

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS EDUCATION

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“The only point of writing a note on this simple and not very good poem is that some reviewer expressed bafflement, and I want to be consistent in trying to remove all trivial grounds for bafflement.”

—William Empson, undated letter to Ian Parsons

“By educating the worker’s party,” Lenin wrote in *The State and Revolution* in 1918, “Marxism educates the vanguard of the proletariat which is capable of assuming power and of leading the whole people to socialism, of directing and organizing the new order, of being the teacher, the guide, the leader of all the laboring and exploited people in the task of constructing their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie” (p. 25). This, one could say, is education with a purpose; Marxism, as an education has, in Lenin’s view a known, an inevitable outcome. It teaches all the laboring and exploited people how to “construct their social life without the bourgeoisie and against the bourgeoisie.” Lenin’s father was a teacher; and “like his father,” Beryl Williams (2000) writes, “he had infinite faith in education. If the working class could not build socialism, then they had to be taught to do so” (p. 143). “The only socialism we can imagine,” she quotes Lenin as saying, “is one based on all the lessons learned through large scale capitalist culture.” For Lenin there are lessons to be learned at each stage of education. Education is the necessary prelude, the precondition for revolution.

Lenin, that is to say, as a man born, like Freud in the nineteenth century, had an overriding belief in the power of education. Teaching and learning were primary metaphors for progress. When the nineteenth century word for change was not evolution or revolution or commerce, it was education. Lenin

using one of the great nineteenth century bourgeois capitalist instruments—organized education—to destroy bourgeois capitalism had, what one might call politely, a certain irony. Forms of education designed to consolidate the state could, with the advent of Marxism be used to dismantle it. Marxism could reveal, as Lenin shows, how the state itself is a precondition for exploitation; how there is a difference—obscured by the bourgeois state—between formal equality and actual equality. There are things people can be shown through education. Through the writing and reading of books.

What Lenin's use of the language of pedagogy exposes is the ambivalence endemic to the nineteenth century bourgeoisie desire for education. On the one hand it was clear to liberals and radicals in Europe that one can only create democracy or revolution—through the circulation of written texts and spoken sentences. Political ideology, at its starkest, was based on information; people had to learn new ideas. And yet, by the same token as it were, there was fear of education—called by its critics indoctrination—as the source and stirrer of political unrest. Once there are words flying around in the culture like revolution, or exploitations, or the rights of man, or atheism, or trade unionism, or indeed anarchism then anything might happen. The desire, say, for freedom may not be containable by the provision of education. People might be prepared to die for their new-found sentences. If cherished traditional ideals are seen to be dispensable—if modern people have appetites for new sentences—then what kind of belief are educated people going to have in beliefs? What education might reveal, as Louis Menand (2001) says in a different context, is that “our reason for needing reasons is always changing” (p. 38). Changing our governments might be like changing our minds, “In the contemporary condition of society, in which the means for publicizing opinion were ever increasing,” as one early nineteenth century commentator put it, “the diffusion may be effected with the instantaneousness of lightning . . . the world has become an immense whispering gallery, and the faintest accent of science is heard throughout every civilized country as soon as uttered” (Connell, 2001, p. 110). The proliferating modern print media; the turbulence of political life; the increasing thoughtfulness about and organiza-

tion of education. All sorts of people and sentences more and more freely associating with each other. This was the world Lenin and Freud—among so many others, and despite the very real difference of their cultural locations—spoke out of. The late nineteenth century western European world in which education was both a promise and a threat. What made it seem to be either of these things depended, of course, on how, it was assumed, education actually worked. On what it was to learn something, and what the consequences of such learning might be. What is called education—like what is called sexuality—are all the sentences that come out of the word; and all the sentences that went into it.

What Lenin proposes, at its most extreme, is a version of education as ideological programming not unlike certain versions of cognitive therapy: informing people in a certain way to make them do things in a certain way. This is a model of education that Lenin would share with his enemies, the reactionary, conservative bourgeoisie who also want education to be a form of indoctrination. If Marxism is taught to the exploited they will no longer be willing to bear their exploitation. Learning about Marxism will be akin to a conversion experience or to receiving orders. It is not assumed, in other words, that Marx's writing might be subject to innumerable competing, and even contradictory interpretations. On the contrary it is assumed that there is an inevitable and therefore irresistible meaning to these texts that itself leads to equally inevitable and irresistible action; unlike for example, learning about the facts of life, though possibly more like reading the gospels. In Lenin's version of education the whole project is extraordinarily calculated; Marx's words are FOR "the vanguard of the proletariat"; which is itself the only group capable of making the revolution required; and which is itself "the teacher, the guide, the leader" three titles that become virtually synonymous in Lenin's sentence. Like Freud's sexual instinct that has a source, an aim and an object, the process Lenin describes has the aura of science about it. It has an impressive inevitability of intention and effect. It privileges clarity of purpose over indeterminacy. It is as though Lenin knows what is to be done and what is going to happen. Even though we are blessed and distracted by hindsight—we can see, in a way Lenin

