An affective politics of sexual harassment at school in the 21st century: Schooling and Sexualities twenty years later

Building on work in the space of sexual harassment in schools, my contribution to this special issue continues one of the threads from the first Schooling and Sexualities conference twenty years earlier, in 1995. In so doing, I provide a contemporary account of a teacher's sexual harassment by one of her students, through a sexually violent comment posted about her on the Rate My Teacher website. Throughout, I explore the affective politics of this sexual harassment. In developing an understanding of affective politics as it plays out through an online review, a teacher, classroom, and students, I draw on the concepts of affects and assemblages, and the capacity of a sexual harassment assemblage to constitute (and de-constitute) identities. I consider how power is both increased and also diminished between student and teacher in an assemblage of gendered, sexual, and neoliberal identities; and how she and her student are re-situated through the sexual harassment. Attending to the affective politics of a teacher's sexual harassment by her student offers a way to understand violence and identities as social, material and discursive assemblages, and contributes to understanding sexual harassment in schools, particularly where teachers are targeted.

Keywords: violence; sexual harassment; affect; identity; internet; school

Reading the words on the screen of her phone, at home on the couch, she was gutted. Taking in the comment her stomach sank, her heart started racing, and her blood ran cold. She was shocked. Jumbled thoughts clamoured for attention in her head, her face growing hot as the words hit home. This was one of her students. She had no idea which one. What could she have done for them to react this way? That he could write such a thing about her, an imagined violent, forceful, sexual penetration, made her incredibly angry. So many lines crossed here.

Violent capacities and affective politics

After Massumi (Evans & Massumi 2017), I suggest violence can be understood as the limitation or curtailment of power, or the capacity to affect. Yet violence is not always a straightforward case of decreased capacity. Affects can produce more than one capacity as they are 'rhizomic' rather than linear, 'a branching, reversing, coalescing and rupturing flow' (Alldred & Fox 2017, 1164). Understanding violence as occurring through the multiplicitous connections of assemblages makes it possible to account for how even where there is a decrease in capacity in one way, other capacities might also be increased. To examine the affective capacity of violence is to examine its power, or potential; how it works to diminish and/or increase conditions for possibility.

This contribution to the special issue continues work into violence and harassment from the original Schooling and Sexualities conference in 1995, through a case study of sexual harassment, in 2015. Bringing the concepts of affect and assemblage to bear, I follow violent affect to consider its potential in the making and un-making of gendered, sexual, neoliberal, student and teacher identities through relations between words, bodies, emotions, online, and classroom spaces. Particularly, this is achieved through an exploration of the violent power of a student's words about his[1] teacher, and how this disrupted her authority in her Australian secondary single-sex boys' school classroom. Through the teacher's experience, the affective capacities of the violent words are traced as they move through her body, materialising via her

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[1] Though we cannot be certain the anonymous poster was a boy, or even a student, Rate My Teacher is intended to showcase student ratings. As the school was a single-sex boys' school, the comment was taken as written by one of its students.

emotions, and curtailed teaching in the classroom. In this way, I examine the affective politics of sexual harassment, tracing its emergence through encounters among social, material and discursive constituents. Attending to affective politics makes it possible to understand how social, material and discursive relations can be enabling and/or constraining for shifting identity positions, and how these come into (and out of) being as an effect of such relations; '[a]ffect maps the… relations that constitute the beginnings of social change' (Hickey-Moody and Crowley 2010, 401). Finally, I discuss how violence itself might be understood in a dynamic and distributed way countering its common centring in human action, and how the problems of cyberbullying, gender and sexual violence and education review sites might be addressed in schools.

