



TEACHING &  
LEARNING  
EXCHANGE

evolVED

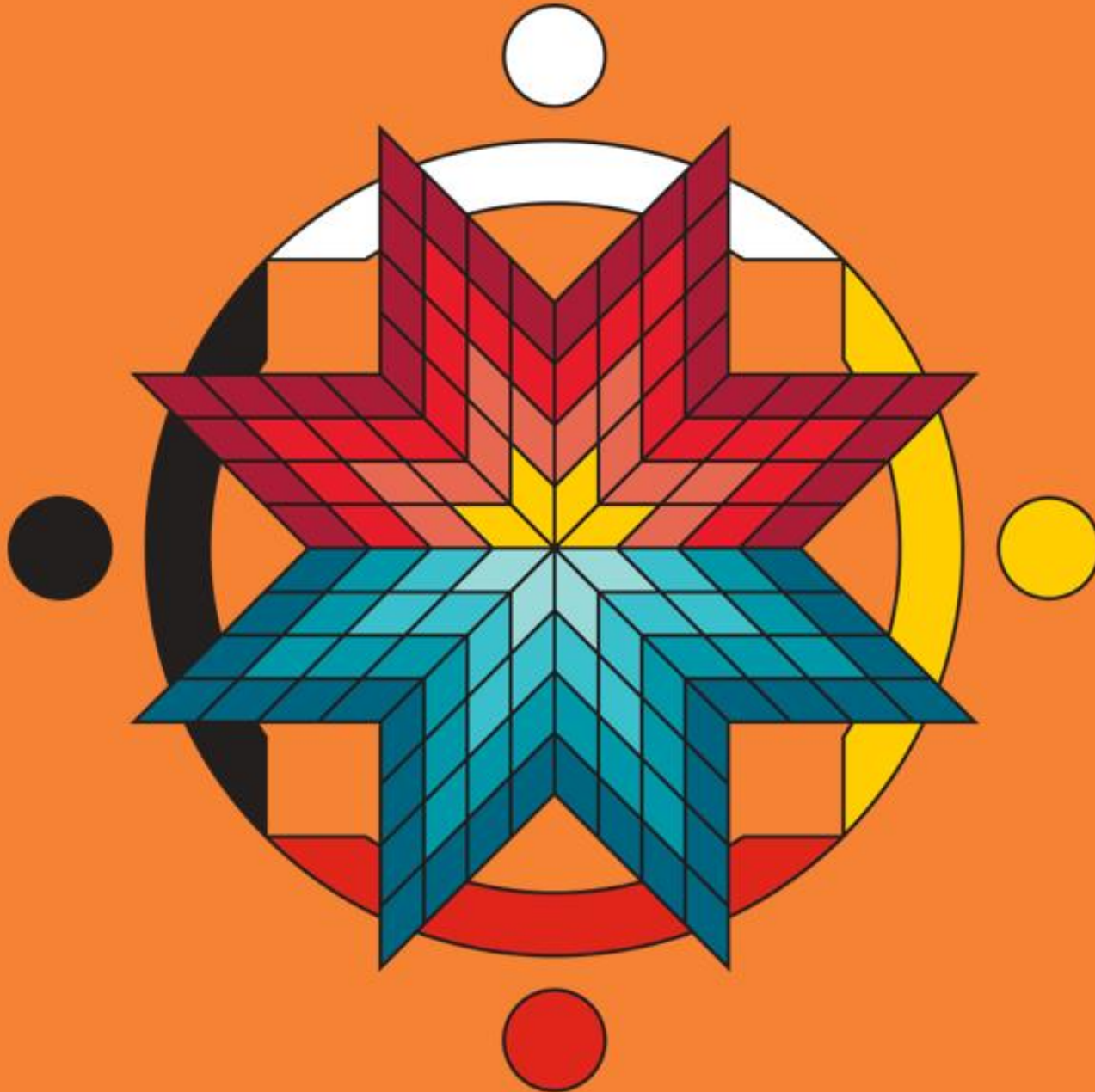
# Evolving Our Practices to Engage 2SLGBTQ+ Learners

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## Land Acknowledgement

George Brown College is located on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous peoples who have lived here over time.

We are grateful to share this land as treaty people who learn, work and live in the community with each other.

[Learn more about our land acknowledgement.](#)



June 29, 2023



# Agenda

**Intro:** Land Acknowledgement, Agenda, Learning Outcomes, Padlet

**Orientation 101:** Case: Anh, Orientation, Intersectionality, Taking Action

**Plumbing Gender:** Case: Jessie, Gender, Sites of Oppression, Taking Action

**At the Intersections:** Case: Isabella, Pyramid of Violence, Taking Action

**Moving Forward:** Surviving to Thriving, Next Steps, Your Learning, Questions?







June 29, 2023



# Learning Outcomes

- **Understand** 2SLGBTQ+ identities.
- **Respond** to 2SLGBTQ+ people with basic respect & inclusivity.
- **Consider** intersecting forms of oppression.
- **Challenge** our own homophobia, transphobia.
- **Intervene** in situations of discrimination, harassment, and oppression.
- **Foster** inclusive learning spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ people.
- **Commit** to continued action to improve GBC for 2SLGBTQ+ people.