couldn't, the actual consequences of his actions—there is, I want to suggest, a certain Leninism in most models of education. By that I mean that a known object is being pursued. That it is a means to a preferred end. Digression is not privileged; distraction tends to be punished. That, like Lenin, the educator wants something specific to happen to the educated; that there are what we call outcomes in mind. Psychoanalytic training committees do not plan for their students to develop an interest in knitting. The Leninist educator has an aim, which he calls revolution; and a method of education, which is exclusively the means to this end. He takes cause and effect very seriously; and there is, by definition, nothing *laissez faire* about him. He is not someone who wants to see what happens; he is someone who wants to make something happen (he would prefer the plans of the day to the dreams of the night). He is a social engineer in so far as he believes in the power of instructing and informing. His wishes have a stark potency; an intractable realism. The problems he foresees—and he is not naïve; he knows, perhaps better than anyone, about the nature of resistance—have to be met by force, if not with violence and intimidation. He knows where the recalcitrance is—for Lenin it is called class interest—and he describes it as something that has to be overcome at whatever cost. The Leninist educator has, what might be called, an immoveable object of desire. It might be called, say, mass literacy, or eternal life, or qualification as a psychoanalyst. The Leninist educator begins, and hopefully ends, knowing what he wants. His omniscience, as omniscience must, extends over time. He may, to some extent, be flexible about his means, but he cannot be flexible about his ends. There are various ways of getting to Jerusalem, but only if that is where you want to go. It is the disarray of life without an aim—or a life in which aims are displaceable—that haunts the politician and the educator. And education, like politics, is unimaginable without ideals and ambitions. For Lenin education is another word for politics; indeed it is education that makes a modern politics possible, even though education means learning Marxism in the appropriate way. And politics means behaving as if, speaking as if, you know what you want. The obscurity of the object of desire has itself been obscured. This is what ideology is for. “Education,” we are told by

Lenin's recent biographer Robert Service (2002), "was the focal point" for his family of origin; his parents had "a common passion for education" (p. 23). They were both trained teachers, and his father was an inspector of schools. It is not surprising that the language of pedagogy came easily to him. For Lenin, Service writes, "A large part of Marxism's attraction had been its emphasis on scholarship and science. He insisted that Marxists had something to teach the working class and that if revolution was to be successful, there had to be a widespread dissemination of Marxist doctrines" (p. 105). "Working class consciousness," Lenin (1902) writes in *What Is To Be Done?*, "cannot be genuine political consciousness unless the workers are trained to respond to all cases of tyranny, oppression, violence and abuse, no matter what class is affected—unless they are trained moreover, to respond from a social democratic point of view and no other" (p. 134). And Lenin, of course, is not simply talking about learning from books; actual lived experience has to be described as in itself educative. Like Freud Lenin is concerned above all with the process of making something conscious; what was soon called consciousness raising. There is something—call it exploitation, call it unconscious desire—that has to be drawn to peoples attention. There is something about their lives that they are failing to notice. It is ever present; and it is, apparently unbeknownst to them, virtually dictating the lives that they are leading. It is in the language of education that Lenin can describe how people can be shown the nature of their oversight; the blind-spot that hitherto has dominated their consciousness. "The consciousness of the working masses," he writes in *What is To Be Done?*, "cannot be genuine class-consciousness unless the workers learn from concrete and above all from topical political facts and events to observe every other social class in all the manifestations of its intellectual, ethical and political life; unless they learn to apply in practice the materialist analysis and the materialist evaluation of all aspects of the life and activity of all classes, strata and groups of the population" (p. 135).

