

CHAPTER ONE

DIFFICULT EDUCATION

Something about education makes us nervous. In fact, Sigmund Freud accords to education and civilization the development of various neuroses and unhappiness. Yet to imagine this view, the narratives of education must be conceived broadly as the means of both expressing and encountering reality and phantasy. All at once, the time and reach of education can move backward and forward when we recall our history of learning through our childhood, through friendship and love, through the force of ideas, through encounters with cinema, books, and ordinary accidents, and through our hopes for influencing others and being influenced. This particular education is a play between the present and past, between presence and absence, and then, by that strange return that Sigmund Freud (1914a) describes as deferred: it is registered and revised by remembering, repeating, and working through. If we make education from anything, we can make education from experiences that were never meant to be education, and this unnerves our educational enterprise.

When Sigmund Freud (1930) argued that education carries psychical consequences, not many people were convinced. After all, a great deal of the official history of education depends upon confining its sphere to concrete manifestations: the school, the textbook, and the objectives. It would take the child analysts—particularly Anna Freud and Melanie Klein—to draw us deeper into the psychical drama both of having to be educated and trying to educate others. But even for these women, whom I will

introduce shortly, a certain incredulity—a resistance—persists toward their work and their world. Freud, however, brought the enterprise of education and the vicissitudes of its phantoms to everyday problems of reality testing and saw in this relation a constitutive failing. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, he warned educators that idealizing the world for children and promising them happiness in a life without conflict would only incur helplessness and future disappointment. This book was written between the World Wars, and Freud felt that education would be more relevant, more useful to those subjected to it and to the world, if educators could prepare students for the harshness and difficulties of life and for the inevitable problems of aggression and violence. This plea to educators was the least of his worries, for Freud's critique of education draws him into a deeper psychoanalytic paradox. If aggression is unavoidable, if it is not just a problem between people but, more pertinently, an operative within each person, how can anyone prepare for what is already there? And, can education even know its own aggression? These questions returned Freud to the profession of psychoanalysis. Can psychoanalysis, itself a helping profession, avoid the dangers of trying to educate? What is the difference between psychoanalysis and education? Does psychoanalytic education, for example, avoid Freud's critique? How does one think about education without calling forth or stumbling upon the force of history made from one's own education?

In Freud's writing, for instance, in his discussions on group psychology and psychoanalytic technique, and even in his reminiscence over his own susceptibility to teachers, education persists as being necessary to the very construction of psychoanalytic theory. It may be that both fields have the same trouble: that which makes the heart beat and break belongs to the question of learning and not learning at all. However, responses to not learning in formal education and not learning in the analytic setting differ dramatically. It seems as though in analysis one can wait patiently for education to become meaningful. In an early paper on psychoanalytic technique, Freud (1914a) suggests this lingering time, barely touching on the question of education: "The doctor has nothing else to do than to wait and let things take their course, a course which cannot be avoided nor always hastened. If he holds fast to this conviction he will often be spared the illusion of having failed when in fact he is conducting the treatment on the right lines" (155). Still, the uncertain question of education returns, now as a sustaining illusion. If education makes us nervous, if its effects are felt before they can be known, and if, at times, it is difficult to distinguish failure from learning, education also

offers Freud a way to configure the influence of central psychoanalytic relations: the playground of transference, the resistance, and the working through. We can put the psychoanalytic paradox in this way: education makes us nervous, and psychoanalysis touches on raw nerves, but its touch requires something other than our nervous conditions. It will take a vicissitude of education to call education into being.

Can we do without education? Certainly Freud cannot. After all, his method of the talking cure is a strange exploration of a formal and an imagined upbringing. And these psychoanalytic narratives offer a more difficult sense of the workings of history for the psyche and so call attention to the sporadic qualities of learning itself. From a psychoanalytic view, André Green (2000, 2–3) describes our history of learning as a condensation of many fragments of events, even as shards of experience that return when least expected. This leads him to describe history for the psyche through its absences and gaps and as drawing into its narrative what has happened, what we wish had happened, what happened to others but not to us, what happened but cannot be imagined, and what did not happen at all. Such is the creative expression of what we do with the meeting of phantasy and reality. Here and there, history is the return of affect: pining, disappointment, envy, and wish. It also is the narration of and resistance to these shadowy experiences. And it is precisely with this strange and estranging mixture that the otherness of our educational archive returns, now as psychoanalytic inquiry.

While the relation between analyst and analysand can be likened to a voluntary school for analysis, to compare formal education to the psychoanalytic experience meets a psychoanalytic resistance. Whereas formal education and upbringing are organized by deliberate actions and advanced plans, these ideal assumptions are obstacles to the only rule in psychoanalytic work—free association, allowing anything to come to mind without the confines of having to make sense. Formal institutional education may be seen as opposing phantasy, but psychoanalysis views phantasy as central to its work and to one's capacity to think. Analytic time is quite different from the ordinary chronology of classrooms, grades, semesters, and years. It is a play between reality and phantasy, between time lost and refund, and between the meeting of the unconscious and the narrative. Analytic time is recursive and repetitious, reconstructed from psychoanalytic theories of deferred action, resistance, and the transference, and from the interpretation of the defenses. And yet even this fictive time returns us to education, indeed, to the work of culture: where interpretation was, there education shall become.¹

Freud tried to separate education and psychoanalysis over his long career, and nowhere did this labor feel more painful than when he tried to comment on the question of child analysis. He became caught in debates over whether child analysis can be psychoanalysis when the child is under the continuous influence of education. At one point, Freud (1925c) tried to settle the dilemma with what he called “a conservative ring”: “It is to the effect that the work of education is something *sui generis*: it is not to be confused with psycho-analytic influence and cannot be replaced by it . . . after-education is something quite different from the education of the immature” (274). This was Freud’s second attempt to distinguish the difference. A few years earlier, he (1916) had tried to separate these fields, only to bring them together again: “This work of overcoming resistances is the essential function of analytic treatment; the patient has to accomplish it and the doctor makes this possible for him with the help of suggestion operating in the *educative* sense. For that reason psychoanalytic treatment has justly been described as a kind of *after-education*” (451, emphasis in original). The editors of the *Standard Edition* offer a footnote on this term: “where, incidentally, the German word ‘*Nacherziehung*’ (‘after-education’) is wrongly translated [in Freud’s text as] ‘re-education’ ” (451).²

The problem is that translating after-education as re-education confines to indoctrination experiences of being influenced and of influencing others and so cannot wrest the transference—or the unconscious ways we use our history to encounter what is not yet history—away from hypnotic suggestion. It also suggests there is something wrong with being susceptible to events that may or may not address us, and so re-education does not describe the work of reconstruction that our histories of learning require. Two dynamic actions allow after-education its diphasic qualities. After-education refers us back to an original flaw made from education: something within its very nature has led it to fail. But it also refers to the work yet to be accomplished, directing us toward new constructions.

