Weaving Together a Tapestry of Historical Knowledge in the Post-apartheid School History Curriculum: The Case of Palesa Beverley Ditsie

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Abstract

In this article, we investigate the exclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) experiences, contributions and narratives in the post-apartheid South African school history curriculum. We position the historical contributions of Palesa Beverley Ditsie, a pivotal human rights activist, freedom fighter and filmmaker who fought against apartheid and during the HIV/Aids crisis, as a critical case study of this erasure. The article is situated against the backdrop of the 2015-2016 student protests, notably the #MustFall movements, which catalysed a national reckoning with the pervasive coloniality of South African higher (and basic) education and demanded, amongst others, the radical decolonisation of curricula and the explicit inclusion of LGBTQIA+ experiences, contributions and narratives. However, despite

students' calls for epistemic and ontological justice, the contributions of Ditsie and her contemporaries, such as Tseko Simon Nkoli, remain peripherised. Employing decolonial queer theory and the metaphor of knowledge as a tapestry of the theoretical orientations, and using critical discourse analysis as the methodology, we make a direct appeal to the History Ministerial Task Team (HMTT) (Department of Basic Education [DBE], 2015, 2018), by arguing that the project of Africanising (and by extension: decolonising) the school history curriculum must be expanded to urgently include, rehistoricise and recentre Ditsie's experiences, as well as her contributions to the fight against apartheid and her contributions to the country's constitutional democracy. Such an inclusion, we argue, is fundamental to weaving a more complete tapestry of historical knowledge, enabling history educators and their learners to challenge the heteronormativity of traditional history writing and fostering a truly intersectional understanding of the struggle for liberation and human rights in South Africa.

Keywords: History Ministerial Task Team; Palesa Beverley Ditsie; School history; Queer histories

Introduction

As post-apartheid South Africa marks over three decades since the decriminalisation of same-sex relations—a landmark achievement in the nation's commitment to protect diverse sexual and gender identities (Matebeni, 2017). It also marks over 30 years of sustained effort to decolonise, Africanise and transform its school history curricula (Maluleka, 2021). This fight was thrust powerfully back into the national conscience during the 2015-2016 student protests. As the clarion call of #FeesMustFall and #RhodesMustFall echoed across university campuses, students demanded more than just financial access; they demanded a fundamental reimagining of knowledge itself. They challenged the nation to ask: Whose histories are most valued and whose are not? And crucially, it was insisted that a decolonised education must explicitly include and rehistoricise Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) experiences, contributions and narratives.

However, despite these parallel journeys of legal and curricular reform, a significant dissonance remains. The experiences and pivotal contributions of the LGBTIQA+ community to the anti-apartheid struggle, the establishment of the country's constitutional democracy and ongoing fights against intersectional oppressions continue to be marginalised and systematically excluded from the knowledge base of post-apartheid

school history curriculum.

In direct response to this epistemic and ontological erasure, this article calls on the History Ministerial Task Team (HMTT) (DBE, 2015), in its ongoing work, to expand the scope of the gender history framework proposed in its 2018 report (DBE, 2018). The intentional inclusion, rehistoricisation and recentring of LGBTIQA+ experiences and contributions are specifically advocated for within the new proposed school history curriculum. This is done by highlighting the life and work of Palesa Beverley Ditsie as a critical case study exemplifying the contributions made by the LGBTIQA+ community that have been overlooked.

To ground this argument, we first outline our theoretical foundations that include decolonial queer theory and the concept of knowledge as a tapestry. Thereafter, our application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is detailed as the primary methodological tool that we used to investigate the exclusion of LGBTIQA+ experiences, contributions and narratives in the post-apartheid school history curricula in South Africa. Thirdly, a subsequent literature review was conducted that traces the evolution of post-apartheid school history curriculum development, with latest effort being the HMTT and its 2018 report.

In the fourth section of the article, we actively counter historical silences that exist in South African post-apartheid school history curricula by tracing Ditsie's seminal contributions, including her activism against the apartheid regime, her leadership in LGBTIQA+ liberation movements and her vital work in HIV/Aids awareness advocacy. As a way of concluding, an appeal is made to the HMTT to weave together diverse historical experiences, contributions and narratives to foster a rich tapestry of historical knowledge—one that acknowledges the complex, intersectional nature of South Africa's past and provides a more truthful foundation for its future.

