cruelly upon the subject, and not only does the subject’s inner world constitute the be-all of understanding and misunderstanding: the subject lives both dilemmas in ways that cannot be predicted, authorized by another, or even deliberately planned and separated.

“The distinction,” writes analyst Andre Green, “between external and internal reality is basic yet vague. Internal reality is not just the reality of the wish, it is also the reality of the body as a place of need. External reality is also not so simple.”⁹ We are back to the intimate question of interference, but now as a sort of frontier between the wish and the need, between the social body and the physical body. Such vagueness itself makes distinction a question. For while the body must secure its boundaries, it can do so only through attachment. If it is the desire to attach—to touch and to be touched—that inaugurates the subject, this inchoate desire, as we shall see, makes our subject and its distinctions fragile. Neither internal nor external reality is simple. To tolerate this insight is just the beginning of what Freud calls “working through” or learning.

We have a view of our subject and a view of learning that raise interminable questions: If education is all types of interference, can one even point to an originary moment? With what does education interfere? What interferes with education? What types of interference can we consider, and how much interference becomes felt as too much? What desires structure the demands to interfere? Is there a difference between the ways a subject interferes with herself and the ways education interferes with the subject? Can there be an ethic of interference? And if the sorts of interference in which we are interested concern the questions of the psychical and social dynamics of love and hate in learning, how do these forces interfere with the subject of education, however defined?

More Interference

The questions offered above are set in motion, and bothered by, psychoanalytic insight. So far, we have been grappling with a characterization of the inside and outside of education and of the stakes opened when education is defined as constituting all types of interference. Now we must turn to a different movement of interference: the interference within the subject. In psychoanalytic views, the most incredible interference is, oddly, the most indirect. And this indirection seems to shape how Sigmund Freud justifies the concept of the unconscious: indirection requires indirection.¹⁰

Freud's concept of the unconscious is paradoxical, for while the unconscious is something one cannot know directly, its workings interfere with what is taken as direct experience and with what is valued as intentionality. Nonetheless, Freud argues, it is necessary to put forth such a concept because "a gain in meaning is a perfectly justifiable ground for going beyond the limits of direct experience" (167). Something inside interferes with the limits of consciousness and the ego's strategies of perception. Knowing that this interference is difficult to accept—because it goes against the wish that consciousness is all, that individuals are masters of their thought, that cognition precedes affect, and that affect should not contradict attitudes—Freud works by way of an analogy that opens even more dilemmas than his first insistence on moving beyond the rules for direct experience. To approximate the otherness that he calls "the unconscious," Freud takes a detour through a conscious wish, by way of a sliding parenthetical remark: "(It would no doubt be psychologically more correct to put it in this way: that without any special reflection we attribute to everyone else our own constitution and therefore our consciousness as well, and that this identification is a *sine qua non* of our understanding)" (169). A special reflection is necessary if we are to move to the fragility of understanding others and disrupt the wish for a continuity and sameness that attributes to others the same state of mind. Something interferes with conscious identifications.

The problem is that, while projecting his or her own state of mind onto others, the one who projects misplaces the projection. Freud offers the example of how easy it seems to be critical of others but how difficult it is to recognize in the self the very same difficulties that one knows so well. Oddly, the self's projection is resisted: "Furthermore, experience shows that we understand very well how to interpret in other people (that is, how to fit into their chain of mental events) the same acts which we refuse to acknowledge as being mental in ourselves. Here some special hindrance evidently deflects our investigations from our own self and prevents our obtaining true knowledge of it" (169–70). This "special hindrance," more akin to a censor, is not yet the unconscious. But the resistance at stake is not only that perception is not everything but also that it must be made from flaws. It is through this resistance to the limits of self-knowledge that Freud returns the repressed: the curious incognito of the unconscious, the place of lost subjects, and the place of re-finding lost objects.

With what does the unconscious interfere? Or better, where does the unconscious interfere? Freud presents two types of interference, both in the form of an ambivalent wish. The unconscious wishes to do whatever it wants without regard for others, consequences, social convention, logic. One might call this wish the "force of Eros." But this interferes with the ego's wish to forget, ignore, and turn away from that which the ego cannot stand or bear to know. In this conflicted design, what is refused cannot go away but is instead repressed, only to return through indirection, in new and disguised forms such as negation, dreams, slips of the tongue, baffling and bungled actions, jokes, fantasy, irreverence. In

these ways the ego is reminded of its own lost wishes and of the fragility of its standing in the social world. These odd hauntings interfere with conscious attitudes. Our subject is made ambivalent through its own conflicted demands and wishes. The two types of interference represent two senses of a wish: the ego's wish to ignore and to flee from what is felt as displeasure and danger, and the unconscious wish for something without consequence. But there is even more, for what makes the unconscious other to the conscious are its curious qualities: the unconscious knows no time, no contradiction, indeed no negation. It is other to education and, unlike the ego, it tolerates all.

