

9 Emotions In/and Knowing

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on how emotions matter in our knowing processes. It is rooted in a two-decade-long research program where we have explored interconnections between relationality, reflexivity, and inter-subjectivity in knowledge construction processes at intertwined levels of nitty-gritty methodological processes and epistemological conceptualization (e.g., Mauthner and Doucet 1998, 2003, **forthcoming**); Doucet and Mauthner 2002, 2006, 2008). Across several cross-cultural qualitative research projects, we have been grappling with emotions: our own, those of our research respondents, and those that reverberate through our fieldwork practices and epistemological thinking. Building from the perspective promulgated in this book that emotions matter, our argument is that they matter profoundly in knowledge construction processes. More specifically, we centre this piece around two questions. First, how can we bring emotions into our methodological practices? Second, how do we do this without veering into what Bourdieu terms ‘narcissistic reflexivity’?

Our chapter is structured into three sections. We begin with a brief background on our theoretical approach to emotions in research, while also providing some detail on how emotions have been taken up in qualitative research practice. We then explore selected ways of working with emotions in research practice. Finally, we address the issue of if, and where, a sustained attention to emotions in research leads to ‘narcissistic reflexivity.’

Background and Definitions

Our reflections on emotions draw on cross-disciplinary influences, including anthropology, sociology, philosophy, geography, and psycho-social studies. In brief, we maintain that emotions in research are embodied (Rosaldo 1980; Holland 2007; Denzin 1984), involve issues of judgment and rational thought (see Nussbaum 2001), and are eminently relational, thus constituting 'embodied, interdependent human existence' (Burkitt 1997:42; Davidson, Smith, and Bondi 2005; Davidson and Smith, this volume). We also posit a strong link between epistemology and emotions, which is grounded in a view that emotion constitutes a way of knowing our social worlds (Game 1997). Furthermore, our particular focus on narrative analysis in research draws together the issue of knowing others and their stories through empathetic connection (Nussbaum 1990). Finally, we draw on British geographer Liz Bondi's work on emotional geographies and her argument that knowledge construction involves attending to the emotional connections between researchers and their research subjects (Bondi 2005; Knowles 2006; Holland 2007; Davidson and Smith, this volume). We agree with Bondi (2005) that emotions are inter-subjective, rather than intra-subjective, and should 'be approached not as an object of study but as a relational, connective medium in which research, researchers and research subjects are necessarily immersed' (433; see also Hollway 2008a, b).¹

As detailed throughout this book, the field of the sociology of emotions has burgeoned in the past decade; its articulation within the more specific field of qualitative methodologies has also received much attention for several decades, especially by feminist researchers. Much of this attention, however, has focused on emotions during fieldwork or data collection. One of the most well-recognized instigators of this long conversation is Anne Oakley's (1981) classic article published nearly 30 years ago on woman-to-woman interviewing and the importance of establishing good rapport and good emotional relations with research respondents.

Challenging the masculine assumptions of 'proper interviews' that dominated the sociological textbooks of the time, Oakley (1981) suggested that contrary to an objective, standardized, and detached approach to interviewing, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing was 'best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship' (41).

Drawing on her interviews with mothers, she maintained that her own identity as a mother came to act as a leveller against a power hierarchy in the interviewee-interviewer relationship: 'Where both share the same gender socialization and critical life-experiences, social distance can be minimal' (55; see also Finch 1984; Rheinharz 1992). Although Oakley did not explicitly use the term *emotions* in her work, the tenor of what she was expressing relates explicitly to how particular types of methods promote emotional connections and conversely enhance a research relationship where 'social distance can be minimal.'

While Oakley's work was celebrated and embraced by many feminist researchers, her argument about connectivity and shared emotions on the basis of gender soon came to be viewed as overly naïve and essentialist. A decade later, such perspectives were being criticized and deconstructed by many feminist researchers who argued that emotional connections in research relations are also fraught with inevitable relational distances and barriers between researchers and the researched. Sociologists were particularly vocal on this issue of the potential dangers associated with trying to be 'friendly' in interviews. Pamela Cotterill (1992), for example, drew attention to the 'potentially damaging effects of a research technique which encourages friendship in order to focus on very private and personal aspects of people's lives' (597; see also Stacey 1991). Ironically, in what could be seen as a 360-degree turn, many feminist researchers began to note that striving for greater emotional connection did not always have straightforwardly positive results. As noted more recently by Gesa Kirsch (2005): 'It is perhaps ironic, then, that scholars are discovering that methodological changes intended to achieve feminist ends – increased collaboration, greater interaction, and more open communication with research participants – may have inadvertently reintroduced some of the ethical dilemmas feminist researchers had hoped to eliminate: participants' sense of disappointment, alienation, and potential exploitation' (2163).

