

Webinar

Organized by the Australasian Services Care Network

Moderator: Robert Lippiatt

Speakers:

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Dr. Carmen Poulin

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Research for change: Examining the history of the LGBT Purge in the Canadian Armed Forces



In this presentation Dr Carmen Poulin & Dr Lynne Gouliquer spoke about the LGBT Purge that occurred in the Canadian Armed Forces and the role social science played in bringing about social change.

To (re)-see this webinar:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6fib62JUM4&ab_channel=VeteranTransitionandWellbeingWebinarSeries

Between historical context ...

The panelists returned to the historical context in which their research takes place as we become aware of the (very) recent evolution of the Canadian Armed Forces in the face of gender diversity.

1967: Created unified policy on homosexuality

1969: Pierre Elliot Trudeau decriminalised homosexuality

1986: Armed Forces Charter Task Force upholds CFAO 19-20 Policy: no longer obliged to report awareness or suspicion of homosexuality of others

1990: Military investigations ceased

1996: Sexual orientation added to Canadian Human Rights Act, Military grants same-sex benefits.

2005: Same-Sex marriage legalised in Canada

2008: "Soldiers" march in Gay Pride Parade (Toronto)

2014: Apology Network formed: a group of individuals directly affected by Purge Campaigns, supporters, and researchers. The goal for the network was to get an official Apology from the Federal government for all the sanctioned discrimination LGBTQIA2S+ people experienced in Canada. The Network was and stayed united until 2018.

November 28, 2017: Trudeau gives "The Apology" to the LGBTQIA2S+

June 25, 2018: LBGT-Purge Class Action Settlement

... and social science role

The research of the panelists published, in 2009, a set of recommendation.

- *Public apology:* there should be a public apology, a recognition of the discrimination that had been perpetrated against members of the Canadian armed forces. It should be from the government; it should be public and from the leaders of that institution.

- *Compensation:* There should be some monetary compensation given the loss of careers. Career and people were broken, and the breaking of those individuals was not an overnight thing but lasted for a lifetime.

- *Complete access to files:* so that they could see what was written in there and the possibility of erasure.

- *Training and education to eliminate discrimination:* to aim for zero discrimination in terms of LGBTQ+

- *Create a medal:* for those who wish to have one.

- *Establish a permanent memorial of the ordeal*

Lessons learned:

"We must never forget our history so that we never make the same mistakes again."

"Never underestimate the power of social science research to change the world."