After-education refers both to past mistakes and to the new work of constructing one’s history of education after the experience of education. In one sense, the concept of after-education signifies a kind of correction. Habits of avoidance—inhibitions of curiosity—are cultivated in education as a defense against its structures of authority, dependency, and interference. And these strategies, affected by what they defend against, also preserve anxiety in learning. So to move the idea of after-education beyond re-education, the methods that make education—explicit instruc-

tion, didacticism, moralism, and so on—must be doubted and set aside for a new learning disposition to be constructed.³ If Freud tried to undo the aftereffect of education without educating, his understanding of education was made from trying to distinguish learning from indoctrination, influence from hypnotic suggestion, and working through from acting out. So he offered a compromise that would conjugate both fields in ways we are still trying to understand—*after-education*, a strange tense of grammar that associates but does not complete the fragments of experiences made when two dimensions of time communicate: the reconstructed time of psychoanalysis and the exigency of education.

What is education that it may need an afterward? Freud (1911) offers one glimpse of this dilemma in an early essay when he ties mental functioning to the pleasure and reality principles and then catches education in that knot. Education, at least at first, is caught up in the harshness of reality *and* the oceanic pleasures of love, a combination that animates libidinal tension for both the educator and the student:

Education can be described without much ado as an incitement 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 reward from 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)

If education is indeed a necessary part of the human condition, it must be conditional in its mode of exchange. The very conditions of education are subject to the yearnings and dreams that animate existence. In Freud's view, education and love are intimates, but their exchange is as precarious as are the realities proffered. At times, the influence that is also education can sustain relations of dependency and helplessness. If it promises unconditional love, then the inevitable withdrawal of that love will incur resentment and misunderstanding. Freud suggests that if education incites pleasure, and if it also attempts to move pleasure closer to reality, then this very trajectory requires that we think about education after the experience of education.

Near the end of his life, Freud (1940a) returned to the work of thinking made after education, as a corrective to relations in education and to the educator herself or himself. Education continues to appear as a problem of self/other relations and of interiority, and nowhere is this

more evident than in an unintended consequence of having to learn: the superego springs from the history of these relations of love, dependency, and authority. The superego is made from, contains, and expresses the strange history of love and authority encountered and imagined. But this psychical agency also is aggressive. Its aggression legitimates itself through the very process of rationality and guilt that education also must employ. Yet the superego also is another site for after-education, and so Freud's advice to the analyst is worth considering, because it recognizes the difficult cost of educational temptation:

However much the analyst may be tempted to become a teacher, a model and ideal for other people and to create men in his own image, he should not forget that is not his task in the analytic relationship and indeed he will be disloyal to his task if he allows himself to be led on by his inclinations. . . . In all his attempts at improving and educating the patient the analyst should respect [the patient's] individuality. (175)

Something difficult occurs in helping relationships. We are apt to forget our differences. That respect of the other's otherness is, for Freud, precisely where education founders and begins.

Freud is not the only one who is uncertain in our uses of education, how education can reverse its content and turn against itself, and indeed, how to analyze its mechanisms of defense, its symptoms, and its dreams. We find discussions of education and its nervous conditions in the most unusual places: in a spate of contemporary novels, where the university is the stage for betrayal and misunderstandings; in popular films, where heroic teachers, aliens, and teenagers vie for glory; in comic sketches that exaggerate the absurdity of school rituals; and, most intimately, in our dreams. In dream time, the school itself is the stage for revenge and rescue fantasies, sexual intrigue, and the return of all forms of forgetting usually concealed in waking hours. Made from that difficult combination of love and hate, from excess of affect that experience cannot complete, these narratives of education draw their force from literary design: the epic, the tragedy, the comedy, and the *Bildungsroman*. Expelled by education, phantasy artfully returns to invite second thoughts through the reconstruction of events in education. We can read these literary expressions as symptoms, as a compromise between the wish and the need, as a return of the repressed, and as a placeholder for what has been missed. Then we might also interpret the fictions of education as trying to say

something difficult about determining what belongs to the inside of education and what belongs to its outside, what is conviction and what is imposition, and what belongs to the immediacy of education and what comes after education. We need the tropes of fiction to lend a quota of our affect to symbolizing the forces and expressions of education, because when we are trying to say something about education, this education and that phantasy are difficult to pry apart. And that makes us nervous.

Throughout this book, I explore a series of psychoanalytic arguments over the uses of reality and phantasy for thinking through the experiences of education by way of the question, *what is education that it should give us such trouble?* The question first arose from a certain exasperation I experienced while studying the work of some difficult figures in the history of child psychoanalysis—beginning with Anna Freud and Melanie Klein—who seemed to haunt, sometimes explicitly and other times almost imperceptibly, the history of dilemmas in representing education. Their arguments are instructive, because both analysts attempted to influence and undo both the education of children and the education of psychoanalysts.

These analysts also argued over timing, offering different emphases on what can happen before, during, and after education. Each offers fascinating and at times fantastically cruel narratives of education. When they faced one another, their controversial debates opened educational reasoning to all that can confuse it: where to put the vicissitudes of reality and phantasy in learning to live with others. I began to surround these analysts with distant others, juxtaposing people who never actually met but when imagined together allowed me to raise crucial questions about the reach, timing, and limits of contemporary education. These two analysts invite the idea that any education does not just require crisis but is, in and of itself, an exemplary crisis: that events both actual and imagined are forcibly felt before they can be known. This, for them, provokes the design we come to call “learning” and what we come to understand, in retrospect, as “history.” Their work begins with the insight that making a signature on knowledge through our thoughts and social relations is, at first, an arduous affair. Each explores the idea that learning and terror are not easily distinguishable from curiosity and pleasure. They warn that devastating experiences within the self occur when education bonds with idealization, denies its own difficulties and the difficulties of others, and involves the absolute splitting of good and bad and of failure and success in terms that disregard human complexity. Simply put, their thinking about the difficulties of education might be used to encourage us to explore our own associations with education.

