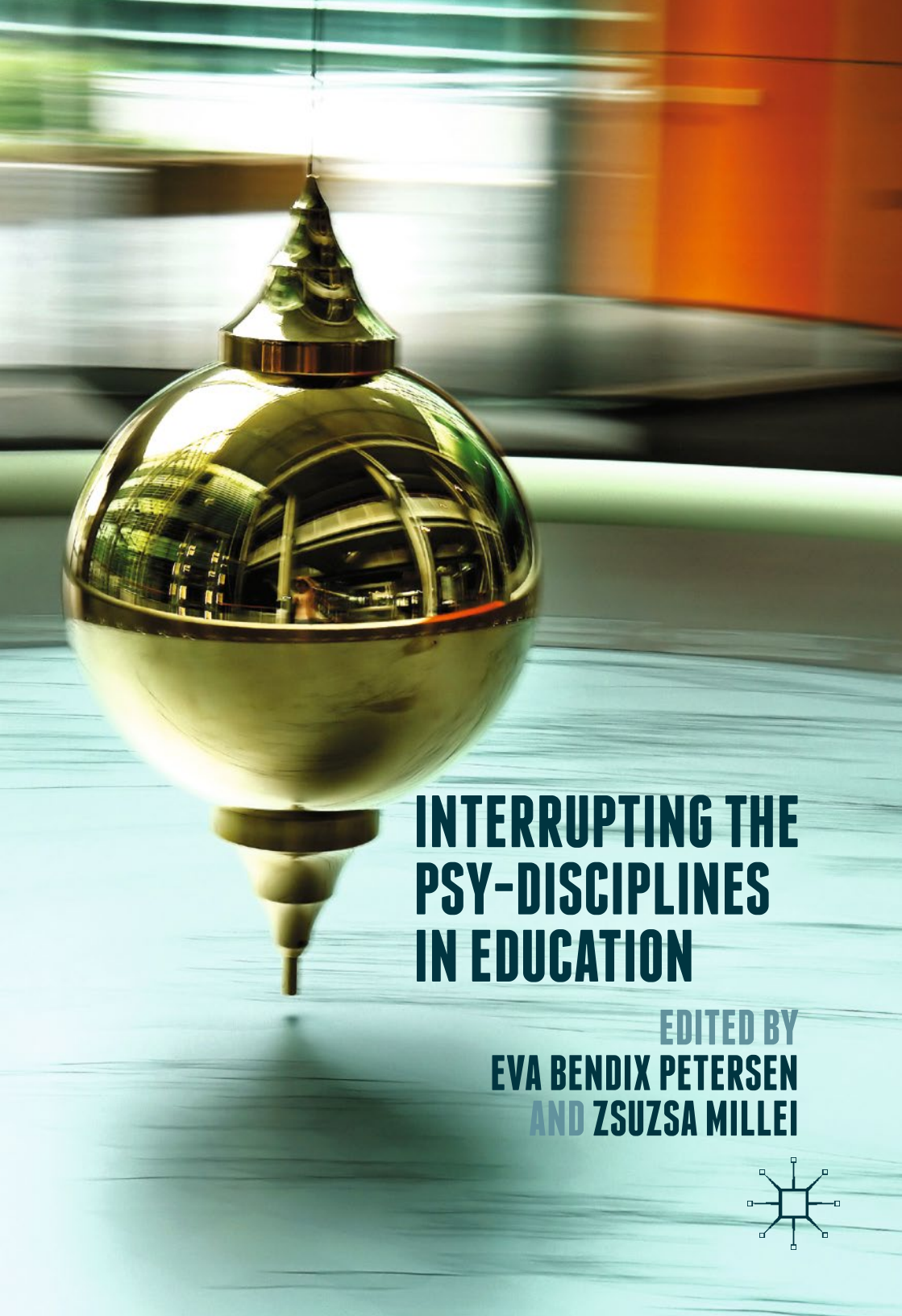

INTERRUPTING THE PSY-DISCIPLINES IN EDUCATION

EDITED BY
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AND ZSUZSA MILLEI

Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education

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palgrave
macmillan

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ISBN 978-1-137-51304-5 ISBN 978-1-137-51305-2 (eBook)
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016942698

Cover illustration: © Josef F. Stuefer / Getty
Cover design by Oscar Spigolon

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the School of Education at the University of Newcastle Australia for supporting the seminar 'Psy-Interrupted: Critical perspectives on the psy-disciplines in education' in June 2014, which formed the starting point for this book. We thank the presenters and participants for making the seminar an enriching experience, and for lending support to our belief that this book is wanted and needed. We also thank the Space and Political Agency Research Group as part of the Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in Research on the Relational and Territorial Politics of Bordering, Identities and Transnationalization (RELATE) for their support.

We wish to thank the contributors to this volume for working with us, and for extending our thinking on the questions at hand.

Chapter 11 by Allan & Harwood is reproduced with permission from Chapter 3 (pp. 46–66) The Risk Factors? 'Race', social class and gender in Harwood, V. & Allan, J. (2014) Psychopathology at School: Theorizing mental disorders in education. Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.

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Cath Laws has worked in education, teaching in regular and special settings, including schools for those categorized as having emotional and behavioural disorders, and juvenile justice schools. Cath has always been interested in examining the ways children living at the margins are positioned, and the discourses operating for, on, and with these children and young people. While Cath is now retired, she continues to trouble the dominant discourses surrounding those at the margins through her work as an independent academic, her work at the Australian Catholic University, and her research. She reads her life's work as exploring the ways those at the margins can come to act with agency and be read/read themselves differently.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Eva Bendix Petersen and Zsuzsa Millei

In the seminal book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) French philosopher Michel Foucault described how the psy-disciplines—his collective term for psychiatry, psychology, psycho-analysis and other psycho-therapies—became entangled in new forms of government. 18th and 19th century liberal Europe was faced with the challenge to govern the population to ensure morality and order, but in ways that also guaranteed the freedom of individuals and a free economy. Expertise, including the social sciences, psy-disciplines, economics, statistics etc., came to provide solutions for this challenge by producing scientific knowledges about persons, society and the economy (Foucault 1988). The emerging psy-disciplines helped to make sense of individuals 'as speaking, living, working individuals' and also provided avenues for these individuals to understand, form and regulate themselves according to these scientific discourses (Foucault 1994: 281). In this way, expertise enabled a shift from coercive control into 'the conduct of conduct' and practices of self-formation.

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_1

Psy-disciplines in this way are 'technologies of the social' (Fendler 2001), rather than simply scientific areas amassed following simple rules and propositions internal to scientific discovery. As Michel Foucault indicated, and, as has since been elaborated by Nikolas Rose (1998, 1999), among others, educational institutions and actors have been, and continue to be, central to the continuation of the psy-disciplines, their knowledges and practice, which often emerge and operate as natural, inevitable, ethical and liberating.

This book critically explores how the psy-disciplines manifest and operate in contemporary spaces and institutions of education. We trace and document the ways in which psy-disciplinary regimes of truth and technologies work in the government of teachers, students, parents, educational leaders, and others. What does it mean to know oneself and others as a subject of education vis-à-vis psy-disciplinary vocabularies, categories, boundaries, and affective registers? What does it mean to relate, to teach, to learn, to lead, or to research on psy-disciplinary terms? What is it possible to be and become, and what forms of beings and becomings pose more difficulty, within and under, what has come to be known as, 'the psy-gaze'?

As the title indicates, the intention of the book is to 'interrupt' psy-disciplinary knowledges and practices in education. We are not so much 'anti' psy- as we are invested in exploring it as central to contemporary modes of truth-telling, meaning-making, organisation, practice, and subject formation. To interrupt is to bring to a momentary halt; it is to interject into a flow of sorts, to disturb the current, or even interfere with it. To interrupt can be to problematise and destabilise taken-for-granted-as-good knowledges and practices, and to destabilise is to enable a practice of freedom (Foucault 1994) by which it becomes possible to think, to imagine, to feel, to become, otherwise.

Foucault's Analysis

For readers new to Foucault's analysis of the work of the psy-disciplines, it may be useful to briefly recap some of the major points. He argues (1977: 191) that for a long time ordinary people were not subject to much interest and scrutiny—only the powerful were. The king, the war hero, particular members of the clergy, and so on, were looked at, observed, and described in detail. It was a privilege for the privileged. However, as new forms of governance were introduced during the 18th and 19th centuries—forms

that Rose (1998, 1996) argues are intrinsically linked with the exercise of political power in liberal democracies—new techniques of knowing, shaping, and controlling populations became both available and further developed. These disciplinary methods, as Foucault calls them, reversed the relation and 'lowered the threshold of describable individuality and made this description a means of control and method of domination. It is no longer a monument for future memory, but a document for possible use' (1977: 191). 'This turning of real lives into writing is no longer a procedure of heroization; it functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection' (p. 192). The objects of the gaze began to include the child, the patient, the madman, and the prisoner. Foucault writes:

> The examination as the fixing at once ritual and 'scientific', of individual differences, as the pinning down of each individual in his own particularity […] clearly indicates the appearance of a new modality of power.

All the sciences and forms of analysis and therapy employing the root 'psycho', according to Foucault, have their starting point in this 'historical reversal of the procedures of individualization' (p. 193). The individual emerges out of the grey masses of ordinary people and delinquents and becomes an object of study and a potential for change. The individual, as a historical construct, became a reality fabricated and upheld in multiple ways, including by the ways the new sciences took an interest in its functioning. We began to measure and make comparisons, to make graphs and metrics for normal development, so that pathological development could be traced, and so on. The assumption was that by knowing human behaviour and its psyche, in general, and assessing the individual in relation to this, one could develop practices and therapies for transformation, improvement, or correction.

Foucault traces the changes to punishment and correction during the early modern period. From the earlier public spectacle of punishment, the tortured body in the town centre, which sought not only to punish the individual wrong-doer, but also serve as a warning to onlookers, governments began to favour other forms of population controls. Other techniques of power came into play, which Foucault calls 'discipline'. Discipline, among other things, concerns getting the population to behave in a certain way without the use of direct physical violence and, preferably, on their own accord, because they have to come to believe these behaviours to be right, true and good. Discipline entails rituals and practices and it requires knowledge. Knowledge about which forms of discipline are effective and which are not, which,

according to this discourse, entails knowing the human and developing vocabularies for describing and measuring this human. Importantly, Foucault questions whether the new forms of discipline were more 'humane'. While the body as the major target of castigation disappeared, the punishment that 'once rained down upon the body [was] replaced by a punishment that acts in the depth of the heart. The thoughts, the will, the inclination' (1977: 16). Punishment should strike the soul rather than the body. Under the new regime, we were in the business of 'governing the soul' (Rose 1999). This changed the way that physical punishment was regarded. Foucault writes, perhaps mockingly, of the new mindset of judges, 'do not imagine that the sentences that we judges pass are activated by a desire to punish; they are intended to correct, reclaim, "cure"' (p. 10). In other words, 'a technique of improvement represses in the penalty, strict expiation of evil-doing, and relieves the magistrates the demeaning task of punishing' (ibid.).

The success of disciplinary power derives from the use of, what Foucault calls, 'simple instruments'; 'hierarchical observation, normalising judgement and their combination that is specific to it, the examination' (p. 170). In order to ascertain how discipline works, Foucault suggests to look at the 'micro-physics' of power: everyday routines and their material arrangements, such as timetables, seating arrangements, architectural orchestrations, etc., and everyday meaning-making practices that compel subjects to think, feel and behave in certain ways, in order to better themselves, for example. The point of discipline is 'subjectification', the making of a particular kind of subject who acts and desires, on its own accord, in desirable ways. In relation to this, it is important to note that Foucault asserts (1977: 194) that we, when thinking of 'subjection' or 'subjectification', need to discontinue earlier traditions of regarding this as 'negative':

> We must cease once of for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.

In that way, power is always already 'productive', and the task for us is to ask, productive of what? What regimes of truth and what forms of being are enabled here, and which are marginalised or even precarious? In what ways do the psy-disciplines know their subjects and objects, and what are the multifarious implications of this? What kinds of lives, communities, and societies do they help create?

The consolidation of psychology into a discipline, and its 'social destiny', was tied to 'its capacity to produce the technical means of individualisation, a new way of construing, observing, and recording human subjectivity and its vicissitudes' (Rose 1999: 136). Alongside the other psy-disciplines, psychology is a 'technology', 'a way of making visible and intelligible certain features of persons, their conducts, and their relations with one another' (Rose 1999: 11). Since World War II, psychologists have increasingly provided the vocabularies with which the troubles of children have been described; the expertise for diagnosing and categorizing such children; the languages within which the tasks of mothers and fathers have been adumbrated; and the professionals to operate the technology of childhood (Rose 1999: 133). While many 'expertises of human conduct' have proliferated over the past centuries, psy-expertise has been marked by a certain 'generosity'. Rose (1998: 33–34) defines this generosity as one in which psy- has been happy, indeed eager, to 'give itself away', meaning that it lent 'its vocabularies, explanations, and types of judgement to other professional groups and to implant them within its clients'. He suggests that psy- has had a 'peculiar penetrative capacity in relation to practices for the conduct of conduct' (p. 34). We are all 'called upon to play [our] part in the making up of persons and to inculcate in them a certain relation to themselves' (Rose 1998: 35). One reason for this may well be that they have provided 'practicable recipes for action' in relation to the government of persons for various professionals in different locales (ibid.). An important point here is, of course, that psy-discourse is not only at play in relation to the subjectification of the governed, but is also operative in the subjectification of expert professionals, such as teachers, as well as others, parents for example. Thus it may be that in this time and place a professional may come to feel not only that it 'makes sense' to take up psy-discourse, it may also be a route through which she can feel competent and justified in her actions and interactions.

Psychology in particular has been highly influential in educational practice and research (Nisbet 2005), for example, in devising the 'educable subject' (Fendler 2001), the 'developing' child (Burman 1994; Walkerdine 1994; Cannella 1997), pedagogies (Henriques et al. 1984; Meredyth and Tyler 1993; Popkewitz 1998; Popkewitz and Brennan 1998; Hultqvist and Dahlberg 2001), behaviour management (Millei et al. 2010) and in identifying different forms of 'conduct disorders', such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), autism or learning difficulties (Billington 1996, or in this book Allan & Harwood). Currently, psy-methods (self-observation

and self-regulation) appear in new constellations with the administration of psychotropic drugs (such as perception, mood, or consciousness altering chemical substances), or combine them with practices neuroeducation or brain based learning utilize. Psy-disciplines merge with these knowledges to form a part of the biopolitical regulation of individuals that is premised on the enhancement and positive improvement of human capacities (Foucault 2007; Rose and Abi-Rached 2013; Millei and Joronen 2016). Moreover, in a kind of a circular fashion, institutions of formal education have a central role in the development of forms of governmentality and biopower, because they inform most other disciplinary fields with the knowledges, techniques and subjectivities they produce (Fendler 2001).

While contemporary psy-disciplines are heterogeneous and, at times, incommensurable, we are interested in what Ingleby (1985) and Rose (1985) called the 'psy-complex' in educational arenas. Parker (1998: 68) defines the 'psy-complex' as 'the network of theories and practices concerned with psychological governance and self- reflection in Western culture'. The mainstream agents of the psy-complex have that in common: that they rarely, if ever, understand themselves as regulation. They rely on description and prescription, and are not prone to problematise themselves as forms of 'conduct of conduct'. In other words, they operate within their own discursive regime, where we, following those who look at the psy-complex in terms of governmentality, wish to take a meta-perspective. Of course, taking a meta-perspective does not mean claiming to be outside of the discourse, however, it is a position where we are willing to question the discourses, including the ubiquitous psy-discourses, governing our analysis (see for example chapters by Millei and Alasuutari, and Wilson-Wheeler in this volume).

The Structure of This Book

With the increasing rate of psychiatry based diagnoses of school aged children and concomitant medicalization; with the increased focus on individual learning styles and needs; with the call for more 'brain-based' pedagogies; with the continuing policy priorities around inclusive education; with mental health and resilience issues becoming a major concern in a wide range of educational contexts; and with neoliberal ideology's hyper-individualism; we are currently seeing a reinforcement of the relevance and significance of the psy-disciplines, and their knowledges and practices, in educational spaces in many countries across the globe. As Vansieleghem (2013) argues,

we live in a time of 'psychologisation' and as Füredi (2004) demonstrates, we live in a 'therapy culture'. Folk-psychology (Olson and Bruner 1996), everyday meaning- and sense-making, is saturated with terms borrowed from the 'psy-sciences' and many terms, for example notions of defence mechanisms, acting out, closure, denial, personality types or traits, and so on, have become common sense ways of understanding psychological phenomena. Psy-disciplinary discourses delimit what can be thought, felt and said, and stipulate both implicitly and explicitly what needs to be done. As Foucault observed (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 187), people often know what they are doing and why they are doing what they are doing, but they usually do not know what that doing does. In other words, educators and other subjects involved in educational contexts may be taking up psy-disciplinary discourses without realising, and critically reflecting on, the implications and effects of these discourses. This book provides scholars, educators and others with the tools to undertake this critical reflection.

The book at hand is the first of its kind. While psychological, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic regimes of truth have been critiqued in various ways from the fields of psychology and sociology (e.g. Walkerdine 1993; Burman 1994; Rose 1998, 1999; Rimke 2000; Füredi 2004; Hook 2007; Brown and Stenner 2009; Wright 2011) the critique remains under-exposed and somewhat scattered within the education field itself. There are some notable contributions however, for example, in terms of monographs, Harwood and Allen (2014), Harwood (2006) and Billington (1996) describe the increased psychopathologisation of children in schools and Laws (2011) interrogates the role of psychiatric and mainstream psychological discourses in an 'end-of-the-line' special school. There are also books that speak to the topic of the proposed book, but do so more indirectly, for example, through deconstructing the notion of 'childhood' (e.g. Cannella 1997; Hultqvist and Dahlberg 2001; Hulqvist, 1997) or 'classroom discipline' (Millei et al. 2010), which are also imbued with psy-disciplinary knowledges. There are also a number of journal articles (e.g. Laws and Davies 2000; McLeod 2000; Graham 2007, 2008; Harwood 2010; Staunæs 2011; MacLure et al. 2012; Petersen and Millei 2015; Millei and Petersen 2015), which demonstrate a common concern.

This book seeks to shows how various contemporary educational contexts are entangled in the psy-disciplines. The point is not to argue that psy-disciplinary knowledges and practices are prevalent but, rather, *how* they operate and what their effects may be. While the book conceptually is couched in Foucault's terms and his interest in psy- as governmental-

ity, it is not a 'governmentality book' as such, as the authors in each of their chapters use an array of different theoretical apparatuses and may not speak directly to the question of government.

In terms of the final selection of chapters, we would not claim this book to be either complete or comprehensive. Many other sites of education (which is an inexhaustible notion), many other aspects of how psy- works in contemporary education, and many other perspectives than the ones offered here, are certainly possible. Yet we believe that these chapters present an interesting range of 'interrupting' perspectives and, in collecting analyses from different educational sectors and sites, they also come to show the ways in which psy- follows us across the educational lifespan. To evoke this sense of lifespan—and we realise there are other educational sites across this lifespan than what is represented here—we have ordered the chapters, as far as possible, accordingly.

We begin with Watson's chapter, which looks into three Australian early childhood classrooms and shows us the ways in which mainstream 'inclusive education' discourses, which have a strong psy-disciplinary heritage, help to produce silence around difference, in effect creating and sustaining taboo around the discursively constituted 'Other'. Also related to the early years, Millei and Alasuutari consider how attachment theory, which they argue is part of the psy-complex, is configured in early childhood policy and practice prescriptions in two contexts: Finland and Australia. They show the ways in which attachment discourse produces various understandings of 'the child', 'the caregiver', and their relations, and discuss the implications these understandings have for notions of professionalism and for what is included in professionals' work.

Following this, we enter the Australian primary school where Petersen explores how children are continuously positioned as 'learners' and how this construct relies on psy-disciplinary knowledges and techniques. Staunæs and Juelskjær's chapter is also set in primary school, but this time in Norway. They illustrate the entanglements of post-psychologies and educational leadership practices following the implementation of a so-called 'milieu therapist'. A 'milieu-therapist' is an agent produced by 'post- psychological' discourses around the relational and distributed self. They also illustrate the ways in which features of modern psychology re-enter the scene via the new 'affective economy'. Next, we enter the secondary school sector, where Saari and Harni analyse the ways in which positive psychology and its notion of happiness are translated into a model of 'positive education' at the Australian Geelong Grammar School. Then

Bansel and Keltie consider the knowledge queer young people labour over to produce the truth of an authentic self situated both in digital social media and schools. Following this, Laws discusses how psy-discourses around 'the mad', the 'bad' and 'the sad' in an end-of the-line special secondary school play out, and how the use of irony and humour helped her, as a teacher and principal, to unsettle the dominant psy-based discourses of engaging with these youths.

Subsequently we move into the tertiary sector, where McMahon and Harwood analyse preservice teachers' understandings of challenging behaviour, and the confusions and conundrums that arise from the apparent conflictual understandings between psychological, biological and ecological discourses. Then Saltmarsh provides a critique of the psy-discourses of university mental health awareness campaigns, and shows the way they ignore or over-simplify the systemic and social conditions that help produce mental health problems for students and university workers

The book concludes with two chapters that are not set in any particular sector as such. In the first one of these, Allan and Harwood discuss the risk factors for psy-diagnosis of school children in the UK, US, Australia and Brazil, and argue that race, class and gender heighten the risk of psy-diagnosis while, at the same time, the very process of psy-diagnosis deflects attention from racialised discrimination or poverty in the lives of children and young people. Next, Wilson-Wheeler illustrates how educational researchers, even as they are aware of the hold of psy-knowledge, unwittingly can come to reproduce the 'psy-gaze' in the analysis of data and the representation of educational subjects.

We hope the reader will find the collection of chapters stimulating for reflecting on how the psy-complex plays out in contemporary spaces of education. Our intention in this book is not to devise 'better psychology' for education. Rather, it is to provide a resource for understanding and critiquing the operation and effects of the psy-disciplines in our everyday within educational institutions.

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CHAPTER 2

‘Silences’ in the ‘Inclusive’ Early Childhood Classroom: Sustaining a ‘Taboo’

Karen Watson

Introduction

‘Inclusive’ early childhood education emerged as an option for children with disabilities during the 1990s (Odom 2000). Inclusion replaced integration as a preferred model (UNESCO 1994) and was introduced with the view to change existing structures and potentially change the view of disability in society (Purdue 2009; Oliver 2013). ‘Supporters for inclusion argue that inclusive education respects the unique contributions of each child and supports the civic, social, and educational rights of all children in the normal daily life of the school’ (Boldt and Valente 2014, p. 202). The Australian Government’s *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2009) that was introduced into early childhood education supports the idea of ‘inclusive learning communities’ (p. 15) where ability and disability are viewed as aspects of diversity. While the concept of inclusion promised to solve the shortcomings of integration and change views about disability, education systems have not reflected on the ‘limits and validity of the knowledge base of special education, nor have they considered the different assumptions and philosophies

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_2

needed to bring about positive change for students' (Kearney and Kane 2006, p. 201). In the 'inclusive' early childhood classroom, the multiple and available discourses that maintain evaluative assumptions about children continue to be embedded in what Foucault (1977) described as the psy-disciplines: psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy. Practices of individualising children via assessment, diagnosis, and remediation are pervasive in this context and have also become a focus for researchers in the field. From my perspective, interrupting this way of thinking about children might potentially deliver promise for 'inclusive' processes.

An alternative to this understanding of children, and how 'inclusion' operates, obliges the examination and interrogation of the exclusion that forms its premise (Slee 2013). Who is excluded and who is included? Who is in and who is out? How do some children come to be already included while others *need* to be included? How do some children become members of the included group while others are excluded? In the 'inclusive' early childhood classroom, it is the 'normal' who are 'automatically' included. However, the 'normal' and the part it plays in 'inclusive' processes in this context, has continued unexamined and un-interrogated (Graham and Slee 2008). The production and maintenance of the 'normal' is problematized in this chapter, as it produces inclusionary and exclusionary practices. How is the 'normal' produced and maintained among the children in the classroom and what are the effects on subjectivities?

The Study

The data presented in this chapter was created during my doctoral study in a six-month long ethnography in three early childhood classrooms in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. Approximately 75 children and 12 staff members participated. I visited each setting for eight weeks, two mornings a week, for four hours. The participating 'inclusive' classrooms included several children with a diagnosis. Although not the focus of my study, the child with a diagnosis was conceptualised and viewed as a catalyst for examining how the constitution of the 'normal' emerges. I acknowledge my complicity in producing and reproducing limiting binaries and my regrettable, but unavoidable, contribution to the marking of these children. Observations of the children, along with unstructured and spontaneous conversations, were recorded and then transcribed in an attempt to capture the circulating discourses and operating discursive practices. The observations and conversations centred on how the unmarked children

(children without a diagnosis) encountered the marked child (child/children with a diagnosis).

I use the terms child with or without a diagnosis rather than other terms such as 'special needs' or 'additional needs' as a way to emphasise the child's marked discursive positioning. This is in an attempt to move away from the 'truth' that comes with the individual child's pathologisation. The terminology that is often associated with the 'special' child in 'inclusive' classrooms locates the problem *in* the child. I wish to disrupt this way of thinking and challenge the psy-knowledge that produces and maintains particular, more privileged, ways of being. In this analysis I refer to the 'child with a diagnosis' as the marked child. The child is marked not by me, but by the diagnosis bestowed on them by the developmental or psychological knowledge (Cannella 1997; Burman 2008) used in the diagnostic process. The term 'marked' signifies the work that the diagnosis does.

The Discursive 'Normal' in the Classroom

The discursive constitution of the 'normal' takes centre stage in my study. Foucault (1977) proposes that the 'normal' and it historical construction by medical and scientific knowledge was, and is, made possible by the individualising, differentiating and categorising of the subject. The creation of scientific disciplines, particularly the 'psy-disciplines' of psychology and psychiatry, produced a change in modern society. There was a shift in the focus of observation, lowering the threshold of the describable individual, which was historically centred on sovereignty and the higher echelons of power in society. Foucault (1977) describes the norm as 'the new law of modern society' (p. 195), as it exercises power and gives muscle to a homogenous social body. The 'normal' imposes uniformity while, at the same time, individualising and measuring the gaps or differences from the 'centre' or the norm. Our understandings of normality are not merely generalisations from our experiences of 'normal' children, but have taken shape in the ever evolving explanations of 'experts' and their claims to a scientific knowledge of the pathological, 'abnormal' child (Rose 1999). In the early childhood settings, psy-discourses are readily taken up; children are individualised and compared; differences are identified from the standardisations created in developmental psychology; and the normality of every child is assessed by a comparison to this norm (Rose 1999). The child in the classroom is an object of constant scrutiny with psy-knowledge enabling 'experts' to identify those who might not fit the norm and might need to be 'fixed'.

The children *in* the classroom also engage in this individualising and scrutinising as they make judgements and comparisons about themselves and each other. Children are not passive in their social encounters and they adjust their own behaviours while also observing the behaviours of others. From a young age, they are aware of diversity and difference and are capable of identifying what they understand as the 'normal' or the 'right' way to be in the context (Robinson and Jones-Diaz 2006; Connolly, Smith and Kelly 2002). In their everyday encounters with each other, the children draw on the available and acceptable discursive practices that circulate in the classroom in order to sustain the 'normal'. In this chapter, I examine the 'silences' that are readily and repeatedly observed, and analyse them as an effect of the take up of dominant psy-discourses. How do the children come to know that performing 'silence' in its many and nuanced manifestations, is the 'right' way to be in the 'inclusive' classroom?

'Silences' and Their Effects

'Silence' as a discursive practice is a strategic response (Derrida 1992) and the children use it in a considered and intentional way. 'Silences' are viewed as a critical part of the whole, 'the relevant speech act "spoken" beneath the surface' (Mazzei 2007, p. xii). The 'silences', in the data to follow 'speak out loudly' among the words within discourses. Understanding what meaning can be found *between* words as well as *with* words (Merleau-Ponty 1964), appreciates the unspoken, or the 'always already absent presence' (Spivak 1976, xvii, as cited in Mazzei 2007) of 'silences'. In my analysis, what is left out or silenced, 'that which is not said, is as important as what is said' (Giroux 1988, p. 4). 'Silence' in the classroom reinforces what can and cannot be said (Ferfolja 2008) and also what can and cannot be done. 'Silences' produce and reproduce particular 'right' ways of being and also 'wrong' ways of being. Performing as a 'silent' subject, sharing 'silence' with others and speaking in only certain terms are presented here as just some of the ways that 'silence' is manifested as a visible effect of the re/production of the 'normal'.

Analytical Framework

Drawing on Foucault's (1982) theorising on the role of discourse and power, I am interested in how power is exercised through discourse as it shapes particular ways of being that are more desirable and privileged than others. Multiple psy-discipline discourses circulate in the classroom,

including developmental psychology and special education, along with discourses of regulation, control, and order. Each of these discourses has a 'right', but also limiting way to be. What is possible in this context and what is impossible? As Foucault contends, discourses are the 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1972, p. 49). Discourses are the 'regimes of truth' that formulate how the object or subject is understood, supposed to be, and also, the correct or favoured way to be (Millei and Petersen 2014). The 'psy-disciplines' 'make' individuals, and in the institution of the early childhood classroom, human conduct is regulated and charted in terms of conformity and deviation (Rose 1999). Davies (2006b) contends that discourses govern the kinds of subjecthoods that might be possible, or impossible, in the classroom as they provide the subject positions that the children can either draw on, or reject. Subjecthood is situated in, and constrained by, relations of power—a power that is productive, but also subjugates—a power that circulates within discourses, and is exercised in the classroom. There is nothing outside of power, or free from power, or the effects of its 'discipline-normalisation' (Foucault 1975, p. 52).

Employing the analytical strategies of Foucauldian discourse analysis (1972); positioning theory (Harré and Van Langenhove 1999); and category boundary and maintenance work (Petersen 2004; Davies 1989), I examine the data by looking at the available discursive formations and the multiple meanings that go beyond words. Foucault (1972) argues that the analysis of statements and discursive formations involves the principle that '*everything* is never said' (p. 118) and thus in my analysis, I became very aware, not only of statements, but also the rarity of statements, the lack of statements and the 'silences'. As the children position themselves and each other within the discourses, they see the world from that vantage point (Davies and Harré 1999) and develop a sense of themselves in the world. They learn partitioned categories, and by identifying the characteristics of the category, they derive a sense of belonging within it. The children work to become a particular kind of person who knows how to belong and how to act in order to be a member (Davies 1993). They work to maintain their membership and the category boundaries that are produced. In the analysis, the category boundary work produces inclusionary and exclusionary actions and 'involves relative *legitimisations* of some acts, articulations and subjects and relative *delegitimisations* of other' (Petersen 2004, p. 28, author's emphasis).

How do the unmarked children in their 'silent' performances re/produce the category of the 'normal'? How does this 'silence' maintain and

reinforce the 'normal' when they encounter the Other who is positioned outside the category? Davies (2004) contends that when individuals deviate 'their deviation will give rise to category maintenance work' (Davies 2004, p. 72). 'Silence' is just one effect of the category maintenance work performed on those who deviate in the 'inclusive' classroom.

A Shared 'Silence'

> As the children in the group finish their morning tea on the verandah they move out into the playground. Sam (a child with a diagnosis) is already in the yard accompanied by a teacher. (He has been making a lot of noise trying to get out of the classroom and into the yard beforehand.) Sam is looking at and touching some hanging orange balls that are attached to a wooden frame and have been set up as an activity in the yard. He is moving them around hitting them with his hand and attempting to catch them. Two children (without a diagnosis) from the group on the verandah move enthusiastically toward the hanging balls activity to play, however, one of the children pulls the other child away from the area shaking her head and pointing at Sam. They quickly move to another part of the yard (Field Notes, 30/4/12, S1, p. 8).

In the above scenario, two unmarked children approach the new activity and appear eager to have a turn. They stop in their tracks when they notice that Sam is already playing with the hanging balls. They don't speak to each other, but through bodily movements and gesturing, move on and do not have a turn. There is a shared 'obviousness' (Althusser 1984, as cited in Davies 1993) about Sam, his difference and his anomalous status. The medical, psychological, and psychiatric discourses in this classroom subject Sam as the Other. He is positioned as 'unable' to follow the 'normal' rational routines of the day and is, therefore, permitted by the teacher to separate from the other children. As Schegloff (2007) contends 'failure to measure up to an identity category does not generally lead to an expansion of the scope of the category; rather it leads to pathologising' (p. 469). Sam's diagnosis declares that he has impaired communication skills and behavioural problems. Sam is provided his own space to move in, his own rules, and his own time. He is made separate in order to facilitate his remediation, reflecting the teachers' understanding of his discursively produced diagnosis. Psy-knowledge provides the teachers with coping strategies. Special education discourses and practices support particular

ways of knowing Sam via his diagnosis, and so he is separated and allowed into the yard before the group, to avoid any potential threat or scandal.

The teacher 'released' him as he was making loud 'noises' banging on the locked door, trying to get outside. Sam's noises create a level of anxiety in the classroom. By allowing him to move out before the rest of the group, the teachers avoid the potential risk of a 'scandal' (Gordon 2013) posed by Sam's 'out of control' and unreasonable actions. The 'noises' of the marked child create an uneasiness in the classroom. The level of anxiety and awkwardness around Sam and his actions contributes to the need to liberate him, thereby silencing the 'noise'. Certain 'noises' disrupt and pollute the established orderliness of the stable classroom and generate a level of disorder. In this discursive context, the noises of the marked child are regarded as different or subordinate to the 'normal'. In developmental psychology, 'noises' are viewed as immature and words are more highly valued, as they are a sign of one's progress through the 'milestones'. Words signal a privileged positioning in communication and development. The noises of the marked child are difficult and sometimes impossible to understand, creating confusion and anxiety. Stopping the 'noise' is necessary for the resumption of the desired social order. Excessive environmental noise levels are argued to affect a child's cognitive growth, being a distraction to one's attention, and detrimental to learning (Evans 2006; Shield and Dockrell 2003). Too much noise reflects not enough learning, as rational cognitive growth requires one's full attention. The unmarked children share the 'need' for 'silence', as they position themselves as recognisable members of the 'word using', word appreciating, 'normal'.

In another reading of the previous scene, the unmarked children could be seen to be adopting special education discourses as they regard Sam as needing teacher remediation at all times. They stay out of his way, as this is considered the 'right' and 'normal' way to act around him, as his diagnosis prescribes his need for space. Alternatively, the act of moving away could be read as the children drawing on moral or tolerance discourses, giving Sam his own space while 'politely' not interfering. However, in taking up any, or all, of these discourses, the unmarked children powerfully legitimise themselves as a member of the 'normal' and custodians of the social and moral order. Members of the category seek to defend the status of the 'normal' through maintaining order, but 'membership categorisation is a "moral order" fraught with consequences for the participants' (MacLure et al. 2012, p. 452) and making decisions about the 'right' and

'wrong' way to be, and also how to be with others, has consequences for the subjectivities of the children in the classroom.

The children's actions could alternatively be understood as a taking up of regulatory discourses that circulate and encourage a 'civilised' (Leavitt and Power 1997) way to act and 'be'. The unmarked children stay away from Sam, because they don't want to be recognised as being like him, as his actions, inside and outside of the classroom, could be considered 'uncivilised'. As Davies (2006a) suggests, 'category maintenance work is actively going on as part of the hard work that individual subjects engage in to separate themselves out into the binary category to which they have been assigned' (p. 73). The category maintenance work upholds their recognisability, but also keeps them 'separate' from the discursive 'deviant' and keeps the 'deviant' separate from them. The 'psy-disciplines' make Sam's conduct both visible and cognizable and also identifiable and notable (Rose 1999). These regimes of truth govern the conduct of the 'normal' as they scrutinise Sam and justify the separation from him.

The children's collective and shared avoidance of the marked child and their separation from him exposes a discernible 'taboo'. A 'taboo' is created around a deviant and dangerous subject, labelling the difference and enforcing the conforming and 'normal' category (Douglas 1966). Douglas (1966) contends that in any social system there is a fear of the marginal, and the precautions against the dangerousness of the marginal must come from the 'normal', as the marginal "cannot help his abnormal situation" (p. 97). If a person has no place in the social system, they become regarded as a marginal being (Douglas 1966). All 'cultures' have ways of dealing with anomalies, and one way of dealing with difference is to 'avoid' the anomalous, which 'affirms and strengthens the definitions to which they do not conform' (Douglas 1966, p. 39). Avoiding the discursively produced marked child affirms the 'normal' membership of the unmarked children. Another way of dealing with the anomalous is to label them dangerous (Douglas 1966). Douglas (1966) concedes that individuals sometimes feel anxious when they are confronted with anomaly, and that attributing danger to the anomaly is one way of putting it above dispute, while again enforcing conformity. These cultural provisions for dealing with difference, I would argue, have the effect of producing exclusionary practices in the classroom made visible in the creation of a shared 'taboo'. A 'taboo' is created around Sam in their 'silent' and shared performance. As one child pulls the other away, they embody together, this common understanding.

Performing as a 'Silent' Subject

> Michael (a child with a diagnosis) is inside a large, hard plastic, blue ball. It has large holes in the sides of it and has been set up with a balance beam going through it as a climbing activity out in the yard. The children walk along the beam and then climb over the large, blue ball shape to continue on the other side. Michael is sitting inside the ball and he is kicking the sides with his feet and hitting the hard plastic with a wooden spoon from the sandpit. The children are staring at him looking unhappy and alarmed about this.
>
> Anna: (a child without a diagnosis) 'Stop it Michael!' she says loudly as she crosses over the beam.
>
> Michael starts to squeal making wooing noises. He looks to be having a good time, but is not listening to Anna.
>
> Rachel (a child without a diagnosis) is standing on the balance beam waiting her turn to cross over on the beam following Anna, but she hesitates. She looks worried about moving any further, closer to Michael. She stares at Michael, eyes wide with her mouth open. She wants to climb over the blue ball, but stops to watch Michael. More of the children have started to tell Michael to stop.
>
> A staff member moves towards the scene reminding the group of the rules about the equipment. The rule is that only one child at a time can be on the beam at one time. Rachel's hesitation has meant that several children are waiting their turn on the beam breaking this rule. Nothing is said to Michael by the group of children or teacher.
>
> With the arrival of the staff member, all the children move away, leaving Michael to it (Field Notes, 4/5/12, S1, pp. 20–21).

Michael's presence in the blue plastic ball in the middle of the climbing game is not welcome. The game on this equipment has particular rules, or expectations, about how it 'should' be played. Play is organised, classified, and divided into tasks (Foucault 1977) in early childhood classrooms. This leads to its normalisation, as activities are governed and monitored (Foucault 1977, as cited in Ailwood 2003). Activities prepared by teachers produce certain actions and ways of playing that are thought to stimulate development or learning outcomes. The children take up the normative discourses of play and its associated regulation. Michael, however, does not follow this same understanding of the game. He plays in the blue ball, squealing and calling out, enjoying himself as he laughs and repeats his actions over and over. Michael's actions are 'out of the ordinary' and the children recognise this.

When Anna repositions herself and attempts to discipline Michael saying loudly 'Stop it Michael', she draws attention to Michael's actions, possibly trying to engage others to help discipline him. However, Anna's attempt at disciplining Michael make his actions more 'obvious' to everyone. In this context, the unmarked children for the most part, do not discipline the marked child, so this interaction is more unusual. Michael's response to this disciplining is to add some extra volume and 'wooing' to the noise mix. Anna's attempt to'normalise' or remediate Michael's actions does not seem to work. When Rachel moves onto the beam, but stops short of crossing over the top of Michael, she stands 'silently'. She says nothing; she just looks at him with trepidation, in 'silence'. She does not speak, but waits, possibly wanting some intervention from someone. The 'silence' does its work here to position the children. Michael, inside the blue plastic ball, positioned as the unreasonable, perhaps irrational being, in contrast to the rational rule following 'normal'. Rachel takes up 'silence' as a discursive practice, to show her disapproval of Michael's actions. Moreover, in the way she embodies this 'silence', she also expresses a level of fear and anxiety about Michael and his actions. She does not act as Anna had done in her attempt to discipline Michael. She instead imposes a 'silence', the effect of which creates Michael as the unreasonable being. Her 'silence' furthermore maintains her category membership of the 'normal'.

As more and more children line up, they are unable to cross the beam and some of them try to 'rein' Michael in with their words, but with no success. The 'use your words' (Blank and Schneider 2011) strategy for resolving the situation does not seem to work. 'Use your words' is a phrase repeatedly employed by teachers (and children) as a strategy for communicating and managing conflict (Blank and Schneider 2011). 'Using your words' is promoted as an egalitarian approach for disciplining and controlling others (Millei 2011). This phrase, positions the child who can use words, as an autonomous subject who can self-regulate: a desirable and privileged subject. Conversely, those who do not have words, or do not use them, are created as Other, younger, less able and perhaps undisciplined (even uncivilised). Developmental psychology shapes the possibilities of being in the classroom, and the children use the 'psy-gaze' to position themselves and others. The unmarked children try to regulate and remediate Michael and move him out of the blue ball to play in the 'correct and civilised way'. The 'noises' created in trying to stop Michael's actions and 'noise', in addition to the 'noise' generated by Rachel's

stationary 'silence', catches the teacher's attention. The teacher defers to the rules and regulations of the game and the allowable number of children on the beam at one time. She avoids an encounter with Michael, keeping 'silent' about his actions. The unmarked children having 'broken' the rules of the game, that is, too many children on the beam at one time, move away in 'silence'.

'Silence' strongly positions Michael, the teacher ignoring his presence, as she moves into the area. Unreasonableness is managed by not addressing or disciplining it, for fear of 'setting it off'. The teacher's actions, or lack of actions here, strongly reinforce, maintain and promote the 'taboo', as this seems to be the best way to work around the marked child. As they share the 'taboo' with the teacher, the unmarked children move away, leaving the equipment to play elsewhere in the yard. They are repositioned as rule breakers, by the teacher and each other, a position they did not wish to occupy, and so left the scene quickly. Michael is left alone inside the blue plastic ball, playing the game differently and unacceptably. Reason and unreason are necessarily separated as Michael's way of being is excluded as it does not 'fit'. He is left isolated in his own space. The 'normal' order is restored.

'Silence' has many moves and manifestations in the data and it has many functions. It works to avoid the marked children, separating them from the unmarked children who share this discursive practice. 'Silence' quietens disruption and shows disapproval. In Foucault's original thesis *The History of Madness* (2006), he traces the silencing of unreason and the limitations placed on unreason by reason. Unreasonable beings were thrown into 'oblivion' at the end of the eighteenth century in a battle with the dominance of reason (Carrette 2000). The exclusion of those who do not 'fit in' is a distinctive focus of Foucault's work. Those without reason were produced as disruptive subjects, incapable of work, unmanageable and undisciplined. They became the 'objects equally of fear, revulsion and human sympathy' (Gordon 2013, p. 93). The power and knowledge exercised by medical science and other psy-sciences (Rose 1999) initiated the call to separate, segregate, and intern unreason. Foucault's (2006) work examines how past societies experienced and defined the limits of unreason and how these limits were produced based on a fear. It seems that the discourses in the classroom produce the marked child as unreasonable and irrational. The practice of 'silence', employed as a way to manage unreason, can be historically traced in Foucault's work where 'silence' works to both protect the 'normal', but equally, to allay any created fear

or anxiety. The enactments of 'silence' produce, re-produce and maintain the 'normal'. The 'taboo' around the marked child contributes to this 'silent' engagement and also reinforces the 'normal'. 'Taboo' as a shared understanding, requires no discussion, but works to contain any danger. Whatever we imagine the 'taboo' to be, and whatever form it could take, it seems that there is *something* in the 'inclusive' classroom that cannot be spoken of and cannot be addressed.

