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**Title of Paper:**

**A queer politics of emotion: reimagining sexualities and schooling**

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**Abstract**

This paper draws together Hochschild's (1979; 1983) concepts of *emotional labour* and *feeling rules* with Ahmed's *affective economies* (2004a, 2004b; 2008; 2010) and *queer phenomenology* (2006a, 2006b) as a way to address wider questions about sexuality and schooling. It highlights the value of the everyday politics of emotion for elucidating and clarifying the specificities, pertinence and complementarities of Hochschild's and Ahmed's work for reimagining the relationship between sexualities and schooling. The combination of their approaches allows for a focus on the individual, bodily management of emotions while demonstrating the connectedness of bodies and spaces. It enables disruption of 'inclusive' and 'progressive' educational approaches that leave heterosexuality uninterrupted and provides insight into how power works in and across the bodies, discourses, practices, relations and spaces of schools to maintain a collective orientation towards heterosexuality. It also counters linear narratives of progressive change, elucidating how change is a hopeful but messy process of simultaneous constraint, transgression and transformation. Key moments from a three-year study with LGBT-Q teachers entering into civil partnerships (CP) in Ireland serve as exploratory examples of the theoretical ideas put forward in this paper.

**Key Words**

Emotional labour, feeling rules, emotional economies, queer phenomenology, queer temporality, sexualities, schooling, LGBT-Q teachers

## Introduction

In this paper we turn to the politics of emotion in order to reimagine the relationship between sexualities and schooling such that the invisible barriers preventing some bodies from flowing into the spaces created by schools are made visible (Ahmed 2012). Emotionality[1] has largely appeared as the separate 'other' to the rational business of mainstream education (Britzman 2009; Lynch 2001; Kenway and Youdell 2011). It has been 'allowed in' primarily through the filter of educational psychology (Kenway and Youdell 2011, 132). On the one hand, it has occupied a space as part of 'normal' psychological development in the form of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, it has been given expression in the dominant representation of abject subjects with emotional difficulties and disturbances, where emotion is aligned with impropriety. In response, several theorists have explored how the politics of emotion are central to the workings of schooling systems (Boler 1999; Hargreaves 1998; Hargreaves 2001; Zembylas 2004; Zembylas 2007; Britzman 2009; Walkerdine et al. 2002; Noddings 1992) and the sexual politics of educational life.

When we look to the relationship between sexualities and schooling, the focus on emotionality most often appears in a heteronormative model of protection and risk avoidance (Alldred and David 2007; Allen 2007). But schooling systems are also invested in the concepts of equality and inclusion of 'others'. Liberatory, inclusive education discourses advocate responding to those who do not identify as heterosexual or cis-gender by attempting to 'include', 'protect' or create 'safe' spaces for 'coming out'. These discourses are underpinned by a problematic linear narrative of progressive change where things will 'get better' in the future (Rasmussen 2006; Rasmussen 2010). However, the rhetoric of equality, inclusion and progressive change leaves heterosexuality and its privileges largely uninterrupted. The workings of heteronormativity are obscured and the lived experiences of inclusion are often ignored. The politics of emotion are at the centre of this nexus of rhetoric and real life.

[1] The term emotionality is used here to encompass affect, emotion and feeling - concepts that are teased out in more detail later in the paper.

Focusing on emotionality, this paper draws together Arlie Russell Hochschild's (1979; 1983) concepts of *emotional labour* and *feeling rules* with Sara Ahmed's *affective economies* (2004a, 2004b; 2008; 2010) and *queer phenomenology* (2006a, 2006b) to facilitate a reimagining of the relationship between sexualities and schooling. Key moments from a three-year study with LGBT-Q teachers[2], as they negotiated their school contexts while entering into a civil partnership (CP) in Ireland, are deployed as exploratory examples. These examples help to show how bringing together the ideas of Hochschild and Ahmed facilitates insight into the power-imbued workings of emotionality in and through heterosexuality in school spaces. The combination of their approaches allows a focus on the individual, bodily management of emotions while demonstrating the connectedness of bodies and spaces, individuals and communities in the social, cultural and political mechanics of emotionality. It paves the way for a shift away from 'inclusive' educational approaches that reproduce a victimised 'other' and maintain a form of heterosexual privilege, and towards an understanding of how power works in the flow of connected affectivities in and across bodies, discourses, practices, relations and spaces in ways that maintain a collective orientation towards heterosexuality. Furthermore, through focusing on the concept of 'appropriateness', we elucidate how change is a messy process of simultaneous constraint, transgression and transformation.

This paper is organised in the following way. Firstly, the landscape of schooling in relation to the politics of inclusion, emotionality and sexualities is presented, providing a context for drawing on the work of Hochschild and Ahmed. Following this, we discuss the relationship between the work of Hochschild and Ahmed, offering a rationale for bringing together the key concepts discussed in this paper. In the following three sections, using exploratory examples from LGBT-Q teachers' lives, we put the theoretical concepts to work in a reimagining of sexualities and schooling.

