

MASTER'S DEGREE FINAL PROJECT

Fixed not absolute

Homophobia & Traditional Masculinity

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Abstract [100 words]:

This project facilitates a study on homosexuality and homophobia, Researched from an interdisciplinary approach. The analysis on the origins of homosexuality and the root causes of homophobia are discussed by analyzing biological, genetic, social, economic, political influences that are either causes for homosexuality or root causes for homophobia. This project includes personal opinions as well as statistics, however the main aim is to provide an unbiased and objective approach, therefore mostly scholar's research work and statistics are used to support my claims. The practical part of the project is supported by the theoretical frame work, the practical aim of this project is to eliminate homophobia, by creating not only, tolerance, and acceptance, but most importantly understanding of the topic, root causes and effects on the LGBT community. The project could then be implemented in schools, or community settings in which the environment most of the time is already friendly, through relationships by family, friends, and (co)-workers.

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List of abbreviations

LGBT – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender

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Introduction

Homosexuality will never be eliminated. So, how about eliminating homophobia? This is basically, the goal of LGBT activist. In recent decades there have been numerous studies on the homosexuality, whether it is about the origin, cause, or the implications, the studies somehow always are negative or positive, and furthermore one of the main weaknesses of all studies is the single sided academic approach. Whether it is biological, economic, political, social etc. Why isn't there an objective inter-disciplinary approach towards homosexuality? Truth of the matter is that as author of this project, I, like everyone else cannot be a 100 percent objective about this topic. With this knowledge, I can only conclude that an inter-disciplinary approach towards homosexuality is required. To get a clear understanding of the causes of homosexuality, and more importantly to understand the roots of homophobia.

In recent years homosexuality, like never before has become a world-wide discussion topic. The world has seen progress for equality rights of LGBT in North America and Europe. However, in Africa, and Eurasia regressive laws have been passed, or more famously used as discriminatory laws. To understand this phenomenon, the theoretical part of this project is aimed to uncover, map and connect the dots between the causes of sexual orientation differentiation, political decisions, economical relevance, social structures, cultural dimensions, and religious explanations. Personally, I find this topic not only interesting, but also intrinsically important for the people to understand, and although I am open for interpretation and opinions, I too often experience opinions based on myths, lack of knowledge, and ignorance.

This project is divided into a theoretical part and a practical part. In the theoretical part, I will demonstrate and outline the previous mentioned areas in an inter-disciplinary setting. The practical part is aimed to create awareness, on a tolerance level, an acceptances level, but also on an understanding level. This project could then be implemented into high school, pre-university, and

university settings and institution who aim to give a holistic approach to the understanding of homosexuality.

Problem analysis

In the introduction I mentioned that it will not be possible to eliminate homosexuality, so why not eliminating homophobia? The concept of eliminating homophobia is complex and will take generations. Homophobia has been deeply rooted in cultures and societies and is a side effect of patriarchy and traditional masculinity. Homosexuals in many ways suffer from the struggles as women in a strong patriarchal system. The “lesser than” men image is one of roots gender inequality and homophobia. Patriarchy and thus, also traditional masculinity are not only cultural, it is deeply imbedded in religion, politics, and economics.

In the common, cultural meaning of the word, “homophobia” refers to the maintenance of negative and discriminatory views toward gay people. It is not a “phobia” in a psychiatric sense. Rather, the word serves as a concise way to refer to discrimination against those who are gay, in the same way that the words “racism” and “sexism” relate to discrimination based on race and gender, respectively. Homophobic beliefs drive homophobic conduct that occurs in all domains of societal life: at home, at work, in church, in politics, at school, on the internet/TV, and on the street. Let me be clear; homophobic violence happens to young people, to adults, to women, to men, and trans people. It happens to straight people when they are gender-variant or presumed gay. It happens most harshly to gay people of color, poor, and working class. In all cases it is tragic. LGBT youth are far more likely to be bullied than students of the majority sexual orientation. In fact, the percentage of gay youth that are bullied is 2 to 3 times higher than that of heterosexual youth. To make matters worse, the school environment can be extremely caustic for LGBT youth regardless of whether they are the target of gay bullying. In recent studies students heard anti-gay

slurs such as “homo” ,”faggot” and “sissy” about 26 times a day on average, or once every 14 minutes (BRIM, 2015). Bullying on a daily basis has a profound effect on young LGBT, effects of non-acceptance cause higher levels of depressive disorders up to 3 times more like (Kerr & Krucik, 2012), conduct disorders, suicide attempts up to 4 times more likely (CDC, 2011), hopelessness, impulsiveness, gender non-conformity. The numbers are staggering in comparison to the heterosexual peers, all of which start at young age by bullying, unsupportive family, religious indoctrination and political discrimination. In short, one out of three LGBT youth up to 25 years old show met criteria for any mental disorder as described above (Mustanski, et al., 2010).

Aim of the project

In the introduction I mentioned that the aim is to create awareness on a tolerance levels, an acceptance level and an understanding level. I will briefly elaborate why I believe this should be the aim, and why it is essential to create in order to eliminate homophobia. The theoretical part of this project will aim to identify and explore the complexity of homosexuality from various fields. By understanding the complexity of homosexuality, the roots of homophobia become visible and easier to challenge. The practical part of the project is aimed to challenge the theoretical part and provide an approach that would create, tolerance, acceptance, but most importantly understanding. There are two main chapters, one primary influences on sexual orientation, and secondly, the secondary influences on sexual orientation and root causes for homophobia.

Tolerance, is defined as a fair, objective, and permissive attitude towards whose opinions, practices, race, religion, nationality etc. differ from one’s own; freedom from bigotry (Oxford University, 2015). Tolerance is a virtue, it is a pillar, and it is how we want others to treat us decently and vice versa. It is also a pragmatic formula for the functioning of society. Think of religious difference, ethnic minorities, sexual orientation etc.

Acceptance; in human psychology is a person's assent to the reality of a situation, recognizing a process or condition, often a negative of uncomfortable situation without attempting to change it, protest, or exit (Oxford University, 2015). Acceptance goes a step beyond tolerance. If a sign of tolerance is a feeling of "I can live with person X (behavior, religion, race, culture, sexual orientation.)" acceptance moves beyond that in direction of "person X is OK." You can tolerate something or someone without accepting it, but you cannot accept something without tolerating it. For example, when a son or daughter tells a parent about an unwelcome sexual identity, he or she wants that information not just to be tolerated, but to be accepted. Understanding moves even beyond tolerance and acceptance.

"Understanding is a psychological process related to an abstract or physical object, such as a person, situation, or message whereby one is able to think about it and use concepts to deal adequately with that object" (Oxford University, 2015).

Think of it like this, it is possible to tolerate or accept someone without understanding him or her; and the same goes for tolerating or accepting homosexuality. However, the converse is also true. It is also possible to understand homosexuality without acceptance, or even tolerance. Tolerance and/or acceptance are desirable, but they will never be a substitute for understanding. They are relevant for getting along with others in the world, but understanding is to uncover root problems, which then could lead to a possible solution, or at least an effective approach.

Sexual orientation

The first chapter of this project is "sexual orientation" We express the direction of our sexual interest in our sexual orientation, our enduring sexual attraction towards members of our own sex (homosexual orientation) or the other sex (heterosexual orientation). We experience this attraction in our interests, thoughts, and fantasies. Many societies differ from their attitudes towards

homosexuality, yet whether a society condemns or accepts homosexuality, heterosexuality prevails and homosexuality survives. This however, does not mean that homosexuality is solely a phenomena of reproduction. Sexual orientation is a far more complex phenomena. The LGBT community many times had hope for a single gene that would determine either homosexuality or heterosexuality, so the community would have evidence that their sexual orientation is in fact born instead of chosen. The following chapters will aim to combine different fields to get a clearer understanding of homosexuality. Note that the scientific question is not “what causes homosexuality?” or “what causes heterosexuality?” but should instead be “what causes differing sexual orientation? (Meyrs, 2010)” To explore this question in this inter-disciplinary project, I will demonstrate and compare backgrounds from different fields.

1. Primary influences on sexual orientation

In this chapter and mainly in the following sections of this chapter, the emphasis will be on the primary causes for sexual orientation, meaning; genetic, biological, prenatal influences on homosexuality. The claim that one is born either homosexual or heterosexual has been refuted by many researcher in past years. However, the questions “what causes differing sexual orientation” is more alive than ever. A complex mix of genetic, biological, prenatal influences and other environmental influences could once and for all provide a nail into the coffin for sexual orientation being a conscious choice.

Sexual Orientation Statistics

How many people are exclusively homosexual? About 10 percent, as the popular press often assumed? Not according to more than a dozen national surveys that have researched sexual orientation in North America and Europe. Recent research has shown that about 3 - 4 percent of the population is exclusively homosexual (Chandra, 2011); (Gates, 2011). The size of the population

that claims to be attracted to the same gender is far higher. A recent studies published confirms that 20 percent is attracted to the same gender. However, this does not mean bisexuality necessarily, it includes same-sex sexual experiences, and sexual fantasies for the same gender (Coffman, et al., 2013)

The population that has come to be referred to as gay in the West is not a descriptive term that would be recognized by all men who have sex with men “MSM” (Makadon, 2012) as known in the rest of the world. While gay culture is increasingly open and discussed. The world of MSM consists of a diverse population that often may respond differently depending on how communications in clinical settings are framed. Gay is generally used to describe a sexual orientation, while MSM describes a behavior. Some men who have sex with other men will not relate to the term gay or homosexual, and do not regards sex with other men as sexual activity, a term they reserve for sexual relations with women. This is particularly true among individuals from non-Western cultures. Nevertheless, it is common in the US. Terms such as MSM are often used in place of the word gay. Men in Africa and Latin America engage in sexual relationships with other men while still referring themselves as heterosexual, which is known as being on the “down-low” (González, 2007). The same is true of men who engage in homosexual activities in the military, gender-segregated schools and universities, or prison; most of them do no consider themselves gay but still engage sexually with members of their own sex in order to fulfill their desires (Enders, 2010).

