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Much has been written about emotions from the perspective of individual educators and students, as well as the politics of emotional management in teaching and leading within specific organisational contexts. Little has been written, with some notable exceptions (Boler 1999), of how emotions provide connectivity between individuals and groups as manifestations of the cultural relations and political economy in specific historical contexts. Denzin uses the term ‘emotionality’ rather than ‘emotions’ to argue the case for a more contextually, relational, and socio-cultural perspective. ‘In every day life the emotions that people experience and establish can be as basic to their joint actions as are their claims to power, influence and status ... Individuals are connected to society through the emotions they experience’ (1984: 24).

In this chapter, I explore the various trajectories of emotionality with regard to collective notions of ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams 1975) and ‘economies of affect’ (Grossberg 1988) in education as a ‘field’ of research and professional practice (Bourdieu 1990). I argue for the need for ‘analyses of emotions in the production of knowledge, culture, individual and collective identities and power relations’ (Harding and Pribram 2004: 864) within wider sociological, cultural studies, socio-psychological discussions about the nature of the post-modern condition and inter/subjectivity in historical contexts characterised as high risk and low trust (Bauman 2001; Beck 1992; Sennett 2006). Considering how teachers, parents, and students ‘feel’ about education means that we begin to recognise socio-cultural and political influences in attitudes to education in society in terms of collective as well as individual identity formation and socio-cultural emotionalities.

Emotions and education

Sociology has until recently viewed emotions to be the domain of the cognitive or ‘psych’ disciplinary fields, which have in turn treated emotion as the display of inner individual psychological dispositions. This exclusion perpetuated the rationality/emotionality and public/private binaries embedded in Enlightenment thought long criticised by feminist theorists (Jaggar 1989). Renewed sociological interest in emotions now recognises emotions as social
constructs situated within cultural and organisational contexts (Lupton 1998).

Similarly in education, emotions have historically been treated as individual psychological manifestations premised upon a rational/emotional binary, one most evident in the privileging of rational (equated to masculine) leadership in education (Blackmore 1989; Kerfoot 1999). Recently, the need for innovation in the production of learner identities for knowledge-based economies as well as advances in neuroscience that have informed management and learning theory have repositioned emotions as central to the educational experience and worker productivity. Emotions are the next resource to be 'tapped' by post-industrial economies and in the production of lifelong learners and learning organisations in Bernstein's (2000) notion of a 'totally pedagogicalised society': the 'crucial regulator and legitimization strategy to translate uncertainty, risk and precariousness into a socialisation characterised by endless learning' (Bonal and Rambla 2003: 169).

In education, emotions have been foregrounded in feminist and critical pedagogy (Bartlett 1998; Kenway et al. 1998; McWilliam 1999), teachers' work (Dadds 1995; Nias 1996; Woods and Bagley 1996; Zembylas 2005), teacher identity (Schmidt 2000), leadership (Beatty 2000; Blackmore 1995; 1999; Sachs and Blackmore 1998), organisational change (Hargreaves 2004), and resistance theories (Boler 2004; Cooks and Sun 2002). The recent convergence of school improvement and effectiveness research has incorporated this earlier literature, recognising that the affective is critical to the sense-making process of educational change in terms of how teachers' emotions are a product of their working conditions and teaching and learning relationships and leadership practices (Leithwood 2006).

Much of the literature on emotion in education draws from the work of Hochschild's (1983) 'emotional rules' and 'emotional labour' of teaching and leading and Goleman's (1998) 'emotional intelligence' with regard to pedagogy and leadership (e.g. Ackerman and Maslin-Ostrowski 2004; Ashkanasy and Dasborough 2003). Emotional literacy is now promoted in teacher and leader professional development programs (Power 2004). By contrast, emotions are rarely mentioned in the university reform literature, other than around student subjectivity, feminist pedagogy and academic identity reformation and the re-positioning of women academics as emotional managers, pedagogical nurturers, and in-house quality assurance workers in the corporatised university (Morley 2003).

