

Georgia Southern University

## Digital Commons@Georgia Southern

---

Curriculum, Foundations, & Reading Faculty  
Publications

Curriculum, Foundations and Reading,  
Department of

---

Fall 2005

### **Review of *After Education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and Psychoanalytic Histories of Learning* by Deborah Britzman**

Marla Morris

Georgia Southern University, [mmorris@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:mmorris@georgiasouthern.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/curriculum-facpubs>



Part of the [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#), and the [Educational Methods Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Morris, Marla. 2005. "Review of *After Education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and Psychoanalytic Histories of Learning* by Deborah Britzman." *Journal of Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies*, 3 (1): 139-156.

<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/curriculum-facpubs/48>

This article is brought to you for free and open access by the Curriculum, Foundations and Reading, Department of at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Curriculum, Foundations, & Reading Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

*Review of*

*After-Education:  
Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and  
Psychoanalytic Histories of Learning*

*by Deborah Britzman (2003) New York: SUNY.*

MARLA MORRIS

*Georgia Southern University*

I begin in the company of renowned psychoanalyst Michael Eigen (1991: xiii) as he states:

Emotional nourishment and poisons can be so interwoven that it is difficult, if not impossible, to tell the difference between them. The problem can be so extreme that nourishment one needs to support life is toxic, or worse, one learns to extract what nourishment one can from poisons at hand.

Eigen is not talking about education, but he could be. What do children do with toxic environments such as public schools? How do educators nourish children's educational imaginations in such toxic sites as schools? Aren't schools the place where children ideally should be nourished? Shouldn't being educated be intellectually and emotionally nourishing? Well, it should be, but in many cases, it is not. Public education, at least in the United States, is in a state of crisis. The cloud of standardized thinking hangs over public education like fog. Young people resort to violence instead of thinking through conflict. Columbine-type incidents are relatively new in the history of American Schooling and are growing. Something has gone terribly wrong! But this 'something' is not new, it is just worse. Herbert Kliebard (2000: 66) pointed out that the toxic atmosphere of schooling can be traced back to the early 20th century. He states,

The bureaucratic model [of education during the early 20th century] along with its behavioristic and technical refinements, threatens to destroy, in the name of efficiency, the satisfaction that one may find in intellectual activity. The sense of delight in intellectual activity is replaced by a sense of urgency. The thrill of the hunt is converted into an efficient kill.

The “efficient kill” that Kliebard mentions has not changed, but only worsened. The state of public education in America is downright depressing. The corporatization of schooling is destroying our young people and our school teachers, not to mention colleges of education and education professors. The demands of high-stakes testing has made toxic the educative project. How can children possibly be inspired by standardized testing? How can teachers hold onto any inspiration when school administrators demand that teachers de-skill and become nothing more than robots for a system gone mad?

Michael Hedges (1999), a gifted composer and acoustic guitarist left behind an amazing collection of pieces titled *Torched*. Hedges inspires by his innovation and a mastery of his instrument. Tragically, in 1997, he was killed in an automobile accident. Hedges was torched with the fire of inspiration. Eros runs through all of his music and yet there is also an urgent madness and struggle with thanatos that one hears in his driving train-like base notes. To be torched is to struggle with life and death. To be torched, moreover, is to burn with passions that dissolve murderous toxins. In any creative act, whether it be song writing, teaching or writing, one always already struggles with these two forces, eros and thanatos. Jacques Derrida (1996: 12) comments that the archive (of song writing, or writing or teaching, for example) is broken apart by the death drive; to archive anything means to struggle with the fire of eros as well as the death drive. But it is ultimately the death drive that urges the archive on. He states, “The death drive is not a principle. It even threatens every principality, every archontic primacy, every archival desire. It is what we will call, later on, *le mal d’archive*, “archive fever.” What one learns in the educative process is always already steeped in the aporia of death and life, the aporia of the archive. The life of education is permeated with its own death.

To be threatened by the toxins that kill, the toxins that damage institutions such as public schools and universities, yet to urge children and teachers to go on—even if they feel that they cannot go on under the heavy cloud of high-stakes testing—is Deborah Britzman’s (2003) message in her book titled *After — Education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and psychoanalytic histories of learning*. There is something about education Britzman suggests, that harms; there is something about education that requires an afterward. What is this afterward? I think the afterward to which Britzman refers is the poison of being mis-educated. Thus, after ingesting the toxins of bad schooling, one

must engage in reparative practices to undo the harm caused by education.

Britzman's book is couched, as I see it, in a dual movement of eros and thanatos; the archive fever to which Derrida refers. As she says, on the one hand, "The very conditions of education are subject to the yearnings and dreams that animate existence" (2003: 5); yet, on the other hand, she states (2003: 4) "After-education refers us back to an original flaw made from education: something within its very nature has led it to fail." The dreams that animate, that torch, as Michael Hedges (1999) might say, are made toxic by the very ways in which children are educated in the United States. So it becomes difficult to untangle what educators do when educating. Are educators nourishing children or poisoning them? Has school children's nourishment become poisoned? How can teachers undo the poison so as to better nourish young children? As Michael Eigen (2001) points out, *Toxic nourishment* as the title of his book suggests, is hard to untangle, for that which is toxic nourishes and that which nourishes is toxic. But what kind of nourishment is toxic? And why should nourishment be entangled with toxins? Eros and thanatos, nourishment and toxins, are the very stuff of life and death; the very stuff of education.