Theoretical orientations: A decolonial queer theory and knowledge as a tapestry

This article is anchored by two interconnected theoretical frameworks. The first is a decolonial queer theory. To understand this fusion, it is essential to trace the journey of the term 'queer' itself. Originating in the Global North as a derogatory label for those deemed 'abnormal' and 'nonhuman', it was strategically reclaimed by scholars from the 1980s onward (Butler, 1990; Sedgwick, 1990). These scholars transformed 'queer' into a theoretical tool designed to rupture rigid norms of kinship, gender and sexuality (Butler,

1994). At its core, queer theory challenges universal, Eurocentric and heteronormative explanations of the world. It meticulously deconstructs the binary conceptions of sex (as biological) and gender (as socially constructed), arguing instead that gendered subjectivity is performative—a fluid, context-dependent identity continually sustained through repetitive social practices (Butler, 1990; McCormic, 2013).

However, this Northern-born theory has not been universally embraced. Scholars from the Global South, and Africa in particular, have rightly critiqued its foundations in postmodern and poststructuralist thought, which can fail to fully articulate the lived realities and ways of knowing of the colonised Other (Ombagi, 2019, 2021). Some have argued that this specific formulation of queer theory should be acknowledged, but not promoted as a primary research strategy in Africa, as it can undermine local attempts to understand queer experiences on their own terms to reclaim humanity and identity (Macharia, 2015, 2016; Woubshet, 2003).

In response to these limitations, a dynamic scholarly movement has emerged. Rather than rejecting queer theory outright, these theorists advocate for stretching and strengthening it, treating it as a 'traveling theory' (Said, 2014), that must adapt, take on new hues, and be recontextualised within the specific realities of the Global South. This requires a critical awareness of its limitations, particularly in the face of pervasive coloniality and African neocolonialism (Abbas & Ekine, 2013; Otu & Van Klinken, 2023).

It is within these complex voyages of theory that queer theory productively encountered decolonial thought, which critiques the enduring structures of coloniality in power, knowledge and being (Quijano, 2000; Walsh, 2023). From this nuanced encounter, decolonial queer theory was born. This hybrid framework alerts one to the geopolitics of knowledge, where the Global South is often seen as a supplier of raw experiences, while the Global North exports theories to be applied (Pereira, 2019).

This study adopts this decolonial queer theory because it is concerned with the rich diversity, complexity and historical development of gendered and sexualised subjectivities in the global South (Otu & Van Klinken, 2023). The term 'queer' is used from a decolonial perspective as an anti-essentialist umbrella term that embraces plurality and seeks to transform oppressive systems, rather than assimilate into them (Abbas & Ekine, 2013; Ubisi, 2021). Specifically, this framework provides the epistemic and ontological tools to question why the post-apartheid school history curriculum continues to exclude, in its knowledge base, the contributions, experiences and narratives of LGBTIQA+ freedom

fighters with a specific focus on Ditsie. We also used this framework to guide our analysis of post-apartheid curricular literature to demonstrate this exclusion, as well as highlight opportunities to reimagine a school history curriculum that includes, rehistoricises and recentres LGBTIQA+ contributions, experiences and narratives.

This act of reimagining was and is aided by a second theoretical framing: knowledge as a tapestry. This metaphor is informed by a decolonial approach that actively searches for epistemic and ontological diversity, pluriversality and the recognition of situated knowers (Mbembe, 2001; Santos, 2014). It insists on dismantling the hegemony of Eurocentric knowledge canons (Fataar, 2022) and instead, views knowledge as a universal project woven together from intricate, diverse systems. Like a tapestry, the goal is to interlace these distinct knowledge threads to create an inclusive future knowledge space for curriculum-knowledge building (Fataar, 2022).

This framework directly justifies the central argument of this study: the need to weave the contributions, experiences and narrative of LGBTIQA+ figures like Ditsie into the fabric of the post-apartheid South African school history curriculum, thereby, creating a richer, more truthful and complete tapestry of the national past.

