


Spring 5-6-2015

# Queering Social Justice Curricula within Higher Education

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University of San Francisco

**Queering Social Justice Curricula  
Within Higher Education**

A Field Project Presented to  
The Faculty of the School of Education  
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Masters of Arts in International and Multicultural

by  
Kate Cabot  
May 2015

# **Queering Social Justice Curricula Within Higher Education**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTERS OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by

Kate Cabot

May 2015

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

Dr. Monisha Bajaj

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Instructor/chairperson

May 5, 2015

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Date

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Chapter I – Introduction.....	6
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Purpose of the Project.....	10
Theoretical Framework.....	11
Significance of the Project.....	21
Chapter II – Review of the Literature.....	28
Introduction.....	28
Problem posing education and liberatory pedagogy.....	31
Engaged pedagogy and teaching about the Other.....	34
The social construction of gender and sexuality.....	37
Queering straight classrooms.....	41
Chapter III – The Project and Its Development .....	43
Description of the Project.....	43
Development of the Project.....	45
The Project.....	47
Chapter IV – Conclusions and Recommendations.....	49
Conclusions.....	49
Recommendations.....	54
Appendixes.....	57
Appendix A.....	57
Appendix B.....	69
Appendix C.....	83
References.....	90

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to acknowledge and thank my family and my chosen community who has given me so much support throughout my educational career. Specifically, I would like to thank my mom, Lilla, my sister, Jane, and my uncle, Jon, who have been the most amazing and caring people in my life. My mom has not only always supported my educational aspirations but has taught me so much about teaching as well. I would like to thank my partner, Jenn Adamson for giving me all the love and support in the world during this process, you have shown up for me in ways I didn't even know possible. I could not have taught, gone to school, commuted between states and written my thesis without your incredible capacities for love and support in making it all happen. I would also like to express my love and gratitude to Ellen Abell, the best mentor I could have asked for or had through my educational journey, starting in college and through my transition into becoming a college instructor. Without Ellen's guidance I don't think I would have been able to take on brand new courses, make them my own, and love every minute of it during the process. Next, I would like to thank Angana P. Chatterji and Richard Shapiro for my first graduate experience and giving me my foundation in critical, emancipatory, activist and multicultural education. Furthermore, I want to thank the mentors and professors that have taught and guided me in the human rights education program; Shonali Shome, JD, Dr. Monisha Bajaj, Dr. Shabnam Koirala-Azad, Dr. Emma Fuentes, Dr. Kevin Kumashiro, thank you! Thank you to Dr. Ruth Kim and Breana Hansen, for filling in the gap in our very own program and queering human rights education. I could not have asked for a better graduate experience. I am inspired everyday by the amazing collaboration and work that all of you bring to the world and I am so grateful to be part of such a revolutionary educational community. Finally, I would like to thank all of my amazing students who make every semester life changing through their hard work and willingness to see themselves and the world differently. So many of my students revitalize my hope, determination, passion, and belief in creating a more safe, just, and ethical world by watching them do the hard work of critically engaging with their community and building lasting allyships across all difference.

## ABSTRACT

Within higher education, social justice education has gained significant ground. While issues of gender, race, and class are increasingly addressed and incorporated into classes there remains a lack in inclusive curricula and pedagogies within colleges and universities when it comes to issues of gender and sexual identity. The social construction of gender and sexualities remains overlooked on the majority of college and university campuses, as well as the discrimination faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA) students unaddressed within curricula. The representation of the LGBTQIA community can be attended to within classrooms, campuses, and curriculums in many various way and at multiple levels of engagement. This project aims to fill the gap in social justice centered education within college curricula. It will provide resources that bring LGBTQIA issues and their intersectionality with race, class, gender, sex, ability, and citizenship into classrooms and core curricula in order to educate and facilitate discussions with students, faculty, and the educational community as a whole. The main objective of this project is to assist teachers in talking about issues of gender identity and sexualities and to provide guidelines and best practices of how to incorporate LGBTQIA issues into class lessons and discussions.

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem**

I teach at a small liberal arts college that has made a commitment to include a social justice focus central to the education students receive. This intimate setting of a small campus with interdisciplinary programs creates an educational community where one knows the majority of students and faculty on campus and interacts with them in many different capacities and collaborations. So, when a student was suddenly killed in the beginning of the spring semester, the entire community paused, came together, and mourned. This student was particularly well known and was extremely involved in many community events. They would often performed with their guitar, or spoken word, as well as choreographed dance performances as a support for the many causes that the students organized. For being such a small community, there is quite a visible queer community within the college. This is especially important because the college is set in the middle of a very conservative, Christian, rural southwest town.

I knew this student because they were part of the queer community in the college, and had been active in the revival of the queer centered events that I had taken on organizing. One is a yearly “Drag Show” that is put on by what is now affectionately known as the ‘Outlaws’ class, which I teach every fall semester. This class is a gender and sexuality course, and is the only course that focuses on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, (LGBTQIA) community and the issues surrounding this aspect of social justice curriculum. Although this student wasn’t in my class that semester, they bravely performed with us on stage that night, they strutted their gender bending stuff on the cat walk along with the other queer

students and allies within the community. The event packed the performance space at the college, and made it clear that although we were an underrepresented group that wasn't highlighted in the college's focus on social justice education, there was immense support.

After I had learned of a tragic accident involving this student who was hit riding their bicycle and killed, a group of us teachers started talking about how we would support each other, our students, and the community, and how we would honor the memory left behind. During this ongoing conversation over the next few days, there was talk about various statements that needed to be written, a memorial that was being planned for the larger community in collaboration with the student's family and articles for the local newspapers. It was clear that this student had touched many, many lives in the college as well as within the larger community. They were obviously cherished by the faculty who had mentored them and the students who grew with them over the years together. What also became immensely clear was that for each faculty member, to each group in the larger community, to various groups made up of friends and peers, all the way to their family of origin, each one had a vastly different relationship with this student and consequently, a vastly different relationship to this student and their gender representation and sexuality.

This impacted the community's mourning and honoring more than I could have ever anticipated. Since I am currently teaching courses focused around gender and sexualities and social justice, and as it was put 'that is my community,' I was asked to help determine how, when, and where to honor this student's gender identity as they were gender queer and preferred gender neutral pronouns like "their," "them," and "they." I was asked to help 'translate' how this could be written and explain how this could be grammatically correct. There was much heated discussion surrounding how this would all sound given the use of plurals. Many were worried



how ‘we’ as a college and an educational institution would look when ‘we’ released press statements that used grammatically incorrect plural pronouns. The concern was that this may either confuse people into thinking that more than one student was killed, or it may look as though ‘we’ didn’t know how to write.

Of course, the family was also of much concern. How did they refer to their child or sibling? Did they know that their child was gender non-conforming? How would we refer to them during the memorial when the family would be there and most certainly their friends would be using these gender-neutral pronouns? I was asked to write up a statement that explained that this student asked to be referred to with gender neutral pronouns, but I was also instructed not to make it too much of the focus. Much of the faculty didn’t feel comfortable using other gender-neutral pronouns, wanted to simply ignore it all together, and just do what made them feel comfortable.

What made them feel comfortable made me feel really uncomfortable. I realize that this was a very trying time coping with such an immense loss, and that expanding one’s comfort zone may have seemed overwhelming and possibly, not the first priority of approach. It did however make it clear just how hard these seemingly small adjustments actually are. Even the faculty at a very progressive social justice oriented liberal arts college hadn’t had to stretch their comfort within these areas nor had they been educated around LGBTQIA matters, despite having taught and mentored queer and gender queer students in their classes; at least not to a point where this would have seemed obvious or without question something that should be honored. I certainly felt a great ethical responsibility and personal connection to making sure this student who was part of the strong queer community within the small college was seen and honored for who they

were and their bravery for living somewhere in between our strictly constructed gender and sexuality binaries.

As an educator of college students embarking on adulthood, I feel this is even more important. This was not an adolescent rebellion or a phase as sometimes it is referred to, in order to reinforce the gender binaries that are so heavily policed within our society and social institutions. This was an adult and their lived experienced. Their relationship to their gender and their gender identity is legitimate, should be honored and respected, and not Othered. To address this in the educational community I am a part of, as well as what I will demonstrate in the sections below is a widespread increasingly devastating problem throughout education, my project will be the beginning of a comprehensive repository of information directed at teachers but for students as well.

As a result, this project consists of three parts that can be utilized together as a curriculum or used separately to fit the level of engagement that is needed or feasible. The three components will include different sections that will be comprised of a handbook, a workshop, and a semester long syllabus for a course dedicated to gender, sexualities, LGBTQIA and queer studies. The different components could be used in part or together depending on the context. This will help teachers to become comfortable in talking about gender and sexuality, incorporating these issues into their classes, and creating a safer, more accepting and just learning environment for students.

### **Othering in Education: Schools and Universities**

The othering experienced, whether conscious or unconscious, of LGBTQIA students along with other marginalized and targeted groups, remains one of the most pressing issues

within education today. Othering in schools and on university campuses is experienced in a multilayered and multitude of contexts. It can be within the school as an educational institution, by educators and administrators with teachers and students in the classroom, and pedagogical practices, or it could be within the lack of representation reflected in books and resources, or within the knowledges that are privileged within the curriculum as a whole (Kumashiro, 2002). These multiple facets of oppression within schools and universities can be evidenced by the disproportionate demographics of study bodies within colleges and universities, to the lack of funding and resources in urban public schools whose students are predominately youth of color, to the overwhelming numbers of violence and hate crimes, to the immense issue of bullying in schools and universities, to the discursive reification of how privilege and oppression functions within larger society. The issue of being Othered in schools or universities is nothing new and educational researchers have come a long way in addressing the conceptualizations of oppression within educational institutions and approaches to bring about change (Jennings, 2014).

The intersectionalities of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexualities, dis/abled, nationality, English language proficiency, and religion, all cross each other in a multitude of ways that sets the stage for the complexities of oppression to function at every level within education. The way oppression plays out or functions varies significantly from situation to situation, context to context. Oppression is not homogenous or dependable but complex in its arrangements and inhabitations within lives, spaces, communities, and larger institutions. More work is needed to broaden the ways oppression is conceptualized and more comprehensive intersectional approaches are needed within education (McCoy, 2014).

## **LGBTQIA Youth and Our Nation's Schools**

According to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Youth Report, LGBTQIA youth are more than two times as likely than their non-target peers to experience verbal harassment, exclusion, and physical attacks at school. In their comprehensive report *Growing up LGBT in America*, 92% of LGBT youth report they frequently and often hear negative messages about being LGBT (Human Rights Campaign [HRC], 2013, p. 6). Compelled by an absence of any national data on LGBTQIA experiences in schools The Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network (GLSEN) along with a network of educational researchers and experts conducted and published the first report of its kind, *The National School Climate Survey (NSCS)*. Since 1999 the NSCS remains the only report collecting this type of data, it is widely used by federal and state governments for educational research, as well as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, in its reports for *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Health*. In the most recent NSCS published by GLSEN, 85 percent of LGBTQIA students were verbally harassed in the past year. It also found that:

- 55.5 percent of LGBT students felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation, and 37.8 percent because of their gender expression.
- 30.3 percent of LGBT students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, and over a tenth (10.6 percent) missed four or more days in the past month.
- Over a third avoided gender-segregated spaces in school because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable (bathrooms: 35.4 percent, locker rooms: 35.3 percent). (Kosciw, Greytak, Palmer, & Boesen, 2014, p. 13)

In 2010, in the wake of national news bringing attention to the widespread endemic of anti-LGBTQIA homophobic bullying resulting in an alarming number of LGBTQIA youth committing suicide, columnist and author Dan Savage and his partner Terry Miller started the “It Gets Better Project” to give hope to LGBTQIA youth facing harassment and bullying with inspiring stories and the message that no matter how hard it seems, it does get better as we get older. President Obama joined the It Gets Better Project with his own “It Gets Better” video and story. Along with the findings of the National School Climate Survey, President Obama also initiated a federal task force on bullying when he asked the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services to join forces of the with four other departments (“Protecting LGBT from discrimination,” 2014). This task force held the first-ever National Bullying Summit and later that year launched a website, [www.bullyinginfo.org](http://www.bullyinginfo.org), which brings all the federal resources on bullying together in one place for the first time. According to the federal website on Bullying, LGBTQIA youth have one of the highest rates of bullying and harassment and remain one of the most vulnerable groups.

We have come a long way from the days when no one thought LGBTQIA youth existed and many people believed a person became gay much later in life. Despite the national attention and the massive steps that have been taken to bring attention to the all too often-deadly outcomes of bullying and harassment, the active call for safe spaces within schools, and the national plan to end bullying all together, there remains deep prejudices within society that are reflected within the educational institutions. Recently, a young transgendered youth named Leelah Alcorns committed suicide by stepping in front of a train just before the New Year. She left behind a letter explaining that she knew she would never be accepted. Her suicide was widely covered in the news and gained international attention over night. This was largely because she was another

LGBTQIA youth who had taken their own life because of unaccepting parents, bullying, and no other resources within her school or community. All over the news and Internet her parents relentlessly denounced her gender and chosen name and even kept her best friend from attending the funeral because she was supportive of Leelah as transgendered. Ultimately, Leelah had no support in school or within the community. Perhaps even with the rejection of her family, she may have been able to find solace elsewhere if it existed. I can't help but wonder if she had the support of a teacher or a network within her school she may not have taken her life. Perhaps a teacher or the school could have helped bridge the disconnect between her and her religious parents.

The majority of news attention surrounding Leelah's suicide and letter has included headlines that have led to the start of conversations bringing attention to issues faced by the transgendered community. For example more than 50 percent of transgendered teens will make at least one suicide attempt before turning 20, according to the Youth Suicide Prevention Program (Youth suicide prevention program, n.d., table 2). The 'T' (Transgender) in LGBTQIA has been left out of a lot of the conversations surrounding LGBTQIA issues and has been marginalized not only in the larger society, but also within the LGBTQIA communities themselves and met with incomparable oppression. Being transgendered challenges not only the sexuality binary but the gender binary as well, which are separate but inextricably linked. However, here we are five years after the string of LGBTQIA suicides that led to a national and federal outcry, now facing more suicides. The conversation is happening but the issues are greater and run deeper than anti-bullying programs or safe zones in public schools can address (Carlson, 2014).

## **LGBTQIA on College and University Campuses**

On College campuses and within college curriculums across the U. S., homophobia, transphobia, and misogyny don't just 'get better' nor do they disappear. On Albion College's campus in Michigan, students burned a 'gay' flag and shouted "gays burn in hell". Although this event was widely reported, including in the Huffington Post, the college did not take action against this act of hate against the LGBTQIA community. The students responsible didn't receive any disciplinary actions nor was the safety on campus for LGBTQIA students addressed (Van Raaphorst, 2010). It wasn't until the college received national pressure that the college president took any action at all. Research and statistics on LGBTQIA students on college campuses are limited and most focus on safety issues on campus among peers. For example, in 2014, a study titled "A Hidden Crisis: Including LGBT Community When Addressing Sexual Violence on College Campuses" was published by The Center for American Progress. The study found that LGBTQIA students experience much higher levels of sexual harassment on college campuses. Overall, 73 percent of LGBT students reported experiencing sexual harassment, compared with 61 percent of non-LGBT students. Additionally, 44 percent of LGBT students reported contact sexual harassment, compared with 31 percent of non-LGBT students. In a survey of transgender individuals, 64 percent said they had experienced sexual assault in their lifetimes (Perez & Hussey, 2014, para. 4).

