

Thematic Dossier

Psychoanalysis, Adolescence and the Social Bond: Notes on the Current Malaise in Education

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Abstract: This article examines aspects of the current grammar of unease among school-age adolescents and university students, a problem evident in increasing rates of psychological distress, suicide attempts, and school and university dropout in Brazil and Argentina. This work stems from the articulation of psychoanalysis, education, and social bond, aiming to explore intersections with sociopolitical dynamics and their implications for the educational field in these two Latin American countries. We seek to identify the ways in which educational discontent and the psychological suffering of adolescents and young people are linked to the dissolution of ties with the Other and to the absence of political imagination. We discuss concepts related to psychological constitution during adolescence and reflect on the effects of the current acceleration of time in producing unease among students. Our analysis contributes to develop potential strategies for teacher training in both schools and universities.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, education, adolescence, youth, social behavior

Psicanálise, Adolescência e Laço Social: Notas Sobre o Mal-Estar Atual na Educação

Resumo: O presente artigo examina aspectos da atual gramática do mal-estar de adolescentes escolares e jovens universitários, problema que se evidencia no aumento do sofrimento psíquico, das tentativas de suicídio e da evasão escolar e universitária no Brasil e na Argentina. Partimos da articulação do campo da psicanálise, educação e laço social a fim de pensar aproximações com aspectos sociopolíticos e seus efeitos no campo educativo para os dois países latinoamericanos. Buscamos nomear as formas pelas quais o mal-estar na educação e o adoecimento psíquico de adolescentes e jovens está relacionado ao desfazimento dos laços com o Outro e à ausência de imaginação política. Discutimos noções acerca da constituição psíquica na passagem adolescente, além de refletirmos sobre os efeitos da atual aceleração do tempo na produção do mal-estar de escolares e universitários, contribuindo com a construção de possíveis ações na formação docente de educadores de escolas e universidades.

Palavras-chave: psicanálise, educação, adolescência, juventude, comportamento social

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Psicoanálisis, Adolescencia y Lazo Social: Notas sobre el Malestar Actual en la Educación

Resumen: El artículo examina la gramática del malestar en adolescentes escolares y universitarios, evidenciada en el aumento del sufrimiento psíquico, intentos de suicidio y deserción educativa en Brasil y Argentina. Este trabajo parte de la articulación de psicoanálisis, educación y política, desde una perspectiva latinoamericana, con el objetivo de explorar sus intersecciones con dinámicas sociopolíticas e implicaciones en el campo educativo. Buscamos nombrar las formas en que el malestar en la educación y el sufrimiento psíquico de adolescentes y jóvenes se relacionan con la disolución de los lazos con el Otro y la ausencia de imaginación política. Discutimos nociones sobre la constitución psíquica en el transitar adolescente y reflexionamos sobre los efectos de la actual aceleración del tiempo en la producción del malestar de estudiantes escolares y universitarios, contribuyendo a la producción de posibles acciones en la formación docente de educadores de escuelas y universidades.

Palabras clave: psicoanálisis, educación, adolescencia, juventud, comportamiento social

*É sempre mais difícil ancorar um navio no espaço.
It is always harder to anchor a ship in space.
Ana Cristina César*

The writing of “Recovery of Adolescence” (*Recuperação da Adolescência*), a short poem by Ana Cristina César (1979/2013) - a Brazilian poet who died an early death and left before the future arrived, brings us closer to the tones of the current malaise of adolescents and young people in Brazil and Argentina.

Studies and research on the suffering and malaise of contemporary youth have been at the center of debate in various spheres of society. Various segments of society (public policy, academic research, educational and clinical discussions) debate the growing concern about the paths of today’s youth; and not by chance. The intense psychological suffering affecting adolescent schoolchildren and university students has become an urgent topic for the education and mental health fields. In this sense, it is urgent to reflect on the grammar of today’s culture. Inflated by individualistic discourses, anchored in competitiveness and meritocratic ideology, we know that the neoliberal logic prevailing in social bonds and educational institutions contributes to weaken bonds and deplete shared experiences.

