



A COLLECTION
OF STORIES
FROM CANADA'S
2SLGBTQIA+
HISTORY





Support LOVE WINS
LOVE WINS
LOVE WINS
live and let love
RIGHT

LOVE WINS
RIGHT
Support LOVE WINS
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LOVE WINS
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LOVE IS A HUMAN RIGHT
Support LOVE WINS
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live and let love
RIGHT

LOVE WINS
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live and let love

WE CAN'T CHANGE THE FUTURE, WITHOUT KNOWING OUR HISTORY.

Canada is a young country with a rich history. But what if we told you that every Canadian history book that you've ever read has been incomplete?

The reason that so many conversations about Canadian history are incomplete is that they typically don't include - or even acknowledge - the history of queer and trans people in Canada.

The goal of this book is to help change that. These stories aren't secret, but for almost as long as this country has existed, Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ experience has remained largely untold in the broader context of our country's history.

So read and explore these events carefully. Share them. Debate them. But most of all, learn more about them. Because you represent Canada's future. And without you, there is no history.

We acknowledge the history of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities include countless complex, diverse and rich stories that are impossible to reduce to a single book. The Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity see this project as a living and ongoing resource. As such, we invite folks to suggest and write content to be added to annual updates and revisions.

We also acknowledge the precolonial history of the gender & sexually diverse communities on Turtle Island (North America) prior to colonization. Their stories and activism continue to inspire and shape our communities for the better.



An east view of Montreal, in Canada
Image source: Wikipedia Creative Commons

NEW FRANCE

1648? That's right. Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ history goes back a long way.

Back in the 17th century, Canada wasn't even called Canada. The area we now recognize as the province of Quebec was called 'New France.' In a town called Ville Marie, there was a garrison of soldiers stationed to protect the town.

One day, the Sulpician priests in the village accused one of the soldiers of being gay, and having a secret relationship with another man. He was put on trial and sentenced to be executed. However, Jesuit priests in Quebec City heard of the matter and intervened. The soldier's life was spared, but only because he accepted to do a very difficult job: he would have to become the executioner of New France, and put condemned prisoners to death.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Was it fair that the soldier was persecuted for being homosexual?
- Why do you think one group of priests wanted him executed, while another group were willing to intervene to save him?

**EXPAND
YOUR
LEARNING**

What were the laws of New France surrounding homosexuality?

How important was the Church in shaping views around homosexuality during this period?



Alexander Wood statue at the corner of Church and Alexander streets in Toronto.

Image source:
Wikipedia Creative Commons

ALEXANDER WOOD SCANDAL

The Canada that Alexander Wood lived in was very conservative, religious and formal.

Wood was a successful merchant who lived in York, Upper Canada, in what we now call Toronto. He was an officer in the local militia and was even a city magistrate, which meant he could act as a judge in legal cases.

In 1810, Wood was tasked with investigating a sexual assault case. The victim, a woman recorded only as Miss Bailey, told Wood that she scratched her attacker's genitals during the assault. There were a number of suspects, and Wood inspected their privates in order to see if anyone was injured in the way Miss Bailey described.

Though there is no evidence that Wood acted improperly, rumours began to spread about his sexual orientation. Some people even said that Wood made up the rape charges in order to seduce the men he had to inspect.

Wood was threatened with charges, but was told by the judge that they would be dropped if he left Toronto. As a result, Woods left York for Scotland later that year.

This piece of history raises important questions:

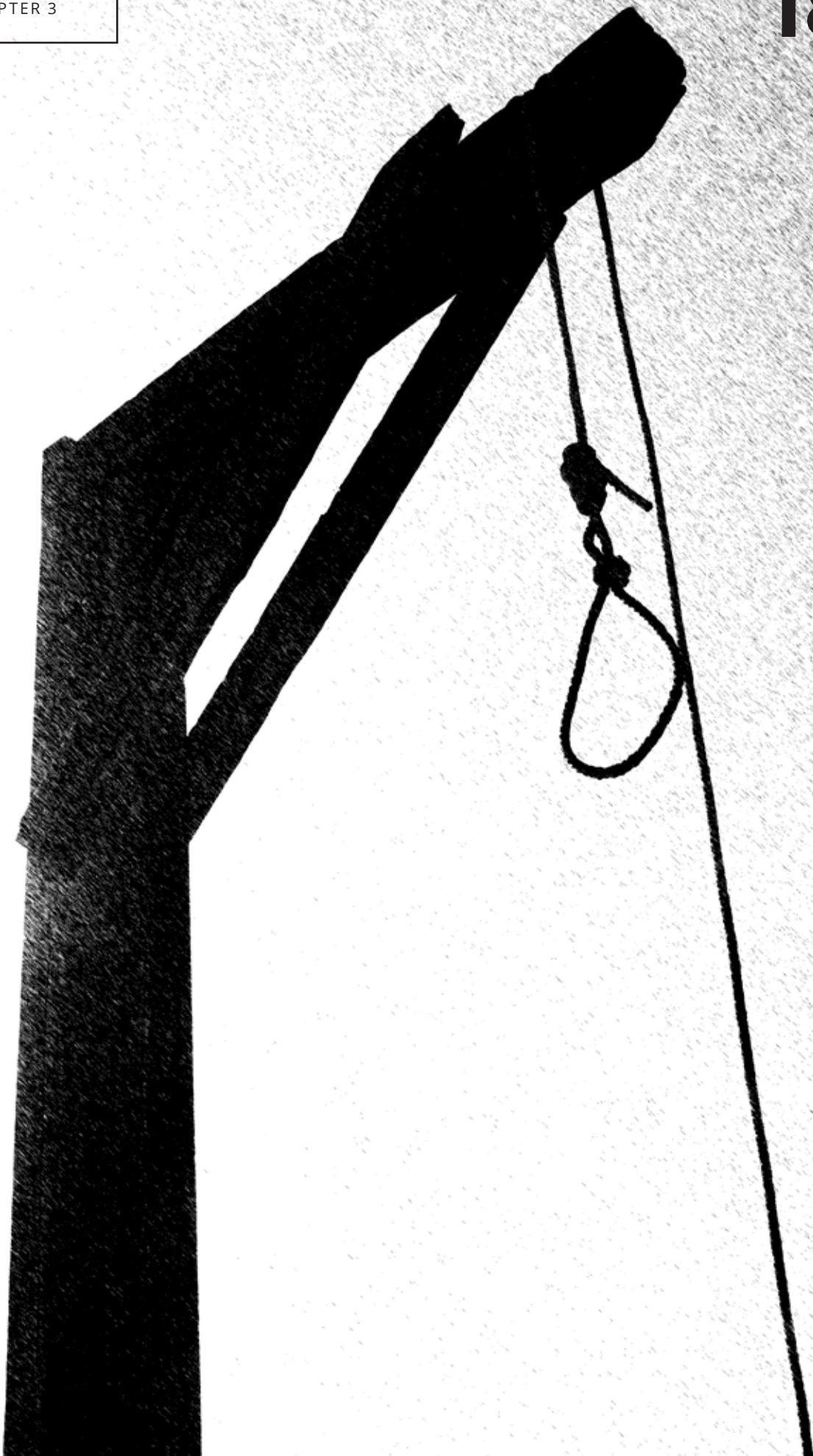
- Was it fair that Alexander Wood was forced to leave Upper Canada based on rumours alone?
- Do you think that Wood could have received fair and impartial treatment if his charges had proceeded to trial?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

