Play-Doh Vulvas and Felt Tip Dick Pics: Disrupting phallocentric matter(s) in Sex Education

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Abstract

In this paper, we explore our experiences working as team comprised of researchers, teacher, and founder and director of a sex education non-profit organisation, who have formed an intra-activist research and pedagogical assemblage to experiment with relationship and sexuality education (RSE) practices in England's secondary schools. We draw upon phEmaterialism theory and socially engaged, participatory arts-based research methodologies and pedagogies to explore two examples of arts-based activities that have been developed to de-center humanist, male-dominated, phallocentric, penile-oriented RSE. We also demonstrate how these practices enable educators, researchers, practitioners and students to revalue and rematter feminine genitalia, and resist and refigure unsettling experiences of receiving unsolicited digital dick pics.

Keywords: activism, assemblage, posthuman sexuality, unsolicited sexual images, arts based methodology

Introduction

As noted in the call for papers to this special issue, "PhEmaterialism" (*Feminist Posthuman and New Materialisms in Education*) (Renold, 2018; Ringrose et al., 2018; Renold and Ringrose, 2019) is a notion that combines explicitly feminist approaches to posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2016) and new and vital materialisms (Barad 2007; Bennett, 2010). Methodologically, phEmaterialism asks us first and foremost to create webs of response and response-ability through our socially engaged research and pedagogical practices. Research and teaching need to be 'more than' (Renold, 2018) an end to itself to show 'what else' (Renold and Ringrose, 2017a) is possible beyond the academy. In phEmaterial exploratory modes, the impact tied to the phallic institutional

aims of metrics and hierarchies to suck worth from researchers' actions as part of cognitive capitalism (Braidotti, 2019) is disrupted. Rather, the aim is to work in zones of possibility to generate new relations of awareness and activity, rhizomatic threads that work their way out in sometimes unpredictable fashion to create the feminist becomings that we want to instantiate. This modality of intra-active phEmaterialism demands new ways of researching, teaching, and collaborating.

Following this injunction, in this paper, we explore our experiences of activating what we call a phEmaterialist intra-activist research and teaching assemblage (Renold and Ringrose, 2017b) through working as a research and teaching team comprised of an MA student/secondary school teacher, a professor, a lecturer, and the co-founder and co-director of Relationships and Sex education (RSE) non-profit organisation called Sexplain. Our intra-activist assemblage involves using arts-based methodologies and pedagogies for social transformation and embedding research with partnerships that can make material changes on the ground through a range of creative practices.

To demonstrate this process, first we document the problematic terrain in which we are aiming to intervene, outlining some of the phallocentric tendencies in RSE internationally and in the UK. As a response, we theorize the potential of posthuman sexuality that re-values sexual difference (Irigaray in MacCormack, 2018) and moves beyond prioritizing the material referent of the phallus by valuing multiplicity and complexity in bodily desires. We then outline a phEmaterial ideal of evoking 'clitoral validity' to revalue feminine embodiment and desire (Lather, 1993).

Next, we explore two arts-based, creative educational intra-activist methodologies and pedagogies aimed at creating new object relations that resist phallocentricism, utilizing arts-based methods and pedagogies to craft change. The first arts-based activity was developed by the RSE non-profit Sexplain and uses Play-Doh to create genital models. Here we focus on the vulva and clitoris to show how they create new forms of bodily awareness in the classroom. The second activity is a newly developed research methodology designed to capture young people's experiences of sharing sexual content online. We consider in detail girls' experiences of drawing dick pics as a transformative pedagogical process that enables them to question phallic force relations. Throughout, we draw upon some key elements of *feminist* posthumanism and new materialism theories to consider how young people's understandings of genitalia and sexuality can be reconstituted *discursively, materially and affectively* (Ringrose et al., 2018). The aim is to shift the dominance of the phallic referent through revaluing feminine anatomy (not as essentialised, but as differentiated) and encourage resistance to phallic force relations in digital sexual cultures, specifically by responding to and re-mattering girls' experiences of digital dick pics.

What's the Matter with Phallocentric 'Sex' Education?

Historically, sex education has been conceptualised as a part of health policy, with the prevention of pregnancy, disease and infection being its primary aims. However, in recent decades, there have been calls for a more holistic approach incorporating sexuality, gender issues, pleasure, and consent (Pilcher, 2005; Fine, 1988; Fine & McClelland, 2006; Hall, 2009; Allen 2003). The English government finally updated its *twenty-year-old* RSE guidance in 2019, alongside a breakthrough ruling that

Relationship and Sexuality Education will be statutory in England from 2020 (DfE, 2019). Whilst a comprehensive exploration of England RSE guidances are beyond the scope of this paper, we wish to make a few points about the limitations of the new guidance (see Sexplain response to DfE, 2019 for further review).

Unsurprisingly, the new guidance is an advance over the *twenty-year-old* document, as it touches upon the changing contexts of sexuality, including, for instance, issues of young people's digital lives, pornography, sexual consent, menstrual literacy, and female genital mutilation. It also encourages young people to take charge of their health through regular sexually transmitted infection testing and promotes wellbeing and self-care techniques "including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests" (DfE, 2019, paragraph 92). Despite this, the guidance is still oriented around avoiding STIs and pregnancy (called the parts and plumbing approach) and makes many repeated assumptions about what is "healthy" and "age appropriate" in an RSE context.

Sex education based on developmental logics of "age appropriate" sexual health have been critiqued as delaying many relevant discussions of sexuality until too late, due to discourses of childhood "innocence" and moral panics over sexualisation, which work to deny young people essential information that are part of their sexual rights (Robinson, 2008; Renold et al., 2015). A "risk and harms" narrative has also been internationally critiqued as creating a masculinist biopolitical approach to managing reproduction, which places emphasis on particular reproductive organs and their capacities and functions penile-vaginal based penetration, risk, harm, and protection (Tolman et al., 2003). Organising "sex education" through binary sex categories (male/female) as well as normative constitutive sex acts neglects the complexities of sexuality, reproducing an assumed, implicit heteronormativity (Epstein, 2004). Renold and McGeeny (2018) advise a shift to *sexuality* education to take account of sexual diversity and complexities.

However, not only is the majority of RSE heteronormative, it is *phallocentric*, meaning it is organised around the phallic referent, creating material-discursive absences in its wake (Ringrose, 2013). Michelle Fine (1988) in her "feminal" (Ringrose et al., 2018) article outlining the missing discourse of feminine "desire" (Tolman, 2002; Allen, 2013) in anti-sex sex education abstinence curriculum in USA demonstrated the preponderance of focus on "male member" and condom-based pregnancy "protection," which foregrounds hetero-reproductive, penetrative sex (McCormack, 2015). Constructing the vagina as a passive receptacle for the penis negates major physical parts of girls' bodies, namely, the vulva and clitoris (Hirst, 2012). Indeed, the large-scale omission of the clitoris from the discursive terrain under discussion relates to the wider construction of feminine desire via anatomy as other than and lesser than in the "hegemonic male imaginary" (Lather, 1993, p. 692).

Moreover, while the guidance pays some attention to youth digital sexual relations, including mentioning pornography and staying safe online, there are significant gaps. Research demonstrates that pornography provides one of the main unofficial sex educators for young people internationally (Mulholland, 2015), but there is little advice on how to engage with porn in government-endorsed

curriculum (Hancock and Barker 2018). For example, though the law around porn is covered in the guidance, the consequences of learning about sex from porn are not, nor are the complexities of peer-produced pornography discussed. The guidance has minimal references to minor's "sexting" as illegal, but does not outline issues of online image-based abuse or digital sexual violence. While a review of how sex education should deal with pornography is also beyond the scope of this paper, the feminist critiques of mainstream pornography as normalising discourses of masculine-oriented phallic desire are important. These argue in general that mainstream pornography tends towards fast paced "sex" moving swiftly to "money shot" of male ejaculation, in ways that construct femininity as passive, and often tip into normalising masculine sexual dominance and violence, solidifying new norms of performative masculinity and femininity (Jensen, 2007). In the RSE guidance, distinctions between reality and fantasy are mentioned as key elements to explore, and there is an emphasis on sexual consent, but there is not enough attention to the male gaze, phallic force relations, and sexual violence, which predominate in mainstream pornography. Attention to gendered power asymmetries - as they express themselves through legitimation of male sexual violence both online and at school - is notably absent. As such, we argue that we have to completely overhaul the approach to sexuality and human genitality that grounds normative RSE.

