Introduction: Conceptualizing Education Governance: Framings, Perspectives and Theories

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The term 'education governance' is one of the most cited concepts in contemporary parlance used to describe and understand changing patterns in the organization of education in the twenty-first century. It dominates the vernacular of big supranational organizations such as the European Community and Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. It functions as a key reference point for national governments, state authorities, local governments, municipalities and regional offices, provincial and district departments, parastatal agencies, and school boards. Moreover, it forms the everyday language of specialists and 'experts' (governors, leaders, consultants, inspectors, auditors and business partners) involved in practices of appraising, credentialing, brokering, mediation, monitoring, and purchasing or commissioning. Yet despite such pervasive use, the term 'education governance' lacks precise meaning due to its polyvalence as a *policy strategy*, *political-economic project*, *mode of intervention*, *problematizing activity*, *vehicle of empowerment*, *scaling technique* and *discourse* or *normative description*.

Polyvalence

Such polyvalence is indicative of a slippery concept that also speaks to different sets of grievances, discontents and hopes. Education governance is experienced by some as a part of the dangerous and mischievous practice of the 'hidden hand' of the market or neoliberalism more generally, while those who fear the tyranny of hierarchies and are distrustful of top-down systems celebrate it as an

empowering tool for democratic change, innovation and improved effectiveness or transparency. Education governance makes possible new institutional forms and practices that subvert and hollow out traditional political structures and processes, including the discretionary powers of civil servants and elected councillors, and therefore works to 'disable or disenfranchise or circumvent some of the established policy actors and agencies' (Ball 2008: 748). On this account, education governance creates opportunities for new agents and agencies to intervene in and profit from the delivery of public policy, from social enterprises to businesses and charities. On the other hand, education governance is shaped by decentralizing education reforms designed to increase horizontal accountability and empower communities and citizens as 'intermediary associations' (Ranson et al. 2005: 359) who can successfully hold others to account.

According to Rose (1999), governance more generally has been traditionally approached from two different, though interlinked, angles. The first one, what he calls the *normative* theme, tackles the problem of determining whether specific political strategies represent instances of *good versus bad* governance. According to its advocates, most notoriously the World Bank, *good* governance implies less government, or at least the exercise of government power through steering rather than rowing, and greater privatization to scale back the political apparatus and introduce new agents as managers and overseers of public provision. The second approach to governance studies is *descriptive*. Here, governance is understood as the resulting product of the interplay of old and new policy actors, which takes the shape of 'self-organizing policy networks' (Rose 1999: 17). Studies within this area attempt to describe the organization, structures and operations of the multiple and complex exchanges that constitute and reshape such policy networks.

Unable to concur with any of those approaches and adding to this polyphony, or at least with the intention of identifying a running thread, we loosely characterize education governance as a heuristic device, discourse and technology of government. In this sense, we want to avoid any comfortable domestication of education governance within a single definition or elevate it to a fixed concept. Instead, we propose to view education governance in Deleuzian terms as a 'modulation', 'like a self-transmuting moulding continually changing from one moment to the next, or like a sieve whose mesh varies from one point to another' (Deleuze 1995: 178–179).

Without claiming to be exhaustive, this book reflects our attempt to think through these different possibilities for framing and debating conceptualizations of education governance with a view to offering readers a set of entry points

and orienting positions for engaging with education governance as an object of critical inquiry and a tool or method of research. The point of this mapping exercise is, first, to trace the systems of signification through which education governance is co-opted and translated into practice and acquires meaning as a dominant or contested concept. This includes a focus on the different stakes, dilemmas, motives, interests and normative commitments mobilized through discourses and programmes of education governance. Second, by mapping specific trends and tendencies in this way, the book serves an important pedagogic function, namely to provide researchers with practical tools, empirical examples and conceptual resources to help situate and enrich their understanding and analyses of education governance.