What then is education that it should give us such trouble? This question is a central leitmotif, and while I will offer a wide-ranging sense of what education becomes affixed to, I use the notion of trouble to consider two related difficulties, drawn throughout this book. One difficulty is with opening the definition of education to include events that resist but nonetheless shape education, such as not learning, ignorance, aggression, and even phantasies. The qualities of this first difficulty also will appear when I use the term *education* to characterize the formation of psychic structures and strategies shaping this inner world. I will depend upon the theories of Melanie Klein to consider what can best be thought of as an education that comes before education, a potential trouble, a precociousness found in psychological knowledge that Klein named as phantasy. The second trouble concerns trying to know the outside world. Education will be a means to enlarge one's sense of reality. It will focus on the practices and theories of education writ large, and so education will be used to signify, for all ages, both crisis and promise. The difficulty of making a relation to reality will be dependent upon some of Anna Freud's theories on the necessity and dangers of education. With this turn of affairs, education will stand in as a shortcut for describing the maturation of children and the experience of development. Then it will be akin to the German notion of *Bildung*, thus signifying the simultaneous tensions of formation, process, and its results. With the help of Anna Freud, education will be the trouble made from relations between parents and children and teachers and students. It will inaugurate, for the adult, a crisis that gradually calls for thinking.

Education then reappears as a social relation, as a quality of the psychical, and also as an institution that draws upon, even as it influences and is influenced by these events. It will refer to how adults learn a profession and how a profession comes to affect itself. In that context, education is the result of what happens when institutional policies meet group psychology and when education is experienced without being consciously thought. And, when used in its institutional sense, education will refer to a social imaginary. I juxtapose arguments in the field of psychoanalysis over the education of analysts with discussions that concern the education of teachers in schools and in the university. There, education becomes a series of theories, strategies, and relations with self and others, an argument over which knowledge serves its intentions, and even as a defense against the uncertainty of existence made from not knowing what to do but still needing to think.

Most generally, however, I will refer to education in terms of the animation, elaboration, and perhaps refinement of psychological knowl-

edge made through psychical dynamics and its psychical representatives. In its ineffable sense, education will feature in the internal world of object relations. Education will then reemerge as a means to symbolize and construct the significance of this other history, and it will be made from a particular revision of psychical life: the wavering between breakdowns in meaning and our urges for their reparation. Education is thus a drama that stages the play between reality and phantasy and a question that leaves its trace in something interminable about our desire to know and to be known.

My orientation to the trouble in education is a patchwork of Anna Freud's insistence that education is made from all sorts of interference, and Melanie Klein's argument that the desire for creativity and construction emerges from destruction and negativity.⁴ While Anna Freud emphasizes the work of reality testing and sees in this work the means for the ego to transform its expectations, anticipations, perceptions, and even its worries over what might count as interference from the outside, Melanie Klein privileges the importance of an interior interference she calls "phantasies." Klein believes a certain freedom can be achieved by elaborating phantasies through a knowledge of their workings and uses. In her view, phantasies come first, and thinking comes afterward. Anna Freud's direction is otherwise; the ego's freedom is intimately bound to its interest in the world, its relations with others, and to its capacity to question and adjust the reach of its defenses. If internal conflicts come before they can be understood, sublimation makes an afterward. They do agree on one point, a commonality that is worked upon throughout this book but highlighted in the concluding chapter, where I explore their shared views on the importance of loneliness to thinking. Both analysts, albeit in different ways, maintain the view that the ego's mechanisms of defense are just different ways of thinking. Together, their respective orientations narrate as contention the theater of education. It will be the staging of that strange encounter with reality and phantasy and so this will rewrite our very capacity to construct knowledge of the self and others.⁵

Education staggers under the heavy burden of representing its own cacophony of dreams, its vulnerabilities, and its incompleteness. If, in education, we must experience a confusion of time that makes distinctions among the past, present, and future difficult to maintain, if the love being offered heralds an impossible and a tantalizing promise and, then, if the thought of education must suffer from the grief of retrospection, from an after-education, then these processes are uncanny. Humans, after all, work both their breakdowns in meanings and their repairs of

significance in similar ways. To think the thought of education, we must argue over what counts as education and miseducation, as neurosis and insight, as idealization and disillusion, as progress and regression, and as human and inhuman. We also must argue, as the analysts did, over the nature of the educational relationship and how emotional ties between people both allow and inhibit our understanding of what becomes of the work of learning. All of these vacillations of education, made from something in excess of deliberate planning, predicable outcomes, or translatable theory, are its nervous systems.

There was a moment in the history of child psychoanalysis when two schools of thought—Anna Freud’s and Melanie Klein’s—clashed over problems of research strategies, knowledge claims, techniques of practice, training regimes, and the ways in which the adult and child might be imagined and enlivened. This clash tied the problem of uncertainty in practices to debates on the nature of reality and phantasy. Readers will encounter what are now known as the “Freud–Klein Controversies” in chapter 2. Beyond the explicit history that these disputes offer, however, and in much of this book, their insistent arguments also are emblematic of the problem of thinking about education. This is because they argued over the status of reality and phantasy in learning to live and in the very poesies and processes of knowledge and its authority.⁶ More than glimpsing the differences between what are roughly thought of in psychoanalysis as the schools of ego psychology and object relations,⁷ beyond attempting any synthesis of a contentious and lively history that continues to haunt our contemporary efforts, and beyond putting certain figures to rest in peace, my purpose is to bring the difficulties psychoanalytic views suggest to education with the difficulties education brings to psychoanalysis. In doing so, I will propose that if education makes us nervous, it need not end in neurosis.

Readers may notice that my arguments carry an ambivalent tone, and perhaps, occasionally, touch on raw nerves. At times, I verge on unfashionable claims by arguing for the importance of confronting knowledge in excess of personal experience, of accepting our constitutive asocial vulnerabilities, and of posing education as difficult, as other to the dream of progress and mastery, even as we also must risk a theory of history, sociality, and education. While researching for this book, I found myself in the ambivalent position of becoming utterly persuaded first by Anna Freud and then by Melanie Klein. Here are just a few stumbles: *Yes, of course, it is crucial to center the problem of anxieties that are in excess of social causes. Yes, of course, reality causes misery. Yes, misery requires neither reasons nor rationality. Yes, of course, it is crucial to center the influence of actual others over the*

phantasy life of the individual. Yes, analysis should have an educational core. Yes, it is best to keep education away from the analytic setting and analysis away from education. And yet, while reading their work alongside those who argued with it and supported it, I also experienced a certain fear and incredulity toward them both. I disagreed with parts of their theory that rendered sexuality in homophobic terms,⁸ or that affixed gender too easily to the dictates of social convention. My resistance to some of their theories also was made from a desire to escape their respective gambles over the reach and strange returns of psychical reality.