What were the laws of Upper Canada surrounding homosexuality in the early 1800s?

What does the treatment of Wood tell you about society in Upper Canada at this time?

What happened to Alexander Wood after he returned to Scotland?



DEATH PENALTY FOR HOMOSEXUALITY

In Canada, the rules that determine if someone has committed a crime are included in a book called the Criminal Code. It's how police know if someone has broken the law. Not only was homosexuality considered a crime in Canada for many years, in 1859 someone convicted of a homosexual sex act (then called buggery) could actually be sentenced to death. And as hard as that might be to believe today, several men were actually convicted and condemned to death in Canada simply for being gay. While it appears that most of those sentences were commuted and not carried out, it wasn't until 1869 that the law was changed.

Very few records remain, but it's easy to imagine that having their sexuality treated in the same light as murder or treason must have been incredibly traumatic for the accused. And while the laws did slowly change, it took over 100 years for homosexuality to be granted an exemption from the Criminal Code as a crime under buggery and gross indecency. Moving into the 1970s, many homosexuals were still charged under the bawdy house laws.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why was homosexuality considered so bad, that it was punishable by death?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Can you find the name and story of one person convicted and sentenced of homosexuality in Canada during the 1800s?

What caused the change to the law in 1869, so that homosexuality was no longer punishable by death?

Are there any countries today that still treat homosexuality as crime, and what are the punishments?



John 'Jack' Nesbit (L) and James 'Jim' Egan (R) on their farm near Chesley Ontario, ca. 1954-1955. James Egan fonds F0110,

THE ACTIVISM OF JIM EGAN

In 1949, a man named Jim Egan began writing letters to newspapers and politicians advocating for law reforms for queer people. After the publication of the Kinsey Report on sexuality in 1954, Egan argued that many people in Canada violated society's rigid sexual norms, and if caught, would be subject to criminal laws prohibiting such behaviour. He was working to normalize sexuality within print media and to create a modicum of positive representation to challenge the negative portrayals and public outings of 2SLGBTQIA+ Canadians in the media.

In the late 1980s, Jim Egan challenged the Government of Canada to receive spousal benefits for his life partner, Jack Nesbit. Their case would eventually ensure that sexual orientation would be protected under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms – a landmark victory for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Although Egan lost his constitutional challenge in the 1990s, the Supreme Court agreed that sexual orientation should be effectively included into the equality rights section of the Canadian Charter. This set the stage for the Canadian Government in 1998 to officially include sexual orientation as prohibited grounds for discrimination, granting protections for things like employment, housing, and healthcare.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- What are some of the reasons that drove the Canadian Government to protect sexual orientation in the Canadian Charter?
- What could legal protection under the Canadian Charter mean for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Look into the role MP Svend Robinson played in the 1980s to try to include sexual orientation in the Canadian Charter. Was he successful?

Who are some other activists and politicians that worked towards this change?



Everett Klippert, shown here in the 1970s, was the last Canadian to be imprisoned for being gay.

Photo courtesy
of the Klippert family

EVERETT KLIPPERT, THE CASE THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING



INTERESTING FACT

ARNOLD PETERS, NDP MP FOR TIMISKAMING, ONTARIO, PROPOSED A BILL IN 1966 THAT WOULD DECRIMINALIZE HOMOSEXUALITY. HE WAS NOT ABLE TO PRESENT THIS TO PARLIAMENT AS IT WAS INSTANTLY TERMINATED WHEN IT CAME TIME FOR THE FIRST READING.

Everett George Klippert was the last Canadian to be arrested, convicted and imprisoned for “gross indecency” after revealing to police that he had recently had consensual sexual relations with four men.

In 1966, Klippert was psychologically evaluated as “incurably homosexual” and sentenced to “indefinite preventative detention.” He was labelled a dangerous sex offender and sent to prison, where he stayed until July 21st, 1971.

Klippert’s appeal was heard by the Supreme Court of Canada in November 1967. They ruled 3:2 to dismiss his appeal, although Chief Justice John Robert Cartwright did recommend that the laws around homosexuality be clarified. This inspired a huge public and media outcry, and Klippert’s case became the catalyst for Pierre Trudeau to introduce Bill C-150, which partially decriminalized homosexuality.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Based on Klippert’s experiences, what might life have been like for gay men in the 1960s?
- Consider the term “preventative detention”. What does that mean to you?
- How many people worked towards changing the laws around homosexuality?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