There are many statistics on sexual orientation. Most studies on sexual orientation have been conducted either in North America or Europe and focused on males exclusively, this is a weakness in my eyes, especially considering that it only represent a small percentage of the worlds’ population and above all, the population all come from industrialized developed countries. The fact that women are excluded from research, is an another major weakness, the difference of the male

and female body are not only physical but also hormonal etc., therefore concluding that research is applicable to both male and female is impossible, I will therefore refrain from making many claims on female homosexuality, if there is no specific inclusion in the conducted research. Noteworthy is that, if there would be studies conducted in Africa or Eurasia the statistics would be rather unreliable, for most countries strongly condemn homosexuality, and thus people might not be honest out of fear. Leading studies on whether or not sexual orientation is inborn are focused on the hypothalamus (brain structure/anatomy), Gene studies to identify a single or set of genes that determine sexual orientation, twin studies, and prenatal hormones and womb development. These studies will be discussed in the following sections.

Sexual orientation and Genetics

Studies show that especially women above the age of 30 exchange their heterosexual orientation for lesbian relationship (Diamond, 2009). The findings appear to pose a challenge to the popular consensus that a person's sexuality is determined by their genes rather than environment, or one could argue that it once again proves the complexity of homosexuality, between both males and females. Furthermore, it proves there is more than just genetics that is involved in sexual orientation. Different studies provided proof that indeed homosexual males share a complex set of genes that make them more likely to be gay on the X chromosome, however similar studies on females came up empty (Hammer, 2014), note that this studies only included 40 pairs of brothers. In a different studies recently published by Dr. Sanders conducted with over 400 gay brothers provided clear proof for a genome significant linkage for male sexual orientation (Sanders, 2015) Whatever results, Sanders, Hammer, and Diamond stress that complex traits such as sexual orientation depend on multiple factors, both environmental and genetic. All scientist however agree that the word "environmental factors" is easily confused by the masses, environmental factors are

not to be confused with socially “acquired” Environmental means anything that is not in our DNA at birth, and that includes a lot of stuff that is not social. The thing that is consistent across all leading scientist (sociologist, biologist, neurologist, geneticist, psychologist) is that they all point to sexual orientation being something fundamental to a person rather than the lifestyle choice some opponents of equality repeatedly suggest (Whitehead & Whitehead, 2013).

The brain and sexual orientation

In the previous chapter we discussed the difference between genetic and environmental factors that determine sexual orientation. The following chapters will offer the latest research on environmental factors that could determine sexual orientation in men.

One of the leading researchers on brain textures and sexual orientation is Simon LeVay. In 1991 he published a research paper of his studies on the hypothalamus, a part of the brain, which is responsible for behavior and preference for e.g. food, fighting, feeling, and reproducing (LeVay, 2006) to avoid biasing the results he conducted blind studies on heterosexual and homosexual men. In his studies he found that one cell cluster was reliably larger in heterosexual men than in women and homosexual men. Indicating there is a brain structural difference between homosexual and heterosexual people. In another study by Dr. Swaab in 2008 similar brain difference were noticed (Swaab, 2008). Current evidence indicates that aside of genetics, sexual differentiation of the human brain occurs during fetal and neonatal development and programs our gender identity, our feeling of being male or female and our sexual orientation as hetero-, homo-, or bisexual. This sexual differentiation process is accompanied by many structural and functional brain differences among these groups. LeVay does not view the hypothalamus as a sexual orientation center; rather, he sees it as an important part of the neural pathway engaged in sexual behavior. He acknowledges

that sexual behavior patterns may influence the brain's anatomy. LeVay believes it is more likely that brain anatomy influences sexual orientation.

Prenatal Hormones and Sexual orientation

Elevated rates of homosexual orientation in identical in fraternal twins that not just shared genetics but also shared a prenatal environment is a confirmed factor (Sanders, 2015). Modern scientific research indicates that sexual orientation is indeed partly genetic as demonstrated in previous sections, but specifically hormonal activity in the womb has significant influences on sexual orientation (Wilson & Rahman, 2008). A critical period of the human brain's neural-hormonal control system may exist between the middle of the second and fifth month after conception (Susanne R de Rooij, 2009). Exposure to the hormone levels typically experienced by female fetuses during this time appears to predispose the person, both female and male to be attracted to males in later life. Prenatal sex hormones control the sexual differentiation of brain centers involved in sexual behaviors, as previously discussed by Simon LeVay. Female fetuses most exposed to testosterone, and male fetuses least exposed to testosterone, appear most likely later to exhibit gender-atypical traits and to experience same-sex desires. On several traits, gays and lesbians appear to fall midway between straight females and males. In the following table an overview is given of the already discussed brain differences, the genetic influences and prenatal influences.

Table 1 Gay-straight trait differences

Gay-straight trait differences	
Sexual orientation is part of a package of traits indicate that homosexuals and heterosexuals differ in the following biological and behavioral traits.	
Spatial abilities	Gender nonconformity
fingerprint ridge counts	Age of onset of puberty in males
auditory system of development	Male body size
Handedness	Sleep length
Occupational preferences	Physical aggression
Relative finger lengths	Walking style
On average, results for gays and lesbians fall between those of straight men and straight women. Three biological influences- Brain, genetic, and prenatal are ought to be the	

determining factor.
Brain differences
- One hypothalamic cell cluster is smaller in women and gay men than in straight men.
- Anterior commissure larger in gay men than in straight men.
- Gay men's hypothalamus reacts as do straight women's to smell of sex-related hormones.
- On average a higher IQ than heterosexuals
Genetic influences
- Shared sexual orientation is higher among identical twins than among fraternal twins.
- Male homosexuality often appears to be transmitted from the mother's side of the family (X chromosome)
Prenatal influences
- Altered prenatal hormone exposure may lead to homosexuality in humans and animals
- Right-handed men with several older biological brothers are far more likely to be gay, possibly due to a maternal immune-system reaction of male hormones.

To sum up, for example lesbians' cochlea and hearing systems develop in a way that is intermediate between those of heterosexual females and heterosexual males, which seems attributable to prenatal hormonal influences (McFadden, 2009). Gay men tend to be shorter and lighter, even at birth, than straight men, while women in same-sex marriages were mostly heavier than average at birth (Morten Frisch, 2008). Fingerprint ridge counts may also differ, although most people have more fingerprints ridges on their right hand than on their left, some studies find a greater right-left difference in heterosexual males than in females and gay males (Kishida, 2015). Fingerprint ridges are complete by the sixteenth fetal week, this difference may be due to prenatal hormones. Prenatal hormones also are possible explanation for why data from 20 studies revealed that homosexual participants had 39 percent greater odds of being left handed, and why older biological brothers are also more likely to be left-handed (Blanchard, 2006). There is also a correlation between homosexuality and IQ, in respect to heterosexuals, homosexuals score on average higher than heterosexuals (Weinrich, 2010) (Kanazawa, 2012). Besides to these and other natural markers of sexual orientation, faces and facial expressions can enable people's "gaydar" to identify gays and lesbians with better than chance accuracy (Freeman, 2010). Differences often appear early, in the

gender nonconformity of many “pre-gay” children. In one study, raters viewed a video clips of children without being told their later sexual orientation, the average pre-gay child was rated as more gender nonconforming than the average pre-straight child, especially after the age of 10 (Rieger, 2008). Another very interesting studies showing gay men’s spatial abilities resemble those typical of straight women (McCormick & Witelson, 1991). The consistency of the brain, genetic, and prenatal findings concludes towards a biological explanation of sexual orientation. Especially the brain, genetic, and prenatal differences helps explain why sexual orientation is fixed, but certainly not just by genetics. Still people wonder, should the cause of sexual orientation matter? Perhaps, for the gay community it is solely to prove the fixity, and the relieve from bigots naming it a choice. However, I do not believe that the cause has to be known, although I believe it would be helpful. Nonetheless, the cause does not matter, but people’s assumptions do matter. Those who believe that sexual orientation is biologically disposed also express more accepting attitudes towards homosexual people (Haslam & Levy, 2006). Which would be a good indicator for less homophobia in the world. The scientific evidence is one of the reasons that boost reasons, and rationale for protection under state law. However, this development in research is potentially also very dangerous, if genetic markers are indeed found, than that could mean in the future that by genetic markers or by fetal testing, a child could be aborted for having an unwanted sexual orientation, or that hormonal treatment becomes standard to develop a desired sexual orientation for your child.

2. Environmental influences on sexual orientation

Having explored the biological, genetic, and prenatal influences on sexual orientation it is vital to understand homosexuality, and with it homophobia from a cultural, economic, political, and religious perspective. Previously I mentioned the difficulties of sexual orientation from a Western

perspective, however the biological, genetic, and prenatal influence could be taken as general studies for all humans on this planet for we share that we are from the same species. I do however, realize that this is an assumption and it would be interesting to do the same studies previously outlined on other continents. The cultural, economic, political, and religious factors are far more diffuse. In the following sections I will explore each of them individually to give a broader understanding of homosexuality, and homophobia across the globe.

It is no secret that homosexuality is more accepted in developed countries in comparison to developing countries (PewResearchCentre, 2013). Homosexuality is often seen as a western product. As most countries grappled with same-sex marriage and homosexuality in general, surveys show that there is huge variance by region on the broader question whether homosexuality should be accepted. Typically in Europe, North America, and South America the general tendency is positive. With the exception of Russia and Poland. The Middle East, with the exception of Israel with an equal amount of people being in favor and against, the general opinion is very negative, similar are the figures in Africa, with the exception of South Africa, which is negative but not nearly as negative as countries like Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Nigeria in which above 96 percent of people utterly reject homosexuality. The widespread rejection of homosexuality persist in predominantly Muslim and Christian nations (PewResearchCentre, 2013). From my perspective it would be foolish and incorrect to conclude that religion is the dominating influence. The political, social, cultural and economic influences could be equally important to understand this global divide.

