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QUEERING EDUCATION FROM THE GROUND UP: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATORS

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> Queer knowledges can proffer a location where identities grow. They enable learners to challenge heterosexualizing discourses and heteronormative ways of being, doing, becoming, and belonging. In doing so they situate queer performance as an alternative pedagogy that often forms new directions for personal development as it cuts across themes of postmodernity such as diversity, identity, representation, audience, textuality, body image/consciousness, and self-definition… They open paths to educational pedagogies that are democratic, unsettling and unsettled, dynamic, inclusive, transgressive, and perhaps most importantly, transformative. (Grace, 2004, p.2)

In North America, there is a small contingent of community educators teaching Working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans- Youth (LGBT) who face challenges in implementing Queer pedagogy within educational curriculum (CAS of Toronto; 2003; CWLA, 2004; Paoletti, 2004). While community educators have the ability to reach a wide audience of front-line social agents, little work has been done to systematically identify pedagogical approaches and practices used by community educators, especially

discussions around incorporating Queer Theory into curriculums and activities. Britzman (1995) and Kopelson (2002) discussed ways to bring Queer Theory to the public through education by developing frameworks based on theory and elucidating challenges faced in academic educational practice. This paper asks, "Are there similar challenges in implementing Queer Pedagogy to classroom participants between academic and community educators, and if so, are there areas where cross-sectoral strategizing could improve the development of Queer Pedagogy?" Using the frameworks developed by academic educators for creating a Queer approach to education, this paper will deconstruct and critique the approaches and activities used in a community educational model to examine challenges in creating transformational change within adult education in a community setting; the challenges exposed through the analysis of the community model will be paired with similar challenges noted by academic educators to evidence areas of potential collaboration between community and academic educators to overcome barriers within our specific educational contexts.

Methodology

I began this research when I started my role as Coordinator of the Services at the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans- (LGBT) Youth Program at the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. The training of social workers, foster parents, and administrative and residential staff to ensure that agency practice is discrimination-free for clients is a central component of the program. However, based on my experiences in the agency, it appeared that the model increased tolerance, rather than creating changes in our classroom participants values and understandings about the social nature of identity formation and their locations of power as workers. As a program, we are challenged to

achieve many of the outcomes we would like to achieve with our classroom participants such as, increased self-awareness regarding identities and values, increased social analysis of identities/privilege, increased ability to understand links and intersections between systems of oppression such as racism, classism, ableism, trans-phobia, and ageism, as well as increase our classroom participant's abilities to understand how practice stems from their own unique matrix of identities, values and beliefs. When my co-coordinator and I attempted to address these issues within our educational practice, we discovered barriers that limited our ability to create an improved approach. I began seeking data to increase my knowledge of promising practices by other adult educators, and to locate existing communities of educators working toward similar goals.

Initially, I searched academic databases for articles written on the topic of adult education and Queer Pedagogy and found little evidence in mainstream educational literature of the contributions made by community educators to the development of Queer Pedagogy. Literature searches in educational and social science databases such as ERIC and Social Work Abstracts revealed that this discussion has largely been held between academic educators. In some cases, the data suggested a need for collaborative and systemic approaches to successfully creating transformational change. [1] However, none of the data elucidated challenges faced in non-academic educational contexts, thus showing a gap in knowledge that could potentially provide useful cross-sectoral discussions and strategic opportunities between educators.

The literature on Queer Theory as it relates to pedagogy showed little evidence of incorporating approaches grounded in "Quare" or Queer of Colour theories that incorporate trans-cultural, racial and class-based knowledge to expand the preview of

Queer theory (Anzaldua, 1999; Elder, 1999; Ferguson, 2004; Lee, 2003). The authors, who discussed race and class analysis as part of their Queer Pedagogical approach, appeared to view Queer theory as flexible and therefore able to account for multiple dimensions of an individual's set of identities (Brown, 2000; Elder, 1999). Further, within the community of Queer educators, inclusion of traditionally marginalized identities such as race, class, religion, and ability are considered central to understanding identities and social relations, but integrating this knowledge into community education is challenging because while a Queer analysis seems well understood, a Queer Pedagogical/Queer of Colour/class/ability Pedagogical approach has not been formally discussed between educators. Further research on community-based understandings around developing Queer of Colour approaches to pedagogical practices is an excellent direction for queer educators.