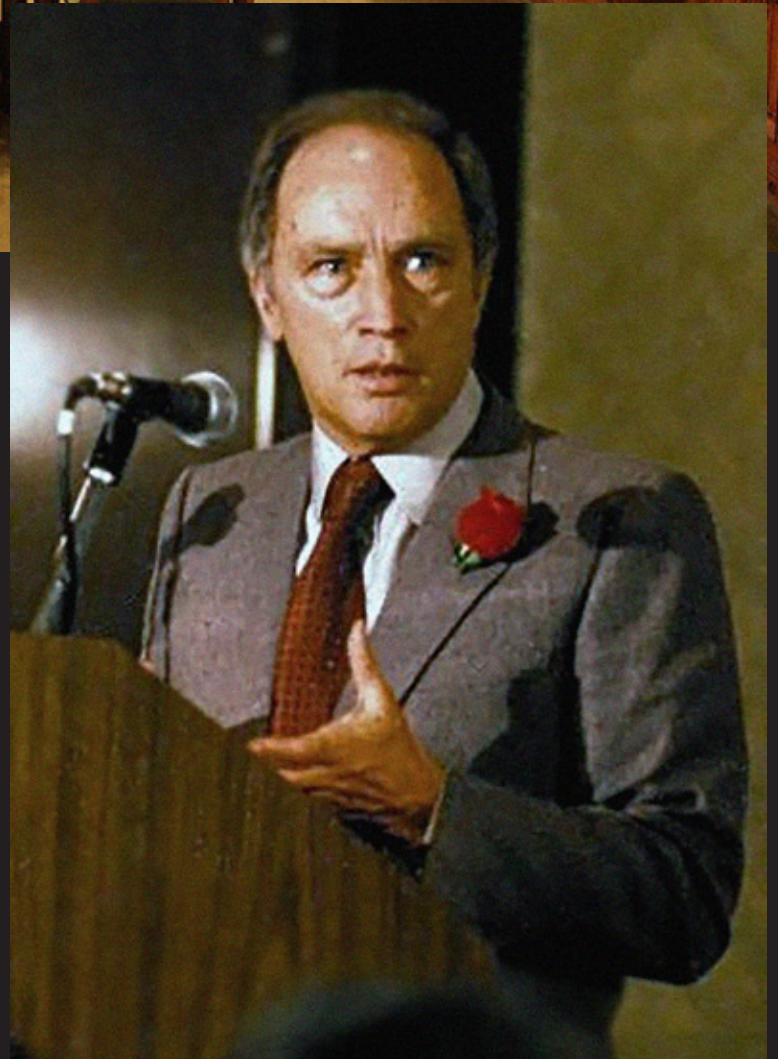
What was the final status of Everett Klippert’s case?

How many charges of “gross indecency” was Everett Klippert charged with?



The chamber of the House of Commons of Canada.

Image source:
Wikipedia Creative Commons



Pierre Trudeau speaking at a fundraising meeting for the Liberal Party at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montréal, Québec.

Image source:
Wikipedia Creative Commons

THE PASSING OF BILL C-150

Before he became Canada's Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau was the Justice Minister in Lester B. Pearson's Liberal Government. One of Trudeau's aims as Justice Minister was to reform Canadian family law.

Trudeau introduced Bill C-195, an omnibus bill that introduced major changes to the Criminal Code. On December 19th, 1968, a modified version of that bill, Bill C-150, was introduced that partially decriminalized homosexuality. The bill decriminalized "consenting homosexual acts between two parties, in private, over the ages of 21" with specific references to buggery and gross indecency.

When Members of Parliament voted on Bill C-150, 149 voted in favour of the amendments, while 55 voted against the bill.

Pierre Trudeau famously said, "There is no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation." But he also maintained that, "there is nothing in the bill which would condone homosexuality, promote it, endorse it, advertise it or popularize it in any way whatsoever." At the time, homosexuality was often seen as an illness that required a cure or rehabilitation.

In spite of Bill C-150, the criminality of homosexuality actually appeared to increase in the 1970's, with hundreds of men being charged under bawdy house laws and the indecent act section of the Criminal Code. The exemption made in 1969 applied only to two of the four laws used to criminalize homosexual acts.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Compare and contrast Trudeau's statements regarding homosexuality and Bill C-150. How could these statements support or contradict one another?
- Why do you think the first quote is more present in the public sphere?
- Why might Members of Parliament vote against Bill C-150?



Ottawa Demo August 28th, 1971 - 6 Charles Hill, head of the University of Toronto's Student Homophile Association reading the text of demands for legislative changes that discriminated against gay and lesbian Canadians.

Photo credit: Jearld Moldenhauer

'WE DEMAND' TAKES ON PARLIAMENT HILL

Once homosexuality was partially decriminalized in 1969, gay and lesbian liberation groups began to form and fight for visibility through activism and media exposure.

1971 was a major turning point in Canadian history. Even though homosexuality was partially decriminalized, in private there were still laws in place that discriminated against gay people in the sectors of immigration, employment, health, and housing. And police harassment became a major issue for the queer and trans community in the 1970's.

This gave birth to *We Demand*, Canada's first gay and lesbian protest, marking the beginning of the large-scale fight for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights. On August 28, 1971, 200 gay and lesbian activists gathered on Parliament Hill with 10 demands that they felt would help eliminate the persecution of homosexuals and lessen discrimination. Some of the demands made included the removal of the nebulous terms "gross indecency" and "indecent act" from the Criminal Code, a uniform age of consent for all female and male homosexual and heterosexual acts, the right of homosexuals to serve in the Armed Forces, and access to all legal rights for homosexuals, which currently exist for heterosexuals

While the demonstration on Parliament Hill didn't seem like a momentous event at the time, in retrospect it marked a significant point in the fight for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights. Today, nearly all demands made to the government have been met.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- What were the 10 demands? Which demands may have been met? Which demands may have not been met?
- Which demand was the most surprising to you?
- If 2SLGBTQIA+ organizations released demands today, what might this list include?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Why was the term sexual orientation used in the demands rather than the terms "gay" or "lesbian"?

Locate the mural in downtown Ottawa, Bank St, and compare it to archival photos online through The ArQuives.



CREATION OF PINK TRIANGLE PRESS AND CLGA/ ARQUIVES

Founded in 1971, Pink Triangle Press has made a significant impact on Canada's 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and have had a far-reaching presence through many years of successful publications. In their first year, Pink Triangle Press first published *The Body Politic*, a magazine featuring discussions surrounding activism taking place in Canada at the time, such as the *We Demand* protest on Parliament Hill.

During its early years of publication, *The Body Politic* was often portrayed negatively in the mainstream press, and major newspapers like *The Toronto Star* refused to publish a classified ad for subscriptions to the magazine. Regardless, *The Body Politic* continued publication until 1986. In 1984, Pink Triangle Press created *Xtra*, a publication that quickly achieved more advertising revenues and a higher rate of circulation than its predecessor.