Lenin, like Freud, is telling us what we should pay attention to if we want to understand and transform what it is we are in actuality suffering from. There is something essential of which we are unaware, and a way has to be found of recognizing it for

what it is. And this for Lenin is done by training and learning, to improve perception. As this is a scientific materialism the working masses have to be educated in “observation.” Redirecting people’s attention with a view to action. This, not always with Lenin’s insistence and certainty, is what is going on in every primary school, in every educational establishment, everywhere. The attempt to transform and/or develop people’s preoccupations—to show them what they are ignoring, or have never been exposed to—is the work of every therapist and teacher. Education, like psychoanalysis and politics, is the art of attention seeking. And what is at stake in this, to us, most ordinary social practice, is the nature of influence; of how the bodies that are called people, work on each other. The entanglements of desire. What people want from each other.

I have dwelt so much on Lenin—partly because I think he is of so much interest—but also because, as I have said, he represents in particularly vivid, indeed lurid form, one story about education that we have inherited with him, and through him, from the nineteenth century. On the one hand, an incredible confidence in the power of education—in the uses of pedagogy—as a progressive force. That, put crudely, a good education, the right kind of education makes a good life and a good society. But more specifically, underlying this confidence—an assumption that people are extremely malleable, unfixed, suggestible, capable indeed of revolutionary transformations. That what education reveals is the exorbitant effect people can have on each other. That we are more like clouds than stars: that we are fashionable creatures. In Lenin’s model of Marxist education, of facilitating the consciousness of the working masses, there is what seems like a relatively straightforward cause and effect at work; a certain kind of education, it is assumed, will inevitably produce a certain kind of consciousness; and a certain kind of consciousness will ineluctably lead to a certain kind of action, and a certain kind of society. We could say that the people who invented communism were the people with the most acute sense of what made communism so difficult (and so necessary). And yet, or so Lenin is committed to a story about education that is akin to something we might call programming; and his critics would call indoctrination. Or, more generously, the learning of a skill. We

don't describe heart-surgeons or hairdressers or plumbers as being indoctrinated; we think of them learning what is to be done. They are not being brain washed, they are being equipped to do something specific. Lenin is teaching the working masses how to do revolution, how to do without the unnecessary oppression of exploitation. But there are grey areas and family resemblances here worth noticing. Being trained in Leninist Marxism, like being trained as a hairdresser entails either the ends justifying the means (if you want to be a hairdresser this is what you need to know how to do); or at least the end being privileged. It is assumed that it is a revolution that you really want, which is why you are learning this. It is not part of the project that this training is simply a means to an indeterminate end. It assumes, in other words, if not a prior omniscience, at least a driving preference. Lenin's training is not staged as a setting for too much innovation or improvisation; you can be a maverick hairdresser, you can perhaps have a slightly different interpretation of Marx, but there is still a compass and a map. Revolution is the project. What is not stressed—though it may be partly encouraged—is the eccentricity of individual curiosity and desire or the evolution of wants; what Freud called dream-work (dreaming, that is, as something we are not taught to do). That we can be taught to interpret dreams but not to dream them may be the main point this paper has to make.

So we should take seriously those caricatured reactionaries of the nineteenth century who wanted to censor the distribution of radical political tracts, those contemporary Christians who don't want Darwin taught in their schools. They are at least acknowledging the inflammatory nature of alternative descriptions. But the ambivalence about a too liberal education is often informed by a quasi-religious (but politically motivated) anxiety about conversion. The fundamentalist Christian fears, in a symmetrical way, that the young will be as possessed by Darwinism as they themselves are by the gospel. The capitalist fears that the worker will become as ruthlessly and extravagantly committed to socialism—to actual as opposed to formal equality—as he, the capitalist is to profit. If education is not—however subtle and nuanced; however liberal and pluralist—conversion, then, what is it? Or rather if we understand education in the language of

religion (however buried), what kinds of human experience, or social practice is education like? I think psychoanalysis is better seen as entering the nineteenth century debate about education; rather than, in one way or another, as a contribution to medicine. Psychoanalysis, whatever else it is, is an enquiry, an opportunity to explore the ways in which people inform each other. And I don't, of course, mean simply transmit information to each other. There is, I want to suggest here, Leninist education in its myriad forms; and there is what Freud would call dream-work and free-association and, indeed psychoanalysis. In the *Standard Edition* translation Freud uses the word "education" 222 times, and the cognate terms "educator, educative" and so on another 94 times. The word medicine is used 101 times. There is, let us say, at least a question here. I want to use this paper to see what psychoanalysis looks like when it is described as a form of education, or "after-education" as Freud himself described it in a rather unusual phrase. And this entails wondering why education has been such a problematic issue in psychoanalysis; both the education of analysts, and psychoanalysis defining itself as against education. From the debates between Anna Freud and Melanie Klein to Winnicott's apparently off-hand comment that in doing psychoanalysis he interprets, unless he is tired in which case he "teaches," education is an issue that all too easily becomes *the* issue.