Less evident is how structural and cultural relations inform power inequalities and what that means in terms of the affective, with notable exceptions (Boler 1999). Furthermore, culture is usually in teachers' work and educational reform treated as 'an aggregate' of individual dispositions and interactions, and schools and universities are treated as discrete sites responding to external pressures as though there is some clear-cut external/internal divide where educational institutions are impermeable to wider socio-cultural influences (Zorn and Boler 2007). Teachers are viewed as conforming to, accom-
modating or resisting institutional cultures and organisational objectives, with little regard to their politics, past histories, or wider professional allegiances to education as a field of professional practice (Blackmore and Sachs 2007). Context (education systems, education politics, social structure, and the relations of work, family, and education) continues to be treated as a backdrop presenting challenges to which teachers and leaders respond, rather than producing conditions and relations informing the emotionalities of teachers and leaders and their students. While there is recognition of how race, culture, and gender inform the emotional relations between teachers, students, and communities, the analysis rarely ventures into wider social, economic, and structural analyses that address the emotional investments teachers and parents have as social groups in rejecting and protecting shared privilege, or collective ‘feelings’ of marginalisation (Oakes and Lipton 2002; Stronach et al. 2002).

Zorn and Boler argue that mainstream perspectives fail to see schools and universities ‘as constructed realities as opposed to systems or structures that operate independently of the individuals in them’ (2007: 140). The micro (personal), mesa (organisational), and macro (structural and cultural factors) are separated out like onion shells that can be peeled away, rather than seen as intermeshed social relations that stretch out into extra-institutional communities of practice (e.g., unions) or transnational social fields that have a shared logic of practice (Bourdieu 1990). Few studies view educational reform as a social movement, an alliance rather than an antagonism between teachers and parents, in association with environmentalist, multiculturalist, and anti-racist movements, themselves ‘collective expressions of frustration, of cultural change’ (Oakes and Lipton 2002: 396). Opposition and resistance are positioned within the mainstream as negative emotions that have to be ‘managed’. The few studies that consider the darker emotional side to teaching and leading, for example bullying and discrimination (Blase and Blase 2003), mostly come from political economy, labour process, or neo-Marxist perspectives such as critical organisational theory (Carlyle and Woods 2002). Multiple restructurings, the de-professionalisation of teaching and academic work, and the intensification of labour during the 1990s’ neo-liberal reforms, with consequent collective emotional manifestations of alienation, stress, and burnout, have produced ‘general occupational stress’ (Vandeborghe and Huberman 1999; Zembylas 2005).

Post-structuralist perspectives such as Hartley’s identify how the move from government (which exercises rule) to governance (which exercises power) through devolution and partnerships have produced new disciplinary technologies that are the non-bureaucratic invisible aspects of ‘emotionality, empowerment, internal marketing, networks, and flexibility’ (2003: 441) producing performative aspects of a subjectivity refusing any emotional/rational binary.

This individualisation of emotion is one aspect of the move towards self management of organisations, but also in the management of the self
through new therapeutic technologies (from student disciplinary procedures through to performance appraisal and team work) ... emotion is viewed in highly instrumental ways because the value systems and emotional connections that bind groups together are missing.

(Blackmore 1995: 338)

These 'modernist makeovers' or re-enchantments encourage 'greedy' organisations to appropriate the intellectual, physical, and emotional energies of teachers and leaders for organisational gain through the technologies of quality assurance, outcomes-based education, performance management, and innovation economies (Blackmore and Sachs 2007; Gleeson and Husbands 2001; Morley 2003).

Despite all the talk of the need for social capital – for trust in economic relations, for social inclusion – networks (a feature of governance), they tend to be calculative and ephemeral, not lasting and emotional. Emotions are managed for performative purposes ... as global capitalism is seeking to change the form and function of education on its behalf.

(Hartley 2003: 447)

Cultural studies perspectives similarly see emotions as central to the shift from production to consumption that has mobilised libidinal economies around desire and pleasure (Du Gay 1996). Emotions are seen to be produced, felt, expressed, appropriated, managed, mobilised, and mediated discursively in ways that meet the performative needs of post-modern governmentalities, another element in the commodification of everyday life of post-modern subjectivities. This is a new form of appropriation of labour, part of a wider move in service occupations to 'the presentation of aestheticised selves' and the performative structuring of labour (Adkins and Lury 1999: 605).

