

PUBLIC HISTORY SPRING 2022 LESSON PLAN

TITLE OF LESSON: LGBTQ+ History in Central PA: Analyzing Primary Source Materials

TEACHER MATERIAL

OVERVIEW OF TOPIC:

- Students will be given an opportunity to explore a multitude of topics in LGBTQ+ history in central PA in small groups. They will look at a range of primary source materials from the Dickinson Archives including magazines and newsletters, oral histories, and posters.

LESSON OBJECTIVE(S):

- Help students develop archival literacy and provide an opportunity for working with primary source materials.
- Promote a strong understanding of the implications of LGBTQ+ history on queer communities in Central PA and beyond.
- Practice public speaking skills as well as group collaboration work with low stakes group presentations.

STUDENT MATERIAL

INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC:

- **KWL:** Have students note what they already know and what they want to know about the topics at hand. At the conclusion of the lesson, the students should also note what they learned.

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS:

- The students will have an opportunity to analyze primary sources in small groups and then give a short and informal presentation to the class about what they learned. More information on this is provided in the next section.

LESSON ACTIVITIES:

1. Divide students into smaller groups. The exact number of students in each group will depend on class size, but should be around 4-5.
2. Each group will be given primary source documents from the Dickinson College Digital Archives LGBT History Project to analyze online. Encourage students to ask questions to cement their understanding of the materials throughout group work.

- Group 1: Northeast PA Gay Alliance Newsletter
 - <https://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt-publication/northeast-pennsylvania-gay-alliance-nepga-newsletter>
 - There are several publications of this newsletter online, so students should pick 2-3 that look interesting to them to present on.
 - Group 2: Joe Burns Oral History
 - <https://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt-history-project/lgbt-oral-history-012a-joseph-w-burns>
 - See video 12A on digital archives. The video is an hour and a half long, and a transcript is also available to read. Students could focus on just a portion of the oral history.
 - Group 3: Altland's Ranch Posters
 - <https://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt-collection/lgbt-084-altlands-ranch>
 - There are 21 of these posted on the digital archives, so students should pick 4-5 that look interesting to them to present on.
 - Group 4: Gay Era Magazine
 - <https://archives.dickinson.edu/lgbt-publication/lancaster-gay-era>
 - There are several publications of this newsletter online, so students should pick 2-3 that look interesting to them to present on.
3. After the students have had ample time to explore the materials, each group will give a short informal presentation to their peers about what they learned. This will give a chance for the students to learn more about LGBTQ+ history, and hear about the sources their peers were working with.
 4. When each group is done presenting, the floor will open up for questions and reflection.

QUESTIONS TO GUIDE DISCUSSION:

- What can we learn from the archival materials about the climate surrounding LGBTQ+ activism during this time?
- What were specific issues that LGBTQ+ activists were trying to tackle?
- What methods did LGBTQ+ activists use to communicate with each other?
- What parts of LGBTQ+ history might be left out of publications, posters, newsletters, etc. from the time period? Why?
- What surprised you about these primary sources?
- What skills did you use to understand the primary sources? What was the most helpful in gathering information from the primary sources?

CLOSURE:

- As stated in the introductory section, the students will be given a few moments at the end of class to note what they have learned. Prompt them by asking how their perception of the LGBTQ+ community might have changed after the lesson.