Culture, patriarchy and the influence on homosexuality (phobia)

This section will focus on cultural difference and specifically the effects of patriarchy on homosexuality (phobia). The definition “culture” means the attitudes and behavioral characteristics of a particular group (Oxford Dictionaries Language Matters, 2015).

Despite all the gains in gender equality that have been made in many countries around the world, hence especially Developed countries, patriarchy remains a powerful and defining force in all countries, whether they implemented LGBT laws or not. Inequality between men and women continues to persist vocationally, financially, socially, and politically. The privileging of the masculine over the feminine and the continued social enforcement of stern gender norms relating to masculinity and femininity play key roles in the development and existence of homophobic views and conduct. Homosexuality is viewed as being in direct opposition to how men and women are expected to behave in a patriarchal societal system in which straight men dominate. From a patriarchal perspective, female homosexuality is viewed as a complete rejection of the most powerful group in society; straight men. Not surprisingly, this perceived rejection is penalized and sanctioned in various ways. The most extreme form of this is the phenomena of “corrective rape” a violent and disturbing punishment aimed to cure gay women (Smith, 2015). Male homosexuality is also viewed as a rejection, a rejection of traditional masculinity. Within a patriarchal framework, male homosexuality is regarded as a rejection of the masculine and an alignment with the feminine, the latter of which is already viewed as “less than”. In this way homophobia is intrinsically tied to patriarchy. Gay men like gay women are also penalized or punished for non-conformist behavior, gay men are often punished by means of prison sentence or corporal punishment, but most notable capital punishment.

I do recognize that many heterosexuals as well as homosexual men are in fact homophobic because they are afraid that men will treat them the way they treat women, and everyone grew up in a strong

patriarchal setting. A significant source of this homophobia among these men is the idea that gay men will make unwanted (sexual) advances, maybe even overpower them, and cross boundaries that they are not used to even having threatened in the first place. Of course, any woman will tell you that this is a fact of life for them e.g. catcalling, invasion of personal space, sleazy comments, etc. All which are pretty much expected. Homophobia has roots with the hate and the perceived view of women and the gender roles, as described as perceived as “less than”. From this traditional view on masculinity, hence patriarchy, males tend to be more homophobic than females (Pennington, 2013), he claims that heterosexuals men, eroticize lesbianism, while heterosexual males have a more homophobic attitude to gay men, likely because of the narrowness of male gender roles, and thus, violating proper male gender role behavior. The analysis concludes that there is a strong correlation between gender roles attitudes, hence traditional masculinity and gender roles and their attitudes towards homosexuality (Shackelford & Besser, 2007).

So, what does masculinity tell us about acceptance of homosexuality in the global world? And perhaps, a better question; what is the correlation between masculine cultures and homosexual acceptance?

In recent research, countries across the globe have been categorized based on cultural dimensions, including “Masculinity vs Femininity” (Andrews University, 2008). Masculinity and femininity differ in the social roles that are associated with the biological fact of the existence of the two sexes. Masculinity and femininity refer to the dominant sex role pattern the vast majority of both traditional and modern societies: that of male assertiveness and female nurturance. Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on

material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life (Geert Hofstede, 2014). Across the globe there is a correlation between countries that are defined “masculine” and LGBT progression vs. homophobia, similar for countries which are defined “feminine” and the correlation between acceptance and tolerance.

In the following overview a list of countries is shown;

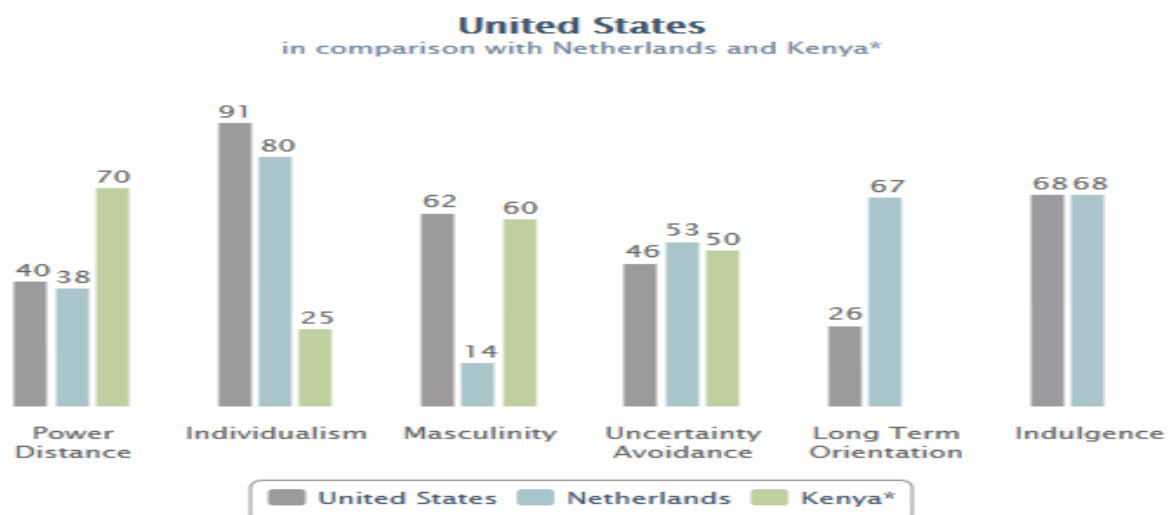


Table 2 Masculinity comparison USA, Netherlands, Kenya (Geert Hofstede , 2015)

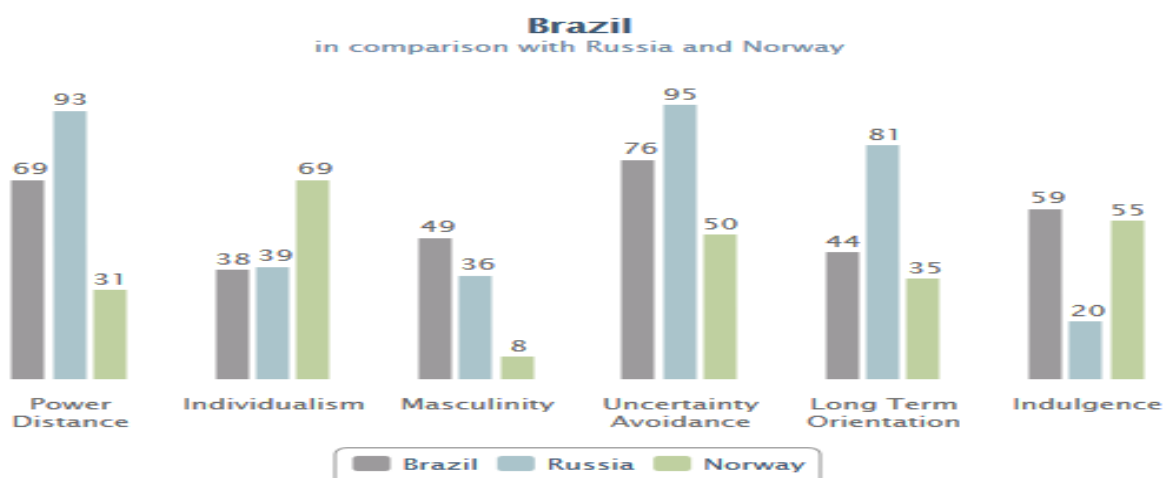


Table 3 Masculinity comparison Brazil, Russia, Norway (Geert Hofstede, 2015)

According to researcher Geert Hofstede and his dimension of masculinity in correlation to homosexual acceptance and homophobia it is countries which demonstrate high masculinity levels that are least accepting. In the two examples above, you can clearly see, with in the back of your mind recent developments on homosexuality that there is indeed a correlation. To be precise, The Netherlands and countries like Norway, and Sweden are in front of equality rights in the past decades. The United States only recently have same-sex marriage and Kenya is far away from any of that. The cultural dimension even within Europe still give a clear understanding of the link between gender equality laws, in this especially equal rights for LGBT, for example Germany and Italy, both countries not having past same-sex marriage are also countries with high levels of masculinity, whereas many countries globally with high femininity levels and thus low masculine levels all adopted progressive laws (The Hofstede Centre , 2015). To clarify Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions the following table will provide an overview.