I selected, as much as possible, literature that spoke to Canadian experiences (Britzman, 1995; Grace 2004; Sumara, 2001); as well, I attempted to select authors and perspectives that utilized Queer Theory in ways that facilitated a greater understanding of various subject locations and analysis of power with regard to identities (Anzaldua, 1999; Brown, 2000; Elder, 1999; Ferguson, 2004; Lee, 2003; Spurlin, 2003). I used these perspectives to frame the critique and analysis of the Children's Aid Society of Toronto (CAS of Toronto) approach and practice. I also used the information to evidence potential sites of shared challenge in bringing Queer Theory to the public (Kopelson, 2002, p. 151). In the following sections, I will highlight the work of the academic authors who developed ideas about creating a Queer Pedagogical framework for education. I will then use those ideas to deconstruct and critically analyze the anti-homophobia curriculum used

by the CAS of Toronto called "Working with LGBT Youth" to expose promising practices and challenges toward creating a transformative pedagogical approach. Finally, when the challenges of the community model are exposed, I will discuss shared challenges faced by academic and community educators to highlight key areas of potential collaboration.

Framework for Queer Pedagogy

In her book, *Gender Trouble*, Butler (1999) used this knowledge and proposed that historical and anthropological positions provided more accurate depictions of gender by constructing it as a relational concept among socially constituted subjects in specifiable contexts. She also coined the term performativity to describe the fundamental lack of substance beneath an individual's *acts* or *presentation* of gender (Kopelson, 2002, p. 19). Butler highlights how gender identities and particular sexual practices can be influenced by the impact of cultural privileging and disciplining; she views gender identities as performative based on the specific self-formation process of each subject.

Following from this analysis, adult educator Eve Kofosky-Sedgwick (1991) developed Butler's notion of performativity and its use as a means of textual analysis and pedagogy. The works of Butler and Kofosky-Sedgwick exposed the moral Puritanism and moralistic policing between individuals that often resulted from the rigid, politically correct norms demanded in identity theory. Kofosky-Sedgwick (2004) defines Queer as:

> …The word Queer itself means across- it comes from the Indo-European root –twerkw, which also yields the German Queer (transverse), Latin torquere (to twist) and English athwart (p. 4)

In the course syllabus materials noted above, she provides students with an extended narrative that speaks to a definition of Queer Theory that does not allow the ease of understanding offered by a reductionist definition. This approach of avoiding ‘ready made’ labels and understandings requires students to adopt a self-conscious, investigative stance toward the course content in order to regain their equilibrium and understanding. Kofosky-Sedgwick provides educators with detailed information about her Queer Pedagogical approach in teaching Queer Theory.

Queer Theory is also understood using a critical perspective within Queer Education. Habermassian Queer Theorists hold an optimistic view of civil society and potential for institutional and social change through public participation. In *Homo-Narcissm; or Heterosexuality* Warner (1990) introduced the idea that the common sense of social institutions has an impact on sexual/gender subject formation (Brown, 2000, n.p). Warner further developed his ideas in, *Fear of a Queer Planet* (1990) in which he proposed the idea of heteronormivity that represents the way in which heterosexual has become a normative category against which all other subject positions are identified and judged (Warner quoted in Brown, 2000, n.p.). This perspective allows for a measure of stability between differential social relations because of its focus on collective knowledge formation and shared social action in efforts to create social change.

Queer Pedagogy

Many academics view Queer Theory as a tool for framing educational approaches and practices known as Queer Pedagogy (Britzman, 1995; Britzman, 1998; Brown, 2000; Butler, 1990; Elder, 1999; Kofosky-Sedgwick, 2004; Kopelson, 2002; Sumara, 2001). Britzman (1995) defines Queer Theory as a method of imagining difference on its own

terms, a way to anticipate the precariousness of the signified and an attempt to move away from individualizing analysis to provide a perspective capable of demarking the repetitions of normalcy as a cultural structure; she sees Queer Theory a method to develop pedagogical techniques. While Britzman discusses her theoretical approach to Queer Pedagogy, she fails to outline the specific practices she uses in the classroom which limits the analysis of possible barriers faced by this author in implementing Queer Pedagogy. Britzman understands Queer Theory as implicitly based on actions. This perspective was a key aspect of her proposal to develop a Queer Pedagogy focusing on three main objectives, 1) The Study of Limits, 2) The Study of Ignorance, and 3) The Study of Reading Practices (Britzman, 1995, p.155). In each of these categories, Britzman critiques existing educational techniques and offers objectives that are designed to achieve the educational opportunities offered by Queer Theory.