A Suspicious Meeting

Psychoanalysis considers in tandem two directions of interference: those within, that animate and try to resolve psychical conflict, and those without, such as education, culture, and law, which animate and attempt to resolve conflict as well. Each dynamic of interference makes the subject fragile in, and susceptible to, education, social pressures, and the subject's own wandering desires. Again we are back to Michael Balint's notion of the human as constituted from its own "intimate mixture of extremes." But unlike education, which depends upon its wish to persuade the subject to transcend conflict in order to learn, psychoanalysis insists that there is no outside to conflict;¹¹ hence the problem of learning becomes how the social and the individual can come to tolerate ethically the demands of the self and the demands of the social. And psychoanalysis, which defines development as new forms of old conflicts, extends this struggle to knowledge itself.¹² Knowledge as well is made from the flaws of its own capacity for extremes. Psychoanalysis asks education to refuse to secure itself through the consolations of certainty, rationality, and progress but, at the same time, to continue to risk itself without the old guarantees. When Freud noted that there are three impossible professions—government, healing, and education—he named not just the failings of central institutions to shape everyday lives in their own image but also the inadequate gambles of their knowledge. "There is no help for it," Freud wrote in one of his last essays.¹³ And then, in "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," Freud returns to his own impossible profession, "in which one can be sure beforehand of achieving unsatisfactory results" (248). Such admissions on the limits of practice and on the strange occurrence of being theoretically right and practically wrong offer no consolation. For many in education feel that these demands are too much and thus view psychoanalysis with suspicion.

However much each field of practice may appear to discourage the other, the modern history of psychoanalysis cannot be considered outside of the modern history of education. After all, both begin with notions of childhood, learning, and sociality. One might notice that both consider questions of suffering, but their views on its sources are opposed. In psychoanalysis the sources of

suffering are interminable. One can suffer from memories, fantasy, and anxiety as easily as one can suffer from social impediments. And while certain forms of education attempt to address the cruel obstacles made from conditions of injustice, social inequalities, and social aggression, Freud's thought does not promise a utopic social engineering. Indeed, one of the most frequent sentences found in Freud's writings is this: "Ladies and gentlemen, I can offer you no consolation." And then, Anna Freud offers her readers a different sort of caution: "We must not demand too much from one another."¹⁴

Still, psychoanalysis has a history of attempting to bring its insights to educational efforts. Anna Freud's *Four Lectures on Psychoanalysis for Teachers and Parents* suggest that a psychoanalytic orientation to learning and teaching can offer teachers a different way of conceptualizing not just the question of the child's psychic development, but more crucially the teacher's understanding of her or his own development as it plays through, repeats, and becomes elaborated within the teacher's relations with individual children, school knowledge, other adults, and, of course, the teacher's own self. Miss Freud tells her audience of three contributions psychoanalysis makes to pedagogical understanding. It is a means to criticize educational methods; a means to extend the teacher's knowledge of the complications of social relations; and, perhaps, something of a "repair [to] the injuries which have been inflicted upon the child during the process of education" (129).

With this last point we are back to the question of education as constituting interference, reminiscent of an earlier warning raised by Sigmund Freud that the best education can do is less harm.¹⁵ This ethical question—what Jacqueline Rose calls "an ethics of failure"¹⁶—is what makes the project of education interminable and explains why, perhaps, Anna Freud placed the question of interference as the central dynamic of education. For, if education must interfere with psychic and social development, with the pushes and pulls of superstitious and stereotypical thought, and with a narcissism that so easily becomes attached to and defended by all sorts of prejudices,¹⁷ then how does education decide which force of interference shall matter? How can education recognize and repair not just the harm done by others but the harm that occurs under the name of education? How can education recognize and repair its own harm? Freud offers a balance, as precarious as his metaphor, in which each side is weighed down by its own hazards: "Education has to find its way between the Scylla of non-interference and the Charybdis of frustration."¹⁸ Between Scylla's transformation from nymph to monster and Charybdis's drowning movements the interference of education is lost and found.