Moreover, issues facing LGBTQIA students entering into colleges and universities have more to consider than just academic rankings or name. They are forced to think about navigating their safety and perceived identity. They must think about their acceptance not only by peers but by faculty as well. They also need to consider infrastructure and housing; resources specifically geared towards the lived experiences in dominant heteronormative and heterosexist culture,

resulting in impediments for and prejudices towards a marginalized community. A non-profit called Campus Pride releases a campus pride index every year considered the benchmark for analyzing how LGBTQIA-friendly academic institutions of higher education are, as well as what infrastructures are in place to serve the LGBTQIA students, and how inclusive academic life is for LGBTQIA students. According to Campus Pride, there have been many notable improvements and more Colleges and Universities that are working to come out as LGBTQIA friendly and make the list. In 2014, they came out with a '50 best of the best' among their index of over 425 colleges and universities (campuspride.org). The college I teach for does not make even the basic cut for campus pride. It is extremely imperative that faculty and instructors have resources they can refer to in order to become better educated and knowledgeable about their LGBTQIA students and colleagues as well as the challenges that are a daily lived experienced for the LGBTQIA community.

### **Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of the project is to begin creating an educational repository for faculty, instructors, and staff at the college level. The project will be a handbook and resource guide for faculty and instructors teaching at the college level that will cover terminologies, basic information about sexualities and gender, the construction of heterosexuality and the gender binary, historical and current issues facing the LGBTQIA communities and how to be a knowledgeable ally and teacher. This will also include a curriculum for a course that specifically address issues in the LGBTQIA community. It will cover current issues in LGBTQIA communities, LGBTQIA legal statuses, LGBTQIA Human Rights Internationally; it will also cover histories of the social construction of the sexuality binary and the gender binary. Further it



will interrogate the role of education and other dominant social institutions have in reifying and reproducing heteronormativity, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, and heteropatriarchy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Through the frameworks of queer theory and critical theory, and by engaging critical pedagogy, this project seeks to contextualize the meeting of educational practices, teacher knowledge base and curriculum to create a more inclusive social justice education. Through engagement with queer theory and critical theory, this project interrogates the histories that inform the present dominant ideologies of sexual and gender binaries that confirm homophobia, transphobia, and heteronormativity. Through this interrogation, queer theory helps to dislocate the normalizing and naturalizing assumptions about dominant privilege in forms of sexuality and gender identity (Talbert & Steinberg, 2000). Critical theory helps to examine how these structures and ideologies are hyper present in every aspect of dominant American culture and representation within society, especially when educational institutions reify and reproduce the privileging of some groups and the oppression of others.

The privileging of certain histories and certain knowledges through the legitimate institution of education allows for the social reproduction of class patterns and values in society (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1976). Critical pedagogy and engaged queer theory praxis serves to dislocate these larger structures and instead of simply creating educational resources for faculty and instructors about the Other and for the Other. Inherently queer theory and anti-oppressive pedagogy (Kumashiro, 2002) seek to interrogate the conceptualization of the Other, how the Other is discoursed, how these discourses live in the world. It seeks to re-conceptualize what the

dominant and the Other is, how it is constructed, and how by simply educating about the Other we are reinforcing the assumption that the dominant is normal and natural (Sullivan, 2003, p. 2).

## **Queer Theory**

There are only two real options when dealing with the Other in contested spaces like social institutions, in particular schools. The first is to strive for acceptance. This strategy holds the end goal to be the acceptance of the deviant other into dominant spaces traditionally held for privilege identities or groups who confirm to the normal behaviors or identities like heterosexuality, or clearly fit into either of the gender binaries. The problem here is that the Other is striving for permission from the dominant group to be accepted and this mostly comes in the form of being tolerated. This fails to reexamine the social structures that maintain hegemonic stratifications across difference in society. It maintains the dominant group's power. The other option is to work towards treating everyone the same. This goal is to conceptualize the Other as different but equal, the Other gets the same treatment and is seen as 'normal' as well. The issue with this approach is that it doesn't account for the long histories of an unequal treatment or awareness of the uneven playing field involved in institutional oppression. It also would demand that an invitation into dominant structures, which privileges conformity of certain behaviors and identities would welcome the other if the Other could integrate with these norms and adopt their value, resulting in erasing disparity. It would require an erasure of the past and ignore the histories, which inform the present. By putting the emphasis on normalizing, it assumes assimilation to make difference invisible is a positive progression. This is achieved through an essentialist's framework, which reiterates sexuality as existing within a hierarchical binary

system rooted in a biological or natural foundation. This ultimately is impossible because society is architected within systems of power, and sexuality is discursively constructed and produced. Discourses are strategically designed to inherently inform what knowledges, subjectivities, and practices are privileged and which are not. Therefore, all groups within society can never achieve the same treatment.

These two options as goals for the inclusion of LGBTQIA students and teachers within educational institutions and curriculum or education as a whole, become something all together different when they are engaged through queer theory or are ‘queered.’ Queer theory emerged from scholars in the field of gender and sexuality studies; this has lead to misunderstandings about the field and its potential applications. Although evolved from gender and sexuality studies, queer theory today is far reaching and increasingly encompassing, with immense potential of analysis regarding systemic fundamentals of power and oppression. Meyers explains, “Queer theory goes beyond exploring aspects of gay and lesbian identity and experience. It questions taken-for-granted assumptions about relationships, identity, gender, and sexual orientation. It seeks to explode rigid normalizing categories into possibilities that exist beyond the binaries of man/woman, masculine/feminine, student/teacher, and gay/straight” (Meyer, 2007, p. 15)

Queer theory subverts these structures and implores that we ask different questions. Queer theory stems from a social reform movement and although queer has in the past been used as a derogatory term to reform to members of the LGBTQ community, it is not a theory exclusive to issues of LGBTQ. The use of the term “Queer” challenges heteronormative orders, it reclaims the term in order to make new uses and disrupt dominant value systems. Queer inherently attacks the dominant ideologies of what is deemed natural. Queer theory seeks to

interject disruptive knowledge into the milieu of sociopolitical discourses. Queer activism, as defined by Pinar, “seeks to break down traditional ideas of normal and deviant, by showing the queer in what is thought of as normal, and the normal in the queer” (Tierney & Dilly, 2009, p. 48). Further, Queer Theory asks the questions what and why we know what we know and do not know about what is determined to be normal and queer. Queer is not just a resistance of the norm but rather, and more importantly, a protesting against the ideals of normal behaviors and practices which constitute identity. “Queer, in this sense, comes to be understood as a deconstructive practice that is not undertaken by an already constituted subject, and does not, in turn, furnish the subject with a nameable identity” (Sullivan, 2003, p. 50).

A Queering of the hierarchical binary oppositions of the identities of heterosexual/homosexual through the practice of deconstruction enables an analysis of these terms, as inherently unstable, culturally and historically created and dependent upon the other. The effects that have been produced by these concepts and their relationality to one another include the supposition of heterosexuality as natural, innate, or biological. Heterosexuality is represented as the original and essential sexuality and through this essentialism, it is dependent upon its so-called opposite, homosexuality, for its identity. Queer theory shifts the axis of interrogation from which these concepts are being interrogated. Instead of asking questions about how our society oppresses homosexuality and how equality along side heterosexuality can be achieved, queer theory shifts the origin of the questions to ask where did these social categories come from and how did one identity become privileged over the other? Why are we reliant upon these categories to begin with and how has our society become dependent upon a hierarchical system of social categories and identities. As Seidman states “Queer interventions urge a shift from a framing of the question of homosexuality in terms of personal identity and the

politics of homosexual oppression and liberation to imagining homosexuality in relation to cultural politics of knowledge” (Steidman & Nicholson, 1996, p. 128) These identities become epitomized into heterosexuality as the ‘natural’ sexuality, and homosexuality as the ‘unnatural’. Yet these identities can never been whole, heterosexuality includes what it excludes as an identity and can never be complete without the close physical and defining presence of homosexuality (Sullivan, 2003, Chapter 3). The relationship that is opposing yet dependent, where each identity seems to be both haunted by the other while haunting the other through its very existence is what Seidman explains creates “extreme defensiveness, the hardening of each other into a bounded, self protective, hard core and, at the same time, the opposite tendency towards confusion and collapse” (Steidman & Nicholson, 1996, p. 131).

In order to subvert, the oppositional ‘natural’ heterosexuality and unnatural homosexuality it is useful to use queer theory to deconstruct these social categories by highlighting both their constructedness as well as to be able to ask further questions about why these divisions exist in particular cultural and historical contexts. Queer theory doesn’t assume identities to be fixed or consistent but rather, constantly being reshaped. It asks why in these particular contexts are cultural divisions being drawn and constructed, as well as who it is that benefits from the knowledge which (re) produces arbitrary divisive categories. “Queer theory is less a matter of explaining the repression or expression of a homosexual minority, than an analysis of the Hetero/Homosexual figure as a power/knowledge regime that shapes the ordering of desires, behaviors, social institutions, and social relations – in a word, the constitution of the self and society” (Steidman & Nicholson, 1996, p. 128).

Students coming into college or university are bringing with them all of their previous lived experiences, especially their experiences in schools. Whether they attended a private

institution or were a part of public education, their whole student careers are deeply immersed in American culture, and embedded in ideologies that are homophobic, transphobic, misogynist, and that strictly police gender and sexuality binaries. The discursive practices of heterosexism and homophobia present heterosexuality and the polarized gender binary as the preferred and acceptable social practice and behavior. Those who deviate from these privileged scripts within society are met with prejudice and discrimination through powerful discourses generated within the institutions of medicine, science, organized religion, psychology, and education. Educational structures or institutions carry exceptional weight in disseminating and contributing to these discourses. Schools play a powerful role by being the social site where knowledge is determined. What is deemed important information or knowledge and what is discourses as “Truth,” is what is being taught in our schools. These systems of knowledge and histories are prioritized, taught in our schools and designed to reproduce a hierarchical social structure based on privilege and oppression. The systems of knowledge that are passed down to new generations are educating youth within a heteronormative, heterosexist, racist, classist, ableist, Eurocentric, English speaking society. All of these ideologies are found deeply engrained in the educational system. Educational systems, textbooks, and teachers are all contributing to selecting what is valued within society, what is taught as legitimate, and what is normalized in the process (Meyer, 2012, p. 11).

Therefore, schools become important social institutions for normalizing and policing heterosexuality and gender roles. Both the formal and hidden curricula work together to mandate hyper heterosexuality and gender performance. These surveillances of policing heterosexuality and gender norms can be explained through Foucault’s concept of the Panopticon (1977). Foucault describes the Panopticon as an apparatus for control that is omnipresent and all seeing.

At the same time, the source of this power of control is invisible and shifting. The Panopticon is effective in social control and obedience to these social discourses and scripts because we all contribute to its powerful surveillance unless we have worked to interrupt our inclusion. To challenge the Panopticon, its functionality must become visible through interrupting its reproduction of social discourses, policing of norms, and questioning our own participation and inclusion (Foucault, 1977).

In the article titled *The Heterosexual Imaginary: Feminist Sociology and Theories of Gender* by Chrys Ingraham, the author describes how the reproduction of heterosexuality is done by understanding it as 'natural' and its existence taken for granted as the norm. From this systemic foundation, its normative category becomes the category from which 'other' forms of sexuality will deviate. This deeply impacts the implications of understanding gender as socially constructed when heterosexuality is reproduced as the norm and understood as 'natural' because its epistemology is not examined. The heteronormative assumptions that reinforce the heterosexual imaginary leave heterosexuality as an unexamined category and therefore unquestioned, and seen as naturally occurring. Gender is constructed through the lens of heteronormativity; it affects our ability to have language outside of that norm for other forms of relationships. Institutionalized heteronormativity ensures the distribution of wealth, economic resources, social and political power/privilege benefits those who perform heteronormativity. Our ability to understand gender is dictated by the heterosexual imaginary and institutionalized heteronormativity. The larger structures of power/privilege so deeply mediate our examinations of sexuality and gender because the disruption of power is so reliant on systems of heteronormativity within capitalism and structure "economic resources, cultural power, and social control" (p. 204).

In order to understand how their personal lives are also lived within a political landscape which ascribes privilege to some identities, and discriminates against others, through activities that are detailed in this project, students will first place themselves on a continuum of their sexuality in accordance to how the ‘dominant society’ would understand them, with the construction and discourse of heteronormativity held within the political landscape (e.g., who do they date but more importantly, who do they publicly interact with in a romantic way). For example, someone may be sexually or romantically involved with members of both sexes, but only publicly be seen with their interest who is of the opposite sex. This is because that form of relationship is privileged. Understanding why someone who is LGBTQIA may bring a friend who is of the opposite sex to a professional event or family function in order to avoid discrimination helps to clarify the issue that who they are in the rest of their life locates them within a target group for oppression. Even if someone who is LGBTQIA is out and accepted by all of their friends and family, they will still be a target for institutionalized oppression. This is separate but not unaffected by systemic power/privilege structures.

To better understand the symbiotic reproduction of privilege and oppression through systems of gender and sexuality, it is vital that the histories, which inform the present, are examined. In *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, Foucault (1978) gives us an account of how discourses around sex emerged and the evolution of these discourses over the last three centuries. Through a historical lens, Foucault’s account of how sex has been shaped and culturally produced depicts a discourse so heavily steeped in Christian doctrine and so dependent upon procreation that it literally eclipses any other relationship to sex. According to Foucault, relationships in which procreation is not the central feature only exist way outside the dominant Christian imaginary of sex.



Such discourses are strictly policed and controlled that even the language used in speaking about the act of sex was shaped heavily on what was acceptable and not simply done. Religion, particularly Christianity, is a very powerful institution contributing to the construction of sexuality. Through the ‘naturalizing’ of the constructs of heterosexuality, the discursive language used to describe everything else in contrast as ‘other’, even ‘desire’, for anything outside of the institution of heterosexual marriage is considered as ‘sinful’ and ‘devious’. These histories are present today in the struggle for marriage equality. For the LGBTQIA community to gain marriage equality and share in the equal rights and privileges under the law, it is necessary for some to align themselves on the platform of the dominant structure rooted in Christian culture. Marriage is extremely gendered and its foundations in this country are not only Christianized, but also rooted in white, middle-class, and nuclear family models of privilege. It is a form of assimilation that privileges and reproduces norms of heteronormativity. This is also addressed in Andrea Smith’s article entitled “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy.” She describes how political organizing around issues of radicalized oppression has often been discourses through shared victimhood of white supremacy or fighting over “who is more oppressed” (p.66). This assumes that each group has been impacted similarly and that similar strategies of resistance can be employed. Through this partial understanding, each group is looking for shared victimhood but, in attempting to rise above oppression, remains complicit in the tactics or promises of colonial privilege.

Smith suggests that organizing around race is about where one’s own positionality is and not about shared victimization. Further, it identifies where we are complicit in the victimization of others in the reproduction of the tactics used by colonizers under white supremacy. “These approaches might help us develop resistance strategies that do not inadvertently keep the system

in place for all of us, and keep us accountable” (p. 69). There are links here for any intersectionality of privilege and oppression with societal and national institutions. Organizers should compare their goals and strategies with others to ensure they do not end up oppressing others in the process of seeking justice for themselves. This becomes an important underpinning to the activity contained in the workshop developed for this field project, which asks participants to visually see themselves and their peers along two continuums that are hierarchically mediated by institutional power structures. The intersectionality of all identities discoursed in society will be present and mediate each participants relationship to privilege.

To be able to say that ‘we just want everyone to see the oneness in love and be free to love who we want’ is rooted in a neoliberal ideology. It is inherently privileged and is coming from a space where one does not have to be aware of the violent discrimination of racist, sexist, homophobic, heteronormative, Eurocentric systems. Anyone who is of the LGBTQIA community will likely experience institutionalized homophobia, either overtly or covertly. The act of separating out and critically looking at where one passes and is freely able to move through spaces with privilege, illuminates how these institutional structures of privilege and oppression function on a much larger scale than just our individual interactions. In the same understanding, we also must examine how our positionality mediates our own complicity in the repetitive acts that are experienced everyday, and function to maintain these power structures.