The violent capacities of words

This is a paper about violent affect, and the capacity of words. As Niccolini notes, 'affect bears a potent teaching capacity… [it] is as material and impactful to teaching and learning as books, paper, or the melamine of desks. Affect moves knowledge' (2016a, 230). Words in any academic paper are intended to generate knowledge as they encounter their readers. Yet as affect can be potent in its teaching capacity, it can be potent in other ways; while I seek to generate knowledge through the capacities of violently affective words, I am mindful of their capacity for trauma. Trauma can be a disabling affective event that limits capacities for learning; trigger warnings and safe spaces can be used by educators to promote the education of traumatised students (Byron 2017). However, trigger warnings can also be weaponised to police and censor, potentially targeting courses on gender and sexuality, critical race theory, and colonial and postcolonial studies as the location of materials that endanger student welfare

(Duggan 2014). As Niccolini argues, '[g]ender and sexuality are affect-laden topics. If we purge the classroom of topics that elicit heated debate, that pique the skin and make bodies uncomfortable, discussions of gender and sexuality will be the first to go' (2016a, 244). Significantly for this paper, while affect itself has become a hot-topic through discussion of trigger warnings and safe spaces, such conversations have tended to exclude teachers' bodies; teachers' pain is expected to be hidden, silenced, to preserve the happiness of their students (Dernikos and Goulding 2016). Having presented an earlier version of this paper to an audience at a conference dedicated to gender, schooling and sexualities, I experienced someone leaving the lecture theatre, upset. My concern with causing distress, then, affects my writing, now; *do I dull the violence of the words, or do I let them speak for themselves?* Halberstam questions whether we can still dare to be surprised, shocked, and thrilled into new forms of knowing, arguing trigger warnings reduce the viewer to 'a defenseless, passive and inert spectator who has no barriers between herself and the flow of images that populate her world' (2017, 541). As this is an article, not a classroom setting, readers are not obligated to engage with this material in the same way they might be if it were presented in a class. Thus, I foreground the teacher's hurting body, wanting readers to know her experience of sexual harassment by a student. Not wishing to censor an analysis of violence, power, gender and sexuality, or constitute readers as defenseless or passive, here are the words, and the teacher's response—

> 'Without a doubt if I was left alone in a room, just me and her, I would bend her over and thrust into her plump rump with the force of a thousand suns, releasing what would appear to be the wrath of Cthulu [sic] into her after a mere 4 pumps. She is also a pretty good teacher I guess' (Author unknown)

Her initial fury slowed, as she realised she had nobody towards whom she could direct her anger. The realisation she had no idea who posted this comment made her feel ill; these were boys who she had seen grow up over the years, she had made strong connections with many of them. She felt utterly betrayed. She knew it was only one out of many, and wanted to continue to be the teacher she had been before; but now she didn't want to go to school tomorrow. Other than requesting the site remove the comment, and enlisting the school's IT department to file a request, she was unable to seek justice. Her attempt at calm rationality to just get on with it and deal with the post, lost the fight with a prickling, cold anxiety, as fear took hold, mind and body inseparable.

When she read it, the post had been online for five weeks. During that time, she had continued her work as teacher, none the wiser. While the words *about* her existed online, they had not yet connected *with* her. The students acted the same way they always had; on the surface, nothing was different, even though the words had been public for weeks with an unknown number of eyes having read them. It was only through her own reading, creating a new connection between the student and herself, that anything changed. The power of those words, once she encountered them, saw her teacher's identity wrested away by an anonymous student. In posting his imagined sexual encounter online he had undone her identity as a confident, successful teacher, producing himself as powerful and monstrous, in control of his sexually violated teacher.