Along with these discussions on how emotions should be invested in research, researchers have simultaneously recognized the potential dangers of such investments, and developed other lines of investigation on the subject of emotions in fieldwork. For example, there is a large body of research on the emotional exhaustion of fieldwork (Wolf 1996; Hubbard, Backett-Milburn, and Kemmer 2001) as well as on managing one's own emotions in interviews and/or fieldwork (Chong 2008; Coffey 1999; Kleinman and Copp 1993). In relation to the

latter, researchers have pointed to how they have engaged in 'emotion management,' which Karen Ramsay (1996) called 'learn(ing) not to cry or laugh in the field,' and which Hochschild (1983, 1998) termed, more widely, 'surface' and 'deep acting.'

Perhaps the most extensive treatment of this issue is found in Kleinman and Copp's (1993) aptly titled *Emotions and Fieldwork*. While written nearly 15 years ago, it remains highly relevant to a discussion of emotions in knowing processes. The crux of their argument is that qualitative researchers tend to emphasize mainly positive emotions, including relational connection, towards their research subjects. In contrast to a rosy rendering of research relations, these authors encourage fieldworkers to acknowledge a wide range of feelings that they experience in the field and to take these feelings into account in data analysis. The strength of their work lies in Kleinman and Copp's emphasis on emotions in *both* fieldwork and data analysis, a point that is especially important given that there has been relatively less attention given to the latter.

Our own work coalesces with that of Kleinman and Copp and their plea for greater attention to emotions in data analysis (e.g., Mauthner and Doucet 1998, 2003). Yet, while this point that emotions matter profoundly in data analysis and knowledge construction processes is now a fairly well accepted one, the question of *how* to identify and work with emotions in our research practice is one that requires further attention. We begin to take up this challenge below.

Working with Emotions in Our Knowing Processes

Over the past two decades many researchers have found ways of grappling with, managing, and writing about emotions in fieldwork. Psychosocial researchers, for example, draw on psychoanalytic concepts, such as transference and counter-transference (see Bondi 2005) and the 'defended subject' (Hollway and Jefferson 2000; Hollway 2008a) to conceptualize ways of working with emotions in research (Lucey, Melody, and Walkerdine 2003; Walkerdine, Lucey, and Melody 2001, 2002; Hollway and Jefferson 2000). Another prominent group of scholars seeking to incorporate emotional ways of knowing into research practice are relational researchers, who have been developing and using the Listening Guide, an approach to fieldwork and data analysis that focuses detailed attention on emotional inter-subjectivity (Brown and Gilligan 1992; Mauthner and Doucet, **forthcoming**). This approach is

useful for sociological and other scholars seeking to work with emotions in research in meaningful ways, but who have no training in psychoanalytic theory or practice (see also Bennett 2009).

In this second part of our chapter, we draw on our ongoing development of the Listening Guide approach to qualitative research in order to explore three ways of working with emotions in knowledge construction processes. These are: (1) field notes; (2) linking fieldwork and data analysis processes; and (3) group-based data analysis (including memory work). We begin with a brief overview of our version of the Listening Guide.

The Listening Guide

The Listening Guide, also referred to as the voice centred relational method, is an 'emergent method of social research' (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2006), which was developed over several years by Lyn Brown, Carol Gilligan, and their colleagues at the Harvard Project on Women's Psychology and Girls' Development at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Its theoretical roots are in clinical and literary approaches, interpretive and hermeneutic traditions, and relational theory (e.g., Belenky et al. 1986; Brown and Gilligan 1992; Gilligan 1982, 1988; Miller 1976, 1986). Since its inception, it has been used, extended, and adapted in diverse multidisciplinary projects within psychology, sociology, education, and social work across several countries (e.g., Brown 1998; Doucet 2006; Halbertal 2002; Gilligan et al. 2006; Mauthner 2002; McCormack 2004; Tolman 2002; Way 1998, 2001).