**The Politics of Sexuality, Inclusion and Emotionality in Schools**

Primary and secondary education contexts have traditionally had an uncomfortable relationship with sexualities (Youdell 2004). Sexualities have long existed 'everywhere and nowhere' in schools (Epstein and Johnson 1998, 108). Silences abound yet (hetero)sexuality is pervasive in how it is 'presumed and encoded in language, in institutional practices and the

[2] This paper draws on an in-depth, qualitative study (2011-2014) with seven primary and eight second-level teachers as they planned or entered into a CP in Ireland. The teachers participated in initial and follow-up in-depth interviews and wrote several written reflections. All names mentioned in this paper are pseudonyms.

encounters of everyday life' (Epstein and Johnson 1994, 198). As a result of normative discourses embedded in sexuality education curricula, school policies and governmental initiatives, alternatives to heterosexuality most often appear as the marked 'other' to the everyday business of schools. A pervasive heteronormativity ensures that heterosexuality persistently remains privileged and reinforced as 'the very model of inter-gender relations' (Warner 1993, xxi). However, heteronormativity is not an all-determining process. Cycles of (emotional) exchanges that are both resistant to, and verifying of, norms and expectations constantly reconstitute teacher identities (Kitching 2009) and school spaces.

Discourses of equality, inclusion and progression circulate in and through the apparatus of the state, educational institutions and schools. The school is a site that is governed by equality legislation[3] in relation to sexuality and discourses of equality are projected by a myriad of stakeholders. Considerable value is attributed to these liberal discourses such that a school's ethos of 'inclusion' acts as a symbol of progressiveness. However, inclusion is not always about those who are to be included per se; more often, it is about protecting the ideal of equality itself (Ahmed 2012). Such narratives might be understood as the self-preservation tactics of institutions that very often obscure the complex politics of inclusion and empty out the ordinary, lived negotiations of those who are deemed recognizable and 'included' in institutional life (ibid.). However, it is these ordinary lives and experiences that expose the complex power-laden workings of these discourses. The teachers in the study that this paper draws upon turned towards the legitimising promise of inclusion. The legitimacy enacted by the state in CP and affirmed in the supportiveness of school colleagues was ambivalently inhabited by the teachers (Neary 2014a; Neary 2014b). These ambivalences draw attention to the complexity of this nexus of rhetoric and real life, highlighting how emotionality is central in the relationship between sexualities and schooling.

In response to the largely bio-medical psychological lens that has traditionally defined emotionality as somewhat separate to the rational business of education (Kenway and Youdell 2011; Boler 1999), many education theorists have drawn on psychoanalytical, socio-cultural, social-psychological as well as spatial/social geographical perspectives to call for a rethinking of the realm of emotions in education. Boler (1999) has encouraged the excavation of embodied memories and feelings associated with educational experiences.

[3] For example, the Equal Status Acts 2000, 2004 in Ireland forbids discrimination on the grounds of Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Age, Race, Religion, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Membership of the Traveller community.

Others have highlighted the benefits of engaging with the unconscious and emotional attachments and investments in education spaces (Britzman 2009; Walkerdine et al. 2002). Hargreaves (1998) called for a mapping of the emotional geographies of schooling. Emotional geographies are 'the spatial and experiential patterns of closeness and/or distance in human interactions and relationships that help create, configure and colour the feelings and emotions we experience about ourselves, our world and each other'(Hargreaves 2001, 508). Zembylas (2007, xiv) asserts that inquiry into the politics of emotion facilitates a connection between 'emotional practices, sociability, bodies and power'. The practice of teaching is at the centre of a politics of emotion that is at work in schooling contexts (Hargreaves 1998; 2001; Zembylas 2004; 2007) and that involves a particular meeting of personal and professional identities (Nias 1996). Gendered codes of control, discipline and rationality 'squeeze out opportunities for teachers to create and sustain the emotional practices of teaching' (Bolton 2007, 20). Teachers regulate their emotions to produce performances that correspond with what is valued in schools (Sutton 2004). Identifying as LGBT-Q (or not conforming to normative assumptions of gender and sexuality), therefore, presents as another intense affective layer in this already emotional practice (Neary 2013).

In the Irish context, the relationship between sexuality and schooling bear the imprints of a long history of complex interconnections between church and state (Inglis 1997). The Catholic Church continues to be a majority stakeholder in education with 92 percent of Irish primary schools (Coolahan, Hussey and Kilfeather 2012) and 52 percent of second-level schools residing under Catholic patronage (Darmody and Smyth 2013). However, in recent times, the power of the Catholic Church has waned (Donnelly and Inglis 2010). For example, in the face of significant religious opposition, there was governmental consensus about the emergence of CP and marriage for same-sex couples. In May 2015, Ireland became the first country in the world to vote in favour of same-sex marriage in a constitutional referendum. This is not to suggest that a waning of religious power has explicitly resulted in a new, more sexually progressive, Ireland. At the very least, such a claim would not adequately represent the complex workings of religiosity in the normative fabric of life in Ireland (Neary 2015). While this paper elucidates particularities of emotion and affect in the Irish context, it is not a comparative study and does not seek to make claims about national/cultural specificity in the relationship between sexuality and schooling.

