
Editorial

Affect and feeling

Lisa Blackman and John Cromby

Michael Chertoff, America's Homeland Security secretary, recently announced that he thought a terrorist attack on America was imminent. This was not due to any strategic calculation of possible risk but rather due to his 'gut feeling'. The invocation of *feeling* or *affect* is often used to refer to that which is *sensed* rather than known (as a conscious cognition or thought for example), and to that which is in the background, often unnoticed, or that exists beyond our capacity for conscious deliberation. Although the psychological sciences have taken the realm of *affect*, *feeling* and *emotion* as an important part of the conceptual landscape of human subjectivity, there is frequently little clarity or consistency in the way these terms are mobilised and elaborated. Their slipperiness is echoed in the different ways in which *feeling* enters into our affective communication. Amongst many others, one can *feel* lucky, sad, fine, happy, bloated, overwhelmed, disappointed, listless, suicidal, lonely, faint, good, validated, sexy, tired and hot. *Feeling* appears as noun, verb and adjective but in most cases seems to refer to what we might term as elements of a phenomenal field, to that which is sensual, somatic, and lived or experienced through the body.

The ambiguity and ambivalence of the status of *feelings* within and outside psychology, is further complicated by their putative distinction from *affects*. Where *feeling* is often used to refer to

phenomenological or subjective experiences, *affect* is often taken to refer to a force or intensity that can belie the movement of the subject who is always in a process of becoming. Becoming is a concept that has been mobilised across the humanities to refer to the subject's capacity to affect and be affected (Latour, 2004; Braidotti, 2002). Although affects might traverse individual subjects, for many scholars they undo the notion of a singular or sovereign subject. Emotions, in contrast, are those patterned brain/body responses that are culturally recognisable and provide some unity, stability and coherence to the felt dimensions of our relational encounters. Arguably, feelings register intensive forces as subjective experience, and emotions performatively stabilise these forces into culturally normative patterns through practices of expression, movement or speech. That is the 'emotion word' or vocabulary does not refer in any representational way to a stable referent, anger for example, but rather brings the object into being and enacts it in particular ways. Affects do not refer to a 'thing' or substance, but rather the processes that produce bodies as always open to others, human and non-human, and as unfinished rather than stable entities. However, this is only one way of organising and defining these phenomena to achieve clarity; as the papers in this special issue on *affect* and *feelings* demonstrate, other definitions, other configurations and relations, are also viable.

Current trends across the social sciences and humanities provide a timely setting for this special issue. A recent book by Patricia Clough (2007) titled *The Affective Turn: Theorising the Social*, highlights an arena of debate that many are heralding as providing the impetus for a paradigm shift across the humanities and cultural theory. This 'turn' to affect, whether real or imagined, is being likened to the turn to language and discourse which inaugurated the emergence of critical and discursive psychologies. Indeed, many earlier proponents of more discursive approaches to subjectivity are now embracing affect as the way out of its apparent social, linguistic and discourse determinism. Claire Hemmings (2005: 548) suggests that this 'turn to affect builds on important work in cultural studies on the pitfalls of writing the body out of theory'. Similarly across critical and discursive psychologies, the enfolding of the psychological into language and discourse is recognised as a strategic practice that has also effectively written the body out of critical psychological

theory (Blackman, 2008). This is perhaps exemplified in extremis by recent discursive psychological work that approaches crying in encounters on a children's phone-in help line through its transcription and decomposition into seven different elements (Hepburn, 2004). The question then becomes one of what gets obscured or silenced by a micro focus on the communicative force of fragments of crying in particular conversational settings? And, perhaps most crucially in a critical psychological context, what methodological issues are raised and excluded by methods that reify conversation as their primary focus of study and ignore other sign systems that are, for example, sensual, haptic, corporeal or kinaesthetic?

