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formal und inhaltlich überarbeitete Version der Originalveröffentlichung in:

formally and content revised edition of the original source in:

Ethnography and education 13 (2018) 2, S. 254-268



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urn:nbn:de:0111-pedocs-155214

10.25656/01:15521

<https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0111-pedocs-155214>

<https://doi.org/10.25656/01:15521>

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Pedagogical relationships in times of sexual violence: Constituting intimacy and corporality at the limits.

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The research was conducted for the German Institute for International Educational Research and for the University of Duisburg-Essen.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany under Grant 01SR1210A and Grant 01SR1210C supported this work.

Word Count: 8068 words

Pedagogical relationships in times of sexual violence: Constituting intimacy and corporality at the limits

Abstract: The article takes its starting point from the current debate on sexual violence in educational institutions. It follows an ethnographic perspective without observing sexual violence directly, arguing that doing so is ethically impossible. Instead it suggests deducing risks for sexual violence through the limits of pedagogical practices. Discussing two case studies (an all-day-school and a residential child care home) and relating their discursive concepts of caring and educating to their practices shows how these institutions address the topic of sexual violence. Reconstructing the practices that constitute a difference between exclusive, one-on-one caring situations and open, publicly accessible educational situations show how transgressions of the limits of corporality to intimacy become institutionalized. We conclude that an ethnography of transgression points to practice arrangements that pose a risk for sexual violence in educational institutions.

Keywords: educational institutions, transgression, risk for sexual violence, pedagogy, practices

Introduction

In Germany over the last decade, sexual violence in institutions of the youth welfare service and schooling has become a major topic of discussion. Compared to other Western countries the contribution to the fact that educational institutionsⁱ are not as safe as they are supposed to be according to their mandate found a late awareness. –The recent discussion in Germany is part of a general public discourseⁱⁱ and of a scientific discussion that highlight risks in educational institutions in particular.

Analysing the numerous past acts of violence against children, Hafenegger (2011) identifies three circumstances as risk factors for sexual violence in the field of pedagogy in Germany: closeness of the institution, insufficient training of staff, and overburdening of educational professionals (such as teachers, social workers,

educators). The findings of Hafenegger renew already existing mistrust vis-à-vis caregiving in educational institutions. We cannot conclude that educational institutions are even more dangerous to children today than they were in the past. Risk factors do not describe appropriate how sexual violating practices are processed within educational institutions. The recent uptick in reporting behaviour represents a *new* awareness of sexual violence and a change of the discursive practices in educational institutions. Likewise, this tendency should not foment a ‘moral panic’ (cf. Tobin 2001, Piper and Stronach 2009). Heightened public awareness has emphasized the fact that sexual violence against children in educational institutions is a major social problem. Before developing further policies on child protection, among other research an analysis of risk-constellations within pedagogical practices is needed.

In most Western states, policy makers established investigation committees after they became aware of sexual violence in institutions (e.g. private sessions and public hearings in Australia, Wilhelminenberg Commission in Austria, St. Iddazell in Switzerland, Weir/Gladman Report on Rotherham in England, Ryans’ Commission in Ireland, Dutch Committee-Samson). Gathering information about the extent and circumstances of sexual violence against children is always a review of the past that spans up to the present (Loetz 2012). In Germany, the government funded several research projects in order to gain more knowledge about the circumstances of sexual violence in institutions, driven especially by the question of protection against sexual abuse in pedagogical institutions that arose in public discourse after a spate of disclosures of sexual violence since early 2010. The high profile cases at two boarding schools – one Jesuit, one progressive - brought the issue of sexual violence in institutions to public awareness. Since then, a process of increasing disclosure of sexual violence in institutions can be identified (cf. an overview of the German debate: Stadler;

Bieneck and Pfeifer 2011; Thole et al. 2012, Andresen and Heitmeyer 2012,). The research project this article is based on was one of the government funded surveys and focused on the educational practices of an all-day-school, a residential childcare group and a boarding school. The expanded understanding and awareness of violence in educational institutions is accompanied by an observation of an institutionalization of violence through pedagogical practices. Institutionalized violence overshadows the practices of schooling and the school system; the school system can be seen as damaging for the individual and also for the overall social order (cf. Francis and Mills 2012, referring to Harber 2004). Reflecting on those practices that force students to attend [private or government-run] boarding school also leaves society confronted with the violent and dissocial behaviour of a traumatized generation. This in turn gives rise to questions about past state policy practices of ‘civilizing’ and ‘educating,’ as well as current questions about confronting inequality in the educational system and questions of violation while integrating disadvantaged students (cf. Smith 2004, Pember 2007, Bass 2014). The negotiation of relationships in residential children’s homes (among other sites) can become a harmful fact of everyday life - even despite protective intentions (cf. Emond 2014, Barter 2006).

