



Do You Mind? Capstone

Radical Queer Relationships Workshop



Evaluation Survey

We want to hear from you!

- Evaluate this community resource
- Share impacts and experiences
- Provide insight on how it can be improved
- Tell us how we can best support and empower 2S/LGBTQIA+ youth in healthy dating and relationships

About the survey:

- Confidential, voluntary, online survey
- Potential risk: some questions may be upsetting (see consent form at the beginning of survey for resources)
- Conducted by the Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC)
- Only CBRC reporting staff will have access to your individual answers and only de-identified, summary data will be shared with project partners/funders and the public

You will be able to access some of the summary-level findings on the CBRC's website (www.cbrc.net) where the study will be published near its end in 2028.



If you have any questions about this project or the survey, please reach out to Wilbur Turner by email at wilbur@checkhimout.ca.

Section 1
Introduction

Land Acknowledgement

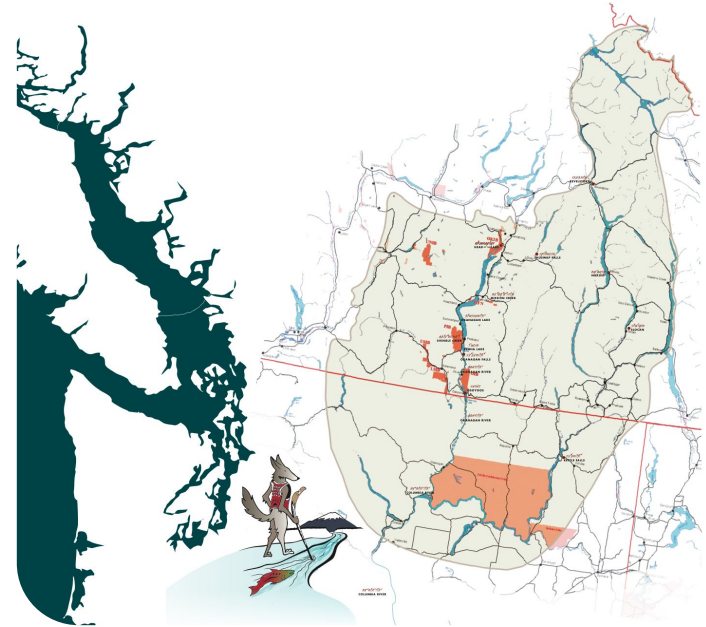
This workshop was designed and is taking place on the traditional, ancestral, unceded, and unsurrendered territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Whose land are you from?



Way p cy?ap

WELCOME



A map of the Syilx Okanagan Territory from ONA website (Syilx, n.d.):
<https://syilx.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/ONA-Map-Welcome-Cropped-V2.pdf>]

Introduction: Workshop Outline & Goals

This Radical Queer Relationships workshop was developed for queer youth, by queer youth.

Goal: To learn to build healthy and fulfilling queer relationships together.

- Empower queer youth to be themselves and look out for each other
- Educate queer youth on building and fostering boundaries and communities/relationships of care
- Provide queer youth with tools to protect themselves from and intervene in harmful relationships.

Introduction: Workshop Outline & Goals

Schedule

4:00-4:30 - Welcoming and Food

4:30-5:15 - Presentations ★

5:15-5:30 - Break

5:30-6:00 - Speakers

6:00-6:45 - Art Therapy

6:45-7:00 - Art Sharing

7:00-7:30 - Closing

Presentation Plan ★

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Love and Connection

Section 3: History

Section 4: How does this history show up in relationships?

Section 5: How do I want to show up in relationships?

Introduction: Disclaimer & Content Warning

This workshop will be mentioning and alluding to the following topics and themes:

- Racism
- Sexism, misogyny, and heteropatriarchy
- Homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia
- Ableism and fatphobia
- Slavery, genocide, broader themes of violence and abuse

No details or graphic descriptions will be included.

If you find you are in distress and do not feel comfortable being present for any section, you are welcome to step out at any point and prioritize your health and wellbeing. Resources can be found in the booklets.