We first used the Listening Guide as doctoral researchers working with Gilligan at Cambridge University in the early 1990s, with Mauthner further deepening her understanding of it as a postdoctoral student of Gilligan's at Harvard University (1995–6). While using the method under the guidance of Gilligan, we also simultaneously began to develop our own version of it. In the ensuing decades, we have further refined this interpretive guide with each subsequent research project that we have taken on, drawing on other methodological approaches which complement it, especially recent innovations in narrative analysis (see Doucet and Mauthner 2008). While respecting its history, our version of the Listening Guide is a more critical sociological one which relates to our broad interest in theoretical and empirical understandings of reflexivity, feminist approaches to methodologies

and epistemologies, questions about what constitutes 'data,' and theoretical debates on subjectivities.

If there is a recurrent core to the Listening Guide approach, especially as articulated in our recent work, it is an integrated set of themes that rely on a relational ontology, inter-subjectivity in knowing, a deeply reflexive approach to knowledge construction, and an emphasis on narrative and narrated subjects. While its initial innovation is found in how it gives particular attention to the detailed processes of how to analyse qualitative data, and how to 'do' reflexivity, it also provides a reminder of the critical importance of the deeply engaged researcher involved in all stages of the research process, through open and receptive interviewing processes, reflexive field notes, and group-based analysis. We explore each of these below.

Field Notes

While taking field notes is standard practice in ethnography or in anthropological research (e.g., Clifford 1990), detailed field notes can act as an important part of our knowing processes in sociological research projects and as vehicles for linking emotion, observation, interpretation, and analysis. According to Kleinman and Copp (1993), when we 'immerse ourselves in the setting and feel like real fieldworkers there is a tendency to record voluminous notes as "recorded facts," as proof that we were there, and to "downplay our reactions and feel like good social scientists"' (19). We concur with their argument that avoiding negative emotions about the research process and its participants can lead to us to put off our analysis and to miss crucial observations that may lead to alternate explanations that build on those same negative emotions. We also suggest that field notes can act as an important emotional bridge between data collection and data analysis, and that doing one's own data collection allows for a greater possibility of the link between emotions felt while being in the field and those that resurface in analysis and writing. This has led us to argue for a critical approach towards the increasing tendency for more established researchers to delegate fieldwork to more junior research team members (Mauthner and Doucet, 2008).

The issue of how to *do* field notes, however, remains somewhat of a 'secret' in qualitative research texts (but see Wolfinger 2002). The question thus remains: How do we utilize field notes in ways that record some of the emotions that may matter in our knowing processes?

Guidelines for writing field notes are found, either implicitly or explicitly, in writing on the Listening Guide. Two points can be mentioned here. First, as the Listening Guide is focused on *listening* and attending to the emotional quality of the sound and tone of the voices that we record on our tape recorders, we recommend that, where possible, researchers listen again to their interviews and begin to jot down initial interpretations and responses. This allows for a weaving of emotional and intellectual responses to our research subjects and the narratives being told and heard (see also Hollway and Jefferson 2000; Hollway 2008b).

Our second point about field notes in relation to the Listening Guide approach to research is that they can provide the beginning of a first, 'reflexive' reading of interview data; that is, data analysis *begins* in the field notes as we re-engage with our research subjects and as we document our initial thoughts and feelings about our encounter and our interpretations of the many layers of evolving narratives (see also Somers 1995; Doucet and Mauthner 2008). While, as described below, the Listening Guide advocates several systematic readings of interview transcripts, its first reading combines insights from narrative research and literary theory, which translate into an integration of narrative analysis (see Riessman 2008) combined with reader response (Radway 1991). This highly subjective and intuitive reading can be started even before interviews are transcribed from talk to text in the form of initial recorded reflections in field notes. In the projects in which we are currently engaged,² some of our most important insights have emerged in the emotional space of field note writing immediately after we leave the interview setting – in coffee shops, in our home office, on the bus or train, or in our cars. Sister approaches to the Listening Guide, such as the burgeoning field of psychosocial methods, take a slightly different approach to field notes, attending to how the fantasies and defences of researchers affect fieldwork, analysis, and writing (Walkerdine, Lucey, and Melody 2002; Lucey, Meldody, and Walkerdine 2003); as recently described by Wendy Hollway (2008b), psychosocial researchers may also utilize psychoanalytic insights to record field notes about embodied expressions of research participants.