We have come to understand that suicide attempts and self-inflicted deaths represent a current clinical and political problem. According to a report published by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021), suicide emerged as the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 29 in 2019. The increasing incidence of psychological distress, suicide attempts, and completed suicide affecting this segment of the population has mobilized a group of researchers from public universities in Brazil, Argentina, and France to conduct an international, multicenter study. In the study, the researchers emphasize that we need to pay more attention to the conditions of social and educational bonds, as well as their effects on the mental health of adolescents and young people attending schools and universities. We see that the lack of future prospects in the lives of young people is particularly evident in the growing dropout rates from educational institutions in both schools and public universities.

The results of the latest National School Health Survey (*Pesquisa Nacional de Saúde do Escolar - PENSE*) conducted with adolescents attending elementary school in Brazil, indicate that 21.4% of the students interviewed say they feel that life is not worth living (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics [IBGE], 2021). It is worth adding that IBGE statistics showed high school dropout rates in 2023, especially among those aged 15 and older. Regarding young university students, data from the 5th National Survey of the Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of Undergraduates at Federal Higher Education Institutions - 2018 (*Fórum Nacional de Pró-Reitores de Assuntos Comunitários e Estudantis [Fonaprace]*, 2019) indicate that at least 83.5% of Brazilian university students experience some type of emotional difficulty that impacts their academic life, with 10.8% related to thoughts of death and 8.5% to suicidal thoughts.

A study on suicide conducted in Argentina with adolescents aged 15 to 19 and young people aged 20 to 24, from 1999 to 2007, showed that the rate of self-harm was 10.7 per 100,000 inhabitants, considering the population aged 15 to 24 (Barrio et al., 2021; Sola, 2011). Another study, also in Argentina, showed that suicide mortality has tripled among young people in the last 25 years, with this morbidity becoming the second leading cause of death in the 10-19 age group (Pizarro & Pereyra, 2021). We add that some studies in Argentina show that almost half a million boys and girls remain out of school, and among those who do attend, many difficulties are noted, especially in completing their studies. School-related and extracurricular factors explain this situation. Some studies indicate that one in three young people from the most vulnerable sectors of the population does not complete secondary education (*Defensora de los Derechos de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes*, 2024), with dropout rates in the final year being the most significant. Furthermore, we observed that many adolescents between the ages of 15 and 17 drop out of school due to the need to enter the job market, or because they are parents in their teens.

These issues add to the countless reports of mental distress and suffering we have heard in the narratives of young

academics within the scope of the research mentioned above. Several studies discuss issues related to articulation of the psychoanalysis, education, and politics fields and highlight how the depoliticization of educational ties silences fundamental issues of the sociopolitical landscape. According to these studies, the exclusion of social aspects contained in the multiple crises we are experiencing contributes to the current modes of youth suffering (Ferreira & Zelmanovich, 2022; Gurski & Lima, 2023). In this sense, the concept of the sociopolitical dimension of psychological suffering coined by Rosa (2016), has supported our reflections on the nuances of suffering in educational institutions, whether high schools or universities.

We cannot forget that we live in a social era in which, as the subtitle of Mark Fisher's (2020) book suggests, it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. These are times of a perfect storm where we encounter an overlap of crises: ethical, political, environmental, racial, social, moral, and other crises. In addition to the various crises and unprocessed mourning we have experienced in Brazil and Argentina, there have been far-right governments which constantly attack human rights and democracy. In the vociferations and violence expressed against minority groups, we see the intense return of echoes of Latin America's centuries-old coloniality in both countries; a coloniality fueled by the frenetic advance of contemporary neoliberal capitalism, with widespread disregard for the environment and indigenous peoples.

Young people, as well as the fields of psychoanalysis and education are not immune to these processes. We suffer from a visible impoverishment of the capacity to dream and imagine a future different from the one we have. Insomnia, solipsism, and an intense attachment to technological devices are symptoms of contemporary malaise and demonstrate that the loss of desire for the future is not only a matter of politics, but also of culture and the instability inherent in current relationships. In this scenario, so that we can reflect on what the future may hold for these young people, we need to think about the conditions of the educational field: how educational agendas, in dialogue with psychoanalysis and politics, can help in construction of the meaning of life for adolescents and young people who find themselves in a world that seems to be organized towards death?

