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Bodies and affect in non-traditional learning spaces

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ABSTRACT
This paper considers the 'knowledge economy' as it is used in education rhetoric to establish social and educational consent for significant changes both to the spatial organisation of classrooms and their affective economies. We draw on ethnographic data from a study of 'non-traditional classroom spaces', where the spatial organisation of schooling emerged as a potential fulcrum through which the imaginary of the conventional primary classroom was being reconceptualised. Traditionally configured classroom spaces and the learning that takes place within them were being challenged and replaced by notions of twenty-first century learning in 'agile' learning environments. In the context of this reform agenda, these open-plan spaces were seen as offering new prospects for participation in a globally connected and competitive economic world that requires students to continuously adapt, innovate and respond creatively to a range of different problems. We consider how these everyday moments function as conceptual encounters between affective, embodied experiences and educational reform discourses that rationalise the implementation of non-traditional classroom spaces in ways that have very little to do with children and their futures. This cultural approach takes a step aside from numerous, and necessary, critiques of recent educational policies per se, in order to consider what might be learned from the uncanny spectres of child bodies that haunt them. The paper draws attention to examples of children's affect in non-traditional classrooms and what that may tell us about current educational reform when sacrifice forms part of the missing account of educational reorganisation for the knowledge economy.

KEYWORDS
Bodies; affect; knowledge economy; non-traditional classrooms

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Bodies and affect in non-traditional learning spaces

It perhaps goes without saying that a more than significant proportion of recent educational reform initiatives in Australia, as in other developed nations, have focused heavily on the importance of educational quality, effectiveness and outcomes. These reforms are rationalised on the basis of educational aims that acquiesce to the dominance of the economic goals of education, particularly the emergence of, and adaptation to, the knowledge economy. The knowledge economy in its various empirical and normative versions has had increasing effect in education. So the rhetoric goes:

> This indicates that the idea of the knowledge society not only refers to transformations in the social and economic dynamics of modern societies themselves—moving from an agricultural, via an industrial and a post-industrial service economy to a knowledge economy—but also comes with

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> a particular educational 'agenda' that calls for the cultivation of certain qualities that make individuals 'fit' for participation in the knowledge society. (Biesta, 2014, p. 14)

Indeed, the OECD suggests that education systems need to produce people who 'are better able to work creatively with knowledge, are flexible, adaptable and mobile, are globally minded and inter-culturally connected, and are life-long learners' (Rizvi, 2008, p. 78). Such a pedagogical focus is seen to be coterminous with participation in a globally connected and competitive economic environment which requires workers to continuously adapt, innovate and respond creatively to a range of different problems. In the Australian context, *The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008) outlines what it sees as the link between education, global economic transformation and occupational opportunity. One of its recommendations stipulates that schooling should facilitate 'the development of skills in areas such as social interaction, cross-disciplinary thinking and the use of digital media, which are essential in all twenty-first century occupations' (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 5). New ways of learning must be apposite to new forms of labour. Performing well in school now involves the successful acquisition of competencies that will ostensibly enable entry into 'twenty-first century occupations'.

The spatial organisation of schooling has come to be seen as a potential vehicle through which these new twenty-first century competencies can be acquired. A number of education scholars, activists and policy-makers have called for the re-conceptualisation of classrooms organised around open-plan designs (see Brown & Lippincott, 2003; Dudek, 2000; Ehmann, Borges, & Klanten, 2012; Fisher, 2007; Oblinger, 2005). Such classrooms are typically built around large open-plan areas designed to accommodate simultaneous use by multiple groups of children or classes engaged in a variety of learning activities. The flexibility of these spaces is considered a means of promoting the integration of information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure into different curricula and modes of delivery. Students are discursively repositioned as active, autonomous agents who participate in the creative and innovative utilisation of classroom space in order to accomplish their own educational goals. As we have argued elsewhere, this conceptualisation of the twenty-first century classroom operates 'as response[s] to a number of intersecting pedagogical, economic, political and academic concerns both internal and external to educational institution' (Chapman, Randall-Moon, Campbell, & Drew, 2014, p. 40).

