

Cases on Social Issues: For Class Discussion - 2nd Edition



# Cases on Social Issues: For Class Discussion - 2nd Edition

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SURREY



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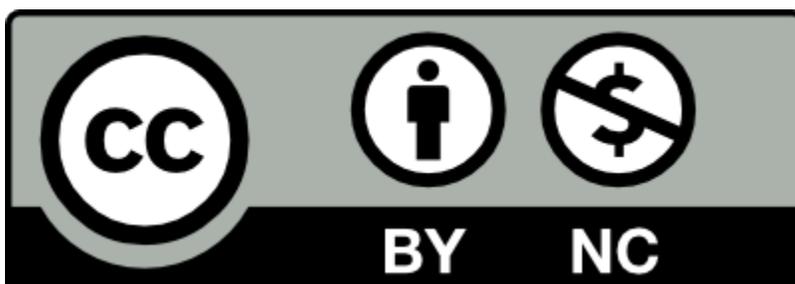
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**List of Known Accessibility Issues**

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<b>Location of issue</b>	<b>Need for improvement</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Work around</b>
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**This statement was last updated on Jan 27, 2023.**

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Case 4: *Invisible Disabilities at Work* by Brianna Doyle, Deirdre Maultsaid, and Simrenprit Parmar

Case 5: *Employee Anxiety in the Restaurant Industry* by Winfred Athembo, Nikhil Garg, Richa Kabaria, Sarah Kulewksa, Celine Wai Shan Li, Deirdre Maultsaid, Simenprit Parmar, and Lesli Sangha

Case 6: *Safety of Women (Both Cis- and Transgender) and Non-binary People at Work* by Winfred Athembo, Nikhil Garg, Richa Kabaria, Sarah Kulewksa, Celine Wai Shan Li, Deirdre Maultsaid, Simenprit Parmar and Lesli Sangha

Case 7: *Bullying of Immigrants and Refugees at Work* by Winfred Athembo, Brianna Doyle, Nikhil Garg, Gursimrat Gill, Thalin Htun, Richa Kabaria, Sarah Kulewksa, Celine Wai Shan Li, Deirdre Maultsaid, Simenprit Parmar, and Lesli Sangha

# Acknowledgements

*Kwantlen Polytechnic University is located on the unceded, ancestral, traditional territories of hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓-speaking Coast Salish peoples.*

## All cases

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## Cases 1 and 2

These cases were inspired by and created as a composite of real-life events.

Inspiration was also provided by the following:

- A 2020 survey of KPU students on LGBTQ2+issues at work (principal investigator Deirdre Maultsaid, KPU, Surrey, BC, Canada)
- [Pride at Work Canada](#)
- Brenda Knights. Brenda Knights is CEO of Seyem Kwantlen and is involved in business development for the Kwantlen First Nation, located in Canada. Her narratives are included in the open textbook [Business Writing for Everyone](#) by Arley Cruthers, a textbook that Deirdre Maultsaid was supported to adopt for classroom use by a KPU Open Education Adoption Grant (2020).

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## Cases 3 – 7

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# Introduction

Note: This second edition of Cases on Social Issues: For Class Discussion is updated with five more cases.

## **What is this resource?**

This open educational resource contains cases for class discussions or group work. Case discussions enhance students' ability to collaborate and to develop ethical and critical decision-making skills. The cases included in this resource are unique as they centre on contemporary social issues while featuring underrepresented and marginalized voices. Included are cases for discussion on workplace scenarios as follows: homophobia; working with Indigenous communities; oil and gas pipelines and the family ranch; invisible disabilities; employee anxiety; safety of women (both cis- and transgender) and non-binary people; and the bullying of new immigrants and refugees.

## **Who should use this resource?**

These cases were designed for upper-level undergraduate or graduate students in the humanities, social sciences, business, healthcare, science, agriculture, environmental studies, Indigenous studies, land use studies, law and other programs.

## **How should this resource be used?**

Each realistic case is supplemented with notes for teaching strategies, possible discussion questions, and a short optional reading list. The teaching notes can also be used by student facilitators.



# CASE 1: HOMOPHOBIA AT WORK



# 1.1 Background On the Social Issue

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

## **The workforce is diverse**

Many organizations recognize that the inclusion of perspectives from a diverse workforce can lead to stronger teamwork and better decision making. Therefore, organizations should be motivated to be inclusive because it can lead to business success. Organizations also want to maintain their reputation and engage with a wide range of clients, suppliers, and communities affected by their business. (Organizations also have diversity and inclusion policies because it is a legal requirement to protect the human rights of all employees in Canada.)



Figure 1.1: A meeting of a diverse group of workers (Krukov, n.d.)



Figure 1.2: A meeting of a diverse group of workers (Jopwell, n.d.)

## Diverse workplaces must be safe for everyone

Approximately 13% of Canadians identify as LGBTQ2+, and 4.9% identify as Indigenous. Many identify as both. For youth, the percentage of those who identify as LGBTQ2+ or are questioning their identity, the number can be as high as 24%.

Indigenous people, people of colour and members of the LGBTQ2+ group say they should feel safe and protected at work and have input and influence on projects at all levels.

Are our workplaces emotionally and physically safe for everyone? Gregory John, a gay Indigenous man, says that in order to have real collaboration at work, we have to ensure everyone's safety, both individually and as a group. Among other issues, this means ensuring individuals' safety from homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, violence, and threats to their reputation and career. For example, LGBTQ2+ employees do not always feel safe with being out and staying out at work. It can be particularly difficult to be out and work in cisgender, heterosexual and still male-dominated Canadian industries such as mining, forestry, energy and even finance.

## Indigenous people, other people of colour and LGBTQ2+ people bring

## multiple perspectives

The essential contributions of Indigenous people, people of colour and LGBT2+ people should be valued.

Although Indigenous people are a fast-growing population and are seeking post-secondary education and starting businesses, organizations need an intentional recruitment process in place to acquire Indigenous talent and to integrate and retain these employees.

*“Indigenous talent is going to be a key component in addressing labour shortage concerns”,* says Gregory John based on his various experiences as an Indigenous relations specialist in energy and engineering, procurement, and construction projects in Western Canada. Many Indigenous communities are deeply involved in developing their natural resources and improving their own communities.



Figure 1.3: From McLeod Lake Indian Band, Indigenous employees of Duz Cho Construction in northeast B.C. work on tree clearing in the Peace River district. Photo used with permission from Canadian Energy Centre (not the company discussed in this case).

However, it can be difficult for Indigenous people to work in controversial development projects while maintaining trusting partnerships with industries such as mining, forestry and energy. Companies have previously focused on extraction over local impact, emphasized profit over bringing local benefits and given little recognition to Indigenous titles on the land

Gregory John, in his experiences as an Indigenous relations specialist, has learned to communicate effectively. He says,

*“Acknowledging being gay and Indigenous has gifted me two additional perspectives to see through. My [multiple] perspectives have been key in allowing me to do this work [Indigenous relations] without making major mistakes. These perspectives have been the foundations for me to mitigate the risk associated with working with diverse communities. Western Society teaches us to make many assumptions before collaborating. With diverse communities, collaboration must start before the first question is asked as there are so many unknowns. Making assumptions here will have serious and potentially project-ending/fatal consequences. Realizing I do not know everything is key. Approaching this work with humility is the key to its success.”*

Deliberately including LGBTQ2+ people at all levels of a company helps build trust and increases productivity, which improves the collegial atmosphere and morale for everyone. In complex projects, companies need their staff to use different ways of problem solving based on their experiences, perspectives and wisdom. To succeed, companies need their employees to be open to new ideas and to be empathic of each other and the clients they serve. Also, LGBTQ2+ clients and suppliers want to see themselves represented by the staff of companies. Clients, suppliers and communities want to know that companies understand their needs.



Figure 1.4: A transgender woman and gender non-conforming person laughing at work. (Drucker, n.d., The Gender Spectrum Collection)



Figure 1.5: A suited man with a version of an LGBT2+ flag. (Shvets, n.d.)

By being vulnerable and empathetic and bringing multiple perspectives (gay, Indigenous, urban) to a situation, Gregory John has learned to successfully navigate controversial conversations at work and in the Indigenous communities he has visited. He says it is important to be completely responsive.

*“If we’re not able to remove ourselves from our bias and our own perceptions of people, then we’re going to come to the wrong answer.”*

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## 1.2 Scenario for Discussion

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

### Background on the Company

SilverRocks is a lithium mining company with head offices in downtown Vancouver and is trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange. SilverRocks' lithium resource is located in the brine beneath the surface of depleted oil reservoirs in Northern Alberta, though it is also developing open pit mines in eastern British Columbia and investigating geothermal energy sources of lithium. Lithium is used in batteries and in metal production and has many other lucrative applications. The fledging electric car industry holds great promise for companies such as SilverRocks.



[\*Figure 1.6: A depiction of sampling for lithium for future mining. \(Frontier Lithium, 2021, not the company discussed\) \[Photo used with permission\]\*](#)

Old oil reservoirs and open pit mines are sources of environmental concern and controversy for rural and Indigenous communities. Environmental impacts on wildlife habitats, waterways, and arable land must be assessed before launching new business activities and developments. As outlined in the federal, provincial and territorial governments regulatory frameworks for development, local Indigenous communities must be consulted on business activities and developments that will affect them. Through consultation, each party must share information and concerns in a way that ensures all

issues are addressed and risks are mitigated from every angle. Risks can be environmental (land, water, air), land-based, financial, cultural/ceremonial, and, where applicable, risks to Treaty rights.

Indigeneity or the Canadian process of Reconciliation are not discussed as cultural or political concepts at SilverRocks, though the Indigenous perspective and consultation with affected communities is very important to SilverRocks. SilverRocks considers the company to be “objective” about their proposed developments.

Although SilverRocks is located in Vancouver and there are people of colour working there, more than 85% of the employees of SilverRocks are white, cisgender, male and heterosexual. There are a few women: a finance manager, an engineer and so on. Only Christmas is acknowledged as an office celebration.

There are no diversity and inclusion programs or policies except for the *Worksafe BC*-mandated one-hour training session on harassment at work. Senior leadership does not talk about diversity and inclusion in strategic planning.

Before a project meeting, when briefly talking about current Indigenous blockades on forestry roads and protests of racism by Indigenous leaders, Dale, a gay, Indigenous employee, heard someone say, “*I really don’t see colour; I mean, you can be blue and have four ears, I will work with you.*” Others nodded.

## Background on the Employee

### The Employee

Dale is a gay, Indigenous employee who works in public relations in the head office at SilverRocks. Dale helps run community engagement in rural and Indigenous communities affected by the mining. Dale is sunny and warm with clients, with prospective partners, and at community meetings. He is able to get most people engaged and genuinely talking about the issues at hand in a solution-oriented way.

