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The Double Image of Education: An Investigation into the Relationship of Literature and the Contours of Desire in Relation to The Gambler (1974)

I.

Axel Freed, the protagonist of the movie *The Gambler*, will be used to show how one's internal dramatic process is central to the educational act. The act of teaching, at its best, brings about an agonal tension in the interpersonal psyche of both the one who learns and the one who is taught; that is, although both may be accomplished at the conscious social level, there is often a vast hidden world of unconscious desires, assumptions, conflicts, and beliefs which remain unquestioned. *The Gambler* brings out the dramatic dialogue of Freed and his Double which has its origins in a primal realm of desire which precedes any form of conceptualization. Freed's two psychic manifestations are his social self as a professor of literature, and his double self as a degenerate with a gambling addiction. The application of literature to the drama of personality creates a dialogue between Freed's conscious and unconscious life, because his literary knowledge informs his double life of gambling and vice versa. These two practices weave together and become one at the climactic point of the movie: namely, when Freed looks at his double image in the barroom mirror, which happens to be the last scene in the movie. Then, can we say that education in general is an art of revealing one's unconscious drives by bringing them to the surface of one's consciousness? This seems essential to the educational experience in one's own life. This paper will attempt to focus on this pressing question.

What is intriguing about Freed's character is that, although he knows a great deal about literature, he does not know about the effect it is having upon his unconscious world. And "As Plato pointed out long ago," says Jacques Lacan, "it is not at all necessary that the poet know what he is doing, in fact, it is preferable that he not know. That is what gives a primordial value to what he does."¹ Freed's unconscious world, which he knows nothing about, is the primordial realm of desire in which his double self exists. Freed's knowledge of literature is fostered by his deeper

unconscious interests in gambling because the knowledge of books is used to fuel his gambling addiction. The process of separation and fusion in which Freed's two¹ aspects move, is similar to what Lacan says: "The mirror stage inaugurates a dialogical relationship between the...inner life and the exterior world."² Freed is both a teacher and a gambler, and his gambling addicted shadow eventually coagulates into Freed's mirror image which is a manifestation of his desire. Freed is unconsciously informed by the presence of his desire in terms of what he needs to read and lecture about, and who he does lecture about is Fyodor Dostoyevsky whose work, not by coincidence, represents the relationship of reason and desire. There is one scene in which Freed's unconscious and conscious dialogue comes to the surface; when Freed asks his student Spencer, a basketball player, to come in on a bet by not winning by more than seven points in the upcoming school game. Spencer agrees to the bet and accepts the five thousand dollar payoff. In this case, Freed's unconscious desire brings his educational world and his gambling world together, which takes place in an academic atmosphere. Freed's gambling double follows him like an ominous shadow seeping into his academic world. Both the teacher and his shadow meld together, which alters the contours of Freed's unconscious desire, in an academic setting.

Freed has a fantasy world, existing in the realm of the other, which draws material from literature. The other is the dimension of his unconscious drives, which he is unaware of in his conscious life. And, conversely, literary knowledge draws its material from Freed's fantasy world. In connection to this, there is an indication that Freed is imagining his bookie, Hips, because he acts, like the complete opposite of how a bookie is supposed to act. Hips is an imaginary manifestation of the world of desire, which is synonymous with Freed's double self, and he acts like Freed's guide through the underworld of the unconscious realm. How is it that a bookie can be a debtor's friend to such a degree as Hips is to Freed? So, Hips functions as a manifestation of Freed's unconscious world of the primal other. In connection to this, Freed's fantasy world draws its material from Dostoyevsky's fictional work "The Gambler". Hypothetically speaking, Freed's double blends with the fictional character Alexi Ivanovich. The latter justifies Freed's unconscious pursuit of his fantasy for gambling. Ivanovich asks, "For why is gambling a whit worse than any other method of acquiring money? How, for instance, is it worse than trade? True, out of a hundred persons, only one can win; yet what business is that of yours or of mine?"³ Ivanovich justifies his gambling addiction by showing the hypocrisy of society and how gambling is not any worse than other more socially acceptable ways of making money. Furthermore, Ivanovich is saying that the world of the other, the addicted world of the gambler, is equally valid to the conscious world of social decorum. Freed's lack of awareness of his double self relates to what Shoshana Felman, in relation to Lacan, says: "Knowledge is what is already there but always in the other," and the life of his degenerate double is concealed from his literary knowledge.¹ Yet, as a professor, he unwittingly draws material from his double life and applies it to his literary pursuit. Ivanovich says, "However ridiculous it may seem to you that I was