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"Men cannot remain children forever. They must in the end go out into 'hostile life.' We may call this 'education to reality.'"

FREUD, FUTURE OF AN ILLUSION

In his late and remarkable essay on and elegy for psychoanalysis of 1937, *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*, an essay so troubled both by the nature and the therapeutic efficacy of psychoanalysis—Freud uses as an example for the difficulties of psychoanalytic treatment, telling children the facts of life. It has, of course, always been a wonderful puzzle to psychoanalysis that their interpretations often don't seem to work in quite the way

they might have wished. That there is, as it were, a gap between the intentionally given and its reception (its always easier, of course, to be right rather than to be useful). The so-called patient, just like a so-called person seems to do his own thing with what is said to him. On the one hand he is keen for orders and instructions, he is a keen student of his own life; but on the other hand he seems to do something the analyst is prone to call resistance; but which is better called idiosyncratic interpretation (refusal is another word for annoying interpretation). The so-called patient, in short, renders himself ineducable; he won't take on, he won't take in the information. Information, the analyst pleads more or less pleadingly, that is good for him. Freud was himself, in his writing a good teacher—that is, someone who trades in good examples—and so gives us an intriguing analogy for the obstacles that occur in psychoanalytic treatment. And the example in, one might say, the primal scene of education; if not an archetype, an emblem. An adult telling, the telling that is teaching, the facts of life. Why, Freud wonders, doesn't the child take to this essential, endlessly useful lesson, like a duck to water? Why wouldn't it be, as we say, in the child's best interests to take this in? Why, indeed should something apparently so natural be so aversive? Children must be quite at odds with what they need to know. "After such enlightenment," Freud writes (1937), and it seems, at least in English the perfect word, "children know something that they did not know before, but they make no use of the new knowledge that has been presented to them. We come to see that they are not even in so great a hurry to sacrifice for this new knowledge the sexual theories which might be described as a natural growth and which they have constructed in harmony with, and dependence, on, their imperfect libidinal organization—theories about the part played by the stork, about the nature of sexual intercourse and about the way in which babies are made. For a long time after they have been given sexual enlightenment they behave like primitive races who have had Christianity thrust upon them and who continue to worship their idols in secret" (p. 134).

From a Leninist point of view—not to mention from a psychoanalytic one—this is unpromising. How do you teach someone who doesn't want to be taught is akin to how do you psycho-

analyze someone who doesn't want to be cured. Psychoanalysis becomes then an attempt to teach the unteachable. It is as though it begins where the resistance to being taught starts. In the light of this, Freud seems to be saying, how does someone go about influencing someone, persuading someone of something in words, when for good reasons of their own, they would prefer not to be so influenced. Or to put it another way what are the children up to; children who, after all, are the main target, so to speak, of our educative efforts? Freud talks of learning the new thing as involving a sacrifice; the children are like so-called primitive races who refuse to be converted, who go on worshipping their idols in secret. So the facts of life are, in Freud's description, something like Christianity, something the child has to convert to. What then is teaching, or indeed psychoanalysis being experienced as, if it elicits this reaction? And the answer is, it is being experienced as an imposition; what Winnicott calls an impingement, and what could at its most extreme be called a trauma. A trauma is the sacrifice we are compelled to make: It is the sacrifice of our sentience Freud is saying in his mumbo jumbo about imperfect libidinal organization, against the grain of the child's development. It doesn't suit the child to believe the facts of life at this moment of his life. The child as an intelligent pragmatist knows that the truth is what it is good to believe. It is a tool rather than a necessity; the stork gets him where he wants to be at this moment. The child can only be taught what he wants to know. Of course he can learn to recite the facts of life—he can become a person who “knows” such things—but it won't much matter to him. He will realize that to be a suitable member of society he has to be a person with the facts of life up his sleeve. There is, Freud intimates, public, official development, and there is secret, informal development. The child goes his own way; and the way to go your own way is to seem to be going someone else's way as well. You can do the real thing as long as you do the right thing. Another word for what Freud calls the child's secret idols are his more private personal fantasies. The medium in which he crystallizes the idiosyncrasies of his desire. Why would anyone ever want to sacrifice these? And the answer, both Lenin and Freud agree, is: you only want to give them up when you suffer too much as a consequence of

them. When the child's story about the stork begins to get him into too much trouble, something has to give. What we call psychoanalysis is an attempt to explain what renders people ineducable—that is, uninfluenceable—and what, if anything might be done about this. Psychoanalysts have been hampered from seeing this because they have been bewitched by the idea that there is something “deeper” than education; that in real psychoanalysis they work with the unconscious where as teaching is, as it were, more cognitive, more like changing or developing something called consciousness.

