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**Title:** Peace-building without Western Saviors? A Decolonial Approach to Teaching African Gender and Sexuality Politics to American Students

**Abstract:** American college students often enter Africa-focused courses with the belief that African women, transgender people, and same-gender-loving people are particularly oppressed. Western media coverage of homophobic speeches and actions, of sexual violence, and of female genital cutting on the African continent has led many caring students sympathetic to the narrative that Africans are in sore need of rescue by Westerners like themselves. This chapter will describe my efforts to complicate these perceptions in an upper-level seminar on African gender and sexuality politics. Through facilitating collective engagement with texts that present varying constructions of African genders and sexualities, analyze differing political dynamics, and describe African initiatives challenging epistemic, structural, and physical violence, this course sought to deepen students' understanding of gender and sexuality politics, to encourage them to critically engage with Western representations of other places, and to enable them to contribute to collaborative peace-building efforts.

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