



Stages of Development Illustrated: Paulette Goodman

Introduction

Paulette Goodman was born into a Jewish family in France in 1933 and grew up in Nazi-occupied Paris, where she endured prejudice, discrimination, and the threat of deportation and death. After World War II, she immigrated to the United States with her family. She started a family of her own and when she learned her daughter was gay, Goodman's own experience of being discriminated against gave her a unique perspective on the discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ people. It inspired her to become a passionate advocate for LGBTQ+ equality and justice. She joined PFLAG—an organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and their families and friends—and served as its national president from 1988 to 1992.

Goodman's story, as shared in the *Making Gay History* podcast episode that anchors this lesson, provides an opportunity to apply and more deeply understand frameworks of psychological development. The framework applied in this lesson is Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development, given the AP Psychology curriculum. A different framework could be substituted based on the curriculum of your course.

Note: This lesson was taught to students who had recently studied the Holocaust in their U.S. and/or World History classes. Having an understanding of the Holocaust is a critical component of the necessary prior knowledge for this lesson; the podcast episode on its own is not sufficient to put Goodman's story in historical context. The lesson plan also presupposes teacher familiarity with the Holocaust sufficient to facilitate discussion about the subject and answer any basic questions about the historical context.

This lesson was created as part of the Making Gay History / National Education Association Teaching Fellowship. Each lesson specifically uses a podcast episode and related resources from the *Making Gay History* podcast. These lessons have been created so that teachers across the country have the context and tools to bring archival audio from the *Making Gay History* podcast into middle and high school classrooms.

The *Making Gay History* podcast brings LGBTQ+ history to life through the voices of the people who lived it. We strive to create a world where everyone understands, respects, and honors the experiences and histories of LGBTQ+ people by providing engaging and accessible entry points to their largely hidden history. The podcast is hosted by historian and journalist Eric Marcus, who has been documenting LGBTQ+ history for more than 35 years.

Grade Level

High school, especially grades 11-12.

Disciplines / Unit Recommendations

This lesson was developed for high school Psychology or Advanced Placement Psychology. It could also be used in English/Language Arts or Social Studies classes.

Estimated Time

75 to 90 minutes.

Preparation

Note: It is recommended that you double-check all links as some may shift since they are not hosted by Making Gay History directly. If you come across any broken links, please let us know at hello@makinggayhistory.org.

- ☐ Listen to ***Making Gay History, Season 3, Episode 9: Paulette Goodman***.
bit.ly/mgh-goodman

Note: As the teacher, you know your students and teaching situation best. It is always advised to listen to the full podcast episode individually before playing it for or assigning it to your students, just as you would review any text for classroom use.

- ☐ Optional: Make copies of the [episode transcript](#) for students to read/reference while listening or prepare to make it available to them digitally.
- ☐ Prepare to show the childhood picture of Paulette Goodman located near the top of the [episode webpage](#), either by projecting the webpage and scrolling down to the episode notes, putting the image onto a slide, or printing copies for students to share.
- ☐ Identify an excerpt from your texts regarding Erikson's Stages of Development for use with your students, or consider the article ["Erikson's Stages of Development: A Closer Look at the Eight Psychosocial Stages"](#) (Verywell Mind).
From the author: I try to encourage students to use current online resources to supplement the textbook.
- ☐ Consider whether your students need the structure of a standard graphic organizer to synthesize their understanding or would enjoy the creativity of each making their own. For students who do better with greater scaffolding for note-taking, create a simple chart where

they can provide an example of each of Erikson's Stages of Development or use a graphic organizer they are already familiar with, such as an [identity chart](#) or [story map](#).

From the author: I had students create their own graphic organizer with the elements of Erikson's Stages of Development. I let them choose whether to use paper or Google Classroom, and I allowed them to be creative.

- ☐ Optional: Make copies of [this handout](#) with excerpts from Goodman's oral history in the book *Making Gay History*.

From the author: After teaching this lesson, I found that my students were eager to know more—and would have benefited from knowing more—about Paulette Goodman than they learned in the podcast episode. I recommend providing them with this handout excerpted from the Making Gay History book for additional information.

Background

As a Jewish child growing up in Nazi-occupied Paris, Paulette Goodman knew what it meant to belong to a despised minority. After the war, her family sought refuge in the U.S., where Goodman got married and had two children. When Goodman's daughter came out as gay in 1981, Goodman quickly became attuned to the discrimination, demonization, and harassment LGBTQ+ people had to endure and joined the fight for LGBTQ+ equality and justice.