Struggles over meaning

Education governance can be reduced to something procedural and programmatic – a technique or technology of government, for example. The introduction of new public management systems captures the intensity and encroachment of these techniques and technologies 'on the ground' where they appear deeply ingrained in the everyday practices inhabited and performed by frontline staff in schools. Public management systems work to reconfigure the internal dynamic within schools through redefining the roles of senior and middle school managers; embedding new forms of accountability that bolster choice and competition; setting priorities and directives that complement new provision models, key among them being charter schools, academies and free schools; and rearticulating meanings and practices of professionalism, professional judgement or 'success', now intimately linked to performance pay indicators. Viewed in another way, education governance can be conceptualized as a field of contestation where different interests and motives conflict, collide and sometimes converge to produce struggles over meaning that involve choosing between values of an incommensurable kind. School governance, for example (not to be confused with the broader, more multifaceted term 'education governance'), aims at building relations of trust between schools and various stakeholders through empowering members of the public, be they community members, parents, teachers, staff members, students or business leaders, to bring lay and professional judgements to bear upon the actions of those who run schools, namely head teachers and middle leaders (Karlsson 2002; Prieto-Flores et al. 2017; Wilkins 2016). Governance, therefore, is underpinned by decisions

and judgements that are framed by norms and values: 'Implicitly or explicitly, governance means choosing between them' (Kooiman and Jentoft 2009: 818).

Studies of education governance therefore span and become inflected through different kinds of empirical and conceptual work, as judiciously theorized and evidenced by the contributing authors to this book. The result is a rich resource for thinking through possibilities for engaging with education governance at the level of theory and practice. Following a Foucauldian toolbox approach, this is best achieved, we argue, through combining a plurality of perspectives, analytical strategies and research approaches, thus aligning education governance more closely and rigorously to an interdisciplinary field of critical inquiry and scholarship.

In this sense, the book is a first approximation of the multiplicity of meanings shaping education governance in policy and practical terms. Moreover, it demonstrates the efficacy of using social theory to 'capture' such multiplicity, even if only provisionally and tendentially, and to develop theoretically robust approaches to tracing the configuration and dynamics of specific policy programmes, discourses, objects, practices, relations, subjectivities and their conditions and effects within 'spatio-temporal fixes' (Jessop and Sum 2016: 108). But theory, however fashionable and fanciful, must be practical in the sense that it enriches our understanding of the events, processes and discursive categories we experience and relate to, even if only temporarily and partially, and shores up possibilities for intervention and change. This is important if education governance is to avoid 'hypostatization' – excess theory and theorizing – where it risks becoming a detached signifier devoid of critical purchase as a model for praxis in the transformation of society and individuals.

At the same time, our approach to education governance is 'diagnostic' rather than 'descriptive', with the aim to develop

> an open and critical relation to strategies for governing, attentive to their presuppositions, their assumptions, their exclusions, their naiveties and their knaveries, their regimes of vision and their spots of blindness. (Rose 1999: 19)

To do so, it is paramount to avoid making any rigid claims to the precise meaning and practice of education governance in order to maintain its flexibility and receptivity to be adapted and revised over time. Hence the importance of theory to this project: 'the absence of theory leaves the researcher prey to unexamined, unreflexive preconceptions and dangerously naïve ontological and epistemological a prioris' (Ball 1995: 265–266). Naturally, therefore, we regard education governance as a continually evolving, mutating project – not just for

governments, parastatal authorities and communities, but for researchers too. In what follows we tentatively sketch the different ways education governance can be conceptualized and researched in studies of education structures and education more generally.

The governance turn

Education governance can be broadly characterized as a response to the failure of state and market forms of welfare planning (Jessop 2000). Libertarians and neoconservatives, for example, tend to be critical of top-down government to the extent it exerts a limiting, constraining effect on the capacity of organizations to self-innovate and the liberty of individuals to pursue their own self-interest and freedom (state failure). Conversely, social justice activists and those broadly situated on 'the Left' draw attention to the fallacy that citizens as consumers of welfare services share equal opportunities and capacities to secure their own competitive self-advantage in a field of choice (market failure). Education governance is a *movement or trend* that seeks to overturn some of these failures by intervening to create devolved systems of education planning managed through the interaction, cooperation and co-influence of multiple stakeholders (Sørensen and Torfing 2007). The 'governance turn' in education (Ball 2009: 537) therefore designates new modes of government and governing where power is not confined to the state or to the market but is exercised through a plethora of networks, partnerships and policy communities who 'consensually' work with stakeholders to produce more flexible, fluid, diverse and responsive forms of service delivery.