It is with such policy directives in mind that this paper seeks to explore the value of an affective approach to education policy. The salience of the knowledge economy as an epistemological framing for non-traditional classrooms has been noted above. However, as Biesta has noted:

> The problem with the dominant manifestation of the knowledge society as a knowledge economy is that it calls for a very specific subjectivity, that of the *homo epistemicus*, the flexible knowledge worker who has made learning into its lifelong task. While from a sociological perspective that sees the education system as a function of society it might be entirely reasonable to expect that education contributes to the production of the *homo epistemicus,* from a wider—and older—educational interest in the humanity of the human being, such as expectation becomes problematic. (Biesta, 2014, p. 18, emphasis in original)

While rhetoric and government policy may wish to induce some form of a paradigm shift where the informal space of the classroom is sequestered into underwriting the knowledge economy, in practice classrooms are potentially places where contused epistemes are tried out and practised. At the empirical level of classroom practice, the normative demands of the knowledge economy fall short. This paper draws on three ethnographic vignettes taken from ethnographic data collected during a project on 'non-traditional classroom spaces'. By considering everyday moments of 'withdrawal', 'refusal' and 'diversion' in non-traditional classrooms, we can bear witness to the ways in which children's bodies and bodies are co-opted into the knowledge economy, as well as to where repression, absence, disavowal and defence form part of this missing philosophical account of modern learning environments and an account of the knowledge economy subject in education more broadly.

Education and its ghostly encounters

In 2011, we were part of a collaborative ethnographic study conducted in three open-plan schools such as those described above. The study schools were located in a Catholic diocese in New South Wales, in which a diocesan-wide transition from traditional classrooms to open-learning spaces was under way. This 'agile learning spaces' initiative involves a major shift in diocesan schools towards a whole-school model of operating within non-traditional educational spaces. In this model, space, resources, activities and teacher expertise are shared within schools and classrooms with a predominantly open-plan design with the express intention of being 'a zone for twenty-first century learning' (Overington, 2011, n.p). In some schools, these agile learning spaces have been 'purpose built', and others have been the result of modification of existing buildings and classroom spaces. The Australian Government's investment of $16.2 billion for the Building the Education Revolution (BER) element of its nation building stimulus package, was directed towards the provision of 'education facilities, through new infrastructure and refurbishments, to all eligible Australian schools' (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2012). Supported by BER funding, many Australian schools upgraded classrooms, gymnasiums, sporting grounds, halls, libraries and other facilities, while others refurbished or con- structed new buildings. In the diocese where our study took place, BER funding had in a number of schools been used to build new open-plan learning spaces, or to modify existing spaces so they could accommodate the new reform agenda. Our study sought to explore pedagogical considerations and learner engagement in such spaces, and consisted of a combination of classroom and school observations, as well as interviews with teachers conducted both individually and in small groups.

While the views of teachers about their work in non-traditional spaces varied, and were by no means all negative, our study documented a number of laments. These primarily concerned a perceived loss of autonomy and professional discretion, diminished time to extend learning activities where students were either deeply engaged or struggling with concepts, and difficulties managing school and diocesan requirements to improve student performance in high stakes national testing such as NAPLAN. On field visits, we were shown around the school grounds, where new buildings, some still under construction, well-appointed facilities, and air-conditioned offices and staff rooms all contributed to impressions of prosperity, growth and the potential for educational innovation. Yet, as ethnographers, we wondered about the silences—those unnamed losses and absences that seemed to hover over conversations in which they could not be spoken openly, and were instead insinuated in the embodied sense that our presence unsettled what appeared to be.

To engage with such questions we will draw on the concepts of 'haunting' and 'spectrality', particularly Avery Gordon's 'Ghostly Matters' (2008), Michel De Certeau's (1984) contention of the necessity of haunting to everyday life and Michalinos Zembylas''spectres' in the classroom (2007), as a method of revealing what can take a hold of our educative imagination when we allow hauntings into our epistemological and methodological frameworks. More than psychological manifestations, the concepts of ghosts and the ghostly offer a politics that assists us in interrogating and uncovering the political present, and that 'helps us realise what is lost by decreasing the "visibility" of embodied and affective practices in the classroom' (Zembylas, 2007, p. 30). As Gordon (2008) writes: 'The ghost is not simply a dead person or a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life. The ghost of the apparition is one form by which something is lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes, makes itself known or apparent to us, in its own way, of course … Being haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against out will, and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling, of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition' (p. 8).