The success of Pink Triangle Press played a major role in forging the way for other similar publications in Canada. Although they have experienced many setbacks and difficulties throughout the years, publications like these continue to thrive and reach a large readership.

In 1973, Pink Triangle Press founded Gay Liberation Movement Archives, which went on to become Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives (now known as The ArQuives). Located in Toronto, the ArQuives connects people with past and present 2SLGBTQIA+ movements, struggles, and achievements. They were first created with the aim of preserving the important history of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and maintaining a space for a vast range of research in the community. The ArQuives is home to important collections that provide a voice to the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. It houses memorabilia, periodicals, audio and video documentation, oral histories, personal papers, organizational records, and many other artifacts – all dedicated to preserving the history of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Canada.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why was it important for publications such as *The Body Politic* and *Xtra* to be created?
- What topics did Pink Triangle Press generate conversations and discussions about through their publications? Why was this so important?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Look through archives of past issues of the *The Body Politic* and *Xtra*. What impact do you think these publications had on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community at the time?

How has The ArQuives expanded over the years? Outline the changes and growth that the archives have undergone since their creation.

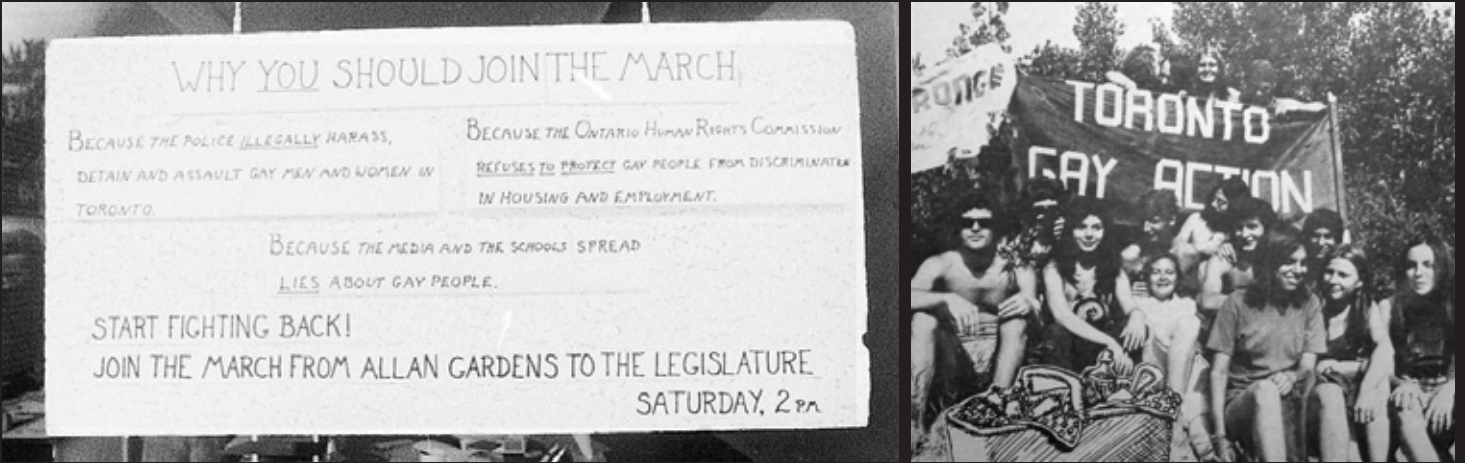


Photo credits:

Top left: The GATE/Body Politic storefront office window at 193 Carlton St.
Photo courtesy of Charles Dobie

Top right: Toronto Pride in 1971 on Toronto Islands.
Photo courtesy of Rev. Dr. Cheri DiNovo, Trinity St. Paul's centre for Faith Justice and the Arts

Bottom left: Carlton St. in front of Maple Leaf Gardens.
Photo courtesy of Charles Dobie

Bottom right: Heading west along Carlton St.; Brian on left smashing sexism, Tom Warner on right in shorts.
Photo courtesy of Charles Dobie

PRIDE MARCHES

The Toronto Islands were early sites for informal pride gatherings in the early 1970's – most notably, the *Gay Picnic* at Hanlan's Point and Ward's Island. The annual gatherings demonstrated solidarity amongst the community just two years after homosexuality was partially decriminalized, and is widely considered as one of Canada's first Pride.

In 1978, the rainbow flag was used as a symbol of gay and lesbian pride for the first time in San Francisco for the Gay and Lesbian Freedom Day Parade. During this time, the Canadian Human Rights Commission recommended that sexual orientation be added to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

In the summer of 1979, Vancouver and Montreal became the first Canadian cities to host an official Pride march. Toronto Pride, like prides in many other urban centres, formalized in the 1980s. None of these gatherings were met without resistance; in some cases, hate literature was distributed door-to-door.

In the years since then, Pride marches have taken hold around the world. WorldPride, a worldwide march, has been active since 2000. The first WorldPride took place in Rome where it is estimated that 250,000 people attended. And since its inauguration, WorldPride has been held in London in 2012, Toronto in 2014, Madrid in 2017, and is currently set to take place in New York in 2019 and Copenhagen in 2021.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- What might be the purpose of having WorldPride in addition to local pride events?
- Why might people protest a pride march?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

What might be the significance of Pride for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?

How has the resistance from religious leaders and the government impacted WorldPride?

How has the rainbow flag changed since its first conceptualization? What do the colors represent?



The Brunswick Four
Photo courtesy of The ArQuives & Xtra

THE BRUNSWICK FOUR



"I HAVE HEARD THAT I WAS COURAGEOUS.
IN RETROSPECT, AND IN THE PRESENT, IT HAS
ALWAYS BEEN AN ISSUE OF BASIC SURVIVAL
– PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL.
MAINTAINING ONE'S OWN INTEGRITY AND A
DESIRE TO POSITIVELY INFLUENCE THE PRESENT
SOCIETAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH I FIND
MYSELF AND OTHERS."

- PAT MURPHY

On January 5, 1974, four women – Adrienne Potts, Pat Murphy, Sue Wells and Heather Beyer – went to the Brunswick Tavern in Toronto for amateur night where they sang a song called "I Enjoy Being a Dyke." They were asked to leave by the establishment's owners. When they refused, the police were called and these women were taken from the tavern to the police station and verbally harassed. They were not given their right to an attorney, so when they were told to leave the police station, they refused. The police then forcibly ejected them from the station, injuring Adrienne Potts. The four women returned to the tavern to collect information from witnesses, and were again ejected from the bar by police and this time charged with causing a disturbance.