Asking about sexual violence in educational institutions affects the negotiation of power relations, intimate and corporal relationships and questions of privacy. Sexual violence, in its indictable form, cannot be observed directly. Moreover, passing judgement on a single perpetrator of violence would narrow the perspective on the social problem and circumvent questions about the relationships between children and their educators (exemplarily Skinner 1992, Jones 2001, Mirsky 2003).

Ethically, conducting research on sexual violence in educational institutions can “only” be research on practices of pedagogical relationships: the impact of intimacy,

participation, power relations, corporality and the institutionalization of violence (cf. Sikes, 2010). Recognising the ethical issues at stake in our research, we focus on those pedagogical practices where the relationship between educators and their clients is under negotiation. We thereby offer insights into institutional practices that are under contemporary debate (cf. Barbour 2010).

In the following sections, we explain our approach to do research on sexual violence; this leads to an ethnography of practices focussing on the limits of intimacy and corporal closeness (section 1). Following this idea, we present two contrasting educational institutions to show different institutionalizations of practices that verbally or practically negotiate the risks of sexual violence (section 2). Accordingly, in sections 3 and 4, we pause our discussion of sexual violence on hold and focus on how practices of closeness, intimacy and corporality constitute an institutionalized pedagogical relationship. What the ethnographic extracts also show is how educational institutions handle the discourse of sexual violence. In the conclusion, we offer a theoretical argument about the risks for sexual violence in educational institutions that accompany the transgression of the aforementioned practices.

1. From sexual violence to limits and transgression of pedagogical practices

Overall in scholarly literature, the “concept of violence in the social sciences still seems remarkably undertheorized” (Moore 1994: 138).ⁱⁱⁱ Randall Collins’ (2008) approach, namely a micro-sociology of violence, stands out as the only remarkable methodological exception. Following the principles of interactionism, he focuses on the violence of the situation, in fact bracketing out the violence of individual actors. He argues for “direct observation of violent interaction to capture the process of violence as it actually is performed” (ibid. 4). As we already indicated in the introduction, our focus

is not and cannot be a direct observation and description of sexual violence. Nevertheless, our research is contextualized in the field of violence. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate a definition to make clear what, ethnographically, can be described as sexual violence. Harvey and Gow (1994) offer a helpful definition of violence that leads to a perspective that does not focus on violence as an act or incident, but rather as a product of practices. Violence 'is transgressive; transgressive of our sense of bodily integrity and the spirit enclosed therein which enables the notion of violation to apply to more than physical hurt. It is in this sense that the concept of violence is associated with western understanding of human sexuality.' (Harvey/Gow 1994: 2)

This allows us to argue that violence is accompanied by an interrelation of difference and transgressive practices that disregard a person's sexual integrity. Sexual violence against children is a result of transgression; therefore we argue that transgressions and limits are part of institutional practices -- and thus the focus of our ethnographies. Transgression includes the violation of social conventions, institutional rules, agreements and orders, as well as personal emotional and physical needs. In terms of sexual violence against children, transgression is a question of violating intimacy and sexual integrity, and an exploitation of power relationships and of emotional and physical needs within the pedagogical relationship. To understand how practices at the limits of closeness, intimacy and corporality constitute an educational institution, we present ethnographic data from two different educational institutions and show how limits are negotiated and normalized in and through practices and discourses in the institutions against the background of sexual violence. Our ethnography focuses on limits and transgressions; this necessitates a discussion of the construction of limits and how limits are co-constructed by transgression.

An ethnographic perspective on limits and transgression can be theoretically framed by the work of Foucault, who argues that the experience of being is defined in relation to its limits (cf. 1977: 30). In this perspective, pedagogical practices define and normalize limits and constitute educational institutions. ‘The limit and transgression depend on each other for whatever density of being they possess: a limit could not exist if it were absolutely uncrossable and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows.’ (Foucault 1977: 34) Sexual violence thus means the transgression of limits, though every transgression reinscribes the normativity of pedagogical practices precisely through its contravention thereof.