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Felman, Shoshana. "The Pedagogical Imperative: Teaching as a Literary Genre." *Psychoanalysis and Education: Teaching Terrible and Intermittent*. Ed. Johnson, Barbara. Connecticut: Yale French Studies, 1982. 21-44.

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Pile, Steve. *The Body and the City Psychoanalysis, Space And Subjectivity*. London: 1996. Routledge, 1996. 124-126.

expecting to win at roulette, I look upon the generally accepted opinion concerning the folly and the grossness of hoping to win at gambling as a thing even more absurd.”³ Freed is unconsciously attracted to Russian literature because it acts as a bridging device, in terms of connecting his conscious self and his unconscious self together in a pleasurable form. Freed’s double self is woven with his conscious self. Conversely, his double feeds on Textual Knowledge in order to develop in the shadows, that is, his double is interpreted by the professor’s literary knowledge and analyses.¹ The relationship between Freed’s two selves is circular in nature because they both inform one another and wrap around one another. Freed ignorantly injects literary meaning into his double’s pursuit for the intensities of gambling. So, Russian literature justifies Freed’s double in terms of gambling, and Freed’s literary knowledge fosters the growth and generation of his double self into an eventual mirror image. The image of the other can be elucidated if we jump to the last part of the movie when Freed fights the pimp in the bar suite: he first lifts the pimp’s knife up to his neck and tells the pimp to kill him, but the pimp is caught off guard and does not kill him. Freed hits the pimp, the knife drops out of his hand, the prostitute picks the knife up and slashes Freed’s face wide open. He then goes downstairs to a barroom mirror and looks at the stark wound of his double. This is captured very poignantly when he is looking at the reflection of the rivulet of blood running through the open wound of the other’s demented face. This scene is the climactic point in Freed’s education, because to the viewer’s utter surprise, he sees his double for the first time in the whole movie. He sees the unconscious manifestation of his other, which is desire shaped into flesh, in the form of his reflected mirror image. This is the moment that the whole movie builds up to: the moment that Freed catches a glimpse of the appearance of his primal other. His facial image in the mirror visually expresses what Whitman says, “The thin red jellies within you or within me, the bones and the marrow in the bones...O I say these are not the parts and poems of the body only, but of the soul, Oh I say now these are the soul!”⁴ Whitman’s soul is translated into Freed’s unconscious world which as a conscious individual, he knows nothing about. This mirror image shows how education unifies Freed’s consciousness and unconsciousness, which weave together into an abominable carnal form. Freed’s image (imago) is reflected back at him. Lacan says “The fiction of the reflection exists in a virtual world which is both there and not there - and the imagos (images) of this doubled world can thus present themselves...hallucination, dreams, shadows...”² What Freed sees is his carnal fantasy of himself, as a demented and grotesque form of Ivanovich, which up to this point has been concealed from him. So, Freed goes through a process of education which, at this point, reveals his unconscious mechanism through the Dialectic that he has with the mirror. Both of his selves are woven together, by the process of desire which brings together the virtual world and the real world, in an eroticized educational union.

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Dostoyevsky, Fyodor. *The Gambler*. New York: Dover Publications, 1996.

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Ibid.