The past decade has seen many changes in relation to sexualities in the Irish context. In times of rapid social change such as this, there is a lack of clarity about the social conventions of feeling (Hochschild 1983), and thus, norms and expectations are in flux. The

unique moment created by CP and the teachers' negotiations of their school contexts while entering into CP provided an object of exploration that speaks to the individual, relational and social in this time of change. The following section makes a case for joining the work of Hochschild and Ahmed in a nuanced analysis of emotion and affect that we wish to argue is generative in reimagining sexualities and schooling.

**Bringing Together Hochschild and Ahmed in a Queer Phenomenology**

The recent 'affective turn' in feminist and gender theory, coupled with the work aligned with the so-called 'New Materialisms', has led to renewed attention to the definitions of the terms affect, emotion and feeling. One way of differentiating between these terms is to understand 'affect' as a pre-discursive bodily sensation, 'feeling' as personal experience and 'emotion' as the naming of feelings in ways that are subject to discursive schema (Kenway and Youdell 2011; Massumi 2002). This understanding of affect as exceeding sociality promises a hopeful unpredictability for the relationship between sexualities and schooling. However, as exemplified in the everyday lives of LGBT-Q teachers, affect is not free from political and structural constraints and so cannot be '*purified* of power and resistance' [emphasis in original] (Tyler 2013, 297). In this vein, this paper posits an understanding of affect as always ideologically constructed[4].

Significantly, in critiquing the term 'New Materialism', Ahmed (2013) reminds us that the concern with the body, affect and matter is not a 'new' departure for feminist and gender theory. By joining together the work of Hochschild and Ahmed, this paper intertwines bodies of work whose origins lie in different disciplines, eras and contexts. Individually, their work focuses on different aspects of the politics of emotionality. Set within a sociological tradition, Hochschild's work focuses on the conscious, cognitive, instrumental work done by bodies individually, relationally and in response to societal expectations and norms. Ahmed's work resides in the field of cultural theory and is concerned with economies of emotion, what emotions do, the fluidity of affective flows and how bodies are aligned and orientated in particular directions. Bridging these ideas together in a reimagining of sexualities and schooling in part responds to Tyler's (2013, 299) call for 'affective methodologies which acknowledge the unfinished histories and projects of feminism' in dealing with the inequalities of the present moment. Together, these ideas

[4] This paper is grounded in a post-structural understanding of identities as subjectivated. Power is productive of subjectivity as a two-fold process that involves being activated as a subject and being subject to; it is the simultaneous process of becoming a subject and the process of subjection or submission (Butler 1997, p.83).

connect the individual management of emotions and the workings of norms through cultural affective flows that bind and orient bodies. In this way, they also demonstrate the messiness of change in ways that reveal both the limits of structural constraints and the simultaneous potential for transformation.

Using examples from the everyday lives of LGBT-Q teachers, the following sections put key concepts to work in exploring the politics of emotion and reimagining the relationship between sexualities and schooling. Firstly, Hochschild's concept of 'emotional labour' provides a frame for thinking through conscious individual emotional work in response to contextual 'feeling rules' and the micro-acts and decision-making processes that reproduce heteronormativity in schools. Secondly, joining together Hochschild's 'feeling rules' and Ahmed's 'emotional economies' in a discussion of happiness elucidates the workings of norms and expectations — often through unconscious means — and provides insight into the systems of emotional exchange through which school collectives become bound together in an orientation towards heterosexuality. Thirdly, we argue that joining the work of Hochschild and Ahmed in a queer phenomenology (Ahmed 2006a; 2006b) facilitates a more nuanced perspective on the workings of change in education spaces, demonstrating how 'appropriateness' in relation to sexualities is co-constructed by both following and deviating from heteronormative lines, as well as the making of new lines of possibility.

**Individual Emotional Work to Follow Heteronormative Rules**

Ahmed (2006b, 547) asserts that repetitive work to follow norms (for example, heteronorms) most often disappears or appears as 'effortless' and is 'forgotten in the very preoccupation with what it is that we face'. In this section, the concepts of *emotional labour* and *feeling rules* uncover some of this invisible, 'effortless', 'forgotten' work in ways that are generative in reimagining the affective landscape of sexualities and schooling. First, it is worth briefly summarising these key concepts.

Building on aspects of Goffman's theory of dramaturgy and Freud's theory of emotions, Hochschild (1979; 1983) developed an emotion-management perspective that includes the concepts of emotional labour and feeling rules. Emotional labour denotes 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display' (Hochschild 1983, 7). According to Hochschild, Goffman's emphasis is on 'surface acting'; that is, how people *try to appear to feel.* In contrast, the emotion-management perspective (Hochschild 1979) focuses on 'deep acting'; that is, the act of *consciously trying to feel* and not on the outcome (successful or unsuccessful) of this work. Hochschild (1979, 562) categorises the

techniques of emotional labour as: *cognitive* (attempts to change images or thoughts in order to change associated feelings), *bodily* (attempts to change physical symptoms of emotion) and *expressive* (attempts to change expressive gestures in order to change inner feelings). Using these techniques, emotional labour involves evoking feeling (where the cognitive focus is on a desired feeling that is absent) and/or suppressing feeling (where the cognitive focus is on an undesired feeling that is present) (Hochschild 1979, 561). While the 'deep' acting of emotional labour risks interpretation as reproducing an internal/external dualism and failing to account for the complex ways that action and emotion are entwined, the concept offers a pointed concentration on the techniques employed and the lasting, embodied effects of such *attempts to feel.*