Derrida (1996: 12) remarks,

Consequence: right on that which permits and conditions archivization [educative institutions], we will never find anything other than that which exposes to destruction, and in truth menaces with destruction, introducing a priori, forgetfulness, and the archiviolithic into the heart of the monument. Into the "by heart" itself. The archive always works, and a prior, against itself.

Education has always already worked against itself, by installing within its own project, the death drive. And yet there is always already a trace, a remainder of work-yet-to-be done. Why else would educators continue their struggle? And yet—as Britzman (2003:4) points out—education "also refers to the work yet to be accomplished." What is yet to be accomplished? To make reparation? To heal educative wounds? Or are the wounds too deep to heal? Why is it that education castrates? As Britzman suggests, the educative process damages dream-life, emotional life, affects and phantasy. It is only when educators realize these difficulties, Britzman argues, that learning can begin. She (2003:15) states that "learning begins in the breakdown of meaning." Meaning is broken down after education fails children and new beginnings are made to heal psychic wounds, to heal what Britzman (2003: 170) calls the "psychic archive of education." If the wounds are always already too deep to heal how does one account for the likes of Michael Hedges, who was torched by the fire of the archive? How does one account for people who have somehow survived schooling to become great musicians or great thinkers?

Britzman suggests that reparation might begin by turning to the mothers of psychoanalysis, by turning to the work of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein. Here educators might learn what the mothers of psychoanalysis teach educators about reparation. Somehow both Anna Freud and Melanie Klein survived schooling. Austrian schools during the early years of the 20th century were just as bad as American schools, if not worse in their didacticism and authoritarian structures. Interestingly enough, neither Freud nor Klein were college educated yet both produced incredibly important intellectual work. Britzman (2003: 7) tells us,

Their work [Anna Freud and Melanie Klein] begins with the insight that making a signature on knowledge through our thoughts and social relations is, at first, an arduous affair. Each explains 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. . . .

The difficulties of education have been noted, of course, by many in curriculum studies such as James B. Macdonald (2000), Lawrence Cremin (2000), Herbert Kliebard (2000), Michael Apple (2000) and William F. Pinar (2000). But the specific psychological difficulties caused by education (such as the problems Britzman notes, (i.e. the killing of dreams, phantasy life and affects) have been discussed in the curriculum literature by William F. Pinar (1994c), Alan A. Block (1997), Mary Aswell Doll (1995), James B. Macdonald (2000) and David Smith (1999) to name but a few. For example, Alan Block (1997: 2) states these troubles in stark terms.

It is a world in which the child's growth becomes a function of the violence that the world, in the form of its systems, exercises upon the child and in which the practice of education is centrally and actively complicitous.

It seems a crime that education is the violence done to children. Children are not allowed to dream, they are not allowed to be creative, they are not allowed to engage in any sort of phantasy life, whether unconscious or conscious. Daydreams are simply not permitted in the world of high-stakes testing. William Pinar remarked some thirty years ago, that education causes harm because of the squashing of fantasy life of children. In an early essay titled *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*, Pinar (1994a: 15) remarks,

Having spent 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 12 to 20 years in classrooms dominated at least by words if not by thought, seated in chairs sufficiently uncomfortable to keep our attention off both the chairs and the discomfort, in rooms sterile enough to keep us away from noticing it, and disciplined to keep our thoughts to ourselves, made to listen to words which usually bear little if any relation to our immediate physical and existential situations, understandably we are trapped in thought. (I use "thought" in its psychoanalytic sense, connoting fantasy and other forms of associative thinking, as well as directed

and critical thinking. Further, it is thought uprooted from its preconceptual basis, from the reality to which it ought to refer. So it is we learn to live in thought tangentially and illogically related to our biographic situations.

When one is tangentially related to one's biographic situation one is split off from parts of the self. To walk around split off is to be less than a whole person.

When one lives in relation to one's biographic situation as a castrated person, one is not living in one's whole body. To walk around with bits and pieces of oneself detached, dissociated and dis-membered is not healthy. These are the kinds of persons school produce. Castrated persons. Castrated persons are mis-educated, under-educated and not educated at all. Schools, historically do not educate, they castrate. To be educated is to become an integrated, whole individual whose dream- world and reality are not separated from each other.

Britzman (2003), unlike the scholars in curriculum studies who I mention above, has turned specifically to Anna Freud and Melanie Klein to look for how educators might repair the harm done by the violence that is schooling. Interestingly enough, she reads the texts of A. Freud and Klein alongside one another. In many ways, Freud and Klein couldn't be more different. As Naomi Rucker puts it (personal communication), Anna Freud's writing—although concerned with the ego and life—is so dead; while, on the other hand, Klein's work—although concerned with death and aggression—is so full of life and vitality. The archive of A. Freud and Klein reflects death and life forces paradoxically. I prefer Klein to Freud because of the interesting way she writes and the deeply felt messages she sends in her texts. There is something about living in the horizon of death that forces one to be more alive.