Anna Freud implies these hazards and the need for education to grapple with its ethicality. Education, she seems to say, must address two directions at the same time: the turning of education back upon itself to view how its practices affect its structures, and the turning of education upon the learner to notice how its practices affect its subjects. This mode of address is different from the plea to

apply psychoanalysis to students, something Miss Freud acknowledges when she insists that the move to fix quickly may actually be a symptom of resistance to change! People do not give up their libidinal positions easily, and when encountering differences, they seem to work hard to assert their own continuity. Anna Freud expects denial, *and* she expects that people can surpass those first anxious attempts at making a limit, at refusing to learn. What is surprising is that she considers these first responses necessary because the ego must attempt to defend itself from what at first glance seems senseless, dangerous, or worrisome.¹⁹

Imagine some statements of defense, or resistances, that Anna Freud seems to anticipate: What does this have to do with me? That's all very well and good but what about this? I wish you would just go away. Everything is not just psyche! You want to put me on the couch! It might be nice in theory, but who has the time? Can't a mistake just be a mistake! So, what's new, I already knew that! Then bring these curious sentences into tension with what Anna Freud has to say:

Examining the small mistakes in the everyday life of human beings, such as forgetting, losing, or misplacing things, misreading or mishearing, psychoanalysis succeeded in demonstrating that such errors are always based on an intent of the person who makes them. Previously these occurrences had been explained, without much thought, as the results of lack of attention, fatigue, or mere chance. Psychoanalytic investigation established that, generally speaking, we forget nothing except what we wish to forget for some good reason or other, though that reason is usually quite unknown to us. . . . People would not take so much trouble to lock up something worthless!²⁰

Just as education constitutes all types of interference, so too does psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis reminds one of the failure of knowledge, the work of forgetting, the elusiveness of significance, the incidental, the coincident, the bungled action, and the psychic creativity of selves: how the self crafts its meanings of the self in the world, what these meanings do to the psyche, and what the psyche does to these meanings. Psychoanalysis interferes with education's dream of mastery, for, through its methods, it catches subjects in the fault lines of inattention: free association, wondering over the elusive significance of the thing furthest from one's mind, and interpretation of dreams. It risks insight from knowledge devoid of social authority and intelligibility. And so we might wonder how the dream of education says something about its underside: the desire for omnipotence, transcendence, innocence, domination.

When the psychoanalytic definition of education is brought to education, education may begin the slow acknowledgement of its own ethical implication: education must interfere. There is nothing else it can do for it demands of students and teachers that each come to something, make something more of themselves.

The problem is that the demand can be felt as too much and too little. The demand can come too early and too late. After all, consider what education asks of students: to listen, to pay attention, to stop talking, to hold the whisper, to stay with the subject, to concentrate, to risk a mistake, to correct a mistake, to talk in front of their peers, to take a test, to go play, to be serious, to stop laughing, to consider things which would not occur to the self, to debate a belief, to encounter strange theories; indeed, it asks students to confront perspectives, situations, and ideas that may not be just unfamiliar but appear at first glance as a criticism of the learner's view. In all these demands, education seems to be asking selves to risk their resistance even as educators have difficulty tolerating the forms working through resistance takes. These demands directed outward return to the teacher in contested forms: as questions, hostile notes, gossip, hurt feelings, forgotten details, failure, incomplete sentences, baffling behavior, falling asleep, sexual innuendo, boredom, slips of the tongue, jokes, irrelevant comments, silence, indeed as all other sorts of ambiguous and puzzling gestures. Our educational demand actually comprises two: we demand that the self consider its own wishes, desires, and needs—to think for itself—precisely in the same moment that we demand that the self think about the requirements of others. Education must set in motion something more than it wants.

A Note on the Ego's Means of Defense

Whereas her father, Sigmund Freud, sketched out the curious movements of the instincts known as love and hate, Anna Freud centered questions of the ego's elaboration and its mechanisms of defense, for the bodily ego is made from its relations with others and in its capacity to touch and be touched.²¹ The inside and outside pressures the ego feels and observes put the ego into question. Because it cannot flee from itself, the ego requires its own strategies of existence. The ego has indirect means for encountering and defending itself from the interference known as education. And these means return to structure the ego. Anna Freud focused on ten "special methods," or strategies, the ego makes in order to modulate and release conflict and unpleasure. The mechanisms of defense are the ego's fragile attempt to secure its own boundaries, to mediate its capacity for extremes, and quite precariously, to make a relation.