Most people at the office, although polite, do not try to befriend Dale or include him in conversations. Dale is neither out nor in the closet as a gay man at work. There is nowhere to talk about sexual orientation. Dale has low-level anxiety all the time. He does not feel safe. He wonders,

*“Am I hand-talking too much?” “I better not cross my legs one over the other as that’s how women sit, not men.”  
“Will the wrong people here gain the information that I am gay and not take me seriously, or worse, threaten my job and/or limit career growth opportunities within the company simply because I am too different to deserve these opportunities?”*

### Dale’s Role as Indigenous Relations Advisor

At every project planning meeting, Dale has asked for time on the agenda to talk about how important Indigenous relations are. Dale has learned that their organization’s teams must go without a fixed agenda when they meet with local Indigenous communities. Every Indigenous community has its own protocols, and SilverRocks must adopt these ways of doing business before trust can be established. SilverRocks will work with the IT group, finance, and leadership to craft emails and other formal project communications to Indigenous communities. Communication must be sent to the right person in the community while carefully saying the right things that open and maintain dialogue. If SilverRocks offends someone and triggers the long-standing mistrust and frustration of local Indigenous communities, the projects will fail.

Dale knows that when the SilverRocks teams visit Indigenous communities, they should learn about the community’s culture, economy, and businesses; how to pronounce the Chief and Council’s names; and how to say “hello” in their local

language. Each Indigenous cultural group (e.g. Stö:lo, Cree, Blackfoot, Tsimshian, Wet'suwet'en) has their own cultural protocol, such as the gifting of tobacco or salmon and/or allowing time for an opening prayer to a business meeting.

Dale knows that preparing for these meetings in this manner will allow the Indigenous representatives to listen and observe everything that is going on. And then the SilverRocks team, with their technical focus, must be ready to hear and tell personal stories to connect with the community authentically while also preparing themselves to hear all concerns as they occur.

Dale has counselled the SilverRocks team many times: If a community wants to talk about water, talk about water. If an elder wants a chance to speak but is tired and emotional today, have tea and wait for tomorrow. If youth want to speak about land issues but are not technically knowledgeable and want to speak more from the heart, the company representatives should listen and do the work of interpreting their meaning so the company can hear and understand what the community is saying.

Dale will check his own biases and expects everyone else, including SilverRocks employees and the local communities, to also assume nothing. **Everyone must be open to true collaboration.** This takes a lot of time and effort.

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## 1.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

Dale, the project manager and several engineers go on a field trip to the East Kootenay region of British Columbia to do a check in and quick site tour of the proposed new mine. They do not have any community meetings planned. Dale and the project manager had previously set up an information table with maps and project information in the field office on site. Anyone that had business with the mine could see the information. Dale, the Public Relations and Indigenous Relations expert, has told the project manager several times that they should be having more active, frequent community meetings. Head office personnel should more frequently visit local towns and Indigenous communities. There is tension between Dale and the project manager.

After the group has completed their work checking on the mine site, they go out to dinner at the Bar and Grill in the local town. Everyone is drinking beer and eating burgers.

*One of the engineers, X, jokingly mentions that he is not happy sharing a hotel room with another engineer, who has already made a mess in there.*

*The hotel roommate engineer, Y, says, "I used a few towels. Don't be such a [homophobic slur]."*

*The other engineer, X, laughing and making a pretend horrified face, says, "All that [swear word] cologne, I am pretty sure you are a [homophobic slur]. I need my own room!"*

Everyone laughs but Dale, who is shaken and fearful. No one notices or does anything about Dale's discomfort.

When they return to Vancouver, Dale goes to the project manager's office to state that the situation in the bar was upsetting and unacceptable.

*The project manager says, "All right, we were out in the wild. Everyone was just letting loose and having fun. If you have a problem with it, go tell X and Y [the engineers]."*

Dale sees the Office Manager/Human Resources Manager to discuss it.

*The office manager suggests that Dale talk to the engineers directly to "sort out your own problems and resolve your own conflicts".*

Dale is hearing that he should not make a big deal out of the incident and that he does not have support. Dale is now depressed and anxious and struggling to concentrate at work.

# 1.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

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## Questions about individual employees

- Is it the obligation of a member of a marginalized group, like Dale, to speak up to protect their own dignity, rights and safety? How should Dale do this? To whom should he speak?
- Is the fact that Dale is distressed a personal problem he has to solve or is it an organizational problem?
- Should Dale try to blend in? Would that be considered more “professional”?
- Should Dale advocate for substantial improvements? Should Dale assert himself as an opinion leader?
- What kinds of improvements should he advocate for?
- What if someone like Dale wants to advocate for the integration of LGBT2+ ways of thinking?
- What if someone like Dale wants to advocate for the integration of Indigenous ways of knowing into the organization? How would he do that? To whom should he speak?
- What are the benefits and challenges to Dale advocating for improvements?
- Should other bystanders speak up/take action against discrimination?
- Other relevant questions students should discuss

## Questions about the organization

- What will be the consequences if the organization does nothing about the incident described above? Should Human Resources create mandatory policies and practices for the whole organization? What should they be?
- In what ways could Human Resources encourage voluntary improvements?
- What are the benefits and challenges to bringing about voluntary improvements?
- Should Human Resources mandate training programs?
- Should these issues be discussed in staff meetings?
- Other relevant questions students should discuss

## Questions about the leadership

- Are there threats to the reputation of the company?
- What role does senior leadership have in this situation?
- Other relevant questions students should discuss

# 1.5 Teaching Notes

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

## Note to teachers:

The scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues and discussing it may be upsetting for some students, especially those who identify in similar ways to Dale. Please provide context about Indigenous issues (particularly in Canada) and LGBTQ2+ issues, especially context that challenges common assumptions. This context would help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the bibliography below or seek other like sources from your own Diversity and Inclusion specialists, Indigenous advisors, or educational supports.

It is important not to generalize language with Indigenous people. You will commonly see Indigenous people use the terms Indian, Aboriginal, First Nations and Indigenous interchangeably, but this language choice is not an option for non-Indigenous people. It is okay to interject to say some language is inappropriate. Most Indigenous peoples prefer to be identified by the name of their specific Nation, tribe, or band. Check with Indigenous advisors at your institution.

## What will students discuss?

- As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will be able to discuss any of the following:
- gender stereotyping, bias, racism, tokenism
- Indigenous racism
- homophobia
- humour at work
- diversity, equity and inclusion, belonging, justice, dignity, human rights
- mental health at work
- professionalism, organizational development, leadership
- human resources, talent management
- policy making and enforcement
- internal communication, organizational culture
- strategic communications, strategic planning
- public relations
- approaches to decision making and persuasion
- mutual care and safety at work
- other relevant topics

Students may argue that a member of a marginalized group should speak up and represent their constituent population, or they may argue that for reasons of personal safety, the member should be silent and try to blend in.

Students may argue that bystanders should stand up against discrimination in their organization.

Students may choose to argue for a mandated or a voluntary approach from Human Resources, leadership or institution-wide committees. They may be guided to discuss the merits and barriers to implementing any of the following ideas or others.

## Internal practices – mandated

- Strategic planning
- Enforceable policies
- Talent management/hiring practices
- Diversity and inclusion programs and workshops
- Anti-racist, anti-homophobic workshops

## Internal culture – voluntary

- Leadership personal storytelling
- LGBTQ2+ network/committee
- Multicultural network/committee
- Indigenous network/committee
- Connections with Indigenous communities
- Social gatherings/celebrations
- Internal intelligence about who works there: maps/languages/stories of heritage shared at meetings, in celebrations, etc.
- Ally programs/safe spaces, desks with pride flags

Students may brainstorm ideas for actions senior leadership could take to improve the company's reputation. They may be guided to discuss the merits and barriers to implementing any of the following:

- Leaders take training as above or otherwise
- Do public speaking/presentations/videos about improvements the company is making
- Publish report cards on diversity and inclusion programs
- Start dialogues within industry on social media about barriers to improvement
- Champion employees publicly (with their consent)
- Get involved in philanthropy
- Offer scholarships
- Promote and partner with smaller businesses that are Indigenous or LGBTQ2+ owned
- Have senior leadership visit affected towns and Indigenous communities

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DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

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# CASE 2: SAFETY IN AN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY



## 2.1 Background on the Social Issue

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

### **The workforce is diverse**

Many organizations recognize that the inclusion of perspectives from a diverse workforce can lead to stronger teamwork and better decision making. Therefore, organizations should be motivated to be inclusive because it can lead to business success. Organizations also want to maintain their reputation and engage with a wide range of clients, suppliers, and communities affected by their business. (Organizations also have diversity and inclusion policies because it is a legal requirement to protect the human rights of all employees in Canada.)



Figure 2.1: A meeting of a diverse group of workers (Krukov, n.d.)



Figure 2.2: A meeting of a diverse group of workers (Jopwell, n.d.)

## Diverse workplaces must be safe for everyone

Approximately 13% of Canadians identify as LGBTQ2+, and 4.9% identify as Indigenous. Many identify as both. For youth, the percentage of those who identify as LGBTQ2+ or are questioning their identity, the number can be as high as 24%.

Indigenous people, people of colour and members of the LGBTQ2+ group say they should feel safe and protected at work and have input and influence on projects at all levels.

Are our workplaces emotionally and physically safe for everyone? Gregory John, a gay Indigenous man, says that in order to have real collaboration at work, we have to ensure everyone's safety, both individually and as a group. Among other issues, this means ensuring individuals' safety from homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, violence, and threats to their reputation and career. For example, LGBTQ2+ employees do not always feel safe with being out and staying out at work. It can be particularly difficult to be out and work in cisgender, heterosexual and still male-dominated Canadian industries such as mining, forestry, energy and even finance.

## Indigenous people, other people of colour and LGBTQ2+ people bring multiple perspectives

The essential contributions of Indigenous people, people of colour and LGBTQ2+ people should be valued.

Although Indigenous people are a fast-growing population and are seeking post-secondary education and starting businesses, organizations need an intentional recruitment process in place to acquire Indigenous talent and to integrate and retain these employees.

*“Indigenous talent is going to be a key component in addressing labour shortage concerns”,* says Gregory John based on his various experiences as an Indigenous relations specialist in energy and engineering, procurement, and construction projects in Western Canada. Many Indigenous communities are deeply involved in developing their natural resources and improving their own communities.