For our analysis of the ethnographic data, we thus focus on practices that, by their limits and in the conjunction with transgression, constitute the educational institution. Following a practice theory approach (cf. Schatzki 2002) and through a Foucauldian lens, we bring the constructs of sexuality, limits, transgression, power, and thereby the genealogy of the institution, into our ethnography of pedagogical practices.^{iv} Taking into account a practice-based approach allows a description of the institution as constituted through practice. ‘A practice is, first, a *set of actions*. [...] To say that actions are “constituted” by doings and sayings is to say that the performance of doings and sayings amounts, in the circumstances involved, to the carrying out of actions.’ (Schatzki, 2001: 56). Our ethnography brings into view how two educational institutions deal with the limits of corporality, intimacy, and privacy – while at the same time strained by the fact of sexual violence and the necessity of addressing it. Rather than discovering sexual violence, our ethnographic research was meant to uncover the practices and discourses that constitute the institutional norms. These practices and discourses also represent the negotiation of both limits and any transgression thereof.

2. Data production and collection

The article is based upon a collaborative research project that consists of three field studies in educational institutions in Germany. In the following section, we focus on two institutions where we conducted fieldwork. The all-day-school and the residential childcare facility are both responsible for providing care for children, though the range of institutionalization of pedagogical practices differs between them. The all-day-school has to provide lunch, lavatory facilities, and supervision from 8 am to 4 pm three days a week, while supervision is only until 2pm the other two days. Most of the supervised time consists of lessons and teaching. The residential child care home has to provide breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as private rooms where children sleep, spend free time, or do their homework. Supervision is mandatory while they are not at school: also at night or if children are ill. Moreover, the residential childcare home is to some extent (temporarily or even permanently) a substitute for the child's family of origin, whereas the all-day school is commissioned by the parents to carry out the above-mentioned pedagogical care tasks. Notably, both institutions have to deal with the absence of the family, but in different ways – for children in residential child care, the absence of the family is even doubled; it is not only a matter of being away from their families for a time, but that their families legally and literally cannot care for them.

Choosing two different educational institutions followed the assumption that the school and the residential care practices differ in terms of the [temporal] absence of the family and in terms of practices of intimacy and corporality, among others.

For each case study, we conducted two research field visits, each for three months; the first took place in the period of February to July 2014, and the second in the period of September 2014 to January 2015. Earlier, Jeffrey and Troman (2006) discussed the challenge of doing reliable ethnography under the 'pressures from funding

bodies for quick completion' (ibid. p. 24) and suggested a 'compressed time mode' (ibid. p. 26) for educational ethnography. Additionally, we experienced a politically forced interest to present first ideas and results on an early stage of ethnographic research to answer the given societal problem of sexual violence in institutions that causes further challenges for educational ethnography.

The collected data consists of protocols and documentation of participant observation (field notes of around 120 hours of observation and ethnographic interviews per field); narrative interviews (transcripts of at least one interview per field); focus groups (transcripts whereby the focus group participants were members of the respective institutions; one focus group with youths aged 11 to 16 and one focus group with adults [educators, personnel, carers] from 21 to 59 years old per field). The field notes describe the participants' practices of everyday life in the institutions. Interviews and focus groups give a direct voice to those were observed (cf. Forsey 2008); they show the discursive level of how these actors navigate the institution with respect to sexual violence. The analysis of this data is based on a "Grounded Theory" methodology (cf. Charmaz 2009). Contrasting the practices of these two institutions, the article aims to present the practice-arrangement bundle that operates at the limit of pedagogical practices in educational institutions. By "bundle," we mean 'the institution of one or more practices that conjointly transpire amid a particular, perhaps newly created or altered material arrangement or set of similar arrangements.' (Schatzki, 2012: 23)

All institutions were asked for their consent to be part of this study; likewise, all actors in the field were asked for consent. The persons who were interviewed agreed in person – and if necessary through a legal guardian – to be recorded. Information on data protection was provided to all persons with whom the ethnographers had contact. We

have omitted all personally identifiable information that is not essentially necessary to understand the given examples. We also anonymised names and places according to best research practices.

In the following two exemplary situations from the residential children's home (3) and the all-day school (4) we point out how educational institutions are constituted through practices that are limited by norms of intimacy and corporality in general, and in particular by the professional knowledge of the educators who deal with the discourse of sexual violence in institutions.

3. Exclusive Intimacy in residential care

3.1 Institutional Discourse

The educational institution of residential care constitutes a place between two inherent spaces. The first it is a place for a [temporary] family-like setting that recalls concepts of privacy and intimacy, while the second space is based on a place of an educational institution with an arrangement that, by statute and public expectation, is meant to educate and care for the children by means of engaged professional educators. In the following focus group excerpt, the educators in the residential child care home discuss corporality and close relationships in their everyday pedagogical practice.