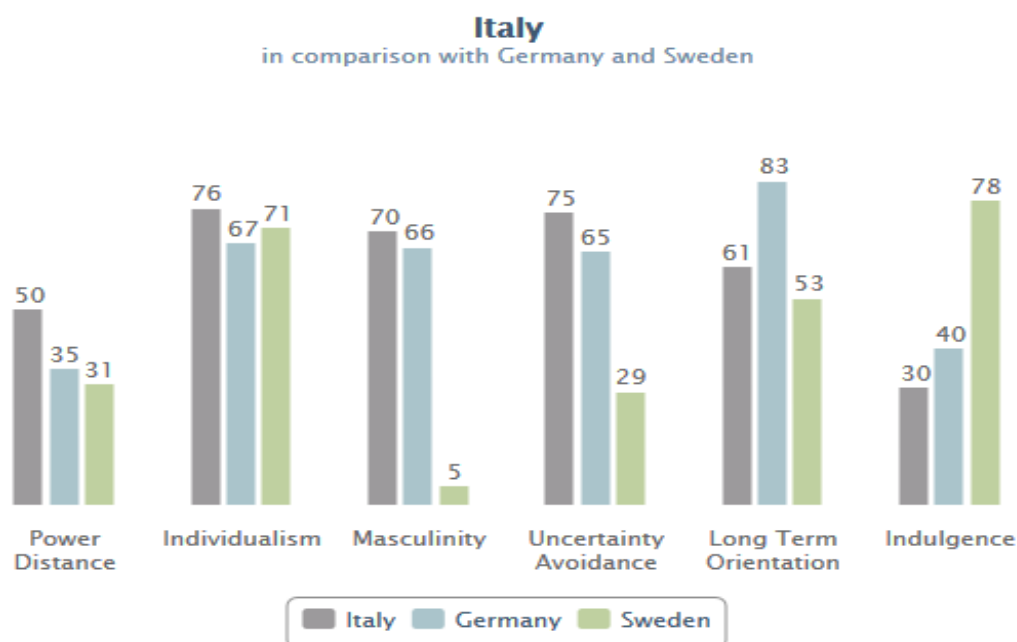


Table 4 Masculinity comparison Italy, Germany, Finland (Geert Hofstede, 2015)

High Masculinity	
<p><i>Sex roles in society should be clearly differentiated; women are supposed to be tender and to take care of interpersonal relationships; in the family, fathers deal with facts and mothers with feelings; girls cry, boys do not, boys should fight back when attacked, girls shouldn't fight (ostentatious manliness)</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dominant values in society are materials success and progress - Men should dominate in all settings - Men should behave assertively, ambitious and tough; women should care (nurture) - Weaker position of the mother in the family - Money and material objects are important - Women's liberation means that women will be admitted to positions hitherto only occupied by men <p>(Belief in inequality of the sexes, some occupations typically male, men are breadwinners/women caretakers, men and women follow different types of education)</p>	
High Femininity	
<p>Sex roles in society should be fluid: both men and women are allowed to be tender and to be concerned with interpersonal relationships; in family, both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings; both boys and girls allowed to cry, but neither boys nor girls should fight</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dominant values in society are caring for others and preservation - Differences in sex roles should not imply differences in power between sexes - Both father and mother are used as model by boys and girls - Stronger position of the mother in the family - People and warm relationships are important - Women's liberation means that men and women should take equal shares both at home and at work <p>(belief in equality of the sexes, less occupational segregation, men and women are both breadwinners)</p>	

Table 5 Geert Hofstede Masculinity vs. Femininity (Arrindell & Eisemann, 2003)

Why does masculinity have an influence on homosexual acceptance and consequently homophobia?

To answer this, we need to understand traditional masculinity as source of homophobia. The great secret of manhood is “we are afraid of men”, but portray this on women and non-conforming males.

Homophobia is a central organized principle of our cultural definition of manhood. Homophobia is more than the irrational fear of gay men, more than the fear that we might be perceived gay. The word “faggot” has nothing to do with homosexual experience or even with fears of homosexuals (David, 1990). It comes out of the depths of manhood, a label of ultimate contempt for anyone who seems sissy, untough, and uncool. Homophobia is the fear that other men will unmask us, emasculate us, and reveal to us and the world that we do not measure up, that we are not real men. We are afraid to let other men see that fear. Fear makes us ashamed, because the recognition of fear in ourselves is proof to ourselves that we are not as manly as we pretend, and want to be. Our fear is the fear of humiliation, we are ashamed to be afraid. The fear of being seen as a sissy dominates the cultural definitions of manhood. This deeply rooted in social and cultural structures around the planet, think of the direction your family, education, media sends you, for example, successful job, family with children in which male is the provider, leader of the family and thus should take a protective/aggressive stance etc. It starts so early, young boys around young boys are afraid of being unmanly, thought by parents mostly males relatives e.g. brothers and dads. Later on in adolescence, we learn that our peers are a kind of gender police, constantly threatening to unmask us as feminine and challenge that by violence, as it is seen as an evident marker of manhood. If you have to think of a few character traits of a typical male, people would say; body shape, tone of voice, behavior, success, money, women etc. But, narrowly defined masculinity sees any non-compliance as an affront to their own masculinity. This ill-defined masculinity is one of the reasons for distant relationships between men, friends, family etc. Thinking of it, it is actually a lack of understanding or misguidance in what exactly should be defined as masculine. However, many people would disagree and believe that masculinity should indeed be what it is today, the men which are in front of claiming that masculinity should indeed be power, authority, money, body

shape etc. In my opinion straight men are actually the ones that suffer most from this ill-defined definition, in which they truly believe, but never find inner-peace, for they will always have to struggle with the masculine ideals, and live up to something no men could ever do. Unfortunately, with the suffering from that traditional understanding of masculinity, groups like women and LGBT are simultaneously victims, in a different degree absolutely, but not less violent. However women and LGBT they get inner-peace through acceptance of the own femininity or masculinity as deviant from the “norm” and will find solace in knowing they stand strong as a group, whereas especially “heterosexual” men stand as individuals for the rest of their lives (even though they are seen as a group), for they would never confront a friend and talk about his problems about masculinity and emotions, whereas females and LGBT people are more likely to do so. Homophobia, from my point of view is a side-effect of imposed beliefs on straight men and women of traditional masculinity.

Intimately linked to homophobia is the phenomena of heterosexism, the position of heterosexuality as superior to homosexuality or bisexuality, based on number of the population or purpose. Indeed the heterosexual population is between 90% - 97% of the population, and the remaining categorized as homosexual. In accordance to “purpose”, an average family produces 2.43 children in a lifetime globally (The Hendry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, 2014). The assumption that all people are born heterosexual is a central feature of heterosexism. Biological diversity is ignored within a heterosexist context, the reality that a certain proportion of the population may identify as homosexual or bisexual is cast aside as irrelevant/denied, and as choice. Within a heterosexual societal context, homophobic views and attitudes flourish unchallenged. In countries across the globe, including the Europe and the United States, heterosexism is so ingrained culturally and institutionally that many people cannot even see it or do not even know what it is. Those who are not heterosexual, however, see heterosexism, on a daily basis. Heterosexual cultural imagery on

television, in movies, in newspapers, advertisements, magazines, and on the sporting field reinforces daily what society regards as not only the primary but the only acceptable sexual orientation. Given the smaller number of the LGBT community, it is very difficult for gay people, as a group to counteract this heterosexual cultural dominance. The exclusion of gay people from a seat at the main table of society communicates the erroneous message that gay people are “less than”, not worthy, not good enough, hence gender inequality. It lays the foundation for homophobia to flourish. Heterosexism will dominate through numbers, and will be therefore by number always be the primary orientation. However, this is not a justification for excluding the needs and views of non-heterosexual people, and above all, most important, it will maintain and reinforce a certain level of distance, and maintains an environment in which homosexuality is wrong. It is very interesting to consider the following when it comes to homophobia. It seems that the struggle for equality rights for homosexual people has bonded the community together(positive and negative), this means that the community thinks as a group, however it also means that it is responsible for the entire group, or at least that is what the majority orientation claims. For example, when a heterosexual couple is convicted for child abuse or domestic violence, the heterosexual community will reject them as of being different from the “norm” of normal heterosexual people and they are viewed as individuals apart from the heterosexual group. Their actions as a person/family are not indicative of any broader social construct. Imagine a similar case of a homosexual couple, then the entire community is responsible or at least held accountable, by claims that homosexuality is not a stable factor for a family, or two gay people are not in balance and thus, should not be allowed to live together. In this case the persons/family is indicative of a broader social construct. This mentality further boosts a rejection toward homosexuality and the normalization of homosexuality in society, hence, homophobia.

The believe that a less masculine society as in accordance to the country comparison having more homosexuals in demographics is simply not true, demographical comparison between Northern Europe, hence less masculine countries according to Geert Hofstede show identical statistics to The United States (Katherine B. Coffman, 2013). However, significantly lower in African, and Asian countries. I could conclude that this is simply because of restrictive laws and harsh penalties, but that would diminish the effects of cultural differences and other factors other applied or applicable then in the West. For sure the influence of the traditional understanding of masculinity, combined with social behavior, family tradition, politics, and the role of religion in other societies make up for a difference. So, does that mean that patriarchy, hence traditional masculinity create a barrier for gender equality and stimulates homophobia? Absolutely, there is no doubt that introducing gender equality for men and women also diminishes homophobia, for the gap between the two roles overlap instead of differ. Ultimately, one could argue that is why we should change this idea of traditional masculinity and patriarchy, but that is easier said than done, for this is exactly why non-western countries see homosexuality as a cultural phenomenon. Patriarchy and traditional masculinity has deeper roots then only culture. Religion, history, politics, and economics are a defining factor for this system still prevailing.

Religion and history, the effect on homophobia

The justification for LGBT oppression from a religious perspective and by extend society is that homosexuality is not merely abnormal but also, and more importantly unnatural. While acceptance in history of homosexuality have differed from time to time, homosexuality as we know it nowadays, thus, including family, children, and marriage has never been seen before. Therefore homosexuality in a modern sense is revolutionary. Yet the sexual behavior deemed “natural” by majority of society with great emphasis on penetrative intercourse is only one aspect of human

sexuality. But what makes it so suited to being described as the only natural form of sex, its reproductive function? It is of course extremely important for the survival for our species, and has always been so. Some feminist claim that penetrative heterosexual intercourse is inherently oppressive to women (Schwyzer, 2010), however it ignores a fundamental biological fact of human life. However, acceptance of the importance of reproductive sex is only half the story. Because one thing is natural it does not following that everything else is unnatural. Moreover, the very word natural brings with it whole number of problems of definition. Human beings have never taken nature as for granted, but have always sought to either utilize or transform it. Our species has, by social means, repeatedly developed and transformed its own “nature”.