It seems that Britzman does not say whom she prefers; she presents the work of both women and leaves it up to the reader to decide. Moreover, Britzman (2003: 170) does a masterful job bringing both Klein and A. Freud to life in order that we might think through "the psychological consequences of education." Of course, these psychological consequences, Britzman argues, cannot be known in advance. And yet, one must be careful when educating young people that there will be psychological consequences. There will always be the trace or the remainder of what has been taught, what has not been taught and how these agonizing pedagogies, as David (1999) Smith puts it, affect students in the years-to-come. Britzman raises difficult questions in her book that leave one perplexed and troubled. Her writing is tough yet eloquent, gentle yet unrelenting. To keep up with Britzman one must work. She is always one step of her readers in her erudition. My meaning making of Britzman's book has taken some time, for I found the themes of her book difficult to digest and yet so exhilarating. To archive the mothers of psycho-



analysis (Anna Freud and Melanie Klein) and connect their work to education is no small task. Britzman does a masterful job bringing together complex thinkers.

### Britzman's Anna Freud

Britzman's reading of Anna Freud is gentle. My aim here is not to reiterate everything Britzman says about Anna Freud, but to cursorily discuss some main themes Britzman discusses. Britzman seems to present mostly a positive picture of Anna Freud without incorporating what the critics have to say. Anna's critics, unlike Britzman, are not so gentle. At any rate, Britzman (2003: 60) points out that Anna Freud,

saw the work of the human in more adaptive terms, for while a human is subject to flights of fantasy and to wishful thinking, all signals of instinctual conflict, she believed that the trauma of the Oedipal conflict could be resolved with an acceptance of reality.

Anna Freud's position is one of assimilation, accommodation, even normalization if she is, as Britzman suggests, asking "neurotic" individuals to "adapt" to reality. The psychological consequences of doing this are quite conservative, no doubt. 'Just be more like normal people and you will be fine!?' If our schoolchildren, especially those who feel that they don't fit in, are asked to adapt to reality, this can be very damaging. But, of course, Anna Freud did not think this to be the case. She wanted to undo the harm done by education. In fact, contradictorily, she told Robert Coles (1992: 31–32) that, if anything, education should allow children to follow their own paths.

So many teachers judge themselves by what they get children to learn. If the children do well on tests— that is a great reward [for some teachers]. I agree. Who would disagree. But teaching is not only the presentation of facts to students, it is persuading them to be interested in the world, to want to learn about it—a state of mind. If you are to 'lead out' children, you have to persuade them to walk with you. The best teachers, actually, persuade their children to take the initiative in 'leading out' themselves.

But how can children be led out if the path they must follow is one of adaptation? To lead children out is a wonderful idea indeed. To allow them to take the lead themselves is even better. However, I don't find that this statement squares with her overall psychoanalytic position which is basically one of normalization. Many scholars associate Anna Freud with the founding of ego psychology which became popular movement in the United States because, I think, Americans are conformist and often look for a psychology that might keep people in line with the status quo. The interesting idea Britzman (2003:9) pulls from Anna Freud, however, is that "education is made from all sorts of interference. . . ." What interferes with education, for

Anna Freud, are the mechanisms of defense. In Anna Freud's (1966) important book titled *The Ego and the mechanisms of defense* she states that there are ten mechanisms that get in the way of living a whole life, and that by implication get in the way of educating. A. Freud (1966: 44) says,

To these nine methods of defense, which are very familiar in the practice and have been exhaustively described in the theoretical writings on psychoanalysis (regression, repression, reaction formation, isolation undoing, projection, introjection, turning against the self and reversal), we must add a tenth, which pertains rather to the study of the normal than to that of neurosis: sublimation, or displacement of instinctual aims.

Anna Freud is simply reiterating what has already been said by her father Sigmund Freud, but she systematizes these. Of Anna Freud's writings, I would suggest that *The Ego and the mechanisms of defense* is (1966) the most important. And so Britzman is right to point out that these interferences are the primary causes of not learning in educative sites. The psyche is somehow blocked unconsciously by these mechanisms and defends against the new, says Britzman. In fact, Britzman suggests that A. Freud's book on the *Mechanisms of defense* might have taken form because of her work as a school-teacher. She had much experience dealing with children's acting out. Before becoming an analyst A. Freud taught school and experienced children's resistances to learning. Drawing on A. Freud, Britzman (2003:72) says, "not only will one's students refuse to learn but so too teachers will defend themselves against new knowledge. . . ." Interestingly enough, Britzman cites an example of her own experience of students' defended reactions to reading or perhaps misreading Anna Freud. Britzman (2003: 77) says her students

insist that Anna Freud is old-fashioned, that children are too young to be affected by their inner world, and that looking too deeply into one's own life can only cause grief. These responses, however, seem to be more than their anxieties of what such knowledge will do to them. . . .

Well, Anna Freud does sound old-fashioned, I will admit that. But the rest of the comments made by Britzman's students are examples of resistance to learning the new. There is something about the new which frightens students. Perhaps the new butts up against their sedimented belief systems. Perhaps the new is just too uncomfortable for them. But there is more—and as Britzman says it is unconscious. It is what is unconscious, says Britzman, that troubles education. The path to lead out children is troubled because children are unconsciously troubled by the new. Children and even adults have difficulty grappling with the new because, in some sense, it threatens the old. The new threatens hardened psychic structures, the new threatens both good and bad objects that 'just say no' to anything new. The psyche is happier staying just the way it is. Change is hard. Britzman (2003: 8) says,



One difficulty us with opening the definition of education to include events that resist but nonetheless shape education, such as not learning, ignorance, aggression, and even phantasies.

