

## HATE IN THE CLASSROOM

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What I want to think about at this moment is the teacher in the classroom. And I want to think *about the presence and effect of hate in the classroom*: because I want to suggest that hate exists there, but not hate as it might be thought of as an emotion that exists irrationally as active antagonism—sometimes violently enacted—between racial or ethnic or religious groups; or between boys and girls; or even between Packer and Viking fans. That presence I will refer to as rage that stems from anger! Rather, I am going to talk about the important and necessary hate (that also, indeed, stems from anger) that is experienced between teachers and students even as that similar hate necessarily manifests itself between parents and children. In the classroom, teachers exist in relationship with students, and so I think now to explore the nature of that relationship, some of which is obvious and some of which—the part I mean to consider here—remains significant but often unacknowledged.

I am going to consider hate in the classroom: what I define as hate, how it may come to exist, how it gets manifested, how it may be managed, and what its presence in the classroom portends for the work we all intend to do there. Because I am certain that hate exists there: I feel it and I have felt it. I have hated and been hated., D.W. Winnicott, the pediatrician and psychoanalyst says, “However much [the psychoanalyst] loves his patients he cannot avoid hating them, and fearing them, and the better he knows this the less will hate and fear be the motive determining what he does to his patients.” (1949, 69). The same might be true as well for teachers,<sup>1</sup> and I have become convinced that unless we account for the presence of hate in the classroom then whatever we mean to do there will be compromised. I think teachers work in the classroom under extreme conditions; if we can better understand those conditions then perhaps we can better work in them.<sup>2</sup> And the work we do is difficult work because in addition to the almost impossible job of teaching academic material,<sup>3</sup> teachers must also appreciate and engage in psychotherapeutic work for which they receive little training and less support. In his talk to teachers of mathematics, Winnicott says, “Teachers of all kinds do need to

know when they are concerned *not with teaching their subject*, but with psychotherapy—that is completing the tasks that represent parental failure or relative failure” (1986, 63, italics in original). We teachers make mistakes. For his colleagues, D.W. Winnicott offers some consolation: “Insane patients must always be a heavy emotional burden on those who care for them.” Our students though not insane, are nevertheless not easy in the classroom, and they do impose a heavy emotional burden on the teacher; sometimes, well, oftentimes, in our efforts to succeed (however we might understand that accomplishment in the classroom) we commit errors, some small and some not so small. Under great pressures, we make mistakes: but to my relief Winnicott says, “*One can forgive those who do this work if they do awful things . . .*” (1949, 69, italics added). I think that if we can understand the motives and sources of those awful things we might commit, we can somehow begin to minimize some of the effects and even fear of those awful things we do and we might learn to forgive ourselves and improve our practice.

I want to first define what I mean by hate. It is a common enough term used by most of us probably daily and it usually implies in its expression something negative. I hate bananas. I hate my parents, my boyfriend, my teacher. What is usually meant when we say we ‘hate’ something is that we want it (or them) to go away, to disappear, etc., etc. When we hate, we want to destroy the Other. When we say we ‘hate something,’ the term refers usually to an expression of anger inspired by something that we confront in the environment—anger is an energy as I believe are all emotions. The American Psychological Association defines anger as “an emotion<sup>4</sup> characterized by antagonism toward someone or something you feel has deliberately done you wrong” (<http://www.apa.org/topics/anger>). The OED offers the definition of the word *antagonism* in biochemical terms. In biochemistry *antagonism* refers to “an inhibition of, or interference with the action of one substance or organism by another.” Now, these antagonistic relations may cause friction (in the case of biochemistry, for certain), and between people they often trigger feelings (and expressions of) hostility, resentment, enmity, and dissension. When we feel we have been wronged and treated grossly unfair, we experience anger.