*Figure 2.3: From McLeod Lake Indian Band, Indigenous employees of Duz Cho Construction in northeast B.C. work on tree clearing in the Peace River district. Photo used with permission from Canadian Energy Centre (not the company discussed in this case).*

However, it can be difficult for Indigenous people to work in controversial development projects while maintaining trusting partnerships with industries such as mining, forestry and energy. Companies have previously focused on extraction over local impact, emphasized profit over bringing local benefits and given little recognition to Indigenous titles on the land

Gregory John, in his experiences as an Indigenous relations specialist, has learned to communicate effectively. He says,

*“Acknowledging being gay and Indigenous has gifted me two additional perspectives to see through. My [multiple] perspectives have been key in allowing me to do this work [Indigenous relations] without making major mistakes. These perspectives have been the foundations for me to mitigate the risk associated with working with diverse communities. Western Society teaches us to make many assumptions before collaborating. With diverse communities, collaboration must start before the first question is asked as there are so many unknowns. Making assumptions here will have serious and potentially project-ending/fatal consequences. Realizing I do not know everything is key. Approaching this work with humility is the key to its success.”*

Deliberately including LGBTQ2+ people at all levels of a company helps build trust and increases productivity, which improves the collegial atmosphere and morale for everyone. In complex projects, companies need their staff to use different ways of problem solving based on their experiences, perspectives and wisdom. To succeed, companies need their employees to be open to new ideas and to be empathic of each other and the clients they serve. Also, LGBTQ2+ clients and suppliers want to see themselves represented by the staff of companies. Clients, suppliers and communities want to know that companies understand their needs.



Figure 2.4: A transgender woman and gender non-conforming person laughing at work. (Drucker, n.d., The Gender Spectrum Collection)



Figure 2.5: A suited man with a version of an LGBT2+ flag. (Shvets, n.d.)

By being vulnerable and empathetic and bringing multiple perspectives (gay, Indigenous, urban) to a situation, Gregory John has learned to successfully navigate controversial conversations at work and in the Indigenous communities he has visited. He says it is important to be completely responsive.

*“If we’re not able to remove ourselves from our bias and our own perceptions of people, then we’re going to come to the wrong answer.”*

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## 2.2 Scenario for Discussion

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

### Background on the Company

SilverRocks is a lithium mining company with head offices in downtown Vancouver and is trading on the Toronto Stock Exchange. SilverRocks' lithium resource is located in the brine beneath the surface of depleted oil reservoirs in Northern Alberta, though it is also developing open pit mines in eastern British Columbia and investigating geothermal energy sources of lithium. Lithium is used in batteries and in metal production and has many other lucrative applications. The fledging electric car industry holds great promise for companies such as SilverRocks.



*Figure 1.6: A depiction of sampling for lithium for future mining. Photo used with permission from Frontier Lithium (not the company discussed in this case).*

Old oil reservoirs and open pit mines are sources of environmental concern and controversy for rural and Indigenous communities. Environmental impacts on wildlife habitats, waterways, and arable land must be assessed before launching new business activities and developments. As outlined in the federal, provincial and territorial governments regulatory frameworks for development, local Indigenous communities must be consulted on business activities and developments

that will affect them. Through consultation, each party must share information and concerns in a way that ensures all issues are addressed and risks are mitigated from every angle. Risks can be environmental (land, water, air), land-based, financial, cultural/ceremonial, and, where applicable, risks to Treaty rights.

Indigeneity or the Canadian process of Reconciliation are not discussed as cultural or political concepts at SilverRocks, though the Indigenous perspective and consultation with affected communities is very important to SilverRocks. SilverRocks considers the company to be “objective” about their proposed developments.

Although SilverRocks is located in Vancouver and there are people of colour working there, more than 85% of the employees of SilverRocks are white, cisgender, male and heterosexual. There are a few women: a finance manager, an engineer and so on. Only Christmas is acknowledged as an office celebration.

There are no diversity and inclusion programs or policies except for the *Worksafe BC*-mandated one-hour training session on harassment at work. Senior leadership does not talk about diversity and inclusion in strategic planning.

Before a project meeting, when briefly talking about current Indigenous blockades on forestry roads and protests of racism by Indigenous leaders, Dale, a gay, Indigenous employee, heard someone say, “*I really don’t see colour; I mean, you can be blue and have four ears, I will work with you.*” Others nodded.

## Background on the Employee

### The Employee

Dale is a gay, Indigenous employee who works in public relations in the head office at SilverRocks. Dale helps run community engagement in rural and Indigenous communities affected by the mining. Dale is sunny and warm with clients, with prospective partners, and at community meetings. He is able to get most people engaged and genuinely talking about the issues at hand in a solution-oriented way.

Most people at the office, although polite, do not try to befriend Dale or include him in conversations. Dale is neither out nor in the closet as a gay man at work. There is nowhere to talk about sexual orientation. Dale has low-level anxiety all the time. He does not feel safe. He wonders,

*“Am I hand-talking too much?” “I better not cross my legs one over the other as that’s how women sit, not men.”  
“Will the wrong people here gain the information that I am gay and not take me seriously, or worse, threaten my job and/or limit career growth opportunities within the company simply because I am too different to deserve these opportunities?”*

### Dale’s Role as Indigenous Relations Advisor

At every project planning meeting, Dale has asked for time on the agenda to talk about how important Indigenous relations are. Dale has learned that their organization’s teams must go without a fixed agenda when they meet with local Indigenous communities. Every Indigenous community has its own protocols, and SilverRocks must adopt these ways of doing business before trust can be established. SilverRocks will work with the IT group, finance, and leadership to craft emails and other formal project communications to Indigenous communities. Communication must be sent to the right person in the community while carefully saying the right things that open and maintain dialogue. If SilverRocks offends someone and triggers the long-standing mistrust and frustration of local Indigenous communities, the projects will fail.

Dale knows that when the SilverRocks teams visit Indigenous communities, they should learn about the community’s

culture, economy, and businesses; how to pronounce the Chief and Council's names; and how to say "hello" in their local language. Each Indigenous cultural group (e.g. Stö:lo, Cree, Blackfoot, Tsimshian, Wet'suwet'en) has their own cultural protocol, such as the gifting of tobacco or salmon and/or allowing time for an opening prayer to a business meeting.

Dale knows that preparing for these meetings in this manner will allow the Indigenous representatives to listen and observe everything that is going on. And then the SilverRocks team, with their technical focus, must be ready to hear and tell personal stories to connect with the community authentically while also preparing themselves to hear all concerns as they occur.

Dale has counselled the SilverRocks team many times: If a community wants to talk about water, talk about water. If an elder wants a chance to speak but is tired and emotional today, have tea and wait for tomorrow. If youth want to speak about land issues but are not technically knowledgeable and want to speak more from the heart, the company representatives should listen and do the work of interpreting their meaning so the company can hear and understand what the community is saying.

Dale will check his own biases and expects everyone else, including SilverRocks employees and the local communities, to also assume nothing. **Everyone must be open to true collaboration.** This takes a lot of time and effort.

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## 2.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

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Dale, the project manager and several engineers are planning a trip to Northern Alberta to hold community meetings and an open house to discuss the possible partnership with the affected Indigenous communities in the area of the proposed lithium mining.

Some members of the three Indigenous communities have expressed frustration with the process through emails and phone calls to SilverRocks. They feel rushed. They are experiencing pressure from members of their communities who want to protest the lithium mine development.

There has been heated language on social media with someone posting on a Facebook page, “SilverRocks will bring in [swearword] from Newfoundland and make us hire them. We have lots of unemployed people ready here. The partnership is just [swear word]. Meet at the rodeo grounds. Let’s show SilverRocks what we think.” This post got momentum: community protests and road blockades were planned.

The particular members of the SilverRocks team were individually mocked.

The project manager was called names.

Dale was called a “sellout” as an Indigenous person.

Leaders in the communities heard through local talk that some protestors have planned to damage the company rental cars, to smash up the open house displays in the trailers on site and to disrupt the community meetings.

## 2.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

### Questions about individual employees

- What should Dale, who has experience navigating the complex issues involved in mining businesses and Indigenous communicating, do?
- Who should he talk to?
- How can Dale protect everyone's ability to collaborate despite their very different views?

### Questions about the organization

- Should SilverRocks hold the community meeting now? What would the implications of postponing be? Who gets to decide?
- Should there be concern for the safety of individual SilverRocks employees, whatever their identities, whatever their roles in the company?
- How should SilverRocks approach the security issue with the communities? What should they do?
- Should SilverRocks discuss the controversial issues with the community? Or should it approach this as a business-as-usual, logistical issue of simply needing a few security personnel?
- Should SilverRocks bring the RCMP to the community meetings? Should it hire its own security force?

### Questions about the community

- How should concern for the safety for all the people in the Indigenous communities, including the leadership, elders and youth in the Indigenous communities, be shown?
- Should the community change the approach to consultation? Why? How?
- How can the community and the company listen, even to those that are angry, and hold a different perspective on partnering with the company?
- Should the Indigenous community provide security?

### Questions for everyone affected

- How can a standard of care for everyone be maintained? What would it look like?
- Whose role is it to maintain a standard of care and safety?

## 2.5 Teaching Notes

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

### Note to teachers

The scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues and discussing it may be upsetting for some students, especially those who identify in similar ways to Dale. Please provide context about Indigenous issues (particularly in Canada) and LGBTQ2+ issues, especially that challenges common assumptions. This context would help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the bibliography below or seek other like sources from your own Diversity and Inclusion specialists, Indigenous advisors, or educational supports.

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### What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will be able to discuss the following:

- stereotyping, bias, racism, tokenism
- Indigenous racism
- homophobia
- diversity, equity and inclusion, belonging, justice, dignity, human rights
- professionalism, organizational development, leadership
- human resources, talent management
- policy making and enforcement
- internal communication, organizational culture
- business development, strategic communications, strategic planning
- public relations, marketing
- approaches to decision making and persuasion
- environmental issues for business
- entrepreneurship, business partnerships
- Indigenous economic development
- Indigenous land claims, treaties and traditional territories

- Reconciliation processes with the Indigenous peoples of Canada
- the “duty to consult” Indigenous communities affected by development
- community engagement
- representation by those affected in all decisions
- mutual care and safety
- political protest, controversy
- criminalization of public protests
- other relevant topics

## The company’s obligations

- Students may argue that Dale has a special role, as an Indigenous employee of the company, to mediate and allay tensions.
- Students may argue that the company has the right to protect its employees and can bring a police escort or private security to a formal meeting.
- Students may discuss the implications of assuming the local situation is “dangerous”.
- Students may discuss what it means that some people have criticized the company publicly. How should the company respond and where?
- Students may discuss the company’s obligations to consult with the Indigenous communities affected, even if tensions are high.

## The community’s obligations

Students may argue that any security issues have to be solved by the community affected, even if that means discussing controversial issues with community leaders or not visiting the community at this time.

## Collaborative solutions

Students may discuss:

- The concept of open discussion and consultation that includes everyone
- The question: Without collaborative solutions to safety, could business negotiations continue?
- The implications of making security everyone’s problem
- The varying perceptions of decision making: that it lies solely with the Indigenous communities, that it lies solely with the companies investing and doing the work, that there has to be a collaborative solution.