To educate means to walk a path that is fraught with resistance. How to educate those who don't want to be educated? I am sure many teachers as well as professors are familiar with this. Resistance can get played out in many forms such as students who sleep in class, yawn, act out, do not do the reading assignment or make statements like 'Dewey is dumb,' 'Why do we have to read this?,' 'Will this be on the test?,' 'How do I get an A in your course?,' 'This stuff is too deep for me' and so forth. On the teacher's end, educating is frustrating because of these resistances to learn the new. So what kind of learning is going on if students unconsciously cannot take in the new? I do wonder sometimes what it is that I doing when I am teaching. Am I speaking to deaf ears? Or are there perhaps one or two students who actually learn something new? Does the learning take place in years-to-come? Or do the students continually act out and resist the new? At any rate, teachers keep on teaching' and students keep acting out. Where is the repair? What has already been damaged in our students that repair becomes impossible? Is it too late to teach reparatively with twenty-year olds? What about older students, what about doctoral students in their 50's who continue to act out by saying things like, 'Dewey is dumb,' 'Derrida is irrelevant,' 'why do we have to read this?' What about a doctoral student who, while the professor reads a brilliant paper on Derrida, puts her head on the desk and proceeds to read the label of a coke bottle? Does the resistance to learning ever end? What about professors who haven't opened a book in twenty years? We all know the types who get tenure and stop reading, stop writing. Are they the living dead or what? What is the resistance in their case? Why the resistance to the new when the profession is devoted to studying the new? Rational answers— like 'students are lazy and so too are tenured professors'— do not seem to account for the enormity of the problem of anti-intellectualism. Following Britzman's lead scholars might re-think these problems of resistance as reflective of unconscious psychical life. If psychical life is already damaged, both students and teachers do not learn nor do they want to know about the new. Britzman (2003: 52) remarks,

Moreover, psychical life is not the same as conscious observable life, and this difference must be maintained if any theory of the force of affect, ego defense mechanisms, anxiety, and phantasy is to be thought. But we are left with the question of what knowledge can mean if this radical instability is acknowledged.

This radical instability keeps one back and yet sometimes moves one forward as well. Working through defense mechanisms loosens up the psyche to take in the new rather than spit it out all the time. But working through takes time and effort and even the help of an analyst. One of the psychic

consequences of learning means unlearning bad habits of living by paying closer attention to psychical blocks. In an essay titled "The Trial" William F. Pinar (1994c: 50) states, "Cultivation of self-awareness can function to dissolve intellectual blocks (or arrest) and initiate intellectual movement." To get unblocked, one must travel deeply into the unconscious to pull out what is blocking the conscious.

Anna Freud explicitly makes the connection between psychical blocks, undoing them and education. A psychoanalyzed teacher will become a better teacher because she understands her own limits, her own psychic blocks and works to unblock her tendencies to *not* learn about herself and about her world. A teacher who is not analyzed will tend to act out more and engage in counter-transference with her students, unwittingly adding to the psychic harm education brings. Raymond Dyer (1983: 86) points out that in the 1920s in Vienna, something called analytic pedagogy was embraced by many because teachers became better at their work after being analyzed. Dyer states,

Anna Freud and Siegfried Bernfeld jointly presented to the Vienna Society their "Report of a Discussion Held in Berlin on the Psychoanalytic Training of Teachers" (Report of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society 1929). In her comments Anna Freud compared the changes in a teacher's work after undergoing a personal analysis with the changes in patients undergoing psychoanalysis. . . ."

Teachers who have been analyzed are less likely to act out their unconscious hostilities if they have worked through them in analysis. The classroom, otherwise, becomes a theater of the repressed. Students project onto the teacher and the teacher in turn projects back onto the students unexamined psychic contents that could cause damage and harm. Here is the educative damage. The classroom becomes a site of war and hostility, a site of cruelty. And perhaps all of this goes on unconsciously which makes the scene even worse for students and teachers alike. If there is anything Anna Freud teaches it is this. And here is the most valuable reason one should read Anna Freud. Britzman (2003: 99) puts it like this:

At her best, Anna Freud's work can be used to remind us of the vulnerability of being educated and having to educate others. Of course, this is more than merely teaching. If we can turn to the interminability of education, of constantly having to choose sides, even though one cannot consider all of the sides, and of having to work without understanding the effects of one's efforts, then we can think differently about the ethics of educational practice in relation to the teacher's inner world.

Britzman's reading of Anna Freud is right on the mark. There is value to reading Freud and she certainly teaches much about vulnerability and the complexities of educating others. A. Freud teaches that the classroom is a space of internal drama whereby the Oedipus complex rages alongside unresolved psychic defenses. So how is that teachers teach at all? How can

students be educated at all? How do teachers, in turn, handle psychologically a drama of projection and resistance? There is no doubt that Anna Freud's legacy is remarkable. Like her father, she changed the face of western culture. In fact, Janet Sayers (1991:158) points out that "Unlike Klein's method, Anna's dominated child analysis in the USA and continental Europe virtually to this day." One of the reasons for this, I think, is that her books are approachable, her method palatable. Freud's writing style is accessible and clean. Her approaches to children were gentle. Britzman (2003: 65) explains: "... Anna Freud's position was one of *Aufklärung*, of analysis on the side of enlightenment, of hope in the capacity of rationality and reasonableness to overcome primary narcissism." Anna Freud believed that analysis and education were inextricably intertwined. The goal of analysis, like that of teaching, is to lead out the patient from internal turmoil, to educate the child to become more adapted to the world. Elisabeth Young-Breuhl (1988: 167) explains in some detail why Anna Freud felt it necessary to educate as well as analyze her young patients:

[S]he felt that the child's superego is, unlike the adult's, dependent on external (parental) influences, [A. Freud] emphasized they ways in which child analysis must and should differ from adult analysis. . . . because Anna Freud stressed the child's continued connection—psychically and in reality—to its familial surroundings, she recommended a period of non-analytic preparation for analysis.

