

Wanderground - Interest Survey (Open May 1 - Nov. 15, 2021)

Seeking responses from ALL Lesbians, especially those who came out prior to 2000!

Why this survey..

To establish an archive/library of Lesbian words and artifacts here in Rhode Island.

Rhode Island resident Mev Miller has received a grant from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities for her new project Wanderground: Archiving Lesbian Legacies, Words, Creativity in Rhode Island.

To lay the foundation for Wanderground, please complete this survey to share your ideas and experiences. Lesbians who live or have lived or worked in Rhode Island are invited to reply. **ALL responses are anonymous (unless you sign up at the end).**

A little background...

As early as the 1960s, Lesbians began to more openly express their feelings and life experiences in poetry, stories, and thought. The Women in Print Movement (1970s-1990s) emerged as Lesbian-focused writers, publishers, and bookstores positively shaped and affirmed Lesbian thought and writing. Despite adversity, those vibrant spaces and voices encouraged women/Lesbians, to discover and affirm their own identities, claim their own strength and power, and gain support and a sense of well-being. They had a profound effect on Lesbians struggling to come out. As Lesbians came to an awareness of themselves as Lesbians, they found each other and formed alliances and communities.

I (Mev) collected hundreds of those national publications (and other Lesbian cultural artifacts) from that heyday (1970-90's) and want to connect with other RI lesbians who may have collected similar materials. Since I did not live in Rhode Island during that time, **I'm also curious to learn more about what Lesbian words or publications contributed to Lesbian visibility and activism in Rhode Island.**

Wanderground - a Lesbian archive/library - will display a broad array of Lesbian publications and artifacts from many places (including Rhode Island) in order to keep them alive and visible to current and future Lesbians.

With great appreciation - thank you for completing this survey.

Mev

If you prefer to speak directly to Mev (rather than complete the survey), contact: info @ wanderground.org

This Wanderground Research Project is made possible through major funding support from the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities, an independent state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Council seeds, supports, and strengthens public history, cultural heritage, civic education, and community engagement by and for all Rhode Islanders.

Part 1: Effect of Lesbian Materials

This section asks questions about the types of Lesbian materials that impacted your coming out and/or involvement in Lesbian communities.

1. Do you remember the first Lesbian book, magazine, or other print material you read?

- No
 Yes

If yes, include title (or, if you can't remember, what was it about)?

2. What do you remember about how that publication made you feel? (Check all the apply)

- Surprise
 Discomfort or Fear
 Relief (I'm not the only one!)
 Mystery solved! / Recognition
 Wanting more writings like this
 Gratitude
 "I found my people."

Other (please specify)

3. Where did you typically get your Lesbian reading materials? (Check all the apply)

- Lesbian/Women's/Gay Bookstore
- Other bookstores
- Community Center or LGBT organization
- Mail order from publisher
- Borrowed from friends

Other (please specify)

4. As you were coming out as a Lesbian or finding your way into Lesbian community, what overall effect did access to Lesbian publications (or music/art, etc.) have on you?

- Helped me to understand and/or accept myself
- Gave me some ideas for activism(s)
- Connected me to Lesbian communities and activity

Other (please specify)

5. Do you think Lesbian artistic expressions (such as writings or music) had an impact on Lesbian/feminist organizing in Rhode Island?

- Yes, definitely
- To some extent
- Don't know
- No. Not really

Please explain

6. Do you know of or recall any specific publications with Lesbian content that have been created in Rhode Island or specifically for those who live(d) in RI? (e.g., books, newsletters, event flyers, pamphlets, etc.)? Please provide titles or descriptions.

7. Besides publications, where else did you experience Lesbian visibility? *(Does not have to be in RI, Check all the apply)*

- Concert or recorded music
- Women's music festivals
- Movie or TV character
- Bookstore or cultural center
- Visual art (painting, photograph, poster, etc.)
- T-shirt or button or bumpersticker, etc.
- LGBT, feminist, or other political organization(s)
- Sports team
- Bar or Dance club

Other (please specify)

8. What are the names or titles of any of those things or places?

Part 3: Developing Lesbian Visibility in RI

This section asks questions about the creation, distribution, and collection of Lesbian materials, especially those from Rhode Island.

9. How have you participated in or contributed to the CREATION or development of Lesbian visibility through publications or objects? (check all that apply)

- Literary - Written word: (Writer / Contributor / Editor etc. – all genres)
- Performing Arts: (Music / Theater / Dance / Film, etc.)
- Visual Arts: (Drawing / Painting / Photography / Posters, etc.)
- 3-Dimensional Arts: (Jewelry / Textile / Pottery / Sculpture, etc.)
- Other
- None of the above

Please list names or titles of any of those creations

10. How have you participated in or contributed to the DISTRIBUTION of Lesbian visibility through publications or objects? (check all that apply)

- Publisher
- Bookseller or retailer
- Exhibit curator (Art or craft)
- Librarian
- Music or Theater production
- Lesbian-focused activism or center or organization
- Other
- None of the above

Please list the names of any of those ventures

11. Over the years, have you SAVED or COLLECTED any type of Lesbian publications, artifacts, or memorabilia (made in Rhode Island or elsewhere)? If YES, what types of Lesbian objects do you have? (check all that apply).

