

PETER TAUBMAN

“Restless Curiosities: A Psychoanalytic Study of Thwarted Enlightenment in the Classroom”

Focusing on a failed pedagogical encounter in which a professor attempted to raise the social consciousness of his students, this paper explores the ethical considerations when a student or analyst holds views repellent to the teacher or analyst. Using Freud's essay on Leonardo Da Vinci, Leo Bersani's *Hommos*, Alenka Zupancic's *The Ethics of the Real*, Lacan's seminar on ethics, and the work of Henry James, the paper develops an ethics of teaching based on a “restless curiosity” and affirmed vulnerability. The central question addressed is: What relationship to the student is the teacher led to assume if the salvific, emancipatory, curative or enlightenment projects of education, particularly social justice education, prove impossible as goals?

Peter Taubman is an associate professor of education at Brooklyn College , the City University of New York. His most recent book, due out in January, 2009, is Teaching by Numbers: Deconstructing the Discourse of Standards and Accountability. He is currently working on a book for SUNY Press entitled Disavowed Knowledge: Psychoanalysis, Education and the Academy.