This period of non-analytic preparation was to consist of educating the child about what was- to-come during the analysis. Melanie Klein, felt that this so-called non-analytic preparation was just hog-wash and deterred from the analysis-at-hand. Klein was staunchly opposed to A. Freud's methods. The aim of education, in Freud's mind, was to normalize and make the child adapt to adult preconceptions of what emotional health should be. Klein found this detestable. Anna Freud, it seems, felt that phantasy life should be minimized over against a more ego-syntonic life. Conversely, Klein felt that phantasy life should be celebrated and examined. The more engaged in phantasy life, the deeper one can live in one's emotions, not split off from them. I must say that I agree wholeheartedly with Klein's position and not Freud's. While sifting through these histories of psychoanalysis, I waited for Britzman to take a side. But perhaps she was simply trying to gently portray both women as having something to offer educators. Britzman seems to leave it to readers to decide.

Britzman (2003: 95) suggests that when she reads Anna Freud, she "picks and choose"[s] what is valuable to her. What this suggests to me is that there is much to sift through and discard when reading A. Freud. Much of the reading, I think, is difficult to get through because of its dryness. Some of it is just plain boring. But more, Britzman points out that there are some passages in Anna Freud that are downright authoritarian. She (2003: 95) tells us,

If some of what Anna Freud has to say over 8 volumes may seem rigid and even authoritarian at times, her allegiance to the project of psychoanalysis, her father's legacy, and the demands of adaptation and sublimation allows education to look differently at itself, to make room for the ambivalence that is also a part of learning.

Britzman's gentle critique of Freud, is perhaps a little too gentle. Anna Freud was so under the shadow of the object of her father, that she never really developed her own distinctive voice. The *Ego and the mechanisms of defense* (1966/1993) is merely a reiterating of what Sigmund had already stated throughout his work. Some of Anna's writings are simply drudgery to get through. At the end of the day, I do not think she has much to say. One must wonder, though, what it would have been like to be the daughter of such a famous, brilliant father. One must wonder what the pressure would have been like to feel that one had to carry on the father's legacy. In the name of the father. If Anna was writing in the name of the father, she erased her own name. Clearly, Anna had father issues, Oedipal issues, no doubt. And I think these issues prevented her from becoming a really interesting thinker. Eli Zachery (1998: 36) states that Anna Freud "was a dutiful daughter, sometimes close to being overwhelmed by her sense of responsibility to and for her father." At what price must one be dutiful? I do not think A. Freud's work as innovative as Klein's, nor as interesting. Janet Sayer (1991: 158) points out that even Sigmund Freud was critical of Anna, although he stood by her of course. Sayer comments: "Freud himself described his daughter's technique as 'reactionary' compared to that of Klein. But he staunchly defended her against Klein. . . ." Julia Sepal (1992: 10) suggests that Anna Freud's method was "didactic," which is not positive to say the least. As I mentioned earlier, Naomi Rucker (personal communication) suggests that Anna Freud's writings are dead. Elisabeth Young-Bruehl (1988), who is a sympathetic reader of Freud, suggests that her writings reflect her lack of a college education. She simply did not have the background to write like Sigmund Freud. S. Freud's writings are full of life, highly literate, filled with interesting literary references.

Overall, Britzman's reading of Anna Freud is erudite and well thought-through. She introduces educators to one of the mothers of psychoanalysis. This is a refreshing portrayal of an important figure of the 20th century.

### Britzman's Melanie Klein

Britzman's Melanie Klein is equally gentle. Here, Britzman discusses with great erudition the main themes Klein has to offer educators. Britzman is masterful at making connections between Klein and A. Freud, which is no easy task. It is clear that Britzman is extremely well-versed in the psychoanalytic literature to be able to make connections between these two diffi-

cult thinkers. I applaud Britzman for her careful and thoughtful connections. For Britzman, Klein's importance for educators concerns her work with phantasy. And here is the trouble for educators. Britzman (2003: 3) states early on that "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." Here I think Britzman is talking primarily about Melanie Klein. For Klein, phantasy is all. Klein's writings seem utterly phantasmic. Reading Klein is encountering phantasy in its raw state, in its mad state. There is nothing like reading Klein. The feelings that one has while reading Klein range from disgust to curiosity to utter confusion. She swirls in a whirling nightmare of pre-oedipal pudding. So, unlike Anna Freud, Melanie Klein's writings are almost too overwhelming to read.

Britzman's work around Klein is careful and synthesizes well Klein's main points. But I felt that there was not enough of Klein's voice in Britzman's book to give the reader the feeling and experience of spending time with Klein. For example, Britzman (2003: 27) remarkably sums Klein up in one sentence.

The hopeful trajectory that Klein sets for thought, her sense of promise and obligation, begins in anxiety and splitting, progress to envy, and then to gratitude, and the urge for reparation.