Assemblages and affects

By now, in education research, Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concepts of affect and assemblage have been used extensively (see for example Hickey-Moody 2013; Mulcahy 2012; Renold and Ivinson 2014; Ringrose 2011). As such, I draw on their application in this body of work to offer only a brief summary here, extending it into the space of violence. Assemblages (sometimes referred to as bodies, following Deleuze and Guattari [1987]) are relational, constituted by affects and the connections they make. They can be made up of all manner of matter: corporeal, technological, mechanical, virtual, discursive and imaginary (Renold and Ivinson 2014). To think in terms of assemblages affords an engagement that takes in all aspects of existence, broadly conceived by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) as the social, material and discursive. It is through connections and relations that assemblages take on meaning, '[a] body's function or potential or 'meaning' becomes entirely dependent on which other bodies or machines it forms an assemblage with' (Malins 2004, p. 85). Following Niccolini, affect is taken as 'embodied intersections of feeling, emotion, and sensation that resist containment in a single body' (2016b, 3), 'an intensity coupled with movement' (4). Because they affect bodies, and can be transmitted between them, affect is social; affective relations are intensities that produce new affective and embodied connections (Mulcahy 2012). Affective politics is the power that emerges through the relations between assemblages as they connect (and disconnect). Attending to affective politics is understood as attending to how 'the capacity of becoming is extended or captured' (Ringrose and Coleman 2013, 126). Alldred and Fox (2015) illustrate how sexuality might be understood using the concept of assemblage, or as a 'sexuality-assemblage'. In this way, sexuality is understood 'not as a bodily attribute, as the foundation of a subject's identity, or as the basis for individual sexual preferences, but as an assemblage

of multiple bodies, things, ideas and social formations that cut across cultural and natural realms' (Alldred and Fox 2015, 906-907). Sexuality is not located with bodies and individuals, but produced in affective flows within assemblages which produce further sexual capacities (Alldred and Fox 2015). To examine assemblages requires consideration of what they enable or disenable bodies to do, and how this aligns with dominant power formations (Ringrose 2012). As outlined at the beginning of this paper, violence is understood as the limitation or curtailment of power, or the capacity to affect. I approach sexual harassment as an assemblage, constituted by affective flows of violence between (teacher, student, online, classroom, neoliberal, gender, sexuality) assemblages. The sexual harassment in this case study resulted in changes to the ways those assemblages were themselves constituted; some decreased in capacity, or were disenabled, while others increased, enabled.

Territorialisation and deterritorialisation

Assemblages are always moving, shifting with various affective flows to connect with new assemblages, and move away from others. When an assemblage stabilises, crystallising through repetition, it becomes a territory. Territories enable social identities to become recognisable; as Albrecht-Crane (2011, 143) suggests, 'territorialisations provide us with social identities, with a social face'. In schools, for instance, territories emerge as teacher and student, as well as gendered, and sexual identities. Yet assemblages are also made up of deterritorialising elements; where territorialising forces create order, at the same time, there are deterritorialising forces which escape it. Affects such as these, 'lines of flight', break away from territories to move in new directions (Kofoed and Ringrose 2012), and form new connections. Deterritorialisation occurs through 'the movement by which territories are eroded as

new assemblages are formed' (Dovey and Fisher 2014, 50). I now turn my attention to how sexual harassment resulted in deterritorialisation, and the changes it wrought.

Deterritorialising gender and sexuality

The sexually explicit depiction of women for political purposes is not limited to the internet, although the internet can intensify its effects. In schools, sexual harassment of teachers is a means through which teacher authority is contested, and power relations associated with identities reasserted (Robinson 2012). The sexual harassment of women teachers by male students is often linked to a dominant Western discourse of authority which encompasses hegemonic, white masculine values (Robinson 2012). Boys can exert power over women teachers by drawing on gendered resources available to them through school and society more broadly, allowing them to transgress institutional power between teacher and student (Robinson 2000). Online, the sexual harassment of women does the same work as it does offline, patrolling gender boundaries using insults, hate, and threats of violence and/or rape, to ensure women and girls are either kept out of, or situated subserviently in, male-dominated spaces (Mantilla 2013). Perhaps her class had become an uncomfortable territory for the student, and he was 'putting her back in her place'. He had taken a line of flight into sexually taboo territory, dragging her non-consensually with him. Not only did he deterritorialise the usual teacher and student relationship by taking it into a sexual space, he also deterritorialised her humanity, through grotesque and monstrous imagery with which he imagined his penetration of her body. However, though an online post may be an encounter between one person and another, such as student and teacher, the internet enables affective capacities to intensify far beyond the walls of a classroom. Technology intensifies affective capacities through wide transmission, and committing

words to screens where they may be captured and endure, making further encounters with other bodies possible.