Df: touching may be allowed, otherwise you might say, (.), I am not allowed to hug a child to console [him/her] because then one would be incriminated for sexual abuse (.) then I wonder whatsoever I am allowed to do? Hence (.) Thus I ask myself where does it start then, is it forbidden to poke the child in the hips (.) Am I forbidden to squabble with him (.) Am I not allowed to do the next, well //mh// that's truly that I need to question myself (.) how many transgressive actions am I doing?

Bm: ↳every day

Df: ^Levery day (.) Those days where I really hug children (.) I mean (.) where
 a child clearly tells me, ‘I don’t want this (.) I don’t want to be hugged or even
 want you near me (.) I immediately respect that

Bm: ^Lmh

Df: ^LI think (.) but where children say, yes, we will
 take part or we need this even (.) By this one fosters another piece of a relationship
 to them (.) and if you would miss out on this (.) what would it look like? So (2) eh

Am: ^Lyes indeed°

This sequence can be read as one statement shared and accepted by the three persons present.^v The educators see themselves confronted with the fact of sexual violence in institutions, which leads to a struggle in their sense of professional self-understanding and provokes a reflection on their own practices. In conversation, they come to the conclusion that in residential child care, every intimate and corporal practice approaches limits of sexual violence. The educators refer to an understanding of pedagogical relations wherein pedagogical practices can be assessed and evaluated and are of public interest. The pedagogical practices are framed by their institutionalization, namely, their transformation of the family-like situation of living *at home* into an official and public situation of living *in residential care*. This becomes clear in the following observation, where the researcher gets permission to participate in the morning routine of waking up a child.

What already is expressed in the above quote is a particular understanding that corporality between children and educators strengthens the relation and bonding in a good [pedagogical] manner. At the same time, the physical closeness is problematic. The residential care home is not a place for privacy in general – educators are employees who obey and represent a public authority. Nevertheless, educators respond to the children’s need for closeness and corporality if the child demands it. At the same time, they discursively exclude intimacy as a pedagogical practice.

3.2 Institutional Practice

The morning situation was observed during the second field visit to the residential community. It shows an example of how corporality and intimacy are present in the observed practices.

It is quarter past six in the morning. Tim, one pedagogue who is on duty today, is busy helping the kids wake up. He keeps going to the different rooms of the children and coming back to the living room every now and again. We sit in the living room observing the morning procedure. Tim says he is going to check on Dennis, a boy aged 11, again. I ask if I can join and follow him after he has given permission. The door to Dennis' room is open. Tim enters, I stand at the threshold. At first Tim talks to Dennis, who is still lying in his bed. Among other things, Tim says that he has already opened the window. Then he sits down at the edge of the bed and tousles Dennis' hair. The boy still looks sleepy. He is lying cuddled up in his sheets, which have the design of his favourite soccer club. The folding screen in front of his bed shields him from the rest of the room. Tim rubs Dennis' back and says that he has to wake up now. He asks Dennis to open his eyes so that he can look at them. Dennis turns his head towards him and blinks. Carefully Tim opens Dennis' left eye (which had been inflamed for the past three days) with his hands and says: "So Dennis, unfortunately you have to go to school. Your eye is much better than yesterday." Dennis buries himself in his sheets again. Tim caresses him again, this time on his head and back and says that he has to get up now. Dennis replies he does not want to. Tim pulls away his blanket; Dennis then pulls his pillow over his head. Tim also takes the pillow and puts it at the bottom end of the bed. Dennis does not try to stop Tim. Tim gets up and says that he will come back over in two to three minutes and Dennis really has to get up now because they still had to pack his swimsuit and towel for sports class. Tim leaves the room; I follow. A little later, Tim goes to Dennis once more. I follow and again remain in the doorway. Tim and Dennis initially talk about the result of last evening's football match. Then he asks Dennis to get up, saying that he really needs to hurry a little now. He should at least sit up. All of a sudden, Dennis looks in my direction, asking why I am standing there the whole time. Dennis says that he finds it irritating. Tim says that it is my job, pulls Dennis' blanket slightly aside and states that after all, he is wearing a T-Shirt and pyjama bottoms. I say that I will go to the living room if I am bothering him. I turn around and go away.

Differently from to other case study, where we observed much less corporal engagement, the above-described situation of being waked is performed as a very corporal arrangement. The educator touches the child to direct his attention to the necessary steps: getting up, getting dressed, packing things, and going to school. The male educator's and female researcher's involvement in the awaking render the power relations open and publicly accessible.