Posthuman Sexual Diversity and Clitoral Validity

A feminist posthuman approach to sexuality can help us understand multiplicity and complexity, breaking apart binary and monadic conceptions of desire. The first step of *feminist* posthumanism is countering hu-man exceptionalism – that is, it aims to decentre white western, Vitruvian, Humanist man and the entire onto-epistemological lineage of male domination over land, plants and animals and chattel (of which woman was categorized as property of and breeder for white colonial man historically) (Mies, 1994). The feminist posthuman is therefore interested in reorienting gender and sexuality from *hu-man-ist and phallocentric* orientations in our pedagogy and research towards new forms of object relations and capacities, generating a vibrant ecology of matter where nonhuman agents play an active role in public life (Bennet, 2010: 2). As Rosi Braidotti writes, "posthuman feminism is that which 'rebels' against … the dominant categories of identity, incubating and injecting lethal viruses to shake the political economy of phallogocentrism and of anthropocentric humanism" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 80). MacCormack (2018, p. 356) likewise states that posthuman sexuality is informed by the work of Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari, and Irigaray, who "share a configuration of a designified and deregulated body where no part of the body stands as the dominant signifier of either sex or gender (formerly the phallus but also the proscribed licit and illicit sexual operations of all body parts in relation with each other)". This reasoning - derived in part from Deleuze and Guattari's 1000 tiny sexes (Parisi, 2009, p. 75) where sexual desire is not reducible to genitals and bodily organs - offers critically important insights into what may need to happen to radically disrupt and reorganise human phallic-oriented desire partly by understanding the vast range of non-human sexual diversity.

We are also influenced by Deleuze and Guattari's (1980) powerful directive to rework phallic power relations by creating contexts for "becoming woman" or materialising feminine desires–validating the experiences and desires of femininities is a critical step in empowering all sexualities and bodies.

This is not a cis-normative valuation of the essential female body, but rather, a valuing of all forms of feminine genitalia - vulvic spaces and openings - refusing a nature/culture divide over what "counts" as a vulva or a clitoris. MacCormack (2018, p. 357), for instance, discusses Irigaray's ideas of "the mucosal" as a new way of theorising desire whereby the model of the vulva as two sets of "two lips shows self-touching, desire without binaries of mastery and submission and proliferative parts indicate both the limitless nature of sexuality". Irigaray's sentiments are significant in that the revaluing of feminine desire lies partly with re-orienting how we relate to feminized genitalia (clitoris lips, holes, openings). This operates in contrast to the common claim of the female anatomy as a binary reference point against the phallus (male penis) rather than a complex set of bodily parts and relations of opening, receptivity, holding (etc.) through which desire may be reconstituted. Therefore, the penile-vaginal coupling is to be disrupted as we rethink a vast range of body part relations to one another in RSE also therefore revaluing LGBT+ queer desire as we go.

Finally, Patti Lather (1993; 682) was critical to our thinking as she offers a counterpoint to male-dominated imaginaries (phallocentricism) through what she describes as "Clitoral theoretics," which can lend itself to what she variously calls "clitoral validity" and "voluptuous validity stemming from feminists theorizing from the body. Such research methodologies are characterized by"leakiness", "excess", "risky practices", and "situated, partial, positioned, explicit tentativeness" (Lather, 1993: 686). We apply clitoral theoretics to reimagine and reconstitute the body and *validate* all forms of sexual pleasure and agency. Clitoral validity provides a frame and guide for pedagogy, and specifically, for sexuality education that is seeking to turn phallocentric power relations on their head (no pun intended). This approach suggests we re-matter, refigure and rework the sexual object relations that dominate normative RSE – the primacy of the male organ, penetration, and desire, and the binary construction of femininity as passive recipient forced to navigate phallic force relations. In the next section we discuss methodologies for micro-mappings of the material doings and becomings in sexuality education classroom that could disrupt phallic oriented desire and gazes, opening up relations and possibilities of clitoral validity.

Intra-Activist Pedagogical-Research Assemblages and Arts-Based Socially Engaged Methodologies

Feminist new materialism methodologies have offered new approaches to mapping the "mundane materialities" of gender inequity in our research processes and findings (Taylor, 2016). PhEmaterialism moves our "experiments" far outside a typically masculinist scientific bounded space of "research production" and/or "classroom education." But what is absolutely fundamental is the Baradian emphasis on ethico-onto-epistemologies of "researcher response-ability" (See Ringrose et al., 2019). PhEmaterialism research practice entails working as collaborative assemblages in order to generate social changes and recognise the material force and impact of our research on the world around us.

Renold and Ringrose (2017b, p. 634) referred to these research methodologies as intra-activist assemblages, charting their collective research journey from mapping "micro-resistance in research data" and moving from traditional reporting of substantive research findings to a "messier form of

engagement, where we attempt to enact and theorize the possibilities of change through our research encounters". This approach involves an "affirmative politics" of "putting the active back into activism" and "facilitating ways of attuning to and creating the conditions through which the micro-political practices of daily activism can surface in our research" (Braidotti in Renold and Ringrose, 2017b: 634). Using Barad's (2007) concept of intra-action, we argued complex relationalities in research processes need to be mapped out and researchers' "response-ability" to carry forward the social significance of research beyond the ivory tower of academia is necessary. A range of diverse ways to engage and capture young people's experiences of gender and sexuality are needed so we can map how and when these methodologies enable positive community engagement and when they break down is also crucial (Ibid).

In this paper, we want to flesh out a phEmaterialist intra-activist methodology further and detail how it aligns with socially engaged, arts-based research practices (Wang et al., 2016) and participatory visual methodologies (MacEntee and Flicker, 2019). These approaches are making huge waves in educational research by demonstrating how different forms of research engagement and dissemination may be able to impact public consciousness in ways that old paradigms of data, evidence and truth claims in social science may not (Leavy, 2009). Our methodologies are indebted to grassroots feminist "craftivism," a term that was coined by activist and crafter Betsy Greer in 2003 (Greer, 2014), merging the terms "activism" and "craft". Craftivists use artistic practices and crafts such as knitting, crocheting or sewing – crafts that used to be associated with domestic femininity and therefore have a strongly gendered history – to engage in social and political activism, subverting established modes of seeing or using objects and spaces.

In a similar vein Anna Hickey-Moody (2013, p. 87) overturns ideas of art as relics and artefacts to think about creating art as a living process whose pedagogical functions can be worked with to change gendered power relations through what she calls "affective pedagogy," which opens up new ways of experiencing this world, cutting through sedimented ways of thinking, whether we are students, teachers, or researchers. Her research shows how young people can engage with religion and belonging and their place in groups and communities via arts-based research practices that "facilitate(s) expression and changes embodied capacity as a process" (2018b, p. 1). Regarding playing with *matter,* she says:

> The materials with which we work prompt us to remember experiences, to modify materials in certain ways rather than in others, and to have emotional, sensory, intellectual, and memory-based responses that are quite specific to the material assemblages of making practices. This intra-action, or co-constitutive construction, mobilizes the forces of matter in ways that can require people to relinquish agency (2018, p. 2).

Hickey Moody's outline of her practices and affordances of "a new materialist, socially engaged research method" (Ibid) was critical for us in thinking about how we might re-matter real RSE processes like models of genitals or pornographic images in order to disrupt phallocentric material-discursive-affective relations in the sexuality education classroom through a literal re-mattering of form in space and time.

Emma Renold (2018), as well, has discussed how she developed arts-based methodologies in her research on sexual violence in an ex-mining community. After a session where girls talked about boys using rulers to lift up skirts and poke and harass girls, Renold drew on arts-based methods and gave the girls rulers and pens to record their experiences of harassment. The graffitied rulers were then attached onto a belt to create a "ruler-skirt" – an intervention was designed to "reassemble" the rules. The ruler skirt, in turn, reassembled again and again through travelling with Emma, and sometimes the girls, to communicate the reality of sexual violence at school. The skirt became what Renold (2018) calls an activist 'd/artaphact', and has been presented at meetings, conferences, exhibits, and events with policy makers and government and other stakeholders to communicate well-worn research findings in ways capable of sparking new affective attention (p. 50). This mash-up of art and data are followed out from the pedagogical and research space, mapping their journey with stakeholders in an effort to change attitudes towards gender and sexual violence and create gender equity in government in Wales. Critical in this example, however, is creating a "conducive context" that is an intra-activist research assemblage where academics collaborate with others to activate change. Therefore, participatory and arts-based research moves from generating research findings to having arts-based "d/artaphacts" that operate in purposefully impactful ways, aiming to create meaningful social change, and working pedagogically to enable thinking learning and transformation. Politically engaged research needs to stretch out beyond silos of academia to enact wider social and community changes, enabling micro, embodied, material forms of transformation. We refer to these as forms of intra-activist assemblages experimenting with methodological and pedagogical techniques for transformation.

Below, we explore two separate and distinct activities that are part of an intra-activist research collaboration between Sexplain, a non-profit organisation which provides inclusive, non-binary, feminist RSE workshops to secondary school students, and the authors (Sexplain, 2019). Jessica and Kaitlyn are academics (among other things!), Sophie is a research assistant and sex educator at Sexplain, and Amelia is Sexplain's co-founder and co-director. Our various overlapping "roles" in this collaborative team have included: developing and delivering curriculum in a Postgraduate Master's module on Gender and Sexuality in Education; designing research methodologies to explore young people's experiences of digital intimacies and Relationship and Sex(uality) Education; collaborating to develop lesson plans that are delivered into a network of over 70 secondary schools in England; and disseminating our work through to wider channels through popular cultural formats like blogs and podcasts (Ringrose and Sexplain, 2019; Regehr for *the Guardian*, 2019). Together, we see ourselves as part of a collaborative a phEmaterialist intra-activist educational assemblage which aims to take cutting-edge theory and research practice into our various pedagogical settings.