Emotionality is also ethical work. While performativity may signify that image counts more than substance and that efficiency is paramount over ethics or equity (Lyotard 1984), the everyday performances required substantively change practices (Butler 1997). Regimes of surveillance stressing out teachers and leaders not only are features of the subordination of education to the needs of the nation state and global capitalism but indicative of contestation over what constitutes a good teacher and academic and education professionalism itself within what is now a highly politicised field of educational research and practice (Gleeson and Husbands 2001; Mahoney et al. 2004). The effects of this technologisation of educational work are forms of cognitive and emotional dissonance, between teachers' and leaders' passion for their work and desire to 'make a difference' (doing good) (Nias 1999), and the demands of performativity which is about compliance (being good), thus producing competing 'mindscape' (Blackmore and Sachs 2007; Sergiovanni 1999). Nussbaum (2001) elaborates on this cognitive/evaluative notion of emotions as 'appraisals or value judgements'.
Emotionality has spatial and temporal as well as a relational dimension. Emotionality is not just a response to an immediate incident, but can arise from long-term unequal relations of power. Those who experience discrimination are fully aware throughout their lives of the shame of powerlessness, which, while ‘felt’ as an individual, is shared feeling with ‘like’ others, just as pride is felt as a shared experience in dominant groups (Fortier 2005). Collective experiences of anger and fear arising from domination and discrimination also lead to political activism displayed in social movements and protests, although not necessarily progressive (e.g. terrorism). Anti-racist literature, narratives of marginalised groups, and white middle-class educators’ reflections on the racialisation of everyday relations are exploring how emotions circulate between individuals and across groups within particular structural and cultural arrangements of power (Trifonas 2003). Boler (1999) and Boler and Zembylas (2003) refer to the ‘pedagogies of discomfort’ central to the type of reflexivity required, for example, to promote anti-sexist, racist, and homophobic teaching, and the ethical and moral tensions this produces for individuals.

Epidemiological studies on quality of life, health, and well-being now connect collective feelings to poverty. For the working-class poor stress is a major feature of chronic under- and un-employment – with a range of associated health problems – often concentrated in local communities where there is usually less engagement with education (Wilkinson and Marmot 2003). Stress derives from individuals and groups feeling a sense of hopelessness. Emotions ‘underpin the phenomenological experiences of our bodies in sickness and health’ providing the ‘basis for social reciprocity and exchange’ and the link between ‘personal problems and broader public issues of social structure’ (Carlyle and Woods 2002: xvi). Rather than being a ‘natural attribute’ of a specific social group, emotions such as ‘a sense of desperation, anger, bitterness, learned helplessness or aggression’ are ‘wholly understandable responses to various social, economic and material difficulties’ (Carlyle and Woods 2002: xvi).

The assumption that emotions are largely individual and not social phenomena leads to the assumption that ‘social entities at national, governmental and corporate levels of operation’ are rational (Harding and Pribram 2004: 865) and only political minorities and particular social groups (e.g. women) are emotional. But emotions are linked to status within specific fields of practice within and across organisations and societies (e.g. the military, bureaucracies, and the professions) (De Botton 2004). Organisations are now seen to be sites of emotional investments of individuals and groups around status hierarchies (Fineman 2003). Feminist and post-colonial theorists argue that emotions are gendered, racialised, and classed in that they are premised upon public/private, rationality/emotionality, male/female, and black/white binaries that have become culturally normalised, classifying emotional displays according to stereotypical emotional attributes of social groups and thus ‘naturalised’. Emotionalities associated with teaching and teacher relationships with diverse student and parent populations are likewise marked by what Hargreaves (2001)
refers to as 'emotional geographies': the spatial or material closeness or distance in human interactions arising from cultural and class-based stereotypes and moral codes. Emotion, how it is managed and displayed, is now seen to be another differentiating process within organisations (Newton et al. 2001).

But, overall, during the twentieth century, the assignment of reason with the dominant, the white, the elite, and the masculine, has served some political interests more than others, creating an 'emotional hegemony' that is portrayed as not emotional but contingent on significant emotional investments in status, hierarchy, and the way things are (Jaggar 1989).

'Generalised anxiety' as a condition of new times

Emotions, therefore, are learned, contextual, and intersubjective; they are historically, socially, and politically contingent, produced by, and productive of, social and political affects at a macro as well as micro and meso levels (Lupton 1998). Social theorists such as Beck (1992), Bauman (1996), De Botton (2004), and Sennett (2006) have argued that we are in 'new times' and 'new economies'. This fast capitalist phase of globalisation is characterised by intensified and rapid flows of people, goods, images, ideas, and money as well as a temporal/spatial collapse with greater interdependence globally (e.g. global warming) producing 'perceptions' of increased uncertainty and risk (Beck 1992). The media and migration have let loose collective imaginations about the future with 'diasporas of hope, diasporas of terror and diasporas of despair' (Appadurai 1997: 6). Rizvi sees discourses of globalisation have mobilised specific fears and desires, producing for some 'a sense of progress, prosperity and peace' and for others 'deprivation, disaster and doom' (2003: 157–8). 9/11 generated a sense of widespread despair, which for the West reverberated as a fear of terrorism conflated into a fear of 'the other' and a feeling that the world has changed forever (Rizvi 2003: 161).