Now, rage is one response to this antagonism: to anger. In my rage I want to eliminate that which obstructs me, that gets in my way, that resists me. Laura Groshong (2011, 44) defines rage as “developmental aggression<sup>5</sup> focused on unbearable frustration, helplessness, and a demand for approval from the other to relieve the pain of rage.” When I experience rage I make demands that my feeling (of rage) be relieved; I strike out and demand of the other (the antagonist): “unfrustrate

me, help me, approve of me.”<sup>6</sup> I feel rage out of a sense of my inadequacies that render me helpless in any situation. Sometimes in my rage I put my hand through the wall. For example: I experience rage when I try to put together something from IKEA that comes in a box with instructions I can’t follow. I scream and usually break pieces. Lately we have heard a great deal about road rage—an act of aggression behind the wheel of an automobile that arises out of a sense of frustration and/or demand for recognition. Riots are expressions of rage. So too might temper tantrums be examples of rage. Adolescents storming about the house and even out of the house slamming doors might be signs of rage. “Rage is associated with a demand, either implicit or explicit, that the other person change and respond to us. It reflects a frustrated attempt to control the other in order to get the other to meet the need for recognition” (Green, 2006, 191). Perhaps we have all experienced rage, and sometimes, perhaps, each of us has put our hand through a wall or screamed obscenities or worse at those about us—some for whom we might even have affection. Interestingly, I think that children express rage but I remain unconvinced that they experience hate: children must learn to hate by learning to accept and understand their feelings of anger, and I will argue that this learning is developmentally important and will occur only when they have first experienced our hate.

Hate is not rage, though it might begin in the same place. Hate is a psychological phenomenon whereas rage is enacted physically. Hate is mentalized (as opposed to developmental defensive) aggression<sup>7</sup> and therefore, involves reflection, thought and self-analysis. When we hate we do not engage in physicality: when we hate we reflect on our emotion rather than strike out from our instinctual urges. When we hate we may still feel the emotion (anger) but we assume a stance to reflect upon it: we wonder, “Why am I so angry? What is going on *here* and *now* with me psychologically?” Hate circulates in us at various levels of awareness, and intermingles with other emotions and feelings such as love, loss, etc., and is available for momentary or deep and thoughtful reflection—when it is not enacted as rage. Of course, first we must have the capacity to recognize the emotion (the bodily responses) and then have the willingness to reflect upon that emotion and call it hate. We must acknowledge hate and then learn how we might manage it. Rage is defensive, but hate, as I am going to use it and when it is reflected upon might be potentially progressive: its articulation actually enables the individual to move forward, to progress, to accept the indestructibility and therefore, the existence of the object of hate as actual reality. In our anger-inspired rage we would have liked to eliminate that which has provoked our feeling, but when we experience hate that

object that we would destroy defies our destructive attempt. And when the object survives our hate, we understand that that object exists outside of our own subjective creation, and that object must be then acknowledged as real. What survives our hate must have objective existence: that object is not our subjective creation that we can at will destroy or even change at our will. Our hate, then helps create our world. What I am referring to here are the existence of internal and external objects. And so very briefly—I would like to look at who we might be in the world according to object relations psychology.

### **Object Relations**

We live in a world of others: object relations theory suggests that our selves are comprised of “the psychic internalization and representation of interactions between self and objects” (Benjamin, 1992, 44). We interact—we play—with objects and that object play transforms us by the experience with it. Object relations theory says that we psychically internalize and represent our interactions between self and objects. We ‘find’ an object in the world because it is there to be found, but we do with the object what we will: in the space of transitional phenomena, to use Winnicott’s phrase, we create (Winnicott, 1989, 11). Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas (1992, 59) says, “In play the subject releases the idiom of himself to the field of objects, where he is then transformed by the structure of that experience, and will bear the history of that encounter in the unconscious. To be a character is to enjoy the risk of being processed by the object—indeed, to seek objects, in part, in order to be metamorphosed, as one ‘goes through’ change by going through the processional moment provided by any object’s integrity.” However, if the object does not sustain our contact with it, then it must be wholly an object of our internal reality and not exist in objective form. If we tear up our writing, destroy our canvas, or smash our doll it is gone forever. The object may remain as a subjective intrapsychic structure, but it has no objective reality. Of course, there is nothing wrong with engaging in imaginary gardens or unicorns—existing in a world of wholly subjective objects, those that we have created but that have no objective reality, but these moments offer no flowers for the table or vegetables for the dinner plate. Nor will engagement with merely these objects promote a character who can (or will) participate in active social engagement.<sup>8</sup>