Negotiated partnerships and collaborative solutions for everyone’s safety.

## 2.6 References and Bibliography

DEIRDRE MAULTSAID AND GREGORY JOHN

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# CASE 3: THE FAMILY RANCH AND OIL AND GAS PIPELINES

This case for class discussion is about family-run ranches and how they are affected by gas and oil (fossil fuel) pipelines using their land. We include background information on the social and environmental issues. Then, we describe the critical events of a scenario that inspired the discussion and provide discussion prompts. We also include teaching notes and a short bibliography of relevant readings. While actively participating in case discussion, students can apply learned concepts to real situations, reflect on social issues and use critical thinking and ethical judgement to suggest a course of action for the people described in the case.



## 3.1 Background on the Social Issue

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

Canada is a large producer of fossil fuels, specifically oil and gas. The Canadian economy depends upon oil and gas in many ways, from fuel for transportation and power for industries to many products made partially with petroleum (plastics), such as electronics and clothes (Government of Canada, 2020). Oil and gas delivered to refineries and many industries often flows through pipelines across Canada. It is not uncommon for cattle ranchers and farmers to share land with drilling companies and oil and gas pipelines (De Almeida Souza, 2019). Some farmers and ranchers may contract with energy companies to extract oil or natural gas from their property or lay pipelines under their fields. These farmers and ranchers often accept payments to compensate for the low profit margins from their agricultural produce or ranching business. These contracts with oil and gas companies usually allow the company to have pipelines and infrastructure running across the land “in perpetuity” (forever) and leave decommissioned equipment and old pipelines behind in the ground without cleaning up or engaging in environmental restoration.

Although a farmer can reap financial benefits from this, the harvesting of natural gas, drilling for oil and laying pipelines can reduce the amount of land available for farming and ranching and cause damage to land when spills occur (Belvederesi et al., 2018). A chemical spill can lead to the contamination of an entire area around the accident, affecting waterways, wildlife and the availability of arable land on which plants can grow. Leaks and spills can kill crops or livestock exposed to the chemicals, affect the environment and workers and even contaminate the crops and thereby affect the end consumer. Pipelines may also permanently warm the soil under which they are placed, affecting crops, growing seasons and pasture lands for livestock and the wildlife that are all part of the ecosystem.

Considering all these factors, farmers often struggle to choose between a stable source of income during bad growing seasons and a fluctuating market and the risk of contamination as a result of damage to their land, crops, livestock, and wildlife. There are many issues to consider in a partnership between the agriculture and energy sectors.



Figure 3.1: Cattle ranch



Figure 3.2: Gas compression station



Figure 3.3 Danger sign for an underground high-pressure natural gas pipeline: Bengough, Saskatchewan, Canada

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## 3.2 Scenario for Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

### Setting

**GreenFolks Ranch** is a family cattle ranch started in the 1950s by the father of the current rancher. Located in Western Canada, this family-owned ranch rears beef cattle. The family produces their own animal feed by planting hay and grasses at the ranch; they also maintain acres of fenced pasture. GreenFolk Limited has six employees and some casual labourers who work during the peak seasons. The ranch has a contract with Western Energy, a gas and oil company, that permits the energy company to lay gas pipelines through their land. Western first approached GreenFolks Ranch in 2005 and installed pipelines between 2006 and 2010.

**Western Energy** is a large North American conglomerate. Western Energy provides thousands of well-paying jobs to Canadians and generates billions of dollars for the economy. It has subsidiary companies working in the Alberta oil sands, in gas and oil pipeline infrastructure, and in oil refineries. They are becoming a global leader in deep-water gas exploration.

### Characters

- **Aaron White** is a White rancher in his 50s and is the spouse of Chida and father of Daniel. He inherited this ranch from his parents. He grew up on the ranch and has spent his working life there. He is a problem solver who can fix most things. He cares about the cattle and treats them well. He listens to his other family members and the ranch hands but generally avoids conflict.
- **Chida Adama** is a Black Nigerian immigrant (settled in Canada in the 1990s) and is the spouse of Aaron and mother of Daniel. She is also in her 50s. Chida handles the administration of the ranch, coordinating with veterinarians, buyers, auction houses, etc. Chida sometimes goes to Edmonton to visit other family, but she is very focused on the family ranch. She appreciates the wildlife that flourishes around the ranch, has many birdfeeders hanging in the trees around the house and has rows and rows of lilac bushes that she loves.
- **Daniel Adama White** is a biracial man in his late 20s and is Chida and Aaron's son. It has always been discussed that he will inherit the ranch and provide for his parents if they wish to move to a nearby town or stay on the ranch. Daniel is a mostly self-taught practitioner of sustainable ranching. He is working on an online certificate in sustainable ranching practices. He is concerned about fossil fuel use and climate change.

## 3.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

### Event

Daniel has a routine of riding a horse or an all-terrain vehicle around the ranch to check on the cattle, fence lines, weather, etc. One day, he notices a terrible rotten egg smell on one of their pastures. He thinks he sees continuous bubbling in a low area and patches of mist floating near the ground. The grass nearby looks white. Daniel also notices some sinkholes about three meters wide. A little further in the pasture, Daniel notices two cows standing very close together. When he encourages them to move along, they limp away with broken or sprained legs, probably from tripping in the sinkholes. Daniel and a ranch hand take these cows into the barn and ask Chida to call the veterinarian. The cows have their broken legs splinted and are resting.

Daniel tells his parents the whole story, and Chida calls Western Energy. A representative of Western Energy calls back two days later and asks the ranchers to take photos and describe what they see. Chida and Daniel take photos and compose the email, including the bubbling, the smell, the caved-in area and the injured cattle. Daniel's version of the email sounds angry and demanding. Aaron asks him to change the tone so that it does not sound hostile, as this might prevent them from getting help from the company. Chida sends the toned-down version of the email.

The Western Energy representative emails and informs them that the venting and bubbling are “acceptable leakage” and states that they will visit the ranch on their next scheduled rotation in a month. The representative does not mention the injured cattle. After the family reads the email, they have a discussion.

### Dialogue between Aaron, Chida and Daniel

**Aaron:** *Sounds like we don't need to worry. The company will check it out later.*

**Daniel:** *Dad, what are you talking about? The ground has caved in. Something is bubbling up! That can't be good. We need some independent researchers to assess this, maybe from the university. Nothing about this setup sounds safe anymore. They already left their garbage on that burned out patch on the south slope.*

**Aaron:** *We have a contract, and we can't survive without it. Stock prices are going down.*

**Daniel:** *Mom? What do you think? We can't keep hosting Western. Pipelines aren't popular anymore.*

**Chida:** *Daniel, the pipeline is already here. It can't just be dug out. It's like a road.*

**Daniel:** *I don't care. And Western clearly doesn't care about our ranch. We need to do something. Mom, tell Dad!*

**Chida:** *I am worried about the cows.*

**Aaron:** *Let's wait for them to do their inspection. We'll have a clearer picture then.*

**Daniel:** *But they didn't even mention the cows. They didn't apologize. They are destroying our place. You know, they might listen to a lawyer.*

**Aaron:** *Son, that will just agitate them. Let's wait for Western to come out. We can talk more then.*

**Chida:** *Okay.*

**Daniel** *doesn't say anything more.*

## 3.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

### What should Daniel do?

- Should he drop the issue and carry on as per usual?
- Should he contact a local university to take soil samples and perform other monitoring?
- Should he convince his parents that he will be the liaison with Western Energy now?
- Should he join a rancher's alliance to discuss this issue?
- Should he encourage his parents to obtain a lawyer to end the contract?
- Should he encourage his parents to launch a lawsuit against Western Energy?
- Should he try to organize a class action lawsuit with neighbouring ranches?
- Should he encourage his parents to go to local media?
- Should he take photos of the caved in land and injured cows and post them to social media?
- Should he wait until he is in charge of the ranch to make big changes?
- Other ideas?

### What should Aaron and Chida do?

- Should they drop the issue and wait for the representative?
- Should they email back requesting a visit sooner?
- Should they chat informally with neighbour ranchers to get a sense of the community concerns?
- Should they call a meeting of neighbour ranchers to plan a course of action?
- Should they agree with Daniel and contact lawyers?
- Should they let Daniel take responsibility for dealing with the problem?
- Should Chida call the veterinarian for a full checkup of all the cattle?
- Should Aaron call a contractor to fence off the dangerous areas?
- Should they document the changes to their land for future reference?
- Other ideas?

### What should Western Energy do?

- What are their obligations?
- Should they inspect the ranch sooner?
- Should they offer empathy and an apology?
- Should they offer compensation for the damaged land and livestock?
- Should they commission an environmental assessment?
- Should they write to GreenFolks Ranch to remind them of the terms of the contract?
- Should they provide as little information as possible to avoid liability and carry on with business as usual?
- Other ideas?

## 3.5 Teaching Notes

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

### Note to teachers

This scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues. Discussions about conflict between family businesses and large corporations or about climate change in general may be upsetting for some students. Please provide context and background information, especially relating to challenging common assumptions about family-run ranches and the consequences of gas and oil pipelines crossing farming and ranching land. This background information would help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the background information above and bibliography below or seek other sources from your own faculties that teach land use planning, environmental issues, agriculture, energy production, Indigenous issues or related areas.

### What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will discuss any of the following:

- family businesses
- succession planning
- business conflict and decision making
- ranching
- farming
- entrepreneurship
- sustainable agriculture
- resource extraction and transport
- the oil and gas industry
- pipeline spills and consequences
- soil contamination
- wildlife protection
- fossil fuels
- land use and rights
- Indigenous territories and rights
- climate change
- environmental ethics

Students may suggest various courses of action for the scenario above.

- Students may argue that family ranches need the additional income from a gas and oil pipeline company's use of

their land.

- Students may argue that since pipelines are the safest way to transport fuels and are thus required for our economy where costs of living are rising, family ranches need to work closely with pipeline companies.
- Students may argue that it is a community obligation to allow pipelines to pass through one's land to benefit everyone.
- Students may argue that family ranches should form an alliance to demand that pipeline companies clean up and restore previously used lands.
- Students may argue that the land of family ranchers is on the unceded territories of Indigenous peoples and thus First Nations should be consulted on the land's use and any potential contracts with pipeline companies.
- Students may argue that family ranchers should be activists that work against the use of fossil fuels and find sustainable alternatives on their own ranches and beyond.

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WINIFRED ATHEMBO; LEE BEAVINGTON; AND DEIRDRE MAULTSAID

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# CASE 4: INVISIBLE DISABILITIES IN THE WORKPLACE

This case for class discussion is about invisible disabilities at work. We include background information on the social issues. Then, we describe the critical events of a scenario that will inspire the discussion and provide discussion prompts. We also include teaching notes and a short bibliography of relevant readings. While actively participating in the case discussion, students can apply learned concepts to real situations, reflect on social issues and use critical thinking and ethical judgement to suggest a course of action for the people described in the case.



