

Queering Art Teacher Education

21

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Abstract

This article sounds a call to action and addresses the challenges of creating inclusive, queer-affirming art teacher education curricula. We examine such challenges through case study vignettes of our varied US university settings and explore the perils of teaching in an increasingly queer-hostile culture. Strategies are given for avoiding attacks against LGBT-supportive pedagogy and championing the cause of social justice for queer students, parents, artists, teachers and faculty.

Introduction

Addressing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (lgbtq) concerns presents U.S. art teacher educators with a wide range of challenges. These can be particularly daunting for those, like us, who are queer. If our pre-service art teachers are to be prepared to equitably educate all students, we contend they must be introduced to lgbtq social justice struggles, the works and identities of queer cultural contributors, and the complexities of queering art education. Once prepared to critique those heteronormative demands imbedded in school policies, curricula and visual culture, and to develop lessons addressing queer content, they may be armed and readied to do battle in an ongoing U.S. culture war.

This essay addresses how queer concerns are integrated into our respective (under)graduate art teacher preparation programs. Examining the challenges of our varied U.S. settings, we will explore the challenges of teaching in an increasingly queer-hostile culture. After contextualizing our discussion by describing each of our university homes we will sound a queer-affirming call to action, and survey the parameters of the battles we wage for human rights. Through teaching case studies we will sketch out a few of our skirmishes, critically examining our varied tactics and those conservative movements aimed at stopping our work for social justice. We will then close by sharing strategies for avoiding attacks and resound our call for championing the cause of social justice for queer students, parents, artists, teachers and faculty.

Background

As co-Presidents of the Queer Issues Caucus of the National Art Education Association we are two of an increasing number of outspoken advocates in a very conservative professional organization. Our Caucus members are working toward queering art education, from pre-Kindergarten through graduate school. The group is now assembling a publication on gay-affirming pedagogical practices, compiling curriculum materials, and archiving visual resources on lgbtq artists' and artworks. The present paper explores the first wave of this multi-flanked attack – an essay aimed at inciting discourse about queer issues in teacher education.

We are both openly and unapologetically queer; tolerated by peers nationally, and warmly accepted within our respective institutions. While we both live in the Midwestern United States, we work in two dramatically different campus communities. Sanders teaches at The Ohio State University, the country's largest art education department, while Cosier is one of only two art educators at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. OSU's art education department is predominantly a graduate program enrolling a high percentage of international students and 125 pre-service licensure students from across the state. UWM, predominantly a commuter campus of traditional and older working-class students, offers an undergraduate licensure program in art education. Sanders' school is well endowed and provides a healthy travel budget, a research assistant, course development flexibility, and community partnership support. Cosier must secure grants to support research and outreach, and has minimal travel funds. Sanders teaches largely graduate courses in arts education policy and cultural studies, and is one of a dozen tenure-track hires and like number of adjuncts – a fifth of whom self-identify as lgbt/queer. A doctor/research II institution, UW-M's art education graduate program has been on hiatus due to staffing and budgetary constraints.

Perhaps because of isolation, Cosier feels vulnerable to the rising tide of animosity toward academia, and queer academics in particular. As one of the only art educators in her institution, Cosier's students cannot self-select out of her courses if they have any uneasiness with queer people or issues. Sanders' sense of vulnerability regards his doctoral/research I institution's publishing expectations – having entered academe after 26 years in nonprofit arts administration. He shares a skeptical reading of "the ivory tower," and also teaches courses required of most graduate students in his department – though most he finds recognize the importance of queer concerns.

While working in very different contexts, we share our fight for social justice – each venturing into uncharted territory as we call for discussion of queer arts curricula, theories and classroom praxis. In the following sections we challenge colleagues to grapple with the difficulties of queering the art

teacher education curriculum. Identifying the need for change, we survey the cultural battlefield, and then share our separate strategies for waging that war. We then close by resounding our call to action, and offering recommendations for those in the trenches that must fight this fight.