The first intra-activist methodology and pedagogy is a Play-Doh genital modelling lesson plan which has been delivered approximately 245 times across 50 different schools (typically to around 25 students per classroom). The workshop has also been adapted to train school staff and university students, although with much fewer numbers. In this paper, we reflect on our own experiences of delivering the workshops in schools as well as in a higher education classroom, where MA students - some of whom were secondary school teachers - participated in the Play-Doh genital activity.

Drawing upon the craftivism trajectory, the workshop utilises materials that are associated with childhood (Play-Doh) in order to explore content deemed taboo and difficult in relation to childhood innocence (Robinson, 2013; Renold et al., 2015), namely female genitalia, pleasure, and desire. We discuss a complex intra-action where normative dominant discourses and "missing discourses" of desire (Fine, 1988) are troubled and reworked through the material processes of moulding Play-Doh into feminine bodily organs, namely the vulva and clitoris.

The second data set we explore in this paper is drawn from a research project and lesson plan responding to challenges facing young people around digital image sharing practices. The project involved interviewing 150 young people aged 11-17 in seven diverse secondary schools (3 independent, 1 academy and 3 state schools) about their experiences of sending and receiving sexually explicit content on social media applications, and to discover what they had learned about this in sex education at school, given the lack of guidance about this topic in recently released RSE guidance. We conducted small focus groups where participants could refer to content on their phone if they wanted (Robards et al., 2018) and we culminated with a period of drawing something that they experienced online that they wanted support or advice about. There has been some work on children's drawing and forming the basis for a child-centred method with potential for empowerment (Mitchell, 2006). We had a distinct and innovative approach that combined group discussion, looking at social media apps and drawing digital content. The drawing was actually the only way for young people to capture from memory sexual content they received on social media from applications where content *disappears,* like Snapchat (Handyside and Ringrose, 2018), or has been deleted or blocked. The use of drawing responds to a need for a method to record memories of images and provides space to consider what they mean. We closely followed a strict ethical protocol of signed informed consent, anonymization of all data (including the images), and we introduced ground rules of respect and confidentiality in all the focus groups at which either a Sexplain facilitator or a teacher were present along with members of the research team. Discussing our findings of this activity, we will show how the felt-tip drawing practices follow in the path of arts-based learning, as well as craftivist interventions, by mixing up the dichotomy of public/private space, as well as age-appropriate child/adult serious/play by using a genre associated with childhood innocence (felt-tip drawings) to engage with a "serious," "sensitive" topic of unsolicited sexual images received on social media applications.

Making the Vulva and Clitoris Matter

In the Play-Doh genitals workshop, the Sexplain facilitators demonstrate step-by-step how to make different genitals out of Play-doh. The Play-doh activity is prefaced with a discussion of the non-binary nature of biological sex (as well as gender and attraction), intersex bodies, and genital variation. Particular emphasis is placed on the vulva and the clitoris to counter-balance its general erasure in popular culture and RSE. Students are then given a pot of Play-doh to build their own genital structures. The structures are then used to explain the different aspects of anatomy and to field any questions about bodies or bodily functions. In our exploration, we focus on the use of the Play-Doh to evoke different feelings around building the different genitalia, particularly looking at experiences of building the vulva and clitoris. Given longstanding understandings of girls and women

having internalised negative ideas and lack of understanding about their genitalia (think of the vagina monologues), assumptions about masturbation being normal for boys and men but not girls and women, and sexual double standards and shame around feminine sexual pleasure (Hirst, 2012), developing familiarity with female genitals is an important phallocentric corrective. It is something that can begin to establish a new kind of clitoral validity in the classroom.

When conducting the activity, each student starts with the same amount of Play-Doh and the same instructions but, as can be seen by some of the young people's various final vulvas, all structures turn out slightly different. The agency of the Play-Doh means that the intentions of the hands manipulating the matter cannot be fully realised; the hands and the Play-Doh *intra*-act to form something mutually constituted (Barad, 2007). The affective power of this variation serves as an educational tool to demonstrate the material form of female genitalia, but also their diversity - the matter is an active force in the being and doing of the classroom to model and enact and create a visible presence where there has been an absence (Fine, 1998), not only discursively but materially and affectively as well. It is constitutive of a new kind of learning that responds to homogenous diagrams enabling a cacophony of vulvic difference to emerge. The use of the Play-Doh and the discussions that result from the varying structures "taps into" something in the students which encourages them to see and feel things differently (Yorks & Kasl, 2006; Hickey-Moody, 2013). Students respond positively with humour and enjoyment to the activity, but they also often express that they have learnt things they had never known before about the vulvic matter and form. The use of matter, like in the Play-Doh activity, allows for engaging learning and effects a long-lasting learning process through arts-based mattering of genitalia (Leavy, 2006).

Instagram collaged photos of Play-doh vulvas made in a Sexplain anatomy session

In many ways, the overt and dehumanised "mattering" of genitals in craftwork like the Play-Doh activity could serve as an interesting starting point to consider the agency of objects in sex education and how affective they can be in taking sex and gender from the abstract and into the more personal, tangible and discussable. In other words, craft allows for discussions about the body without reference to actual bodies; the reference point is the craft matter. Sophie suggests that, from her perspective as a Sexplain classroom facilitator and a former RSE teacher, when doing the Play-Doh activity, students tend to feel more comfortable in asking questions about their bodies than when the learning is based on diagrams and text. The material-discursive shame around genitalia results in an affect of shock, awkwardness and discomfort – a kind of squirming – when it is discussed in the classroom. The "agential cut" (Barad, 2007) of the Play-doh genitals contrasted with human body genitals creates a discursive distancing which eventually facilitates greater openness in the room for students and facilitators. When the human body is decentred, the matter of the Play-doh genitals becomes the focus and allows students to learn through that instead, thus removing barriers of personal embarrassment and attention.

Within the spacetimemattering of the Play-Doh activity, it is important to consider not only the matter itself, but also the space and time in which it intra-acts (Barad, 2007). The material-discursive power of the Play-Doh is affective through its association with childhood and play, enabling

experimentation with the temporality of the materials and space, at once being implicitly "grown up" as part of an overt discussion of genitalia whilst discursively being reminiscent of early years craft activities. When using the Play-Doh in a classroom space, there is often an affective charge (what we might feel like nervous excitement) tied into the engagement mentioned above; a "buzz" around the classroom at the prospect of the dissonant childhood nostalgia and adolescent sex education (Niccolini, 2016). This "buzz" is added to by the way in which the Play-doh blurs the line between human bodies and matter, which become entangled and overlapped in what is both human and nonhuman simultaneously. The possibility for this blurring creates said "buzz" in the classroom as students work to manipulate the Play-Doh - the agency of the matter becomes apparent as it resists perfect manipulation.

The Play-Doh vulva activity was also used in another pedagogical format in an MA Gender and Sexuality lecture as part of a class of 65 Master's students. The lecture was exploring sexuality education's limitations and possibilities across contexts. After a lecture looking at the constraints of normative RSE that is focused on abstinence or diseases, Amelia delivered an input on innovative RSE which uses the Play-Doh genital activity to the MA students. The adult students, some of whom were teachers, were given a double task, asked to complete the Play-doh activity and record the effects upon themselves while considering how the activity may be used with children and young people to break down taboos and basic knowledge of female genitalia.

Recalling Anna Hickey Moody, "intra- action… [and] co-constitutive construction…[forms a] materialist collaboration" (2018, p. 2). Working with the materials to construct the genitals changes the agential relations of learning through doing, often unfamiliar for higher education students who are used to discursive and intellectual debate. This challenges normative discursive-material-affective relations of gender through new doings (see also Hickey-Moody et al., 2019).

Doing the Play-Doh genital activity with the MA students was interesting because there were a range of participants from around the globe, with diverse cultural contexts around sexuality. We found that some of the adult students had never encountered either arts- or craftivism-informed education, and many had also never confronted taboos around female genitals, and reported that it was their first time with the tangible sensations of creating feminine sexual genitals. One reported that it felt "thrilling" to create the small ball of the clitoris as the tip of a much longer interior organ (Figure 2). Others in the class were seasoned delivers of RSE and offered advice about how the activity could create new potentialities for learning.

Working with the Play-Doh clitoris ball

Through a new materialism lens, these multiple layerings of discourses attempt to fill in the missing discourse of desire and physicality of traditional sexuality education, which has sometimes neglected mention of female anatomy such as clitoris, instead favouring a discussion of reproduction, eggs, and fallopian tubes. Hickey-Moody (2007) suggests pedagogical affect "has a visceral impact on the body before it gives subjective or emotive meaning… an a-subjective bodily response to an encounter" (2007, p. 9). What is relevant from a phEmaterialism lens is the materiality-discursivity and affect of the encounters, and how building genitalia oneself counts as a new embodied, material, discursive, and affective source of knowledge.