These four women attempted to bring their cases of police abuse to court, but were largely ignored. However, while they never received justice in the courts, they were granted an apology in the early 2000s by the police watchdog in Ontario. The Brunswick Four declined this apology. The police accused of assaulting these women were never brought to justice.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why were they asked to leave the bar?
- How could this incident impact the broader 2SLGBTQIA+ community to trust the Toronto police?

**EXPAND
YOUR
LEARNING**

What do you think the attitude of police departments during the 1970s was regarding homosexuals, and why?



Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau with a model of the proposed Olympic Stadium, explains in the Quebec City national assembly in January, 1975 how despite soaring costs the Montreal 1976 games will be self-financing. (CP PHOTO) 1999

THE 1976 SUMMER OLYMPICS



“THEY YANKED OFF PEOPLE’S TOWELS AND THREW EVERYBODY TOGETHER AND TOOK PICTURES AND CHARGED THEM ALL WITH BEING IN A COMMON BAWDY HOUSE. THERE WAS A FORMER MAYOR’S SON THERE, A GOVERNMENT MINISTER, A SECRETARY TO THE CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP AND A COUPLE OF COPS, BUT THEY WERE USHERED OUT THE BACK DOOR WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS THROWN IN PADDY WAGONS.”

- HENRI LABELLE,
CASHIER AT THE NEPTUNE

In the years before homosexuality gained legal and social acceptance, bathhouses were often safe havens for homosexuals, serving as areas of community away from the public eye. These bathhouses or saunas were often male-only establishments and some continue operating today as establishments for men who have sex with men (MSM).

On April 1975, in Montreal’s Stanley Street Gay Village, the *Aquarius* bathhouse was firebombed. No one was arrested. Although three individuals died, no arrests were made in connection to their deaths. Two of the victims were never identified or claimed by their families, and as a result they were buried in anonymous graves.

The following year, the police cracked down on gay bars and bathhouses in Montreal. This was mayor Jean Drapeau’s attempt to “clean up” the city prior to the 1976 Summer Olympics. On May 14th, 1976, the *Neptune* bathhouse was raided. 89 people were arrested and police confiscated the Neptune’s 7000-name membership list.

Although large-scale protests took place, the raids continued.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why might the families of the unknown victims not claim or identify their bodies?
- Why might Jean Drapeau feel it was important to crack down on gay establishments around Montreal prior to the 1976 Summer Olympics?
- Why do bathhouses cater to MSM? How would this be different from advertising these saunas as gay-only spaces?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

How many raids did Montreal police execute in gay establishments from 1975-1976? Why might these raids occur so frequently?

Which prominent American Transgender figure won a medal during the 1976 Montreal Olympics?



Photo courtesy of The ArQuives

THE FORMATION OF LOOT & LOON

In November 1976, a group of women formed The Lesbian Organization of Toronto (LOOT). In February 1977, they opened a community house at 342 Jarvis Street. The purpose of LOOT was to provide lesbians and feminists with a safe space for community, support, culture, and politics. LOOT and its community house closed on May 1st, 1980. This also inspired a similar group to form in Ottawa.

Marie Robertson, along with Rose Stanton and others, formed a separate organization called Lesbians of Ottawa Now (LOON), operating mainly as a social collective, but also organizing a national lesbian conference from October 9th to 11th 1976, attracting over 300 women from across the country. Barbara Thornborrow, a private in the Canadian Armed Forces, contacted LOON when she was discharged as a sexual deviant in June of 1977. Her case became a lightning rod for cases of job discrimination against the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. The group disbanded in 1979, but acted as inspiration for grassroots organizers across Canada.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why do you think activist groups like LOOT and LOON were important?
- Why was it important for there to be social options for queer women?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Look into some of the activities that LOOT or LOON were involved with in the 1970s.

What were some other organizations Marie Robertson has been involved with?

Research the Ottawa Village Legacy Project for more reading on Lesbian Activism.



Buddies in Bad Times new home in front of the door at 12 Alexander Street, Toronto.
Left to right: Robin Williamson, Alisa Craig, Tim Jones, Gwen Bartleman, Sky Gilbert.

BUDDIES IN BAD TIMES THEATRE

The oldest standing 2SLGBTQIA+ theatre company in Canada, Buddies in Bad Times, was founded in 1979 by Sky Gilbert, Matt Walsh and Jerry Ciccoritti. Buddies in Bad Times has maintained a level of ongoing success with a consistently political message that focuses on acceptance and awareness of queer culture in Toronto.

The impact of Buddies in Bad Times has been far-reaching over their 40 years in existence. The theatre houses a range of performances and events from drag shows, plays and community discussions. Plays such as *Lana Turner has Collapsed!* (1980), *The Dressing Gown* (1984), *Drag Queens on Trial* (1985), *The Postman Rings Once* (1987), and Don Druik's *Where is Kabuki?* (1989) have been staged over the theatre's long-standing presence in Toronto. In addition to their activism with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, Buddies in Bad Times has focused on women's rights in theatre by solely staging work by female creators from 2009 to 2010. This was in response to the low representation of women in the Canadian theatre scene.

The company has always stayed true to its original message - to create a space for political activism for through theatre. Today, Buddies in Bad Times continues to make an impact on the 2SLGBTQIA+ theatre community.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- What impact has Buddies in Bad Times had on the theatre community, specifically for 2SLGBTQIA+ folk?



A man with blood streaming down his face scuffles with police outside the Ontario Legislature in Toronto on Feb. 6, 1981 after about 1000 gay rights demonstrators marched there in protest of the arrests on Feb. 5, 1981 of 253 men in four city steam baths.

Image source:

The Canadian Press/UPC/Gary Hershorn



A man is restrained by police outside the Ontario Legislature, Toronto, Ont., Feb. 6, 1981, after about 1000 gay rights demonstrators marched through the downtown area protesting the February 5, 1981 arrest of 223 men in four city steam baths.