Why are **you** here?  
What do **you** want to learn?



# What do you want to learn?

Take a minute to add what you want to learn on the Padlet, using the QR code to the right, or click on [this padlet link](#).



# Orientation 101

**Case: Anh, Orientation Terms, Intersectionality, Taking Action.**

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# Orientation 101: Case (slide 1)

Anh is new to George Brown and excited to make friends in her Game Production course.

When she meets her team, one member, Gary, starts loudly talking about how **Anh “looks so cute”** and “just like an anime character.”

Her peers say it’s just a joke and **not to be so sensitive**, so Anh tries to ignore Gary’s behaviour, but he **keeps hitting on her in group meetings.**



At a group meeting after class, he comes up to her and asks, “**will you be my waifu?**”

Finally, Anh says “stop trying to make me your girlfriend, I’m an ace lesbian!”

Gary responds: “you wouldn’t be if I took you out,” and **the team is silent.**

Anh grabs her bag and leaves. She’d rather do the whole assignment **alone** than deal with this.

# Orientation 101: What's happening here?

## *Homophobia:*

- Hostility towards people perceived as LGBTQ+, often in the forms of prejudice, exclusion, discrimination, and violence.

**Homophobia includes “jokes” regardless of intent.** Their effect is to create an environment hostile to LGBTQ+ people and their free expression.

## *Sexual harassment:*

- comments or conduct related to **gender, sexuality, or of a sexual nature.**
- known (or **ought to reasonably be known**) to be unwelcome, unwanted, offensive, intimidating, hostile, or inappropriate.

**Anh made it clear that these comments are unwelcome.**



# Gender Essentialism and Normativity

**Gender essentialism** is the belief that people of a certain gender must have certain *essences* in common, and these shared characteristics are *necessarily* present in *everyone* of a given gender. Essentialism shapes our beliefs about ourselves and others, **unless we work on unlearning it.**

**Gender-based discrimination** relies on gender essentialism with assumptions like:

- Of course, all men are strong – so women (*because they're weaker than men*) have to be protected.
- Of course, women are emotional & overreact – so men (*because they're more logical than women*) shouldn't cry.

**Heteronormativity** is the assumption that everyone is heterosexual unless proven otherwise. Under heteronormativity, we need proof someone is *not* straight.

- It is expected, normal, and “natural” for men to be attracted to women and women to be attracted to men.
- It is surprising, abnormal, and “deviant” for people to be attracted to people of the same gender and not the “opposite” gender.

# Orientation 101: Case (slide 2)

Anh is new to George Brown and excited to make friends in her Game Production course.

When she meets her team, one member, Gary, starts loudly talking about how Anh “looks so cute” and “just like an anime character.”

Her peers say it’s just a joke, and not to be so sensitive, so Anh tries to ignore Gary’s behaviour, but he keeps hitting on her in group meetings.



At a group meeting after class, he comes up to her and asks, “will you be my waifu?”

Finally, Anh says “stop trying to make me your girlfriend, I’m an **ace lesbian!**”

Gary responds: “**you wouldn’t be if I took you out,**” and the team is silent.

Anh grabs her bag and leaves. She’d rather do the whole assignment alone than deal with this.

# Orientation 101: Terms (LGB)

1. What terms are you familiar with?
2. Which are new?

## Lesbian:

- a woman who is attracted to other women (aka sapphic, WLW).

## Bisexual, pansexual:

- someone attracted to people of their gender and other genders.

## Gay:

- someone attracted to people of the same gender.
- Includes (but is not limited to) gay men/MLM (flag on right).

## Heterosexual, straight:

- someone attracted only to people of the gender "opposite" to their own.

# Orientation 101: Terms (AQ+)

1. What terms are you familiar with?
2. Which are new?

## Asexual, ace:

- someone who does not experience sexual attraction, or who has little to no interest in sexual activity.

## Queer:

- a term that encompasses a broad spectrum of identities related to sex, gender, and attraction.

## Aromantic, aro:

- someone who does not experience romantic attraction, or who has little to no interest in romantic intimacy.

...and many more!

You don't need to understand every identity to respect people's needs & boundaries.



# Orientation 101: Case, Revisited

Anh is new to **George Brown** and excited to make friends in her Game Production course.

When she meets her team, one member, Gary, starts loudly talking about how Anh “looks so **cute**” and “**just like an anime character.**”

Her peers say it’s just a joke, so Anh tries to ignore Gary’s behaviour, but he keeps hitting on her in group meetings.



At a group meeting after class, he comes up to her and asks, “will you be my **waifu?**”

Finally, Anh says “stop trying to make me your girlfriend, I’m an ace lesbian!”

Gary responds: “you wouldn’t be if I took you out,” and the team is silent.

Anh grabs her bag and leaves. She’d rather do the whole assignment alone than deal with this.

# Orientation 101: What's happening here? Revisited

## ***Racism:***

A term for the many ways attitudes, actions, policies, and systems **create inequitable opportunities and outcomes** for people based on race.