Within the Study of Limits, Britzman discusses the limits to identity-based pedagogical approaches and provides two corresponding objectives for educators. These are to work on the ability to recognize other through self-recognition and work on proliferating identities within the classroom (Britzman, 1995, p. 158). She discusses the limits of inclusion-based approaches that use information-sharing combined with efforts to create attitudinal change by uncovering true images of LGBT people. The inclusion-based approaches create tolerance and position classroom participants as innocent bystanders, to the social oppression experienced by non-normative sexual and gender identities rather than finding avenues that allow for transformational change by safely implicating them within systems of privilege. Britzman encourages educators to develop strategic ways to ensure students understand and acknowledge the margins between the

claims of truth and the claims of textuality (Britzman, 1995, p. 162). In doing so, Britzman's approach allows students to understand the links between identity, beliefs, and actions. As such, Queer Pedagogy asks educators and students to examine their identities in social and relational ways.

Kopelson (2002) emphasizes Butler's notion of Peformativity in her definition of Queer Pedagogy by combining the concepts of Queer and Performative Theories. Her definition challenges readers resist ready-made labels like Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) as a means of agitating our terms of understanding. This definition allows for a focused approach to developing Queer Pedagogy because it frames the classroom discourse on the interconnected themes of identity, cultural norms, and governmentality. Kopelson focused on developing pedagogical approaches for the classroom that would increase a Queer Positive environment for all students, especially those from marginalized sexual identities. By examining the issues facing sexually marginalized students and teachers, Kopelson argues that pedagogy may be the link to facilitate the public relevance of Queer Theory.

Brown (2000) presented The Narcissism of the Public Sphere to the Modern Language Association's (MLA) Convention using a Habermassian model of Queer Theory. This approach facilitates student understanding of the sociology of texts and histories and allows for discussion of knowledge as an artifact rather than as a universal truth. Using the classroom as the initial practice space for discussions around differences, beliefs and actions, students become prepared for collective work in practice. These discussions become the connective elements in communicative action. Brown explains that Queer Theory seeks to witness non-normative identities and practices as a central

feature of humanizing public life; he proposes the need to reshape curricula and classroom dynamics by collectively developing understandings of published educational texts as part of mass media. These texts then can be used to highlight how mass publications are not tailored to speak-to unique identities and experiences of students; as such, they are inappropriate tools for connecting with individuals and do not allow for a true understanding of experiences.

Both Sumara (2001) and Spurlin (2002) use a combination of Post-Structuralist and Habermassian influences in their work. Sumara sees the value of incorporating the strengths of both perspectives on Queer Theory by defining it as an approach. He says, Fundamental to all definitions of Queer Theory is an emphasis on developing critical knowledge of heterosexism and heteronormativity (Sumara, 2000). Sumara incorporates Warner’s ideas while emphasizing the usefulness of the concept of performativity as a tool for understanding and analyzing the effects of heteronormivity in society and in the classroom. Spurlin (2002) incorporates a civic-minded understanding of Queer Theory. He recognizes as one of the primary objectives of Queer Pedagogy its role in creating social change by allowing more participatory spheres of public deliberation. He views Queer Pedagogy as a way to provide students with the tools they need to participate in shaping and transforming their societies.

Community Education and Queer Theory

In addition to maintaining a series of agencies policies regarding human sexuality, sexual diversity and same-sex fostering and adoption policies, the CAS of Toronto also offers mandatory Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination training for all agency staff. In the early 1990’s, the CAS of Toronto was one of the first child welfare agencies in North

America to identify and openly support the need to consciously address the issue of homophobic service provision as an organizational barrier to equitable service delivery. In order to create this organizational change, the agency established 3 policies to support 1) same-sex fostering, 2) same-sex adoptions and 3) accessible services for LGBT youth.

In 1996, CAS of Toronto chose to hire staff to develop and deliver a program to assist in the implementation the accessible services policy for LGBT youth; a major component of the overall implementation strategy was training to front line social workers. The curriculum and activities were developed by a core group of LGBT community workers/advocates using research of best practices and incorporation of their existing knowledge. Representatives from CAS of Toronto, Central Toronto Youth Services and Planned Parenthood were key partners in this process of research and development, according to particular community workers who were involved. [2] Each educator adapted the activities to suit their own knowledge and beliefs; however, there is ongoing sharing of knowledge between educators that impact on the individual delivery of each curriculum. Since its development, the training or many of its components are used to train front-line workers in community and policing organizations across the City of Toronto and Ontario.

