

SAVING OUR CHILDREN

Queer Teacher Organizing, the Religious Right, and
Battles Over Child Protection in South Florida's Schools,
1977-1997

Undergraduate Thesis
Presented to the Department of History
Columbia University in the City of New York
April 3, 2015

Jared Odessky
Seminar Advisor: Mae Ngai
Faculty Advisor: Ansley Erickson

Acknowledgements

I share credit for this project with my teachers. Over the past four years, the faculty members and teaching assistants of the Columbia Department of History challenged me, inspired me, and ultimately prepared me to write an undergraduate thesis. Caterina Pizzigoni's course on early Latin American civilization sparked my interest in the study of history starting my first semester. Graduate students Lindsey Dayton and Nick Juravich encouraged me to explore the history of American labor and education. In their seminar on post-World War II American conservatism, Mark Lilla and Alan Brinkley first exposed me to Anita Bryant's "Save Our Children" campaign, setting this research in motion.

Mae Ngai fearlessly led a group of determined but bewildered novice historians through our thesis seminar. Along with our teaching assistant Anna, she offered endless encouragement throughout the research and writing processes. Ansley Erickson graciously stepped in as my second reader in the midst of crisis, and her thoughtful commentary was instrumental in guiding the completion of this project.

Miriam Frank of New York University coached me along the way. She welcomed me into her home, served me homemade soup, and after countless hours of discussion, made sure that I left with extensive revisions and a banana for the road.

I am indebted to Erica Lehman for letting me spend several nights with her in Miami while I conducted interviews and visited archives. I also thank Salonee Bhaman, Jay Odessky, Eric Schwartz, and Eddie Sheehan for letting me take up precious San Francisco real estate during my weeklong stay in the Bay Area.

Columbia has surrounded me with a group of caring and critical thinkers that I have been lucky to call my friends. Their patience and reassurance throughout this project was invaluable. I cannot list all their names here, but Roko Rumora deserves an individual shout out for his unconditional support in my most trying moments.

My family gave me the opportunity to attend Columbia when it was not always easy for them to manage, and for that I am more grateful than they may know. With knowledge of the history that follows, I do not take their unfailing love for granted.

Table of Contents

Introduction: “Sometimes the Gay Issue is Used Against Us”	1
Historiography	6
I. “There is No ‘Human Right’ to Corrupt Our Children”	11
II. “Some of Us Are Dying to Be Ourselves”	26
III. “It is A Special Interest, because the Interest Is Kids”	36
Epilogue	50
Bibliography	53

Introduction: “Sometimes the Gay Issue is Used Against Us”

It was an otherwise uneventful ceremony. When the Teacher of the Year celebration in Broward County, Florida began at the county convention center one night in February 2002, there was no indication that it would make history. The school district awarded the top honor to Connie Hines, a social studies teacher at Sunrise Middle School, one of those rare educators highly revered by students and fellow teachers alike.¹ She arrived on stage to deliver her acceptance speech and began running through the usual list of acknowledgements, giving a nod to her principal and students and recognizing her mother and father. She then took “a big gulp of air” and concluded by thanking Becky Neiswender, another female teacher at her school.² Becky, as Connie would explain after the ceremony, was also her partner of four years.

A teacher praising her life companion in an awards speech hardly seems newsworthy, but by acknowledging her same-sex relationship, Connie had crossed a threshold that few teachers in South Florida had ever traversed so publicly before.³ Her speech soon captured the attention of the country’s leading LGBT magazines, becoming the top national news item in *The Advocate* and landing her in *Out*’s 100 Greatest Gay Success Stories of 2002. If the media placement of Connie’s announcement evidenced its deep significance, Connie herself perhaps understated its symbolic value for the area’s queer teachers.⁴ “It’s important,” Hines suggested, “because

¹ Jeremiah Hall, “Teaching by Example,” *The Advocate*, April 16, 2002.

² Jamie Malernee and Peter Bernard, “Teacher Tackles Tough Issues,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, March 1, 2002.

³ In this thesis, I use “South Florida” to refer to the area encompassed by what is now Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. Dade County, alternatively called Metro-Dade, became Miami-Dade County only after a voter referendum in 1997. Together, these three counties are typically referred to as the Miami metropolitan area. All three have separate public school districts coterminous with county borders. Miami-Dade receives particular focus in this thesis as the birthplace of the “Save Our Children” campaign and the center of much of the action.

⁴ I use “queer” in the spirit of reclamation to refer to a spectrum of sexual and gender minorities, including but not limited to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. History, of course, dictates who within this umbrella term was particularly active or targeted at any given time. It bears noting that gay, lesbian, and bisexual teachers are the primary actors in this narrative. Moreover, when teachers turned their focus to “queer” students, they first tackled discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation, but quickly became attentive to issues of gender identity and expression, as well. I occasionally use more specific terms than “queer” for precision.

sometimes the gay issue is used against us.”⁵ Sometimes.

In fact, from the 1950s to the moment Hines stepped on stage, queer educators in South Florida served as the target of an unrelenting history of state repression and public derision. In 1956, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee (FLIC), a body tasked with excising communists and civil rights sympathizers from state government, which came to focus on terminating the employment of homosexuals working in public education.⁶ Known colloquially as the Johns Committee after its chairman state Senator Charley Johns, FLIC was the state-level incarnation of a nationwide scare over public safety initiated in the McCarthy Era of the early 1950s. When it came to homosexuals, FLIC was particularly concerned about the safety of children. A report the Committee produced in 1964 quoted a veteran investigator warning, “We must do everything in our power to create one thing in the mind of every homosexual, and that is ‘Keep their hands off our children!’ The consequences will be terrible if you do not.”⁷ The Legislature shuttered FLIC that year on grounds that its activity overstepped “established statutory procedures for dismissal,” but many teachers had already been fired and stripped of their professional credentials.⁸ Those queer educators remaining grew increasingly wary of the right’s characterization of homosexual educators as threatening to Florida’s youth.⁹

The language of child protection aimed against homosexual teachers resurfaced in South Florida in 1977 when the Metro-Dade County Commission voted to pass a human rights

⁵ Jeremiah Hall, “Teaching by Example,” *The Advocate*, April 16, 2002; Chelsey Johnson, “Out 100: Politics,” *Out*, December 2002.

⁶ Stacy Lorraine Braukman, *Communists and Perverts Under the Palms: The Johns Committee in Florida, 1956-1965* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 163.

⁷ *Homosexuality and Citizenship in Florida: A Report of the Florida Legislative Investigation Committee*, 1964, 18, <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00004805/00001>.

⁸ Karen Harbeck, *Gay and Lesbian Educators: Personal Freedoms, Public Constraints* (Malden, MA: Amethyst Press and Publications, 1997), 183.

⁹ I use “right,” “religious right,” and “religious conservatives” to refer to local political factions that supported socially conservative and anti-queer policies based on their religious beliefs.

ordinance banning discrimination based on a person's "affectional or sexual preferences."¹⁰ The measure followed the enactment of similar laws across the country beginning in 1972.¹¹ Reacting to the vote by the Commission, an evangelical Christian woman named Anita Bryant, famous for her career as a beauty queen, singer, and Florida orange juice spokeswoman, launched "Save Our Children" (SOC), a campaign aimed at gaining enough signatures to force a referendum vote for the ordinance's repeal. While the law applied broadly to private discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations, Anita Bryant and her followers narrowed the rhetorical terrain of the dispute to the employment of homosexuals as school workers while expanding it to include both public and private education.¹² Bryant popularized the notion that "homosexuals cannot reproduce—so they must recruit. And to freshen their ranks, they must recruit the youth of America."¹³ She targeted the classroom—the workplace of gay and lesbian teachers—as the primary recruitment ground, relying on conceptions of homosexuality as both mutable and predatory to strike fear into the minds of parents that their children could be corrupted by "sexually deviant" educators.

The attacks on South Florida's queer teachers continued unabated in the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, relying on the same conception of teachers as threats to innocent youth and of parents as children's ultimate protectors. When Connie Hines took the stage in February 2002, she undoubtedly knew this damning history of discrimination better than most. She not only taught American history to her eighth grade students, but she lived this particular chapter day in

¹⁰ "UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights" advertisement, *The Miami Herald*, May 24, 1977.

¹¹ Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2014), 86.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Anita Bryant, *The Anita Bryant Story: The Survival of Our Nation's Families and the Threat of Militant Homosexuality* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1977), 62.

and day out. How could she possibly feel comfortable, then, defying decades of policy and practice that relegated queer teachers to the shadows of the closet?

Importantly, she was not alone. Despite being a singular public face, Hines represented a maturing movement of queer teachers who dared to be out, to organize, and to stand on the front lines of the fight to secure their rights. Yet the motivation of teachers like Hines extended beyond a concern for their own protection. When Hines revealed she was a lesbian, she was actively thinking about the example she could set for queer youth in her classroom and in schools across the region. “Coming out as a teacher,” she explained, “makes me a better role model for my students.”¹⁴ The idea of a queer teacher serving as a “role model” was exactly the fear that religious conservatives played to their political advantage throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

The history of South Florida’s queer teachers is not merely a story of repression, but also one of resistance and reclamation. Queer educators turned from being the targets of the religious right’s effort to “Save Our Children” to the leaders of a movement to protect queer children from dangerous school environments that the religious right had helped instigate through this very campaign. Queer educators took hold of the rhetoric of child protection and safety, reinvented assumptions about who constituted responsible caretakers, and won their own employment rights in the process. They struck down the argument of parental rights by demonstrating how some parents, not queer teachers, were “unfit” to deal with queer youth and showed how queer children needed support from the greater LGBT family when their own families opted to neglect them. Propelling this rhetorical tug-of-war was a shift in organizational style from behind-the-scenes organizing in the late 1970s deemphasizing queer identity to front-line agitating in the 1990s and early 2000s that openly identified teachers as queer in the public sphere.