Goodman helped found several chapters of PFLAG (Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and later became the organization's national president. [PFLAG](#) is the nation's largest organization dedicated to supporting, educating, and advocating for LGBTQ+ people and those who love them.

Lesson objective: Enable students to apply Erikson's Stages of Development to one person's critical life stages.

Outcome/evidence of learning: A graphic organizer applying Erikson's Stages of Development to one person's critical life stages.

Lesson Plan

1. Optional: Have students discuss how they would want the grown-ups in their lives to react to something with which they struggle.
2. Explain that the class is going to listen to a podcast episode about a remarkable woman. Tell them she was a Jewish child in Europe during the Holocaust, a survivor of World War II, and later a wife, mother, and activist.

3. To activate prior knowledge, ask students to share what they remember from their study of the Holocaust about what life was like for Jewish people living in Europe before and during the Holocaust.
4. Play the [podcast episode](#) (20 min. without credits):
 - a. Have students take everything off their desks so that they can listen without distractions.
 - b. Optional: Make the [episode transcript](#) available.
 - c. Project or otherwise share the childhood picture of Paulette Goodman near the top of the [episode webpage](#) while students listen.
5. Think-pair-share:
 - a. Have students think about two to three things about Goodman's life that stood out to them.
 - b. After two minutes, have them share their thoughts with an elbow buddy.
 - c. Have every partner group share out. One partner can share something they or their partner thought. Once every partner group has had their turn, open it up to anyone else who wants to share additional thoughts. Make a list on the board for students to see.
Variation from piloting teacher: I had one student write the answers on the board and another student take notes that could be shared with everyone.
6. Provide students with information about Erikson's Stages of Development from your textbook and/or the article ["Erikson's Stages of Development: A Closer Look at the Eight Psychosocial Stages."](#)
 - a. Explain that Erikson believed people experience a conflict in each stage that serves as a turning point in their development.
 - b. Give students time to read and take some notes on Erikson's Stages of Development.
7. Optional: Invite students to learn more about Goodman by reading [this handout](#) excerpted from the *Making Gay History* book.
8. Applying Erikson's theory to Paulette Goodman's life:
 - a. Option one: Provide students with a standard graphic organizer. Have them fill in the graphic organizer applying Erikson's Stages of Development to Goodman's life. Note that your instructions will vary based on the graphic organizer you chose.
 - b. Option two: Explain to students that they will be creating a graphic organizer of their own comparing Goodman's life to each of Erikson's Stages of Development. Give them the choice of making the organizer either on paper or on the computer. Allow students to create their organizer in whichever way showcases their strengths and let them determine what works best for them.

From the author: Given limited time and information, I allowed my students to make some assumptions and guesses as to what Goodman's life might have been like and where she would have been at each of Erikson's Stages of Development.

9. Once the assignment is finished, have students share out based on what they created.

From the author: For each stage I suggest randomly calling on two to three students to share, dependent on class size.

10. Optional: If this lesson is part of a larger unit on psychosocial development, consider a final open-ended question about Goodman, such as:

- a. Which other psychological frameworks that we studied besides Erikson's could be illustrated by Goodman's life and choices? How?
- b. What other readings or people from our study this year would you apply to or compare with Paulette Goodman? In what ways?

Extension Activities

After completing this lesson on Paulette Goodman, students could be invited to select another individual featured on the *Making Gay History* podcast to study and relate to a Psychology topic of their choice. This could be an end-of-year lesson so that students would have many topics to choose from.

Other topics that the Goodman episode could illustrate include parenting styles and human development.

To dive deeper into the founding of PFLAG, consider *Making Gay History*, Season 1, Episode 6: Jeanne and Morty Manford, bit.ly/mgh-manford. A lesson anchored by the Manford episode titled "See a Need, Fill a Need" can be accessed via makinggayhistory.org/lessons.

Instead of using the Paulette Goodman episode as an opportunity to teach Erikson's Stages of Development or another framework of psychological development, it could also be used as a summative assessment. In this application, make sure the class has studied multiple frameworks that could be applied to Goodman's life (e.g. Erikson and Kohlberg). Summative prompt:

Listen to the Paulette Goodman episode. Which psychological development framework do you believe provides the best insight into Goodman's development over time? Use at least three specific psychology terms from the framework in your description.

About the Author: Cathy Murray

Cathy Murray is a Psychology teacher in Michigan. She believes in the concept of honesty in education. It is her hope that, through the National Education Association / Making Gay History project, more LGBTQ+ students will be able to see themselves represented in an educational setting and that others will learn more about LGBTQ+ people who have influenced history.