Our engagement with objects informs our growth—indeed, adds to our growth. I’m a vegetarian and that expresses not only my relation to meat but to the world at large; I’m a Vikings fan and this relationship is part of my self-definition. I’m

referred to as a momma's boy or as daddy's little girl (both sexist terms, I know), which implies a certain relationship with my mother (and father) internalized and then projected: my relationship with others reveals this connection. These objects comprise and define me. There is a silly rhyme that has long been a joke in my family: everytime we serve peas with our meal we say, "I eat my peas with honey, I've done so all my life; it makes the peas taste funny, but it keeps them on the knife." For us the rhyme represents a relationship with and use of objects: with peas, with knives, with honey, with food, and also, in the repeated telling, the rhyme (yet another object) represents a relationship with family around the table. We are comprised of the objects we have taken in and with which we are in relationship and which we use. To understand ourselves, we must understand the encounters with our internalized objects, those inner presences that are the trace of our encounters with objects. We often *sound and behave* like our parents; and for my purpose here, we often *sound and behave* like our teachers and like our existences in previous classrooms as students. How do we understand ourselves, then, except as an expression of the relationship between ourselves and objects—those objects include the presence of Others. Object relations theory argues that we are the sum of our relations with objects.

Intersubjective theory, a close variant of object relations theory (see Benjamin, 1992), postulates that the other must be recognized as another subject—an independent actor—in order for the self to truly experience his or her own subjectivity in the other's presence. That other object must be recognized as a subject and not as my independent creation, because if I believe that the existence of the other is wholly of my thinking and has no reality outside of my thought, then I, too, might be a creation of the Other and have no real existence.

Hate might be one engine that can enable us to feel like a Self. Hate allows me to see the other as independent of myself. It is possible that if we don't accept the presence of other subjects, as say might be the case for children who reject the social world and whom we label as autistic—if we live wholly in our internal world and do not engage in inter-subjectivity, then we do not become a Self—an "I Am." As we learn from intersubjective theory, to be a self we must have selves about us, and we need to break through our internal world—to know that our internal world is *not* reality—and hate is one of the means by which this is accomplished. If we cannot hate and break through our internal world, then we do not know that the others are real and they cannot therefore, be loved.<sup>9</sup> Hate perhaps comes before love. I must understand that the students before me are not my idealized creation!

### The Process of Hate

What happens when we hate, then? First, I recall that hate is an energy that stems from anger. Anger, we recall is a feeling of antagonism toward someone or something you feel toward someone you feel who has deliberately done you wrong or that has somehow frustrated you. Anger stems from a feeling of having been interfered with! I assign reading and a student doesn't read. And during the classroom discussion I notice that the student over there isn't paying any attention to me. And a third student refuses to sit quietly and listen to the story I am reading enthusiastically. These students say (at a minimum) "Not Teacher" to me, and in my anger I allow that student to have the authority to assign that identity to me and make it stick! But if I *am* 'not teacher' then I wonder who am I? I have been interfered with and I am angry. I demand attention and obedience. I might strike out in rage, scream at the recalcitrant students, or even demand their exit from the class or assign to them a zero for the day! But when I hate, I destroy the *internal objects* that define me as Not Teacher in order to find myself as Teacher. In my anger, I hate those students, but in the management of my hate, then I can begin to deal with them. My hate establishes boundaries. I consider: I may not be perfect but I am a good enough teacher! And in this conscious process I have now survived the attack on myself by both the student and by my own psyche.

Interestingly, at the same time, perhaps the students desire that I be the unconditionally loving parent and forgive them for not doing their work or for not paying attention. One internal object they might hold is of themselves as young children in a holding environment of the home and of the good enough parent who caters to their every desire. Those students demand that I leave them alone: they are preoccupied, or bored, or desire some other entertainment.<sup>10</sup> When I won't do so, they are angry. They tell me to fuck off; they fuck off. But when they can learn to hate me—when they can wonder why they feel such anger—then they might hate and destroy the needy authoritarian child who has (perhaps) ruled the roost, and they may also have destroyed the internal object of me as absolute authority like their parents (perhaps). But they have not destroyed me! I remain. "Hate," Winnicott tells us, "is the destruction used to break through our internal object world." Hate is a mental process. We think hate: we physically enact our rage. Hate takes power from others and re-appropriates it to the self because hate represents NOT getting what we need from the other but no longer depending on that other to fulfill our needs.

