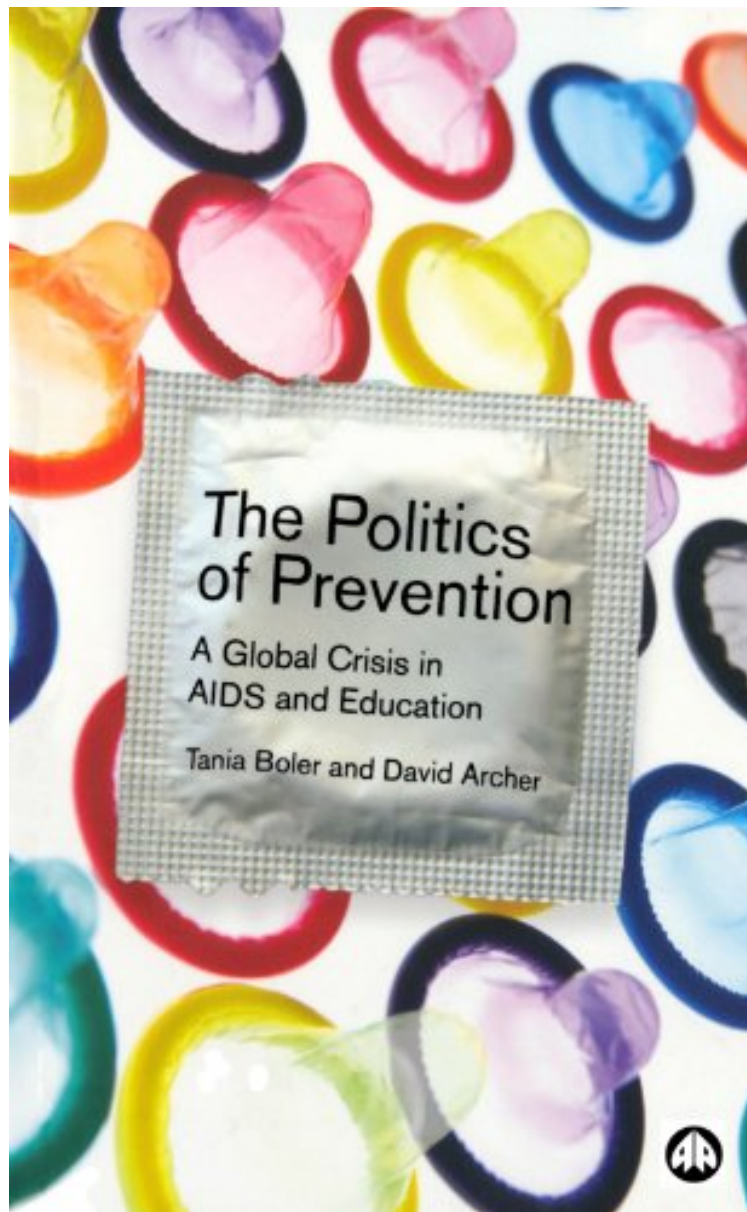


(Ebook pdf) The Politics of Prevention: A Global Crisis in AIDS and Education

## The Politics of Prevention: A Global Crisis in AIDS and Education

*Tania Boler, David Archer*

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**Tania Boler, David Archer : The Politics of Prevention: A Global Crisis in AIDS and Education** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Politics of Prevention: A Global Crisis in AIDS and Education:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An essential read for any informed citizen By TanvirI really enjoyed