Despite these protests, however, I found myself feeling pathos in and attraction to their long years of research and their respective lives.⁹ After all, their lives were made in what Kristeva (2001b) calls “the psychoanalytic century,”¹⁰ where the line between madness and sanity became more faint and, where the speaking subject, testimony, and witnessing became associated with justice and working through. These women were caught not just in the nexus of the contentious early history of child psychoanalysis and, then, in how it would be chronicled, remembered, and disputed, but their lives and theories spanned much of the history of the twentieth century: its World Wars, its technological revolutions, its universalization of education and human rights, its gender and sexual revolutions, and its long-standing disputes over what it means to be human, to be subject to both history and phantasy. To figure the history of education through its controversies over the status of learning, knowledge, and authority and through philosophical and literary discussion of the problems of understanding self/other relations may mean reconsidering the relevance of psychoanalytic theories from the vantages of Melanie Klein and Anna Freud. It also may mean returning to the status of phantasy and reality in our educational thinking and, perhaps like Sigmund Freud, trying to figure their educative and miseducative senses.

It is useful to reconsider Anna Freud and Melanie Klein together, because they not only emphasize different qualities of reality and phantasy but suggest divergent methods for how these qualities can even be known. Their arguments are not just about which woman might be seen as carrying the authority of Freud, although, as we will see in chapter 2, Freud tried to settle this competition before his death. Both women also establish the relevancy of psychoanalytic theory to children by their witnessing the child’s psychical complexity; in doing so, they may have inadvertently offered something quite stunningly difficult, even audacious to the ways we can now imagine education and the relations that compose it. That something has to do with the ways in which love and

hate—through the dynamics of loss and mourning—animate the potentiality of psychical and historical reality and our capacity to be susceptible to education. They allow us theoretical speculations on the nature of aggression but urge us to do so with a curiosity and patience that can provoke us to think with creative reach and to inquire with compassion.

If noting such grand purposes could not help my wavering, considering the way their arguments resemble our contemporary breakdowns did give me a pause.¹¹ After all, a great deal of their fight concerned the problem of splitting: choosing sides, being recognized, expelling that which a theory cannot configure, and, most problematic of all, resisting free association, perhaps the only rule that makes psychoanalysis, well, psychoanalysis.¹² And yet, both women and their schools do require discretion, as they try, in very different ways, to characterize the neglected relations between reality and phantasy, consciousness and the unconscious, adult and child, and practice and theory. They ask us to accept the incredulous reach of psychical life—our own and that of others—and still hold onto varying degrees of the world outside of our psychical realities, to its constraints and possibilities, and the conditions we confront that are not of our own making, yet still require something from us. If each of their orientations, to child analysis and, to some extent, to the education of teachers and analysts, acts out the very wish for knowledge that they tried to analyze in others, then reconsidering their methods also can mean raising new questions for what we take to be the workings of reality and phantasy in our education, provided that we can tolerate what both women have to say.

Melanie Klein asks us to accept an inaugural negativity at the heart of psychical design—a time before education that nonetheless still exerts influence. This kernel of negativity creates, for Klein, our urge for reparation, the gradual translation of inchoate demands and feelings of persecution into affectation, the desire to think of and care for the other. It is a process that can never be completed. In her view, there is a destructive force within that must, over the course of one's life, be overcome and affected by another of our nascent promises: the capacity to love and experience gratitude. She offers a theory of psychical positions as the beginning of thinking, made from a primary anxiety and terrible helplessness. Becoming thoughtful toward the self and others entails finessing, not limiting, the creative elaboration of phantasy. Klein believed this is best accomplished through developing knowledge of phantasy and learning to respect the workings of one's own psychical reality. Without this respect for interiority, Klein would maintain, there can be no relation to

reality. For Klein, the psychoanalytic problem concerns our phantasmagoric creations and how these originative creatures, what she called “persecutory and part objects,” structure and are themselves structured by perception, desire, and experiences of being alone and with others.¹³

For Anna Freud, what makes the psychic heart beat and break belongs to instinctual conflict and then to the ego defenses that evolve slowly and in relation to, or in tension with, dramas staged between the actual world and the inner conflict. Anxiety plays a starring role in the theater of our psychical world, and its character is elaborated as ego defense mechanisms. Anna Freud’s analytic technique with children has a normative goal: adaptation to the reality principle, sublimation of the pleasure principle, and an interest in using ego defenses more flexibly. After all, she might observe, our ego is rather fragile, because it evolves in relation to others and arrives before the self can stage understanding. And so, the ego must, in many senses, defend itself against overwhelming stimuli. We can become better reality testers, but this need not mean that we become compliant, conformist, or resistant to changing the very reality that we try to apprehend. Indeed, for Anna Freud, compliance and conformity represent defenses against the anxiety of loneliness, worries over being left out, and worries that one cannot change. It also means that the more rigid the defense mechanism, the harsher reality can seem, which leaves a question for Anna Freud concerning the evolving relation between the ego and its reality. Chapter 3 returns to these particular dilemmas by considering the working of ego defense mechanisms in experiences of learning to teach. There I explore some small controversies of learning that occurred when I tried to teach something about the theories of Anna Freud to undergraduate university student teachers.

Quite differently, the psychoanalytic theories of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein take what we imagine to be education to its limits by opening its borders of reason and rationality to unconscious phantasy and to ego demands that meet these processes in the other. Education is lost and found, they remind us, somewhere between intellectual inhibition and social prohibition, somewhere between the search for pleasure and the confrontation with reality, somewhere between the negativity of the death drive and the integrating work of the Eros and of reparation. The vacillations between self and other, perception and desire, phantasy and reality, and “primary processes” and “secondary processes” begin in phantasy.¹⁴ While these speculations can seem to dispute the force of outside circumstances and of conditions not of our own making, they also may be used to heighten our attention to the problem of how the

world is noticed, lived in, and used, to what it is to make lively and relevant selves, and to figuring out something new about the difficult work of learning to live with others. These tensions are the subject of chapter 4, animated by the dilemmas of thinking within the dynamics of group psychology.

Rather than view one school of thought as being more important or more true than its adversary, and rather than decide, once and for all, whether the views of Anna Freud or Melanie Klein are beyond the pale of contemporary education, readers are asked to consider both orientations: when they meet, when they seem far apart, and when they transform something of their respective insistencies. Read through the exemplary conflict of the Freud–Klein Controversies, education proffers narratives of lives that one will never live and glimpses of histories that require something unanticipated from our present encounters with them; education also is the place where individuals are asked to imagine something about realities that they do not yet know or know so well. These gambles, that knowledge matters, mean that education can be thought of more vitally as residing between phantasy and reality, between the breakdowns of meaning and the afterward urges for reparation.