## 4.1 Background on the Social Issue

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

The work life of people with invisible disabilities is becoming an increasingly important social topic amongst Canadians.

When people think of disabilities, they tend to think of individuals who have some sort of physiological disability such as those requiring a wheelchair, which is something everyone can see. However, many people have invisible disabilities. People with invisible disabilities are afraid to reveal their disabilities at work because they fear they will receive unfair treatment in the workplace, suffer a loss of credibility in the eyes of others, be the target of gossip and/or experience rejection (Brohan, 2012). People with disabilities expect to be productive at work but may need accommodations in order to do their jobs. People with invisible disabilities such as chronic illnesses, mental health issues or other conditions may need a variety of accommodations at work (Share, 2022).

Employers are being encouraged to treat their diverse groups of employees equitably and continuously support them (Leonard, 2022). Employers in Canada also have a legal duty to keep employees safe, not discriminate and take steps to avoid any negative effects on an employee based on personal characteristics such as gender or disability (British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal, n.d.; Government of Canada, 2022; WorkBC, 2022). Still, even with such laws and organizational policies in place, people with disabilities sometimes experience ignorant comments or prejudiced behaviour from others at work.



Figure 4.1: Workplace meeting including visibly disabled worker



Figure 4.2: Woman with migraine struggling at work

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## 4.2 Scenario for Discussion

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

### Setting

**Good Citizen Services (GCS)** is a Canadian bank that started in the 2000s. There are GCS branches in every Western Canadian province.

### Characters

- **Shaleen Gill**, supervisor of loan officers and tellers

Shaleen is a South Asian Canadian woman with a BBA and a certificate in business management who has worked in banking since the start of her career 11 years ago. She is a supervisor at GCS branch #023. She is a good problem-solver.

- **Patricia Dorado**, loans officer, who has an invisible disability

Patricia is a white Canadian woman working on her diploma in business management online. She started her career in office work, then became a teller and has been a loans officer for about a year after applying internally several times. Unfortunately, a few years ago she was involved in a car accident that left her with a concussion and permanent brain injury. To avoid headaches and clouded judgement, Patricia takes frequent small breaks and occasionally takes a sick day to rest.

## 4.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

### The situation

GCS bank branch #023 is busy due to two nearby branches closing down for renovations. The lineups for the tellers are long, and the schedule for appointments with loans officers is full. Shaleen, the supervisor, is encouraging the bank tellers and loan officers to finish each transaction as quickly as possible. Patricia is now trying to keep up with the fast-paced work environment but is going home with headaches each night. Patricia believes the expectation is for her to “power through” this busy time, and she is afraid to complain.

### The event

Patricia is in a meeting with a client who is applying for a small business loan. The client has been abrupt and rude throughout the meeting—he is likely frustrated, as it was difficult for him to get an appointment, and he is now asking many rapid-fire questions. Patricia becomes flustered and starts making calculation errors and is unable to answer the client’s questions about locked-in interest rates and so on. The customer starts to speak loudly and angrily: “Come on. This is a big deal to me. You don’t seem to get it.”



Figure 4.3: Angry Customer

Upon hearing the client's raised voice, Shaleen enters Patricia's office. Shaleen invites the client into her own office to complete their loan application. After dealing with the aggressive client, Shaleen shuts her office door and carries on with other work. Feeling nervous and wanting to debrief, Patricia knocks on Shaleen's closed door.

## Dialogue between Shaleen, supervisor, and Patricia, loan officer

**Patricia:** *I am so sorry that happened. You know I have a brain injury and get stressed. I need short timeouts and then I am back! No problem!*

**Shaleen:** *You told me before, so I solved this situation for you. I guess I am willing to do that once in a while, but breaks don't look good to clients in the middle of the meeting. We are under pressure here, you know that. At this point, I am sorry, but I have to ask you—Isn't there anything else you can do? For work? Like medication? I have a friend who goes to a homeopathic guy and says it is amazing. I can get their contact info for you. Or maybe counselling?*

**Patricia:** *I don't want to get into my list of medications, but I do go to counselling, of course. But is it actually ok for clients to be yelling at me?*

**Shaleen:** *No, needless to say. Thank you. (Shaleen turns back to her computer).*

Subsequently, at work, Shaleen ignores Patricia. Most days, there is another supervisor posted on the roster for Patricia's section. No one discusses this change. The other supervisor does not go out of his way to connect with Patricia and swiftly and neutrally answers any of her questions about client matters without encouraging her to learn anything new or improve her job skills. It seems that Shaleen is hostile to her, but Patricia struggles to interpret what is going on. Patricia feels increasingly worried, isolated and sidelined.



Figure 4.4: Office worker criticised holding up a HELP sign

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## 4.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

### What should the employee, Patricia, do?

- Should Patricia forget about this situation and try to move on?
- Should Patricia call in sick for a few days?
- Should Patricia chat with her colleagues about the issue?
- How can Patricia protect her privacy in this situation?
- Should Patricia try talking to Shaleen again?
- Should Patricia file a complaint report with Shaleen's supervisor?
- Should Patricia talk to Human Resources again regarding her disability?
- Should Patricia try to start a disability committee (or a diversity, equity and inclusion committee) with co-workers and management?
- Should Patricia try to start a workplace union to advocate for workers' rights?
- Other ideas?

### What should the supervisor, Shaleen, do?

- Can Shaleen continue to ignore Patricia now that another supervisor is in place?
- Is Shaleen legally or ethically obligated to do anything else now?
- Should Shaleen re-check the employee's personnel file for designated accommodations?
- Should Shaleen discuss the issue with Human Resources?
- Should Shaleen discuss the issue with the employee and Human Resources?
- Should Shaleen discuss the issue with her own supervisor?
- What are Shaleen's legal and ethical obligations to protect the employee's privacy?
- Other ideas?

### What should the organization, GCS bank, do (if they become aware of the events)?

- Should the organization reexamine the ethical and legal obligations of the organization towards its employees?
- Should the organization train everyone on how to behave in a diverse workforce?
- Should the organization provide conflict resolution training?
- Should the organization have policies or be updating their policies on diversity, equity and inclusion?
- How would policies be enforced?
- Who would enforce policies?
- Who would be involved in monitoring issues such as accessibility and inclusion?

- Should the organization be starting and maintaining cross-department committees on diversity, equity and inclusion?
- Should these committees be consultative or provide direction and contribute to strategic planning?
- Other ideas?

## 4.5 Teaching Notes

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

### Note to teachers

This scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues. Discussions may be upsetting for some students. Please provide context and background information about invisible disability issues, especially background information that challenges common assumptions. This background information will help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the background information above and bibliography below or seek other sources from your own diversity and inclusion specialists, accessibility services or other educational supports.

### What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will discuss any of the following:

- bias
- diversity, equity and inclusion, belonging, justice, dignity, human rights
- visible and invisible disabilities
- workplace accommodations
- bystander behaviours
- definitions of “professionalism”
- conflict resolution
- supervision
- customer service
- public relations
- banking practices
- organizational trends in the banking industry
- organizational development, leadership
- human resources
- hiring practices
- policy making and enforcement
- employer obligations
- internal communication, organizational culture

- approaches to decision making
- other relevant topics

**Students may suggest various courses of action for the characters in the case.**

- Students may argue that Patricia should take formal action to complain about her supervisor/workplace.
- Students may argue that Patricia should form an alliance with other marginalized employees to organize a group letter of complaint or other workplace actions.
- Students may argue that individual employee needs must be balanced with operational needs and business health.
- Students may argue that the organization has to change its culture and may recommend steps on how to implement change.
- Students may argue that Patricia should just let the incident go and continue working.
- Other ideas

## 4.6 References and Bibliography

BRIANNA DOYLE; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; AND SIMRENPRIT PARMAR

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# CASE 5: EMPLOYEE ANXIETY IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

This case for class discussion is about anxiety and occupational stress for workers in the restaurant industry. We include background information on the social issues. Then, we describe the critical events of a scenario that will inspire the discussion and provide discussion prompts. We also include teaching notes and a short bibliography of relevant readings. While actively participating in the case discussion, students can apply learned concepts to real situations, reflect on social issues and use critical thinking and ethical judgement to suggest a course of action for the people described in the case.



## 5.1 Background on the Social Issue

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

Stress at work can affect a person's productivity and job satisfaction as well as negatively impact their mental health. Mental health issues such as anxiety and depression caused by work will also affect every other aspect of a person's life.

While many workplaces are stressful, restaurants are considered particularly difficult, stressful places to work. Restaurant workers often experience anxiety, tension, sleep deprivation, overwork, competitiveness, verbal abuse and a chaotic environment. Not all restaurant businesses last, leading to workers to feel vulnerable and worried that the business will close and they will lose their jobs. Staff also often work long hours with inconsistent pay and schedules. Dealing with customers and relying on tips for a significant portion of one's income is "precarious" work that is associated with stress and depression (Curley, 2018). In fact, people in the restaurant industry contend that a severe mental health crisis is happening behind the scenes and that it is not discussed enough (Akhtar, 2016). As a response to this situation, some websites and support groups for restaurant workers have been created to improve restaurant work culture (FairKitchens, n.d.).



Figure 5.1: Senior Couple on a date



Figure 5.2: Restaurant worker



Figure 5.3: Restaurant food preparation

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## 5.2 Scenario for Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### Setting

A family-owned, family-friendly restaurant called “Roman’s Grill” offers the following:

- Burgers “grilled to perfection”
- Party arrangements and a customized menu for children’s birthdays
- An annual Mother’s Day brunch
- Parking in the strip mall outside

### Characters

- **Employee: Sonia**, a young woman of Middle Eastern heritage (self-identifies as a “Brown” person), is a permanent resident in Canada. Sonia is a college student in addition to working at Roman’s. She usually keeps her head down and works hard, but she lacks confidence and is anxious about making mistakes at work. She was never properly trained on many of her tasks.
- **Chef/Manager: Maxwell**, a White man and second-generation Canadian citizen of Western European heritage, has worked in more prestigious restaurants than Roman’s Grill but came on a few years ago because he was promised creative freedom with the menu. He manages the restaurant day to day. Maxwell is someone who talks fast, is domineering and yells at staff to try to motivate them to accomplish tasks. Maxwell spends time in his office doing administrative work (and drinking wine).
- **Owner: Roman**, a White man and third-generation Canadian citizen with Western European heritage, inherited the business from his parents and grew up in the lower middle-class neighbourhood where the restaurant is located. Roman, the owner, is proud of the restaurant but has a hands-off, casual attitude.

## 5.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### The situation

Roman's Grill is suffering as a business. There are more restaurants in the neighbourhood now and fewer available parking spots, which families and seniors need. Even loyal customers do not come every weekend for brunch as restaurant goers are branching out to the many restaurant choices in the city.