¹⁴ Hall, “Teaching by Example.”

This analysis will first examine the tumultuous period of the Bryant campaign in 1977, when religious conservatives reconfigured the language of civil rights adopted by queer activists to instead argue for the rights of parents. In this period, queer educators primarily treated the attacks of the nascent religious right as a threat to their own employment. Afraid to identify themselves individually by coming out of the closet and risking their jobs, they organized within local labor organizations under the banner of their profession.¹⁵ Handily defeated by the Bryant campaign, however, most queer teachers retreated further into secrecy during the 1980s. The second chapter will look at the effects of the repressive environment that calcified in the wake of SOC for both queer teachers and students. It will also discuss the effects of the AIDS crisis, which further stigmatized homosexuality and contributed to the hostility, but also politicized local queer teachers.

The third chapter will detail how a worrying escalation in youth suicide and schoolyard harassment motivated queer teachers to take action. It also served as the basis on which they could assert a new claim to their own rights. Equipped with organizing prowess from the AIDS battles, queer educators stepped in at the turn of the 1990s when parents and the state turned their backs on children and let them suffer in silence. They fought for employment protections so that they could be open resources for children in the school system and successfully used this leverage to fight for policies and programs that would help protect students. Every step of the way, the religious right intervened, but queer educators had successfully pulled the rug of their child protection argument out from under their feet.

¹⁵ I define a “labor organization” as any group of people with a shared profession that advocates for the material security of its members in relation to their employment. This distinguishes labor organizations from professional associations not interested in economic justice, but is not so narrow a definition as to exclude groups of professionals that may not be engaged in collective bargaining. Queer teachers groups from the 1970s to early 2000s located outside of unions are still classified as labor organizations since their interest in being able to retain their jobs despite their queer identity was fundamentally material in its motivation.

Historiography

While historians have given SOC due treatment, no scholar has thoroughly documented the local organizing of queer teachers before and after the June 1977 election. Nonetheless, a wide variety of scholarship informs this work, including twentieth-century American histories of queer teachers and Florida-specific histories from the Johns Committee era of the 1950s and 1960s. This thesis also inserts itself into the growing body of scholarship on “social justice unionism” and queer labor history.

Numerous queer histories address SOC in passing, often mentioning the ascendance of Anita Bryant in Miami before moving on to battles elsewhere in the country.¹⁶ In their efforts to cover an extensive swath of history, some fail to mention the centrality of queer teachers as Bryant’s targets, portraying SOC only as a broad assault on homosexuality.¹⁷ Michael Boucai (2002) and Fred Fejes (2008) independently composed local histories of the campaign.¹⁸ Both authors anchor SOC as a pivotal moment in queer history by tracing the terms of the national debate on homosexuality in the 1980s and 1990s—rights versus morality—to Dade County in 1977. They also show how SOC focused on the teaching profession, but mostly overlook the activism of teachers. Patrick McCreery builds on their early work by evaluating why gay activists, in relying on an appeal to “rights,” failed to defeat SOC as a moral crusade.¹⁹ He claims that dependence on rights-based rhetoric did not adequately address SOC’s more compelling

¹⁶ Michael Bronski, *A Queer History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011); Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney, *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999); Jonathan Ned Katz, *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.* (New York, NY: Meridian, 1992). Neil Miller, *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History From 1869 to the Present* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995).

¹⁷ John D’Emilio and Estelle B. Friedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 346-7.

¹⁸ Michael Boucai, “Anita Bryant and the First Crusade: Miami-Dade County’s 1977 Referendum on Gay Rights” (undergraduate thesis, Yale University, 2002); Fred Fejes, *Gay Rights and Moral Panic: The Origins of America’s Debate on Homosexuality* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

¹⁹ Patrick McCreery, “Miami Vice: Anita Bryant, Gay Rights, and Child Protectionism” (PhD diss., New York University, 2009).

argument of child protection. Focusing on the work of gay rights organizations, however, McCreery does not examine how teachers made the same strategic error in their activism. Only Miriam Frank begins the process of placing teachers and their responses to SOC at the center of the story, but she limits her discussion to a summary of the run-up to the election in Dade County and its immediate national influence.²⁰

While queer teachers play little active role in the existing histories of SOC, current scholarship does address their lives more generally. Karen Harbeck provides an exhaustive legal history of LGBT rights in the teaching profession, but her account touches little on teacher organizing.²¹ Jackie Blount traces the experiences of queer educators in the United States throughout the twentieth century, focusing on the manufacturing of a teacher threat over time and the resulting history of repression.²² She devotes some attention to the formation of queer teachers groups and the pressure they exerted on the teachers unions. While her work is impressive in its scope, its coverage of South Florida follows the same course as general American queer histories. She documents SOC's attacks on queer teachers before departing to narrate other conflicts that emerged in its wake. In the process, she leaves behind the stories of queer teachers in Dade and neighboring counties who were left to pick up the pieces.

Several works in sociology and education studies also document the experiences of queer teachers.²³ Their focus is mostly on personal experiences in the classroom, overlooking collective action. Rita Kissen's work on the individual experiences of gay and lesbian teachers does have a chapter on the rise of local gay teachers groups and the formation of LGBT caucuses

²⁰ Frank, *Out in the Union*, 86-7.

²¹ Harbeck, *Gay and Lesbian Educators*.

²² Blount, *Fit to Teach*.

²³ Martin Mayer, *Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Teachers: An Investigation of Acceptance of Self, Acceptance of Others, Affectional and Lifestyle Orientation: Their Rightful Place* (San Francisco, CA: Mellen Research University Press, 1993); Ronni L. Sanlo, *Unheard Voices: The Effects of Silence on Lesbian and Gay Educators* (Westport, Conn: Bergin & Garvey, 1999); Janna M. Jackson, *Unmasking Identities: An Exploration of the Lives of Gay and Lesbian Teachers* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007).

in major educational associations.²⁴ Kissen, however, provides little information about the work these organizations perform and does not discuss the experience of South Florida.

The release of the Johns Committee's records in 1993 spurred a new interest in scholarship about Florida's queer teachers, focusing on the Committee's period of activity from 1956 to 1964. Karen Graves places the resistance strategies of educators under state investigation at the center of her account.²⁵ She delves into the transcripts of individual interrogations, showing how state agents worked to corner teachers into admissions of their same-sex desire or activity, while also demonstrating the artfulness of teachers who evaded questions and challenged the Committee's methods and presumptions. Nonetheless, she discusses the limits of individual acts of resistance, noting that since they lacked "a group sensibility, let alone a powerful political organization, gay and lesbian teachers' sense of individual power vis-à-vis the Johns Committee had to have been minimal."²⁶ She later draws a connection to the Bryant campaign, arguing that the extent of queer teacher organization had not changed by the late 1970s. She writes, however, that the defeat of Dade County's human rights ordinance fueled "a national mobilization of gay and lesbian activism, including teachers who began to organize to end school employment discrimination."²⁷ Graves leaves this history of organizing open for future scholars.

Stacy Braukman's account is less interested in the responses of queer teachers than in the actions of the Johns Committee and its supporters. Importantly, she documents how the teacher organizations in place at the time worked in cooperation with the Johns Committee, rather than

²⁴ Rita M. Kissen, *The Last Closet: The Real Lives of Lesbian and Gay Teachers* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996), 142.

²⁵ Karen Graves, *And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida's Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 48.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 143.

serving as vehicles through which to assert the rights of queer educators.²⁸ This thesis will build on the recent scholarship of the Johns Committee by extending the narrative of teacher resistance provided by Graves, demonstrating how it took the form of group organizing rather than individual acts in the wake of the SOC campaign. It will also show how queer educators grew to assert power within teacher organizations that had earlier stood against them during the course of the Johns Committee proceedings.

By showing how queer teachers worked within their labor organizations to secure protections for both themselves and the children they served, this study contributes to a broader historical investigation into “social justice unionism” in the United States.²⁹ At times, organized labor has struggled to articulate its important place in fighting for a more just society for all and not just its rank-and-file. One of the greatest challenges for teacher labor in particular has been demonstrating how the collective activism of educators is not a purely self-interested task or one that extends benefits only to organization members. Sara Smith launched the study of queer teachers in relation to this movement, demonstrating how rank-and-file queer teachers in California labor organizations worked to oppose Proposition 6, or the Briggs Initiative.³⁰ Briggs was the SOC-inspired state ballot measure introduced in 1978 to forbid the employment of queer teachers. Smith shows how the unions, prodded by queer teachers, moved beyond collective organizing to successfully take on a pressing social issue. The earlier South Florida outcome was a defeat, but it later extended the aim of organizing to include child protection, an aspect that Smith’s account of queer teacher organizing in California does not address. The organizing of

²⁸ Braukman, *Communists and Perverts Under the Palms*, 141.