Deterritorialising teachers

The online post gained further complexity through publication on review site, 'Rate My Teacher'. Underpinned by neoliberal notions of meritocracy, review sites encourage commercial enterprises to improve their offerings, to be better than competitors, and thus increase profits. Education review sites are but one of many interactive sites set up for users to 'rate' school experiences, just as they post reviews of meals, holiday experiences and services. Review sites promote themselves as enabling a politics of participation, where consumers feel they matter. Posting reviews reconfigures democratic participation in market terms, interpellating the reviewer as a neoliberal citizen-subject (Kuehn 2013). As Davies has it, '[e]ven when individuals or organizations are not acting in a market, the project of neoliberalism is to judge them and measure them as if they were' (2014, 31). Applying neoliberal principles to schooling shifts traditional student and teacher relationships into a different space; students become consumers, teachers, service providers. Where neoliberal principles connect with schools, '[t]eachers' bodies now become commodified objects within a market model that promises customer satisfaction—and the customer is always right' (Dernikos and Goulding 2016, 2). Differing from commercial review sites, education review sites cloak student reviewers within a protective buffer of anonymity, preventing negatively reviewed teachers seeking revenge in the classroom. Within schools, students' assemblages commonly situate them with a limited capacity to affect teachers, and an increased capacity to be affected. While student evaluation of teachers is the norm in higher education, it is not common practice in schools. Education review sites

enable students to re-situate themselves by anonymously reviewing, rating, and ranking, rather than being reviewed, rated, and ranked; a neoliberal politics of participation enables them to feel they matter, to reconfigure themselves. In this way traditional notions of authority can be challenged; perhaps these violent words were posted in an attempt to resist authority. boyd (2011) notes those who rely most heavily on online anonymity are those most marginalised by systems of power. The potential to write anonymous yet public reviews can contribute to deterritorialising what may be uncomfortable classroom spaces for students, and teachers' power. Neoliberalising capacities seek to rationalise, quantify and de-mystify sources of sovereign authority (Davies 2014). Teachers are situated within discourses, practices and materialities that have crystallised over time, constituting them in territories of authority. The neoliberalising affective capacity of posting to an education review site increases students' power through their capacities as 'consumers'. Through a student's posting, and other students' (potential) reading of those words, the teacher's authority was de-mystified—she might have power at school, but she is still a woman, able to be rated and violated by a man.

The post in this case threatened sexual violence, more trolling than a review proper. Phillips (2011) argues trolling may not be overtly political, but is grounded in resistance to all forms of authority. She suggests the transgressions of trolling can draw attention to dominant cultural mores, and existing social systems (Phillips 2015). Teachers' positions are territories with increased affective capacity, with the ability to limit or extend students' affective capacities. The anonymity of the website increases students' capacities, through encouraging consumerist, transparent feedback on teachers; but also protects those who post harmful and damaging statements. As the post was anonymous, in this instance the teacher could not push back; she could not apply

school discipline policy, or rely on student perceptions of her capacity to punish with bad grades. The violence of the words worked far beyond the 'de-mystification' of a teacher, this was more than a simple consumerist teaching evaluation. Dismissingly, in his final comment, he added, *'she is also a pretty good teacher I guess'*. By turning her primarily into his sexual object, her capacity as teacher hardly worth mentioning, he changed her, and her territory within the school. She became something else; the resources available to him through gendered norms took away her teacher-power, in some ways re-situating her as his victim.