Feeling rules are most often latent and are deployed by social guidelines, norms and standards. They govern emotional exchanges and 'define what we should feel in various circumstances' (Hochschild 1975, 289), operating as an implicit mode of assessment for the 'fits and misfits between feeling and situation' (Hochschild 1979, 566). For example, it might be expected that one should feel sad at a funeral or feel happy at a family party. We come to recognise a feeling rule 'by inspecting how we assess our feelings, how other people assess our emotional display, and by sanctions issuing from ourselves and from them' (Hochschild 1983, 57). A rule reminder appears in the form of a private reminder to ourselves, a watchful voice from another or a call to account for a feeling when 'emotional conventions are not in order and must be brought up to consciousness for repair…or checkup' (Hochschild 1983, 58). Sometimes rule reminders are overt and explicit in the overriding compulsion to call emotions into line. For example: 'You ought to be grateful considering all I've done for you' (ibid.). Others are more subtle and operate through cajoling, teasing or gentle scolding. Set by the 'front stage' arrangements of institutions, feeling rules mark the lines of appropriateness and acceptability; they reflect power relations and act as techniques of discipline (Hochschild 1979).

The teachers in this study demonstrated the varied, continuous and very often invisible emotional labour involved in their everyday negotiations of schools. Many teachers described significant self-surveillance work in the careful monitoring of their clothing, mannerisms and behaviour at school. The following two teachers' accounts provide an illustrative anchor, showing how Hochschild's concepts of emotional labour and feeling rules can be used to interrogate the apparent 'effortlessness' of heteronormativity in schools. Steve altered his physical display in dealing with older primary school children:

> Sometimes I'd be kind of conscious of walking past a group of them…I kind of find myself, sometimes…god this is embarrassing, nearly butching it up a bit…kind of a bit like, you know, even be a bit cross: "get to your seat" [authoritative voice]…stand my ground. So, it's more about "Oh god here's Steve, don't mess with him" (Steve, Teacher, Educate Together Primary).

Schools are underpinned by gendered discourses and feeling rules of control, order and discipline (Bolton 2007). Steve's reflection illustrates how inducing the feeling of being in control necessitated the presentation of a hetero-masculine gestural expression ('butching it up….don't mess with him'). Eimear's account of displays in public spaces reveals similar labour:

> Patricia [partner] and myself wouldn't walk hand in hand around here, simply because of parents [of children in her school]. Yeah and equally if we're walking along hand in hand and we come across a family with kids, Patricia looks at me 'you're on your own' and we just**...**we break away, because again like that, we're not going to leave, we don't want to rub it into people, we don't like**...** we're very happy together but we don't want to cause stress or strain for everybody or just like if we were in the pub and we saw a heterosexual couple kissing we'd be saying 'get a room'. Now OK all we're doing is holding hands and sometimes we don't break, sometimes we just link in or whatever but sometimes we just feel, oh no, just break, let it go (Eimear, Class Teacher, Catholic Primary).

Holding hands would instantly mark Eimear and her partner and so the decision to alter this expressive gesture induced the feeling of being 'normal' and unremarkable in a busy public space. Furthermore, her attempt to normalise and rationalise this decision by equating same-sex hand-holding with heterosexual kissing in public and her awareness of the tenuous nature of this comparison ('OK, all we're doing is holding hands') suggests an attempt to cognitively change her thoughts in order to change her associated feeling. She suppressed the feeling of being 'out-of-place in the everyday' (Probyn 2004, 328) and evoked, in its place, the feeling of being normal and ordinary. For Hochschild (1983, 90), such performances might be understood as 'feigning' — the active construction of a display when a correspondence between feeling rules and feeling is desired but not achievable and such 'emotive dissonance' causes strain over time. 'Feigning' is problematic in its suggestion of an authentic, inner, fixed self and, on the contrary, our understanding of the body is as a threshold where lived experiences are neither pure object nor pure subject. But what this concept highlights are the lasting, embodied effects of emotional labour such that heteronorms are inculcated and even justified by the very people they threaten.

The concepts of emotional labour and feeling rules elucidate how occupying affective states such as feeling in control, ordinary and normal requires heteronormative performances. These concepts afford insight into the contours of the everyday invisible survival work of

certain bodies and the ways in which this work is productive in constituting spaces as heterosexual (Browne 2007; Bell and Skelton 2003). However, the body is the point where the physical, symbolic and sociological act together such that it both constructs and is the effect of feeling rules – they are both done to the body and emerge from the body (McNay 1999). In this light, the idea that feeling rules require a corresponding emotional display does not assume that these rules are deterministic. Hochschild (1979) reminds us (and this is illustrated in more detail later in this paper) that resistance and transgression come in many forms and individuals defy feeling rules by refusing to perform either the appropriate affective displays or the emotion management necessary to secure a fit between feeling and situation. In fact, these defiant exchanges are often the very basis for bonds of solidarity, which are not pre-political but must be constantly re-forged through complex emotional encounters (Gray 2013).