We do not necessarily express our hate, though it can be spoken, but we do feel it and the acknowledgement and management of this hate is important. Hate represents an alternative to the enactment of rage. Winnicott was a pediatrician and psychoanalyst in the years before and after World War II. He and his social worker wife, Claire, took in a particularly delinquent boy—perhaps of mid-teen years. Regularly the boy would get into trouble and Winnicott and his wife would retrieve him from the various police stations where he would end up. During his treatment the delinquency he enacted turned inward and sometimes his behavior disrupted the Winnicott home. He was a horror! Winnicott (1949, 73) says,

Did I hit him? The answer is no, I never hit. But I should have had to have done so if I had not known all about my hate and if I had not let him know about it too. At crisis I would take him by bodily strength, and without anger or blame, and put him outside the front door, whatever the weather or the time of day or night. There was a special bell he knew that if he rang it he would be readmitted and no word said about the past. He used this bell as soon as he had recovered from his maniacal attack.

And Winnicott continues: “The important thing is that each time, just as I put him outside the door, I told him something: I said that what had happened had made me hate him. This was easy because it was true.” It was this latter statement that was important because it allowed Winnicott to express his feelings “without losing my temper and every now and again murdering him.” The expression and acknowledgment of hate allowed for its relief: because Winnicott expressed his hate in his anger he need not have murdered the boy. And when the boy had reentered the house, nothing was said of the incident: that hate permitted love—an unqualified acceptance of the boy. Winnicott’s hate destroyed Winnicott’s internal horrible and delinquent boy and the boy’s potential murderer and identified the boy as an individual who could be loved. Winnicott also avoided the murderous violence he might have enacted. And though the boy heard Winnicott say that he hated the boy for what he did, the boy also knew that Winnicott loved him because without question he re-admitted him to the home. The boy’s behavior did not destroy Winnicott, and Winnicott’s behavior did not destroy the boy—though he did in his hate destroy the antisocial boy who opposed him. When Winnicott said to the boy, “Your behavior has made me hate you” what he said was that you are separate from me and your behaviors are unacceptable to me. “Hate is a necessary part of feeling an independent sense of one’s self . . . (Green, 192). But hate also permits us to

recognize the Other as separate and to have existence not merely as my subjective creation.

Another example: when I deny my daughter permission to go out because we are having dinner she does not hit me or throw things or storm about the house slamming doors. She is, however, very angry and says, "I hate you." But what she might mean is that she must destroy the internal object she holds of herself as independent and wholly capable of coming and going at will so that she can come to see herself as an individual in the family with obligations and commitments; and she must destroy the image of me as some authoritarian bully so that she can see me again as her father who loves her. Hate is the energy that makes this transformation possible. We both survive that attempt at destruction.

Hate establishes boundaries, and therefore, enables the reality of the self. In hate, though I psychologically desire to destroy that internal object toward which I feel antagonism and hostility for not meeting my needs—the rebuffing daughter or the incorrigible boy—the object survives nonetheless. And when that object survives my hate, then I know that the object must be real and not my subjective creation—the unqualifiedly loving daughter or the eternally grateful and well-behaved boy—therefore, the object becomes available to be loved! Hate eventually makes empathy possible: empathy might be defined not as the ability to *feel* the other's feeling (that is impossible) but to have enough control of ourselves and our feelings *to listen* with attentiveness to another person. If the object survives our hate—our destructiveness, then it is real. Winnicott says (1986, 47), "There is no disillusionment (acceptance of the Reality Principle) except on a basis of illusion." Hate breaks through our illusions and leads us to the other. Winnicott acknowledges: "Every moment I have my little experience of omnipotence, before I hand this uncomfortable position over to God" (1986, 47). For our purposes here, it is ideal to say we love our students: they exist in our un-reflective and unreflected love as our internal projections.<sup>11</sup> But I think that when we acknowledge that we can hate our students *then* we can begin to love them. And I believe that if we do not recognize that hate we might not be able to bear the strain that we experience in the classroom daily.