The moments of these various experiences of teaching "glowed" (MacClure, 2013) or "stuck" (Ahmed, 2008) for us as an intra-activist research team, generating affective intensities (Ringrose and Renold, 2014). For instance, some students became reflective about their own experiences of RSE and how they had never even heard the word "clitoris" in their education at school. In the cases of teachers, some commented that they would like to use the exercise as part of delivering RSE in their own classrooms because it offered a way to connect with anatomy in ways that diverged from the normative focus on protection and harm against disease and pregnancy. Some students commented on the unique ability of the exercise to combine anatomical learning with discussions about pleasure,

bodily diversity, gender, menstruation, and more. The materiality of the Play-Doh structures allowed for exploration of myriad unforeseen but valuable topics which led to further unfolding and collaborative learning *amongst* students.

Tagging Vulvas Digitally

Indeed, the rhizomatic nature of feminist new materialism led us to a newly emerging idea which we had not anticipated would become relevant to this paper. The Instagram Collage above, where we transmitted our craftivism into the networked plane, and members of the MA class also posted their images and tagged their class members to share their experiences. In these ways, Play-Doh genitals become *re*mattered in a digital space and are further entangled with the human body (Warfield, 2016). The development of digital social platforms and technologies allows for the creation and dissemination of new kinds of "texts" which iteratively *re*matter the body and generate new networked affective entanglements of matter, bodies, and discourse (Niccolini et al., 2018).

Seven months after the MA session, one of the international students tagged author one in an Instagram post of an image of a display of diversely shaped vulvas at the newly-opened Vagina Museum in London, captioned in both Chinese and English, to say "the most profound thing I learned about gender the last year at university was to face up to each part of your body equally." In these ways, the Play-Doh itself is a vehicle for embodied learning that extends far beyond the session; these broadcasts generate networked entanglements of thinking and feeling across digital domains. PhEmaterial practices in the classroom which revalue feminine genitals generate embodied, affective pedagogies which travel and transmute, creating ever-expanding "tentacular" networks (Haraway, 2016), and in this case we can witness the digital tendrils and connections generated (Niccolini et al., 2018). This example is important also in demonstrating the intra-active educational assemblages of our team, where it is not a one-way direction of Higher Education trickling theory and knowledge into educational practices, but a dynamical process where higher education itself must learn to embrace new forms of embodied, material learning such as the craftivism-inspired Play-Doh genital making.

Capturing Young People's Experiences of Networked Sexual Image Exchange

The second example we discuss in this paper had its genesis when we were piloting a lesson plan on toxic masculinity, which explored how gender stereotypes in school create sexual double standards. This lesson was not explicitly on pornography, but during one of the sessions, a discussion emerged about dick pics as an expression of toxic masculinity. Nearly all of the 15-year-olds in the group had received an unsolicited dick pic, and what was remarkable to the research team was that all the girls said they would not bother reporting the incident either to the social media company or school, as it was simply a normal tedious part of life.

Responding directly to this encounter, as well as international research documenting "the rise" in the unsolicited dick picks (YouGov, 2018), including amongst young people (Ricciardelli & Adorjan, 2018), we designed a collaborative research project with Sexplain to explore over 150 young people's aged 12-16 digital image sharing practices and to find out what elements their sex education was covering
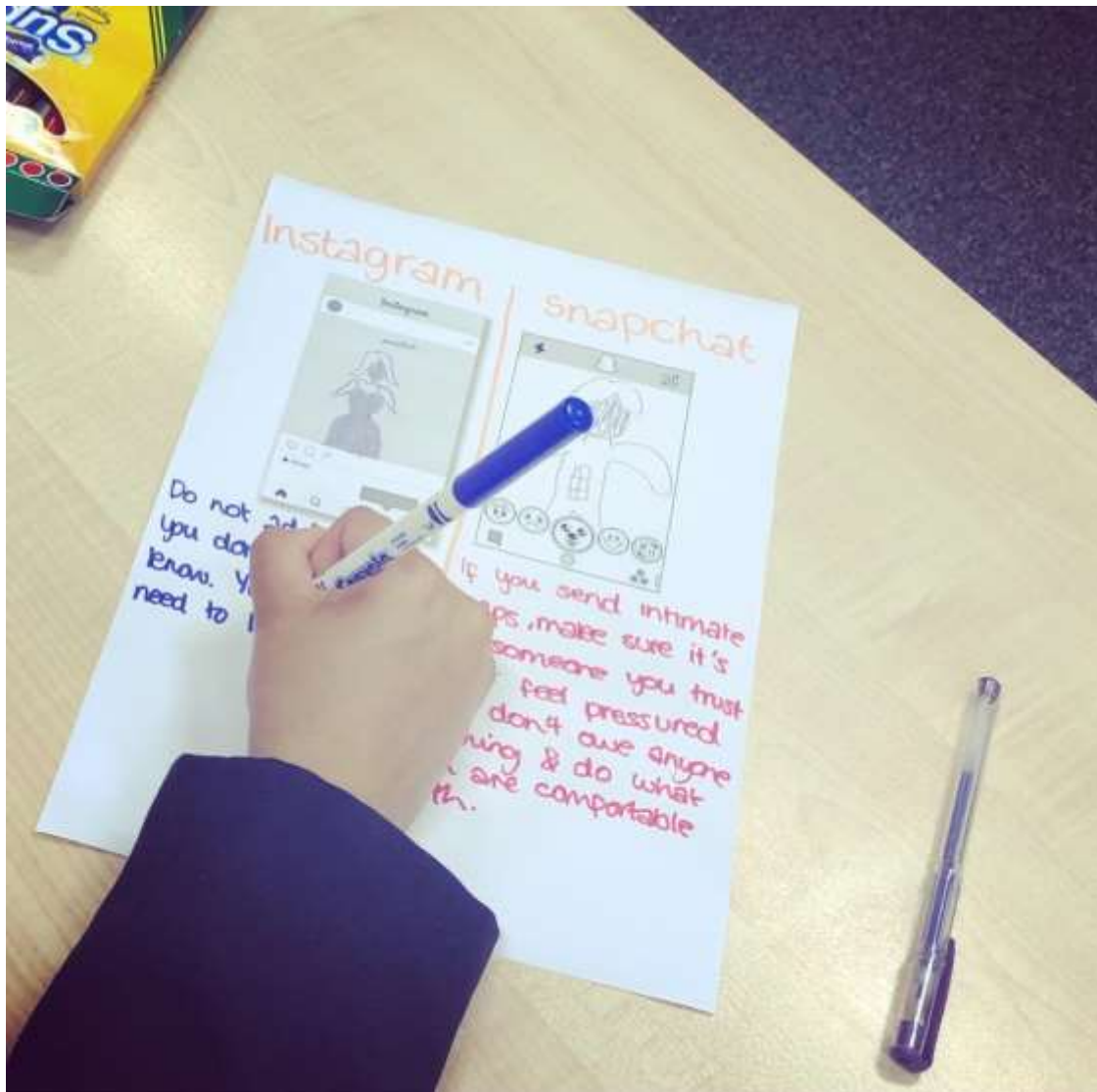
(or not). We conducted focus groups with between 4-12 participants each which involved group interviews and discussion, exploring images on phones in some cases, and finally, drawing content. The workshops were mostly conducted with friendship groups and arranged by convenience from the teacher, and often in "single gender" groupings. Gender identification is variable, but there is evidence that young people may discuss issues in sexuality education more openly with young people they feel more comfortable with and less embarrassed in front of (Hirst, 2004; Bragg et al., 2018). They therefore were mostly gendered groups of either girls and boys, although sometimes, due to friendship groups, space constraints, or choice, they were mixed-gender groups.

First focus group: Mobile phones and Drawing

Initially, we conceptualized the drawing exercise as a type of "digital map" in which students would draw examples of content which was "inputted" into their phones through the posts of others. On the other side of the sheet, they recorded the "outputs" they themselves shared, such as photos, videos, comments, and so on (Warfield, 2019). We took a range of social media templates for students to draw their ideas into, including Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and YouTube. The first focus groups revealed a clear pattern in social media use across young people

which sustained throughout our data collection; the main apps in use were Snapchat and Instagram. These two platforms had different digital affordances (boyd, 2011) which resulted in different material experiences of how they could receive content, particularly from unknown senders, which we realised was important to map systematically. Consequently, we ensured that we always used Instagram and Snapchat templates in the focus groups.

Felt Penning Instagram and Snapchat Templates

Across our research, there was a pattern of boys receiving messages of porn-style images of women saying they would exchange images, information, or money. Consistent with a pornified logic of male consumption, the boys almost universally said that responding to this would be "stupid" and they knew they were "bots" (robots) or organised groups seeking to exploit them via what they identified as "sexualised" content (here we directly meet posthuman techno-sex and its wide-ranging spread and capacities). There was also a clear pattern of girls being sent unsolicited genital images from men

they did not know. This was often through message requests or group chats, where the girls clicked onto the image and saw a dick pic or a video of a man masturbating.

Girls, however, had a much harder time across our groups clearly identifying a motive or understanding these as digital group-organised activities; rather they positioned the senders as "paedos," "desperate old men." and "flashers". We felt that the dynamics facing girls - of receiving and navigating such messages - was significantly different. For the girls, receipt of these images was almost always perceived as shocking, less expected, and individualized. We found that the majority of girls had received dick pics or masturbation videos from unknown senders, and by age 14, it had become "ubiquitous" (Ricciardelli & Adorjan, 2017). The focus group was, in all cases, the first time that girls had been asked to share their experiences of receiving "unsolicited content". In nearly every group, stories emerged about how girls were sent many images from "randoms" (unknown anonymous senders) on Instagram and Snapchat. These were old men (in their twenties!) from America, a range of people they didn't know, but who sent messages that the girls clicked on and opened up to a dick pic.