According to a training information sheet, the CAS of Toronto curriculum is based on the values of anti-oppression, non-judgementalism, pro-diversity, cultural competence, assumption of competence in children and youth (CAS of Toronto, 2003). The values are used to create an environment that will sensitize workers to LGBT identities and issues and to increase their capacity to successfully intervene with youth developing their sexual and gender identities. Further, the values frame the activities that

are designed to allow a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere for classroom participants to engage with the course content.

The values noted exemplify concepts that are “works in process” for many mainstream child welfare organizations who have been critiqued for their role in systemic oppression of many including racial and sexual minorities and the poor (Swift, 1995); many of these organizations, CAS of Toronto included, are taking steps to incorporate these types of values into the structures of their organizations, and as such, the meanings stand in a state of flux between their theoretical/philosophical roots and the ways they are actually incorporated into practice in a mainstream context.

The CAS of Toronto curriculum incorporates a mix of presentation styles, group discussion, and interactive activities designed to increase worker comfort and competence in creating an “anti-oppressive, anti-heterosexist environment for everyone … including a celebration of the broad diversity of sex and sexuality” (CAS of Toronto, 2003, p.2). The curriculum has three general components including orientation, sensitization, and practice strategies that achieve the objectives to a certain extent.

The orientation component of the training includes a popular education tool called LGBT Bingo that increases participants’ comfort levels with their peers and exposes them to LGBT cultural and historic icons. Participants are asked to locate other individuals in the classroom to complete a series of trivia questions. When someone completes the required number of questions, the group reviews and discusses the answers to each of the questions. This exercise challenges the heteronormative invisibility of Queer history. It uses what Hill (1996) calls “fugitive knowledges” as an integral part of exposing marginalized historical and cultural data. Fugitive knowledges are ways of

knowing that have escaped the control of those who authorize and make legitimate the dominant heteronormative discourse. By offering a location where fugitive knowledges can be shared with classroom participants, this exercise offers a location to include data on previously invisible or marginalized histories of Transsexual, Transgender, Queer of Colour, and class-based struggles. The invisible histories include those of queer persons/queerness and studies of queer culture that are used to confront heterosexualizing pedagogy (Grace, 2004). Grace writes,

> Queer knowledge producers are concerned with defending our interests and rights, and becoming political through a process of conscientization, rebellion, and resistance; we write a pedagogy of transgressive action. Thus fugitive knowledges transgress heteronormalized cultural life; they emphasize what queer life really feels like. (p.2)

The LGBT Bingo activity is followed by an exercise to explore definitions related to sexuality and gender. The CAS of Toronto's training information sheet demonstrates elements of a Queered approach with regard to this exercise when it states that the facilitator will,

> … explore with the group the difference between orientation, self-identity, behaviour and lifestyle, [and that] this way of looking at sexuality is…more difficult to grasp than the more traditional ways which have been used in the past. It is more accurate and respectful, so this difficulty is an opportunity to grow and learn and challenge ourselves (CAS of Toronto, 2003, p.3).

In the delivery of the exercise, however, this exercise uses approaches that combine both Queer and Identity Theory. Implemented as an interactive group activity, the facilitator asks participants to describe their understanding of terms such as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, sex, gender, transsexual, transgender, and sexual and gender orientation. Within a purely Queer framework, definitions would be designed to allow identities to proliferate, and to ensure classroom participants gained the basic tools for understanding performativity, the social nature of privileging/knowledge (Britzman, 1995; Britzman, 1998; Brown, 2000; Butler, 1990; Elder, 1999; Kofosky-Sedgwick, 2004; Kopelson, 2002; Sumara, 2001). In contrast, the CAS of Toronto uses an identity theory approach and begins the definitions exercise using knowledge derived from the heteronorm which employs binaries as ways of understanding and in doing so, also assigns opposing values to each component of a dualism.