Introduction: Housekeeping

- Access and Accessibility
- Code of Conduct:
 - Active listening
 - Respect for all
 - Challenging ideas respectfully
 - Asking questions rather than making assumptions
 - Maintaining confidentiality



Section 2

Love and connection

Quotes From the Community

“I've always imagined you and me sitting out in the sun, hand in hand, free at last. We spoke of all the places we would go if we could. Yet you are gone now. If I had known that bombs raining down on us would take you from me, I would gladly have told the world how I adored you more than anything. I'm sorry I was a coward.” (Queer lover, Palestine, Queering The Map.)

“If this weren't supposed to be right then his fingers would not fit so perfectly between mine.” (Queer writer, Kelowna.)

Quotes From Queer Writers

“I love being asexual because I can still be intimate with someone and not go against what my soul and mind and body desire, and that is to not have sex. There are thousands of ways to get that closeness with someone.” (Jade qtd. in Sherronda J. Brown’s *Refusing Compulsory Sexuality*, 2022, p. 173)

—

“Too great a love of beauty was often the sign of ungovernable wants and errant ways.” (Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, 2019, p. 116)

“When we see love as the will to nurture one’s own or another’s spiritual growth, revealed through acts of care, respect, knowing, and assuming responsibility, the foundation of all love in our life is the same.” (bell hooks, *All About Love*, 2001, p. 136)

—

“To open our hearts more fully to love’s power and grace we must dare to acknowledge how little we know of love in both theory and practice.” (bell hooks, *All About Love*, 2001, p. xxix)

Quotes From Queer Writers

- Love can show up in many different ways
- All forms of love are relevant to the queer experience

To queer love means to make it unconventional, to remake it as something more than what you have been told it must be.

Queer Connection: Sex and Sexual Intimacy

Queer connection takes many forms, including and sometimes through sex.

Tips for maintaining safety and boundaries while engaging in sexual activity (Street, 2025):

- Know what you're comfortable with and want from a hookup, be careful of using sex to self harm, communicate, make sure everyone's consent is continuously upheld.

Things to consider when hooking up:

- Know what you're comfortable with and what you want.
- Are you using unsafe or risky sex as a form of self harm?
- Consent is enthusiastic and ongoing- make sure you are checking in with your partner(s) and yourself before and throughout intimacy.
- Aftercare is kind to offer and always okay to ask for- what do you or your partner(s) need after the fact? Cuddles, help cleaning up, water, and snacks are great ways to wind down.

Sexual Safety Resources

Full panel STI testing:

- Walkin: Outreach Urban Health Centre: 250-868-2230
- Book an appt: Interior Health building at 505 Doyle Ave: 250-862-4407
- PrEP- bccfe.ca, or talk to your doctor

Resources if you have experienced sexual violence:

- Central Okanagan Elizabeth Fry Society: 250-763-4613
- SAFE program within Interior Health
- [Omunity.com](https://omunity.com)
- LGBTQ- friendly crisis line: 310-6789

Queer Love Keeps Us Safe

Love shows up in the shapes of the webs queer people create to connect with, and keep each other, safe.

Queer loving being unconventional means we are able to show up for each other's unconventional needs.

- Lesbian solidarity during the AIDS crisis ([XSaraXPoeX], 2020)
- Same-sex adult adoption (Rustin Center, 1982; Lizama, n.d.)
- Ballroom culture and community (Soto, 2024; Plaster, n.d.)

In the Matter of the Adoption by
BAYARD RUSTIN

of
WALTER STEPHENS NAEGLER,

Adoptive Child.

DOCKET NO.

ORDER OF ADOPTION
(Private Placement)

The petition of BAYARD RUSTIN ~~xxxx~~
verified the 27th day of February, 19 81, having been duly presented to this Court, together with an agreement on the part of the petitioning adoptive parents to adopt and treat the above-named adoptive child as ~~their~~ ^{his} own lawful child, and together with the affidavits of Bayard Rustin sworn to the 27th day of February, 1981 and Robert P. Wittes, sworn to the 3rd day of June, 1981

and the consents required by Section 111 of the Domestic Relations Law,

** having been dispensed with since the adoptive child is more than eighteen years of age and both of his parents reside in the State of New Jersey.

AND the aforesaid petitioning adoptive parents and the above-named adoptive child and all other persons whose consents are required as aforesaid having personally appeared before this Court for examination, ~~except~~ ^{xxxx}

AND an investigation having been duly ordered and made and the written report of such investigation having been duly filed with this Court, as required by the Domestic Relations Law;

Pictured: Adoption papers for a queer couple that could not marry (Rustin Center, 1982).