The climax of the movie is reached by virtue of Freed's involuntary desire for ignorance, because he turns a blind eye to what is deemed safe for him by the people who care about him, like his mother Naomi and his girlfriend Billy. Freed does not choose ignorance, rather, his double is the one who represses Freed's conscious awareness of his actions as a degenerate gambler. What is conventionally considered dangerous is what he needs in order to fuel the life of his unconscious self. Like Oedipus, Axel Freed has a passion, as Lacan would say, for ignorance, because he refuses to see the effect his behavior is having not only on himself, but also the people who care about him. Freed's ignorance strengthens the visceral life of his double.¹ His ignorant state of mind provides fertile ground for his other self, because his literary knowledge is ground up and fed into his unconscious primal machine. This machine is fueled by "juice" which is translated into desire; the latter operates within a primal realm that precedes any conceptual framework regarding a certain type of knowledge. In one of his classroom lectures, Freed quotes a passage from *Notes from Underground*: he says, "And what if it so happens that a man's advantage, sometimes, not only may, but even must, consist in his desiring in certain cases what is harmful to himself and not advantageous."⁵ What is not conducive to a comfortable lifestyle is translated to what is not socially acceptable or recognizable as morally good, which is made manifest by Freed's social double. So, Freed unwittingly accepts his other self and relinquishes responsibility to it, by his sheer passion for ignorance. This can be seen when Freed asks his mother Naomi to pay off his debt. The scene takes place at the beach, while freed is lying down watching his mother go for a swim. Freed writes the amount of his gambling debt, forty four thousand dollars, on the beach sand so that his mother can see it. By writing the money on the sand, he is relinquishing the responsibility of having his social self verbally tell the amount that he needs to borrow from her. So, he posits the amount in a domain of the unconscious other in which Freed is unaware of his asking his mother to take care of his debt. On the other hand, if his social self told his mother about the amount needed to be borrowed, then the enterprise of unconscious desire would have been compromised. Freed has an interest in a particular type of knowledge whose characteristic is that it does not know itself; and as Felman says, "literature, for its part, knows it knows, but does not know the meaning of its knowledge-does not know what it knows."⁷ Freed as a professor of literature fits this description because he knows his literary genres very well and employs quotes from different genres in his classes. But why he does this he does not know, because what he does not know lies in the realm of his double self which builds itself out of the professor's literary knowledge until the last scene in the movie when his double solidifies into mirror image. Freed's literary knowledge gives desire the needed structure in order to operate on both conscious and unconscious levels of reality. In a class lecture, Freed says that basketball players have something in common with poets, which is that when they shoot the ball, at that moment, they know it's going in against all odds. In this way, the poet's knowledge exists in the realm of the unknown, in terms of the subconscious other. Similarly, Lacan says, "what the analyst must know is

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Dostoevsky, Fyodor. *Notes from underground*. London: Vintage Classics, 1994.

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Thucydides, et al. *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Penguin Books, 1990.