But what is the role of religion and history on homophobia, and why are Abrahamic religions predominately against homosexuality, and needless to mention “same-sex marriage”. Religions have tended to represent patriarchal norms over the past thousands of years, enforcing a straight heterosexuality at the expenses of any other sexual expressions. This primal instinct, arising from both sexuality and power relations, becomes institutionalized into the religions produced by primitive societies. Most traditional religions have happened to ritualize and dogmatize practices that tend to place heterosexual males in charge of women, families, religious communities, societies, and governments. This form of dominance ends up stigmatizing those who do not fit into the scheme, notably, strong females and non-heterosexuals such as homosexuals. The direct influence of religion in secular society has receded from the government level, but maintains a level of influence on social level. In the back of our mind, the previous chapter of patriarchy and traditional masculinity it is no surprise that secular states, mostly Western, have passed progressive laws, whereas countries in which especially Abrahamic religions dominate the government have many punishing and discriminatory laws.

However for a believer in one of the major world religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all of them share and accepted parts of the Jewish scripture as canon (Peters, 2004). There is a lot of hype about the biblical condemnations of homosexuality, the clearest verses come from the Hebrew Scriptures, and others are indirect or unclear. It is Leviticus that the surest anti-gay text can be found, but the correctness of the translation have been questioned, for example, the bible has been translated into many languages, and many people take English or the King James bible for granted, yet ancient Greek or Hebrew has no literal translation to English for it simply does not have as many words (Benner, 2008). No surprise that one thousand years ago reading a bible as laymen was strictly forbidden, for organized needed to dominate the truth (Starr, 2013). The famous text “Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind; it is abomination” – Leviticus 18:22 for example uses “abomination” a word that has been used many times in the bible, but not as we know the word nowadays, as “detest”. In a religious sense the word has been used many times as “taboo” or “unrealistic”, “ritual wrong doing”. For eating rabbit, wearing different sorts of linen etc. (Bible Thumbing Liberal, 2013). Is also an abomination according to the bible, yet they were not prosecuted in history nor put to death. Judaism has the healthiest attitude towards sexual orientation. There is no suggestion in Judaism that celibate life is especially holy, sex is the most intimate and enjoyable way of deepening a relationship. Yet, like other holy books Torah law forbids the specific act of male homosexuality, not there is nothing about women. Yet, Torah law also forbids bigotry; therefore homophobia is prohibited as well. This attitude is probably why Israel, the only Judaist state in the world is the only state in the Middle-East which is moderately acceptable towards LGBT (Swift, 2015).

Islam is probably the most rigidly and inhumanly anti-homosexual in its practices of all the world religions. The verses from the Qur’an condemning homosexuality are much clearer than that those

the Christians use, hence that books are written in idiom of time, this is likely why writing styles are different and more “clearer” as we write nowadays (Biblical Studies UK, 2009). In all Muslim countries, and all areas where the Islamic Sharia law is enforced, homosexuality strictly illegal. All of Islam fits within the area of Christianity that we call “fundamentalist” with regards to sexuality, note that the vice versa is also true. The debates in Islam about homosexuality are not about whether it is acceptable, but merely about how severe the punishment should be (Hagi, 2007) (International Gay Rights Index, 2012). Seven countries in the world can give the death penalty as a punishment for homosexuality, all of them are Muslim, and in other Muslim countries, persecution against homosexuals is rife and violent, from government and religious institutions down to the actions of mobs and individuals.

Religion and by extend individual verses from holy books have been used to ostracize, discriminate, murder people or groups. Think for example, time of slavery, segregation, suppression of women, and homophobia. Abrahamic religions have contributed to the most negative and destructive attitudes towards sexual orientation, especially homosexuality, hence homophobia. Christian and Islamic communities and organizations are at the front of this. However, the liberal wings of some of religions including Christianity and Islam in Europe and North America have adopted to the wide acceptance of homosexuality.

So does this again mean, that a strong patriarchal structure which exists in religions is one of the root causes for homophobia? And of course with the traditional masculinity? I would personally argue that it is one of the main reasons nowadays, and also probably why lesbianism is left out, and why attitudes towards lesbian are better. However, when religious text were written the importance of protecting the tribe, instead of nowadays the religions was differently motivated. Protecting the tribe either Judaist, Christian, or Muslim meant large families and marriage with other tribes to

spread the strength and authority of the religion which would convert. Homosexuality, which cannot procreate actively meant stagnation and no reproduction. One of the reasons I have this conclusion is because upon arrival of primitive nomadic Jews and or pre-Christians and Muslim in Roman and Greek empire they were stunned by the sexual diffusion they allowed (Schumacher, 2014), not to be confused with modern definition of homosexuality. Large empires, large amounts of people no longer required necessarily large families for production nor spreading of religion, because the known world was already conquered. This of course does not mean that homosexuality is a product of advanced economies, however economic developed lays a path that gives access to homosexual liberation and equal opportunities. Religion in many parts of the world are being overrun by cultural changes from internal and external forces, this is unstoppable. Religion is trying to keep up with society, but is always a few steps later than modernity. In time, religions change, but not fast enough in this globalized world. Persecution, discrimination, ostracizing, murder will not be tolerated anymore. And of course let's not forget, if it truly were for high moral beliefs in religion, than homophobia, racism, oppression of women would no longer exist. Yet religious text are as powerful as weapons, and often used as weapon.

Economic and political influence on homophobia

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, economic development has created an environment in which LGBT liberation could take a stance. John D'Emilio quotes;

“Using Marxist analyses of capitalism, I argue that two aspects of capitalism, wage labor and commodity created the social conditions that made possible the emergence of a distinctive gay and lesbian identity (D'Emilio, 1983; 115-116)”

The reverse is also true, the lack of commodity and wage/income creates a situation in which physical labor is required and thus, high levels of reproduction and thus a nuclear family that consists of reproductive labor. The following section will provide; (1) you explicitly how capitalism, more precisely the market has indeed provided more freedom for homosexuals(2) It

inadvertently shows how the state has been sued by factions to impose their will upon other faction in society or abroad.

“There is another historical myth that enjoys nearly universal acceptance in the gay moment, the myth of the “eternal homosexual”. The argument runs something like this: Gay men and lesbians always were and always will be. We are everywhere, not just now, but throughout history, in all societies and in all periods. This myth served as a political function in the first year of gay liberation” (Gibson, 2014; 45-46)

When D’Emilio writes about the myth of the eternal homosexual, he is not denying that homosexuality has been absent from human history since time immemorial. What is saying that homosexuality as we know it nowadays, has never existed in the same format e.g. family, children, marriage etc. Homosexuality was something different depending on cultural interpretation. This is very interesting, because I would argue that gay men and lesbian have not always existed, they are a product of history, and have come into co-existence in a specific historical era. Especially when it comes to capitalism and the rise of nations. Capitalism has provided an environment for large numbers of people to identify homosexual, and be part of that community within the societal structure. It would now almost sounds that I completely ignore the first chapters of this project. The contrary is actually true, but homosexuality is indeed revolutionary as we see it now. Same-sex attraction has always existed and same-sex relationships in a different format, secretive or in high society (Ancient Greek, Roman, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian). Hence, that sexual preference is as strong for heterosexuals as for homosexuals, however if the environment (economics, politics, social structures, religion), does not allow for one of them than someone could be gay in a heterosexual relationship, as someone could hypothetically be straight in a gay relationship. The first, which is obviously the case in many parts of the world. So back, to why and how capitalism created more freedom for homosexuals. Capitalism has created the space necessary for homosexuals to live their lives as freely and independently as possible, something that has never

been accomplished before. One of the main reasons is that the Market system provides more flexibility and mobility for people, by economic means, if these means would not be available as they are of today than homosexual relationships would not be feasible in a strict economic sense. The market system operates under the principles of production, wage, and consumption. There could be two approaches to this, either Capitalism ideally drives people into heterosexual families, to reproduce labor, provide labor, and consume. Homosexual relationship in a modern sense would not be able to reproduce actively, yet they could very well have a family, which will ultimately reproduce again, and produce labor, provide labor and consume. It is therefore, that capitalism, and market forces actually provided for gay liberation. In history for example, marriage and relationship, were (completely) different than nowadays, and we do not have to go back a thousand years to understand that. For example, in the middle ages marriage between two people was out of economic gain, and political gain, without the two persons necessarily loving each other.

Economies might be separate from government, most of the times the links between them and homosexuality is evident. Homophobia, which is not necessary in an economic system, it would merely produce extra demand, it is in politics. Especially in global politics. I would argue that it is governments that have been the restricting force on gay laws, and consequently by withholding them, homophobia. Remember, the strong influence of patriarchal religions on government, progressive-liberal-secular countries have seen improvement in LGBT laws decades ago, while conservative religious western countries like the USA, Ireland, Australia, Germany, Italy, France, UK are about to move or recently passed progressive laws. But that is the West. Non-Western aligned countries like Russia, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, India, Uganda have passed regressive laws. Ideologically, religious-conservatism is slow towards change when it comes to progressive laws for LGBT. On the international theatre the problem is not LGBT laws, and never

have been. LGBT laws have been used to take a stance, and not necessarily in favor of LGBT but just to differentiate on an international level, a tool to reject what is “West”, which is troublesome to say the least, for as we have seen (homosexuality, same-sex attraction is not cultural), by denying LGBT community rights, they suffer, in the same way other marginalized groups have been suppressed in the past. Take for example the USA and Russia in recent years. Progressive laws vs regressive laws, respectively. The same goes for African nations, to show the West that they are not interested in cultural or political domination. It is needless to say that it is ultimately the fault of politics in both countries that boost homophobia, either oversea indirectly, or directly in their own country.