In this sense, one of the questions guiding this writing concerns the effects of the much-vaunted acceleration of life to the detriment of the experience of contemporary youth (Benjamin, 1936/1987). Are today's adolescents differently absorbing the dimension of experience in human and social relationships due to the superficiality that arises both from the acceleration of time and from the excessive speed that occurs in today's daily life?

We need to reflect more deeply on the meaning of youthful acts, and at the same time on the difficulty adults have in deciphering the discomfort evoked by these episodes. Why does youthful suffering so often end up medicalized and/or criminalized? Are the increasing cases of depression, anxiety, and suicide a way of trying to carve out a space for themselves

in the Other? A way of seeking a form of symbolic inscription or even a recognition which does not come through other channels?

In this article, we seek to elucidate the ways in which educational malaise and psychological illness among adolescents and young people are related to the dissolution of ties with the Other and the absence of political imagination⁶¹. We discuss notions about the psychological makeup of adolescence, as well as reflect on the effects of the current acceleration of time on producing malaise among schoolchildren and university students, contributing to develop possible actions in the teacher training of school and university educators.

Adolescence, malaise and social bond

The issue of youth malaise has been mapped by national and international health organizations. This issue impacts the educational and health institutions that serve this population. Based on a study by Gurski & Lima (2023), we understand that researching youth malaise also involves investigating the impasses in current social bonds, including the educational bond as an expression of intergenerational relationships.

Thus, when we talk about young people and malaise in the educational field, we must recognize that the conditions of social bonds become even more impactful during adolescence, as this is when the transition from family to social bonds occurs. It is also at this time that young people need to address the issues of their origins in a way other than through infantile sexual theories or family romance. This is often a stage in life when individuals must seek ways of representing themselves outside the home, meaning they must invent other possible traits in order to represent themselves in relationships with the Other. Dialoguing with the conditions of social discourse that receive the actions of adolescents is important because it is a moment in life when they need someone to signal the value of their actions and words in relation to the social Other (Jerusalinsky, 2004).

The structural issues of this moment in the psychological constitution help us understand part of the suffering, but they do not explain everything. To give you an idea, according to the WHO (2021) global suicide rates are declining, although they are increasing in the Americas. The global rate decreased by 36% between 2000 and 2019, but rates in the Americas increased by 17% in the same period. According to data from the Ministry of Health (2021), what is worrying is that the high rate of suicide deaths among young people has been gradually increasing in Brazil, representing the fourth leading cause of death in this same age group, behind only deaths from violence and traffic accidents.

How can we interpret this malaise which is so explicitly expressed through the high rates of youth suicide, especially

¹ The expression refers to some of Georges Didi-Huberman's statements in the book "The Survival of Fireflies" (2011). The philosopher says that imagination always has a political character, since the act of imagining carries the notion of a time to come, in which the perspective of a future is contained that truly launches something new into the present.

in the Americas²? We know that the specter of death which haunts the conditions of cannibalistic capitalism and capitalist realism, mentioned above, also appears in the statistics on depression and youth suicide (Fisher, 2020; Fraser, 2024). Therefore, it is important to emphasize that formulating the desire to live is not an easy task for anyone, especially during adolescence, when the topic of the meaning of life expands and self-questioning takes on enormous significance. It is in this sense that we understand that the wavering will of today's young people to live, as expressed in the depression, anxiety, and suicide rates, highlights a question about the meaning life can have when we live in times of triumphant enjoyment of the drive to death.

The news shows that the damage from the slow elimination of living conditions on the planet is multifaceted, which leads us to ask: how can we address the fractures of our social time in the educational field? How can we intervene in current problems, taking responsibility for the future of the world into our own hands, a task historically sustained by educational initiatives? What anchoring would be possible for the generation arriving in a world in which the decline of the symbolic and the prevalence of the imaginary are creating a kind of desertification of the future? Such a debate also leads us to question what kind of world we are leaving for future generations when, instead of the desire of the youth of a given era to live, we find a social logic which operates to reduce imagination, dreams, utopias and the collective dimension of bonds?