Deterritorialising a classroom

The post remained online for weeks. The ongoing emotions during that time were unpleasant. She returned to the once familiar space of her classroom, the space which over years she had made her own. Her everyday world was no longer as it appeared. The rows of desks in her classroom now posed a threat, filled as they were with boys. She remained seated at her desk at the front of the room, present, but not really there, while the post remained online. Ordinarily she would be on her feet, animated and talking with her hands, moving around the room, between boys' desks, writing on the whiteboard. But the memory of the words prevented her from circulating among the boys, owning the space. The words haunted her, casting a 'non-present presence' (Blackman 2015)*, the temporality of her encounter with the words clashing with the temporality of her being in the classroom. She remained hidden behind the teacher's desk, silently suppressing the pain she experienced. As a teacher, her body had been territorialised into enacting 'appropriate' expressions of emotions by Western school practices* (Zembylas 2003)*. Though the boys couldn't see it, shame and fear rooted her to the front of that room, to survey the room filled with their expectant faces. She*

wanted to be able to see all of them, and did not want them behind her at any point; were they reading the post there, on their internet-enabled devices, in class? She feared them imagining doing to her, there, in the flesh, what the scenario so vividly described regarding her 'plump rump'. Moving to the whiteboard meant her back was to the class. So, she stayed in her seat. Her fear and anxiety deterritorialised her teacher-identity; she became a faded version of her former self. She didn't know who it was out of the hundreds of boys she would encounter each day, or if it was even a former student, no longer on her rolls. She couldn't confront them, either; only one had written the comment, and many were not even aware of the site. She was also ashamed. She didn't want them to view her as a victim, potential prey for further adolescent sexual power plays, attempted displays of manhood. Contemplating who among her students had written the words, or even who might have seen them, she was no longer a smiling, approachable teacher, but withdrawn, and silently angry. She pulled back, unable to perform her 'competent teacher' self, suspicion of each young face flooding her with anxiety. Indeed, for most boys, it would have seemed she had changed for no apparent reason. The unpleasant emotions wrestled with her desire to be a good teacher. She just wanted things to go back to how they were. The hurtful words of one boy had fractured her teacher-assemblage, and in doing so anonymously had damaged her teaching relationships with all the boys. For those weeks, she was frozen, unable to look the boys in the eyes. She was no longer a teacher, just a body at the front of the room with a teaching registration. One anonymous boy's hurtful words had ripped away her identity, both as teacher, and as a sexually autonomous woman, reconfiguring her otherwise.

As can be seen in this case study, the teacher was deterritorialised following her encounter with an online post. The posted words alone did not disrupt her; it was

through her encountering the words, and re-entering her classroom, that relations were made and the words gained affective capacity. Identities are constantly changing ways of being that can be extended or captured as different relations are made. Where the teacher's capacity for becoming was arrested, captured as violated woman, the student's was extended through his violence towards her. While the post remained online, positioning her within neoliberal, gendered and sexual assemblages as it did, her teaching suffered. Her own capacity for becoming, to constitute herself as a teacher as she wanted to be, was only extended again after the post was taken down.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me?

This familiar English language childhood rhyme encourages victims of name-calling to ignore taunts, and highlights how commonly, violence is understood to be actual physical assault. To think about violence with affect and assemblage, a 'sexual-harassment-assemblage', takes in not only physical assault, but violence enacted by other means. In her (1998) paper, Valentine explores her own experience of harassment through homophobic mail, silent phone calls, threatening answering machine messages, and being 'outed' to her parents. The extract below details Valentine's embodied response to anonymous, threatening hate mail, illustrating the violent capacities of words:

> 'There are physiological aspects to this, too… Opening Letter 8, I suddenly began to gag and choke. Since then, whenever I feel stress, this sensation of retching returns. The throat is a locus of the exchange between inside and outside. It is as if my body is defending itself against the filth of the letters, by expelling the poison' (Valentine 1998, 322-323).