So the ghosts of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein haunt each of these chapters: we will find them in their own controversial discussions, in classroom discussions about their work, in theories of group psychology, and in thinking with other theories and in contexts that they never would have entered and, more than likely, would have avoided. Let us try to see what these tensions they called “education” can mean for our own time. For the rest of what follows, I sketch a series of dilemmas in psychoanalysis, curious problems for education really, that preoccupied our key protagonists and their worthy adversaries. I consider some key debates over the theoretical nature of learning: the philosophical nature of subjectivity and, while not so popular in times of social construction theory, the ontological capacity of humans to transform themselves and others through an original susceptibility to knowledge, social relations, and libidinal bonds. These dilemmas return to help us think about group psychology in chapter 4 and the question of theory and affect in chapter 5. The last chapter continues these themes, from the vantage of theories of loneliness. There, both Melanie Klein and Anna Freud try to construct psychoanalytic histories of learning by their meditation on the relation between loneliness and poignant thinking. How curious, then, that it would take a concept called “loneliness,” made from what Kristeva (2001b) calls “the fate of being a stranger” (194), for them to finally meet and for us to reset the time of after-education.

IMPOSSIBLE PROFESSIONS

If each of us holds intimate views on what counts as bad education, ill-prepared teachers, and miserable school settings, then we may also try, at times, to imagine an education that can make the world better and people more generous, encourage tolerance, and banish humiliation to nightmares. And yet, however we try to characterize education, there is a nagging sense that even this work resists any understanding of the uncertainties of our lives and what becomes of our knowledge when we try to communicate it to another. Sigmund Freud may well characterize the problem of education most openly when he calls it, more than once, one of the “impossible professions.” How can one stay close to Freud’s difficult insistence upon the impossibility of teaching and learning without using it to express tired cynicism, or to represent a certain exhaustion teachers and students make from trying to sort out the problem of what education can and should signify?

Consider the notion of impossibility as a metaphor, as a work of language, that tries to associate education with a constitutive difficulty at the heart of trying to teach and to learn: our idiomatic selves. The concept of impossibility signals a certain excess and distress, which results when the qualities of trying to learn and to teach, namely, the desire to persuade, believe, and transform the self and the other, encounter uncertainty, resistance, and the unknown. All of these remnants are indices of new editions of old conflicts that allow psychical demands to do their strange work. What makes this work both estranging and strange is the paradox in which learning begins in the breakdown of meaning, while these fragments animate the wish that knowledge settles distress and erases what cannot be understood. This is the tension at the heart of psychoanalytic method, described quite beautifully by Christopher Bollas (1999):

The wish for knowledge must not interfere with a method that defers heightened consciousness in favor of a dreamier frame of mind, encouraging the free movements of images, ideas, pregnant words, slips of the tongue, emotional states and developing relational positions. (35)

The method of free association itself meets an incredible resistance for Freud—there is something maddeningly obdurate, irrational, really, about the human. The early Freud names this madness “sexuality” or

“libidinality,” the insatiable search for pleasure and the avoidance of pain. A later Freud reaches into something far more frightening: the death drive, the reduction of all tension, the annihilation of conflict. In placing education in the realm of impossible professions, he suggests that the work and workings of education are not immune to their own psychical consequences: narcissism, masochism, sadism, regression, omnipotence, denial, undoing, and all of the forms of aggression that work in the service of destruction. What seems impossible, then, is not so much that we have education. Rather, the impossibility is that however good and intentional our methods may feel, we cannot guarantee, for either ourselves or others, the force, experience, or interpretation of our efforts once they become events in the world of others. That provisional knowledge arrives belatedly, in the form of an existential question such as, what have I really made? After the experience of education, there is still the problem of education.

Sigmund Freud (1925c) first called education one of the “impossible professions” in his foreword to the now almost forgotten study of delinquency, *Wayward Youth*, by August Aichhorn. Aichhorn was a colleague of Freud’s and worked closely with Anna Freud in designing after-school programs for working-class youth in Vienna. Freud understood that psychoanalysis, because of its emphasis on the prehistory of the adult, on repressed infantile wishes, and on a prophylactic child psychoanalysis, would offer a great deal of hope to the field of education in terms of preventing neurosis from having a future and in terms of freeing children and adults from superstitious thought, the censoring of sexuality, and crude authoritarian social relations.¹⁵ Indeed, from its inception, child psychoanalysts could not help but talk about neurotic tendencies made from the experience of school: school phobias, running away, not being able to read, early stuttering, school pranks, and even cases of uncontrollable laughter. And by the early 1930s, in Europe, the United Kingdom, North America, and Latin America, the thought experiment known as “psychoanalysis” was influencing—particularly through the work of Anna Freud, August Aichhorn, Siegfried Bernfeld, and Melanie Klein—the ways education could be designed.¹⁶ Freud, however, was ambivalent about what it meant for the human to learn, and he tried to separate himself from both child analysis and education.

And yet, over the course of his long career, Freud returned continually to the dilemmas of educating: he wrote of difficulties made from psychoanalytic technique and of the problems in learning from, as op-

posed to about, psychoanalysis; he questioned the problem of when analysis is said to be over; and, in debating the meanings of psychoanalysis, he acknowledged its limits. Near the end of his life, he was still struggling with justifying the diverse potential of psychoanalysis and the possibility that the talking cure might offer a means of reconstructing the significance of a history that is no longer available but that still exerts pressure on the ways the present can be experienced. If Freud feigned reticence in transposing psychoanalytic methods beyond the analytic setting—and in the conclusion of this chapter, I will return to the tensions that psychoanalysis offers to social commentary—he also saw his method as offering new constructions to “kernels of historical truths” that could illuminate, even by psychoanalytic myths and its theoretical fictions, larger cultural regressions, historical breakdowns, and societal repressions.¹⁷ That is, he felt that psychoanalysis might have a great deal to say about the human’s proclivity to violence, to unhappiness, to charismatic leaders, to group psychology, and to forgetting one’s own traumatic origins.

Analyzing the failures that belong to education is not, for Freud, an academic exercise of application, where the thinker is somehow immune to the implications of her or his own argument. In defending the qualifications of lay analysts—or of those who practiced psychoanalysis without a medical degree—Freud (1910) also insists that utilizing psychoanalytic views without oneself being subject to the demands of a personal analysis can only be “wild analysis.” The wildness is not because the claims made are out of control, although they can be, but unless psychoanalytic claims direct self-understanding, they can easily become an occasion to act out one’s own aggression and disclaim one’s own experience. Freud (1925c) suggests this resistance to learning from psychoanalysis when he urges educators to undergo a personal analysis: “A training of this kind is best carried out if a person . . . undergoes an analysis and experiences it on himself: theoretical instruction in analysis fails to penetrate deep enough and carries no conviction” (274). We are back to the problem of conviction: how it is made, what rules its passions, and even why theoretical instruction stops it short. We carry conviction, Freud seems to suggest, when we experience the limit and doubts of trying to construct self-understanding. We carry conviction when we can encounter the vicissitudes of suffering.