how to ignore what he knows.”¹ A gambler is addicted to the idea that if he knows he will win, then he will win, and by doing this he ignores the odds that are almost completely against him. In this sense, Freed’s double is going against the odds that he knows are not in his favor, since gambling is an activity that is at extreme odds with the player, but he nonetheless continues doing it because of sheer will and belief in winning. His hope for a win will come about by chance that has nothing to do with pre-existing knowledge on how to win. Take for instance the last gambling scene in Las Vegas in which Freed, in the double’s guise, stakes all of his money on the hope that the card the dealer gives him will be a three. He says to the dealer, “Give me the three,” and the dealer gives him the three. In connection to this, in one of Professor Freed’s lectures he quotes Dostoevsky, who says, “Reason only satisfies man’s rational requirements, desire on the other hand, encompasses everything, desire is life”.⁶ Desire, which encompasses Freed’s entire being, finds its sustenance within his other self which is primordial and not bound by what the ego is bound by: societal limitations and pre-existing conceptions on appropriate forms of action. Freed’s double tells Hips, his bookie, that all degenerate gamblers are “looking to lose”; he goes on to say, “if all my bets were safe, there just wouldn’t be any juice”, which reflects Dostoevsky’s famous formula that is mentioned in one of the professor’s classroom lectures: two plus two equals not four, but five!. What he is saying is that desire is not limited to what is conducive to a financially stable lifestyle, or even a life of physical safety. What he does is not rely on “ready-made” knowledge, in terms of economic and physical stability to inform him on how he will follow his desire at any given moment.¹ In this sense, gambling suggests the symbolic structure of the other because placing a bet is a reliance on pure chance which does not follow any predetermined path of knowledge, because the other is more akin to primordial instinct. When one places a bet, one takes a leap into a visceral reality in which conscious knowledge does not exist. One jumps into the realm of unconscious desire right at the point when the dice are thrown. The double refuses to live by financially conformable standards because he thinks meaning is found when one lives in the dangerous conditions of desire. So, having “juice”, as it were, is not found in obeying conventionally known formulas, such as two plus two equals four. But, five!⁶ On the flip-side, this famous phrase is really emphasized in professor Freed’s classroom lecture which points to his knowing the meaninglessness that comprises the core of literary knowledge. Freed’s double is in continual dialogue with his conscious self and at certain times the boundary between his two selves blur. His unconscious double is given a poetic contour which is visually expressed when Whitman says, “It is in his walk, the carriage of his neck, the flex of his waist and knees—dress does not hide him; The strong, sweet, supple quality he has, strikes through the cotton and flannel...”, and what strikes through Freed’s clothing and appearance is his desire to go beyond the boundaries of the socially constructed self.⁴ Freed’s desire even extends beyond bureaucratic restrictions; for instance, in the bank scene in which the bank officer asks his mother for two pieces of identification, and gives

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Reisz, Karel, dir. *The Gambler*. DVD. 1974.

her some trouble when she only presents him with her driver's license, because two pieces of identification are needed in order to pull out large sums of money. As a result, Freed's double grabs the bank officer's arms and shakes him ferociously and says, "Look I came out of her womb, and I am telling you that she is Naomi Freed".⁶ This shows how desire pierces through the membrane of the intellect, right to the immediate fact of the act of being born. In this sense, the fact of birth symbolizes an essential function in the realm of the other, that is, the violent act of being born is always more than its societal definition. Even though this fact is defined by medicine and science, it is not limited to either of these interpretations. The sheer violence of giving birth cannot be pinned down to anything other than what it is, which is the ferocity of life. So in this sense, like Freed's other, the act of giving birth precedes any interpretation that may come after the fact. Look at it this way, when one witnesses the birth of a child, no amount of scientific or medical knowledge will alleviate the visual shock of the act of birth. This immediacy is what is conveyed to the bank teller and to the audience, which is expressed not by Freed's conscious self, but by his double. And this scene shows that what the double is is more imminent than anything that is considered socially acceptable, because the realm of the double precedes any societally constructed ideas about the self. The double is as primal as the physical act of birth.

II.

The erotic relationship that education has with desire is not usually a popular subject of discussion, but it is desire which draws one person to another and allows for the transference of ideas. Desire is generated in the primal realm of the other in which Freed's unconscious double operates in. The essential function of eroticism is destruction, in terms of the annihilation of the barriers that inhibit desirable transference. Education is a desirable transference from one person to another, or from one social structure to another. A significant function of the erotic process of learning, in our society, is breaking through the "Production Function", of the bureaucratic model of society, in terms of an organization producing a fixed quota demanded by the company.⁷ Desire pierces through corporate models and grants Freed's double the unification he looks for which transcends bureaucratic barriers. In connection to this, Felman says: "... transference is the acting out of the reality of the unconscious,' teaching is not a purely cognitive, informative experience, it is also an emotional and erotic experience ... and, ... 'I deemed it necessary,' insists Lacan, 'to support the idea of transference, as indistinguishable from love, with the formula of the subject presumed to know.'" ¹ Similarly, when Freed shakes the bank teller's arms an educational process takes place because Freed's emotionally charged experience opens the flood gates of his unconscious world which pours into the conscious world; it is by this process that transference occurs. For us to understand how transference works in this situation, let us hypothetically assume that the bank teller is a representative of the bureaucratic system in terms of the requirement of an employee to perform a series of functions and inputs within a particular