## ***Anti-Asian racism:***

Racism **directed towards people** perceived to be **of Asian descent**. Anti-Asian racism includes biases, prejudices, attitudes and beliefs, stereotyping, discrimination, harassment, and physical harm.

*"just like an anime character"*

*"will you be my waifu?"*

→ If unchallenged, the norms we absorb from society feed into these attitudes and behaviours.

Anh is being excluded because of **Gary's assumptions** about her and **behaviours** towards her **and her peers' unwillingness to intervene**.

# Intersectionality

- No one experiences only privilege or oppression.
- Elements of our identities are intertwined, shaping each other.
- Our **social locations** are formed **at the intersections** of elements like gender, class, ethnicity, age, orientation, ability, culture...

## *Intersectionality:*

“Intersectionality investigates **how intersecting power relations influence social relations across diverse societies as well as individual experiences in everyday life.**” –Patricia Hill Collins & Sirma Bilge

# Anh's Intersections

1. What intersections form Anh's identity?
2. Which matter most to her current experiences?
3. What kinds of oppression is she experiencing?





# Intersectionality: Your Identities

Take a few minutes and fill out the handout here (you won't have to share it), and think about:

- How do I experience oppression and vulnerability?
- How do I experience privilege?
- How do these interact to form my identity?



# Orientation 101: What will you do?

Considering your positionality, how will **you respond** to this incident and **prevent** similar things from happening again?

Think on your own first, then talk to someone beside you.

Post your ideas on Padlet!



# Anh's Case: What else can you do?

## If an incident occurs...

Connect students with SGBV Response Advisors. If needed, remove the student *causing the problem* from the group, *not* those experiencing victimization.

## Before an incident occurs...

- Share, remind students about SV policy, what it looks like in the classroom, what to do if you experience, witness it; connect to professional ethics.
- Set out clear policies within your course regarding harassment and discrimination and follow them. Pre-existing policies can usefully rebut claims of preferential treatment or “reverse discrimination”.

## To prevent incidents from occurring...

- Integrate positive collaboration practices into your course content, including group norms and contracts, assessing team health, receiving and responding to feedback, and constructive conflict.
- Especially in fields with significant underrepresentation of 2SLGBTQ+ people, highlight the accomplishments of 2SLGBTQ+ professionals and their contributions to the field.

# Plumbing Gender

**Case: Jessie, Gender, Pronouns, Taking Action.**

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# Plumbing Gender: Jessie's Case



Jessie is a two-spirit transmasculine person studying to get a better job and provide for his kid. Jessie is almost finished the Practical Nursing program.

On the way to class, a peer notices someone leaving the gender-neutral washroom and says there's only three genders: male, female, and mentally ill.

As they walk into class, someone else adds: "if a patient with a 'F' says she 'identifies as' something else, I'm sending her to the psych ward."

Another chimes in: "I'm not giving give a kid experimental drugs that cause irreversible damage."

These transphobic comments are exhausting to Jessie, but he doesn't feel like he can push back. He's already worried about being outed or ostracized in his program, but now also concerned for any trans people his peers might be responsible for.

**What's going on here?**  
**What can we do?**

# Wait, what's gender?

~~Case: Jessie, Gender, Pronouns, Taking Action~~

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# Gender: What is it, anyways?

Gender is culturally produced and defined.

You can't know someone's gender for sure!

Many different factors combine to make what we call "gender", such as...

## ***Gender identity:***

Our sense of our own gender

## ***Gender expression, presentation:***

How we present ourselves to the world, such as style, clothes, mannerisms...

## ***Relational, social gender:***

Our names, pronouns, and social relationships

## ***Chromosomal:***

Typically determines primary sex characteristics

## ***Hormonal:***

Causes development of secondary sex characteristics – if you change them, your development changes

## ***Legal:***

The names and genders on our legal identification (M/F/X)

# What's Your Gender?

Our genders grow and change with us.

What makes you your gender?

My name is...

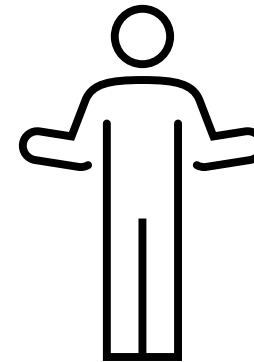
My pronouns are...

To my loved ones, I'm...

As a kid, I liked...

I like to wear...

My voice sounds...



...at work  
...around friends  
...by myself

This body can...

I feel affinity with...

People are attracted to...

I imagine myself getting older and...

I want to be...

My roles are...

Strangers call me...



# Gender: Some terms

Quick stats for  
Canadian college &  
university students:

- 1 in 20 are nonbinary and/or transgender.
- 1 in 65 are intersex.

## Transgender, trans:

- people whose gender doesn't match what they were assigned at birth.

## Cisgender, cis:

- people whose gender matches what they were assigned at birth.
- Cis- comes from "on the same side as", and trans- from "on another side as".

## Nonbinary:

- people who don't identify solely as either male or female.

## Intersex:

- someone whose chromosomal, hormonal, or anatomical sex characteristics fall outside of the conventional classifications of "male" or "female".