Discussion Questions

What is love to you?

What do love and connection mean to you?



Section 3

History

Disclaimer and Content Warning

This section will be mentioning and alluding to the following topics and themes:

- Racism (anti-Black, anti-Indigenous)
- Sexism, misogyny, and heteropatriarchy
- Homophobia, transphobia, queerphobia
- Ableism and fatphobia
- Slavery, genocide, broader themes of violence and abuse

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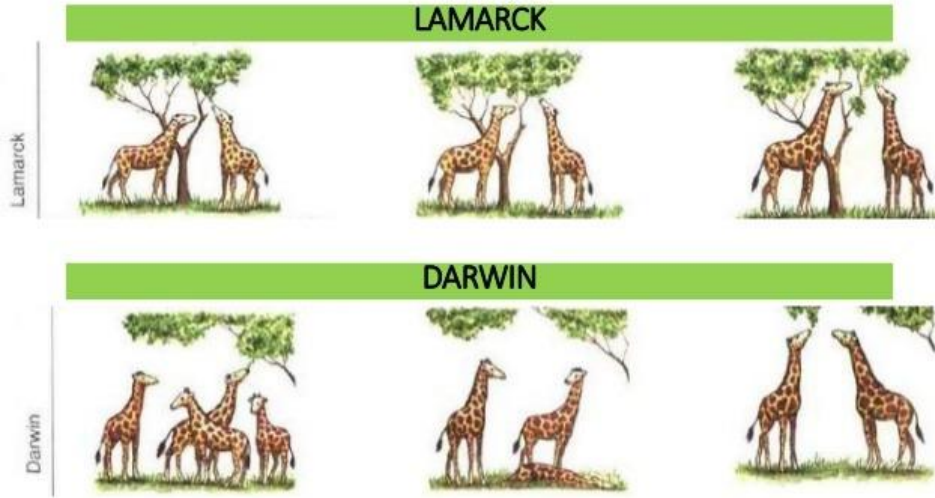
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White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with gender, queerness, and queer relationships?

Darwinism: “species change occurs through random variation and the struggle for existence” (Schuller, 2018, p. 35)

Lamarckism: “organisms’ pursuit of pleasure and avoidance of pain determines the course of evolution” (p. 35)



White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with gender, queerness, and queer relationships?

- European nations seeking power and establishing hierarchies (1800s)
 - How does one decide who is more powerful—who has more status?
- The adoption of (neo)Lamarckism -> the belief that an individual can change the course of evolution in their lifetime through their actions and behaviour

White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with gender, queerness, and queer relationships?

- Class hierarchies privileging the wealthy, who don't have to farm or work and have animals and other humans doing work *for* them
 - Less time in the sun and on the land, the paler you are + wealthy elites frequently catching tuberculosis (TB), causing sickly, paler complexion = whiteness as a desired beauty and sign of being “civilized”

White Supremacy, Evolution, & “Civilization”

What does white supremacy have to do with gender, queerness, and queer relationships?

- Humans as “impressionable” and sensitive, and therefore malleable to change and evolution → Europeans striving to create the most “evolved” and “civilized” offspring
 - **Gender:** As birthers, white women being kept inside (or under the supervision of white men) where they can’t be influenced by the outside environment while the men could move through any space without consequence → make sure women don’t experience heightened emotions / “hysteria”
 - **Race:** White women not being allowed near racialized people (especially men) to prevent “contaminating influences from impressionable flesh” (Schuller, 2018, p. 37)

The Creation of Sex, Gender, & Race

Existing beyond the expectation of whiteness and striving for creating “evolved” and “civilized” offspring seen as against natural law.

Understanding what Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) calls “intersectionality” → how gender and race have various relationships and how identities intersect.

- White women policed and confined to maintain “civilized” heritage
- Racialized peoples racialized, dehumanized, and segregated to create a distinct divide and “Other” without any say
 - Racialized women not fitting in either category of “women” or “human”
 - Racialized gender non-conforming people forced into gendered and racialized categories
- Rules and definitions of what race and sex (gender) is to enforce racialized and gendered bodies in the name of “evolution” and “civilization” → the erasure of cultures, communities, and identities

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.

hooks, b. (1992). *Black looks: Race and representation*, Between the Lines, Toronto.