Teaching, in this story, is about informing people and teaching them methods of psychoanalysis, if not actually trying to persuade them of something; psychoanalysis is assumed to be exempt from persuasion, from suggestion; it facilitates, it enables. People don't come for psychoanalysis to have a lesson on the Oedipus complex; they can, after all, read about that in a book. Psychoanalysis, in other words, is a story about why that doesn't work. Either psychoanalysis is something quite different, or—as I want to suggest—it has found an even better way, an even better form—in which a person can learn how best to live as themselves. Psychoanalysis, that is to say, is also a response to contemporary dilemmas about education; and a critique of what I am calling the more traditional Leninist account of what education is and does. Free-association is at once a new kind of information about the self, and a new way of learning about the self; dream-work is the individual's unofficial form of self-education that every educational system always comes up against, the individual's counter-culture where his own pleasures are plotted. The poetry of what he prefers. There is the repeating self that can repeat what he is supposed to know—the facts and fictions that make him a recognizable member of the social group; and there is the dreaming, or dreamy self that is making what it wants to out of what it is given. The repeating self adapts—which means seeks requisite legitimation; the dreaming self seeks something else. The dreamer is educable exclusively on its own terms (which is why the pupil always chooses the teacher; and a national curriculum creates delinquency). Freud, I think, could never get over his discovery, his description of the dreamer at work inside the individual. To take this dreamer seriously (not earnestly) involves a radical cri-

tique of what we call education; of what it might be to educate someone. Education is our privileged analogy for the ideally beneficial influence one person has over another; parenting is the other. Freud implicitly links them to produce the third term, psychoanalysis; an after-education.

“If at the beginning of any disciplines self-definition,” Marjorie Garber (2003) writes, “it undertakes to distinguish itself from another ‘false’ version of itself, that difference is always going to come back to haunt it” (p. 57). Education is the supposedly “false” discipline that haunts psychoanalysis; and that therefore makes the teaching of psychoanalysis itself such a problematic issue. “Differentiation,” Garber writes in her book about what she calls “discipline envy,” “is one strategy that disciplines employ to protect themselves against incursion and self-doubt. But how about the opposite strategy: emulation, imitation, envy?” Or, to put it another way, why are psychoanalysts phobic about “teaching” their so-called patients? On the one hand there is the analyst’s envy of the teacher, his (supposedly repressed) desire to teach. But on the other hand there is the analyst as a new kind of teacher; the psychoanalyst as the one who performs an alternative pedagogy. Freud wanted to show us, in other words, why teaching is impossible (where and how it breaks down); and he invented to deal with this crisis in pedagogy a different kind of teacher. A teacher for whom most of what he teaches he has to learn from student (i.e., the patient). A teacher who does something that lets the patient let himself know about himself. Like traditional teaching it was in words and it had a method; unlike traditional teaching there were no texts used in the setting (though texts, of course, informed it). In the interplay between the patient’s free-association and the analyst’s free-floating attention—through the mutual suspension of familiar judgment—something else, something extra-curricular is learned.

“I spent several years,” the critic Harry Berger (1997) writes about teaching Shakespeare, “entranced by the sound of my moral rhetoric before coming to the realization that what I thought of characters was both less important and less interesting than what they thought of themselves . . . my effort to resist the judgmental impulse (became one) . . . in which one imagines one can “hear” what speakers hear in their utterances as they

listen to themselves and monitor the effect of their speech on others” (p. xxi). The psychoanalyst, by the same token resists his own judgment to hear what the so-called patient thinks of himself; the analyst teaches not so much a subject, but a form of listening to oneself and others. If there is a subject of psychoanalysis it is whatever obstructs speaking and listening. Freud believes that speaking and listening sometimes require an after-education; which implies that they themselves may have to be learnt. Learning to speak and listen—like the experience of dreaming—is quite unlike learning to be a hairdresser. or to create a revolution. It has no preformed content. It has no predictable outcome. It discovers the object of desire rather than knowingly anticipates it. It experiments with wanting and being wanted, because wanting and being wanted are always an experiment. But unlike scientific experiments they can never be replicated.

