Sexual Diversity and the Role of Educators: experiences in developing and teaching an accredited course in Africa for teachers in training

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Rationale for the course:
a request from 4\textsuperscript{th} year education students
During teaching practice sessions in schools, saw increase questioning of sexuality by students and an increase in bullying.

Believed that their teacher education programme had not equipped them to deal with either.
Context
You're invited to the
NEW YORK PREMIERE
of
GOD LOVES UGANDA

Tuesday, June 25, 2013 | 9:30 pm

Peter Jay Sharp Building | BAM Rose Cinemas

General Admission: $14 | BAM Cinema Club Members: $9

FORD FOUNDATION | ITVS | INDEPENDENT LENS Present
a FULL CREDIT PRODUCTIONS and MOTTO PICTURES Production "GOD LOVES UGANDA"
Music by MARK DEGU ANTON | Cinematography by DEREK WIESEHAIN | Associate Producers PAIGE RUANE | CASPER DE BOER
Line Producer CAROLYN HEPBURN | Edited by BENJAMIN GRAY | RICHARD HANKIN | Supervising Editor RICHARD HANKIN
Produced by JUDE GOLDMAN | Directed and Produced by ROGER ROSS WILLIAMS

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CINEASTE | TRIBECA FILM INSTITUTE | BERITHA FOUNDATION | THE FLEDGLING FUND
"If we’re struggling with a homosexual same-sex desire, let the bible kill you."

Lou Engle
In 2004, Pearl Mali was raped for the first time by an elderly man whom her mother brought home from church. She was 12 years old. The man raped her in her bedroom almost daily until she was 16 years old. “My mother didn’t want me to be gay so she asked him to move in and be my husband. She hoped it would change me.”
In 2011, Noxolo Nogwaza’s body was found in a drainage ditch in the Kwa Thema township near Johannesburg. She was raped; her body was mutilated; her eyes were pulled from their sockets; her brain was split open; and her teeth were scattered around her body. Her mother sits by her grave.
Non-conformity to what a woman is meant to look like angered my male students.
Eudy Simelane: a victim of ‘correctional rape’
Tebogo Motswagi, a transgender woman, was raped by seven men and penetrated with a broomstick.
Thamsanqa Mdluli, was gang raped. During the attack, one of the men told Thamsanqa that they were raping him to restore his manhood.
Student assistant
SOUTH AFRICA
ONE IN EVERY TWO WOMEN WILL BE RAPED IN HER LIFETIME
- INTERPOL
41% of rapes are against children under 18.
1/3 of rapes are committed by family members or close relatives.
RSA Police estimate that a rape occurs 36 seconds.

A person becomes infected with HIV in RSA every 108 seconds.
What does the world spend on rape prevention?

Goal of spending US $22 to 24 billion/year on HIV in low and middle income countries
It is political and it is global
And it is also historical
The myth of black sexuality was simply a myth of excessive sexuality: it held that 'with the Negro everything takes place at the genital level" - Frantz Fanon
“After their ‘Otherness’ was established, the African subject was disciplined and controlled by the colonial government. This was done physically with the Contagious Disease Bill, proposed in 1886 and again in 1890, which demarked all black populations of South Africa as potential carriers of syphilis, further noting that black women were likely to be prostitutes while black men were likely to rape their white female employers. Such logic extended into "sanitation segregation" which ultimately became "the Native Question" in apartheid South Africa.

- Jenni Smout
Some HIV ‘interventionism’ from the global north is still steeped in the belief that African people’s sexuality is ‘out of control’ and white people need to step in once again and fix it.
The current obsession with ‘evidence’ from the same government that brought us AO is seen with suspicion.
‘Evidence-driven’ is political in this context. Whose evidence? Whose measuring stick? Is it a part of command and control?
Cannot think about a course for pre-service teachers on sexual diversity in South African without considering these things.
Quick registration

5 credits (50 hours)

7 weeks

130 students (down by 150, mostly males)
Starting point:

A journey we would take together to figure out what pre-service education students in their final year of study needed to learn and do in order to respond well to questioning and bullying related to sexual diversity in their classrooms and schools.
Early factors identified:

- Need to understand sexual diversity
- Need to learn to navigate tension between their religious and cultural values and the existence of homosexuality
The course would NOT be something I designed and delivered.
The course would be a series of conversations, some difficult, some challenging, that would inspire and guide a process of collective self-discovery involving critical learning and unlearning and resulting in a new understanding of how to respond to sexual diversity matters in schools.
‘Matters’ not ‘issues’

don’t problematize what is not a problem

don’t pathologize what is not pathological
The course was NOT about sexual diversity per se, but how teachers respond to sexual diversity.
Personal work. Intense self-reflection and inquiry.
Origins
Is it a choice
Is it a sin
Laci Green
Livitacus

Sodom & Gomorrah
Bullying and teachers
Conventional punishments given to bullies makes it less safe for LGBTI youth.

SA schools: control & command, corporal punishment, humiliation
Section Nine of the Constitution of South Africa
The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.
Homosexuality as contested terrain in Africa with South Africa playing an extraordinary advocacy and protection role.
It is about far more than matters of sexual diversity. It is about how we meet difference.
Who we will be as human beings.
Cautionary tale: What happens when we do not inject the spirit of a Section 9 into our life blood and DNA? Rwanda. Ferguson.
How quickly hate can turn to a desire to harm someone because they are different.
"If a person is gay and seeks the Lord and is of good will, who am I to judge him?"

- POPE FRANCIS

July 29, 2013
“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”
Reflection assignment: When you first heard about homosexuality; how you felt; how you responded.
Promoting and protecting a diversity of thought. Deconstructed their own beliefs that allowed them to make their own decisions about how they felt about homosexuality.
Results: Need to develop empathy. 
Reduce judgement. 
Reject labels. 
Meet people for who they are.
Don’t have to accept homosexuality but do have to defend the rights of people to be homosexual. Section 9 trumps culture and religion.
The only choice to be made when it comes to homosexuality is not if someone is gay or straight, but if the rest of us will love them *regardless* of who they love, or hate them *because* of who they love. And if we chose to hate anyone because of who they love, we must be own that decision and be honest that we have chosen to hate.
Personal: I re-examined how much I was taught to hate anyone that did not look. Pray, act or think like me. I was taught to hate Black people, gay people, the marginalised youth I have worked all my life. To hate people with HIV I have worked with for 30 years. I rejected all these lessons. I decided not to make difference a source of hate. I decided to let no one teach me to hate and to be suspicious of anyone who tries to teach me to hate.
When you work in an evidence-based platform, how do you understand yourself and what do you do with Lily Walker:

“If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us walk together.”
What is the evidence that supports the power of human love to meet and greet and walk beside those we are meant to hate? And to love them?

How do you measure the transformation of human hearts?
“The real issue confronting our society today is not why people seek love and understanding as much as they do, but why some are unable to love and understand at all.”

Bryan Welch (1990)
“It's not our job to toughen our children up to face a cruel and heartless world. It's our job to raise children who will make the world a little less cruel and heartless.”

— L.R. Knost
We have made cruelty and heartlessness the dominant discourse. We organise our work around it and use it to garner our livelihoods. We measure its existence and its absence, but not its opposite. In so doing, do we assure its reproduction and contribute to sustaining cruelty and heartlessness in our world?

Bryan Welch (1990)