Touching Dennis is, of course, corporal. The process of waking him up and then leaving Dennis alone to get up and get ready shows that the situation is corporally defined; Dennis is left alone to awake properly and get dressed in privacy. The practice of waking the child contains moments where corporality and the open, publicly accessible arrangement are transgressed. The transgression becomes obvious in the concluding moment, namely, when the presence of the outside researcher and the opening up of the situation by the educator is identified as irritating and the child demands privacy -- that is, an intimate, one-on-one interaction.

In particular, we need to analyse the scene as a research situation and question what ethnography shows and what the researcher represents. By asking for *permission*, the researcher already marks this situation as extraordinary. Asking for permission is required in this institution – at least once or sometimes even every time they want to do something, children have to ask for permission. The educators need to track and be aware of what the children are doing. The researcher here follows the same rules as the children, reflecting the powerful position of the educator. Participating in this morning ritual, which is not fundamentally pedagogical, but rather caring, necessitates permission and negotiation. Intimacy is transgressive and institutional limits are made visible in the researcher's conduct.

As the spatial setting shows, intimacy is constructed and controlled by the interplay between accessible and exclusive pedagogical relations in this institution: Exclusive intimacy is afforded to the child only in the material of the *folding screen* that leaves Dennis with a niche to hide from the open setting of the residential home. However, there is no doubt that this situation is not only corporal, but in its arrangement, intimate. According to the adult focus group, the educator cannot ignore this, and it deepens the relationship to the child. By sitting near at the edge of the bed and touching the boy, the educator imbues the situation with intimacy.

In addition to merely being a practice of waking up the children, this situation represents an institutionalized practice wherein the educator has to make a decision based to his pedagogical mandate. His check-up on the eye is a corporal closeness within his role as a carer and responsible adult. This corporality is limited to the inspection of a recently inflamed eye.

The arrangement of an exclusive and intimate situation is made more explicit when the female ethnographer is addressed by the child, who calls her presence as “irritating”. A particular intimacy is institutionalized and performed here, but by integrating the researcher into the situation, a transgression takes place. The attendance is a violation of the exclusively intimate, one-on-one arrangement.

The general public affords little or no risk for sexual violence to educational institutions; granting permission and visibility reflect. That notwithstanding, the situation is arranged as exclusively intimate, reflecting residential child care home’s task of ensuring that children’s lives and development are not on constant public display, but also entail intimacy and privacy. Surprisingly, the educator’s reaction contradicts what was said in the focus group. The child’s indication of a violation in the situation is not immediately respected. Dennis sees a difference between the two adults

and requests that Tim arrange the situation as exclusively intimate. Tim offers an excuse for the researcher, who thereby becomes part of the institution, though Dennis addresses her to challenge the arrangement to become an open, institutionalized practice. It is the researcher herself who acts on the “rules” of the institution that were presented earlier in the focus group, and exits the situation.

The interaction of Tim, Dennis and the ethnographer indicates and represents the difficulties inherent in the institutionalized practices. Corporality between the educator and the child is limited to an open, publicly accessible relation. At the same time, following the mandate and the institutional understanding requires a *transgression* into an exclusively intimate situation according to the needs of the child.

We have shown that the situation of waking up a child needs to be one-on-one to a certain extent and, by becoming intimate, thereby transgresses the open, publicly accessible residential care practices. Transgressions of practices that become exclusively intimate can be seen as a risk factor for sexual violence that cannot easily be solved by opening up the situation.

In the following section, we present data from the all-day-school and give another example of how an educational institution deals with discourses and risks of sexual violence and how limits and transgressions of pedagogical practices are addressed.

4. Accessible corporality in the all-day-school

4.1 Institutional Discourse

The educational institution of the all-day-school is oriented to constitute a space for learning and gaining knowledge and competences outside the family; it is necessarily oriented toward differences in levels of achievement. The following statement is part of

the focus group with the teachers; the sports teacher (Em) summarises the group's perspective and explains all sides of the debate. Earlier, the teachers had discussed broadly -- and in a problematic tone -- that if pupils' corporal needs are not satisfied by their families, this affects the pedagogical relationship in school and leads to a compromise of their professional position. While in the residential child care home, corporality is part of pedagogical practices, it is an exception for the professional teacher.

