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Title of project	Student voice in school
Title of report	
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HREC Approval Number	2012/2188
Date of publication	2016
Jurisdictions	New South Wales
Area of Research (key words)	Student voice, school reform, affect/ emotion in schools, listening, negotiating curriculum
Abstract of report	<p>This study explores the ambivalent affective intensities surrounding a four-year student voice in a school reform initiative at a comprehensive coeducational public Australian high school. Student voice, an educational movement with rationales that zigzag between standpoint epistemology, dialogue, critical pedagogy, and school improvement, does not necessarily “feel empowering” in its enactment (Ellsworth, 1989, my emphasis). Propelled by prior affective perturbations, I engaged, over a year of participatory ethnographic fieldwork, in processes of methodological and conceptual experimentation with students, teachers, parents and the philosophical resources of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. Deliberately working with the problematic concept of voice, I sought to think and feel voice beyond the autonomous liberal humanist subject, to attend to what exceeds the verbal and linguistic in and beyond schools, and to map the simultaneous liberations and co-options of voice. The question What can ‘voice’ do? is concerned with the capacity of voice to affect and to be affected – as a concept, as a felt force, in methodological configurations, and in writing. I examine common sense ways of knowing students’ voices, emotions and bodies: according to age, ability, emotional expression, and imperatives to produce data demonstrating progress. Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of affect, assemblages, lines, order words, desire, and concept creation are employed to rethink the political, pragmatic and affective dimensions of the communicative act and social (re-)production in schools, and to re-tool participatory and ethnographic methods. Mapping what voice does, I explore the refrains that murmured and metamorphosed around voice in a school reform process: respect, understanding, responsibility and change, and their intersections with affects articulated in language as doubt, fear, shame and joy. I argue that what student voice can do depends on conceptions of the body of the speaker, and the opportunities available to trouble these conceptions. What student voice can do depends on the ways in which relations between bodies are felt and interpreted, the configurations and conditions of communicative events, and how student voice events are evaluated.</p>

Link to report (if available)	https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/15274?mode=full
Link to project website	N/A
Copy of report (if no link)	N/A
Link to researcher email	eve.mayes@deakin.edu.au
Implications for education jurisdictions and schools	<p>The study attempts to contribute to productive conversations between students, teachers, parents and school communities about teaching and learning relationships and engagement at school. The following questions are raised for discussion that have implications for schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it possible for schools to be places where students and teachers learn together and from each other? • What conditions support both students and school staff to feel like they can make a difference at school? • In the current educational system, what limits the sense of the possibility for doing things differently? What possibilities are still available?