Staff have inconsistent work schedules; they are sometimes sent home early because there are not enough customers. Some employees are students who work part time. Staff, particularly part-timers, are expected to fill in on all the jobs (serving, cooking, prepping, and even mixing cocktails, even though these part-time staff are paid less than kitchen assistants or bartenders). There are also some mature long-standing employees who behave in a condescending manner to the young part-timers because the long-standing employees are usually given the better shifts on evenings and weekends.

### The event

It has been a busy Friday night at the restaurant and tensions are high. Some long-term employees on the shift stand around casually chatting. They say they are "on break". They task Sonia, a part-timer, with more work such as topping up customers' water and clearing tables in between her kitchen work preparing appetizers and desserts and time in the bar preparing drinks.

A customer has complained because their cider was warm and the dressing on their salad appeared to be frozen. The chef/manager, Maxwell, apologizes, and sorts out the customer's needs. Then, Maxwell calls Sonia into the kitchen. He takes a bottle of salad dressing out of the fridge under the prep tables, kicks the fridge door shut and slams the bottle on the counter. He speaks to her in a loud, angry voice.

### Dialogue between Maxwell, chef/manager, and Sonia, part-time employee

**Maxwell:** I've already told you so many [swear word] times to take the dressings out of the freezer at the beginning of your shift. This is so easy. I mean, it was still frozen. Look at this! It makes me look bad because it is my reputation on the line here every day and every night. Right?

**Sonia:** I know. I mean, yes, chef. I'm sorry.

**Maxwell:** Well, I had to comp Table 6. What the [swear word] is going on with you?

**Sonia:** I'm sorry. I'm just so busy and stressed out with the kitchen and the floor.

**Maxwell:** It is so [swear word] easy to restock the bar at the beginning of your shift and do your kitchen prep.

**Sonia:** Okay, okay. I mean, yes, chef. But I also had to prep the veggies and the pies and set tables. I'm trying to do a good job, sir.

**Maxwell:** Should you even be working evenings? Maybe you should go work at [swear word] McDonalds.

**Roman**, the owner, walks into the kitchen. He happens to have dropped into the restaurant to talk to **Maxwell**. It is not clear to **Sonia** if **Roman** heard.

**Maxwell** (mutters to **Sonia**): *Okay. Get your act together.*

**Sonia** then hides in the washroom to cry and text her mother for support, though that break puts her behind on all her tasks and the other staff glare at her when she comes back to the kitchen.

## 5.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### What should the employee, Sonia, do?

- Apologize and get back to work?
- Ask for scheduled breaks?
- Ask for training?
- Ask for posted recipes and instructions?
- Decline to mix drinks at the bar as it is outside her job description?
- Ask for a staff meeting?
- Find allies amongst other staff and write an email to the manager and owner expressing concerns?
- Post complaints anonymously on recruitment sites?
- Ask for a promotion to a kitchen staff position with a higher wage?
- Inform the owner, Roman, about Maxwell's verbal abuse?
- Other ideas?

### What should the chef/manager, Maxwell, do?

- Ignore the problems and tensions?
- Keep putting pressure on employees because he has a business to run?
- Revise hiring practices/employee requirements?
- Compose job descriptions and assign staff appropriately?
- Hold some sessions to demonstrate how to prepare menu items?
- Send employees to cooking and bartending classes?
- Introduce an incentive program, (e.g., employee of the month)?
- Institute regular staff meetings?
- Start an anonymous complaint box?
- Update scheduling software to coordinate staff schedules and/or monitor staff breaks more closely?
- Promote a shift supervisor for each shift?
- Monitor staff to see that workloads and tasks seem equitable?
- Other ideas?

### What should the owner, Roman, do (if informed by Sonia of the problems)?

- Support the manager's views and reinforce the view to staff that they should do a better job?
- Drop in by surprise on the business more often to monitor?
- Insist that the manager create job descriptions of which Roman will approve?

- Hire new staff that Roman will approve of?
- Have a frank talk with the chef/manager?
- Send the manager for anger management training?
- Involve the manager in leadership training?
- Call an all-staff meeting?
- Involve everyone in anti-bullying training?
- Stop the tipping system and replace it with salaries?
- Change the business model in several ways (for example, stop serving alcohol)?
- Other ideas?

## 5.5 Teaching Notes

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### Note to teachers

The scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues. Discussions may be upsetting for some students. Please provide context and background information about employee anxiety, stress and mental health issues, especially background information that challenges common assumptions. This background information will help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the background information above and bibliography below or seek other sources from your own diversity and inclusion specialists, mental health and counselling staff, or other educational supports.

### What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will discuss any of the following:

- mental health at work
- employer obligations
- stress and anxiety at work
- verbal abuse at work
- social hierarchies at work
- “kitchen culture”
- employee incentives and recognition
- employee retention
- hiring practices
- job descriptions
- human resources
- employee training
- occupational health and safety
- customer service
- the restaurant industry
- the hospitality industry
- the alcohol industry

- small businesses
- small business ownership
- leadership
- internal communication and organizational culture
- other relevant topics

### **Students may suggest various courses of action for the characters in the case:**

- Students may argue that the part-time employees should band together and ask for help from the more experienced employees.
- Students may argue that the employees should politely request kitchen training and a set work schedule from the manager.
- Students may argue that the employees should directly speak to the owner about the issues in the restaurant and bypass the manager.
- Students may argue that the owner (Roman) should improve the overall business and may have suggestions for how to do so.
- Students may argue that the manager has the right to demand quality work from employees.
- Other ideas.

## 5.6 References and Bibliography

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

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# CASE 6: SAFETY OF WOMEN (BOTH CIS- AND TRANSGENDER) AND NON-BINARY PEOPLE AT WORK

This case for class discussion is about the safety and vulnerability of women, transgender women and gender non-binary people, especially in small businesses. We include background information on the social issues. Then, we describe the critical events of a scenario that inspired the discussion and provide discussion prompts. We also include teaching notes and a short bibliography of relevant readings. While actively participating in the case discussion, students can apply learned concepts to real situations, reflect on social issues and use critical thinking and ethical judgement to suggest a course of action for the people described in the case.



## 6.1 Background on the Social Issue

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

Cis women, transgender women and non-binary people often experience violence and sexual harassment on the job (Silliker, 2019; Western University, 2022). The perpetrators of sexual harassment are often customers (or patients or co-workers) who instigate sexual conversations, sexual jokes, and verbal intimidation (Western, 2022). Transgender women and non-binary people also experience mis-gendering and mocking behaviours at work (Hadjisolomou, 2021).

In service industries such as retail and hospitality, employees are supposed to remain polite, suppress their feelings and stay in a subservient role in relation to the customers (Hadjisolomou, 2021). This aspect of retail culture, wherein the “customer is king”, makes it especially difficult for cis women, transgender women and non-binary employees to speak up about harassment.

Employers in Canada have a legal duty to keep their employees safe and to take steps to avoid employees experiencing any negative effects based on a personal characteristic such as gender (British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal, n.d.; Government of Canada, 2022; WorkBC, 2022). However, cis women, transgender women and non-binary people are often reluctant to speak up about sexual and other types of harassment at work, as they fear the negative consequences of directly confronting harassers or reporting harassment. Victims of sexual harassment often experience “victim blaming”, which minimizes the impact of the harassment and leaves victims humiliated, afraid, and unsupported. In summary, employees lack effective strategies for dealing with harassment (Ayres et al., 2009; Del Carmen Herrera, 2018), and employers are not advocating for or protecting their employees.



Figure 6.1: Woman commuting alone



Figure 6.2: A non-binary person commuting by bike

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- [Non-binary person commuting by bike](#) © Vice is licensed under a [All Rights Reserved](#) license

## 6.2 Scenario for Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### Setting

Moose Souvenir Shop (MSS) is a small Canadian souvenir shop located on a short commercial street in a suburb of Vancouver, British Columbia. The company sells a variety of domestic products and locally made gifts and souvenirs. MSS is open days, evenings and weekends, except Mondays. On the same street, some shops close in the evening, though the pub, liquor store and bookstore stay open. There is a large carpark near the store that is not well lit at night.



Figure 6.3: Gift Shop



Figure 6.4: Retail Worker

## Characters

- **Mamie Garcia (Sales Associate)** – Mamie is a black Canadian of Belizean heritage. She is fluent in Belizean Creole, Spanish, and English. She is attentive and conscientious at MSS. She eventually wants to sell her own knitted crafts through an online store.
- **John Harrison (Sales Manager)** – John is a white Canadian of European heritage and was born and raised in Vancouver, BC. He can speak fluent English. He has worked in retail for years and has been working at MSS as a sales manager for about one year.

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## 6.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### The situation

The owner trusts John to manage the store and is not usually there. Unbeknownst to the owner, John regularly leaves shifts early or shows up late and trusts his sales associate Mamie to run the store in his absence. Because John is a sales manager, he receives a salary and does not need to clock in and out of work, which allows this behaviour to go undetected. This leaves Mamie to struggle to do everything: manage stock, help customers and cash out at the end of the day.

At times, Mamie feels unsafe, particularly when she has to lock up on her own, walk to the parking lot and then drive to the nearby bank to make the cash deposit in the bank night slot. Mamie does not want to tell the owners about having too many responsibilities because she fears retaliation from John and does not want to lose her job.

Recently, a local man who frequents the pub next door has been coming in and bothering Mamie at work in the evenings when she is alone. He makes her uncomfortable with his compliments and holds out his cellphone, asking for her number and private details about her schedule. She tries to stay professional and says she is “busy”. Mamie has tried to discuss the issue with John before, but he brushes it off and says to be polite to the customers.

### The event

One night, after John is long gone, Mamie locks up the shop by herself and walks to her car while carrying the cash deposit bag under her arm disguised in an old shopping bag. She notices that the same man is hanging around near the carpark.

As Mamie is cautiously walking in the parking area to her car, the man walks up to her and asks whether she wants to go to a street festival on the weekend. He pretends to be begging. Mamie declines his invitation. Then, the man demands to know when she is available to go out with him, stating that he has already given her “your three chances”.

Mamie tries to walk away from him, but the man grabs her arm. Mamie twists away and starts to walk quickly to her car. He says, “Hey, wait!” very loudly. The man grabs her shoulder from behind and tries to give her a hug. Mamie forcefully frees herself and runs back to the store. The man shouts something after her that sounds like swearing. Mamie locks herself in the store and calls John to tell him what has happened.

### Dialogue between John and Mamie

**John:** Hello?

**Mamie:** John, I am sorry to bother you so late, but I ran back to the store. I had to. That same guy was following me and grabbing me. I had the money, too. I didn't go to the bank.

**John:** You are in the store? Did he take the money?

**Mamie:** No, I ran back to the store and am locked in here. I'm really scared. There's no one around. I told you before he wouldn't leave me alone.