From this perspective, education governance describes a *policy strategy* for governing acentred, polycentric systems of education – that is, education systems in which central steering mechanisms at the federal, state or regional level are supplemented, substituted even, by self-organization or 'heterarchy' (Olmedo et al. 2013). A further role of education governance concerns the replacement of the formal authority of government with improved conditions for the development of informal relations of 'trust', diplomacy and cooperation between welfare providers, users, funders and regulators (Rhodes 1997). This has deep implications for education policy research which is required to focus on 'the complexity of interacting forces rather than assuming that governmental practice in a plurality of sites flows uniformly' (Newman 2007: 54). Education governance therefore has as its focus the problematics of governing highly

fragmented, devolved systems of education planning where power is not applied at particular points or reducible to the actions of a single actor or apparatus. Instead power tends to be disaggregated, co-produced and interdependent among numerous actors and organizations (Stoker 1998) to complement the distribution of power outwards to parastatal organizations (inspection, credentialing and commissioning bodies) and downwards to communities and stakeholders, thereby undercutting the costs and constraints associated with top-heavy bureaucracy and traditional government structures, including 'clunky command or instrumental contract relationships' (Davies and Spicer 2015: 226).

Complexity, anxiety and mistrust

This is not to say that education governance as a policy strategy is not concerned with the governing of centralized education systems and their formal operations and activities, typically those in 'late-developing' countries, for example. 'Complexity' is not restricted to the vicissitudes and exigencies that accompany decentralized education system planning, namely coordination through a mixture of hierarchies, markets and networks (Crouch 2011). Indeed, the goal of education governance more generally is to enhance organizational preparedness and response to complexity in all its forms (Olmedo 2017). 'Governance failure' (Jessop 2000) therefore is a recurring problem in education systems where significant instructional, financial and operational powers have shifted away from the centre and shifted towards schools and those charged with the responsibility of running schools, often bypassing traditional policy actors in the process, say, municipal authorities and local governments.

The decommissioning of certain intermediate structures and activities in favour of power being devolved directly to schools and communities has also given rise to a regulatory gap (or 'missing middle') formerly occupied by government-employed authorities and actors. Related to this are heightened government concerns over the suitability of schools and their 'governors' to discharge their responsibilities as assessors and appraisers at a time of increased decentralization and 'disintermediation' (Lubienski 2014: 424). (Here we mobilize the term 'governor' in a very general sense to refer to school-based managers and overseers of education, from leaders and trustees to business directors and parent governors.) Ironically, then, the shift from government to governance has ameliorated some anxieties (the spectre of 'state monopoly', for example, see Wilkins 2017) while intensifying others, namely how best to

govern the governors. Education governance captures elements of a neurotic government (distrustful, anxious, maladjusted) unable to fully accept the vagaries of its own reform. Hence governments in favour of decentralized education planning typically pursue forms of 'hard governance', 'things like target-setting, performance management, benchmarks and indicators, data use to foster competition, and so on' (Clarke and Ozga 2012: 1). Education governance is a 'self-contradictory form of regulation-in-denial' (Peck 2010: xiii).

On this account, education governance can be described as a 'technology of mistrust' (Rose 1999: 154) since it concerns the struggle to maintain control in the face of 'contradictory systems, contested positions and contentious subjects' (Clarke 2004: 3). But rather than concede incomplete and imperfect control, governments typically pursue techniques and strategies that may enhance their capacity to govern at a distance. In some cases, the generation of attrition and compliance through inspection, managerial deference and high-stakes testing is monitored and regulated by third-party organizations and agents to strengthen accountability to the centre. Education governance therefore entails elements of 'soft governance', namely 'attraction-drawing people in to take part in processes of mediation, brokering and "translation" and embedding self-governance and steering at a distance through these processes and relations' (Clarke and Ozga 2012: 1).

Freedom through control

The involvement of charities, businesses and social enterprises as new policy actors does not always undermine traditional organization structures and bureaucratic modes of governance, however. Soft governance appears to be less about disrupting state power or curtailing the encroachment of state officialdom and more about upholding the dominance of certain rule-bound hierarchies and building legitimacy with the government through extra-governmental relations and practices that sustain practices of 'extrastatecraft' (Easterling 2014). On this account, Davies (2011: 2) argues that it is more appropriate to talk of 'governance hegemony' and the persistence of 'unwarranted assertions and silences of dominant paradigms'. The broader aims of education governance therefore concern the optimization of techniques and strategies by which subjects may be successfully called upon and incentivized to regulate themselves voluntarily in accordance with certain directives, priorities or provisos (funding agreements, national targets, contractual obligations, statutory guidelines, pedagogical

strategies and performance benchmarks). This includes bringing the gaze of government to bear more firmly upon the actions of others and their horizon of intelligibility and morality or 'common sense', namely what counts as 'good', 'fair' or 'just'. This is evident when we look at the formation of education systems where 'deregulation' and 'decentralization' are drivers of reform.