Research methodology

A CDA was used to interrogate the representation, or lack thereof, of LGBTIQA+ individuals within post-apartheid South African school history curriculum. We engaged in a close reading of both the official curriculum policy documents and the surrounding scholarly debates, utilising a purposive sampling strategy to gather the most relevant data. Moving beyond a simple search for keywords, the application of CDA specifically involved reading for absence—analysing the telling silences, gaps and omissions to understand how exclusionary histories are systematically maintained and transmitted within and through the school history curriculum. This approach was chosen for its fundamental concern with how language manifests relationships of power, dominance and ideology (Martin & Wodak, 2003), which aligns directly with the study's decolonial queer theoretical framework. Guided by Fairclough's (1989) model, the analysis of this study moved dialectically through text description, interpretation of production and reception and social explanation, allowing us to expose the structural mechanisms that govern whose histories are included in, or excluded from the knowledge base of the post-apartheid school history curriculum.

Post-apartheid school history curricula

Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, a persistent effort has been underway to decolonise and Africanise the school history curriculum to liberate it from its colonial-apartheid past (Maluleka, 2018). This protracted struggle has resulted in the adoption of four distinct curricula, each representing a step in this ongoing process, with the latest being proposed by the HMTT in 2018 (DBE, 2018).

The first attempt, the Interim Core Syllabus (ICS), emerged during a period of national transition as the country sought to build a more equitable education system (Bertram, 2006; Jansen, 2001). Despite its aspirational context, the ICS failed to include, rehistoricise or recentre the contributions and experiences of the LGBTIQA+ community in the struggle against apartheid and the fight for basic human rights for all South Africans.

The ICS was soon succeeded by Curriculum 2005 (C2005) in 1997 (DBE, 1997), an outcomes-based model framed as a radical break from the colonial-apartheid past (Mthethwa & Maluleka, 2025). Promoted as an 'inclusive' curriculum that would dismantle Eurocentric knowledge and forge a new national identity based on constitutional principles (Siebörger, 2000; Van Eeden & Vermeulen, 2005), C2005 nonetheless, repeated the exclusion of LGBTIQA+ histories. This failure can be partly attributed to the fact that the development of C2005 was largely the responsibility of officials still aligned with apartheid-era epistemologies (Maluleka, 2021). Additionally, the exclusion can also be explained by the political compromises of the time over the genuine pedagogical or epistemic imperatives (Jansen, 1998).

In 2002, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) replaced C2005 following reviews that acknowledged its predecessor's limitations (DBE, 2002). The RNCS was explicitly marketed on the principles of social transformation, human rights and inclusivity, envisioning a learner imbued with democratic values (Bertram, 2020). However, despite these bold claims, the RNCS continued to be peripheralist and exclude LGBTIQA+ contributions and experiences in its knowledge base, including that of Ditsie (Maluleka & Godsell, 2024). This omission can be attributed to two primary factors: first, the deeply embedded epistemic coloniality that continued to dominate the RNCS knowledge structures, even amidst superficial changes in representation (Mthethwa & Maluleka, 2025). Second, the authors of the RNCS themselves, exercised a narrow historical lens, overlooking critically important subjects like Ditsie and the entire South African LGBTIQA+ community in the liberation struggle.

The subsequent introduction of CAPS in 2011 (DBE, 2009), was seen by some as a return to disciplinary familiarity. For others, it symbolised the enduring power of coloniality, because CAPS perpetuated the same epistemicide and marginalisation of its predecessors, privileging masculinist interpretations of the past and continuing to ignore LGBTIQA+ contributions (Maluleka, 2021; Wills, 2016). The persistent peripheralisation of the LGBTIQA+ community's contributions to the liberation struggle can be understood as a function of the new official master narrative that emerged in post-apartheid South Africa. As Wassermann (2017) suggests, this narrative, constructed around an imagined nationalism, downplayed the horrors of apartheid and created a sanitised history centered on a messianic Nelson Mandela and the ANC's triumphant transition to power in 1994. This process effectively erased complicating narratives. Wassermann's analysis signals the potent force of a rooted epistemic coloniality that, as Maluleka (2021: 80) argues, is "hellbent on preserving the status quo", actively engaging in epistemicide and rendering contributions and experiences like those of the LGBTIQA+ community historically insignificant within the national memory.

The appointment of the HMTT in **2**015 did not occur in an intellectual vacuum; it was directly propelled by the national fervour of the #MustFall student movements that emerged in 2015. These movements forcefully demanded the decolonisation of knowledge, curricula and institutions of learning. It was within this specific context of heightened demand for change and against the enduring backdrop of curricular exclusion, that the HMTT was formed.