Hemmings (2005) attests to the increasing focus on affect across the humanities as the new 'cutting edge' of cultural theory that provides a conceptual language for addressing embodied subjectivity. This *newness* and the apparent work of affect to undo the mantra of social constructionism has not to date been hailed with such celebratory force within critical psychology. This might be more to do with the status of affect and feeling as anything but *new* subjects within the discipline of psychology. Indeed, many mainstream psychologists have been central and inventive resources for cultural theorists interested in theorising the unfinished tendencies of embodied subjectivity, rather than approaching the body as a fixed substance or entity. The work of the feminist cultural theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003) and her heralding of the American psychologist Silvan-Tomkins's work on affect have provided one such coupling of psychologist with critical cultural theorist. This is echoed in affective work across cultural theory that has turned to the brain and neurosciences to provide a conceptual vocabulary to illuminate the work of affect. Brian Massumi (2002) is perhaps the most central figure who finds in neuroscience a range of concepts for formulating affectivity. However, it seems that critical psychologists have been more cautious in any such coupling, perhaps mirroring the institutional success of incarnations of critical psychology that have been suspicious and hostile to the mainstream psychological, biological and neurosciences. There is nevertheless an opportunity here for critical psychology to engage constructively with colleagues in other disciplines who are, paradoxically, sometimes taking up resources that critical psychologists have already rejected.

It is at the interstices of these and other pressing questions, dilemmas and problems that we hope this special issue will provide the beginnings of a dialogue within and between mainstream and critical psychology, and with those working in an interdisciplinary context across the humanities who are interested in the complex relationships between affect, subjectivity and relationality. In the spirit of inventiveness that characterises the hope of much of this work to bring the body back into theory, we have brought together scholars across the humanities and critical psychology to provide their own formulations as to the importance of affect and feeling for cultural theory and critical psychology. What is clear from this project of expansion across disciplinary boundaries is that the ontology of subjectivity becomes a pressing concern. The question of how to understand the performative force of subjectification, if one moves beyond discourse, social or linguistic determinism, directs us to areas that have not been central to critical psychological inquiry. These areas, although not contained by the concepts of affect and feeling, are made manifest by the problems, dilemmas and questions that affect and feeling render more visible.

This special issue brings together psychologists working in interdisciplinary contexts with cultural theorists interested in theorising subjectivity and who find affect and feeling useful foci for their work. All the papers attempt to undo and displace the centrality of linguistic and discursive approaches to subjectivity by starting with the murky waters of affect and feeling as both substantive phenomena and as resources and tools for re-formulating theory and method. Although the papers multiply the complexity of what we might understand affect and feeling to be, or more precisely to *do* in our inquiries, we have identified certain themes that provide a commonality of problems, issues and questions important for evaluating any such paradigm shift that might be identified by a 'turn to affect'. We have arranged the papers into two thematic clusters, and we will now elaborate some of the commonalities and discontinuities between them. Although we do not want to claim that we 'know' the objects of which we speak, nor to suggest that the authors in this issue are necessarily making strong claims of this kind, we have grouped the papers according to what we see as a primary substantive focus on either affect or feeling.

The first three papers are more tied to the elaboration of affect

and bring together work on psychoanalytic practice and the concept of transference and counter-transference, and work on affective and contagious communication that has always undone the notion of the singular, sovereign subject within the psychological sciences. All of these articles in one way or another posit affect as the capacity of the subject to affect and be affected. That is, what is taken to define human subjectivity is not singularity and boundedness, but rather connectedness and permeability (of borders and boundaries). The notion of contagious communication or ‘affective transmission’ as a central modality of relationality has a long lineage within the psychological sciences and cultural theory. Within cultural theory the mobilisation of affect as the capacity to affect and be affected has been associated with more Deleuzian conceptions of subjectivity (Massumi, 2002). Bruno Latour (2004), the French sociologist and proponent of Actor Network Theory, has similarly aligned affect to the body in process, rather than the body as substance and has turned to nineteenth century philosophers and scientists to further specify this reformulation of bodiliness. This includes a reactivation of the work of the American pragmatist philosopher and psychologist, William James, as well as the French sociologist and psychologist, Gabriel Tarde (Blackman 2007 and, forthcoming).