Learning the facts of life, like being trained in what Lenin calls “genuine political consciousness” is apparently the means to a known end. The informer intends to have a specific effect on the informant. Indeed what is most striking in Freud’s example of the unconvertible children—not to mention, of course, Lenin’s “working masses”—is the progressivism of the educative project. To learn such things, to acquire such knowledge and acknowledgments, is the way to a better future. There may not be an after-life, but there is the potential of the self. The myth of redemption begins to wear a school uniform. Education, the optimistic language of pedagogy, is haunted and taunted by the promise of the future. If only these lessons can be properly learned, these truths accepted, these psychoanalytic interpretations consented to, we shall have a better world, a better future, a better self. And yet, Freud tells us, the bribe for some reason isn’t always taken; the lesson of history is that history is not a lesson. Lenin could never predict the consequences of his predictions. Self-improvement doesn’t always seem to be the improvement that modern selves are seeking. Modern Western myths of education, shot through as they are with Christian, Enlightenment, and liberal progressivism—with more or less secular and sacred myths of promise and redemption, of the next best thing ahead—keep coming up against what Freud called re-

sistance (and what Lenin and Marx would call the sheer force of bourgeois ideology). Psychoanalysis, in its very belief in therapeutic interventions, acknowledges what so-called education finds itself up against: the idols worshipped in secret have, as it were, the last laugh. Psychoanalysis is literally the impossible profession because it educates us about the impossibility of education. It makes us wonder what it would be to be better. It shows us why getting better isn't always the best thing that we can get; why it is that wherever we go we keep turning round. Don't look back is always a paradoxical injunction.

Why, Freud keeps wondering, doesn't psychoanalysis work better as a treatment? Why is it so difficult for the so-called patient to allow the analysis to have a beneficial effect? Why, in short, isn't a better future what people most want, when it is so obviously on offer in psychoanalysis? And the answer, Freud tells us, is that it isn't always the future that people want; they are often, as it were rather ambivalent about the Promised Land. Indeed, it isn't the future that they most want, it is the past. Psychoanalysis, like education—and as a form of education that turns up when confidence in traditional education begins to falter—is an attempt to lure people into the future, to tempt them to grow up. And yet, Freud tells us—though it is something we have been told in different ways before—the past is an object of desire; suffering is an object of desire; stasis is an object of desire. And, above all, childhood pleasures are the exemplary, the founding (and forbidden) objects of desire. If, as Freud famously wrote, the finding of an object is always the refinding of an object, then the past must be utterly alluring. It is our virtually irresistible reality. Perhaps after the rigors of a humanistic and religious education we may need psychoanalysis as an after-education in the rather more immediate, sensual pleasures and ordeals of the past.

It is not incidental, I think, that when Freud wants to review towards the end of his life the obstacles facing psychoanalysis in *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* we find the analyst as teacher facing the patient as someone radically ineducable. The analyst, Freud writes is different from a medical doctor. "As long as he is capable of practicing at all," Freud writes, "a doctor suffering from disease of the lungs or heart is not handicapped in diagnos-

ing or treating internal complaints; whereas the special conditions of analytic work do actually cause the analyst's own defects to interfere with his making a correct assessment of the state of things in his patient and reacting to them in a useful way. It is therefore reasonable to expect of an analyst, as a part of his qualifications, a considerable degree of mental normality and correctness. In addition, he must possess some kind of superiority, so that in certain analytic situations he can act as a model for his patient and in others as a teacher. And finally we must not forget that the analytic relationship is based on love of truth—that is, on a recognition of reality—and that it precludes any kind of sham or deceit” (p. 248).

It is worth wondering, perhaps, where or indeed how one might “qualify,” get qualifications in, mental normality and correctness. Freud is quite explicit that the analyst, in certain situations should act as a teacher; and the teacher is implicitly associated with a love of truth; defined as recognition of reality. Teachers possess some kind of superiority. Despite the fact that teachers, presumably, like everyone else have an unconscious, they are exempt from any kind of sham or deceit. They are figures of integrity not victims of self-division. And yet psychoanalytic patients, as Freud keeps insisting are extremely resistant to the work of these impressive people; people who themselves have only become analysts, are only qualified, because they have themselves been patients. And the “bedrock” of this well nigh universal resistance is what Freud calls “the repudiation of femininity.” “At no other point in one's analytic work,” Freud writes, “does one suffer more from an oppressive feeling that all one's repeated efforts have been in vain, and from a suspicion that one has been ‘preaching to the winds,’ than when one is trying to persuade a woman to abandon her wish for a penis on the grounds of its being unrealizable or when one is seeking to convince a man that a passive attitude to men does not always signify castration and that it is indispensable to many relationships in life” (p. 252).