'Silence': Speaking Only in Certain Terms

'Silence', as an absence of words within the discourses, supports the category maintenance of the 'normal', and powerfully shapes a divide, shoring up the boundary between the marked child and the unmarked children. Sometimes in the data 'silence' takes a different form and the 'silence' is not an absence of words, but a limitation on words, as only certain things can be said, and only certain discourses can be drawn on. In examining the 'silences', I do not wish to create a binary between speech and 'silence', that is between what one says and what one does not say, but instead when theorising with Foucault it seems:

> We must try to determine the different ways of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorised, or which form of discretion is required in either case (Foucault 2008, p. 27).

This conversation occurred after a group of children (without a diagnosis) witnessed Jasmine (a child with a diagnosis) resisting a teacher's request to complete an activity:

Me: "What has happened to Jasmine?"
Chelsea: "Who?"
Me: "Jasmine over there?"
Jackson: "She's having a heart attack."
Me: "Does that happen often?"
All: "Yeah, yeah, yeah."
Me: "Does that happen to you?"
Both children: "Nope."
Jackson: "We don't have a heart attack."
Tyler: "Someone on the TV I saw had a heart attack."
Me: "Tell me more."

Tyler: "……Well ummm a doctor was trying to fix someone and then he's gone out …so… he goes outside and then he just had a heart attack."
Me: "How did you know he was having a heart attack?"
Tyler: "Cause he just fell over."
Me: "Why does Jasmine do that?"
Tyler: "Cause she always sits down when she tells ummm….when the teachers tell her to do something, like painting and …er…drawing."
Me: "Why does she have to do that?"
Chelsea: "Cause she has to do what the teacher tells her to do."
Me: "Do they tell you to do it?"
Chelsea: "No but we do it."
Me: "Why do you do it?"
Chelsea: "Cause we know we will get in trouble."
Me: "And she doesn't know that?"
Tyler: "No cause she's little."
Chelsea: "And she's just learning."
Tyler: "She's just learning… she's five …. she is a big girl."
Chelsea: "She doesn't know a lot of things cause she's talking really young and she's talking funny."
Tyler: "Yeah… she's talkin funny yeah…..but she can say hello good like bye, bye."(Field Notes, 20/11/12, S3, pp. 93–94).

Jackson is quick to explain Jasmine's actions of lying on the floor, screaming, and struggling with the teacher as a 'heart attack'. He has seen it before and does not appear concerned about it, as he quickly returns to the conversation with his friends. Jasmine has obviously recovered from her 'heart attacks' in the past. He draws upon available and sanctioned discourses to understand and describe Jasmine's actions. He does not have heart attacks; he is 'normal'. Tyler too draws on medical discourses and knowledge from television viewing. As they take up these authoritative discourses from outside the classroom, both children position themselves as somewhat imperious. They are confident in the way they deliver this information and make their 'diagnosis'. The normative discourses of developmental psychology privilege the mature and conversant 'being', as they are considered more adult-like. The 'normal' maintains limits around speakability; what can be said, who can say it, and what cannot be said.

The unmarked children talk about Jasmine as if she is quite different from them; she has medical concerns, and in taking up regulatory discourses, they explain how she does not want to do what the teacher wants. The 'psy-disciplines' render her difficult to govern. The 'normal'

do what the teacher wants, to avoid getting into trouble; they can normalise themselves. Doing what the teacher wants is viewed as important. The unmarked children position themselves as knowing the rules and conforming to them, avoiding punishment, and securing their membership in the category of the 'normal'. In a setting where the adult/child binary dominates, being positioned as a knowing, more adult-like being, is a privileged position, from which power can be exercised. They position Jasmine as not knowing how to act, explaining that she is only 'little' and 'just learning'. They draw on developmental discourses, which are widely accepted and favoured in the early childhood classroom (Cannella 1997; Robinson and Diaz 2006; Burman 2008). These embedded discourses produce multiple binaries in the classroom that delimit subject positions and possibilites: big/little, helper/helpless, to know/to not know, already learnt/just learning, rational/irrational, dependent/independent, able/unable, rule follower/rule breaker, play with others/play alone. The children use these binaries to position each other. Tyler comments that Jasmine is 'little', but then corrects himself saying she is 'just learning', 'she's five….she is a big girl.' Tyler knows that being five is supposed to position a person as 'big'. He seems to be struggling with himself on how to position her in this discourse, as her age and actions do not fit together in the normative discourses he is drawing on.

The 'silence' in this observation, takes a different form. The children draw on the available and tolerable discourses to talk about Jasmine. They do not talk about her as being 'naughty' or misbehaving, as they might about another child who avoids doing what the teacher wants. Instead, they explain her actions as a 'heart attack', a medical concern, something that perhaps Jasmine cannot control or regulate. She is described as young, and 'just learning'. The 'silence' here is not an absence of words, but a discursive practice (Foucault 2008) where only certain things can be said. The unsaid is replaced by what is permissible and available. The power of 'silence', or the unsaid, or that what is said in its place, is made visible as the unmarked children take up sanctioned knowledge that is privileged in this context. The children could have discussed the 'heart attack' as a tantrum, but the medical terminology used produces a difference, and places an emphasis on the medicalised and pathologised discourses and im/possible ways of being. The medical is approved of, and can be spoken of, but only in terms of a medical condition, a biological condition, and not in terms of the psychiatric: the unreasonable or irrational. These ways of speaking about the marked

child are 'taboo'. Jasmine is not described as having a tantrum as she is 'not normal' and only the 'normal' have tantrums. She has something else going on. Using medical terms produces her and her actions as something quite different.

The unmarked children give the impression that they are comfortable in their knowing, positioning themselves as different and more 'grown up' than Jasmine. Walkerdine (1999) contends that discourse informed by developmental psychology privileges a certain representation of normality to the degree that particular children are Othered as they become the object of pathologising discourses (p. 2). Jackson's description of Jasmine's actions as a 'heart attack' announces his adoption of these pathologising discourses. As Butler (1997) argues, pathologising discourses have become central to the formation of the subject (MacLure et al. 2012). Rose (1999) contends that psychological 'expertise' reshapes subjectivity, as the 'apostles' of this knowledge 'proffer images of what we could become' (p. xxxi). Within these disciplines, we become defined, constructed, and governed in psychological terms (Rose 1999). These discourses position Jasmine as being outside the limits of the discursive 'truth' of the 'normal'. They create her as a subject, or object of pathology, possibly a patient, someone who needs medical attention. The 'taboo' around Jasmine as a discursively produced subject allows only particular statements to be made and the children join together to show they understand this kind of 'silence' in their conversation about Jasmine.

Discussion

In the three scenarios presented, the actions of Sam, Michael, and Jasmine are met with a 'silent' performance by the unmarked children. It seems that the irrational and unreasonable, or the 'disabled' or 'diagnosed', cannot be addressed in this context. The discursively produced Other remains separate and excluded in the 'inclusive' classroom. Due to an unrecognised and unaddressed fear of difference, constructed around a potential threat to the order, the 'silent' 'normal' sustains its position. Foucault's work (2006, 1967) offers a cultural and historical understanding of how anxiety, fear, and separation have been constitutive of 'unreason' and 'madness' over centuries. The unrelenting scrutiny and surveillance sanctioned by the psy-discourses continues for all children in the 'inclusive' classroom, as a prescribed level of development is obligatory. The pathologisation and objectification of individuals who do not conform to the 'normal',

as a more contemporary exploit of medical science, is arguably a similar practice to the separation of the 'diseased' and the 'mad' that occurred during past centuries (Foucault 2006). This separation it seems is now accomplished *in* the classroom.

Being a 'silent' subject, sharing 'silence' and using only sanctioned ways to talk about the marked child, powerfully positions and repositions the 'normal' in a classroom where the 'psy-gaze' is ubiquitous. As Foucault (2008) argues 'there is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses' (p. 27). While my study set out to investigate the discursive constitution of the 'normal', and examine how the 'already included' children take up these discourses, it was the 'silences' that 'spoke' loudly from the pages of my data. It was the 'silences' that operated to support and conserve the social order of the classroom, while also providing a 'shelter for power' (Foucault 2008, p. 101). It was in the various manifestations of 'silence', that were shared by the 'normal' as 'taboo', that power was exercised. 'Silence' as a social mechanism worked to maintain category membership within or outside those boundaries. The 'silences', strategically practiced by the 'normal', produced a divide between those created with reason and those created without reason. By examining the many 'silences' that permeate the classroom's 'normal' discourses, and questioning the effects of these 'silences', other possibilities for the 'inclusive' classroom are perhaps imaginable.

In the 'inclusive' early childhood classroom, through a whole set of complex processes, children and teachers come to learn that difference is difficult, oftentimes problematic and best to separate from and stay 'silent' about. Children learn to not ask questions, not to protest, or to offer alternative positionings. It seems a 'taboo' provides the classroom with a strategy to cope with difference. Other possibilities could be created by disrupting and interrogating the constitution and privilege of the 'normal' and by shifting the obsession of the psy-disciplines to pathologise the individual. If by understanding the 'normal' as a social and cultural accomplishment that can take many shapes and forms, 'inclusive' early childhood education and practice might come to think and act 'otherwise', and in doing so appreciate that the 'silences' and separation, created in the production and maintenance of the 'normal' is not 'inclusive', and is not sustainable.

Acknowledgement I would like to acknowledge the generosity and hospitality extended to me by the children and educators in the participating early childhood classrooms.

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CHAPTER 3

Binds of Professionalism: Attachment in Australian and Finnish Early Years Policy

Zsuzsa Millei and Maarit Alasuutari

Introduction

Attachment theory is often referenced in psychology, social work, and early childhood care and education, and is ubiquitous in popular publications directed to parents, carers, and educators of young children. It is considered a 'grand theory' and explains 'the growth of social relationships from infants' experiences with their caregivers and the consequent social preference called attachment' (Mercer 2011, p. 26). Founded on Bowlby's preeminent construction, the theory's basic formulation and application have remained relatively continuous and influential worldwide. In this chapter we do not aim to add yet another critique of the theory itself, or its rightful or wrongful understanding and application; there are numerous publications that do just that. Rather, we consider attachment theory and its various manifestations in different documents as 'attachment discourses'. We glean the work of critical psychologists who rethought psychology as part of 'psy-complex', 'the sprawl-

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_3

ing speculative and regulative network of theories and practices that constitute psychology (Ingleby 1985; Rose 1985)' (Parker 2002, p. 199), including attachment theory, as 'discourse practice' (Burman et al. 1996; Parker 2007). In addition to shedding light on the operation of psychology in various areas of life, they also showed how 'psychological effects are more than discursive in that they enter into the material structure of major institutions [including early childhood education and care] that govern our experience as well as our actions' (Burman 1996, p. 1). Following their analytical strategy, we take a step back from psychology to obtain a critical distance that enables us to destabilize attachment theory's claims that normalize views about feelings, behaviors, and experiences between various carers and the child, and that pathologize people who do not fit in (Burman et al. 1996). Statements, forming part of attachment discourses travel, and policy makers variously interpret, recreate, and put into action those, such as Bowlby's initial construction, or others' related constructions. They meet and merge with, and often stand in contestation to, other discourses in policies (Ball 2015, p. 311). The focus of our chapter is on the operation of attachment discourses in early childhood policy and practice prescriptions. We discuss how they constitute (what they say about) 'the child', 'the adult', and the relations, feelings, duties, and responsibilities of actors and with what effects (what they do).

In our post-structuralist policy and practice analysis, we attempt to also critique our own positions, including our realist representational practices as academics, and the ways in which psychology is an implicit ingredient of our professional and everyday lives and writing (Burman et al. 1996; Petersen 2015). So to keep in check, we introduce a different voice. This voice is hoped to trouble our position as 'disembodied and "objective" knowers' or the realists in our writing that psychological frameworks usually present their authors (Lather and Smithies, 1997, p. xvi) and the ways in which we also operate within the 'psy-complex' as researchers and authors of this text.We use this different speaking position to critique or transgress the discourse we produce and to 'extend interpretive power beyond the borders of the officially sanctioned researcher' (Pignatelli 1998, p. 405). This voice catches the realist, the operation of psychology/ists in our text. We posit this 'voice' (in italics) in dialogue with the text.

Here I am. They introduced me. I was asked to transgress their text and to catch when it is inscribed by psy-discourses. This is a difficult task to undertake, but I will attempt. Foucault helps me here, as he argues that knowledge is gained only by the critique of knowledge since knowledge is implicated in

power. So I will critique the knowledge that is produced in this text. I will look for epistemological strategies to create 'pure knowledge', such as deduction, induction, syllogism or interpretation, that are all attempts to control thought and action. I will 'think' with the text, where 'thinking' is a continual transgression of established norms and truths. To help my work of transgression I use these questions: What are the epistemological strategies the text is using? What norms and dynamics do the text re/produce while it also critiques? How does the text create particular knowledge claims? What positioning/s is the text written from and what positioning/s does it create for the reader?

Here is the first one: All the possible ways in which a relationship between a mother and child can be understood are reduced in the text to the one offered from a governmentality perspective—attachment is understood as a discourse regulating people through the norms it prescribes. So the 'truth' of 'attachment theory' is replaced with another 'truth'. However, this knowledge is not free from power, the power to persuade the reader to view attachment as the authors have painstakingly laid out.

Positioning, Contexts and Politics: Two 'Sides'

We are trained in psychology and work as academics in the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC). In our research and teaching, we are critical of the ways the 'psy-complex' operates in early childhood policy and practice. After Zsuzsa moved from Australia to Finland for two years, we met with Maarit, a Finnish Professor of ECEC. Our informal discussions about early childhood education and care in these two countries led us to develop a 'hunch' about the influence of, and current, but differing take on, attachment theory in these contexts, and the ways in which they regulate certain actors. As Petersen (2015, p. 150) argues using Ozga's work, 'research projects tend to spring from the hunches that researchers develop as they travel along the discursive webs we have come to know as the social world', so we decided to undertake a 'study' to follow up on our hunch. We considered attachment theory as an idea that travels, or flows across boundaries and that is translated, or undergoes change in its new settings (Cowen 2009). We were interested in thinking further about what is being viewed as attachment and how it operates in these two policy contexts.

Reading these words: 'academics', 'trained in psychology' and 'working in early childhood' I wonder what they do by conjuring up a world of highly accomplished intellectuals. Reminding me of what Parker said, Maarit is then

associated with a scientific rank that lends her authority 'to know' people and their actions, as psychologists do. As Parker (2007, p. 11) explains further: 'Traditional psychologists all too often tell us that this is the way the world is, this is the way people are, this is what can and cannot be done, as if they knew. But they do not'.

In the next sentence, as a curtain would fall, the text changes to an informal tone—as if to manufacture uncertainty and unfamiliarity that poststructuralist researchers should have based on their epistemological stance. In my opinion, this kind of informality cautiously steers the reader away from the authoritative introduction of the 'performers' and the weight of their arguments. However, that doesn't mean that the arguments become less authoritative.

Translation is a useful concept for our analysis. According to Cowen (2009, p. 323), translation is 'the shape-shifting of educational institutions or the re-interpretation of educational [and psychological] ideas which routinely occurs with the transfer in space: "the chameleon process"'. He continues by arguing that the transfer, translation, and transformation of ideas and organisations are most intense (time-compressed), and we add discernible, when there is a collapse or redefinition of a political vision. Although we cannot claim such a grand change that, for example, accompanied the end of the Soviet Bloc, we still think that the rapid developments that took place from the beginning of the twenty-first century with the economisation and neoliberalisation of ECEC in most economically developed nations (OECD) marks a watershed that has led to the intensive re/translation of older and new ideas into policies and practice prescriptions worldwide (Moss 2015). Attracting the support and attention of nation states from the end of the twentieth century in even those countries that have neglected early childhood education until then (we could arguably place Australia here), nations began to invest money into developing ECEC services and policy initiatives (Moss 2015). As Moss (2015, p. 227) explains:

> In particular, what has refocused governmental attention on early childhood education is a belief, fed by the influence of relatively new disciplines and theories, neuroscience and human capital, that early intervention, in the very first years of life, provides an effective and relatively cheap technical fix for both social and economic failings, often expressed in terms of a high rate of return on 'social investment' in this field.

With the increased focus and the newly found 'super power' attributed to ECEC in economic realms, technologies of control have also been increasingly applied that take shape, for example, 'as general structures and one dimensional standards for practices. These are based on contemporary and updated developmentally appropriate practices [based on psychological theories and research] … In fact, the more complex things become the more we seem to desire processes of reduction and thus increase control' (Lenz Taguchi 2010, p. 14). Set against this backdrop, we were thinking about the ways in which attachment has been translated and operationalized in this seemingly uniform global context of ECEC in two countries: Finland, which has a long history of large governmental investment into ECEC since the 1970s (Karila 2012) and Australia with a relatively new and large federal investment from 2007[1] (Sumsion et al. 2010).

I am reading here about a world that is described in a very particular way: things flow, get translated; a worldwide agreement on ECEC is constructed; then suddenly a separate analytical space emerges with two perspectives. Those are powerfully justified: worthy to be taken up in the analysis. The difference created here forms a part of the inductive logic of the analysis that prepares a deductive reasoning to arrive at in the conclusion. My question is: Why among the many other possibilities has this difference been selected? What are its effects and how conclusions could have been made otherwise?

Our politics here spring from two sources: First, Parker's (2002) definition of critical activity in psychology calls for the deconstruction of mental phenomena that is invariably located in individuals' heads or 'insides', such as attachment as it is argued to be located in the child and carer (see explanation later). He argues for repositioning these phenomena within the operation of discourse between people. Second, and relatedly, our politics springs from Foucault's notion of governmentality according to which psychology works as a technology of government that regulates people through their own freedom by offering/conditioning possibilities between which they can choose (Rose 1999). Psychological discourses are vested with power that regulates individuals to become certain subjects and by aligning their actions through their rational choice rather than coercion (Rose 1999).

While we are at this point, I need to say that I am also acting here in a certain way, offering you a particular way to read this text. Am I governing you, reader?

Constructing the 'Normal' Adult Child Relationship

Attachment is variously defined as a developing and changing affective relationship between child and carer in response to the experience of the relationship (Cassidy and Shaver 2008). Attachment research is a large field that spreads across physiological, clinical, developmental, and social psychology journals, and includes numerous anthologies alongside research that adapts these theories to applied fields, including ECEC. Due to this voluminous research, authors themselves utilize various definitions, often in contestation, of what attachment is and what the theory is aimed to explain and how. Others search for the 'real' definition, such as Vicedo (2011, p. 402), who suggests taking into account Bowlby's original historico-political context of the 1950s that was characterized by critical debates about women's role in modern society to arrive at a 'better' understanding of the theory. All in all, and after various debates, Karen (1994, p. 90) contends that attachment, for Bowlby, represents a 'complex, developing process' that is 'close to the idea of love, if not identical with it'.

> *Descriptions of attachment theory in this text help to produce it as a reality in a scientific configuration—especially when this text utilizes numerous references to others' work. They 'researched' this concept and what they thought this concept encompassed, then they captured those elements in their studies: warmth, kindness, attention, longevity etc. Sounds like everyday life doesn't it? As Parker (2007, p. 3) also explains: 'Psychology pretends that it is a science, but it draws its images of the human being from culture and from everyday life to construct its object' (Parker 2007, p. 3). How else can parent and child, teacher and child relations be known, felt, sensed …? In what other ways would it be possible to talk about these relationships? Perhaps as poets do:*
>
> *'I SEE the sleeping babe, nestling the breast of its mother;*
> *The sleeping mother and babe—hush'd, I study them long and long.'*
> *Mother and Babe by Walt Whitman*

Taken for granted in psychology, Bowlby (1958) approached attachment as a mental phenomenon and theorized the *interiority of the child and mother* and their relation to each other. He explained that the child-mother dyad composes a biological system; they are tied to each other: 'babies are so designed by Nature that they beguile and enslave mothers' (Bowlby 1958, p. 351). Creating the notion of the mother-child bond,

Bowlby drew on, amongst other theorists, Lorenz's notion of imprinting, an internal biological instinct that infant birds exhibit towards the first moving object they see (Vicedo 2011; Karen 1994). In his search for a model of attachment, he devised the concept of 'internal working models' to describe the ways in which interaction patterns between child and trusted person(s) evolves into relationship representations of self and other in attachment relations (Bretherton and Munholland 2008). This is an internal model in each person that is built, used and revised, and that 'allows us, for example, to imagine interactions and conversations with others, based on our previous experiences with them' (Bretherton and Munholland 2008, p. 103). These models are constructed in interpersonal relationships, but the most important relationships become the property of the child (Bowlby 1988). Bowlby then 'wedded this idea to Piaget's (1951, 1952) theory of sensorimotor development, representation, and perspective taking' (Bretherton and Munholland 2008, p. 108) and devised his developmental stages of attachment.

> *Maybe I could tell you about that relationship from the point of view of children (but still described by adults) how children sense a special relationship between an adult and the child:*
>
> *In a preschool 'Simon (1,6) is sitting in a high chair and has been playing with a puzzle for a short while. He stops his play, looks around in the playroom, and the presence of an educator catches his attention. He points towards her and calls her name gladly. She calls his name back with a cheerful voice. He climbs down on the floor and walks to her. She lifts him up, saying, "Come here, my little one". Simon smiles.' (*Pálmadóttir and Einarsdóttir 2015*, p. 1487)*

Mary Ainsworth (1967), adding greatly to Bowlby's theory, hypothesized five stages of attachment development, and also developed the notion of 'secure attachment'. She argued that infants with secure attachments tend to explore their environment with the comforting knowledge that their caregivers will reassure them if needed (Ainsworth et al. 1978). 'Insecure attachment', according to Ainsworth, potentially leads to lowered self-esteem, relationship issues, inability, or difficulty in seeking help, and deformed character development that lasts through a person's adult life. Ainsworth, through her work, firmly outlined 'normal' attachment and the pathology attached to it.

The gendered and conservative ideology underpinning Bowlby's psychological theory lays down 'normal relationship' in relation to economic

life. Accommodating to the shifting economic and social demands in light of the weakening of 'traditional' family system of the 1950s and the changing priorities of the welfare state, variations to the theory redefined what was considered 'normal' (Billington 1996). The 'mother' in the theory became a 'specific person'—a father, carer or educator. Also, more than one person could experience feelings of attachment with a child, and vice versa. Attachment theory and its shifting formats reflected the changing cultural meanings of motherhood, family and the 'quality' of the child. The 'quality' of the child, in relation to his or her upbringing, was initially expressed by concerns in relation to the child's environment at the turn of the twentieth century, with a focus on hygiene. Later 'quality' was focused on in the character of the child (from the 1950s); that was followed by the psychological health of the child from the 1980s, as Alldred's (1996) genealogy of psychological concerns about child-raising details. Currently 'quality' is closely linked to the healthy brain as defined in neuroscience knowledge (Millei 2015). In this way, the different forms of attachment theory link/ed 'appropriate relationship' to the 'quality' of the child in different ways.

> *I notice that in the void created by deconstruction, a position is inserted that is better valued. At the same time, the text appears in a light of objectivity 'claiming to know "from nowhere"', as the positivist tradition would have it (*Petersen 2015*, p. 148). As Foucault tells us, in the will to truth, power seeks to protect itself by mystifying its control over knowledge. However, I discern its operation and triumph here, to instil and develop its hold on the reader by showing a careful review of the literature, by shoring up different (but carefully selected) views of experts –points and counterpoints—as if to control its 'unreason', summarizing and leading the argument in a premeditated direction, to go hand-in-hand with the reader so the reader can follow the reasoning of the text—as intended.*

Attachment theory is an influential framework for understanding relationships in contemporary early childhood policy and practice (in Australia see Degotardi and Pearson 2009; in Finland see Horppu and Ikonen-Varila 2004). There have been numerous publications that promoted attachment-related concepts to early childhood practitioners (e.g. Raikes 1996; Honig 2002; Elfer et al. 2003; Harrison 2003; Rolfe 2004; Wittmer and Petersen 2005; Dolby 2007) and incorporated attachment constructs into early childhood policy, curriculum and pedagogical documents

(Degotardi and Pearson 2009). In these texts, in a general manner, the above-explored variations of attachment discourses and subjects are reiterated in the contexts of various other ECEC discourses. For example, it is argued that infants' attachment has implications for their *learning*, that is, to independently explore and learn about their world and to form *new relationships*. It is also maintained that attachment also affects children's *self-confidence* with which they explore their environment (Raikes 1996). Based on this understanding, early childhood settings are often thought of as environments where children maintain existing attachments, form new attachments to significant figures, or as sites where relationships with significant others could replace 'insecure attachments', and finally as sites of intervention in children's and parents' lives who suffer from 'attachment issues' (Horppu and Ikonen-Varila 2004; Aylward et al. 2010; Buyse et al. 2009). However, not all observers are in agreement that attachment theory is ubiquitous in early childhood education and care. Some contest this view, such as Cortazar and Herredos (2010) from the US context. They argue 'that attachment theory has not been widely used as an explanatory theory in this field' while it could be utilized to 'better understand why some children do not adapt to our preschool settings' (Cortazar and Herreros 2010, p. 193).

> *The observer and knower position of the authors—psychologists aren't they—is quite blatant by the end of this review, do you notice that too? I see a scenario developing: 'Attachment' is sitting on the (psychologist's) couch. The psychologist examines it to understand its workings each doing following the other deed. Then she establishes a truth about its 'true', 'hidden', 'deeply held' or 'unconscious' nature that remained inaccessible before—even for attachment (the patient)—but nonetheless regulating. This is the foundation that is prepared for the psychologist to give advice.*
>
> *I question how a post-foundational Foucauldian analysis can arrive at a foundation this way.*

Our Task

We untangle, as Rose (1995) proposed, how the 'psy-complex' operates in early childhood policy and practice through the dynamic and contingent interplay between 'attachment discourses', policy frames, and pedagogies in various texts and contexts. Our attention is focused on how

subjectivities, power relations and practice subscriptions are produced by attachment discourses. To do this work we use Ian Parker's (2002) model of the 'psy-complex', Foucault inspired discourse analysis, and the concept of governmentality in our analysis. We consider policies as discourse where the adoption of attachment theory produces discursive statements and emotions that tell a story about the self and ways to perform this self: 'the child', 'the teacher' and 'the parent/adult'. Our aim is to open up spaces in which *it becomes necessary* to think about what 'we' do, or what we produce, in Australia and Finland with the adoption of attachment theory in relation to particular childhoods, children, families, early childhood education and care, and professional work (Ball 2015, p. 311 paraphrased).

To assist in our analysis of attachment discourses we ask the following questions: What statements, stories and emotions do attachment discourses produce in early childhood policy and practice? What conditions of possibility do attachment statements offer for the individual to understand, monitor, regulate, and improve her or himself and with what effects?

Policy Contexts: Australia and Finland

In policy texts, the early childhood years in Australia are positioned as a key factor in ensuring mothers' workforce participation and helping to raise a productive future workforce. Both agendas are related to the maintenance of economic competitiveness nationally and internationally through guaranteeing 'the social and economic functioning of society into the future' (Commonwealth of Australia 2007, 4). The importance of the early childhood years is mostly argued in financial terms: as actual investments and returns in specific dollar amounts, by drawing on longitudinal studies of investments into ECEC. Returns are translated into savings on welfare spending (Commonwealth of Australia 2007, 10), such as crime, unemployment, social and health services and so on. However, the system (if it could be termed that way) is far from fulfilling these aspirations. As the current McKell Institute's Report (Brennan and Adamson 2015, p. 7) summarizes: 'parents of one in six children were struggling to access child care services in their area, with just over one half of parents indicating that a failure to secure child care was hindering their ability to meet work commitments'. The report adds that Australia spends less than the OECD average on ECEC where the provisioning

is dominantly user paid and includes community, private, and for-profit centers with a very small number of centres provided by state or municipal governments.[2]

> *The context for each country is constructed in front of my eyes—a 'realist history' (*Petersen 2015*) is composed from a highly selective treatment of history, policy frameworks and provision descriptions. This construction can then be, and are set against, one another from particular (objective) frames of viewing to reach the intended effect—to see the similarities and differences the text wants you to see: 'As Foucault (1980) notes scientificity is something that is assembled, it is a performativity; processes are presented in certain ways, arguments for the choice of these processes are made in a particular way and so on. The passive language, for example, makes it appear as if no human subject was involved in any extensive way.' (*Petersen 2015, p. 155*).*

From the end of the last century, two dominant and intertwined discursive threads have been present in Australian policies: risk and neurosciences. Knowledges and mechanisms for risk management include regimes of quality assurance, monitoring, regulation, centralized planning, and evaluation. These assessment regimes re/produce discourses of 'risk' and 'assurance', legitimizing their own introduction. At the same time, they also reframe pedagogies to mitigate these risks. They have fuelled considerable changes in ECEC that resulted in the release of a *National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care* (Council of Australian Governments 2009). This agenda subsequently included the publication of national regulatory policies, establishment of a national ECEC organization (ACECQA), and the publication of the first national ECEC curriculum (Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [AGDEEWR] 2009) applicable to all early years settings, which here we will term as 'day care' disregarding their specificities and differences in provision.

In Finland, since the 1970s, the government invested first in building the day care system, making it available to all employed parents by the mid 80s. Then, the focus shifted to pedagogical aspects, that were less addressed previously (Kampmann 2004). Since the 1990s, each child has had a statutory right for ECEC after maternal and parental leaves, which end when the child is around ten months old. In the new century, early childhood became an investment, not only in families' lives, but also in children's lives. ECEC is considered to be part of education and is the first phase of lifelong learning (e.g. Karila 2012). However, it is also associ-

ated with municipal day care, since public day-care centres and family day care (in groups of four children) are the main institutions providing both early childhood education and child care in the country. The obligatory preschool classes for six-year-olds are also often organised in day-care centres. In Finnish political debates, the Teacher's Union and politicians commonly refer to ECEC as an investment in the (society's) future. Although the mothers' low attendance in the labour market is highly debated in Finland, the debates do not relate to ECEC that much because of the child's right to ECEC. They focus mainly on the function of the homecare allowance that parents are entitled to if their child (younger than three years) is not in public day care. Due to the homecare allowance, small children are more often, cared for at home, or in other informal contexts, in Finland than in most European countries (e.g. Repo 2009).

Finnish legislation on early childhood education and care emphasises the child's overall development and wellbeing as well as learning, education, and the quality of the early education environment. One of the statutory goals of ECEC is to establish stable relationships between the child and the early education staff (Varhaiskasvatuslaki 1973/36[3]) In 2003, the first national curriculum guidelines on ECEC were published in Finland (Stakes 2004), which are now under revision. This is not a binding document, but a 'core plan', which presents the principles and content orientations of ECEC. The curriculum guidelines have a social-pedagogical orientation and emphasise play.

Selection of Data for Analysis

For the analysis we have reviewed those policy documents in both countries that govern the provision of ECEC and were released after the turn of the century. Other policies were selected in a process that is more of sampling than accounting for all other existing documents. The analysed documents include national curriculum documents, policy initiatives, reports, and guidebooks or training materials that translate the curriculum to more practical prescriptions.

> *This is a poststructural analysis, and see, 'the realist context-making' is followed by the norm of 'scientistic method section' (*Petersen 2015*, 155) as in a positivist study.*

Psy-complex

'Psy-complex' 'pertains to the individual, self-monitoring subject and the many practices that subjects employ to survey and improve themselves' (Parker 2002, p. 199). Psychological theories and practices provide subjects with sets of narratives to understand themselves and act in specific ways; and a set of norms according to which the subject can surveil and develop themselves (Foucault 1980). These narratives are composed of discursive statements that constitute the ways in which we think and feel about problems and solutions. Parker (2002) discusses six discursive complexes of 'psy' (already prevalent in Freud's work) that are structured into three pairs. We understand these complexes as dynamics that produce 'psy' related discursive statements and their power effects. The first pair is 'ego' versus 'id', where 'ego' works as a defence against that which is outside of 'normal', and that which is being produced by the 'id'. The 'not normal' is the constitutive outside of the 'normal' (rational), thus by producing the 'not normal' the 'id' constitutes the 'normal' as well.[4] For example, by constituting what is 'insecure attachment', how to 'normally' relate also takes form. The second pair is 'working through' and 'acting out' that constitutes places where 'rational' debate may take place, but also spaces where the defence mechanism of the 'ego' can be activated in the form of 'acting out'. For example, the preschool could work as both. As a place of 'acting out', the child can display signs of 'insecure attachment' and educators aim to accommodate this behaviour. As a 'therapeutic place', the educator can 'treat' the faulty or missing relationship by offering advice to parents, or by forming an attachment with the child to fill the need. The third pair, 'stages of development' vs 'polymorphous perversity', is the most familiar in ECEC since the notion of the 'developing child' carries this dynamism. 'Stages of development' or 'developmental progress' is an often critiqued discursive complex of 'psy' (see Walkerdine 1993; Burman 1994; Cannella 1997). This complex shapes how psychological theories understand the human lifespan: in sequences that surpass previous ones in a measure of advancement. As we do our analysis, we read policies against these pairs and spot 'psy' in its dynamics of operation in statements and their power effects.

'Psy' Dynamics in Policies

Many documents, both in Finland and Australia, translate attachment as an 'emotional tie' or 'bond' between a child and a parent, often qualifying it as a 'strong' or 'secure' emotional tie that is the basis of children's well-being (e.g. Finnish curriculum – Stakes 2004, p. 15, 2005, p. 13; Australian curriculum – AGDEEWR 2009). For example, in the Finnish curriculum, attachment promotes wellbeing and learning. By creating a relationship between wellbeing and learning, two important aims of ECEC, the text normalises the kinds of relationship that is necessary for those aims: stable, warm and personal relationships for learning and wellbeing:

> Children's well-being in ECEC activities is promoted through stable[5] and warm personal relationships. Their relationships to parents, educators and other children are fostered… (Stakes 2004, p. 15, 2005, p. 13).
>
> Warm personal[6] relationships provide a basis for [in the original, 'good'] learning (Stakes 2004, p. 17, 2005, p. 16).

In the Australian curriculum wellbeing, learning and attachment are also linked, where wellbeing is a prerequisite to learning and promoted by relationships that are warm and trusting:

> Children's wellbeing can be affected by all their experiences within and outside of their early childhood settings. To support children's learning, it is essential that educators attend to children's wellbeing by providing warm, trusting relationships, predictable and safe environments, affirmation and respect … (AGDEEWR 2009, p. 30)

Attachment discourses frame normal relationships and construct non-normal relationships that are cold, lacking trust and stability, and are 'risky' to children's wellbeing and learning. Relationships are rendered on a developmental trajectory where 'secure' attachment is positioned at the end of progression, needing 'one-on-one' attention, play, routines, reading sessions to develop (Educators' Guide to EYLF). Attachment, thus, is progressively built, as it is explained in the '*Educators' stories and models for practice*' section of the Educators' Guide to the EYLF (p. 117):

> One on one and shared enjoyable experiences will help our developing primary care attachment and give Layla the confidence and trust to be able to explore her environment with less inhibition, therefore learning more and more.

The idea of progressive development introduces temporality and gradation to the relationship that is extended in time and has consequences for the child's later wellbeing. The Finnish documents outline that the relationship with the main attachment figure can continue to influence the child's adaptive competence in situations in which the attachment figure is not present, and can have an effect on her or his learning and overall development (e.g. Stakes 2004, p. 17, 2005, p. 16). In the above quote, and also in other Australian documents, this influence is not discussed explicitly; rather, it is implied: without the attachment developed in the family, the child is inhibited in her exploration, but building secure attachment with the educator will remedy this problem.

> Research has shown that babies are both vulnerable and competent. Babies' first attachments within their families and within other trusting relationships provide them with a secure base for exploration and learning (AGDEEWR 2009, p. 12).

The notion 'secure' is used in a double meaning in both contexts. First, in the form of quality of attachment that is hard to break. 'Secure' attachment only develops over time and, as a result, of the caregiver's continuous labour (as in the previous quote). In the second meaning, 'secure' attachment provides a stronghold for the child. It operates as a defence, for example, in the presence of unknown peers or adults, and when entering a new environment. 'Secure attachment' creates a safe micro-space that could 'travel' with the child into new environments, such as different institutions, school or society, and through the life of the child.

> *I understand, the discourse analysis attempts to reconstruct how acts, feelings, and notions are made sense of as attachment in policy documents that give rise to particular practices of attachment that are vested with power. However, I could, in the same way, read this analysis also as interpretative where authors search for 'deeper meanings' and 'intentions' hidden in these documents that are now uncovered with the careful 'analytical' work of the writers (psychologists looking for repressed feelings, acts, memories* etc.*). Thus the truths that have been so far 'repressed', inaccessible, and at the same time controlling, 'come out' into the open, can be acted out, diagnosed and remediated.*

As soon as the 'normal' relationship is created, the outside is constituted: the 'not normal'. ECEC in Australia is listed as one of the avenues to grapple with inequalities, such as wealth differentials, and the result-

ing environmental disadvantages and loss of economic productivity. This social and economic agenda seamlessly mixes with the discourse of attachment in the Policy Brief authored by The Centre for Community Child Health Centre (CCCHC) (2009) (aiming to inform the government's early years policy in Australia):

> …children's relationships, particularly with their parents or primary caregivers, are highly vulnerable to the stress that is often associated with poverty (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child 2006). In turn, this compromises child development and stymies the realisation of human potential. The ability of a child to reach his or her full potential, and become a self-sufficient and successful adult, is particularly limited when a family remains consistently poor.

Poverty stymies human potential–the 'not normal' is constituted–but a 'proper' attachment relationship provides the 'normal' future of the child. If poverty continuously persists around the child, it can prevent the development of, or break 'secure' relationships, and can lead to the state of 'polymorphous perversity' of crime, unemployment and so on. In this equation, even if the assumed consequences are left unsaid, the responsibility falls back to the parent and her or his 'resilience' in poverty to be able to create and maintain a warm and trusting relationship with the child. Another Policy Brief (CCCHC 2006, p. 2) makes this link more explicit: 'how well their [parents'] basic needs (income, employment, housing) are met; their social connectedness', employment and related workplace arrangements improve'. The parent is constructed as 'poor' implying also 'poor parenting', a powerful construction that marks and regulates those parents' lives who do not meet the minimum living standards. Similarly to feminist scholars' arguments, constructing parents and parenting as 'poor' 'legitimizes normative concepts of motherhood [parenthood] and mandate[s] social services and clinical inventions to police working class caregiving' (Duschinsky et al. 2014, p. 6; Vicedo 2011). The individualisation of social and educational problems is prevalent in these policies, a process referred to as 'the parenting turn' that reduces parents to sites of intervention (Gillies 2005; Geinger et al. 2014).

In a Finnish guideline on ECEC curriculum (Kaskela and Kronqvist 2007), the attachment discourse provides a resource for interpreting the child's home experiences when the child starts to attend day care. Thus attachment is framed as a diagnostic tool of the child's wellbeing in the

process of transition from home to child care. Furthermore, in this particular publication (Kaskela and Kronqvist 2007), attachment between the child and parent provides the rationale for developing educational partnerships between the family and the educator. Within the partnership, the educator tends to the existing attachment between the parent and the child while the child is in day care. The educator's role is to nurture the mother-child attachment while the parent is not present. Of course, this set up raises questions about the nature of possible relationships of professionals with children. Can they attach to children the same way as parents do, or must their relationship with children remain 'second grade' to that? This formulation of attachment nicely fits within the rationales for the provision of preschool in Finland, that is, to provide substitute care in periods when the primary care of the home is not available, and to fulfil children's rights to *education*. Attachment is translated differently in the Australian case, where the educator's task is, while acknowledging the parent child attachments, to form an additional secure attachment with the child to sustain the child's wellbeing while the parent is not present. This translation of attachment theory fits in well with other discourses in which educators are valued as substitute mothers (Ailwood 2007). A commonality between contexts in practice prescriptions is that children could bring objects or photos to 'keep alive' (Finnish case) or 'remind' (Australian case) the children of the attachment with the parent. If the child was upset, the educator brings these to comfort the child. In sum, the ways in which attachment is translated in to both ECEC policies prescribe a form of emotional practice adding further to arguments that describe early childhood educators' work as emotional labour (Osgood 2004; Taggart 2011).

The educator in both contexts is constituted as a master of attachment, who can create, assess, and remediate relationships. The documents, especially the *Australian Educators Guide*, describe the process of how the educator can create this relationship. The site of the home, or preschool, can become spaces for 'acting out' problems with parent–child attachment, or where therapeutic intervention might happen (see Buyse et al. 2009; Colmer et al. 2011). In the Finnish case, the educator visits the home to gather pictures of the attachments of the child. The educator assesses the situation with expertise and then tends this relationship in the day care, which at the same time ensures the child's wellbeing. In the Australian case, especially in relation to child protection cases, the preschool substitutes for the home and the attachments the child has there. In cases where the home attachment is insecure or

lacking, in the therapeutic space of the preschool the parent might be 'remedied'. Through advice that concerns the importance of attachment and therapy, that includes showing how to play with and read to the child, the formation of attachment is facilitated. The hope is that behaviours will improve with this therapy and the parent will learn to 'better' relate to the child. If not, the attachment dyad is substituted by another dyad formed between, for example, an educator or social worker and the child (e.g. Aylward et al. 2010 from Australia; Finnish documents Korkalainen 2014). In this way, day care settings become therapeutic places of 'acting out', where it is safe(r) to display, or act out attachment problems, and there are practices in place to remedy the issue. The day care is a place to 'work through' issues associated with attachment. The educator, in turn, is constructed as an expert and practitioner of attachment, who is performing this task as a professional.

> *So, this is a Foucauldian policy analysis that tells us that this is the world according to these policies, and attempts to make that strange/unfamiliar: this is the way people are constructed, this is how they are regulated. But I wonder, what world does this analysis itself construct in turn?*

Complex Entanglements

As we have highlighted, the transfer of attachment discourses produces educators, practice prescriptions, and emotions differently in these two contexts. In Finnish documents, the day care is a place where educators tend the child–parent attachment through the day. It is not prescribed for the educator to develop an affective relationship with the child. Practices that remind the child of their bonds with the parents, such as weaving from good-bye windows, the presence of favourite home toys, or family pictures, aim to sustain feelings in the absence of the parent. The child's wellbeing and learning is secured this way. In the Australian case, documents suggest strategies to educators through which they can progressively build a secure bond that helps the child operate in the day care environment in the absence of parents, and that ensures the child's wellbeing and learning. The management of feelings accompanying the emotional tie comprise a part of professional labour in both contexts. Attachment discourses thus intersect with professional discourses of ECEC in complex ways.