In the context of reactivating what might have been lost in contemporary cultural and psychological theory, Lisa Blackman’s article, ‘Feeling FINE: Social psychology, suggestion and the problem of social influence’, explores the historical antecedents of a version of contagious communication that was central to early psychology and social psychology at the turn of the last century. This version of contagious communication, which was known as ‘ordinary suggestibility’, underpinned many accounts of relationality within the social and psychological sciences. It also formed the basis of the philosophy of Henri Bergson who, like Tarde and James, was fascinated by psychic phenomenon such as mediumship, hypnotic suggestion and particular processes of psychopathology, such as delusions and hallucinations. Ordinary suggestibility was an inter-psychological mechanism, which was mobilised to explain why traditions, affects, beliefs, emotion, and ideas could spread throughout populations with such rapidity and force. Blackman’s article maps how this version of contagious communication became translated and substituted within early social psychology such that

it was produced as a rather different kind of object. In her genealogy of 'ordinary suggestibility' she shows how the concept of 'ordinary suggestion' was replaced with the concept of abnormal suggestion, where the capacity to affect and be affected became re-distributed through the lens of mass psychology and particular notions of the 'mob' or 'group mind'. This re-drew the boundaries of so-called normal subjectivity by positing *will* and *inhibition* as the normative psychological capacities that would allow subjects to ideally withstand social influence and suggestion. Will and inhibition were viewed as cognitive capacities, aligned to the capacity of conscious deliberation, which were viewed as higher, more sophisticated and civilised mechanisms of self control. Suggestion became re-distributed as a more primitive form of communication that was mapped onto an instinctual economy understood through the concepts of evolutionary biology. The concept of abnormal suggestion was mobilised to produce the so-called masses as overly-suggestible and sensitive to social influence processes and therefore in need of management and regulation.

This re-distribution of 'ordinary suggestion' through the positing of 'affective self-containment' as the defining modality of subjectivity, has presented a number of paradoxes and problems for contemporary psychological theory. Blackman's article engages with the phenomenon of 'emotional contagion' which has been documented in numerous ways within social and personality psychology, and has been of interest to cultural theorists interested in 'affective transmission'. This includes the work of the late feminist cultural theorist, Teresa Brennan (2004), as well as work in film studies which is drawing on 'emotional contagion' and particular neuroscientific concepts, such as mirror neurons, to explain audience consumption of film (Coplan, 2006). Blackman suggests that asking the question, what is affect or feeling, may ignore or sideline the different ways in which affect is produced as an object across different knowledge practices. Instead, she examines what kinds of questions, problems and dilemmas different versions of contagious communication make possible, and what different versions *do* in our conceptual and methodological inquiries. Her genealogical project is situated within work across sociology and cultural theory which is attempting to open suggestion up to new theoretical horizons, and to examine how different versions

distribute automaticity, bodily feeling and rapidity of thought such that certain questions are stabilised and others excluded. She focuses this question particularly in relation to the knowledge practices of contemporary social psychology, and the production of social influence as an object which is based upon processes that are taken primarily to be readable and comprehensible through the action of cognition and its various distortions. She explores what gets placed in the background, rejected and repudiated within contemporary social psychology and the implications of this for how we might think the relationships between affect, subjectivity and relationality.

The complex relationships between affect, relationality and subjectivity provide the focus of the next two articles, both of which deal with the specificities of the therapeutic encounter and the movement of affect between analyst and analysand. Jan Campbell, a cultural theorist and practising analyst, considers the psychoanalytic setting as defined by the inter-subjective flow of affect and ideas between persons that are always in *movement*. Her article, 'Transference: Streams of affect and representations' displaces the notion that the unconscious can be spatialised and located within the singular, bounded individual. Rather, she turns to a variety of conceptual approaches, from object-relations psychoanalysis to notions of affect within cultural theory, to produce a more social and shared sense of the unconscious and the self, and maps some ways in which both affect and feeling have been produced as objects within and across different psychoanalytic traditions. Campbell stresses the importance of analysing the *counter-transference* within psychoanalysis, and skilfully does this by examining a clinical vignette, fictionalised from her own practice, that explores how difficult it is for the analyst to 'know' where the client ends and she begins (and vice versa). Rather than the counter-transference being presented as an obstacle to the therapeutic process, and one that should be examined within the analyst/supervisor relationship, she pays attention to it in order to invent new relationships between fantasy and reality.