De Certeau's concern with individual practices and everyday experiences is grounded in an interest in the ways that 'culture is spoken, written and practiced through embodied, individual subjects' (Saltmarsh, 2015a, p. 30), or as Ian Buchanan puts it, 'an analysis of culture from the mute perspectives of the body, the cry and the murmur' (Buchanan, 2000, p. 98). Within this cultural framing, we seek to configure classrooms as haunted spaces whose rituals and customs hold memories and traces of everyday practices: some of which are abandoned, others summoned, and many silenced. These atemporal, co-implicated exchanges signify 'a speaking back of past to present and future, in ways that cannot necessarily be contained or fully reckoned with' (Saltmarsh, 2009, p. 540). The conceptual work of haunting is perhaps particularly effective because of the cultural meanings it calls into play, investing sociologically oriented research encounters with reminders that our objective realities are everywhere inscribed with traces of what has been collectively rendered unsayable, unmarkable and unknowable— traces that are in turn inscribed on the individual and social body (Saltmarsh, 2009, p. 542).

Thus, a cultural analysis of policy moves beyond language representations, policy implementations and enactments, to instead think of policy as operating in dialogue with everyday life, as well as in terms of its role 'in refiguring everyday cultural beliefs and practices over time' (Saltmarsh, 2015a, p. 31). This affords possibilities for policy actors and constituents to (often creatively and subversively) recreate the limitations of their worlds and inscribe novel meanings on the surfaces of policy they navigate and occupy. It also makes way for cultural apparitions of past and present to speak through narratives, stories, folk tales and other cultural forms otherwise 'suppressed in the emergence of science as the writing of the world' (Massey, 2005, p. 25). We see such conceptualisations as offering the prospect of an engagement and reckoning not only with what is lost or repressed, but also with the present and the repression of the past, as a way to portray life in the failed state of the much extolled vision of education in and for the knowledge economy. As Zembylas writes:

> My point, however, is a simple one: we need to acknowledge and work with teachers and students to explore why and under what circumstances teaching and taught bodies are sometimes rendered as visible and other times as spectres, as if they do not exist. (Zembylas, 2007, p. 21)

In the following sections, we recount three vignettes recorded during field visits that utilise Gordon's (2008) method of pointing to, that which is lost or excluded, barely visible, and concealed, as part of the fragile project of searching for hauntings in the discourses of schooling and educative practice. Each of our case studies invokes such ideas, yet resists 'procedures for the application of theories' (Gordon, 2008, p. 24) with the intention of invoking a 'different way of seeing, one that is less mechanical, more willing to be surprised, to link our imagination and critique, one that is more attuned to the task of "conjur[ing],up the appearances of something that [is] absent" (Berger, 1972, p. 10)' (Gordon, 2008, p. 24). We then ask whether, and in what ways, these critical theoretical insights related to haunting and affect might draw attention to the unseen affective dimension of an educational policy agenda and its attendant educative practices that are together driven by fanatical obsessions of the 'knowledge economy'.

Haunted schoolhouses of education reform

> Vignette 1—Withdrawal
>
> Mrs. D. yells 'Where's Billy'. Few are paying attention to her at this stage, despite her panicked tone. Child bodies seem to be everywhere. Some are walking to get a pen or some sticky tape, others chatting with a friend, some working quietly on a worksheet, others lying on the floor doing a group task. Most are yet to notice the commotion. Other teachers are working with their students in their spaces. Some students who are unaccounted for in the common space have found it more comfortable to work on beanbags in a small circle. I have no idea who Billy is, but I do know the sound of panic in a teacher's voice. Mrs. D. is looking around anxiously, yet Billy offers her no response. She does not appear to see Billy anywhere in the classroom. She moves quickly to peruse