The team's 2018 report emerged as a direct response to this pressure, representing a significant decolonial imperative. It rightly advocated for an Africa-centered approach and specifically recommended the rehistoricising and recentring of gender history, aligning with the student protests' call to dismantle patriarchal and Eurocentric narratives. However, while the inclusion of women's experiences is a necessary step toward intersectionality, the HMTT's recommendation remains worryingly trapped within a heteronormative framework. Consciously or unconsciously, it replicates the very exclusionary logic the student protests sought to overthrow**,** continuing the tradition of peripheralising LGBTIQA+ contributions and experiences, and lacking a truly inclusive gender-and-other gaze (Wills, 2016).

This critical omission betrays the expansive spirit of the 2015-2016 #MustFall movements and has profound consequences. This is because it perpetuates an existential crisis for LGBTIQA+ community, especially LGBTIQA+ history educators and learners,

by reinforcing their ontological and epistemic othering—a direct contradiction of the protests' demand for epistemic and ontological justice. Furthermore, it denies all history educators and learners, irrespective of their sexual orientations, the opportunity to learn about the foundational role of queer freedom fighters like Ditsie in contributing to building South Africa's constitutional democracy, thus presenting a fractured and incomplete history of the very liberation struggles the students in public universities in 2015-2016 were invoking.

Ultimately, by maintaining this absence, the proposed school history curriculum by the HMTT is denied its potential as a powerful site for combating the homophobia, transphobia and intersectional oppressions that plague South African schools and society—issues the student protests of 2015-2016 also highlighted. Including these narratives is, therefore, not merely an act of additive inclusion; it is an essential pedagogical strategy to actualise the decolonial goals of the protests. It is also a means to dispel ignorance, foster critical empathy, break down stereotypes and create safer, more understanding school communities. A curriculum that weaves in LGBTIQA+ history moves beyond mere tolerance to actively contribute to building a more just, inclusive and truthful national consciousness that was a central dream of the 2015-2016 uprising.

Palesa Beverley Ditsie

Ditsie is a human rights (LGBTIQA+) activist, musician, writer and filmmaker (Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action [GALA], 2020), who was born in 1971 in Orlando West, Soweto and was raised by her grandparents because her mother, a singer at the time, was usually touring Southern Africa. Ditsie recalls how, from a very young age, she knew that she was 'different' because at school her peers started dating each other, boys and girls, and she could not find someone who she could relate to at that level (GALA, 2020). This contributed to her melancholic and ambivalent condition at the time, which was then exacerbated by her family denying that she was 'gay' when she 'came out' to them (GALA, 2020). Because of these feelings of ambivalence, personal disconnection, liminality, invisibility and pariahdom, Ditsie tried to commit death by suicide (GALA, 2020).

In her journey to find herself and transcend those feelings of loneliness and alienation, Ditsie met Tseko Simon Nkoli in 1988 for the first time at a meeting in Johannesburg that led to the formation of the Gay and Lesbian Organisation of the Witwatersrand (GLOW) (Botes, 2023). Ditsie's involvement in GLOW, as a co-founder, ignited not only her activist self, but also her political persona, which was then nurtured by those around her, especially

Tseko, her lifelong confidant and best friend. GLOW was also a space in which Ditsie was able find her true self because, like Nkoli, Ditsie was also 'prepared to be herself at all costs'. Hence, at just eighteen years old, Ditsie publicly 'came out' and becoming one of the first Black lesbian to do so during apartheid. This was an act that had extraordinary personal consequences, as the publicising of her sexual orientation meant that she and her family lived in constant fear and in hiding for weeks just to avoid being sexually violated, and at worst, being killed or jailed (GALA, 2020).

It was, however, through her participation in GLOW that Ditsie was able to advance an intersectional struggle against apartheid and for human rights, especially those of Black lesbian women, Black women and Black queers in general. It was also through GLOW that Ditsie raised awareness around HIV/Aids (Mchunu, 2023) and fighting for free Antiretroviral treatment, as it was not freely available at time (Pakade, 2024; Reid, 2005).