I notice that out of the many possible truths foreshadowed in the analysis one is laid out here. While this 'truth' is at best uncertain, there is no sign of uncertainty here. Through careful interpretation 'attachment' reemerges in a different form, formulated to fit the politics of the authors outlined earlier.

While attachment emotions are developed in systematic ways in the Australian case, in Finland they are held distant from the educator, however, in both cases, they are part of being a professional. In the Australian case, this kind of professional emotion management is somewhat in contestation with another discourse that considers educators of young children as amateurish enthusiasts (mothers) whose characteristic is to love children for altruistic reasons (Ailwood 2007). According to Moyles (2001) emotions are necessary for working with young children, but having qualities for emotions prevent practitioners from being considered as professionals. In order to distance ECEC professionalism from this latter discourse, during the past decade, agendas attached to the professionalization of ECEC called for the abandoning of traditional association of the profession with care (Taggart 2011). Could we understand the translation of attachment discourses into the Australian context as the professionalization of the management of emotions?

The major premise—the new interpretations of attachment developed in the analysis—meets here with a number of specific statements, and conclusions are drawn. I am curious about this since there is no sign of the word 'conclusion' (meaning a judgement reached by reasoning) as a header for this section, but there are judgements laid, some of them in a quite strong tone, colonizing the remaining uncertainty that was cautiously built up before.

Additionally, and during the same period, lifelong learning discourses also incorporated ECEC in the trajectory of learning from birth to death in both contexts (Karila 2012; Millei 2008). It is not difficult to see the ways in which the Australian framework's attachment discourses seamlessly mix in with learning discourses and agendas. Attachment is something to learn for both educators and children. Situated within this paradox of care (discourses of amateurism or professionalism) and discourses of learning, perhaps we could contest Osgood's (2004, p. 19) argument that professionals' 'personal and emotional investments' to nurture and safeguard children happen for *only* altruistic reasons. To her humanist position, the managerialist and performative stances of policy and its prescriptions could be added in both the Finnish and Australian cases. Both Osgood

(2004) and Taggart (2011, p. 88) call upon the notion of 'ethic of care' based on Noddings' (1984) articulation, to contrast 'performative' professionalism. For Noddings' (1984, p. 94) an 'ethic of care' is an internal ethical ideal 'developed in congruence with one's best remembrance of caring and being cared for'. However, the managerialist and performative stances of attachment carry the danger of conflating an 'ethic of care' with subscribed normative and moral behaviours around emotions. This danger alerts us to the question, of who we—as educators of young children—have been made to become before we are ever in a position to make further determinations about our 'ethic of care' (Butler 2004, p. 24).

When the idea of writing together about attachment came up, we did not expect that attachment discourses would have such a strong position, for example, in the municipal level guidelines in Finland. As academics educating pre-service preschool teachers and working in the framework of discursive psychology, we teach our students critical thinking and provide them with alternative perspectives on psy, including those of Foucault, Parker, or poststructuralist feminist scholars referenced in this chapter. However, where does our own 'ethic of care' lie in these policy contexts that prescribe particular attachment practices for our students? What does our teaching produce within these contexts?

I wonder what is this change in tone? What is the work that it does? What purchase does this tone have? Is this about returning to uncertainty coupled with an element of surprise and discovery, something that a Foucauldian policy analysis should perform?

And again, we are back in the theatre. As in the end of a story, we can return to the scenario presented at the beginning creating a circular structure and 'closure', but we are better informed now, right? In 'closure' there is a desire for a firm answer to a question, or for the dissolution of ambiguity. Perhaps calling again on authority (and the knowledge and power associated with that invoked by the word 'academics') provides this 'closure' with the promise that we now know better and have the competency to deal with it.

Notes

1. It has to be said that the Australian Commonwealth government has made a relatively large investment into ECEC during the 1970s to enable women's workforce participation and as a result of feminist movements, however these investments quickly waned by the 1980s and remains minimal until 2007.

2. The Australian terminology is very complex for different ECEC settings that also vary between states, so for ease we just refer to all settings as day care in Australia and also in Finland.
3. The Finnish Legislation on Early Childhood Education and Care http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1973/19730036
4. As Rose (1985) also explains in relation to mental testing and the constitution of the 'normal', the invention of mental testing set up a reciprocal dependence of 'normality' and 'abnormality', because the extensive initial examination of the abnormal set up standards for normality, and in turn the measurement of mental abilities according to the criteria of normality determined the abnormal.
5. The quotation is from the official English translation of the Finnish national curriculum guidelines. However, the adjective used for stable in the original Finnish document could rather be translated as "secure", since it refers to an emotional experience or state of an individual rather than an experience that lasts for a period of time, such a stable.
6. This quotation is also from the same document as the previous one. Again, the original Finnish document has the adjective secure, which has been translated to "warm personal".

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CHAPTER 4

Becoming a 'Learner' in the Australian Primary School: An (Auto)ethnographic Exploration

Eva Bendix Petersen

It is a hot and humid January day. My oldest son and I set off on our walk to the local primary school. He will turn five in a few days and has been deemed ready for 'kindy', wearing his brand new uniform with a mix of trepidation and pride. Although it is he who is starting 'big school' I too feel at a beginning. I went to primary school in a different country a long time ago and he is my first-born child, the trail blazer. We attended the information session some months back, which was entirely uninformative, and we are very unsure about the whole enterprise. We know about school, of course; conjured up in children's television shows and books, in advertisements, in the uniform he must wear, in the stories his dad and I tell, in the questions grown-up friends and strangers ask (apparently something one ought to be excited about), and so on. And we are excited as we walk along. We agree that this is a new adventure.

In this chapter I want to explore the process of becoming a recognizable and viable subject in the Australian primary school. There are many ways that one could do that and it is, no doubt, both an enormously

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_4

complex process and an inexhaustible question. Here I want to take an ethnographic approach which, because the site is my oldest son's start of school could be called a form of auto-ethnography, but which, because the study is not undertaken from his vantage point, does not fit strictly within the parameters of an auto-ethnography (which would have to be about becoming a 'parent' in the Australian primary school). On all accounts, it is the kind of qualitative research of everyday life that Brinkmann (2012) argues for, who, incidentally, also opens his book with a story about his child's first day of school.

I explore some of the ways in which my son in the course of his first year in a regional Australian public primary school, was positioned, and some of the discourses he was exposed to (when I was around to observe) and that he recounted as we went about our daily business. The focus here is on the discourses operating at school and not so much on his take-up of the discourses offered to him. I consider the (auto)ethnography to be critical in the sense that it seeks to problematise rather than merely describe these discourses and positionings.

The key analytical questions underpinning the exploration are: Who is it possible and impossible to become in this setting? How does one emerge as a subject? How are you met by others, both human and non-human, and what do you take yourself up to be? The title of the chapter, therefore, indicates the plot of the entire story I tell here rather than a starting point. While the process of becoming a viable and recognizable subject is multifaceted and involves many different forms of becoming, by examining the observations that I made at the time, it became clear to me that a predominant form of 'invitation to subjectivity' (O'Flynn and Petersen 2007) for my son and his peers was one of becoming a 'learner'. In the following paragraphs I will go on to substantiate the claim.

First, however, I need to briefly clarify the conceptual thinking technologies and methods used in this chapter. Thinking with Foucault (1980, 1988) and Butler (1997), along with a number of other education scholars (e.g. Youdell 2006; Davies 2006; Hey 2006), it is assumed that the process of becoming a subject, the process of subjectification, is ongoing. Becoming a culturally recognizable subject involves a citational and reiterative practice within various matrices of intelligibility (Butler 1990, 1993). Each of us is born into power/knowledge relations that we did not choose, to which we are subject, but as we are subject to multiple and contested power/knowledge relations, we can negotiate, exceed, critique, and transform them (Butler 1997). Schools, like other social and

cultural institutions, are sites of subjectification. Here we become, among many other things, a 'subject of school', where 'school' is both understood as idea and ideal, and understood as a specific school, with specific funding arrangements, specific architecture, specific humans, and specific rules, both spoken and unspoken, and so on. At school we are exposed to both familiar and unfamiliar discourses, known and troubling norms, and affirming and unsettling ways of being. Here we make sense of ourselves and others: Who am I? Who are they, what am I not, etc.? What can and can't I do? What is valued and when and by whom? Each of us, as e.g. 'students', 'teachers', or 'parents' are continuously subject to/of these processes. In relation to these sets of assumptions, it becomes interesting and important to ask what a subject can become here; how the subject is positioned; and how this subject takes itself up, and positions itself and others (Davies and Harré 1999).

A further assumption is that this subject is not a naturally given entity. The subject emerges as a historical effect (Foucault 1988). Contrary to mainstream psychological discourse that assumes the individual, assumes the human, as a more or less pre-scripted entity, a Foucauldian perspective does not accept the bounded individual as an ontological starting point, but rather wants to follow the ways in which boundedness, individuality, humanity, personality, and so on are construed, operate as cultural imperatives and are taken up, and what their effects are. What follows from thinking, feeling, living on these terms? This is not to say that when subjects enter schools they are boundless or empty, so to speak, as they have been subjected to discourses of personality, humanity, gender, etc. since before they were born, however, entering school does mean that in relation to other discourses of schooling of which one is already a subject, one does becomes subject of a specific school and must negotiate a viable subjecthood there.

Methodological Musings

The material that I draw on here are notes taken over the course of about 11 months—from late January to mid December 2014. It was not the intention from the outset to examine our beginning as a school-going family; however, as an educational researcher I could not help myself and found myself writing about it in my diary. As I have been using ethnographic methods (O'Reilly 2012) in my research for many years, it was a habit to record minute details of things I saw or heard, or things that my

son told me about. As I was writing a diary and not 'field-notes' there was no strict routine to my note taking and I was not systematic; I wrote when I wanted or needed to, sometimes just noting something in passing, other times describing something at length. Therefore, the text I draw on was not at first 'data', it became reconfigured that way later, which begs the question whether this is ethnography or a memoir of sorts, or something in between. Perhaps it is what Ruth Behar (2007) would call ethnography in a time of blurred genres. This refers to how our ethnographic writing invariably becomes a kind of creative non-fiction, where many different writing voices and positions may be in play and where their interplay blurs the boundaries between them.

I make no claims to objectivity here, neither in my observation nor in my analysis. This research (all research) is strongly situated. In one significant way, for example, it matters that in my professional capacity as an academic I have for about two decades taken an interest in the 'psy-complex' and the ways in which psychological discourses enable and constrain various ways of making sense and of living. Therefore, without having it as a clear focal point, or as a research question, it is apparent when the diary notes are read in their entirety that this interest is at play. It is particular observations, particular things people do or say, particular non-human agents, which are included in the descriptions in the diary. Many other things could have been observed, for example, the volume could have turned up in other discourses, such as race or class, observations about which do figure in the notes, as they intersect with psy-discourses. Furthermore, once I decided to use the notes as a basis for this chapter for this particular book, observations on other dynamics were placed to the side in order to pursue the analysis provided here. Therefore, when I claim that becoming a learner was a predominant form of becoming, it is based upon this double set of conditions: a prior interest ('bias') in the note-taking and, subsequently, a particular analytical gaze.

Researching from within your own life is full of unique opportunity and ethical conundrums. Or let us re-phrase that: making experiences and observations from your own ~~personal~~[1] life an *explicit* focus in your research is full of unique opportunities and ethical conundrums. The material you generate is different from the material an outsider would generate; someone coming into the site from somewhere else in order to observe. As Gingrich-Philbrook drily(2005) notes, auto-ethnography is 'easy access to compulsory experiences'. It is participatory in the fullest sense and there is no risk of 'going native'. Post-foundational auto-ethnography,

such as the one aspired to in this chapter, violates the split of classical ethnography between 'reportable nonparticipatory observation' (read: good) and 'nonreportable total participation' (read: bad) (Tedlock 2011: 332). Yet, as Davies (2004: 5) writes:

> Researchers are not separate from their data, nor should they be. The complexity of the movement and intersections amongst knowledge, power, and subjectivity require the researcher to survey life from within itself. Researchers come to know the lines of force that make up the social apparatus through being located in and on them, as those lines pull now in one direction and now in another, as they sediment, or break.

When this takes the shape of auto-ethnographic inquiry, however, particular and difficult ethical questions present themselves. There are issues around potential identification of sites and subjects, and issues around consent. In auto-ethnographic research it becomes difficult, sometimes undesirable, sometimes impractical, to ask for consent, which is not the same as saying that it is automatically unethical. Rather than applying a review board notion of research ethics, perhaps in these instances we need to apply a considered 'ethics of care' (Prosser 2011), where we must balance a care for everyone involved with a care for the integrity of critical inquiry. In the case of this study, I have de-identified specific sites and subjects by providing pseudonyms, and since we have moved away from the country and town in which this took place, identification would not be immediately possible (except for the people who know us personally). Also, as I do not give detailed description of individuals, and the focus is on the discourses and positionings used and offered, identification becomes both less likely and less fraught. In terms of consent, my concerns have centred on my son's involvement. Being ready to abandon the project, I have discussed it with him and asked him about what he thinks and feels about it.[2] He was entirely disinterested in the project (and wanted to talk about Pokémon instead), but said that it was 'OK.' As mentioned earlier, I decided to not focus on his adoption of the discourses offered to him, though, but on his particular process of subjectification and his negotiation of the 'learner' subject position. The focus of this study is the *possibilities* around 'becoming' and some of the ways these possibilities emerge.

The diary notes that I decided to use here were crafted into ethnographic vignettes and I used the present tense to give the reader a sense of the situation, perhaps a sense of being in the situation. Again, I draw on Behar's notion of blurred genres, acknowledging that elements of 'creative writing' and descriptive text are present and difficult

to disentangle. The vignettes are descriptive as well as at times reflective, which replicates the nature of my diary writing. The analytical strategy used here is a Foucauldian discourse analysis, where discourse is understood as practices of meaning-making, in the widest sense, that are lodged within particular regimes of truth (Foucault 1980), and where I focus on the discourses at play and the subject positionings offered within, and in relation to, these discourses (Petersen 2015; Davies and Harré 1999).

The following presentation and analysis of the vignettes is divided into two sections; in the first one I consider school as a place of learning; and in the second, the invitation to become a learner on psy-disciplinary terms. The chapter concludes with a discussion and conclusion.

School as a Place of Learning

Given the discursive terrain in which many of us live—Biesta (2013) calls it 'a learning age'—stating that school is 'a place of learning' seems obvious. Of course it is, what else would it be? However, not only would it be possible to configure school differently was one to focus differently (e.g. as a site of class oppression or capitalist indoctrination), researchers have also shown that in other times and places, other discourses of schooling were dominant (Bjerg and Rasmussen 2008; Biesta 2015). Moreover, some argue that Kindergarten, as a transition space between pre-school and 'big' school, is not 'real' school and, therefore, is not subject to quite the same discourses of schooling (Dockett et al. 2007). However, as pre-schools in Australia already are governed by learning-centred discourse (Grieshaber 2010) and the Kindergarten curriculum is too (Sumsion and Grieshaber 2012), that space has also, largely, been colonised by that regime of truth. The interesting question becomes how schools, including Kindergartens, not only in policy, but also in everyday practice, become configured as 'places of learning' and how that notion becomes naturalised.

In the case of our school, the production of that discourse was prevalent and multifarious. From the ways in which the principal and teachers addressed the children at morning assembly as 'students' or even explicitly as 'learners', to the ways parents' talked among themselves expressing concerns for their child being 'behind on their learning', to the way colourful motivational posters called out 'Kindergarten—learning is fun!' or 'Learning: it's not homework, it's LIFE-work!' Even school athletics day had an aspect of learning to them: 'learning how to use our bodies and

following rules'. What was particularly interesting, though, was the way 'learning' was circumscribed in particular ways. The following vignette illustrates this:

> On our way home, as I strap him into his car seat, I ask [my son] how his day was. He says, wide-eyed, excited, 'Jayden was on the red face two times! He got sent to Mrs. Winston's office'! I can hear in his voice that this is a big deal. 'Oh dear', I said, 'what is so bad about being sent to Mrs. Winston's office'? He replies, 'Well, Mr. Wendell said that he would get a time out and that this was not good because Jayden would miss out on a learning opportunity'. I almost laugh, seeing his little face using and underscoring those big words.

Here my son refers to one of the behaviour management techniques of his teacher, Mr. Wendell, who used a traffic light system with faces where the green face is meant to say 'good', the yellow face 'a bit naughty', and the red face says 'bad' (I am using the words that my son used when he at a different time explained it to me). According to the story, the consequence of being placed on the red face twice was that one was sent to the principal's office for a time out. The explanation my son's class was given for why this was a 'negative consequence' was that this boy would miss out on the opportunity to learn. While other teachers might have constituted the act of being sent to time out as learning in itself (as in 'learn your lesson, boy'), this teacher affirmed that being sent away precluded learning. In other words, learning happens in the classroom and the worst kind of 'negative consequence' (the word punishment would never be brought into play) would not be the principal's anger or disappointment, or the shame of being excluded from the group, or other such things, but to be deprived of the opportunity to learn. In this way, learning is linked to academic learning and the classroom constituted as the place for that to take place. Interestingly, this moment shows a particular technique in fabricating a learner subject where the imposition of the desire to learn is introjected via a threat of being deprived from learning opportunities.

The vignette also gives us insight into some of the palpable psy-disciplinary tools at work in this classroom. The traffic light behaviour management system continues to be a widely used tool in Australia which, according to proponents, will not only enable clear and non-confrontational communication to children, but also motivate the child to control his or her behaviour (Petersen 1995). For example, good/green behaviour will

enable you to move from ('earn the reward', in their parlance) the yellow light back onto the green light and the idea is that everyone begins on the green light each day. Proponents say that it will help children make better choices—that they will 'stop', 'think', and 'do (differently)' (ibid.). The tool rests on a mix of behaviourist (clear expectations, reinforcement, consequences) and cognitive psychology (awareness, self-regulation, choices). It aids the learning discourse as its self-proclaimed aim is to teach children about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

That school is a place of academic learning is further illustrated in the following vignette:

> I attend the teacher-parent conference alone as [my son's father] has to stay home to watch the kids. I'm looking forward to it, actually, to learn how these meetings are done and to hear how Mr. Wendell will talk and what he will talk about. I sit outside the classroom on a bench and wait my turn. The parents before me leave; we greet, and Mr. Wendell asks me to come inside. We sit down on grown-up sized chairs in the sea of tiny chairs on opposite sides of a desk, and engage in small-talk. He goes to a different desk and collects a folder with papers and booklets. He places them in front of me and shows me what appears to be [my son's] work. He says, with a big smile, 'In all my years of teaching I have never met a fellow keener to learn'. 'He's still a bit silly at times and does not have a very developed pencil grip, but he is very keen'. More smiling. The critical ethnographer disappears for a moment and I am one big cliché of a chuffed parent. 'If he applies himself, and doesn't fool around too much, he will easily meet the learning objectives this year'. 'Great', I say and continue, 'How is he going socially; have you got a sense of that?' 'Well he is good at helping the other kids with their learning, and he seems to be able to control his emotions quite well. My thinking is that if we help them self-regulate their emotions, then social well-being will follow'. He smiles again. It crosses my mind that he knows what I do and thinks that it pleases me to hear him talk this way.

In my reading, this conversation indicates what this teacher believes is the point of schooling (meeting the learning objectives) and success at school (keen to learn, meeting the learning objectives), or at least what he believes, or finds appropriate, to convey in this situation. Praise is couched in terms of the learning discourse (keen to learn). There are potential sticking points in this case (lack of developed pencil grip, being silly and fooling around), however success will come easily if my son 'applies' himself. Therefore, there is potential, promising potential in this case, but it will require effort to materialise this potential into success (and failure,

should it happen, will be easily ascribed to a lack of personal effort). When I invite a different gaze, turning to the social or relational aspects of beginning school, the teacher quickly brings the conversation 'back on track'. The social is going well, because my son helps his peers with their learning (good social behaviour is directed towards academic learning). Again, it is reiterated that this is what should be the focus, what our concern should be at this time. The teacher then offers me his concept of the social, as a situation of 'social well-being', which progresses via the individual's capacity to self-regulate emotions. What emerges is the student-subject as a learning machine, or a learning potential; whose sociality progresses via an individualised ability to control his emotions. The notion of individual emotional self-regulation is, again, an example of an operative psy-discourse (cognitive behavioural theory) (see Rimm-Kaufman et al. 2009).

As reflected in the last few lines I got the feeling that the teacher spoke to me in a particular way. In an earlier conversation he had asked me what my partner and I did for work and he had smilingly commented, upon hearing that I was a lecturer in Education, that then he would have to 'make sure to cross his t's and dot his i's'. This suggested that he saw me as a potential assessor, perhaps as someone likely to fault him. It was also interesting the way he couched the standard of competence ('cross his t's and dot his i's') that he would have to meet, which is concerned with following the rules, being orderly, and paying attention to detail. In terms of the nature and content of our conference, perhaps he believed that this 'lecturer in Education' expected a particular kind of professional dialogue, who would find him competent if he showed mastery of particular discourses? As Popkewitz (1994) argued, professionalisation of teaching involves teachers taking up academic and scientific discourses, and given that teacher education in Australia is saturated with psy-discourses (Petersen and Millei 2015), it is not surprising that the professional-academic discourse that this teacher takes up is one based on psy-discourse.

While it may be that other conversations would have been possible (see MacLure and Walker 2000, for more on the performance of the school-parent talk), in this conversation between this teacher and I, we cannot get beyond the hold of the discourse of academic learning. It seems to be a very precise illustration of Biesta's analysis of the 'learnification' of education (Biesta 2015). In a sense the school and the classroom and my son and everything that goes on, or should go on, is reduced and related to this overarching goal. The gaze narrows and school and schooling emerges as something technical, almost clinical, where the children

are on their path to meeting the academic learning objectives, and where all activities, emotions, behaviours, and tools (e.g. teachers, parents, and artefacts) are assessed in terms of being effective at getting the individual child there. School becomes a machine solely for the production of academic capacity. As Patrick (2013: 4) observes, within 'the new language of education, the teacher is there to meet the needs of the learner, but these needs are narrowly defined as "learning" needs within a model that reduces learning to a series of teaching inputs designed to meet prespecified outcomes'.

Becoming a Learner on Psy-Disciplinary Terms

Within this discourse of school as 'a place of learning' we have already seen how the invitation to subjectivity becomes an invitation to be, exclusively, a 'learner'. Yet, what has also been suggested, as we saw with the traffic light technology, for example, is that becoming a learner is, repeatedly, on psy-disciplinary terms. The following vignette illustrates this further:

> We usually wait outside the classroom to pick up the children after school and when the bell rings, the kids come running out with their bags and we leave. Today, however, [my son]'s water bottle is not in his bag and I step inside the classroom, which is dimly lit. I look around for the water bottle—it could be anywhere—and notice the little tables and chairs, the identical coloured-in pictures that have been pegged to a line across the room—which one is [my son]'s?—and the pictures and things on the wall: The clock, the different safety posters, large bright letters and numbers. My eye zooms in on a particular poster, a large glossy white one with a colourful circle in the middle. I walk closer to have a look. Above the circle in big black letters it says 'Who am I?' The circle is divided into eight slices, each with a different colour that also has an icon on it. The yellow one says 'self-smart' (icon of a person-figure with arms in the air (triumphant, happy?)); dark green, 'picture-smart' (camera); light blue, 'music-smart' (music note); lilac, 'body-smart' (figure running); light green, 'people-smart' (male and female figures next to each other); red, 'word-smart' (open book); purple, 'logic-smart' (a pocket calculator); blue, 'nature-smart' (leaf). [My son] comes up behind me and says 'I found the water bottle, mum'. 'Good work', I say and point to the poster, 'what do you make of that, darling'? 'Ah that's easy', he says, 'Mr Wendell says I'm a bit red and a bit purple…Can we go now?' We leave.

In a classroom such as this, it seems that there are several forms of 'invitation to subjectivity': a subject who sits on a chair at a table and con-

forms (or not) to this way of embodying 'school'; a subject who colours in, neatly preferably, with the rest of his class, learning about heading the lines, picking up the right colours and, as the picture is the same, is a subject with comparable ability (neat, less neat, not neat at all); a subject who must learn the letters, preferably becoming a reading subject through the help of colourful reminders of the letters. The safety posters invite the subject to understand himself and others as subjects of risk, and so on. In the midst, there is the poster, a non-human actor, who also invites its viewer to consider him or herself on its terms. As other non-human actors, it seeks to enrol its viewer into its network of meanings, affects, and actions (Fenwick and Edwards 2012). The title of the poster asks a self-reflective question, constituting self-reflexivity, not only as a possibility, but also as a sanctioned and desirable activity. The poster provides possible answers—eight of them in fact and, as it turns out, more as one can be 'a bit of this and a bit of that', according to my son's account. Yet, although various combinations are possible, the entire sum of possibilities can be contained within one neat circle. In short, the answer to the question of 'who I am' can be found here.

The poster, without it being explicitly stated anywhere, seems to draw on the psy-discourses of 'learning styles' (differences in orientations) (e.g. Kolb 1976) and perhaps also the idea of 'multiple intelligences' (smart) (Gardner and Hatch 1989), which in their original form may be quite different, but which here appear as an amalgam. Both discourses can be considered mainstream in that they appear in most, if not all, of the large glossy authoritative introductions to educational psychology in English. The learning styles discourse is a particular way to account for individual differences in learning, and it assumes that we each have different predispositions and that the route to learning goes through different forms of engagement. As we saw in this poster, difference is at the heart of the discourse, but it is still a bounded field: the possibilities of difference are far from infinite. It is a performative discourse in that it constitutes the reality of these differences (there *are* differences), while also defining and explaining them (*these* are the differences). Furthermore, it is exemplary of mainstream psychological discourse: the focus is on the individual and it presupposes a bounded monolithic identity with inborn and fixed personality traits (Gavey 1989). As in the question the poster asks, subjects 'are' something and therefore operates in the realm of foundational ontology. The question is not 'what am I here?', 'today', or 'at this moment', but transcendentally, always.

The learning styles discourse seems to have achieved a certain status as both iconic and obvious. It is iconic in the way that it can be presented without specific reference. It has surpassed the need to be endorsed by a certain name. It can take different shapes (not all learning styles presentations or posters are the same), but it will still be recognised as that: as bringing the same assumptions and the same message. There are other such iconic actors in the educational field: Bloom's taxonomy for example, which is often presented without reference to Bloom. Moreover, the learning styles discourse has become taken-for-granted as measured by how it travels into everyday language. At our school, it manifested itself in many ways. For example, in a conversation between three mothers (who all had not attended university), which I overheard while we waited outside the classroom to pick up our kids:

> Mother 1: So I was just saying to [husband] the other day, I wish, you know, I wish they'd use more pictures and things in the classroom, Chloe is a visual learner, you know, she always has been—just like me!
> Mother 2: I know, I know—they definitely should cater for all the styles.
> Mother 3: I am a visual learner too! Though I think Ella is more bodily, you know, this is why ballet comes so easy to her
> Mother 1: Yeah, see; it really matters, doesn't it!

Here we see how the learning styles discourse operates as, not only a possible, but entirely legitimate and sensible way of speaking one's child and oneself into existence in this context. It has lost its status as an academic theory and has become adopted as a naturalised everyday meaning-making tool, part of what we, with Bruner (Olson and Bruner 1996) might call 'folk-psychology.' It is also used by these mothers who, despite being mothers in the public school system, are continuously positioned as education consumers (Fitz et al. 2003), to assess the quality of teaching. It would have been interesting to see if, or when, the children of these mothers would take up the discourse as their own; if, when, or how it would become a governing plot in their 'learning careers' (Goodlad 2007), and/or what other stories they would be offered to live by, and how these stories would intersect. In the case of my son, his response shows us that he had already been offered the language of the poster in the classroom to make sense of himself. His teacher had given him the answer to the question of who he is. At the time of talking about it with me though, it appeared that it had made a minimal impression on him, or perhaps he took it as self-evident, or was performing to me his 'smart-ness' (the question is cast as 'easy').

Concluding Discussion

At least since Foucault (1977) we have known that psy-discourses are an integral part of modern schools and schooling. In that way, the insights of this (auto)ethnography are not new or surprising in themselves (see also Fender 2001; De Vos 2009; Walkerdine 1993). However, it remains interesting to trace how psy-disciplinary knowledges and practices operate in specific times, and at specific sites, as the manifestation of psy-changes as they are confronted by, or coalesce with, other discourses. We must keep asking critical questions about their effects on the ways we think, feel, and act.

The psy-based learning discourse that featured so prominently at my son's school coalesces powerfully with a neoliberal governmental rationality (Brown 2003). Under this regime of truth, the individual learner is regarded as a future worker and a competitive good in the marketplace. Schooling under neoliberalism entails enhancing the value of each individual unit in terms of the economy via notions of personal and social capacity and academic competence (Davies and Bansel 2007). Both neoliberalism and the psy-based learning discourses presuppose an individual and presuppose that the individual is capable of working on him or herself to become a more productive version of that self (Petersen and O'Flynn 2007). Neoliberal governmentality, coalescing powerfully with rationalist enlightenment discourse, invokes a concept of the human subject as an autonomous, individualised, self-directing, decision-making agent (Bondi 2005). Becoming a 'learner' as I have shown here, entails becoming accustomed to seeing oneself and others in those ways. As Biesta (2013: 6) notes, '"learning", unlike "education", is an individualistic and individualising term'. Learning-centred psy-discourses become a powerful technique of 'governing at a distance'; subjects are governed through the 'learning sciences', which masks it as a politics.

When we use the phrase that discourses constitute an 'invitation' to subjectivity we do so to underscore that there is not a one-to-one relationship between the presence of a discourse and subjectification. As Patrick (2013: 5) puts it: 'in theory, individuals still have agency to accept, reject, mediate, or ignore neoliberal policies and practices. In practice, the extent to which individuals can exert choice over whether to accept or resist such policies may be limited by a range of factors (social, economic, and cultural).' In the case of our school, the choice of discourses other than the psy-based learning discourse was severely limited by the lack of other available options, not only for some—marked by class or gender, for

example—but for all. From the moment we sat our foot at that school, we became entangled in a sticky learning-discourse web, and it felt impossible and even a bit ridiculous to counter or ignore it. There was a marked foreclosure of other possibilities.

Notes

1. Personal is put under erasure to disrupt the taken-for-granted meaning as possible to separate from public or professional, and as idiosyncratic.
2. Here I follow the tradition in research involving children that view children as capable, competent and active in negotiating their social worlds (James and Prout 2015).

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CHAPTER 5

The Principal Is Present: Producing Psy-ontologies Through Post/Psychology-Informed Leadership Practices II

Dorthe Staunæs and Malou Juelskjær

> The fact that a milieu therapist was hired resulted in me being able to be in the classrooms for half the day. Previously this was impossible because of student casework. My work changed from being ad hoc to participate in long term development (School principal at a Norwegian School).

In a job advertisement from 2015, a newly built school was seeking a 'milieu therapist', to 'build up character' among students and to improve learning for the children. The advertisement asked for a reliable, systematic, goal-oriented, and unambiguous grown-up acting as a role-model—

The title is a reference and a toast to the performance work *The artist is present* by Marina Abramowich: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OS0Tg0IjCp4 and in addition the CFP: Training School on Research Genealogies: New Materialisms, and Ideas in Material Practices. At TATE Modern, London, UK. 27–29th May 2016S. *"Intra-actions. The robot is present—exploring posthuman bodies"*: conducted by Cathrine Hasse and Malou Juelskjær, Aarhus University and Robert Rosenberger, Georgia Tech.

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_5

someone who could ensure a well-functioning learning environment without bullying, violence, or racism. The milieu therapist was supposed to focus on the relationships between the professionals, management team, and students and to closely follow the disciplinary and social development of each student.

The enrolment of milieu therapists in schools can be perceived as a post-psychological approach to lead students' learning. It is an approach that avoids focusing on the autonomous individual, but directs attention towards contexts and relationships. In the job advertisement, the holistic nature of education is emphasized. The milieu, the architecture, and interior are mentioned as factors in conditioning student learning and development, as well as facilitating close interactions with students, teachers, principals, and other professionals. Though rearticulated, the concept of milieu-therapy is borrowed from a treatment paradigm that originated in the 1960s as a revolt against psychiatric treatment and medication. In a Nordic context, is has been assigned to the treatment of patients with psychiatric diagnoses, sexually molested children, or children with damage due to parents' intake of drugs or alcohol e.g. Milieu therapy is still employed at psychiatric hospitals and institutions for persons with special needs. The core idea is the holistic nature of the problem, and how the institutional organization and environment enact transformation among patients. The premise is to set up the environment so that it has a therapeutic effect. The physical surroundings, such as the furniture, interior, and architecture are all a part of the treatment. Professionals are staged as vehicles in this machinery and supposed to act in accordance with the theories, methods, and tools of the program. Important elements are: Clear descriptions of roles, a focus upon relations, and a focus upon correcting emotional experiences, while remaining curious and adventurous.

We came across the issue of milieu-therapists in schools when we explored a school development project at 13 schools in a large city in Norway. The initial quotation comes from this project. It signals how the practices of educational leaderships are changing and how leading learning has become the mantra. New activities and professions are introduced. Besides working the learning milieu in different ways, this renewal is supposed to release school principals from the difficult tasks associated with individual students who have previously occupied the principal's office and schedule. The freed up time is expected to be used to lead teachers and other professionals' development and learning, especially as this may take place in activities linked to educators' teaching in classrooms.

This chapter is not about the work of the milieu therapist as such, but the milieu therapist is an icon of a redesigned school, a redesigned learning apparatus, and not the least, a redesigned form of educational leadership that is supposed to be (omni)present. It is not the return of panoptical power as the figure of surveillance. In this chapter we will try to outline how another slightly different, yet fertilising but quite ambivalent presence seems to emerge. The presence of the school principal, and the milieu therapist assisting the principal in being present, is among the myriad responses to Nordic government efforts regarding inclusion and enhancing learning for all children. New forms of educational leadership are invented by municipalities and school principals with the purpose of raising the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. We term this trend 'Learning-centred leadership' (Bjerg and Staunæs 2014; Juelskjær 2014; Staunæs and Juelskjær 2014).

The psy-sciences are often brought in as a helping force for conducting learning-centred leadership. Contemporary leadership is not just a matter of administrating, ordering, or managing people. It is, on many occasions, a practice of leading the development and learning of others, and of encouraging, engaging, and motivating people. In others words, one ideal is to lead 'more softly' with students', teachers', and other professionals' emotions and affective states in mind (Leithwood and Beatty 2008; Robinson 2011). Concepts and tools from psychology: the science of how people experience, think, act, and feel, are taken up, developed, and integrated into practices of leadership for learning. For ages, the psychological figures were borrowed from modern, realist, and often positivist, approaches concerned about the autonomous individual, and often used as a tool of excluding, disciplining and ordering students (Rose 1996), However, as a reaction, and to critique these conceptualizations, combined with a political agenda on inclusion and empowerment on the one hand, and a more neoliberal and business -oriented agenda on potentialising all resources on the other hand, schools are experimenting with new kinds of interventions. These intervention, are informed by post-psychologies that rebel against modern psychology and argue for how context, culture, relations, and inter-subjectivity are important in the development of human thinking, feeling, and acting, and it is these psychologies that have coined terms, such as distributed subjectivities, contextually constituted selves, socially constructed selves, and systemic and narrative therapy.

In brackets, some of these are post-psychologies that we, the authors, are very fond of, and have contributed to in academic texts and previous

research. Given the premise of constitutive contexts, the post-psychologies imply a curiosity of how psychology itself (as both an academic discipline and a way of thinking) is implicated in constituting psy-ontologies. This curiosity may be called a second order psychology (Brown and Stenner 2009), where psychology is observing how psychological phenomenon are conceptualized and theorised, and feeding back to, and inventing, psychological practices, which again are observed, conceptualised and critiqued. We need to ask the critical questions: What may the performative effects of such experimental inventions be? And how do they work with or interrupt, the former psychologies that were employed? We read the empirical material on milieu therapist diffractively. Reading diffractively is a methodology of reading texts (theory, data) intra-actively through one another 'attending to and responding to the details and specificities of relations of difference and how they matter' (Barad 2007b). We read our empirical material through different etymologies of the word 'presence', and secondly, we read the material through the concepts of post/psychology. By consulting etymology, as well as doing close-up theory-informed readings, we explore how 'presence' takes different shapes and zoom in on the creating of presence and the transformation into vigilance. This methodology allows us to suggest how a psy-ontology, an affective mind of being present, seems to be vitalized; not as something against, or in contrast to, learning-centred leadership but as a performative and iterative effect of the very same (Barad 2003, 2007a; Butler 1990, 1993). What is of interest to us in this chapter is not the person, or idea, of milieu therapist, as such, but rather the kind of iconic status and, particularly, the performative effects this intervention may have on educational leadership and the people taking up positions as leaders.

In the chapter, we focus upon the psy-ontologies emerging. In the upcoming sections, we treat milieu therapists as an icon of the post-psy-informed trend towards orchestrating the learning milieu, and we analyse some of the performative effects of leading learning through milieu, relationships, and intersubjectivity. Hereby we show how specific psy-ontologies as 'being present', attunement, and vigilance seem to emerge as products of strategic work upon conditions and careful calibrations of the imprints of teachers and other professionals. As our analysis ironically shows, that the rebellious acts of the post-psychologies (for instance milieu therapy) often happen in joint venture with modern types of psychologies, and, therefore, also co-contribute to leadership practices and psy-ontologies, which the post-theories were originally in opposition to. But

before jumping to conclusions, we will briefly present the concept of post-psychology followed by the analysis. The empirical material is produced as part of a formative evaluation.[1] In particular, we use a number of emails as examples. The emails are written by principals and milieu therapist and were sent to us after hosting an explorative laboratory on leadership.

Post-Psychologies

As Nikolas Rose (Rose 1996) has brilliantly pointed out, psychology in the previous century contributed to 'the invention of ourselves' through numerous techniques for repairing, regulating, and compensating for psychological features. The educational system has been one of the most regular users of psychological methods, tests, and classifications (ibid.). Today, inventions informed by psychology are still going strong. However, post-psychologies have slightly realigned the focus for intervention by re-conceptualizing the learning environment as constitutive and by re-approaching the socio-material relations as targets for managerial interventions.

The psychologies used as tools for reaching this new standard of leading learning are not restricted to the modern and humanistic psychologies, neither to the paradigm of discipline and order, exclusion, classification, and normalization. The educational intake of psychology is broadening to include, what we term post-psychologies (Juelskjær and Staunæs 2016; Nissen et al. 2016; Staunæs and Juelskjær 2014). Post-psychology is not a departure from psychology. Post-psychology is a range of approaches towards rethinking psychological issues and concepts. This work is based on a new postmodern, global, and societal context and, most importantly, the post-psychologies are very much intertwined with the complex contemporary world with which psychology collaborates and provides input. Post-psychology is the overall term we use for different psychologies theorizing 'relational subjectivities', 'distributed subjectivities', 'multiple subjectivities'. It is the term for psychologies showing how subjectivities are made of and constituted through social, cultural, semiotic, material, neural, and affective relations. Post-psychological thinking has made fleeting appearances throughout the 20th century. The concept of post-psychologies does not imply *not* being concerned with psychology; that is, the science of how people experience, think, act, and feel, but as an alternative post-psychological focus upon constitutive contexts and

relations and, thereby, cancels, or at least challenges, the concept of the autonomous subject.

Despite the fact that it is trendy business to problematize the conceptualization of subjectivity, self, and personality, this problematization is not entirely new. Nor is it ground-breaking to insist, as the post-psychologies do, that psychological phenomena, such as learning, personality, cognition e.g. should be seen as emergent phenomena, and as emerging in relation to aspects that are other and external to itself. The understanding that subjectivities, or personalities, should be viewed as a capacity, or a capability, rather than a characteristic is also not new. These kinds of process-based concepts have namely made fleeting appearances throughout the 20th century since William James penned his book *Principles of psychology* (James 2010[1890]). Thus, the post-psychological problematization of personality and other psy-ontologies, which arose during and after the 1970s in the periods of social constructionism, post-structuralism, and post-social constructionism, is 'version 2.0' of an older psychological format.

In a previous text (Staunæs and Juelskjær 2014), we have made a small genealogical manoeuvre that provided us with material for three periods of both continuity and discontinuity, which can be described as follows: *First*, a *pre-post* period in which the post-psychological pops up as scattered 'bubbles' within psychology, in the form of theories of personality as something that is not separate from its surroundings, but rather something that is radically open and connected to its surroundings. As mentioned above, the text *The problem with personality* by James is an excellent example. *Secondly*, a *post-period* involving system- and norm-critical approaches (for instance anti-psychiatry, Marte Meo, attachment theory, and milieu therapy) and in which other disciplinary traditions, such as literature, philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, and anthropology, challenge modern, Western psychology's ways of thinking about personality, and dissolve personality into multiple selves, relational selves, and decentred learning. Social constructionism (for instance, names like Gergen, Shotter), discursive psychology (for instance, Potter, Wetherell, Harré, Davies), critical psychology (Holzkamp, Osterkamp, Dreier), and systemic concepts (Varela, Maturana, Schön, among others) are different exponents from this period. *Thirdly*, there is a *post-post period*. In this period, the aforementioned post-psychological concepts have begun to gain ground in mainstream thinking in earnest, for example, in pedagogical and organizational practices. At the same time, post-psychological

thinkers have made further efforts to move beyond the now dissolved subject and, instead, to specify subjectivity as post-human entanglement and radically intra-woven and intra-acted 'capacitation'—inspired by thinkers, such as Barad, Deleuze, Bergson, and Spinoza. Although, on the one hand, the post-post-psychology deconstructs psychological phenomena, such as personality and learning, it demonstrates, on the other hand, how psy-ontologies continuously emerge as an effect of social, semiotic, material, and affective processes, and how these processes are emerging closely entangled with time and space.

When learning-centred leadership is combined with post-psychology, the milieu is configured as constitutive for psychological phenomenon. Learning-centred leadership, going post-psychological, approaches students as if they were relational-beings and made *of* the milieu, with the embedded hope that learning can be enhanced by strategically leading and conditioning the milieu and the relationships. We think this is acted out with the milieu therapist and the omnipresence of leadership. Let's take a look.

Presence as Performative Effect

When educators use the concept 'milieu-therapist', we understand it as a 'wor(l)ding' (Barad 2007b)—a way of both wording and making a school world. Etymologically the Greek word 'therapei' means a service, a treatment, supervision, or inspection. As such, 'therapist' connotes a person who repairs something broken, or not in order, as well as a practice of waiting for the right moment to intervene and realize new potentials. Some years ago, the term 'therapy' was associated with efforts for special needs students taking place outside everyday schooling. In contrast, the job advertisement mentioned at the beginning of the chapter signalled that therapists were now to be propelled into everyday school life and invented as a psy-technology targeting all students. Coupling 'therapist' and 'milieu' seems to make an interesting pair and may indicate that, not the students, but the surroundings, require an intervention. Perhaps interventions oriented towards students could be made through an inclusive and well-orchestrated learning apparatus rather than through picking out, excluding, and treating/training the individual student. In that sense, the notion of the milieu therapist indicates a new and comprehensive way of thinking about school and school leadership, and instead of meeting students 'as they are', this approach makes student-subjectivities *of* the

environment, meets them through the milieu, and creates their possibilities of learning through modulating the very same variables. When asked about how the introduction of milieu therapist impacted on his work, one of the principals wrote us an email saying:

> My leadership practices changed, such that I left my office far more and went to the classrooms. I have also gotten more experience with classroom observation.

