

ON FEELING AND KNOWING: EPISODE 5, MEGAN BOLER

ABOUT THE SERIES

ON FEELING AND KNOWING

Classrooms are to be safe spaces, we're told. Yet educators working within complex realms, where the tensions and discomforts of human experience offer no safe havens, know that deep learning often elicits strong feelings. Created by [Dr. Tara Mayer](#) and presented by the [Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies](#), *On Feeling and Knowing*, is a series of seven recorded conversations with seasoned educators working at the creative frontiers of their disciplines. Their insights reveal what classrooms of higher education were traditionally conceived to be and what they can become. These conversations aren't prescriptions or guidelines, but generous and candid reflections by educators daring to disrupt educational norms, in search of deeper and more diverse pathways to knowledge.

ABOUT MEGAN BOLER

Dr. Megan Boler is a Professor in the Department of Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto. An internationally renowned author, teacher, and public intellectual, Megan is currently working with a large research team on a funded study of race, identity politics, and emotional expressions in the context of election-related social media.

meganboler.net

RELATED RESOURCES

- Zaliwska, Z., & Boler, M. (2019). [Troubling Hope: Performing Inventive Connections in Discomforting Times](#). *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 38(1), 71–84.
- Boler, M. (2018). [Dilemmas of Conceptualizing Affect and Emotion: Towards a critical interdisciplinary methodology](#). In K. Gallagher (Ed.), *The Methodological Dilemma Revisited*. New York: Routledge.
- Boler, M., & Davis, E. (2018). [The affective politics of the “post-truth” era: Feeling rules and networked subjects](#). *Emotion, Space and Society*, 27(August 2017), 75–85.
- Boler, M. (2015). [Feminist politics of emotions and critical digital pedagogies: A call to action](#). *Pmla*, 130(5), 1489–1496.

ON FEELING AND KNOWING: EPISODE 5, MEGAN BOLER

KEYWORDS & TIMECODES

Emotions, feminist pedagogy, critical pedagogy, identity politics, truth

Timecode	Content	Related Reference
1:30	Emotion & Epistemology and its place in the classroom	Zaliwska, Z., & Boler, M. (2019)
5:18	Brief historical review: why emotions did not matter	Boler, M., & Davis, E. (2018)
7:45	Feminist pedagogy	Boler, M. (2015)
12:00	The revolution of the 80ies	
19:38	Emotion as a sign of social control	
23:40	From critical theory to pedagogy	Boler, M. (2018)
26:30	Essentialism and identity politics	
39:45	“Truthiness”	Boler, M., & Davis, E. (2018)

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Boler states in her interview that emotions play a crucial role in the classroom. Touching on topics such as student’s vulnerability and identity politics she asserts that in most cases the field of education neither welcomed nor acknowledged the role of emotion in learning. Studying emotions is one of the most challenging undertakings in academia (Boler, 2018). She attributes this circumstance to the legacy of modernism and the scientific revolution. A countermovement to this notion can be found in feminist pedagogy. The approach acknowledges and values emotions opposed to supressing them. However, Boler clarifies that education is not therapy. A classroom is not a group therapy session. In her publication she explains the pedagogy of discomfort, which encourages students and educators to critically inquiry their values and beliefs (Zaliwska & Boler, 2019). She criticizes western history for denigrating feminist theory. The movement radically changed education in the 80ies. Most history curricular omit the revolution. Boler exemplifies the repressive myth of critical pedagogy related to structural and institutional

ON FEELING AND KNOWING: EPISODE 5, MEGAN BOLER

oppression. Then she addresses the neologism “truthiness”. The word of the year 2005 refers to “the quality of seeming or being felt to be true” (Boler, 2015; Boler & Davis, 2018). She finishes the interview with a strong analogy: “There is a rulebook out there, which has not been shared.”