Call to action

To equitably serve all students, art teachers must consider matters of social justice and human rights, including histories and representations of those who are queer. While enrolled at very different institutions, our students share a yearning for *knowable and authoritatively definitive truths*. Whether those yearnings regard studio instruction, classroom management, theory, assessment, or teaching students with special needs, they want solutions and a refuge from uncertainty. Trusting that answers are held by outside authorities, they may resist the nebulousness of our queered pedagogy, fearing that which is unknown and seemingly *other*. As educators we must tell them that we can offer no assurances, especially when it comes to exact instructions on how to deal with gender and sexualities. Continually reminding them that notions of age-appropriateness, visual textual meaning, and curricular content are contested territories, we nevertheless insist they address queer notions and consider the realities of those who may (not) have been represented by accounts of traditional art historians and historically hetero-centric curriculum and arts discourses.

Each student comes to us with a particular set of experiences through which they construct philosophical and practical approaches to pedagogy. We feel it an ethical obligation to help them see that none of these is value-free or innocent. We challenge pre-service teachers to (re)consider how they actively participate in the creation of students' social understandings of race, class, gender and sexuality. Instructing them in how to explore visual culture's role in (homo)sexual (re)production, we aim to arm them to enter what may be a life-long struggle for human rights.

We seek to help students recognize and understand the impact of prejudice and social misunderstanding regarding gender identity and sexualities – providing them with strategies for confronting

and addressing pressures to conform to heteronormative school cultures. Acknowledging their difficulties in discussing sex within the presumably safe space of the academy is an important first step, but we must press our students to go even further. We challenge students and colleagues to first address their homophobic dis-ease and then accept responsibility for making schools safer spaces for all students. If they cannot, how will they ever be able to help students, fellow teachers, and administrators in K-12 settings recognize their role in creating hostile contexts where queer students must struggle to survive?

Surveying the battlefield

Sexuality or gender identity rank second, after appearance, as the most frequent reason students are victims of bullying and harassment in U.S. schools (Harris/GLSEN, 2005). Research for the Massachusetts Department of Education (1995) found that students who described themselves as gay, lesbian or bisexual were four times more likely to have attempted suicide, and five times more likely to miss school because of feeling unsafe, than other students. Statistics from the National Mental Health Association (<http://www.nmha.org>) and Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States (<http://www.siecus.org>) reveal that over 87% LGBT/Q youth report experiencing physical violence or verbal harassment at school, with 37% hearing these slurs from school faculty or staff. Queer youth are three times as likely as other students to drop out of school. Unlike members of other marginalized groups, queer youth may not even have the refuge of an understanding home culture – so where are they to turn? For many queer students, even one understanding teacher who is committed to social justice for all students can make all the difference (Cosier, 2001).

The alarming U.S. statistics above clearly implicate teacher educators. It is an educators' responsibility to ensure all students feel valued and safe in securing an education free from harm. Fighting for that safety is a moral obligation; and preparing new teachers to create safe environments may require (re)educating and (re)sensitizing ourselves and our colleagues to the concerns of those (un)recognized as a minority within our schools.

Educators must come to see that LGBT/Q students are not simply casualties of homophobic attacks. We must find ways to celebrate their resilience, creativity and courage (Cosier, 2005, Savin-Williams, 2005). It is important that we develop in our teaching ways of acknowledging queer kids' strengths and strategies for facing the dangers inherent in their lives, and to help our students see queer youth as multi-dimensional human beings.

As art educators we must be willing to purge the biases embedded in the teaching of art histories, criticism and technologies. By encouraging colleagues and pre-service educators to take on these challenges, we help them illustrate their sensitivity to LGBT/Q students' epistemologies, and 'unthink' (Britzman, 1998) social injustice. The dearth of queer data in text book annotations and labels on museum walls help rationalize mandatory heterosexuality by (un)intentionally editing out all things queer as 'inappropriate' or inconsequential. Acknowledging the (homo)sexuality of living and historic artists is thus important. An artist's identity and the social context in which the work was produced can inform student readings of a subject's gaze, and help them decode imbedded messages. Armed with alternate knowledge students are better able to decide how they might best enter the battle for human rights.

Acknowledging the existence of sexual difference, educators can challenge heteronormativity; that "world view in which the framework, points of reference and assumptions are all heterosexual" (Stychin & Herman 2001, p. 260). By confronting homophobia – the irrational fear or hatred of lesbians and gay men – educators may begin to resist conscription into compulsory heterosexuality. Art educators of all identifications and teaching at all levels may effectively combat injustice by creating curriculum and classroom conversations that acknowledge the value and importance of LGBT/Q artists, students, families and colleagues – those whose histories have seemingly been lost, and whose futures hang in the balance amidst rising anti-homosexual legislation in the U.S.