Further, the identity-based approach ignores the multiple components constitutive of an individual identity that are central in understanding experiences of sexual or gender performance such as the differential impacts of ability, class-based and racial identities that exist in the public sphere (Anzaldua, 1999; Brown, 2000; Elder, 1999; Ferguson, 2004; Lee, 2003; Spurlin, 2003). However, later in the definitions exercise, when defining transsexual and transgender, the CAS of Toronto educators incorporate a more Queer-friendly perspective that breaks down traditional binaries suggested by other ‘fixed identity’ categories. The facilitator guides participants to understand these identities as unique and transversive of socially constructed sexual and gender norms and, therefore, subject to definition by the subject themselves. One of the dangers of utilizing a Queer approach at this juncture is that it may inadvertently construct particular identities as

especially non-normative compared to the LGB identities which were presented as stable and coherent with the identity theory based approach; however, the facilitators take steps within the discussion to normalize these identities by using the trans- identities as a means of illustrating the fluidity of identities in all categories previously discussed. This aspect of the approach is consistent with Butler's notion that sexual orientation/performance/desire are more free flowing and neither stable nor causal (Butler, 2004).

Some community educators adopted an approach of incorporating a social context analysis before working on definitions (CWLA, 2004; Paoletti, 2004). They acknowledge the subjective meaning of these terms and reject the essentializing, sorting, arranging, organizing, and systematizing of labeled identities that define sexual identities in reference to the heteronorm. This approach by community educators is consistent with the Queer approaches outlined by academic authors because it starts with the classroom participant's conventional label based knowledge, then engages them in a process of deconstructing that same knowledge; this method highlights the complexities and contradictions located within the construction of individual identities and diminishes the binary thinking that constructed the moral hierarchies within identity theory. It also provides an opportunity to allow students to begin learning about others by learning themselves in context of the concepts provided, then deconstructed.

Following the definitions exercise, classroom participants are sensitized to the social impacts of identity self-formation in the context of homophobia through the Names, Stereotypes, Causes exercise. Participants are divided into groups of three. Each group is assigned the responsibility of generating a list of normative/pejorative "Names",

"Stereotypes", or "Causes" they have heard in reference to LGBT people. When the lists are complete, the facilitator draws a circle in the middle of a flipchart paper and identifies the circle as representative of a LGBT person. A representative from each group reads the list created regarding the Names, Stereotypes, and Causes, and the facilitator notes the answers around the circle so it looks like a "Porcupine". When the Porcupine pictograph is complete a list of disciplinary descriptions are displayed to the group. The facilitator asks the group to imagine they are an 11-year-old child who wants to be accepted, but is having feelings about a same-sex friend and realizes they are the outcast denoted in the pejorative list of names, stereotypes and causes. The group is asked how they might feel and react in this situation.

This exercise is effective in giving participants insight into the pervasiveness of negative stereotypes and how they are used to regulate gendered and sexual identities and behaviour. Further, the facilitators guide the discussion to include the impacts of other oppressions such as ability, race or class in order to elucidate the multiple and differential impacts a child may experience when coming to terms with their sexual or gender orientation. Drawing from the "cultural competence" model, this approach includes other forms of oppression, but ultimately elicits feelings of "sympathy" and "tolerance" for the fictional youth, while positioning the classroom participants as innocent bystanders to the heterosexism. Instead of addressing the normative understandings in the participants themselves, the Names, Stereotypes, Causes stimulated empathy for the persecuted minority and provoke the normative folks to welcome the diversity of others (Britzman, 1995, p. 159). While this is a helpful tool to raise participants' consciousness of the impact of normative views of sexual identities, it does not take participants to the next

level of self-understanding. Because the exercise does not provide a framework in which participants can identify themselves in the systems of oppression, it can valorize tolerant attitudes, while failing to create the new understanding of knowledge and self required for transformational change.

The final component of the training involves placing participants into small groups to work on practice strategies. Participants are asked to either discuss a dilemma they have experienced in the course of their practice or to select a scripted example. Each group is asked to develop a plan of intervention. When the groups complete the activity, they share the scenario and the solutions they developed with the larger group. Participants are encouraged to discuss dilemmas and approaches to situations that may arise in their fields of practice. Participants particularly enjoy this activity and it can be a useful way to determine the level of knowledge accumulated during the course. It can also provide workers with feelings of confidence in dealing with sexual diversity. However, it is important to caution that without an examination of identities and heterosexist social advantage (as well as other advantaging identities), participants may not understand how advantaged identities can be used both to benefit clients and to put them at a disadvantage