Em: I think the question between closeness and distance is one and the same (.) also it occupies me personally (.) particularly me because (.) exactly this tension between (.) how much closeness is good or how can I engage emotionally (.) but also where is it needed a corporal range that is not necessarily about touching, but a trusting talk, relatively intimately with a pupil when he sees: alright now there is someone who does really care about me. In sports it becomes something because (.) ehm (.) because exactly (.) particularly touching, also it is always clear that when it comes to gymnastics and assistance is there and a the girls are in danger of crashing over the horse, then it must be clear that in advance that the male teacher spots her in case of emergency (.) and that it is just (.) simply only part of the professional role one is in

?f: L_{mh} ((agreement))

Em: L_{what} is really important is that they can trust you (.) that they simply will caught also in this very specific case because actually every year that it happens that some goes head first (.) because he was to confident or maybe because he didn't have enough confidence and then they must count on me simply that I am there and in this moment I touch them, but otherwise it is this question of closeness (.) corporal closeness is delicate and emotional I think (.) this is my experience (.) I think I would -- I am more someone who tries to show an emotional closeness

As seen earlier in the residential child care home, in the school institution corporality and intimacy are interlinked and become an issue of pedagogical practices as these shape a relationship. Corporal closeness in sports is an exception because it is necessarily part of the general situation. The male teacher here transforms corporality to

intimacy by applying a gender differential: the male teacher cannot easily assist the female pupil. This gender difference is not very well elaborated here. Earlier in the focus group, a female teacher has said that she “as a woman” can transgress the limits of corporality but also reinscribe the institutionalized practices of care more easily. Although this is criticized by her colleagues, the gender difference remains vivid in the sports teacher’s (Em) concluding remarks and thus for the institutional practices. First and foremost, teachers perceive themselves to be forced by the students to act corporally in their practices – in sports because students over- or underestimate their abilities, and generally because students are perceived to be very touchy-feely and the teachers then feel obliged to enact limits and maintain a professional corporal relation. Corporality becomes a question of caring for the well-being of the student. If practices of caring shift from being corporal to constituting care for emotional well-being, this expands the situation to deal with the intimacy of caring too. This practice of emotional and intimate care is singled out as an exception at this school, which according to the institution’s self-definition, sees its practical arrangement as responsibly caring, giving students a space to express their needs and worries.^{vi} The teachers highlight the need for a professional practice that is empathic to the needs and problems of the students. Here, they -- and in particular the sports teacher -- describe how as a teacher, one sometimes gets closer to a student and offers closeness, expressing that he or she does care for the pupil. The sports teacher does this without touching, but by coming “emotionally close”. Reflecting on the institutionalized practices, this is not in their core professional responsibilities, but still teachers consider starting a conversation about the concerns or worries of the student. Close relations between teachers and students are perceived to be part of the institution; it becomes intimate to a certain extent, but the teachers do not explicitly identify this as problematic against the background of sexual violence.

Corporality and intimacy are described as an ambivalent practice in educational institutions.

In the focus group, the teachers indicate that they do not think about their practices within the context of sexual violence. This also becomes visible in the following situation. Sexual violence is addressed as a topic that applies -- implicitly -- only in a non-institutional setting. The pedagogical practices in the school -- differently from residential child care -- are not perceived to be outside of the realm of potential violation. Rather, the teachers see it as their task to teach and convey competences about this topic -- a topic that is assumed to be and take place outside the realm of their institution.

4.2 Institutional Practice

The following example shows how the discourse on sexualized violence against children influences the practices of this educational institution.

In a lesson of the subject “methods and social competences,” the female teacher describes the story for a “role play” taking part: A 13-year-old student is travelling at night alone; only a few other passengers are around. At one stop, a man enters the subway, sits down next to the student and starts a provocative conversation, exerts pressure on the student to spend time with him, and is corporally overbearing. The importuned student is requested to find a way out of this violent situation. The teacher casts the role of the old man. “That is the paedophile, right?” one male student calls. The teacher answers that it is not about “sex” here. The student replies that it is about the “seduction of underage persons”. The teacher accepts this interpretation, casts further roles to play other passengers and begins the scene again. The importuned female student takes a seat by the window, and makes room for the “man”; she answers to the “man” and doesn’t react defensively when the “man” comes closer. The importuned student acts exactly opposite to what has been developed as “good practice” during a couple of repetitions of the role play involving different pupils. The teacher interrupts the current play and resumes the role of the “man” herself, while the role-playing student remains the

same and makes the same mistakes as she did before. Most students in the audience are outraged of the performance of their classmate. The “man” – now the teacher - sits next to the student; their shoulders, legs and hips are in close contact already, it seems that it cannot get any closer. “May I put my arm around you, just for this game?” the “man” asks. The student agrees to the question. When the “man” puts her arm around her, the student starts smiling shyly, her shoulders relax and she even seems to lean against the “man”. At the end of this lesson the teacher gives an explanation for the students, that there are certain dangers “outside” and that they should be somewhat prepared.