In Australia, the Independent Public Schools (IPS) initiative claims to free schools up from the constraints of top-heavy bureaucracy so they may govern themselves, but which introduces further regulation through tight centralized accountability made possible through a competitive performative culture that compels and obligates school leaders to acquiesce to the demands of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the enterprise form more generally (Gobby 2013). These forms of intervention can be characterized as 'key fidelity techniques in new strategies of government' (Rose 1999: 152): they are integral to the discursive, political work of joining up external evaluation and self-evaluation with the aim of 'linking political objectives and person conduct' (ibid.: 149). Similarly, the academies programme in England aims to extricate state-funded schools from the politics and bureaucracy of local government so that they become 'state-funded independent schools', but which also intervenes to place limits on meanings and practices of 'good governance' so that, despite their 'autonomy' and professional discretion, schools are amendable to the statistical mapping, administration and scrutiny of government and non-government authorities (Wilkins 2016).

Supranational organizations like the OECD administer the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) to achieve similar results on a global scale. The purpose of PISA is to collect and compare data on student achievement from different countries to enable national governments to determine their international economic competitiveness. These global testing regimes constitute a new form of biopolitics and 'metapolicy', steering educational systems in particular directions with great effects in schools and on teacher practices, on curricula, as well as upon student learning and experiences of school' (Lingard, Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2016: 540). These reforms can therefore be described as the function of 'introducing additional freedom through additional control and intervention' (Foucault 2008: 67). Education governance involves 'improving steering functions at the centre' and 'improving the quality regulation', as indicated in the OECD report 'Governance in Transition' (1995). On this understanding, education governance is a *political-economic project* that echoes and redeems elements of 'neoliberal governmentality': a 'flowing and flexible conglomeration of calculative notions, strategies and technologies

aimed at fashioning populations and people' (Wacquant 2012: 69). As Eagleton-Pierce (2014: 16) astutely observes, the term 'governance' vacillates between

> the intuitive sense of hierarchical ordering (long tied to state rule) and the modern appeal to horizontal networking . . .Governance thus seems to be a kind of bridging concept between the bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic visions of politics.

Complexity regulation

On this account, education governance can be described as a *mode of intervention* for 'coping with complexity' (Jessop 2003: 3), perhaps because complexity and plurality are not conducive to regulation. Indeed, complexity is counterproductive to regulation inasmuch as it undermines the capacity of external authorities (regulators and funders) to hold schools to account for specific purposes, agendas or priorities. Any person, process or unquantifiable outcome that resists or evades capture from the 'lure of the explicit' (Green 2011: 49) and the 'cult of efficiency' (Stein 2001: 7) is counterintuitive to a system of complexity regulation. Complexity therefore needs to be grasped at the level of 'representation' and 'meta-analyses' so that it is amenable to cognitive, conceptual, visual and statistical mapping by league tables, data-driven audit cultures, accountability infrastructures, comparative-competitive frameworks and standardized testing regimes.

Education governance functions to superficially 'stabilize' elements of complexity within interoperable, complementary systems of signification and quantification, thus helping to secure the always unstable and provisional as navigable and calculable sites of 'commensurability, equivalence and comparative performance' (Lingard, Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2016: 542). In other words, education governance strives to render the internal operation of schools calculable and 'appropriable' – that is, amenable to rituals of verification and instruments of objective measurement so that they can be replicated across organizations and contexts and compared for the purpose of inscribing organizations within systems and sorting mechanisms of ranking and grades. Described in another way, these forms of intervention constitute 'metagovernance' which, according to Marsh (2011: 43), 'is a process by which the state shapes both the particular form that hierarchy, networks or markets, as modes of governance, take within a policy area/political process, and the way in which each form articulates with other forms of governance'.

Interconnectivity and problematization

Education governance therefore is also a *scaling technique* since it works to produce greater interconnectivity and overlap between the local, the regional and the national, but more broadly and ambitiously aims to produce alignments and interdependency between national and international or global education priorities (Lingard, Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2016). The production of statistical data on the educational performance of different national education systems not only helps to digitally render diverse education systems 'inscribable and comparable in numerical form' (Rose 1999: 153); they also create new opportunities for policy intervention, profit-making by large multinational corporations and the designation of 'problems' and potential solutions (Williamson 2015). Viewed in another way, education governance works to reduce complexity to causal relations between units in a fluid chain reaction, with the implication that diagnosis and programmatic solutions are possible for the purpose of intervening upon and even predicting specific 'problems'. Education governance is the use of post hoc evaluation to determine efficacy of knowledge to achieving specified goals or principles and enhancing different accountability frameworks, for example.