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Meier, Kenneth J. "'Representative Bureaucracy and Distributional Equity': Addressing the Hard Question." *Forthcoming Journal of Politics* (1999): 1- 31.

organization.⁷ Let us also assume that the bank teller is a representative of the conscious social world (for Lacan, the symbolic world). Then, the conscious world of the bank system, through an educational act of transference, takes on the appearance of Freed's unconscious double. This process of identification is produced by an erotic coupling of both known and unknown contours of flesh. As a result, Naomi Freed can get the money to bail her son out of casino debt. Desire injects a primal reality into the framework of the bank system which is defined as a series of performances with the pressing end of inputting data into the system. Pleasure is made manifest into a forming of knowledge which is known by and inherent in the world of the other. So, Freed through an act of childlike love, transforms into his double in order to get to a hidden type of knowledge which is what the other knows, as the one who is presumed to know. What this hidden way of knowledge directs us to is that the bureaucratic system does not sufficiently support people who need immediate help in the realm of the everyday world, which is seen in Naomi Freed's case. The bureaucratic world's identification with the unconscious other manipulates the contours of desire, in that, the conscious world and the unconscious world unify with one another and develop into an educational happening. Even though the bank teller goes against the bureaucratic system, the result that is produced is essentially positive because the educational act of transference changes the course of the bureaucratic outcome and resolves the situation by giving Naomi Freed the money she is asking for. The conscious world of bureaucracy is educated by an erotic coupling with the primal world of Freed's double, as the one who knows.

Let us shift the context of the bank space to that of the classroom space, so that by doing this one can then see the similar process that education has within these seemingly two different scenarios. The process of transferring an educational current from one world to another is also seen within the structure of the classroom. Similar to the bank scene, the bureaucratic model is destroyed by the sheer intensity within the concentrated space of the classroom. The act of transference occurs when the world of desire pours into the world of academia, which creates an educational happening. One is made aware of the literary significance of desire by Dostoevsky's distinction between the world of reason and the world of desire, which Freed takes considerable pleasure in mentioning to his students.⁶ Bureaucracy exists within the world of reason, whereas education exists within the world of desire. Transference can only work outside of the bureaucratic performance of education, which is defined as: "[a] function whereby student performance is a function of inputs to the organization and various policies."⁷ When the teacher and the student are made aware of the unknown aspects of the other, by virtue of the act of desirable transference, they break through the bureaucratic barriers by the sheer immediacy of the learning experience exhibited within the structure of the classroom. Similar to desire, when education occurs within the classroom space it brings with it other aspects of society, and of the personality, into the structure of the classroom. The latter is the armature

in which the educational fusion of different worlds occurs. The blending of different worlds occurs when the established input and output modality is confronted and transgressed. By going beyond the input and output model, one can delve into the pool of desire in which an educational experience occurs. Education is essentially a bridging together of different worlds which can only happen within the realm of the primal other, as that which transcends both the teacher, student, and bureaucracy. However, what often happens is that the bureaucratic model of education works against desirable and pleasurable learning processes, which creates a blunt barrier between consciousness and unconsciousness. The normal situation is that the teacher's performance is limited to the grading system, and with excessive focus on the quantity of students per classroom, which is numerically registered in the system. On the other hand, education operating within the realm of desire cracks wide open the bureaucratic mold so that reality can come in and develop into an actual dialogue between the teacher and the student. Education is synonymous with reality; and this assumes a world which, naturally manufacturing the images of desire, precedes any conceptualization and categorization established by conditioned ways of thinking.