The concept of 'affective transmission' is central to this process, which presents the analytic journey as not from the body to mind, or primitive pre-oedipal relations to symbolic representation, but rather as the movement of affect and thought such that it can be

recreated from its potential to become split off, dissociated, stuck and bound within neurosis and hysteria, for example. Campbell finds the work of William James and Henri Bergson useful to her analysis and, like Blackman, finds the concept of the 'subliminal self' based on 'ordinary suggestion' a way of framing the radical relationality of subjectivity. The concept of the 'subliminal self' elaborated by William James suggests, Campbell argues, that affects can never be located and contained within the singular, bounded individual. The subliminal self suggests a view of consciousness that is always in motion or transport between the internal and the external, the self and other, the conscious and the non-conscious. Affects can bind and unbind, and what Campbell (2006) terms the 'time of life' involves the capacity to notice or attend to this potential for movement. What is demanded of the analyst is what Campbell calls a 'sensitive attunement' which is as much about *feeling* as it is about the importance and timing of analytic reflection and interpretation. As she argues; 'One way of thinking about analytic technique is to just see it as the way we give attention, enable the stream of thoughts, help set a rhythm for the right attunement and transmission of emotional affect'.

The production of affect as a kind of vitality that can be felt and which is shared inter-subjectively is reiterated in a different way by Stephen Frosh and Lisa Baraitser, whose article, 'Affect and encounter in psychoanalysis' also focuses upon what affect might be *doing* when people come into contact with one another. Frosh and Baraitser understand the psychoanalytic encounter as a particular kind of site or setting, enabling what they term, following the work of the French philosopher Alain Badiou, an 'event' which provokes quite particular inter-subjective responses. The notion of the 'event' describes the potential of such an encounter to produce new modes of subjectivity; new modes of inventing relationships to self and other. In their analysis the psychoanalytic encounter is produced as a technology that manifests the workings of affect in ways that might be distinctive from other modes of sociality and relationality. Their work is more firmly placed within object-relations psychoanalysis than Campbell's, but also engages and borrows from the ways in which affect has entered cultural theory. They emphasise affective transmission or resonance as a 'non-rational terrain' that is felt rather than articulated, and difficult to under-

stand through processes of cognitive sense-making. This suggests a different kind of methodological or psychoanalytic inquiry that they characterise as an examination retrospectively, by the analyst, of their own embodied experience of the interchange and flow of affective states between analyst and analysand. The encounter is one that they describe as 'enigmatic' based upon an affective intensity that disrupts meaning and, importantly, can overwhelm and change the analyst as much as the analysand.

Although Campbell suggests that affective transmission and the movement and flow between fantasy and reality is part of everyday life, Frosh and Baraitser suggest that the therapeutic encounter has a particularity in that it is seen to imply an 'enforced focus on the intersubjective exchange to the exclusion of anything else'. This site or setting is seen to effectively generate particular affective *states* which produce the potential for reinvention and recreation of modes of subjectivity. They equate this to the British object-relations analyst William Bion's focus upon the importance of the analyst being open to projective identification through entering a state of reverie. So although both articles articulate affect as a felt phenomenon or process that is difficult to understand through conscious deliberation, they differ in the strategies and techniques they suggest are important for the analytic process. Both agree that the encounter is relational, inter-subjective, and based upon the flow and movement of affect as a felt intensity between persons. One question raised by the difference between the articles is whether affect can describe a 'state' or whether affect is marked by the felt intensity of flow and its potential for the subject to become and become-stuck. One implies the importance of separation as an analytic strategy, whereas the other is more tied to concepts of attunement and noticing that imply different kinds of therapeutic strategy and technique to the idea of conscious deliberation. This is a debate that we hope the inclusion of both articles can stimulate, particularly in terms of the development of methods and analytic inquiry based upon a form of sense-making that is embodied rather than cognitively and consciously understood and articulated.