Connection between Data Collection and Data Analysis

A second way of working with emotions during our research processes is to emphasize a continuous flow between fieldwork and data

analysis; as discussed above, this can be achieved partly through documenting our emotional responses in field notes. It is also important to note that emotional connections may, and often do, occur out of a sense of ‘being there’ in the field (see also Geertz 1973, 1988). While a seemingly simple point, its radical nature is revealed when we consider current academic climates where more and more team research is being conducted and where grant holders and lead researchers may do less and less of their own fieldwork (see Mauthner and Doucet 2008). An excellent depiction of the importance of this view, while 30 years old, still strikes us as powerful and worth repeating. In the words of anthropologist, Rosalie Wax (1971):

There were many times when I found sitting in the classrooms or driving many miles to call on Indian mothers so tiring and time-consuming that I was tempted to stay home and busy myself with ‘analyzing my materials’ and letting the younger research assistants do the hard, dirty, and sometimes very depressing legwork. But circumstances forced me to do much of the observation and quasi participation myself. When the time came to write our report, I was intensely grateful that I had done this, for there were all manner of statements and remarks in our field notes (and the fill-in interviews) that we would otherwise have been unable to understand. Somehow, by sitting in so many Indian homes . . . I, consciously or unconsciously, had picked up the cues that helped us to ‘understand.’ And we picked up these cues, not through introspection or by extrapolation from someone else’s notes, but by *remembering what we saw and listening to what we heard*. (266–7, emphasis added)

Regardless of their career stage, researchers can benefit from conducting their own interviews, as these constitute ‘privileged moment(s)’ of knowledge construction (Bourdieu et al. 1999:615). If, as argued above, emotions in research are embodied, relational, and intersubjectively constituted between researcher and researched, then research ‘data’ must be conceptualized as much more than textual residues encapsulated in interview transcripts. Our argument here is that the emotions gleaned during data collection, and tapped back into during data analysis, can lead us towards knowing particular forms of understanding of social phenomena. This is, moreover, part of a larger epistemological issue of constantly challenging ‘the curious divide of the theory and practice of field research’ (Wacquant, personal correspondence, 2009; see also Wacquant 2009a). Loic Wacquant

(2009a) articulates this particularly well in his explanation of the difference between ‘egological’ and epistemic reflexivity (121–2, see also 2009b): ‘. . . epistemic reflexivity is deployed, not at the end of the project, *ex post*, when it comes to drafting the final research report, but *durante*, at every stage in the investigation. It targets the totality of the most routine research operations, from the selection of the site and the recruitment of informants to the choice of questions to pose or to avoid, as well as the engagement of theoretic schema, methodological tools and display techniques, at the moment when they are implemented’ (2009b: 147).

Group Analysis

Group analysis of interview transcripts can also provide a further venue for working with emotions in our knowing processes. While the Listening Guide employs multiple and successive ‘readings’ of interview transcripts, a first reading focuses on a narrative reading combined with a reflexive reading that attends to a wide range of responses, including emotional ones. The latter part of this first reading involves reading oneself in the text, and watching for how we respond to being back in the research relationship. Providing a way of maintaining a sustained relationship with research subjects as well as a concrete way of ‘doing reflexivity,’ this approach, since its inception, offers the excellent suggestion of using a ‘worksheet’ technique for this reading; that is, the interview transcript is transformed into a working document where the respondent’s words are laid out in one column and the researcher’s reactions and interpretations are laid out in an adjacent column (Gilligan, Lyons, and Hanmer 1990; Brown and Gilligan 1992; Mauthner and Doucet 1998; see also Norum 2000). This technique enables the researcher to examine how and where some of her own assumptions and views – either emotional or theoretical – might affect her interpretation of the respondent’s words, and in turn how she later writes about the person. As described by Lyn Brown (1994): ‘. . . the first listening or reading requires the listener/interpreter to consider her relationship to the speaker or text and to document, as best she can, her interests, biases and limitations that arise from such critical dimensions of social location as race, class, gender and sexual orientation, as well as to track her own feelings in response to what she hears – particularly those feelings that do not resonate with the speaker’s experience’ (392).