Despite Freud’s attempts to control the reach and relevance of psychoanalysis to the world beyond the intimate analytic setting, his (1925c) preface to Aichhorn’s *Wayward Youth* seems to leave the field of education to others:

My personal share in this application of psycho-analysis has been very slight. At an early age I accepted the *bon mot* which lays it down that there are three impossible professions—educating, healing and government—and I was already fully occupied with the second of them. But it does not mean that I overlook the high social value of the work done by those of my friends who are engaged in education. (273)

And yet, a cursory look through the index of Freud's twenty-four-volume *Standard Edition* complicates his claim to have left the dilemmas of education to others. The index entry under the heading "education" is not half as long as the one under the word "ego," but there are wide-ranging associations: "sexuality," "inhibitions," "prevention of war," and "unsolved problems of." Oddly, Freud's "after-education" is not cross-referenced, although it appears in his preface for Aichhorn. If education is impossible, part of its common impossibility emerges when one tries to consider what education should be responsible for, and whether education can prevent and solve human suffering.

Freud's (1937a) second mention of the impossibility of education is found in one of his last essays, "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," in which he returns to the problem of psychoanalytic technique. Here, education is bleak, entangled in what he calls "negative therapeutic reaction," or the analysands' participation in her illness through the resistance to cure, by which Freud means the painful refusal to risk love and work, even if these chances are utterly vulnerable to loss, disillusion, and melancholia and mourning. The negative therapeutic reaction is a notoriously misunderstood concept, one that posits unconscious investments in not changing and in suffering. These efforts do not belong to rational thought, and they are communicated indirectly, through the symptom. Freud considers the special efforts of the analyst, herself not immune from the negative therapeutic reaction, in trying to practice:

Here let us pause for a moment to assure the analyst that he has our sympathy in the very exacting demands he has to fulfil in carrying out his activities. It almost looks as if analysis were the third of those "impossible" professions in which one can be sure beforehand of achieving unsatisfying results. The other two, which have been known much longer, are education and government. (248)

Shoshana Felman's (1987) exposition of the teachings of Freud and Lacan begins with the difficulty of self-transformation and the transformation of the other. Her sense of the negative therapeutic reaction begins with a passion for ignorance, indeed, the commitment not to know what one already knows! Felman is interested in why there is resistance to knowledge and what this resistance means for pedagogy. She too suggests that unsatisfying results are the very heart of the pedagogical exchange, not because nothing can be known "not so much with lack of knowledge as with resistance to knowledge. Ignorance, suggests Lacan, is a passion" (79). But a passion for what?

"BETWEEN THE THUMB AND THE TEDDY"

Try going back to a time before education. This imaginative effort preoccupied many analysts influenced by Melanie Klein, and it characterized the creative work of D. W. Winnicott.¹⁸ To consider education through Winnicott's (1992b) paradox of indebtedness allows us to meet illusion: education is a relation that exists and does not exist at the same time. Before there is education, there is potential space. In writing about transitional objects, Winnicott's curiosity turns to the not-yet social space that the baby makes between the thumb and the teddy, an early instance of what he calls "the intermediate area of experience" (230). This complex emotional geography is already full of all sorts of experiences, even before it is entered into, and this fullness totters precariously between the subjectively and objectively perceived. Two experiences are confused in this area: the baby is projecting and introjecting objects. We are imagining the chaotic world of phantasy: here, condensed affect that wants before it can know. Along with this internal work, Winnicott points to a potential relation that is neither internal nor external; he describes this as indebtedness, as somewhere "between primary awareness of indebtedness and the acknowledgment of indebtedness ('Say: ta!')" (ibid.). The area is an illusion, and it is tentative; provided that the baby does not have to defend it, this intermediate experience will become creative.

If we cannot know from this forgotten space what the baby experiences as indebtedness, we can speculate about what ruins it. If any outsider makes a decision about the nature of this space, the baby's illusion that experience is hers or his to make will be spoiled. We also can wonder about the nature of this debt—how it will come into awareness, be played out, and even become a relationship, what Winnicott calls "indebtedness." We can imagine as well these qualities as composing

education, where the student and teacher come into existence and then accumulate debts of their own. The paradox is that education exists and does not exist at the same time; it is a space already filled with the meanings of others, and yet it still needs to be thought.

Is it only the psychoanalyst who is concerned with the thumb and the teddy? Or is there something essential about the fact of natality that absorbs all sorts of discussion? In his study of philosopher Levinas, Richard Cohen (2001) enjoys the gift of the introduction. That first introduction, the fact of natality, opens our lives to others with promise and vulnerability. From this relation, Cohen sees the question of freedom as inextricably tied to obligation; this emerges from the fact “that we are *born* and not *caused*, and that we necessarily have parents” (22). To narrate what comes after this fact of natality, that a life comes into the world of other lives, that this new life requires introductions, even as it introduces itself, brings education closer to ethics. Cohen’s view is not so far away from Winnicott’s insistence on the ways baby makes the parent. And both the philosopher and analyst are occupied with the question of how, from such inarticulate beginnings, does the human become humane?

If Cohen brings the necessity of parents into the miasma of beginnings, then Lyotard (1991) stresses not the introduction but the problem of having to learn. The human must learn to become human. Lyotard’s argument is deceptively simple: “If humans are born human, as cats are born cats (within a few hours), it would not be . . . possible to educate them. That children have to be educated is a circumstance which only proceeds from the fact that they are not completely led by nature, not programmed” (3). Here is the paradox: We are not led by nature, but without our nature we would not need to be educated. Our helplessness and dependency are the very conditions that make us so susceptible to education. We are born, and this fact of natality creates the baby and the parents. It also turns introduction into obligation. Lyotard provides us with one dilemma that this nature archives, now from the vantage of the adult’s awareness of her or his indebtedness to the baby:

Shorn of speech, incapable of standing upright, hesitating over the objects of its interest, not able to calculate its advantages, not sensitive to common reason, the child is eminently the human because its distress heralds and promises things possible. Its initial delay in humanity, which makes it hostage of the adult community, is also what manifests to this community the

lack of humanity it is suffering from, and which calls on it to become more human. (3–4)

Lyotard's characterization of the relation of the inhuman to the human is such that if the child wants before it knows, others do not just have difficulty in this delay but must use this very distress to educate. Our humanity is that distress that allows for all that will follow, even education: "All education is inhuman," writes Lyotard,

because it does not happen without constraint and terror; I mean the least controlled, the least pedagogical terror, the one Freud calls castration and which makes him say, in relation to the "good way" of bringing up children, that in any case it will be bad . . . everything in the instituted which, in the event, can cut deep with distress and indetermination is so threatening that the reasonable mind cannot fail to fear in it, and rightly, an inhuman power of deregulation. (4–5)

This melancholy education is made from the least pedagogical experiences, namely, processes of psychical growth: learning to give up magical and omnipotent thinking, noticing when the desire for mastery and absolute knowledge domesticates curiosity and our capacity to be surprised, having to enter into a law greater than the self, and accepting our own fragility, dependence, and faults. These qualities—for both the child and the adult—are the least pedagogical, because they are made from distress, vulnerability, and chance. The terror and constraint of education come from within, even as these impositions are found outside. If psychical development is the least pedagogical experience because it is so subject to the helplessness of our beginnings, to the passion for ignorance, in short, to the unconscious and the return of this repressed, then these modes of resistance offer us another sense of the difficulties of that other development, namely education.