Women want something they will never have and are unable to relinquish the wish for it. The man, as Freud says, “refuses to subject himself to a father substitute, or to feel indebted to him for anything, and consequently he refuses to accept his recovery

from the doctor” (ibid.). Men and women, in Freud’s view, are allergic to receptiveness. Their potential for passivity—for invention perhaps—horrifies them. They want teachers, but they don’t want to be taught. Something in people is unyielding; there are truths to which they will not surrender. But the psychoanalyst is apparently the one who knows why the teaching doesn’t work; to learn the lesson too much has to be sacrificed. The analyst, like the teacher, as a teacher, demands a sacrifice. What the analyst, and the teacher and the political revolutionary come up against is peoples refusal to sacrifice an apparently known pleasure for an apparently unknown one. Better the devil you know, because if you know him he can’t be the devil.

“Psychoanalytic treatment,” Freud (1905) wrote in “On Psychotherapy,” “may in general be conceived of as such a re-education in overcoming internal resistances” . . . “for it is education even to induce someone who dislikes getting up early to do so all the same” (pp. 266–7). It involves, Freud says, “persuading” someone to accept something they have (because of unpleasure) rejected. It is, though, a paradoxical form of education that is being proposed. It is education to make education possible. Education begins with the word NO, and begins as the self-education that is called repression; This *No* has to be persuaded to turn into a *Yes*, and this requires another person.

The first instance that Freud calls education was the individual’s evasion of the pain of his desire. Education was the way he distracted himself from the difficulties of his own nature. Then he suffers from the suffering he couldn’t bear. And then he employs a psychoanalyst to re-educate him. Psychoanalysis is an education in the art of unlearning. It teaches you the cost of your education. Because you couldn’t bear pain you couldn’t bear pleasure. The auto-didact, with his repertoire of automatic defenses, has to be persuaded otherwise. And Freud is quite clear about the aim of this particular form of education that he has invented to cure the ills of education. The aim is take make the individual a cleverer animal in his pleasure seeking. The object is to please himself, not to save himself. The enlightenment is in the service of satisfaction, the satisfaction is not in the enlightenment. In this view truth would only be worth having if it gave you pleasure; truth would only be recognizable in its yield of

body-pleasure. The extraordinary thing Freud has to tell us is that our pleasure is something that we have to relearn. And that we need someone to teach us. “Under the doctor’s guidance,” he (1916) writes in “Some Character Types Met With in Psychoanalytic Work,” (the patient) “is asked to make the advance from the pleasure principle to the reality principle by which the mature human being is distinguished from the child.” But, Freud remarks, “His privation is only to be temporary: he has only to learn to exchange an immediate yield of pleasure for a better assured, even though a postponed one.” It is, Freud makes it clear, a learning experience, what he calls “an educative process.”

The analyst plays the part, Freud writes, “of the effective outsider; he makes use of the influence which one human being exercises over another. Or—recalling that it is the habit of psychoanalysis to replace what is derivative and etiolated by what is original and basic—let us say that the doctor, in his educative work, makes use of one of the components of love. In his work of after-education, he is probably doing no more than repeat the process which made education of any kind possible in the first instance. Side by side with the exigencies of life, love is the greatest educator; and it is by the love of those nearest him that the incomplete human being is induced to respect the decrees of necessity and to spare himself the punishment that follows any infringement of them” (p. 312).

Love and the exigencies of life may be the great educators, but education is the great thing for Freud. Psychoanalysis repeats—or recruits—that education in love, through love, that is parenting. Psychoanalysis is a reminder for the individual of what education used to be like before it was called education. What is original and basic about a person is what the after-education that is psychoanalysis is about. There is, to put it mildly, a scepticism here about sophistication and development. What we want to be is what we are already, Freud suggests; and that is what we need to be reeducated in. Freud is asking us to imagine what happens if we link schooling with love, education with what is basic and original about ourselves. Freud discovered that modern people had to be taught how to re-animate themselves. They were the only animals that had to learn that they were animals.

The after-education that was psychoanalysis was an after-education in human creaturliness. An after-education in the question: what is a good life for incestuously-minded creatures like ourselves?