What seems curious about these defenses is not their content—for the content keeps changing—but the motility of their guises in dynamic movement: their twists, turns, reversals, returns, and hence their movements of relationality. A mechanism of defense is a relation, but one that moves back and forth, from psychic reality to social reality. This motility is the condition for ideas or contents to unattach from the force of their affect and then reattach to, and hence disguise, the affect in a new idea. The affect, however, "constitutes a challenge to thought."²² Its time is contradictory: the affect comes too early and too late. We

can substitute one idea for another, and even though these two ideas appear at first glance to be opposed, the same affect can be repeated within a new idea. Why does one care so much that a mistake has been made, that a word has been forgotten, that one is misunderstood? What seems most at stake for psychoanalysis is the underlying or latent wish disguised in the tolerable idea. These stakes form the basis of Freud's method for interpreting the dream. It is not just that we mean the opposite of what we say or dream, but that ambivalence in desire complicates what each of us can tolerate knowing. The present concern, the obsession, the care, the hatred, all these things point elsewhere. The study is with the dynamic and the tricks of its content.

The defenses of the ego are thus not a question of *Why?* but of *where?* Where is the desire of the defense?²³ With the directional indicator of where, we can consider the prepositional movements of defense: against, in, on, around, behind, in front of, beside, with, and under. After all, the movements of the defenses are curious and volatile symptoms of other relations, other histories, other desires, indeed otherness itself. The ten defenses Anna Freud formulates offer us plenty of directions: regression, repression, reaction formation, isolation, undoing, projection, introjection, turning against the self, reversal, and sublimation. Anna Freud would come to add two more to the ego's socially oriented strategies: altruism and identification with the aggressor. The ego's learning, it turns out, is neither linear nor progressive but entangled in its capacity to touch and to be touched. We are not concerned with positing stages or chronology, for in psychoanalytic method more than one chronology occupies the same space, and, because of ambivalence, we can hold two opposite understandings precisely in the same place. We become torn.

Psychoanalysis presents the bodily ego as very busy. In Freud's second psychic topology, the ego is named a "frontier creature"²⁴ and is twice constituted: through its attempts to mediate, placate, and even trick something besides itself and something within itself, the id and the superego, and through its capacity to be touched by its relations with others in the world. Because the ego works through perception, observation, reality testing, projection, and hallucination, it must struggle with the question of boundaries and with the question of education. Over and over, the ego must solve the problem of love. What belongs to the ego, and what belongs to the object? Is it me, or is it them? How do I know that what I think is happening is actually happening? What if I can not believe what I see? How do my actions become puzzling to me? How do I recognize my self when my self is at the same time conflictive, ambivalent, and caught between my own demands and the demands of others? Again, what belongs to the ego, and what belongs to the object? More pertinent, in a place called "education," what belongs to the teacher, and what belongs to the student? Where do the teacher's emotional ties become entangled in pedagogy? Where is the student? We are back to the question of interference, or, put in a slightly different way, the question of an implication that reaches elsewhere. But where?

Self-Subversive Narratives of Education

We can now make our exploration more specific and borrow a method from the writer Samuel R. Delany. In his autobiography, *A Motion of Light in Water*, Delany offers readers a story of his first day in the prestigious Bronx High School of Science. Actually, Delany comes to tell this story in three dimensions of time: the ethnographic (or the place of detail), the reflective (or the consideration of the significance of anxiety), and the uncanny (or the force of secrets). The first time of the story's telling is filled with ethnographic details: fifteen-year-old Delany enters the classroom on that first day, peruses his new classmates, complies with the teacher's request that the students rearrange themselves through alphabetizing their seating order, and then listens to the teacher's next request, that classmates nominate someone for the student government organization. A boy named Chuck, whom Delany has just met, nominates Delany. And of the four nominations, Delany wins the election. In this telling, perhaps too good to be true, too easy to tell, everything happens well: his new peers acclaim him, he meets a new friend, and his teacher seems friendly.

In the second telling of the story, the details return with the difference of anxiety. The first ethnographic telling is mulled over with a retrospective observation: "What strikes me is how quickly the written narrative closes [more important details] out—puts [them] outside of language" (25). Our narrator wonders, What if the story could dare to admit those other moments, those movements of otherness one might term "anxiety"? But where is the anxiety? Remember the anxiety of that first day? Will I be liked? Will I like the others? Can I sit next to the one I'm attracted to? Will he like me? Will I be popular? Do I look alright? Does he know what I'm thinking? Am I as smart as the school? Delany imagines these worries and desires as arranged in parallel columns. Two realities coexist but one is more difficult. The ethnographic detail does not add up to make the whole story. And there is something more than the ethnographic detail can bear to admit.