III.

The realm of the double is always more than one particular individual's unconscious self, which can be seen during a game of craps game in Las Vegas: when a man grabs the double's arm and rubs on it in order to share some of his luck which is poetically expressed when Whitman says, "To be surrounded by beautiful, curious, breathing, laughing flesh is enough...". Also, "...The armies of those I love engirth me and I engirth them / They will not let me off till I go with them, respond to them...", and his luck or desire is transfused to other people which suggests that desire is "spacial" and not limited to one individual body.⁴ The spatial body or the "sea of flesh" is suggestive of the relationship between academia and gambling, in that, both of these worlds are woven together at certain times of intensity and become like a "sea of flesh." Because of the melding together of these two worlds, one realizes the impact desire has upon the body and the realm of the sense. In connection to this, the double is the realm in which the educational process occurs as is seen when Freed takes his literary experience into the streets, in the guise of his double, because he needs to be around people of a different world than what he is used to, namely the academic world. He needs to be in unknown territory which can be seen at the beginning of the movie when he goes to an inner city basketball court and challenges black teenagers to play him, for a "dime".⁶ In connection to this, Felman says: "But the position of the teacher is itself the position of the one who learns, of the one who teaches nothing other than the way he learns."¹ This applies to Freed desiring to go into unknown territory because the realm of the other, where the unknown territory exists, is where the process of education takes place. Freed needs to move in unknown circles because, as he is not a fully complete self, the unknown territories exist within the gaps of his unfinished self project. Freed, the

teacher, descends into his unconscious other in order to learn the way that he will teach in his conscious classroom life, in the form of literature. The material he draws upon is from his unconscious self where desire thrives. Freed goes into unknown territory because people symbolize desire for his other self, which is conveyed by Whitman when he says "...To pass among them, or touch any one, or rest my arm ever so lightly round his or her neck for a moment—what is this, then? I do not ask any more delight..." Freed's body and the body of others are one and the same, and they are in the realm of the big other, the Lacanian symbolic order.⁴ The unfamiliarity of people is the background of the other where Freed's conscious self unknowingly operates in. This background activates Freed's double which is why Freed is so attracted to being around other people who he does not know.

The double announces itself as a sign of good things to come in terms of Freed's intuition that he is moving on an inevitably good path. However, the message of the double can easily be misconstrued as a sign of evil things to come because the double operates in the realm of desire which is located in an unknown realm beyond intellectual understanding. For the most part, the intellect judges anything that is unknown as a threat and essentially as an evil. The scene that leads up to the recognition of the omen takes place after the school basketball game is over when, towards the end of the movie, Freed leaves Hips and goes into an unknown territory, namely a distinct African American sect of the city. This is a sign, in the conventional sense, of evil things to come in relation to Freed's double life of desire. As a reaction to Freed's descent into the unknown neighborhood, Hips says, "there are a bunch of cannibals there."⁶ According to Hipps, an individual White male will be killed due to his intrusion on an African American world. Before Freed goes into this neighborhood which symbolizes the racial other, he tells Hips that it was never a question of luck that he managed to win back his outstanding losses because he was destined to win. Freed believes in "omens", and he takes with him his sense of fate when goes into the unknown African American social sect. Freed's move to the unknown sect of society leads into the mirror scene, which is the last scene of the movie, as mentioned above. This scene symbolizes a world of positive and negative merging together in a reflective dialectical relationship.² The mirror scene is the moment of recognition in Freed's life. He witnesses the mirror image of his negative self. The interplay of Freed's two worlds, conscious and unconscious, has led up to this point of educational clarity. Desire unifies these two worlds together by attracting the known and the unknown to each other in an erotic way. Freed gets a glimpse of his other negative self; negative because his other represents the antithesis of his socially constructed identity. Freed's negation is shown to the viewer by the reflection of the grotesque face with the knife wound. Felman says, "For teaching to be realized, for knowledge to be learnt, the position of alterity is therefore indispensable: knowledge is what is already there, but always in the Other."¹ What Freed learns is precisely what the image of his other has to teach him, and what is taught is fundamentally visual.