Moving from the discussion of the "randoms", we would next work to see if they had received images from anyone they knew. By aged 15, around ½ of participants had received images from boys that were known to them and/or their peer group. Often when girls discussed various experiences of receiving dick pics, there was a sense of shame that continued to circulate. One girl in an elite independent girls' school told us a story of how a friend of one of her male friends (from a neighbouring all-boys school) added her on Instagram. He was the son of a diplomat visiting London and, impressed by this, she had accepted. She relayed to the group that the boy then started sending dick pics to her. This was explained in hushed tones with an acute sense of embarrassment, but also possibly excitement as it generated reactions of "Really?!" and "Oh my god!" from the group. There was a pause after the story and no one spoke. A feeling circulated in the group that was palpable and recorded in one our fieldnotes:

> There is a sense that somehow the girl has done something wrong by receiving these dick pics and implication that maybe she has sent something back (field notes May 21).
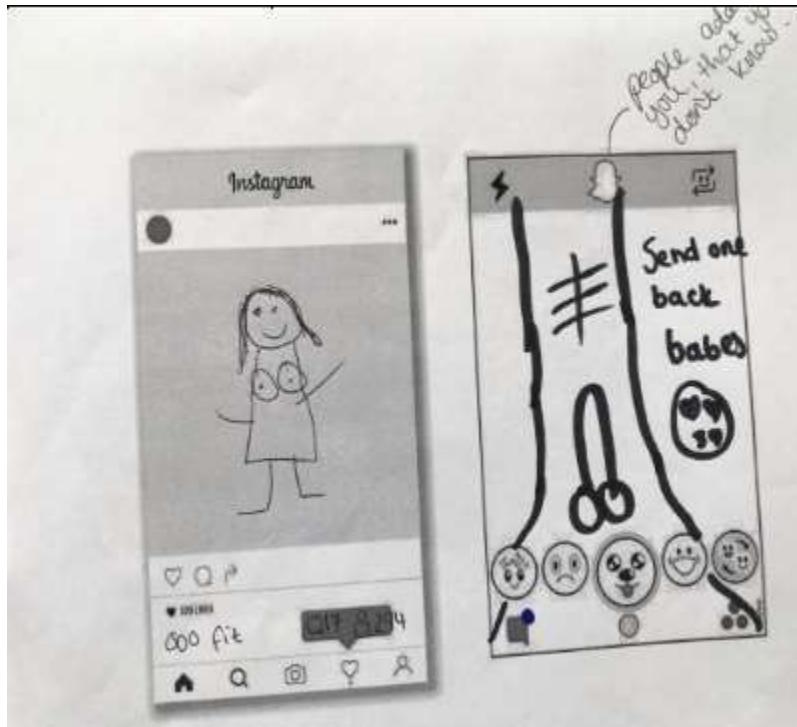
In their commentary on how researchers put posthumanist theory into practice, Hughes and Taylor (2016) note the varying methods applied to "dis-place 'methodol/ogy' and call forth new ways of finding out" (2016, p. 19). For example, they highlight how Bennett (2010) favours following "the scent" to always respond to the things that call the researcher's attention, human or non-human. They also consider how some scholars opt to apply Barad's (2007) agential realism, using concepts of intra-action and entanglement to draw out the next thread of enquiry. This affective, sensory, relational experimental approach resists modes of rigid empiricism and objectivity, seeking out different forms of 'validity' (Lather, 2003). The next findings emerged through "following the scent" in the experiments in participatory drawing.
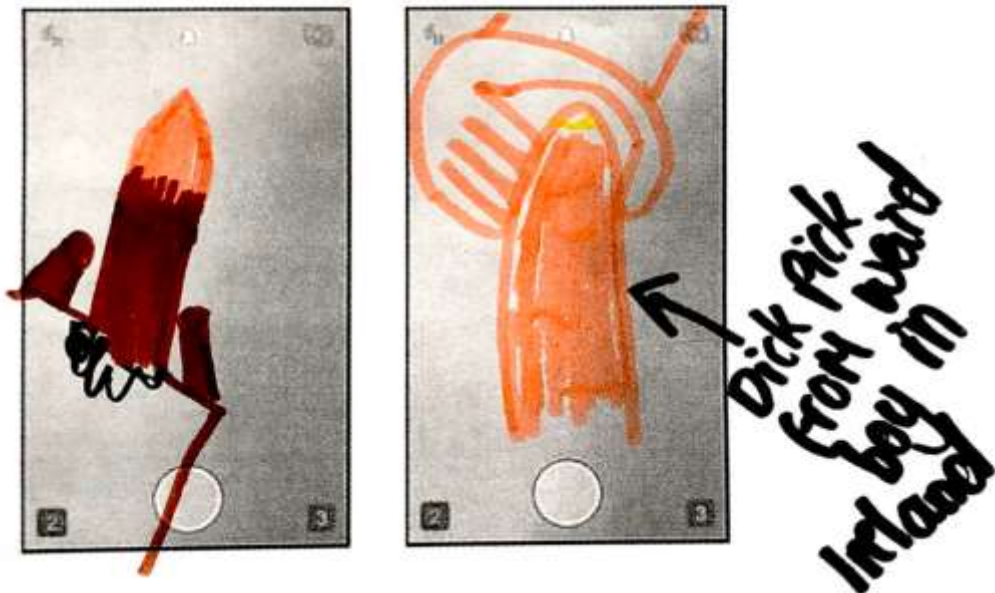
Disrupting Dick Pick Dismay through Drawing

During one of the workshops, after an extensive discussion of dick pics, the girls asked tentatively if they should draw what they "actually" received. This was responded to in the affirmative by the researcher. Amidst a heightened feeling of "wonder" and intensity in breaking taboos in school (MacClure, 2013) the girls set about drawing the dick pics they had received. There was a sense of solidarity amongst the girls in their experience as they discussed the pictures they had received from "random old men" on Snapchat. The ability to recreate what they had received in somewhat comical drawings seemed to empower the girls and worked to reimagine what had been an assumed silence, taboo and phallocentric control into a form of clitoral validity.
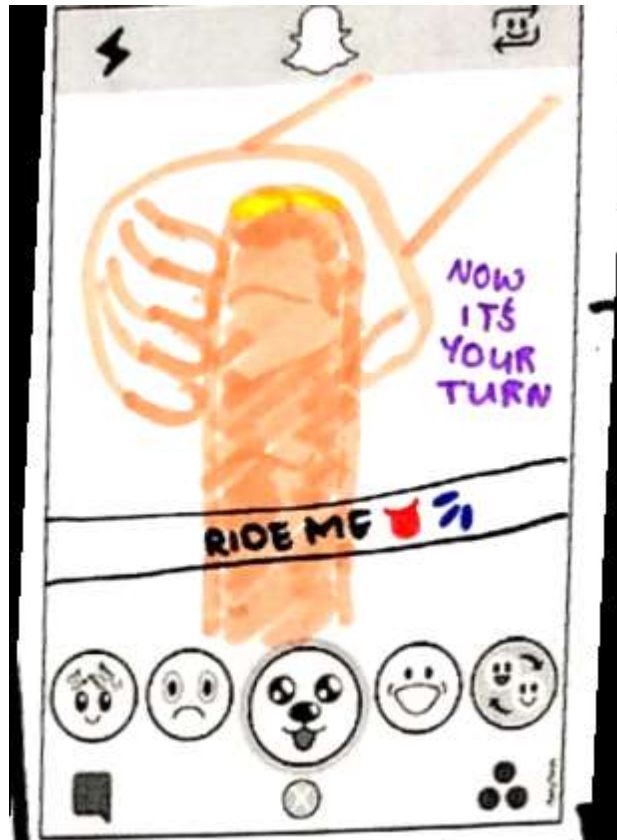

'Wanna see me cum!'

'Send one back babes

'Dick Pick hand from "weird boy in Ireland"'.

'Ride me – Now it's your turn'

It is important to note that the first dick pick drawings did not emerge until our third research school and were experienced by the team as a sort of breakthrough in the fieldwork. Author one remembers walking into a workshop led by Author two and saying "wow; this has generated something really important!" From here we gained confidence to prompt other groups to draw any "explicit" content.

