

**Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project
Workshop at the Roanoke Diversity Center
September 20, 2015**

18 people in attendance.

Agenda

6pm Welcome; Introductions
6:15pm History of LGBTQ+ History
6:30pm Roanoke / SW Virginia LGBTQ History?
6:45pm Small Groups – Brainstorming
7pm Small Groups – Sharing
7:30pm Next Steps
8pm Adjourn

Potential LGBTQ History Sources

- secondary sources (already published)
- police records; court records
 - o annual police reports
- newspapers
- church records
 - o incl. black churches
- medical / mental institutions
- residential hotels (ex. YMCA)
- city directories
- ABC (Alcoholic Beverages Control Board)
- colleges! (Roanoke; Hollins; Tech; etc.)
- archival collections (1970s newsletters, etc., housed in Richmond and even farther afield)
- obituaries

Brainstorming

Prompt: what would you like to learn? what would you like to work on?

GROUP 1:

- high school curriculum
- PR w/ churches, PTAs, etc. – introduce vocabulary, disperse stereotypes
- Intersectionality – study subgroups but remember unity.

GROUP 2:

- oral histories
- written stories
 - o gather hard copy
 - o internet blog
- create archival resource/process to preserve current history, events, etc.
- annual transfer of archives to main library

- create regional LGBTQ History “Group”
- SOURCES:
 - o Online community
 - o Hollins College
 - o Other women’s colleges

GROUP 3:

- unknown lives of those whose sexuality got them into trouble (their good lives upended)
- love lives of couples that might have never been in trouble, etc.
- legal history (laws that target LGBTQ folks)
- social life outside bars

GROUP 4:

- make a history resource that is not critical of LGBT people
- when looking into old police records don’t just search for “gay” or “LGBT”; look for “sexual deviance,” child molesters, serial killers; LGBT people were lumped into these categories
- interview older LGBT people from each area of SW VA, document stories and find out where LGBT met and gathered in history
- more focus on Transgender history & LGBT People of Color

Potential Projects

- record oral histories
- creating a digital archives
- organize a “document drop”
- organize a “walkabout”
- education & outreach
 - o HS curriculum
 - o Educational outreach – focus on intersectionality
- Collect written histories (online)
 - o Use of survey to extract information?
- Create an LGBTQ+ archives & archival process
- Create an LGBTQ+ History “group” (facebook)
- Focus on positive social lives
- Research legal history
- Research use of adoption
- Focus on stories of couples / partnerships
- Don’t neglect Transgender & POC experiences
- Work on the LGBT Library (housed at MCC)

Next Steps

We decided to focus on the following projects:

- 1) ORAL HISTORIES – creating a methodology / structure; creating a list of potential interviewers and interviewees; partnering with Roanoke College for access to equipment, student involvement; etc.
- 2) ARCHIVES – creating an LGBTQ+ archives for the region; deciding whether to go digital, hard copy, or both; whether to partner with the Roanoke Public Library or some other institution

We decided to call this project the Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project.

We decided to create a facebook group for the project.