

Preface

This book, as the title suggests, draws from the everyday experiences as well as the harsh realities facing people on the frontline. The book recounts the stories and sometimes disturbing emotions of people whose lives have undergone sudden change or even drastic trauma and people whose feelings of comfort and safety have been shattered by exposure to illness, abuse, death, and bereavement. The perspectives and experiences of nurses, social care staff, patients, children, and families are at the core of understanding the importance, challenges, and therapeutic vitality of emotions. The people on the frontline who took part in interviews, on which study is based, are thus owed a huge debt of gratitude for their frankness and honesty. The participants discuss difficult emotions associated with care in mental health, children's oncology, and AIDS/HIV, as well as child protection and abuse, racism, refugee exile, poverty, and social exclusion. Their bravery, openness, and ability to communicate and share their emotions made this book possible. This book explores in further and richer detail the emotional issues raised in health and social care by previous research (Smith 1992, 2005; Smith and Gray 2001a, b; Smith and Lorentzon 2005; Gray and Smith 2009; Gray 2009a, b, 2010); as well as offers a new and innovative synthesis of Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labor and Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1992, 1993) ideas of cultural/economic capital, habitus, field, cultural reproduction, distinction, and symbolic violence.

There are several colleagues and people who persevered to shape my appreciation of emotional labor and care in the National Health Service and Social Work. Chief among them is Professor Pam Smith, whose introduction to the subject of emotional labor stimulated this book. Our close collaboration helped me to understand, challenge, and redefine emotional labor as originally set out by Hochschild. There has also been great mentoring, assistance, and recommendations for study while I was a student by Professor David Silverman and Professor Charles Watters. I would like to thank Dr. Kenneth Wilson for his mentorship and gentle encouragement. Thanks are also to many advisers through the years, particularly, Jenny Perry, Dr. Carla Reeves, Dr. Stephen Smith, Dr. Catherine Robinson, Dr. Robert Harding, Professor James Arthur, Angela Roberts, Shirley Bowen, Dr. Ray Godfrey, Geraldine Cunningham, Mark Stogdon, and Honor Rhodes.

Finally, this book would not have been possible without the constant help and emotional labor of my family and friends. Monica and Sofia have constantly helped me to rethink and better understand the best qualities of emotion. In this respect also my family—Catharine, Ricky, Richard, Sheona, Mark and Joyce—has shown constant support as well as intellectual and emotional encouragement. Jessica, Jack, Sam, and Zac have helped to keep these pages full of endeavor and honesty through their examples of kindness, vigor, fun, and warmth.

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