Thinking about sexual harassment as an assemblage enables violence to be understood as extending further than exclusively physical altercation. Approaching violence as an

assemblage, enables it to be understood in more nuanced ways. Valentine's experience with hate mail and phone calls saw the violence of words materialise physiologically through her body. Similarly, Henry and Powell (2015) argue that harms originating online can have real bodily and psychical effects, and are increasingly central to how individuals experience and live their everyday lives. They suggest harms experienced by women through online spaces 'may have at least as much impact on a person as traditional harms occurring against the physical body' (Henry and Powell 2015, 765). The sexual harassment experienced by the teacher in this case study saw her suffer emotionally, her fear, anxiety and anger affecting her movements in her classroom, and her capacity to teach. A body might then be understood as able to experience violence through embodied meaning-making; as Springer has it, '[v]iolence as a mere fact is meaningless without subjective content, or the ways in which it is experienced, lived, represented, desired, refused or endured by individuals, groups and societies… violence acquires meaning through its affective and emotional content' (2012, 137). Here, violence caused pain, emotional distress and a shift in power, while also disrupting teaching (and presumably, learning).

Violence can be territorialising, or order imposing, or a deterritorialising line of flight, depending on what it does in an assemblage. A teacher's capacity to rank and measure her students might be understood as enacting neoliberal violence, situating those in her classroom as students, and limiting their capacities for becoming otherwise. When a violence-assemblage connects with gender, or sexuality assemblages, it can become sexual violence, such as sexual harassment. Sexually harassing violence which deterritorialises a teacher's authority with her students, simultaneously draws on gendered discourses to produce a patriarchal relationship where a woman is sexually dominated by a man, in this instance also connecting with neoliberal discourses to

render the teacher's body a product for consumption and evaluation. This violent line of flight decreased the teacher's capacities, repositioning her as victim/less-than-human/consumable, while increasing the student's, as he repositioned himself as attacker/monster/consumer.

What can words do, and what can be done about it?

In this paper, sexual harassment has been understood as an assemblage constituted by violent affects, which both limited and extended the potential of affected bodies. Here the violent practice was an online post, with affective capacities playing out in and around a school space through processes, bodies, and emotions. In this way, a teacher reading online commentary about her own sexual violation can be understood as having affective capacity as 'language can operate as affect: it has the power to impact materially on the body, to course through and between bodies' (Dawney 2011, 601). Though conveyed online, when words and body connected their violent affects registered materially, as painful emotions. These embodied affects elicited a response which enacted a different teacher subjectivity, affecting what was possible for everyday classroom practice, and for relationships between teacher and students.

The affective capacity of an online post is multiple; while words may originate with a single post, the technological context of the internet means the capacity for harm moves with words, encountering bodies with offline effects. The internet provides instant access to images and words, able to be shared and consumed by desiring bodies at the touch of one's fingertips, via smartphones in purses and pockets. Audio and video content multiplies possibilities for sensory engagement, increasing capacities of users to both affect, and be affected by, online material. Repeated harassing affects such as those of cyberbullying connect distant spaces, producing harmful territories within individual

bodies. High profile cases of cyberbullying have shown it has the capacity to seriously harm victims, and can even be fatal. In Australia, the suicide of television personality Charlotte Dawson highlighted the relationships between cyberbullying, social media, and depression. In Victoria, cyber-bullying can result in a criminal conviction under the state's stalking offences. The case of Allem Halkic, a 17-year-old boy demonstrates the violent capacity of words, and how his bullying via SMS and internet communication, and resulting suicide, has been approached through law. Halkic's convicted bully told the court 'I did not realise the effect of my words' (Milovanovic 2010), and his father has sued for damages over the psychiatric injuries he has suffered since his son's death (Mickelburough 2016). Halkic's cyber-bullying assemblage highlights the flow of affects moving across bodies through words, and their harmful, embodied effects. Yet not all violence produces such intense affective responses. While stalking offences can recognise the potentially extreme capacities of cyber-bullying violence, it is perhaps not appropriate for all violence to be addressed in the same way.