Within the limitations of the time allotted to these exercises, the educators incorporate several steps to facilitate incremental change by engaging students in discussions of how they would support a queer youth, how they would address homophobia in their work place, as well as challenging heterosexist assumptions, language and practices. As well, when discussing risks, needs outcomes for LGBT youth, detailed discussion about the impacts of race, ability and class are included as part of the

learning around working with LGBT youth. Further, program staff is working with the CAS of Toronto Evaluation Team to develop methods of measuring the attitudinal and behaviour change impact the training has on workers in order to improve the model. A Queer approach would ask workers to develop practice strategies/analyses showing evidence of an awareness of their identities and an open acknowledgement of power to clients. By incorporating Queer Theory, workers can gain an increased understanding of identities as fluid and influenced by context. In doing so, workers can understand practice strategies as being based on curiosity rather than expertise, thus ameliorating to some extent the effects of the power imbalance created in the socially privileged identities between worker and client.

Challenges and Opportunities for Educators

The works of academic educators reviewed in this paper expose two main uses for Queer Theory. The first is to use Queer Theory as a tool for deconstruction, primarily for teaching students a method of textual and socio-cultural analysis to understand identities and intersections of power, beliefs, and choices. This first use allows for the inclusion of Queer of Colour analysis or the culturally sensitive Quare approach. (Ferguson, 2004; Lee, 2003) The second is to use Queer Theory as a tool for teaching students about LGBT/sexuality/gender/orientation and marginalized identities. While academic educators appeared to focus primarily on developing a Queer Pedagogical framework and discussion of challenges facing Queer educators, there was little discussion of classroom practices. Within community classrooms Queer educators developed extremely promising practices and ways of developing transformational pedagogical techniques.

While educators in both contexts have unique strengths and barriers, they share some key challenges. Educators have emphasized that they need organizational support for the additional time required to develop improved techniques and require more facilitation time with students. (Draughn, 2002; Garber, 2002; Liddle & Stowe, 2002; Paoletti, 2004) Many educators alluded to a sense of lip-service by administrators evidenced by the demonstrated need for more time to ensure transformative change in classroom participants. (Elder, 1999; Kopelson, 2002; Paoletti, 2004; Spurlin, 2002). Compounding issues challenging administrator's ability to support increased time for implementing new models include, increasing service demands, limited resources for developing training and proliferation of fee-for service education competing for student's time, Britzman (1995) discusses the organizational structures of disavowal within education. Educators cited in this review highlight the challenges they face in making choices about how much time to invest in developing and teaching students Queer Theory both as a tool of analysis and for understanding systems of privilege and oppression within the context of required course content.

One of these challenges is the limited class time available to educators. This reality may lead educators to support the more generalist approaches because they allow for the building of tactical/situational interventions inclusivity and empathy within a limited time frame. The empathy strategy, despite the limitations previously noted, allows incremental change in classroom participants. It is a useful starting point and may be a non-threatening way to later introduce more challenging types of knowledge given further classroom exposure. Often what are considered palatable, and therefore acceptable pedagogical approaches, are those that valourize workers and the organization

as heroes for being knowledgeable, accommodating, and inclusively tolerant of the marginalized LGBT youth. Britzman (1995) states,

> Pedagogies of inclusion do not facilitate the proliferation of identifications necessary to rethinking knowledge and identity. Inclusive pedagogies can actually reproduce new forms of heterosexism if the only subject positions offered are the 'tolerant normal' or the 'tolerated subaltern' (p.160).

While in some cases, this may be the case, educators in all cases noted in this work took steps within the constraints of existing barriers to ameliorate the negative limitations within traditional models. Draughn, Becki and Rakhi (2002) discuss effective methods of creating transformational change in heteronormative students. However, the excellent practical information provided indicated that at the root of success, is the need for ongoing contact with classroom participants. Liddle and Stowe (2002) discuss the transformational outcomes rendered by combining information-based models such as the CAS of Toronto's model with follow-up workshops designed to assist workers in processing the information provided to facilitate the process of self-implication in systems of heterosexism. By doing so, the set of training creates opportunities for educators to begin more complex and realistic discussions of social analysis around sexual oppression, and how that impacts on worker practice.

Many community models imply the issue of identity and educator's role in normative power relations (CAS of Toronto, 2004; Paoletti, 2004; CWLA, 2004). While adapting this approach might be useful in creating a context for student learning, most workers face organizational constraints that impact on their ability to re-shape curriculum

from information-based to transformational models. Improving Queer approaches to pedagogy requires significant time for research and development not generally available to community educators. Because many community organizations face systemic barriers to raising funds to support educational programs, an additional barrier challenges the successful development of Queer approaches and practices. While this means innovative projects are plausible, it also means there is less time dedicated to ongoing practices and the development of material. Project funding is used to cover salaries for both program delivery and project development. Given the amount of time needed to develop innovative and organizationally acceptable proposals and to meet the ongoing reporting requirements of funders, there is virtually no time to discuss and incorporate new approaches.