How the human learns is, of course, a very old problem in education, one that is difficult to separate from its other side: upbringing, pedagogical exchange, and how (or whether) one teaches the human to become human. Is there something implicit in or natural to the human that should be honored, or from which we ought to learn? Is nature the place where learning imposes itself? Is there something monstrous, even gothic, about the human that requires drastic prohibitions? These questions still plague our pedagogical imagination. In 1762, Rousseau (1979)

offered to his public a “natural” guide that linked child rearing to the bringing up of culture. He created a paper-boy-child—Emile— and tutored him, provided for him, selected only a few books for him, and arranged for his gradual confrontation with the world. Rousseau’s was an experiment to help Emile lose time with his own development. On the way to becoming a human, at least in paper form, Emile also served as a foil; Rousseau used Emile as a critique for how children were brought up in his own time, and one of his biggest arguments had to do with when children were thought to be able to reason:

If children jumped all at once from the breast to the age of reason, the education they are given might be suitable for them. But according to the natural progress, they need an entirely contrary one. . . . The first education ought to be purely negative. It consists not at all in teaching virtue or truth but in securing the heart from vice and the mind from error. (93)

While Rousseau’s thought experiment on how to raise a child for eventual self-sufficiency became the grounds for what we now know as progressive and child-centered education, Alan Bloom’s (1979) introduction to this classic reminds us of the paradox of Rousseau’s moral pedagogy: “What is forgotten is that Rousseau’s full formula is that while the child must always do what he wants to do, he should want to do only what the tutor wants him to do” (13).

Freedom, it seems, is not quite free but rather binds obligation and indebtedness to constraint and terror. This difficult equation was made years later by Mary Shelley’s (1996) cautionary tale on the impossibility of education, this time through a confrontation with science and poetry. Perhaps the novel *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus* should be read as a rejoinder to Rousseau’s *Emile*. Shelley offers us a mad scientist’s sublime creation, a nameless creature who learns to speak and read on his own and then, because of language and literacy, suffers from loneliness so profound that it drives this inhuman being into human madness. In one conversation with Victor Frankenstein, the creature compares himself to the first biblical man, Adam. Much too late, he demands of his creator: “Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous” (57). The lonely creature requires his distresses be acknowledged by way of being loved. But the creature also may be mistaken in his hope that being happy leads to virtuousness. The other side of this equation is spoiled by Victor

Frankenstein, whose manic triumph, after the creature was given life, turns into a disillusionment in which he feels only horror toward his own awful experiment. Without a sense of indebtedness made from this terror, education would remain inhuman and our creature, along with Victor, would remain all too human.

The preoccupation with what exactly the baby or the child is capable of, and with what adults ought to do with it, belongs to our modern sensibilities. The baby returns us to the nature of being and to the question of history.¹⁹ When Hannah Arendt (1993) wrote of North American education, she too returned to the baby and to our fact of natality, but only to appeal to the adult's indebtedness to the child. The fact of natality is actually three facts for Arendt. New events enter the world, and so natality consists of a promise. Second, natality also is a state of extreme dependency and vulnerability. This gives rise to its third feature, natality ushers in obligation. It requires something from those already in the world, just as those already in the world require something from the new. The fact of natality thus references the promise of sociality for renewal and continuity, a promise easily broken. Kristeva's (2001a) meditation on Arendt's thinking centers on this very human condition, and she may as well have been referring to processes of education: "Arendt reconstructs the political realm from scratch based on two key notions—the birth of individuals and the frailty of actions—and on two psychopolitical interventions—forgiveness and the promise" (204). These dilemmas of the unknown are, for Arendt, the crisis of education. And just as in the fact of natality, there is something utterly ordinary about the crisis of education, even if the demands of responding to the human condition are extraordinary.

Arendt's move is bold, for she is addressing the situation of education in North America. She asks, how can one suggest, for all of the devastations of the twentieth century, that North American education is in crisis? One sees in newspapers daily laments over standards, over literacy attainment, and over a certain lack of discipline, whether it is found in the students, the curriculum, or the community. But when compared to the wars in Europe, Arendt goes on, and perhaps in reference to Adorno's (1998) question, what can education be after Auschwitz?, such worries seem irrelevant. Still, for Arendt, education is a promise, a responsibility, and a social obligation; precisely because these are its vulnerable conditions, it must, by its very nature, inaugurate itself through the crisis of sociality. Like Lyotard's, Arendt's suggestion for thinking education as crisis also is deceptively simple:

Aside from these general reasons that would make it seem advisable for the layman to be concerned with trouble in fields about which, in the specialist sense he may know nothing (and this, since I am not a professional educator, is of course my case when I deal with a crisis in education), there is another even more cogent reason for his concerning himself with a critical situation in which he is not immediately involved. And that is the opportunity, provided by the very fact of crisis—which tears away facades and obliterates prejudices—to explore and inquire into whatever has been laid bare of the essence of the matter, and the essence of education is natality, the fact that human beings are *born* into the world. (1993, 174, emphasis in original)

If Arendt reminds us of our big obligations toward strangers and even in caring about fields in which we are not specialists, Winnicott brings us to the smaller responsibilities that perhaps allow us to notice the crisis differently. For Winnicott as well, there is something absolutely delicate that must be respected from this fact of being born. It has to do with the work that the infant does, along with the work that the adult must do to allow the infant its explorations. The indebtedness that an adult makes with the infant begins from the adult's willingness to not ask a certain question about the infant's experience. Winnicott (1992b) warns us against pedagogical intrusions: "*Of the transitional object it can be said that it is a matter of agreement between us and the baby that we will never ask the question 'Did you conceive of this or was it presented to you from without?' The important point is that no decision on this point is expected. The question is not to be formulated*" (239–40, emphasis in original). This careful indecision depends upon the nature both of the baby and the transitional object: with the transitional object, the baby is participating in the adventure of symbolization and also designing what Winnicott calls the "first not-me possession," the nature and use of an attachment. With the transitional object, reality and phantasy can be safely confused. It is the allowance for this confusion that ushers in curiosity and thinking.