Another principal wrote:

> The milieu therapist relieves management so we can follow the teachers more closely in the classroom and observe the pupils there. I think this is important for the school in order to have a better pedagogical development.

When we asked Paul, who is the head of principals in a specific district of a municipality, if he intended to adjust his leadership practices in the future, he followed up by saying:

> I must be even closer and more present in the evaluation of whether the efforts have the desired effect according to school aims. At the same time constantly evaluate whether the initiated cases are in correspondence with the school's challenges and needs. I see the need for a closer follow up of the initiatives. I must clearly be more vigilant when it comes to measuring the effect of the efforts.

These emails are exemplary for the sample of emails. Let's first scrutinize the vocabulary of the two emails and then read this vocabulary through the etymology of the word presence. Paul uses words like 'being closer', 'more present', 'follow up' and 'more vigilant'. He links students' learning improvement to the affective economy of his own presence and the high intensity of this presence. If he is intensively present, the student will learn more. Listening to the audio recordings of lab sessions in our empirical archive, it becomes clear how the importance of superintendents' presence is repeated at the level of principals. Principals are needed in the classroom. Principals spending hours outside the office can be exchanged for better student learning outcomes. As a principal says:

> The milieu therapist releases the board in the sense that we can follow up upon teachers in classrooms and watch the students there.

Presence in these quotations, and the ones like them, is first and foremost understood as leaders being bodily present. It is leaders being close and nearby and leaders being within sight and at hand for teachers. In the quotations, being present becomes a technology of watching students and following up upon teachers. Thereby it equals an activity of acquiring empirical access to the world that the principal is in charge of. Being present makes the principal a kind of ethnographer who uses her/his own body as an instrument. However, being present as an ethnographer is not just a matter of writing up ethnography. What seems to matter is the transaction of time and learning improvement. This is at the core of the principal, Ann's argument, where she emphasises minimal distance and close relations between principal and teachers, not direct relations between principals and students. Ann writes in an email:

> The increased quality of classroom teaching is a result of the principal being closer to the teachers. Improving quality has therefore come about as an indirect consequence of the milieu therapist managing student cases.

What is the imaginative link between principals being present on the one hand and enhancing children's learning outcome on the other? To get a little close to the imaginaries of this link, let us try to read the empirical material through the etymology of the word 'presence'. Etymologically, presence is a temporal-spatial embodiment. It may mean a 'being here and now'—the opposite of being absent or distant. In English, the term, presence, is closely related to present, as a grammatical derivation of the verb 'to present'. This terminology enables us to think of presence as a 'here and now'-time, where you as a leader present something for the audience, or represent something. Presence is a matter of being in time, but in close tension with a representational logic. In the Nordic languages, the word is 'tilstede' or 'tilstedeværelse', to be at a place. In the Nordic languages, the word presence is similarly connected to issues of temporality: To be near is to be in the moment ('for tiden', 'i øjeblikket', 'for nuværende', 'for indeværende'). Presence is, however, also the part of space within one's immediate vicinity. The word for presence is as mentioned 'tilstede', emphasizing presence as a matter of placing oneself. Sometimes the term would even be 'tilstedeværelse', which translated into English means 'to be' or 'exist' in a (particular) space or place.

Reading the empirical quotations from school principals through this etymological repertoire, we are reminded of principals in the rest of the

empirical material talking about principals being present—embodied in time and space. This technology of leadership mimes the job of an ethnographer, who stays in and walks through the classrooms observing and sensing the atmosphere, more or less guided by already given standards. This observational practice does not only involve sight ('watching students' as in the above mentioned quotation). Other senses are activated while being present in flesh, blood, and bones. The principal is not just the head (!) of the school, or the guy in the suit saying 'hello' at the school entrance every morning. When the principal is present, one may expect a vibrant body passing the boundaries between administration and teaching, which joins activities in classrooms and meetings. Senses are activated and tuned in certain directions rather than others, for instance to the smell of the student struggling with math and gym, or the tiny voices from students asking for help. Being present means being excited by the loud sounds of students successfully solving a problem: 'YES; WE DID IT!!' It is watching the frustration on the teachers' faces, when results are not as expected. When the principal is present, the principal is being moved, touched and transformed. The present principal is not only *in* the classroom—s/he becomes *of* the classroom.

This kind of presence is not a specific emotion, but rather a way of being in the world, an affective state of body and mind. Presence implies a spatial awareness shifting from a sense of distance involving an overall, abstract concern, to being a concrete, present awareness. It is a spatial movement from sitting in the office to joining the milieu. It is a 'becoming with' a different learning landscape than the landscape at the administrative office. Learning-centred leadership thus becomes working the environment *through* the principals' body. Presence as the new royal road towards enhancing students' learning. It is exactly *not* a practice of knowing better, having the right didactics, or instructing with manuals. Neither is it a matter of transmitting skills to teachers, but of incorporating new forms of action into the modus operandi of the learning milieu through affectively attuned ways of listening, pushing, nudging, engaging, and motivating professionals step-by-step. The authority of the principals to pose questions to the teachers—or to simply let the question linger in the air, stems from having been there in the classroom and having sensed and watched what happened. How is this conducted?

Attuning Others and Selves

In many of the quotations, presence intertwined with learning-centred leadership seems to be a matter of having influence on the professionals and, thereby, indirectly to have an impact on students' learning outcomes. In Danish and Norwegian, the term 'being present' is 'at være tilstede' and means an affective state of mind, or a bodily presence. However, the word 'tilstede' can also be used as a verb, indicating an action. As a verb 'tilstede' means to allow for something to happen. If we read our empirical material diffractively through this etymology, the word presence may indicate an even more active form of existence than what we have described in the section above. If presence is to allow for something to happen, it becomes a relational existence. Being present, then, allows for the capacity to relate to, and respond to, other bodies. Presence becomes attempts to influence and energize professional work and the development of it. 'Being there' becomes a leadership technology of motivation. Being there is supposed to energize and make the professionals engaged: to move, mobilize and modulate their practices.

Sometimes presence becomes more active than just 'being there' and energizing. The tiny techniques that the principals use for 'allowing something to happen', are known from, for instance, systemic and narrative therapy, such as wondering, tickling, asking, and interrogating with open questions, and curiosity. Video-observations and walking through[2], concepts informed by the psy-sciences are invented. In our empirical material, some of the principals go beyond the 'talking cure' and utilize video-clips of authentic teaching sessions and classroom interactions that the principals themselves have video-taped. These moving (!) pictures are expected to prompt a process of simultaneously feeling and thinking about what went on in the classroom. The audio-visual instruments give access to other dimensions than the purely linguistic. Filming is staged as a leadership technology that, by reaching and releasing somaaesthetic (Schusterman 2012) aspects, can attune the professionals. The principal-being-present combined with the-principal-presenting-live-interactions is fuelled by the hope of mirroring as a thought provoking tool. Instead of passive miming of the professionals, an affective and refractive mirror reflects 'the golden moments of interaction' and helps to attune and energize the involved professionals differently and, thereby, improve their didactics and especially their relational skills. These methods of mirroring social relations resemble the Marte Meo method (Aarts 1996), that originally implied records

of infant-mother relations on video and afterwards showed the mothers (who were perceived to lack relational skills) 'golden moments' of successful interaction between the mother and the infant. The hope was that confronted with their own positive interactions, activities, and behaviours, the mothers would decisively improve their parenting skills. However, the affective economy of mirroring is muddy and the psy-ontologies produced are sometimes unexpected. Being present also informs the principal of other necessary adjustments than just teacher adjustments. It makes principals aware of their own failures and short-comings. In that sense, the auxiliary aim of presence is to improve your own leadership practices. Principals-presence becomes a kind of auto-affective process with a purpose; a way of allowing yourself to be affected in order to affect others. Or when the principal is present, s/he is governing the ability to affect others by affecting her/himself. This auto-affective process may become a new source of frustration, which they must, of course, happily receive and handle. 'We need to learn from our own mistakes', as the principals say, when they reframe their failures as an opportunity for development and, therefore, future success. The milieu therapists have helped the principals 'get rid of all the difficult cases' and saved them from 'the bad energies of frustrated parents and students', however, the principals are now faced with, not only an awareness of being 'sucked into the bad energies of the classroom', as they say. They are also confronted with their own frustrations and feelings of (self) inadequacy, and a longing for a more distant presence, as an email from one of the principals reminds us.

Presence Turning into Vigilance

Even though being present is spoken into existence as 'minding the moment' and 'being thoughtful', presence in many instances is being mindful *with* a purpose. Thereby, presence paradoxically becomes an affective state of mind that is oriented towards potentials and the future. It is a state of mind always on the move, attending to, sensing and feeling what may come or not come. This paradoxically temporality of presence is closely linked with an urge to act, repair, compensate and potentialise. A milieu therapist says:

> In addition to identifying teachers with a potential for improvement, we also noticed teachers who had a very low quality in their teaching because of

> their classroom management and who therefore needed more observation and guidance.

Another therapist describes how some teachers are observed rather sporadically by the principal, while other teachers had their own supervisor following them and were offered courses on the Marte Meo-method. Yet another milieu therapist says:

> I believe that if teachers receive guidance and feedback on the work they do in relation to good goals and the high ambitions, it will provide increased learning outcomes for students. Then, the learning environment will also be improved. I therefore think that the principal in collaboration with me has to be *even closer to teachers in the form of observation and monitoring* [our italics].

Being present may not be enough. Presence is supplemented with a kind of ethnographic presence producing 'hands on data'. Presence is, thereby, turned into a kind of monitoring, and the affective state of being present is turned into a kind of vigilance. It is a careful, however, anxious, never sleeping state of mind, keenly watching and detecting dangers ahead. The purpose of such a kind of vigilance is not to potentialise the future. Rather this vigilance resembles a managerial aim of securing and controlling the future. A milieu therapist writes:

> Management has rarely had the opportunity to observe and evaluate the way [milieu therapists] supervise. We are in other words uncertain about whether what we do is correct. We need more of this [monitoring the effect of their own supervision]

Feelings of uncertainty are transformed into feelings of lacking time for evaluating the evaluation and for continually and frequently assessing the effects of interventions made. Utterances on presence as a matter of 'assessing frequently' and 'in the need of more' overshadows the just-being-there presence and give us a glimpse of vigilance as a 'short breath state of mind' that is knitted tightly together with ongoing worries about being on the (right) spot at the (right) time, contributing with the (right) things. Not only are the employees monitored. Principals are observing and evaluating themselves observing and evaluating. The presence technologies, whether they be the ones of flesh and blood, or

the ones of videos, graphs, notes, and numbers that help the leaders and milieu therapist to 'get near and closer', produce experiences, which again can be carefully scrutinized, analysed, problematized, and learned from. A principal says:

> We will prioritize creating a kind of learning loop where classroom observations are tied together with weekly reflection and analysis of all teams—and where management, milieu therapist, and project assistant will be key in these meetings.

In this situation, managerial presence departs from the less standardized, embodied principal being in classroom technology. In order to get closer to problems, as well as potentials, the present leader seems to morph into a managerial omnipresence. This omnipresence is in need of what is perceived to be better data than ethnographic experience and situational descriptions. 'The better data' is perceived to be representational and quantitative indicators applicable for documentation, calculation, monitoring, and measurement. As a principal explains:

> The efforts pursued are dependent on a close monitoring of the management. There must be frequent feedback and adjustment of the matter at hand. It is all too easy to get into a habit where everything continues as before. […] The impact must be measured. We must be able to quantify that more students have been moved out of the danger zone.

Ironically enough, the rebellious act of the post-psychologies in milieu therapy and presence is now entering a joint venture with modern types of psychologies, and, therefore, also co-contribute to leadership practices, which the post-theories originally were in opposition to. Specifically, the last words 'to move out of the danger zone' show us how the fear of failing the obligation of improving learning outcomes seems to produce a rather different modality of being present. It is enacted by a trust in (abstract) numbers, rather than in (concrete) embodied experiences. What is perceived to be needed is a kind of commander-in-chief prolonged by sophisticated equipment, who is able to sensitively register what would come ahead and thereby manage potential breakdowns and threats in the environment (Hvenegaard and Staunæs 2015; Massumi 2009). In contrast to the vibrant being-open-figure of presence that we met in the first section of the chapter, this figure of presence glides into anticipatory

modes of leadership that are intensively coloured by fear rather than hope, closure more than openings (Falkenberg and Juelskjær 2015; Raffnsøe and Staunæs 2014).

Presence as Ontopower

In this chapter, we explored how the use of post-psychologies targeting the milieu, contexts, relations, and bodies is centrally incorporated into leadership practices. On the one hand, these practices are producing and bringing life to certain feelings and affective state of minds, while on the other hand, these practices take the life out of others. Inspired by Brian Massumi (Massumi 2009) this could be thought of as ontopower radically producing and constituting psy-ontologies as perception-cognition and affective states of minds. This assumption builds upon a Foucauldian concept of power as not only reacting or modulating upon already given feelings and affective states of mind, but rather a concept of power as radically producing subjectivities, feelings, and affective states of mind.

In addition, we have indicated that post-psychological insights on constitutive (learning) milieus and conditions ironically has become supplemented and entangled with modern and positivistic types of psychologies and, thereby, also produces psy-ontologies and leadership practices turning out quite differently than what might have been anticipated. Current psy-informed school leadership allows, as we have shown, for muddy affective economies and ambivalent psy-ontologies. This contributes to intractable tensions between different and conflicting leadership practices, which the post-theory informed practices were originally in opposition of. One could ask, if our analysis, which displays two rather conflicting, however entangled modalities of presence, is telling the suspicious story of one form of presence aggressively interrupting, or even colonising, the other. The problem with this story is that is difficult to figure out which modality of presence is the interrupted part and which is the interrupter, which is the colonizer and which is the colonized. Before making this kind of judgement, we will, however, do and ask for further research. As, for instance, Sam Sellar (Sellar 2014) has pointed out, the proliferation of data and numbers in educational governance involves affective sense-making. Interrogating these processes at the level of principals may (again) interrupt our ideas

and post/psychological theories of what the psy-ontology of presence might refer to. This interrogation may even interrupt our understanding of the psychologies that in imperceptible ways invoke presence in/of the learning milieu.

New forms of leadership and governance are often critiqued in terms of already formulated opposition of good feelings already existing on the one hand, and on the other, bad, cold, depersonalized, depthless reifications and calculations of capitalism, and neoliberalism. This may be the case in some instances, however, in this case the affective economy of the new form of leadership seems to be more subtle than just being an instrumental, dehumanizing, homogenizing force in an already fabricated social life. In this case, leadership also brings life to new affective state of mind, and the same kind of leadership practices and technologies may produce good, empowering feelings as well as bad and stressful ones. When this is the case, we need a vocabulary that can grasp the ambivalent affective economy of psy-leadership, because an either-or-vocabulary will be a reduction of the affective economy involved and, thereby, also a limitation of the critiques available. This chapter is a hopeful contribution to such psy-interruptions.

Notes

1. The formative evaluation was financed by the muncipality and conducted by Oxford Research in cooperation with Aarhus University. It ends in 2017. The material consists of a standpoint analysis by Ernst & Young, interviews from an evaluation of the school development project conducted by Oxford research, MRS-reports audio recordings from explorative learning laboratories, which we conducted around the preliminary analyses. In addition the archives consist of municipality documents and job advertisement traced on the internet, and finally a larger amount of emails written by the principals, superintendents and milieu therapists in the wake of the first lab. In this chapter, we draw upon the material from the labs and the emails.
2. A walk-through is an observation technique with the purpose of collecting classroom teaching strategies, levels of interaction, student engagement, teacher behaviors and classroom resources. The purpose is to examine instructional practices in terms of their impact on learning in the classroom.

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CHAPTER 6

Positive Education as Translation and Conquest of Schooling

Antti Saari and Esko Harni

Introduction: The Ubiquity of Happiness and Well-Being

It is impossible to avoid the theme of happiness and well-being when browsing through contemporary magazine articles on lifestyle, health, work, or education. Downshifting, mindfulness, and life hacking are all technologies of the self, claiming to be the royal route to individual happiness in a tumultuous world. Yet the increasing concern over the aim of happiness today is not only a market for life coaches and authors of self-help guides. There are also institutions: 'happy schools' and 'happy workplaces' fashioned across the globe (McKay 2013).

Positive psychology, a recent branch in the psy-sciences, has seized the opportunity to make happiness an object of rigorous scientific research in its own right. It seeks to provide objective, neutral representations of universal human nature, despite cultural and historical contexts. Positive psychology also finds out 'what works' in the pursuit of happiness and well-being. This gives leverage to claims that positive psychology should be used in the work of life coaches, paediatricians' clinics, and schools

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_6

(Seligman 2011a). The line between the psychological and educational aspects of positive psychology is highly porous. On the one hand, positive psychology entails branches of positive education and positive youth development that study the phenomena of happiness and well-being in educational contexts. It also seeks to provide evidence-based interventions in schools. On the other hand, positive psychology, in general, is educational, as it is aimed towards providing a means of self-cultivation. As a technology of the self, positive psychology defines how one can establish a pedagogical relationship with oneself so that one can recognize and act upon oneself in a certain way, apart from any educational institution.

Positive psychology associates itself with few 'fathers' of the discipline, mainly Martin Seligman who rose to prominence in the 1990s with his studies on the conditions of individual happiness, such as character strengths and virtues. Moreover, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, the famous theorist of flow, is also mentioned as one of the vanguards of positive psychology. Positive psychology attempts to be a useful discipline for 'all'. It claims that, until recently, psychology had merely dealt with 'fear, related negative emotions and illness'—the pathological aspects of human existence (Lopez and Gallagher 2011, pp. 4–5). In contrast, positive psychology ostensibly throws light on people's strengths rather than just their weaknesses. This also means that the expertise of positive education can be used, not only in the institutions focused on pathologies, but also in schools and faith-based organizations with 'normal' children (Norrish and Vella-Brodrick 2009).

In this chapter, we explore how the practicality of positive psychology is established through a certain regime of truth that introduces conditions on how happiness can be discerned and acted upon in schools. Using elements from governmentality studies and Michel Callon's theory of translation, we tease out the ways in which positive psychology translates rationalities of rule into psychological discourses, and how positive psychology is, in turn, translated into interventions in schools.

Translation and Conquest

Positive psychology claims that by making discoveries about the nature and conditions of happiness, positive psychology can have an impact on the field of education. Yet it is rarely the case that psychological theories, concepts, and research findings are found convincing and relevant to the field of education once they are printed in the pages of psychological pub-

lications. Instead, discourses of positive psychology must be involved in the messy negotiations institutional spaces where the aims and strategies of governing human behavior are implemented (cf. Fenwick 2010; Fenwick and Edwards 2010; Usher and Edwards 2005). Thus positive psychology is not only about representing happiness, but also intervening in the sense of influencing the way school administrators, teachers, and pupils understand and act on themselves and each other.

For Nikolas Rose, the psy-sciences operate amidst governmental rationalities that are concerned with cultivating individual freedom (Rose 1999, pp. 48–49). Through psy-knowledges, subjects are persuaded to recognize the realization of their freedom and their own personal interests in the way they are governed and made to govern themselves (Rose 1996). A key element of such governance is translation, through which political and moral ends and values are connected to scientific knowledge, and then into technologies of the self (Rose 1999, p. 22; Gorur 2015; Usher and Edwards 2005).

Rose (1999, pp. 48–49) draws his notions of translation in the psy-sciences from Callon and Latour's work. Michel Callon and Bruno Latour use concepts of translation and conquest to describe relationships between governmental problematizations and the ideals of rigorous science (Callon 1986; see also Latour 1983, 1986). In this chapter, translation is understood in the broadest possible sense—as the Latin *translatio* means the transferring or carrying something over from one thing to another. Translation thus gathers elements (concepts, subjects, materials and practices) into a part of the same network that fixes their positions and interrelations within it (Latour 2005).

Processes of translation also involve conquest. Translation is a performative and intervening act which, when successful, replaces alternative ways, for instance, of understanding and acting on individual happiness or practises of schooling. Therefore, translation involves a situation in which an actor, or force, takes to be conferred upon itself the authority to speak, or act, on behalf of another actor of force (Callon 1986). Thus, power is understood, rather, as a consequence of translation processes than something one can simply possess (Gorur 2015, pp. 91–92).

In his famous essay *Some elements of a sociology of translation*, Michel Callon (1986) describes four phases that make up the relationships between translation and conquest. First there is a *problematization* in which a certain actor or actors, such as researchers or politicians, seek to problematize and make understandable some part of social life, for example

individual happiness. This is called the construction of 'manuscripts', which entails, for example, conceptualizations of the objects or aims of governance and research. The construction of manuscripts is never totally neutral or objective; instead, it creates opportunities for new kinds of assemblages and transmitters between governmental and scientific discourses. The second phase of translation consists of actions that certain actors use to persuade others to think and to operate in a predefined way. In this phase of *interessement*, it is essential to lock actors into the roles that were assigned to them in the actor's programme for resolving that problem, for example as a person who seeks certain kind of happiness or well-being for him/herself. The third phase, *enrolment* or *networking*, refers to a process in which actors attempt to enlist one another in a variety of different ways, including the transformation of imputed interests. It is a set of strategies in which the researchers sought to define and interrelate the various roles they had allocated to others. The fourth phase, *mobilization*, is the result of these processes of translation; it is a state in which a relatively stable network is established and set to work. It is also a configuration of power in which certain entities control others (Callon 1986, see also Gorur 2015, pp. 90–91; Gorur 2013; Usher and Edwards 2005, p. 406). However, it must be remembered that translation is always an ongoing process, never a completed accomplishment, and that it can also fail (Callon 1986).

In summary, analysing processes of translation and conquest can help to understand how psy-sciences combine psychological knowledge with institutional contexts, for example schools or clinics. Processes of translation and conquest also expose how positive psychology can connect the behavior of an individual with wider governmental rationales. Employing Sam Binkley's conceptualization (2014), we can see positive psychology as a 'hinge of power', that translates a rationality of rule that accentuates freedom and autonomy into problematizations and scripts, then into pedagogical practices and subject positions.

> Positive psychology encourages us to accept and implement a program imposed by other through a relationship that can only be described as one of power. But is also to adopt a conduct, to incorporate this program into a form of personal practice that is singularly free. To pursue happiness is therefore to be governed, but also to govern oneself, or to govern oneself as one is governed by others. (Binkley 2014, p. 5)

As positive psychology functions as a relay that mediates wider governmental rationales in the operation of institutions and even our private personal lives, it offers an apt example of translation and conquest in the psy-discourses. In the following, we analyse how happiness is operationalised and translated within the sphere of positive psychology and schooling. We seek to identify some crucial points of translation: namely, curriculum planning and technologies of the self in the daily minutiae of schooling. These points are chosen to highlight the dispersed and processual nature of translation and to preclude any neat localization with respect to where psy-knowledge is produced and applied (cf. Petersen and Millei 2015). First we introduce the object of our case study, the Geelong Grammar School (GGS). We then analyse GGS from the viewpoint of the four phases of translation and conquest. We do not depict these phases in strict chronological order, since we see them as closely intertwined in the case of GGS.[1] Our analysis focuses especially on two questions: 1) how certain actors, in this case, Seligman's research group, seek to make themselves indispensable in defining the manuscript of schooling, and 2) how these actors seek to persuade students and teachers to adopt certain subject positions. We show how these processes are not simply neutral or objective descriptions on schooling practices or human nature, but how they actively mediate certain governmental interests and power relationships.

A Happy School: The Case of the Geelong Model

The literature of positive education entails a wealth of examples of interventions in the field of schooling. Often these take the form of separate courses or projects in the school. Yet positive psychology can also be embedded in a model that involves an entire educational institution. The Geelong Grammar School (GGS) model of positive education is the best known example of embedding principles of positive psychology in schools. It can also be considered a flagship for the application of positive psychology as it was designed, in part, by Martin Seligman himself, and as it has been depicted in several articles and in a monograph dedicated to the GGS model (see e.g. Norrish 2015; Norrish et al. 2013; Seligman 2011a, pp. 85–93).

The Geelong Grammar School is Australia's largest co-educational boarding school, located in Victoria. In 2005, a member of the school council, after attending one of Martin Seligman's courses on positive psychology, invited Seligman to help design a school curriculum and its

implementation. The first step in the translation process was to convince the headmaster who was said to be sceptical about positive psychology. To do this, Seligman held a nine-day course for the 100-person faculty and the headmaster on the skills of happiness in their personal lives. Allegedly, the positive impact of the course on their lives convinced these people to begin designing a pervasive model for positive education (Seligman 2015b). The project was well funded, which enabled Seligman and his group of psychologists to remain in residence at GGS for a year as planning and implementation consultants (Seligman 2011a, pp. 86–88).

Since 2008, the GGS has been implementing a comprehensive positive education curriculum. The curriculum is thought to help teachers and pupils use positive psychology in classes, daily school activities, pastoral care, and at home. Thus the aim of the GGS model is to penetrate every aspect of the lives of teachers and pupils (Williams 2011; Norrish et al. 2013). GGS is thus an extraordinary site for implementing, evaluating, and conducting research on positive psychology in education. This offers opportunities for investigating the multiple level translation from positive psychology to educational practice and technologies of the self.

Mapping the Terrain, or, How to Change the Manuscript of Schooling?

When positive psychology is translated into a script (a strategy paper, a vision statement, a policy, or other document), it guides the organization in setting out the aims and contents of the curriculum. This allows positive psychology to be a central point of entry into the actual practices of schooling in the GGS. The manuscript is constructed in the name of scientific representation: it seeks to provide an objective account of the psychological conditions of happiness and well-being.

Positive psychology, including positive education and positive youth development, translates its object from a global catalogue of cultural history; through reviewing a vast amount of religious and philosophical literature, positive psychologists claim to have found a drive for happiness that is inherent to all human beings, regardless of culture or creed. Seligman argues that great thinkers and religious authorities all focused on the happiness and well-being of the human race, although they failed at giving them an objective, scientific description (Seligman 2008; Seligman et al. 2009, p. 296). According to Seligman, the perennial call for happiness

finds resonance especially in contemporary societies: most people today enjoy unprecedented wealth and freedom to pursue their individual goals, which is why people can now begin to ask philosophical questions of the nature of the good life. (Seligman 2008.) Seligman insists that the happiness phenomenon should be present in schools as well, as all parents, more than anything else, want happiness and well-being for their children (Seligman 2008, p. 20; Seligman et al. 2009, p. 295). This can be understood as the preliminary construction of the script, which seeks to muster up allies by homogenizing the aims and interests of potential actors. It provides a psychological translation of the aspirations built into all humans at all times. It is thus a way of saying that what you want and need is what each of us wants, and we can provide a scientifically valid representation of those aspirations (cf. Callon 1986). On the basis of this preliminary framework of what is common to all people, positive psychology can be translated into a more specific script of a school curriculum.

At the GGS, a group of psychologists, together with the members of the staff, took theories, concepts, and research findings from positive psychology and transformed them into a curriculum (Conoley et al. 2014, p. 503). The aim of the GGS curriculum is to help its staff and pupils 'flourish'. This is a concept used frequently in positive psychology literature, and it refers to various aspects of mental health and well-being. At the GGS, the notion of flourishing is based on research conducted by psychologist Felicia Huppert and her colleagues (GGS 2012; Williams 2011). Drawing on data from the *European Social Survey*, they produced statistical constructs of different types of flourishing (Huppert and So 2013). In GGS, these constructs were worked into various domains of flourishing, such as 'positive purpose', and 'positive accomplishment', which are used to structure the education so that every domain receives balanced attention (Norrish et al. 2013, pp. 150–151). Peterson and Seligman's (2004) character strengths and virtues classification is also present in the GGS model. This classification, including six universal virtues and twenty-four character strengths, is based on a global statistical survey. At the GGS, these virtues and character strengths are thought to integrate the domains of flourishing mentioned above (GGS 2012; Norrish et al. 2013, p. 151; Seligman 2008).

Figure 6.1 shows the GGS model of positive education, in which the categories of flourishing and character strengths are included. The aspects (or 'well-being domains') of flourishing are depicted as the leaves reaching out from the center, whereas character strengths make up the concep-

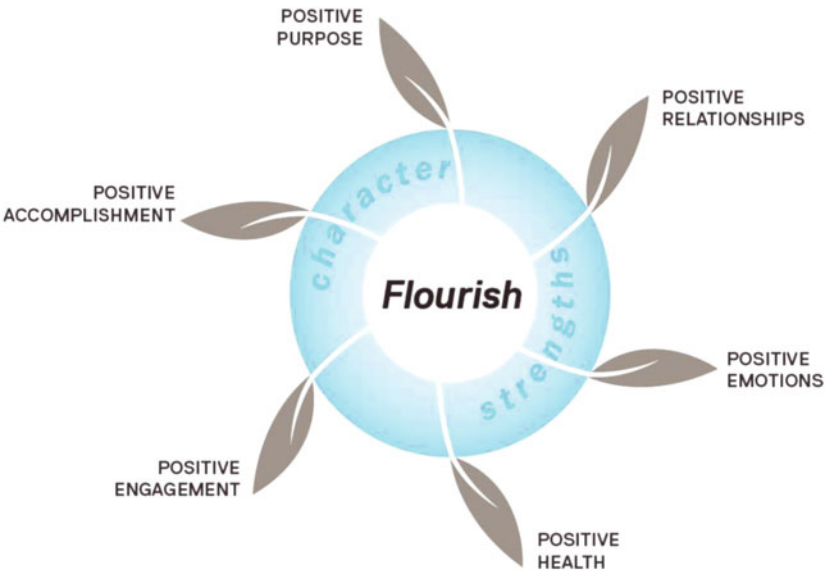

Fig. 6.1 GGS Positive Education Model. (GGS 2015a)

tual 'ring' holding everything together. This model conveys the idea that education at the GGS can employ each pupil's own strengths and virtues, which, according to research findings, aids in student accomplishment and happiness. As it expresses the inbuilt strivings in all human beings, the model can function like a mirror: it reflects, in a psychological way, what we always seek for ourselves. The GGS site uses the analogy of a map: 'Our Positive Education Model can be thought of as a roadmap of what people want for themselves, their students, and their children' (GGS 2015a). Thus it operates as a translation device that links together, and homogenizes, the aims and aspirations of different actors into a conceptual whole based on psychological research findings.

There are both separate courses on positive psychology (years 5–10) and elements of positive psychology embedded in ordinary classes and extracurricular activities. The courses on positive psychology entail studying central theories and concepts of positive psychology (such as flourishing and character strengths) and then learning to implement them in daily life. One of the courses employs an applied version of the popular Penn Resiliency and Strath Haven programmes created by positive psychologists

for adolescents. In this course, pupils learn to cope with their day-to-day problems by learning more 'realistic' and 'flexible' coping strategies. These may involve, for example, relaxation and brainstorming exercises. As for courses not dedicated to positive psychology, history lessons can entail the assessment of the character strengths of historical figures, and in geography class, students examine how the physical environment affects flourishing in towns and cities (Norrish et al. 2013, p. 151). Even when studying literature, students will learn to analyse Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Kafka's *Metamorphosis* through the lens of character strengths. Outside the official curricula, the school's chapel services could also include scriptural passages on specific character strengths (Seligman et al. 2009, pp. 305–306; Norrish 2015). This is how positive psychology operates as a translating meta-discourse that overcodes and connects all other discourses: while allowing historical, literary and religious meanings to circulate in the school, positive psychology is still the 'truth of truth' that orders these discourses according to how much universal truth of happiness they entail.

Martin Seligman and Jacolyn Norrish argue that the domains of flourishing and character strengths should form a *lingua franca* that gives researchers, teachers, and pupils common concepts with which to speak of the school values, the curriculum, and the daily activities at the GGS. Thus it also ties the school community together into an organic whole:

> Character strengths can be illustrated in concrete behavioural examples and thus provide an accessible entry point for exploring well-being, particularly with younger children. The aim is to develop a shared language for strengths across the school community, creating a sense of belonging and connectedness. (Norrish et al. 2013, p. 156; see also Seligman et al. 2009, p. 304)

The GGS manuscript forms what Nikolas Rose (1999, p. 33) calls an 'irreal space'; it characterizes the aims and contents of the curriculum as a coherent, intelligible field, which has limits, connected elements, systematic divisions, and identifiable differences. Yet the GGS model is not merely a neutral mediation of universal human characteristics to school curriculums, but also works as a conquest as it introduces a regime of truth that resonates with wider rationalities of rule. Positive psychology reflects a very specific ideal of 'subject' that nurtures his or her own freedom and responsibility for attaining personal fulfilment (Christopher and Hickinbottom 2008). In positive psychology, (real) happiness or 'flourishing' does not depend on the external conditions of an individual's life.

It is possible for anyone to be released from the chains of learned habits and to begin to direct their own lives. Happiness, then, is a highly personal experience that can be subjectively controlled (see. e.g. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000, p. 5). Moreover, developers of the GGS curriculum stress that individual resilience and flexibility are crucial in the dynamic and competitive labor market. Therefore, the students should learn to 'capitalize on opportunities, and cope adaptively with disappointments and challenges' (Norrish et al. 2013, p. 153) These characterizations resonate well with a wider governmental rationality in which each human being is understood to be a self-sufficient being 'who produces his own satisfaction' (Foucault 2008, pp. 215–239). Individual well-being in positive psychology is, above all, something for which each human individual is responsible (Brunila 2012).

Above, we have illustrated *problematization,* the first phase of translation at the GGS, where Seligman's research group changed the manuscript for schooling: they helped construct the curriculum around categories of flourishing and character strengths. The manuscript, a result of this process, translates general programs of governance into conceptual models of how to manage a school with its curricula, aims, and evaluation. This also entailed elements of other phases of translation, namely *interessement,* where the staff was persuaded into adopting certain ways of thinking and speaking about the processes and aims of the curricula, and *enrolment*, in which the interests of the GGS staff were coordinated with those defined by the positive psychologists. These acts of translation were necessary to reach the fourth phase, where positive psychology discourse controls the GGS curriculum. However, translation does not operate only at the level of curricula, but also reaches to the confines of private subjectivity, on how to recognize oneself and act as a certain kind of individual. Next, we show how these phases operate as a conquest of selves by offering certain kinds of subject positions to students and teachers.

The Conquest of Selves

The technologies of the self—the systematized practices through which a subject can recognize him- or herself as a certain kind of person—form the most intimate area in which translation and conquest in positive psychology takes place. Foucault (2005) has characterized confession as a prominent trajectory in the history of Western technologies of the self. In modern day psy-sciences, the logic of confession entails a dialectical rela-

tionship in which a subject confesses her own interiority to a psychological expert, who, in turn, tells the truth about the subject's condition to her. We can thus understand confession as a very intimate form of translation where psy-knowledge slips into the realm of one's own subjectivity and provides a grid of intelligibility through which one can understand oneself through confessional discussions (Usher and Edwards 2015; cf. Fejes 2008).

The GGS model inculcates a certain relationship in the teacher and the pupil towards her or his own personal emotions and thoughts. It governs how she or he can recognize her- or himself as a certain kind of person, to probe towards her or his interiority and see more clearly the strengths, or the positive aspects, of her or his daily experiences. This can be seen as a confessional logic typical of psy-knowledges, in which the subject receives the conditions of recognizing one's self from psy-discourses, then confesses something of her or his personality for public recognition. This assumes several forms at the GGS.

At the GGS, what is seen as the most effective strategy of disseminating technologies of the self is characterized by their slogan 'live it, teach it, embed it'. First, teachers should themselves be transformed by their training in positive psychology. They should learn to practice optimistic thinking, compassion, and recognition of their own character strengths. This enables them to realize, first-hand, what the actual benefits of positive psychology are for their own happiness, and then to teach it while being 'authentic models' to their pupils (Norrish et al. 2013, pp. 150–151; Seligman 2011a, p. 88).

Teaching positive psychology and embedding it into the daily minutiae of school life can take many guises. For example, there is the loose form in which positive psychology scaffolds a relatively open conversation between teacher and pupils. Seligman (2015a) relates a typical morning in a GGS class. Six-year-olds form a semi-circle, and the teacher then asks, 'What went well last night'? Children respond with accounts of their experiences. For instance, a boy named Kevin answers:

> 'My sister and I cleaned the patio after dinner, and Mum hugged us after we finished'. Teacher then asks: 'Why is it important to share what went well'? He doesn't hesitate: 'It makes me feel good'. 'Anything more, Kevin'? 'Oh, yes, my mum asks me what went well when I get home every day, and it makes her happy when I tell her. And when Mum's happy, everybody's happy'. (Seligman 2011a, 2015a, p. 92)

Moreover, the students in all grades are encouraged to keep a 'blessings journal' in which they write about their positive experiences (Seligman 2011a, p. 89). There is also a What Went Well-board at the school on which students and staff can express positive thoughts and gratitude. This board is thought to bind students and staff together into a community of positive relationships (Norrish 2015, pp. 70–71; Norrish et al. 2013, p. 151). These are ways in which Seligman's (2011b) idea of learning to think like an optimist is embedded in schools. Seligman notes that one needs to learn positive habits of thinking and gratitude to succeed in life, and it is by seeing the fruits of these strategies first-hand that they can take hold and become part of one's daily existence. This is a concrete example of what Foucault (1982, p. 220) referred to as the 'persuading' and 'seducing' character of power in modern societies. The concepts and principles of positive psychology are not applied just through external coercion, but mutual recognition and sharing of personal experiences in an open dialogue and empowerment through building supportive community. Positive psychology can thus slip surreptitiously into loosely structured daily exchanges in the class.

Another example sheds light on how positive psychology is involved in the construction of pupils' subjectivity in a more direct way: Statistical tests based on psychological research are used in helping students know themselves (Norrish 2015; Norrish et al. 2013). For instance, Peterson and Seligman's Character Strengths test, along with Huppert's Individual Flourishing Questionnaire, is used in positive psychology lessons. Students submit a questionnaire with several hundred items and then receive a characterization of their specific character strengths, or authentic ways of flourishing.[2] In Visual Arts, the students then craft 'shields' that describe those strengths (Norrish et al. 2013, p. 153; GGS 2012). Ideally, these tests structure how pupils can recognize themselves as having certain kinds of virtues so that they can evaluate and develop themselves according to these virtues and express themselves as that kind of person. This inserts the translation between the individual and psychological knowledge to the confessional technologies of the self in the school: students answer test questions, which are then translated back to the student as knowledge of his/her 'authentic' strengths and the way they are expressed to others.

To some extent, these cases reflect the rationalities of governing free subjects in which, ideally, people do not need to be governed from above, or from the centre. Instead, individuals engage freely in what they consider to be suitable for their own well-being, and testify this to others

as well (Miller and Rose 2008, p. 148). As seen above, teachers are first encouraged to feel the effects of positive psychology in their own lives. Thus teachers' enthusiasm, conviction, and authenticity can light a spark for positive psychology in their pupils (Norrish et al. 2013). Yet, while these discourses and practices highlight the discovery of one's 'authentic' way of being happy, this authenticity can only be duly recognized and confessed in the discursive space provided by positive psychology. In the case of the what-went-well dialogue depicted above, the teacher still frames the verbal exchange, as she guides the dialogue by allowing only positive experiences to surface, and uses them to help pupils discover certain moral principles of good behavior. And in the case of character strength tests, one's own subjective experience must go through a battery of items and a statistical classification in order to gain authenticity.

Educational sociologist Andreas Fejes (2008, pp. 661–662) has claimed that in the new millennium, the role of experts in confessional relationships of education is waning. We are persuaded to see ourselves as our own experts, to diagnose and confess the truth of our condition to ourselves and our peers, not to psychologists or psychiatrists. This is also how subjects are encouraged to govern themselves as autonomous, responsible individuals (Fejes 2008). Binkley (2014) also claims that positive psychology and a new discourse of happiness work so well because they break down the hierarchy of knowledge between psy-professionals and the general public. From the viewpoint of positive psychology, every human being is the potential object of psychotechnics (Binkley 2014). '(Positive psychology) is a promissory discourse which deems happiness to be within the reach of everyone, irrespective of their genetic makeup, dispositions, past experiences, life chances, or material circumstances', as Reveley (2013, p. 5) puts it.

To some extent, this is also true of the technologies of the self used at the GGS, where psy-knowledge is not limited to the use of psychological experts only. As noted above, there can be a dialogue about happiness with the teacher, among schoolmates or within oneself, and in a school class, just as well as at home. Yet even if the immediate interaction between psychological experts and pupils is not there, it is clear that psychological expertise is still mediated through various kinds of translations in which pupils are assigned certain subject positions. Character strengths and virtues are translated into tests, and it is through them that GGS pupils can find out the truth about themselves. Moreover, expert knowledge even governs those less structured confessional technologies, such as the

What-Went-Well board, as they embody the subject positions allocated by positive psychology; they express positive thoughts by individuals actively seeking happiness.

Yet, it must be noticed that translation is never complete, but an ongoing process. What is crucial for the success of translation is that the objects of translation, in this case students and teachers (and parents, remember Kevin's quote), really identify and perceive themselves as a certain kind (happy) persons. Although the reports used here only tell about the success of the GGS, the processes of translation and conquest can also fail. Callon (1998) has called this potential failure a 'pressure of overflowing'. In the case of the GGS this could mean, for instance, that teachers and students, for one reason or another, don't identify themselves as subjects described in the manuscript; they could, for instance, resist these positions.

Conclusions

Since the turn of the millennium, positive psychology has succeeded in its programme of spreading its version of the psy-sciences beyond clinical institutions into almost every imaginable area of human life, including schooling and education. It now influences the way individuals, groups, and institutions can think of happiness and well-being (Binkley 2014). Allegedly, the practicality of positive psychology in schooling is founded on representations of universal human nature apart from cultural and historical contexts. This way, positive psychology can also, according to itself, aid in identifying our individual character strengths and provide tools for using them.

However, we have indicated that positive psychology is not merely a representation of human nature apart from political and governmental interests and strategies. Instead, positive psychology involves multiple translations between governmental rationalities and practices of schooling. First, it can be noticed how the GGS model seeks to make understandable and visible certain phenomena in school practices, in terms of flourishing or character strengths. As a manuscript, the GGS model is able to formulate a stable space in which teachers and pupils can communicate using a common language; recognize themselves as a certain kind of person; and make visible certain kinds of phenomena. This manuscript also connects psychological knowledge to governmental rationalities and educational institutions.

Moreover, the process of translation creates subject positions to which the GGS seeks to persuade teachers and students. This 'interessement' works especially by employing certain technologies of self. Creating subject positions does not mean teachers or students are being held as passive objects in these translation processes. Instead, they play an active part in the way psychological knowledge is internalized into 'the psy-disciplinary gaze'.

Translation also involves conquest as positive psychology spreads its own regime of truth into schools. Positive psychology is actively embedded into school practices whereupon they affect the ways teachers and pupils recognize themselves and act like certain kinds of persons. Furthermore, conquest includes severing existing links and relationships (Callon 1998), such as non-psychological communication and expertise concerning educational aims.