Although, Britzman's reading is right on the mark, I miss the texture of Klein here. Why anxiety, why splitting? What is the pre-oedipal swirl that Klein explores? Counter to Britzman's careful reading of Klein, listen to Klein's (1946/1993: 2) messy swirling phantasy world of the child. I think it is worth citing a lengthy passage of Klein to get the feeling of what it is to read her. She states,

From the beginning the destructive impulse is turned against the object and is first expressed in phantasised oral-sadistic attacks on the mother's breast, which soon develop into onslaughts on her body by all sadistic means. The persecutory fears arising from the infant's oral-sadistic attacks on the mother's breast, which soon develop into onslaughts on her body by all sadistic means. The persecutory fears arising from the infant's oral-sadistic impulse to rob the mother's body of its good contents, and from the anal-sadistic impulses to put his excrements into her (including the desire to enter her body in order to control her from within) are of great importance for the development of paranoia and schizophrenia.

Klein certainly has a way with words! These words are full of texture indeed. And it is this texture that I miss in Britzman's reading of Klein. I wanted to hear more from Klein herself. As Eve Sedgwick (2003: 17) comments, it is to the "texture" of emotional life that one might turn. Sedgwick (2003: 17) suggests that there is a "particular intimacy . . . between textures and emotions." It is interesting though, that there is little texture in Anna Freud's writing, so



one might wonder what kind of emotional life she describes throughout her work. Her texts seem completely flattened. One must wonder whether living in the shadow of a giant flattens one's perceptions. At any rate, Klein's work is texture-full, imaginative and innovative. Indeed, Britzman comments on the madness of Klein's work or I should say the madness Klein thought inheres in humankind. Britzman (2003:65) remarks, "Klein's position relied on a kernel of madness that she thought structured the very problems that the wish for rationality and education ultimately buried. . . ." So it is here that Klein and A. Freud differ. Although both women believed that education, especially Viennese education, harmed children in its authoritarianism, A. Freud still held onto the hope that education plus analysis could heal the wounds that education caused. Klein, on the other hand, had no truck with education. She did not think that educating patients helped them to explore a rich phantasy life, in fact, she thought education caused far too much harm and the aims of education completely antithetical to those of psychoanalysis. Creative living, for Klein, depends upon embracing madness and negativity. Britzman (2003: 128) tells us that Klein, "insists upon negativity as being necessary for creativity, reparation, and gratitude." Yet if education is the site where far too much harm is done to children, can there be a reparative space for children to heal? Are there any moments in the educational arena whereby children can be repaired from education's harm? Or must they enter analysis to undo the ways in which they have been mis-educated? Why must education harm? Is there any point in the history, of say American schooling, where the relentless factory/business/corporate models lets up? Have children ever been able to be truly creative? I do not think much has changed over the course of the history of public schooling in America, in fact, I think things have gotten considerably worse. High stakes testing ruin any passion for learning. The efficiency of testing by converting so-called knowledge into numbers (i.e. standardized exams) seems ludicrous. What kind of learning goes on when memorizing bits and pieces of unrelated "facts." The American educational system harms. It kills any initiative for young people to think for themselves, or to even want to read. There can be little intellectual pleasure in studying for standardized exams. The intellectual life should be one that is thrilling and challenging. But learning unrelated bits and pieces of so-called knowledge for standardized tests has little to do with learning or education at all. If anything, this insanity of standardized testing is nothing short of cruel. And as Derrida puts it (2002: 240), ". . . no other knowledge stands ready to take an interest in something like cruelty—except what is called psychoanalysis." This is exactly why Britzman's book is so important. She brings together the problems of schooling and its cruelty with the possibilities of reparation through studying the work of A. Freud and Melanie Klein. Britzman (2003: 9) states the educative problem as



... the wavering between breakdowns in meaning and our urges for their reparations. Education is thus a drama that stages the play between reality and phantasy and a question that leaves its trace in something interminable.

Many commentators, including Britzman, argue that A. Freud and Melanie Klein's aims were really not that different and the controversies that ensued between them did not have to occur. At the end of the day, both of their work aims toward the reparation of children, although the means by which one repairs differ. Britzman (2003: 40) remarks,

The psychoanalytic theories of Melanie Klein and A. Freud were derived from their work with children, their attempts to listen to the children's symptoms, their innovations and conservation of Freud's thought, and perhaps just as significantly, their own self-analysis. At times, their respective writings seem to trail each other; both wrote about school phobias, reading difficulties, children who bully others or are subject to being attacked, children who lose things, including their intellectual curiosity. . . .

Like Britzman, many commentators argue similarly that when it all comes down to it, A. Freud and Melanie Klein were not that different and thus there was little cause for them to feud so intensely (Grosskurth, 1986, Likierman, 2001, Matte-Blanco, 1988, Peters, 1985). John Bowlby, in the words of Phyllis Grosskurth (1986: 325), suggested that "Klein and Anna Freud were mirror images of each other—stubborn women who refused to open up their minds to the ideas of others. Katherine Whitehorn once described them as the Valkyries of the psychoanalytic movement."

One must wonder why so much squabbling goes on at all in intellectual communities. Can't we just be grownups? These interpersonal battles remind me of many squabbles within the curriculum theorizing community. Historically, those reconceptualists who do politics have rarely gotten along with those who do autobiography (Pinar, 1994c). But aren't we all working toward the same end? Curriculum theorists are all working toward social justice. However, it is interesting that as Michael Apple (2000) points out, what makes an intellectual field is not consensus but conflict. Certainly the curriculum field has had its share of conflict. And sometimes competing ideas push people in directions for which they are not ready.