This 'reading' of interview transcripts can be done individually or in small groups with trusted colleagues. In the first research projects where we used the Listening Guide, along with Carol Gilligan and a small group of doctoral students at Cambridge University, we spent an intensive period of about 17 months collectively analysing each other's interview transcripts and building emergent explanations and theoretical analysis out of that group work (Mauthner and Doucet 1998). Working within the context of a group was extremely useful, because, having read extracts from our transcripts, others were able to point out where we might have missed or glossed over what they regarded as key aspects of the interview narrative. This made us acutely aware of how our emotional responses mattered in knowledge construction, as well as our control in choosing or ignoring particular lines of inquiry and explanation. That is, working with other colleagues highlighted how 'people have more than one way to tell a story and see a situation through different lenses and in different lights' (Gilligan, Lyons, and Hanmer 1990: 95).

Another kind of group work that works with subjectivity and emotion is the small but burgeoning field of 'memory work.' Rooted in the work of German feminist theorist Frigga Haug (1987) and her theories on self-development, memory work has mainly been taken up by researchers in the United Kingdom (see Holland 2007; Crawford et al. 1992; Thomson and McLeod 2009) who have further developed innovative approaches to bringing out researcher emotions. Working mostly in teams, researchers use memory work in varied ways to explore emotions in relation to research topics and research respondents, and to reflect on how emotions may affect knowledge production. Memory work has been effectively employed in research on sensitive or emotionally laden topics – such as motherhood, fatherhood, sexual violence, and transitions into adulthood. The value of memory work is well expressed by Thomson and McLeod (2009) who have recently written: 'We have engaged in memory work as a complementary research practice for ten years, with regular memory work becoming a vital part of communication within research collectives, feeding into the accumulation of a reflexive understanding of our investments in our topics of research, or connections with and differences from each other as well as directly into methodological and theoretical development' (16).

As with many methodological approaches, there is no one particular way or recipe to undertake memory work. Its recent iterations have

been based in group-based approaches (Crawford et al. 1992; Gordon, Holland, and Lahelma 2000; Thomson and Holland 2005) or in individual approaches (Kuhn 2002, 2007), and with differing emphases on textual journaling or the use of photography. In spite of its continuing diversity within research practice, memory work can nevertheless be called a methodological ‘family’ (Thomson and Holland 2009:29) and an important means of working with emotions in our knowing processes.

Narcissistic Reflexivity

Taking an approach to knowing that involves attending to our emotions through field notes, an integrated approach to emotional work in data collection and data analysis, and group analysis and memory work, leads us to the question of how much emotional work needs to be done in order to achieve ‘good’ knowing, or what philosopher Lorraine Code (1988) has referred to as ‘responsible knowing’ (page?) On the other hand, is there a possibility that, by taking emotions into account in our knowing processes, we might inadvertently veer into what Bourdieu (2003) called ‘narcissistic reflexivity’ (281)?

Bourdieu’s concept of ‘narcissistic reflexivity’ is part of his larger ‘*obsessive insistence on reflexivity*’ (Wacquant 2006:11; emphasis added), which is, in turn, part of an extensive body of writing that spans several decades. In brief, Bourdieu (2003) describes this concept in the following way: ‘Scientific reflexivity stands opposed to the narcissistic reflexivity of postmodern anthropology as well as to the egological reflexivity of phenomenology in that it endeavours to increase scientificity by turning the most objectivist tools of social science not only onto the private person of the enquirer but also, and more decisively, onto the anthropological field itself and onto the scholastic dispositions and biases it fosters and rewards in its members’ (281).