> the other three spaces. Panic seems to be mounting by this stage, yet nobody else has noticed. She runs to the door, and it is only now that another teacher looks up from her activities. Busy children cease work and also look to the worried teacher. Out of nowhere, Billy emerges from inside a cupboard. He says with a forlorn look that he was looking for glue and decided to stay in there a little longer or until somebody noticed. (Field notes, 2011)

Non-traditional learning spaces are busy and constantly changing environments that appeared to be overwhelming for some children in the classes we observed. While teachers considered that for the most part children adapt to, and in some cases prefer, the levels of activity and noise, there was general consensus that such environments are not suited to all students and certainly not all of the time. A number of teachers readily admitted that maintaining order and managing noise were key concerns in trying to minimise distractions so that children could learn. Making sense of disengagement and misbehaviour in these non-traditional classrooms often seemed confusing and ambiguous for students and teachers, and occasionally for members of our research team. On one hand, these spaces are premised on autonomy, active engagement, risk and creativity, and as such imply a level of activity and 'agility' in the ways they are and should be utilised by students. Yet for us, this vignette raises questions about the way resistance to the learning environment can be marked not by rowdy behaviour, creating noisy distractions or being 'off-task' (a concern often expressed by teachers in relation to these open-learning spaces), but rather by silent retreat and withdrawal to the only quiet space available.

Thus a spectre emerges of the child to whom much of educational discourse fails to attend, precisely because its construction of children's learning needs is tethered to ideas about either accommodating, facilitating and mobilising or, alternatively, constraining and disciplining active child bodies. The child's withdrawal to a cupboard 'until somebody noticed' speaks to what it means to experience a purpose-designed space for learners understood in these active and agile terms as unintelligible, and to experience oneself as unintelligible within such a space. In this moment, the material and epistemological parameters of schools and education reform are haunted by an unmarked failure of educational discourse to apprehend the affective, embodied, cognitive and social implications of discursive unintelligibility. Napolitano and Pratten describe this in terms of an 'encounter between the plurality of everyday practice, its irreducibility and un-intelligibility, and the narratives of and at the margins' (Napolitano & Pratten, 2007, p. 10). During our site visits, we observed several examples of individual children retreating behind whiteboards, under tables, or in cupboards in order to find a quiet place, whether to read, do work or simply cease 'doing'. Holloway and Kneale contend that,

> involuntary and often unsettling recollections which occur in such spaces involve the transformation and destabilization of the very mundanity of materially ordered space. In other words, haunted spaces concern the disruption of the normalized affordances of objects (i.e. how they enable and constrain 'taken-for-granted' modes of action and practice) and their attendant spatialities: mundane practices with and towards objects are shifted and the habitualized sense we make of objects is disrupted such that the configuration of materiality, space and bodies show up and are enabled in new and unexpected ways. (2008, p. 303)

The examples of self-withdrawal that we encountered in our study sites offer a powerful counter- point to the spatially constituted vision of twenty-first century learners and its repetition through the intensity of continual movement, busyness, and activity of such learning environments. Disciplining the body and governing the soul may be tightly woven into the fabric of schooling, but in every school space the ghosts of possibility and inventiveness never cease their work of unravelling.

Vignette 2––Refusal

> A young boy sobs inconsolably outside the office where I am seated. Although the office door is open, I cannot see his face, nor that of the teacher who has accompanied him down the corridor. I can hear them clearly, though, and see their shapes through the frosted glass—boy with shoulders hunched, head facing downward, his small frame shuddering intermittently as he tries to regain

> his composure; teacher standing over him (too close, I think), looking down at his head, pointing her finger in the air and waving her arms as she speaks.
>
> Do you know why you're here? Do you? Because this is the third time in two weeks that I've had to speak to you about your behaviour in Mr. W's class. The third time! So what do you have to say for yourself?
>
> The boy sniffs, and gulps a little, then says, still sobbing 'But whenever I try to have fun he always yells at me, he's always getting me in trouble even when I'm not doing anything bad.'
>
> The teacher continues, 'Well I'm very disappointed. Because if you're not on task, you're not learning anything. And we're trying very hard here to support your learning—we've developed an individual learning plan just for you, so you can reach your full potential. And you're not honouring that plan. So what I want to know is what are you going to do to improve this situation?'
>
> He shudders again, then suddenly straightens his back and squares his shoulders. Although still sobbing, he takes a more defiant tone and stance, then retorts 'To not be happy at school. That's what I'm gonna do. Never be happy at school again, so he stops getting me in trouble. There.'
>
> The teacher straightens her back, too. 'Well, I don't think that's a good enough answer. We've gone to a lot of trouble to develop an individual learning plan for you, and I wonder what your mum would think if we told her that you weren't working toward meeting those outcomes that we've agreed on? Because we may just have to get her involved if you can't stay on task. How would you feel about that then?'
>
> He sniffs once more, and says resolutely through his sobs 'I don't care. Cause I'm never gonna be happy at school again.' (Field notes, 2011)