Image source:

The Canadian Press/UPC/Gary Hershorn

OPERATION SOAP

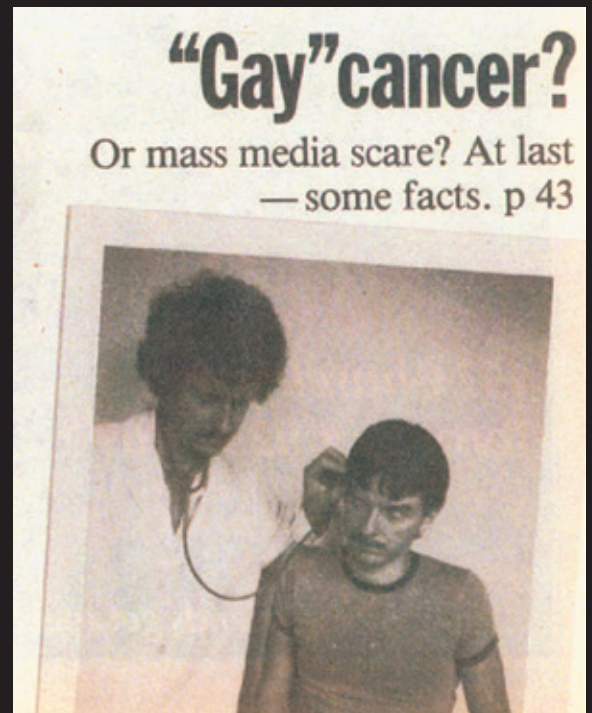
On the night of February 5th, 1981, at 11:00pm, four bathhouses in Toronto (*Club Baths, Romans II Health and Recreation Spa, Richmond Street Health Emporium, and the Barracks*) were raided by over 150 Toronto Police officers in what became known as, "Operation Soap." They arrested 286 people who committed no actual crimes, while the owners (20 individuals) of the bathhouses were charged with "keeping a common bawdy-house." This was, and remains, the single largest mass-arrest in the history of Toronto, with over 300 people taken into custody.

In response to these events, the Toronto 2SLGBTQIA+ community mobilized by staging protests, fundraising for a legal defence fund, and engaging in community town halls. Common slogans included "Queer Rage," "Queers Bash Back," and "No More Shit".

This was a crucial turning point in Canadian queer and trans history. The next day, over 3000 people gathered to stage a demonstration in protest of the raids. The community was successful in getting most of the charges acquitted, although several people did go to jail as a result of taking early plea bargains. These men most likely acted out of a place of self-preservation based on their circumstance, as fighting the charges would have required some public announcement of their sexual orientation.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Were these arrests truly in the interest of public safety, which was the original claim made by Toronto police?



THE EMERGENCE OF HIV/AIDS

In the early 1980's, doctors began noticing rare cancers and infections in young, healthy gay men. The fatal condition affected the immune system, and was dangerously contagious. This disease was called GRID, or Gay-Related Immune Deficiency. Other terms used to coin the disease at the time were "gay cancer" and "gay plague."

By 1982, the American-based Centre for Disease Control started to refer to the disease as AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), in response to the fact that it wasn't just homosexuals being affected. The virus that causes the disease, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), was also infecting intravenous drug users, hemophiliacs and heterosexuals. Despite this fact, some politicians and religious leaders had called for homosexual activity to be criminalized in the name of "public health." Fear-driven prejudice and mass confusion grew as AIDS became an epidemic. The social and political hysteria was devastating for the gay community in relation to both social acceptance and healthcare.

There are examples of resistance and community support throughout Canada during this time. The Gays of Ottawa operated a help line throughout the 1980s that worked to give people updated information about HIV/AIDS. In Toronto, several groups formed, including Aids Action Now and Gay Asians of Toronto. Both groups worked towards providing support to those living with HIV and to advocate for a government response.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- How did the outbreak of HIV/AIDS impact the community internally?

Canada's first openly gay MP, addresses an audience three days after publicly coming out on Feb 29, 1988.

Image source: By Philip Hannan/Xtra



SVEND ROBINSON MAKES HISTORY

In a climate where homophobia ran rampant because of HIV/AIDS and social stereotypes, British Columbia Member of Parliament Svend Robinson courageously came out as gay on February 29, 1988, making him Canada's first openly gay Member of Parliament.

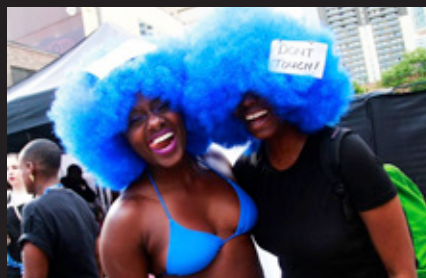
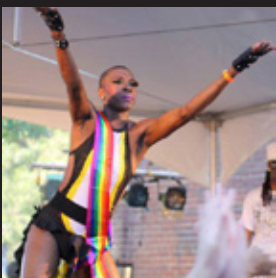
Robinson came out in spite of the fact that the windows of his constituency office were smashed because of rumours circulating about his sexuality. He said it was the possibility of giving "a message of hope and solidarity to the younger gay and lesbian people" that spurred him to open up about his sexuality. Although Members of Parliament had previously made several veiled comments about the sexual orientation of Robinson, the House of Commons erupted in applause when Svend came out publicly.

Svend was also involved in parliamentary debates leading up to the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Robinson advocated for sexual orientation to be included in the initial iteration of the Charter, and was denied. At this time, it was still legal for out 2SLGBTQIA+ employees to be fired or denied promotion from public service and the military. Robinson was the lone publicly gay MP for six years, until Quebecois Réal Ménard came out in 1994. British Columbia MP Libby Davies was the first lesbian to come out in 2001.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- How do you think Svend Robinson's experience as the only openly gay Member of Parliament was different than the MPs who followed him?
- Why was it important for Svend Robinson to disclose his sexual orientation publicly? (both for himself and for other 2SLGBTQIA+ people)

BLACKO



From top left: Matthew Chin, Shani Robertson, Craig Dominic, Keisha Williams, Syrus Marcus Ware, Nik Redman.

Bottom row: various photos from Blockorama events in Toronto.