Bauman refers to the 'climate of ambient fear' distinguished by a new world disorder marked by universal deregulation in which the market determines value, a new style life politics with the collapse of familial and state safety nets, and radical uncertainty produced by lack of agency in the light of the all-consuming image industry (1996: 22–4). Whereas the twentieth-century welfare states and bureaucracies of Western social capitalism protected the individual, neo-liberal reforms have produced a post-welfare state that has made the most vulnerable more open to risk as it has stripped away minimal protections. New capitalism is premised upon uncertainty, de-bureaucratisation, and fluidity within as well as between organisations. 'But the fragmenting of big institutions has left many people's lives in a fragmented state ... with ... a move away from stable unions, big corporations, and relatively fixed markets' (Sennett 2006: 9). These mutual vulnerabilities give rise to a collective sense of fear and grief circulated in the media and on the Internet.

Cumulatively, these factors produce a sense of 'generalised anxiety' even amongst those in more secure positions as a dominant emotionally of
Measures of hope and despair (De Botton 2004). Denzin argues that 'emotionality draws the person to others, for emotions are felt in relation to other interactants. While emotional experiences are purely private, many emotions are ritually inspired by groups or larger social structures' (1984: 5) (i.e. class or ethnic identification as well as commitment to social movements such as feminism, environmentalism, or nationalism). Key sociological traditions have argued that human emotions and consciousness are shaped by structurally situated conditions: Marx refers to alienation, estrangement, and the forms of disenchantment arising from the reduction of individuals down to exchange value; Weber saw capitalism as 'anchored deeply in religious and emotional attitudes' (Denzin 1984). From a cultural studies perspective, Raymond Williams refers to 'structures of feeling' as 'the felt sense of the quality of life at a particular place and time'; a 'pattern of impulses and restraints' through which the lived experience differs from the 'official consciousness' of prescribed ideas and values of a particular social group (1975: 47). These structures emerge, dominate, and then dissipate over time. Thus there can be a generalised 'anxiety about economic instability as a culturally pervasive emotion, felt or experienced by individuals, but in response to contradictions and constraints in the larger social formation' (Harding and Pribram 2004: 870). Experience is mediated through these structures of feeling, hegemonies of popular commonsense, and individual beliefs, thus integrating the affective and the cognitive. Emotions 'act simultaneously as structures of meaning and structures of power ... intimately connected to larger social operations', and the 'means by which social and cultural formations affect us' (Harding and Pribram 2004: 871).

The contemporary structure of feeling of reflexive modernisation could be characterised by a sense of risk, insecurity, lack of trust, and fear of 'the other' (Beck 1992). Contradictions are emerging between normative standardisation and the crumbling traditions of class culture, gender relations, family, and science. While risk is produced systematically in ways that are incalculable, individuals have increased choices. Intensified feelings of insecurity are exacerbated by post-welfarism characterised by self-help, and processes of responsibilisation and individualisation (Bauman 2001). 'Only a certain kind of human being can prosper in unstable, fragmentary social conditions', with the capacity to 'manage short term relations and oneself' while 'improvising a life narrative' and a 'sustained self of self' in the context of transient relations and multiple jobs where 'no one owns their place in her organization', and there is no guarantee (Sennett 2006: 3–5). 'Durability of persons and objects has been replaced by disposability' (Sennett 2006: 5), whether it is professional skills or education. This fear of disposability is new to many. Emotional insecurity arises because 'most people are not like this; they need a sustained life narrative, they take pride being good at something specific, and they value the experiences they've lived through', and desire 'a rightful and secure position in society' (Sennett 2006: 24, 5).

This is, then, the foreseeable fear-filled future imagined by the middle class, many working at the edge or within the new economy. Pusey (2003)
identifies how Australian economic restructuring after 1989 marked by market liberalisation, deregulated industrial relations, and reduced public expenditure on health, education, and wealth, impacted the collective psyche of the middle class. Middle Australia, on the whole, wanted to see a more equitable distribution of income and a fairer society, with higher levels of trust in institutions and no sense of weaker commitment to solidarity such as unions. The majority saw wage and salary earners as losers in the reforms and big business as winners, with society now more unequal and unfair, favouring elites, and more hierarchical.