reading the book 'The Politics of Prevention: A Global Crisis in AIDS and Education' by David Archer and Tania Boler, two friends and ex-colleagues from ActionAid. David Archer is known around the world in development circles for incorporating Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educationist's innovative and powerful ideas on community empowerment into REFLECT. Tania has done some ground breaking work on HIV and education. When the two of them collaborated on this book, it built up expectations of something startlingly original and a valuable addition to the current development discourse. They satisfy that expectation with flying colors. It was a fascinating read but before going into my observations on the book, I would like to share about the perception I felt from the people I tried to gauge regarding HIV in Bangladesh. I was not so surprised to find that even in educated communities, the tendency is to stand on a moral high ground, enjoying a sense of relief bordering on complacency. People still feel that it is a problem for Africa and for developed countries with a 'culture' of promiscuous practices and loose adherence to religion. In Bangladesh, we take pride in the fact that teachers are not perceived as abusers of children (a misplaced belief prevalent in Africa) and religion keeping us safe against pre-marital sex. Sex is a taboo issue to talk about in public and even amongst friends, so we assume it really doesn't take place at all or happens in a very moderate quantity. Even the statistics (prevalence rate of less than 1% even in the 'high risk groups') doesn't give us any cause for alarm. We are also beset with many more seemingly visible problems, poverty, unemployment and corruption, so, why is it necessary to exercise caution when it comes to HIV. Such is the blissful notion of pervasive complacency that we fail to take heed of the cautionary signs around us. Looking at the book, coming out of Pluto Press in London, one can identify a lot of relevant and topical ground covered in the book. For instance, it discusses in a lucid manner - \* Role of education not only as an enlightening process, but also the role of school as shelters of peace and nurture for young minds. \* Necessity for inclusion of teachers in the uphill battle for nurturing the child, and removing the ignorance by informing of the scientific facts, rather than imposing personal views. \* Setting in right perspective of HIV being a health issue, not a moral or religious one. \* To accord enough priority to prevention and how, as there are effective means of prevention of every mode of transmission of HIV AIDS. \* How to look beyond the stigma, and how to overcome deeply held prejudices instilled in one's childhood. \* While the examples are mainly from Africa, the universality of the issue and human reactions to it are familiar and identifiable even in Bangladeshi context. \* The role of the international financial and aid architecture in dehumanizing this issue and limit it to the realm of technical experts and economic concerns. \* Imposition of abstinence only programmes and why they are bound to fail. \* It also shows that religious fundamentalism is not limited to geographical regions, as the western media would like to make us believe. Its prevalence is fuelled by ignorance and not always constrained by economic growth. The book does not wallow in misery and morbidity as might be the case when one is discussing a potentially life threatening health issue. There are useful statistics in the book that helps one realize the extent and gravity of the situation and also the alarming trends that might dominate if not addressed properly. However, it never reaches the saturation point with numbers when we stop caring and lose the human perspective. There are enough case studies to illustrate the human face of the issue. But these cases never digress to make these only anecdotal interludes. Rather, they put the issues in perspective, and at times, illustrate specific dimensions of the issue. It is neither a pedantic research, nor a polemic with all fire and no substance. Rather, it is an impassioned argument backed by solid evidence and humane case studies in favor of making informed and rational choices that determines the way the fabric of community is strengthened and supports individuals in dire straits. Written in crisp, jargon free language that assumes an audience of concerned citizenry, not only veteran HIV and Education activists. In an era when we tend to have an overflow of glorified project documents with shelf lives seldom beyond the project duration, here we have a book that resonates beyond insular project timelines, addressing an issue which we can't afford to overlook. It transcends the moral or technical boundaries imposed on HIV and spans the gamut of cultural and political aspects of what it means to be human. When the prevalent fad is to despair of the human follies pushing us towards extinction, this book extracts and encapsulates cases of courage, hope and the resilience of indomitable human spirit that strives to overcome insurmountable odds. It has been a privilege to read and comment on this seminal work. I hope it finds a wide audience that reads it, and more importantly think and act on the lessons and experiences drawn from it.

'A wonderful investigation of the ways and means of fighting the spread of AIDS through the expansion of education' -- Amartya Sen, Nobel Prize-winning Professor of Economics and Philosophy, Harvard University. From the Author Tania Boler is a leading specialist in HIV and Education. Through her work at ActionAid and in the United Nations, she has pioneered seminal research across Africa, Asia and Latin America. David Archer has over twenty years experience working in international aid. He currently heads ActionAid's education team. A prolific writer and activist, David is widely recognised as one of the world's leading experts in international education. About the Author Tania Boler is a leading specialist in HIV and Education. Through her work at ActionAid and in the United Nations, she has pioneered seminal research across Africa, Asia and Latin America. David Archer has over twenty years experience working in international aid. He currently heads ActionAid's education team. A prolific writer and

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