Through critical pedagogy rooted in queer theory and critical theory frameworks there is the possibility for an exchange of understanding. By understanding what is not examined and taken for granted as normal/natural and consequently unexamined, invisibilized, and therefore privileged, one can interrupt these narratives as Truth (Foucault, 1977). Through the examination of knowledge/power and the introduction of counter narratives, the intrinsic link from what

knowledges are privileged to what knowledges are discounted, and how power functions through these arrangements, can be deconstructed. There is a privilege ascribed by teachers and a power imbalance that is inherently present in a classroom. Inhabiting this role comes with a responsibility that teachers must understand. Whether implicit or explicit, their ability to reify or interrupt ideologies and larger structures of dominance is formidable. How the LGBTQIA community is discursively represented within dominant societal narratives can be countered with other understandings and histories of the social construction of systems that benefit certain groups and oppress others. Through this understanding of the prevailing reproductions of homophobia and heteronormativity, curricular interventions can create more inclusive classrooms and campus communities for LGBTQIA students and faculty (Rodriguez, 2007).

### **Significance of the Project**

This project aims to support faculty and instructors teaching at the college or university levels in becoming more knowledgeable of LGBTQIA issues. In understanding how these systems of privilege and oppression function through all levels of the educational process, the unintended reproduction of these can be interrupted. Faculty and instructors who are unaware of the histories, which inform the social constructions of sexualities and gender, will reproduce a normalizing ideology of heterosexuality and the gender binary (Foucault, 1990). In the process of creating an educational repository and resource guide for faculty and instructors, the project will interrupt systems of heteronormativity, homophobia, and transphobia. This will help those faculty and instructors who are unfamiliar with LGBTQIA issues, terminology, and histories to interrupt the unintended reification of sexuality and gender binaries, heteronormativity, and homophobia. The project will also create a handbook for those who identify as ‘straight’ or

heterosexual to become critical allies and informed colleagues and teachers. This will help create a safe and knowledgeable environment for LGBTQIA faculty, students, and staff and will inform a more inclusive social justice education within the college.

### **Definitions of Terms**

**LGBTQIA:** any combination of letters attempting to represent all the identities in the queer community, this represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual.

**Asexual:** a person who generally does not experience sexual attraction (or very little) to any group of people but does experiences romantic attraction to specific partners.

**Bisexual:** a term of identity given to individuals who are sexually and emotionally attracted to some males and females (GLSEN, 2002).

**Cisgender:** a description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression, preferred gender pronouns, and assigned biological sex all align (e.g., woman, feminine, female, she and her preferred pronouns).

**Cis-man:** a person who identifies as a man, presents himself masculinity, and has male biological sex, *often referred to as simply “man”*

**Cis-woman:** a person who identifies as a woman, presents herself femininely, and has female biological sex, *often referred to as simply “woman”*

**Counter Narrative/Knowledge:** A counter narrative is a narrative, which counters or interrupts the dominant narrative. Usually this dominant narrative reinforces the status quo by privileging only certain groups and marginalizing others. A counter-narrative only makes sense in relation to something else. The tension of the relationship with the dominant narrative or to the narrative they are countering. It's a positional category in tension with another category. What is dominant and what is in resistance to that dominant is not stagnant, with multiple layers of positionality.

**Gay:** a term of identity typically given to males who are sexually and emotionally attracted to some other males (GLSEN, 2002).

**Gender Expression:** the various ways individuals chose to externally communicate gender through dress, clothing, hairstyle, voice. People tend to match their gender expression with their gender identity. However, gender expression is not necessarily an indication of someone's sexual orientation or gender identity (GLSEN, 2002).

**Gender Identity:** an individual's innermost sense of self as "male," "female," "man," "woman," or somewhere in between, and is often enacted in the use of chosen pronouns (i.e., They, Them, Their, He, She, Him, Her, Ze, Hir) (GLSEN, 2002).

**Gender Role:** a set of behaviors and attributes assigned to men and women based on traditional binary societal expectations of males (maleness) and masculinity, and females (femaleness) and femininity (GLSEN, 2002). Individuals who challenge traditional gender roles by stepping outside of the binary are often referred to as transgender.

**Genderqueer:** (1) a blanket term used to describe people whose gender falls outside of the

gender binary; (2) a person who identifies as both a man and a woman, or as neither a man nor a woman; *often used in exchange with “transgender”*.

**Heteronormativity:** A term used by social theorists to describe how heterosexuality and ascribed gender roles are fixed and naturally occurring. Heteronormativity describes how strict gender roles within a binary system are reified through heterosexuality. When heterosexuality is discourses as the normal and naturally occurring sexuality, then all other sexualities are subsequently understood in opposition to heterosexuality or outside the normal. As a result, all other sexualities are discourses as “other” and non-normative. Heteronormative discursive practices or techniques are multiple and organize categories of identity into hierarchical binaries. This means that man has been set up as the opposite (and superior) of woman, and heterosexual as the opposite (and superior) of homosexual. It is through heteronormative discursive practices that lesbian and gay lives are marginalized socially and politically and, as a result, can be invisible or discriminated against within social spaces, such as schools. Heteronormativity (heterosexuality and the gender role binary) is thus institutionalized as the privileged category reinforced through institutions within society.

**Heteropatriarchy:** (Smith, 2006) Heteronormativity reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is natural and normal and therefore all other sexualities are outside the norm, at the same time it reproduces strict gender binaries (man/woman) and also categorizes these binaries hierarchically, (man is superior to woman) (heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality). Heteropatriarchy is described as a further naturalizing or normalizing force of Patriarchy and the understanding that in order for heteronormativity to be dominant socially and institutionally, a patriarchal system

must be in place. The traditional role the institution of marriage plays in the control of wealth and power results in the private nuclear family system, which is a reflection of the system of the state, state power.

**Homophobia:** irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against Homosexuality or Homosexuals (Merriam-Webster). Homophobia: a psychological term originally developed by Weinberg (1973) to define an irrational hatred, anxiety, and or fear of homosexuality. More recently, homophobia is a term used to describe the fear, discomfort, intolerance, or hatred of homosexuality or same sex attraction in others and in oneself (internalized homophobia) (GLSEN, 2002). Examples of homophobia include hate crimes, derogatory comments, jokes that slander, denial of services, and other oppressive actions or beliefs (Bonner Curriculum, 2009).

**Heterosexism:** behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing

**Heterosexual:** a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the other gender (or, literally, biological sex) than they have; *often referred to as “straight”*.

**Lesbian:** a term of identity given to females who are sexually and emotionally attracted to some females (GLSEN, 2002).

**Misogyny:** is the hatred or dislike of women or girls. **Misogyny** can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, denigration of women, violence against women, and

sexual objectification of women. It can be broad enough to encompass everything from feelings of dislike to entrenched prejudice and hostility, even murderous rage. It also is at the root of discrimination against boys and men who do not fit into the traditional roles categorized as masculine or those who do not exhibit overly masculine characteristics.

**Other:** I take my use of Other as capitalized, from Kevin Kumashiro's book *Troubling Education: Queer activism and anti-oppressive pedagogy*. "Other refers to those groups that are traditionally marginalized, denigrated, or violated (i.e., Othered) in society, including students of color, students from under- or unemployed families, students who are female, or male but not "stereotypically" masculine, and students who are or are perceived to be queer. They are often defined as other than the idealized norm"...this also includes other "traditionally marginalized groups, such as students with disabilities, students with limited or no English language proficiency, and students from non-Christian religious backgrounds" (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 32)

**Power/Knowledge:** Foucault's (1980) view is that mechanisms of power produce certain types of knowledge. This knowledge then organizes, classifies, and structures information about society and peoples placement within these structures of power. The knowledge gathered in this way further reinforces these exercises of power. Certain groups who have power privilege create forms of knowledge and structure knowledge hierarchically in order to reproduce the structures, which reinforces the group's hold on power. Foucault (1980) studies the complex relations between power and knowledge as interrelated functioning aspects of society, but are separate apparatuses within society.



**Transphobia:** a fear, disgust, stereotyping, or hatred of transgender, transsexual and other gender nontraditional individuals because of their perceived gender identity, expression, or status (GLSEN, 2002; Whittle, 2006, March). According to Whittle (2006, March), transphobia can be direct or indirect:

1. **Indirect Transphobia:** any intentional or unintentional action based in ignorance or inadvertence of the trans person's identity, such as referring a transgender woman to a "men's clinic," or failing to recognize a trans man's need to seek gynecological services. Indirect transphobia plays out in failing to recognize trans people in nondiscrimination policies, and anti-bullying campaigns. Indirect transphobia also includes the deliberate exclusion of insurance policy coverage for hormone therapies or other gender-affirming medical procedures.
2. **Direct Transphobia:** any activity that sets out to deliberately harm an individual based on their perceived gender identity, expression, or status. Direct transphobia may include discriminatory practices, insulting comments, physical and emotional harassment, threats, and violence. Direct transphobia upholds the belief that the gender nontraditional person is less than human, which may result in overt discrimination in medical care (i.e., failing to treat the trans patient), physical and sexual abuse, and blatant disregard for the trans person's humanity.

**Transgender:** an umbrella term for individuals whose gender expression (at least sometimes) runs against societal expectations of gender, including transsexuals, cross dressers, drag kings, drag queens, gender queer individuals, and those who do not identify with either of the two sexes currently defined (GLSEN, 2002).

**Transsexual:** individuals who do not identify with their assigned birth sex, and sometimes use surgical and hormonal interventions to “transition” and achieve some form of sex congruence (GLSEN, 2002).

**Queer:** (1) historically, a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQIA people; (2) a term that has been reclaimed and reconstructed by the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms”. Today it is an umbrella term used by anyone to identifies as LGBTQIA. To identity as Queer, is a refusal to conform to heteronormativity and heterosexist socially constructed norms.

## Chapter II Review of the literature

# CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

## **Introduction**

Is it possible to create an environment within a classroom where the exchange of knowledge and the processes of thinking are critical and collaborative? Where Othered voices are present without silencing others in a shared space. Can the classroom be a space for more voices to be heard? Is it possible for voices of the Other to be present without becoming

representative of the entire group's experience, where intersectionality and the vastly differing experiences within a group are understood to exist but also understood that one can never truly know all experiences? How do teachers create environments where “the Truth” is not the goal but to critically think about the world is? This chapter looks at literature that discusses the multiple ways education operates within dominant structures of privilege and oppression and how education can subvert (re)producing them by engaging in critical pedagogies and queering curriculum. Teachers within a classroom can teach critical thinking and, through a collaborative process, open spaces for Other voices and identities to be present within the classroom. This process can be furthered by including education *about* the Other and *for* the Other within educators classrooms, pedagogies, the curriculums, and text books, as well as the educational institution as a whole.

For the past decade, gender and sexualities within schools, its curricula, as well as in the classroom, comprise arguably one of the most contested spaces in education. And it has only become more intensified over the past few years. Will gender and sexuality, while gaining more recognition within society as a legitimate human rights issue, sufficiently impact educators and educational institutions in the motivation to effect change and realize equality? Moving towards equality in schools needs to happen at all levels. Administrators of educational institutions and educational boards need to change policies and curriculum to be more inclusive of all genders and sexualities, as well as all Othered groups. People who are of a target group whether because of their actual or perceived gender and/or sexuality, are often at greater risks within education institutions for violence and other discrimination. Teachers have a great responsibility to make their classrooms safe and inclusive learning environments. With that, amazing opportunities to

effect change can occur, when they educate themselves and their students about equality for all genders and all sexualities.

Throughout this paper I will be using the term “Other” with a capital “O”; I am borrowing this term from Kumashiro in his book *Troubling Education* (Kumashiro, 2002). Although I am specifically focusing on gender and sexuality issues within education and urge for more inclusivity and equality for the LGBTQIA community, much of what I discuss in this chapter can benefit all targeted groups. I use the term Other (capitalized) to refer to:

Those groups that are traditionally marginalized, denigrated, or violated (i.e., Othered) in society, including students of color, students from under-or unemployed families, students who are female, or male but not stereotypically ‘masculine’, and students who are or are perceived to be queer. They are often defined in opposition to groups traditionally favored, normalized, or privileged in society, and as such, are defined as other than the idealized norm. (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 32)

Throughout this chapter, I will also use the term Queer to represent anyone in the LGBTQIA community, as well as to refer to a theory which seeks to dislocate the locus of power/knowledge as a framework of analysis beyond the already defined categories and identities within society. Queer is often used within the LGBTQIA community as a reclaimed and (re)appropriated identity to describe members of the community who exist within the intersections of gender and sexual orientation. The term is also used to identify anyone whose life and/or relationship does not fit into the traditionally desired cis-gendered, heteronormative, heterosexual lifestyle. Queer, as a term, has been abnegated due to its long history of being a pejorative term for gay or lesbians, or anyone perceived to be different or strange. In academic

spaces in particular, as well as activists' communities, it has been undergoing a process of reclamation and reconstruction. Queer theory seeks to deconstruct the construction of the dichotomous organization within society of 'normal' 'natural' and 'different' or 'strange'.

### **Problem-Posing Education and Liberatory Pedagogy**

In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (Freire, 1996) presents a critique of dominant education and the role of teacher-student relationships, and compares two key concepts of education that are present today: banking and problem posing. Banking is a concept of education that holds the ideology of knowledge as something to be deposited into students in order to shape them. It assumes students are empty and passive and teachers take all control, determine what will be learned, and "fill" students with preselected, predetermined information. This concept inherently reproduces a hierarchy of knowledge and knowledge production, which gives those in power the ability to determine what is knowledge, and what is taught. Problem-posing education allows people to develop their humanity by engaging in dialogue. This concept recognizes the relationship between people and the world, and holds lived realities as central to learning and encourages discovery and creativity. When these realities are engaged in a shared dialogue between student and teacher, the power differentials are interrupted and learning is a collaborative process within which the student becomes central to the teaching process.

This concept has led to the emergence of new terms for the relationship: teacher-student and student-teachers. The construction of an authority, which holds absolute power in truth knowing, is no longer the basis of education and students have the ability to teach their knowledge and lived experiences.

The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on ‘authority’ are no longer valid; in order to function, authority must be *on the side of freedom*, not *against* it. (Freire, 1996, p. 80)

Problem-posing education consistently engages in a delayering process of the different lived realities that may be experienced. Banking education inhibits critical thought, self-determination, and creative approaches to the world. Freire explains that banking education seeks to “maintain the submersion of the consciousness” whereas problem-posing education “strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality” (p.81).

Another part of Freire’s theory, which is fundamental to deconstructing the hierarchies of knowledge and dissemination of that knowledge, is *Praxis*. In banking education, the process of an action being taken such as a theory being practiced or applied or the act of engaging and fully realizing ideas, can become a reproduction of the status quo and reinforce power structures that are already in place. Praxis allows for an interruption to occur within that process of action and engagement of ideas and theories, by consistently engaging in critical reflection of the world and one’s actions upon it. “Through praxis oppressed people can acquire critical awareness of their own condition, and, with their allies, struggle for liberation” (Freire, 1996, p. 36).

To build upon Freire’s theory of critical pedagogy, this project is also framed by culturally responsive pedagogy. Education that includes the student’s culture within its curriculum and pedagogy is referred by a few names: culturally competent, culturally responsive, and culturally relevant educations. The theoretical foundations are the same, however, and the goal of bridging the student’s culture within the culture of the classroom remains central.