Conclusion

After exploring several key areas within sexual orientation and influence on homophobia, it is good to combine them into one overview. In the introduction we mentioned that the question should be; “what causes sexual orientation to differentiate?” From a genetic and environmental sense, sexual attraction and, by extension, homosexuality is not innate in the purely deterministic sense necessarily, as genetics make up for only a portion of sexual orientation. Deterministically we are not being born with a pre-programmed mechanism which determines precisely who and what we find attractive, but it is in point of fact innate because the mechanism operates unconsciously and we have no conscious control over which parameters the mechanism acquires from our surrounding environment. Homosexuality is not, therefore, a direct adaptation but rather a byproduct of an adaptation, sexual attraction one of many different outputs that this heuristic mechanism is capable of generating. One could argue that in the right environment the chances for homosexuality is less, which in my opinion makes no sense, for the variety of parameters and environmental factors are too great to ever become either ideally “heterosexual” or ideally “homosexual”.

This accounts for continuity of homosexuality across the human race and for the fact that it arises even in hostile cultural environment with strong social taboos against same sex attraction. The observed prevalence of homosexuality is therefore, merely an expression of the probability that this mechanism will acquire parameters for an attraction to members of the same sex.

Knowing what and how sexual orientations differentiates us, it is easier to understand homophobia and combat it. As outlined in the aim of the project, it is to eliminate homophobia, by creating awareness on a tolerance, acceptance, but most importantly understanding level. By introducing culture and patriarchy combined with religion and history we already could see that they actually overlap. Homophobia has roots in culture, and religion but come mainly from reinforced patriarchal norms and traditional understanding of masculinity. The last part on economics and politics shown us that economics has actually provided an environment for LGBT community to grow and become independent and create an identity which we have never seen before on such a revolutionary scale. Politically, like religion I believe that LGBT only has suffered from their oppression, it has always been political structures and religious structures that up to today deny LGBT community equal rights. Overall, this theoretical part of the project has given you as reader insight into what the challenges are, and perhaps more importantly what homosexuality is and represents, and how it is linked to homophobia. Based on my conclusion that especially patriarchy and traditional masculinity which is so intrinsically rooted in all layers, I realize how complicated it is to actually change the attitude towards homosexuality. It does however, comfort me that in the countries that have passed progressive laws the attitudes towards homosexuals have become better over time. Mainly, because anyone of us, has a friend, a family members, a co-worker, or acquaintance that is in fact LGBT, which makes people see the suffering first hand, and reaffirm that they are perfectly normal

Discrimination



homophobia
sucks

(not in a good metaphoric way)

Be Careful Who You Hate
It Might Just Be
Someone You Love

HOMOPHOBIA

Hatred is not a family value



HOMOPHOBIA



Homophobia?

Now That's a Choice!

The struggle against homophobia

The following chapter in this project has been designed to help LGBT campaigners and workshop teacher to give the LGBT community as well as non-LGBT community a brief insight of what exactly homosexuality represents and perhaps more importantly what it is not. This project will have various aspects, including video materials that have already been published, on homophobia, on how to deal with it from a religions perspective, and to give you understanding how homosexuality affects you as a LGBT or as a friend, family member, co-worker, teacher etc.

The theoretical part of this project serves as a platform for the various areas you might have to address as teacher or to face as LGBT or hopefully, as friend, family members, or co-worker. In the introduction of the theoretical part and the aim of the project, I already made it clear that the ultimate goal of is to create awareness, on a tolerance level, acceptance level, but perhaps more importantly an understanding level. Hence, that any human being might out of cultural/religious stand point of view not tolerate or accept LGBT, however giving especially those people understanding of what it means to be LGBT.

Objectives of the project

1. Identify where homophobia is most often seen.
2. Provide material, e.g. video, text, data to spread the importance of dealing with homophobia.
3. Identify key areas to address when it comes to homophobia
4. Consider right approach
5. Create a workshop

Table 6 Objectives of the project

With the right approach, and the right material, we together should create the awareness necessary for people to judge LGBT. For too long, LGBT has been mystified and persecuted under false claims and pretexts which have reinforced homophobia.



What are we looking at?

First let's go over the word "homophobia" In the common, cultural meaning of the word, "homophobia" refers to the maintenance of negative and discriminatory views toward gay people. It is not a "phobia" in a psychiatric sense. Rather, the word serves as a concise way to refer to discrimination against those who are gay, in the same way that the words "racism" and "sexism" relate to discrimination based on race and gender, respectively.

What are we trying to achieve?

The aim in a broader sense, as previously mentioned is to create understanding for LGBT, and with it the effect of eliminating "homophobia". Now "homophobia" happens in all layers of society that is why we should aim to create a LGBT friendly school, not by putting up billboards "gay friendly" no, by educating the children that enroll at school. This does not only include school teaching but also home talks with parents. I am convinced that a good understanding of LGBT will diminish "homophobic" violence drastically. In my personal opinion on of the weaknesses of pro LGBT campaigns has always been, exclusion of heterosexual people in the debate, gay prides, LGBT campaigns too often focus on the "pride" side, which excludes the heterosexual community, and one could therefore argue that it would only boost homophobia, by casting themselves and others aside as not part of the group.

I AM ~~GAY.~~
I AM ~~STRAIGHT.~~
I AM ~~LESBIAN.~~
I AM ~~BISEXUAL.~~
I AM ~~TRANSGENDERED.~~
I AM HUMAN.

Who are we addressing?

Since the theoretical part had an inter-disciplinary approach, it would be a waste to not include a lot of people at this point. Naturally, the people who could be identified as “homophobic” should be reached, but how do you reach someone who is “homophobic” from the beginning? School curriculum nowadays in the Netherlands include mandatory sex education, this includes different orientations. One could argue to hand out leaflets, but “homophobia” is not solved by a few leaflet, as mentioned before we should aim to create “understanding”, with that understanding comes tolerance and acceptance in the majority of the cases, for most of the cases are pure hatred based on false conclusions, out of bigotry etc.

The plan is to offer this plan, the theoretical material and practical approach into school settings. However, as said there is already a program running, which is solid as a rock as they claim. But that is exactly the problem, the Dutch system is based upon “tolerance”! Now that would be sufficient if that would indeed solve “homophobia” it simply does not (Eenheid, 2013). So instead of focusing solely on tolerance, we should aim for understanding!

Remember:

“Understanding is a psychological process related to an abstract or physical object, such as a person, situation, or message whereby one is able to think about it and use concepts to deal adequately with that object” (Oxford University, 2015).”

Include the interdisciplinary theoretical and practical part in school settings to not just aim at tolerance and acceptance but at true understanding, after which I am convinced people will look differently towards the LGBT community. It is well known that anti-gay violence happens most under the age of 30 by young men (Eenheid, 2013). We should aim there, but not stop there! Children and young people are easy to influence, but what if parents tell you something opposite to what school teaches you? Exactly, that is why we should not limit this work to schools only, but expand it to community meeting places, where parents gather. However, I also believe there is a

wide misunderstanding among the LGBT community itself, so therefore we should also aim to re-inform the LGBT community on the problems, and their part within the problem.

So, the aim is at:

- **young people in schools (age 20 – 25)**
- **Community buildings, meetings places for parents**
- **All humans in society should be aware of this**



Initial aim should be to attract College/University students, from any discipline

- **Teachers and co-workers of the school/Universities**

Note that “understanding” is only created when we approach non-LGBT people as well as LGBT people, it is vital to join together!

A workshop against Homophobia! The age for Understanding!

We have already set a goal of the project and we identified the people of the project. The next step of this project is to provide a platform of people which have information and network which can help you, to start up and guide you along the lines of a successful project.

Networking is important, because your local school might not have the funding, or perhaps only partial funding for you. That is exactly why you should contact: **COC Nederland**, COC Nederland is non-profit organization which can provide you with access to the government, materials, guest speakers, and guidance at your school. The other network contact you should consider is the **Gay-Straight Alliance** in The Netherlands, it is has a wide community globally to spread LGBT awareness.

It is vitally important you have permission from your own school, however with a broader network you will definitely be more successful.

The external help is of course of value, but besides the outside people, you definitely also want to have inclusive leaders, and allies in your school. Whether you are a teacher or a student, it is important you publicly praise staff members who actively promote inclusive environments. This practice both affirms their positive actions and creates a culture in which other staff members and students are unafraid to be ally of your project.

Organizing a workshop!

Setting up a detailed plan for a week against “homophobia” by creating “understanding”. LGBT community people live in every part in the world. They are members of every age, ethnic, and religious group. And in very country, LGBT face discrimination based on their gender identity and sexual orientation. As High Commissioner said;

“In all regions, people experience violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity...Violations include, but are not limited to, killings, rape, and physical attacks, torture, arbitrary detention, the denial of rights to assembly, expression and information, and discrimination in employment, health and education. (Badgett, et al., 2014)”

The following section is focused on the daily activities that could be organized, naturally any other suggestions by your own team can be included.

Step 1 Understanding Homophobia and Violence

The key questions of this day is: “When are you yourself? Can I always be like this? And how important is this to me?”

The idea is to allow people to talk about themselves in a communicative friendly session, in which you will sit in a circle. Individually you will think about the question “When are you yourself” Obviously this is not limited to LGBT people, it is vital to include non-LGBT people to peer-check with other people the second question “Can I always be like this” Something that is obvious for someone, can be completely uncomfortable for the other one. Besides the two previous mentioned question, the question: “How important is this to me” is equally important, someone who does not

have to think about the second question, might automatically not see this as a vital question, for it is the norm and that person, has probably never faced the challenges a LGBT person goes through. Important teaching material in this case is the “understanding” of Galtung’s dimension of violence. In sum, violence is any physical, emotional, verbal, institutional, structural or Spiritual behavior, attitude, policy or condition that diminishes, dominates or destroys ourselves and others (Galtung, 1991). You could debate the theoretical part, and select which part leads to each of the different dimension of violence, and do not hesitate to include other examples.