In this section, we have suggested that close attention to the minutiae of individual, emotional labour interrupts the apparent effortlessness of everyday negotiations, revealing the ways that (hetero)normative logics are simultaneously inculcated, resisted and reformed. Furthermore, such focused attention on the techniques of emotional labour and the inculcated workings of norms disrupts simplistic, 'inclusive' solutions so often set forth in relation to sexualities in schools. Hochschild (1983, 12) points out that 'it is not the emotional labour itself but the underlying system of recompense that raises the question of what the cost of it is'. In light of this, we now move from our primary focus on individual emotional labour in response to contextual feeling rules to think about how the concepts of feeling rules and emotional economies together provide insight into the systems of emotional exchange through which collectives become orientated towards heterosexuality.

**Affective Alignments, Exchanges and Orientations**

While Hochschild enables an analysis of individual, conscious, situated emotional management in line with the latent rules of how we should feel in various circumstances, Ahmed's (2004a; 2004b; 2008; 2010) work on *emotional economies* provides a vantage point on how emotions function as affective flows, moving and creating 'the very effect of the surfaces or boundaries of bodies and worlds' (Ahmed 2004b, 117). In this section, we bring together the work of Hochschild and Ahmed in a discussion of how affective states such as happiness move across and create heteronormative bodies and spaces. Using exploratory examples from the teachers' accounts, Ahmed's concept of emotional economies directs our

attention to the ways in which power works through the 'gift' of collective affirmation and belonging – a gift which requires certain kinds of work in return. At the same time, Hochschild's concept of 'feeling rules' explicates the mechanics of the complex emotional encounters that result in the production of 'the proper state of mind in others' (Hochschild 1983, 7).

Following Locke (1997), Ahmed (2008) explains that we judge an object on the basis of how much pleasure or pain it brings us. In this way, happiness is attributed to objects if they have affected us in a good way and if we, in the future, orientate ourselves towards those objects that make us happy. As a result, we create a 'horizon of likes' (Ahmed 2008, 10). Drawing on Aristotle's conceptualisation of happiness as the 'Chief Good', she points out that happiness has classically been conceptualised in end-orientated terms. From this perspective, an object becomes good or valuable because it is assumed that it orients towards happiness in the future. In this more end-orientated version of happiness, the judgement that certain objects are 'happy' is pre-made and thus 'happiness is an expectation of what follows' (Ahmed 2008, 11). Ahmed also notes Hume's (1975) notion of happiness as contagious where 'affect leaps from one body to another'. However, Ahmed (2008) is careful to point out that this does not mean everyone is impacted in the same way or that an affect simply moves from one body to another creating a shared feeling or atmosphere. In light of this, she draws our attention to the concept of alienation:

> happiness is attributed to certain objects that circulate as a social good. When we feel pleasure from such objects, we are aligned; we are facing the right way. We become alienated – out of line with an affective community – when we do not experience pleasure from proximity to objects that are attributed as being good (Ahmed 2008, 12).

Ahmed suggests that we can also feel alienated in spaces where the dominant affective gestures are not consistent with our state of feeling. She gives the example of laughter at the cinema at a moment or occurrence that we find less than amusing. In this way, happiness is closely linked to affirmation but positive reinforcement can serve to create a certain order of things that marks out strict boundaries of what is acceptable and what is not, such that this order ultimately emerges as 'truth'.

The following teachers' accounts afford a site of exploration as to how happiness functions through feeling rules and emotional economies, orientating school collectives towards heterosexuality. For many teachers, news of their CP in school was a catalyst for certain reactions and rituals normally associated with the announcement of heterosexual

weddings and teachers were relieved and grateful for this kind of support. Such reactions brought feelings of affirmation: 'it was the public affirmation in my working environment...I thought it was lovely' (Conor, Teacher, Community Second-level). Words such as 'lucky', 'blessed', 'grateful' and 'gracious' dominated their descriptions of colleagues' reactions to their announcement of entering a CP. However, there was also considerable evidence that CP shunted many teachers into a compulsory, (hetero)normalising visibility with which they were not necessarily comfortable. Eimear was overwhelmed by news of her CP spreading around the school community:

> I was greeted by someone in the staff room with (screams) "Congratulations!" … and somebody else turned around and said "What, what, what's the news?" and I went "No news, just no news!... it's a private thing Ssssh!!" And I was forced…the vice principal — who was acting principal at the time — came running up to me and gave me a big hug and said…."I heard the great news, congratulations, we're delighted for you and can't wait to celebrate!!" (laughs). Oh fuck no!!!… I felt vulnerable in the whole thing, very vulnerable (emphasis) I thought no no no this is my private story, this is the story I'd like to keep to myself, this is my life and I'm just getting over being a religious'….The normal way was to go to the local pub for drinks and give flowers…I wanted to keep things quiet and would be grateful if we didn't go to the local pub, and equally I was not into cut flowers... This sort of threw the staff a little (Eimear, Teacher, Catholic Primary).