Bourdieu’s work with Wacquant helps to explicate even further his conception of narcissistic reflexivity; he writes: ‘This is to say that the sociology I argue for has little in common with a complacent and intimist return upon the private person of the sociologist or to look for the intellectual *Zeitgeist* that animate his or her work . . . I must also dissociate myself completely from the form of ‘reflexivity’ represented by the kind of self-fascinated observation of the observer’s writing and feelings which has recently some fashionable among some American anthropologists’. . . who, having apparently exhausted the charms of fieldwork, have turned to talking about themselves rather than

their object of research (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1990:72; see also Bourdieu 2003). Bourdieu (2003) is thus concerned not to turn the lens 'onto the private person' and to avoid being taken in by 'the "diary disease,"³ an explosion of narcissism sometimes verging on exhibitionism' (282); elsewhere, he urges researchers to draw a distinction between the "epistemic individual" and the "empirical individual" (Bourdieu 1988), and he cautions against being taken in by the "biographical illusion" (**verify quotes within quotes**) (Bourdieu 1987, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In light of these points, our question is: In reflecting upon the emotions that matter in our knowing processes, how can we ensure that we do not get trapped into research processes which constitute a 'self-fascinated observation of the observer's writings and feelings,' and which encourage 'a thinly veiled nihilistic relativism' as opposed to 'a truly reflexive social science' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:72).

Drawing again from Bourdieu and Wacquant, we argue that this achievement of a 'truly reflexive social science' can be done by attending not only to the personal and biographical positioning of the researcher but to his/her positioning within theoretical, disciplinary, institutional, political, and cultural locations that impact on their knowing processes (Doucet and Mauthner 2003, 2008). In this vein, we agree with Bourdieu (2003) that epistemic reflexivity must attend not only to 'the recording and analysis of the "pre-notions" (in Durkheim's sense) that social agents engage in the construction of social reality; it must also encompass the social conditions of the production of these pre-constructions' (282). As Wacquant (2006) puts it, there needs to be systemic attention to 'the personal identity of the researcher: her gender, class, nationality, ethnicity, education, etc.,' but also '(h)er location in the intellectual field,' including 'disciplinary and institutional attachments' (11). Put differently, this means that the objects of study or 'social phenomena [are] to be found, not in the consciousness of individuals, but in the system of objective relations in which they are enmeshed' (5).

Thus a key point for this discussion is to appreciate Bourdieu and Wacquant's point that efforts to be self-reflexive in our knowing processes can indeed translate into 'narcissistic reflexivity' when this reflexive thinking remains focused only on the 'private person of the sociologist.' Nevertheless, we posit that there is a means of working with emotion and memories in ways that can have epistemological weight. For example, in her work on primary caregiving fathers, Doucet (2006, 2008) reflected on how a dream came to her while she was

midway through her data analysis and she realized that a childhood memory about a single father who lived across the street from her childhood home was, in fact, the instigating point for her sympathetic openness to the narratives of lives of fathers who were primary caregivers of children.

Did Doucet fall into the trap, which Bourdieu (2003) clearly scorns, of shamelessly promoting ‘the biographical particularities of the researcher or the *Zeitgeist* that inspires his (her) work’ (282)? While this danger is, indeed, a possibility, we would argue that it does not necessarily emerge from this rather intimate approach to reflexive thinking. As argued by Amanda Coffey (1999), ‘[t]he boundaries between self indulgence and reflexivity are fragile and blurred’ so that there ‘will always be the question of how much of ourselves to reveal’ (133). Our view is that any attention to memories, emotions, and dreams as instigators or critical parts of our research must always hold a sustained focus of inquiry towards *why and how* they matter to the knowledge being produced. Divulging ‘confessional tales’ (Van Maanen 1988) can indeed verge on what Bourdieu (2003) abhors as ‘self-fascination’ or ‘exhibitionism’(page(s)). What is thus required is detailed attention to how these emotions, memories, or dreams – whether analysed individually or within a group – lead us down a particular avenue of analysis, explanation, and knowledge construction (see also Gordon 1996; McMahon 1996). If they alter the general direction or tenor of the knowledge being produced, then they may indeed be useful to reflect on and to possibly write up as part of our ‘audit trail’ (Seale 1999).