Somehow, hate must be managed. For example, D.W. Winnicott says that the mother hates the baby before she loves it, maybe even as teachers hate their students before they come to love them. For the mother the baby's demand of ruthless love inspires hate in the mother, *but* because the mother means to provide a protective



environment, the mother cannot express that hate; rather, she must recognize and manage it and acknowledge that this baby is not her subjective creation. The mother must recognize that this baby exists despite me, sometimes in spite of me, and I will care for it nonetheless. Why does the mother hate the baby? Winnicott offers an extensive list of reasons. Let me list a good sampling:

1. The baby is not her own (mental) conception.
2. The baby is not the one of childhood play.
3. The baby is not magically produced.
4. The baby is a danger to her body in pregnancy and birth.
5. The baby interferes with her private life.
6. The baby hurts her nipples.
7. The baby is ruthless, treats her as scum and as his slave.
8. Mother has to love all of baby—even the excrements.
9. Baby exhibits cupboard love: once he has gotten what he wants he throws her away like an orange peel.
10. The baby periodically hurts her—bites her.
11. The baby at first must dominate.
12. The baby doesn't know what the other sacrifices for him: and cannot allow for her hate.
13. He refuses her good food, but does eat his aunt's food.
14. If she fails him she knows she'll pay later
15. She excites him but she cannot eat him or trade in sex with him.
16. After a particularly difficult morning with the baby the mother takes her out and stranger comments "Isn't she sweet?"

To tolerate (and manage) her hate the mother might direct that hate back on herself—and this might inspire a form of masochism. She turns all of her anger onto herself and emotionally destroys herself. This is not beneficial to either the mother or the child. Or that mother's hate may appear sublimated in things like nursery rhymes:

Rock a bye baby, on the tree top,  
 When the wind blows the cradle will rock,  
 When the bough breaks the cradle will fall,  
 Down will come baby, cradle and all (Winnicottt, 1949, 74).

Or perhaps it appears in simple prayers:

But if I die before I wake  
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

Perhaps fairy tales work in a similar manner. In any case, the mother's hate is managed (expressed), "so that she does not end up murdering her child."

Winnicott cautions that what the mother must *not do* is become sentimental: sentimentality denies hate. Sentimentality is emotion in excess of the stimulus; sentimentality is emotion at the expense of reason. Sentimentality romanticizes the child and her behaviors and assumes some ideal existence that does not represent the real child. "Oh," we say, "isn't he cute" when he throws the prepared food at me, or "Ah, he is just going through a phase." In such depiction we lose the individual for the type. If I can make something disappear, if I won't accept the child for what it is and what it does, then I assume that the object has no reality—it is wholly my fantasy creation. I *can* love a fantasy, but what good will that do in reality? We cannot enter the teaching profession because we 'love children.' But I think we become teachers first because we love subject matter and learning and study, and because we want to share this love with others. We meet often with antagonism and resistance, and we often experience frustration and anger. Hate is the feeling that breaks through our internal object world, and when that object nevertheless survives, then it can be accepted as real and it can be loved!

Winnicott (1949) says that the well-trained analyst in her own analysis has gotten to the bottom of her own hate—thus it is that for this analyst the hate may be understood, appreciated and managed and remains latent: undercover. The same might be true for the teacher. The analyst has learned to tolerate her hate: the analyst has already dealt with these counter-transferences in her own analysis. *But* if the analyst has *not* explored those reservoirs of unconscious hate, then they appear in sessions in the experience of the counter-transference. (1949) In the *counter transference*, the psychoanalyst (and teacher) responds to the subjective phenomena that turn up in the analytic session *in an objective* manner. That is, the psychoanalyst (and teacher) responds to the analysand's (and student's) words and behavior from the analyst's (and teacher's) own resistance to the transference and reacts from his own affect. When you treat me this way, I respond from my own unconscious motives: if you resent me I will respond with resentment and/or hurt. If you flirt with me I might flirt back with you. If you express anger at me, I will respond

according to my own history confronting anger. If you resist me, then I might respond as I did when I was resisted by my parents or my own children! In a later essay Winnicott (1990) defines the counter transference as “the neurotic features *which spoil the professional attitude* and disturb the course of the analytic process as determined by the patient” (162). The same might be true of the teacher. In the countertransference, the patient (the student) calls up in the analyst emotions that corrupt the analysts’ and teacher’s objective stance and affects the progress of the session and interchange. The analyst and teacher respond from the client’s or student’s, having designated them as an object. Unless the analyst (and teacher) understands the structuring of his own ego-defenses, how he has protected himself from negative feelings, like hate, then he cannot effectively engage with his patient because the analyst will use his ego-defenses to protect him from the hate he experiences. But the therapist and teacher who has gotten to the reservoir of his unconscious manages the hate that is experienced there. So too for teachers. I think that the teacher needs not necessarily the couch but a journal for reflection and some significant colleagues to meet with at the coffee houses. That is, the ego means to protect itself against negative feelings like fear and hate!