Following Eimear's emotionally discordant reaction, she received an overt feeling rule reminder from her principal: 'An engagement is a public expression of your love so get over it! It's out now … and it should have been out a long time ago … we all support you, we all love you, you know that!' Her resistance to these practices and insistence on privacy was assumed to be borne out of a fear of homophobia or adverse reaction. However, Eimear had been a nun in a religious community for many years and she was now experiencing a new freedom and independence in having a private life. Eimear's colleagues were undoubtedly motivated by equal treatment and a desire to be inclusive. However, they are also a potent illustration of how feeling rules are deployed and how affirmation demands a particular kind of return. In schooling contexts, we can see how emotional labour becomes stretched as part of a currency of feeling (Hochschild 1983).

While Eimear resisted certain normative traditions, many teachers, such as Bev (Teacher, Catholic Second-level), saw it as their responsibility to 'honour' their colleagues in making a speech and participating in normative traditions around marriage: 'If you stay silent you don't kind of give them the opportunity to express your joy'. There is a sense of giving their joy to their colleagues so that they have the opportunity to mould it. In this way, emotional labour acts to reproduce heteronormative hierarchies of power. Hochschild (1983)

notes how we '"ride over" a feeling (such as a nagging sense of depression) in an attempt to feel cheerful for others. Such emotional labour is very often invisible and only becomes visible in situations (such as Eimear's above) when the feeling rules do not legitimate the feelings (Hochschild 1979). Ahmed (2008, 12) draws our attention to the work of bodies to maintain happiness and avoid feelings of discomfort because 'the affect alien is the one who converts good feelings into bad; who kills the joy'. In this way, the threat of being the cause of unhappiness or deviating from the dominant discourse when combined with gratefulness for affirmation and inclusion sustains the desire to keep on "the right path" (Ahmed 2008, 13). And so, normative vertical lines are laid down to be followed and an affinity is created amongst those who face the right way.

Ahmed's example of the family further illustrates the complexity of this path. The family displays heterosexual objects that 'make visible a fantasy of the good life' and demand a return and an 'embracing [of] such objects as embodiments of our own histories, as the gift of our own lives' (Ahmed 2006b, 559), a following of lines. The offspring are expected to (re)produce what they inherit 'by being affected in the right way by the right things. The family becomes what we must reproduce as necessary for a good and happy life' (Ahmed 2008, 12). Described powerfully here is the imperative to collectively face and work towards the shared object and thus, heterosexuality 'shapes the contours of inhabitable or liveable space' (Ahmed 2006b, 565). Much like the family, schools have a series of normative lines that are 'already given in advance' (Ahmed 2006a, 119) because of their social arrangements and alignments. Following these lines binds those in schools as a collective as they are regulated by affect to orientate themselves (or 'face') a certain way. Particular work is done (or not done) in return for the gift of acceptance and belonging. Investments in 'progressive' wider equality provisions, heteronormative infrastructures and the sense of belonging on offer from the school community draw attention to how these very infrastructures — despite their failures — make subjects recognisable. However, the 'return' required involves particular performances that 'fit' and exchanges operate 'according to a prior sense of what is owed and owing' (Hochschild 1979, 572). In this way, we can see how 'bodies as well as objects take shape through being oriented toward each other' (Ahmed 2006b, 552). The practice of inclusion homonormalises what is 'queer', rendering it complicit with heteronormative 'progress'.

The concepts of emotional labour, feeling rules and emotional economies have facilitated transdisciplinary inquiry into, and connectedness between, the individual and the social, the conscious and the unconscious, and bodies and spaces in the politics of sexuality

in schools. In the next section, we show how bringing together these concepts in a queer phenomenology of affect provides a nuanced perspective on change in relation to sexualities and schooling that contests linear narratives of change and progress.

## Queer Phenomenology of Affect: Creating and Following, Conforming and Transgressing

This paper has, thus far, focused primarily on how subjectivities and spaces are heteronormatively and homonormatively shaped. In what follows, key moments from the teachers' accounts serve as examples for thinking through how 'appropriateness' is co-constructed by both following and deviating from heteronormative lines as well as the making of new lines of possibility. In this way, a queer phenomenology of affect helps counter linear narratives of progressive change that abound in many educational discourses concerned with sexualities and schooling, elucidating how change is a messy process of simultaneous constraint, transgression and transformation. First, an introduction to Ahmed's (2006a; 2006b) 'queer phenomenology'.

Ahmed takes on phenomenology's central tenet of 'orientation' (the idea that consciousness is always directed towards an object) and its emphasis on 'lived experience, the intentionality of consciousness, the significance of nearness or what is ready-to-hand, and the role of repeated and habitual actions in shaping bodies and worlds' (Ahmed 2006a, 2). She does so to theorise how emotional economies orient bodies and collectives along (hetero)normative lines and identifies how certain objects appear as reachable depending on these orientations. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty and Husserl, she alerts us to how phenomenology 'is full of queer moments, moments of disorientation, which involve not only "the intellectual experience of disorder, but the vital experience of giddiness and nausea, which is the awareness of our own contingency and the horror with which it fills us"' (Ahmed citing Merleau-Ponty, 2006b, 544). She explains how social collectives have vertical and horizontal lines that are 'modes of following' such that these moments of 'disorder' in the everyday are continuously righted, corrected and overcome as 'bodies are reoriented in the "becoming vertical" of perspective' (ibid.).