For the working class, the new work order produced a sense of desperation about changing rosters, irregular hours, and unpaid overtime. In a politics of resentment cultivated by a neo-conservative government, women, elites, welfare freeloaders, and refugees were blamed, or perceived as advantaged. Overall, upper and lower middle class felt ‘anger over the precariousness and scarcity of jobs and the consequences of labour market reform’ (Pusey 2003: 59). This led to a retreat into the private and alienated, not because of ‘moral laxity’, but due to economic dislocation underpinned by anxiety about the degrading of civil society.

Arguably, the first decade of the twenty-first century is one that can be characterised by a generalised anxiety, an ontological insecurity, and a fear of being made redundant that is not fully explained away by individual experience, workplace cultures, or stressors. The issue, of course, is whether this generalised anxiety is like a ‘disease’, moving through and within networks, within communities and societies, and manifest in particular communities of practice such as education.

**Education as a field of emotionality**

In this context of generalised anxiety, education is more than ever a field of contestation over values and beliefs, individual and collective desires, hope (of success), and fear (of failure). Education has historically been linked with individual advancement and collective improvement for marginalised social groups, promising progressive social change. Britzman argues that anxieties about education, teacher education, and teaching flow over and ‘mirror larger public anxieties over the education of children, youth and university students’ (2007: 3). Education also sits within a wider social and political frame, prone to crisis in itself and also externally to other crises (e.g. Sputnik, globalisation). What is essential is ‘the crisis in education’ re-producing a more generalised ‘psychoanalytic psychology of uncertainty’ (Britzman 2007: 7).

Bourdieu (1990) argues that education, as a cultural field with its own rules, languages, logics, and practices constitutes an objective hierarchy that is ‘bounded’, subordinated to other fields such as economics, politics, and journalism in the past decade. The penetration of the logic of managerialism and the market has challenged and transformed dominant values and discourses in the field of education. As a cultural field, education has a hier-
Measures of hope and despair

archy of sub-fields – universities, schools, and technical education – in which universities claim authority over other sub-fields. Despite this, there are shared understandings, discourses, and belief systems as well as rules of engagement about the nature of education and its purpose. Education during the twentieth century was seen by politicians, activists, and professionals alike as a site of social change as well as social reproduction – a means of individual and collective mobility and equity for the marginalised – and as a public good in educating citizens and workers. While the division of labour was racialised and gendered, the massification of educational and bureaucratic systems did allow inclusion. Individuals largely knew their place, but long-term careers provided a 'psychological home', with some discretionary space for 'interpretive modulation' locally that 'gave individuals a sense of agency' (Sennett 2006: 36). Unhappiness with an institution coexisted with social bonding. Therefore nurses and teachers stay in underfunded and dysfunctional organisations because they feel they can make a difference.

Neo-liberal reforms based on parental choice, marketisation, managerialism, privatisation, and vocationalisation means that education has now been tightly coupled to national economies (Blackmore and Sachs 2007; Connell 2006). There was a shift from welfarism to post-welfarism in England as in Australia towards an 'enterprise culture' as a 'deliberate attempt at cultural restructuring and engineering based on the neo-liberal model of the entrepreneurial self – a shift characterised as a moving from a "culture of dependency" to one of "self reliance"' (Peters 2001: 58). These reforms have produced fundamental shifts in the nature of work, the role of the state, and the state's relationship with the individual and education, effecting a cultural shift in attitudes to education through its commodification (Blackmore and Sachs 2007). Education is now viewed increasingly as an international commodity, an individual positional good, imparting to individual students or nation states competitive advantage over others in a magnified instrumentalism. As work becomes central to identity, education is critical to improving life chances as the means to manage individual and collective risk through choice (Pusey 2003). Education promises to guarantee futures and gain advantage in ways that gender, class, and nationality provided in the past. Thus discourses of parental choice found fertile ground amongst the middle class who fear loss of status as well as the desires of marginalised groups to gain recognition, an anxiety intensified by reduced employment and educational opportunities with increased competition. To add to this, as lifelong learning has become the mantra, education increasingly requires increased personal and familial investment. Yet choice is contingent on personal, cultural, and financial capital.

