

Lesson Two

Origin and Othering

Lesson Objective

Students will understand that societal and geo-political pressures can create systems and laws that allow for marginalized groups, in this case members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities, to be discriminated against.

Driving Questions

Should parts of our personal identity be open to examination by the government?

Who can keep you safe?

Who should know our personal secrets?

Should your workplace be a place to express yourself?

Are there things about who you are that make you afraid of getting in trouble at work or school?

Materials

- Worksheet: Social Identity Wheel
- Backgrounder: What Is the LGBT Purge? (page 26)
- Backgrounder: Timeline of 2SLGBTQI+ Federal Laws in Canada (page 29)

Lesson Summary

Students will begin by examining the concepts of identity and intersectionality and explore how, in certain contexts, people are not able to express all aspects of their identity.

Students will then examine historical and current Canadian laws and court decisions that both diminished and upheld the rights of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals.

Finally, students will examine the historical context that led to the LGBT Purge and how perpetrators of this violation justified their actions.

Pre-Teaching Supports

[EGALE: Genderbread Person: Components of Human Identity](#)

["Canada's History: Pride & Prejudice" \(Wolfenden Report\)](#)

["The power of uncovering hidden pasts,"](#) by Matthew Cutler.

This article is also published in the catalogue *Love in a Dangerous Time: Canada's LGBT Purge – Reflections on queer history and why it matters today*, pp. 7-9.

"Shaking a Lavender Fist: Canadian 2SLGBTQI+ activism during the Cold War," by David Churchill. *Love in a Dangerous Time: Canada's LGBT Purge – Reflections on queer history and why it matters today*, pp. 40-57.

Instructions for Teachers

Introductory Discussion

1. Before starting the discussion, ask students to complete the social identity wheel on page 24.
2. Discuss how we all have similarities and differences in our identity. Examine how these differences make us unique and complex.
3. Use this discussion to introduce the concept of intersectionality to students.
 - *Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by several discriminations and disadvantages. It considers people's overlapping identities and experiences to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.*
4. Discuss with students about how some stories and voices have been forgotten in history because of identity, and about how some elements of a person's identity are taboo subjects in many contexts.

Reading

Backgrounder: What Is the LGBT Purge? (page 26)

Follow-up Discussion/Assigned Questions

1. How would you react if you lost your job because of your identity?
2. How did 2SLGBTQI+ communities react as information about the Purge was revealed?
3. Are there parallels between people who were affected by the LGBT Purge and other groups who have been discriminated against throughout Canada's history (e.g. Chinese head tax, women's suffrage, Japanese internment, Indian residential school system)?

Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Legal Timeline

1. Review groups that were discriminated against throughout Canadian history. Discuss the importance of human rights and recognizing Canada's discriminatory past.
2. Print out the backgrounder Laws and Challenges: A Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Legal Timeline (page 30).
 - a. Cut up the timeline elements.
 - b. Ask the students to work in groups to arrange them in chronological order.
 - c. Ask groups to reorganize the timeline elements according to a theme they determine. (e.g. pro-/anti-2SLGBTQI+ laws, pre-/post-Confederation or Charter, connecting to cultural, social and political events, etc.).
3. Ask groups to share with the class how they categorized the timeline elements.

Follow-up Discussion/Assigned Questions

1. What did you find surprising in the timeline?
2. How do you think these laws made people from 2SLGBTQI+ communities feel about themselves and about their sense of security in their country?
3. How did these laws affect the concept of who is "normal"?
4. Is there a period in the timeline where you started to notice a change in the laws regarding 2SLGBTQI+ individuals?
 - a. What were some of the social, political and global events happening around this time?

The Cold War, the Lavender Scare and the LGBT Purge

Reading

Backgrounder: What Is the LGBT Purge? (page 26)

Follow-up Discussion/Assigned Questions

1. How did members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities respond to the increased pressure and scrutiny they were facing during the Cold War?
2. What were some of the systemic barriers that members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities faced during that time? How were they able to deal with these barriers?

Extension Activity

Many members of 2SLGBTQI+ communities were facing discrimination in other spaces at this time.

The story of Jackie Shane is one example:

- [Heritage Minutes: Jackie Shane](#)
- [No Other Way: The Story of Jackie Shane](#)

Have students research 2SLGBTQI+ people who were forgotten in history and who were rediscovered, e.g. Jackie Shane. Students could identify an equity-deserving person in history who has been rediscovered or who might be rediscovered by the student themselves.

- [Canadian Pride Historical Society: 7 Queer Black Trailblazers You Should Know](#)
- [Queer Events: We've Been Here: Notable QBIPOC](#)

Have students find information and answer the following questions about these individuals:

- a. Name, period they were alive, birthplace, background (i.e., race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc.).
- b. What important accomplishments did they achieve in their lifetime?
- c. What were some of the factors that contributed to their initial exclusion from being recognized for their accomplishments?
- d. Why is it important for everyone to know about them today?