Ahmed (2006b, 562), for example, explains how heteronormativity acts as a 'straightening device, which rereads the slant of queer desire' ensuring that spaces are (re)oriented around the straight body. In this way, spaces become straight and 'allow straight

bodies to extend into them' so that 'the vertical axis appears in line with the axis of the body' (ibid.). Ahmed uses the analogy of tracing paper to elucidate this idea:

> lines disappear when they are aligned with the lines of the paper that has been traced: you simply see one set of lines. If all lines are traces of other lines, then this alignment depends on straightening devices, which keep things in line, in part by holding things in place. Lines disappear through such alignments, so when things come out of line with each other the effect is "wonky" (ibid.).

For things to line up correctly, these wonky moments must be corrected and realigned. And therefore 'heterosexuality is not then simply an orientation *toward* others, it is also something that we are oriented *around*, even if it disappears from view' [emphasis in original] (Ahmed 2006b, 560). What we can see in the first place depends on which way we are facing. As indicated above, Ahmed (ibid.) uses the example of the family tree to illustrate how facing a certain way requires following certain heteronormative vertical lines. Such orientations are the points of alignment between bodies and spaces. Bodies are pushed along 'the right path' and follow lines that maintain (hetero)normativity. As we have seen, following these lines involves particular forms of investment and attachment that promise benefits and rewards but also require a return. However, a queer phenomenology also promises a different orientation towards the everyday moments of disorder where we might 'find joy and excitement in the horror' of such disorientation (Ahmed 2006b, 544). Moments, practices, behaviours and gestures can work 'out of line', producing a diagonal line 'which cuts across "slantwise" the vertical and horizontal lines…perhaps even challenging the "becoming vertical" of ordinary perception' (Ahmed 2006a, 107).

In line with Butler's (1990) theory of the performative, Youdell (2011) outlines a moment of performative resistance that might be understood as a diagonal line. She describes how students in a school for 'Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties' (SEBD) resist and trangress the discourses and practices of the school. They enact disruptive practices (intentionally and unintentionally) that unsettle and subvert the normative vertical and horizontal lines to be followed. In these acts, they both reinforce *and* disrupt the determining nature of their 'SEBD' subjectivities. Youdell (2011) notes how it is in the simultaneous occupying and being occupied by the term that one can resist and oppose it. The suggestion here is that norms might be inhabited differently because 'sometimes the very conditions for conforming to the norm are the same as the conditions for resisting it…conforming and resisting become a compounded and paradoxical relation to the norm' (Butler 1990, 217). An example of such an imitative act that provides the potential for the

norm to be occupied differently can be found in Eimear's description of a normative wedding practice in her school context. There is a tradition in Eimear's school whereby the teacher getting married is given a printed t-shirt with their partner's name on the front. So, Eimear received a t-shirt with the name 'Mrs Patricia' [her partner's first name]. Adopting such a signifier might be read as following a heteronormative line. However, such attempts by LGBT-Q individuals and collectives to operate within and follow a heteronormative frame are unlikely to accumulate too many normative 'points on a straight line' (Ahmed 2006b, 568). Rather, drawing on Butler (1990) and Ahmed (2006a), it is possible to see how the traditional, conservative signifier 'Mrs', through the emotional work of wearing it on a t-shirt, might be released into a future of possible significations. As Ahmed (2006b, 569) puts it, 'it is possible to follow certain lines (such as the family line) as a disorientation device…The point of the following is not to pledge allegiance to the familiar but to make the "familiar" strange'. This is not to suggest that

> homonormativity is the condition for emergence for a new angle on queer politics (though it could be). It is to say that inhabiting forms that do not extend your shape can produce queer effects, even when you think you are "lining up." There is hope in such failure, even if we reject publicly (as we must) this sexual as well as social conservatism (Ahmed 2006b, 569).

Sarah acknowledged that, because of her difficult relationship with her family, emotional exhaustion had reduced her to caring less about what people thought in the school environment:

> I got into a conversation with a parent who asked was I Ms, Miss, or Mrs...a random question not knowing anything about me and I said straight out..I'm not sure how to answer that...and explained...wasn't sure how it would be received and didn't really care... do you know something now I just don't give a shit anymore I'm just worn out (laughs). I don't care (Sarah, Teacher, ETB Second-level).

Sarah's 'worn out' emotional state might be read as the negative end-point of a life of trying to pass as appropriate. However, Berlant (2011, 27) highlights that although attachments to certain fantasies wear out subjects, they 'nonetheless, and at the same time, find their conditions of possibility within it'. Sarah's account provides another example of how emotional work is generative in opening up transgressive spaces of possibility. Rasmussen (2006, 44) warns that 'transgression is not always transgressive' and moments such as Eimear's and Sarah's always bear the risk of re-inscription as deficit positions. However, there is hope in Ahmed's idea that lines can work slantwise in ways that have potentially

queer effects. For example, Darina was asked if she would like to make a speech in the staffroom and be presented with a gift following her CP:

> I said "under no circumstances"…I didn't want it, because I really was conscious that it's a Catholic school…I might be putting the board in a situation…. I was having it very quietly, because I was very very conscious of my principal who really facilitated me in every way possible. I didn't want to kind of land him or the Board of Management in the soup with the Catholic ethos (Darina, Teacher, Catholic Primary).