This analysis of translation and conquest shows that for psychological concepts and theories to be relevant in education, they must not be left lingering in the pages of psychological journals or lecture halls; they have to be in constant movement and transformation and so they find their way into curriculum texts, classroom dialogues, personal journals, tests, and private thought patterns. This also means that the psy-knowledge of happiness does not have a fixed essence, or a privileged surface of emergence. Instead, its flexibility and modifiability is the very guarantee of its practicality. Thus, against the notion of the psychological knowledge of happiness being universal and practical to begin with, we have indicated that these traits have to be translated over and over again in different loci, and that the more spaces, resources, and allies these translations can mobilize, the more universality and practicality the concepts and theories of positive psychology can have.

Notes

1. As Gorur (2015, p. 103) notes, Callon and Latour never apply these 'moments' in a strict sense, but use them as a heuristic device.
2. The tests used at the GGS, along with a host of other positive psychology tests and questionnaires, can be found at the University of Pennsylvania Authentic Happiness site: https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/

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CHAPTER 7

Labouring Over the Truth: Learning to Be/Come Queer

Peter Bansel and Emma Keltie

Our address to the production of gendered, sexed, and sexualised subjects in neoliberal times foregrounds the obligation of subjects to be self-reflexive, to labour, learn, discover, and express the inner truth of themselves. In so doing, we articulate a constitutive relation between the truth of the 'self' produced in the heteronormative practices of schooling, and the multiple and possible truths and selves produced in young people's engagement with digital social media. In considering the practices through which young people are engaged in the ongoing negotiation of their own subjectivities, we re/articulate Foucault's (1992) insistence that sexuality is not a natural biological and fixed truth of the self, but rather, constituted and regulated through historically specific and *variable* discourses and practices.

In pointing out that new sexualities are constantly under production, Foucault emphasises that far from being a natural discoverable feature of the self, they are open to revision and invention. In foregrounding the historically variable discourses and practices of sex, gender, and sexuality that young people negotiate in online and offline spaces, we situate both digital social media and classrooms as apparatuses, or normalising machines, through which a range of variables is standardised as the truth of oneself.

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_7

Further, we point out that this machinic production of the truth of oneself is, at once, calibrated by modernist discourses of normalcy, nature, and truth, and recalibrated by postmodern discourses of multiplicity, indeterminacy, and invention.

Boler (2007) suggests that digital representations of self, or digital identities, are more fluid, dynamic, and flexible compared with pre-digital representations of self. Similarly, Giddens (1991, 1992, 2000) characterises the post-modern subject as self-reflexive, unbound by tradition, and highly flexible. Giddens suggests that 'the digital revolution' has intensified the practice of self-reflexivity, and invites users to change, or continuously re-inscribe/re-constitute their identity in a digital world. This leads users to constantly analyse, reflect, and strategically change themselves in order to find their place within shifting modes of being.

If, as Foucault suggests, new realms of possibilities for sexual subjectivities are constantly being produced, where, we wonder, might we find these new possibilities in the hetero/normative practices of schooling? We take up this question by looking at the introduction of a new taxonomy of gender produced by Facebook (USA), and read it against accounts of experience collected from young people in the study 'Growing up Queer'.[1] The purpose of that study was twofold: to gather digital stories from queer young people to inform a professional development resource for teachers; and to conduct an online survey to establish a relationship between young people's experience of homophobia and transphobia as it impacts on their health and wellbeing. Drawing on the qualitative data collected in our national Australian online survey, and from interviews and focus groups with young people at Twenty10, a Sydney-based service for people of diverse genders, sexualities, and sexes, we consider the labour young people perform to produce the truth of themselves through digital social media and classroom pedagogies.

In situating both digital social media and schools as normalising machines, we specifically consider the knowledge queer young people labour over to produce the truth of an authentic self. We reflect on the ways in which different knowledge and truths of the self are differently produced online and off line—and how the production of truths about sex, gender, and sexuality might be opened up to possibilities routinely excluded from the heteronormative-business-as-usual of the classroom. We draw attention to the ways in which the material effects of classroom discourses and practices instantiate psy 'problems' that are negotiated and resolved online. Classroom experiences of alienation, abjection, invisibility,

misrecognition, and discrimination are materialised in, and through, psy-discourses of depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and shame (amongst others). Online experiences of discovery, identification, community, and recognition are expressed as psy-discourses of hope, optimism, healing, and self-realisation (amongst others). In this way, online labour becomes a corrective to the problems emergent for the subject who finds that their (queer) life is not viable in the classroom, but can be/come viable online.

Labouring to Learn the Truth

The labour of coming to know oneself, and become an expert of self, is a technology of self (Foucault 1992) through which individuals become certain types of subjects. The self becomes something to be worked on; that is, the self becomes the product of one's own labour. Our account of the labour of learning/knowing the truth of a sexed, gendered, and sexualised self in both digital social media and classrooms, draws on Nikolas Rose's account of labour and the making of the self in neoliberal times. Rose (1999) proposes that within neoliberalism, an earlier identification with a work ethic has been written over by an ethic of self-care and self-realisation. Our labour is no longer simply a matter of paid employment in the workforce. Rather, it is through our labour, and particularly our labour on ourself, that we find, express, understand, and realise the truth of who we really are. This is a self-reflexive project through which the interiority of the body, as a space in which the truth of oneself might be found, is made accessible through psy-practices of self-reflection. It is through this interrogation of the self that the individual can find 'the "inner life"' that holds the secrets of identity, which they are to discover and fulfill', and through which the standard for living 'an "authentic" life is to be judged' (Rose 1996, p. 22).

For Rose (1996, p. 4), the psy-subject is constituted through, and in, an 'internal universe of the self', which lies at the core of ways of conducting ourselves that are considered normal—and for thinking and judging the abnormal. Our lives are made meaningful to the extent that we can 'discover our self, be our self, express our self, love our self, and be loved for the self that we really are' (Rose 1996, p. 4). Rose points out that the growth of psy has been connected with 'transformation in forms of personhood, and our notion of what each of us is in ourselves, and how we can become what we want to be' (1996, p. 4). But how might we know who we want to be?

The technologising of self-knowledge and self-expertise through digital media has significantly increased the reach of psy-discourses and practices of the self (Dean 2013). The burgeoning knowledge about sex, gender, and sexuality that circulates in these online spaces is multiple, transient, fluid, and mobile. The multiple and mutable psy-knowledges of the self produced and consumed online has, we suggest, an ambivalent relation to the psy-knowledge of the self produced and consumed in the classroom. That is, the matrices of intelligibility from which young people find the truth of themselves differ significantly in online and offline spaces. Further, in negotiating the possibilities available in each of these spaces, young people are required to make strategic choices about how they will identify (and be identified) in these different spaces. This, in itself, demands significant labour in the negotiation of different knowledges of self.

Feeling the Way to Truth

In situating digital social media and classroom pedagogies as normalising machines through which we come to realise our potential and become ourselves, we draw attention to the ways in which competing discourses of truth are differently mobilised in the production of queer subjects online and in the classroom. Dean (2013, p. 137) highlights the ways in which users of networked media encounter 'the endless possibilities of contemporary reflexivity' through which they are 'propelled to move through a variety of imaginary identities'. We imagine ourselves one way, then another, choosing how we might appear and to whom. Indeed, subjects are '*obliged* to…construe their existence as the outcome of choices that they make among a plurality of alternatives' Rose (1996, pp. 78–79). In negotiating these heterogeneous possibilities for being, a number of themes recur: 'choice, fulfillment, self-discovery, self-realization…(through) which life and its contingencies become meaningful to the extent that they can be construed as the product of personal choice' (Rose 1996, p. 195).

Each decision is seen to realise a certain aspect of the personality and you make it intelligible to yourself and to others as if it was an expression of some underlying feature of your personhood. You are to take responsibility for the happiness or the sadness of your own existence. You are to be the actor in the drama of your own existence, and intrinsically bound to this is the injunction that the self must become the subject of choice in its everyday life, in order to realise its potential and *become what it truly is.* (Rose 2015, n.p., our emphasis)

We are interested in the extent to which this reflexive psy-subject is articulated as simultaneously natural (this is the truth of who I am and always have been) *and* self-determining (this is who I choose to be from among the new possibilities available to me). Importantly, the resources through which one might come to know one self are not inevitably acquired through pure introspection, but 'by rendering one's introspection in a particular vocabulary of feelings, beliefs, passions, desires, values, or whatever and according to a particular explanatory code derived from some source of authority' (Rose 1996, p. 32). As one participant stated: *I wasn't proud of my sexuality and didn't think I would be accepted or safe. I am now using Facebook to show people that I am proud and that I am very happy with who I am and the choices that I have made.* This source of authority is, we suggest, a 'normalisng machine' through which particular embodied forms, or expressions of psy-subjectivity, are constituted and regulated. It is through the normalising machine of the school (Rose 1996, p. 78) that the student embodies the norms of the institution, and the institution acts as a machine 'for the registration of human differences' (p. 106).

In being concerned with the labour through which the truth of one's nature is learned/disavowed online and in the classroom, we are not so much concerned with comparisons that illuminate and problematise online and offline practices, or with discontinuities among them. Rather, we point out the ways in which the erasure of non-heteronormative sexes, genders, or sexualities within the pedagogical practices of schooling reduces access to knowledge about the possibilities for alternative subject positions that are readily available to be taken up online: *When I was younger and still coming out I found it particularly useful to go onto internet sites and talk to people who had the same feelings as me; I didn't know many gay people growing up and there were certainly none who were open at my school.* Here, we point to the different matrices of intelligibility through which queer young people must learn to know themselves: the heteronormative matrices of intelligibility of the school/classroom and the heterogeneous possibilities to be found online. We also emphasise that the embodied psy-effects of these differences should not be understood as *individual* differences, but rather, as the material effects of social and cultural practices that constitute and regulate the interiority of the subject: 'What moves us, what makes us feel, is also that which also holds us in our place' (Ahmed 2004, p. 11).

The feelings/emotions through which we locate the truth of ourselves accumulate over time as a form of affective value, and these affects and

values have a history of production and labour (Ahmed 2004). Ahmed emphasises that objects of emotion do not simply circulate in particular temporalised and spatialised practices and labours, but 'get 'taken on' and 'taken in' as 'mine' or 'ours'' (Ahmed 2004, p.15). Importantly, this involves 'the concealment of labour under the sign of nature' (Ahmed 2004, p. 145).

Classroom Labour Under the Sign of Nature

Schools are normalising machines through which the heteronormative citizen/subject is re/produced through particular knowledges and pedagogies of becoming hetero/normal (Robinson and Davies 2008). This hetero/normal subject is articulated as a reproductive body that follows a psy-trajectory from childhood innocence to sexual maturity. In this trajectory, maturity is conflated with fertility and procreation and expressed as a heteronormative reproductive relation between a woman and a man. Despite some recognition of the importance of access to a curriculum that encourages choice and diversity, knowledge about multiple sexes, genders, and sexualities is conspicuously absent from curricula (Robinson and Ferfolja 2001). This absence perpetuates a perception among teachers and students that knowledge of sexual diversity is irrelevant to the heteronormative-business-as-usual of the classroom, and students learn that expressions of difference are best kept to oneself. Ironically, this elision of knowledge about multiple and diverse genders, sexes, and sexualities renders queer students invisible at the same time as it makes them hyper-visible as other; as unspeakable, deviant, and not normal.

The heteronormative psy-gaze of the teacher is a technology through which students are examined for signs of abnormal development, and subject to disciplinary practices and pedagogical interventions. Further, this gaze of the other is turned upon the self so that students see themselves as outside the norm, and perhaps outside the natural. In such instances, students variously labour to uncover the extent and meaning of their difference, embody and express their difference, or disavow and hide their difference. *I didn't tell anyone I was gay because there were other openly gay students at my school that—people isolated themselves from them. Yeah, there was a guy that went to my school and he was extremely feminine and the boys were really intimidated because they thought he was going to try and put it on them. I saw that so I just thought I'll wait until I finish school and it'll be a lot easier.*

Knowing, or feeling, oneself to be gay is in tension with the knowledge of being gay (and the consequences of being gay) that the pedagogical practices and curricula of schooling produce. The heteronormative apparatus of the school forecloses discussion of knowledges that disrupt binary constructions of sex, gender, and sexuality. The heteronormative curriculum also forecloses possibilities for understanding oneself and being, or becoming, other than straight or not straight. Further, possibilities for being other than straight are collapsed into stable categories of difference, such as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual (but not usually trans, queer, or intersex). As recounted by a gay, male identified participant, instructional material on HIV constituted the non-heteronormative male body as the carrier of death/disease: *We had to watch a story about a woman that got AIDS quite young and they made a point that it was given to her by a bisexual man. They made that quite clear in the video…It was highlighted on the screen and everything. That video really traumatised me.* We point here to the knowledge practices through that which is constituted as health education is also a cautionary tale of the 'other' as disease(d). In this way, a heteronormative curriculum stabilises the truth of identities into a limited range of possible categories of being. And yet, the range of sexed, gendered, and sexualised positions performed by students in classrooms may not be visible or intelligible to the gaze of the teacher. What we draw attention to here, is the extent to which queer young people's digital practices make available knowledges and identities that the practices of the classroom foreclose or pathologise.

The invisibility of, and silence about, alternative performances and embodiments of sex, gender, and sexuality in classrooms does more than re/produce heteronormativity. Invisibility and silence also produce and endorse homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of gender violence, including the symbolic violence of eliding certain categories of being, or belonging, in a relation where one person has the capacity to reshape the meanings through which the other makes sense of their life and another does not. Further, alternative (non-heteronormative) possibilities for embodiments and performances of sex, gender, and sexuality are often experienced/read as signs of compromised wellbeing.

Those young people subject to the heteronormative psy-gaze of others, and found to be 'different', find that they are either invisible in school curricula, policies, and pedagogical practices, or hyper-visible as bodies that disrupt the regulatory and disciplinary regimes of the school. This is not only alienating and marginalising, but opens non-heteronormative bodies

to multiple forms of homophobic and transphobic violence. Many of the LGBTQI young people who participated in the Growing Up Queer study, along with those who indicated that they were questioning their sexual and/or gender identities, mobilised psy-discourses when characterising their experience of schooling as negatively impacting their physical and psychological wellbeing: *I tried self-harm, attempted suicide and then eventually changed schools. Tried telling the school counsellor, who told the head of the middle school, who told me it was my problem to deal with and that I should finish what I started—by which I guess she meant it was my fault for coming out.*

Not surprisingly, young people made strategic decisions about whether or not to come out, and calibrated the extent to which they would hide their sexuality and gender variance in order to 'pass' as heteronormative subjects. Coming out narratives were a feature of every account of non-heteronormative lives, and extensive online searches and conversations were undertaken to discover/learn when to come out, how to come out, who to come out to and whether or not to come out at school. Yet, out or not, bodies subject to the heteronormative psy-gaze of teachers and peers, and found wanting, were always already read as queer. This exposed them to the multiple forms of harassment they were trying to avoid—and to unanticipated discrimination from teachers. Many of the queer young people in our study described experiences in which they endured daily physical, verbal, and emotional harassment and alienation from both peers and teachers. Many suggested that harassment from peers was expected and, to some extent, more manageable than the unexpected homophobia of teachers. Indeed some young people indicated that teachers were often the main perpetrators of the homophobia or transphobia they experienced.

A gay identified male who attended a single sex school suggested that his peers were more accepting of his difference than his teachers. As he tells it, his performance of masculinity was refigured as a danger from which he and his schoolmates needed to be protected. This ascription of unnatural desires was subject to particular modes of regulation that the student experienced as homophobia: *I went to [X] High School where in general speaking they were quite good but I wasn't allowed to get changed in the boys' bathroom. That was the teachers' decision, not the students'. The students loved me. I fitted in, I was actually kind of popular because I had all the girls' roles in the drama room but the teachers wouldn't let me get changed in the change rooms. They made me get changed in the teachers' lounge. I wasn't allowed to get changed with other students.*

This issue of perceived discrimination by teachers is both interesting and complex. On the one hand, the school may have sex/gender discrimination policies in place, and on the other hand, they might routinely discriminate against students in the decisions they make about or for them. This is especially the case when decisions are formed on the basis of knowledges about, and assessments of, the truth of students' identities and their need to be protected—or for other students to be protected from them. But the psy-discourses of true identities, of variation from the hetero/norm, of danger, protection, and risk mobilised by teachers, constitute and co-implicate a range of psy-discourses and experiences for students: *When I was younger and in high school I experienced homophobia/biphobia/heterosexism…This put me in a state of fear, isolation and depression so I never had the confidence to stand up to bullies…Instead I withdrew and turned to underage drinking, wagging school, and cannabis consumption as a way of dealing with the homophobia.*

In articulating the psy-effects of experiences of homophobia and transphobia at school, young people were, ironically, exposed to the psy-gaze of teachers and other experts of young people's well-being (doctors, school counsellors, psychologists, psychiatrists): a gaze that constituted them as subjects in need of intervention. Here, we reiterate our earlier point that these embodied psy-effects should not be understood as *individual*, but rather, as the material effects of social and cultural practices that constitute the interiority of the subject.

In this way, the heternormativity, homophobia, and transphobia of schooling produced psy-effects that consolidated a constitutive relation between non-heteronormative subjects and psychological/emotional trauma: *I just felt ashamed and awful about myself…Often it is hard to speak up, as it is very emotionally draining…When speaking up would require that I out myself, I tended not to say anything, for fear of being stereotyped or thought of as disgusting.*

Our point here is not to critique the operation of psy-discourses in the production of shame and disgust, but to emphasise that teachers' pedagogical practices, and the psy-gaze through which students are constituted and regulated, produces 'troubled' young people. This is the materialisation of gender trouble on the bodies, hearts, and minds of queer young people.

Despite the heteronormative regulation of sexual subjectivity at school, and the silence and invisibility of knowledge of diversity, students are always already learning about sexuality in other spaces—including

digital media. So, despite teachers' best efforts to normalise and regulate students' expressions of sex, gender, and sexuality, possibilities for non-normative identities are in constant production through the labour that young people undertake online. This labour profoundly disrupts normalised, taken for granted relations between sex, gender, and sexuality and reassembles them in a variety of combinations, associations, embodiments, performances, and meanings. Self-identifications noted in our online survey include; *gay, homosexual, lesbian, queer, asexual, greysexual, greyromantic, gender variant, pansexual, omnisexual, polysexual, heteroflexible, homoflexible, panromantic, pansexual demiromantic, sapiopansexual, heteroromantic and bisexual, open to people*, *heterosexual and queer (simultaneously—weird but true!)*. Heteronormative discourses of nature and the natural are exclusionary and often irreconcilable with the nature young people ascribe to themselves. The psy-effects of these irreconcilable natures were, in our data, expressed as suicidal ideation, depression, anxiety, shame, humiliation, and so on. This was in stark contrast to the more optimistic psy-discourses mobilised online. This is not to romance the production of online identities, but to point out the role that schools might take in both constituting a relation between difference and experiences of trauma, and constituting difference differently.

Online Labour Under the Sign of Nature

On February 14, 2014 Facebook (USA) launched the functionality for users to customise their gender identity on their user profile. The purpose of this change was explained by Facebook as an opportunity for users to 'feel comfortable being [their] true, authentic self' (Facebook 2013). A key element of this authenticity is the individual user's 'expression of gender, especially when it extends beyond the definitions of just "male" or "female."' So today, we're proud to offer a new custom gender option to help you better express your own identity on Facebook' (Facebook 2013). Currently, fifty-two gender categories (Fig. 7.1) are provided for Facebook users to choose from, inviting active choice making in the production of self, and in the production of self-knowledge. Fischer (2012), in pointing out that Facebook empowers users to contribute 'to their own objectification' (p. 175), signals the extent to which Facebook is a technology for the constitution and regulation of psy-subjects who invent themselves and express their freedom to be/come 'who they really are': *Facebook also has a sub-community where people give advice on top-*

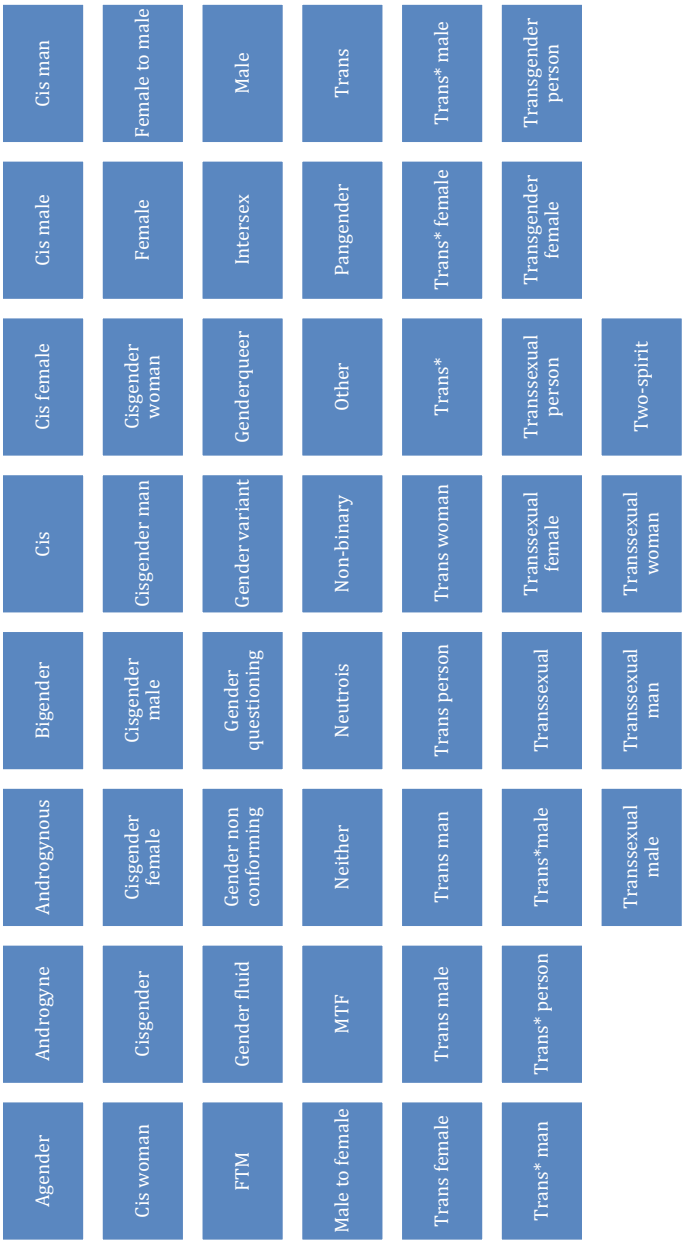

Fig. 7.1 Facebook's taxonomy of 52 genders

ics that are important when finding out your identity and things of that nature. Lincoln and Robards (2014) acknowledge that Facebook profiles are multiple and varied spaces for the performance of identity. Profiles can be adjusted, changed, and tailored to reflect change over time and the journey of becoming 'more oneself'. Indeed, our data suggests that queer young people experience and use Facebook and other digital media as spaces in which they can explore and experiment with their identity: *When I was around 13-years-old, I delved more into the Internet and would secretly search gay blogs and forums to gain an understanding of who I was and what other people saw me as.* Interestingly, this included not only self-identification, but also an understanding of how other people saw them; a self-reflexive psy-gaze conjoined with the psy-gaze of another to confer recognition and intelligibility. This gaze can then be re/turned to recognise and support other online users: *Facebook has been good for spotting when a friend is in need of reassurance that they are fighting a good fight to stay true to themselves.*

Buckingham (2008) argues that 'commercial forces both create opportunities and set limits on young people's digital cultures', at the same time as they 'provide young people with symbolic resources for constructing or expressing their own identities' (2008, p. 5). Facebook, as a commercial enterprise and site for the consumption and production of identities, defines and organises identities, enables young people to take up new identities, reaffirms who they already know themselves to be, and offers recognition by others (Buckingham 2008, p. 6): *I visit sites that allow me to freely explore my sexuality and find information and read stories, other's stories about growing up and self discovery.* Lincoln and Robards' (2014) observation that timelines and data on Facebook can be 'mapped onto a "growing up" narrative' (p. 2) simultaneously parallels, and counters, the heteronormative pedagogical discourse of maturation (growing up) as a trajectory from childhood innocence to adulthood embodied by the pairing of a reproductive male/female couple. Our 'Growing up Queer' data maps the psy-discourses of maturation and emergent self-knowledge as developmental trajectories from immaturity and uncertainty, through discovery and choice, to coming out and getting on with things: *At first I was scared to even read some of the stories. Some people have gone through horrible times just for being who they were. But then there was hope. These people still went on in life and made something of themselves.* These narratives also map the emotional travails of this journey of self-recognition and self-acceptance. These are psy-discourses of the self, constituted and

regulated by acts of consumption, production, self-determination and the freedom to be/come one's true self and growing up (to be) queer—all of which are central to neoliberal technologies of self-realisation: *When it comes to exploring my own sexual identity, the Internet has really helped me realise that there are other people experiencing the same feelings and going through the same repression as I am…After I overcame the denial of being gay I found www.gayteenforum.org as a way of talking with other gay teens and to feel comfortable with my sexuality.*

The young people who participated in our research laboured online to find the right vocabularies of intelligibility, and categories of personhood, through which they might recognise, describe, embody, and perform their true or real self. These vocabularies of intelligibility are not signs, or reflections, of a true sexed, gendered, and sexualised self; rather they are normative technologies through which certain knowledges of the self are constituted and regulated. These vocabularies of possible bodies, desires, identities, essences, natures, truths, and realities are constitutive psy-discourses through which bodies, minds and inner worlds of sensation, desire, and feeling are brought together as self-knowledge: *The vast majority of my knowledge about atypical gender and sexual identities I gained from the Internet. I found YouTube to be very helpful when it came to feeling right about myself. Those who were out and proud gave me comfort, hope, and support.*

The possibilities for applying new vocabularies of sex, gender, and sexuality to ourselves, such as Facebook's fifty-two genders, make it possible for us to experience, express, and perform ourselves in new ways. These new vocabularies of intelligibility make it possible for new kinds of persons to come into existence, and it is through our labour and acts of choice, that it is possible for us to become such types of person (Rose 2015). Through these new vocabularies, queer young people speak themselves into being. This is, according to Rose (2015), an act of identification, performatively constituted though the obligation to produce words that are in some way true to an inner reality, and performatively embodied through acts of self examination that precede and accompany the speech. In this way one is made a subject for oneself (Rose 2015), and the labour through which this relation is constituted produces a certain kind of relationship of the self to the self. The knowledges and vocabularies through which this labour is materialised as a self, also give us access to certain practices and procedures for deciphering ourselves, for examining ourselves, for judging ourselves and for rectifying ourselves (Rose 2015).

Within this context, queer youth, as consumers and producers of digital and social media, engage in temporally and spatially specific labour to produce temporally and spatially specific identities. We have suggested that queer young people's negotiation of identities online is shaped by psy-discourses of self-realisation, self-recognition, happiness, potential, hope and positivity. Yet, as Ahmed (2010) points out, the promise of happiness is normative and disciplining, and as we read it, the reiteration of neoliberal psy-discourses of self-knowledge, authenticity, and self-realisation. This engenders a neoliberal form of collective affect that shapes the boundaries of truths about queer identities. It also invites queer young people to respond to heterosexist violence with a 'psycho-social refashioning of pain, depression, anxiety, and indeed suicide into active hope, introspective resilience, personal fantasy, and political complacency' (Grzanka and Mann 2014, p. 376) that locates the problem and solution in the queer subject. In this way, the dynamics of sexuality and gender-based inequality become the personal responsibility of queer youth who take it upon themselves to refashion their lives. This represents the embodiment of neoliberal structures of feeling that constitute the individual as the problem/solution space of contemporary lives, a space that can be laboured over through practices of self reflection and the exposure of a dis/eased self to psy-technologies of intervention, treatment, recovery, and well-being: *I found out more about queer sexuality and gender identities…that I educated myself on unraveling and constantly adjusting my expectation and my wellbeing in a heteronormative society.* This digital labour is in significant tension with the pedagogical labour through which queer young people negotiate a curriculum that re/produces privileged embodiments of the (hetero)normative subject/citizen.

In thinking about the concealment of labour under the sign of nature we hope to open up a reading of the psy-effects of discrimination and marginalisation as a disease of the social, rather than the psychopathology of an individual. This implicates the school as a site for both the social re/production of psychopathology *and* a site for in(ter)vention.

Queering the Subject of Schooling

In pointing out the extent to which queer young people labour online (as a normalising machine) to manage the material impacts of the heteronormative practices of the school (as normalising machine), we suggest that schools have an ethical responsibility to *all* young people to ensure

that heteronormative curricula and pedagogies do not produce psy-embodiments of homophobia, transphobia, and other forms of gendered discrimination. The psy-consequences of classroom practices alert us to dilemmas and possibilities for the constitution and regulation of sexual subjectivity in the classroom. We are all, of course, caught in normalising machines of one sort or another, but what it is that we normalise should be open to critical reflection, ethical practice, and revision. We can labour to abandon a pathologisation of the individual in preference for a critique of the performative dynamics of heternormativity.

Young people who had experienced homophobia and/or transphobia at school pointed out that it impacted their health and well-being, and the equity, quality, and outcome of their educational experiences. Based on our survey, those young people who experienced homophobia and/or transphobia at school variously indicated they could not concentrate in class, that their marks dropped, they missed classes, skipped days, and hid at recess or lunch times in order to avoid harassment. Given our articulation of the labour of producing queer identities online and offline, and of the significant material violence young people experience in the space of incommensurability between online and offline worlds, we contemplate some possibilities for rethinking the psy-truths of sex, gender, and sexuality at school. We specifically think beyond anti-homophobia education and equity discourses that, as we see it, reinscribe queer youth within normal/not normal, self/other, same/different, hetero/homo binaries that solidify assumptions of predictable continuities between sex, gender, and sexuality. As one participant in our study pointed out: things would have been better *if there was better education in schools about queerness.*

There's quite a bit to be said here…but for now we might keep this in mind: Queer is a radical questioning of identity and binaries, and quantum physics, like queerness, displaces a host of deeply-held foundational dualisms. One could say that this denial of quotidian queerness of the world is a kind of queer-phobia. (Barad 2012, p.18)

Barad suggests that all matter, both human and not, is queer: that is, everything is indeterminate, open to multiple possibilities under multiple and variable conditions of possibility. It is something of this spirit of indeterminacy that we hope to mobilise in order to undermine heteronormativity as a hopelessly inadequate account of human becoming. We are, then, interested in pedagogies that resist entreaties to find true sexed, gendered and sexualised selves and fix them in place once and for all.

Note

1. The data, drawn from the study 'Growing up Queer', was collected in a national online survey of 1230 young people aged 17–26, interviews and focus groups conducted in 2012, with young people who identify as gender and sexuality diverse. The report 'Growing up Queer', authored by K. Robinson, P. Bansel, N. Denson, C. Davies and G. Ovendon, was supported by the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre. The report can be accessed at http://www.youngandwellcrc.org.au/knowledge-hub/publications/growing-queer/

Acknowledgements This project is supported by the Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), an Australian-based international research centre that unites young people with researchers, practitioners, innovators, and policy-makers from over 70 partner organisations. The Young and Well CRC is established under the Australian Government's Cooperative Research Centres Program. This project is also supported by the Australian Research Council (DE120101029).

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CHAPTER 8

Re-thinking 'Pointiness': Special Education Interrupted

Cath Laws

As a principal of a special school for those positioned as emotionally/behaviourally disturbed/disordered, my work involved developing the capacity to apply poststructuralism in a place where other discourses are dominant. At the same time, as researcher, I examined the educational practices used in a special school for those students who are read as unmanageable and too violent to be maintained in mainstream/regular schooling.

In this chapter, I look at some of the ways in which psy-discourses and processes inform teachers and students' understanding of persons, events, situations, and practices in an attempt to make the discursive practices of the special school more visible. I will discuss how the works of Foucault and other poststructuralists helped me to move towards counteracting dominant discourses and to use poststructuralist theory to bring about change.

But first, I should give a 'warning'. I am very aware of the ironic ways in which I write. I say 'very aware' almost ironically, as irony has become such a habit with and for me that I almost find it invisible to myself. I am aware that others are often puzzled by my use of irony. There are many ways this use might be read. At worst it might be read as callous, manipulative, supercilious, and unfeeling. It could also be read as a 'defense', a

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_8

way of dealing with the pain I encountered each day at the special school and a pain that is mine. My irony is a way of counteracting the deeply troubling 'anonymous imperial violence that slips quietly and invisibly into our (my) best intentions and practices and, even, into our (my) transformational yearnings' (Scheurich 1997, p. 90). In this sense my use of irony is a way of 'checking up on' myself in order to catch myself out when I become the valiant rescuer, the all-knowing sage, the righteous judge of those who get it wrong. Irony was one of the main ways that I dealt with the complexity of being not only a researcher but also a principal. As Riley (2000, p. 172) stated, 'it is not my detachment from my attributed condition that leads to my irony, but on the contrary my deep involvement in it'. My use of irony does not free me from my positions, but reflects my entanglements in my positionings. And taking a step further, perhaps this way of using irony can be a productive tool for others too—those who are labeled and those who teach them—to catch themselves when they act as positioned by, or as, valiant rescuers.

So it is with some irony that I talk about those students at the 'pointy-end'. Today in many schools across Australia—and indeed across the world—the behavior of students has come to be seen in this way: a triangle where most students do the right thing, about 15% are challenging and between 1–5% are up the top of the triangle—which many have come to call, ironically, 'the pointy end'. This triangle (Sugai 2001) is a key aspect of the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports approach detailed on the website www.pbis.org. Of course, the triangle is not what the approach is all about—it is about 'designing and sustaining teaching and learning environments that actively teach and promote contextually appropriate social behaviors and prevent the occurrence of norm- or rule-violating problem behaviors' (Sugai and Horner 2008, p. 67). This idea of management of students' behavior with most students doing the right thing is not based on ideas of those students at the blunt end taking up the right behaviours in order to perform appropriate student behavior within the dominant discourses, as Davies and I talk about (Laws and Davies 2000). Rather it is seen as a psychological 'truth'—that most students will be compliant, non-norm-or rule-violating. For those students in the 15% band 'best practices' are often seen as those involving behavior management strategies of changing antecedents and consequences.

'Best practice' for students with 'emotional/behavioural disorders' (those at the 'pointy end') was identified in a New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education and Training review by Laughlin in 1998. These

best practices were facilitated by teachers who were trained in behaviourist management techniques, and who provided, continuously assessed, and monitored programs. Best practice was defined as involving a continuum of services, and interagency coordination and cooperation. Kauffman (1999, p. 450) summarised the research and concluded that programs for students with 'emotional/behavioural disorders' should be based on the rewarding of desirable behaviour, non-violent punishment of inappropriate behaviour, effective instruction in basic skills and social skills, and correction of environmental (for example familial/residential/peer) conditions that foster deviant behaviour. This special education discourse focuses on learning, with teachers bearing responsibility for ensuring that students learn different ('better') ways to behave so that they can comply with the requirements of the regular school environment.

Throughout the past decade this approach has migrated from the specialist environment to the regular school environment, where there have been emphases on behaviour management strategies and school-wide positive behaviour support, as influenced by the work of Lewis and Sugai (1999). In this approach there is also a strong emphasis on collecting data, hypothesising a function of the misbehaviour (often constructed as a desire to escape or access something), and then developing a plan to intervene and change the misbehaviour. The plans commonly involve teaching the 'desired' replacement behaviours to students, and changing the environment in order to decrease reinforcement of the undesired behaviours. In order to change the aberrant behavior of the student, the instructional environment must be organised in ways that reinforce the pro-social replacement responses of a student.

Sugai and Horner (2006) refer to the growing attention to adopting practices that represent 'what we know about the science of human behaviour' (p. 246) and the growing adoption of the 'positive behaviour support' approach. They acknowledge that this approach has been established for many years within the behaviour field and has an extensive empirical history. They also discuss the importance of system wide support, and funding for training and coaching as well as political support, as key to the ongoing success of this approach in schools. In a time dominated by economic rationalist discourse, where there is a focus on data and evidence, it is not surprising to see this recent increase in the implementation of behavioural interventions to deal with the challenging behaviour of students. So we have come to have a range of strategies—based on 'evidence'—for those inside the triangle.

One of these approaches is the positive behavior support applied individually, or as a whole school approach. Positive behavioural interventions (such as setting consensus-driven behavior expectations, teaching critical interpersonal skills, positive reinforcement against set performance criteria, eliminating punitive and exclusionary strategies etc.) aims to achieve socially important behavior change (Luiselli et al. 2005). The positive behaviour support approach should not be confused with the 'positive psychology' approach as they seem to be informed by differing fields of psychology. Positive psychology seems to focus on the development of prosocial behaviours (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000). This approach is also having a significant impact on schools' work with their students (see Saari and Harni and Saltmarsh chapters in this book). Many of the components of positive psychology are not new, but attempt to bring together a range of ideas about what makes young people flourish and what makes their lives satisfying. While positive psychology sees itself as being firmly grounded in empirical research, McDonald and O'Callahan (2008) put forward a Foucauldian critique of positive psychology as tied to a neoliberal economic and political discourse.

My work as a principal, teacher and researcher involved developing the capacity to apply poststructuralism in a place where positive behavior support and positive psychology discourses are dominant. I examined the educational practices used in a special school for those students who are read as unmanageable and too violent to be maintained in mainstream/regular schooling. I examined ways of collecting data in a poststructural frame, and ways of making the discursive practices of the special school more visible (Laws 2011).

Probably the work I did that was most challenging of the psy-disciplines in education is that of the work on 'The Mad'. I cannot remember where I first heard students with 'emotional/behavioural disorders' spoken of as 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad', but this colloquial naming has been with me for at least forty years. I remember these categories as ones by which people tried to avoid the mental health descriptors of a particular disorder, a particular disability or personality disorder (http://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/mad-bad-or-sad). They were an attempt to name the problematic behaviours presented by children some way other than naming the children or children themselves as 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad' in everyday practice (Nind et al. 2012). The colloquial way notes perhaps a critical relation to the clinical diagnoses that are bandied around. Yet I find that the mental health categories, while not so colloquial, do closely parallel this more simplistic naming of children

as 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad'. I use these categories to guide my teasing out of the different discourses. They point to the simplistic, and at the same time deeply ingrained, ways the children who came to our special school were positioned as, and also took up, 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad' (Laws 2011).

Through this naming of the unnameable and the use of backstage terms, I was able to make more visible the operations of the power-knowledge about and around these children. The categories of 'mad' and 'bad' are often distinguished from each other in dominant educational/psychological discourses, for example official discourses clearly distinguish services for students with emotional disturbance from those for students with behaviour disorders. The 'sad' category is often used by educators in the field; sometimes it applies to both the 'mad' and the 'bad' (and their circumstances); sometimes it names a whole new category of those caught up in the 'mad/bad' naming through terribly sad circumstances. I argue that the categories serve to brand and mark students as other than 'normal' in similar and overlapping ways. I do not see the category of 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad' as definable, separate, and knowable. Rather, I see it as important to tease out the ways these students are positioned as 'mad' or 'bad' or 'sad', and try to make this positioning, and its effects, more visible. How these children are read depends on who is doing the reading, who is doing the naming. The work of Michel Foucault was key in helping me to make the students' subjection visible, recognisable, and self-conscious.

The Mad

In the story below, Shane's attempts at suicide, and his previous hearing of voices in his head, positioned him firmly as irrational, and yet the way he was able to see the humour in this positioning was surprising.

> Shane had a really hard night last night. Attempted suicide again. He was sticking to me like glue but I needed to go to the shops to get some things.
>
> Cath: Shane, I really need to go out for a little while. You're more than welcome to come with me. How do you think you will go out in the real world?
>
> Shane: Just a minute, let me check. Shane put his head in his hands and was there for at least a minute. Then he looked up.
>
> Shane: I think it will be all right.
>
> Cath: What did you do, Shane? Take a vote?
>
> We both roared laughing.

This was a surprising moment for me—both because of what I said and because of Shane's reaction to it. One reading of this is as a moment of complicity with/in the 'madness'. Shane's attempted suicides were genuine yet could be read as 'attention-seeking'. The way he spent so long deciding about whether he would be able to stay safe, even keep 'sane', outside the confines of the school, surprised me. And touched me. And troubled me. The state he was in was so difficult for him and while he had his head in his hands, I felt him to be falling away. If I had added 'into the darkness' to this last reading, I know that I would be seen to have been too enmeshed, too psychiatric, buying into his behaviour and, worse, possibly seeing a 'madness' that was so dark that I might have been thought to be there. For those who even see extreme pain and emotional turmoil, there is a doubling-back on them that means they may be seen as possibly 'mad'. So rather than being seen in this way, I turned it into a joke. My use of humour could be read as inappropriate. Current approaches to grief counselling propose concepts and practices related to meaning reconstruction, empowerment, and accommodation to new realities following an event of loss (Humphrey and Zimpfer 2008)—joking does not get a mention. Yet in the face of such pain and confusion, the connection that was made through humour could be almost outside, or at least going against the grain of, the dominant discourses. We were both aware of the ideas around 'multiple personality' and found a space to see the idea of taking a vote amusing. Yet, in analysing this story I still cringe at the possibilities of what could have happened. The fear of the possibility of a rational person's action pushing 'madness' to and 'over the edge', to a place where 'sanity' can never be retrieved, is with/in me. Even though, as the researcher/author/collaborator, I understand sanity as a socially functional category constituted in a particular time and serving a particular purpose (Foucault 1988a), ideas of 'madness' possibly being a truth, and real, are with me. Consequently, there is danger in speaking of 'madness', of seeing humour in its practices and in the practices around it. We left the school and returned, both safe.

The Bad

Power in schools works through the complex relationships of all those in schools. Power is not simply a teacher's power exercised over the powerless students; power invests students: 'is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in

their struggles against it, resist the grip it has on them' (Foucault 1977, p. 27). In this sense, 'bad' behaviour can be read as a struggle and there are sometimes traces of admiration for those who struggle. They can be read as brave and amusing by other students—and even teachers.

> Peter's mother had died. He was back full-time at a new regular school but when his teacher at the regular school heard the news, she organised for him to visit us. Although Peter had not lived with his mother for some time, his new teacher thought that it would be better for him to spend time with us in case the death of his mother sent him over the edge. She didn't want that to happen as he had been going really well there— he was a problem, but one the school was dealing with.
>
> Cath: When is the funeral?
> Peter: On Friday.
> Cath: Where?
> Peter: At Liverpool.
> Cath: Your teacher would like to go and I'll go if I can. Is there anyone else you'd like to be there?
> Sandy: Yes I'd like to go Miss—Peter?
> Mark: Yes can I come?
> Peter: What is this—a fucking school excursion?
> Everyone laughed.