# Gender: Some more terms

***Assigned gender at birth*** (aka "AGAB", "sex"):

Assigned at birth by visual inspection.

*Typically* corresponds to characteristics developed during puberty but doesn't determine them.

***Gender dysphoria:***

Sense of unease, discomfort, dissociation from self when our perceived gender doesn't match own gender identity.

*Misgendering* and *deadnaming* can cause or worsen gender dysphoria.

***Gender euphoria:***

Sense of joy, comfort, and wellbeing when we feel recognized and at home in our gender.

Gender-affirming care is crucial to supporting the wellbeing of people who pursue it.

# People and Pronouns

Pronouns often indicate, but are not determined by or determinative of, gender identity.

Just like you can't tell someone's gender through observation, you can't tell someone's pronouns!

The best practice is to **share your pronouns first**, rather than demand pronouns from everyone you meet.

- ...in your syllabus.
- ...in your email signature.
- ...ask students at the start of classes *confidentially* in a "getting to know you" questionnaire.

Subjective	Objective (Reflexive)	Possessive
They	Them(self)	Their
Ask <u>them</u> what <u>they</u> want in <u>their</u> tea.		
He	Him(self)	His
<u>He</u> said <u>he'd</u> get <u>his</u> by <u>himself</u> .		
She	Her(self)	Hers
<u>Her</u> over there - what did <u>she</u> get in <u>hers</u> ?		
Xie	Xem(self)	Xyr
<u>Xie</u> got <u>xyr</u> tea with honey. Ask <u>xem</u> !		
For more, try <a href="https://practicewithpronouns.com">practicewithpronouns.com</a> !		

# People and Pronouns: But what if...

If you get someone's pronouns wrong, **correct yourself and apologize quickly**, then move on. Don't center yourself!

If someone misgenders a person, quickly **remind them** of that person's proper pronouns!

If you keep getting pronouns wrong, you need **practice!** Practice talking about the person in third person (using their pronouns) until it becomes natural.

Mistakes happen occasionally, but **repeated misgendering is harassment** and can create a **poisoned environment**.

"Has anyone seen Noor? I have something for him - **sorry, them** - that I need to drop off."

"Drew was here a bit ago, but we couldn't find what they were looking for."

"Drew's pronouns are **she/her**. **Her** camera is over here; is that what **she** needs?"

"I was worried I wouldn't get it, but I'm so glad we practiced Jessie's pronouns!"

"We care about Jessie: it's important **he** feels safe and comfortable here."

# Two-Spirit (2S) Identities & Colonization

Gender diversity has always existed. Colonial regimes violently repressed gender diversity across the globe. Many cultures continue to resist the impacts of colonization.

## ***Two-spirit (2S):***

An English term used by some indigenous people to describe orientations, gender modalities, and roles outside of the colonial male/female binary.

Beaded medallion of two-spirit flag by Ray @beadsagainstfascism





# Plumbing Gender: Jessie's Case, Revisited



Jessie is a **two-spirit transmasculine** person studying to get a better job and provide for his kid. Jessie is almost finished the Practical Nursing program.

On the way to class, a peer notices someone leaving the **gender-neutral washroom** and says there's only three genders: male, female, and **mentally ill**.

As they walk into class, someone else adds: "if a **patient with a 'F'** says she **'identifies as'** something else, I'm sending her to the **psych ward**."

Another chimes in: "I'm not giving kids **experimental drugs** that cause irreversible damage."

These transphobic comments are exhausting to Jessie, but he doesn't feel like he can push back. He's already **worried about being outed or ostracized in his program**, but now also concerned for any **trans people his peers might be responsible for**.

**What's going on here?  
What can we do?**

# Plumbing Gender: What will you do?

Considering your positionality, how will **you respond** to this incident and **prevent** similar things from happening again?

Think on your own first, then talk to someone beside you.

Post your ideas on Padlet!



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# Jessie's Case: What else can you do?

## **If an incident occurs...**

- Pause and acknowledge the emotions.
- Make it clear what behaviour is unacceptable in your classroom.
- Set aside time after class to discuss with students individually.
- **Do not** avoid conflict or attempt to intimidate or bargain with students.

## **Before an incident occurs...**

- Set an inclusive tone for your class: include your pronouns on your syllabus, invite students to share their pronouns, chosen name, & pronunciation in a confidential "getting to know you" survey.
- Encourage interactions among students to build their sense of belonging.

## **To prevent incidents from occurring...**

- In your content, discuss the importance of diversity to your professional work.
- Use cases that reflect the diversity of our communities. Use strengths-based rather than deficit models to present these cases.
- In your classroom management, develop shared expectations for your class.
- Provide multiple (non-disruptive) means for students to share feedback and feel heard. Consider making professional ethics a part of students' grade.