On this account, education governance is a 'problematizing activity' (Rose and Miller 1992: 181) and therefore more than a doctrine and set of rules about how to cope with complexity and respond to problems. It is a *discourse* or *normative description* about 'what works' and what is thinkable and practical to achieving specific outcomes. Education governance works to constitute 'problems' rather than simply reflect them (Fischer 2003). From this perspective, education governance needs to be differentiated from education management which has as its focus the implementation of policy and an operational focus on the mobilization of resources and staff to achieve a set of predetermined goals and outcomes. In contrast, education governance is concerned with the design of parameters and disciplinary frameworks under which behaviour management and administrative systems operate successfully, sometimes located within a 'neo-corporatist ideology' (Fusarelli and Johnson 2004: 118).

Checks, balances and self-regulation

Education governance therefore relates to the development of strategies, techniques and frameworks (training and evaluative tools, for example) to help

embed self-governance and steer actors towards fulfilling the requirements of 'good' or 'strong' governance, for example. This may include a focus on improved resource allocation and monitoring, resource-use efficiency, digital data use, performance appraisals, professional guidelines, quality controls, and target setting to future-proof the long-term sustainability of schools as 'high-reliability' organizations (Reynolds 2010: 18). Education governance is about strengthening the transparency (or visibility) of the internal operations of schools through engendering a culture of evaluation and self-review that makes use of optimizing-information-gathering technologies such as data tracking instruments to capture, digitize and make 'known' staff and pupil performance.

Such developments are designed to enhance upward and downward accountability to different stakeholders through processes of coordination, priority-setting and consensus-building as well as to ensure organizations act prudently, professionally, morally, efficiently, and legally. On this account, education governance is designed as a *vehicle of empowerment* since it concerns developing the capacities and skills of others to self-regulate and pursue their own freedom in the absence of any overarching authority or safeguards, albeit self-regulate in line with certain priorities, prerogatives and provisos. Moreover, education governance constitutes a *heuristic device* or *method of analysis* which can be put to use by researchers in their studies of education systems and their concomitant relations, practices and discourses, as illustrated in the chapters that follow.

Structure of the book

Despite the pedagogic design of the book, there is no attempt here at theoretical closure and suturing the meanings and practices of education governance. In fact, one of the strengths of the chapters that follow is the different theoretical and methodological approaches taken by the authors. For instance, some authors engage with more well-established theoretical perspectives (e.g. Bourdieu, Habermas, Actor Network Theory or ANT) while others focus on specific concepts (e.g. dispositions and situations) or analytical frameworks (e.g. narrative approach or political discourse theory). Far from a criticism, we understand the multifarious epistemological and empirical approaches to education governance adopted by the different authors in this book as an attempt to problematize unidimensional and seemingly bounded exploratory research approaches; to render porous those boundaries separating different modes

of explanation; and to revise and rethink the utility of traditional theoretical models that have dominated the field of education research for decades. In doing so, inconsistencies and unsteadiness may surface and become apparent. This is, from our perspective, the everyday life of the elucidative challenge of the social scientist who has chosen the wobbly and rickety intellectual terrains instead of the steady, domesticated comforts of apparently coherent schools of thoughts.

Each chapter in this book demonstrates the utility and operationalization of specific conceptual tools, theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches to generate original insight into education governance and its different operations, conditions and effects across diverse geopolitical contexts. From digital data and accountability infrastructures to public–private partnerships and inspection policy, each chapter engages with contemporary issues that can be read as both conditions and effects of education governance. Moreover, each chapter combines theory and methodologies with case study material to interlink theory and method through an exploration of real-world issues, and therefore offers readers a theoretically and empirically rich resource for thinking through the possibilities and dilemmas of researching education governance in all its multifaceted, multi-scalar forms.

The book is divided into four parts in order to bring some thematic coherence (data regimes, evaluation regimes, knowledge regimes and institutional regimes), although the chapters could have been arranged differently according to other organizational logics. In Part 1, Williamson focuses on the growth of digital data-processing technologies and non-governmental organizations in processes of education policy and governance. Developing the concept of 'algorithmic governance', Williamson analyses Pearson's efforts to position itself as a site of expertise in the generation and analysis of educational data and as an authoritative source for narrating its meanings. Thompson tackles what he calls the 'promise of digital learning personalisation'. Using Steigler's work, Thompson discusses some of the wide-ranging implications of learning personalization and related technologies – learning analytics and Big Data – to pedagogy and the ritualized practices that typically make up teacher–learner interaction. Finally, within this part, Sellar and Gulson examine the development of data infrastructure in Australian schools and school systems. Drawing on infrastructure studies, post-structuralism and interpretivist governance studies, Sellar and Gulson show, on the one hand, how data infrastructures in Australian schooling are producing a standardized national space of education governance and new market opportunities for commercial providers. On the other hand, their analysis reveals how these very same data infrastructures are creating new opportunities for these

providers to shape education governance through moral and technical narratives that operate alongside, and potentially modify, their commercial objectives.