As students consider how sexual minority others are produced by chauvinist xenophobia, they may begin to think the un-thought of their majority privilege. Calling sexual majority students'

attention to their own unstated privilege and power might be one of the most important lessons they can be offered in school – redressing what J. William Fulbright has called our U.S. arrogance of power. Just as racism and misogyny are issues that must be borne by white men, heterosexism must be seen as a problem belonging to the straight majority. By disrupting silences surrounding gender, race, class and sexuality privileges, art educators may unleash new political possibilities and revolutionary social understandings for their students.

In "Why Discuss Sexuality In Elementary School?" Kathy Bickmore notes, "As a result of their own sense of students' prior knowledge and maturity, or in anticipation of parents' possible objections, teachers often manage class in ways that limit democratic foundations such as free expression and access to information" (1999, p.17). To combat such managerial censorship, professors in higher education can share strategies for introducing sexualities as a subject within the K-12 classroom – practices that might support pre-service educators in developing democratic spaces where freedom may flourish. Teacher educators can also share these strategies by presenting provocative performances of queer sexual theorizing for the classroom at (inter)national conferences.

Given the dearth of critically queer literature in US art education publications, it is of little wonder there are virulent National Art Education Association (NAEA) member reactions to its Queer Issues Caucus. While working hard, a seventy-member LGBT/Q special interest group alone cannot transform all the fields' heterosexist practices or ameliorate all members' queer fears. The group now reaches out to progressive peers who identify as heterosexual and bear their straight shields in fighting for lgbtq human rights. Working with their art education programs we may prepare more pre-service art teachers to address diverse student bodies, and contribute to the literature on anti-oppressive education – conditioning them for strenuous struggles for social change.

Sanders' classroom challenges

As a gay father and one who for years has worked with young children in schools and community-

based settings, I am poignantly aware of talk surrounding paedophilia and connotations of gay sexuality with communism, criminal behavior and disease. But as bell hooks (1989), Jim Keller (2002) and others note,

...the group most committed to portraying gay men as a menace to the social order is the same that is responsible for virtually all rape, assault, murder, theft, child abuse, spouse abuse, and war, yet no one suggests that heterosexual males are a threat to peace and should subsequently be deprived of their constitutional rights. (Keller, 2002, p. ix)

In teaching pre-service educators and working with graduate students in studying cultural policy, arts administration and museum education history I find myself having to consciously work at queering the course readings, exercises and assignments, given the scarcity of literature addressing LGBT/queer concerns. In the section that follow I will recount and reflect on the ways I have attempted to queer my curriculum and engage colleagues and students in unthinking heteronormative practice.

Deal a discourse

What's queer about assessment? I asked the group of 30 licensure students in my Assessment of Art Education course. I could hear the muttering beneath students' breath – was I imposing a homosexuality agenda on a class they saw as having little to do with queer concerns? I distributed eight or nine lessons from Cahan and Kocur's (1996) *Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education*, asking each group of students to read the lesson dealt them against the Ohio Arts Content Standards, and then design assessment tasks needed to determine that students had learned what was taught. Each group had to come to agreement on what grade(s) the lesson should serve before creating an assessment rubric that articulated learning outcomes, and assigning grading scales to each exercise. Finally, groups were to reflect on how this exercise might have caused them to think differently about issues of gender and sexuality in assessment and after 45 minutes of group work, share their insights and instruments.

The response to the exercise was gratifying, not only in each group's quality of rubric design, but also in the thoughtfulness of their replies. Reflecting on how they might differently approach introductions to these lessons in urban or rural communities, and across liberal and conservative social settings, they began to brainstorm, as well as challenge each other to develop site-specific strategies for the implementation of the lesson. They not only acknowledged the possibility of implementing their units on contemporary art works addressing the range and diversity of family structures and social readings of peoples with HIV/AIDS, but throughout the quarter applied this exercise in critically reading those heterosexist notions embedded in lessons and models used by authors to illustrate their exemplar assessment strategies.

