

SOUNDINGS PART 2

Emotional Manifesto

INTRODUCTION

This second special *Soundings* issue on the theme of emotions is a testimony to the interest and debate fuelled by the first special issue published in Spring 1999. The original idea came as a result of the debate in the 1990s about care and its invisible function in propping up a failing welfare state. We were coming to the end of the nightmare Thatcher years and we were hopeful that things could only get better under New Labour. Our issue on emotional labour looked particularly at the relationship between emotions and care, using Arlie Hochschild's analysis of emotional labour in the service sector. Her description of how flight attendants and debt collectors managed their emotions to influence the feelings of others showed the commercial power of emotional labour in extracting profits from passengers and payment from debtors. She also described the importance of gender in defining the nature of emotional labour both in the work place and in the home, concluding that because it is traditionally associated with women's work it often remains invisible, unrecognised and undervalued.

Hochschild also tested her emotional labour analysis within the domestic sphere, finding that, despite the rhetoric of gender equality, working women in two-job couples with children were still the main carers when it came to child and home care.

Why is emotional labour so compelling a concept? We concluded that the great power of Arlie Hochschild's analysis was that, at a time when service-sector and people-orientated work is replacing heavy and manufacturing industries, she has provided a language through which to describe the nature of relationship work, whether paid or unpaid, public or private (and frequently-taken-for-granted).

In the Spring 1999 issue we used the language of emotional labour to track these issues in looking at the changing contexts and cultures of care in eastern and western Europe, and in trying to understand how immigrant communities managed the emotional as well as the territorial boundaries between home and host country. An emotional labour logbook tracked a range of emotional labourers - pilots, politicians, air traffic controllers, ambulance crews, actors

and nurses. The contract culture, particularly in the public sector, was on the ascendant, and set a harsh and demanding emotional tone, which resulted in deteriorating work conditions, low pay and fragmented work processes. Elsewhere we looked at the politics of emotions, detecting in the ideology and language of the 'Third Way' a number of contradictions and tensions: between care and control; liberalism and equality of opportunity; capitalist economics and socialist politics. It was argued that marketised and spin-doctored emotions should be replaced with the construction of emotional democracy. The final piece examined the learning required to prepare nurses to acquire the skills to manage their emotions in complex caring situations.

The interest and debate generated by the first issue led to the organisation of two conferences and workshops to explore the theoretical and practical dimensions of emotion work, and to examine the political and policy implications. In this second collection of writing from these debates, Steve Smith charts our collective journey in his *Manifesto for Feelings*; an important point in this journey was Arlie Hochschild's public lecture post 11 September, in which she talked about *Emotion Management in an Age of Global Terrorism*, which we also publish here. Arlie introduced the notion of the *emotional regimes* which have been opened up and laid bare by 11 September. She further suggests that these *emotional regimes* or *regimes of emotion* (the title chosen for this special issue) set out feeling rules, which in turn are part of a set of framing rules for how we should both see and feel reality. These regimes, Arlie says, require us to do emotion work in trying to live up to them.

In this issue we have extended our examination of emotional labour and begun to explore the notion of emotional regimes. Two articles, by Fiona Douglas and Maria Lorentzon respectively, juxtapose employment and unemployment, in looking at the work of careers counsellors during the 1970s, when full employment was the norm, and, contrastingly, the hopelessness of the unemployment which dominated the 1980s and early 1990s. Unemployment is again becoming an issue - especially in the airline and associated industries. Perhaps the catastrophe of the twin towers has been used as a convenient smoke screen to hide the fact there was already a serious downturn in the economy prior to the events of 11 September.

Articles by Gay Lee on cancer nursing, Del Loewenthal on involvement, and David Newbold on the links between emotions, therapeutic nursing and

economics, re-examine the usefulness of emotional labour for understanding the complexities of care. As a practitioner, Gay has some reservations as to whether emotional labour is useful or whether it is merely a fascinating idea. As an academic, Del is concerned to use emotional labour alongside his data to critically reflect on nurses' involvement with patients, and the individual costs and benefits of institutional life and socialisation processes. David sees a paradigm clash between health technology and emotional labour, and explores the potential of economics to provide the link between the two by identifying the therapeutic contribution of nursing.

Bridget Towers discusses the disappearance of convalescence, and with it the caring context that enables the definition of illness and recovery. Hochschild's classifications of 'cold-modern' care and 'systematic neglect' appropriately describe this phenomenon.

Stuart Nairn's descriptions of heroism and horror in narrating emergency takes on a new significance post 11 September. In recent months it has become fashionable to abbreviate the date to '911', the emergency telephone number in the USA.

Rick Rattue and Nelarine Cornelius re-examine the gender dimension of emotional labour in focusing on front-line male-dominated police work. Officers try not to let emotions get in the way of their work, but at the same time they develop ways of looking after each other when 'off the beat'. The ways in which they do this are not always beneficial, and Rick and Nelarine argue that the concept of emotional labour could be a really useful tool of analysis for improving a number of crucial aspects of police work - both for the police themselves and for the public.

Under some regimes, however, the police may be implicated in creating a sense of threat and uncertainty among refugees, and in some instances they may actually be the torturers. Some of the emotional regimes experienced by refugees are described by Ian Robbins, who works as a clinical psychologist in the Traumatic Stress clinic of an NHS hospital. The article is illustrative of the bleak prospects for refugees who come to Britain alone, without the emotional safety nets created by family and friends.

Finally Marjorie Mayo, Trudi James and Pam Smith explore the emotional labour associated with the changing face of regeneration in the Broadwater Farm Estate, Tottenham. The authors comment on a portfolio of photographs and

newspaper clippings, which evoke a range of powerful emotions - from rural harmony in the late nineteenth century, to the riot-torn community of the 1980s, and finally the transformation of the estate into a 'happy and secure' place.

We have been mindful in both *Soundings* special issues of the importance of the pictorial and poetic representation of emotional labour. Our cover picture conveys the intensity of the emergency - in this case experienced by a young St John's ambulance volunteer. The four images of nurses included in the issue update Dympna Casey's photo-essay in the earlier collection. These are images of nurses engaged in the extremes of high-tech and hands-on care, with babies, an older person and a cardiac monitor. They aptly convey the messages contained in the articles by Gay, Del and David about involvement, and emotional and technical labour in the delivery of patient care.

Although care- and people-work continue to be central to the emotional labour debate, new and urgent issues have emerged since the last issue in spring 1999. Emotional labour has taken on a new meaning, and the debates have been expanded. We have tried to address some of these issues here: global terrorism and the management of our responses to it; the managing of emergencies more widely; the refugee experience; and regeneration and urban renewal. As Stephen Smith argues in his article in this issue, in an age when our emotions are increasingly managed for us, there is acute danger in *not* trying to produce a democratic manifesto for the emotions - there will always be others only too willing to step in to fill the gap.