

QUEER / FEMINIST PEDAGOGIES

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INTRODUCTION

- Feminist and Queer theories in their relationship to education
- How to put it into practice in the classroom
- Putting it into practice
- Critiques



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- What is the potential here for you to adapt your own practice?
- What are the strengths/limitations of these ideas in education?



QUEER AND FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES CAN TRANSFORM....

- Attitude to the way things are taught
- Nurturing of relationships within the classroom
- The way in which we develop citizens of the world



FEMINIST THEORY

- Mainstreaming issues of gender
- Gendered social justice
- Challenges dominant power relations (patriarchy)



QUEER THEORY

- Queer theory is whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant (Halperin, 1995: 62)
- Emerges in relation to LGBT+ Activism
- Challenges hegemony of power relations (heteronormativity)
- Queer is at its most potent and its most subversive when conceptualised as a verb (something which I do) rather than as a noun (something which I am).



QUEER/FEMINIST GEOGRAPHY

- Bell and Valentine (1995) Mapping Desire
 - Specificities of LGBT experience in public space
 - LGBT leisure spaces (bars, clubs, bathhouses)
 - GPS-informed Hook-up apps (Grindr)
 - 'compulsory heterosexuality' in the workplace, at school, within medical discourses
- Gendered implications of work policies, security discourses, migration data
- Opens up analyses of colonialism, critical race theory, disability
- Colonial legacies of violence in knowledge production.



QUEER/FEMINIST IDEAS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Gender inequality and austerity politics
- Household units and how they exclude people in non-normative living arrangements
- Pro-natalist/pro-work national policies
- Health politics – HIV (San Fransisco), maternal care, access to services
- Mapping queer spaces
- Mapping surveillance tools in public spaces
- Gendered analysis of urban design and street furniture



WORLD VIEWS IN THE CLASSROOM

- Feminist and queer epistemologies (ways of thinking) can be used in the classroom beyond sexuality/gender issues
- Challenge to dominant forms of power
 - Hierarchy/Plurality
 - Construction of knowledge, even in hard science
 - Whose story prevails, whose is silenced
- Ethic of own comportment in the classroom
- Principles of reflexivity
- Positionality/Intersectionality of knowledge
- ‘World-Travelling’ and subjectivity



EXAMPLES

- Not just knowledge transfer
- Exploring, 'knowledgeable local guide' (Fox 1983)
- Ethic of sharing/discovering knowledge together
- Taking account of students own expectations (seeking feedback)
- Facilitate collaborative learning (project work, group work, research beyond the classroom)
- Non-hierarchical relationships in classroom
- Critical perspectives on taken for granted/common sense knowledge
- Designing assessments which have these principles



CRITIQUES

- Squeamishness
- Propaganda
- Complexity
- Resources



PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

- Think about what you teach. What concepts or ideas touch on feminist or queer topics? (that you do already, or that you could do)
- Think about the approach you take to teaching the subject. Is there anything in your practice that could be done more feministly or queerly? (that you do already or that you could do)
- Are there problems that you anticipate? Or concerns you would have about these approaches?



SUMMARY

- Queer and feminist approaches to teaching social sciences are about content and about approach
- Adopting queer and feminist approaches in teaching enables students to develop critical thinking skills, to challenge hegemonies of power and dominant ways of thinking and to think about themselves and their own practice
- Part of a political move towards a transformative education



EDUCATION CONTINUING THROUGH A LIFETIME, RESCUING PEOPLE AS CHILDREN FROM THE IMAGINATIVE HOLD OF THEIR FAMILIES, THEIR CLASS, THEIR COUNTRY AND THE THEIR TIME, AND GIVING THEM AS ADULTS ACCESS TO A REPERTORY OF GENERIC PRACTICAL AND CONCEPTUAL CAPACITIES, IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ENABLER OF FREEDOM (UNGER, 1998: 267)