Culturally responsive pedagogy happens when the culture of the student is fully understood and represented within the curriculum and classroom. The goal is for students to be academically successful, culturally competent, and socio-politically critical. A common practice for this is to make the community within which the student is living, the curriculum. The student is able to gain a sense of self through locating themselves within their community's history. "A culturally relevant pedagogy is designed to problematize teaching and encourage teachers to ask about the nature of the student-teacher relationship, the curriculum, schooling, and society" (Freire, 1996, p. 483).

Freire worked with oppressed groups to critically interrogate and change social structures through education as a form of liberation and political dissent. Educators worldwide who have wanted to create a more antioppressive, more just society, have been highly influenced by this concept of education as praxis. Freire's notion that what should be worked towards was a more liberatory educational experience for all students has lent itself as a foundation for anti-discrimination education. Although Freire has been criticized for sexist language and assumptions, feminist theorists have built upon Freire concepts to further anti-racist, antisexist pedagogies. Feminist pedagogies, which were largely built on Freire's liberatory pedagogy, worked to include an analysis of patriarchy. Feminist pedagogies share similar goals to critical pedagogies, which led to the emergence of Queer theory and queer pedagogies in the 90's. Although often associated narrowly with issues of gay and lesbian, Queer pedagogies seek to interrogate all systemic foundations of oppression and create a critically thinking collaborative classroom in order to address oppression in its multitudes of functioning (Meyer, 2007).

## **Engaged Pedagogies and Teaching about the Other**

Through the understanding of intersectionality, teachers can subvert the trend of ghettoizing these interrogations into the Other by looking at how the Other intersects with dominant curricula. For example, instead of dedicating a week to Queer studies or Black history, and subjugating these from the main lesson plans and curriculum, teachers could include queer and black authors when teaching American literature. Instead of teaching about the Other in infrequent and sectioned off lessons that cover one group exclusively, educators can integrate lessons about the Other with each other, as well as the dominant. Educators could teach about the queer resistances and the gay rights movement within lessons on the civil rights movement of the 1960s, or the highly organized grassroots strategies of ACT UP surrounding the AIDS epidemic.

According to Kumashiro (2002, p. 42), the strengths of this approach “teaches all students, not just the Othered students, as it calls on educators to enrich all students’ understanding of different ways of being.” Kumashiro also warns educators to be aware of how teaching about the Other may (re)produce systems of oppression by unintentionally (re)creating a dominant narrative of the Other, which the students may take as the experience for all members of that group. Students may take the limited teachings and if they are not taught to critically think about what is not being taught, what voices are not present, they may read it as *the queer experience* or *the Chicano/a experience*. Another unintended outcome may be that teaching about the Other (when the teacher does not share the identity being discussed) would be that students of that particular group could be positioned as experts and tokenized as representatives of that identity's experience. For example, Kumashiro uses the example of “the case when students of color are asked to explain the African American or some other ‘minority’ perspective” (2002, p. 42). The goal of teaching about the Other and resisting partial knowledge



is rooted in the modernist goal of full knowledge, seeing the truth. The idea that the Other can be known fully is also situated in this idea, as well as the concept of a one Truth that can be achieved.

hooks' (2010) explanation of engaged pedagogy while teaching critical thinking, can be used to overcome the challenge of partial knowledge while teaching about and for the Other. If critical thinking is taught as foundation, the framework through which the Other is engaged in teaching and learning, then further interrogations and can be understood as inherently necessary to an ongoing process. hooks describes critical thinking as requiring discernment "It is a way of approaching ideas that aims to understand core, underlying truths, not simply that superficial truth that may be most obviously visible. One of the reasons deconstruction became such a rage in academic circles is that it urged people to think long, hard, and critically; to unpack; to move beneath the surface; to work for knowledge" (hooks, 2010, p. 3). This can act as a process of continuous interruptions of the dominant narrative seen as truth, as well as a source of counter-knowledge if the partial knowledge being discussed in the classroom has the potential to be read by students as *the experience* or *the narrative* of the Other. It also challenges the assumed concept of Truth, as one truth that can be achieved. It interrupts this goal and instead introduces the understanding that there are many truths, these truths are contextualized and located within intersectionalities and consistently shifting and reshaping new truths.

Kumashiro suggests an intervention on this partial knowledge and at the same time to harmful knowledge, which is the knowledge that is already strategically produced by dominant structures about the Other. Since there is already harmful knowledge (re)produced about the Other, in order to change oppression educators must offer disruptive knowledge, not simply more knowledge.

Students can learn that what is already known or is becoming known can never tell the whole story, especially since there is always diversity in a group, and one story, lesson, or voice can never represent all. In fact, students can learn that the desire for final knowledge is itself problematic. Learning is about disruption and opening up to further learning, not closure and satisfaction. (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 42)

Much of the educational system is based on the quest for answers that is framed in the idea that the teacher knows these answers and the answers held by the teacher are the right answers. For example, high stakes testing, which is increasingly popular in U.S. education, reinforces this and is highly evaluative in determining the school's future funding. This concept is very much based on larger structures, which reinforce domination by privileging knowledges that benefit the dominant groups in society and oppress others. Much of our educational training for teachers reinforce the idea that they must be right, all of the time. hooks proposes teachers must stay open at all times, and must be willing to acknowledge what they don't know.

Keeping an open mind is essential to critical thinking. I often think about radical openness because it became clear to me, after years in academic settings, that it was far too easy to become attached to and protective of one's viewpoint, and to rule out other perspectives...A radical commitment to openness maintains the integrity of the critical thinking process and its central role in education. (hooks, 2010, p. 4)

What is also key to critical thinking is a collaborative exchange, which obfuscates the traditional teaching pedagogies that assume students to be passive subjects or receptacles that simply receive knowledge. This dislocation of the 'right' answers or the 'right' knowledge to

obtain also interrupts the power dynamic within the classroom and exchange of information. This creates spaces for students to share and participate within the classroom, they can be open and honest when they feel as though their lived experience and what they know becomes an important, valued part of the classroom. hooks describes this as the integrity of the classroom and describes this exchange as engaged pedagogy:

Engaged pedagogy begins with the assumption that we learn best when there is an interactive relationship between student and teacher. As leaders and facilitators, teachers must discover what the students know and what they need to know... as teachers, we can create a climate for optimal learning if we understand the level of emotional awareness and emotional intelligence in the classroom. That means we need to take the time to assess who we are teaching. (Hooks, 2010, p. 12)

### **The Social Construction of Gender and Sexualities**

Sexualities have been socially constructed by means of discourses contextualized within American or European society. Sexuality is constructed, experienced, and understood in culturally and historically specific contexts. Heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, transgender, and queer, are all culturally produced identities specially discoursed and historically specific. Gender, as well as sexuality, is a product of social and cultural construction—not fixed in the natural/biological realms as heterosexuality is presumed to be. Although linked within cultural and historical contexts, gender and sexuality are not mutually exclusive nor are they inextricably tied to one another in their cultural meaning or their practice. The presupposed ‘natural or biological’ basis of gender as innately associated with the assignment of a sex at birth, in an arbitrarily assumed binary system, impetuously collapses sex and gender. The idea that sex

is one's gender and that this is innately biological and natural (re) produces legitimacy of a hierarchical binary system. Butler explains:

If gender is the cultural meanings that sexed body assumes, then a gender cannot be said to follow from a sex in any one way. Taken to its logical limit, the gender/sex distinction suggests a radical discontinuity between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders. Assuming for the moment the stability of binary sex, it does not follow that the construction of "men" will accrue exclusively to the bodies of males or that "woman" will interrupt only female bodies. (Butler, 2006, p. 9)

Schools are social institutions and do not exist outside of society's heterosexist and homophobic ideologies. They are in fact, in Foucauldian terms, an apparatus for control within society to transmit information and knowledge which, (re)produces power and privilege through discourses about the Other. These ruling ideologies maintain hegemony within society and are legitimized through discourses which construct normalcy and hegemonic education as commonsense. These discourses are reproduced at virtually every level within mainstream education. The complexities of the social construction of sexualities start with the constructing of heterosexuality as normal and natural, which consequently, constructs all other sexualities as deviant, or deviating from the norm which has discourses heterosexuality at the center of the identifying process of a sexuality and as commonsense. Therefore, all other sexualities inherently will be deviant, other, outside the norm and fighting to be tolerated as a result. The other thing this does is to assume gender. It constructs gender within a binary system, which discourses male and female as the construction of a defining organization of the category of gender. This understanding is linked to the assumed natural progress of one's assigned sex at birth, female or

male, to ones subsequent gender. This makes practices within schools seem “harmless” as a logical way to define children and youth and keep an organized institution. From the moment children enter kindergarten or preschool they are inducted into a more formalized system of gender and sexuality (re)construction and discourse. What is available to them within this social institution constantly recreates the strict gender and sexuality binaries within which they must fit. Although certainly not the beginning of this socialization it is important to understand that because it is the first social institution besides their home where there are authorities different from their parents or caregivers a new kind of gender and sexuality policy is at play. This is the most important moment in the long journey of gender and sexuality teachings that children will receive outside of their parents or caregivers and they first identity they will understand that they are being identity is their gender. No other aspects of their identity are particularly enforced or acknowledged as they enter into the sociopolitical landscape of school. Their educational experience formally begins with a classroom that separates by a binary gender system and usually exclusively heterosexual examples are ever present. Butler states,

The presumption of a binary gender system implicitly retains the belief in a mimetic relation of gender to sex whereby gender mirrors sex or is otherwise restricted by it. When the construction status of gender is theorized as radically independent of sex, gender itself becomes a free-floating artifice, with the consequences that man and masculinity might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and woman and feminine a male body as easily as a female one.

(Butler, 2006, p. 8)

It has only been recently that some schools have incorporated other examples for children to understand gender or made available other examples available for youth within schools.

Gender outside the binary and sexuality all together are usually left out of schools all together. As a formal social institution it is important to understand how social justice are in fact in schools and they can't be pushed out. This is the tricky thing about homophobia and heterosexism: it's not just about fighting for gay visibility of gay and lesbian sexualities to be accepted into the acceptable categories of sexuality, its about gender as well. The construction of the binary system of sexuality with heterosexuality on one end and homosexuality on the other-- both of them constructed categories—assumes a gender binary as well (Seidman, 2003). In order to further comprehend how schools are embedded within larger structures of oppression, the focus must switch from teaching about the Other to knowledge about oppression. Teaching about the Other, especially in this case, can have unintended consequences. Teaching about LGBTQIA or queer issues will contribute to affirming visibility and knowledge of queer issues and hopefully increased acceptance but the unintended consequence comes when it is taught as its own separate lesson.

This can also be the case when starting a gay/straight alliance group (GSA) or an LGBTQ center, as often is the case within high schools and colleges; the center may provide information to LGBTQIA students or raise awareness within the school through specific attempts, but ultimately this also reinforces the idea that queer students are Other, separate, outside of the norm. The goal of accepting the Other into spaces which are normally inhabited only by the dominant groups, is a goal destined to maintain a discourse that privileges heterosexuality, names it as normal and commonsense, while reproducing heterosexism/heteronormativity and subsequently homophobia. To challenge these unintended outcomes, educators should advocate for a critique and transformation of the structures within colleges and curriculums. Developing awareness of these larger structures of oppression through critical thinking and critique,

empowers educators to interrupt or disrupt oppressive structures and ideologies within educational institutions, and consequently, strategies for change become possible. Engaging queer theory can make other strategies possible for creating change on a multitude of levels with schools and curriculum (Talbert & Steinberg, 2000).

### **Queering Straight Classrooms**

School structures traditionally and usually require severe and gender conforming norms of heterosexuality. Schools reinforce heterosexism through the policing and surveillance of bodies, language, and curriculum. Schools mandate the performance of hyperheterosexuality, through curricular and extracurricular activities, as well as physical spaces. Hypersexuality is the performance of or exaggerated privileging of heterosexuality as the desired norm, which is privileged through school functions, school structures, and what is studied within the curriculum. It can be seen in traditional school structures, for example, the homecoming dance and prom concludes with the 'king' and 'queen' of the dance and requires them to dance together to a romantic song. Examples also include the exclusive study of heterosexual relationships in romantic literature, the exclusion of any other form of relationship and the emphasis of the 'nuclear' family comprised of a heterosexual married couple and two biological children as the normal/natural family.

Another way hypersexuality functions in schools is teaching only the reproductive aspects of sexuality in sex education programs. These may seem invisible to most of society but they are strong reinforcements. In curricula for most traditional educational institutions, heteronormativity is indoctrinated through the study of exclusively heterosexual romance and

representation in literature, to the hidden sexuality or gender of some of the authors read, to the nuclear highly gendered family comprising of: two parents, both cisgendered, and of opposite sexes as the norm and the ideal. In most colleges, issues of assault are addressed in extremely heteronormative language and discoursed around cisgender identities and heterosexism. Sexual health and education are discoursed around reproductive aspects of sexuality and all other forms of desires and sexuality are omitted from the curriculum. Language is another powerful way of policing gender and sexuality. The most effective way to challenge a boy or man is to threaten their masculinity; the most powerful way is to use terms like 'homo', 'gay', 'fag', 'pussy', and 'queer'. What is being challenged here or threatened is his sexuality and consequently his gender.

The cultural boundaries or scripts for gender are connected to heterosexism, which is therefore rooted in homophobia and informed by misogyny. At the same time of being insulted through being called 'gay', 'feminine' qualities associated with this undesirable attribute, and consequently woman as a gender, are being denigrated. Gender codes are reestablished through the surveillance and policy of peers, authority figures and institutions through hyper-heterosexism, homophobia, and misogyny. Lipkin (1999) provides extensive and detailed accounts of the discrimination experienced by educators who are LGBTQIA, as well as the devastating treatment of students who were or who were perceived to be non-heterosexual or non-gender confirming in identity or performance. When there is a lack of intervention upon harassment and policing of gender and sexuality, schools are sending the message that these cultural scripts and codes are to be upheld, that anyone outside of these strict hierarchical binaries are unwelcome and unnatural (Luhmann, 1998). By not offering intervention into these hierarchies within the binaries of men over woman, straight over queer they are being



reproduced within educational spaces. Even when it is not the school administration or teachers who are not directly involved, the lack of intervention maintains these systems of oppression. Educational spaces can provide spaces and strategies to dismantle these socially constructed categories. Queer theory and pedagogies, critical thinking, engaged and anti-oppressive pedagogies are all extremely effective frameworks for essential interrogations into these (re)productions. “Queer theory,” Meyers explains, “offers educators a lens through which educators can transform their praxis so as to explore and celebrate the tensions and new understandings created by teaching new ways of seeing the world” (Meyer, 2007, p. 15). Teachers can provide counter-knowledges as intervention in order to create liberating spaces that oppose these strict boundaries and systems to make space for the diversity of students in the classroom, as well as in society. By queering pedagogies and curriculum, teachers have the agency to create classroom environments and spaces of learning that are more inclusive, safe, liberatory, and socially just.

## Chapter III The Project and Its Development

### **Description of the Project**

This field project is designed to help create a college culture that is committed to social justice as part of an educational foundation, which is more inclusive in the study and education of gender and sexualities. In other words, this project is designed to help queer the college

culture and curricula, as well as pedagogy within the classroom. This project will fill a gap in social justice centered education within college curricula where there is lack in education surrounding gender and sexualities and the dichotomous binary system within which these are discoursed; it aims to provide resources for teachers to facilitate a more inclusive classroom environment by providing educational materials which specifically addresses the social construction of gender and sexualities. It will provide resources that bring LGBTQIA issues and their intersectionality with race, class, gender, sex, ability, and citizenship into classrooms and core curricula in order to educate and facilitate discussions with students, faculty, and the educational community as a whole. The main objective of this project is to assist teachers in talking about issues of gender identity and sexualities and to provide guidelines and best practices of how to incorporate LGBTQIA issues into class lessons and discussions.