Peter's ironic humour in the face of a very bleak time was found amusing by the students and myself. While Peter was attending a regular school full-time, his behaviour was still regarded as problematic, and, while he was exhibiting 'bad' behaviour, he was being maintained there. He had managed to engage with his teacher, get it right enough, for his teacher to want to persist with him. Many teachers, in the dominant discourses, take up the idea of teaching as a calling and they desire to make a difference in the lives of children. This can be even more rewarding if very difficult children are 'turned around'. I read Peter's teacher in arranging for him to visit the special school in a time of pain, as demonstrating concern for, commitment to, and connection with him and, at the same time, as being wary that such a crisis might precipitate the sort of behaviour that could not be managed in the regular school, and possibly sever the connection she had established with him. Like those who work with the 'bad' in prisons, teachers are 'technicians of behaviour: engineers of conduct, orthopaedists of individuality with the task of producing bodies that are both docile and capable' (Foucault 1977, p. 294).

However, before I tell our story, it is important to briefly look at how grief and the grieving person became pathologised and the target of power. While Freud speaking about mourning denies its basis in pathology, later grief and mourning were pathologised as demonstrated by a leading bereavement therapist, Therese Rando, arguing that one in three bereavements end up in morbid or pathological patterns of grief (Foote and Frank 1999). This approach prescribes the need to intervene in grieving through therapeutic treatment. Foucault agrees that grief has become pathologised and establishes the 'grieving self' as an object of power and calls to unmask the working of violence of institutions on that self, including schools and therapy appearing both as neutral and independent (Foucault in Rabinow 1994, p. 6). By setting in motion technologies of the self, Foucault (1988b, p. 18) argues, therapies aim to effect operations of the persons' 'own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves, in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality'. The most important aspect of the therapeutic discourse is that individuals do not act alone on the themselves, but therapy is played out in relationships—with the therapist or teacher in this case—to direct the behavior of other in a form of mutual obligation where the therapist provides direction to the role the bereaved person plays and where power encompasses them both. In the special school, this production of docile bodies through technologies of self is often successful. Yet this story tells about a time where such production is challenged and I certainly read Peter as heroic.

In the story there is also a shared conscious awareness—making 'the problem' speak-able through a humorous intervention that puts Peter and myself together as the ones who know about, can speak about together, and laugh together about what is otherwise morbid and too painful for anyone to deal with. More than that, perhaps, Peter sees that he is not alone any more with his problem, and it is therefore, hopefully, not anywhere near so scary for him, or so overwhelming. Alternatively, my understanding of this story about Peter's supposed feeling is reflective of my hope that I helped Peter to reach a certain state of 'happiness', through the mobilization of the very therapeutic relationship Foucault critiqued. Still, we both could laugh about it and then got on with the ordinary business of daily life. In this way, humour here both bought in, and rejected, the way therapy seeks to reform and control (Foote and Frank 1999). Perhaps, or I hope, humour here effected the opposite of pathologising—saying rather, yeah, we can handle this too.

The Sad

Observing myself and my colleagues at work, I began to see that to get it right as competent teachers, our sympathy for the 'sad' must be covert while we work overtly to teach them the skills they are lacking: to learn to control their emotions and become rational, learning beings. To do this effectively, emotion, in both teachers and children, is suppressed. As teachers, we also work to protect children from harm and emotional damage, but as Burman (1994, p. 55) points out, there is a possibility that such protection of children is a way of 'rendering them passive, dependent and malleable'. Our work was like a high wire act. In trying to become the best teachers we could be, according to the dominant discourses, we worked to teach students how to become rational beings, silencing emotions and making our caring as rational as possible.

In the last week of term Anne was put into time-out. She had been running around throwing things and hitting Bob. I went into the room. She was hitting the walls. I told her to scream as long and as hard as she liked as that might make her feel a bit better. It worked for me sometimes. She told me another of her mice had died. She thought the mother had attacked it—or the father.

Anne: Why would it do that?

Cath: Don't know. It happens. Sometimes things or people just don't know how to look after little ones. Not always their fault. Just happens. Anne, did you see on television last night where this man had a great big dog that had had puppies? The man didn't want the puppies so he put them in a big paper bag and buried them right down in the ground while the mother dog was tied up and watching. The mother dog got so distressed that in the night, she got free and dug and dug and dug and guess what?

Anne: What?

Cath: The puppies were alive. Then she howled and a neighbour heard this and rushed her and the puppies to the vet. They lived.

Anne: What happened?

I told her again. I thought to myself—not a particularly therapeutic story to be telling this kid, Cath. Her therapist will be really impressed.

Anne: But why did the man do that?

Cath: I don't know—some people just don't know how to look after little things—not their fault, they just don't know—nobody's fault—just happens.

Anne: Like my last carers?

Cath: Yes, I think so. Wasn't your fault—wasn't their fault. It's OK to still care about them even though they left you. It happens.
Anne: I don't think I want to be in another family again unless—
Cath: Unless what? What would help?
[Anne looks embarrassed—then looks straight at me.]
Anne: Unless it's someone like you who understands kids. Do you have kids?
Cath: No I don't Anne. I have puppies. I don't think I'd have the energy to worry about all you kids here if I had kids to worry about at home. But you know there are lots of people like me out there Anne. There are people who understand kids and want them in their family. This could happen for you.
Anne: Yeah. Maybe.I walked with her back to her class.

In reflecting on this story, the binary of care/control that works to hold me in the dominant discourses becomes more transparent. Anne was put into time-out to calm down and for her to get her behaviour in order. I went in, as I saw myself as responsible for her safety, including her emotional safety. As principal I ensured order—policed the boundaries. As a female professional, I am also responsible 'for the moral order' (Walkerdine 1989, p. 76). So I made sure that she was not too frightened, too upset, too angry. In encouraging her to get her anger out, I demonstrate my immersion in a psychological practice in which cathartic expression of emotion is thought to lead to healing (Pennebaker 1997). I read Anne as knowing the discourses around being 'sad/bad' and giving me a reason for her 'bad' behaviour—the death of her mouse.

I read this as Anne also demonstrating her knowledge of psychological discourses and what it might take to get her out of trouble. In case she was really upset about the loss of the mouse I distracted her with the story of the dog. In doing this, perhaps I demonstrated the idea that teachers must prevent students from displaying too much emotion. In the discourses around children and children in state care, children get it wrong if they display too much emotion for too long. They get it right when they perform as resilient and get over things quickly.

Bronwyn Davies (personal communication, May 30, 2014) theorises that a number of causal links are disrupted in the story of Anne. The links that go as: 'if they do not care it must be my fault, I must be bad or unlovable'; 'the need to explain why some people do not know how to care' and 'if one set of parents does not care, and then another, it does not mean there never will be anyone who can care for you'. Davies comments:

Anne will come again to her rage at adults who don't know how to care, she will get caught up in the citational chain that blames them and blames herself for that failure, she will, as we all will, get caught in the psy discourses, which will swell up and become all of her. It is not that the new philosophy causes the old repeated modes of enunciation to disappear. Nevertheless this is a line of flight she has been on, and she knows in her body the feeling of being cared for and knowing that when bad stuff happens it is not necessarily her fault. That has become a way of being that she has access to.

Anne is beside herself, it seems, because parents are bad and even capable of killing their children. My counter story is a line of flight—I am not quite sure where I am going, but pursue it, aware as with any line of flight that there are risks involved. The story I tell is that even under impossible circumstances there are also parents who will find a way to care for their babies. Perhaps this is crucial intervention in Anne's overwhelming despair/rage. Whereas there is no point if parents/carers are so bad, if there are some who care, including me, then perhaps she has hope.

In the next part I will talk about times where other causal links of the psy-discourses are broken and access to other possibilities are opened up.

Counteracting Dominant Discourses Using Poststructuralist Theory: Deforming Descriptions

Together with the teachers at the special school I took some of this teasing out of ideas with poststructural theory and started to do things differently. While I looked at sport, camping, day-to-day learning, crafting—making Xena costumes, the story of Chrissie helped me to better understand how the power of the discourse produces what it names is evident, as the students in the special school went about their lives as 'mad/bad/sad' and were constantly read in those ways. I bring, as example, notes from a staff meeting about Chrissie, a girl new to the school who had a disturbing impact on the boys, making them overexcited in their competition for her attention.

Cath: I'm wondering if we think it is her problem? What about the boys—can't she do her stuff without having them all over her?
Allison: If she stayed inside the classroom mostly.
Cath: Here is this powerful girl—if she was eighteen and walked into a dance club and had every guy falling over themselves we would say "Yes! go for it" and admire that power she had over them.

[Nodding agreement from teachers.]

Cath:I guess we need to ask ourselves: what are the possible positions for a girl to take up in a place like this? Anywhere in fact! What would we want for her?

Beti: (laughing at herself) I would like her to be a nun!

Steve: (laughing) I'd like her to be a businesswoman—to come to school in a suit with a little briefcase!

Cath: I'm wondering how can we acknowledge the power she has—it's what has got her through a tough life so far—without her being forced to take up the usual positions available to girls?

Lee: My fear is that if it keeps going the way it is, a possible end will be that some boys will get angry with her and attack her, so we have to do something.

One reading of this story is that we were all concerned about, and for, Chrissie. But when we talked of the impact that she could have on the school we caught ourselves making her 'the problem'. Chrissie was at continual risk of being that which she was named: 'bad' in her behaviour, 'doubly bad' in getting it wrong as a girl, 'triply bad' in using her sexual appeal to have power over the boys. I say 'caught ourselves' because I read the teachers as seeing other possibilities than seeing her as that which she had been named. We discussed how, in another guise, we would have been admiring of the power we attached to her. We saw that her actual behaviour was not 'bad' but rather that the way the boys were reading her was problematic. The dominant discourses position girls as other, as sexual, and even as playthings for the boys. In asking ourselves what the other possibilities were for her in a place with boys positioned as 'mad/bad/sad', we gave versions of the possibilities usually available. These included girls as pure and virginal (nun) and girls as academic—concerned only with the business of school. These position the girls as 'sexless'. I read these now as ironic—knowing the limited positions that were available to girls.

I also read this discussion now as a moment when the teachers, in taking up a way of thinking made possible by poststructuralism, enabled a radical disruption of the taken-for-granted readings of educational practices—a moment in which we could go beyond the conditions of our subjection. Butler proposes that the 'power of the discourse to materialize its effects' (1993, p. 187) is not stable. I read in this story that we were able to exploit the instability of the discourses that held us, 'normally', and thus resist positioning Chrissie as getting it wrong.

What's the Point?

I considered and gave examples of the many ways psy-discourses keep a hold on the ways teachers and students position themselves and others. I also demonstrated that we could move beyond these positioning and power relations by using irony, humour, or poststructural theorizing. Using humour and irony defuse descriptions by deforming them so that descriptions of categories begin to disintegrate, for example using 'mad/bad/sad' or asking Shane if all the voices in his head 'had taken a vote'. This use of irony and humour is radically different from the dominant approaches used with students who are not getting it right in schools. Becoming a good student is meant to be serious business. Along with the students, I find it ironic that the minutiae of correct school behavior becomes the large focus, and the sometimes tragic life experiences of students is meant, in the dominant discourses, to become so tiny and controlled. Humour offers elements of surprise and contradiction and circulates sameness and otherness altogether. The one positioned by the discourse finds an alternative external expression to the discourse, the same way as the outsider is incorporated within. Humour points to the particular framing of behavior that it intends to undermine, to expose and challenge those frames and stereotypes, to mock clichés. Humour provides a particular emotionality for communication and being together that breaks prescribed ways of relating. Often ambiguous and difficult to decode, humour is based on wit, cleverness, and intelligence, and requires a certain inner structure capable of dealing with the situational incongruities that occur between appearance and essence. Lending an unexpected emotionality and positive positioning to students and teachers, since humour requires a particular form of intelligence, humour offers a line of flight. Using humour and irony also lets students know that I find this bizarre and helps them to see the humour as well. And perhaps this helps them to play the game of school with the ironic knowledge of how it is meant to work on them and through them, and they take up the position of student in more powerful ways than simple compliance.

Working with poststructural theorizing names a behaviour as outside a particular discourse and inside another, for example, naming a behaviour as involving a sense of justice rather than 'badness' (Laws and Davies 2000). It helps reading/naming particular discursive practices both with students and with teachers, for example, making more visible the doubling-back on the 'sad'—where extreme pain and emotional turmoil

is associated with madness—so that they come to get it right as 'Annie'. And while I still use these strategies, that was then—this is now. I have been recently in conversation with a woman in the UK who is doing her doctoral studies working with teachers. We have been exchanging emails about the challenges faced when we work with undergraduate and post-graduate teachers who ask 'what's the point of all this theory stuff?'. How do we work in ways to overcome the theory/practice binaries? I certainly used poststructuralist thinking in our work at the school, but how am I using it now? I could say everywhere, all the time, but I know I slip back into powerful psy-discourses everyday. There are times, however, when I continue to interrupt them.

One way I continue to interrupt is through my teaching at a University, The dominant pedagogy at the University at which I teach is constructivist—a given. Yet in the ideas around behavior management, around disabilities, around child protection, I ask students to think through the taken-for-granted ideas by asking them to trace an idea and tease out the discourse—to think through poststructuralist thinking—informed by ideas of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, Walkerdine and Davies—this points and prods at me to ask questions and to think about everything:

What is it? What we are talking about—how is an idea defined today and who is doing the defining?
Links with? What other ideas inform how we make sense of something like disability?
Past/Future? How was it made sense of in the past? Where is the future heading?
Contradictions? What are some of the taken-for-granted pairings that when you think them through are deeply contradictory? Like care and discipline.
Silences? What are some of the ideas and voices around a topic that are silenced?
For us now? Where is our thinking about the idea—having thought about these questions—where am I?

Coming to see the discourses that hold teachers in particular places, through particular mechanisms so that they get it right as teachers and ask who is benefitting from these discourses can be empowering. Understanding discourses gives an agency to act inside them, or outside

them, and opens ourselves up to a new line of flight. As Foucault (1980, p. 79) wrote of his works:

'They are, in the final analysis, just fragments, and it is up to you or me to see what we can make of them'. For my part, it has struck me that I might have seemed a bit like a whale that leaps to the surface of the water disturbing it momentarily with a tiny jet of spray and lets it be believed, or pretends to believe, or wants to believe, or himself does in fact indeed believe, that down in the depths where no one sees him any more, where he is no longer witnessed nor controlled by anyone, he follows a more profound, coherent and reasoned trajectory. Well, anyway, that was more or less how I at least conceived the situation; it could be that you perceived it differently.

How do I more or less conceive the point of my work? I want to believe, and pretend to believe, that I have come to a different space than being immersed in the psy-disciplines and interrupting special education discourses, but I catch myself out all the time. Yet perhaps it is this catching myself out is a line of flight for me, a trajectory of interrupting. Well, anyway, that is more or less how it seems to me; it could be, of course, that you read it differently.

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CHAPTER 9

Confusions and Conundrums During Final Practicum: A Study of Preservice Teachers' Knowledge of Challenging Behaviour

Samantha McMahon and Valerie Harwood

Introduction

> Defining challenging behaviour … has always been an unsatisfactory enterprise.
>
> (Visser and Cole 2003, p. 10)

> Australian Professional Teaching Standard 4.3, "Manage challenging behaviour"
>
> (AITSL 2014, p. 3)

Considering the two quotes together, one is left with the paradox of teachers having to 'manage the non-definable with professional certainty'. The juxtaposition of these opening quotes becomes even more problematic when one contemplates their origins. The first quote was featured in *A Study of Children and Young People who Present Challenging Behaviour*

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_9

(Visser and Cole 2003), a literature review commissioned by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), in the UK. Ofsted commissioned the literature review to 'determine the range of characteristics and definitions of challenging behaviour used by academic researchers and practitioners' (Ofsted 2005, online). That Ofsted perceived an ambiguity in definitions of challenging behaviour is noteworthy. That the educationists commissioned to conduct the literature review deemed their task an 'unsatisfactory enterprise' is important. The complex, multidisciplinary nature, fractious definitions, and varied applications of 'challenging behaviour' necessitated an 87-page literature review. By contrast, the second quote positions challenging behaviour as a defined and mandated domain of teacher knowledge. This second excerpt is from the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL 2014), the document that governs preservice teacher education and teacher accreditation in Australia. Here, 'students with challenging behaviour' are positioned as a mandatory object of teacher knowledge. This begs the question: If there are many ways of understanding challenging behaviour, which knowledges do teachers 'buy into', which do they resist, and to what effect on their pedagogy?

Our study found that teachers' knowledge of challenging behaviour is characterised by contradictions and confusions. We will argue that the contradictions and confusions inherent in the participants' knowledge of challenging behaviour centred on a blurring of discursive boundaries. Broadly speaking, behaviour is conceptualised in different discourses as either 'externally' or 'internally' located, or in some combination of these. The notion of a combination of causes seems a balanced, almost common sense, knowledge claim. Indeed, it is the most common conception of behaviour in teacher education coursework and educational policy contexts (McMahon 2013; Harwood and McMahon 2014). However, it also presents a difficult theoretic middle ground to engage with. As Murphy (1994, p. 53) explains: 'for those working with children or adults with challenging behaviours, the most difficult task may be to develop an integrated view of how biological, operant and ecological factors interact'. We found that rather than achieving an integrated view, preservice teachers more often used misconceptions of the bio/psycho/social trio as a covert epistemological springboard to mutually exclusive discourses with confounding effects for pedagogy. This chapter begins to describe how psy-knowledges impact on how teachers come to understand challenging behaviour. We explore psy-knowledges' capacity to both support and confound pedagogical reasoning.

In this chapter we briefly provide some contextual notes regarding preservice teachers' knowledge of challenging behaviour, generally. Then we describe the study and deploy Foucault's archaeological analytics so as to impose some discursive order on this messy knowledge referent: three discourses of challenging behaviour. Finally, we explore the epistemic processes of two preservice teachers engaging with the psy-centred discourse of challenging behaviour (the biopsychosocial discourse). This chapter construes the biospsychosocial discourse of challenging behaviour as a dangerous 'theoretic middle ground'. It is dangerous insofar as it attends at once to biological, psychological and social aspects of behaviour, and this seems easily misunderstood and misappropriated by teachers, often with undesirable results for their pedagogy.

Teachers' Knowledge of Challenging Behaviour

There is little consensus on exactly what challenging behaviour is, why it might be troubling, and where it comes from in the literature on behaviour management. The teacher, however, is implicated in the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of challenging and disorderly behaviours. It is interesting to note, then, that critical analysis of educators' (and more specifically, preservice teachers') knowledge of and attitudes towards disorderly behaviour accounts for only a small portion of literature on the subject.

There are potentially many ways to understand the behaviours that teachers find challenging. 'Challenging behaviour' has been used to describe all manner of behaviour: from a specific description of a triad of aggressive, self-injurious, and/or destructive behaviours presented by individuals with a disability (Emerson et al. 1997); to a catchall description for behaviour, from any child, that individual teachers might warrant 'challenging'. Examples of this 'catchall' usage are commonly found in teacher education textbooks that variously posit challenging behaviour as: synonymous with 'problem' and/or 'inappropriate' behaviour and characteristic of general classroom management concerns (e.g. Allen and Cowdery 2009; Lovat et al. 2009); synonymous with 'severe and/or frequent inappropriate or problem behaviours' (e.g. Allen and Cowdery 2009; Conway 2005; Groundwater-Smith et al. 2007; Sleishman 2005); and a barrier to student safety, engagement, and learning (e.g. Allen and Cowdery 2009; Groundwater-Smith et al. 2007; Sigafoos and Arthur 2005).

It is the subjective and subtly changeable nature of these 'catchall' and 'commonsense' usages that underscores our investigation. As Qureshi (1992, p. 23) explains, 'On an everyday basis the term challenging behaviour is socially defined. Different people, or groups of people, will have different ideas about what is meant by challenging'. Indeed teachers may adopt 'any of many' socially and discursively defined recognitions, 'labellings' and understandings of challenging behaviour. The impact of such variations on students' educational experiences is keenly noted in the literature (e.g. Harwood 2006; Humphry 2013; Laws 1999; MacLure et al. 2012; McMahon 2012; Millei 2005).

Studies of teachers' knowledge of challenging behaviour typically focus on in-service teachers' perceptions of what is challenging (e.g. Axup and Gersh 2008; Beaman et al. 2007; Carter et al. 2006; Ford 2007; Grieve 2009) and causal attributions for challenging behaviour (e.g. Mavropoulou and Padeliadu 2002; Miller 1995; Poulou and Norwich 2000). By 'causal attribution' we are referring to studies drawing on a particular tenet from the discipline of psychology:

Attributions are inferences about the causes of events and behaviour. Individuals make attributions to understand their social world. Attributions can be classified as internal or external. Internal attributions ascribe behaviour to personal dispositions and traits, whereas external attributions locate the cause of behaviour in the environment (Weiten 2001, p. 664).

As it is maintained in a diverse (and sometimes contradictory) literature, how a teacher understands behaviour will impact on how s/he responds to challenging and disorderly behaviour in a classroom setting (Ford 2007; Grieve 2009; Harwood and McMahon 2014; Hughes and Cooper 2007; Kos, Richdale and Hay 2006; Mavropoulou and Padeliadu 2002; Quinn and Wigal 2004). Moreover, different teacher responses may result in varied educational and diagnostic experiences for children described as presenting with challenging or 'disorderly' behaviours (e.g., Alban-Metcalfe et al. 2002; Kauffman and Wong 1991; Jordan et al. 1993; Podell and Soodak 1993, all cited in Mavropoulou and Padeliadu 2002; Miller 1995; Poulou and Norwich 2000). These arguments signal the importance of critically analysing how causal attribution impacts preservice teacher knowledge, especially within the context of an increasing rate of behaviour disorder diagnoses (Harwood 2006). It is necessary to investigate from what sources, and by what means, teachers create their knowledge of challenging behaviour and how this, in turn, may impact on their teaching practices.

About the Study

This was an in-depth, qualitative study of how five final-year preservice primary teachers re-constructed their knowledge of challenging behaviour before, during, and after their final Professional Experience (PEx). PEx is an appropriate context for studying preservice teachers' knowledge of challenging behaviour as it is commonly held that 'behaviour management' is best learned 'within the framework of professional experience' (Ramsey 2000, p. 81), yet little seems to be known about how such knowledge construction takes place. Each of the five preservice teachers engaged pre- and post-PEx concept mapping and related hour-long interviews, weekly day-long observations of their four-week PEx, and participation in a post-PEx focus group (with all the preservice teacher participants). The preservice teachers also provided copies of their PEx teaching programs, assignments, and reports for document review. As part of understanding the participants' knowledge of challenging behaviour, there was a need to understand the types of knowledges of challenging behaviour that they could access to construct their own understandings. To this end, there was extensive document review (described in the next sub-section) and interview and observation data was collected from the supervising (mentor) teachers in an attempt to discover how the mentor teacher and preservice teacher's knowledges related to, and impacted on each other, during PEx.

Because behaviour may be understood from several mutually exclusive perspectives, it was necessary to adopt an approach capable of supporting multiple understandings of a given concept. Therefore, the study drew on a critical, post-structural framework, specifically Michel Foucault's theories of knowledge. Working within the post-structural paradigm accommodated the possibility of questioning 'the idea of transparent or universal truth' (Ropers-Huilman 1999, p. 23), thus allowing the development of multiple understandings through the analysis. This approach is appropriate as Laws (1999) points to the utility of a poststructural approach in opening up different possibilities for considering and responding to disorderly behaviour in school contexts.

Positing Three Discourses of Challenging Behaviour

Our intent is to deploy a Foucauldian conception of knowledge as at once archevised and 'dynamic' (Rouse 2003). This framework concurrently considers both an archive of knowledge that exists at the discursive level

and 'goes on without us [humans]' (Kendall and Wickham 1999, p. 36), and how individuals may position themselves in relation to this archive. This positioning work of individuals is relational, dynamic, and often in a state of flux. It is evidenced in an individual's talk and texts insofar as each of their statements can be identified as belonging to one particular discourse or another. So, in order to map participants' positioning movements and subsequent changes in their knowledge and subject position(s), the critical reference point of 'the archive' must, at least metaphorically, be static. Thus, our initial task was to construct an archive. This was achieved by positing three discourses of challenging behaviour.

We have given detailed descriptions of our method for positing three discourses of challenging behaviour elsewhere (Harwood and McMahon 2014; McMahon 2013). This method included the review of hundreds of documents regarding challenging behaviour. These documents included literature, Australian print media, the compulsory and recommended readings of an undergraduate initial teacher training program, educational websites, including the New South Wales Department of Education (NSW DEC), NSW Institute of Teachers, NSW Government, and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Participating schools' welfare and discipline policies, university professional experience documentation, and participants' written assignment work were also reviewed. To this extensive textual dataset, we applied Foucault's (1972) 'rules of discursive formation' to discern discursive regularities in an archive that transcended traditional disciplinary boundaries. From this analysis we posited the existence of three distinct and mutually exclusive discourses of challenging behaviour: the biomedical, biopsychosocial, and ecosocio discourses presented in Fig. 9.1. Whilst it is the biopsychosocial discourse that is the focus of this chapter, it is necessary to briefly describe each discourse and its function for pedagogy.

The speakers' causal attribution of the 'challenge' they perceive from the child is critical to demarcating the three discourses of challenging behaviour posited in this chapter. Firstly, the challenge could be construed as one that was innately part of the child's biology and so the child was not responsible for behaving in challenging ways, this is the 'in-actively challenging child'. Secondly, the challenge could be seen as constructed by the child to willfully serve his or her own purposes, including to fulfill a psychological function, to gain or resist power, or otherwise—this is the 'pro-actively challenging child'. Finally, the challenge could be seen as mostly reactive to environmental and structural 'supports' or lack thereof

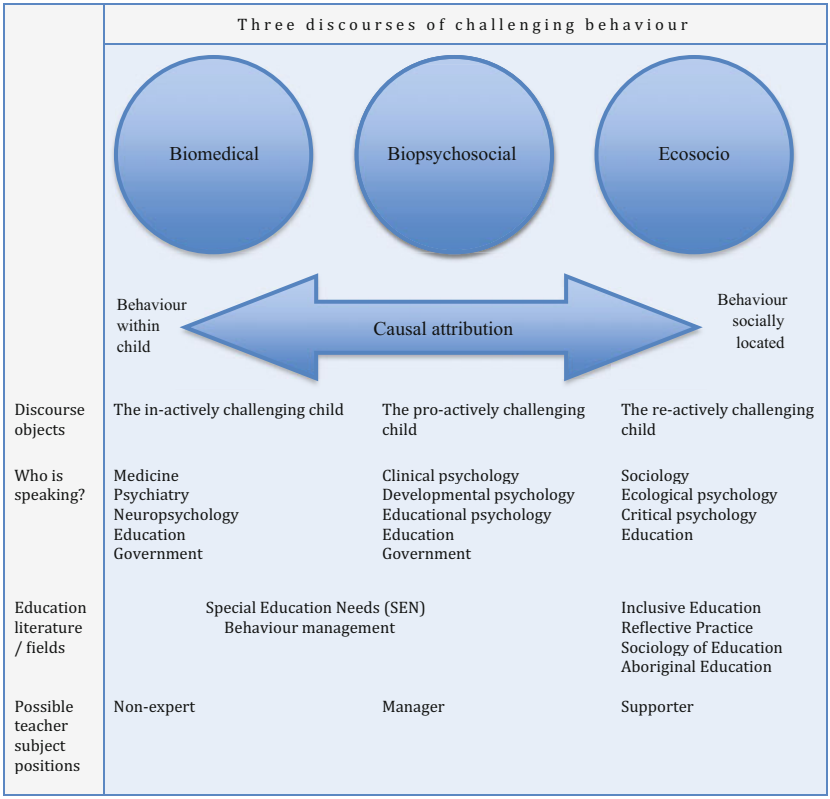

Fig. 9.1 Three discourses of challenging behaviour

surrounding the child—this is the 're-actively challenging child'. Fig. 9.1 summarizes the first point of differentiation between the three posited discourses, that is, each speaks of a different discourse object: a child that is challenging in a specific way.

These three, unique discourse objects transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries, *both the psy-sciences and education disciplines variously deploy all three discourses of challenging behavior* (see Fig. 9.1 'educational literature' row). Specific areas of interest in education and psychology consistently map against each of these discourses. This mapping gives rise to 'fields of regularity' (Foucault 1972) that make possible certain 'teacher' subject positions associated with each discourse. First, teachers who speak of the 'in-actively

challenging child' position themselves as 'non-expert' regarding children with challenging behaviour. Their sense of non-expertise stems from the knowledge of the challenge as biologically innate and so irreparable by means of teaching. The uptake of this discourse is typically discernible in teachers' talk when they express helplessness and/or compassion for the child's condition (for example, 'he's got ADHD, he can't help it'). Second, teachers who speak of the 'pro-actively challenging child' position themselves along a continuum of management expertise, taking up different subject positions of 'teacher as manager'. These teachers consider whether they have the 'behaviour management' knowledge and experience to successfully carry out functional behaviour assessments, identify reinforcers, design and employ token economies, promote positive feedback, discriminate appropriate use of extinction strategies, and know the appropriate set of pedagogies to respond to behaviours inherent in certain medical and psychological diagnoses. This focus on 'managing challenging behaviours' features in the standards governing teacher accreditation in Australia (AITSL 2014). Finally, the teachers who speak of the 're-actively challenging child' position themselves along a continuum of possible subject positions as 'teacher as supporter'. These teachers prioritise evaluating whether their decisions as teachers ensure that children's positive behaviour is supported. They do this by primarily by evaluating whether the physical environment, classroom routine, relationships, lesson design, timing, pacing, content, and resources are supportive; if lessons are engaging for individuals; and if teachers are culturally sensitive to their students' lives. They constantly reflect on curriculum and pedagogy.

Each of these discourses offers unique and consistent understandings of pedagogical possibilities for responding to challenging behaviour. So, why are preservice teachers' knowledge of challenging behaviour characterized by contradictions and confusions? In order to answer this dilemma, we sketch out different discourses of challenging behaviour used by participants and map those against each of these three posited discourses, highlighting instances of inconsistencies and confusions.

The Biopsychosocial Discourse and Preservice Teachers

Arguably, the biopsychosocial discourse for understanding challenging behaviour functions as an ideal quasi-partnership of medicine and psychology. The point of conceptual overlap in this quasi-partnership is essentially a biological one. The biomedical discourse asserts that the

problem is biological and this premise is accepted in the biopsychosocial discourse. This biological point of agreement however, is also a point of schism. Critiquing the medicine/psychology conceptual overlap, Graham (2006) illustrates how the discipline of psychology deploys a unique 'theorisation of agency, reason and control with an effect towards perceptions of responsibility and culpability' (Graham 2006, p. 12) that divides the biomedical and biopsychosocial discourses. For example, the biomedical discourse holds that behaviour is symptomatic of biological dys/function and it follows that a person, or their environment, is not to be blamed, or held entirely responsible, for their behaviour. By contrast, on the topic of responsibility, the biopsychosocial discourse utilizes the psychological concept of 'faculty' to position the individual as capable of learning self-control (Graham 2006). Thus, unlike the biomedical perspective, the biopsychosocial perspective holds that learning from teachers, peers, home-life, and psychotherapy can positively impact on dys/functional behaviours. So then, the central defining tenet of the biopsychosocial discourse of challenging behaviour (as identified here) rests on the distinctly psychological maxim that, although biology is a factor, ultimately, behaviour can be learned.

Considering the pervasiveness of biopsychosocial discourse in contemporary educational contexts (McMahon 2012, 2013; Harwood and McMahon 2014), it is perhaps unsurprising to note that in the pre-PEx concept maps and interview texts, all participants drew on the biopsychosocial discourse to construct the bulk of their knowledge of challenging behaviour. Their uptake of biopsychosocial discourse was overwhelming, but rarely total.

Working Within the Biospychosocial Discourse

Each of the three posited discourses in and of themselves offers epistemic restvia[1] their internal consistency. This is because each set of discursive limits sets out an internally consistent continuum of possible teacher subject positions and related pedagogical responses (see Fig. 9.1). Epistemic rest becomes possible when the knowledge of the preservice teacher is discursively consistent and/or mirrored in the discursive positioning of the knowledge base encountered (e.g. university studies, or mentor teachers' knowledge). The only participant for whom this seemed to be the case, was Ella.

Ella's knowledge was consistently biopsychosocial. In the pre-PEx empirical material (concept maps, interviews, written university assignment work) there were no discernible contradictions. Ella's uninterrupted uptake of the biopsychosocial discourse was especially noticeable because she was the only preservice teacher who consistently aligned her knowledge with the biopsychosocial maxim that behaviour can be managed and learned, regardless of biological disorder. Moreover, she consistently demonstrated the uptake of the biopsychosocial subject position of 'teacher as manager':

> E: I think they're all behaviours that can be managed. So I think, um, a challenging behaviour can be managed and so can um, a behaviour disorder diagnosis…oh, I think the disorder one managed by the teacher …You know, so I think a kid, all behaviours can be managed [pause] in some way and I think by the teacher in regards to, the disorder.
>
> …
>
> S: So, like, do you then think, um, if behaviour can be managed, if a kid has a behaviour disorder, do you think they can manage themselves, do you think they're capable of doing that?
>
> E: To an extent, yeah, everyone can…I think they just need to know how to, as well…Not in all cases though. That's hard, that question's hard. Not, not in every case can a [pause] behaviour be managed, by both, external and internal influences [pause]…I don't know, I don't like that question…It's a contradictory question, yes and no.
>
> (Ella, pre-PEx interview)

Ella's consistent deployment of the biopsychosocial premise that behaviour can be learned is in stark contrast to the other participants, who all expressed uncertainty, as to exactly 'how much' a child diagnosed with a behaviour disorder is able to personally control and/or learn behaviour, and so be managed (see an example in the following section). Ella's confusion, evident in the above excerpt, does not seem to lie in whether or not all behaviour can be managed, or controlled, but instead on whether the locus of that control is 'external' and/or 'internal'. Interestingly, she believes that the teacher can manage the child with a behaviour disorder, but only 'to an extent' can the child learn to manage his/herself. What is interesting is that although her account of biology's relationship to behaviour takes a singular discursive position, her questioning of the obvious assumptions inherent in that discourse, namely the medicine/psychology overlap, leads to some uncertainty.

At the beginning and end of her final Professional Experience Ella's knowledge remained solely biopsychosocial sustaining pedagogical deci-

sions during PEx consistent with this discourse. For example, she did not report (or appeared to experience) any great difficulties or epistemic tensions. Working entirely within the biopsychosocial discourse was, for Ella, supportive of pedagogical decision making. That Ella experienced epistemic rest via discursive consistency did not inhibit her learning during PEx. During her PEx, Ella was observed to encounter new experiences of students' challenging behaviour and developed new management strategies for responding to this. This learning occurred in a discursive context that built seamlessly on her existing, and consistently biopsychosocial, knowledge and pedagogical performance of 'teacher as manager'. In this sense, although no pedagogical quandaries resultant from epistemic tension were encountered, drawing entirely from one discourse delimited learning from the pedagogical possibilities afforded by other discourses, especially the ecosocio discourse.

The Problem of Traversing Discursive Boundaries

Unlike Ella, the other participants experienced epistemic dissonance unsupportive of their pedagogic decision-making. The following example shows the epistemic and pedagogical tensions experienced by Monique when she oscillated between two, mutually exclusive discourses to understand the challenging behaviours she encountered during her final professional experience. In Monique's case, her attention to biology present in the biospychosocial discourse was erroneously conflated with (and we would say 'squished' against) tenets of the biomedical discourse.

During her PEx, Monique sustained an overarching positioning of her knowledge as biospychosocial. She consistently used the subject position of 'teacher as manager' as her point of reference and reflection. However, Monique seemed to struggle to reconcile with her pre-PEx biopsychosocial understanding what she saw and heard on PEx. Much of this struggle centred on the possibility of 'biological, psychological and social factors' at once impacting behaviour. Monique experienced epistemic dissonances during PEx that led to her positing a new, epistemologically and pedagogically significant question. This subsection examines the conditions that led her to such questioning. First, the dissonance generated by what Monique saw on PEx will be described, then the epistemic move outlining the positing of the question follows.

Post-PEx, Monique talked of 'seeing' the behaviour of children in her class who had behaviour disorder diagnoses and how that challenged her knowledge:

> I had a lot of emphasis on social [understandings of behaviour in the pre-PEx concept map] influences on behaviour. But then, after prac, *after seeing the boys who couldn't help themselves*, couldn't sit still, no matter what they did…biology has so much more of an impact than I've ever given it credit for.
>
> (Monique, focus group, original emphasis)

> Like talking to Katherine [mentor teacher], she would explain that 'yes, this [inattentive behaviour] is intrinsically part of him. This is what will happen'. But then *also seeing it for myself, seeing [Daniel], that he just couldn't concentrate*…It was kind of a bit of a 'moment' for me…I was like 'okay, I see it now' whereas it was something I hadn't really experienced before. Um [pause] and just kind of like although all these [reward/discipline] systems were in place that I've seen [elsewhere] that have worked…but even with them in place, these children still didn't [pause] respond … like every other child that I've seen, or the other kids in the class.
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview, emphasis added)

> I guess in past weeks, I'm like, 'Daniel, you're doing the wrong thing. Why? …Then this last week, when he didn't have his medication, I could just see him. Yeah, 'pay attention!' then just the change in his face, I'm like [pause] it kind of took that moment for me to realise, 'you can't help what you're doing, [trails off]'
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview)

In these recounts of what she *saw* of challenging behaviour on PEx, Monique moves from biopsychosocial preoccupations of reasoning and self control ('why?'), to biomedical understandings that the child 'can't help' their behaviour. These biomedical understandings were at odds with the almost solely biopsychosocial knowledge presented to Monique in her university studies (and previous PEx).

In her new insights, Monique was inadvertently oscillating between discourses. Oscillating between discourses is different to psychological notions of eclecticism that support drawing from many theories or methods to provide the best understanding for a problem or solution. Eclecticism infers intent on the individual to understand multiple theories,

or resources, and conceptually synthesise these for improved outcomes. Whilst we contend that there is potential benefit for teachers to take an intentionally discursively eclectic approach to understanding challenging behaviour (particularly considering the relationships between the biopsychosocial and ecosocio discourses), inadvertently oscillating between discourses results in confusions and conundrums. As McMahon (2013) demonstrated, oscillating between discourses is an epistemological act. It is made possible, we argue, due to an inability to identify the boundaries of the three distinct discourses of challenging behaviour and their related pedagogical affordances. A key reason why these discursive boundaries are difficult for preservice teachers to identify is that only one discourse dominates their formal teaching knowledge resources: the biopsychosocial discourse (McMahon 2013). However, the biopsychosocial discourse, on its own, is insufficient in disrupting, challenging, or expanding preservice teachers' existing and apprenticeship-acquired knowledge. Instead, it functions as a malleable theoretic middle ground that the preservice teachers can manipulate via an epistemic process, such as oscillating between discourses in order to sustain their apprenticed knowledge. This kind of epistemic dissonance was expressed by Monique and manifested with the generation of a new question.

> Through, I guess, I don't know, the theory that we've learned at uni, it's like 'okay, yeah, that's what makes most sense to me'…but being in the practical field, so much of that doesn't fit.
>
> (Monique, focus group)

> I guess what I had understood [from university studies] is that, okay here's the biological but you can influence it and control it by giving these [psychological and] social things. Whereas, and so I'm like, 'okay, yeah, that's fine but it doesn't necessarily work'. And yeah, and that's what I found conflicting is [pause] Where is it [the behaviour]? *Which one's showing* [biological, psychological or social]?
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview, emphasis added)

We suggest that this is an excellent example of how the university's almost singular presentation of the biopsychosocial discourse provided a covert springboard for concurrently considering other, mutually exclusive discourses of behaviour. The biopsychosocial assertion of 'three at once'

(biological and psychological and social factors) became a different question for Monique: 'which one of three'?

Monique's recount of the dominantly biopsychosocial university knowledge presented a coherent set of possible pedagogical responses and subject position of 'teacher as manager'. By asserting understandings of behaviour as 'three at once', behaviour was framed as, ever and always, a combination of biological, psychological, and social factors. Or, as Monique put it, 'there's the biological but you can influence it and control it by giving these social things'. But the epistemic dissonance encountered on PEx caused her to re-frame this knowledge with a new question 'which of three': 'Which [behaviour] is showing'? (Monique, post-PEx interview), is it biology, psychology or social? Without a clear understanding of the discursive boundaries between biopsychosocial, biomedical, and ecosocio discourses of behaviour (and their implications for pedagogy), this new and powerful question allowed scope to oscillate freely between contradictory knowledges. When knowing 'all three', the pedagogical responses and subject positions afforded by the biopsychosocial discourse are clear. When asking the question, 'which of three'? quandaries arose regarding a choice between the conflicting pedagogical responses afforded by each discourse. This 'squishing' epistemic move, this posing of a new question and subsequent covert oscillating practices, resulted in pedagogical quandaries for Monique when teaching 'children with challenging behaviours' during her final PEx.

Pedagogical Quandaries

One pedagogical quandary Monique encountered during PEx was whether or not to punish a child for challenging behaviour:

> 'One of the biggest things he [Daniel, diagnosed ADHD / ODD / IM] got in trouble for, and was in Reflection [detention with a focus on explicit teaching of behaviour], for most days, was his swearing and his language. Which, he learnt from his…Dad in particular, um, [pause] particularly the use of like, the 'F' word… And he'd been told that it's not appropriate language, so he knew, that at school it wasn't appropriate language …So, that was a difficult thing 'cause like Katherine's like, 'I know he can't help it… he doesn't know', like we couldn't tell if he just didn't know [because of his disorders] that it was inappropriate, or if he knew but just kept using it because [pause] he wanted to.
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview)

Here tensions appear between knowledge that behaviour is learned (via assertions of learning swearing from parents and teachers' efforts to educate Daniel that 'it's not appropriate') and that 'he can't help it… he doesn't know'. Or, tensions between biopsychosocial and biomedical understandings, respectively. What is important is that these tensions manifest in a real pedagogical quandary regarding whether or not to punish Daniel based on the problematic question 'which of three'? indicated by the 'if/or' language deployed.