I think people were just not ready for Klein; she was simply too forward thinking. Moreover, in my reading of Klein and A. Freud, I do not see them as similar, rather I see their work as being completely opposite. And in many ways, I think Britzman tries to bring out these oppositions throughout her book. Britzman's treatment of Melanie Klein, as I previously argued, is gentle. I think what the book lacks is discussion around what some of the critics say about Klein. Because Klein is still an extremely controversial figure, I would have liked to have seen more of the critics' voices in the book. When one reads biographies of Klein, one soon finds out that she

caused trouble, I should say she troubled the psychoanalytic community. In fact, Anton O. Kris (2001: 96–97) tells us that during the 1950s and 1960s,

Young north American psychoanalysts were still virtually forbidden to pay attention to the work of Melanie Klein and her students, but the writings of Balint and Winnicott, who were seen as friends, slowly entered the curricula.

I would venture to say that today, there probably are not many Kleinian analysts in the United States. Perhaps in Britain the story is different. According to John Phillips and Lyndsey Stonebridge (1998: 1) Klein's "legacy is contested but secure." In the United States, however, it is even difficult to find Klein's writings in bookstores. Anna Freud's books, contrarily, are easier to come by. To find Klein, one must search harder. It is as if the hidden curriculum of bookstores, even psychoanalytic ones, is to keep Klein out of the conversation, to keep her away from Americans. It is as if she is too crazy to think through, or perhaps she is just not considered legitimate. This truly is the shame that is American culture. Americans are loathe to read difficult texts, especially ones that challenge the notion of the innocence of the child. On the other hand, one of the reasons, I believe, Winnicott and Balint appeared in the psychoanalytic curricula is that their writings are more accessible and easier to stomach. Klein's writings are bizarre, and to an outsider to the analytic community, like myself, Klein seems crazy. Here, I mean crazy in a good way, not crazy in a way that one might dismiss her importance. I have struggled more with Klein than with any other psychoanalytic thinker and repeatedly come back to her. When one reads passages like the following, one might want to close the book. Klein (1946/1993: 8) argues,

The phantasized onslaughts on the mother follow two main lines: one is the predominantly oral impulse to suck dry, bite up, scoop out and rob the mother's body of its good contents.

On my initial reading of Klein I did indeed close the book. But then, I kept coming back to her over the years and have re-read her several times learning interesting things each time I re-read her. The violence of the passage above might repulse. After all, Klein is talking here about infants! Is it true—can it be the case—that infants can engage in such violent phantasies? As Robin Anderson (1992) tells us, Klein was disturbed at the violent phantasies that children would engage in while playing in her office. Klein's overall argument is that evil lurks within and phantasises about the mother are just that. The mother may or may not do bad things to the child for the child to phantasize bad things about the mother. Winnicott, on the other hand, did not believe this. Perhaps this is why Winnicott was more easily accepted within the psychoanalytic curriculum. He, like Fairbairn, (Morris, 2001) believed that the mother must do something bad to the child for the child to

inject bad objects and in turn phantasize negative and hostile things about the mother. It is much more difficult to think that children might just be bad from the start. As John Phillips and Lyndsey Stonebridge (1998: 1) comment, "For some readers and analysts, it seems, Melanie Klein has always been hard to swallow." Or as Catalina Bronstein (1997:69) puts it "people were genuinely spooked by the sheer craziness and nastiness of the inner world as described by Klein. . . ." Klein was just kind of an outrageous person. Her thinking was bold and she said what she thought. She was not under the shadow of the object of Sigmund Freud, and it seems that she wrote whatever she wished in whatever fashion she wished. There is nothing easy-going about Klein. Her writing is thick, full of interesting imagery, almost maddening. Perhaps she could be considered an early postmodernist? But maybe I go a little too far here. The experience of reading her, though, is not unlike the experience of reading, say Deleuze. You just don't know what to expect next. Ignacio Matte-Blanco (1988: 139) puts it this way,

When reading her, there are some moments during which a feeling arises that everything, seems to be everywhere, or almost everywhere. This is apt to lead to disorientation and, at bottom, to an intense desire of the mother, and to anxiety.

And yet, Julia Kristeva points out that some critics do not like Klein because as she puts it one does not turn to the mother upon reading her, but one wishes, rather to kill the mother. Klein, Kristeva (2001: 135) suggests, "encourages matricide." Phyllis Grosskurth (1986) interestingly points out that Klein has unresolved mother issues of her own and perhaps transferred those onto her patients. Grosskurth (1986: 59) remarks that Klein,

. . . could never come to terms with the reality of her mother. She never experienced what she probably needed: a woman analyst capable of interpreting her fear, hatred, and guilt about her mother. Years later, shortly before her death, she said to her analyst Clare Winnicott, "There's no use talking about your mother. She's dead, and there's nothing you can do about it."

If this is not an example of transference I don't know what is! No analyst in her right mind would make such an outrageous statement. But that was Klein. She was an outrageous figure in the history of psychoanalysis. But thank goodness for that!! Her work has spawned some of the more interesting psychoanalytic writers such as W.R. Bion and Michael Eigen. I do not think that either of these thinkers would think as they do if it weren't for Klein.

Deborah Britzman has done a marvelous job introducing two important figures of the psychoanalytic movement to educators. I applaud Deborah in her brilliant insights and eloquently written book. The themes of eros and thanatos permeate the text as readers are introduced to the archives of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein. Hopefully readers will be encouraged, as I

was, to turn back again to the primary texts of Anna Freud and Melanie Klein so that they may engage in their own after-education. An after-education should be torched with fever. An after-education burns with both eros and thanatos, always already moving deeper within in order to do the work of reparation and social justice.