Source: Blockorama

BLACKNESS YES! & BLOCKORAMA

In 1998, Jamea Zuberi was reminded of Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival during one of Toronto's Pride parades, which led her to question the lack of representation of African, Caribbean and North American black communities in Toronto Pride. With the goal of creating an event which celebrated black members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, Zuberi along with fellow queer activists and feminists Angela Robertson, Camille Orridge, Junior David Harrison and Douglas Stewart formed *Blackness Yes!*, an organization working towards achieving black representation in the Toronto queer and trans community.

Blockorama, widely known as *Blocko*, became a reality in 1998. Dedicated to bringing thousands of people together to celebrate black queer and trans pride, *Blocko* has provided a safe space for many to feel welcome and at home, and attracts up to 25,000 people during its festivities.

Since its inception, *Blockorama* has been a beacon of energy, creativity and resistance; celebrating music, dance and visual art within the black 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why might it be important to have black representation within the Toronto Pride parade?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Research the 10 demands made by *Blackness Yes!* What could be added?

What other Pride related festivals and organizations in Toronto celebrate people a part of the African, Caribbean and North American black community?



Main entrance of Little Sister's Book and Art Emporium, Vancouver BC, Canada. Taken June 2006

LITTLE SISTERS BOOK & ART EMPORIUM V. CANADA

Little Sisters Book and Art Emporium is a bookstore in Vancouver, British Columbia that opened in 1983. The majority of the bookstore's content includes gay and lesbian literature, academic studies, AIDS/HIV materials, safe-sex materials, and queer erotica. The bookstore had been experiencing difficulties in attempting to import these materials, often from the United States, as Canada Customs had classified them as obscene and therefore barred them from entering the country.

In 2000, the Little Sisters Bookstore challenged the Customs Act. The bookstore argued that having the burden on the importer to disprove the obscenity of the content was unjust. During the trial, it became apparent to the court that Canada Customs had been specifically targeting shipments being delivered to the bookstore and purposely destroyed, damaged or delayed these materials.

Canada Customs was found to have violated Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in relation to freedom of expression; however, it was also determined that the government was justified to do so under Section 1. The trial then went to the Supreme Court of Canada, which upheld the verdict; however, the court also determined that the law had been implemented in a discriminatory manner and that it was not the duty of the importer to prove that materials were not obscene. The Supreme Court's ruling also determined that customs agents could not pre-emptively reject these materials without legal rationale.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- How might having access to 2SLGBTQIA+ materials in a public space, such as a bookstore, benefit the community?



Couples Kevin Bourassa (left) and partner Joe Varnell and Anne Vautour and partner Elaine Vautour (right) pose with Reverend Brent Hawkes after the couples were married at the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, Sunday, January 14, 2001. The couples are hoping to have the first legal same sex marriages to be recognized by a province in Canada.

Image source: The Canadian Press/Kevin Frayer

LEGALIZATION OF GAY MARRIAGE IN CANADA

In Canada, the laws that affect couples are provincial rather than federal. And although the Supreme Court of Canada granted same-sex couples the entitled financial and legal benefits associated with marriage in 1999, same-sex couples were still not entitled to the right to legally marry.

On January 14th, 2001, Reverend Brent Hawkes gained national attention by performing two same-sex marriages, between Kevin Bourassa & Joe Varnell, and Anne & Elaine Vautour. Ontario law authorized him to perform marriages without city-issued marriage licenses. However, the records of these marriages were not accepted by the authorities, and a lawsuit was then brought over whether the marriages were actually legally performed.

When the Ontario Court of Appeal found that the common law definition for marriage violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, same-sex couples were immediately allowed to marry. This made the Brent Hawkes' unions the first two legal same-sex marriages in the modern world.

What followed in the next two years was a chain of legalized same-sex marriage laws in nine provinces and one territory. And today, there are thousands of married same-sex couples in Canada.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- What might be some benefits of same-sex marriage for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community?
- Why would the Vautours' wedding need police protection?



Kent Monkman painting in his studio
Photo credit: Ryan Van Der Hout

KENT MONKMAN & TWO-SPIRIT IDENTITY

Two-Spirit is a revitalized pan-Indigenous umbrella term used by various Indigenous groups in North America to describe community members who fulfill a traditional third-gender role in their cultures or do not adhere to Westernized concepts of heteronormativity.

Kent Monkman is a two-spirit, Cree artist whose controversial work utilizes themes of sexuality, loss, colonization, and resilience within romantic interpretations of North America. A primary focus of his work is centered upon contemporary and historical aspects of the Indigenous experience.

Monkman works in a variety of mediums, including paintings, films, installations, and performance art. Monkman's two-spirit alter-ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, appears in many of their pieces. "I thought, an artistic persona that can live inside my work and basically be the artist painting her subjects... I immediately thought of We'Wha, this very well-known Zuni, two-spirited personality who represented her tribe; this was the male who identified as female... I knew that I wanted to talk about sexuality ... to address homophobia in Indigenous communities and also more widely ... so I created Miss Chief Eagle Testickle as this idea of 'the ego and the artist.'"

Monkman and Miss Chief have appeared in international art spaces, including The Royal Ontario Museum, The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, Compton Verney, the Denver Art Museum, and the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. Additionally, Monkman's videography has appeared at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival and the Berlinale in 2007 and 2008.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why might it be significant to include Miss Chief Eagle Testickle in Monkman's works?
- What do you notice about Monkman's painting *Miss Europe*?

EXPAND YOUR LEARNING

Who are some other two-spirit artists? What might their art reflect about the two-spirit experience?

How might have the experience of two-spirit people differed pre and post contact?



Screen shots of a video from Toronto's first-ever Trans Pride March - 2009.

Image source:
Xtra, youtube page.

TORONTO'S FIRST TRANS MARCH

In Toronto Pride's early days, the trans community took part in marches and parades during Pride week, but have often felt sidelined due to limited support and zero funding.

On June 26th, 2009, the first Trans March was held in Toronto with over 1,500 people in attendance. Inspired by similar marches in the United States, the Toronto march, organized by Karah Mathiason and her wife Diane Grant, aimed to create "a safe place where everybody's welcome to be who they are". Since its start, the march has been used as a way to increase visibility, raise awareness, and end human rights inequalities facing the trans community.

The march has continued to run every year, but not always without difficulty. In spite of lacking support from other pride-related organizations and the authorities, Trans March continues to grow and remains a landmark event in the city.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- If Pride marches are centered around inclusion, why do we continue to have individual marches such as Dyke March and Trans Marches?
- What is the significance of having these specific marches?