²⁹ I borrow the term “social justice unionism” from Kim Scipes, who proposes it as an alternative to “social movement unionism” more appropriate for an American labor setting. Kim Scipes, “Social Movement Unionism or Social Justice Unionism? Disentangling Theoretical Confusion within the Global Labor Movement,” *Class, Race and Corporate Power* 2, no. 3 (2014): 4.

³⁰ Sara Smith, “Organizing for Social Justice: Rank-and-File Teachers’ Activism and Social Unionism in California, 1948-1978,” (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz, 2014).

queer educators to fight for the safety of queer students provides a clear example of how workers have harnessed their collective power to fight for causes that benefit consumers of their labor—in this case, students—and that positively transform society.

American queer labor history as an independent field accelerated quickly over the past two years with the publication of several important works. In 2013, Philip Tiemeyer released *Plane Queer: Labor, Sexuality, and AIDS in the History of Male Flight Attendants*, which details the personal struggles and political triumphs of airline workers whose sexual orientation and gender transgressions shaped their lives in the workplace. In spring 2014, Anne Balay published *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers*, which lays out the struggles that queer steelworkers continue to face on the job. In summer 2014, Miriam Frank unveiled *Out in the Union*, the first substantive historical survey of LGBT persons organizing around labor issues in the United States. Many scholars await Margot Canaday's upcoming work *Perverse Ambitions, Deviant Careers: A Queer History of the Modern Workplace*, which seeks to discredit the notion that workplaces in twentieth-century America were "straight zones" absent of queer employees. My thesis continues the study of this burgeoning historical interest.

Chapter One: “There is No ‘Human Right’ to Corrupt Our Children”

The fight over Dade County’s human rights ordinance began with queer activists staking a claim to “civil” and “human rights,” which local religious conservatives refashioned into a declaration of “parental rights” to save their children from homosexual educators. Failing to adapt to the debate’s rhetorical shift from “rights” to child protection, queer teachers fell short in their efforts to resist the religious right’s attacks.

Starting with the homophile movement of the 1950s and continuing with Gay Liberation in the 1960s and 1970s, LGBT people began entering the American political arena as queers. Starting in 1972, anti-discrimination ordinances protecting homosexuals were adopted in dozens of American cities and counties.³¹ South Florida’s queer culture was lively, but not politically oriented.³² That changed in the summer of 1976, when Jack Campbell, the owner of a popular bathhouse, led local gay groups to form the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays.³³ Campbell pushed for the group to distribute candidate questionnaires in advance of that year’s election and to endorse individuals who shared their views about gay rights.³⁴

With the support of the new Coalition, Dade County voters elected Ruth Shack, a recent migrant from New York, to the Metro-Dade County Commission. A close friend of the gay and lesbian community, Shack agreed to sponsor a human rights ordinance similar to laws being passed in other areas of the country.³⁵ Shack’s version – proposed Ordinance 77-4 – would bar discrimination based on “affectional or sexual preferences” in the areas of housing, employment, and public accommodations.³⁶ Stuart Simon, the Dade county attorney who wrote the law at

³¹ Miriam Frank, “Organized Labor, Gay Liberation and the Battle Against the Religious Right, 1977-1994,” *Notches*, March 17, 2015, <http://notchesblog.com/2015/03/17/organized-labor-and-gay-rights/>.

³² Clendinen and Nagourney, *Out for Good*, 293.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 294.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 295.

³⁶ “UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights” advertisement.

Shack's request, drew from the language of the first gay rights bill introduced to Congress by Bella Abzug in 1975.³⁷ Simon's draft of the ordinance aimed to protect gay identity without sanctioning homosexual acts then illegal as "sodomy" under state statute.³⁸ The Commission's first reading of the proposal resulted in a unanimous vote in favor on December 7, 1976, but the body's operating rules required another opportunity for public testimony and a second vote by the Commission before final passage.³⁹

Local religious leaders took notice. Before the final hearing and vote by the Commission scheduled for January 18, 1977, preachers and rabbis from evangelical Protestant churches and Orthodox Jewish synagogues across South Florida spoke to their congregations about the supposed moral threat posed by the ordinance. Southern Baptist Anita Bryant first heard about the ordinance from her pastor, who "noted the effect this ordinance would have on private and religious schools" since they would not be able to discriminate in their hiring of teachers on the basis of sexual preference.⁴⁰ After Bryant expressed further interest in the issue, her pastor asked if she would help spearhead the effort to block the ordinance from passing.⁴¹

On the day of the final hearing, Bryant stood at the podium and delivered her first public testimony on the issue, stating "I especially address you as a mother. I believe I have a God-give[n] right to be jealous for a moral environment for my children. ... I believe I have that right. That I can and do say no to [a] very serious moral issue. That would violate my rights and all the rights [of] all the decent and morally upstanding citizens."⁴² Bryant pitted the discrimination that homosexuals claimed to face against the discrimination that she believed that "decent" parents

³⁷ McCreery, "Miami Vice," 25.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Fejes, *Gay Rights and Moral Panic*, 71.

⁴⁰ Blount, *Fit to Teach*, 131.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² "Transcript from County Commission Meeting Concerning Gay Rights Ordinance," box 6, series 5, folder 25, Ruth and Richard Shack Papers, University of Miami Special Collections, 17.

would experience if the ordinance passed. She reclaimed the language of “rights” emanating from gay rights supporters and established a claim to the rights of parents. Very early in the dispute, she demonstrated how the parental rights argument not only repeated rights-based rhetoric from the opposing side, but transformed it into the entirely new argument of child protection.

Bryant’s testimony also foreshadowed her later focus on education. She reframed the letter of the ordinance, asking “just when did the word, discrimination start meaning that I as a citizen and as one of your citizens, can’t say no, or the people of Dade County, in the area of housing employment and education.”⁴³ Bryant’s speech introduced “education” as a protected arena, when the law only specified housing, employment, and public accommodations. Shortly after the hearing, educators became the primary target of Bryant’s political strategy.⁴⁴

The final passage of Ordinance 77-4 in a 5-3 vote by the Commission activated Bryant and local religious leaders to formalize their opposition to gay rights. Many conservative activists from the religious sphere had political experience from the anti-busing battles of the early 1970s, when they drew on the rhetoric of child protection to warn against desegregation. During the busing protests, worries about sexual contact between children across racial lines inspired fear of integration. “Save Our Children from the Black Plague” was one common slogan.⁴⁵ In the wake of court-ordered busing, many religious conservatives withdrew their children from the public school system and placed them in private and parochial programs. They viewed Ordinance 77-4 as another incursion into the protected sphere of education that they had

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ By the end of January, Anita Bryant’s husband Bob Green was actively referring to his wife’s activism as an effort to repeal the “homosexual teacher ordinance.” “Telegram from Bob Green to Barry Drucker,” January 27, 1977, box 6, series 5, folder 7, Ruth and Richard Shack Papers, University of Miami Special Collections.

⁴⁵ Gillian Frank, “‘The Civil Rights of Parents’: Race and Conservative Politics in Anita Bryant’s Campaign against Gay Rights in 1970s Florida,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22, no. 1 (January 2013): 151.

already carved out and as an attempt to impose another sexually charged “civil rights” measure into that sphere. The same parents and religious activists who had fought busing programs now redeployed the rhetoric of child protection to battle the area’s queer teachers. In February, Bryant and her supporters established the organization Save Our Children, Inc. and held a press conference announcing SOC with the primary goal of circulating a petition to force a referendum for the ordinance’s repeal.⁴⁶ Relying on the tight organization and numerical strength of large religious congregations to mobilize support, the call to “Save Our Children” quickly succeeded in winning enough signatories to secure a special election scheduled for June 7.

Official communications from SOC located the teaching profession as its specific target. Their main pamphlet stated that “Metro’s dangerous ordinance would allow openly proclaimed, flaunting homosexuals to teach our children.”⁴⁷ The idea that “openly proclaimed” and “flaunting” homosexuals were the problem suggested that it was acceptable for teachers to be gay so long as they remained in the closet. Bryant validated this claim, suggesting that “what the homosexuals want is to create role models so they could be looked up to by young children. If a teacher—especially a teacher—can legally say ‘I’m a homosexual,’ that presents a plan that God says is not [H]is plan for our lives.”⁴⁸

The campaign insisted that the human rights ordinance passed by the Commission was not actually concerned with the civil rights of teachers. SOC’s primary pamphlet quoted the Florida Action Committee for Education as saying, “We do not believe that under the guise of avoidance of discrimination in employment, they [homosexuals] should be allowed to use the

⁴⁶ Fejes, *Gay Rights and Moral Panic*, 57.

⁴⁷ “Save our children from homosexuality!” pamphlet (side 1, incl. outer covers), ca. 1977, box 11, folder 7, Collection #7439, James M. Foster Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁴⁸ Frank Greve and Gerald Storch, “Anita Bryant: Homosexuality is a Sin,” *The Miami Herald Tropic Magazine*, May 29, 1977.

schools as a vehicle for employing their perverted ideas with impunity.”⁴⁹ SOC rejected the civil rights claim of teachers with a child protection argument cloaked in parental rights, asserting that “there is no ‘human right’ to corrupt our children.”⁵⁰ According to SOC, Ordinance 77-4 would allow homosexuals to promote their agendas in the classroom and give them free rein to have sex with students. To clarify this point, SOC compiled a file of newspaper clippings that they used in campaign material to suggest that homosexual teachers were natural sexual predators.⁵¹



Figure 1. “Save our children from homosexuality!” pamphlet (side 2), ca. 1977, box 11, folder 7, Collection #7439, James M. Foster Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁴⁹ “Save our children from homosexuality!” pamphlet (side 1, incl. outer covers), ca. 1977, James M. Foster Papers.