Delany's second story is caught in the fault lines of our first victorious ethnography. There resides an older story buried and preserved in the ethnographic present. What our fifteen-year-old Delany notices that first day and cannot bear to leave alone is Chuck's beautiful hand. Noticing the beauty of Chuck's hand, Delany begins to fall in love. In this second telling, what is told is Chuck's body: his height, the color of his shirt, the fall of his hair, the tone of his skin, the way he sighs. In the momentary chaos of students finding their seats, our narrator loses sight of Chuck and in this loss feels the loneliness of that first day and his own strangeness. There is a brief panic: Had I only imagined him? If I see him again, will I see the same Chuck I first saw? But through the coincidence of alphabetical seating, Delany finds himself in a seat to the left of Chuck. And then their hands can finally meet; the surprise comes in the form of a handshake. The touching of the hands leaves behind a trace. Yes, it is that same Chuck who nominates Delany. Does that mean he likes me in the way I like him? The movements of anx-

ity—that strange dialogue Delany sets up between the id and the ego—momentarily rest, until the next worry troubles the telling.

There is always more to the story. The excess found in the third sense of time, the uncanny, also occupies what both tellings have not yet said. Still, the uncanny can be examined only in bits and pieces, for while its haunting persistence depends upon its being buried, its return is not yet home. In commenting on the second retelling and in re-finding the lost quota of affects that return, Delany maintains that the first story does not explain the second try at retelling. Readers are offered an interminable question: “Why speak of what’s uncomfortable to speak of?” (29). Delany is worried about how his story will be understood, how his imagined readers may lend their own continuities to his fragile retelling. In this curious architecture where the imagined boundaries of the inside and the outside refuse to be known, Delany tests his narrative experiment with the following paradox: “If it *is* the split—the space between two columns (one resplendent and lucid with the writings of legitimacy, the other dark and hollow with the voices of the illegitimate)—that constitutes the subject, it is only after the Romantic inflation of the private into the subjective that such a split can even be located” (29-30).

The space that signifies the split between falling in love and recounting that first day as if there were no fall marks the loss of subjectivity. The discomfort is the symptom of that split, between the aggression of social rejection over the form of love and an Eros that desires contact and hence must risk the self.

Our turn to literature is also something psychoanalytic inquiry encourages, for in both narratives “the resplendent and the hollow” coexist in the same space. Two fictions meet: the fiction that is the theory and the fiction that is the subject. What surprises the meeting, how the coincidence stubbornly points elsewhere, is part of the paradox Delany offers. Because the paradox is necessary to the poetics of the self, it is not to be solved but rather located in the in-between space of potential relations. Where is the paradox? For Delany’s story is not just about the ego’s capacity to reality test, to hallucinate, or to observe, actions which would still keep us in the domain of the first story, the unaffected ethnography. That first ethnography would not yet be a fiction if we bring to bear on the question of fiction what Michel de Certeau noticed about the fiction we call “psychoanalysis:” “fiction as being a knowledge jeopardized and wounded by its own otherness (the affect, etc.).”²⁵ We might name the wound the “unconscious.” We might name the knowledge “education.” And so, de Certeau’s strange pursuit can be set in tension with the question raised by our narrator: “Why speak of what’s uncomfortable to speak of?” This question interferes as well, for how does the uncomfortable live within the comfort? How does the comfort defend against the uncomfortable? These questions occupy the uncanny third time of interference, that simultaneous moment of defense, recognition, and undoing that makes the ego so vulnerable. Freud called the work of learning a “working through.” What did Delany learn from himself that he had not known before? How does Delany

learn to allow his unconscious wishes to coexist with his conscious attitudes? The way Delany interferes with himself is also an education.

In Delany's first retelling, the teacher, Mr. Tannenbaum, is barely there, except for two ethnographic details. The first detail is that "he smiled if you made a joke, sometimes in spite of himself" (22). The second, that because of (or maybe in spite of) the prestige of the school, the teachers respected the students. Perhaps these details are related. In spite of something that tells the teacher not to laugh, the teacher laughs, and in this laughter offers a recognition of something other to the pressures of getting work done. The teacher laughs at the pressures of getting work done, for what else is a joke but the means to release a pressure, a way to tell oneself something that can be borne only with laughter? The otherness of teacher and student returns in the form of laughter, and this mutual recognition is the allowance of respect.

There is a story of another teacher. We return again to Anna Freud's lectures to parents and teachers. And just as Delany's method suggests the need to excavate the lost subjects in a story until what is uncanny can be engaged, Anna Freud relates a story of education by way of this need. This teacher's story again must pass through a story of the student. The first bearable ethnographic details add up to a happy ending. A governess went to work with a family who had three children. The oldest and the youngest were doing well in their studies and had the admiration and love of their parents. The middle child was the source of trouble: he was falling behind in his reading skills and was viewed as unmotivated in self-improvement. His parents and siblings encountered him as if he were an extra and heavy appendage, a burden that asked too much. The governess focused all her efforts on this child, and after some time he caught up to take his place as a valued member of the family. As soon as the child succeeded, the governess left her charge and sought new work.