**EXPAND
YOUR
LEARNING**

What other cities and countries around the world host Trans Marches similar to Toronto's?



Gigi Gorgeous answers questions on stage at the Trans Day of Visibility celebration in San Francisco, March 31, 2017.

Image source:
Wikipedia Creative Commons

GET TO KNOW GIGI GORGEIOUS

Born in Montreal, Quebec, famous Youtuber Giselle Loren Lazzarto, widely known as Gigi Gorgeous, made a significant impact on the 2SLGBTQIA+ community through her videos and social media presence. In 2013, Gorgeous came out as transgender and began to document her transition publicly. Her online presence generated important conversations and raised awareness about transgender people. Throughout 2014, she documented her transition and uploaded videos detailing her multiple procedures.

In 2016, Gigi Gorgeous was denied entry to Dubai because of her identity as a transgender woman. Authorities at the Dubai airport detained Gorgeous for over five hours and she was eventually released. The “imitation of women by men” is illegal in the United Arab Emirates, so Dubai officials felt justified in the detainment. This incident received significant media attention and Gigi Gorgeous called for equality and legal protections for transgender people.

Gigi Gorgeous played an integral role in creating awareness and acceptance of the trans community through her decision to transition in a very public way. She generated conversations among the mainstream media about the experiences of many transgender individuals and created more awareness about the experience of transitioning.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- How has Gigi Gorgeous' experience as a transgender woman generated more conversation and awareness in the mainstream media?
- Why was Gigi Gorgeous' detainment in Dubai so significant for the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, and specifically the transgender community?

**EXPAND
YOUR
LEARNING**

Learn more about Gigi Gorgeous' transition in the documentary, *This is Everything: Gigi Gorgeous*.



Above: NDP MP for Burnaby Douglas Bill Siksay rises in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa Thursday May 14.

Image source:
The Canadian Press/Adrian Wyld/TCPI

Below:
Don Plett, president of the National Council of the Conservative Party of Canada, speaking at the national convention of its sister party (Høyre) in Norway in 2009.

Image source:
Wikipedia Creative Commons



GENDER IDENTITY IN CANADA

In 2005, NDP Member of Parliament Bill Siksay, presented a bill, later called Bill C-16, in the House of Commons. The bill specifically outlined an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination based on gender expression and gender identity. The bill was rejected by the House of Commons and reintroduced by Siksay in 2006, and again in 2009. In 2009, Siksay added an additional recommendation; that the bill include gender expression and gender identity within the hate crimes provisions of the Criminal Code. In 2011, the bill passed its third reading within the House of Commons, but was not taken up as law before Parliament was dissolved prior to the federal election. Reintroduced in 2012, the bill again died as result of the 2015 federal election.

On May 17th, 2016, Bill C-16 was introduced by the Government of Canada, its purpose being to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. The bill ensured the protection and right of individuals to live in accordance with their gender identity and gender expression. It passed on June 17th, 2017, and immediately offered individuals protection from discrimination, hate crimes and hate propaganda. Bill C-16 states the illegality involved in denying services, employment, and accommodations, and it identifies that any offense motivated by hate, bias, and/or prejudice regarding an individual's gender identity or expression can now be considered when determining a criminal sentence.

This piece of history raises important questions:

- Why might it be significant for 2SLGBTQIA+ people to have protections under Bill C-16?

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OUR HISTORY QUIZ

01.
Who was labelled a sex offender and sent to prison after being evaluated as “incurably homosexual?”

- A. Everett George Klippert
- B. Jim Egan
- C. Gary Doer
- D. Pierre Trudeau

02.
What law amendment, backed by then-Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1968, was put forward that partially decriminalized homosexuality?

- A. Bill LGBTQ
- B. Bill C-150
- C. The Equality Bill
- D. Pro-gay Bill

03.
What movement formed that lead to Canada’s first gay and lesbian protest?

- A. Together We
- B. The Outcry
- C. We Demand
- D. ASK

04.
The Brunswick Four (Adrienne Potts, Pat Murphy, Sue Wells and Heather Beyer), were dragged out of the Brunswick Tavern by police after they sang a song called _____.

- A. Forever Gay
- B. I Enjoy Being a Dyke
- C. Girls Kissing Girls
- D. Loud and Lesbian

05.
In 1975 and 1976, Mayor Jean Drapeau had police crack down on gay bars and bathhouses in Montreal in an attempt to “clean up” the city prior to _____.

- A. The federal election
- B. Festival du Voyager
- C. The Summer Olympics
- D. The Junos

06.
How many police officers raided the four Toronto bathhouses in what is famously called, “Operation Soap?”

- A. 50
- B. 75
- C. 100
- D. 150

07.
After Operation Soap, the community successfully had 99% of the charges acquitted, Although several people went to jail as a result of taking early plea bargains. Why?

- A. They provided false information to police
- B. Fighting the charges would have required the public to know their sexual orientation
- C. They resisted arrest and became excessively violent
- D. They had rap sheets

08.
Before being called AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Disease), the disease was called _____ and the stigma surrounding the disease and the LGBTQ community grew like a wildfire.

- A. Gay-related Immune Deficiency
- B. Homosexual Disease Transference
- C. Same Sex Disease
- D. HIV

09.
Who was Canada’s first member of Parliament to come out as gay in 1988?

- A. Réal Ménard
- B. Svend Robinson
- C. Libby Davies
- D. Glen Murray

10.
Who was Canada’s first member of Parliament to come out as lesbian in 2001?

- A. Libby Davies
- B. Nancy Ruth
- C. Sheri Benson
- D. Julie Lemieux

11.
What year did Reverend Brent Hawkes gain national attention by performing two same-sex marriages – making them the first same-sex marriages in the modern world?

- A. 1994
- B. 1988
- C. 2005
- D. 2001

12.
Bill C-16, a bill designed to prohibit discrimination based on gender expression and gender identity, was presented to the House of Commons in 2005. Although it was turned down, it was also reintroduced numerous times afterwards. What year was it passed?

- A. 2008
- B. 2010
- C. 2014
- D. 2017

01.	A
02.	B
03.	C
04.	B
05.	C
06.	D
07.	B
08.	A
09.	B
10.	A
11.	D
12.	D

ANSWER KEY



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