The project has been designed into three separate parts. The first is a handbook for teachers and students, which provides foundational knowledge of gender identity and sexualities. The second component is a workshop designed for college students (but is encouraged for faculty as well) that explores the complexities of the categories and identities as they relate to the construction of sex, gender, and sexualities. The workshop asks students to use their own narratives to understand the differences in the categories as they are constructed, how identities are influenced and discoursed. The workshop challenges the restrictive binary systems for each category while educating students about the fluidity inherent within the spectrums of gender and sexualities. The third part of the project is a syllabus for a college-level course, which specifically focuses on LGBTQIA issues within society, across the world, while understanding gender and sexuality within the framework of international human rights. The course covers the historical contexts of the construction of gender and sexuality and traces the evolution of how

both gender and sexualities have been differently discourses during distinctive periods throughout history and how it has been influenced by larger structures of privilege and oppression within societal norms of the time. The course also interrogates the (re) production of heteronormative and heteropatriarchal privilege through rigid misogynic gender binaries. It then covers queer and critical theory, as well as a timeline of queer resistances, strategic grassroots movements, and critically examines what it means to be queer today, both socially and politically. Most importantly the course teaches students how gender and sexuality issues are a human rights issue here within the United States and around the world.

### **Development of the Project**

Starting in 2013, I began teaching at a small liberal arts college, which in recent years has dedicated its mission statement to social justice education. Through this commitment to social justice more courses were needed that focused on race, class, gender, and LGBTQIA studies and their intersectionality. When I started teaching at this College, there was a significant gap regarding LGBTQIA issues. There was a great need to design a course that addressed LGBTQIA issues discrimination and marginalization as a human rights issues, drawing from local to global examples and frameworks.

Once I started teaching courses in gender and sexualities it became clear that I had become representative for the issues of LGBTQIA for students, as well as faculty. At first I hadn't realized what a gap in education concerning the social construction of gender, gender identity, sexualities and queer issues in general existed among the faculty, as well as the college culture as a whole. Soon the lack of education and awareness for even being able to discuss or have the language necessary to engage in discussions surrounding gender and sexualities with

each other or students became apparent. There is a strong queer and transgendered community within the student body, although numerically small; these students are very politically savvy. Even so, they are students and there is an inherent power differential which exists. Coming from a marginalized or targeted status it is important that they have allies among faculty and administration within their educational community in order for them to feel represented and safe.

To further understand the educational landscape and the depth needed to provide education surrounding LGBTQIA issues I started meeting with two other faculty members who teach the majority of feminist theory and courses that include addressing gender and sexuality. It became clear that an entire course dedicated to gender, gender identity and all sexualities needed to be created, taught, and included in the overall curriculum of the college in order to fill the void that was glaringly present.

I started developing a course that covered many aspects of this field of study. The course covers the historical contexts in which gender and sexualities have been interpreted, languaged, and, as a result, discourses at differently during different periods throughout history. Most importantly, it covers the invention of heterosexuality and subsequently the ‘other’ sexualities including but not limited to homosexuality and how morality and religion played an influential role in this development. The course covers queer resistances through social movements and the fight for equality. The course understands that gender and sexuality are human rights issues within our country, as well as internationally and the violence and discrimination inherent within hate crimes against people who identify or are perceived to be LGBTQIA. The course also interrogates the (re)production of heteronormativity with all institutions within our society, as well as the assumption of this heteropatriarchy to be the normal and natural model for romance, relationships, and families. It also covers how homophobia and heteronormativity are

(re)produced within education and uses the college as a case study to examine this within a progressive liberal arts college.

Through the development of this course, it also became clear that the majority of faculty and instructors were not including gender and sexuality in their courses in general, and even specifically when there was a focus of privilege and oppression. It seemed that because there was a lack of foundational knowledge and missing language needed to talk about these issues it was inherently uncomfortable to even bring it up. Some teachers approached me once they knew I was the one who was taking on these issues and I became the expert; they wanted me to educate them and explain terminology, language and definitions. Pronouns were exceptionally hard for most teachers to grasp and change if one of their students was transitioning or didn't feel as though they fit into the binary gender system. Other teachers didn't believe they needed to understand these issues or would benefit from any education surrounding them because they taught subjects that were outside of the social sciences; these teachers were extremely resistant to any intervention at all. For this reason, it became clear there was going to be different levels of engagement with these issues and, as a result, my field project is comprised of three separate components to reflect three different levels of engagement.

### **The Project**

The first component is a short handout that covers terminology, language, definitions and examples [See Appendix A]. The goal here is to briefly cover the overarching or larger concepts in order to make professors more comfortable in talking about gender, gender identity, and sexualities. It also explains things like pronoun preference for students who may not identify with the rigid binary system of gender, which is important within a classroom environment to be

accepted and addressed with pronouns that they identify with. The handout could also be utilized by students to educate their peers.

The second part of the project, which goes a step further in its engagement with gender and sexuality, is a workshop that I designed for college-aged students [See Appendix B]. The workshop uses students' own lived experiences and life narratives to illuminate the differences in the categories of sex, gender, and sexualities. The workshop shows how gender and sexuality are on a spectrum, both are fluid, and as the participants physically move along the spectrum they experience how one can occupy different places along both spectrums at different times during one's life. For the purpose of this particular project, I am including this workshop also as a way to introduce these understandings and this material to teachers from multiple educational contexts as well. More specifically, I will be facilitating this workshop for willing faculty and instructors at the college I work at currently. Other faculty, teachers, or students can easily take this workshop and facilitate it in many various settings. It could be used in other classes, at other colleges and universities, as well as training seminars and conferences.

The third part of the project is a syllabus for a course covering many aspects of gender and sexualities, which I explained above [See Appendix C]. The core of the syllabus is to have a comprehensive course of study in order to fill a void within the overall curriculum of social justice education and human rights. The syllabus is a deeper engagement with the material and will be able to be picked up and taught at other institutions and environments. With the understanding that faculty and instructors will chose to engage with the material at various levels, I have separated the project into three levels of commitment and have made all available to the college and to interested readers who could adapt these resources to their contexts. Through this model, the hope is that at the very least students within all classrooms across the

campus I teach at will have a more inclusive and safe learning environment.

## CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

*Progressive, holistic education, “engaged pedagogy” is more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy. For, unlike these two teaching practices, it emphasizes well-being. That means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students. (hooks, 1994, p. 15)*

Finding alternatives to the reproduction of heteronormativity and heterosexism within educational curricula and educational environments is complicated and needs to be addressed on every level for change to be successful. It demands an integral intervention upon educational cultures within academia, as well as pedagogical shifts within the classroom, and more inclusive texts. More importantly, it asks teachers to become educated themselves about the issues at hand. For classrooms to become more inclusive of students and aware of the unique positionality that students inhabit within the intersectionality of race, class, sex, gender identity, sexuality/sexual orientation, and ability teachers must also have an understanding of how these categories are discourses and how they function with systems of power and oppression. Heteronormativity functions with gender and sexuality in that it reinforces the norms of the dominant constructions of these socially constructed categories. These ideologies are re-inscribed at every level within

the institution of education while education itself functions as an apparatus of social control through which the dominant norms of these social categories are further reproduced.

Teachers have a unique ability to offer counter- knowledge as an interruption to the continuous onslaught of the reproduction of heteronormativity and heterosexism. Within classrooms teachers have the space to create inclusive educational environments, which engage anti-oppressive pedagogies that breakdown hierarchies of power, which traditional practices within the classroom relay on to uphold the dominant systems. When the construction of gender and sexuality are held in rigid unforgiving dichotomous binaries, school becomes the main stage in which these are challenged and consequently enforced. The systemic reification of gender and sexuality as binary seeps into every aspect of education and subsequently needs to be interrupted at many levels at once. Particularly at the college or university level this can be achieved through a collaborative effort from everyone within the classroom engaged in critically examining heteronormativity and heterosexism within the curricula and the pedagogical exchange within the classroom.

This can be done through small gestures of language in the classroom in which heterosexuality is not assumed nor is one's gender identity and pronouns are not taken for granted. It can also be done in the constant and persistent resistance to homophobic and heteronormative texts, language, pedagogies, and curricula. Teachers can include small practices within their classrooms at any level even when teaching more traditional curricula. For example, on the first day of class teachers can ask students to introduce themselves and ask for their preferred name and their preferred gender pronouns. Teachers who are familiar with the social construction of gender and sexuality can explain how gender and one's assigned sex at birth do



not always correlate and the binary system for sex and gender have long since been rejected through overwhelming scientific research.

Similar practices can be incorporated when interrupting heterosexism. Teachers can incorporate non-heteronormative language into their lesson plans, as well as into their classroom in general. By not assuming that heterosexuality is the norm/natural and by using terms like someone's 'partner' are small ways that interrupt the idea that heterosexuality is the norm from which all other sexualities are organized. This also creates a space where students who identify as LGBTQIA don't have to actively out themselves in the classroom or don't feel safe being who they actually are, and destabilizes heteronormativity within the classroom. This also is a refusal to invisibilize or other students who don't fit into the rigid gender or sexuality binary.

Teachers have a responsibility to be informed about the issues that students who either identify or are perceived to be LGBTQIA. In the past decade, the queer community has gained recognition and achieved more legal protection and further human rights. What has also been on the rise is bullying, suicides, and violent hate crimes towards the queer community. Most colleges and universities show a huge lack of inclusive curricula, texts, and pedagogies. Many colleges and universities do not have courses that address gender and sexuality or include issues of gender and sexuality in other courses. There is a glaring lack of resources on college campuses and within administration policy as well.

Being an adjunct faculty member at a small liberal arts college, many students have scheduled meetings with me to help them navigate classrooms where gender and sexuality, even in obvious places, were being over looked and invisibilized. After the tragic loss of one of the college's leaders within the student body, as discussed in the introduction to this field project, it became clear that the faculty and staff were uncomfortable talking about gender, gender identity,

sexual orientation, and using gender-neutral pronouns. Heteronormativity was being reproduced within their classrooms and using gender neutral pronouns was uncomfortable for them because they had no counter-knowledge to draw from or any education surrounding the construction and discourse of the gender binary or sexuality binary. They had little to draw from and what information they did have came from brave students who, despite a power differential, took the time to educate their teachers in order to create a safer more inclusive classroom. All of sudden I was being asked to be the educator for the faculty and staff at a very emotional time. Teachers need to have access to information in order to understand LGBTQIA issues and queers their curricula, their texts, their pedagogies, and their language in the classroom. As bell hooks puts it in her book *Teaching to Transgress*,

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn.

That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin. (hooks, 1994, p. 13)

This project was designed to have three separate parts which teachers and administrators could chose from in order to fit the level of engagement that is desired or feasibly implemented. The first section of the project is intended to give teachers a foundation, which is required to initially engage gender and sexuality in the classroom. It also provides terminology, definitions, and examples of easy ways to incorporate these understandings and language in the classroom. It is my hope that at the very least teachers starts to queer their lesson plans and texts to include all

identities into their classroom and create a safe space to all students to learn. This is an easy way to incorporate pedagogies that encourage students to critically think about the world around them without “Othering” students in their classroom. The second part is the workshop that teachers can do with their students to navigate gender and sexuality in a way that exemplifies how the socialization of gender and sexuality effects us all and we all have different relationships with these categories. It is my intention that this workshop be incorporated into all faculty retreats or diversity training in the hopes that teachers will become be comfortable with the understanding that gender and sexuality are organized as dichotomous binaries which are socially constructed and not based on science or biology, and therefore breakdown the assumption of a natural order of things. The third part of the project is a syllabus for a course that address the historicity of the social categories of sexuality and gender, how it has been discourses during different times throughout history, current issues of LGBTQIA, and queer as a human rights issue in the U. S. and around the world. Courses, which engage these issues through critical, feminist, and queer theoretical frameworks, are often left out of social justice curricula, as well as the intersectionality of gender identity and sexuality in other areas of study in academia. As the creator of this course I designed the syllabus to be broad so when a teacher pick this up, it is used as a guideline to tailor their course to the specific needs of the group of students in their classroom. When the teacher studies the entirety of course material in preparation for the course, they will be familiar with the material and subject matters addressed to then specifically design their own particular version of the course. For example, whether the students need more of a foundation in queer studies, critical theory, social justice, or human rights because they have not had previous courses covering these or if the students have a foundation and what to delve deeper into in Trans\* issues, the religions aspects surrounding sexuality and marriage, or the

intersectionality of race, class, nationality as human rights, the teacher can focus in on those areas after the foundational knowledge has been covered. It is my aspiration that my syllabus be used widely and appropriately adapted to suit particular classrooms of students and their particular desires of engagement according to their positionality within society. I believe that will contribute deeply to the understanding that the social construction and discourse surrounding sex, gender, and sexuality and their intersectionality limits us all and with this comprehension we can all become more empowered in our identity and more importantly better allies to others.

### **Recommendations**

This project is designed to start the larger task of filling in the gap within higher education where a critical understanding of gender and sexualities are lacking and where support services on college and university campuses are not commonplace. Much research has been done which urges educators to know and understand the positionality within society each of their students inhabits. Instead of assuming stereotypes about LGBTQIA students or students of color their class background and how this will affect their performance in the classroom, educators should acknowledge the difference in their classrooms and the day-to-day realities of their lived experiences. The answer is not to assume all one identity to avoid prejudice subsequently reproducing privilege and oppression. Many studies urge educators not to ignore the differences in their students' identities, and "not to assume that their students are "normal" (and expect them to have normative, privileged identities) or neutral, in other words, without race, sex, and so forth (which is often read as "normal" anyway). Rather, educators could work to learn about, acknowledge, and affirm differences and tailor their teaching to the specifics of their student population" (Kumashiro, 2002, p. 36).

Teacher engagement and commitment is essential to this curriculum project. It is at the heart of anti-oppressive education and pedagogical engagement in the classroom is where change starts to happen. Educators who are interested in and committed to including all genders and sexualities into their classrooms and implementing any of the levels of engagement that each section of the project requires needs to do the work of educating themselves. Educators have the unique ability to engage different pedagogies, to create classroom environments, to address and resist larger social structural norms and systems of oppression and power. The intent behind each sections of this larger project is that each section be implemented as part of larger social justice antioppressive education curricula and classroom pedagogies designed to give educators tools to resist and challenge oppression and advocate for LGBTQIA students and all queer issues and their intersectionality.

This project has the opportunity to change classrooms and entire cultures for higher education if expanded upon and the interrogation into oppression based upon gender identity and sexual orientation furthered. It would need to be expanded upon in department's curricula and in the support available to and geared towards LGBTQIA students within the university's policies and services. To advance this project further to work towards anti-oppressive social justice education as more comprehensive curricula, educators could reorganize how each target group is addressed. Instead of focusing on each identity as separate educational units, educators could weave, for example LGBTQIA and race together. Looking at the intersectionality of a student body within a classroom, the differences within the group can be specifically addressed. For example, when affirming an identified queer student of color, the educator may design a syllabus to include the study of civil rights along with queer resistance movements and how historically there were shared strategies for dissent.