Schuller, K. (2018). *Biopolitics of feeling: Race, sex, and science in the nineteenth century*. Duke University Press, Durham.

Ideas of Sex, Gender, & Race as Excuses to...

Colonize:

- (White) saviourism: the idea of “saving” and “civilizing” racialized, disabled, queer peoples into whiteness
 - Assimilation (e.g. gender norms, residential schools)
 - Sterilization (eugenics for disabled/racialized peoples)
 - Institutionalization/criminalization/policing
- Seeing peoples as “other” and/or not human
 - (Settler) colonialism & land theft → terra nullius
 - Genocide, ethnic cleansing
 - Withholding of human rights (e.g. right to vote)
 - Invalidation, neglect, alienation, discrimination
 - Oppression, policing, violence

Exploit:

- Slavery and human trafficking
 - Transatlantic slave trade
 - Criminalization → prison labour
 - Corporations and mass production → sweatshops, unregulated/unprotected labour, migrant workers
 - Circuses, human experimentation, human “zoos”
- Theft & profit
 - Stealing/rewriting of knowledge
 - Cultural appropriation
 - Labour and time (uncredited, erased labour)
 - Gentrification
 - Slumming practices (Harlem, *Paris is Burning*)

Cole, T. (2012). The white-savior industrial complex. *The Atlantic*. 21 March 2012.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>.
hooks, b. (1992). *Black looks: Race and representation*, Between the Lines, Toronto.

Machado de Oliveira, V. (2021). The single story of “forward”, *Hospicing modernity: Facing humanity's wrongs and the implications for social activism*. North Atlantic Books, Berkeley.
Pailey, R. (2021). Race in/and development, *The essential guide to critical development studies*, edited by Veltmeyer, H. and Bowles, P., Routledge, 2, 31-39.

Section 4

***How does this history
show up in relationships?***

Section Content

How does this history show up in relationships?

This section will cover:

- Identity policing
- A case study
- Defining relationship violence
- Red flags to know early on

Identity Policing

Identity Policing: within-community judgment about who counts as “really” gay/queer/trans enough or whose body/race/ability is deemed acceptable

Common experiences include:

- Racialized exclusion (sexual racism)
- Fatphobia & body discrimination
- Ableism and desexualization
- Biphobia & community gatekeeping

Where does this show up?

- Dating apps, community spaces, and relationships



Dating Apps as the main stage

- Apps function as visibility hierarchies.
- Profile shorthands like “not into [race]”, “clean only”, “no fats no fems” is normalised as ‘just a preference’ rather than discrimination.
- Whiteness is positioned as the most desirable category.
- Fatphobia and gender-expression policing are intertwined, phrases like “no fats, no fems” reject body size and femininity.
- Desire is organized and categorized.

Disability & Desexualization

- Disabled people experienced double discrimination. They are desexualised as society refuses to see them as sexual beings which is also read as “not really” queer. Thus, they experience two stacked layers of policing.
- Also, sexuality is deemed equal to humanity. Making “sexualization” a standard to deserving respect.
 - Why do disabled people have to be sexual beings to be valid?

Case Study

Maria (21 yo lesbian) and Juhi (22 yo bisexual) have been dating for a couple months. Maria, is Afro-Latina and started identifying as a “masc” since that’s what all her queer friends insisted her style was. Maria initiated things with Juhi. Sometimes Maria worries that Juhi isn’t actually bisexual since this is her first experience with a woman.

Yesterday, they got into a fight when Maria said she used to date men before identifying as a lesbian. Juhi said that she can't be a lesbian . This hurt Maria since she’s identified as a butch lesbian for over a year. She doesn’t wear makeup anymore, and even feels that she always has to top... even though Juhi has expressed she wanted to top sometimes too.

How are these dynamics impacting Maria and Juhi’s relationship?

How is history reflected in this case?

What problems can you identify?

Reflection

- When do labels stop helping us?
- Stereotypes
- Identity policing
- “Gold-star” lesbian
- Biphobia
- Expectations of gender roles within a queer relationship
- Expectations within a relationship – top, bottom, femme, masc,
- Intersectionality

2SLGBTQIA+ Relationship Violence

Like heterosexual domestic violence, 2SLGBTIA+ IPV involves the conscious manipulation and control of one person by another through the use of threats, coercion, humiliation, and/or force.