**John:** Where are you?

**Mamie:** Well, I'm in the back. I'm just shaking.

**John:** So, you don't know if he's still there. It's probably just some drunk guy from the pub who wandered off.

**Mamie:** I don't know, but I don't want to go out. He keeps bothering me. I already told you. He keeps coming in and bothering me. Now he's grabbed me. I can't stop shaking.

**John:** Well, if you won't go out to your car, what do you suggest?

**Mamie:** I don't know!

**John:** Well, I'm already at home in Abbotsford. It would take an hour to come back. Let me see...

**Mamie:** What should I do? Should I call the police for an escort for half a block? Or, I don't know, should I report it? I don't know the guy. He didn't hit me. Can I report it?

**John:** Hmm. How about you wait 20 minutes? Then, call me back.

**Mamie:** All right. I guess so.

**Mamie** locks up the bank deposit, even though she is worried about getting into trouble for not depositing the money. She waits a full 30 minutes and goes back outside with her phone in her hand. There is no one around, so she drives home. She texts **John** that she is home, but the money has not been deposited.

## 6.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### What should the employee, Mamie, do?

- Should Mamie have demanded that John return to the store to escort her out safely?
- Should Mamie have called a friend to come get her?
- Should Mamie file a report with the police?
- Should Mamie have a discussion with John about staying at the store in the evening instead of sneaking out early?
- Should Mamie inform John the next day before reporting this to the police to protect the souvenir shop's reputation and image?
- Should Mamie call or email the owners the next day and tell them everything that has been going on?
- Should she alert the rest of the women at work?
- Should she organize a self-defense course?
- Other ideas?

### What should the manager, John, do after Mamie tells him what happened?

- Should John have returned to the store to help Mamie?
- Should John help Mamie file a police report?
- Should John ask the owners to install CCTV cameras and hire a security guard?
- Should John organize customer service training?
- Should John organize safety training?
- Should John beg Mamie to stay quiet about his absences and promise he will always be around to help her close from now on?
- Should John request that Mamie work only during the day?
- Other ideas?

### What should the owners do once/if they find out about the incident?

- Should the owners disregard the problem?
- Should the owners reexamine their employer obligations?
- Should the owners install cameras outside the store in the parking lot?
- Can the owners ban certain people from the store?
- Should the owners set up a security system?
- Should they hire security guards?
- Should they tell John to implement safety and anti-harassment training?
- Other ideas?

# 6.5 Teaching Notes

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

## Note to teachers

This scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues. Discussions may be upsetting for some students. Please provide context and background information about the sexual harassment of women, transgender women and non-binary people and safety at work, especially background information that challenges common assumptions. This background information will help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the background information above and the bibliography below or seek other sources from your own diversity and inclusion specialists, anti-racist advisors, or educational supports.

## What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will discuss any of the following:

- bias
- diversity, equity and inclusion, belonging, justice, dignity, human rights
- gender
- gender identity and expression
- gendered harassment
- crime
- sexual harassment
- bystander behaviours
- “victim blaming”
- worker protection
- worker safety
- worker night shifts
- retail industry practices
- social expectations/customer service
- safety policies and procedures
- management
- professionalism, organizational development, leadership
- human resources
- policy making and enforcement
- employer obligations
- organizational culture
- other relevant topics

Students may suggest various courses of action for the characters in the case.

- Students may argue that Mamie should report the incidents to the police.
- Students may argue that Mamie should speak to the manager informally.
- Students may argue that Mamie should file a formal written incident report with the manager and argue for the benefits of doing so.
- Students may argue that it is the responsibility of the employer to implement workplace harassment policies and suggest ways these policies and strategies could be implemented.
- Students may argue that it is the responsibility of the employer to implement more formal safety strategies/ proper security/safety training.
- Students may choose to argue that bad customer behaviour will happen and the employer cannot control it; they can only encourage customer service personnel to deal with it politely and calmly.
- Other ideas.

## 6.6 References and Bibliography

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; NIKHIL GARG; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

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# CASE 7: BULLYING OF IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES AT WORK

This case for class discussion is about the bullying and exclusion of immigrants and refugees in the workplace. We include background information on the social issues. Then, we describe the critical events of a scenario that will inspire the discussion and provide discussion prompts. We also include teaching notes and a short bibliography of relevant readings. While actively participating in the case discussion, students can apply learned concepts to real situations, reflect on social issues and use critical thinking and ethical judgement to suggest a course of action for the people described in the case.



## 7.1 Background on the Social Issue

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; BRIANNA DOYLE; NIKHIL GARG; GURSIRAT GILL; THALIN HTUN; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

Employers in Canada have a legal duty to keep employees safe, to not allow discrimination and to prevent harassment (British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal, n.d.; Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2020; WorkSafe BC, 2022). However, new immigrants and refugees might not be familiar with their human and workplace rights (Buckley, 2016). Unfortunately, new immigrants and refugees can experience discrimination, bullying and stereotyping at work in Canada.

Recent immigrants might appear to be an easy group to exclude or to focus on as targets of frustration for problems at work (Rosander, 2022). New immigrant or refugee employees may be criticized or berated by senior employees or supervisors, and if there are language barriers between them and other employees, new immigrants or refugees may be avoided. They may work alone, without getting advice on how to handle problems or mistakes. Furthermore, they may not be informed of updates or changes in procedures. Also, people who are bullied at work are often excluded from the social life of the workplace and may not have the same opportunity to bond with co-workers. Considering all these factors, workplace bullying can be stressful and can have detrimental effects on employees' health and well-being.

If immigrant or refugee workers are experiencing discrimination or bullying at work, they may fear that if they complain they will experience reprisals from others, social exclusion or even risk losing their immigration or refugee status. Co-worker support is important for victims of bullying and harassment, but the victim needs supervisor support as well (Blomberg, 2020). Victims of bullying and harassment at work need employer advocacy and the enforcement of policies meant to protect them.



Figure 7.1: A Factory Worker



Figure 2: A sad Latin American man pushed away

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## 7.2 Scenario for Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; BRIANNA DOYLE; NIKHIL GARG; GURSIRAT GILL; THALIN HTUN; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### Setting

- A manufacturing plant/warehouse that makes bottled fruit juice.
- Keremeos Best Juice has between 35 and 50 employees, including office staff, factory floor staff, some engineers, and lab technicians, with an increase in staff during the fall when apples are harvested.



Figure 7.3: An Apple Processing Plant

## Characters

- **Dani**, of Latino heritage from Honduras, is a refugee to Canada. He is a new employee who is still learning English and working as a fruit sorter at the beginning of the processing line.
- **William**, white, of British heritage, is a Canadian citizen. He is a processing engineer who maintains the machines and workflow, has an office upstairs, and is not on the factory floor all day.
- **Feng**, Asian, of Chinese heritage, is a Canadian citizen. As assistant manager, he manages the floor crew, the cleaners, William, and some other processing specialists.

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## 7.3 Critical Events to Inspire Discussion

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; BRIANNA DOYLE; NIKHIL GARG; GURSIRAT GILL; THALIN HTUN; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### The situation

Keremeos Best Juice has a busy work environment, as fruit must be processed before it spoils, even in cold storage.

Although all companies must comply with human rights laws, there are no explicit diversity or inclusion policies in place at this worksite. Furthermore, there has been no training provided on workplace harassment other than the annual mandated WorkSafeBC course. Most workers have been there for years and are proud of their competence and high productivity. Keremeos Best Juice has an environment where the staff work hard and comprise a tight knit team who like to joke around. They aren't always careful in considering what they say since staff call this "teasing" and everyone laughs along.

The main character, Dani, is able to speak functional English. He is a fruit sorter and is making mistakes as he learns the job. Other employees have spoken to him sharply at times, reminding him to be careful as it affects everyone down the line. Several employees asked him in a very loud voice, "Do you understand? English? Do you speak English?" Other employees have also asked Dani to do extra jobs, such as carrying crates to other locations and sweeping up, tasks that are supposed to be everyone's responsibility. Even when he asks for assistance for two-person jobs, he has noticed how his fellow employees only begrudgingly help him. As Dani is a recent refugee who is unsure of his status, he does what he is told and does not stir up trouble by talking back.

### The event

One day, William, the engineer, has to stop production for 45 minutes to fix something on a conveyor belt. Some workers are sent to do inventory checks, while others are sent on break early. Dani, however, doesn't understand where to go, and so he stands by the conveyor belt, apparently anxious. The senior employees, who are helping William with tools and equipment, stare at Dani and shake their heads. One worker laughs and mutters to William, "That new Venezuelan or Mexican guy or whatever probably broke it. Ha, ha. He always slows us down. Guess he doesn't like to work!" Dani doesn't say anything and looks down at his feet. William politely asks the employee to help Dani learn his job. Later, William goes into Feng's office to discuss the situation.

### Dialogue between William, the engineer, and Feng, the assistant manager:

**Feng:** Hello. Hey, the lab reports look good this week.

**William:** Good, good. But I wanted to talk to you about the new guy, Dani. I think the others are treating him bad and not helping him.

**Feng:** Well, he's still learning. Maybe he isn't popular. Hey, why isn't he talking to me about it if it's a problem?

**William:** Who wants to be a snitch? Anyway, he probably doesn't know anyone and wouldn't be able to give you names, dates or info like that.

**Feng:** *I'm running a great team here. It's probably just the new guy learning our way of doing things. He'll settle in.*

**William:** *Maybe. But I think there's some kind of pigeonholing of this guy, like he's a so-called lazy Mexican and has to be bossed around and given the extra grunt work. They think he's Mexican. He's from Central America, right?*

**Feng:** *Yeah, maybe. Okay, let's keep an eye on the floor line and see if it really is a problem.*

## 7.4 Discussion: What should happen next?

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### What should Dani, the employee, do?

- Try to befriend an employee who appears to be respectful?
- Talk to William, the engineer?
- Report the bullying to Feng, the assistant manager?
- Keep his head down and keep working through the bullying?
- Try to talk to the bullies?
- Bring some Honduran food to work to share?
- Ask to be reassigned to a different place on the production line?
- Other ideas?

### What should the bystander employee and engineer, William, do?

- Ignore the problem?
- Provide Dani with informal help?
- Ask Dani questions about his life to get to know him?
- Model friendly behaviour by greeting everyone by name and frequently thanking them?
- Other ideas?

### What should the assistant manager, Feng, do?

- Discount the problem of bullying?
- Pull Dani aside for a conversation to confirm what is happening?
- Assign a formal mentor to Dani?
- Track down the bullies and give them a warning?
- Give a speech to all the staff to ask them to be sensitive about what they say?
- Walk the floor more often and deliberately praise everyone?
- Ask upper management to implement diversity training for all current employees?
- Hold mandatory anti-harassment courses?
- Create fun events to lighten the mood and create a friendly atmosphere?
- Other ideas?