Even more comprehensive would be to include LGBTQIA studies and queer theory into every subject, classroom, text and curriculum throughout the university. It could be as broad as fostering an overall culture that lays its foundation with introductory courses that explore social construction, critical and queer theory, and encourage inclusivity of all genders, sexualities, races, and classes. It could be as small as acknowledging and incorporating contributions made by LGBTQIA identified individuals in all areas of study, or simply asking each student to express their chosen pronoun as an expected practice within the classroom. The most important part of this is that the educators take it upon themselves as their responsibility to educate themselves about these issues in order to foster and encourage a classroom environment that is inclusive, critically engaging, and affirming for all students which are Other within larger social structures of oppression. This will shift the responsibility and power differential so students who are or are perceived LGBTQIA don't have to be the ones to advocate for their inclusion or acceptance within the classroom.

## Appendix A

### **“Gender, Sexuality, and Heteronormativity: LGBTQIA+, Say What?”**

A handbook for educators and students: the language and terminology surrounding sex, gender, and sexuality etc...

## LGBTQIA+, Say What?

*What is a person's sex and how is that different from their gender?*

A person is assigned a sex at birth but that is not their gender. Sex and gender are two different categories and identities.

*What do you mean by sexualities?*

I mean there are so many more sexualities than just heterosexuality or straight and homosexuality or gay/lesbian.

*I thought there was just a binary and you were in one box or the other?*

Sexuality is on a spectrum and can change during one's lifetime. Sexuality is fluid and can only be accurately represented on a continuum or a sphere to demonstrate just how varying and complex sexuality can be.

*There are more than two sexes?*

Yup, 9 or more scientists say!

*I thought your sex was your gender and that there were just two and the binary system was natural and normal?*

I will explain more in just a bit, but someone's sex is biological and their gender is who they are! They could be the same and then they would be Cisgender, meaning the sex they were assigned at birth matches up to the gender society thinks should correlate. If they don't feel as though their assigned sex matches up with who they are and their gender experience and identity, then they would identify as transgender or Genderqueer. They will also use pronouns that may be different from pronouns usually associated with an assigned sex, or they may refuse the whole binary altogether and use gender neutral pronouns like they, them, their when referring to themselves. Or Zir and Ze. Either way, you should use whatever pronouns they prefer to be referred to as and respect their lived experience with their gender.

*What do I do when I can't really tell if someone is a boy or a girl?*

Well first thing first is... resist the overwhelming urge to fit this person into the limited options of two boxes provided so rigidly by our social constructions! Don't worry so much about it because we are all still just people trying to do the best we can. Then ask them what their preferred name and pronoun is and then tell them your preferred pronoun and name. Now that that's outta the way, you can get on with it...



*What do I do when I don't know what someone's preferred pronouns are?*

Just ask and then tell them what yours are!

So.....if you have asked yourself or others these questions or know someone who has, this is a handbook to help you navigate all these situations, topics, and issues!

*Lets get started...*

First things first! Lets get started by debunking some myths, explaining some terms, and giving you some foundational knowledge to build upon...

When someone is born they are assigned a sex. Whether they clearly fit into the box of either baby boy or baby girl they are still assigned a sex. The baby's sex is supposed to be the scientific and biological way of determining who fits into either box. The problem is that we know that biologically there are a lot more sexes than just the two available to us. This idea that there are only two categories (male and female) is not scientifically-based; rather it is socially constructed. When we only have two boxes to fit into yet 1 in 1,500 are obviously, physically, and biologically belonging to one of the other at least 9 sexes that researchers have identified so far, it leaves the only option being to have surgery to try and make that baby fit and/or having a perfectly healthy person feeling like some thing is wrong with them because they don't automatically fit into either of the choices given to us.

Now that we have discussed one's assigned sex, so let's talk about gender...

So the idea is that one's assigned sex of male or female will correlate to their gender of woman or man, right? Well we already can see the problem here, huh?

So actually, one's assigned sex doesn't always have to do with their gender. Sometimes their assigned sex has nothing to do with their gender. Someone's assigned sex can be very different from their gender experience, their gender presentation, their gender identity, their gender pronouns, or their gender performance. When someone doesn't identify with their assigned sex, they can use different pronouns. Some choose to go by the opposite sex's pronouns or they may decided to go by gender neutral pronouns like they, them, their, or Zir/Ze. This is also a statement to resist the reproduction of the gender binary as our own gender options or experience. The refusal to conform to these socially constructed norms is also part of queer culture and should be treated with respect. If you don't know someone's preferred pronouns you should ask! An important practice that educators can easily incorporate into their classrooms is asking all their students what their preferred name and pronouns are on the first day of class. This will created an more inclusive classroom and will create a safe learning environment for all students by affirming and respecting different within your classroom, especially for LGBTQIA students who may not have practice yet in advocating for differences in sexuality and gender to be incorporated in the classroom environment.

Sexuality is along these same lines but is not contingent upon one's gender!

Sexuality is also on a spectrum and along the sexuality spectrum there are many different ways someone can identify or experience their sexuality. Now gender has something to do with someone's sexuality both when it comes to physical, sexual and romantic attraction, but someone's assigned sex does not always come into the equation. So you have to separate out sex, gender, and sexuality into three very separate, very different categories even though they all can interact with each other.

Here is some terminology defined for you to help you queer your understanding of sex, gender, and sexuality!

### Terms and Language

**LGBTQIA:** any combination of letters attempting to represent all the identities in the queer community, this represents Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual.

**Advocate:** a person who actively works to end intolerance, educates others, and support social equity for a group.

**Ally:** a straight person who supports queer people

**Androgyny:** (1) a gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity; (2) occasionally used in place of "intersex" to describe a person with both female and male anatomy.

**Asexual:** a person who generally does not experience sexual attraction (or very little) to any group of people.

**Bigender:** a person who fluctuates between traditionally "woman" and "man" gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with both genders (and sometimes a third gender).

**Binary Gender:** a traditional and outdated view of gender, limiting possibilities to only two rigid categories that one has to fit into "man" and "woman". Now we know gender is not a binary system, gender is on a spectrum and ones gender can change and develop depending on where one is in ones life.

**Binary Sex:** a traditional and outdated view of sex, limiting possibilities to only "female" or "male". It is a dichotomous and rigid binary system that we now know is not based on science or reality. Now we know there are at least 9 sexes and about 1 on every 1,500 babies born are intersex. There are so many different kinds and degrees that 1 in 1,000 babies have surgery to "normalize" appearances. This is extremely controversial and there are many organizations dedicated to fight for the rights of those born intersex. Over coming the binary system to realize that it is not normal/natural or biological would not only help LGBTQIA folks, especially those who are trans\* it would also help intersex folks gain acceptance for who they are as well!

Biological sex: the physical anatomy and gendered hormones one is born with, generally described as male, female, or intersex, and often confused with gender.

Bisexual: a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction to people of their own gender as well as another gender; *often confused for and used in place of "pansexual"*.

Bottom Surgery: Surgery on the genitals designed to create a body in harmony with a person's preferred gender expression.

Butch: A person who identifies themselves as masculine, whether it be physically, mentally or emotionally. 'Butch' is someone who is masculine presenting and can identify with any gender, historically Butch referred to a masculine presenting female identified lesbian. There is a long time stereotype of the Butch/Femme lesbian or dyke couple. Although still celebrated today, this stereotype received criticism for reproducing heteronormativity in lesbian or queer couples.

Cisgender: a description for a person whose gender identity, gender expression, and biological sex all align (e.g., man, masculine, and male).

Cis-man: a person who identifies as a man, presents himself masculinity, and has male biological sex, *often referred to as simply "man"*.

Cis-woman: a person who identifies as a woman, presents herself femininely, and has female biological sex, *often referred to as simply "woman"*.

Closeted: a person who is keeping their sexuality or gender identity a secret from many (or any) people, and has yet to "come out of the closet".

Coming Out: the process of revealing your sexuality or gender identity to individuals in your life; often incorrectly thought to be a one-time event, this is a lifelong and sometimes daily process; *not to be confused with "outing"*.

Counter Narrative/Knowledge: A counter narrative is a narrative, which counters or interrupts the dominant narrative. Usually this dominant narrative reinforces the status quo by privileging only certain groups and marginalizing others. A counter-narrative only makes sense in relation to something else. The tension of the relationship with the dominant narrative or to the narrative they are countering. It's a positional category in tension with another category. What is dominant and what is in resistance to that dominant is not stagnant, with multilayers of positionality.

Cross-dressing: wearing clothing that conflicts with the traditional gender expression of your sex and gender identity (e.g., a man wearing a dress) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; *often conflated with transsexuality*.

Drag King: a person who consciously performs "masculinity," usually in a show or theatre setting, presenting an exaggerated form of masculine expression, often times done by a woman; *often confused with "transsexual" or "transvestite"*.

Drag Queen: a person who consciously performs “femininity,” usually in a show or theatre setting, presenting an exaggerated form of feminine expression, often times done by a man; *often confused with “transsexual” or “transvestite”*.

Dyke: a derogatory slang term used for lesbian women; reclaimed by many lesbian women as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term.

Faggot: a derogatory slang term used for gay men; reclaimed by many gay men as a symbol of pride and used as an in-group term.

Female: a person with a specific set of sexual anatomy (e.g. XX phenotype, vagina, ovaries, uterus, breasts, higher levels of estrogen, fine body hair) pursuant to this label.

Femme: Feminine identified person of any gender/sex.

Fluid(ity): generally with another term attached, like gender-fluid or fluid-sexuality, fluid(ity) describes an identity that is a fluctuating mix of the options available (e.g., man and woman, gay and straight); *not to be confused with “transitioning”*.

FTM/MTF: a person who has undergone medical treatments to change their biological sex (Female To Male, or Male To Female), often times to align it with their gender identity; *often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”*.

Gay: a term used to describe a man who is attracted to men, but often used and embraced by women to describe their same-sex relationships as well.

Gender Expression: (1) the external display of gender, through a combination of dress, demeanor, social behavior, and other factors, generally measured on a scale of masculinity and femininity. (2) the various ways individuals chose to externally communicate gender through dress, clothing, hairstyle, voice. People tend to match their gender expression with their gender identity. However, gender expression is not necessarily an indication of someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity (GLSEN, 2002).

Gender Normative: A person who by nature or by choice conforms to gender based expectations of society. (Also referred to as ‘Genderstraight’.)

Gender Oppression: The societal, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that privilege cisgender (gender-typical people) and subordinate and disparage transgender or gender variant people. Also known as “genderism.”

Gender Variant: A person who either by nature or by choice does not conform to gender-based expectations of society (e.g. transgender, transsexual, intersex, genderqueer, cross-dresser, etc.).

Genderism: see “Gender Oppression.”

**Genderfuck:** The idea of playing with ‘gender cues’ to purposely confuses “standard” or stereotypical gender expressions, usually through clothing.

**Genderqueer:** A gender variant person whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or is some combination of genders. Often includes a political agenda to challenge gender stereotypes and the gender binary system.

**Gender Identity:** the internal perception of an individual’s gender, and how they label themselves. An individual’s innermost sense of self as “male,” “female,” “man,” “woman,” or somewhere in between, and is often enacted in the use of chosen pronouns (i.e., They, Them, Their, He, She, Him, Her, Ze, Hir) (GLSEN, 2002).

**Genderqueer:** (1) a blanket term used to describe people whose gender falls outside of the gender binary; (2) a person who identifies as both a man and a woman, or as neither a man nor a woman; *often used in exchange with “transgender”*.

**Gender Confirming Surgery:** Medical surgeries used to modify one’s body to be more congruent with one’s gender identity. See “Sex Reassignment Surgery.”

**Gender Cues:** What human beings use to attempt to tell the gender/sex of another person. Examples include hairstyle, gait, vocal inflection, body shape, facial hair, etc. Cues vary by culture.

**Hermaphrodite:** an outdated medical term used to describe someone who is intersex; not used today as it is considered to be medically stigmatizing, and also misleading as it means a person who is 100% male *and* female, a biological impossibility for humans.

**Heteronormativity:** A term used by social theorist to describe how heterosexuality and ascribed gender roles are fixed and naturally occurring. Heteronormativity describes how strict gender roles within a binary system are reified through heterosexuality. When heterosexuality is discourses as the normal and naturally occurring sexuality, then all other sexualities are subsequently understood in opposition to heterosexuality or outside the normal. As a result, all other sexualities are discourses as Other and non-normative. Heteronormative discursive practices or techniques are multiple and organize categories of identity into hierarchical binaries. This means that man has been set up as the opposite (and superior) of woman, and heterosexual as the opposite (and superior) of homosexual. It is through heteronormative discursive practices that lesbian and gay lives are marginalized socially and politically and, as a result, can be invisible or discriminated against within social spaces such as schools. Heteronormativity (heterosexuality and the gender role binary) is thus institutionalized as the privileged category reinforced through institutions within society.

**Heterosexism:** behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than queerness, or ignores/doesn’t address queerness as existing. (2) Behavior that grants preferential treatment to heterosexual people, reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is somehow better or more “right” than

queerness, or ignores/doesn't address queerness as existing

Heterosexual: a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the other gender (or, literally, biological sex) than they have; *often referred to as "straight"*.

Heterosexual Privilege: Those benefits derived automatically by being heterosexual that are denied to homosexuals and bisexuals. Also, the benefits homosexuals and bisexuals receive as a result of claiming heterosexual identity or denying homosexual or bisexual identity.

Heteropatriarchy: (Smith, 2006) Heteronormativity reinforces the idea that heterosexuality is natural and normal and therefore all other sexualities are outside the norm, at the same time it reproduces strict gender binaries (man/woman) and also categorizes these binaries hierarchically, (man is superior to woman) (heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality). Heteropatriarchy is described as a further naturalizing or normalizing force of Patriarchy and the understanding that in order for heteronormativity to be dominant socially and institutionally, a patriarchal system must be in place. The traditional role the institution of marriage plays in the control of wealth and power results in the private nuclear family system, which is a reflection of the system of the state, state power.

Homophobia: irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against Homosexuality or Homosexuals (Merriam-Webster). Fear, anger, intolerance, resentment, or discomfort with queer people. (2) Homophobia: a psychological term originally developed by Weinberg (1973) to define an irrational hatred, anxiety, and or fear of homosexuality. More recently, homophobia is a term used to describe the fear, discomfort, intolerance, or hatred of homosexuality or same sex attraction in others and in oneself (internalized homophobia) (GLSEN, 2002). Examples of homophobia include hate crimes, derogatory comments, jokes that slander, denial of services, and other oppressive actions or beliefs (Bonner Curriculum, 2009).

Homosexual: a medical definition for a person who is attracted to someone with the same gender (or, literally, biological sex) they have, this is considered an offensive/stigmatizing term by many members of the queer community; *often used incorrectly in place of "lesbian" or "gay"*.

Hyperheterosexuality: The ingrained status quo of heteronormative structures and events within social institutions such as schools. Hyperheterosexuality happens when only heterosexuality is studied in school with no other examples of relationships, exclusively teaching reproductive sex in sex educations, or the insistence that there is a prom 'king' and 'queen' and they must dance together after their nomination to commence their titles. It is the exaggerated performance of heterosexuality as the norm and exclusive example of sex, romance, and family.

Institutional Oppression: Arrangements of a society used to benefit one group at the expense of another through the use of language, media, education, religion, economics, etc.

Internalized Oppression: The process by which a member of an oppressed group comes to accept and live out the inaccurate stereotypes applied to the oppressed group.

**Intersex Person:** Someone whose sex a doctor has a difficult time categorizing as either male or female. A person whose combination of chromosomes, gonads, hormones, internal sex organs, gonads, and/or genitals differs from one of the two expected patterns. (2) a person with a set of sexual anatomy that doesn't fit within the labels of female or male (e.g. XXY phenotype, uterus, and penis).

**Lesbian:** a term of identity given to females who are sexually and emotionally attracted to some females (GLSEN, 2002).

