

Website perpetuates complaining, fails to solve real problems

Contributed by Trevor Oechsel

Walking through the hallway one day after school I came across a group of freshmen bantering about how much they hated their teachers. Interested and amused, I decided to hang around and see how far their rant would go, when one of the underclassmen mentioned a website where he had evaluated his teacher.

{section=Opinion}

I got home and decided to take a visit to the site the frosh had mentioned—www.RateMyTeachers.com. It had a complete list of all high school teachers who have taught for the last several years.

On the website, anybody can rate a teacher, whether they've had them or not. It's all there, from the sincere to the just plain rude. All in all, the site seemed more like a bashing forum than a productive evaluation service.

Teachers are marked with either a smiley face with sunglasses for "cool" or with an angry face for "not cool," based on an overall average of three categories: easiness, helpfulness, clarity.

When looking at some of the reviews of teachers I came upon one review that just said, "I hate her with a passion." Why should this one single, obviously biased review follow him or her for the rest of their career? It's obviously unreliable.

Only one thing came to mind after reading over this website for a little while—the walls of my middle school bathroom where you could find at any given time the hot and not girls of the grade.

Like the bathroom, at RateMyTeachers.com anybody with a problem is given an opportunity to vent. A major flaw I noticed in this website is that through my high school career some of my hardest and strictest teachers were the best. I see best in terms of learning and getting the most out of the course that I could. To another student, this same teacher could be terrible.

Recently in my English class we had to complete an exercise about what a good child is. When the class read their answers, nobody said the same thing. The same goes for what is a good teacher. Is a good teacher one who just keeps movies on the reel all semester long, or one who forces the students to figure out difficult but rewarding problems and pushes the student the farthest they can go?

In science you compare your results to what you have determined to be as a constant, but in this trial, there is no constant. How can you conduct an experiment without something to compare your results to? While reading these ratings, one really can't decipher what's true and what's not.

The website provides students a departure from reality by giving them the opportunity to underrate and slander teachers online without fear of consequence. Instead of dealing with issues face-to-face, students turn to the next best thing-the world wide web. On RateMyTeachers.com, students can publish a review of their teacher and rate them based solely on a bad encounter, when in reality teachers should be rated for overall performance.

If the student is brazen enough to go online and publish a public review of one of the teachers at Redwood, why can't they be man enough to claim the work as their own?

This website is just another example of a younger more tech-oriented generation. Instead of talking, students resort to the next best thing: online assault. Why should we criticize the teachers that are going to help us get to where we want to be in life? We might not agree with some decisions they make but, that's life. In life you're going to have bosses you don't like, but complaining behind their back doesn't help. If you have a problem, just say it. Honesty is always the best policy, and it is sites like these that just slander the truth.