Darina's gratefulness for her principal's support in relation to her sexuality in the past caused her to exercise her loyalty by having her CP 'quietly' so as to avoid causing trouble for him in relation to the school ethos. While there is significant emotional labour involved in engaging with conflicting sets of feeling rules circulating in school spaces such as those indexed by Darina's negotiations, the very fact that such conflicting sets of feeling rules exist produces clashes and fissures where moments of transgression might be made possible.

Taking up a queer phenomenology promises hope in how 'lines are both created by being followed and are followed by being created' (Ahmed 2006b, 555). The emotional labour that is conducted by feeling rules is itself productive of new lines. This draws attention to the agentic and transgressive potentiality of this work. Vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines provide a metaphorical frame for understanding the pull to reorient and correct queer moments in school spaces but simultaneously alert us to how this reorientation is resisted and redirected. A queer practice, gesture or moment can work 'out of line'. The hope with such changes of direction from the vertical lines is their unpredictability. They 'leave their own marks on the ground, which can even help generate alternative lines, which cross the ground in unexpected ways' (Ahmed 2006b, 570) and these unexpected changes of direction make 'new futures possible' (Ahmed 2006b, 554). They demonstrate how change is a messy process of simultaneous constraint, transgression and transformation and signal hope in how queer effects are created despite the magnetic pull to reorientation.

**Concluding Thoughts**

This paper highlights the value of everyday feelings and the politics of emotion for elucidating and clarifying the specificities, pertinence and complementarities of Hochschild's and Ahmed's work for thinking through and reimagining sexualities and schooling. We have argued that close attention to the minutiae of individual (often invisible), emotional labour in school-based social interactions sheds light on, and interrupts, the apparent effortlessness of

everyday negotiations, revealing the ways that (hetero)normative logics are simultaneously inculcated, resisted and reformed. Such focused attention on the techniques of emotional labour and the inculcated workings of norms disrupt simplistic, 'inclusive' solutions so often set forth in relation to sexualities in schools.

Together Hochschild's 'feeling rules' and Ahmed's 'emotional economies' allow us to demonstrate how happiness moves across and creates heteronormative subjects and spaces. Specifically, the concept of 'emotional economies' hones in on how the gift of collective affirmation and belonging in schools necessitates particular kinds of labour in return, while that of 'feeling rules' affords a focus on the mechanics of the complex emotional encounters that are part of these systems of exchange. The pervasive impact of heteronormative assumptions is such that limits are set on the negotiation of viable subjectivity within schools. In the face of threats to legitimacy, bodies 'ride over' feelings of discomfort, conform to heteronormative practices and become aligned in a collective facing towards the promise of a happy school environment and heterosexuality as a collective good. Discourses of equality and inclusion promise happiness but these theories show how this very happiness is itself a mechanism through which heteronormativity is reproduced. As such, the appearance of equality and inclusion works towards the maintenance of the status quo.

A queer phenomenology of affect (that draws on emotional labour, feeling rules and emotional economies) demonstrates how 'appropriateness' is affectively co-constructed by both following and deviating from heteronormative lines as well as the making of new lines of possibility. This counters linear narratives of progressive change that abound in many educational discourses in relation to sexualities and schooling, elucidating how change is a messy process of simultaneous conformity, constraint, transgression and transformation. Bodies and collectives simultaneously follow, redirect and redraw normative lines. And so, while heteronormativity is a powerful straightening device in orienting schools towards heterosexuality, queer moments and practices (such as killing joy) promise 'to open a life, to make room for life, to make room for possibility, for chance' (Ahmed 2010, 20). For the relationships between sexualities and schooling, this encases a hopeful reminder that the potential for transformation is sometimes carved out of the most unlikely moments and spaces.

Discourses of equality and inclusion espoused by the state through CP/marriage and projected by schools leave little space for the unanticipated, that which has yet to arrive. Instead, 'chrononormative' expectations frame linear temporalities of progressive

inclusion ensuring people become 'bound to one another, engrouped, made to feel coherently collective, through particular orchestrations of time' (Freeman 2010, 3). The school culture is marked by a drive towards identification and investments that refuse alterity, so that to be a good teacher subject, s/he has 'to be perceived as a happiness-cause, as making others happy' (Ahmed 2010, 20). 'To be bad is thus to be a killjoy', Ahmed continues (ibid.), and the killing of joy is avoided in many cases because it produces heightened visibility and further exclusion. Inclusion, by contrast, promises 'the "happy point"...a point where lines meet' (Ahmed 2012, 14). Through our focus on affective practices and the politics of emotion in the everyday negotiation of sexuality and schooling, the linear, progressive and secular temporalities that underpin liberal notions of equality and inclusion come under pressure. Counter-temporalities of emotionality reveal the potential for queer temporalities as anti-normative feelings surface and circulate to produce alternative contours of belonging.

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