**Male:** a person with a specific set of sexual anatomy (e.g., 46, XY phenotype, penis, testis, higher levels of testosterone, coarse body hair, facial hair) pursuant to this label

**Outing [someone]:** when someone reveals another person's sexuality or gender identity to an individual or group, often without the person's consent or approval; *not to be confused with "coming out"*.

**Misogyny:** is the hatred or dislike of women or girls. Misogyny can be manifested in numerous ways, including sexual discrimination, denigration of women, violence against women, and sexual objectification of women. It can be broad enough to encompass everything from feelings of dislike to entrenched prejudice and hostility, even murderous rage. It also is at the root of discrimination against boys and men who do not fit into the traditional roles categorized as masculine or those who do not exhibit overly masculine characteristics.

**Oppression:** The systematic subjugation of a group of people by another group with access to social power, the result of which benefits one group over the other and is maintained by social beliefs and practices.

**Outing:** Involuntary disclosure of one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.

**Pansexual:** a person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

**Passing:** Describes a person's ability to be accepted as their preferred gender/sex or race/ethnic identity or to be seen as heterosexual.

**Polyamory:** Refers to having honest, usually non-possessive, relationships with multiple partners and can include: open relationships, polyfidelity (which involves multiple romantic relationships with sexual contact restricted to those), and sub-relationships (which denote distinguishing between a 'primary' relationship or relationships and various "secondary" relationships).

**Power/Knowledge:** (Foucault, 1980) Foucault's view is that mechanisms of power produce certain types of knowledge. This knowledge then organizes, classifies, and structures information about society and peoples placement within these structures of power. The knowledge gathered in this way further reinforces these exercises of power. Certain groups who have power privilege create forms of knowledge and structure knowledge hierarchically in order to reproduce the structures, which reinforces the group's hold on power. Foucault (1980) studies the complex relations between power and knowledge as interrelated functioning aspects of society, but are

separate apparatuses within society. This is really important to know and consider when we are looking at gender and sexuality. For example, gender is categorized in a dichotomous binary that is comprised of two genders (female and male), which are directly linked to the idea that there are only two sexes, and you are either one or the other but we know that biologically this is not true. So therefore it is easy to see that this system is socially constructed.

Queer: (1) historically, this was a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people; (2) a term that has been embraced and reclaimed by the LGBTQ+ community as representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms”. It is often used as an umbrella term which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\*, and intersex persons. (3) Queer: (A) historically, a derogatory slang term used to identify LGBTQ+ people; (B) a term that has been reclaimed and reconstructed by the LGBTQ+ community as a symbol of pride, representing all individuals who fall out of the gender and sexuality “norms”. Today it is an umbrella term used by anyone to identify as LGBTQ+. To identify as Queer, is a refusal to conform to heteronormativity and heterosexist socially constructed norms.

Questioning: the process of exploring one’s own sexual orientation, investigating influences that may come from their family, religious upbringing, and internal motivations.

Same Gender Loving (SGL): a phrase coined by the African American/Black queer communities used as an alternative for “gay” and “lesbian” by people who may see those as terms of the White queer community.

Sexual Orientation: the type of sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction one feels for others, often labeled based on the gender relationship between the person and the people they are attracted to; *often mistakenly referred to as “sexual preference”*.

Sexual Preference: (1) generally when this term is used, it is being mistakenly interchanged with “sexual orientation,” creating an illusion that one has a choice (or “preference”) in who they are attracted to; (2) the types of sexual intercourse, stimulation, and gratification one likes to receive and participate in.

Straight: a man or woman who is attracted to people of the other binary gender than themselves; *often referred to as “heterosexual”*.

Third Gender: (1) a person who does not identify with the traditional genders of “man” or “woman,” but identifies with another gender; (2) the gender category available in societies that recognize three or more genders.

Top Surgery: This term usually refers to surgery for the construction of a male-type chest, but may also refer to breast augmentation.



Transgender: a blanket term used to describe all people who are not cisgender; *occasionally used as “transgendered” but the “ed” is misleading, as it implies something happened to the person to make them transgender, which is not the case.* (2) A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity. (3) Transgender: an umbrella term for individuals whose gender expression (at least sometimes) runs against societal expectations of gender, including transsexuals, cross dressers, drag kings, drag queens, gender queer individuals, and those who do not identify with either of the two sexes currently defined (GLSEN, 2002).

Trans\*: An abbreviation that is sometimes used to refer to a gender variant person. This use allows a person to state a gender variant identity without having to disclose hormonal or surgical status/intentions. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

Transactivism: The political and social movement to create equality for gender variant persons.

Transitioning: a term used to describe the process of moving from one sex/gender to another, sometimes this is done by hormone or surgical treatments.

Transsexual: a person whose gender identity is the binary opposite of their biological sex, who may undergo medical treatments to change their biological sex, often times to align it with their gender identity, or they may live their lives as the opposite sex; *often confused with “trans-man”/“trans-woman”*.

Transvestite: an out dated term that at one time was used to describe a person who dresses as the binary opposite gender expression (“cross-dresses”) for any one of many reasons, including relaxation, fun, and sexual gratification; *often called a “cross-dresser,” and often confused with “transsexual”*.

Trans-man: a person who was assigned a female sex at birth, but identifies as a man; *often confused with “transsexual man” or “FTM”*. (2) An identity label sometimes adopted by female-to-male transsexuals to signify that they are men while still affirming their history as females. Also referred to as ‘transguy(s).’

Trans-woman: a person who was assigned a male sex at birth, but identifies as a woman; *often confused with “transsexual woman” or “MTF” (male to female)*.

Transphobia: a fear, disgust, stereotyping, or hatred of transgender, transsexual and other gender nontraditional individuals because of their perceived gender identity, expression, or status (GLSEN, 2002; Whittle, 2006, March). According to Whittle (2006, March), transphobia can be direct or indirect:

1. Indirect Transphobia: any intentional or unintentional action based in ignorance or inadvertence of the trans person’s identity, such as referring a transgender woman to a “men’s clinic,” or failing to recognize a trans man’s need to seek gynecological services. Indirect transphobia plays out in failing to recognize trans people in nondiscrimination

policies, and anti-bullying campaigns. Indirect transphobia also includes the deliberate exclusion of insurance policy coverage for hormone therapies or other gender-affirming medical procedures.

2. **Direct Transphobia:** any activity that sets out to deliberately harm an individual based on their perceived gender identity, expression, or status. Direct transphobia may include discriminatory practices, insulting comments, physical and emotional harassment, threats, and violence. Direct transphobia upholds the belief that the gender nontraditional person is less than human, which may result in overt discrimination in medical care (i.e., failing to treat the trans patient), physical and sexual abuse, and blatant disregard for the trans person's humanity.

**Transwoman:** An identity label sometimes adopted by male-to-female transsexuals to signify that they are women while still affirming their history as males.

**Two-Spirited:** (1) a term traditionally used by Native American people to recognize individuals who possess qualities or fulfill roles of both genders. (2) Native persons who have attributes of both genders, have distinct gender and social roles in their tribes, and are often involved with mystical rituals (shamans). Their dress is usually mixture of male and female articles and they are seen as a separate or third gender. The term 'two-spirit' is usually considered to specific to the Zuni tribe. Similar identity labels vary by tribe and include 'one-spirit' and 'wintke'.

**Ze / Hir:** Alternate pronouns that are gender neutral and preferred by some gender variant persons. Pronounced /zee/ and /here,/ they replace "he"/"she" and "his"/"hers" respectively.

## Appendix B

### ***Breaking Out Of The Binary: Sexuality and Gender Continuum***

Curricular project and Workshop

Submitted by

Kate Cabot

## Introduction To The Workshop

### **\*\*Concerns for settin<sup>1</sup>g a safe space\*\***

Creating a safe environment to explore these issues is the first and foremost important aspect when facilitating a workshop that asks participants to be vulnerable and honest. This can be done in many different ways but successfully providing a background and educating the participants on how these social constructs are created and reinforced is an important place to start.

Understanding that our gender and sexual orientation is not innate, invariant, nor biologically and naturally programmed can be very affirming to many peoples lived experiences. It may help us all to not feel so different or like something is wrong with us! I will share one of my favorite ways to help create this environment, which culminates in a collaborative safe space. It goes like this... After the educational background component has been successfully facilitated and before you ask participants to share their own lives and lived experiences, ask them what they would need to feel safe in an environment where they are being asked to share. You can cue them by asking what safe and respectful spaces looks like to them, what does it need to be a safe space? Then on a big piece of paper or black board you can draw a circle, which will be the 'safe bubble' that the whole group will be inside of during the exercise. Ask them to contribute at least one aspect of the 'safe bubble' that they would want to have present and one that they commit to carrying out. These most likely will be along the lines of: Respect, care, no judgments, allowing all understandings to be present, being able to asking questions, confidentiality, respect for different learning styles, everyone's voice is heard and valued, non-judgmental language,

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<sup>1</sup> This section draws from the submitted field project thesis. In order to be a stand-alone resource for facilitators of the workshop some text is repeated.

reflexivity practiced by everyone, 'I' statements, ownership of ones own lived experience, supportive feedback, letting everyone be where they need to be, etc.

After this has come to a close, ask them all to agree to uphold all of the attributes of the 'safe bubble' and as you all move forward this will become what the group can expect from each other in order to be safe and cared for during the workshop as a contract. Then you can have them all sign their name to the 'safe bubble' as if they were signing a contract.

### **Description**

In order to create a workshop, which deconstructs the social construction of sexuality as well as the social construction of gender, I wanted to physically place sexuality and gender on a visual continuum, which interrupts the binary model strongly held by society. Students then could physically move along the continuum to further show the complexities that the spectrums, both sexuality, as well as gender inhabit. Understanding through an analysis of deconstruction allows students to critically think through both their own sexuality and gender identity, as well as the ascribed binaries reproduced within dominant culture. The intended audience for this workshop is first time college freshmen (17-19yrs of age), but can be adapted to be made appropriate for other age groups and communities.

I chose this particular audience not only because it is the population I work with the most, but also because the majority of this age group is experiencing coming to college for the first time. Young adults can begin to think critically about their world in the classroom, through course materials, and also new life experiences. It is also during this time during development when adolescents are exploring who they are and where they want to be within society on a deeper level with more freedom away from their family of origin or hometown.

Developmentally, they are also able to hold abstract complexities about themselves and the world in a way they had not before. Lastly, specifically when it comes to sexuality and many times gender, this is when they will be able to explore these realms for themselves and figure out who they are in their sexuality and their gender identities.

Students will be able to share their lived experience and move through the continuum, as their understanding of their sexuality has been understood up until the present. This act of moving from one place along the continuum to another will enable students to actually experience the fluidity of sexuality and better understand the unrealistic confines of a binary system. This will be done again for the spectrum of gender, first how 'dominant society' would understand and place them, or not know where to place them at all, if that is the case. Once the students are at a standstill of where they are now on the continuum, they will be asked to look at the continuum they are occupying, and notice where others are; are they only at either end of the spectrum or are there many places one can be standing along the continuum? If everyone isn't at either ends of the continuum, does it make sense that sexuality or gender as been constructed as a binary? Did anyone's placement change as they went through life? Do they think of sexuality and/or gender as fluid?

Students will be asked to examine where they are along the continuum, and first think about how their identity privileges them and then consequently, what adversity or discrimination they may face or have faced because of this? This is be asked as a two part question: first, what privileges them in how dominant society perceives them, and what institutionalized discrimination may they face or have faced because of how they are seen by dominant society? Secondly, how they experience privilege and discrimination within their own lives, families, and communities? The separation given to these questions about where they place themselves and

where society would put them, shows how institutionalized oppression is situated and how privilege is granted to individuals within our society, even if it is not asked for.

As a facilitator for a workshop which is asking students to examine their own positionality in relation to privilege through systems of heteronormativity and gender, it is necessary to have also done this work thoroughly themselves. It is important to be able to critique oneself and be aware of one's own positionality and how this will impact (and often in varying degrees) relationships and interactions depending upon the lived experiences and histories present in the interactions. Teachers and facilitators who are activists and who are committed to acts of resistance within educational settings must incorporate praxis of allyship and critical self-examination in order to effectively disrupt the dynamics of oppression. How one is complicit in the reproduction of systems of oppression is harder to identify when one's positionality is privileged. In the article *Against Repetition: Addressing Resistance to Anti-Oppressive Change in the Practices of Learning, Teaching, Supervising, and Researching*, Kumashiro explains how even within the community of educators who are activists working against oppression in the classroom or other educational settings, there is a tendency to be unconsciously complicit in the repetition of systemic oppression.

Kumashiro describes how at the foundation of anti-oppression work within education is the interruption of what has been accepted as common sense and status quo within the classroom. Kumashiro draws on Butler (1997) to understand this further. What is oppressive is the repetition of regulatory identities, forms of knowledge, and practices. Having to experience over and over certain systems of knowledge being considered privileged and the privileging of certain thinking and relating to others, is oppression. This is also a good explanation of how internalized oppression works. Within this repetition of privileging, certain ways of thinking and being in the

world are advanced by ascribed characteristics and stereotypes, which are hierarchical in their privileging as well as unnamed and unquestioned. This process reifies the taken for granted stereotypes and the unquestioned nature of how education and society works. One's own identified 'otherness' is unquestioned as well, and easily internalized. Resistance to both internalizing these repetitions of oppression and complicity in the act of reification requires an interruption or disruption in order to question, examine, critique what is otherwise taken for 'common place' or status-quo.

### **Background**

Gender is not the same as one's ascribed sex at birth, nor is it consistent with the categories of male and female in a binary model. Gender is constructed and reproduced within a hegemonic discourse, it is learned and in return taught. Socially constructed as a binary, hegemonic practices are discourses as 'woman' and 'man' or 'boy' and 'girl'; it starts the moment a birth sex is assigned. To better understand the symbiotic reproduction of privilege and oppression through systems of gender and sexuality it is vital that the histories, which inform the present, are examined. In *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, Foucault (1978) gives us an account of how sex was discourses and the subsequent process and evolution of these discourses over the last three centuries. Through a historical lens Foucault's account of how sex has been shaped and culturally discourses depicts a discourse so heavily steeped in Christian doctrine and so dependent upon procreation that it literally eclipses any other relationship to sex. It is so compressively defined that relationships to sex other than for procreation, does not exist except for way outside the dominant Christian imaginary of sex.



So strictly policed and controlled that even the language used in speaking about the act of sex, was shaped heavily on what was acceptable and not simply done. Religion, particularly Christianity, is a very powerful institution contributing to the construction of sexuality. Through the ‘naturalizing’ of the constructs of heterosexuality, the discursive language used to describe everything else in contrast as ‘other’, even ‘desire’, for anything outside of the institution of heterosexual marriage is considered as ‘sinful’ and ‘devious’. Marriage is extremely gendered and its foundations in this country are not only Christianized, but also rooted in white, middle-class, and nuclear family models of privilege. These histories are present today in the struggle for marriage equality. For the LGBTQIA community to gain marriage equality and share in the equal rights and privileges under the law, it is necessary for some to align themselves on the platform of the dominant structure rooted in Christian culture. It is a form of assimilation that privileges and reproduces norms of heteronormativity.

To be able to say that “we just want everyone to see the oneness in love and be free to love who we want’ is rooted in a neoliberal ideology. It is inherently privileged and is coming from a space where one does not have to be aware of the violent discrimination of racist, sexist, homophobic, heteronormative, Eurocentric systems. Anyone who is of the LGBTQIA community will likely experience institutionalized homophobia, either overtly or covertly. The act of separating out and critically looking at where you pass and are freely able to move through spaces with privilege, illuminates how these institutional structures of privilege and oppression function on a much larger scale than just our individual interactions. In the same understanding, we also must examine how our positionality mediates our own complicity in the repetitive acts that are experienced everyday, and function to maintain these power structures.