In this scene, witnessed through a frosted pane of glass and an open door, we wonder what un/conscious practices of schooling, what individual and collective memories, and what policy spectres are invoked for teacher and child, and for ourselves as researchers. Here, haunting involves the interplay of teachers' laments and strategies to address their losses of time and professional autonomy amidst the demands of new accountabilities, and the inscription of these losses on the body of a boy in turn haunted by the surrender of happiness at school. Subjected to the dominating force of threats (we'll tell your mother), and the insidiousness and inherent dangers of being held individually accountable for his own learning outcomes (you won't learn anything, we won't listen to your complaints, you'll be a disappointment), the mandates of education reform are inscribed on the body of the sobbing child. As De Certeau observes,

> There is no law that is not inscribed on bodies. Every law has a hold on the body … Through all sorts of initiations (in rituals, at school, etc.) it transforms them into tables of the law, into living tableaux of rules and customs, into actors of the drama organized by the social order. (De Certeau, 1984, p. 139)

What remains in this individualising scene as reform is translated into discipline of the overwhelmed, embodied child by the irate teacher is the ghost of selves, and of selves and others for whom schooling and its relations of power have only ever operated as tools of punishment. While the disciplinary mechanisms of biopolitical state power that operate through schooling are well recognised by education scholars, they are largely absent in the discourses and rhetorics of agile learning spaces, twenty-first century learning and individual learning plans. Having been repressed by epistemic, rather than genealogical violence (between, for example, father and child), spectres of the invisibilised violence of reform agendas inscribed on child bodies now return as uncanny apparitions of what can no longer be—that is, unconscious or unguarded pleasure and enjoyment in the learning environment, now focused only on instrumentalist outputs. Through economic discourse and its indentured servant, educational practice, embodied, speaking selves are silenced by the clamour of 'the individual'—the choosing, competing, actualising, accomplishing, rational, responsibilised, reified individual. In what Saltmarsh has described elsewhere (2015b) as the disjunction between utopian policy promises and their coercive intents, space remains only for bodies rendered docile by processes of audit and compliance.

The scene between the teacher and the boy is haunted by the return of ghostly, invisible selves, defiant, 'demanding their due' (Gordon, 2008, p. 182) through the figure of the child who names the violence of being rendered corpse-like by the stultifying oppression of instrumentalist rationalities that preside over education in his classroom and his school. The claim of individualism in contemporary education—with its focus on 'learning contracts' and ' individual learning plans' and 'agreed outcomes'—is that selves will (or at the very least can) realise fulfilment *brought about* by continual monitoring and measuring of their submission to what amounts to little more than coercive operations of power. Yet the lie is laid bare by the ghostly form of the sobbing child who dares to openly speak the falseness of its claims. He refuses the pretence of what Ahmed (2010) refers to as the 'duty to happiness', unsettling neoliberalism's mythical narratives of individual autonomy and meritocratic success, in an uncanny calling to account of everyday logic and practices that promise satisfaction and fulfilment to selves transformed into individuals and thereby conscripted into the service of a dehumanising machinery.