# At the Intersections

**Case: Isabella, Pyramid of Violence, Taking Action.**

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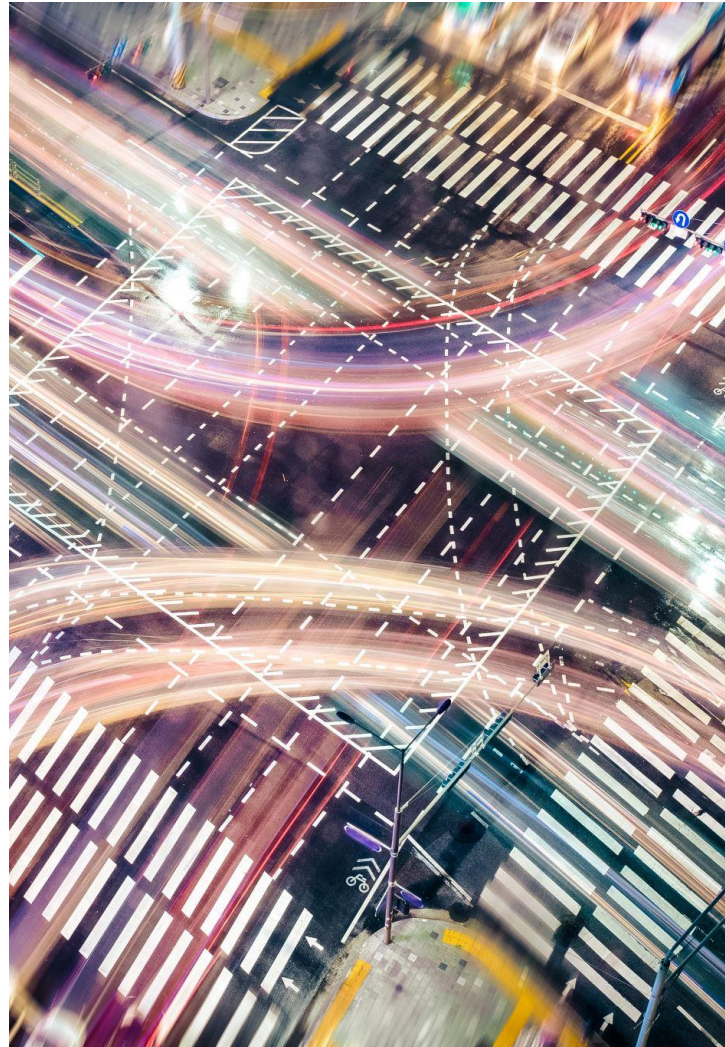
# At the Intersections: Isabella's Case

Isabella is a Black woman studying Business Marketing.

During a case study presentation, she shares insights from past work experiences in the tech industry, "back when people thought I was a guy." Some students snicker.

The next class, some students whistle when Isabella comes in. During the discussions, students refer obliquely to Isabella's comments as "his" and "that guy's" or ignore them altogether.

The discussions concluded; you receive her peer feedback.



Feedback for Isabella is all over the place: one student praises her pretty normally; one says Isabella was "bossy" and "dominated the project"; another says she was too "angry" and "made me feel uncomfortable and threatened"; and the final one seems similar to the first, except that the student conspicuously avoids using Isabella's name and pronouns, something not done in their feedback for other peers.

**What's happening here?**



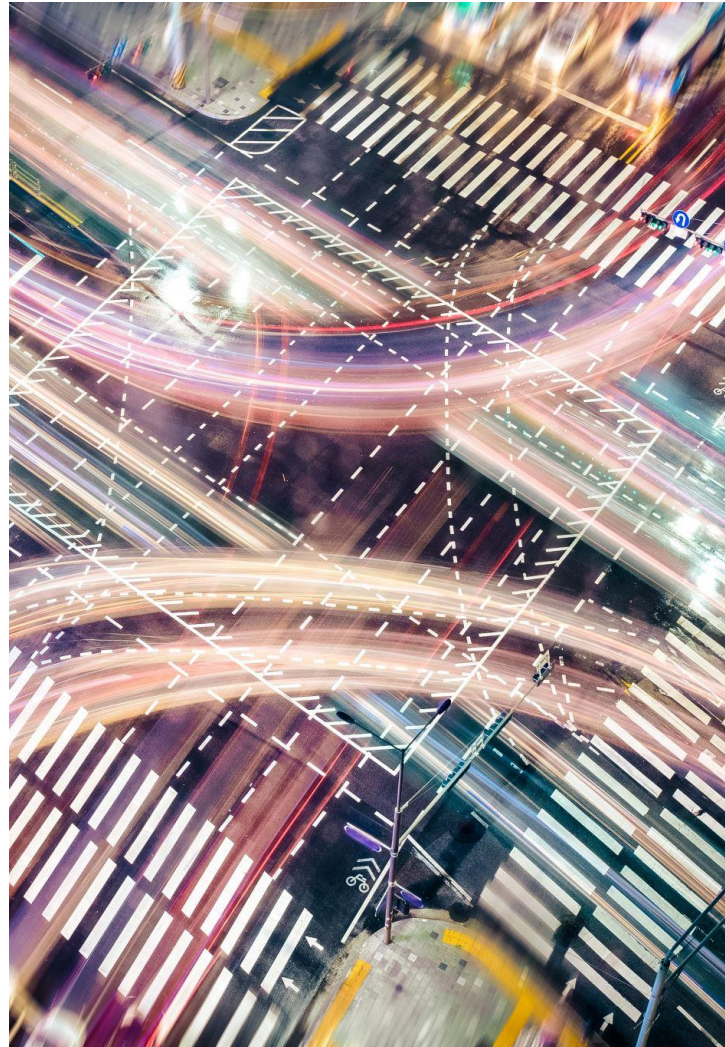
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Feedback for Isabella is all over the place: one student praises her pretty normally; one says Isabella was "**bossy**" and "**dominated the project**"; another says she was too "**angry**" and "made me feel **uncomfortable** and **threatened**"; and the final one seems similar to the first, except that the student conspicuously **avoids using Isabella's name and pronouns**, something not done in their feedback for other peers.