Analysts and teachers sometimes hate their patients and students. Patients and students say and do a good many things that inspire hate. In order to avoid expressing the hate experienced, analysts and teachers tell themselves stories: their ego defends them against acknowledging their hate. Winnicott says there are reasons, rationalities, why an analyst’s hate remains (properly) unstated even though the analyst yet feels hate. The hate is managed. What Winnicott (1949, 70) says of the analyst might be also true for the teacher. The analyst and teacher say to themselves,

1. Analysis is the chosen job (like teaching), and represents the best way to deal with my own guilt in constructive way;
2. Analysis (teaching) is how I get paid;
3. Analysis (and teaching) is the environment in which I learn, positing learning as a primary motive for working;
4. Analysis (and teaching) provides immediate rewards through progress of patient [and students] with whom I, the analyst and teacher, identify;
5. I have a way of expressing hate legitimately: end of hour!

I will explore this final rationale as it applies to the teacher in just a bit. Because the analyst doesn’t express her hate does not mean that she does not feel hate, and it is

important that the analyst and teacher tolerate the psychic strain without expecting the client and students to know anything that is going on in the analyst. *The analyst and teacher must tolerate and manage their own fear and hate.* Thus, in any session or class the analyst and teacher must work hard to deal with these inexpressible feelings. Fortunately, analysts have ways of expressing their hate: for example, the end of a session. Teachers have other means.

### **On the Transference**

What does transference mean and what possibly can this have to do with the classroom? Perhaps we are all neurotic: that is, for the sake of argument, let's say that neurosis refers to an individual's particular and basically ineffective attempt to adapt to one's environment. Our neuroses make it difficult and sometimes impossible to develop a richer, more complex, more satisfying personality. As a result of our particular upbringings, no one is perfectly situated in the world. Is there really a concept of the 'normal?' What is the 'ideal' behavior? How is it learned? From whom? How do we deal with frustration? How do we receive satisfactions? By what are we made sad or happy? And why? Assuming that what we know is what we have learned from our object relationships and use, then we look to our environments, our objects—home is where we start from—to understand our behaviors. And every analyst and every teacher comes from a family—and every analyst and teacher suffers some neurotic symptoms. Thus, if we want to understand a person's character—which includes (indeed might consist wholly of neuroses: disturbances in one's relation to self and to others) then the analyst wants to understand the home from which that individual came. Somehow, the analytic session attempts to recreate familial relationships so that in the session the patient transfers those feelings that attend to this early environment. This is called the transference.

Winnicott says, Home is where we start from. In the psychoanalytic process, Winnicott says that the analyst must study the early stages of the individual under treatment—because those stages set the pattern for later development (for integration, personalization, realization, an awareness of time and space, and other aspects of reality). This process is called the transference. "Transference is not just a matter of rapport, or of relationships. It concerns the way in which a highly subjective phenomenon repeatedly turns up in an analysis. Psychoanalysis very much consists in the arranging of conditions for the development of these phenomena, and in the interpretation of these phenomena at the right moment. The

interpretation relates the specific transference phenomenon to a bit of the patient's psychic reality, and this in some cases means at the same time relating it to a bit of the patients' past living" (Winnicott, 1990, 159). Some clients have had satisfactory early experiences which can be discovered in the transference and the analyst can also discover those very early experiences that have been so deficient or distorted that make it necessary for the analyst to be the first in the patient's life to supply certain environmental essentials. Students often transfer their experiences with home onto the classroom, and teachers ought to be aware of such mechanisms.

The analytic session might proceed "for the development of these [transference] phenomena" that continue to turn up in analysis and the classroom: ways of behaving that have been formed early. These phenomena concern the manner by which an individual responds to his/her environment, the adaptations s/he makes in her functioning in the world. Winnicott (and other object relations theorists) holds that these responses begin in the early environment: the home. These responses begin as well in the classroom. The analyst and teacher is concerned to understand the origin and meaning of these repeated actions and attempts to tie them to the facilitating environment (the home and the school) in which the patient has developed. That is, the analyst is concerned not only with *the transference* of feelings from the analysand to analyst—to the patient's statement "you are like my mother" the analyst responds not only okay, but she is also concerned with the unconscious elements contained in those feelings.