According to the teachers, as expressed in the focus group, the practice of role-play can be seen as part of institutional expectations. Teaching the students how to deal with the dangers outside the institution responds to the concerns and worries of the students. Although here the teacher did not explicitly explain how the “man” was meant to behave according to the script, it becomes clear according to the situation these practices violate limits based on sex and gender. It is a student who explains his understanding of the situation as an intervention against sexual harassment in the public sphere.

It is interesting that the situation tackles sexual violence in public, while in fact most sexual violence is committed in institutions by perpetrators who know their victims well. What has been already part of the discussions in the focus group thus becomes readily apparent: for the teacher, the risk of sexual violence does not apply to the school. The representational space positions the pupils as though they were at risk of violence in the public sphere only. Moreover, in addition to its potentially deceptive framing, the role play is a teaching unit where practices of evaluation and the powerful position of the teacher remain present.

The role play is meant to be an exercise in ‘good practices’ in response to violent situations. A gender discourse is implicated, wherein ‘men’ transgress [women’s] corporal integrity in the public sphere. The pupils shaped the exercise,

navigating the role-play and finding ways how to reject the “man”: by asking for support from the other “passengers”, by changing seats in the subway, by not answering the questions of the “man”. When another female student is supposed to do the exercise, the result is deemed insufficient by the teacher. Interrupting the scene, the teacher takes the lead in the play. First, the success of the lesson plan is endangered; what has been developed is not reproduced by the next student. The teacher does not evaluate this as a failure of the exercise. Instead she gets engaged in the role-play and transforms it into a caring situation. The students’ substantial emotional reactions, which relate to the young woman’s misunderstanding of the situation, not only evaluate the classmates’ performances, but immediately reformulate the situation. The teacher intertwines the teaching practices with one-on-one caring and creates a relation of intimacy to the student. The intimacy that is negotiated between the audience and the role-playing scene becomes explicit in the moment the teacher asks whether she can touch the student. The “man’s” touch was not indicated in the script of the role-play before. It marks a transgression of the institutionalized limits of pedagogical practices – only in sports does corporal closeness seem mandatory/crucial. It is impossible for the student to negate the question -- if the teacher’s touch is acceptable in the context of the game -- as the teacher frames it as a “game” and demands that the student enter an intimate situation with the teacher in this lesson.

Because the teacher is involved in the role play, power relations are involved and necessarily retain the pedagogical dynamics. Power relations are even redoubled as the female teacher is playing a male person who offends the female student. Her practice reflects how open, publicly accessible teaching can be transformed into an exclusively intimate situation.

As only a few students can have an active part in the role play, the classmates and teacher constitute an audience. While the students in the audience understand the lesson and experienced the “man’s” action as a violation of limits, the female student apparently does not interpret this situation as a violation. She does not acknowledge the role-character of the male person and instead performs the role of a student in a caring scenario -- she is responding to the teacher as a teacher, not as a character in a role play. While the teacher performs the scenario as an act of caring, intimate and one-on-one, it remains institutionally open to the view of the other pupils in the audience. It is the intimacy with this student - the student trusts the teacher, for reasons external to the role play scenario - that enables a one-on-one teaching moment. It is questionable whether the audience understands the intended lesson. The audience being witness to the intimate lesson creates a crisis regarding practices that can only be resolved by an institutionalized practice of explaining the lesson and making the goals explicit.

The transgression of the limits of the student-teacher relationship shows the difficulty posed by corporal closeness and emotionally intimate closeness. We have shown how the transgression of an institutionalized, open accessible teaching practice can be experienced by the audience of the students as a violation of limits, and at the same time become an exclusive intimacy that seems pedagogically appropriate. Teaching protection against sexual violence may thereby simultaneously be a risk for sexual violence.

These final sentences make clear that ethnography can only reflect on the risk of sexual violence; for our purposes, that means approaching the problem through reflection on limits and their transgression in educational institutions. It is ethically and professionally untenable to be in a situation of observing acts of sexual violence.

Conclusion: Transgression of limits in risk for sexual violence

This article focussed on educational practices especially on corporality and intimacy in educational institutions. By analysing the pedagogical practices and reflecting on how the all-day school and the residential child care home deal in discourse and practice with the debate of sexual violence in institutions, we gain insight into an understanding and ordering of the educational institution and its understanding on risk for sexual violence.