Winnicott's description of the use of the transitional object matches later uses of knowledge in academic work: attachment to the object includes both cuddling and mutilation; it seems to survive the baby's aggression; it cannot change unless the baby makes it change; it seems to have a reality of its own; it is close to the baby's point of view; and, in the end, it is discarded when eventually it loses these meanings

(1992b, 233). If all goes well, and this is Winnicott's phrasing, then this loss is not to be mourned. But neither is the discarded object just forgotten. The transition does take some time to play out, because the qualities that Winnicott notes and the naïveté of the claimed authorship fray the borders of the passion for ignorance and knowledge. Because the transitional object is bestowed with this peripatetic passion, it would break the illusion to ask, did you find it, or did you create it? For to ask the baby if she or he found or created the teddy, or the blanket, or the cotton would impose a point of view that would simply devastate the attachment so painstakingly made, the attachment that consoles distress and heralds indebtedness. The transitional object cannot be separated from its use and, in a certain way, its user: the play of the transitional object vacillates between madness and care, ruthlessness and petting, biting and kissing, banishing and cherishing. Its point of view is not yet a point of view but rather symbolizes a reality so magnetizing that it absorbs and survives the owner's affect.

"MINUS K"

If some are questions best left unasked, then others are worth asking. While Winnicott offers us a way to conceive of how the baby makes and finds knowledge, Wilfred Bion wonders what inhibits the capacity of adults to attach passionately to new ideas and people.²⁰ He asks the startling question, why is there a hatred of learning? Bion considers the psychical experience of thinking in groups and the phenomena of what he calls "thoughts awaiting thinkers." "The problem is simplified," Bion (1994b) writes, "if 'thoughts' are regarded as epistemologically prior to thinking and that thinking has to be developed as a method or apparatus for dealing with 'thoughts'" (83). Bion was interested in designing a system of notation used when listening to his analysand's free associations and when studying how individuals think in groups. One of these symbols was called "Minus K," where K stood in both for the problem of realizing "knowledge" and for accepting new ideas and new people as valuable and worthy. "Minus K" is a destructive attack upon links between ideas and people. It overtakes thoughts when groups feel somehow devalued by new members, and when ideas that have not yet been thought are felt as if they were sent to ruin a pristine reality. More devastatingly, the group's sense of its own moral superiority feels attacked, and thereby the group creates the conditions for "Minus K" to stand in for the group's

own hatred of development. Symptoms of this hatred are conceptual: the group splits ideas into rigid formulations of good and bad, and this splitting fuels its aggressive moralism toward new ideas or what it does not understand. All of this aggression is sustained as a group necessity, for in “Minus K,” the group feels attacked by ideas, language, and potential differences within the group. What, Bion wonders, makes new knowledge so threatening? Why are new ideas so difficult to digest that they seem to provoke mental indigestion and even regurgitation?

Bion’s attempt to answer these questions draws on the work of his analyst, Melanie Klein, and her concepts of envy and gratitude. Envy is a particularly violent affect, different from its more common usage offered perhaps as a backhanded compliment of admiration, such as when we “envy” a colleague’s success or vacation. Klein’s (1957) essay, “Envy and Gratitude,” sketches a series of confusions in thinking that inhibits or undermines the capacity to craft meaningful relations with others. She proposes that confusion itself is a defense, the key confusion being between good and bad. Indeed, Klein’s concept of envy does not include outside rivalry but rather an internal drama that has to do with what Likierman (2001) noticed as “a malign resentment of [the object’s] goodness” (175). Envy is a violent affect in which goodness itself is rejected, and Bion viewed this violence as “Minus K.”

Klein returns to our earliest object relation, her first fact of natality: the breast.²¹ To the infant who experiences bodily sensations before meaning arrives, the breast offers both good and bad phantasies: it is blamed and hated when needs are felt but not satisfied. This is Klein’s model for splitting.²² The good breast assuages the infant’s anxiety, and the bad breast persecutes the infant by holding its nourishment back, by not being available. Splitting, for Klein, is one of the human’s earliest defenses against unbearable anxiety; from this severe phantasy the confusion of good and bad emerges to create the conditions for the painful problem of integration, of acceptance of both good and bad. This acceptance is made through the development of gratitude, a poignant form of thinking indebted to the creativity and separateness of the other. But for the other to be seen as separate, the self must learn to acknowledge her or his own psychical reality, including phantasies of destruction and the guilt left in their wake. These painful realizations are, for Klein, the material from which we construct reality. “Together with happy experiences,” she writes,

unavoidable grievances reinforce the innate conflict between love and hate, in fact, basically between life and death instincts,

and result in the feeling that a good and bad breast exist. As a consequence, early emotional life is characterized by a sense of losing and regaining the good object. In speaking of an innate conflict between love and hate, I am implying that the capacity both for love and for destructive impulses is, to some extent, constitutional, though varying individually in strength and interacting from the beginning with external conditions. (1957, 180)

The confusion of love and hate exists from the beginning, and the raw combination of this primal or one can even say prehistoric, conflict is the material from which thinking is gradually made. Paradoxically, thinking is aroused from conflict and so carries traces of its own difficult emergency. It may seem, at first glance, as if Klein is suggesting an absolute boundary between love and hate, that hate is something we must stop feeling, and love is something we must feel in spite of ourselves. However, to idealize these affective relations, or better, what Klein calls “object relations,” is to forget what in the human is least pedagogical and, at the same time, utterly susceptible to influence: phantasy. For Klein, envy “is the angry feeling that another person possesses and enjoys something desirable—the envious impulse being to take it away or to spoil it” (1957, 181). The breast is the baby’s first object of love and hate, and so of envy. It will be the experience that allows the baby to move from “*deprivation* into *frustration*” (Kristeva 2001b, 142; emphasis in original). But it also will be the first object where enjoyment and, hence, gratitude is made. From gratitude, Klein believes that the “capacity to make reparation” (1957, 189) gradually becomes stronger. If the infant can come to tolerate frustration, to understand the other as offering new experiences, to enjoy the feeling of making a bond, and to accept that both frustration and satisfaction are needed parts of life, then she or he will slowly make from this anxiety feelings of gratitude, something needed in later life for the capacity to make reparation, indeed, to feel indebtedness to the other. The hopeful trajectory that Klein sets for thought, her sense of promise and obligation, begins in anxiety and splitting, progresses to envy, and then to gratitude, and the urge for reparation. Then there can be an acceptance of mourning. For Klein and Bion, thinking is just another word for symbolizing and working through crisis. Perhaps the same trajectory can be said for what becomes of our education, provided that we can tolerate a frustration that is also education.