Above all, we want to problematize the contemporary facets of the conditions adolescents encounter in the social fabric and educational spaces in order to elaborate on the psychological operation that concerns them. This is because we know that the problem of every individual is finding ways to represent themselves in social bonds. This issue becomes more acute for adolescents who, having just emerged from the world of childhood, need references that indicate the value of their actions and words in relation to the social Other (Jerusalinsky, 2004). We know that the degree of this guarantee depends on both the individual's history of childhood relationships and on the way the culture in which they are inserted treats symbolic values.

Regarding Brazil, we have indeed experienced a period of countless setbacks in political and institutional discourse and practices which brutally impacted education through openly conservative and neoliberal proposals. Unprecedented alliances between neoliberalism and neo-Pentecostal churches, or even between medical and legal discourses and capital, have fostered a true depoliticization of ties in schools and universities. This reality has paralleled the increase in complaints regarding violence in social relationships and the psychological distress of students and teachers. Even the importance of school in the lives of children and young

people has been called into question through the advocacy of homeschooling.

The situation in Argentina is not much different. Over the last decade, the combination of some neoliberal governments, the still largely understudied consequences of the pandemic, and the rise of anarcho-capitalism have led to establishing neoconservative and neoliberal policies, reflected in an unprecedented adjustment of education funding. This situation promotes an education and societal model based on a business logic which encourages competition, individualism, and meritocracy as values, favoring privatization and commodification of education. It is important to highlight that despite the rise in suicide rates, the current anarcho-capitalist government, as it calls itself, has reduced the public budget for prevention actions, with each province having autonomy to plan and administer health and education policies within its jurisdiction.

Malaise in school education and youth suffering: What does psychoanalysis have to say about it?

In 1910, when the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, led by Freud, invited a high school teacher to speak about the suicide of a young high school student, a discussion began which marked the connection between youthful malaise, social impasses in the educational field, and the issue of mental health.

In the brief text in the Complete Works which records this meeting, and in light of the discussion regarding the school's responsibility for the young man's act, Freud (1910/1996) vividly emphasizes that schools should do more than simply stop pushing young people toward suicide. According to him, schools should instill the will to live in young people, as this is a time when individuals are loosening ties with their parents and need a space other than home and family to invest their awakening in the outside world.

The awakening of adolescence can be seen as an act which carries an ethical-political effect capable of inscribing the individuality of the subject, and at the same time, the collective dimension of this inscription. The theme of the young person's awakening to life outside, to sexuality, to the dimension of lacking and castration, can be understood as the psychological operation of adolescence itself. It is in the awakening of the Oedipus dream that the subject takes upon themselves the responsibility of creating a version of themselves.

A necessary question when discussing adolescence, psychoanalysis, education, and social bonds concerns the place of educational institutions, invaded as they are by neoliberal grammar. In responding to the impasses experienced by young people through medicalization or the judicialization of their actions, such institutions end up weakening the importance of speech and hindering young people's connections with the figures of transmission. In other words, by not listening to young people, they do not offer them a place of belonging, and thus do not serve as a space for the construction of their "desire to live" (Freud, 1910/1996).

² Despite a 36% reduction in suicides globally, the Americas saw the opposite trend. The region saw a 17% increase in suicides between 2000 and 2019. The number of suicides in Brazil rose 43% during this period. Data collected by Cidacs/Fiocruz (2024), available at: <https://fiocruz.br/noticia/2024/02/estudo-aponta-que-taxas-de-suicidio-e-autolesoes-aumentam-no-brasil>

The symptomatic manifestations of adolescents in the educational contexts of Brazil and Argentina, marked as they are by neoliberal logic and an emphasis on competency- and skill-based teaching, highlight the impasses they face in their bonds with the social Other during their adolescent years. When we compare the situations presented in a children's and youth outpatient clinic with some statements and situations observed in interventions conducted with young people in public schools and universities in the Research on Mental Health at the University, we can hear how much the helplessness experienced by adolescents echoes in fraying of the bonds they experience in the school environment. What we have gathered from adolescents in our work with educational institutions is a recurring complaint about not being heard, not having their needs recognized, not being able to talk to or rely on anyone, be it parents, teachers, or peers, which leads us to believe that the bond with the Other is fading (Coutinho, 2023).