Another of the pedagogical quandaries facing Monique on PEx was whether or not to expect children with behavioural disorders to do their schoolwork. For example:

> …particularly Justin, when he would just, he wouldn't do the work. I'm like well, 'is this something that is socially learnt'? like, [pause] like the, this was what Katherine was saying, 'he's not doing his work'. But, I couldn't tell if that was just because it was, he didn't want to because he had ODD and was just saying he didn't want to or if that was because he'd, Katherine said he was getting scared of like, failure because you know he's not as bright as the other kids—he knows that and he didn't like getting things wrong, so is that something that is biological and it's hard to tell, I'm like 'well'!?
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview)

The confusion around whether Justin's resistance to seatwork was either a 'socially learned' fear of failure or 'because he had ODD' became an issue of exasperation: 'well'!? The exasperation rested, it seems, on indecision about whether it was reasonable to demand compliance from a child who had a disorder that rendered him innately 'oppositional' and 'defiant', whereas 'avoidance issues' may be ameliorated by all manner of pedagogy. Likewise, she recounts the quandary of whether or not to expect a child with ADHD and ODD diagnoses to participate and/or achieve in scheduled learning experiences:

> When he wasn't paying attention…he would go over and play with the dollhouse…when he did that, I was conflicted by that. I'm like, well, do I make him come and sit back down because he's not paying attention, he's not learning [pause] But yeah, I don't know whether to push it and try and make him sit down or if I should just let it go. And on the other hand, Katherine has been saying a lot of the behaviours you just need to ignore them. And I'm like, well, is this one I ignore or is this one I get on…Which one's this one?
>
> (Monique, post-PEx interview)

In the focus group, Monique expanded on this quandary by expounding concerns and fears regarding how the behaviour of a child diagnosed with ODD might affect the rest of the class by interrupting their learning:

> Like, I'm stopping the learning, I'm stopping the flow of the lesson to talk to him and then I know if I tell him to come and sit back down, he's most likely to say no…and he's probably going to start throwing chairs, and he's probably going to start screaming and squealing…and so I'm like, I'll just let him do it. But then, I'm like, he's not learning now. So that was a bit of a conflict that one.
>
> (Monique, focus group)

Here, Monique took on biomedical understandings and resolved a pedagogical quandary by relieving expectations of students with known behaviour disorders to engage and learn, because they '[can't] help themselves' (Monique, focus group). But, within a single teaching session, Monique would both 'ignore' children she assessed as displaying innately dysfunctional behaviours, and inform them that they could do their work 'now or recess, that's your choice' (field notes, 15 November 2010). This demonstrates the possibility of different outcomes to the same quandary based on oscillations between discourses. When she 'saw' the biology of the 'in-actively challenging child' she relieved the child from all requirements to engage with learning experiences. Concurrently, when she 'saw' that same child as 'pro-actively challenging' she offered a compliance/consequence ultimatum.

Dangerous Answers: 'Its Biological When Social Doesn't Work'

What is concerning is that despite inherent contradictions and being unsupportive of pedagogical decision-making, Monique's new 'squished' question offered its own and indisputable solutions. In discerning 'which of the three' is showing, Monique now 'knows' that the biological is the 'base-line' (Monique, focus group) and the social is either going to change it, or not. The new idea developed during PEx that sometimes 'nothing works' (Monique, focus group) assists in answering her self-devised question 'which is it [biology, psychology or social factors]? which one's showing?':

> When you've tried, when you've implemented everything that you know: you've tried the social, you've tried the motivation and nothing seems to be

> working. I think, well okay, there's something maybe more [going on] than what I can do [because the behaviour is biological].
>
> (Monique, focus group)

Deeming behaviour biological and therefore existing beyond teacher intervention or assistance, we would argue, is a precarious position for a pedagogue and her students. It is a dangerous 'answer' to the question 'which of three' insofar as it permits the teacher to non-reflexively oscillate to a 'teacher as non-expert' subject position at their own discretion. Children, under this reasoning, could be deemed 'unable to help their behaviour' and 'beyond help' purely because their teacher felt they had exhausted their 'teacher as supporter' or 'teacher as manager' expert understandings. This should be troubled and questioned by teacher educators.

Conclusion

As we have outlined, the key problem in preservice teacher knowledge of challenging behaviour is not the dominant application of the biopsychosocial discourse itself. The biopsychosocial discourse has very clear discursive limits set by very clear axioms, and is characterised by internally consistent continuums of possible teacher subject positions and pedagogies. The problem is when the biopsychosocial discourse seemingly stands alone—as it does, for example, in university coursework and school policy documents (Harwood and McMahon 2014; McMahon 2013). In these contexts, preservice teachers potentially misconstrue its discursive limits erroneously believing its accommodation of challenging behaviour as at once biological, psychological and social, as 'limitless'. For this reason, we make the argument that the biopsychosocial discourse is a *dangerous theoretic middle ground* for teaching and teacher education. This place is dangerous insofar as it gives one the false sense of knowledgeability; one that leaves teachers ill-equipped to respond to the children they meet in classrooms.

The notion of constructing and re-constructing a personal knowledge base very much involves the individual in a perpetual and dynamic relationship with knowledge, but with which knowledge and from where does the knowledge come? Drawing on Foucault's theory of 'knowledge as archevised', as something that circulates (at least in part) at the level of discourse, produced new possibilities for understanding preservice teachers'

knowledge of challenging behaviour. As our analysis demonstrated, the posited discourses of challenging behaviour in the archive were the knowledges that the preservice teachers variously and dynamically accessed to re-construct their knowledge of challenging behaviour during their final PEx. The three posited discourses identified discernible limits of the sayable and repeatable about children with challenging behaviour. Thus, it became possible to set aside definitional debates and instead, discursively 'map' participants' statements and so knowledge and knowledge-change. Such mapping allowed us to identify which discourse/s the preservice teachers adopted, rejected, and negotiated, and to note the effects of this on their knowledge, pedagogy and teacher subjectivities.

As we have shown, the preservice teachers in this study seemed unable to see the limits of the biopsychosocial discourse, because they couldn't easily compare it to its discursive counterparts: the biomedical and eco-socio discourses. These discursive counterparts were rarely represented in the teacher preparation coursework and educational policy and teaching standards. 'Limitless discourse' is an impossible and juxtapositional notion that is unhelpful to knowledge re-construction. The biopsychosocial discourse (seductive though it may be for preservice teachers with no clearly defined alternative theoretical resources at their disposal) can't accommodate knowledge beyond its own discursive limits. Paradoxically, whilst a 'limitless' biopsychosocial discourse is a notion unhelpful to knowledge re-construction, via its role in enabling epistemic oscillations between discourses, it renders inaccurate and dangerous knowledge re-construction entirely possible.

What is important here, and is indeed dangerous, is that the reasons for their confusions, and the contradictory knowledges they have deployed, did not seem 'obvious' to the participants. This can manifest, as we have described, in a preservice teacher demonstrating both undetected and explicit 'confusions' about how different bodies of knowledge are being used about 'challenging behaviour'. Such confusions and their consequences, seen in pedagogies applied and questions raised, indicate that there is a strong need for preservice teachers to critically analyse the very 'knowledges' they draw on and which rest, often unquestioned, at the centre of education and teaching. There have been strong connections made between students' epistemological beliefs and learning and ensuing calls for students' epistemological beliefs to be 'brought out into the open' (Schommer 1994, p. 315) and for 'ways of knowing' to be explicitly taught in

teacher education (Lyons 1990). We join this call for explicit teaching about 'knowing' in teacher education programs. As a way forward, we call for teacher educators to reflect on their own discursive positioning on the matter of challenging behaviour, and to make this transparent to their preservice teachers. We also suggest that teacher educators make a concerted effort to present and clearly demarcate different discourses of challenging behaviour in teacher preparation coursework and their respective implications for pedagogy.

Note

1. 'academic rest' is a term we've used to describe the opposite of 'epistemic dissonance'. It is not, in any way, intended to frame the knower as lazy or unmotivated.

Acknowledgement Research student grants from the School of Education at University of Wollongong and an Australian Postgraduate Award provided financial support for the PhD project.

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CHAPTER 10

'No, I'm Not OK': Disrupting 'Psy' Discourses of University Mental Health Awareness Campaigns

Sue Saltmarsh

Happiness, Emotional Labour and Mental-Health Awareness Campaigns

The unmet mental health needs of university students is widely considered to be a serious public health concern (Hyun and et al. 2007; Eisenberg et al. 2007b; Stanley and Manthorpe 2002), with research showing that university students' self-rated emotional health has been steadily declining in recent years (Eagan et al. 2014). That notwithstanding, access to, and up-take of, mental health services among university students have been shown to be relatively poor, with lack of perceived need, and lack of awareness, about the availability of services among the predictors for whether students actually access them (Eisenberg et al. 2007a). Perhaps not surprisingly, mental health awareness campaigns have, therefore, become a regular feature of campus life at Australian universities, and include events and activities associated with initiatives, such as World Mental Health Day,

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National Mental Health Awareness Week, RUOK? Day, Stress Less Day, and the *beyondblue* National Roadshow.

Mental health awareness promotions of this sort are held at universities around the country, with outreach to campus communities being seen as an important way of providing information to potentially vulnerable populations and reaching significant numbers of young adults (Eisenberg et al. 2007b), as well as a way of reducing social stigmas and taboos regarding mental health issues (Dunne and Somerset 2004). As noted by the World Health Organisation (WHO), 'Well-planned public awareness and education campaigns can reduce stigma and discrimination, increase the use of mental health services, and bring mental and physical health care closer to each other' (World Health Organisation[WHO] 2001: 111). These types of campaigns thus attempt to raise collective awareness of mental health issues, to provide information about and promote supports and services that are available; to encourage sufferers of depression, anxiety or other mental health issues to seek support; and to remind others of the importance of being aware of, and sensitive to, the mental health needs of those around them.

Despite their potential benefits in providing information and changing public attitudes (WHO 2001), in this chapter I consider how mental health awareness campaigns can also be understood as sites for the reiteration of norms of self-governance and the discursive regulation of university students and staff. Utilising recent examples of events immediately preceding, during, and following one such campaign, I query the ways that 'psy' discourses of mental health coalesce with 'emotional labour' (Hochschild 1983/2012) and 'affective economies' (Ahmed 2004) to construct notions of happiness, well-being, and work-life balance as desirable and attainable. In these discourses, mental ill-health is invoked as an avoidable or manageable malaise, the containment of which is constituted as both devolved responsibility and celebratory occasion. Mental well-being, on the other hand, is constituted as a form of happiness that is simultaneously an unmarked, albeit obligatory duty, as well as a protection against personal crises, relational instability, and institutional risk. I argue that these types of university-based mental health awareness campaigns operate as a technology for harnessing mental health toward organisational gains, meanwhile ignoring, or over-simplifying, the systemic and social pressures which place the well-being of students and university workers under significant pressure.

The activities associated with campus-based mental-health campaigns can take a number of forms, ranging from seminars, workshops, and pro-

fessional development sessions for university staff, to hosting barbeques, crafts, games, and other social events for students on campus. Posters and promotional materials, the wearing of brightly coloured themed t-shirts, and participation in social activities lend an air of informality and fun to heightening awareness of what are generally recognised as serious issues. Together, these festive elements contribute a sense of what literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin refers to as *carnivalesque*, through which established social norms and hierarchies are temporarily disrupted and queried.

We have already said that during carnival there is a temporary suspension of all hierarchic distinctions and barriers among men and of certain norms and prohibitions of usual life. We added that an ideal, and at the same time, real type of communication, impossible in ordinary life, is established (Bakhtin 1941: 15–16).

Bakhtin's notion of carnival as a means of challenging the status quo theorises, not only, the political nature of humour and playfulness, but emphasises, as well, their communicative and transformative potential. In this sense, the carnivalesque is dialogic, and its effectiveness relies, in part, on the playful recognition and suspension of everyday norms, rather than on binaries set in strict opposition (Hall 2009). Importantly, for the purposes of this chapter, the festive atmosphere of some mental health awareness campaigns provides an interesting example of the way that suspending certain norms and prohibitions might be potentially productive—offering, for example, informal approaches to learning about, and attending to, issues around which there are numerous cultural silences, stigmas, and taboos (Eisenberg et al. 2009; WHO 2001; Wade 2002).

In another sense, however, such approaches can be seen as trivialising the serious nature of mental health issues, or as offering a panacea that rests on the premise that greater awareness (irrespective of whether adequate resources and supports are available) can, by itself, signify, or effect a positive change, in attitudes and experiences. While research with university students has shown that students themselves tend to regard mental health promotions positively (Dunne and Somerset 2004), carnivalesque approaches promoting mental health awareness also speak to Sara Ahmed's (2007) contention regarding the popularity of self-help and therapeutic discourses available through a vast array of books, courses, instructions, therapies, philosophies, and practices that promise happiness as an effect or outcome. Happiness, as a goal or object of desire, is not only an industry, it is also, for Ahmed, a site of consensus around which truths about that which is good, valuable, and meaningful are maintained.

Thus the 'promise of happiness' (Ahmed 2007, 2010) undertakes particular kinds of subjective and cultural work that insinuates happiness into shared meanings about the 'good life'.

For Ahmed, this cultural work is profoundly political, such that 'Ideas of happiness involve social as well as moral distinctions insofar as they rest on ideas of who is worthy as well as capable of being happy "in the right way"' (2007: 11) These distinctions and the power relations they demarcate circulate within 'affective economies' (Ahmed 2004: 44) that 'refer to relations, practices, and discourses about emotions, how they are constructed, and how they constantly change' (Zembylas 2009: 98). Thus emotion is understood neither in terms of internal structures and characteristics residing within the individual, nor as socially constructed, but rather as political, as something that is 'circulated, and one of the effects of this circulation is that some bodies, objects, or events are endowed with particular emotional meanings and values' (Zembylas 2009: 98). The circulation of emotions within affective economies produces differentiations between individuals and groups, shaping and producing effects on their encounters with others. Affective economies, as Zembylas points out, 'may establish, assert, subvert or reinforce power differentials, because affectivity separates us from others as well as connects us to others; this is why it functions as an economy' (2009: 101).

Within this framing, happiness circulates as a kind of currency, becoming indicative of subjective meaning and worth that accrues to those who are seen to be oriented toward, striving for, and achieving that which is 'good', or as Ahmed puts it, 'happiness is located in certain places, as being what you get for being a certain kind of being' (Ahmed 2007: 11). In the context of universities, this cultural politics of emotion is played out in the power relations between institutions, staff, and students. For the audiences and participants of mental health awareness campaigns, there is an obligation to be/become aware of, and to make adequate use of, mental health needs, issues, support services, and so on, as a means of making oneself and/or others happy (or at the very least, to improve the chances of being happy) through greater mental well-being. In this sense:

Happiness becomes a measure of progress—a performance indicator—as well as a criterion for making decisions about resources. The presumption, here, is that the happier you are, the better you are doing, whether the 'you' is an individual or collective actor (Ahmed 2007: 8).

Importantly, this 'happiness duty' (Ahmed 2010: 7) as it occurs within places of work and study, can be understood not just as an individual

or social obligation, but also as a form of emotional labour (Hochschild 1983/2012), in which emotions are mobilised, managed, and discursively mediated 'in ways that meet the performative needs of post-modern governmentalities, another element in the commodification of everyday life of post-modern subjectivities' (Blackmore 2009: 112). This has particular implications for female academics and students, for as feminist scholars of higher education (Blackmore 2014; Koster 2011; Morley 2005; Leathwood and Read 2008; Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004) have pointed out, as in other educational settings, 'women do much of the emotional labour in the academy' (Blackmore 2014: 89).

This emotional labour is both subjective and intersubjective, involving work on the self, as well as managing the affective dimensions of pedagogic, administrative, leadership, and collegial relations. In one sense, we might think of mental health awareness campaigns as one of so many organisational technologies that 'attempt to eliminate the effects of affect' (Wallace 2009: 174)—promising, or offering, to relieve the affective dimensions of academic study and work. However, hosting campus-based awareness campaigns can also overlook and invisibilise institutional factors that contribute significantly to the well-being, or otherwise, of those who make up university communities. Such campaigns can also be understood as another 'cog' in what Eva Bendix Petersen and Zsusa Millei refer to as the panoptic psy-gaze of the initial teacher education machine that 'works to internalize rules, to rehabilitate, to ensure (self) surveillance into so-called private aspects of life and to relay power efficiently'. (Petersen and Millei 2015: 130) In this case, the psy-gaze of campus-based mental health awareness campaigns locates responsibility for mental well-being within the individual, and the affective relations between those who are co-located within the institutional setting. Emotion thus 'operates as a constitutively reciprocal component in the interaction/transaction of the *individual* and the *social*' (Zembylas 2009: 99, original emphasis), with the institution's role confined to raising awareness of its detrimental effects among those individuals expected to manage and address it. For those individuals, then, an affective investment in the well-being of self and other is thus also an investment of emotional labour, a contribution to '*institutional therapy culture*' (Ahmed 2012:47, original emphasis).

Such cultures, and institutional attempts to manage them through strategies, such as work-life balance policies, wellbeing seminars, and mental health awareness campaigns, can be understood as attempts on the part of institutions to minimise the risks posed by 'the risky humanity' (Saltmarsh

and Randell-Moon 2015) of students and staff. Risky humanity refers, in part, to embodied subjects who are always/already at risk of illness or injury, and whose physical, emotional, and mental health and well-being can be negatively affected by the conditions within which they study and work. But it also refers to the risks posed *by* embodied subjects *to* institutions. These risks may take the form of absenteeism and loss of productivity when students or employees suffer from illness or injury, financial costs associated with preventative measures, such as counseling services and insurances, as well as compensation claims, or they may come about in the form of loss of expertise and organisational knowledge when employees leave an institution to seek better conditions elsewhere.

The vignettes in the following sections provide provocations for considering the subjectivating practices through which affective economies of mental health operate on university campuses. In some regards, the events recounted in each vignette can be understood as a finding: something found while following the narratives, traces, and histories of another object (see Ahmed 2015). In recent years, my research in higher education has engaged more explicitly with the nature of the economic subject within institutional cultures, and it is from this particular pursuit that my interest in work-life balance and academic well-being took shape as a research focus (Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon 2014, 2015). That the three events recalled from my everyday working notes happened to take place during a single week in which a university mental health campaign was taking place, both is, and is not, coincidental. It *is* coincidental in the sense that none were orchestrated by me to coincide with the *R U OK? Day* campaign that was underway at my workplace. It is *not* coincidental in the sense that as the events began to unfold across the three days that preceded, occurred during, and followed *R U OK? Day,* I attended more carefully to the ways that the awareness-raising activities for staff and students on campus constructed a particular kind of subject of mental ill/health and un/happiness. In this way, my notes turned toward the subject of mental health discourse prevalent in the 'psy' disciplines, as well as toward the subject of academic and institutional accountabilities that so persistently articulate meanings of well-being and work-life balance in terms of risk, choice, and responsibility. The vignettes included here, then, can also be understood as staging a 'research encounter' (Pollock 2007) between academic and student subjectivities, mental health discourse, and the policy and organisational context within which the events recounted took place.

Tomorrow is RUOK? Day on Campus

The student's voice and hands are trembling, and we are anxious about how this meeting might turn out. The student's conduct has recently been described to us by other students and colleagues in terms ranging from 'concerning' to 'disturbing' and 'bizarre'. Recognizing our duty of care toward all involved, we have arranged to discuss the student's progress and support needs for the remainder of the semester. In line with a raft of policies and procedures, we have taken steps to minimize any perceived risks and to provide a supportive environment, and have agreed in advance on strategies for managing the tone of the meeting. The student perspires and shakes while describing recent pressures that have exacerbated an existing mental illness, and struggles to explain complex learning needs without divulging deeply personal and confidential information regarding mental states and personal circumstances. The student emphasizes a desire to complete the course and achieve a professional qualification, and we orient our advice toward that goal. Tomorrow *RUOK? Day* is being celebrated on campus, and we later reflect on our concerns for this particular student's well-being, as well as our complicity in adding to an already distressing situation.

The above meeting was a somber affair, with potentially far-reaching implications for a student who feared that mental illness was jeopardizing a long-held dream of educational and professional success. While the three staff members (myself included) in attendance espouse commitments to social justice and equal opportunity, the 'psy' discourses of mental illness that underpin cultural practices and institutional policies are pervasive and can be difficult to disentangle from discourses of risk and responsibility. I see the meeting as situated at the convergence of these discourses, within the context of institutional climates whose emphasis on 'quality' and 'excellence' in policy and practice 'is actualized through the affective, embodied, and intersubjective practices of the academic workforce' (Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon 2014: 241). This is emotional labour that involves affective investments and embodied responses to a complex and difficult situation, in which I and my colleagues share professional responsibilities to the student, to one another, and to our employing institution.

However, when various types 'of emotional labour are institutionally invisible we have to engage in coping strategies to 'self-manage' this emotional labour' (Koster 2011: 75). In this regard, our pedagogic approach to the meeting merits consideration as a strategy for managing

our own place within this affective economy. Offering encouragement and learning support to the student fulfills a duty of care to a student deemed 'at risk' of failing, and ensures compliance with university policies and procedures regarding assessment, course progression, disability, and student equity. However, it also renders us complicit in a form of government, in the sense that Nikolas Rose uses the term, to describe 'all those more or less rationalized programs, strategies, and tactics for the 'conduct of conduct', for acting upon the actions of others in order to achieve certain ends' (Rose 1998: 12). Our pedagogic focus presumes a power relation within which the student's desire to succeed is tethered to an obligation to the governance of self according to specified professional norms. Our role as educators, within a discipline profoundly shaped by 'psy' discourse, is, in no small measure, to 'nurture and direct these individual strivings in the most appropriate and productive fashions' (Rose 1998: 17). Yet our dialogue is also situated within the happiness discourse of our field, in which accomplishing both the student's and our pedagogic goals is seen as that which makes 'good' educators happy. The promise of happiness, in other words, 'is what makes things promising; the promise is always "ahead" of itself. Anticipation is affective as an orientation toward the future, as that which is ahead of us, as that which is to come' (Ahmed 2010: 181)

Our concerns and responsibilities regarding the student's self-governance are co-constitutive of norms of conduct prescribed by institutional policies and professional standards. These norms determine what is possible and intelligible within the social order (Butler 2004; Foucault 1978), and function in the operation of disciplinary power within which psychology has established truth claims and normative practices about what 'counts' as un/desirable, in/appropriate, or un/acceptable conduct. These are, in part, professional grids of intelligibility. But they are also implicated in everyday understandings and practices, wherein the power dynamic between self and other is construed 'in psychological terms of adjustment, fulfillment, good relationships, self-actualization, and so forth' such that 'we have tied ourselves "voluntarily" to the knowledges that experts profess, and to their promises to assist us in the personal quests for happiness that we "freely" undertake' (Rose 1998: 77). These collective, tacit knowledges, and everyday understandings, shape our own, our students' and our institution's expectations about what is being provided in this particular educational context.

Today is RUOK? Day on Campus

On my way to the videoconference room, I walk past a barbeque stall and craft tent manned by student support staff wearing bright yellow t-shirts. Two fellow staff members on their way to the same professional development seminar glance at me in surprise then look away, taking up seats on the opposite side of the room. When the seminar was announced to staff, the email subject line read: Worklife Balance Seminar Invitation—Workshop 3—RUOK—Monitoring Your Mental Wellbeing. My current research on university work-life balance policies, makes me curious about what will be said about the effects of work-life balance on mental wellbeing, and what advice will be offered regarding how to maintain that balance in ways that protect mental health. However, the presentation assumes instead that those in attendance (or someone close to them) are already struggling with mental health issues. Definitions of mental illness and examples of its impact on people are provided, along with a case study about a professional couple whose marriage breaks down following a series of changes and unanticipated events in their lives that leads one of them to go through a period of depression. We are asked to discuss how we would react if something like that happened to us, and admonished by fellow attendees to seek counseling just as they have done when contending with depression and other mental health issues. The session concludes with quotes from famous people, a list of things we can do to look after ourselves, and an admonishment to do nice things for others as a way of looking after ourselves.

The scene above is framed by the carnivalesque atmosphere of the celebratory activities taking place outside, in which carnival functions as 'a metaphor for the temporary licensed suspension and reversal of order' (Hall 1996: 290) amid ordinary university activities. Despite the slogans, posters, and other public messages declaring mental health a serious matter that merits individual and collective responsibility, the gravity of this call for concern is simultaneously suspended by the fun and festivity of barbecues, balloons, and brightly coloured themed t-shirts. As Stuart Hall, informed by the work of literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, points out, 'Based on studies of the importance of fairs, festivals, *mardi gras*, and other forms of popular festivity', carnival can be used 'to signal all those forms, tropes and effects in which the symbolic categories of hierarchy and value are inverted' (Hall 1996: 290). In this instance, the seriousness of mental health concerns is superseded by the call of festivities to align one-

self to others through desire for, and seeking of, happiness and pleasure. Happiness, in other words, becomes the panacea for the implied *un*happiness associated with mental ill-health.

The Bakhtinian notion of carnival has been widely used to consider how popular culture subverts, and calls into question, dominant social hierarchies, orders, and power relations. Here, however, it is the formal institutional structures within the university that mobilise the perceived playfulness of student culture through frivolous activities that symbolize, but do not operationalize, a meaningful institutional response to serious matters. Importantly, while the vignette above refers to a specific day and its associated activities, there is nothing particularly unique in the use of carnival in mental health awareness campaigns. For example, another campaign later in the same year announced in an email to the university community that Stress Less Day would include a range of similarly carnivalesque activities:

For Stress Less Day, a range of stress-busting activities will be on offer on the main quadrangle between 10 am and 3 pm including: cookie decorating, badge-making, free yoga and boxercise classes (both held at 12 noon), free Greek BBQ, Silent Disco, Carnival Rides, Slushie Machine, free coffee and gelato cones, Photo booth, volley ball and more…

Such uses of festive atmosphere and activities inverts their place in a hierarchy of concerns, and subverts formal calls for taking mental health seriously. It does this, in part, by conscripting mental-health awareness into the consumerist agenda of the enterprise university (Marginson and Considine 2000) with commercial imperatives to offer consumers a positive student experience. But it also does so under a banner of legitimacy brought about by publicly espousing concern for the mental well-being of those for whom it has a formal duty of care. These claims of concern and support enable the institution to be seen (or to claim to be seen) as part of the solution to a perceived problem, while simultaneously attempting to manage the risky humanity of university students and staff. In addition, the carnivalesque atmosphere allows students and staff to be cheerfully reminded of both the risk to happiness that mental ill-health purportedly poses, as well as of their duty or obligation to happiness. For, as Ahmed observes of contemporary obligations, 'If we have a duty to promote what causes happiness, then happiness itself becomes a duty' (Ahmed 2010: 7).

This duty is reiterated more succinctly in the professional development seminar, as attendees are invited to consider the unhappy circumstances of others, notably in the example provided by the presenter of a profes-

sional couple (who are recent counseling clients of the presenter, so we are told) whose marriage has broken down after one of them goes through a period of depression. Interestingly, he points to certain decisions this couple has made—to relocate in the pursuit of job opportunities and career advancements, to work in high-paying but demanding professions, and to not appropriately heed the warning signs of depression. Happiness, in other words, 'is assumed to follow from some life choices and not others' (Ahmed 2010: 54). The presenter paints a scenario that equates this couple's pursuit of the good life with choices that permit ill-health to undo the promise of happiness.

The seminar presents this example as both a cautionary tale and a technique for elicitation. How would attendees at the seminar feel in a similar situation? The ensuing discussion invites those present to identify those objects, pursuits, and decisions that contributed to the couple's unhappiness, thereby inciting attendees to publicly disavow the likelihood of making similar choices. 'Psy' circulates among the attendees as a form of shared 'expertise', described by Nikolas Rose as 'a particular kind of social *authority,* characteristically deployed around *problems,* exercising a certain *diagnostic* gaze, grounded in a claim to *truth,* asserting technical *efficacy,* and avowing *humane* ethical virtues' (Rose 1998: 86, original emphasis). It is not necessary for the presenter/counselor to be the only person with access to this expertise—on the contrary, the case for avoiding and appropriately managing the effects of mental ill-health is strengthened by the testimonials of attendees who contribute their own experiences.

The pursuit of happiness as both goal and antidote for mental ill-health gains considerable currency precisely because, as Ahmed would have it, 'We align ourselves to others by investing in the same objects as the cause of happiness' (Ahmed 2010: 38). 'Psy' discourse becomes the organizing language within a particular grid of intelligibility within this confessional scene, offering attendees both a 'way of justification and a guide to action' (Rose 1998: 87). The solution to the problem of work-life balance, featured prominently in the title of the workshop, lies not with institutions that place increasingly excessive demands on its workforce, but rather with individuals. As Holly Randell-Moon and I have argued, 'The application of work–life balance policies and rhetoric towards techniques and strategies of self-management…functions as a way of shifting employees' attention away from the structural conditions of academic work that produce ill-health' (2015: 9). Seminars, such as the one described here can be understood as subjectivating practices that produce affective economies

in which happiness, well-being, and work-life balance are constructed as desirable and attainable, and invoke mental ill-health as an avoidable or manageable malaise. As Petersen and Millei (2015) argue, university-based mental health psy-discourses construct happiness and a stress-free life as the responsibility of the individual, even though it may be the institution itself that produces the stress being experienced. Organisational solutions are thus proposed in terms of monitoring one's own (and others') mental health through the shared knowledge of 'psy' expertise. To do so is to share in the implied promise of happiness as both object and outcome of individual choices when appropriately guided by 'psy' expertise.

Yesterday Was RUOK? Day on Campus

Things on campus are quiet today—no marquee in the courtyard, no student barbeque, no music blaring from loudspeakers. It is Friday afternoon, nearby office doors are closed and lights switched off, and I work quietly at my desk until a colleague from another building hurries frantically past my office door. 'Are you OK? Is there anything I can do'? I ask. 'No, I'm not OK!' she replies. A student has arrived for a routine meeting in an extremely distressed state, having suffered a domestic violence attack the day before. My colleague, too, is distressed—the student's situation is upsetting, and she does not consider herself trained for managing critical incidents of this sort. While my colleague returns to the student, I rush off to find the (already occupied) counselor, relay messages, and offer hollow-sounding reassurances that someone will come as quickly as they can. Afterward, we privately lament the irony of a student suffering such an ordeal on a day when fellow students had been celebrating a national day of awareness with balloons and barbeques. Before exchanging pleasantries and heading home, we commiserate that our Friday afternoon's work would now have to be completed over the weekend.

As in the first vignette, discursive hierarchies and norms of conduct shape ways of relating between university lecturers and students. In the first example, hierarchical power relations and behavioural norms are maintained, managed, and mediated through recourse to institutional policy and procedure. The carefully planned meeting allowed time for preparation and putting supports and protections in place should those norms be placed under threat. Yet here, they are disrupted by the student's sudden and unanticipated display of emotion of a sort that might usually be contained within more private domains of what Rose refers

to as 'the therapeutic culture of the self and its experts of subjectivity' (1998: 164). The pedagogic relationship and the professional boundaries with students understood by my colleague as appropriate to her role and expertise, are unsettled by the student's tearful revelation of a traumatic personal experience. While the student has entrusted her lecturer with this deeply personal information, it is ultimately psychological knowledge, in the form of counselling expertise, that is sought to bring the encounter into an 'ethical scenario' from within which:

> the diverse apparatuses and contexts in which a particular relation to the self is administered, enjoined, and assembled, and where therapeutic attention can be paid to those who are rendered uneasy by the distance between their experience of their lives and the images of freedom and selfhood to which they aspire. (Rose 1998: 194)

The discomfort experienced by the lecturer through the sudden shift in the pedagogic intent and register of her meeting with the student is mediated by the availability of counsellors. This offers the prospect of maintaining the distinctions between relations of power organised around either pedagogic or therapeutic discourse, by directing the student into what is seen as an 'appropriately' therapeutic space.

Scenes such as this one illustrate how emotional labour is woven into the everyday pedagogic work of university lecturers. Often this work is invisibilised, neither part of the official work of teaching, curriculum planning and assessment, nor able to be 'counted' in the measures and metrics so typically used these days to calculate academic work in terms of 'output'. Unable to be quantified, this work 'remains largely invisible although of value to the institution in terms of student welfare and retention' (Koster 2011: 63). Instead, it is a form of labour that circulates through affective 'processes of life and vitality which circulate and pass between bodies and which are difficult to capture or study in any conventional methodological sense' (Blackman 2012: 4). As noted in the introduction, emotional labour is also profoundly gendered, seen in forms of 'academic motherhood' (Ward and Wolf-Wendel 2004), and in 'the way [women] are expected to be enthusiastic, cheerful, caring' (Koster 2011: 67). Even when such positioning is resisted, or shifted into the terrain of 'psy' and therapeutic discourse, 'emotions involve investments in social norms' (Ahmed 2004: 196) that can make it difficult to negotiate the dissonance encountered when those norms are unexpectedly disrupted.

My and my colleague's commiseration about completing unfinished work over the weekend speaks to questions of work-life balance, the topic of the staff development seminar on the previous day. As our working day concludes, neither of us seems happy about the afternoon's events, or about impending deadlines that now require us to complete pressing work in personal time. We nonetheless conclude our encounter with smiles and well-wishes, and some optimistic commentary and reassurance that things will work out. As 'the ultimate performance indicator' (Ahmed 2010: 4), happiness is mobilised here—as it is in higher education discourse more generally—as 'a rationale for work-life balance policies, as an indicator of academic well-being and as a signifier of compliant productivity' all of which 'carry a tacit demand that employees at least give the appearance of being happy' about the conditions within which they work (Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon 2014: 245). As academic workers, we recognise and understand the obligations to happiness expected within our workplace and profession. We simultaneously long for, and undo the possibility (at least in this instance) of, 'balance', precisely because it has become 'a bio-cultural mode of laboring that academics are positioned as ultimately responsible for' (Saltmarsh and Randell-Moon 2015: 11).

Conclusion

This chapter's reading of everyday encounters during a university-based mental health awareness campaign highlight ways that mental health and therapeutic discourse intersect with educational and professional discourse. These encounters between academics and students illustrate endeavors to deliver on the promise of happiness in the affective economies of the university, and the emotional labour that is required to manage and neutralize potential risks to that promise. Yet education, as Gert Biesta points out, 'always involves a *risk*' (Biesta 2014: 1) of one sort or another. In the vignettes discussed here, mental health awareness is presented and practiced as way of minimizing the risk of failure among students with mental health issues, and as a way of managing the potential effects of mental health on the productivity and well-being among academic workers. In other words, mental health awareness campaigns function as one means by which institutions actively designate responsibility for mental health and well-being to individuals, while simultaneously benefiting in organisational terms from the productivity and wellbeing of those who effectively monitor and manage their own (and each others') mental health.

Yet as Biesta's discussion of the many risks associated with education attests, 'The desire to make education strong, secure, predictable, and risk-free is in a sense an attempt…to deny that education always deals with living "material", that is, with human subjects, not with inanimate objects' (Biesta 2014: 2). I understand much of what takes place in the vignettes analysed here in terms of attempts to manage (in largely superficial ways) the perceived risks associated with mental health issues, while offering little outside 'psy' inflected therapeutic, pedagogic, and professional responses that might contribute to, or improve, the lived experience of those who study and work whilst grappling with mental health issues. This does more, I would suggest, to harness mental health agendas toward institutional gains, than to meaningfully engage with the complex, and at times, difficult and painful mental health issues with which the human subjects of university communities grapple.

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CHAPTER 11

The Risk Factors For Psy-Diagnosis? Gender, Racialization and Social Class

Julie Allan and Valerie Harwood

Introduction

Much of the scientific and educational literature on childhood and youth behavioural disorders ignores, or at best, gives limited attention to, the racialized, classed, and gendered aspects of diagnostic practice. Minority groups and children from disadvantaged circumstances are over-represented in educational remediation and disciplinary programmes, and boys are far more likely to receive a diagnosis relating to their behaviour than girls. In this chapter we examine the 'risks' associated with 'race', class, and gender and detail how these affect diagnosis and medicalization in education.

We draw together contributions from the literature on ADHD and childhood mental disorders, statistics from the UK, US, Australia, and Brazil to offer critical perspectives on patterns and trends, and comparisons of particular contexts. We examine the risk factors of 'race', class, and gender and, taking each of these 'oppressions' in turn, we consider the psychopathologizing that goes on within these arenas through, and

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_11

as a consequence of, risk. We explore the specific patterns of naming—of disorder—within each of the risk factors and the subsequent practices of spatialization that arise. At one level, following Soja (1996), spatialization concerns all social relations, but here, it has very specific—and often segregated—outcomes for the individuals concerned. We acknowledge the powerful added value of intersectionality (Erevelles 2010) and whilst we take account of cumulative risk effects, we also think it is important to examine 'race', class, and gender in their individual intersections with psychopathologization. We draw upon our own work as well as on theoretical perspectives from Disability Studies, Critical Race Theory, and sociological analyses of social class to analyse these practices. We argue that belonging to certain minority groups puts children at risk of receiving a medical diagnosis of their behaviour and that this risk is produced through a series of complex naming and spatializing practices.

'Race': The Risk of Colour

Symonds (1998, p. 951) suggests that certain groups, for example young black men in England, may have, 'elevated perceptions of dangerousness' attributed to them, while Bean et al. (1991) note higher rates of emergency detention of Afro-Caribbeans than for whites, and higher proportions of the former group at each point within the mental health system. 'Race' appears to be associated with a high risk of diagnosis of special educational needs, with particular racial groups at a particularly high risk (Artiles et al. 2010). It is precisely the attention to the dangerousness associated with being black and failing in school that both encourages a diagnostic gaze and diverts attention from the role of schools and society in producing inequality (Brantlinger 2006). This attention involves firstly, processes of naming trouble at the intersection of 'race' and behaviour; and secondly, a series of spatializing practices that protect both the individual and others and, in so doing, separate them. We explore these naming and spatializing practices, but before doing so, examine some of the available figures on prevalence relating to the diagnosis of special needs and behaviour disorder among minority ethnic groups.

Government figures for England (Department for Education 2011a) indicate that in 2011, 25% of black children of compulsory school age were diagnosed with special educational needs (although only 2% of these had statements of special educational needs). Black Caribbean children were apparently at greatest risk with 29.8% diagnosed as having special

educational needs (SEN), compared with 20.6% of white children. The overall percentage of Asian children with SEN diagnosis was lower than the average for White children (18.4%), although 23.5 of Pakistani children had received this diagnosis. Only 11.1% of Chinese children had been identified as having special educational needs. The government figures for emotional and behavioural difficulties in England show a similar racialized pattern. The greatest 'at risk' group here appear to be children of mixed 'race', of whom 34.3% were deemed to have emotional and behavioural difficulties even though this group did not figure prominently as having a high proportion of SEN diagnoses (32.2% of Black children were diagnosed and an eye-watering 39.9% per cent of Black Caribbean children were given this label). Yet 26.6% of Black African children had been diagnosed with SEN, which is lower than the 27.2% of White children within this population. Asian children again numbered fewer among the population diagnosed with emotional and behavioural difficulties (15.7 per cent) as did Chinese at 13 per cent.

Diagnosis of ADHD among minority ethnic groups is a mixed and indeed changing picture. In the US, ADHD prevalence increased from 1998–2000 to 2007–2009 for non-Hispanic white children (from 8.2 % to 10.6%) and for non-Hispanic black children (from 5.1% to 9.5%). In 2007–9, ADHD prevalence was similar among non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, and Puerto Rican children. ADHD was lower among Mexican children compared with children in the three other racial and ethnic groups (Akinbami et al. 2011). Children of mixed 'race' were considered to be at high risk of an ADHD diagnosis with between 8.9 and 14.1% being accorded this status (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2011).

In Australia, National draft guidelines (Royal Australasian College of Physicians 2009) on ADHD admit to not having accurate data on ADHD among Australian Indigenous peoples, but indicate that people with ADHD are over-represented in the criminal justice system and that rates of incarceration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are high. The draft guidelines, advising on cultural sensitivity in the diagnosis of ADHD, point out that it is common for Indigenous children to move around the classroom, checking on one another and advise that this should not be viewed as an indicator of impulsivity. (It should be noted, however, that these guidelines have never been formally endorsed following the identification of a conflict of interest violation by one of the US authors whose work was heavily cited. The individual, a psychiatrist,

failed to disclose the huge sums of money he had received from drug companies.) Rates of diagnoses of Indigenous children from the Brazilian Amazon are cited as 24.5% (Azevedo et al. 2010) although the difficulty in accessing remote populations to estimate prevalence was acknowledged, as was the case in Australia.

The National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (2009) suggests that the differential rates among different ethnic groups may reflect different levels of tolerance within cultures for the symptoms of ADHD. This is a conclusion also reached by Tamini and Taylor (2004), who found vastly different levels of diagnosis of ADHD across different cultures and regarded these as reflecting parental perceptions of what constituted 'normal' behaviour. This cultural distinction was underlined by Rohde (2002) in a study of ADHD in Brazil in which he pointed out that children and adolescents from Latin America are more likely to exhibit emotional distress and to be more talkative and active than their counterparts from Anglo-Saxon cultures, and that such tendencies must be taken into account by physicians making assessments. Dwivedi and Banhatti (2005) also point to inconsistency in the ways in which assessment criteria are applied and, reviewing several studies, all of which used the Connors rating scale, found diagnosis rates ranging from 16.6% in the UK; 16% in Spain; 15% in New Zealand and 12% in Australia to 3% in China; 4.5%in Scotland; and 5.8% in both Brazil and Canada.

Racialized patterns of naming are so entrenched that, according to Walker (2006) who spent four years at the Yakama Indian Health Clinic, there was a 75% probability of children presenting with behavioural problems emerging with an ADHD diagnosis and prescribed stimulants. This pattern is particularly problematic, because the deficit ADHD trajectory is at odds with the strengths based perspective of American Indian cultures, and fails to acknowledge the importance of intergenerational and family contexts, and to recognize that difficult behaviours may be part of, 'an individual's and family's life path' (Simmons et al. 2004, 61). This is a point also made by Rohde (2002), who, in his study of Brazilian diagnosis of ADHD is critical of the lack of regard for culturally specific behaviours as part of what constitutes normal. Walker (2006) is not overstating in claiming that the indiscriminate translation of ADHD across cultures, without regard for that particular culture, amounts to a form of colonization of the mind, levelling 'concepts about themselves and their children quite foreign to their culture' (p. 78).

Within school spaces that are occupied by special education, there are distinctive sites of the psychopathologization of ethnicity. The

overrepresentation of ethnic minorities within special education has been well documented (Artiles et al. 1997; Ferri 2004; Graham 2012) and suspicion has turned on special education and its role in preserving education in the face of ever increasing diversity (Dudley-Marling 2001). In spite of the convincing empirical evidence of the problem of overrepresentation of particular groups of students, Artiles (2004) questions the appropriateness of the focus on 'representation' of any group, the result of which, he argues, is that, 'these students are seen as the passive carriers of categorical markers of difference (e.g., 'race', class, gender) and their assumed nefarious consequences (e.g., low achievement, dropout, delinquent behaviour)' (p. 552). This reductive tendency and the obsession with the physical presences and essences of students generate 'myopic understandings of the role of culture and history' (Artiles 2004, p. 552) and ensures that agency is denied.

Mind the (Achievement) Gap: Spatializing 'Race'

Paperson's (2010) notion of the ghetto is a helpful way of understanding the particular spatialization of minority groups. The ghetto, according to Paperson, is not, 'a fixed sociological space… [but rather] a dislocating procedure' (p. 10) that draws on the, 'apparatus of empire' (p. 21) to justify the separation, through diagnosis, of children from minority ethnic groups. Pathology, according to Paperson (2010, p. 9), becomes a valuable legitimizing device:

> Pathology generously rewrote us as anticolonialists. Our colonial complicity erased, pathology also erased the violence of this pushout. Thus, the ghettoed subject appears fleetingly as a problem, then vanishes as a person from the official record.

Cartography, which Paperson describes as a key technology in colonialism, allows for a kind of space shifting which is 'trickster magic' (2010, p. 10), and which leads to the eradication of those who do not fit,:'[t]he trickster is shape shifting again, producing new regions of displacement and mapping these cartographies of nowhere onto bodies' (p. 10). The diagnosis of children and young people from minority ethnic groups with a mental disorder maps both them, and their ethnic identity, as distinctive, and subsequently distances, dislocates, and differentiates them from their peers. This cartographic practice is promoted as benign and as functioning in the best interests of children, young people, and their peers.