## **Goals and Justification for this workshop**

For this workshop the specific language and symbols used are intentional and intended to evoke certain messages. For example, this workshop is based on thinking through the message of 'the personal is political' and how this mediates the experience of privilege. It is specifically designed to have students first see where they would be on the sexuality spectrum, and then the gender spectrum. For students who hold beautiful ideals about how the world “should be” and how they “want their world to be”, this is an activity that will give them an opportunity for understanding that without an acknowledgment of the effects that the political categories they inhabit have on other groups in society, they are reproducing the very systems of which they are critical.

An important aspect of this which is necessary to further understand is how the social construction of gender mediates systemic privilege and oppression, and how these gendered patterns of interaction demand that the gender statuses are strictly differentiated. Within this stratification of genders there is a power construction which structures genders and gendered ‘attributes’ hierarchically. “As a social institution, gender is a process of creating distinguishable social statuses for the assignment of rights and responsibilities. As part of a stratification system that ranks these statuses unequally, gender is a major building block in the social structures built on these unequal statuses” (p. 60). It is not enough to understand how gender is a human production, embodied and maintained through the internationalized performance of gender, one must understand how these are constructed unequally and in turn inform privilege and oppression structures. “When gender is a major component of structured inequality, the devalued genders have less power, prestige, and economic rewards than the valued genders” (p. 61).

To be able to ignore systems of privilege and institutional discrimination that impact the spaces through which they move, allows individuals to benefit from unnamed privilege. The unexamined parts of society are privileged and normalized. For the purpose of clarity, the language used in this activity will be changed from ‘the political’ and will be substituted for ‘dominant society’. In my experience with this specific student group, referring to the political is not understood and often confused with political branches of government, and not appreciated as a hegemonic system which reproduces hierarchical power structures. This is necessary to critically understand in order to subvert systematic oppression.

The reproduction of heterosexuality is done by understanding it as ‘natural’ and its existence taken for granted as the norm. From this systemic foundation, its normative category becomes the category from which ‘other’ forms of sexuality will deviate. This deeply impacts the implications of understanding gender as socially constructed when heterosexuality is reproduced as the norm and understood as ‘natural’ because its epistemology is not examined. The heteronormative assumptions that reinforce the heterosexual imaginary leave heterosexuality as an unexamined category and therefore unquestioned, naturally occurring etc. Gender is constructed through the lens of heteronormativity; it affects our ability to have language outside of that norm for other forms of relationships. Institutionalized heteronormativity ensures the distribution of wealth, economic resources, social and political power/privilege benefits those who perform heteronormativity. Our ability to understand gender is dictated by the heterosexual imaginary and institutionalized heteronormativity. The larger structures of power/privilege so deeply mediate our examinations of sexuality and gender because the disruption of power is so reliant on systems of heteronormativity within capitalism.

In order to understand how their personal lives are also lived within a political landscape which ascribes privilege to some identities, and discriminates against others, students will first place themselves on a continuum of their sexuality in accordance to how the ‘dominant society’ would understand them, with the construction and discourse of heteronormativity held within the political landscape (ie. who do they date but more importantly, who do they publicly interact with in a romantic way). For example, someone may be sexually or romantically involved with members of both sexes, but only publicly be seen with their interest who is of the opposite sex. This is because that formation of relationship is privileged. Understanding why someone who is LGBTQIA may bring a friend who is of the opposite sex to a professional event or family function in order to avoid discrimination, helps to clarify the issue that who they are in the rest of their life locates them within a target group for oppression. Even if someone who is LGBTQ is out and accepted by all of their friends and family, they will still be a target for institutionalized oppression. This is separate but not unaffected by systemic power/privilege structures.

It is vital to understand not only the histories, which inform the present institutions of privilege, but also histories of resistance. The impulse to displace differences in the goal of eradicating oppression, serves to ignore what can be learned from past struggles for justice. Angela Davis points to the present day political landscape and powerfully makes the point that it took many resisters to come together and stand up and fight for justice. “Student movements, civil rights movements, anti-war movements, women’s movements, gay and lesbian movements, solidarity movements with national liberation struggles in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, Latin America have all contributed immeasurably to making our world a more just one” (p.155). Even in our fight for justice today, we cannot ignore the places where victories have been seen. Being aware of ones own positionality of privilege and oppression and the intersectionality of

these forces is essential toward fostering an effective intervention. This is a vital component in the struggles for justice.

## **The Workshop**

Workshop: “Breaking Out Of The Binary X2”

Summary:

The intent for this workshop is for students to think critically about sexuality and gender as socially constructed. Sexuality and gender are both constructed and discourses within society as a binary. Sexuality is discourses with heterosexuality as the ‘natural norm’ and all other sexuality is ‘other’, this places a hierarchy which is legitimated by various institutions within society. This constructs sexuality as heterosexuality or LGBTQIA. Gender is also constructed within a binary which avails only two options man or woman, boy or girl. This discourses gender as something which is consistent with ones assigned birth sex, male or female. Students will learn sexuality, as well as gender exist along a continuum and can change within one’s live time. After learning terminology and reading various articles about the social construction of gender and heterosexuality, students will be asked to place themselves along the sexuality continuum and then the gender continuum. This will be intersect by an analysis of what is privileged and what is discriminated against within the identities of sexuality, as well as gender.

Materials:

1. Signs for the sexuality continuum which read heterosexual/straight and LGBTQIA
2. Signs for the gender continuum which have the traditional man/woman bathroom signs. (the hidden curriculum for choosing symbols here is that some have the privilege to fit into this either/or symbols of the gender binary, others who are not clearly seen by dominate society to fit into one or the other are consistently outted even in the simply daily act of going to the bathroom outside of ones own home.)
3. blank pieces of paper and markers.

Goals and objectives:

1. to understand the difference between sexuality and gender. Although mediated by the other gender and sexuality are not mutually interrelated and can exist within multiple complexities.
2. to understand that ascribed birth sex is not the same as nor always consistent with ones gender.
3. to understand both sexuality and gender as socially constructed binary categories.
4. to understand that sexuality as well as gender exist along a continuum and can change throughout ones life.
5. to understand that ones own identity may or may not be consistent with what privileges or discrimination dominate society ascribes.

6. to understand that how dominant society perceives ones identity comes with a set of ascribed privileges and discriminations which exist on an institutional level rooted in racism, heteronormativity, homophobia, sexism, classism, nationalism, ableism etc...

#### Activity Outline:

Students will be asked to placed themselves along the sexuality continuum in two parts. 1st- as dominant society would place them, then 2nd- where they themselves understand themselves to be along the continuum.

Students will be asked to placed themselves along the gender continuum in two parts. 1st- as dominant society would place them, then 2nd- where they themselves understand themselves to be along the continuum.

#### Essential observations and questions:

After the Sexuality Continuum and then after the Gender Continuum ask the students to look around and along the continuum...

- Where are you placed along the continuum?
- look at the continuum you are standing along and notice where others are, are they only at either end of the spectrum or are there many places one can be along the continuum?
- If everyone isn't at either ends of the continuum does it make sense that sexuality or gender as been constructed as a binary?
- Did anyone's placement change as they went through life?
- Do they think sexuality and or gender is fluid?
- think about how your identity privileges you in society? and what adversity or discrimination may you face or have faced because of this?
- within certain communities you call your own?
- what privileges could you experience within dominant society because of how you are perceived?
- what institutionalized discrimination may you face or have you faced because of how you are seen by dominant society?
- within your own lives, families, communities etc. have you experienced privilege?
- within those same spaces what discrimination have you experienced?

#### Reflection and connection:

ask the students to reflect upon their sexuality journey through their life, as well as their gender journey.

- How did it feel to move physically along the continuum?
- can you make any connections to this in your experience of moving freely through certain spaces? or spaces where you need to be cognizant of your identity?

Further prompt questions for written exercises or group discussions:

In challenging the binary the LGBTQIA community and scholars alike have developed language to describe other groups who place themselves along the continuum and either reject the binary or are not easily placed by dominant society. In the process of being aware of naming these other identities has your understanding of the construction of sexuality or the construction of gender shifted or changed? Do you know of or do you identify with an identity outside of the sexuality or the gender binary? (examples: pansexual, polyamorous, transgender, transcending, gender queer, trans-masculine, trans-feminine, femme dyke, butch woman etc..)

Extended Exercise:

With the blank pieces of paper and markers ask students to write down their preferred identity as named by them or their community and place it along the continuum. How does this impact their understanding of resistance to the dominant binary system?

Resources:

Davis, A. Y. (2012). *The meaning of freedom*. San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality (Vol. I)*. New York, NY: Random House.

Ingraham, C. (1994). The heterosexual imaginary: Feminist sociology and theories of gender. *Sociological Theory*, 12(2), 203–219.

Kumashiro, K. (2002). Against repetition: Addressing resistance to anti-oppressive change in the practices of learning, teaching, supervising, and researching. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(1), 67–92.

Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider*. Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press.

Lorber, J. (1990). "Night to His Day" The Social Construction of Gender. *The politics of women's biology* (pp. 54-65). New Brunswick, [N.J.: Rutgers University Press.

Smith, A. (2006). Heteropatriarchy and the three pillars of white supremacy: Rethinking women of color organizing. In *Color of violence: The INCITE! anthology* (pp. 66–73). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.



Appendix C  
Course Syllabus

**Gender & Sexualities:  
History, Politics and identity**

## **Gender & Sexualities: History, Politics and identity**

Instructors name:

Number:

Email:

Office hours:

### **Course Description:**

Sexuality and one's gender is a socially constructed experience grounded in socialization and reinforced through interpersonal relations, social institutions, and cultural norms and values. Far from being our "natural" biological programming as human beings, sexuality and gender is a social act or performance and changes throughout history and across cultures. What is viewed as "natural", "normal" and innate is socially produced, reproduced, and constructed. A critical examination of sexuality and gender through the frameworks of critical, feminist and queer theory reveals much about the distribution of power and privilege within a society. Through readings, activities and assignments, students will develop tools to critically analyze how social and cultural forces shape us as gendered and sexualized individuals in the context of the world in which we live. Through a critical lens we will analyze the ways that the construction of gender, sex, biology, race, class, nationality, power, politics, and social movements intersect to influence our understanding of sexuality, gender and their culture context. This course will 'queer' your understanding of what is natural, normal, biological, and innate.

### **Core Texts:**

\*Articles as assigned

### **Course Assignments:**

1. For each of our readings, write a 1 - 2 page summary that covers the main points of the article. In addition, write a response that voices your thoughts, experiences, and connections you may have to the material.
2. Following each documentary seen in class, a brief 2 -3 page response.
3. Organize and plan the Drag Show
4. Final synthesis paper: 10 - 15 page critical reflection paper that integrates course topics and concepts, incorporate at least 5 of our readings and/or documentaries, 2 - 3 pages devoted to your own process and exploration of lived experience, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
5. Final Summary Letter & Self-Evaluation.

### ***Course Contracts***

A class contract is an agreement between student and instructor. As such, your contract should precisely reflect your goals and objectives. Be specific about what you wish to accomplish and how. In the spirit of self-direction, you will be the primary monitor of your own progress in fulfilling the terms of your contract. Course evaluations will be based upon your summary letter,

review of your written work, your presentation, class participation, overall contribution to the learning environment, final student evaluation, and grade, if you choose to receive one.

***Final Summary Letter:*** The summary letter is a 2-3 page synthesis (maximum) that addresses what you have learned, how well you fulfilled the terms of your contract, and what you would have done differently to enhance your learning. ***Assess what grade you think you earned in the class, and why. This letter is due on the last day of class.***

### ***Drag Show***

The Drag Show will be held at the end of the course. All students are expected to actively participate in organizing, planning, advertising and performing in this event. Your level of commitment to and involvement in this event will count heavily toward your final grade/evaluation. The Drag show is intended to be an educational scripted and well rehearsed performance for the whole community to raise awareness about the topic covered in the course and the personal/educational experiences of the students.

(This can be adapted to explain the drag show and may even be the communities first!)

### ***Academic Integrity***

Academic work is evaluated on the assumption that the work presented is the student's own, unless designated otherwise. Anything less is unacceptable and is considered academically dishonest. *Plagiarism* is defined as submitting academic work for credit that includes material copied or paraphrased from published or unpublished works *without* documentation.

### ***Instructors' Expectations:***

- Come to class prepared to participate in discussions and exercises.
- Papers **must** be turned in on the due date. ***No late papers will be accepted unless prior permission from the instructor has been obtained.***
- Come to class with an openness to learn and be challenged.
- Try on new ideas and behaviors.
- More than 1 absence may result in a NC (No Credit) for the course.
- Treat others respectfully.
- Talk with instructors about class-related concerns or problems.
- Enjoy the class!

***Portfolios are required in this class and must be handed in with your final paper at the culmination of the course.***

## Syllabus Agreement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the syllabus for this course and agree  
(Print your name)  
to abide by the provisions set forth in it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If you are submitting a course contract, please attach this form to your contract.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1:

*"Night to his day" the social construction of gender* by Judith Lorber

*Gender and genitals: constructs of sex and gender* by Ruth Hubbard

Watch: Before Stonewall

Activity: Breaking out of The Binary X2

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

### Week 2:

*The History of Sexuality* by Michel Foucault

*The Invention of Heterosexuality* by Jonathan Ned Katz

Watch: After Stonewall

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

### Week 3:

*The social construction of sexuality* by Steven Seidman

*The social justice advocates handbook: A guide to gender* by Sam Killerman

Watch: Breaking Through: The struggle for equality in the Nations Capital

Or Pornography: The Secret History of Civilization

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

### Week 4:

*Odd girls and twilight lovers: A history of lesbian life in twentieth century America* by Lillia Faderman

*The Heterosexual Imaginary: Feminist Sociology and Theories of Gender* by Chrys Ingraham

*Gender Trouble* by Judith Butler

Watch: Pariah

Activity: The Gender Bread Person: Making your gender identity

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

### Week 5:

*Black Girl Dangerous: on race, queerness, class and gender* by Mia McKenzie

*Heteropatriarchy and the three pillars of white supremacy* by Andrea Smith

Watch: Paris is Burning

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 6:

*Transgender history* by Susan Stryker

Watch: Screaming Queens: the riots at Compton's cafeteria

Mid-Course Letter Reflection/Response

## Week 7:

*Straight Expectations* by Julie Bindel

Watch: A Drag King Extravaganza

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 8:

*Thinking Queer: sexuality, culture, and education* by Susan Talburt & Shirley R. Steinburg

*Excluded: Making feminist and queer movements more inclusive* by Julia Serano

Watch: The Laramie Project: The Mathew Shepherd story

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 9:

*Gender Failure* by Ivan E. Coyote & Rae Spoon

*Genderqueer: and other gender identities* by Dave Naz

Watch: How to Survive a Plague or We Were Here: The AIDS years in San Francisco

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 10:

*Difference troubles: Queering social theory and sexual politics* by Steven Seidman

Watch: Campaign of Hate: Russia and Gay Propaganda or For The Bible Tells Me So  
Plan for the Drag Show!

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 11:

*Intimacies: A new world of relational life* by Alan Frank, Patricia T. Clough, Steven Seidman

Watch: Call me Kuchu

Activity: Breaking Out of The Binary X2 (lets see how things have changed!)

Plan for the Drag Show!

Week Reflection/Response Due Friday by 5pm

## Week 12:

*The human rights watch world report for 2013 and 2014*

*Normal life: Administrative violence, critical trans politics, and the limits of the law* by Dean Spade

Watch: Break Through (2014)  
Final Paper Due  
Plan for the Drag Show!

***Drag Show!!!!***

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