⁵⁰ “Save our children from homosexuality!” pamphlet (side 2), ca. 1977, box 11, folder 7, Collection #7439, James M. Foster Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library.

⁵¹ See Figure 1. Ibid.

Ordinance 77-4's jurisdiction did not extend to Dade County's public schools. The exemption dated back to the adoption of a Home Rule charter by county voters in 1957 that partitioned the powers of the County Commission and the School Board in setting employment law.⁵² Public schools still maintained license to discriminate against queers in the hiring of teachers. Nonetheless, while the law only prohibited employment discrimination in private and parochial schools, SOC took on "sexually deviant" teachers in all schools.

The attacks on all teachers—public, private, and parochial—were a gross misunderstanding of the limits of the law. John Fitzgerald, counsel for the Archdiocese of Miami, incorrectly believed that the ordinance was all-encompassing and committed his errors to public testimony. "I don't think their rights mean that they should be involved in a school system... both public and parochial," he argued. "I don't think these people have any rights in the school system anymore than a fox would have in a chicken coup [sic]."⁵³ Even though public schools would not be affected, SOC found other ways to make the ordinance important to all Dade County parents. Warning individual voters that "[t]he entire nation is watching to see what you and your fellow Dade County citizens will do June 7," the campaign claimed that "Members of the Congress of the United States are especially interested in your decision—because Congress is considering passage of House Resolution 2998, *a bill which would impose on the whole country the dangers of Metro's ordinance*. H.R. 2998 would require all *public* schools, kindergarten through 12th grade, to hire practicing homosexuals."⁵⁴

Queer teachers began to organize. They worked with labor organizations representing educators in Dade County from the inauguration of SOC in February until the polls closed on

⁵² "Today's Q&A: How Ordinance Can Affect Gays and Everyone Else," *The Miami Herald*, June 6, 1977.

⁵³ "Transcript from County Commission Meeting Concerning Gay Rights Ordinance," box 6, series 5, folder 25, Ruth and Richard Shack Papers, University of Miami Special Collections, 18.

⁵⁴ "Save our children from homosexuality!" pamphlet (side 1, incl. outer covers), ca. 1977, James M. Foster Papers.

voting day in June. While operating in these groups, queer teachers chose to collectively identify themselves to the public by their profession rather than as individuals agitating on the frontlines.

Seeking to deemphasize the organization's focus on homosexual identity and reframe their campaign as one centered on "human rights," the leaders of the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays relabeled their group the Coalition for Human Rights and alternatively as Citizens for Human Rights in the run-up to the June vote.⁵⁵ As the referendum battle heated up in spring 1977, the newly rebranded group established an Educators' Task Force, which drew its membership from parochial and private schoolteachers, as well as public school educators and administrators and faculty members from local Florida universities.⁵⁶

The Task Force worked carefully to frame its opposition to the ordinance's repeal as part of a larger concern for the profession. It announced that "[u]nder the guise of the 'Save Our Children from Homosexuals' campaign, the rights of all teachers are being threatened, as some members of the teaching profession have become a focal point of the present scapegoating process."⁵⁷ Placing the Bryant campaign within historical context, the Task Force noted that such scapegoating "is not without precedent, for teachers have only recently been afforded the same rights, private and professional, that other citizens have traditionally enjoyed."⁵⁸ By linking SOC's rhetoric to the vulnerability of the teaching profession, queer educators forwarded their cause as an enduring labor issue. Members referred to themselves only as "educators," affirming their professional status without a specific identity. They repeatedly stated, "*we, as educators* are disturbed by the homophobia manifested as a result of the passage of the ordinance," "*we, as*

⁵⁵ Karen Graves, "Political Pawns in an Educational Endgame: Reflections on Bryant, Briggs, and Some Twentieth-Century School Questions," *History of Education Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 5.

⁵⁶ "Citizens for Human Rights 'Educators' Task Force" booklet, ca. spring 1977, "Anita Bryant 1977 ephemera and 1978+ clippings, ephemera" box, "Citizens for Human Rights 'Educators Task Force'" folder, Anita Bryant collection, Paul Fasana and Robert S. Graham Archives, Stonewall National Museum and Archives.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

educators deplore the use of smear tactics, ugly stereotypes, and unfounded fears as a basis for continuing discrimination against homosexuals,” and “*we, as educators* reject the social, legal, and religious condemnation of homosexuality.”⁵⁹ They emphasized their identity as educators even within a gay rights organization, suggesting that these teachers sought respect for their opinions, which they might not find if they identified as gay or lesbian. They figured they might have more success if they rallied behind their profession and drew on the history of assaults on teachers’ rights to defend themselves against this new barrage. In this first public document of labor solidarity against the ordinance’s repeal, no teacher put an individual name to the statement.

Other queer educators voiced their opposition to the repeal effort by organizing within the local public school teachers union – the United Teachers of Dade (UTD), American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 1974. The UTD had a history of involvement in civil rights struggles under its Executive Vice President Pat Tornillo, Jr. In 1962, Tornillo was elected to the presidency of the National Education Association (NEA)-affiliated Dade County Classroom Teachers Association (DCCTA) after running on a platform calling for collective bargaining rights and merging the county’s then-separate black and white teachers unions.⁶⁰ He led the nation’s first statewide teachers strike in Florida in 1968 alongside Janet Dean, a close ally in the DCCTA.⁶¹ Frustrated with the NEA’s lack of militancy and empowered by a new collective bargaining law for public employees secured in the strike, Tornillo merged the DCCTA with a new AFT affiliate in Dade to form the UTD in 1974; the year marked the name of the local.⁶²

⁵⁹ Italics added. Ibid.

⁶⁰ Michael R. Makowsky, “The Origins and Development of Teacher Unions in Florida, 1945 to 1975: A Study in Organizational Politics” (PhD diss., Florida State University, 1998), 107-8.

⁶¹ Ibid., 210; Tom Lander interview. --- in this interview, Tom Lander identified Dean as a lesbian

⁶² Michael Makowsky, “The Origins and Development of Teacher Unions in Florida,” 245.

Despite the union's creed of democracy, Tornillo was notorious for running Local 1974 with an iron fist.⁶³ Queer teachers appreciated Tornillo's political liberalism and his forceful leadership.⁶⁴

Throughout the SOC campaign, queer teachers had no formal caucus within the UTD, but those who were active in the union knew each other, even if they were not out publicly. One such teacher was Helene Linn, a lesbian who was out to a few friends but remained closeted in the school system. 1977 marked Linn's third year on the UTD Professional Staff as a bargaining agent representative.⁶⁵ Working alongside Tornillo in the union, she consistently urged him to consider addressing SOC's attacks on teachers. She believed the UTD should offer a public statement on the issue as it had on desegregation.⁶⁶ Linn appealed to Tornillo using the language of "civil rights." While Tornillo expressed private support, he was reluctant to have the union take up an issue that could so easily divide the local's membership in its early years.⁶⁷ He agreed to lobby for an addition to the UTD's contract with the School Board that would put "the question of out-of-school activities on the part of teachers purely on a professional and ethical basis," with the decision to engage in certain activities "entirely in the keeping of the conscience of the individual teacher."⁶⁸ As the union's chief negotiator, Tornillo secured the change under Article XXXVIII of the contract with no explicit reference to sexual orientation. Nonetheless, Linn and other lesbian and gay teachers still wanted the union to take an explicit stance on Ordinance 77-4.

Linn called Edda Cimino, a lesbian, an English teacher, and a union activist. She had seen Cimino at early meetings of the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays

⁶³ Ibid., 109.

⁶⁴ Helene Linn, interview by Fred Fejes, February 22, 1998.

⁶⁵ "UTD Calendar Datebook and Directory, 1977-78," ca. 1977, United Teachers of Dade County, Florida (1977-1978) collection, Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, 25.

⁶⁶ Helene Linn interview.

⁶⁷ Edda Cimino interview, phone interview by author, January 6, 2015.

⁶⁸ "UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights" advertisement.

before Cimino quit the group, and she knew her to be an effective organizer.⁶⁹ Cimino agreed to contact other queer teachers in the union. She pressured prominent members such as Janet Dean to place their own calls to Tornillo and members of the UTD Executive Board. Bombarded by messages, Tornillo arranged for the teachers to present their cause to the union's leadership. At the presentation on May 19, it made Linn "physically sick" to see so many colleagues at the UTD opposed to the ordinance.⁷⁰ Tornillo spoke persuasively against repeal and urged the Board to produce a position paper in favor of the queer teachers' stance.⁷¹ The final document stated that "The United Teachers of Dade by formally endorsing and supporting the issue of human rights and the dignity of the individual in the conduct of one's personal life, equally does not support or condone the proselytizing of children (students) by adults towards the adult's sexual, religious or political preferences or activities."⁷²

The position paper still required approval from the Council of Representatives, but Tornillo knew that opening the issue up to everyone in the union could slow down or stop its passage.⁷³ He scheduled the vote for the end of a long and controversial meeting over his pay raise and left it off the agenda, hoping that most people would grow weary and depart before the vote on the position paper was taken.⁷⁴ Tornillo's plan worked; the Council of Representatives approved the paper that night without objections. In the next few weeks, dozens of teachers frustrated with both Tornillo's pay raise and the vote to oppose Ordinance 77-4's repeal resigned

⁶⁹ Cimino objected to male chauvinism within the Dade County Coalition for the Humanistic Rights of Gays. Helene Linn interview.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights" advertisement.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

from union membership.⁷⁵ But the union’s queer teachers now had the UTD’s official endorsement.