**What's happening here?**



# Pyramid of Violence



## Death

Concerted campaigns of violence continue to escalate, seeking to eradicate people of a certain identity from society. The existence of a category of people is blamed for societal problems, justifying their eradication in interpersonal violence and on a mass scale.

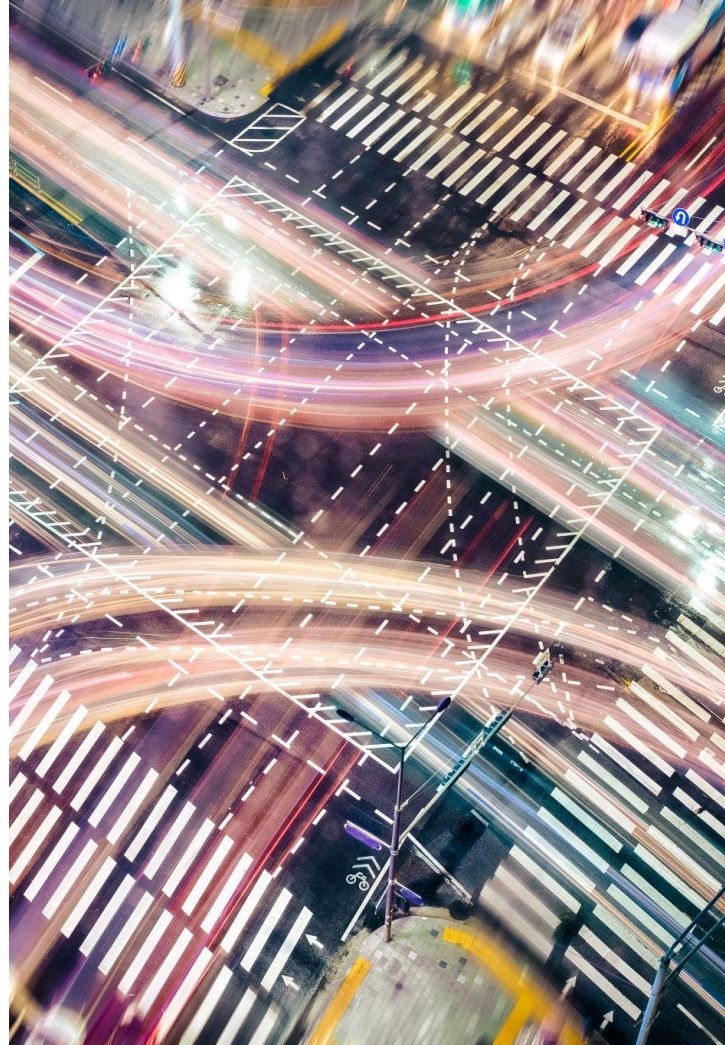


# At the Intersections: Isabella's Case, continued

After class, Isabella goes to the washroom. Her classmate Chloe starts videoing her walking into the women's washroom and threatens to call 911 on Isabella for being a "peeping Tom" and a "predator".

Isabella doesn't come to the next class, or the next. You ask one of her friends if they know what's happened.

The student shows you a post Chloe made on social media, featuring old pictures of Isabella, her deadname, and the video.



It also has Isabella's class schedule.

The comments are filled with misgendering, slurs, and threats, including people who say they're planning to keep watch at the nearby intersections to stop her from "invading women's spaces."

What **intersections** of oppression is Isabella confronting?