This value shift evident in the Anglophone nation states indicates a move away from social democratic values of cooperation, participation, and collectivism to market-driven values of competition, advantage, and individualism in and through education (Blackmore and Sachs 2007; Gewirtz et al.)
The social democratic covenant of twentieth-century public systems has been replaced by a new contractualism in employment relations, relations between schools and families, and between the individual and the state. Individuals now relate to organisations more on a basis of fear of being made redundant than trust based on a shared commitment, voluntarism, and mutuality. Cooperation is coerced to produce superficial conformity via the disciplinary technologies of performance management standards. The new contractualism repositions teachers as technical experts required to service the state and clients rather than a professionalism characterised by judgement, recognition, and authority (Carlyle and Woods 2002: 142–3). This repositioning has been accompanied by intense media scrutiny around the education in crisis discourse requiring teachers to defend themselves as a field in terms of the rules of the game and value positions.

The interpellation of market and media relations in education and the move towards more competitive social relations in education both exploits and mobilises parental anxiety and emotions (Blackmore 1996): 'You are not a good parent if you do not pay for schooling.' Markets as socio-cultural constructs tap into emotions and are premised upon the emotions of desire, fear, greed, and envy (Woods and Bagley 1996). Emotionality about education is also mobilised and channelled through the media. Within a market context where image and reputation means survival, governments have 'mediatised' strategies to control the professions and divert attention from failed policies (Blackmore and Thorpe 2003) by shaming and blaming of individuals and particular families (e.g. single parents) and low-performing schools, thereby silencing teacher opposition to neo-liberal reforms in what Hargreaves refers to as the emotional politics of school failure, and how in 'intergenerationally unequal societies, distributions of dignity create emotional economies of distinction and disgust ... the basic emotions of social exclusion' that 'demarcate success from failure' (2004: 34–5).

The contractualist state now steers through policy and regulates through financial agreements and accountability a range of self-managing public and private providers competing to offer educational services. Schools and universities have become 'service' providers and students and parents 'clients'. In turn, the disciplinary technologies of market and managerial accountability penetrate into the emotions and the soul of educational workers. While there is some autonomy locally, the centre keeps control by setting the tasks, encouraging individual units and teams to compete on a winner-takes-all basis, leading to high levels of stress and anxiety for workers. Internal markets within organisations raise the 'anxiety stakes' as 'the line between competitor and colleague becomes less clear' (Sennett 2006: 52). 'Anxiety arises in ill-defined conditions, dread when pain or ill fortune is well defined. Failure in the old pyramid [of workplaces] was grounded in dread, failure in the new institution is shaped by anxiety' (Sennett 2006: 53).

Educators are, therefore, as a field experiencing a shared sense of a fundamental shift in the nature of their work and relations with their colleagues,
students, and communities as well as in their profession. Multiple studies have mapped their sense of despair and anger at the inability to undertake the type of educational work that is required to make a difference at a time when these reforms have increased educational inequality (Blackmore and Sachs 2007; Carlyle and Woods 2002: 138–9; Gleeson and Husbands 2001; Hargreaves 2004). They express feelings of alienation from their work due to capture by the performative exercises demanded of them. These standardised outcome-focused and performance management-driven systems not only undermine collegial cultures but also denounce progressive education, reject principles of social justice, and reduce professional autonomy. Educators across sectors, systems, and nations express an increased sense of powerlessness, greater sense of control being exerted and less agency than within the ‘iron cage’ of bureaucracies producing widespread feelings of disengagement, alienation, resistance, anger, and distancing:

... there is a basic clash of values. And it is a conflict where teachers are in a weaker position. They are under examination in a disciplinary exercise, where their humanistic morality has been replaced by one centred on rational-technician. We have seen a number of comments here about teachers feeling that they were losing control of their own classrooms, and their very selves.

(Jeffrey and Woods 1998: 83–4)

The passion for education

The field of education is infused with a particular articulation of the dominant structure of generalised anxiety arising with new capitalism. Grossberg (1997) refers to the ‘economy of affect’: the material conditions, distribution, and consumption of the affective as one of several economies – capital, money, information, representations (Harding and Pribram 2004: 872). Thinking of affect as investment provides a range of possibilities: ‘producing dependencies, responsibilities’, ‘connection’ as a ‘basis of social processes of recognition and difference’ as ‘integral to the notion of individuality’ and as a means of communication in the circulation of feelings amongst people and the exertion of power and influence. The affective economy (communication, recognition, etc.) produces and reproduces its own complex network of power and meaning relations in conjunction with other economies (capital, etc.) such that emotions ‘may be part of the constitution of culture and collective identities’ (Harding and Pribram 2004: 878).