We also want to point out that Bourdieu himself, in his last published work (2008), quietly argued that there is a way to turn the ‘private person of the sociologist’ and their ‘intuition’ into a form of research ‘capital’: ‘This kind of experimentation on the work of reflexivity . . . shows that one of the rarest springs of the practical mastery that defines the sociologist’s craft, a central component of which is what people call *intuition* is perhaps, ultimately, the scientific use of a social experience, which, so long as it is first subjected to sociological critique, can, however lacking in social value it may be in itself . . . be reconverted from handicap into a capital. As I have said elsewhere, it was no doubt a banal remark of my mother’s . . . that . . . triggered the reflection that led me to abandon the model of the kinship rule for that of strategy’ (86). This admission of Bourdieu that a ‘banal remark’ from his mother ‘triggered’ an important theoretical line of inquiry strikes us as both radical and somewhat contradictory to his earlier

remarks on the dangers of narcissistic reflexivity. This admission is not the only one in which he reflects, in a subdued manner, on how his own biographical history and his emotional connections played a role in motivating particular theoretical interests.

Two other examples of his attention to biographical influences are Bourdieu's rambling reflections on how his father praised the young Bourdieu in his rebelliousness and 'stubbornness' against authority at school. The first is in a passage that begins with: 'Rediscovering a photograph in which I was walking alongside my father . . . I remember what he once said to me, when coming out of the lycée, I related one of my latest clashes with the school administration' (2007:89–90). A further instance are his thoughts on how '(t)he experience of boarding school no doubt played a decisive part in the formation of my dispositions' (2008:90). Such reflections open up the possibility of considering Bourdieu as an ally, albeit a cautious one, in work that argues for the importance of emotions in knowing. As we have argued elsewhere in our work on reflexivity, it is a matter of *how* it is done; it is a matter of 'degrees,' and of recognizing the necessary limits of knowing all that matters to our knowing (Mauthner and Doucet 2003). We thus argue that there is indeed a possibility that attending to emotions in research and in our knowing processes can veer towards 'narcissistic reflexivity.' What matters, then, is how this work is accomplished so as to balance biographical and emotional influences with a sustained attention to the demands of a larger conception of epistemic reflexivity. According to Henri Bernard (1990), Bourdieu 'has shown how ethnography can be reflexive without being narcissistic or uncritical' and offers 'a way out of the cul-de-sac that ethnographers and theorists of ethnography have created for themselves' (58, 71, cited in Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:41). We concur that this remains a challenge for researchers who want to take emotions seriously in their knowing processes.

Conclusions

In this chapter, we have highlighted cross-disciplinary writings, particularly by feminist sociologists, emotional geographers, and psychosocial researchers, on the critical importance of taking emotions into account in processes of knowledge construction. As attested throughout this book, the field of the sociology of emotions is burgeoning; nevertheless, less attention has been given to how to work with emotions in our research practice and our knowing processes. Rooted in a

two-decade-long immersion in extending the Listening Guide approach to qualitative research, we have laid out several practical strategies to identifying and utilizing emotions in ways that matter to our knowledge production. Specifically, we discussed field notes, an integrated approach to emotional thinking in data collection and analysis, and group analysis and memory work. Finally, building on selected insights of Bourdieu and Wacquant, we explored the issue of how researchers can work on emotional terrain in their reflexive thinking and practices without veering into ‘narcissistic reflexivity.’

Our approach underscores the importance of the inter-subjective emotions that occur between researcher and the researched in fieldwork, field notes, and analysis. We also noted the value of psychosocial methods in excavating emotions in research while simultaneously concurring with Bennet (2009) that social scientists with no training in psychoanalytic methods are less well placed to bring such insights into their field notes and analysis. A final point on emotions in our knowing processes relates to the retelling of stories and to the knowledge outputs that are eventually produced. In our view, an additional key challenge for researchers who work with and write about emotions is how to convey, even partially, a small degree of the rich sensuousness of being in the field with people – embodied subjects who enter into a brief relation with us as they tell their stories in voices that register a wide array of emotions and with gestures that convey more than texts. That is, with Wacquant (2008b), we maintain that it is critical to work towards a sociology of emotions in methodological writing that seeks ‘to expand textual genres and styles so as to better capture the taste and ache of social action’ (101).

NOTES

- 1 We recognize that there is a complexity of work on the differences between emotions and feeling, and emotions and interpersonal processes, distinctions that are dealt with in other sections of this text (see also Turner and Stets 2005).
- 2 Doucet is currently writing a book on mothers who are primary breadwinners in Canada and the United States, while Mauthner is conducting a cross-cultural research project on academics and their work.
- 3 Bourdieu (2003) is drawing here on Clifford Geertz (1998:89), who is drawing in turn on Roland Barthes (1980:532).