While earlier in the quarter self-elected representatives of this same group had complained to my chair that I had no business telling them I was a gay, by the end of the term they were calling attention to unspoken biases in each other's presentations, including those concerning race, class, ableism and sexuality. Several noted on their anonymous written evaluations of class that this was one of the most meaningful learning experiences they had in their studies. Affirmed by this seemingly successful strategy, the next year I taught the course I thought I would try yet another variation.

Bingo at Bergamo

Eager to share my newest queer strategic interventions with colleagues, I tried out the playful approach I had planned with a dozen or so scholars attending the 25th anniversary assembly of the Journal of Curriculum Theory and Practice conference at Bergamo in Dayton, Ohio. This time I spent days in the Fine Arts Library, digitally capturing images of works by artists whom queer scholars recognized as historically having shared same-sex desire. Space does not allow for a full discussion of the ongoing debates regarding the limits of queer intelligibility, or critiques of historians claiming as queer those artists living and working in time periods preceding the modern conceptualization or naming of homosexual, gay or queer, but the coded or explicit erotic images, gaze and posturing portrayed in the digitized figu-

rative works variably performed same sex desire in ways that were difficult to deny. To complicate conversation further and focus on queer concerns less dependent on revealing sexual acts or organs, I also included works by artists who identify as heterosexual, but in their queer theoretical handling of content and narrative certainly did not seem straight.

Again, seeking to incite critical discussion of state and U.S. national arts education content standards, critiques of high-stakes testing, and possible strategies for making queer concerns visible in the curriculum, I printed out Bingo-like 11" x 17" placemats for each of the five visual art content areas (perception, production, historic study, critique and social context). On the horizontal left margin of each grid I listed the performance objective and outcomes students were to accomplish, parallel spaces that intersected with four vertical grade categories (pre-k-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). As the five groups reviewed the major objectives of their content area and grade levels, I dealt each an assortment of cards on which one side was printed an image earlier digitized, and on the other, a description of the represented work. While providing historic contextual data, and technical information (size, media, technique, date and attribution), I variably had (not) named the sexuality of the artist or subject.

The room hummed with conversation as groups grappled with ways of categorizing their images – at times trying to figure out some logic for the works across media and historic period they would employ in their imagined curricular units and individual lessons addressing the rubric of required state arts content. Shrieks of faux horror and laughter were heard as outrageous and provocative images were uncovered. Some curiously asked what was queer about Rosa Bonheur's animal portraits, abstractions by Delany, or a Rauschenberg's Combine. Cards were traded as images that one group felt couldn't be used were valued by another. Whether or not a full curriculum could have possibly been constructed during the generous 90-minute conference time slot was not my concern – so after half the time had elapsed, the group discussed the questions raised by the exercise and the challenges they imagined might face

classroom educators' implementing imaginary queer curricula.

Bingo at school

The session seemed successful, so the following winter I repeated the exercise, confident that my group of 30 undergraduate students would find the experience of value. But instead of the giddy excited chatter I had expected, a dead silence filled the room – disrupted only by the occasional sigh and whisper of groups complaining of the vagueness of the assignment and their sense that the subject matter had no place in schools. While some seemed deeply confused and bewildered in trying to figure out how to teach a lesson using any of the works portrayed, most dutifully struggled through until they had some form of lesson for at least one grade level. No joy emerged from the exercise; some angrily asked what the "pornographic images" I had thrust on them had to do with K-12 art education or assessment. I did my best to explain the logic behind the exercise, reminding them that all images had been collected from the University's Fine Arts Library, but I sensed most still read the works as pornography.

A day or so later I learned that roughly half of the class had marched en masse to my chair's office, demanding that I stop pushing my gay agenda – some complaining that my teaching could be considered sexual harassment. Not satisfied with the Chair's support of my addressing issues of sexuality in the classroom, they went to the Dean to set me straight. Again they were denied the satisfaction of having me reprimanded or removed from the classroom, but they did undermine my sense of confidence in being able to introduce difficult subjects.

I readily acknowledge my ability to misread students' capacity for queer inquiry, their sense of entitlement, and (im)maturity. While I cannot imagine abandoning my commitments to queering the curriculum, I also know I must more mindfully prepare students to encounter the intentionally unsettling learning experience. While mourning the unsuccessful experiments I have encountered in working with young adults too straight and narrow to accept my queer interventions, these uncomfortable learning spaces also remind me of

the support I enjoy from those who mentor and guide my growth in academe. Knowing my work is valued and the issues I deal with are important to colleagues emboldens my continued (though more cautious) challenging of students to consider all things queer.