Direct Violence

Violence can take many forms. In its classic form, it involves the use of physical force, like killing or torture, rape and sexual assault, and beatings. Verbal violence, such as humiliation or put downs, is also becoming more widely recognized as violence. Peace and conflict studies scholar Johan Galtung describes direct violence as the 'avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life which makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. Threat to use force is also recognized as violence.'

Cultural Violence

Cultural violence is the prevailing attitudes and beliefs that we have been taught since childhood and that surround us in daily life about the power and necessity of violence. Consider the telling of history which glorifies, records and reports wars and military victories rather than people's nonviolent rebellions or the triumphs of connections and collaboration. Nearly all cultures recognize that killing a person is murder, but killing tens, hundreds or thousands during a declared conflict is called 'war'.

Structural Violence

Structural violence exists when some groups, classes, genders, nationalities, etc. are assumed to have, and in fact do have, more access to goods, resources, and opportunities than other groups, classes, genders, nationalities, etc., and this unequal advantage is built into the very social, political

and economic systems that govern societies, states and the world. These tendencies may be over such as Apartheid or more subtle such as traditions or tendency to award some groups privileges over another. One article to share with people: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/olan-harrington/the-day-i-held-my-boyfriends-hand_b_6271910.html

VIOLENCE TRIANGLE GALTUNG

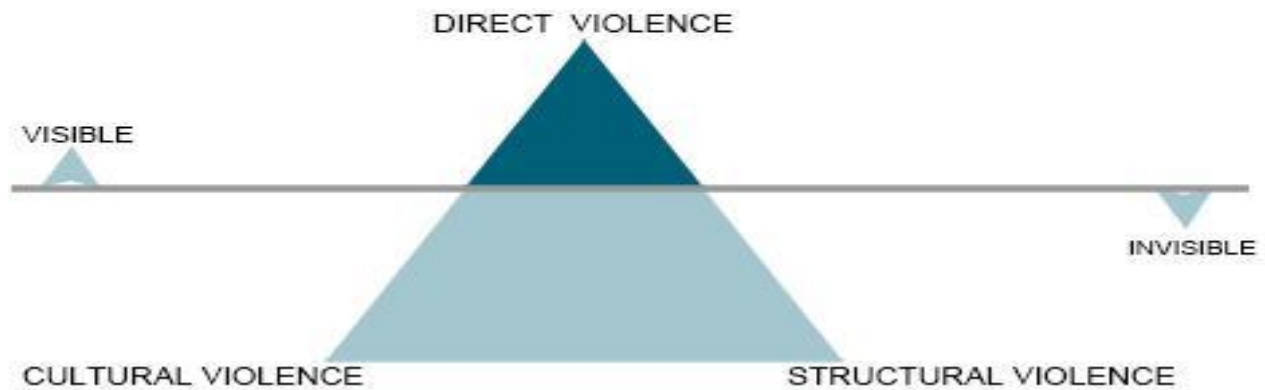


Table 7 Violence Triangle Galtung (Sakah, 2013)

In the afternoon, a variety of plays could be organized at which “stereotypes” are central, let every selected group think of stereotypes of LGBT and Non-LGBT people. As soon as a lit is made an acting stage could be organized, or music to identify those stereotypes, with of course the aim to see how they have a profound effect on how people feel, e.g. clothing, behavior etc.



Step 2 Traditional Masculinity & Religion

Understanding, LGBT and Homophobia means you have to understand the root causes. Traditional masculinity, and femininity is take for granted, and thus, often not seen by non-LGBT people as well as LGBT. The previous day we already talked about when, and how we are comfortable, but the real question is “why” do we feel comfortable? Teaching people on masculinity, and femininity will certainly uncover (obvious) yet often not known problems, when it comes to dealing with homophobia.

The theoretical part of this project already gives you an impression of masculinity, I would advise to back this up with videos some examples are:

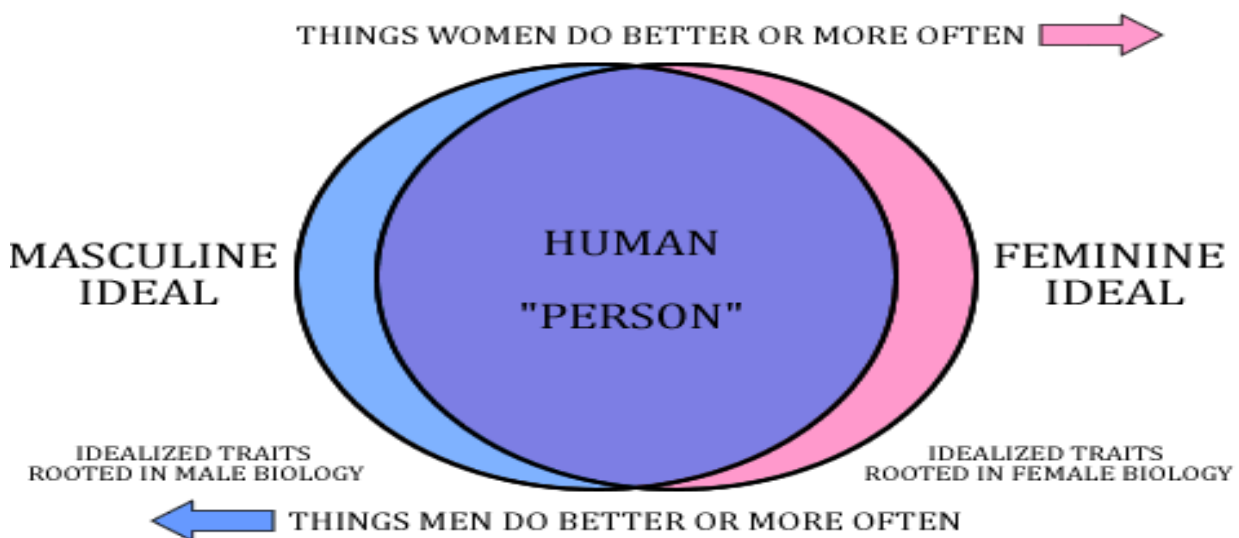
Geert Hofstede on Masculinity versus Femininity <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pyr-XKQG2CM>

What is Masculinity? –The Way of Men <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-JWqHIKpU8>

Big Man on Campus: Beyond Traditional Masculinity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Zap0WOZsAo>

Fear of Femininity: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rH8dC2VcFq0>

Redefining masculinity: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SK0XON6_do



Top: Table 8 Gender assumptions bottom: Table 9 Masculine vs Feminine Ideals

It would be interesting to combine the traditional masculinity with religion, especially LGBT people are worried about that, especially if they are religious. Perhaps more importantly people use(d) religion to bash, persecute, and discriminate against LGBT people. It would be interesting to organize a session in which a question round is started, and ask the people what they “know” about religion and LGBT. Share the stories and finalize with the following movie:

For the Bible Tells Me So: www.veoh.com/watch/v18496223THBFsstz

And, **Things Don't Go the Way He'd like:** http://www.upworthy.com/a-stunning-blonde-blue-eyed-freshman-sits-next-to-him-in-church-things-dont-go-the-way-hed-like?g=2&c=tpstream&fb_ref=Default

Key concept of this day in respect to religion are:

“Be Accepting” You will teach that our Maker made men to act like men, made men to be “one man, one women, for life,” made men to be normal. Because the boy believes in God, he’ll believe what you say about God.

“Be supportive” And, when you discover how ill he is, my dear youth pastor, you won’t call him in for counsel. You won’t telephone his folk. You won’t wonder about that sermon of yours.

“Be open” The boy will imagine that his soul and the soul of the freshman are being knit together, stitch by stitch, a new stretch of yarn every time they share the back row seat. With each knitting, the boy is learning.

“Be aware” You’ve seen him. He sits in the back; he’s one of the young ones, only fourteen. Soon, the boy will begin to learn something new about himself, something old, something he can never (un)learn. (Michael, 2014)





Step 3 Love is all you need

Wednesday will be in light of “love” When does it happen? Is it weird/uncomfortable falling in love with the same-sex or the opposite-sex?

Being in love with someone is like magic happens between two people, share stories between the people in the audience, ask people to describe what love is, and what it does to a human being. Also add to the discussion, what it means to love someone that is known as an impossible love. I am convinced that the stories between straight people and gay people are remarkably similar.

A next step would be to write down stories about “love” or create poetry in which “love” is central. Poetry without a specific gender, or orientation can be inter-changed, which will boost the spirit of similarity, Love is love.

There is also a movie online (satirical), to promote and support LGBT rights worldwide, focused on love, especially if it is impossible. It is the reverse to what heterosexual couples actually experience daily, it is exactly what homosexual people face when it comes to love and relationships.

“Love is all you need”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f9jICOMFNtM>

“Marriage”

<http://videosift.com/video/Jonathan-Dwayne-A-story-about-love>





Step 4 Acceptance and Tolerance

Acceptance and Tolerance, what is it? How important is it?

Whether or not you know their identity, you can be certain that you are teaching LGBT students.

Visible support and small acts of kindness go a long way in helping these youth feel safer and find harmony at school. Not only does fulfilling the role of ally let them know they are not alone, it models for other students that gay and transgender classmates are their peers, worthy of respect and acceptance. More often than not, bullies operate with the tacit approval of the school community.

Here are six LGBT-friendly actions teachers and school staff can take to turn their classroom and hallways into tolerant zones. Since, we create a “zone” for everyone, we might just want to create a “sign” saying; **HeterosexualLesbianGayBisexualTransgenderQuestioning** “**HLGTOQ**” a more inclusive approach to sexuality.

