LGBTQ+ Collections in Context

Digital Commonwealth Conference
April 7th, 2020

Stephanie Yuhl
Andrew Elder
Laura Peimer
K.J. Rawson
What does LGBTQ+ collection-building, outreach, and digitization look like at your institution?

Stephanie Yuhl, PhD
Co-curator, LGBTQ+ Worcester For The Record
SHARED AUTHORITY - COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD
WHM, AREA SCHOLARS (HC, WPI, CLARK), OUTREACH
PARTNERSHIPS - APW, LGBT ASYLUM TASK FORCE, ETC.

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1993 - GLCCCM DONATION
DISCOVERY DAYS/PROGRAMMING

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WHM EXHIBIT & CATALOG (2019)
ONGOING DIGITIZATION/ARCHIVIST
What does LGBTQ+ collection-building, outreach, and digitization look like at your institution?

Andrew Elder
Chair, Board of Directors
Volunteer Archivist
The History Project: Documenting LGBTQ Boston

historyproject.org  |  andrew.elder@historyproject.org
The mission of The History Project is to document and preserve the history of Boston’s LGBTQ communities and to share that information with LGBTQ individuals, organizations, allies, and the public.

Photograph: Members of The History Project in the Boston Pride March, June 1980
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Photograph: Members of the Combahee River Collective, late 1979 or early 1980
Photograph by Susan Fleischmann, Gay Community News Photograph Collection
Volunteer-driven

- Volunteers donate thousands of hours annually
- Board of Directors, Advisory Committee, and committee structure

Executive Director

- 2-year, full-time position (thanks to Support for Community Archives grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation)

*Photograph: Boston Pride March, 1979*
Collection-building and processing

Digitization

Flyer (detail) from June 1970 for events in Boston to commemorate first anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising in New York City

One year ago this week members of New York’s gay community threw off the yoke of oppression, stood up, and fought back. It was Christopher Street Liberation.

This event marked a new trend in the fight for civil rights for homosexuals – not just in New York, but throughout the nation.

No more do we hide behind masks and fears – ours and yours.

Come out. Meet publicly with us at any or all of the following special events:

The New Homosexual – Dialogue With A Straight World. A seminar on Saturday 27 June at 12 noon, St. John the Evangelist Church (Episcopal), 33 Bowdoin Street on Beacon Hill.

Why Can’t We Have A Dance in Boston, or Does the Cradle of Liberty Rock Only One Way? A Panel Discussion sponsored by the Gay Liberation Front, Saturday 27 June, 2:00 pm at the Charles Street Meeting House (Unitarian Universalist), 200 Charles Street.
Outreach and community engagement

Organizational development and fundraising

Photograph: Patron at Playland Cafe, circa 1959
Jim McGrath Collection
Photograph (edited): Eddie Bernier (center) and acquaintances in costumes in a Provincetown bar or restaurant, circa 1950s. George Chapin Scott and Edward F. Bernier Collection
What does LGBTQ+ collection-building, outreach, and digitization look like at your institution?

Laura Peimer
Archivist, Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University
Transgender group meeting “Dream ‘73,” 1973
Ari Kane Papers
Lesbian Avengers printed materials, 1990s
Kelly Cogswell Papers
Lesbian Herstory historians and archivists, January 27, 1979

Photographer: Bettye Lane
Bettye Lane Photograph Collection
Pat Parker and Audre Lorde at a lesbian poetry reading, 1981

Photographer: Susan D. Fleischmann
Pat Parker Papers
What does LGBTQ+ collection-building, outreach, and digitization look like at your institution?

K.J. Rawson
Associate Prof., College of the Holy Cross
Director, Digital Transgender Archive
@digitaltransarc
- www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net
- Launched January 2016
- 61 contributing institutions from 9 countries
- Digitization occurs on-site, off-site, and in lab
- 8,425 total items available online
- Materials date from 1587–present; majority are 1950s–1990s
The DTA uses the term *transgender* to refer to a broad and inclusive range of non-normative gender practices. We treat *transgender* as a practice rather than an identity category in order to bring together a *trans*-historical and *trans*-cultural collection of materials related to *trans*-ing gender. We collect materials from anywhere in the world with a focus on materials created before the year 2000.

A portrait of Marie Høeg with a hat and cigarette. Held by the Preus Museum

https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/files/jq085k18x
Panel Discussion Questions

1. How does your archive connect with the LGBTQ+ community?
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2. How does inclusion in online archival resources, such as DPLA and Digital Commonwealth, affect accessibility and context for LGBTQ+ records?
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3. “The creation of metadata requires interpretation and labeling and it can be a highly subjective and political act” (DTA website). How have you navigated the complexities of metadata creation in LGBTQ+ records?
Questions from Chat


https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/files/1g05fb71z