## Acknowledgement

I thank Naomi Rucker for introducing me to the work of Ignacio Matte-Blanco. Thanks to your interesting insights on Anna Freud and Melanie Klein, I was able to break through to write this difficult paper.

## References

- Anderson, R. (1992). *Clinical lectures on Klein and Bion* (New York: Brunner-Routledge).
- Appignanesi, L. and Forrester, J. (2000). *Freud's women* (New York: The Other Press).
- Apple, M. (2000). The hidden curriculum and the nature of conflict. In W.F. Pinar (ed.), *Curriculum studies: The reconceptualization* (Troy, NY: Educator's International Press Inc.), 95–119.
- Block, A. (1997). *I'm only bleeding: Education as the practice of violence against children* (New York: Peter Lang).
- Britzman, D. (2003). *After-education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and psychoanalytic histories of learning* (New York: SUNY).
- Bronstein, C. (1997). Technique and interpretation in Klein. In B. Burgoyne and M. Sullivan (eds), *The Klein-Lacan dialogues* (London: Rebus Press), 37–43.
- Cremin, L. A. (2000). Curriculum making in the United States. In W. F. Pinar (ed), *Curriculum studies: The reconceptualization* (Troy, NY: New York: Educator's International Press Inc.), 19–35.
- Coles, R. (1992). *Anna Freud: The dream of psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing).
- Derrida, J. (1996). *Archive fever: A Freudian impression*, trans. E. Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).
- Derrida, J. (2002). Psychoanalysis searches to states of its soul. In J. Derrida, *Without alibi*, trans. & ed, P. Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 238–280.
- Doll, M.A. (1995). *To the lighthouse and back: Writings on teaching and living* (New York: Peter Lang).
- Dyer, R. (1983). *Her father's daughter: The work of Anna Freud* (New York: Jason Aronson).
- Eigen, M. (2001). *Toxic nourishment* (London: Karnac Books).
- Freud, A. (1963). *Psycho-analysis for teachers and parents*, trans. B. Low (New York: W.W. Norton).
- Freud, A. (1966/1993). *The ego and the mechanisms of defense, revised edition* (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc).
- Grosskurth, P. (1986). *Melanie Klein and her work* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf).
- Hedges, M. (1999). 'Torched' [Song] In Michael Hedges *Torched* [CD recording and #01934-11394-2] (New York: Windham Hill Group).

- Klein, M. (1946/1993). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. In M. Klein *Envy and Gratitude and other works 1946-1963* (London: Karnac Books), 1–24.
- Kliebard, H. (2000). Bureaucracy and curriculum. In W. F. Pinar (ed.), *Curriculum studies: The reconceptualization* (Troy, NY: Educator's International Press Inc.), 51–69.
- Kris, A.O. (2001). Discussion of Anna Freud and the evolution of psychoanalytic technique. In A.J. Solnit, P. B. Neubauer, S. Abram and A. S. Dowling (eds), *The psychoanalytic study of the child* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press), 96–104.
- Kristeva, J. (2001). Melanie Klein, trans. R. Guberman (New York: Columbia University Press).
- Likierman, M. (2001). *Melanie Klein: Her works in context* (New York: Continuum).
- Macdonald, J. (2000). Curriculum theory. In W. F. Pinar (ed), *Curriculum studies: The reconceptualists* (Troy, NY: Educator's International Press Inc.), 5–13.
- Matte-Blanco, I. (1988). *Thinking, feeling, and being: Clinical reflections on the fundamental antinomy of human beings and world* (New York: Routledge).
- Morris, M. (2001). *Curriculum and the Holocaust: Competing sites of memory and representation* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum).
- Peters, U.H. (1985). *Anna Freud: A life dedicated to children* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson).
- Phillips, J. (1998). Introduction. In J. Phillips and L. Stonebridge (eds), *Reading Melanie Klein* (New York: Routledge), 1–4.
- Pinar, W.F. (1994a). Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown (1973). In W. F. Pinar, *Autobiography, politics and sexuality: Essays in curriculum theory 1972-1992* (New York: Peter Lang), 13–18.
- Pinar, W. F. (1994b). The trial (1976). In W. F. Pinar, *Autobiography, politics and sexuality: Essays in curriculum theory 1972-1992* (New York: Peter Lang), 29–62.
- Pinar, W. F. (1994c). Introduction. In W. F. Pinar, *Autobiography, politics and sexuality: Essays in curriculum theory 1972-1992* (New York: Peter Lang), 1–6.
- Sayers, J. (1991) *Mothers of psychoanalysis: Helene Deutsch, Karen Horney, Anna Freud, Melanie Klein* (New York: W.W. Norton).
- Sedgwick, E.K. (2003). *Touching feeling, affect, pedagogy, performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press).
- Sepal, J. (1992). *Melanie Klein* (London: Sage Publications).
- Smith, D. (1999). *Pedagon: Interdisciplinary essays in the human sciences, pedagogy and culture*. (New York: Peter Lang).
- Young-Bruehl, E. (1988). *Anna Freud: A biography* (New York: Summit Books).
- Zaretsky, E. (1998). Melanie Klein and the emergence of modern personal life. In J. Phillips and L. Stonebridge (eds), *Reading Melanie Klein* (New York: Routledge), 32–50.