The second thematic cluster of articles in this special issue are characterised more by their focus upon *feelings*, which are characterised by John Cromby as embodied states that may be shot through with discourse, and indeed exist in a dialectical relation-

ship with it, but are nevertheless not reducible to language. Cromby's article, 'Toward a psychology of feeling', engages with the problems of linguistic and discursive reductionism that have come to characterise many social and critical approaches within psychology. Feelings, for Cromby, are manifestations of the momentary state of the body-brain system that provide a flow of feedback which is primordially constitutive of the phenomenal field. They include the embodied component of emotions, such as the racing heart of fear; feelings that might be thought of as more physiological, for example hunger, thirst, tiredness and pain; and the relational, intersubjective feelings of knowing characterised by John Shotter as 'knowing of the third kind'. In elaborating what a psychology of feeling might require and making the case that feelings are always thoroughly social, Cromby draws on resources from critical and discursive psychologies, social theory, sociology and psychoanalysis. Additionally, at some points he also turns to neuroscience: for example, to account for that which might have passed for intuition at different historical moments, and to bolster his assertions that feelings are both separate from language and provide the 'default' mode of human engagement with the world.

The re-alliance and engagement with the brain and neurosciences by cultural theorists and critical psychologists is part of a trend, emerging from the dissatisfaction with discursive reductionism, which is emerging across the humanities. Damasio's work, for example, has been important for theorists including Brian Massumi (2002), William Connolly (2002) and Barbara Stafford (2007). The neurosciences are providing a language for the materiality of bodies and brains which, these authors suggest, can allow us to understand the workings of social processes without reducing subjectivity to linguistic and discursive signs and systems. Elizabeth Wilson (2004), the Australian feminist psychologist is perhaps the person best known within the critical psychological community for attempting to take neuroscience seriously. Cromby's article similarly rejects the notion that neuroscience is homogeneously and self-evidently reductionist. He asks instead, following Wilson: what kinds of reductionism might be (and indeed, already are) deemed acceptable? Wilson suggests that much feminist work in cultural theory has repudiated the biological, and focused its attention wholly on the role of ideation and cultural inscription – to

the detriment of considering what biological processes would allow social practices to take hold of the body. Her focus, like Cromby's, is on the performative force of certain practices, and how a serious and detailed engagement with biology and neurology might permit a greater understanding. As she says: 'how many feminist accounts of the anorexic body pay serious attention to the biological functions of the stomach, the mouth or the digestive system? How many feminist analyses of the anxious body are informed and illuminated by neurological data?' (p. 8).

Cromby's position supplements or adds to existing work in critical psychology on cultural and discursive inscription, and in so doing adds fleshy weight to some of John Shotter's ideas. His paper is followed by John Shotter's article, 'Wittgenstein and our talk of *feelings* in inquiries into the dynamics of language use' which develops the idea of a different way of 'knowing' subjectivity, through engaging with Henri Bergson's reformulation of time as duration (lived time) rather than linear mechanised time. The emphasis in this article is on the *movement* of meaning between persons within a dialogic context, and how meaning is evidenced or displayed through *feeling*. Talk is seen to create what Shotter terms a 'feelingful movement in others' that we are largely unaware of. This is what Bergson termed a second kind of knowing, of which we are usually only tacitly aware. Talk is not just *about* something (in a referential sense) but rather creates a 'witness' that is always anticipatory and responsive to future possibilities. Shotter defines feelings as 'the massive *structure of possibility* that constitutes the largely uncharted background to people's lives of choice and deliberation'. Thought is always feelingful, unfinished, and oriented towards this background structure of possibility. Shotter primarily draws on Wittgenstein, as well as Bakhtin, Bergson, James and Vygotsky, to elaborate a relational dynamics based upon feelings and utterances rather than Austinian speech acts. His paper takes critical psychology beyond the action-oriented, rhetorical focus of the kinds of conversational and discourse analysis that have become part of the new mainstream, and closer to the lived, phenomenal body.

One question about such a reciprocal (ideally) dialogic model is the assumption that effective communication would be about a reciprocal attunement or flow between persons and an openness to be