Years later, the governess happened to engage an analyst, she happened to engage herself in psychoanalysis. And thus the ethnographic story—the rescue fantasy—could at last be interfered with. The governess can lift the veil of the discomfort that is also there. The happy story told that the governess had left the position because she had achieved her educational success. The otherness of the story is that the governess could not tolerate the child's success, for her emotional tie, the love she could bear to transfer onto the child, was made from her own childhood sense of being unsuccessful. She could only identify with the child when the child mirrored her own view of herself. Anna Freud poses the unspeakable this way: "All the love and care which she had lavished upon him meant that she was really saying to herself: 'That is the way I ought to have been treated to make something of me'" (130). As long as the child was falling behind and depended upon the governess's efforts, she could identify with the child and perhaps, in living through his failure, could find again her own lost self. Through her pedagogical efforts the governess found a way to perform the actions she wanted to have performed on herself. But the student's progress interfered with her

actions of love. When the child improved and somehow was seen to earn the parents' love, the governess left. The governess experienced the child's success as a self-betrayal of her own unloved self. And this she could not tolerate.

Now in retelling, perhaps twice, the story of the governess, Anna Freud interferes with the unaffected ethnographic story of education: that fine educational successes should not be looked at too closely and that there is nothing more to pedagogical efforts than the teacher's desire for educational success. But we are being asked to tolerate what jeopardizes the ethnographic details of the governess. What does it mean for each teacher to notice a student and to ignore others? Why this student and not that student? How does what the teacher notice return in the form of the teacher's self or even seem to turn against the teacher? And how do those who are ignored come under the sign of the teacher? How does the teacher come to have an emotional tie to the student and where does that tie become entangled? If, as Anna Freud reminds us, the students can be more than "more or less suitable material on which to abreact [the teacher's] unconscious and unsolved difficulties" (131), then ethically the teacher is obligated to explore those other dimensions, that other story, the story of one's own otherness. Just as education demands something from the student, the kinds of interference we are exploring here demand something of the teacher.

Whereas Delany's story begins to hint at the vulnerable time of falling in love, our governess's proffers that curious moment of falling out of love, when love changes its content, when love turns to hate, and when love is lost. The same year Sigmund Freud justified the unconscious, he also articulated a view of the vicissitudes of the instincts.²⁶ He works with four kinds of vicissitudes or transformations of instincts: reversal into the opposite, turning round upon the subject's own self, repression, and sublimation (126). These movements are reminiscent of some of the ego's strategies of defense. Most interesting to our discussion is Freud's observation that "the change of the *content* of an instinct into its opposite is observed in a single instance only—the transformation of *love and hate*" (original emphasis, 133). The transformation of love and hate, and the view that both of these emotional ties can be directed at the same object, bring Freud to the concept of 'ambivalence.' For Freud, there are three positions in the dynamics of love: love and hate; loving and being loved; and unconcern or indifference (133). We can see fragments of the movements that occupy Delany and the governess, and indeed throughout this volume we will continue to explore such twists and turns: different combinations of unconcern, hate, and being loved and loving. Perhaps we can even observe in our own educational experiences traces of these lost subjects and their uncanny return, their coming back at the self in the form of contested objects; that is, if we care to study how we come to attach ourselves to as well as to ignore particular ideas, theories, and people. We also might come to a time in which what jeopardizes the ethnographic telling of education are the vicissitudes of love and hate.

The reversals of love and hate do not mean that these affects are equal in status. While each depends upon intra-psychical and subjective processes, neither is comparable to experiences of anger, indifference, or frustration, all of which are transformable when obstacles are removed by mutual action. Analyst Michael Balint argues: "Hate is a measure of inequality between object and subject; the smaller the inequality, the more mature the subject, the less is [the] need for hate."²⁷ Love, or what both Michael and Alice Balint call "mature love" requires the lover to tolerate the other's equality or right to have a separate and idiomatic existence. For Michael Balint, how one comes "to solve the problems of love without resorting in any way to hate" (149) determines the capacity to take pleasure in the other's otherness and the self's otherness. And how one comes to tolerate times when love is lost, indeed, when love loses its way, is also a part of the problem of love. These problems were also those of Delany and the governess.