On the one hand, we believe that there is symbolic fragmentation which is no longer sustained by traditional hierarchies and institutions, but rather by the rise of totalitarian discourses that aversely attempt to make the Other exist at all costs, as we see in some medical, legal, and pedagogical discourses. This promotes what Rosa (2016) called discursive helplessness. Based on experiences with young people in educational and clinical settings, we have understood that young people can lose their discursive power when segregationist discourses, often engendered by the logic of science allied with capital, take the place of an Other which presents itself as total, and in turn they often respond through violent and disruptive acts.

Within a broader spectrum, the new configurations of the educational field marked by neoliberal logic and technocracy seem to intensify the erasure of references to the Other and the possibility of sustaining a word that creates a connection, and therefore produces conditions of subjectivation. Several authors (Primo et al., 2021; Rodrigues & Reis, 2018) point out how many educational and training institutions are no longer seen as places of connection and transmission of possibilities for the future. They often universalize the impasses inherent in adolescents' journey through diagnosis and referrals, failing to recognize the young person as having a singular place within the social bond, a place capable of sustaining the desire to live. Once again, what is at stake is the status of the Other within the social bond which takes on a more serious dimension when it comes to adolescence operation, as social instances of appeal tend to fade in a political landscape governed by neoliberal practices.

This analysis reinforces the idea of the sociopolitical dimension (Rosa, 2016) of youth suffering manifested in the recurrent acts of suicide and lack of meaning in life, since it is not an isolated phenomenon, but rather one that is on a growing scale in some countries in the Americas. In this sense, it concerns the places they occupy in social bonds and in dominant discourses, promoting silencing and segregation of these subjects and exposing them to violence, often naturalized through closed discourses about them.

Student malaise at university and contemporary accelerationism

We have observed a significant increase in students at universities seeking mental health treatments, whether medication or therapies across a range of spectrums (Fonaprace, 2019). We understand that the increase in students receiving psychological care services at universities should serve as a warning about the rise in youth mental illness. Data on dropout rates in higher education, especially at public universities, also point in the same direction.

A greater demand for psychological care was observed in one of the surveys in the northern region which is part of the aforementioned Project, along with a wide variety of complaints, including: issues related to university, hometown, especially in the case of Indigenous, riverside, and remote populations; learning difficulties; conflicts in relationships with peers and/or teachers; age; job market integration; problematic substance use; medication use; digital technology use; anxiety and panic; family conflicts; and histories of violence, including domestic, gender-based, racist, homophobic, class-based, ableist, etc.

It is important to consider that a significant number of university students face challenges related to the psychological work of adolescence, intensified by the current demands of academic life. This malaise is compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused immense changes in everyone's lives, including material and symbolic losses that reverberate to this day. Manifestations of suffering through anxiety attacks, inhibitions, panic attacks, depression, suicide ideation and attempts, self-harm and uncertainties about career and the future have become even more intense since then.

Another issue which has arisen in the university context of these projects concerns the demands placed on students, for example, by emphasizing a university qualification geared toward private capital, encouraging competitiveness, and the idea of the individual as a self-entrepreneur (Han, 2019; Laval, 2019; Ravanello, 2020). While controlling time is one of the most powerful instruments of power logic, the temporal acceleration instituted by market logic imposes a continuous flow on life that creates widespread resignation. This is particularly evident in the university context, but affects everyone and poses growing challenges for the education field.