To publicize their position, supportive union staffers pooled their money to run an advertisement in *The Miami Herald*.⁷⁶ It was published on May 24, 1977 and announced that the “UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights.”⁷⁷ The advertisement repeated the language that queer teachers had used in their “civil rights” pitch to Tornillo, framing their argument as part of a long tradition of “human rights” advocacy in the union dating back to its days as the Classroom Teachers Association. It situated opposition within the context of the UTD’s leadership in the fight for academic freedom in 1959, the integration of black and white teachers unions in 1963, desegregation in Dade’s Schools in 1967, when it “petitioned as a ‘Friend of the Court’ on behalf of school desegregation,” as well as its 1969 support for “the integration of school faculties.”⁷⁸

The advertisement emphasized how the “United Teachers of Dade has always, in the past, and will continue in the future, to maintain [a] posture of respect for the rights of the individual in defense of human rights.”⁷⁹ Citing contract provisions such as its nondiscrimination policy (which did not yet include sexual orientation) under Article XXX and its recently adopted protections for “out-of-school activities” under Article XXXVI, the UTD portrayed its stance as an extension of the work it was already doing, rather than as a whole-hearted and novel embrace of queer teachers.⁸⁰ In fact, the advertisement afforded queer teachers no explicit recognition, with the public statement coming from the voice of all educators rather than queer teachers

⁷⁵ Steve Strasser, “79 Teachers Quit on Pay, Gay Rights,” *The Miami Herald*, May 25, 1977.

⁷⁶ Helene Linn interview.

⁷⁷ “UTD Sets the Record Straight on Human Rights” advertisement.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

specifically. Importantly, there existed no publicly visible effort by queer educators to speak out as a group by themselves. Rather, they worked quietly within the union to get a statement in support of their rights on behalf of the teaching profession at large.

Interestingly, while the UTD eschewed arguments of child protection in its defense of Ordinance 77-4, the union engaged child-centered rhetoric for its other organizing efforts throughout spring 1977. The front cover of the union newsletter from March demonstrated how the union linked its work to caring for children, noting that “[t]eachers have found precious few things important enough to have changed the world. One is children. The other is UTD.”⁸¹ In the midst of their bargaining campaign that year, members at a march carried signs with messages such as “Walking for Your Children” and “We Care About Your Children.”⁸² At another event on June 8, only one day after the vote for repeal, teachers held posters pushing for “More Instruction Time for Students!”⁸³ Clearly, the UTD knew how to defend teachers’ rights using arguments about the effects of policy on children. However, the union did not deploy similar rhetoric in their defense of queer teachers’ rights.

Queer teachers could not yet make an affirmative argument for child protection. Many of them had survived hard times as young people, but they could not formulate a role for themselves in the lives of queer students. In the absence of an affirmative argument, queer teachers could only have responded to SOC’s child protection attacks by claiming they were not true. Yet at least one member of the Coalition for Human Rights believed such an approach would be counterproductive:

⁸¹ “UTD Today, Vol. XXIX, No. 7,” March 1977, United Teachers of Dade County, Florida (1977-1978) collection, Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, 1.

⁸² “UTD media campaign plan,” United Teachers of Dade County, Florida (1977-1978) collection, Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library.

⁸³ “UTD Special Report,” June 17, 1977, United Teachers of Dade County, Florida (1977-1978) collection, Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library, 3.

[O]n paid TV and radio advertising, I did not want to spend time denying the child molesting and recruiting allegations made by Save Our Children's advertising. I did not make the theme of our campaign, 'No, we don't molest children.' I was afraid that if all the voters heard every day was, 'Gays molest children,' followed by, 'No, gays don't molest children,' that all the voters would remember would be, 'molest children, molest children.' If that happened, by the end of the campaign they would want to put us all in cages.⁸⁴

One alternative was to focus on arguments about their "rights" as educators.

Throughout the campaign, only a handful of queer educators played identifiable roles as "queer teachers." Many of them were visiting activists, such as Hank Wilson, Tom Ammiano, and Ron Lanza, who co-founded the San Francisco Gay Teachers Coalition in 1975.⁸⁵ When SOC started up, they flew to South Florida to join the Dade County Coalition for Human Rights. While Wilson, Ammiano, and Lanza afforded queer teachers a public face, as outsiders they did not feel the kind of threat that local teachers did.

During the campaign, *The Miami Herald* was unable to find any queer educators willing to speak on the record.⁸⁶ Only one local queer teacher entered the fray, and late in the campaign: "Eleanor." Her story was published in *The Miami Herald* on April 17, alongside a major article on SOC's attacks on teachers. Eleanor testified to the environment of fear faced by queer teachers and intensified by SOC's propaganda. She dismissed the child protection argument at the heart of Bryant's campaign.⁸⁷ She argued her status as a "queer teacher" could benefit students, stating that she was a "better teacher" for "blacks and Cubans," because she "know[s] how it feels to be oppressed."⁸⁸ In the late 1970s, issues for racial and ethnic minority students

⁸⁴ Lee H. Solomon, "Lessons from Losing: Four Perspectives from Dade County (Ethan Geto)," *The Advocate*, August 24, 1977, 7.

⁸⁵ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ "Teacher: Her Gay Life Won't Lure Students," *The Miami Herald*, April 17, 1977.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

were obvious and constant; but queer children and the unique struggles they faced were invisible.⁸⁹

While Eleanor stopped short of asserting that gay teachers could help gay students, her student-centered argument demonstrated sophistication and prescience. Making the claim that job protections for queers could help rather than harm children diverged substantially from the rights-based of the official teachers' organizations, an understandable difference given that Eleanor may have been a lone actor. In stating that she had "no way of knowing" if there were other homosexual teachers in the county, she revealed the extent to which queer teachers remained isolated and unorganized despite their collective advocacy on the repeal issue.⁹⁰

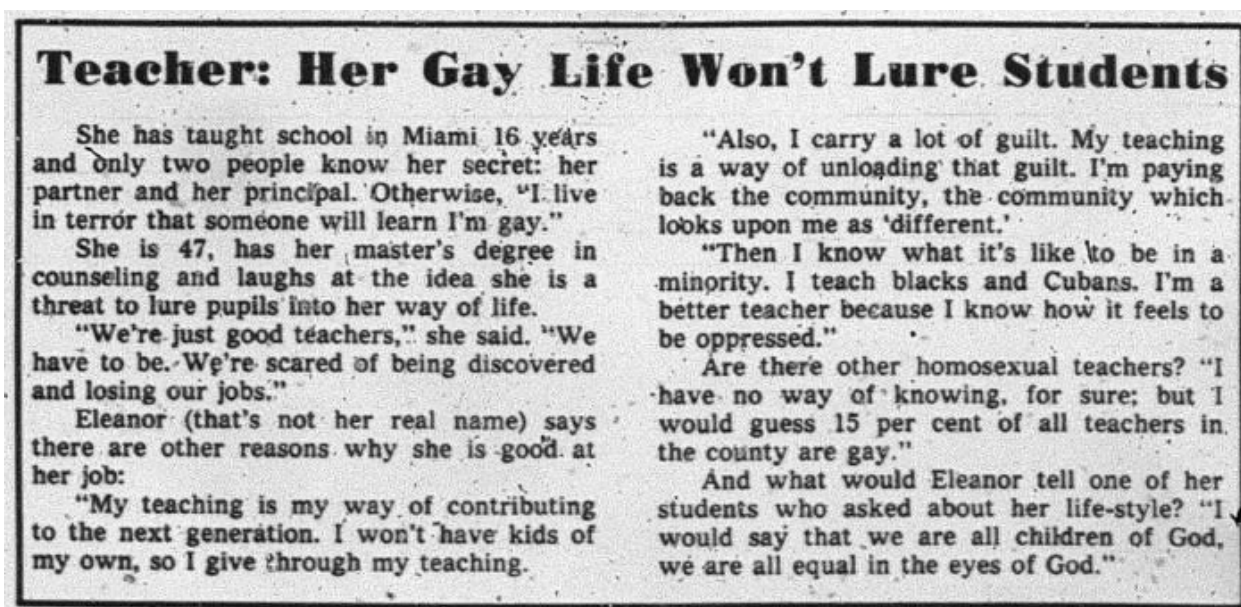


Figure 2. An anonymous woman identified as "Eleanor" was the only queer teacher from South Florida who spoke out individually during the SOC campaign. "Teacher: Her Gay Life Won't Lure Students," *The Miami Herald*, April 17, 1977.

⁸⁹ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

⁹⁰ Due to the repressive environment for queers in South Florida in spring 1977, it is also possible that Eleanor was lying about not knowing other queer teachers. "Teacher: Her Gay Life Won't Lure Students," *The Miami Herald*, April 17, 1977.