moved and touched by otherness. This would imply a kind of sensitive discernment or entrainment that is ideally based upon communion, reciprocity and connectedness. Jane Ussher, Janette Perz and Julie Mooney-Somers's article shows how, often, what marks relational encounters is not reciprocity but gaps, silences, misunderstandings and asymmetrical power relationships and dynamics. In their article, 'The experience and positioning of affect in the context of intersubjectivity: The case of premenstrual syndrome', they explore the relational consequences of women's experiences of premenstrual syndrome in the context of intimate couple relationships. Feeling, within this approach derived from critical and feminist approaches to the psychological, is located within the intrapsychic experiences women have that are always materially and discursively produced. PMS, within the medical and psychiatric literature is understood as a distinct symptomatology marked by intolerance, irritation, emotional sensitivity, negativity, feelings of being overwhelmed and so on. Ussher et al take this symptomatology as a particular kind of feeling economy or set of affectual experiences that are lived and mediated through the particular relational dynamic in the partnership. Based upon interviews with 59 self-defined PMS sufferers, they explore the kinds of self-techniques the women mobilise to survive and cope. These might include particular kinds of self-policing and self-surveillance. They do not understand the 'PMS sufferer' as a distinct pathology, but rather as a subject position produced through the medical and psychological sciences that sufferers can take up and mobilise. Their focus is on the importance of the *intersubjective* context through which the PMS feelings can be lived, passed, negotiated and transformed. This is related to the particular 'context of relatedness' that characterises their intimate relationship.

Similar complexities are indicated by Gavin Sullivan's article 'A critical psychology of pride'. Like other contributors, Sullivan explicitly locates his work within the cross-disciplinary resurgence of interest in affect and feeling, suggesting that it is opening up new opportunities to consider both empirical and conceptual questions through the novel recombination of methods and theories previously held separate. Reviewing various theoretical accounts of pride, Sullivan – like Shotter – adopts a Wittgensteinian stance. Whilst he is mindful of the difficulties this predominantly

linguistic approach can create in the study of affect and feeling, he argues that its value lies in allowing analysts to more effectively chart their meaning. His discussion ranges across mainstream, critical and cultural theories of pride, highlighting the shortcomings of cognitive experimental approaches and drawing attention to the embodied aspects of more critical and cultural accounts. He follows these discussions with discursively-driven analyses of pride that nevertheless recognise its somatic or felt character, and which he relates to Ahmed's (2004) cultural-political analyses of emotion. He contrasts national pride in Germany with that in South Africa, showing how they differ in important ways and drawing attention to the ways in which such homogenising affective nationalisms can work to marginalise and exclude minorities. He goes on to ground these issues with a discussion of the 2005 race riots in the Sydney suburb of Cronulla, sparked by the aggressive actions of local white residents who 'had a feeling that the Lebanese youths were taking over'.

In both Sullivan and Ussher et al.'s articles, then, we see the careful yet explicit invocation of feelings as extra-discursive phenomena that nevertheless gain at least part of their meaning through their enrolment within language and discourse. In this closing section we'd like to consider some of the questions that a move of this kind raises for methodology. This issue is particularly important because it seems that the development, adaptation or adoption of an appropriate method might currently be the primary impediment to critical psychological investigations of affect and feeling. In large part this problem arises because of critical psychological views of language, and the ways in which it is understood to generate meaning. From the discursive perspective that has dominated much critical psychological work for the last decade or so, the functional, action-oriented aspects of language have been emphasised above all else. On this view language is always language-in-action, and meaning flows from its situated deployment and use. However, the emphasis on language-as-action within this perspective is such that it can sometimes be difficult to recall that language can also, however partially, temporarily, imperfectly and contingently, function referentially or indexically. Of course, recognising the action-orientation of language does not mean we must preclude it from also having an indexical or referential

function, and although they have not yet been taken up widely there are theoretical-conceptual frames that allow both aspects to be recognised (e.g. Nightingale and Cromby, 2002; Sayer, 2000; Sims-Schouten, Riley, and Willig, 2007).

With reference to affect and feeling, however, this general problem of language and meaning is compounded by the further difficulty of representing phenomena that, at least in part, are in their very character not representational. That is, alongside the difficulty of legitimating some indexical or referential function for language without being drawn back into naïve correspondence or picture theories of meaning, we also have the problem of the ineffability of bodily experience. The complex interweaving of these two problems plays itself out, in this special issue and indeed elsewhere, in the form of two contradictory tendencies, two effects that, whilst seemingly mutually exclusive, nevertheless frequently co-occur. For on the one hand it can often seem that accounts of affect and feeling are transparently poetic and narrativised, worked up with the help of metaphor, simile and trope in order to invoke the sensual realm of corporeal feeling, passion and desire. On the other hand, to the great extent that these accounts do and must rely on language, they can simultaneously seem hollow, partial, clumsy, or inadequate. Their fictive character not only betrays their reliance upon essentially literary techniques, it also bears witness to what language loses, what it elides whilst appearing to capture, what it misses whilst nevertheless appearing to signify.

