



LGBTQ-RAN Commemorates Virginia Ramey Mollenkott:

Names Award and Establishes Memorial Fund

[Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Ph.D.](#), was a renowned feminist-lesbian-trans religious scholar and leader for over four decades until her death in September 2020. The [LGBTQ Religious Archives Network](#) (LGBTQ-RAN), in collaboration with Mollenkott's close friends and family, is establishing a permanent memorial in recognition of her courageous witness and advocacy and her profound impact upon the lives of countless LGBTQ+ persons and their friends and families.



LGBTQ-RAN is naming its annual award for papers for Mollenkott. The [Virginia Ramey Mollenkott Award](#) honors outstanding research and scholarship in the field of LGBTQ+ religious history. The [Mollenkott Award](#) is the preeminent honor for young queer scholars in religion.



LGBTQ-RAN is also establishing a memorial fund that will endow the Mollenkott Award. The goal for the [Virginia Ramey Mollenkott Memorial Fund](#) is at least \$50,000, the proceeds from which will cover the expenses of the Mollenkott Award. As the [Memorial Fund](#) increases, an internship or scholarship may also be established in Mollenkott's name.

"The legacy of one queer scholar-activist is intertwined with the legacies of all the rest of us," observed Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., lesbian-feminist theologian-ethicist and long-time Mollenkott colleague. "Virginia, always a pioneer, leads the way once more. Her unique combination of lesbian-feminist-trans commitments along with deep spirituality make her a central character in the unfinished story of LGBTIQ+ religious life. It is the story that LGBTQ-RAN tells so well."

"My heart was full of gratitude in learning that the [LGBTQ-RAN board of directors](#) voted unanimously to name their annual award for most outstanding scholarship in LGBTQ religious history, the Virginia Ramey Mollenkott Award," stated Debra L. Morrison, Virginia's partner from 1980-1996, executor of her estate, and forever friend. "Knowing Virginia for four-plus decades, I cannot think of a more significant honor than to have her rich legacy of tireless work in correcting systemic injustices give voice to those otherwise silenced. Her decades of writing and speaking liberation theology, rooted firmly in the Bible, provide proof that one could indeed be faith-based and gay or omni-gendered, re-introducing thousands of LGBTQ folks back to their faith. I eagerly await reading queer theologians' papers competing for this coveted award, this year and into perpetuity."

Forty of Mollenkott's friends and colleagues have come forward to donate more than \$38,000 to launch this memorial fund. The initial list of contributors can be found here:

<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/vrm-memorial-fund> Persons interested in making a pledge or gift to the [Mollenkott Memorial Fund](#) can find information [at this link](#).

“The [LGBTQ Religious Archives Network](#) is proud to have this opportunity to lift up one of the trailblazers of queer religious movements,” noted Mark Bowman, LGBTQ-RAN executive director. “As we are dedicated to preserving our voices and stories for future generations, it is fitting that we help establish a permanent memorial for Dr. Mollenkott. At the same time we are ensuring that young queer scholars in religion are nurtured—in Virginia’s name.”

Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Ph.D., was the author or co-author of 13 books and first received widespread recognition for the 1978 publication of *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? Another Christian View*, co-authored with Letha Dawson Scanzoni. Other groundbreaking books include: *Sensuous Spirituality: Out From Fundamentalism* (1992) and *Omnigender: A Trans-Religious Approach* (2001). In addition to her prolific and provocative writing, Mollenkott was in great demand as a conference speaker and retreat leader. She drew devoted followers to regular gatherings at the [Kirkridge Retreat Center](#) and the



[Evangelical and Ecumenical Women’s Caucus](#). As a long-time English professor at William Paterson University, Mollenkott was passionate about teaching. You can learn more about Mollenkott at [her website](#).

The [LGBTQ Religious Archives Network](#) (LGBTQ-RAN) is a ground-breaking venture that preserves the history of LGBTQ+ religious movements around the world. Launched in 2001, it has three primary purposes: 1) to assist LGBTQ religious leaders and groups in determining how best to preserve their records and papers; 2) to provide an electronic information clearinghouse about LGBTQ religious history for the use of historians, researchers, and other interested persons; and 3) to encourage scholarship in queer religious history. Learn more about LGBTQ-RAN at its website:

<https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/>

LGBTQ-RAN is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 organization, so all donations are fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.