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CURE Project Dilemma Stories for Courses

Promoting active citizenship

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Story

For five years Peter / Gloria has been working as a teacher for History and Philosophy at the only grammar school in the small city called Ambigueston. Although he [replace here and below by “she” or appropriate if Gloria is the protagonist] was used to live in the capital, he now likes to work in this small city, because he experienced the colleagues at school as well as the neighborhood of his new home as nice, friendly and supportive. Therefore, for him the problems and challenges due to profession and all-day-life seem to be manageable.

Ambigueston is the regional capital of an area far away from the economic and social centres of the country. Thirty years ago, the city started to change from mainly agricultural towards industrial value added, because an international automotive supplier has built a factory close to the city. Especially people working on the surrounding farms were attracted by this new opportunity for employment. Additional to this group the company brought in many workers from abroad, mainly from low-income countries close to Europe, e.g. Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Greece and Serbia. Due to this migration, the population of the city can be described as a mixture of different cultures and religions forming more or less hermetic groups and living together in more or less closed up quarters. Recently a new investment was given to the city and to the region establishing start-ups for technological innovation. This project has attracted already nearly thousand young people from outside to settle down.

Peter's school is located in the city centre. Some of the students (around 40%) are living close by, coming from Protestant family backgrounds with a middle class income. There are also students (40%) coming from farming families and having a catholic background. The third group (20%) are children from families of the migration workers. Most of them have an islamic background, yet there are also some students with Greek and Serbian orthodox orientations.

Recently in the lesson on Philosophy, Peter has introduced the European Convention on Human Rights. Applying this idea he initiated a discussion on the legalization of homosexuality, and the discourse on the UNO-declaration against the discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Peter himself is gay, yet up-till-now he couldn't decide for his coming out.

His students have identified tendencies of homophobia in their particular social living area. Very spontaneously they decided to organize something like a „Love-parade“ in the city. They have already motivated the majority of the students at their school to participate and to involve in this parade. Yet the school principal and 1/3 of the colleagues are strictly against the realization of this idea.

The students ask Peter to help them, especially because this action was initiated by his teaching Philosophy.

What shall Peter do?

Serial story

Some parents of Peter's students support the idea of their children. One of them, Henry, is a lawyer with liberal views. For two legislation periods he has been working in the City Council as a member of the ruling political party. Henry personally is very popular by all social groups in the city, because of his open-mindedness.

Therefore, he would be nominated for the next mayor. Due to his engagement he hasn't much time to be with his son Antony. Yet he always tries to support his son's ideas. Henry has also made friendship with Peter.
Should Peter go for support to Henry?

The parents of two Muslim students have claimed against the project and against Peter.
What should Peter do?

Dimensions of dilemma

Role / Position of a person versus intimate affairs

Serial story: increasing and widening the issues by bringing in different persons

Related to selected course content / topics

Civic disobedience as a tool of democracy

Living together of heterogeneous groups

Dialogical and participatory problem solving

Possible involved values

Educational Aims / Developmental objectives

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