Anna Freud also would be concerned with these dynamics. But because of her interest in education, her own psychoanalytic emphasis moved from the instincts and their vicissitudes to the ego's mechanisms of defense. This shift may have had to do with the institution of education, for there the ego must defend itself from all types of interference even as education attempts to educate the ego. The governess's story exemplifies a common defense employed by teachers, which seems to respond to one of education's impossible demands upon the teacher: to act for the student. Anna Freud calls this strategy "altruistic surrender:" the mechanism which somehow allows the ego to live through the other, to find "some proxy in the outside world to serve as a repository."²⁸ The student, the curriculum, the institutional mandate—all these objects can become, for the teacher's ego, a proxy. As it turns out, through this proxy the ego can find still the gratification it denies itself; through some distance, it can enjoy still what it appears to deny itself. This too was the governess's (other) story. While she could not lavish the love she required onto herself, she could find some proxy and then discard it as soon as it became other to herself. These curious turns were almost the same ones in Delany's story, had he stayed in the confines of the ethnographic detail that foreclosed and jeopardized recognition of his own otherness.

Anna Freud first describes the mechanism of altruistic surrender as a tentative answer to the curious phenomenon of sports fans. She tries to make sense of how the sports fan comes to be so invested in games he or she does not play. How to explain the manic triumphalism of the victory or the sad despair at watching one's favorite team lose the game? How do individuals get so caught up in lives they cannot live? What is this sacrifice for the ego? How does altruistic surrender turn around upon the self and come to be seen as an attack upon the ego? (And here we must note a familiar statement of the ingrate: "I did everything for you, and now you do this to me!") We can see this reversal of love into hate at work in the governess's story.

Anna Freud suggests that the defense mechanism of altruistic surrender is rooted in early conflicts with authority over some form of the child's desire for

instinctual gratification. That first parental authority, asking that the self hold its desires in abeyance and identify with the aggressor's demand to find a more suitable substitute, is transferred onto other authorities, like education or the teacher. What is interesting is that the ego can manage still to find a way to reach the forbidden gratification. The problem is that the strategy of gratification then can be experienced as a turning back onto the ego and become its opposite: a hatred toward both the self that complies and the other who seems to ask for such compliance. Altruistic surrender transforms into another defense: identification with the aggressor, which is actually an identification with the actions of aggression. While in common parlance *the aggressor* is a term given over to the one who performs physical violence on another, in psychoanalytic discourse this term also is given over to the violence of authority. This is what Delany struggles over when he asks himself, "Why speak of the uncomfortable?" Part of the answer must be to locate "the where" of discomfort, and of course the split.

We can now return to a fuller version of Delany's third uncanny telling: "What damages might [this other story] do to women, children, the temperamentally more refined, the socially ignorant, the less well-educated, those with a barely controlled tendency toward the perverse . . . ? Since publishing it in most cases explains little or nothing of the public narrative, why not let it remain privy, personal, privileged—outside of language?" (29).

Samuel Delany cannot keep outside of language what is inside himself. One boy falls in love with another boy. The authority says: Keep this love to yourself and therefore renounce it. Surrender your desires for the sake of the social. Undo, do not touch, isolate yourself. While one may not think of the closet as a mechanism of defense, the altruistic surrender it requires, the proxy the closet becomes, covers that first identification with the aggressor. The defense mechanism of altruistic surrender, and as Delany poses it, the demand to identify with the aggressor's wish, with the authority who says no to that love, will diminish the ego. Delany must announce his love even if it costs him social disparagement. The directionality of interference is different in our governess's story, which begins with the finding of a proxy for the self. But this proxy seems to turn against her desire to preserve the loss. The governess falls out of love (again) with herself. If she is to love again, she too must announce that her love changed its content, becoming hate both for the boy and for her self. If the governess is to love again, she must learn to tolerate her own capacity for extremes.

An Outline of the Book

We have come full circle to the psychoanalytic definition of "the cure": the capacity to risk love and work. When each of us explores the otherness of the self, when each might decide that the uncanny in the social is also a site of learning, when each explores those lost subjects that jeopardize knowledge, the only purpose is to

risk work, love, and learning. How one works, how one loves, how one learns, and how one makes room in the conceptualization of these themes are the stakes in the following chapters, and of course when a certain psychoanalysis meets a certain education. These fields of practice are brought to bear on each other because, at their respective best, they are concerned with the vulnerabilities, fragilities, and capacities of learning. And while the teacher's work must be different from the work of the analyst, the teacher is ethically obligated to formulate theories of learning that can tolerate the human's capacity for its own extremes and its mistakes, resistance, belatedness, demands, and loss without creating more harm. The work of education must be a working through of education. For this work to begin, the story of education must pass through—but not merely repeat—the ethnographic, the reflective, and the uncanny.