The lack of organizational support creates tension for educators who must attempt to balance required course content and providing students with the analysis and insights offered by Queer Theory (Britzman, 1995; Elder, 1999; Kopelson, 2002; Paoletti, 2004; Spurlin, 2002). Educators cited a need to take a series of pedagogical steps to facilitate students' understanding of the two (somewhat distinct) potential uses for Queer Theory in order to initiate a process of transformational change. Many of the educators indicated a need for students to undergo experiential learning about how to deconstruct normative power structures within the classroom as an initial step in learning to analyse power as it relates to contextual identities such as teacher and student (Elder, 1999; Spurlin, 2002; Sumara, 2001). As a part of this step, Queer educators often out themselves as non-heterosexual in the process of implicating themselves in classroom dynamics. However, when not adequately supported to have the time to teach and develop effective

techniques, the educator appears to be labeled as different and criticized for sexing the classroom which may create a positive model for (Queer) students. However, it can also detract from the student's learning about how to use Queer Theory as a tool of analysis, and marginalize the educator and the classroom in which Queer Theory is taught because student perception that the Queer teacher is simply promoting their own agenda (Elder, 1999; Kopelson, 2002). Queer educators are further challenged on an organizational level because Queer Theory can be perceived less of a tool of analysis regarding social relations and more of an integral part of expanding a Queer Agenda; thus the disavowal to provide adequate curricular time to educators, can inadvertently re-enforce the marginalization of Queer Educators and the suppression of new forms of knowledge and practice.

Further, organizational disavowal plays a role in reproducing the dominant discourses of power that suggest the Queer approach is only relevant in classes taught by Queer educators. The fact that Queer Theory is not taught or supported in meaningful ways by administrators or other colleagues outside the classroom gives further credence to the notion that Queer theory is only relevant to Queer issues to classroom participants. However, community education is grounded in the notion that nobody is alone, and that by working as a group, new knowledges and powers can persist and succeed in changing structures. Many authors cite the pivotal importance of developing organizational support in successfully bringing emancipatory education to classrooms. (Messinger, 2002; Liddle and Stowe, 2002; Draughn, Elkins and Roy, 2002; Garber, 2002). I would add that a key component in developing effective strategies to overcome organizational, personal and classroom barriers, Queer educators need to develop ongoing through a combination of

collective action and academic discourse. Both community and academic educators bring unique strengths to these discussions that provides room for fruitful discussions of overcoming barriers experienced.

Conclusion

The intent of this examination of Queer educational approaches and practices was to examine CAS of Toronto's Working with LGBT Youth training in order to identify barriers in creating a curriculum that has transformational outcomes for classroom participants, as well as to propose increased cooperation among Queer-positive educators. By reviewing existing knowledge and practice developed in academic and community-based classrooms, I discovered that many educators in community and academic environments have successfully developed works-in-process as well as identified barriers at the organizational and classroom levels that block the improvement and implementation of Queer Pedagogical approaches/practices.

Challenges that emerged at the organizational and classroom levels included resistance to theories that implicate students and teachers in systems of oppression. As well, many Queer educators appeared to be solely responsible for teaching Queer Theory seemed to increase their level of exhaustion and anxiety at being labeled the Queer teacher and potentially pushing a personal agenda in the classroom. In all cases, the need for space and time for students to effectively learn how to understand their identities, power, and beliefs as they relate to social and cultural norms was identified, but not resolved. Ensuring that students value the perspectives presented within the classroom requires overt support by non-Queer staff and administrators within the organizational culture to ensure that Queer educators are legitimized to students and to ensure that

educators have the time and resources to develop and improve techniques. An analysis of academic practices by community educators would be an interesting next step in the discussion. Foucault (1997) noted the dangers of promoting new types of knowledge, and emphasized the need for strategically planned action in order to create transformational social change. Collectively, Queer educators can create excellent opportunities for social change by working together to create organizational change and educational practices that will facilitate social change.

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[2] Personal communications with Lorraine Gale of Services for LGBT Youth at CAS of Toronto and Joanne Bacon formerly of Planned Parenthood of Toronto.