

Red River Rainbow Seniors Possible Oral History Interview Questions

Please introduce each recording by saying something like, "This is [YOUR NAME] with the Red River Rainbow Seniors Oral History Project, "Breaking Barriers: Harvesting LGBTQ Stories from the Northern Plains." Today is [DATE] and I am interviewing [INTERVIEWEE'S NAME] at [PLACE OF INTERVIEW, INCLUDING CITY]."

Part One: Background

1. Where were you born?
 - a. What year were you born?
2. Where have you lived?
3. Tell me about your family.
 - a. Where was your family from originally?
 - i. How would you describe your ethnic background?
 - b. What was your father's/mother's occupation?
 - c. Did you have any siblings?
 - d. How would you characterize your childhood?
 - e. What is your relationship with your family like now?
4. Who would you say was the most influential person in your life while you were growing up?
 - a. In what way?
5. What, if any, was your religious affiliation when you were growing up?
 - a. Did you attend religious services?
 - b. If so, what was your place of worship?
 - c. If so, what was that like?
6. What is your educational background?
 - a. What high school did you attend?
 - i. Did you graduate?
 - b. Did you attend college?
 - i. Which college or colleges?
 - ii. Did you graduate?
7. Did you serve in the military?
8. What is your current occupation?
 - a. Are you retired or unemployed?
 - b. What types of work have you done?
9. What do you like to do in your leisure time?

10. When you were growing up, do you recall hearing things (stories, claims, warnings, or jokes) about LGBTQ people?
 - a. In what context, e.g., in church, school, from family, from friends?
11. Did you have any LGBTQ friends or relatives?
12. When were you first aware of your LGBTQ inclinations or identity?
 - a. How did you feel about this?
 - b. Did you talk with anyone about this?
 - i. Who?
 - ii. What was that like?
13. Describe your process of coming out.
14. What types of discrimination have you experienced throughout your life as a member of the LGBTQ community?
 - a. Have you experienced discrimination in your work because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?
 - b. Are you out at work?
 - i. If so, what is that like?
 - c. If you were in the military, did you experience discrimination because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?
 - d. Have you experienced discrimination in the community because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?
 - e. Have you experienced discrimination from your family because of your sexual orientation or gender identity?

Part Two: Relationships

1. Were you ever in a long-term opposite sex relationship?
 - a. Did you get married?
 - b. Did you have children?
 - c. If so,
 - i. Do your children know you are LGBTQ?
 - ii. How do your children feel about your being LGBTQ?
2. Before same-sex marriage became legal, would you have liked to have been able to marry?
 - a. Would you like to have/had children?
3. What same-sex relationships have you been in?
 - a. If so, where and how did you meet?
 - b. If so, how long were they?
 - c. If so, did you live together?
 - d. If so, did you get married?

4. Do you socialize with people in the LGBTQ community?
 - a. If so, in what manner?

Part Three: Socializing in Your LGBTQ Community

1. Tell me about your experiences with LGBTQ social life your community.
2. How has the LGBTQ scene changed over the years in your community?
 - a. What types of places did you go to when you went out?
 - b. What types of places do you currently go to when you go out?
 - c. What do you feel are some of the more important changes?
3. Did you belong to any LGBTQ organizations and what did they mean to you?
 - a. Do you presently belong to any LGBTQ organizations and what do they mean to you?
4. What do you think are some challenges facing LGBTQ people in your community?
5. Are you politically active?
 - a. If so, what motivated you?
 - b. If so, can you pinpoint a moment when you became political?
 - c. If you are not political, why not?

Part Four: The Big Picture

1. How has being LGBTQ changed over your lifetime, in terms of
 - a. How people treat you,
 - b. How you see yourself, and
 - c. How you interact with others?
2. Would you be a different person if you were not LGBTQ?
 - a. If yes, how so?
3. At this point in your life, what is important to you?
4. Can you suggest other people we should interview?
5. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank you for your participation.

Did you remember to take a photo of the interviewee?

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Adapted from the Gay & Lesbian Archives of Mid-America (GLAMA), which were adapted from the Ozarks Gay and Lesbian Archive, Missouri State University, Springfield, Mo.