In Part 2, 'Evaluation Regimes', Baxter's chapter focuses on the role of the quasi-autonomous non-governmental organization (or QUANGO) and how they are used by government to not only evaluate standards in education but also, through the act of inspection, govern standards in education. Using a narrative approach to reveal the tensions inherent within instruments and processes of governance, Baxter unravels the hidden discourses of inspection and the conflicted nature of school inspector's work. From a different perspective, Piattoeva tackles the ways in which global governance manifests a transnationally networked structure that builds on allies and connections to spread particular policy messages. Piattoeva asks how such a structure is held in place, how it expands and how it wields influence, and concludes by arguing that global education governance and numerical assessments co-evolve and co-produce relationally.

Part 3, 'Knowledge Regimes', opens with Papanastasiou's endeavour to explain how market discourses have become powerful shapers of education governance. Drawing on a 'critical logics approach', Papanastasiou focuses on England's school landscape, which has steadily become a quasi-market steeped in the promotion of individual choice and self-interest. The chapter considers the impact of market discourses on education governance and highlights how a critical logics approach reveals possibilities for resisting or destabilizing the hegemonic grip of the market on education. Within this part, Verger and Parcerisa offer an analysis of test-based accountability (TBA) as an emergent powerful device to steer public services at a distance. TBA allows the state to retain regulatory powers over the broader range of education actors that operate in increasingly complex and multilayered education systems, for example. Verger and Parcerisa also demonstrate how international organizations promote the use of TBA to achieve different, sometimes conflicting, sets of goals and outcomes, thus pointing to the different sets of interests, motives and stakes served by these policy technologies. Finally, Santa Cruz Grau and Cabalin offer an account of the mass media as a key site where the production, circulation and contestation of education policy discourses takes place. According to Santa Cruz Grau and Cabalin, the process of news structuring is defined by the interrelationships between the rationale of the journalistic profession, the characteristics of the media field and the powerful interests of the dominant elites. Moreover, in a context of growing societal mediatization, this dynamic appears to affect processes of education governance through legitimizing those voices that bolster a neoliberalized education agenda.

Kaščák and Pupala open Part 4, 'Institutional Regimes', with an exploration of the conditions and opportunities made available for the Slovak teaching community to engage in education governance. Based on the work of Bourdieu and developing the concept of 'participatory governance', Kaščák and Pupala explore the kinds of conditions necessary for teachers to actively engage in political debate and shape education governance. Murphy's chapter explores the relevance of Habermas to research on education governance and, in particular, research on education accountability. In Murphy's view, Habermas offers critical tools to explore the limits of accountability as well as document the damage it can cause to interpersonal relations in an education context. While his chapter highlights some of the limitations of Habermas' theory, it concludes by making a case for Habermas as an exemplar of hybridization in the field of social theory and education governance research. Closing this final part, Stevenson analyses the changing role of education leadership in the English school system following a sustained period of system reform. Stevenson claims that while governance structures associated with post-war welfarism have been progressively dismantled, a set of new actors and a more complex relationship between the state and private sector has emerged. Drawing on 'labour process theory' and a framework grounded in scientific management, he challenges the orthodoxy of a new transformational leadership in schools and argues that school leaders play a key role in advancing the 'frontier of control' whereby state and managerial authority is asserted at the expense of teachers' autonomy and their space to exercise professional judgement.

Intendedly, this book does not have a 'conclusion chapter'. This is our way of refusing to exert the 'editorial right' to have the last word. We regard education governance as something always unfinished and incomplete due to its overt political construction. Education governance is, for us, a hegemonic project and therefore continually in the making, remaking and unmaking subject to the histories, narratives and struggles of those who partake in and write it. To omit a conclusion chapter, as we have done, is to retain this open-endedness and search for impermanence and unbounded hope in the face of indissoluble truths, post-truths and authoritarian claims to 'good governance' for all.

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