Tonight, once again, I was reminded of the role I am allowed to play, as another colleague called me to share my research and introduce students to both queer epistemologies and the gay and lesbian liberation struggles I urged all to join. Carefully reviewing the range of research released under the rubric of queer theory, I self-assuredly unpacked complex and constantly shifting discourses regarding social constructions of sexual subjectivity. At times patiently rephrasing concepts too slippery for easy grasp, I was reassured and occasionally rescued by my colleague and three students I had taught in the past – each confirming they not only understood, but now embodied and professed those queer concepts we had explored in earlier meetings.

Getting to a comfort level with my own queerness in the classroom has been an ongoing process. Feeling affirmed and comfortable enough in my own body, work and setting, to move readily between humour, irony, irreverence and humility, I am confident today that I will continue to grow. But in taking risks and trying out new teaching tactics that openly address queer subjects that personally matter, I always run the risk of ruin. This is why it is essential then to build allies, sustain nurturing and affirming relations with colleagues at home and in the field, and appreciate those friends in powerful places that can rescue me when needed, for without them, my battles for human rights might be lost.

Cosier's cautionary tale

A sense of responsibility to work toward social justice for all people is the driving force that fuels my desire to be a teacher educator. However, my efforts at education for social justice, especially where lgbtq issues are concerned, have not always been warmly accepted by my students. Some time ago I had an experience in the classroom that strongly signaled the necessity of proceeding with caution when dealing with politically-charged

issues, including, unfortunately, the politicized nature of the fight for social justice and basic human rights for LGBT/Q people. My undergraduate art education students were reading *Will Standards Save Public Education*, by Deborah Meiers (2000). At its heart, this book examines the fundamental purposes of education in a democratic society – the “big ideas” of teaching.

Suspecting that my students would have fuzzy notions about the subject, I began by asking them to define democracy and to describe its salient features, or “what makes democracy work?” As anticipated, most had only vague notions about democracy with the majority focusing on rights rather than the responsibilities of a democratic citizenry. In a U.S. political ecology that uses rhetoric of “spreading democracy” to justify a pre-emptive war against another sovereign nation, I was not surprised.

Oscar Wilde is reported to have said, “Democracy means simply the bludgeoning of the people by the people for the people.” The events that unfolded from our discussions of Meier’s book would make Wilde’s pithy statement hit close to home. Since most of my students go on to work in public school settings, I felt it was essential to devote time to developing through dialogue a deeper understanding of democratic principles than their written responses suggested. I thought I was being quite impartial, focusing on the responsibilities that democratic citizens must accept when they exercise their freedoms.

I admit that I criticised new legislation that was having a deleterious effect on arts education in public schools. Because I teach in an urban setting I also felt justified in raising questions about the majority’s responsibility to the minority. I used as examples a range of situations, from the thorny issues surrounding slavery and the continued institutionalized racism that grew out of it, to the current debate over gay marriage.

Our conversations seemed very productive to me; I was energized by the intellectual growth many seemed to be making. But then I received an email from one of the students who informed me that a group of students were secretly organizing to file a complaint against me to my department chair. They apparently thought I was forcing my views on

them and believed that our discussions were not relevant to art education. The young woman went on to write that there were those among the group of behind the scenes dissenters who took especial offense at my bringing up gay rights issues, as they “didn’t believe in homosexuality.”

I was devastated. Since our conversation began by expressly dealing with freedom of speech including dissent, I couldn’t believe these students were covertly organizing behind my back! I was simply dumbfounded to discover that there was a contingent of students who felt they could not openly discuss their views in my classroom. Further, I was astounded that they could not make connections between our readings and discussions and their futures as art educators. Students’ desire for professionalization at the expense of the moral and philosophical implications of teaching was never so clear to me. In response, I wrote an open letter to the class that explained my reasons for focusing on the issues we had been discussing, pointed out that freedom of dissent was one of our first topics of discussion, and reiterated my invitation to give voice to dissenting opinions.

