



SPOILER ALERT!

Note: This guide contains spoilers for Season 1 of Love, Victor.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

LOVE, VICTOR: SEASON 1

Set in the world of the original 2018 film LOVE, SIMON, the Hulu series *Love, Victor* follows Victor, a new student at Creekwood High School on his own journey of self-discovery, facing challenges at home, adjusting to a new city, and exploring his sexual orientation. When it all seems too much, he reaches out to Simon to help him navigate the ups and downs of high school. GLSEN + Hulu are partnering in creating this discussion guide. All 10 episodes of *Love, Victor* are available on Hulu starting Wednesday, June 17th.

How to Utilize *Love, Victor* to Create Discussion

You can host a virtual screening and use this guide and the discussion questions (choose 3-4) below to start conversations in your GSA, diversity club, leadership class, or other virtual youth group. Topics such as identity, heteronormativity, coming out, consent, and social class are interwoven throughout this series and can spark conversations and how it relates to our own experiences. When starting your discussion, use the [GSA Guidelines for Respectful Conversations](#).

Love, Victor

- Creators** Isaac Aptaker (*This Is Us*, LOVE, SIMON) and Elizabeth Berger (*This Is Us*, LOVE, SIMON)
- Showrunners** Isaac Aptaker, Elizabeth Berger, and Brian Tanen (*Grand Hotel*)
- Produced by** LOVE, SIMON original writers Isaac Aptaker and Elizabeth Berger serve as executive producers alongside Brian Tanen, Jason Ensler (*The Passage*), Isaac Klausner (THE HATE YOU GIVE), Marty Bowen (FIRST MAN), Adam Fishbach (*Narcos*), Wyck Godfrey (I, ROBOT), Pouya Shahbazian (DIVERGENT) and Adam Londy
- Cast** Michael Cimino (ANNABELLE COMES HOME), Ana Ortiz (*Whiskey Cavalier*, *Ugly Betty*), James Martinez (*One Day at a Time*), Isabella Ferreira (*Orange is the New Black*), Mateo Fernandez, Rachel Naomi Hilson (*This Is Us*), Bebe Wood (*The Real O'Neals*, *The New Normal*), George Sear (*Will, Into the Badlands*), Anthony Turpel (*The Bold and the Beautiful*) and Mason Gooding (BOOK SMART).
- Website** <https://www.hulu.com/series/love-victor-3cb4c446-d459-41a2-97d2-2ea9ed164ab7>
- Trailer** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uh-laEaEdEO>
- Social Media** @loveVictorHulu #LoveVictor
- Rating** Rated PG-13 for language and underage drinking.
Parents strongly cautioned.
May not be suitable for ages 13 and under.
- Content Warnings** Racial stereotypes, Homophobia, non-consensual kissing, underage drinking, abandonment, sexism and ableist language.

TERMS TO KNOW

Cisnormativity: The assumption that cisgender identity and stereotypical appearance is the norm, which plays out in interpersonal interactions and institutional privileges that further the marginalization of transgender including nonbinary and gender nonconforming people.

Consent: Consent occurs when one person voluntarily agrees and communicates clearly to the proposal or desires of another that include but are not limited to: any form of touch, conversations, images/visuals, shared information, etc.

Heteronormativity: Heteronormativity is the assumption that heterosexual identity is the norm, which plays out in interpersonal interactions and institutional privileges that further the marginalization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and queer people etc.

Cinematic Stereotyping: A common portrayal in films and shows of a specific demographic that can lead to prejudices and harmful assumptions. I.e. Asian people as nerds, Black people as violent, Latinx as macho.

Toxic Masculinity: A cultural concept of manliness that glorifies stoicism, strength, virility, violence, and dominance, and that is socially maladaptive or harmful to mental health.

Benevolent Sexism: Represents evaluations of gender that may appear subjectively positive (subjective to the person who is evaluating), but are actually damaging to people and gender equality more broadly (e.g., the ideas that women need to be protected by men).

THEMATIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

General Questions

- “Pretending” is a recurring theme throughout the series and shows up within each character. Mia at one point tells Victor “Sometimes it’s easier to plaster on a smile and let people see what they want.” (Episode 2, “Stoplight Party”)
- Which character’s experience of “pretending” is most relatable to you? How have you had to curate your identity and let people see what they want because it was/is easier?

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Heteronormativity and Cisnormativity

- When Victor first walks through the doors at Creekwood High School, one of the first questions he is asked is if he has a girlfriend back in Texas. His inner voice contemplates the weight of answering that question so he says there is no girlfriend back home. (Episode 1 “Welcome To Creekwood”)
- How does heteronormativity show up in your day to day life?
- What are ways you can help shift the conversations to be more inclusive of unassuming?

Identity

- In season 1 of *Love, Victor*, Victor struggles with navigating his feelings and identity.
 - › What identities does Victor hold and how do they intersect throughout the series?
- The series touches on different struggles each character navigates such as socio economic status, appearances, abandonment, trust, acceptance, traditions, and loyalty.
 - › What were some of the experiences that stood out to you the most?
 - › Although each of the characters had their own experiences, what were some of the parallels between what the characters were navigating?
- The Salazars are a Latinx family who moved from Texas to Atlanta. The series addresses moments of racial stereotyping around gender and sexuality expectations. (Episode 5 “Sweet Sixteen”)
 - › What were some of the racial stereotypes the Salazar family or other characters encountered?
 - › How can racial stereotyping be harmful to communities?
- Victor runs off to New York to meet Simon face to face. Victor ends up meeting Simon’s roommates who Victor finds out have been helping Simon to support Victor as he explores his identity. Simon refers to them as family and gives Victor his signature jacket. (Episode 8 “Boys Trip”)
 - › What did Victor discover on his trip to NYC?
 - › How did his trip impact him when he returned to Atlanta?
- Toxic masculinity and sexism shows up throughout all cultures because of how the patriarchy is centralized.
 - › Name some of the moments where this is disrupted.
 - › How does toxic masculinity and sexism show up in your own lives, at school, at home, and in your community(ies)? What are some ways you can disrupt it?
- On Victor’s first day of school, he pays attention to how his peers and teachers talk about LGBTQ+ people testing the waters if he could really start school with a “blank canvas”. In the locker room he overhears his classmates say “that’s so gay” and after Felix introduced Victor to Benji, Felix points out to Victor that Benji is gay. (Episode 1 “Welcome to Creekwood”)
 - › How have you had to navigate safety around your identity at school?
 - › What are some things you look out for to determine if a space is safe or unsafe for you to “come out”?

Consent

- Not only does Andrew kiss Mia without consent, Victor kisses Benji without consent. Even if both parties ended up together, it violated that person’s ability to say yes to engaging with another person in a way they wanted and agreed to. (Episode 7 “What Happens in Willacoochee”)
 - › As we move towards respecting each person’s bodies and boundaries, what are ways we can engage with one another with consent?
 - › What are some other consent based engagements besides touching?

Relationships

- In the film, we see a glimpse of each of the main character’s relationships with their families.
 - › How does this impact each character?
- The scene in Lake’s bedroom when her mom buys clothes for her as a “gift” is an example of benevolent sexism. (Episode 9 “Who The Hell Is B”)
 - › How has society reinforced these toxic ideas of positive femininity that are actually toxic?
- How has support shown up throughout the film?
 - › What does support look like for you and how do you communicate this to the folks who care about you?

Dear Victor...Here’s the thing about the truth... You can’t control how people will react to it. All you can do is be honest with the people you love. The rest is up to them. Love, Simon.