The same might be true of the teacher. She must be concerned not only with the overt behavior, but with the psychological (and unconscious) elements in the actions and communications. What in the situation identifies me as one of the student's past teachers; how does the patient feel about the teacher and how did the teacher create for that student/child an environment that has produced the transference unconsciously in the patient from the student's past experience with teachers and classrooms and schools—at the minimum. In the transference, the analyst or teacher gains insight into the conflicts that are aroused and the defenses that have been organized to protect the child from the world that might have even been good enough but yet exists outside the child's control. Our defenses were organized to protect us against our own aggressiveness, destructiveness, and ruthlessness. Hate is not a defense but managing hate requires a development of appropriate defenses.

The classroom is not an analyst's office, but the classroom is where students and teachers have spent many hours. The classroom, *like the home*, has been a *holding*

*environment* that contains the influences of the home and other classrooms. The classroom is the place where one learned about learning; about knowledge; about appropriate behavior, about being a student and being a teacher, about authority and order. We must come to understand these relations, and our feelings towards them *that include hate*. Ironically, many teachers have entered the profession because they hated school! Britzman (2009, 83) writes, "That teachers have grown up in school only to return as adults means that their relations to authority, knowledge, to school objects, and to the differences between the teacher and the students are never neutral but rather are in conflict with their own infantile phantasies of education, now in the form of impact theories of learning and teaching and their idealization of the profession." When a teacher *stands* in the classroom as a teacher she transfers her connections from the holding environment of the school she experienced *as a student* onto the relationships in the classroom in which she is now a teacher. These feelings produce instances of demand and wish. Your past relationship to teachers, to subject matter, to knowledge, to the desks and texts and halls and walls and social relations in the school are transferred onto your present experience of education as teachers. You transfer as well your idealization of the classroom and teaching: you might become sentimental and then the objects with which you interact—the students—will not be real: they become your subjective projection. You might say: *They* are only children; you might say: *This* knowledge will enable them to rise in the world; you might say: *teaching* is a calling! In such sentimentalizations, we avoid our feelings of hate.

Being a teacher is hard work and requires a great deal of preparation that is not technological, but psychological. Winnicott says, "I am not saying that the analyst's analysis is to free him from neurosis; it is to increase the stability of character and the maturity of the personality of the worker, this being the basis of his or her professional work and of our ability to maintain a professional relationship" (1990, 100). So too for the teacher. Psychoanalysts are required to undergo extensive psychoanalysis; teachers must subject themselves to intense reflection on their educational experiences. The psychoanalyst must have been first analyzed so that he can understand the ego defenses that s/he has built up to allow 'hate' to remain latent. The hate is there but is tolerated. So, too, for the teacher. We teachers are only partly recognized for ourselves: we are always subject to the transference. Sometimes we resist the transference: sometimes we become enraged. I will not be that person/object. *You* will do what I say or you will suffer. But our rage isn't productive and defeats our purpose. And perhaps it is this that makes the profession

of analyst and teacher so difficult. Winnicott has said, "One can forgive those who do work if they do awful things" (1949, 69). We teachers make mistakes.

We cannot love what does not survive our mental aggression: our hate. If we can make the object disappear, then it has no reality beyond what we have created. I cannot love what has no reality. I must learn to love through my acceptance of my hate. Hate is a way of testing the environment—to see if the object will survive. If it survives, it can be loved. Perhaps our students seek our hate so that they can get in touch with their own hate! They hate us so that they can love us.

Having spent forty-six years in the classroom, I know that hate exists there: I know I have been the target of it, and I have certainly at times felt it. I am not the first to address this issue: Deborah Britzman (2009) has explored the presence of hate in the classroom in her book *The Very Thought of Education*. Britzman approaches the work of the teacher both from her time in the classroom and from her training as a psychoanalyst, and she explores the difficulties attendant on the work of the teacher without the acknowledgement of how our early experiences have structured our ideas of education and our role as a teacher. We do not require an analyst's couch—though I am certain that this wouldn't hurt any of us—but we might all begin to get in touch with our hate.