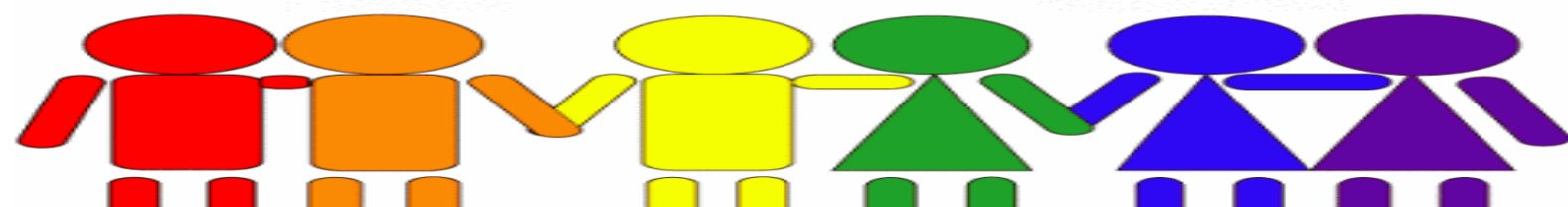
1. Make a “Safe Zone” sign in your classroom and office. It signals to LGBT youth that you’ve got their backs, but besides that, include the non-LGBT people, by having a sign that creates a zone for everyone, no one wants to be separated from the group.

2. Confront homophobic remarks, including slights and slurs that you overhear. Many students use terms like “fag,” “dyke” and “that’s so gay” without thinking. Let them know in no uncertain terms that such speech is unacceptable.

3. Seek opportunities to incorporate the contributions of LGBT people in science, history, athletics and the arts into your curriculum.

4. Don’t assume any student is gay—or not gay. If LGBT students do confide in you, thank them for their trust. Follow the student’s lead about what else you should do. Perhaps sharing this information is enough at this point. But if the student needs additional support, you can provide invaluable help by being versed in the LGBT-competent resources available in your school, district and community.

5. Organize or encourage inspire others to arrange a service with a qualified youth advocate about how to create a safer school for LGBT students.



Step 5 Reclaiming full humanity

Reclaiming our full humanity between all genders, and sexual orientation. As mentioned in the theoretical part, the traditional masculinity is one of the root causes of homophobia, as I personally believe that it is especially men, who suffer from this and thus project this on males is why we should re-sensitize men to eliminate homophobia. Naturally, this believe of traditional masculinity is also prevailing under female population in many parts of the world. Let us reclaim our humanity and join together! The following material has been used to re-sensitize, of primary importance to break the ideas of traditional masculinity (Bearman, 2013).

Reclaim Intimacy: Begin to directing the unconditional, loving admiration you used to reserve for people you're attracted to, outward towards all kinds of people in all kinds of relationship. Start new relationships with people you thought would never be your friend. Who are the people in your life who are ready to receive your trust and vulnerability? Give your trust to them and ask them same in return! If you choose to have a primary partner, please remember that no matter how strong the relationship, one person is not enough for any human being to be close with. It is in your nature to desire closeness with all people, closeness that rarely has anything to do with sex. We have yet to discover what it will be like to have so much and such varied closeness in our lives (Bearman, 2013).

Reclaim feelings: The passionate intensity you have saved only for sexual encounters can fire up all areas of your life. What else besides sex ignites that much passion? What dreams and desires for your life you need to rekindle in order to burn as brightly about your daily existence? Take on the challenges that make waking up exciting, that fill you with a sense of wonder and magic. Expand your horizon of what you feel and think, find feelings long buried and set them free. Cry wet tears

and laugh with your whole voice, tremble with fear and giggle with embarrassment, storm with outrage at the cruel ways we have been hurt. Weep with tenderness at the beauty of our existence. We need one another to feel these glorious feelings, so ask for all the help and love and attention you need, and you really need it! We cannot do this alone, we should not do this alone! (Bearman, 2013)

Reclaim your body: Sensual pleasure is our birthright, and it is available in thousands of forms besides sex! Take off your shoes and walk barefoot through the grass, the mud, the rain, Learn to breathe freely, so that every breath reminds you that you are alive right now! Dance, finding and releasing the movement within you, reveling in the gorgeous organism that you are. Take joy in the movement of your muscles, the feel of you sheets sliding on your skin as you lie down to rest, the splash of cool water on your face, and swish of that coolness in your mouth as you drink. Hold hands! Become aware! (Bearman, 2013)

Step 6: Reflection

The final step of this workshop is to self-reflect with the participants, a model that could be applied is the following:

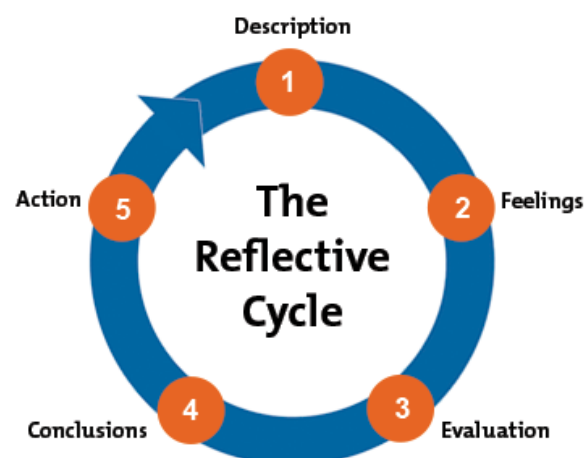


Table 10 Gibb's Reflective Model (Eyre, 2011)

Step 1 Description

First, ask yourself, or your peer to describe the situation in detail (what have you learned) At this stage we simply want to find out what we learned.

Consider asking:

- Why were you there?
- Who else was there?
- What happened?
- What did you do?
- What did other people do?

Step 2 Feelings

The next step is to encourage yourself and your peer to talk about emotions. Remember the last step of the workshop, feel free to show emotions and discuss them, just do not evaluate them yet.

- What did you feel before this workshop, or an experience took place?
- What do you think other people felt during this situation/experience?
- What did you feel after the situation/experience?
- What do you think and feel about the situation/experience now?
- What do you think your peers feel about this situation?

Step 3 Evaluation

Encourage each other to look objectively at what approaches appealed to you and which did not, and why?

- What was positive?

- What was negative?
- What went well?
- What did not went well?
- What changed?
- What did you or your peers contribute to the experience?

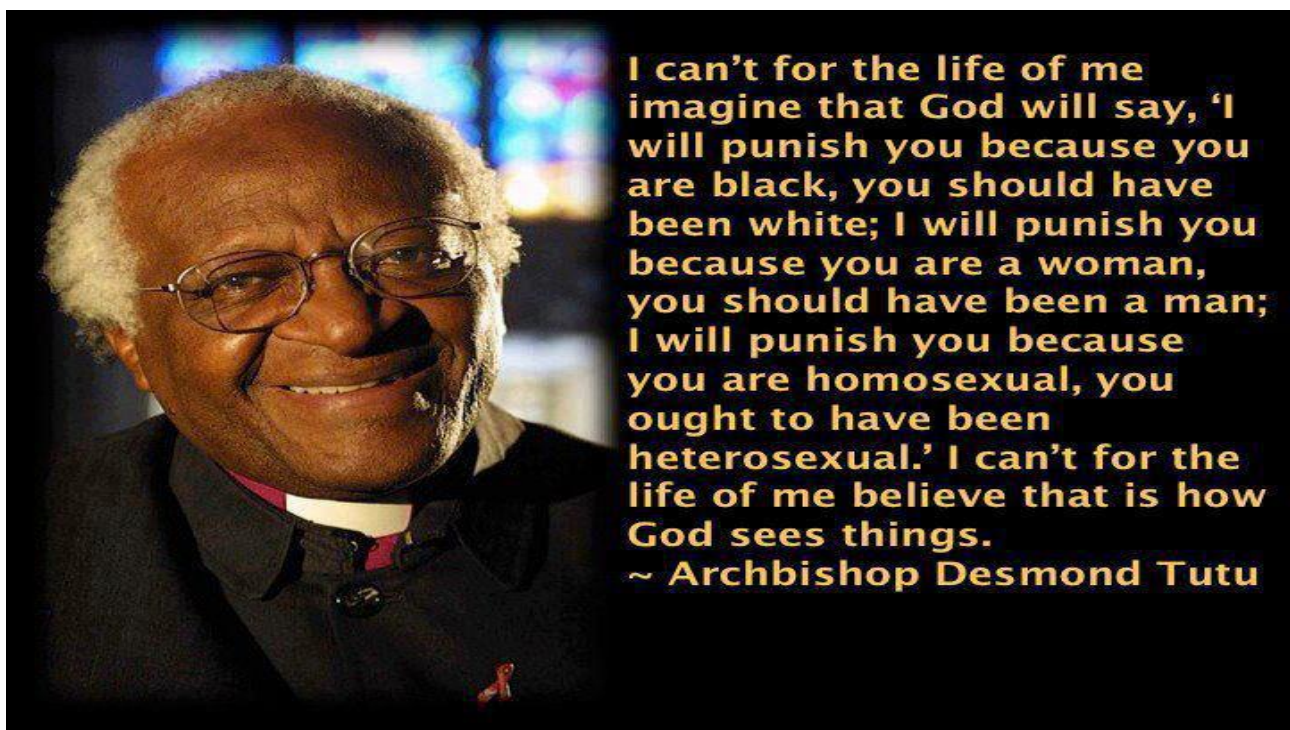
Step 4 Conclusion

Draw conclusion from your opinion and experience, and discuss them with your peers.

- How could this have been a more positive experience for everyone involved?
- If you are faced with homophobia again, what would you do differently?
- What skills do/did you (have to) develop?
- Was it effective? And do you think that this would make a difference?

Step 5 Action

The last step is to make action, discuss with you peers what you action plan is! Remember we already created a few; confront homophobic remarks, make a safe-zone sign. Perhaps, spreading the message, or challenging the workshop, by including new ideas, new theories etc.



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