School-based approaches have been suggested as a means for preventing violence not only in schools, but preventing violence before it occurs in society as a whole. Described as primary prevention approaches, such strategies work across communities, organisations and society to address underlying drivers of violence; where this violence affects women, primary prevention approaches seek to address gender inequalities (Kwok et al. 2017). In Victoria, the Department of Education and Training has a number of programs in place towards preventing violence in schools and beyond, including online violence (Bully Stoppers), child abuse by trusted adults (PROTECT), gender-based violence (Respectful Relationships), and homophobia and transphobia (Safe Schools). Schools are recommended to address sexual harassment through both policy, as well as broader socio-cultural approaches to create a culture of respect,

gender equality, and acceptance for all (see particularly for example Hill and Kearl [2011]; also Flood, Fergus and Heenan [2009]). This paper has considered the gendered and sexual aspects of the student's harassment of his teacher, which gave this harassment assemblage a different character to other types of cyberbullying or violence. In measures taken to address sexual harassment in schools, the gendered aspect of such violence must be taken into account; as observed by Henry and Powell (2014), virtual forms of sexual harassment are rarely framed according to a broader pattern of gender-based violence. They suggest strategies to prevent online sexual violence must align with other violence prevention frameworks to address social constructs such as gender inequality, but must also take into account the distinctive characteristics that online environments contribute to virtual forms of sexual violence. Addressing gendered and sexual violence through school-based approaches can contribute to the reduction of violence in society more broadly, and how it works to limit capacities relating to gender and sexuality.

In returning to the notion of safe spaces addressed earlier, it is important to consider how schools might be 'safe spaces' not only for students, but also their teachers. McMahon et al. (2017) note that while there have been many programs and interventions to reduce violence in schools, almost all have focused on violence and aggression toward students. They suggest much can be learnt from whole-school, primary prevention approaches taken up in schools, but that these must also incorporate the needs of teachers. The experience in this case study, and of Dernikos and Goulding (2016) with Rate My Teacher, illuminate the harmful capacities of teaching evaluations as capable of inflicting pain, triggering trauma, and encouraging sexism and objectification (see also Sprague and Massoni 2005; Felton et al. 2008). What is the use of such sites, if they undermine teachers' ability to teach? In higher education, Davison

and Price (2009) note the popularity of a similar site, 'Rate My Professor', and how seriously it is taken by students steeped in consumerist values. Sexualisation is explicitly built into this site, as educators are rated on 'hotness'. Finding the evaluations not to be 'good data', yet aware such sites continue to grow in popularity, Davison and Price (2009) urge institutions to develop their own well-designed versions of the sites, and make data summaries available to students. In schools, where students are frequently unable to provide feedback on teaching, websites such as Rate My Teacher can grant students a degree of (neoliberal) participation. Davison and Price's (2009) suggestion that institutions might develop their own student evaluations could also be considered by schools. However as demonstrated here, and by Dernikos and Goulding (2016), anonymous student evaluations can harm teachers. Student evaluations tend to decrease the capacities of some groups more than others, such as women (Atkinson & Grether 2017), LGBTQ (Russ, Simonds & Hunt 2002) and sessional/adjunct teachers (Sperber 2017), playing out along 'group-based lines: (cis) male professors are rated more positively than (cis) female, White professors are rated more positively than professors of color' (Sensoy & DiAngelo 2017, 566). Should schools consider introducing student evaluations, they might consider making them confidential, rather than anonymous (Kogan, Schoenfeld-Tacher and Hellyer 2010). In this way, students could participate in a way that attends to specific questions about teaching and learning, and affords less capacity for anonymous violence than currently possible through Rate My Teacher.