If we describe psychoanalysis as a form of education that is, at the same time a theory about education; and if we take Freud's point that parenting, and education and psychoanalysis—his preferred set of terms, with medicine as the ambiguous fourth term—are all versions of a larger question about how people influence and effect each other; how they look after each other, then psychoanalysis as education may seem less of a worry and more of a lead. And what it can lead us to is a recommendation of the aims of education in the light of psychoanalysis, and of psychoanalysis in the light of prior traditions of education. If love and the exigencies of life—and love as one of the exigencies of life—are, as Freud suggests, the great educators; then we have to acknowledge that for Freud as both the founder of psychoanalysis, and as a representative man of the nineteenth century, life (a good life) was conceived as an education. Learning, in other words, was the privileged description of what a life involved. Experience was there to be learned from. Life was a schooling of life.

But Freud doesn't simply describe psychoanalysis as part of some peoples continuing education; he describes it as re-education. and it uses, he says, "one of the components of love." The psychoanalyst, he says, "in this work of after-education . . . is probably doing no more than repeat the process which made education of any kind possible in the first instance." After-education makes people educable. The parents' love opens the child to the world, and the world to the child. It makes exchange possible by fostering an appetite for exchange. And by repeating this, or incorporating it in the treatment psychoanalysis educates people into becoming educable. What is to be analyzed are the obstacles created by the individual to exchange. So in this language trauma is the name we give to the experiences that we find most difficult to learn from; and which hinder learning in the future. What people learn about psychoanalysis is what they have refused to learn about: how and why that education called

life keeps breaking down. They learn, in short, their repertoire of ways of sabotaging exchange.

III

“We long for a picture of what went wrong in the world.”

Susan Neiman, *Evil in Modern Thought*

If psychoanalysis is, as Freud suggests, a form of education called after-education—if its project, broadly speaking is the undoing of repression, the restoration of vital conflict—it is also unusually mindful of the fact that we have defenses for a reason. Psychoanalysis as, in Freud’s (1903) words, “re-education in overcoming internal resistances” to sexuality, acknowledges the sense in which one’s sexuality is constituted, is phrased, by one’s resistances to it” (p. 267). Love may be the greatest educator, but Freud forgets to mention here the forbidden love that is incestuous. Forbidden love, he might have said, is also a great educator; though in a rather less pastoral vein. What kind of after-education is possible, or available, after the harsh education of the incest taboo? And the answer would be: education in the various impossibilities of desire, the snags in wanting. To desire now—to desire in the severe wake of the incest taboo—is to learn ruses for the evasion of desire. How we go about so intently not getting what we want, and just what the mortal risks are for us, of getting what we want; this is another kind of after-education.

Psychoanalysis might seem to be, then, an education in forbidden things. Freud makes it quite clear that people don’t exactly learn to be incestuously minded; rather, they have to learn not to be. It would be an accurate exaggeration to say that from a crudely Freudian point of view, education is the attempt to persuade people to lose interest in their parents’ bodies; to find fascinations elsewhere, outside the family circle. Education, in other words, wants to teach people to have a future and not merely a past. Psychoanalysis teaches that we must remember our forbidden desires so we can find sufficiently satisfying approximation; so that we can perform that paradoxical form of renunciation called displacement. The lure of the future is that it will be the same as the past, but different. If desire is funda-

mentally transgressive—and psychoanalysis is an after-education—then psychoanalysis is an after-education in the taking of risks. It would be possible, from a psychoanalytic point of view, to describe the singularity of a person's life in terms of the risks courted and the risks evaded (in this sense, a symptom turns up where an opportunity has been missed). As Lenin insisted, it is always never the right time for revolution.

There are tremendous satisfactions in learning how, and in learning about. But what we might need an after-education for—the after-education that is psychoanalysis—is to re-learn the nature of our satisfactions; the difference, say, between what we want and what we are supposed to want. You can teach people the facts of life, but you can't teach them sex. You can teach people about trauma, but you can't teach them their traumas. You can teach people about dreams, but you can't teach them to dream. You can teach people to listen, but you can't teach them what they will hear. Psychoanalysis turns up when people need to learn things that can't be taught. Or can't be taught by education as traditionally conceived. The unconscious is not a subject. Neither the analyst nor the patient can be supposed to know.

When Winnicott dedicated *Playing and Reality* “to my patients who have paid to teach me” he was acknowledging something very simple; the analyst teaches only through his capacity to learn. It is a revolutionary idea that being listened to could be an education.

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