It is also significant that drawing penises is more conventionally laddish behaviour connected to displays of masculinity (Bantjes and Nieuwoudt, 2014). Giving girls in particular the opportunity to draw penises in a way to show their experiences of unsolicited content disrupts this convention. Almost universally, the task at first created laughter, and hilarity which we as researchers sought to mediate through a focus on the seriousness of the task and our need to know and understand the type of content they were sent and where it came from "for science". Materially drawing the images on the pages seemed to enable a sense of confronting something that had been taboo; something that the girls would say in discussion they "didn't care about" or weren't bothered by as was repeated at length by some participants. Through a process of collective drawing we also were able to get to some of the feelings experienced of receiving these images, which emerged in the snippets
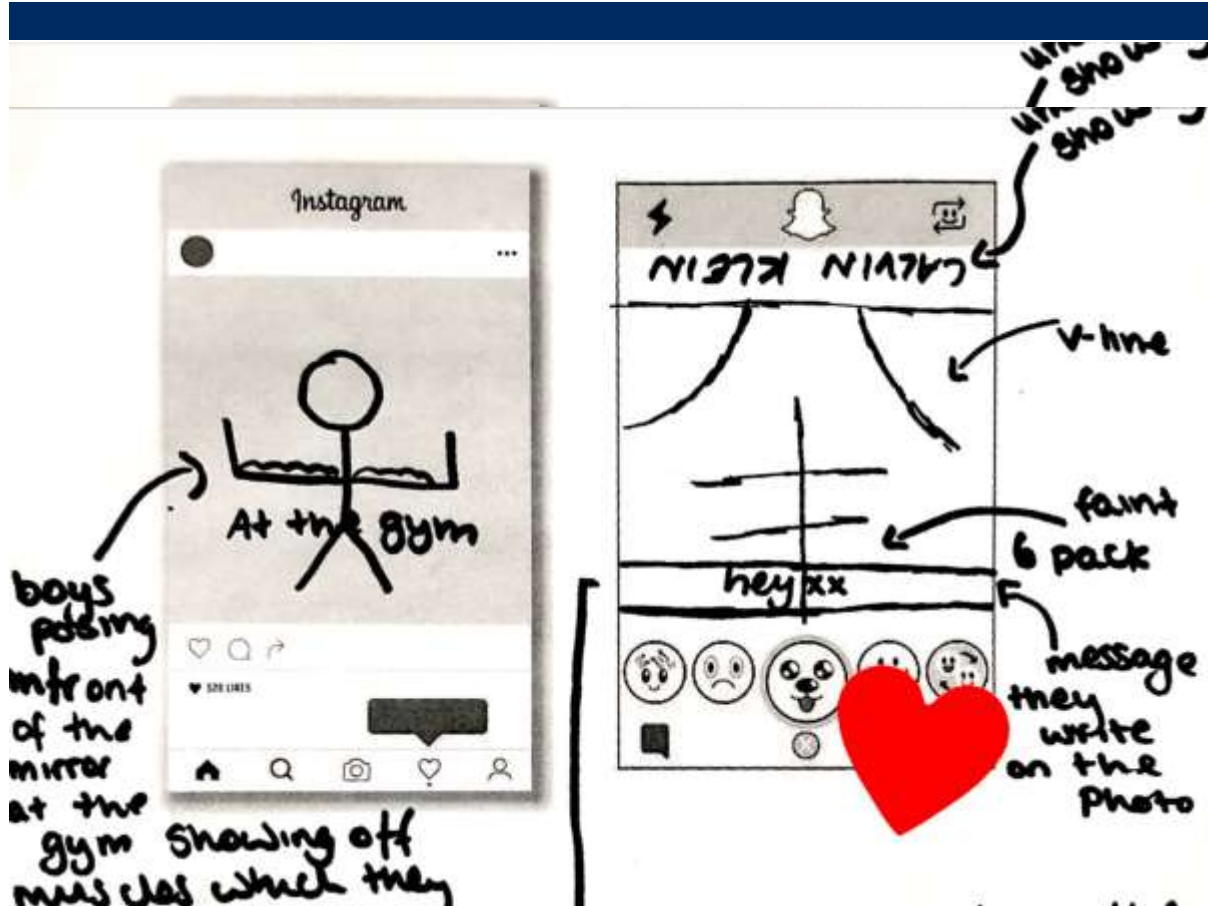
of talk between drawing. One girl discussed feeling "unnerved" and wishing someone had told her to "expect" the content and what to do. Another said she would have liked to "be prepared". Another expressed her savvy cool-ness, saying girls just "had to get chill with the dick pick".

These drawings and talk synergize into a powerful set of research understandings about young people's experiences of online platforms, but what is most relevant for this paper, which is concerned with teaching about relationships and sexuality, is that they show us what needs to be brought to light and made visible in educational practices so that we can "prepare" young people, perhaps counterbalancing the shock and dismay experienced by some. Perhaps we can reposition girls' relationships to the digital dick pic in a way that troubles these phallic digital force relations, what Renold and Ringrose (2016) discussed as forms of phallic tagging and touch and connection generated through social media networks. We can move from "digital flashing" and coercive affects to something understandable, "reworking the dick pick" to something expected and manageable as part of an endemic sexualised and pornified media terrain (Ringrose and Lawrence, 2018).
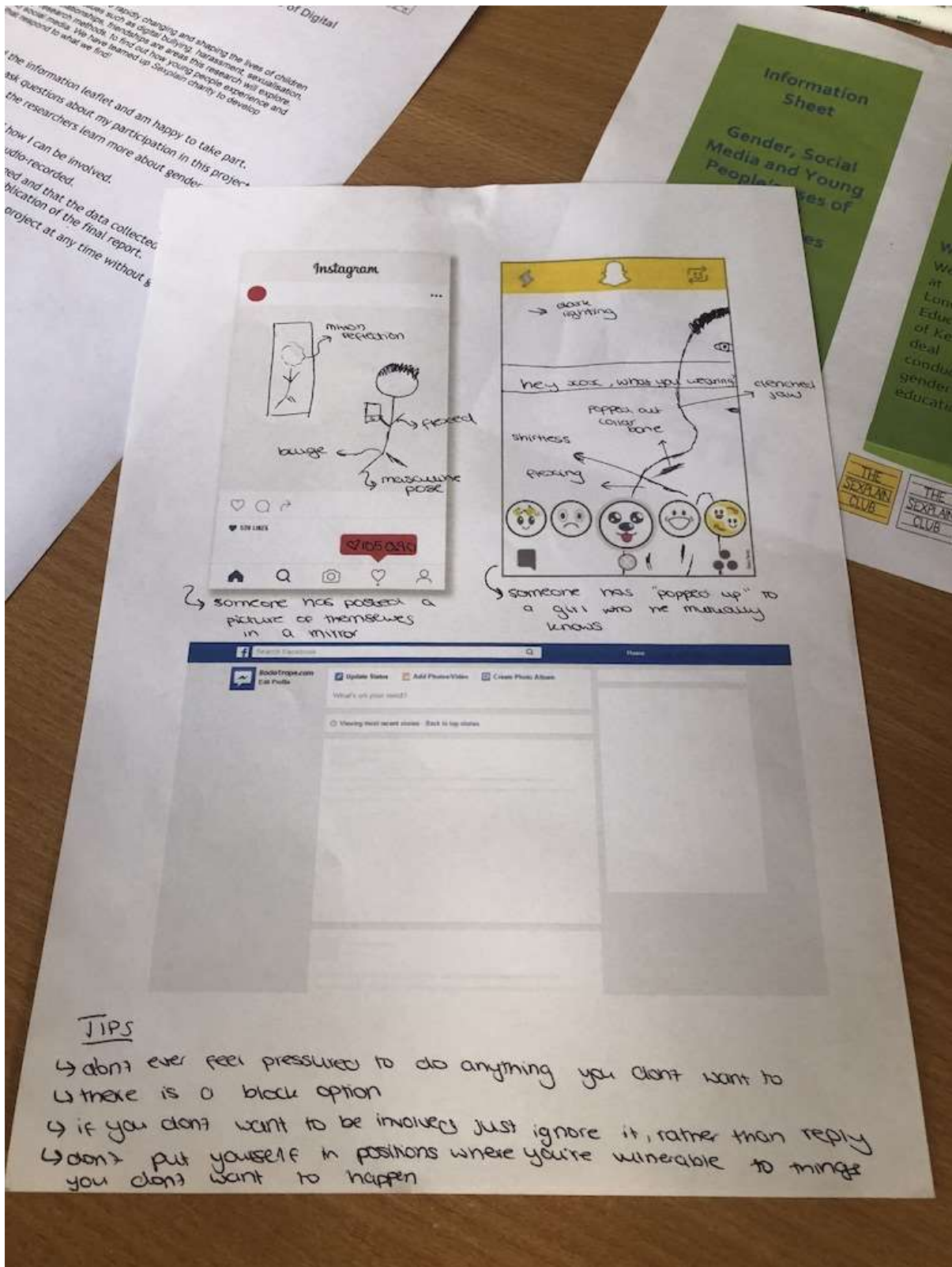
Barad's agential realism tells us that intentions and actions are not owned by individuals; rather, they are formed and entangled collectively across human and non-human networks (Hughes & Taylor, 2016). Barad resists separationalism and focuses instead on ideas of relationality (Warfield, 2016). We can see how the dick pick flows across online networks and the workshop environment enables an emergence and group experience that turns moments of private coping into collective confrontation. Like Renold's (2018, p. 50) "researchactivist encounters" which allowed "the unexpected to emerge," the research intra-actions, create a "material processes of emergence" (Hughes & Taylor, 2016. P. 13). Viewing this psychosocially, the encounter creates an affective holding (Ringrose and Renold, 2014) to deconstruct the discursive and material power relations in the dick pic practices.