The circulation of emotion produces in and between people connection, ruptures, dependencies, responsibilities, accountabilities and so on ... people care – they are invested. If people care, certain effects are produced: they feel and act in certain ways.

(Harding and Pribram 2004: 879)
Economies of affect get beyond representation that often neglects the affective or reduces it to sub-functions of ideology or the 'libidinal economies' of desire. Affective economies have their own organisational characteristics such as, in education, belief in meritocracy but also that education has transformational capacities. Plato, Aristotle, Dewey, and Friere articulated a desire to use knowledge to effect social change. People teach because 'there is an intangible, effable quality to our goal, for the kind of desire we aim to teach is about love, passion and commitment' (Todd 1997: 5). 'Affect here is a form of energy and motivating force or intensity rather than a system of interpretation' (Harding and Pribram 2004: 873), a 'psychic energy' that is the 'coloration or passion within which one's investments in or commitments to the world are made possible' (Grossberg 1988: 285). Affect determines or constitutes what matters to people in ways that 'identify the strong investments people have in their experiences, practices, identities meanings and so on...'. (Grossberg 1992: 82). Desire should not be understood only within a negative or libidinal framework – the desire to teach and the desire to learn are critical to every educational moment. Desire, ethics, and 'affect' are productive political forces that create new assemblages that organise desire, affections, and power (Zembylas 2005).

Education as a field 'assembles' the affective in ways that function within power relations. Affect is central to education because it fuels the social imaginary about what education offers in terms of identity and culture (Todd 1997: 5), an imaginary associated also with a particular politics. The passion for teaching is imbued for many teachers with a desire to make a difference. This moral imperative fuels an imaginary that challenges existing power relations (Liston and Garrison 2004; Nias 1996). Pusey (2003) in his studies refers to the 'improvers', the public sector professionals including teachers, who were in despair about society in general and managers who did not care. Their concerns were about the destruction of the public sector through downsizing, privatisation, increased hierarchy, degradation of professional work, and toxic and more socially abrasive work cultures (Pusey 2003: 60). Likewise, in a study of women leaders in schools, technical institutes, and universities, Blackmore and Sachs (2007) found educators angry and in despair because of shifts in the relation between the political and affective economies that had transformed educational work in ways antithetical to their own beliefs and that of the profession. They struggled within the performative culture between 'care for others' as an expression of doing good as citizens and 'self-care' in terms of maximising self-interest and looking after the survival of oneself and one's own. The socio-psychic economy of education simultaneously coopted teachers' good will but also produced guilt. The pleasure of discovery, of process-driven and student-centred learning, were being undermined by high stakes standardised outcomes focus that routinised educators' work at the very moment when innovation and creativity are most needed.
Conclusion

This, then, is the core dilemma of the field of education that produces a particular economy of affect which is linked to a generalised anxiety of the new times. The socio-psychic economy of education has always meant that teachers are susceptible to emotive pressures (e.g. guilt), but more recently, teachers and academics are feeling increased dissonance between their worldviews, dominant ideologies, desire for social justice, and the lived experience of the restructured field of education along market and managerial lines. Grossberg (1988) argues that 'emotion is the product of affect and ideology' that becomes passion, and is therefore part of the articulation of power relations. How this is felt is manifest in how teachers and academics 'feel' and 'talk' about the dilemmas and contradictions of their work marked by a crisis in trust and a widespread sense of powerlessness. Teachers understand that the relations of power have significantly altered, and thus express a range of emotions – dismay, regret, anger, despair (Blackmore and Sachs 2007).

This argument raises new issues for educators and how they relate to each other within the field of education and across the professional fields of politics, journalism, and economics. Rizvi argues that

... resources of hope are thus to be found in the development of a new perspective on cultural and democratic change. What needs to be emphasised now is the urgency of new institutional building across cultural traditions, the acknowledgement of justice issues posed by the polarisation of wealth, income and power and the pursuit of interests common to humanity as a whole ... democratic dispositions exist in all cultural situations, even if expressed in radically different ways.

(2003: 27)

The question is whether current modes of educational governance can do that work. It may be emotional bonds that will provide the basis for collective action in the future to preserve what we value most in the context of the de-institutionalisation and social, economic, and political fragmentation of educational work.

References