In the face of Bryant's crusade, queer teachers never directly confronted accusations of child endangerment. Their own claims to "civil" and "human rights," repeated again and again, had been hijacked early on by conservative activists who asserted the "civil rights of parents."⁹¹ Unprepared for the intensity and dynamism of the onslaught, queer teachers continued to assert the "civil rights" claim based on the history of discrimination in their profession. However, they failed to adapt to the new direction of right-wing rhetoric. The Greater Miami Organization for Human Rights, an organization unaffiliated with queer activists or teachers, attempted to salvage the situation at the last minute. The day before the repeal vote, they placed an advertisement in *The Miami Herald* declaring, "We will vote against repeal because we too want to save our boys and girls... Save them from bigotry, fear, hatred, and injustice."⁹² Only in the aftermath of SOC did the local queer community recognize the importance of addressing the child protection argument. At South Florida's first gay pride parade on June 27, 1977, marches carried signs proclaiming "Hi, Mom! Hi, Dad!" and "We Are Your Children."⁹³ For queer teachers, however, it was too late. The successful repeal of Ordinance 77-4 on June 7 initiated a period of intense repression in South Florida's schools, both public and private. In the weeks after the Dade County defeat, neighboring Broward and Palm Beach counties swiftly voted down similar laws, extending the same atmosphere of legalized hostility to queer teachers throughout the region.⁹⁴ The effects would reverberate throughout the school system, touching the lives of teachers and students.

⁹¹ "The civil rights of parents" advertisement, *The Miami Herald*, March 20, 1977.

⁹² "Will Justice Ever Be Achieved?" advertisement, *The Miami Herald*, June 6, 1977.

⁹³ John Pineda, "Gays march carrying signs," *The Miami Herald*, June 27, 1977.

⁹⁴ Rand Hoch interview.

Chapter Two: “Some of Us Are Dying to Be Ourselves”

In the 1990s, queer teachers created a haunting poster that they urged counselors to hang in schools across South Florida. The sign depicted a young girl sitting on the ground in front of her locker, her face hidden, her arms wrapped around her knees, and her body surrounded by papers and books sprawled across the floor as if they had been hastily dropped. The source of the girl’s anguish could be found in the word spray-painted on the inside of the open locker behind her: DYKE. Above the picture, the teachers included a chilling quotation. “Some of us,” the message read, “are dying to be ourselves.”⁹⁵ No statement better expressed the new environment that had developed for queer teachers *and* students over the course of the preceding decade.

In the midst of the SOC campaign, queer teachers limited their activism to anonymous public statements via the Educators’ Task Force and work behind the scenes at union headquarters. After the June 7 defeat, organizing by educators came to a complete standstill. “After Anita Bryant,” high school history teacher Tom Lander claimed, “everyone went underground.”⁹⁶ As Edda Cimino recalled, “not only were we in the closet, but the door was locked against us. She had a very big negative effect – huge. People believed all of her lies.”⁹⁷

Teachers had always been wary of coming out of the closet, but before the success of SOC, teachers who knew each other to be queer often formed friendships and served as private sources of support for one another. These clandestine relationships enabled organizing. Now, Lander explained, “If I thought a teacher was gay, I avoided them.”⁹⁸ Queer teachers grew fearful of guilt by association and took extra precaution to hide their identities in the workplace.

⁹⁵ “Some of us are dying to be ourselves” poster, box 1, loose papers, GLSEN Miami/Dade, Florida collection, Paul Fasana and Robert S. Graham Archives, Stonewall National Museum and Archives.

⁹⁶ Tom Lander, interview by author, Hollywood, Florida, December 24, 2014.

⁹⁷ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

⁹⁸ Tom Lander interview.

Many had nobody at their job with whom they could converse about their experiences and with whom they were able to establish a sense of solidarity.

The Bryant campaign had made the vulnerability of queers in the teaching profession starkly visible. Con artists took notice and manipulated the fear of queer teachers to their advantage. In the mid-1980s, Lander, who was not out even in his personal life, managed to secure a date with a man to whom he revealed he was a teacher. When he arrived at the date, however, the other man threatened him, demanding that he pay him an enormous sum or else he would call Lander's school and alert the principal that he was gay.⁹⁹ Cimino recalled the time that she and her partner found a neighbor at their window attempting to photograph them engaging in sexual activity. They would later find out that the neighbor planned to blackmail them by demanding a fee for not turning the photographs over to the school district.¹⁰⁰ Threats like these made it dangerous for teachers to meet even outside of school.

As the direct targets of SOC's attacks, queer teachers in South Florida experienced the most direct repression in the years after the ordinance's successful repeal. Nonetheless, the campaign's assault on teachers generated conversations in homes and schools that assailed queer identity more generally, contributing to a toxic environment for queer students. Local media began its first sustained coverage of gay rights after the Metro-Dade County Commission's first round of voting on Ordinance 77-4 in December 1976. The initial consideration of the ordinance was buried several pages into South Florida's newspapers, but public resistance from SOC soon afforded queers their front-page debut.¹⁰¹ Between January and June 1977, editorials raged over

⁹⁹ Tom Lander interview.

¹⁰⁰ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Ron LaBrecque, "Metro to Examine Gay Bias Law," *The Miami Herald*, December 7, 1976.; Fejes, *Gay Rights and Moral Panic*, 92-3.

the ordinance, with opinion pieces and letters to the editor each side of the issue.¹⁰² Since Bryant was a national figure, her campaign also attracted substantial coverage outside of South Florida. Dade County's gay rights debate was on the cover of *Newsweek*, in the pages of the *New York Times*, and on national television.¹⁰³

With the local and national media amplifying the voices of both the pro- and anti-repeal sides, discussions of the upcoming vote were unavoidable in daily life. For the first time, homosexuality became a topic of conversation at family dinner tables in homes across South Florida and around the country. The impact was often far from positive. Queer youth felt the disapproval of their families before they could even reveal their identities, and other children brought the disdain for queers they learned at home into the schoolyard. Some students dared to step out of the closet, but SOC had coached other students in the rhetoric of hate. As a result, “[v]erbal and physical attacks against gay youth ... increased ... as students [became] increasingly threatened by the presence and openness of peers with a lesbian or gay orientation.”¹⁰⁴

Queer teachers believed this had devastating consequences. Hank Wilson remembered “following the national statistics on teen suicide, and in February 1977, when [SOC] was launched, the numbers jumped off the scale.”¹⁰⁵ Wilson's observation is confirmed by data showing a sharp spike in the U.S. suicide rate for the 15-24 age group in 1977.¹⁰⁶ Experts provide no explanation for the rise in youth suicide. Factors ranging from drug abuse to greater

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 101.

¹⁰⁴ Paul Gibson, “Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide,” in Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration, *Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide*, ed. Marcia R. Feinleb, 110-42. (Washington, DC: Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off, 1989), 133.

¹⁰⁵ Hank Wilson, interview by Miriam Frank, San Francisco, California, April 12, 1995, quoted in Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union*, 87.

¹⁰⁶ Robert E. McKeown, Steven P. Cuffe, and Richard M. Schulz, “US Suicide Rates by Age Group, 1970–2002: An Examination of Recent Trends,” *American Journal of Public Health* 96, no. 10 (2006): 1744–1751.

firearm availability could possibly explain the change, but queer teachers had a different idea.¹⁰⁷ As Wilson observed, “People don’t know why, but I think I do. When the topic surfaced it affected young gay people. All of a sudden, their parents, the people they counted on for support and love, weren’t there. Their parents were agreeing with the hate.”¹⁰⁸ Even if the data proved inconclusive, queer teachers spent the next several years observing the real-world impact of SOC in their classrooms and hallways. School bullies, equipped with queer slang from their home environments and from the streets, brought their rhetorical weapons past the school gate. South Florida’s queer teachers noticed the proliferation of terms like “faggot,” “dyke,” and “queer” in everyday talk and marked on building walls. Afraid to generate speculation that they were queer themselves, educators felt powerless to stop it.¹⁰⁹

While a wave of bullying and youth suicide swept the country, and South Florida in particular, another catastrophe was on the horizon: AIDS. In 1981, doctors identified the first AIDS case in Florida. By 1982, Miami already had thirty-two deaths from AIDS and was fourth in the number of reported cases among U.S. cities.¹¹⁰ As the epidemic escalated, South Florida remained central in its spread.

The disease permeated every facet of daily life in South Florida, and teachers and students felt its effects in a number of ways. The most glaring impact of AIDS in the school system was the death of teachers, the vast majority of them gay men. As more educators contracted the disease, the Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach county school districts each had to confront the question of what to do when teachers got sick. The immediate response was to remove educators from the classroom. Between 1981 and 1985, ten Dade County public school

¹⁰⁷ Associated Press. “Youth Suicide Is Rising,” *The New York Times*, February 22, 1987.

¹⁰⁸ Hank Wilson interview, quoted in Miriam Frank, *Out in the Union*, 87-8.

¹⁰⁹ Robert Loupo interview; Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

¹¹⁰ Steve Sternberg, “Six More Cases of New Disease Found in Dade,” *The Miami Herald*, October 28, 1982.

teachers received AIDS diagnoses. The School Board decided to grant paid leaves to nine while the other was permitted to continue working, but all ten soon died.¹¹¹ In 1986, State Representative Javier Souto, a Republican from Miami, and State Senator Don Childers, a Democrat from Palm Beach, introduced HB 137 in the state House and SB 44 in the state Senate to mandate that teachers “suspected of having AIDS” undergo testing, and, if found to be infected, be required to leave the school system.¹¹² The suspicion of AIDS was understood as code for suspected homosexuality.