Digital Phallic Masculinity

Drawing of unknown "random" dick pics also opened up the discussion into the practice of performing masculinity online in general and reference to and understanding of a phallus-oriented desire in the sexualised communication of boys.

Boys posing in front of the mirror, V-line, faint 6 pack

Genital 'bulge' photo, masculine pose to emphasise jawline and show arm muscles
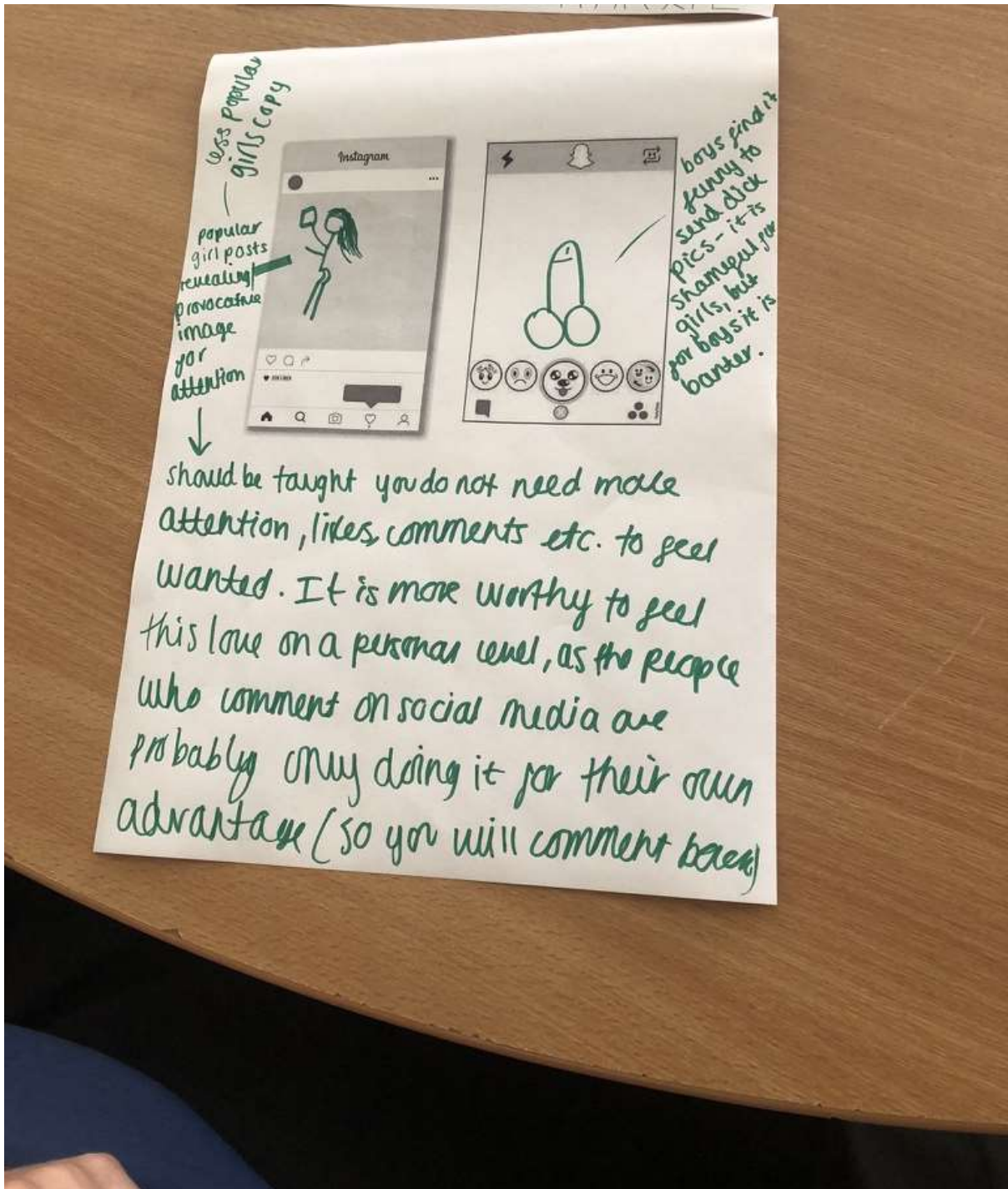
The images above are some examples of the drawing which emerged during discussion of boys on Instagram and Snapchat. These are not "dick pics," but rather, what the girls referred to as "provocative" images where boys perform their ideals of "sexy" masculinity through "clenched jaws", muscles with tops off, images of their "v-line" pointing towards the groin, or images that emphasized a genital "bulge". These drawings of digital images girls received reference or point to the penis in a range of ways – the clothed bulge in pants (erect penis) or v-line (hair leading to groin). The drawings of these images took place in a context where they were looking at images from their mobile phones, drawing the content and discussing experiences all at once:

> "He took a picture of his Calvin Kleins taking a picture of it, then put a picture of his abs & and a picture of his face" (focus group year 8 Independent Girls School)
> "It could be a picture of his bulge… He's just standing there, try to find a way to say 'like come get this'. Or they'll get like a light and put it right there! [to make the bulge look bigger]" (Focus group Year 10 Independent Girls School)

The intra-action of the methodologies of drawing and exploring through talk opens up space for the girls to think about the sexualised power relations at work in the staging and taking of the images, the practices of sending them, and the intentionality behind the images, which can be a form of banter experienced as harassment. The drawing allows them to work with matter to enfold and entangle new matters and meanings (Dolphijn & Van Der Tuin, 2012: 49).

It is significant that, in this research encounter, the girls worked closely together on their images, sharing and commenting on one another's, creating individual images, but with shared threads, as we could see the clenched jaw and v-line emerge in many of the drawings. This togetherness, which was not possible with all the groups by any means, enables a mode of grappling with the discursive framing of digitally networked images of masculinity, but also their affective power and their material effects. It also enabled a form of empowerment shown in the directives they issued around dick pics-- "don't respond" and "report"--which had not been articulable prior to this session which fostered the drawing of digital images of unsolicited images and a re-mattering of the penis and phallic-oriented power plays.

'Boys find it funny to send dick pics, it is shameful for girls, but for boys it is banter'
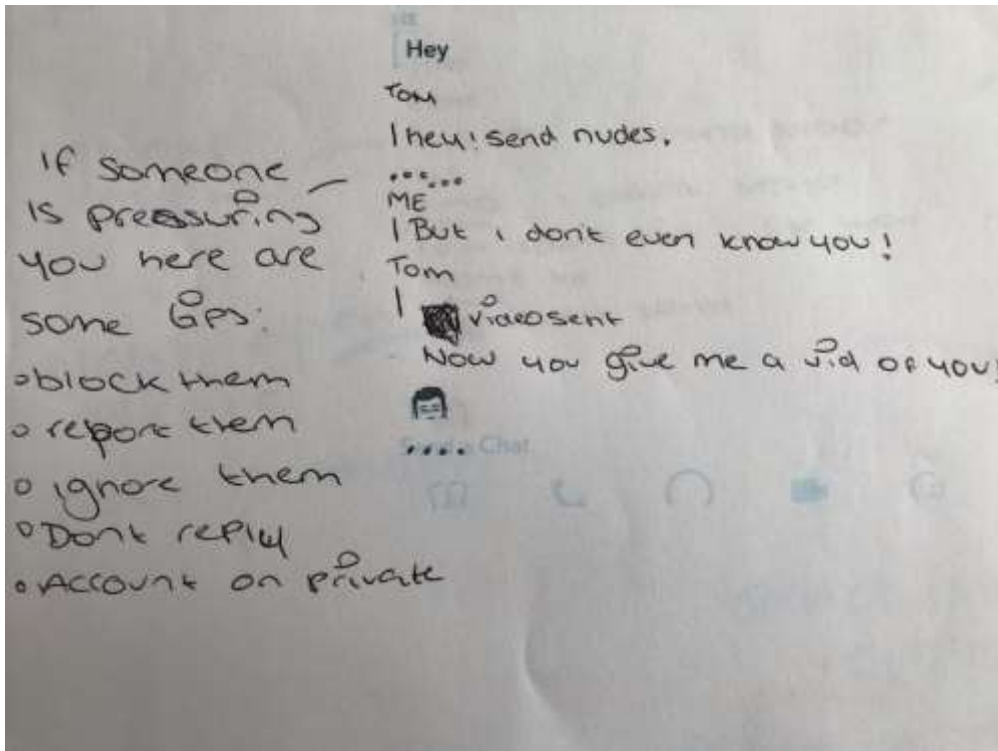
We can see educative messages and a form of empowerment around unsolicited sexual messages start to shape in the message above, through the drawing, the discussion and explorations of content on the phone. It not only shows the content, but starts to document an educative message that has come out of discussion and which is being documented as part of the task to offer "top tips" for