Unfortunately, none of them spoke up. It was a disappointing time, but through that experience, I learned that it is better to guide students toward tolerance of difference in more active ways than only through discussion. I have established partnerships with a school and a community group that serve LGBT and questioning youth. Our students now have opportunities to become familiar with queer people other than their professor. These partnerships have taken a lot of pressure off me, as they better prepare our students to work with diverse groups of young people. Even so, as I consider the difficult and necessary work involved in enacting education in the service of social justice for queer folk, I have become increasingly distressed. I cannot help but think that we are sounding a call to action that could soon be rendered moot if the climate of censorship that has begun to rise up in the U.S. continues to gain momentum.

Rescanning the battlefield

Today, we are faced with a growing movement against academic freedom, which includes the

freedom to be ourselves in our own classrooms (Fish, 2004). If we are to make the world we imagine, we must out-manuever those who seek to push us out of the classroom and back in the closet. In the United States, there is a growing tolerance of conservative muscle-flexing on university campuses. While much of the rest of the world seems to be progressing toward equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, U.S. queer folks are living under reinvigorated oppression.

While we, in academia, have been talking amongst ourselves about effecting social change, social conservatives have been systematically and steadily amassing social, political and ideological strength since the 1980s. To reverse this backlash against justice, and to effect the change we desire, we must confront mounting threats to academic freedom and queer-affirming pedagogical praxis. As our personal stories reveal, we must do so with patience and caution. In the following, we close with practical tips for creating classrooms in which queer concerns can be addressed.

Practical tips for queering your classroom

Never Let Your Emotions Get the Better of You

Classroom dramatics do little for the cause of social justice for queer folk. Breathe deeply and practice “wait time” before responding to offensive statements. Rather than being the one to always intervene, allow students to make counter arguments when possible. While it is difficult to not take homophobic statements personally, keep in mind that most religious conservative students actually believe that homosexuality is a sin. Also bear in mind that this is an issue that is being used by powerful groups in order to manipulate the sincere religious convictions of these young people. Finally, if you plan to send an email message to the class regarding an incident, have a cautious colleague review it before hitting *Send*.

Be Aware that Everything You Say Can be Monitored

Be strategic. Advertisements from the Students for Academic Freedom appear in campus newspapers that encourage conservative students to

record and turn us in for holding views that are in opposition to what they are taught at home and in church. Again, be careful about *how* you convey your views.

Stay Strong and Focused on the Future

Much of what we have written about gives reason for anger and despair. However, there is reason for hope; time is on our side. Most young people today are far more open-minded about LGBTQ people than they were just a decade ago. According to an *Advocate* survey of 1000 randomly chosen subjects:

Three quarters of this year's high school seniors favor legal recognition of same-sex relationships, either as marriage or civil union; three in four seniors oppose a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage; and 63% support adoptions by gay couples. (Advocate.com, 2006)

Not only are straight youth more accepting of difference, queer youth have also been found to be more well adjusted than their predecessors. They are transforming queerness into myriad and shifting identities that defy prior conceptions of sexual identity (Savin-William, 2005). This too gives us reason to hold out hope.

We must push forward to win the war for social justice even if we seem to be losing ground. It is vital that art educators work to stop the spread of heterosexist social disease by affirming the value of compassion and caring for all students and families. By demonstrating a willingness to engage in political contestations of dignity and worth, the lives of sexual minorities are reaffirmed and social justice is served. Properly prepared to wage peace and compassion with the sharpened weapons of sound psychological, sociological, scientific and aesthetic research, pre-service art educators with imagination, drive and commitment may fight on, and with support, succeed.

Opening ourselves to new alliances, collaborations and political projects, our pedagogical practices may perform our compassionate concern for those culturally misunderstood, misrepresented and mistrusted. In respecting difference and allowing ourselves to think differently about naming and

claiming those who may or may not have been historically constructed as queer, LGBT/Q students and colleagues may come to see themselves in the curriculum and within a continuum of creators.

In nurturing their self-recognition, demanding diminution of denigrating discourses and reigniting flames of hope fueled by affinity, affirmation and alliances judiciously formed, our classrooms may serve as spaces of renewal – places where the world can be imagined as queerly as one day it might be. Our teaching tales, challenges and queer experiences, while not all turning out as well as we might have liked, offer a glimpse into this messy and difficult work. While neither of us has found THE ANSWER, sharing our processes of coming to know has been reaffirming – emboldening us to continuing on in our fight for social justice and human rights.

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