The appearance of his other represents ferocity and primal aggression operating within the world of desire. The moments that precede this last scene are indicative in terms of understanding the significance of the double in relation to the omen, which is the inner voice that emanates from Freed's unconscious other. Right when the school game is over, Hips tells Freed's double, "...you was pretty fuckin' lucky. If they didn't put your boy in there at the end, you was dead.", and the double replies, "Luck had nothing to do with it."⁶ In this scene Freed's double is translating himself as a harbinger of good things to come identified as the Socratic inner voice, daimonion. The latter justifies the belief of Freed's double, in terms of inevitably following the way of a good omen. By way of speculation, the flow of desire operates within the same realm as the Socratic inner voice, since both desire and the inner voice are experienced within the realm of the senses. When Socrates speaks to the jurors in *The Apology*, he asks: "What has happened to me may well be a good thing, and those of us who believe death to be an evil are certainly mistaken. I have convincing proof of this, for it is impossible that my familiar sign did not oppose me if I was not about to do what was right."⁸ Freed's double is a manifestation of the inner Socratic voice which desires the illicit ways of life and going through the agonal throes that accompany the life of the gambler. However, contrary to the point of view of the inner voice being a sign of good things to come, Dimitrus Vardoulakis says that doubles "tend to be with evil and the demonic..." The double "presents the notion of subject/subjectivity that is defective, disjunct, split threatening, spectral."⁹ In this sense, what Freed's double is suggesting is that he is the exception to the traditional notion of the double. And yet, when the last mirror scene of the movie is considered, what is suggested by the mirror image of the double is not a portent of good, but of evil. Freed's double image looks like a demented and deformed animalistic being with a gash on his face. So, contrary to what Freed's double says about himself as being a sign of good things to come, the viewer has a different take on what the mirror image signifies: a sign of evil things to come. Nonetheless, it would be remiss if we overlook the compelling notion that it is precisely at the center of evil that the hopeful reality of daimonion exists. Out from the evil depths does the inner Socratic voice emanate towards the divine light, and creates a pathway of desire that Freed moves on towards the unified image of his double self reflected in the barroom mirror.

Axel Freed, the protagonist and anti-hero of the movie, is a split self since he embodies both a professor of literature and a degenerate gambler. His conscious self and his unconscious self merge together and become one at the end of the movie. The double is not only Freed's other self, but society's other as well. And the becoming aware of the other, through the merging process of Freed looking at his reflected double, is what education is about. Education is a becoming aware of not what is known, but what is unknown. Education is often thought of as a series of bits of information added to an already given fully conscious self. But in real life the self is a dramatic and 'transformative process, which is a play of both conscious and unconscious forces of the personality. In this

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Philip, Kenny D. "Socratic Knowledge and the Daimonion." *Aporia* 13 (2003): 26-39.

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Vardoulakis, Dimitrus. "The Return of Negation: The Doppelgänger in Freud's "The 'Uncanny'". *SubStance* 2006: #110, Vol. 35, no.2. 100.

sense, Freed's conscious self is not wholly complete by itself because it is in a dialogical relationship with Freed's unconscious other. Education reveals to Freed what he has been unconsciously searching for through the casinos and through the streets of New York. What happens to Freed after he gets a glimpse of who he is can only be discussed within the realm of speculation. But, perhaps after seeing his double, Freed outgrows his unconscious fascination with gambling and dialectally moves on to some higher plane. Or, perhaps the glimpse of his double has no effect on Freed the character but on the viewer who sees the image of the double. Regardless of what happens to Freed or the viewer, what can be said is that an educational happening occurs right at the point when the recognition of the unveiling of the double shows up in the form of a mirror image.

Endnotes

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