- Books
- Magazines/journals, Newsletters, pamphlets, etc.
- Recordings (albums, CDs, etc)
- Film/video
- Letters
- Personal journals
- Artwork (all types) and/or posters
- Lesbian visibility items (jewelry, t-shirts, buttons, bumperstickers, hats, mugs, and other swag)
- Notes or histories or reports, etc. from Lesbian community organizations, businesses, or events
- None of the above

Other (please specify)

12. If you have been collecting Lesbian materials or memorabilia, have you considered what you would like to do to preserve those treasures?

- Yes – I already have a plan
- Sort-of. I'm looking for ideas now
- No, not yet

Comments:

Part 3: A Lesbian Archive-Library in Rhode Island

This section asks questions about your interest in having access to a Lesbian Archive-Library in RI.

13. In general, do you think the existence of Lesbian Archives are important?

- Absolutely
- Maybe
- Not really

Comments:

14. If you have ever visited a Lesbian archive or collection in another state, which one(s) and What did you learn from that experience? What impressed you the most about their collection(s)?

15. In general, what do you think or feel about the possible existence of an archive-library in Rhode Island?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not so interested
- Not at all interested

Comments:

16. How important is it to you that an archive-library in RI features memorabilia, objects, and cultural/artistic expressions of Rhode Island Lesbians?

- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not so important
- Not at all important

Comments:

17. In general, what do you think or feel about the possible existence of Wanderground – an archive and circulating library of Lesbian resources that includes both Rhode Island memorabilia as well as a larger collection of Lesbian materials from around the US and world?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not so interested
- Not at all interested

Comments:

18. If a community-based, accessible archive-library of Lesbian publications, cultural resources, artifacts, and memorabilia (especially those from Rhode Islanders) existed in RI, I would... *(check all that apply)*

- Visit it occasionally to explore what's there
- Visit it regularly to explore what's there
- Explore the website or blog
- Attend special events
- Borrow materials that might be available for circulation (e.g., Lesbian books)
- Tell my friends or other people about it
- Donate Lesbian cultural items from my own collection (publications, records, journals, artifacts, etc.)
- Provide general supplies and resources (e.g., bookshelves, file cabinets, etc.)
- Make financial contributions
- Volunteer to help out in some other ways
- Add myself to the mailing list
- None of the above

Other (please specify)

19. If you have been collecting Lesbian objects or memorabilia (from Rhode Island or elsewhere), might you be willing to donate it to Wanderground in Rhode Island?

- Yes, for sure
- Maybe, would need to know more
- No or Not Applicable

If yes or maybe, what types of things would you have to contribute?

20. Please add any other thoughts or comments you have about the Wanderground project.

A Few Demographics....

Please help us to know something about who responded to this survey.

21. I prefer to call myself

- Lesbian
- Gay woman
- Dyke
- Queer
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

22. Age group:

- 80+
- 60-79
- 35-59
- 20-34
- Younger than 20

23. **Coming out** is an on-going process. Please answer this question as it best describes when you accepted to yourself that you are a Lesbian or gay woman. I "came out":

- Prior to 1970
- Between 1970-1995
- After 1995

24. What is your Race/ Ethnicity?

25. Residence (check all that apply)

- Currently live in Rhode Island
- Currently live in Connecticut or Massachusetts
- Lived in Rhode Island at some time between 1970s-1990s
- Never lived in Rhode Island

Stay Informed and Connected

Would you like to stay informed about and connected with the Wanderground project?

26. Please add me to your mailing list. *(Don't worry. We won't send too many emails -- and you can unsubscribe at any time.)*

First Name	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>
Address 2	<input type="text"/>
City/Town	<input type="text"/>
State/Province	<input type="text"/>
ZIP/Postal Code	<input type="text"/>
Country	<input type="text"/>
Email Address	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>

As part of the Wanderground research project, **small group listening sessions** will be provided for Lesbians who want to share and discuss their input and ideas in more detail.

Discussion topics/questions will also build on responses and comments from the survey responses. **Between June and through November 2021**, the Wanderground Listening Sessions will be held in COVID-safe environments via Zoom, or outdoors as weather permits.

27. In addition to being on the mailing list, I would also be interested in the following: *(check all that apply)*

- Participate in a small group sharing session about my ideas (sometime between June through November)
- Discuss the project in more detail with Mev directly
- Become actively involved in the on-going development of Wanderground
- Share specific skills that I have (short-term commitments)
- None of the above

Other (please specify)