The more things change, the more they stay the same

The 2016 *Schooling and Sexualities* conference followed the first conference, held in October 1995. One objective of the original conference was to open up 'the hidden

dimensions of sexuality and schooling' (Laskey and Beavis 1996, p.iii). Building on a paper presented at the *Schooling and Sexualities Conference: 20 years on*, I have attempted to reveal a further hidden dimension of schooling and sexuality, exploring the affective politics of a student's anonymous sexual harassment of his teacher. Using the words of the original post and the teacher's story, I have used autoethnography to provide a sense of the affects at work. As such, I have attempted to take readers into the world of the narrative, inside a teacher's classroom, in such a way that they can extrapolate meaning from the account to others. Usually, as in the case of this paper, autoethnographers do not live through experiences to write about them, but write about experiences flowing from, or made possible by being part of a social group, which they then consider using methodological tools and research literature (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2010). Here I have drawn on personal experience to examine the social setting—a boys' school—in which I was situated as a teacher-researcher. As it was posted anonymously, this paper does not identify the original author of the post. Until this point, the teacher has also remained unidentified; although written in the third person, this case study details one of my own experiences as a teacher. Writing about one's own pain is difficult, writing from a third person perspective affords me some distance. Words can indeed be traumatising, and while the hurt they elicited has diminished with time, it is easier to attempt analysis through writing as though this happened to somebody else, to deterritorialise my own hurt. While the capacity of the post is explored from a teacher's perspective, my own perspective, anonymity makes it impossible to give the same attention to that of the student. Therefore, discussion about his increased and decreased capacities is theoretical. However, the emphasis of this paper is not on people themselves, but the affective politics of violent words, and how

affect moved throughout online, social, spatial, material and emotional spaces to constitute different assemblages, and as such, social identities.

In the decades since the original conference, some things have changed while others have not. Conference organiser Jane Kenway (1996) detailed a period of economic rationalism where students were implicitly reduced to economic and cognitive units. This remains the case in Australia, where students are ranked and positioned against their peers through measures such as the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), and acquire 'twenty-first century skills' and various 'capabilities' throughout their education to facilitate their economic productivity upon leaving school. Kenway also spoke of a time where education policy did not understand students as both constructed and embodied, and where schooling operated with a blindness to the ways in which sexuality, identity and power are 'woven through the fabric of school life, for better or worse' (1996, 1). Papers from that conference reveal concerns in schooling and sexualities from twenty years ago, such as the social construction of sexual identities; sex education; teaching against homophobia; and violence, harassment and abuse. What *has* changed, since the time described by Kenway, are initiatives such as Safe Schools and Respectful Relationships, which recognise students' identities as constructed and embodied, and that sexuality, identity and power are implicated in schooling and violence. Unfortunately, the need for such initiatives also speaks to the violence and sexual harassment that still occurs in schools, even if the methods have evolved.

Twenty years on, social network sites are digital extensions of the schoolyard (Dobson and Ringrose 2015). As illustrated in this paper, school spaces and online spaces are intricately connected, and increasingly, the same space. Teachers' bodies and home spaces are co-constituted with school space, through connection with online

spaces. This paper has brought the focus of schooling, sexualities and violence from the original conference, into contemporary discussion of how sexual harassment can play out in schools in the 21st century. Understanding the practice of online sexual harassment, and what it can do, warrants further consideration, while attending to how the internet can increase its affective capacities (see for example Kofoed and Ringrose [2012] on affect and sexualized cyberbullying, and Henry and Powell [2014] on 'technology-facilitated sexual violence').

Understanding sexual harassment and various identities as assemblages, I have attempted to show how teacher and student identities were de/re/constituted through a violently affective encounter between a teacher, and a comment made on Rate My Teacher by an anonymous student. Sexual harassment (and the violent affect it produces) has been an issue since before the online era; while the capacity for harm is the same, the context and scale for experiencing it has increased as technology enables previously distinct spaces to fold into each other. Relationships however, remain at the heart of the issue, as thinking about the affective politics of assemblages demonstrates. As such, relationships might continue to provide the focus for future attempts at addressing sexual harassment within education.

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