

## Sport and Media

In this module you will learn about the coloured hockey league and how they changed the game of hockey as we know it today.

Do you know any TV shows that were written by black Canadians? You may know of the show *Da Kink in My Hair*, written by Trey Anthony. You will also learn about that show in this module.

### Here is a list of activities you will work on:

- KWL Chart
- Reading
- Listening/Video
- Summary
- References

### KWL CHART

K	W	L
What I know about Black Canadians in the media and sports	What I want to know about Black Canadians in the media and sports	What I learned about Black Canadians in the media and sports

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## **READING**

### **Black Canadians in Sports<sup>1</sup>**

Since the late 1800s Black Canadians have made great contributions to the culture of sports, starting with the founding of the Coloured Hockey League in Nova Scotia. In North America's four major professional sports leagues, several Black Canadians have had successful careers. These include Ferguson Jenkins (Baseball Hall of Fame member), Grant Fuhr (Hockey Hall of Fame member), Jarome Iginla, Russell Martin, and Jamaal Magloire. Most recently, Andrew Wiggins and P. K. Subban have achieved a high level of success. In athletics, Harry Jerome, Ben Johnson, and Donovan Bailey were Canada's most prominent Black sprinters in recent decades. The current generation is led by

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Canadians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Canadians)

Andre De Grasse (who ran against Usain Bolt in the 2016 Olympics, 100 m men's final and won bronze).

In the next few paragraphs we will take a closer look at the Coloured Hockey League.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Canadians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Canadians)

### **Coloured Hockey League,<sup>2</sup>**

Nova Scotia is considered the place of origin of modern ice hockey. This is because there are many natural ponds which are ideal for skating. In addition, there is a strong tradition of gaming in British culture. As a result, the geographic and social conditions in Nova Scotia facilitated the development and creation of the game now known as Canadian hockey.

The roots of Canadian hockey originated with the North American Indians but early African-Canadian players also helped shape the sport. By the mid-1890s, in an era when many believed blacks could not endure the cold, these African-Canadian athletes defied myths. They developed a revolutionary style of hockey that was fast moving, tough, acrobatic, exciting, and entertaining.

The Coloured Hockey League was an all-black ice hockey league founded in Nova Scotia in 1895. It featured teams from across Canada's Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Islands).

During the late 1890s, games between black club teams in Nova Scotian towns and cities were arranged by formal invitation. By 1900, however, the Coloured Hockey League of the Maritimes was created and was headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The league operated for several decades lasting until 1930. The league consisted of up to a dozen teams with over 400 players.

The Colored Hockey League produced players and athletes comparable to any in Canada. These Black hockey players changed the sport from the primitive "gentleman's pastime" of the nineteenth century to the modern fast moving game of today. The Coloured League emerged as a premier force in Canadian

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<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured\\_Hockey\\_League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured_Hockey_League)

hockey. It supplied the resilience necessary to preserve a unique sports culture that still exists. Unfortunately, their contributions were ignored as hockey players copied elements of the black style and often took credit for black hockey innovations.

The Coloured Hockey League is credited by some as being the first league to allow the goaltender to leave his feet to cover a puck in 1900. This practice was not permitted elsewhere until the formation of the National Hockey League in 1917. George and Darril Fosty wrote a book called *Black Ice: The Lost History of the Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes (1895-1925)*. They claim that the first player to use the slapshot was Eddie Martin of the Halifax Eureka in 1906.

Despite these and other important contributions to today's game of hockey, there are no monuments to the Coloured Hockey League of the Maritimes. Although the League continued to be prominent until the mid-1920s, racism, World War I, and dramatic changes in the Nova Scotian economy resulted in the League being dissolved. Nonetheless the Coloured Hockey League of the Maritimes changed the way hockey was seen and played in early Canada.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured\\_Hockey\\_League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured_Hockey_League)

### **Black Canadians in Media - Da kink in my hair**

*"If you want to know a black woman, you touch her hair"*

*-Novelette, Da kink in my hair*

Da Kink in My Hair is a Canadian television sitcom. Based on the play of the same name by Trey Anthony, the story was adapted into a television show. It aired on Global during primetime, from October 14, 2007 - May 14, 2009. Set in a Caribbean hair salon in Toronto, 'da Kink in my Hair gives voice to eight black women who tell their unforgettable stories with drumming, singing and dance. It is a testament to the challenges and triumphs in the lives of contemporary black women. Many black women in North America immigrated from the Caribbean. Mixing laughter and tears, revelation and inspiration, the intense stories of each woman are woven together in this powerful piece.