## 7.5 Teaching Notes

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; BRIANNA DOYLE; NIKHIL GARG; GURSIRAT GILL; THALIN HTUN; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

### Note to teachers

This scenario deals with sensitive and controversial issues. Discussions may be upsetting for some students. Please provide context and background information about discrimination and harassment at work, especially information that challenges common assumptions. This background information will help prepare students for a robust but respectful discussion. Please see the background information above and the bibliography below or seek other sources from your own diversity and inclusion specialists, anti-racist advisors, or educational supports.

### What will students discuss?

As relevant to course learning outcomes, students will discuss any of the following:

- bias, racism, stereotyping
- diversity, equity and inclusion, belonging, justice, dignity, human rights
- cross-cultural communication
- bystander behaviours
- language barriers
- work anxiety and stress
- immigration/refugee processes
- professionalism, organizational development, leadership
- human resources
- hiring practices
- supervision
- workplace culture
- humour at work
- factory work
- medium-sized businesses
- policy making and enforcement
- employer obligations
- internal communication, organizational culture
- approaches to decision making
- other relevant topics

**Students may suggest various courses of action for the characters in the case:**

- Students may argue that Dani should formally complain to the manager and argue for the benefit of doing so.
- Students may argue that the manager should organize more social events where everyone is included and explain how this will help the situation.
- Students may argue that it is the responsibility of the employer to implement workplace harassment policies and suggest ways these policies and strategies could be implemented.
- Students may argue that it is the responsibility of the employer to implement more formal mentorship strategies, to clearly outline roles and responsibilities and also to suggest ways these policies and strategies could be implemented.
- Students may choose to argue that it is not the responsibility of other employees to orient new employees or help them fit in to the established workplace culture.
- Other ideas.

## 7.6 References and Bibliography

WINIFRED ATHEMBO; BRIANNA DOYLE; NIKHIL GARG; GURSIRAT GILL; THALIN HTUN; RICHA KABARIA; SARAH KULEWKSA; CELINE WAI SHAN LI; DEIRDRE MAULTSAID; SIMRENPRIT PARMAR; AND LESLI SANGHA

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# Contributor Biographies

## Editor

Deirdre Maultsaid

<https://deirdremaultsaid.com/>

**Deirdre Maultsaid** (she/her) is a queer, White settler of European and Middle Eastern ancestry and a faculty member of KPU. She has a Bachelor of Communications, a Master of Education and a certificate as a diversity and inclusion influencer with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. In addition to being a creative writer with many publications in literary journals and anthologies, she teaches Applied Communications in the Melville School of Business, KPU. She was the 2021 KPU Open Research Fellow conducting research on whether open pedagogy and creating open educational resources with students fosters inclusion and care.

## Author

Deirdre Maultsaid

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**Deirdre Maultsaid** (she/her) is a queer, White settler of European and Middle Eastern ancestry and a faculty member of KPU. She has a Bachelor of Communications, a Master of Education and a certificate as a diversity and inclusion influencer with the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion. In addition to being a creative writer with many publications in literary journals and anthologies, she teaches Applied Communications in the Melville School of Business, KPU. She was the 2021 KPU Open Research Fellow conducting research on whether open pedagogy and creating open educational resources with students fosters inclusion and care.

## Contributors

Brianna Doyle

**Brianna Doyle** (she/her) is a Caribbean/Afro/Canadian student who had completed three years of pre-requisite university healthcare requirements at KPU prior to starting her Bachelor of Science, Nursing at the British Columbia Institute of Technology. Brianna has interests in immunology, public health, community health and healthcare education. Having completed global public health internships, volunteer commitments and post-secondary education, Brianna is eager to begin her career as a registered nurse.

Celine Wai Shan Li

**Celine Wai Shan Li** (she/her) is Belizean-born Chinese person as she was born and raised in Belize City, Belize, and her parents are Chinese. As an international student, she graduated with a BBA in Accounting in addition to an accounting certificate and diploma at KPU. During her time at KPU, she has been volunteering for a variety of events related to

business and other fields. In her spare time, she listens to Latin music and Latin pop, plays shooting games, collects playing cards, and runs or walks around the seawall.

## Gregory John

**Gregory John awohkotsinaa (war chief)**(he/him) is a gay, Métis business owner and Indigenous relations advisor. He has spent the last six years of his career as president and CEO of Four Peaks Business Development, an Indigenous economic development and reconciliation consultancy operating in Canada's energy sector. For the last three years, he has also played double duty in one of Canada's few Indigenous and LGBTQ2+-owned technology start-ups, where he is president and CEO of Unimaize Technologies Inc. Unimaize is a hospitality and live events-focused technology start-up that launched just six weeks before the pandemic started in January 2020. Gregory's career spans numerous industries, yet it was the experience gained as an Indigenous relations specialist involved in negotiations around various energy, engineering, procurement, construction, public policy and environmental protection projects in Canada that helped him understand how business works as viewed through his valuable and highly sought-after Indigenous perspective.

## Gursimrat Gill

**Gursimrat Gill** (she/her) is a South Asian 4th-year BBA in Accounting student at KPU. Upon graduation, she is interested in pursuing a Chartered Professional Accountants designation and working in public practice. She has a quiet presence and has seized every opportunity that has come her way during her time at KPU. She has completed multiple co-op terms, facilitated workshops, worked for a small business, took on an orientation leader role, led two KPU clubs, is an essential member of the Accounting Case Competition Team, and is a 2022-23 Greater Vancouver Board of Trades' Leaders of Tomorrow student member.

## Lee Beavington

<http://www.leebeavington.com/>

**Lee Beavington** (he/him) is a settler-scholar of European ancestry. He is an award-winning author, learning strategist, and interdisciplinary instructor at KPU and Simon Fraser University, BC. He is currently co-developing a st a lōw (Fraser River) field school, serves on KPU's Climate+ Challenge Instructor team, and leads *Wild Spaces*, an interdisciplinary project on place-based outdoor learning in post-secondary education. He also served as co-curator for the *Wild Things: The Power of Nature in Our Lives* exhibition at the Museum of Vancouver, recipient of the Award of Merit for Excellence in Exhibitions. His research explores land-based pedagogy and environmental ethics.

## Lesli Sangha

**Lesli Sangha** (she/her) is a mature South Asian student with disabilities. As a student author and two-term student leader with the Kwantlen Student Association, Lesli supports and values student-created pedagogy and open education resources. She is a recent graduate from the KPU Legal Administrative Studies Program with distinction and was inspired to pursue a higher credential at KPU. She is determined to ensure mature students and students with disabilities get needed accommodations because there should be no barriers to education and no age limit on education. As a result of her passionate student advocacy towards universal design for learning and equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives, she was conferred numerous KPU awards including the distinguished KPU 2022 JEDI Award and the KPU 2021 Future Alumni award. Alongside her student leadership work, Lesli also advocates for her broader community and is the founder of @BCHealthNews on Twitter, where she shares current medical information with others.

## Nikhil Garg

**Nikhil Garg** (he/him) is an international student of South Asian identity. He graduated with a degree in the Associate of Arts program at Douglas College. During his time at Douglas College, Nikhil was involved in various volunteering activities with the Douglas Student Union in organizing various events with the Douglas International Office by mentoring new international students and helping ease the transition to a new country and environment and also served as an executive of a student club. He also actively volunteers at various cultural festivals to give back to the community.

## Richa Kabaria

**Richa Kabaria** (she/her) is a South Asian student at the Melville School of Business, KPU who is working towards a Bachelor of Accounting with Co-operative Education. Prior to joining KPU, she went to Burnsville Secondary School in Delta, BC, where she was regularly involved in sports and a wide range of volunteering activities. Richa likes to be involved with the KPU community by helping various student run clubs, which has landed her some valuable opportunities and connections that will be helpful in building her career as an accountant in the future.

## Sarah Kulewska

**Sarah Kulewska** (she/her) is a White, first-generation Canadian who is currently working towards her Bachelor of Psychology at Douglas College and plans to secure a Master of Social Work shortly after. She has been a volunteer on the telephone lines at the Vancouver Crisis Centre since October 2020 and is also a member of their health and safety committee. Sarah presented preliminary research on a panel in May 2022 at the Canadian Sociological Association's conference, where she discussed intersectional feminist sociologies in a digital age. She plans to continue her education with an intersectional and multicultural lens to empower and support people from all different backgrounds.

## Simrenprit Parmar

**Simrenprit Parmar** (he/him) is a 3rd-year South Asian student at KPU working towards a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and hopes to pursue further education in the medical field to help individuals receive quality healthcare services. Prior to joining KPU, he went to North Delta Secondary School, BC, where he was involved in boxing and volunteered as a boxing coach to help give back to the community.

## Thalin Htun

**Thalin Htun** (she/her) was born in Burma and attained her education in Yangon, the capital, before leaving for Canada in 2021. She studied Political Science at Douglas College, where she was vice president of the Burmese Club and engaged in several volunteer activities with the college as a student mentor, student ambassador, and student leader. There, she also received multiple awards and scholarships. In 2022, she transferred to the University of British Columbia as a 3rd-year undergraduate student majoring in Political Science. There, she is an executive of the International Relations Student Association, where she works as a podcast producer. With her passion for education, academics, and writing, she has coauthored this book with many other students from other educational institutions.

## Winifred Athembo

**Winifred Athembo** (she/her) is a highly motivated processing engineer and farmer. She has a BSc. in Biomechanical and Processing Engineering from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya and was enrolled

as an international student at Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) to pursue a graduate diploma program in Green Business Management and Sustainability. Her main interest is sustainable agriculture to promote food security and feed the world's rising population. Winfred is an alumna of the Young African Leaders Initiative, where she pursued a public management track for policy making, design thinking and stakeholder analysis. She later took part in the Women in Engineering Fellowship program, where her team carried out an assignment on how engineering can support sustainable agricultural development. She furthered her leadership abilities by training over 400 participants and collecting signatures to support her campaign for youth engagement in sustainable agriculture through the CANVASSITY Pan-African Democracy Fellowship. Winfred wanted to contribute to open sources for students in Canada so she could add to the diversity of the research and present the views of a female Black African farmer to the Canadian audience.

# Versioning History

This page lists major changes to this book with major changes marked with a 1.0 increase in the version number and minor changes marked with a 0.1 increase.

Version	Date	Change
1.0	March 1, 2022	Original <a href="#">Cases on Social Issues: For Class Discussion</a> created (Cases 1-2)
2.0	March 13, 2023	Second Edition published with Cases 3-7 added
2.1	March 24, 2023	Updated title of Case 6 to be more inclusive. Updated Chapter names to be more concise. Updated Chapter URLs to be more consistent,
2.2	June 2, 2023	Added 2 references to the bibliography in Case 4.