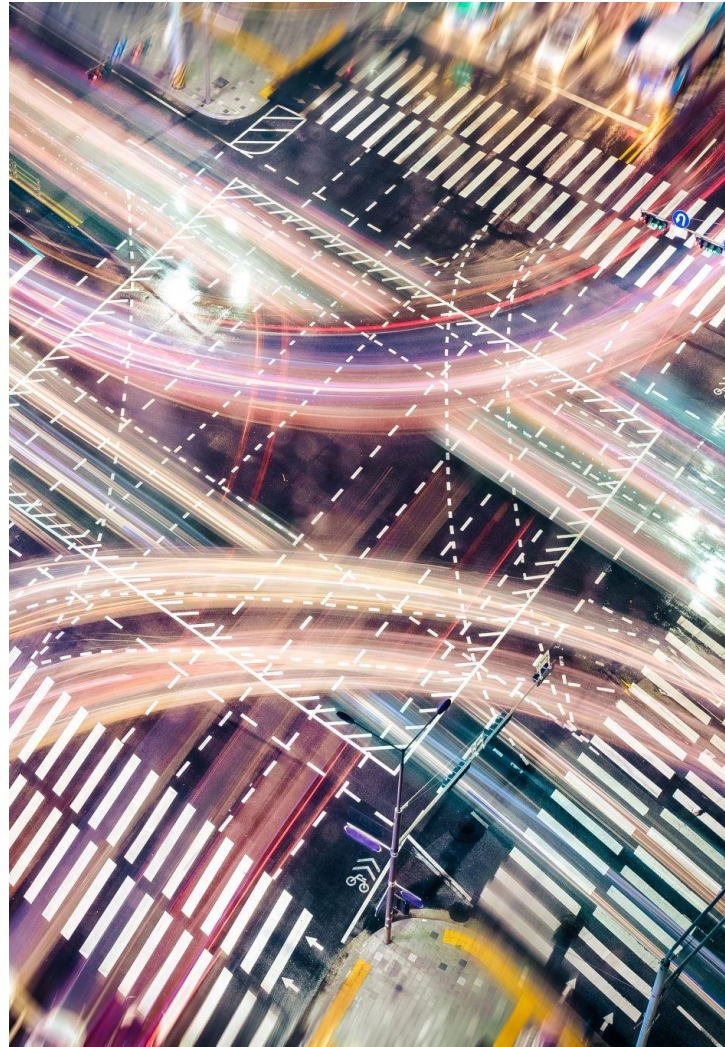
**How has this escalated?**

# At the Intersections: Isabella's Case, continued\*

After class, Isabella goes to the washroom. Her classmate Chloe starts videoing her walking into the women's washroom **and threatens to call 911 on Isabella** for being a "peeping Tom" and a "**predator**".

Isabella doesn't come to the next class, or the next. You ask one of her friends if they know what's happened.

The student shows you a post **Chloe made on social media**, featuring old pictures of Isabella, her **deadname**, and the video.



It also has Isabella's class schedule.

The comments are filled with **misgendering, slurs, and threats**, including people who say they're planning to **keep watch** at the nearby intersections to **stop her from "invading women's spaces."**

What **intersections** of oppression is Isabella confronting?

**How has this escalated?**



# At the Intersections: Violence

**Violence against 2SLGBTQ+ people, especially QTBIPOC, is incredibly prevalent.**

**55% of LGBTQ Canadians** have experienced violent victimization; 9% in the past year alone. **Women, trans, disabled, and indigenous people** experience higher rates of physical and sexual assault.

67% of Ontario trans people avoid public spaces because of fear of being read as trans.

**Police are not a safe solution.**

Trans people in Ontario **experienced police harassment** at far higher rates than cisgender people: 4% of white trans Ontarians, **35% of indigenous trans Ontarians**, and 26% of non-indigenous trans people of colour.

49% of white transgender people **worry about being harassed or stopped by police**; 75% of Indigenous trans people, and 94% of Black trans people.

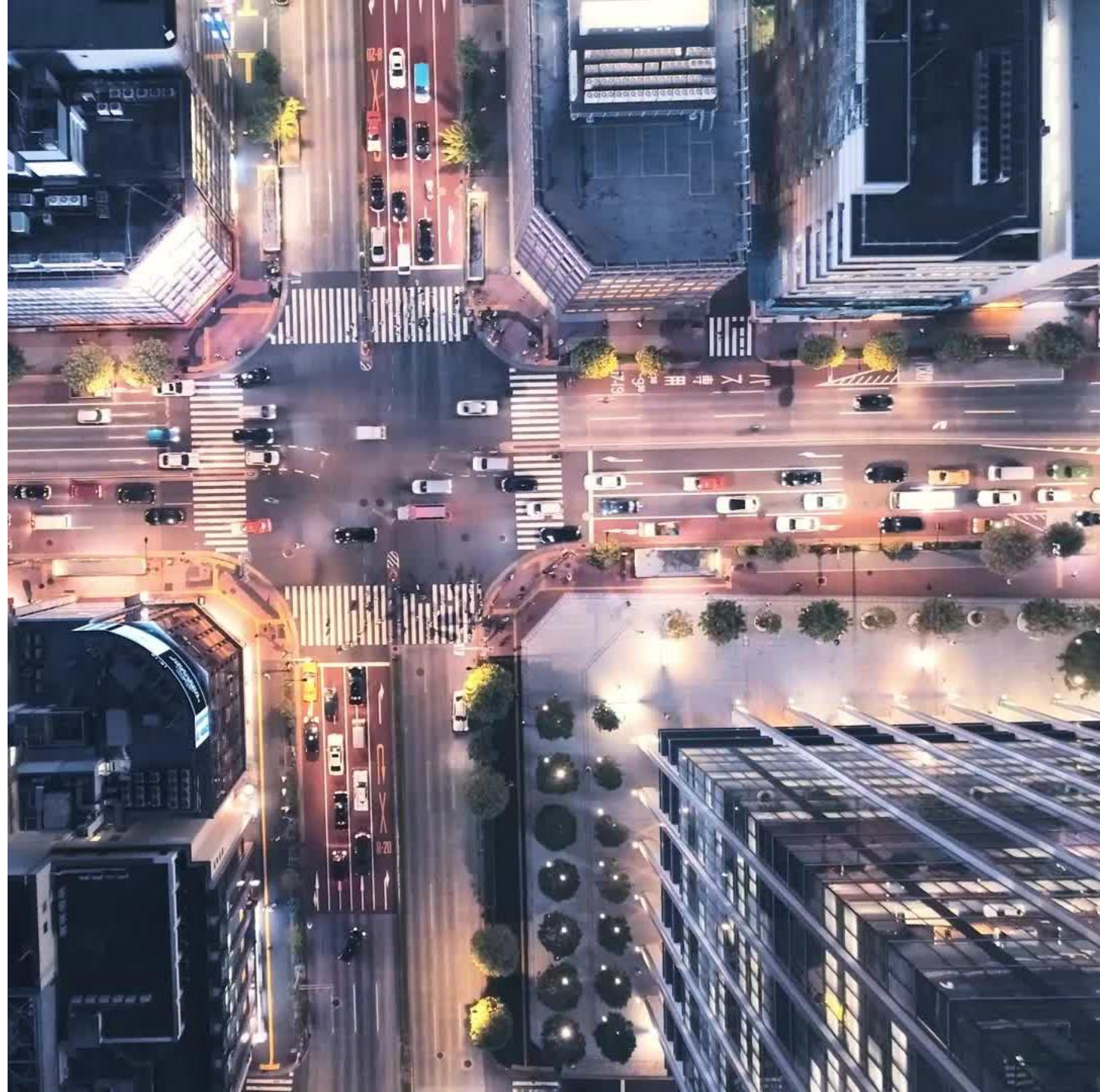
Police have historically and continually harmed 2SLGBTQ+ people, especially those at the intersections of poverty, racialization, disability, and trans identity.