School failure among minority ethnic groups is spatialized as a gap, yet Ladson-Billings (2006, p. 3) is critical of the 'achievement gap' that has

become part of our common parlance 'invoked by people on both ends of the political spectrum' (p. 3) and with, 'few argu[ing] over its meaning or its import' (p. 3). The achievement gap is 'often characterized as a single unyielding gap between white students and… minority students' (Ream and et al. 2012, p. 37) but is more accurately conceived 'as multiple gaps that fluctuate between racial, social class, and linguistic groups'. Gillborn (2008, p. 65) argues that 'Gap Talk' serves a particular strategic and political purpose in enabling a sense of incremental progress to be conveyed through messages about narrowing, or reducing, the gap and calls it 'a deception' (p. 68). Gillborn suggests that the achievement gap is more of an 'educational debt' (2008, p. 44) which is persistent. Ladson-Billings and other scholars, particularly those writing within the US have pointed to an impossibility of ever recovering this debt, because of the 'locked in' nature of racialized inequalities (Roithmayr 2003, p. 38). These are so deep rooted, historically and culturally, and so institutionalized that they become almost inevitable. Furthermore, as Gillborn (2008) argues, attending to the narrowing of the achievement gap obscures the real systemic problems that need to be tackled.

Class and Socio-Economic Striations

'The class struggle exists; it exists more intensely'. (Foucault 1989, p. 18)

Children and young people living in poorer circumstances are four times more likely to be diagnosed with, borderline to abnormal, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties (Barnes et al. 2010; Goodman and Gregg 2010; HM Treasury and DEFES 2007), and have an increased likelihood of school suspension and exclusion and to be connected with high rates of behaviour disorders and medication (Harwood 2006). Children are at a greater risk of ADHD as a result of deprivation and this is mediated by both social class and ethnicity (Bauermeister et al. 2005). Here, we suggest that children and young people of low socio-economic status experience a naming of their chaotic lives and of the lack in their lives, not just of material goods, but also of self-control. The naming of these omissions generates a moral obligation, and leads to further spatial practices that situate the children, and young people and their families, on the end of professional concern, support, and control. These practices produce plural disadvantage (Wolff and De-Shalit 2007) whilst creating, to draw on ideas from Said, a, '*positional* flexibility which puts [the professional] in a whole

series of possible relationships with [the child and family] without ever losing him (sic) the upper hand' (Said 2002, p. 1009, emphasis added).

Confirmation has been sought from neuroscience that poverty and disadvantage affects children physically. Whilst in opposition, the UK MP Ian Duncan Smith studied the findings of research on the neural development of children from 'neglected and deprived' families compared with 'normal' families (Tomlinson 2012, 282) and the UK Parliamentary Strategy Office produced a paper contrasting a normal brain with an 'emotionally deprived brain' (Cabinet Office 2008, p. 87). Similarly, in Australia, during a sitting of the federal parliament in March 2001, Dr. Louise Newman, then head of the child and adolescent faculty of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, compared projected images of a healthy and a 'neglected' eight-year-old brain. Media coverage of this event records Dr. Newman calling for awareness of the 'forgotten epidemic of child maltreatment' and inferring poor parenting as potentially brain damaging (Ellingson 2001, p. 1). As Tomlinson (2012, p. 282) notes, this is not very far away from eugenics theories, and from those medical textbooks showing the 'warped brains of criminals and the mentally retarded'. One of the profound consequences of medicalization of special needs is that the diagnosis obscures other interpretations, and this has particular implications for understanding the behaviour of children from poorer backgrounds. This concern echoes Schram's (2000) critique of the medicalization of welfare. In Schram's view, 'poverty can be an important cause of psychological problems, but correcting those psychological conditions will not necessarily correct the poverty that produced those conditions in the first place' (Schram 2000, p. 92). More broadly, this points to the need for medicalized treatment in poorer communities to be given careful scrutiny.

The UK study, *Poorer Children's Educational Attainment: how important are attitudes and behaviour?* (Goodman and Gregg 2010) identifies the markedly lower levels of educational attainment reached by children from poorer families, pointing to behavioural problems as a key element contributing to this. A Scottish study found one in four persistently poor children (aged three-to-four and five-to-six) rated as having social, emotional or behavioural difficulties (Barnes et al. 2010). Children in these circumstances experience multiple social, health, and behavioural problems, with rates of 22 and 23% for 5–6 year-olds living in short term and persistent poverty, and a sharp increase of 28% for 3–4 year-olds living in persistent poverty (Barnes et al. 2010). Research has predicted that young

people aged 14, living in poverty, have an increased likelihood of school suspension and exclusion as the number of family problems increases (HM Treasury and DEFES 2007). Gorard's analysis (Gorard 2010; Gorard and Smith 2010) highlights the confounding effects of scenarios where children from poor families, from particular ethnicities, and with additional learning needs, cluster in specific schools.

US National statistics show that from 1998 through to 2009, ADHD prevalence increased to 10% for children with family income less than 100% of the poverty level and to 11% for those with family income between 100% and 199% of the poverty level (Akinbami et al. 2011). Patterns of higher diagnostic rates in low socio-economic areas are evident in Australia, a country which has rates of diagnosis of 11.2% and which has the third highest use of stimulant medication for ADHD after the US and Canada (Harwood 2010). The rates of medication are highest within disadvantaged communities in Australia, among unemployed families (Sawyer et al. 2002) and among children in care (Graham 2008). Concerns have been raised in Australia about the risk of paediatricians 'medicating for social disadvantage' (Isaacs 2006, p. 44). The implication of social class and disadvantage as a risk factor has been recognized in urbanized Brazil where lower class young people were more likely to be identified for behavioural diagnoses by both clinicians and school staff (Béhague 2009), and where distinct socio-economic inequalities have been recorded between black and white Brazilians (Gradín 2007).

Several researchers have discerned classed and racialized parental strategies that determine particular outcomes for their children. Gillies (2005), for example, comparing Scotland and England, distinguished between middle class parents who emphasize the individuality and competencies of their children, and working class parents who stress characteristics such as social skills, working hard, and staying out of trouble. Similar differences were observed in the US by Lareau (2003) who also distinguished between the intensive cultivation by middle class parents of their children, and the concern to provide adequately for the physical needs of children by working class parents. A UK study by Vincent et al. (2012) found subtle differences among a group of middle class Afro-Caribbean parents in terms of their strategies for involvement and support, and identified a continuum with parents doing whatever it took, including employing tutors, to get the best for their children at one end; and parents merely hoping for the best at the other end; and those in between who were described as 'watchful and circumspect' (p. 347) and being guided by what was

deemed to be appropriate parental involvement. Whilst these studies appear to show the value of an intersectional analysis, Strand (2010) warns that social class has limitations in accounting for ethnic based differences. His UK research found that Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, and Black African children achieve, at the age of 14, three points behind their white peers and he suggests that these differences are better explained by pre-existing effects of ethnicity at age 11 than by factors relating to socio-economic status.

Territorializing the Home

Children and young people living in poor circumstances were especially marked by the manner in which 'their' problems were explained, with depictions of the chaos of their lives and of what they lacked, both in material terms and in their capacity for self-control. Depictions of poverty and 'the poor' as chaotic and lacking organization are recognisable characterizations. For instance, in drawings such as *Après la Saisie* (*After the Seizure*) by Jean Louis Forain, (circa 1870–1900), which conjures this meaning, while at the same time, the title itself could be said to prompt an understanding of the family's chaotic or disorganized presence (Fig. 11.1).

This drawing, a nineteenth century depiction of a destitute family, with its jagged lines, is evocative of the chaos of their life as they move from the structure of home to the unknown. While current depictions of poverty with chaos echo the sentiment of this drawing, we want to suggest that the practices that medicalize poverty and child behaviour territorialize social class in new ways.

The classed thematic becomes a tell-tale characteristic of the way in which classed-medicalization produces the behaviour assemblages of children from poorer backgrounds, and territorializes the family and the home as a site for support. Following Fox and Ward (2011, p. 1015) we view behaviour assemblages as 'confluences of relations that *pattern* the psychic landscape of a subject and establish the boundaries of 'what a body can do''. Behaviour assemblages can result in limits that pathologize poverty, a pathologisation that is picked up in Schram's (2000) analysis of the medicalization of poverty.

Parents are also depicted as 'erratic' in the administration of medication. This can serve as a rationale for services to focus concern onto the amelioration of inconsistent medication regimes and medicalized engage-

Fig. 11.1 Après la saisie by Jean Louis Forain, circa 1870–1900. © The Trustees of the British Museum

ment. The idea that parents need to be supported to engage productively with medication serves to compound identification of social classes with specific medical problems and, thereby, medicalizes their experiences of poverty. Being poor and working class can, therefore, mean that child

behavioural issues fit neatly into striations that have the twofold effect of both creating and bolstering classed and medicalized modalities. The danger is that the problem becomes one of engagement with this classed-medicalized striation and, in so doing, risks missing other ways of conceptualizing the issues involved with child behaviour problems.

Gender: The Danger of Being a Boy

'Boys' behaviour at school is still more challenging than that of girls, but the behaviour of both is getting worse' (Association of Teachers and Lecturers 2011)

A salutary reminder is given by Roberts (2012) of the way in which attention to extremes of behaviour and achievements, in particular, boys' underachievement, leads to (what McDowell (2003) terms) 'ordinariness', being overlooked. Much of this appears to be associated with intense media interest in 'bad boys' and even though, as Ashley (2009, p. 181) points out, gender is a smaller risk factor than 'race' or class: 'it is boys to whom media often turn first for good stories'. At the same time as it can lead to the less dramatic, but nevertheless troubled, behavioural disorders exhibited by girls being missed, and to over-dramatizing, and an intensified regard for the behavioural problems that boys may present with.

Boys outnumber girls in diagnoses of ADHD by three to one, and this is the case in most neuropsychiatric conditions, but Cantwell (1996) notes a referral bias, whereby boys are more frequently referred than girls because of their aggressive behaviour, which takes the ratio of boys to girls within mental health clinics, or hospitals, to between six and nine to one. Girls are considered more likely to exhibit the characteristics of the less prevalent attention deficit disorder, which include sluggishness and anxiety, but because, by its nature, it does not involve hyperactivity, they may not be referred elsewhere, or may be misdiagnosed (Myttas 2001).

Whilst ADHD prevalence is increasing across the board, this prevalence is markedly higher among boys than girls and is noted as a worldwide phenomenon (Skounti et al. 2007). Also consistent across countries are the higher rates of prevalence where there is a clinical referral, going from a ratio of 3:1 to as much as 9:1, for example, in New South Wales, Australia (NSW Department of Health 2002). Skounti et al. 2007 suggest that variation between countries may be due to cultural factors, reflecting, as in relation to ethnicities, different levels of tolerance of hyperactive behaviour, but these are not gender specific. Indeed, reporting on ADHD

in Brazil, Rohde (2002) notes similarities in the male–female ratio, the prevalence of the combined type of ADHD, and the pattern of comorbid disorders with those reported in the United States. As O'Dowd (2012) points out, reflecting on Australian statistics, most of the studies of ADHD are biased towards males.

A major UK teachers union (Association of Teachers and Lecturers 2011) named boys' behaviour as still remaining more challenging than that of girls, but girls' behaviour becoming increasingly problematic over recent years. A survey conducted with its own teacher members also identified gender differences in the problem behaviour, noting the boys as exhibiting aggressive behaviour, which teachers experienced as more challenging. Girls, according to the teachers, undertook more subtle forms of disruption, but this was nevertheless still challenging, and the recent increases in forms of cyber-bullying using social media, which often spilled over into the classroom, had been most prevalent among girls.

Taking Boys Out

Department for Education figures, which cover England and which report 3020 suspensions and 40 expulsions of five-year-olds during 2010, show boys were three times more likely to be suspended than girls and four times more likely to be expelled (Department for Education 2011b). O'Regan (2010) notes that school exclusion impacts disproportionately on children with special educational needs, and although the relationship between ADHD, boys, and exclusion has been under-researched, Daniels and Porter (2007) suggest that rates of exclusion are higher among children with ADHD. The Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service (ADDISS) (2006) documented rates of 11% of exclusion among children with ADHD, over 10 times higher than the average in 2006. O'Regan suggests that the significantly lower proportion of girls than boys with ADHD being excluded may reflect an under-diagnosis of girls' ADHD rather than anything else. Being excluded from school has clear 'knock on effects' (CALM 2010) on educational attainment for the obvious reason that children who are not in school will be not participating in lessons (although they may well be learning).

At the same time as there have been concerns that insufficient attention is given to behavioural disorders in the discipline practices within schools, leading to children's physical exclusion, there has also been an intensification of regard for troubled boys and of practices that regulate space. These

practices are *inclusive* and, therefore, retain boys within the school, but mark them as both troubled and troublesome, either actually or potentially, and territorialize them as objects for special attention by specialist staff and for particular intervention programmes that may be gendered, or that at least try to take account of masculinity.

The Risks of Psy-Diagnosis

'Race', class, and gender heighten the risk of psy-diagnosis, while at the same time the very process of psy-diagnosis deflects attention from racialised, or gender discrimination, or poverty in the lives of children and young people. The orientation to psy-diagnosis of behavioural problems, both in discourse and practice, is itself dangerous, because it obscures other interpretations of children and their behaviour. It also detracts from considerations of what is best, educationally, for individual children, by forcing attention, instead, on how to *manage* the child (Harwood and Allan 2014). The alternative is to find ways of privileging pedagogy over pathology, to seek to change the conversation through public discourse and debate, and to help beginning teachers to engage more constructively with difference.

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CHAPTER 12

‘How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?’ Troubling the Psy-gaze in the Qualitative Analysis and Representation of Educational Subjects’

Matthew Wilson-Wheeler

Introduction

This chapter was borne from a conversation that I had with my doctoral thesis supervisors regarding the initial draft of the discourse analysis of an interview with one of the research participants, ‘Maria’. My dissertation aims to trouble hegemonic understandings of academic ‘(under)achievement’ by considering the complexity of the discourses that constitute primary school students’ academic subjectivities. Specifically, the project examines the conditions under which discursive power acts to make the ‘(under)achieving’ student possible, as well as the conditions under which the subject ‘takes up’ the available discourses of ‘(under)achievement’ as

‘The master, who at first appears to be “external” to the slave, reemerges as the slaves own’s conscience’ (Butler 1997, p. 3).

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2_12

their own, and moreover, how does the subject negotiate her/his positioning? To this end, in-depth interviews were conducted with a sample of students (and their parents/caregivers and classroom teachers) identified, according to a range of self-identified academic ability, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Discourse analysis of the data aimed, therefore, to examine students', parents'/guardians' and the teachers' experiences of academic '(under)achievement', and the ways in which these are 'shaped' by various social forces and, hence, to challenge current conceptualisations of academic '(under)achievement' as the 'way things are'. In other words, I wish to make the constitutive force of the discourse of academic '(under) achievement' visible by foregrounding and 'denaturalising' the effects of power at work in this discourse.

Of all the interviewees in my research project, Maria's 'life in process' continues to resonate with me long after the initial interview. What struck me particularly were the discursive possibilities (or lack thereof) that were made available to her and, moreover, how she negotiated her subject positioning. In my interview with Maria, her narrative suggested that she wasn't doing particularly well academically as illustrated in the following excerpt:

> *Maria:* …I'm a bit slow um and everyone else is a bit faster um …oh in reading like it might take a few minutes to sound a word or something. I'm not the fastest.
> *Matt:* Do you think that's a problem though?
> *Maria:* No, because you'll learn it one day.
> *Matt:* OK, are there any problems that you are having with any other aspects of your work?
> *Maria:* Ah, well maths is not the best.
> *Matt:* Why is 'maths not the best'?
> *Maria:* Oh because, because I'm in the lowest group and just that I'm a bit slower like I said.
> *Matt:* Do you enjoy reading or maths at all?
> *Maria:* No, not really. I probably actually like maths better than reading though. I hate reading and spelling.
> *Matt:* What is it that you don't like so much about spelling and reading?
> *Maria:* Well, I've never been good at it and so um it's just not my thing, I just don't like it.

My initial analysis of the interview with Maria was ostensibly aimed at examining the discourses, which were mobilized by Maria that constituted

her subjectivity as academically '(under)achieving'. It was apparent from the conversation with my supervisors, however, that despite my articulation of the poststructuralist underpinnings of the thesis, I had defaulted to 'psychologising' in my analysis; that is, I had uncritically engaged psychological knowledges to produce 'the' *real* story about Maria (where 'the' expresses the singularity and objectivity of the story that I aimed to produce). In other words, my own positionality in terms of how I engaged with Maria, the power relations between myself and her, and my take up of an individualising psychology to produce Maria's subjectivity, remained unchallenged. What follows is an explication of the epistemological issues that I have encountered 'representing' Maria (as a problem to be solved); and, in particular, my (ongoing) work towards engaging a critical reflexivity towards the normalising knowledges produced by the psy-gaze.

Producing Maria with/in the Psy-Gaze

As noted above, my supervisors raised their concerns after I had submitted my initial draft of an analysis chapter for review. They commented that I had used my psychologist's 'expert' gaze to produce a particular 'picture' of Maria as illustrated by the following excerpts from my draft analysis:

> Maria's narrative was peppered with phrases supporting her *perception* that she was not doing well academically.
>
> I was interested to know *how she had come to view herself* as someone who wasn't doing well academically.

My supervisors argued that I was searching for the 'truth' about Maria and had enlisted some psychological concepts and knowledges to accomplish my aim to produce Maria as a knowable subject. For example, my use of the term 'perception' defined as the 'interpretation of sensory information' (McInerney 2014, p. 114) is derived directly from Educational Psychological discourse. In the context of the analysis, my use of the term 'perception' and my desire 'to know how she had come to view herself' relies upon the humanist notion of a stable self, and constructs Maria as an individual who is independent from the social world. By drawing on my background in psychology (even now I teach an undergraduate course in educational psychology), I had taken up educational psychological discourse to observe (and produce) Maria's stable self in order to render her as a knowable individual. In doing so, my supervisors argued that I

had positioned myself as 'expert' with the power to 'know' others. I was attempting to make sense of Maria's narrative by mobilising my 'expert' psy-gaze and knowledges, which was contrary to my stated goal of being 'epistemically responsible' (Code 1987).

Erica Burman's (1994) comments in her introduction to *Deconstructing Developmental Psychology* resonate where she acknowledges her own 'multiple and contradictory' subject positioning within psychological discourses and, in particular, the power that developmental psychological discourses have upon her subjectivity. She does so:

not, or not only, to engage in the confessional mode of expression conventionally adopted within an 'Introduction', but to emphasise that I, as author am as subject to the power of the discourses developmental psychology produces and reproduces as the putative children and families I discuss in this book (Burman 1994, p. 8).

Notwithstanding my own 'confessional' narrative (see below) I too have been subject to psychology's discursive power as a consequence of my own taking up of psychological discourses, which have proven to be particularly challenging to resist and exceed. By drawing on my own 'psy-knowledges' I was in the words of Rose (1989) claiming:

'a particular expertise in the disciplining of the uniqueness and idiosyncracies of childhood, individualising children by categorizing them, calibrating their aptitudes, inscribing their peculiarities in an ordered form, managing their variability conceptually, and governing it practically' (p. 132).

In poststructuralist terms, it might be argued that I had become discursively constituted through my take up of educational psychological discourses, and consequently mobilised these discourses as 'authoritative statements' in my interview and analysis, and by doing so, had 'discursively construct(ed) the boundaries' of what I had considered to be 'intelligible' (Parkes et al. 2010). It is also interesting to consider Petersen and Millei's (2015) contention that to varying degrees, we are all caught up with/under the psy-gaze. For example, within the context of Initial Teacher Education, they suggest that such is the discursive power of the psy-disciplinary gaze that both students and lecturers alike 'are actively produced by the discourses that are upheld as relevant and authoritative' (p. 142).

I am mindful, however, that a concern of poststructuralism is the way in which speakers are constantly negotiating and renegotiating their subject positions within a range of different and, at times, 'competing discourses'

within their specific historical, cultural, or social context (Baxter 2002, p. 829). For Foucault, it is through the operation of power in this discursive exchange that the subject is constructed (Foucault 1980). Foucault outlined his propositions about power in *History of Sexuality Volume 1* Foucault (1980), and argued that power is not simply wielded by groups or institutions over passive individuals, but rather, people are differentially positioned within networks of power. It should be noted that Foucault himself claimed that the primary goal of his work was to illuminate the process by which 'human beings are made subjects'. This entailed not analysing 'the phenomena of power [as such], nor to elaborate the foundations of such an analysis. My objective instead, has been to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects…' (Foucault 1983, p. 208). Consistent with Foucault's theorising, poststructuralist writers, such as Valerie Walkerdine have argued that individuals are not autonomous 'subjects' but are 'produced' as 'a nexus of contradictory subjectivities' and, therefore, it becomes possible for speakers to become multiply positioned within constantly changing relations of power (Walkerdine 1990, p. 3).

Power, therefore, in Foucault's conceptualisation is a verb rather than a noun. Institutions do not possess power, as such, but the people within them enact power relations. Hence, a particularly important aspect of Foucault's conceptualisation of power is the way in which it is exercised, that is, the 'how' of power (Foucault 1994). In Foucault's words:

To approach the theme of power by an analysis of 'how' is therefore to introduce several critical shifts in relation to the supposition of a fundamental power. It is to give oneself as the object of *power relations* and not power itself—power relations that are distinct from objective capacities as well as from relations of communication, power relations that can be grasped in the diversity of their linkages to these capacities and relations (Foucault 1994, p. 339).

Foucault applied this conceptualisation of power to gain an understanding of disciplinary institutions and practices and the roles that they play in the constitution of subjectivities. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977), Foucault examines the changes in disciplinary practices of prisons in eighteenth and nineteenth century France, and charts the shift from torture and public execution to the development of more 'humane' methods of incarceration and techniques of surveillance designed to regulate criminal behaviour (such as Jeremy Bentham's panopticon) and the production of 'docile bodies' that 'may be subjected, used, transformed

and improved' (p. 136). It is noteworthy that Foucault did not view these changes as necessarily being indicative of a more 'humane' penal system, rather, he saw them as resulting from the adoption of the new rationalities for understanding criminality that were emerging during the industrialisation of Europe. For Foucault:

What was at issue was not whether the prison environment was too harsh or too aseptic, too primitive or too efficient, but its very materiality as an instrument as a vector of power; it is this whole technology of power over the body that the technology of the 'soul'—that of the educationalists, psychologists and psychiatrists—fails either to conceal or to compensate, for the simple reason that it is one of its tools (Foucault 1977, p. 36).

This is significant in Foucault's conceptualisation of 'power-knowledge relations'. Rather than viewing knowledge as necessarily making people powerful, Foucault argues that knowledge produces particular kinds of people, that 'power produces knowledge' by constituting subjectivities (Foucault 1977, p. 27). For Foucault, it is through the operation of competing discourses within these power relations that the subject is constructed. Arguably, my subjectivity, at least in the initial stages of the analysis, was constituted by psychological discourses, despite my engagement with, and articulation of, the poststructural underpinnings of the thesis. I was subject to the very discourses which I wished to resist and exceed. The effects of which were to produce a particular set of psychological knowledges about educational discourse. In the context of this analysis, I mobilised the power of the psy-gaze to individualise Maria as a case to be studied. In other words I had presupposed the inevitability of Maria's 'condition' of academic 'underachievement' and had set about establishing a 'case' to substantiate my 'truth claims'.

Producing Maria's 'Case'

Burman (1994) notes that the 'psychology of the individual' emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Western Europe out of the need to control and regulate the growing concern regarding the 'feebleminded' and concomitant 'delinquency' amongst the population. An 'individual psychology' provided the means with which to classify and monitor these potentially 'unstable and unruly' social elements and, hence, to address the social 'anxieties' created by these elements in the middle classes (Burman 1994). The emergence of the 'psychological individual' enabled individual 'mental qualities and development' to be compared

with those of the general population and provided the means with which to divide 'the mad from the sane, the criminal from the unlawful and educable from the ineducable' (p. 14). Consequently, the 'psychological individual' became the focus of the prison, the psychiatric hospital, and the school, and became the forerunner of a developmental psychology, which has become the chief means for the standardisation and normalisation of child development. According to Rose (1989) developmental psychology:

> was made possible by the clinic and the nursery school. Such institutions had a vital role, for they enabled the observation of numbers of children of the same age, and of children of different ages, by skilled psychological experts under controlled, experimental, almost laboratory conditions. They thus simultaneously allowed for standardization and normalisation—the collection of comparable information on a large number of subjects and its analysis in such a way as to construct norms. A developmental norm was a standard based upon the average abilities or performances of children of a certain age on a particular task or a specified activity. It thus not only presented a picture of what was *normal* for children of such an age, but also enabled the normality of any child to be assessed by comparison with this norm (Rose 1989, p. 142).

Burman (1994) critically examines how the normative discourses associated with modern developmental psychology, not only detaches 'the child' from her/his socio-political and historical context, but also how homogenised descriptions of child development pathologise children (both individually and collectively) who do not 'fit' with normative accounts of 'the child'. The normalisation of child development was enabled by the concept of 'mental age', which underpinned the notion of IQ testing and the scrutiny of children's psychological development within the medical gaze (Burman 1994). Burman (1994) notes that the comparison, regulation, and control of children are closely associated with modernity and subscribes to a particular 'gendered model of scientific practice'. Such practice, psychology as science, has contributed 'to the conditions which produce taken-for-granted practices which in turn produce taken-for-granted facts' (Laws and Davies 2000, p. 207). Walkerdine (1990) notes that the development of modern psychology and the study of child development, in particular, are also 'central to the modern "truth" about pedagogy. It seems central to modern regulation practices. The "facts of child development" form the bedrock of modern pedagogy, and the teacher must know them' (p. 68). This taken-for-grantedness is evident in my subject positioning as the 'expert' knower.

Having positioned myself as expert in the analysis, I duly mobilised psychological discourses to produce Maria's biography. According to Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) the introduction of the 'biographical' was important in the history of penalty because it 'establishes the "criminal" as existing before the commission of a crime and even outside it' (p. 252). This required that the life of the prisoner be examined from top to bottom so that not only the circumstances, but also the causes of the crime could be taken into account in order to arrive at an appropriate penalty. Similarly, by producing a biographical account of Maria's 'true story', it becomes possible to establish who Maria 'really' is, as a pre-existing subject, before discourse 'works on her' and the causes of her 'underachievement' in order to be able to provide a cure.

For example, in response to her teacher's comments about Maria's 'non-compliance' I had stated:

> By attributing Maria's poor academic performance and 'non-compliant' behaviour to Maria's apparent inability to 'make good choices', the teacher abrogates her responsibility to do the 'emotional labour' of establishing and maintaining a supportive relationship with Maria that might have mitigated against the difficulties that Maria was experiencing.

Here again, I default to the psychologists gaze and disciplinary power-knowledge to 'diagnose' Maria's 'non-compliant' behaviour and to find a solution. Far from troubling my own implicatedness in the production of Maria's *self,* I was exercising my discursive power to position my *self* as the 'expert knower'. Such comments prompted one of my supervisors to respond:

> OMG! Remember, what are the effects—we are not looking for causes or making guesses who thinks what!!!!

Rather than examining the effects of Maria's multiple positionings I was attempting to build a picture of Maria by using the psychological knowledges that governed my understanding. As such, I went about constructing an 'expert' view of Maria to establish Maria's 'case' by collecting multiple data sources in order to enable her to be 'described, judged, measured (and) compared with others' (Foucault 1977, p. 191). Specifically, I borrowed the voices of her teacher and mother to triangulate who Maria 'really' was for me rather than focusing my attention on the discourses she mobilised, and the way in which she negotiated these, and how others—including myself—were doing the same. For example, the following are excerpts taken from my draft analysis:

It is interesting to note however that according to her mother, Maria compared herself academically with her social group.

> Sue: …and the other thing I tend to notice with her too is her *peers* (emphasis added) are of the same um level too like she feels better, she's actually made comments that um two of her friends are dumber than her and that makes her … I think that is why she um chooses them as friends you know that's really sad too when you think if that's how you're going to rate yourself in society right through life.

Maria's comment that she has two friends that are 'dumber' than her may also be read as another strategy that Maria employs to negotiate her reflexive positioning vis-a-vis her peer group.

AND

Being mindful of the poststructuralist premise that the subject can only take up subject positions that are made available to them, my attention was drawn to her teacher who explained Maria's academic performance:

> Teacher: Only because she doesn't *choose* to do well. She's off on another wee planet…..she just *chooses* not to think that she can do it (emphasis added). Maria will just not even try and put the effort in like doing Maths and she will be looking up at other things.

Maria's apparent failure to achieve what might be considered to be normative conceptions of success at school was seen as being her fault simply because she didn't 'apply herself'.

These comments prompted one of my supervisors to comment in her written feedback:

> I am worried, Matt, that you invoke the psychologist positioning in this chapter by presenting Maria's data first, and then as 'cross-examined' you present others' ideas about her. It is as if you were searching for the truth about Maria, or trying to defend her (as you express in your contested expert positioning), rather than on focusing on the ways in which she negotiates discourses and how others (including yourself) mobilise discourses in discussions with her.

My attempt to produce Maria's 'case' by triangulating her teacher's and mother's stories about her, overlooked that this had nothing to do with how Maria positioned herself, nor addressed the ways in which she negotiated the discourses, which positioned her as academically 'under-achieving'. Rather, my desire to 'know' Maria was privileged without any consideration of my implicatedness in the production of this knowledge. I had, again, adhered to my position of expert 'knower' to understand who Maria 'really' was. I was, in the words of Skeggs (1997) 'a part of the disciplinary practices that engendered my desires for control through knowledge' (p. 31).

The Problem of Knowledge and Self-Knowledge

Given the claim of poststructuralism to 'reject the possibility of arriving at a "truth" about the essence of a phenomenon' (Sondergaard 2002, p. 188), it is necessary to mobilise a methodological approach that allows the possibility of 'truth claims' to be made while taking into account the 'crisis of representation'. Citing Derrida, Sondergaard (2002) states that the poststructuralist emphasis of the signifier over the signified means that 'truth claims become very interesting to study, not for their assumed reflection of reality but with Foucault for their production of social and cultural effects and thereby for their inductions of regular effects of power' (p. 188). One approach that may be used to examine the effects of discursive power (and the approach which I outlined in the theoretical framework for my research project) is to examine the inclusive and exclusive discursive processes whereby categories are constituted. As such, I utilised discourse analysis to foreground the constituting processes with the aim of making these processes explicit, and to challenge and destabilise discourses and practices of academic '(under)achievement'. Consistent with the poststructuralist theorisation of my approach I stated in the theoretical framework that:

Text is not a representation of reality which, therefore, brings into question the authority of the researcher to represent the lives of others (Choi 2006). As such, it is the responsibility of the researcher to make his/her readers aware that the text is 'a site of political struggle over the real and its meanings' (Choi 2006, p. 441). This requires reflexive engagement with the text to cast light upon the crisis of representation, as well as illuminating the operation of discursive power. While I certainly don't make claim to solve the 'crisis of representation' in this thesis, I wish, at the very least,

to trouble claims to represent the realities of others by reflexively foregrounding my epistemological assumptions and political beliefs that guide the research process and, in particular, as they apply to the deconstruction of power relations between myself and the research participants, as well as the implications that this positioning has for my analysis and interpretation (and reinterpretation) of the data.

Despite my stated aim, as noted above, my initial attempts at discourse analysis invoked psychologising discourses in which I had attempted to represent 'Maria' from the position of expert with no acknowledgement of the power relations between myself and 'Maria'. Consequently, in order to atone for my lack of reflexive insight I confessed that:

My personal location in the research initially was simply articulated as a researcher who happened to have previously taught at the school with no acknowledgement of the implications that this may have had for the power relations between myself and the student research participants (including 'Maria').

For Foucault, the confession is a form of truth telling, a technique that constitutes the self. Indeed, Foucault asked 'How did it come about that all of Western culture began to revolve around this obligation of truth…'? (Foucault 1997, p. 281). As such, his work sought to analyse how in Western culture so called 'truth games' in the social sciences, including the psy-disciplines (including psychiatrists, psychologists, psychoanalysts and counsellors etc.), developed technologies (such as speaking, listening, recording, and transcribing) for individuals to understand their own selves. In this context, my confessional narrative, a culturally circumscribed performance, could be regarded as an attempt to transform or to 'constitute, positively, a new (reflexive) self' (Foucault 1988, p. 19).

It is clear, however, that I had not considered power relations, let alone my implicatedness in this positioning. It may be the case that I was simply playing a 'truth game' in which I was abiding with my supervisors' requests to address the power relations between myself and the research participants. For example, as 'evidence' of my reflexive sincerity I stated:

> It should be noted that the articulation of my positioning is neither a confession, nor an attempt to 'come clean', but rather to situate my own story as a beginning researcher alongside the stories of those who participated in the study. Moreover, I am mindful that power relations between researcher and research participants cannot simply be reduced to an effect of social categories.

Not to be outdone, as further evidence of sincerity I took my newfound reflexive stance to an evangelical level by positioning myself along the hero storyline. In commenting on Maria's teacher's use of deficit theorising to explain Maria's academic performance I state:

> Although the teacher's comments regarding Maria's performance could be regarded as deficit, arguably it may be more acceptable to explain her achievement in terms of effort rather than ability. It is at this point that I begin to have difficulty with the dialogue between myself and the teacher. To what extent am I being told what I might be expected to *want* to hear? What is interesting is that I had preconceptions of the students telling me what I wanted to hear, but had not anticipated being told what I wanted to hear from an adult (let alone a former colleague!). I had taken for granted the differences in power relations between myself and students as well it would seem between myself and the adult research participants!

My lack of humility notwithstanding, and with no attempt to acknowledge my implicatedness (I'm not sure why I thought that anyone would care that I was a so called researcher now?), once again, my expert positioning remains invisible and unchallenged vis-a-vis the comments about 'what I wanted to hear'. I attempt to get myself 'off the hook' regarding differential power relations between the research participants and myself by simply confessing that I had taken these for granted. As Skeggs (2002) notes, in order to reflexively challenge power relations, it is necessary for a shift to be made from 'telling and confession to practice and positioning' (p. 369). Moreover,

> These practices display not so much a particular form of (self) consciousness or interiority, but the cultural resources and social positions on which the person/researcher can draw and by which they are located. It is, therefore, a matter of positioning and access to the means of telling. It is also about the ability to be heard (p. 352).

Arguably, my attempts to find my reflexive voice as a beginning researcher were derailed, in part, due to my adherence to an expert positioning through the mobilisation of psychological discourses, as well as to my failure to make the operation of these powerful discourses visible, and in particular, to examine how these discourses have created relations of power between myself and the research participants. Fox and Allan's (2014) article resonates where, in discussing reflexivity in the context of

the fraught journey of the doctoral process as one of 'unbecoming and becoming' (p. 101), the doctoral student states that at the beginning of her doctoral study: 'I was comfortable with what I thought I "knew" and as Drake (2010) suggested I probably knew what I expected to find' (p. 105). Similarly, I felt comfortable with my psychological knowledge which I had duly mobilised to substantiate my 'truth claims'.

It should also be noted that in the context of this research project (in which the students I interviewed are subject to the normative practices and discourses of academic 'achievement'), as a beginning researcher I, too, am subject to the 'discursive rationalities' (Petersen and O'Flynn 2007) of the institutional practices and discourses of the academy and academic knowledge that work to constitute my academic subjectivities. For example, my candidacy as a doctoral student is regulated 'through mechanisms such as confirmation of candidature, milestone reporting, annual reports and the incorporation of timely completion rates in academic workload agreements and measures of research activity' (Bansel 2011, p. 548). It is interesting to consider Bansel's (2011) account of his doctoral experience in which he contests and resists 'the neoliberal technologies of audit and accountability through which academic subjectivity is constituted, regulated and ascribed value' (p. 544) and frames doctoral study as an 'embodied and performative academic labour' (p. 543). As such, he argues for an 'ambivalent' resistance to the neoliberal indices of knowledge production and for the process of knowledge production and the lived experience of doctoral study to be recognised as a 'complex, messy and not-always-rational process' (p. 554).

Epistemology Reconsidered

As noted above, my doctoral dissertation is located within poststructuralist theory. My encounter with poststructuralism has not only provided a theoretical framework from which I am able to critically examine the tools which might be used to explore social reality, but it has had a profound impact on my epistemological beliefs as a beginning researcher. On a personal level, as I have engaged with poststructural theorising and its paradigmatic critique, I have come to better understand that the way in which I had previously tried to make sense of social reality was very much informed by a positivist paradigm. For example, my Masters dissertation utilized a quantitative methodology employing survey research and statistical analysis in which I had made the assumption that the data 'were' a

reflection of 'reality'. In the spirit of poststructuralist enquiry, my desire to undertake a doctoral thesis, therefore, is to not only trouble the taken-for-grantedness of academic 'underachievement' discourses, and to highlight the instability of meaning and the productive possibilities of language, but to also highlight the instability in the production of personhood.

It follows that a poststructural methodology necessarily requires 'other ways of thinking about our research' (St Pierre and Pillow 1999, p. 11). For example, Stronach and MacLure (1997) argue that a poststructural methodology needs to abandon the 'myths' of 'representational clarity' and the emancipatory discourses of the Enlightenment in favour of a methodology that attempts to 'rupture' and disrupt the so-called 'epistemologies of certainty' by embracing a practice of 'strategic uncertainty'. Significantly, they also argue for a practice of uncertainty on political grounds, as well as on the basis that educational research that addresses complex issues in education is better placed to inform policy rather than trying to 'deliver simple truths' which 'amount to a surrender to populist rhetoric about education' (Stronach & MacLure, p. 6). Similarly, Scheman (1993) has cautioned researchers against obsessively preoccupying themselves with accurate representation, and rather, should focus on opening up access to institutional spaces. However, Skeggs (1997) doesn't view these activities as necessarily being mutually exclusive. For example, in her study examining the complex ways in which gender and class intersect in the constitution of subjectivities of working class women to achieve 'respectability' she argues that:

The representational challenges to the pathologizing of working-class women (Black and White) in which their experiences are seen to make a contribution to, rather than detract from, feminist theory may ultimately enable their access to institutional spaces (Skeggs 1997, p. 21).

She adds that:

For categories, representations and explanations to work they have to contain explanatory power in relation to the subjects/objects that they are designed to represent. Representations are not completely arbitrary. They may reveal something about their producers (as in the case of femininity being a projected male fantasy) but they also have to represent something about the experiences to which they lay claim. This is why so many representations are inapplicable to White working-class women: they cannot explain the specificity of their lives (Skeggs 1997, p. 21).

For example, Skeggs (1997) cites the application of 'femininity' to all women as a misuse of a 'historically specific representation' (p. 21).

Consequently, feminist theory has sought to trouble the historic situatedness of 'femininity' by interrogating the experiences of different groups of women at different historical junctures in relation to the operation of power (Skeggs 1997).

Consistent with poststructuralist theorising therefore I had articulated in the theoretical framework of my dissertation my aim to:

trouble claims to represent the realities of others by reflexively foregrounding my epistemological assumptions and political beliefs that guide the research process and in particular as they apply to the deconstruction of power relations between myself and the research participants as well as the implications that this positioning has for my analysis and interpretation (and reinterpretation) of the data.

As seen above, however, as well intended as my aim was in terms of demonstrating my 'epistemic responsibility' (Code 1987), my subsequent attempt at analysis contradicted this intention as I had not fully considered my own implicatedness in what was produced.

Conclusion

It is from this vantage point that I have reflected upon my positioning and my struggle regarding a poststructuralist endeavour. I am cognisant that rather than engaging in a form of poststructuralist reflexivity that was asked of me by my supervisors, they received, instead, a psychologising self. It is interesting to reflect upon my stated positioning in the Methodology of my dissertation where I acknowledge the complexity of the interaction between power, knowledge, and subjectivity, and the poststructuralist imperative to trouble previously held epistemologies. Clearly, although I had given 'lip service' to the potential issues attending my previously held 'epistemological assumptions', I had failed to address to my own 'implicatedness' in terms of my multiple positionings and my subjection to psychological discourse/s, as is evident in the ways in which I have participated in interviews and during my practice of representation. In that context, it is interesting to consider how the psychological expert positioning has lent itself to me: to provide me with a footing, a sense of place, academic legitimacy, and a particular confident version of all-knowing competence. However, my subjection to psychological discourse remained unacknowledged and, hence, unchallenged. As Butler (1997) notes 'As a form of power, subjection is paradoxical' in that one is dependent/subjected on a discourse while at the same time this subjection

'initiates and sustains our agency' (p. 2). I had 'taken up' psychological discourses without realizing the possibility of gaining agency to 'speak/write meaningfully and convincingly beyond the terms of my subjection' (Laws and Davies 2000, p. 206).

I am also cognisant that my positionalities, in terms of why I have undertaken the research and how I interacted with the research participants (including Maria), cannot be separate from the data which I collected and analysed 'as the complexity of the movement and intersections amongst knowledge, power and subjectivity require the researcher to survey life from within itself' (Davies 2004, p. 5). To invoke Herman Melvilles' (cited in Deleuze 1992) fishing line analogy, in order to comprehend the complexity of the interaction between knowledge, power, and subjectivity, it is necessary for the researcher to position her/himself on the 'lines of force that make up social apparatus'. That is, in order to disentangle the lines of force that make sense of what a subject describes, the researcher has to be 'located in and on' those lines (Davies 2004, p. 5).

As noted in the theoretical framework of my dissertation, however, the way one thinks about his/herself shifts in response to the shift in discursive context, and each 'possible' self may be contradictory to another 'possible' self located in a different storyline. Skeggs (1997) notes that the 'positioning process is not without contradiction' as our positioning as researchers is informed by a myriad of factors, including history, disciplinary practices, and dominant paradigms. As a consequence 'these positionings impact upon what research we do, when and how we do it' (p. 18). Significantly, she adds, however, that there is 'no straightforward correspondence between our circumstances and how we think: we are positioned in but not determined by our locations' (p. 18). Accordingly, who I am and how I choose to ground myself epistemologically is dependent upon the positions and discursive practices which I take up and, indeed 'within those practices, the stories through which [I] make sense of [my] own and others lives' (Davies and Harre 1999, p. 15).

In view of the above, therefore, and consistent with the 'poststructural thesis of the knower's implicatedness, multiple and shifting subjectivities, and the negotiated and situationally contingent nature of stories' (Choi 2006, p. 437) I believe that my continuing engagement with my own positioning and subjectivity, along with a commitment to challenging the 'taken-for-granted' discourses attending academic '(under)achievement' (such as 'laziness', 'lack of motivation' and 'lack of self-control') opens up the possibility of critical representation and destabilisation. In particular,

it becomes possible to examine, and to trouble, how is it possible to speak the 'underachieving' student into existence and to relate these discourses to the reality of being constituted as 'underachieving'. Hence, rather than try to 'solve a problem like Maria' through the psy-gaze by finding the 'truth' about academic 'underachievement' in order to provide a 'cure', my desire to be 'epistemically responsible' is now to attend to the contradictions in my positionings, and to recognise my implicatedness in the way in which I 'know' my research subjects.

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E. Bendix Petersen, Z. Millei (eds.), *Interrupting the Psy-Disciplines in Education*, DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51305-2