The collective experience of acceleration arises from states of disconnection between the individual and the world of life, states of "alienation" from subjective experience stemming from estrangement, a lack of meaningful engagement with collective experiences, and a loss of connection with the relationships and places that make up everyday life (Rosa, 2022). Linked to this logic, digital technologies appear to have established a new model which guides the economy and social life. For example, the financial system has become increasingly dependent on the accelerated circulation of information, regardless of the context, only the information itself, atomized and perceived as an economic variable.

As early as the 1930s, Walter Benjamin (1936/1987) announced that capitalism promoted the decline of tradition

and memory by introducing the fragmentary structure of work and the acceleration of time, constituting factors which sustain collective experience, leaving behind the immediacy of information instead of transmitted knowledge. For him, information is comprehensible “in itself and for itself”, disregarding the subjective dimension, the singularity of each apprehension. For the author, the erosion of the dimension of experience that we have suffered since modernity further transforms subjects into automatons, incapable of telling their own stories.

In times of contemporary acceleration, we wonder about the effects of these conditions on young schoolchildren and university students, since we know that adolescence, as a psychological operation, is inseparable from the dimension of knowledge, and its transmission, apprehension, and invention. It is then important to add that adolescents also face many challenges related to the empire of enjoyment in the era of “every person for themselves”; a context in which we seem to have a lot of information to exchange, but few stories to tell.

In this sense, digital technologies reach subjects anywhere and at any time, obliterating any interval for subjective emergence under an avalanche of stimuli of enormous intensity, which block the possibility of producing experience and subjectivizing it (Gurski & Lima, 2023). Rosa (2019) proposes the use of the metaphor of “resonance” as a conceptual-relational operator which functions as a reader of our time marked as it is by social acceleration. Using this operator, he proposes critical reflection on the possibilities of building a world where “the standards are not domination and control, but listening and responding” (Rosa, 2019, p. 428), a bet on a direction contrary to the undoing of bonds which can leave traces of life’s lack of meaning. It is then about creating spaces and periods of alternative temporality, restoring elements of the past to the present, and projecting oneself into the future.

Discussion

If the politics of psychoanalysis proposes to give space to the subject in their radical singularity in facing the totalization brought about by socio-digital acceleration, we consider it essential that those who occupy the position of representing the adolescent’s Other be available to listen to “what isn’t working” within the educational context.

It was from this perspective that X, launched in 2007 in Argentina, inaugurated a way of applying logical temporality (Lacan, 1945/2008) to professional and teacher training spaces. This approach, which has had an impact on teacher training at Argentine public universities and is based on psychoanalytic ethics, offers a practice which is not restricted to the standard analytical framework. The primary recipient of the intervention is the one who represents the subject’s Other within the school institution. We refer to teachers and other professionals in the educational field who are also affected by their own anxieties and who, depending on their position in their relationship with young people, can undermine the

teaching role and its educational effects. This intervention is based on three pillars: subjective time, its articulation with the writing of scenes of discomfort in one’s own practice, and a clinical reading which draws from psychoanalysis and a transdisciplinary perspective (Ferreya & Zelmanovich, 2022).

We often say that listening to adolescents requires a reading which considers the “future before” in the way subjective time operates. As conceptualized by psychoanalysis (Lacan, 1945/2008), it is a time that resignifies the past based on a present that can harbor a possible future: an instant of seeing, a time of understanding, and a moment of concluding in action to return to a new instant of seeing.

The appeal to the anterior future allows us to work with the term “mental health” and its porosities, opening space for the “time to understand” which is necessary to subjectivize youth trajectories, then proposing a counterpoint to the diagnostic merry-go-round that often circulates in schools and universities, even as referred to by adolescents themselves. Although psychoanalytic discourse occupies a position of extraterritoriality in relation to the knowledge constituted around the topic of mental health (which is often organized around the Master’s discourse), these discourses are not necessarily exclusive. Thus, psychoanalysis is present and produces its effects wherever an analyst operates, in this case, in the educational space.

Finally, and by way of a concluding discussion, we present a brief excerpt from a training experience implemented at Argentine universities which illustrates the connection between psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice in the field of education (Ferreya & Zelmanovich, 2022). It is important to note that in this experience we found the opportunity to interpret and address the malaise within the educational bond through the voices of teachers and professionals working in the education field. Proposals such as these aim to address one of the symptoms of malaise within the educational culture: school dropout and students’ difficulty in retaining students, as well as how teachers will address these realities.