# At the Intersections: Acting Transformatively

What can we do to prevent the same thing from happening again?

## Think transformatively:

- What enabled this incident to occur?
- How can we change the conditions leading to harm?
- What do 2SLGBTQ+ people need to thrive?





# At the Intersections: What will you do?

Considering your positionality, how will **you respond** to this incident and **prevent** similar things from happening again?

Think on your own first, then talk to someone beside you.

Post your ideas on Padlet!



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# Isabella's Case: What else can you do?

## **Response: If an incident occurs...**

Correct any misgendering in the classroom. Upon escalation, immediately alert OAREHRS. Prepare to provide human rights-based accommodations (e.g., grace days, alternate submission) for those impacted.

## **Awareness: Before an incident occurs...**

Be aware of how leaving covert discrimination unchecked can create space for escalation towards overt harassment and violence.

Reach out to learners who don't show up. Build in flexibility to allow them to catch up and continue learning

## **Education: To prevent incidents from occurring...**

Disrupt racism and gender essentialism as part of your course content and anti-oppressive practices.

# Moving Forward

**Surviving to Thriving, Next Steps, Your Learning, Questions?**

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# What helps 2SLGBTQ+ people thrive?

## Being **Proactive**

Provide multiple means for learners to share feedback and feel heard.

Foster connections and a sense of belonging among students.

Emphasize importance of diversity from multiple perspectives, e.g., socio-ecological, strengths-based.

## Being **Inclusive**

Set clear policies & practices for your learning spaces.

Represent a diversity of 2SLGBTQ+ experiences in your course content.

Invite students to co-create norms for their groups, especially around conflict resolution.

## Being **Responsive**

Refresh students and yourself on GBC's policies regarding accessibility, inclusion, and discrimination.

Push back against microaggressions and discrimination.

Know who to contact and where to refer students, colleagues, and yourself.

# Next Steps

What's **one concrete action you will take** to improve your learning spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ people?

- Take 3 minutes to think on your own, then share.

## Any questions?

- Email me!  
[wren.alden@georgebrown.ca](mailto:wren.alden@georgebrown.ca)







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# THANK YOU!

## Conference Agenda

START	END	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
8:00 AM	8:55 AM	Registration & Breakfast	Atrium
9:00 AM	9:30 AM	Land Acknowledgement, Hand Drum and Opening Remarks with Dr.Gervan Fearon	SJC 406 with online option
9:30 AM	10:45 AM	Keynote Speaker: Brenda McDermott	SJC 406 with online option
10:45 AM	11:00 AM	Music and Move to Session 1	
11:00 AM	11:45 AM	Concurrent Session Block 1	On-campus with online option
11:45 AM	12:50 AM	Luncheon	
1:00 PM	2:00 PM	Plenary Conversation with John Weigelt	SJC 406 with online option
2:00 PM	2:15 PM	Music and Move to Session 2	
2:15 PM	3:00 PM	Concurrent Session Block 2	On-campus with online option
3:00 PM	3:30 PM	Wine & Cheese Social	Atrium
3:30 PM	4:00 PM	President Awards & Concluding Remarks	Atrium