On 13 October 1990, GLOW managed to host the first Johannesburg Pride, which acted as both a queer pride event and an anti-apartheid march. Ditsie, Tseko, Justice Edwin Cameron and many other LGBTIQA+ activists led this march which had over 800 participants (Martin, 2020). The march was met with much criticism, especially from religious groupings and onlookers who were present and described the march as 'disgusting' (South African History Online [SAHO], 2017b). Despite this, the march was a resounding success which paved the way for other similar marches across the country and elsewhere in the world (SAHO, 2017b).

A decade later, GLOW held its tenth Johannesburg march which attracted over 20 000 attendees, with Ditsie once again leading in the front, however, this time without her confidant and best friend, Tseko—who sadly transitioned to the ancestral world after suffering from Aids-related complications on 30 November 1998 at the age of 41. Ditsie and other LGBTIQA+ activists convinced the City of Johannesburg to rename a street corner in Hillbrow after Tseko, to honour and commemorate his memory and legacy. Thereafter, GLOW continued with its activist work with other LGBTIQA+ individuals and movements such as the Lesbians and Gays Against Oppression (LAGO) in the Western Cape; the Rand Gay Organisation, a multiracial lesbian and gay organisation based in Johannesburg formed by Alfred Machela; as well as the Organisation of Lesbian and Gay Activists (OLGA). Their efforts combined contributed to ensuring that the LGBTIQA+ community in South Africa was legally protected against any form of discrimination, oppression and segregation. In other words, GLOW and other organisations, with Ditsie, Tseko, Gcina Malindi, Edwin and Alfred as some of the leading figures, ensured that the

first democratic constitution (1996) included 'sexual rights orientation' in its Bill of Rights. The adoption of the democratic constitution also led to the 1998 Constitutional Court of South Africa judgement, *National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality v. Minister of Justice* (1998) (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 1998), which declared all sodomy laws repugnant to the constitution; leading to the decriminalisation of what was considered as homosexual acts that were passed under colonial and apartheid era.

However, for Ditsie, the struggle for LGBTIQA+ rights and the fight against all forms of intersectional oppressions did not stop with the adoption and enactment of the 1996 constitution—in fact, the struggle had to continue, because no one was free unless all peoples of the world were free from all forms of oppression. On 13 September 1995, Ditsie delivered a statement at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China (SAHO, 2017a). Ditsie addressed the gathering as a representative of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, the International Lesbian Information Service, the International Lesbian and Gay Association, and over fifty other organisations. Ditsie was amongst the first openly Black lesbian woman to do so and it was also the first time that the United Nations (UN) was addressed on LGBTIQA+ realities and rights and how the organisation could contribute in making sure that LGBTIQA+ rights are also seen as fundamental human rights that must also be protected (SAHO, 2017a). In her address, Ditsie highlighted the realities that many lesbians across the world continued to endure by the stating the following:

> *Yet every day, in countries around the world, lesbians suffer violence, harassment and discrimination because of their sexual orientation. Their basic human rights -- such as the right to life, to bodily integrity, to freedom of association and expression – are violated. Women who love women are fired from their jobs; forced into marriages; beaten and murdered in their homes and on the streets; and have their children taken away by hostile courts. Some commit suicide due to the isolation and stigma that they experience within their families, religious institutions and their broader community . Yet the majority of these abuses have been difficult to document because although lesbians exist everywhere in the world (including Africa), we have been marginalized and silenced and remain invisible in most of the world.* (Ditsie, 1995).

She further urged the UN to prioritise all human rights, especially those of lesbian women by saying the following:

> *… it [the UN] must similarly recognise that discrimination based on sexual orientation is a violation of basic human rights. [Because] No woman can determine the direction of her own life without the ability to determine her sexuality. Sexuality is an integral, deeply ingrained part of every human being's life and should not be subject to debate or coercion. Anyone who is truly committed to women's human rights must recognize that every woman has the right to determine her sexuality free of discrimination and oppression. I urge you to make this a conference for all women, regardless of their sexual orientation, and to recognize in the Platform for Action that lesbian rights are women's rights and that women's rights are universal, inalienable, and indivisible human rights. I urge you to remove the brackets from sexual orientation. Thank you.*(Ditsie, 1995).

