

NO WAY, THEY WERE GAY?

HIDDEN LIVES AND SECRET LOVES



DISCUSSION TOPICS

By **Lee Wind**
author of *No Way, They Were Gay?*

↳ In *No Way, They Were Gay? Hidden Lives and Secret Loves*, you read about how history has been “sanitized” for the protection of the people in power, leaving out the stories of men who loved men, women who loved women, people who loved without regard to gender, and people who lived outside gender boundaries.

- How might reclaiming and including Queer history change your school?
- What would reclaiming and including Queer history look like on a bigger scale—in your town? Your state? Your country? In our world?
- What would reclaiming and including more of our Queer history look like in popular culture—in movies, songs, books, TV shows, art, etc.?

↳ What was new for you in reading this book?

- Did you already know some of the stories?
- What part of Queer history was the biggest surprise for you?

↳ Does learning the truth about someone’s loves or lived gender change your feelings about how you see them in history? Why?

↳ If you could meet and speak with one of the 24 historical figures featured in *No Way, They Were Gay?*, who would you choose to meet, and why?

- What would you want to ask them?
- If it sounds fun, write this as a dialog. What are your questions? What do you imagine are their answers?

↳ Many other groups have been left out of history, including women, people of color, Native and Indigenous people, and disabled people. Choose one of these groups to learn more about, and challenge yourself to find primary source materials that center their voices.

↳ Intersectionality sounds like a complicated term, but it really just means that each of us can hold many identities at the same time.

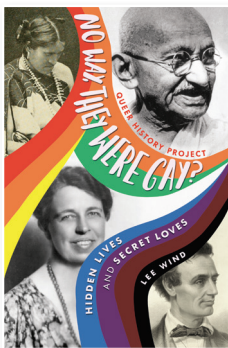
- Draw a circle on a piece of paper. Inside the circle, write down all the identities you hold that are part of the majority where you are. Outside the circle, write down all the identities where you are not in the majority. (e.g., inside my circle, I'm white and a man. Outside my circle, I'm Jewish and Gay and a first generation American.) Consider all the many identities you hold.
- For each quality of your identity outside the circle, consider if there are places you can feel part of the majority. (e.g., In Israel, my being Jewish isn't that different. At LGBTQ pride celebrations, I'm in the Queer majority.)
- How about the qualities of your identity inside the circle? Are there places where your majority status puts you in the minority? (e.g., attending a Black Student Alliance graduation event at my daughter's high school as an ally, my being white put me in the minority. In grad school, I was the only man in most of my classes.)

↳ What do you learn (about yourself and others) when your identities flip from majority to non-majority, or the other way around, from non-majority to majority?

About the Author



Lee Wind is the founding blogger and publisher of I'm Here. I'm Queer. What The Hell Do I Read?, an award-winning website about books, culture, and empowerment for Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Questioning and Queer youth, and their Allies. He also works for Independent Book Publishers Association and Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Visit him online at www.leewind.org to see and share how #QueerHistoryIsEverywhere.



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