Why do I hate my students? Britzman (2009, 97) offers a short list: "The teacher after all is a witness to how students ruin her lessons, misinterpret her intentions, refuse to read, hand in late papers, and generally go their own way without thinking about the teacher's plans, schedules or even her feelings." And students hate the teacher who grades them, demands they behave in a specifically defined manner prescribed by her, who writes all over their work, and refuses to accept late papers or absences. What do we all do with our hate? Winnicott argues that our ego defends us against our hate—teachers tell themselves stories: We offer ourselves all kinds of reasons for loving our work: that we chose this job, that we get paid, or that I am training to be a teacher; that we love to learn, that sometimes I receive reward from seeing students learn, that bad grades are communication and motivation. As a teacher, I also have ways of expressing my hate legitimately: I can give out grades! I markup papers. The class ends; the semester ends and I will never have to see you again. And teachers often defend ourselves from our hate by idealization and sentimentality. We say we love our students—though really we hardly know them. We say that they *are children* though we don't always know what that means, but tend to accept some sentimentalized portrait of 'a child.' We repress our feelings of hate and fall into idealizations and sentimentalities that deny our hate. To deny our

hate denies the possibility of relationship because we do not destroy that internal object that we have created out of our own needs, idealizations and fantasies: we deny the reality of the Other. We might acknowledge that hate so that we do not fall into rage. We might acknowledge our hate so that we can establish boundaries and see our students as Subjects and not our own internal object. Why do we become teachers? That is a good question. What is there about the educational environment that makes it our choice? That is another good question. We are held in the classroom, but what happens when the students do not hold us—when our idealization turns out less than ideal—we hate. During the course of any one class the teacher experiences anxieties, frustrations, and irritations. We are affected by the work and to deny this is to deny reality. Teachers must bear the strain of the work and that means to recognize that the student might not know what the teacher is doing at any one time and therefore, the teacher must be aware of her own fear and hate. Otherwise it will affect us in ways deleterious to our work. When we hate, we accept that we are NOT in control and that there are other selves in the classroom—If we cannot acknowledge and manage our hate then we cannot realize our selves and we cannot see our students as separate from us. But if students can feel our hate then they also can feel hate—and then they, too, will come into their own selves. I have no problem with our students recognizing our hate. How that might occur, I am still learning—but this writing has clarified a great deal for me.



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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Substitute teacher, Nicholson Baker (2016, 235) says “I love these kids. I really love these kids.” It is their spontaneity and unrepressed innocence that he admires and not their individuality. He is a substitute teacher: he hardly knows them.

<sup>2</sup> In his albeit brief stint as a substitute teacher, Nicholson Baker, (2016, 493) says “One grown-up can’t teach twenty digital-era children without spending a third of their time or more, scolding and enforcing obedience.”

<sup>3</sup> Baker escapes into the teacher’s lounge and confesses to his colleagues “I’m sorry to interrupt you guys, but I’m lonely—the thing that is hard is that if you’re a regular teacher you actually have to get the kids to learn something—that’s hard” (2016, 512).

<sup>4</sup> The neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, (1994, 139, 151) says, “I see the essence of emotion as the collection of changes in body state that are induced in myriad organs by nerve cell terminals, under the control of a dedicated brain system, which is responding to the content of thoughts relative to a particular entity or event . . . [the] process of continuously monitoring that experience of what your body is doing *while* thoughts about specific contents roll by, is the essence of what I call feeling. A feeling is the experience of those [bodily] changes.”

<sup>5</sup> Developmental aggression is emotion unthought and unevaluated, and represents a body response without reflection.

<sup>6</sup> Winnicott says that it is madness to demand to be believed.

<sup>7</sup> I use the term aggression after Groshong and Green because it can mean *both* hostile attitudes towards another *as well as* an action or act of attack. Rage represents the latter and hate the former. I think it possible that one can reflect upon an attitude in place of physically acting instinctively upon it!

<sup>8</sup> Marianne Moore called poetry “imaginary gardens with real toads,” but it was her relationship to objects (words) that created those imaginary gardens with real toads, the latter the substance of ideas and feelings.

<sup>9</sup> Baker’s expressed love is an idealized one. “I love these kids,” but he doesn’t really have to interact with or know any of them.

<sup>10</sup> Baker (again, 493) says, “School isn’t about efficient teaching; it’s about free all-day baby sitting while parents work—it has to be inefficient in order to fill 6<sup>1/2</sup> hours”

<sup>11</sup> Observing students out on the playground during recess Baker says, “I loved these kids.” In the classroom he often forms a different opinion.