The teachers unions were not a center of queer activity in the 1980s, but the locals in Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach saw HB 137 and SB 44 as a threat to all teachers and took action to stop the hysteria. Tony Gentile, president of the Broward Teachers Union (BTU), AFT Local 1975, asked, “How does one suspect that another person has AIDS? That opens up a Pandora’s box.”¹¹³ The unions lobbied their respective school boards to take a stand against the legislation proposed by Souto and Childers. In response, the Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach school districts presented a united front through the South Florida Consortium of School Boards, asking the state to leave AIDS-related school employment policy under local control.¹¹⁴ After the defeat of his bill, Childers revived the language of child protection when he said, “I think in four years, when we have 500,000 people who are AIDS carriers, they’ll look back and say, ‘What did we do? Back in 1987, we had an opportunity to protect our children.’”¹¹⁵

While some viewed teachers with AIDS as a threat to students, the teachers unions in the 1980s saw students with AIDS as a threat to teachers. The legislation introduced by Souto and

¹¹¹ Laurel Leff, “Dealing with AIDS on the Job, Courts May Decide Rights of Victims, Employers,” *The Miami Herald*, October 13, 1985.

¹¹² Rick Pierce, “Bill Forcing Teachers to Test for AIDS May Be in Trouble,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, April 22, 1986.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ KiKi Bochi, “School Officials Fight Proposals for AIDS Rules,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, March 15, 1986.

¹¹⁵ Joseph Schwert, “Classroom AIDS Ban Defeated,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, April 30, 1987.

Childers would also have required the testing and mandatory separation of students believed to have AIDS, but the unions focused their rhetoric only on employment protections for educators. In fact, the unions' steadfast defense of teachers sometimes led them to support removing children with AIDS from the classroom. In 1986, after a 17-year-old student at the Wingate Oaks School in Fort Lauderdale tested positive for HTLV-III, an antibody that indicated exposure to AIDS, BTU filed two grievances against the Broward County School Board for permitting the student to return to school, which they believed put educators at risk.¹¹⁶ The unions' arguments about the rights of people living with AIDS in the school system differed substantially when discussing teachers and students who contracted the disease. BTU downplayed the threat of AIDS when it came to subjecting teachers to automatic testing. Discussing the Wingate Oaks student case, however, John Sole, a BTU field organizer, said, "We're not talking about a flu epidemic here. We're talking about a deadly disease for which there is no cure."¹¹⁷ In 1988, when the Palm Beach County School Board adopted an AIDS policy that allowed students who had come in contact with the virus to remain in school, the Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association (PBCCTA) demanded that teachers be told which students in their classrooms had the disease.¹¹⁸ The School Board believed that providing this information violated student privacy.¹¹⁹ Still driven underground in the wake of SOC, queer educators did not unite within their locals to fight back against the unions' demonization of infected students.

Instead, queer teachers joined other members of the queer community in new organizations dedicated specifically to securing research and treatment of AIDS. They risked their livelihoods by participating, since educators still lacked protections based on sexual

¹¹⁶ KiKi Bochi, "Student Exposed to AIDS Upsets Teachers," *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, February 27, 1986.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Arden Moore, "Officials, Teachers Differ on AIDS Policy," *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, May 16, 1988.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

orientation and the assumption was that organization members were homosexual. While teachers remained fearful of coming out in school settings, their trepidation turned to action as they witnessed the deaths of family members and friends.¹²⁰ In 1983, a group of volunteers formed the Health Crisis Network (HCN), South Florida's first AIDS service organization. HCN began small and focused on health services and social support.¹²¹ For many teachers who joined HCN over the course of the 1980s, meetings of the organization were the first time they met and spoke with with other queer educators since the end of SOC. Tom Coyle, for example, recalls connecting with an educator with AIDS from his own school through HCN, both acknowledging their queer identity to one another for the first time. In turn, the other educator introduced Tom to Robert Loupo, a queer teacher at a neighboring school who he also met through HCN.¹²² Such interactions within the AIDS movement helped build informal networks between educators in the absence of a visible queer presence in the local teachers organizations.

As AIDS swept through the local queer community, HCN became a hub of political organizing. As the 1980s progressed, other organizations, such as South Florida AIDS Network (1986) and Community Research Initiative (1989), joined HCN in the fight.¹²³ Years after Anita Bryant's crusade stifled the local queer community's first significant foray into politics, the AIDS epidemic reignited and rechanneled queers' political consciousness. As government at all levels delayed support for research and treatment of the disease, the members of AIDS organizations learned how to articulate demands and put pressure on the political system to respond. They also learned the repertoire of organizing; they recruited members, ran meetings,

¹²⁰ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014; Tom Coyle interview.

¹²¹ Tom Coyle interview.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

planned marches, and navigated relationships with the press.¹²⁴ In performing this work, queer people stepped into public view. For queer teachers, the openness of organizing presented complications at work. Tom Coyle, for instance, attended an AIDS march on Miami Beach, where a local television station interviewed him about his involvement in HCN. After appearing on camera, he “was afraid” that the district superintendent or a parent of one of his student’s might call Coyle’s principal and alert him of his activity.¹²⁵ The next school day, Coyle proceeded immediately to his principal’s office and “told him what had happened, what I did, that I’m gay.”¹²⁶ Coyle’s principal surprised him by admitting that “he had no problem with that.”¹²⁷ By bringing queer teachers into the public eye, involvement in AIDS organizations pushed them to test the boundaries of the closet.

While research and treatment were at the forefront of the AIDS activism agenda, community education was also central to its mission. The AIDS organizations designed their own efforts to inform adults about the threat posed by the disease. For local queers, however, the high death tolls among people their own ages focused their thinking on the next generation. For one, they were concerned that the AIDS epidemic contributed to an even greater stigmatization of queer identity in schools. Educators and school officials confirmed their fears. AIDS accompanied the list of slang terms levied against children by their peers. “One student says to another, ‘You have AIDS,’ said Treasure Island’s [Principal Beverley] Karrenbauer. ‘That’s a very dirty thing to say to somebody.’”¹²⁸ Harriet Glick, principal at Biscayne Elementary, “said

¹²⁴ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹²⁵ Tom Coyle interview.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Jeffrey Kleinman, “New School Course Alerts Kids to AIDS,” *The Miami Herald*, May 15, 1988.

the insult at her school has replaced ... longtime favorite[s].”¹²⁹ Local AIDS activists believed that teaching students about AIDS could help alleviate bullying.

In addition to combatting harassment, AIDS organizers believed that the inclusion of AIDS in sexual education programs would prevent children from contracting it. The fight introduced queer teachers involved in AIDS activism to how the language of child protection could be harnessed for their own cause. AIDS organizations asserted that children entering sexual maturity needed to learn about the disease so that they would abstain from sex or take proper precautions. As a health educator from Dade County active in the South Florida AIDS Network avowed, “I don’t want to go in and scare kids. I want to help them process information and think about putting themselves at risk.”¹³⁰ Another teacher from Palm Beach County stated, “We have so many students that are involved in sexual activity and they have to be aware what they can pick up.”¹³¹ Conservative parents believed that teaching children about the specific ways that AIDS could be contracted was dangerous, claiming that “AIDS is too serious a threat to make children feel it’s hard to catch.”¹³²

The AIDS organizations’ child safety argument proved more compelling. The Dade County School Board pioneered its AIDS education program in 1987 and recruited HCN to produce materials.¹³³ The Broward and Palm Beach County School Boards introduced their own programs the next school year.¹³⁴ Through South Florida’s AIDS education battles, queer teachers learned how to lobby local school boards, paying particular attention to the efficacy of

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Lori Crouch, “AIDS Warnings Come to County Middle Schools,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, May 4, 1987.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Lourdes Fernandez, “Supervisor to Oversee AIDS Education,” *The Miami Herald*, November 1, 1987.

¹³⁴ Crouch, “AIDS Warnings.”

claims to child protection. One Dade County School Board member nearly copied a line from their presentation, stating, “If we teach children about it, we’re going to save lives.”¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Kleinman, “New School Course.”

Chapter Three: “It is A Special Interest, because the Interest Is Kids”

The 1980s was a period of fear for South Florida’s queer teachers, and the toll that repression took on queer school children motivated educators in the 1990s to take action. Their work with children helped them to campaign for their own employment rights. Reclaiming the language of child safety from the religious right, queer teachers asserted the need for anti-harassment policies for students so that children could be protected from bullying. Teachers developed nondiscrimination policies for themselves so they could serve as role models for queer youth.

The content of their argument in the 1990s differed sharply from their claims in the late 1970s, when they had based their calls for protection on their own “civil rights” as teachers. By re-centering the basis of their argument on students and proclaiming that these children needed queer adults as resources in their schools, teachers not only won greater support for their cause, but also acquired a reason to organize openly as “queer educators.” Teachers groups emerged that classified their membership as queer and grew willing to assert this identity in the public sphere.