The reader will notice that the story of psychoanalysis offered in each of these chapters is not the one that typically has come to be supposed in order to be discarded: this story is not Eurocentric, not sexist, not homophobic, not racist; it is not analysis for the purposes of social adaptation and to berate the one who cannot adapt, and indeed not to posit something as normal or pathological. And while these histories, however, pressure and structure the demands and the repressed of education, in the exploration of some of their returning fragments the following chapters will consider the question of "working through" difficulties. The bad story of psychoanalysis does not interest us here for we need not, and should not, imagine psychoanalysis as literally mapping on to a sociology of the body, as a series of literal sentences, as apparent language, or even as capable of separating the psyche from the social. While all of us may be experts in dismissing ideas, we might turn our suspicions back upon our own expertise.

Our concern is with the unapparent, but we pass through the all-too-apparent of contemporary education and through the ways institutional design and social pressures put the conflicts that are so central to learning outside of the learner, the curriculum, and the pedagogy. In our own times, the pressures of social discourses such as "family values," new and old racism, homophobia, and nationalism weigh heavy in education and return to prop up social policy, curriculum design, admission criteria, censorship, and, of course, disputes over the currency of identity as category, nature, or no body. The chapters that follow focus on the problem of how conceptualizations of teachers, students, and the excess knowledge between them are lived as dilemmas and as difficult knowledge. But I also suggest that we may come to know our own dilemmas as elegant problems, necessary to the work of learning to love and love in learning. The lost subjects in the title refer to the repressed psychic events of teaching and learning, which return to haunt education in the form of its contested objects: as conflicts, as disruptions, as mistakes, and as controversies. Given the demands for widening the curriculum to include the relevances, desires, and histories of those who can matter, of communities, perspectives, and expressions that signal comfort and discomfort simultaneously; given the deep implication of education in the space of

identity, life chances, and the capacity each of us holds to participate meaningfully in our respective lives; given all the chances education risks, the lost subjects considered here may raise some new questions for those grappling with the interminability of education and for those interested in conceptualizing a theory of learning that can tolerate the vicissitudes of love and hate in learning, that can begin with a generous curiosity toward the subject's passionate capacity to attach to the world.

Chapter 1 continues to admit the strange relations between education and psychoanalysis: the arguments, registers, and limits that are made evident when the demands of psychoanalysis meet the demands of education. It examines how psychic topology becomes an event in learning and in public discourse about education, and then it moves to a discussion of "angst" in education. Chapter 2 discusses the philosophy and methods of Maxine Greene and her urging of an education that can get lost in the fictions of literature and the arts. In chapter 3 we consider the tensions inherent in conceptualizations of sex education in the time of AIDS and identity politics and in the strange relations between sexuality and curiosity. Chapter 4 offers a queer theory of pedagogy and discusses whether or not identities can be more than a site of mastery. There, we consider the question of reading practices. Chapter 5 is concerned with the issue of how relations of difference within communities structure relations of love and hate between communities, and then explores what such lost subjects have to say to the antiracist curriculum. Chapter 6 is a meditation on loss and the work of mourning in education as it wrestles with learning from the difficult histories of reception and pedagogy in Anne Frank's *Diary*. Taken together, all the chapters consider the specificities of identity, history, and difficult knowledge, in psychic time—an uncanny time in which the larger arguments of history, whether known or not, lives in the small history of the subject.

Perhaps we might have a theory of dreams. With it, we might risk interpretations of the operatic dreams of education. The metaphors and associations I am after, and perhaps that are after me, return to Freud's first method of free association—the things furthest from the mind—an association that might be interested in freedom and its interminable symptoms. "What we actually mean by free association," writes analyst Karen Horney, "is the purposelessness of mental productions. There is no immediate purpose other than this: letting things emerge."²⁹ We can refind these lost things in education as well. In the chapters that follow, my interest in a certain psychoanalysis is closer to what Adam Phillips calls a "post-Freudian Freudianism,"³⁰ a time to consider a learning in which there can be no experts, in which curiosity is incited and the demand of education meets those other demands and then does something more. The "post" is that strange time of learning when one can get lost in thoughts: when the inside meets the outside and the outside meets the inside. We can return to one of Sigmund Freud's last inconsolable essays, "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," in which he speaks of "the slow progress of analysis" (219) and then returns to the ego's mechanisms of

defense to consider again the instincts of love and hate. Freud returns the question of education back to the educator: "Instead of an enquiry into how a cure by analysis comes about . . . the question should be asked of what are the obstacles that stand in the way of such a cure" (221). In his "post-Freudian" fashion, Adam Phillips, in *Terrors and Experts*, poses more difficulties: "There may, sometimes, be a cure for symptoms, but there is no cure for the unconscious, no solution for unconscious desire. Knowledge can't put a stop to that, only death can" (7).