Vignette 3—Diversion

Spiderman, by this I mean one Kindergarten student, begins his day with play. Against the hurried backdrop of classroom—of mother's kissing and waving goodbye for the day and teacher's hurriedly greeting people, moving desks and finding books, scissors and glue—Spiderman appears as a lone vigilante. It is he who makes the most of the newly created common area and the chaos that is the start of this school morning by using his spiderlike agility to climb and jump from the tiered portable seating block that fills the liminal space between the classrooms. Soon he is joined by some others. The dress up box has been pulled out and a princess, a wizard and two gypsies join in. The ensemble run across this third space, playing a game of 'Red Rover', excited to play beyond the confines of a traditional classroom but running quickly through this space as if they are unsure of its correct use or proper purpose. They seem reluctant to linger—is it a work space, a teacher space, a friend space, a learning space, play space, a free space? Spiderman, however, seems less concerned with such questions. He rolls on the ground, per- forms air kicks and shoots his web from his hands entangling the wizard. He carries on climbing over the portable tiered blocks and then leaps off when nobody appears to be looking.

'Look at me' he squeals, 'I can fly'!

A shrill 'EXCUSE ME' fills the air mid-flight. 'PLAY TIME IS OVER. GET CHANGED QUICKLY AND COME SIT ON THE MAT NOW. I AM READY TO START TEACHING'. (A. Chapman, field notes, DATE? 2011)

Assuming the place of an ethnographer on a rather mundane school morning, this scenario seemed to appear as an unexpected apparition, manifest out of nowhere. The busy, gleeful activity of children at play invokes and speaks back to nostalgic and nostalgicising notions of childhood as a time of playful innocence, and gestures towards the possibility of new spaces within which education might offer greater freedom and exploration. Yet even as the space exhumes and reworks such notions of playful- ness as a potential companion to children's learning, the spectre of education as a space of disciplinary constraint and conformity refuses to be silenced. These ghosts existed on another strata of classroom life, as if from a postmodern narrative, incanted in a barely visible form of spectrality made comprehensible through an engagement with De Certeau's style of 'embracing fiction through the novel, the folktale and the narrative, for its capacity to stage complexity, multiplicity and embodied experiences' (Napolitano & Pratten, 2007, p. 8). If, as Ferris asks, 'Ghosts frequently indicate that some aspect of life, for better or worse, has shifted or been transformed; the ghosts in contemporary art are beckoning and cajoling us, with some urgency, to look more closely at the current state of human affairs' (2003, p. 33), what was the ethnographer being invited to bear witness to? What were these benevolent spectres beckoning the observer towards?

In this case, the school in which these scenes were observed, like others in our study, is one in which purpose-designed buildings conform to a top-down mandate that all schools in this particular diocese would embrace and incorporate the new, open-plan learning concept. The rhetoric describing this large-scale shift claims such spaces to be conducive to student autonomy

and independent learning, and the practices of educators and students were expected to reflect this intent. While here we understand the ways in which such educational spaces are organised and utilised in terms of cultural practices: they can be understood in terms of what Youdell and Armstrong (2011) refer to as choreographies of schooling. These choreographies constitute 'collectivities in movement that is meaningful and productive, the choreographic emphasises the multiplicity of bodies implicated and constituted in the event.' (2011, p. 146).

As they point out, these choreographies and the 'interrelations of spaces, subjects and affects in everyday life in schools' (2011, p. 144) can be both productive and troubling, and can remain so over considerable distances of time and memory. Hence, we see in the vignette described above a scene haunted by affective potentiality. The productive possibility of children's playful use of the space— running, leaping about, playing rowdy games—is answered by the teacher's harsh rebuke pronouncing playtime to be over, reminding us that hauntings can simultaneously be oppressive and productive.

Importantly, we are not suggesting that the tension between that which is productive and that which is troubling in this scene should be taken as an argument for or against open-plan learning spaces as such. Indeed, it has long been acknowledged that the restrictive architectures of traditional school buildings can signify restrictive relationships and modes of learning (Gulson & Symes, 2007; Hunter, 1994; Symes & Preston, 1997) that are deeply problematic. Instead, we are suggesting that the spectre of children oppressed by schooling and its corporeal and disciplinary regimes of power continues to pervade schooling spaces—even those purposely designed to allow for movement, flexibility, creativity and independence. The teacher's shrill barking of instructions, and formally calling their imaginative play to a definitive end marks a diversion to 'forms of happiness that are directed in the wrong way' (Ahmed, 2010, p. 220).