> *After the UN statement, Ditsie continued with her activist work and in 2002 she released a documentary entitled: Simon and I, directed by herself and Nicky Newman. In it, she traces and documents her relationship with her late best friend, Tseko, and their involvement in the struggle. She does this through narration, interviews, newspaper clippings and archival footage of speeches and parades. Currently, Ditsie still continues with her activist work using other forms of expression such as music, film, dance and many others.*

Despite this extraordinary legacy, Ditsie's experiences and her contributions to South Africa's constitutional democracy, universal human rights and HIV/Aids awareness, continue to be de-historicised and de-centred from the knowledge base of the post-apartheid school history curriculum.

Weaving together a tapestry of historical knowledge in the post-apartheid school history curriculum with reference to Palesa Beverley Ditsie's contributions

The imperative to weave a more inclusive tapestry of historical knowledge for the post-apartheid curriculum is not merely an academic exercise; it is a direct response to the clarion call of the 2015-2016 student protests, which demanded the decolonisation of education and the queering of knowledge. This project of curricular transformation is vital for several interconnected reasons.

Firstly, the inclusion, rehistoricisation, and recentring of a figure like Ditsie in the knowledge base of the post-apartheid school history curriculum in post-apartheid South

Africa, can and would fundamentally strengthen an intersectional understanding of our past (Maluleka & Ledwaba, 2023). Ditsie's narrative, as traced in this article, intricately connects the anti-apartheid struggle with fights for LGBTIQA+ human rights, gender equality and health justice. By integrating such previously occluded contributions and experiences, the school history curriculum can empower history educators and their learners to engage with and analyse how multiple, overlapping systems of oppression and privilege shape human experiences. More importantly, it would allow them to study the diverse and courageous ways individuals like Ditsie responded to these systems, providing a richer, more agentic model of historical change.

Secondly, this approach directly addresses a critical pedagogical failure. While topics like sexuality are abstractly covered in life orientation school curricula, they are often presented in a dehumanising vacuum, leading to the trivialisation of lived experiences. Including Ditsie's contributions and experiences in the school history curriculum, would perform the essential work of queering historical knowledge and the school curriculum in general. This is because such an act would move LGBTIQA+ existence from an abstract concept to a tangible, historical reality. This would, in turn, humanise othered sexualities and genders, fostering a school history curriculum that truly appreciates the diversity of human experiences. Consequently, LGBTIQA+ history educators and their learners would finally see their identities reflected and valued in historical studies (Godsell, 2019), mitigating the existential crisis of othering. Simultaneously, it would create a vital safe space for cisgender and heterosexual educators and learners to engage with narratives that demonstrate how people 'different' from themselves were also indispensable architects of the constitutional democracy they inherit today (Maluleka & Godsell, 2024).

Lastly, the inclusion and rehistoricisation of LGBTIQA+'s activism in the post-apartheid school history curriculum in South Africa is a foundational act of justice. It would align with the core human rights principles of the South African constitution and actively promotes epistemic, ontological and social justice. By challenging the systematic exclusion of LGBTIQA+ experiences and histories from the official historical canon, the curriculum ceases to be a tool of epistemicide and becomes a site of restoration and humanisation. It would also acknowledge that the fight for liberation in South Africa was waged on multiple fronts by people of all identities, and in doing so, it answers the 2015-2016 student protestors' demand for a knowledge system that truly reflects the complexity and richness of the South African struggle for freedom.

Conclusion

With this article, we have argued that the continued exclusion of LGBTQIA+ contributions and experiences from the South African school history curriculum constitutes a profound epistemic and ontological injustice, one that the #MustFall student movements of 2015-2016 explicitly sought to redress. Through decolonial queer theory and knowledge as a tapestry as theoretical orientations, as well as CDA as the methodological approach, we were able to reflect on and theorise about Ditsie's erased contributions and experiences. We were also to demonstrate that the project of decolonisation and Africanisation remains incomplete without a rigorous queering of its scope. Therefore, the appeal to the HMTT is not merely for inclusion, but for a fundamental reimagining of the historical canons that would underpin the knowledge base of their proposed school history curriculum in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, to truly answer the call of the 2015-2016 student protests, the proposed school history curriculum must actively dismantle its heteronormativity by weaving the vital threads of LGBTQIA+ lives that are exemplified by the likes Ditsie into its very fabric. It is only that we, as a country, can claimed that we have achieved a tapestry of historical knowledge that is truly liberatory, fostering the intersectional understanding and inclusive national identity that is the rightful legacy of all who fought for freedom

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