In both institutions, educators and teachers claim a specific relationship to their clientele, a relationship that is built on corporality and emotional intimacy. The practices of corporality are conveyed and justified by the mandate and responsibility of the institution, while practices of intimacy take place at the limits of institutionalized practice.

We argued that the only ethically possible ethnography of sexual violence in educational institutions deduces risks of sexual violence based on practices at the limits of pedagogical interactions. Sexual violence in educational institutions was approached by observing transgressions and limits of corporality and intimacy. Power relations and gender dynamics are part of the observed cases but had not been systematically in focus of the analyses also because this perspectives are already well known.

Nevertheless, both examples deal with the topic of sexual violence. In the school, sexual violence is posited as an element outside the educational institution, and by doing so; the pedagogical interaction neglects the risk of sexual violence within the institution. The residential child care home reflects on its own corporal practices and understands them within the context of the risk of sexual violence. They experience the [public] discourse of sexual violence as a limitation of their educational and caring

practices. Considering the risks for sexual violence does not render the institution immune to establishing practices that could in fact pose a risk for sexual violence.

For both institutions, corporality is an important marker of the limits and transgression of professional pedagogical practices. Both cases use corporality and emotional closeness to shape a pedagogical sphere. Corporality is under transgression – building in both cases on a pedagogical relationship in an intimate sphere.

The institutionalized setting is paradoxical; transgressions in pedagogical relationships push limits. What is intimate or emotional caring and what is sexual violence becomes a fluid practice arrangement. The institutions perceive and construct sexual violence as external to them, and thereby elide the risks inherent in their own practices. Practices of intimacy in institutions do irritate the social order and entail practices of relief – the researcher who resolves the conflict and the teacher who explains her teaching practice.

Waking the child and teaching the child how to protect her- or himself from sexual violence are accompanied by a practice of corporal transgression; that is to say, the practice arrangement corresponds to the expectations of the institution, likewise the needs of the children and the mandate of the institution. But in the negotiation, limits are surpassed, broken down, established, questioned and accepted. The teacher in the all-day-school uses her position to create a closeness to the girl she -- the pupil -- cannot control. The educator in the residential child care is the one who decides whether any third person may attend an intimate moment, and although the child questions the attendance, intimate limits are no longer controlled by the child.

By establishing a pedagogical relationship between the child and the educator, the latter gains power over the child; this relationship necessarily invokes institutional

limits. The transgression of limits carries the risk of overstepping the norms of a corporal caring and guarding pedagogy, and intimates the educational institution.

The practices of open, publicly accessible corporality and exclusive one-on-one intimacy reveal the constitution of risks for sexual violence in institutionalized practice arrangements. Sexual violence will not automatically be prevented by respecting limits and transgressions, but that would lead to a reduction. Further, ethnography would be compromised if it only focussed on singular acts of violence.

Thus doing ethnography at the limits of corporality and intimacy provides knowledge and insight into the transgression and violation of pedagogical relations. The risk of sexual violation is a result of the transgression of limits of institutional pedagogical practices. One has to accept that ethnography [only] shows the practices of risk for sexual violation, and can never in fact show the violations themselves.

Acknowledgements

A draft version of this paper had been presented at the OEC 2015. We are very thankful for our colleagues in the audience who had been the first readers of our ideas. We are delighted that Bettina Fritzsche, Dennis Beach and Nicole Koch gave special attention to our text in an early stage. Furthermore we are very thankful for the reviewers, who did not tire of helping us reflect on our ethnography. The comments, questions and suggestions of the reviewers have richly helped to develop our theoretical background and sharpen our interpretation of data.

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- ⁱ The German welfare system provides for different institutions and different mandates for the development and wellbeing of children. We will subsume those institutions that mark an interface of a transition into the society as *educational institutions* (cf. Benner 2015).
- ⁱⁱ Intense motion pictures (e.g. The Magdalene Sisters, film by Peter Mullan, Ireland 2002) and print media reports contribute to the increasing public awareness that *educational institutions* are not as safe as they are supposed to be according to their mandate.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Vulnerability, Power Relations, intimacy and Subject Positioning as well as Gender differences are those theoretical concepts that frame sexual violence – mainly with recourse to Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Erving Goffman, and Raewyn Connell.
- ^{iv} The perspective of practice-arrangement-bundles already provides the perspective of Foucauldian Genealogy (cf. Schatzki 2012: 25).
- ^v The overlapping of voices (marked by “L”) shows how intense they discuss this topic. Pauses of less a second are marked by “(.)”.
- ^{vi} This aspect of governing the subject and the related concept of pastoral care (refer to Foucault) have to be elaborated elsewhere.