A student presented a paper in a classroom situation taught in a teacher training course at a public university in Buenos Aires in which he narrated a scene drawn from his school experience and titled it “*the self-excluded one*”. In the paper, he tells the story of a high school classmate who slept through all the classes and could not be woken by any teacher. In the first version of the work, or, as we called it based on Lacan’s text on logical time (1945/2008), the moment of seeing, his description was informed by clichés commonly used to describe adolescents: *the student slept a lot, nothing interested her, she was a repeater, she was carefree, her teachers were accustomed to her behavior and didn’t intervene, etc.*

In this experience, it was interesting to see that his description of the situation changed after a few weeks of classes. Before submitting the second paper, in which he had to resort to theory to “read” the logic of the scene according to the concept of “time to understand” as time for elaboration, the student asked if he could expand on the description because he had omitted important details of what had occurred. He said that memories surfaced as he engaged with some concepts.

He added to the story that on the few occasions his classmate did not fall asleep in class, she had made some very good drawings. He also recalled that the art teacher had even invited her to design a mural in the schoolyard because of these drawings. When presenting the second paper, the student added descriptive details to the scene, changing his classmate's way of speaking and producing theoretical articulations which allowed for a clear shift in position. The title was rewritten: *The Self-Excluded? Awakening Desires*, shifting the focus from the adolescent as "culprit" of exclusion to the role played by listening. He was also able to read the fact that his colleague had slept in class as an appeal to the Other (Lacan, 1962-1963/2005), in addition to highlighting the importance of the transferential bond based on the gesture of the Arts teacher.

Through this brief vignette, it is possible to consider the role of the teacher as the adolescent's school Other, which can both obliterate the subject's position and open up new possibilities for subjective inscription of youthful acts. Implementing the proposed transmission and evaluation device allowed us to see that using theory as a "toolbox" can broaden the teacher's listening, re-establishing other means of dealing with the invariant malaise, and in turn provide new know-how for addressing impasses.

We have viewed adolescence throughout this article as a psychological operation inserted into the discursive field of an era rather than as a chronological development phase. A time when, as we have already discussed, young people need to confront questions about their origins in a way that differs from infantile sexual theories and family romance. It is in this sense that school and university become so important in the adolescent transition, as they can foster new connections with life and the future, and thus counter the statistics regarding the high youth suicide rates. They are social spaces where the subject finds the possibility of organizing new assemblies of themselves in order to sustain the new place in the relationship with the demands of the Other of their time.

We would also like to emphasize that the clinical-political function of psychoanalysis in the education field intervenes to restore the place of the word that creates connections. We have produced several publications on psychoanalysis and mental health at universities in the aforementioned multicenter study, including events and writings, with the latter still in print, discussing new ways of thinking about mental health in the lives of adolescent schoolchildren and young university students. Contrary to the totalitarian discourses which are increasingly disseminated as indisputable in the educational field, we emphasize through our research how ethics and psychoanalytic listening can undermine fixed meanings that often appear to precede the subjects' experience, thereby also suspending false destinies to which many young people still succumb.

Data Availability

The datasets generated and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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Authors' Contribution:

All authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of this study, to data analysis and interpretation, and to the manuscript revision and approval of the final version. All the authors assume public responsibility for the content of the manuscript.

Associate editor:

Wanderlei Abadio de Oliveira

Received: May. 20, 2025

1st Revision: Jul. 26, 2025

Approved: Sep. 07, 2025

How to cite this article:

Gurski, R., Coutinho, L. G., Oliveira, B. F., Zelmanovich, P., Lima, N. L., Ferreyra, A. C., & Henrique, R. A. (2025). Psychoanalysis, Adolescence and the Social Bond: Notes on the Current Malaise in Education. *Paidéia (Ribeirão Preto)*, 35, e3539. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-4327e3539>