Moreover, buried within this there may be a further, deeper problem for critical psychological analyses of affect, emotion and feeling, since the textual data and qualitative methods typically preferred by critical psychologists implicitly privilege a realm of rationality, reflection and control. In most analyses, this realm is typically divorced from the experience of any particular subject and distributed across a wider field of sociality and culture. But even without a fixed attachment to particular subjects, the emphasis on accounts inevitably foregrounds practices of meaningful reflection, discursive representation and its associated forms of rationality and control, and so instantiates particular kinds of relation with affects or feelings. But this may be problematic since, in areas from social psychology through to psychoanalysis and neuroscience, there is evidence that the accounts we give of our activity are frequently

post-hoc justifications. Studies of various kinds repeatedly show that our accounts are often confabulations: perceptively aligned to situated conversational and discursive requirements and sensitively allied to cultural and social norms, but nevertheless demonstrably inaccurate or incomplete in important respects (Bargh, 2007; Gazzaniga et al., 1996; Westen, 1999).

Of course, from an alternate perspective these problems might be seen as strengths, as a way of prioritising socio-cultural rationalities in order to repudiate the purely machinic or animalistic notions of 'behaviour' that might otherwise prevail. But we would like to suggest that it is probably yet more fruitful still to refuse the dualistic opposition of these two alternatives. In our lived experience, affects and feelings get continuously allied to, and interpellated within, shifting matrices of reflexive discursive articulations – and, indeed, other extra-discursive social and relational practices. This means that we might sensibly treat discourse as pointing, more-or-less imperfectly, to a realm of affect and feelings, that we might take it as providing at least tangential evidence for their presence and influence. Broadly speaking, and in somewhat different ways, this is the kind of strategy adopted in this special issue by Campbell, Frosh and Baraitser with respect to affect, as well as by Sullivan and Ussher et al. with respect to feeling. To the extent that these papers effectively evoke this realm, the strategy might be deemed successful. However, to the extent that they might be seen to both reify and elide the very phenomena they try to evoke, or to raise methodological conundrums to which they appear largely blind, the strategy could be seen as problematic. We do not presume to judge this issue, nor to claim that we have answers or ways forward. It nevertheless seems clear that if critical psychology is to engage meaningfully with affect and feeling, and indeed with the body more generally, it will need to develop new methodological criteria, new analytics (Brown et al, 2007). The potential costs and benefits of any such developments will, we anticipate, underpin future debate in this area.

And finally ...

Sadly, this will be the last issue of the *International Journal of Critical Psychology* with its current publisher. The economics of journal publishing are ever more rapacious and, particularly in the realm of

psychology, bound up with the growing pressure to attain impact factors and provide a variety of electronic services. In such a context, and with considerable regret we have decided to move to a bigger publisher. Lawrence and Wishart took this journal on when no other publisher would, in recognition of the political need for such a forum, and for this the international community of critical psychologists owes them a substantial debt of gratitude. On a more personal level, thanks are due to Sally and Cat at Lawrence and Wishart for their vision, generosity and diligence.

From April next year the *International Journal of Critical Psychology* will be published by Palgrave Macmillan. The move to this publisher has been negotiated by a small team who will jointly edit the re-launched journal, and who have also decided upon a change to the title. The re-launched journal will be called *Subjectivity: International Journal of Critical Psychology*. This new title simultaneously reflects both the journal's particular focus and its interdisciplinary reach. It signals an intention to focus upon a topic that is alternatively ignored, dismissed or massacred by mainstream psychology, but which has many resonances – not just within critical psychology but for scholars in cultural studies, sociology, social theory and elsewhere.

The first issue of the re-launched journal will appear in April 2008. It will benefit from the facilities and support a larger publisher can provide, including online access to papers, web submissions for authors, and indexing in relevant databases. In the interim period before all of these facilities become available, authors wanting to submit papers can send them direct to one of the editors:

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Papers can also be sent to us via the new publisher at: subjectivity@palgrave.com

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