It was the first comedy series on a national private mainstream broadcaster that was created by and starred black women in Canada. The series centered on a hair salon in the heart of Toronto's Caribbean-Canadian community, Eglinton West. It was the winner of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters Best Fiction Series prize in 2008 and won a Gemini Award for Best Hair.



Trey Anthony is known for the ground-breaking and award-winning television and theatrical production 'da Kink in My Hair. She is the first Black Canadian woman to write and produce a television show on a major prime time Canadian network. Trey is a former television producer for the Women's Television Network

(now W) and a writer for the Comedy Network and CTV. She was also the executive producer of the Urban Women's Comedy Festival! She has recently been named a Bell Media Fellow, which recognizes emerging television producers and their contribution to Canadian media. Trey is a much sought after speaker and delivers seventy to ninety keynote speeches a year. She is a writer for the Huffington Post and contributing writer for the Toronto Star. Trey was selected to give an address at TEDX Toronto 2010 which she received a standing ovation. She recently screened her documentary film, *When Black Mothers don't say I love you*, at the Toronto Black Film Festival and then went on to produce and direct a box office sell out of her play of the same name in May 2016 at the Factory Theatre. In the summer of 2016 'da Kink in My Hair is being produced at Horizon Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia and fall of 2016 the show will be produced in Canada at both Theatre Calgary and the NAC.

Trey Anthony is a member of the black, LGBT community in Canada. The following is an excerpt from an interview where she discusses her coming out story.

***I heard you have a pretty interesting story around coming into your queerness.***

*At the time I was writing "da Kink," I was engaged to a man—my childhood sweetheart— and we were about to get married. I started working at an overnight shelter for homeless women and I ended up falling in love with a co-worker. Yeah, that went over really well with my Jamaican family (laughs). They were ecstatic! I was coming out as queer, I was ending a marriage and then I announced I was going to write a play. It was a really trying time in my life and my writing really became therapeutic for me—the place where I was working out the kinks.*

***Jamaicans have a reputation for being extremely homophobic and you've hinted that your coming out experience was challenging. Can you expound?***

*I was in such a vulnerable place in my life when I was writing "da Kink." I was estranged from my family who wasn't really dealing with my queerness very well. There's this thing around queerness and the Jamaican community. I know people tend to think that Jamaicans are more homophobic than every other community. I don't want to speak for all Jamaicans, but I can say my family was very homophobic.*

## **LISTENING/VIDEO**

Information from the videos and audios will also be included in the quiz.

- ESPN video about the colored hockey league: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2QZm8llvig>
- How to do a slapshot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HssioRWnT24>
- Watch an interview with trey <https://youtu.be/vi4N3AtAVXw>

- Watch a clip from da kink in my hair <http://theafricachannel.com/watch/da-kink-in-my-hair-s02-e13-oils-well-that-ends-well/>
- In this article, Trey discusses her global success and her coming out journey: <http://thegavoice.com/queer-artist-trey-anthonys-groundbreaking-play-da-kink-hair-open-atl-lgbt/>

## **SUMMARY**

This module introduces us to the contributions, often overlooked in some mainstream media and history records, of black Canadians to the sports and television in Canada. Da Kink in My Hair also alerts us to a hot topic around the world that gets people talking about race and identity: hair. When you have a moment, catch up on the story of the brave 13 year old girls in Pretoria, South Africa who started protests at their school where they faced discrimination because of their hair: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/08/31/africa/south-africa-school-racism/>

## **REFERENCES**

The references are for additional information. You do not have to study them for the quiz.

George and Darril Fosty, *Black Ice* (New York: Stryker-Indigo Publishing Company, Inc. 2007); Cecil Harris, *Breaking the Ice* (Toronto: Insomniac Press, 2003); Willie O'Ree, *The Autobiography of Willie O'Ree Hockey's Black Pioneer* (New York: Somerville House, 2000); <http://www.birthplaceofhockey.com/hockeyists/african-n-s-teams/african-ns-team/>

- See more at:

<http://www.blackpast.org/gah/coloured-hockey-league-maritimes-1890s-1920s#sthash.J9UjOZrf.dpuf>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured\\_Hockey\\_League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coloured_Hockey_League)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_Canadians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Canadians)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Da\\_Kink\\_in\\_My\\_Hair\\_\(TV\\_series\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Da_Kink_in_My_Hair_(TV_series))

<http://www.dakinkinmyhair.com/trey/>