sexuality education. They make an evaluation of how the sender of dick pics on social media are doing it for their own advantage, and the description also highlights a sexual double standard where sending a dick pic can be something experienced as "funny" for boys. The key message is "for boys it is banter," but sending a nude is experienced as "shameful" for girls. New narratives about dick pics are co-created by the bodies and the matter in the classroom through "micro reconfigurations of the gendered apparatus of bodily production" (Warfield, 2016, p. 7) happening in the talk, laughter, scrolling through apps on phones (Robards et al., 2018), and drawing on the templates. This is a form of consciousness-raising generated through the group of experience of "crafting back" against dick pics (Ringrose and Regehr, 2018).
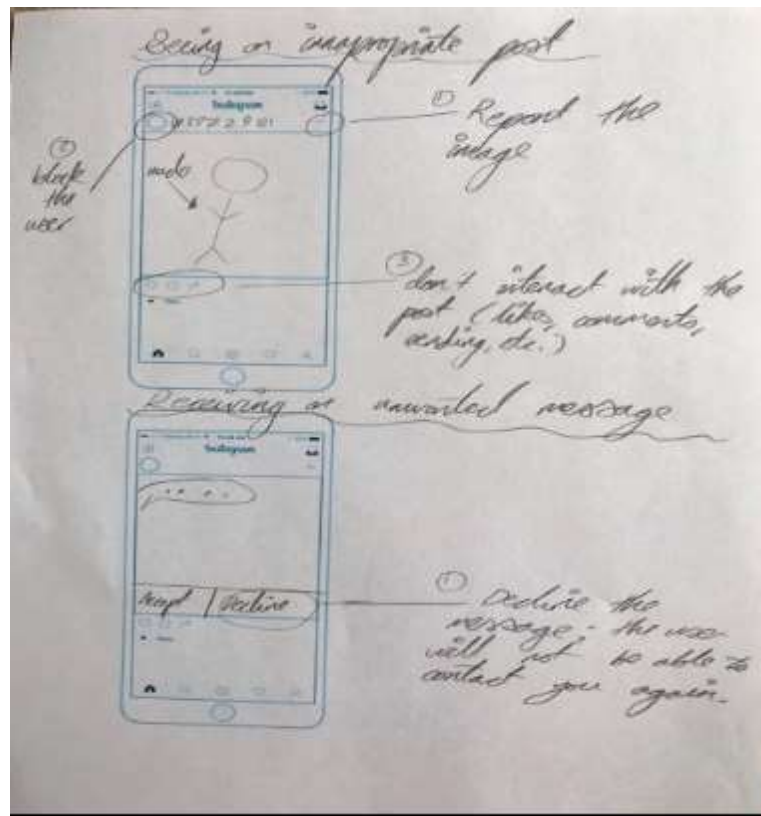
Intra-Activist Nude-Navigating Pedagogies

Mapping the flows and intra-actions between research, pedagogy, learning, and transformation remediated across contexts is one of the main goals of this paper, and as we noted, this research exercise was translated into a Sexplain lesson plan trialled in secondary school classrooms. Hence, we wish to reflect finally on what happened when we put the research activity into a pedagogical exercise in the classroom. The drawing portion came after a lesson on "sexual consent" to set up a context for placing unsolicited sexual content into a framework of sexual ethics of right and wrong, and ethical decision making and reasoning (Lamb and Randazzo, 2016). Whilst the research space is freer for exploratory and information gathering, and a lesson plan is more didactic, some hybrid blurring is possible in this context, and letting young people come to grips with a pedagogical message through drawing can also enable exploration.

For the lesson, the drawing task came as a final activity after discussing how the law deals with digital issues and consent, digital intimacy, image-based abuse, non-consensual image sharing, bystander culture, and bots/strangers online. Students were asked to choose one of those topics, draw an example of an issue they were familiar with, and provide advice alongside it, just as we had done in the focus groups. The classroom environment had significantly more students and a greater teacher presence than the focus groups, and so it seemed that students were slightly more reticent to open up about their experiences with what they perceived to be illicit and taboo content. As a result, we had to explicitly tell them that they could draw *anything* that they deemed relevant and important. Eventually, many of the students became more relaxed and started to share their experiences with the group. In the lesson plan, we likewise found that young people used the drawings to create a scenario through which they could explore gendered power dynamics online, but they go a step beyond this with more specific directions about what to do (report, block, and speak to an adult), indicating they are intra-acting with the sexual ethics of consent, which have been conveyed in the lesson.

'Block them, report them, ignore them'.

This girl describes steps of managing content on the specific platform of snapchat by putting on privacy settings, blocking and reporting masturbation videos.

'Report the unwanted image. Decline the message'

In this intra-action with the Instagram template, a boy explains how to manage porn push activity on Instagram, advising "block the user" who sends "nudes" and "decline message" requests. Thus, through creating spaces in which young people were able to discuss ostensibly "taboo" subject matter, and what they find appropriate and inappropriate in very real, material specific ways, through the particular objects of digital dick pics, man masturbation videos, requests to "send nudes" and mass circulated pornography, a transformative environment can be enabled.

Conclusion: PhEmaterialising Potentialities in Sex(ality) Education

Whilst the unending, rhizomatic nature of new materialist thinking can make it difficult to conceptualise the limits of what sex education can and should do (see Allen, 2019) we argue phEmaterialism has an ethico-political phem-date (rather than mandate) to enact changes through intra-actions with multiple players and actors and stakeholders in our complex posthuman ecologies (Bradoitti, 2018). Barad's (2007) notion of posthuman response-ability applies to all research and pedagogy" "there is only the ongoing practice of being open and live to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly" (p. 141).

PhEmaterialism calls for a form of feminist guerrilla warfare and "injecting viruses" into normative power relations--and we would add, injecting *feminist viruses* into the RSE curriculum--in ways that

can create new openings for feminine desire and pleasure. Tapping into this, we have argued that if we wish to undo phallocentric power relations we need to start with the basics--the literal objects, materials and relationalities--through which bodily organs, anatomy, desire, and pleasure-receiving and accepting are made manifest in discursive, material, and affective ways in RSE. If we wish to find practical application in the new compulsory RSE in England, a focus on correct genitalia and vulva-making can be pursued as part of gender equity and the duty of care for schools to provide up-to-date and accurate information from the biology perspective (Ringroser, 2013; Ringrose et al., 2019b). We have demonstrated how the creating Play-Doh feminine genitals materially reshapes the masculinist focus on disease and risk via the object of the male penis, which has been placed as the primary referent to manage in both wider culture and RSE. The vulva and clitoris-making reorients biology towards clitoral validity, subverting heteropatriarchal logics in ways that may be able to be snuck into the curriculum.

Likewise, our research demonstrates that many young people experience unsolicited sexual images on social media, and for girls, receiving unwanted "dick pics" or being harassed for nudes puts them in the position of passive recipient and "victim". It was the phematerial drawing exercise that enabled a communicative channel to demonstrate these phenomena tangibly and to counteract feelings of relative helplessness and secrecy to open-ness and a dynamic of confrontation. Drawing enabled a way of re-mattering this digital content – a reorientation of phallocentric power. The activity of drawing the unsolicited content that young people receive is easily translatable to a lesson, as we showed. It can be a somewhat generic task that opens up spaces of exploring the ways complex private and public elements of pornographic content is received and experienced by young people on their mobile phones. The key is to frame this discussion explicitly within a conversation about sexual ethics, rights, and consent (Renold and McGeeny, 2018). By helping girls understand the penile power plays at work, we can give them the material, discursive, and affective tools to understand and manage this imagery on their own terms, enabling a form of clitoral validity for re-mattering what the dick pic can and cannot do (Ringrose and Lawrence, 2018).

We would also like to mention some of the preliminary affects/effects we have found through our presentations to academic and practitioner audiences. Drawing the sexualised genital images to which they are involuntarily exposed demonstrates their ubiquity and normalisation for young people, but comes as a shock for many adults. We see the power of disrupting age-appropriate ideas about RSE and the jolting of adults out of complacency. Through the intra-action of seemingly childlike mediums (drawing with felt tips) with the taboo images of dick pics, the materiality of the images works to highlight the gap between "adult" perceptions of age appropriate content young people should be taught about in schools and what young people's lived experiences of sexually explicit imagery and pornography actually are (Mulholland, 2015). The fact that the felt tip drawings of masturbating videos and dick pics are so shocking reveals an important truth about our collective will to construct a false notion of "childhood innocence" (Renold et al., 2015) that ultimately, if maintained, works to place children in harm through lack of information and guidance in the name of protection and "safeguarding".

For phEmaterialism to have an impact on a broader scale, it has to engage with "what matters" (Hickey-Moody, 2018) and the "more than" (Renold, 2018) of educational research in each diverse context. We have argued in the strongest possible terms that phEmaterialism is not a theoretical armchair exercise or methodological doctrine; it is an experimental re-doing and re-mattering (Ringrose et al., 2018). In the case of this paper, it is about showing some new discursive, affective, and material capacities made possible through methodological and pedagogical experiments generated via our intra-activist educational assemblages. Through continued dialogues between ourselves as researchers, teachers, and RSE facilitators, and through building connections with schools, policy makers, and other stakeholders, we seek to create further webs and tendrils of phEmaterial praxis (Ringrose and Renold, 2019) that challenge and transform phallocentric orientations, re-mattering the parts and plumbing of normative RSE curriculum and practice.

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