It can include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Financial abuse

Queering Violence

While there are similarities in violence in heterosexual and 2SLGBTIA+ relationships. There are some specific experiences of queer violence.

These include:

- Outing
- Leveraging community stigma
- Gender stereotypes and transphobia
- Undermining 2SLGBTIA+ identity
- Restricting access

Red Flags to Know Early On

- Insists they know your identity better than you do, or that your identity is ‘just a phase’.
- Refuses to use your pronouns or chosen name ever after being asked.
- Tells you no one else would want you because of your identity.
- Isolates you from queer friends, community spaces, or support networks.
- Threatens to ‘out’ you to family, employer, landlord, or anyone else.
- Uses community norms ‘real lesbians like or do __’, ‘real gay men like or do __’, body standards to shame or control you.

Section 5

***How do I want to
show up in relationships?***

Relationship Anarchy

Coined by Andie Nordgren in 2006

“Relationship anarchy is not about never committing to anything — it’s about designing your own commitments with the people around you, and freeing them from norms dictating that certain types of commitments are a requirement for love to be real, or that some commitments like raising children or moving in together have to be driven by certain kinds of feelings.” — *Andie Nordgren* (2012)

The "Relationship Escalator"

The "Relationship Escalator" describes:

Societal rules and assumptions of what a relationship "should" look like, including pre-written milestones to showcase a successful relationship.

- This ignores how each person is different, and has their own needs and values. Some people may be happy with this path, and others may not. Instead, it can add pressure to yourself and your relationship, and that way can be harmful.

What is "Fake Fairness"?

Mutual Deprivation

Sometimes one can believe that they must sacrifice certain needs or even avoid communicating them out of fear of rejection from their partner.

- Not "What would make this equal?" but "What would make this *satisfying* for both of us?" (Bradley, 2025)

Mutual Satisfaction

“Invites us to acknowledge that our needs may not match and that’s okay. Fairness isn’t about sameness; it’s about making sure each person gets to be nourished. This might mean negotiating, stretching, or collaborating, but not shrinking” (2025)

Relationship Anarchy Smorgasbord

Romantic Elements: Courtship, Passion, Romanticism, Gestures	Friendship Elements: Companionship, playfulness, shared interests/activities	Life Partnership Shared Goals. Safe Haven (Acceptance), Strong Base (Support)	Physical Touch: Dancing, cuddling, hugs, pets, body contact, massages, hand holding roughhousing	Sexual Interaction: Oral, Anal, genital, orgasmic, nonpenetrative, Sexting, karezza, eroticism, sensual play
Emotional Intimacy Sharing, Vulnerability, empathy, sympathy	Emotional Support: Listening, Holding space, advising,	Intellectual Intimacy: Sharing thoughts, Beliefs, Opinions. Shared media. Learning together.	Intellectual Support: Debate, dialectic, heuristic, and didactic engagement to improve/expand intellectual pursuits.	Kink/Fetish BDSM, Roleplay, Voyeurism/exhibitionism, discussion or participation
Spiritual Intimacy: Chanting, Ritual, meditation, Prayer, Worship with through the other. dharma, faith, fate	Caregiving: Giving and receive care. Medical, Emotional. Short term/long term	Co-Caregiving: Children Parents, Pets, Plants, Family, Friends	Domesticity Nesting Shared living space, Roommates, Co-sleeping, division of labor	Power Dynamics: Mentor/Mentee, Teacher/Student, Coach/Client, Leadership/deference
Collaborative Partners: Teaching, Projects, Art, Organization, Events, Fundraising, Volunteering	Financial Partnership: Sharing: Money, accounts, payments, responsibilities, property	Social Partnership: Co-workers, friends, family, Community, Fans, Followers knows	Business Partnership: Various combinations of collaborative, financial, and social.	Political Elements: Protest, Civil Disobedience, political action, refining agendas, supporting causes

My Needs

Needs are what help us feel :

- Safe
- Respected
- Connected
- Valued

What are one of two things you need to feel cared for in a relationship?

My Boundaries

Needs tell us what matters.

Boundaries help protect what matters.

What boundaries could help you protect your needs?



Thank you!



Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada

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