Indeed, the spectre of schooling as itself an instrument of oppression and control that imposes disciplinary and social norms of compliance and conformity over learning environments intended to foster creativity and autonomy, audibly haunts the shiny new of spaces of 'agile learning'. Children following their desires, interests and curiosities marks a refusal to conform to the 'business' of stultifying activities in space despite its capacity to afford preferable alternatives. Despite rhetoric to the contrary, silencing and repressive practices employed under the guise of putting 'structure within the space' (Saltmarsh, Chapman, Campbell, & Drew, 2014) in order to produce outcomes required within the policy context, these non-traditional classrooms still reject the 'freedom to be happy in inappropriate ways' (Ahmed, 2010, p. 222). Disciplining the body and governing the soul may be tightly woven into the fabric of schooling, but in every school space, the ghosts of possibility and inventiveness never cease their work of unravelling.

Sacrificing bodies and affects in non-traditional classrooms

Taken individually, these vignettes present small disruptions to the discursive choreographies and logics of non-traditional classrooms and the notion of twenty-first century learners upon which they are premised. In analysing these moments, we are reminded that much work has been done on the ways that traditionally configured schools and their logics of practice similarly constitute particular kinds of schooled subjectivities (Saltmarsh & Youdell, 2004; Youdell, 2006; Youdell & Armstrong, 2011). Thus, as already noted, it is not our intention to argue a case for or against open-plan learning spaces *per se*. Instead, through our vignettes and the conceptual tools of haunting and spectrality, we have aimed to draw attention to the affective dimensions of embodied experiences of classroom life in non-traditional classrooms.

Non-traditional classrooms operate and are constructed within discourses of education reform that emphasise productivity and innovation, preparing learners to take up their place within the global knowledge economy. Such spaces purportedly harness the excitement of play, the co-operation of group learning and the autonomous freedom of children's creativity as part of a move

towards less instrumental, more progressive forms of learning focused on the needs of children. Where the dominant logic of the traditionally configured classroom only allows space for student resistance in the didactic form of 'misbehaviour' or 'disengagement', non-traditional classrooms can be viewed as attempts to overcome the 'problem' of resistance through a spatial reconfiguration of student-centred learning. Where traditional schooling requires compliance and assimilation, new discourses of learning in non- traditional classrooms effectively harness discourses of resistance as creativity and agency in order to ensure students meet the occupational imperatives of a competitive, global economy. However, in so doing, non-traditional classrooms simultaneously render some affective responses to and uses of these open-plan or 'agile' learning spaces unrecognisable and unintelligible within discourses of twenty-first century learning.

The ruptures of bodies and affects discussed in our vignettes from non-traditional classrooms can also point us to broader problematics in the knowledge economy discourses so often adopted by non-traditional classrooms. The salience of the knowledge economy as a framing for non-traditional classrooms has been noted above. However, the data presented here demonstrate that the logics of practice around which discourses of learner activity, agility, autonomy, innovation and so on are also resisted and interrupted at the level of the classroom practice. There can be no mistake that systems level policy reforms may favour a paradigm shift where the informal space of the classroom aligns to government policy goals that see education as underwriting the knowledge economy. In practice, how- ever, classrooms remain places where new formulations and cultural remainders alike invoke spectres of educational discourse within which disciplinary constraint and oppression have proven remarkably persistent.

The three vignettes analysed in this paper have, to some extent, haunted us. For us, a utopian future premised on the discipline, control and compliance of children should be required to critically examine the existential wounding it inflicts. By reading non-traditional classrooms through an engagement with the 'haunting' and 'spectrality' that emerges in everyday schooling, we can query and re-imagine the silences and affective politics that haunt education policy and educational spaces. By engaging with aspects of the affective in non-traditional classrooms and glimpsing these forms of 'sacrifice', we are reminded of the costs of past and present educational ideals, and the embodied child subjects whose learning and lives bear their inscriptions. These hauntings and inscriptions work through multiple mis- recognitions, oppressions and erasures of children's agency and subjectivities, even while the embodied child of new, 'modern learning environments' hides, sobs and refuses the rationalising and disciplinary institutional mechanisms whose purpose is to advance economic, rather than learning, agendas.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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