South Florida’s first post-SOC test case of anti-discrimination protections based on “sexual orientation” came in 1990. United Citizens for Human Rights, a Broward County-based gay advocacy organization, argued for an amendment to the Broward County Human Rights Act that would protect against discrimination based on “sexual orientation” in housing, employment, and public accommodations.¹³⁶ The question was to be put on the September 4 ballot. Local religious conservatives led by a man named Jim Pollard reacted swiftly, drawing on the same imagery of threatening teachers and vulnerable children from the Dade County campaign in 1977. As Pollard said, “It’s an alternative life style that they would be required to teach. ... I’m

¹³⁶ Steve Bousquet, “Rights-Referendum Ads Reflect Warring Emotions,” *The Miami Herald*, August 31, 1990.

concerned about homosexuals teaching small children.”¹³⁷ An ad from the referendum opposition campaigned played on WFTL-AM radio:

Passage of this amendment would give appointed county officials the power to force schools and day-care centers to hire openly gay men and lesbians as guidance counselors and teachers. ... There will be nothing to prevent the Broward County School Board from insisting that homosexuality be taught in elementary grade sex education courses as a normal and acceptable life style.¹³⁸

Just as in the 1977 battle, the local teachers union – in this case, the Broward Teachers Union (BTU) – offered a statement of support for anti-discrimination protections rooted in “civil rights.”¹³⁹ Ultimately, the religious right’s child protection argument won out as Broward County voters defeated the referendum.

In 1991, the Palm Beach County Human Rights Council (PBCHRC) advocated for the county’s School Board to include “sexual orientation” in its list of protected categories for teachers and students.¹⁴⁰ The teachers within PBCHRC did not organize as their own force, and the group advanced its argument as a “civil rights” claim.¹⁴¹ While protecting children from harassment was raised by PBCHRC, the packaging of protections for children and teachers in one campaign focused the attention of local conservatives and eventually the School Board on the danger of allowing queer teachers to be out in the classroom.¹⁴² The Board rejected the request.¹⁴³

Robert Loupo, a resident of Coral Gables, Florida in Dade County, carefully eyed the examples of Broward and Palm Beach counties. He witnessed how easily Anita Bryant’s campaign rhetoric resurfaced well over a decade later. If queer teachers wanted to earn

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Steve Bousquet, “Gay Rights Debate Heats Up in Broward,” *The Miami Herald*, July 29, 1990.

¹⁴⁰ Rand Hoch interview, March 28, 2015.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Viola Geinger, “School Plan Would Ban Bias Based on Sex Orientation,” *The Palm Beach Post*, July 31, 1991.

¹⁴³ Rand Hoch interview.

protections, he knew they needed to forgo the focus on rights and employ a different strategy.¹⁴⁴ For Loupo, the answer was a cause he was already interested in – the protection of queer students. Loupo began his teaching career at Hialeah Senior High School in 1985 and had grown up as a queer student himself in South Carolina when the SOC campaign was unfolding in South Florida. Bryant’s crusade was influential across the country, and the South experienced its effects harshly.¹⁴⁵ Loupo remembered being so personally affected by the resulting repression that he attempted suicide on several occasions. In fact, it was before another planned suicide attempt that he made the decision to visit Key West, a vacation that he thought would be his last. Being from a small town in the heart of the South, Loupo viewed South Florida as a beacon of tolerance in the region. He decided to move permanently in 1980. After a few odd jobs, he became a substitute teacher and then a teacher of English.¹⁴⁶

His view of South Florida as accepting to queers shifted, however, once he entered the classroom. As an adult educator, he once again experienced trouble navigating the school system as a gay person.¹⁴⁷ He worried about his own ability to come out on the job, but he was especially sensitive to what he saw happening to students. He heard queer slurs used in his own classroom, and he witnessed harassment in the hallways. One afternoon he watched one student shove another into a locker and call him a “faggot,” all while other teachers stood by silently. Loupo himself was too afraid to step forward at the time lest he be suspected as queer, but he still remembers the event as a call to action.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

In 1989, Loupo applied for a Rockefeller Foundation grant to develop a training program for other Dade County teachers.¹⁴⁹ In his application, he stated that as a gay teacher, he was interested in having other educators learn about the needs of queer students. Tom Lander, at the time a closeted Dade County educator, later said that “it blew [him] away that someone dared to be so forthright about their identity in the school climate of that day.”¹⁵⁰ To the surprise of colleagues at Hialeah and queer teachers across Dade, the Rockefeller Foundation approved the grant, and despite having no employment protection for his queer identity, Loupo kept his job.¹⁵¹

Loupo founded the South Florida Educators Group (SFEG) in 1992, an organization for queer educators in Dade County schools and neighboring districts.¹⁵² Queer teachers groups were already active by this time in more liberal areas of the country. New York City’s Gay Teachers Association (later Lesbian and Gay Teachers Association) started up in 1974, and San Francisco’s Gay Teachers Coalition began meeting in San Francisco in 1975.¹⁵³ While these groups fought lonely battles for many years without connections in other areas of the country, the momentum picked up again in 1990, when Kevin Jennings launched the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Teachers Network (GLSTN) in Massachusetts.¹⁵⁴ SFEG’s emergence in the early 1990s was not an anomaly, but its formation occurred independently of the rise of other local groups. Only in the mid-1990s, when GLSTN’s aspirations became national and it started to amalgamate with existing organizations, would these organizations begin to form official bonds with one another.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, while SFEG might be viewed as part of the trend of such groups springing

¹⁴⁹ Robert Loupo interview, December 22, 2014.

¹⁵⁰ Tom Lander interview.

¹⁵¹ Robert Loupo interview, December 22, 2014.

¹⁵² Thomas Kahler, “South Florida gay educators find support,” *The Weekly News*, December 15, 1993.

¹⁵³ Blount, *Fit to Teach*, 123-29.

¹⁵⁴ Kevin Jennings interview, March 2, 2015.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

up in liberal urban regions, the area's legacy of homophobia, especially toward educators, made the formation of a queer teachers group all the more remarkable.

The initial name of the South Florida Educators Group gave no indication that its members were queer. Loupo wanted to recruit as many educators as possible, and a group that automatically identified as LGBT was sure to discourage participation by some in the profession.¹⁵⁶ To spread the word at the beginning, Loupo relied on word-of-mouth advertising within the loose network of queer teachers that had emerged during the early years of the AIDS crisis in South Florida. During that time, queers across the region became more visible to one another as they encountered each other during meetings, marches, and lobbying sessions. Despite his best efforts to make use of the network, however, only three people showed up to the first meeting held in his living room in March 1992.¹⁵⁷

Loupo continued scheduling monthly meetings despite low attendance and kept on notifying people who he knew might be interested. He also began publishing invitations in *The Weekly News*, South Florida's primary gay newsletter, where he could advertise without attracting attention from outside the local queer community.¹⁵⁸ Month after month, with new attendees each time, the group started to build a base. In the first years, meetings functioned as social affairs. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual teachers would meet in private homes, host potlucks, and introduce each other to their partners.¹⁵⁹ In these intimate settings, shielded from public view, they forged a stable network rooted in social and professional ties and began building up their collective confidence.

¹⁵⁶ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.; Tom Coyle interview.

From the very beginning, SFEG focused not only on the issues faced by queer teachers, but also those faced by students. Opinion varied within the group about where the balance between these two interests should lie. Some, like Loupo, remembered their own difficulties growing up and attending school in the South and wanted to focus first on securing rights for children in the school system.¹⁶⁰ Others, such as Tom Coyle, saw SFEG as an opportunity for social support and mutual protection on the job.¹⁶¹ Even the latter group recognized, however, that a strategy solely focused on winning rights for teachers could potentially incite the same arguments levied against teachers as in 1977. If the religious right unleashed another battle cry couched in the language of child protection, teachers wanted to preempt the attack with counterarguments of their own.

Teachers studied the composition of the School Board. Among its seven members, they found two possible allies.¹⁶² The first, Janet McAliley, was positioned to reject discriminatory arguments coded as claims to parental rights and framed as appeals to child protection. For one, she was a veteran of South Florida's desegregation battles, when conservative activists made use of such rhetoric in an effort to halt court-ordered busing.¹⁶³ McAliley was a liberal parent activist in Coconut Grove when the governor appointed her to the Dade County Bi-Racial/Tri Ethnic Committee, which was responsible for overseeing desegregation. In 1970, when Dade County began implementation of the plan, McAliley and her husband were among the first white families to transfer their children to primarily black schools.¹⁶⁴ In 1986, now a member of the School Board, McAliley introduced a law to open clinics in Dade County high schools that would

¹⁶⁰ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁶¹ Tom Coyle interview.

¹⁶² Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁶³ Frank, "The Civil Rights of Parents."

¹⁶⁴ Janet McAliley, interview by author, January 5, 2015.

provide birth control to students with the consent of parents.¹⁶⁵ She fought against a group called the Committee for Education and Protection of Our Children that emerged in response, countering claims that the presence of family planning resources in the schools would poison the minds of students and that parents had a right to stop it beyond denying consent to their own children.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, McAliley had a gay son, so while she might have already been sympathetic to gay rights, she was even more likely to support queer teachers if they pitched their activism as an effort to support queer children.¹⁶⁷ The other probable ally, Betsy Kaplan, used her School Board position to support liberal causes such as less restrictive immigration policies and call for sweeping free expression protections for students.¹⁶⁸ Luckily for SFEG, the two people on the School Board most disposed to agree with their line of argumentation also held positions of leadership. In the early 1990s, McAliley served as the Board chair and Kaplan as its vice chair. While their votes were given equal weight with the other members, they had the opportunity to set the agenda and often frame issues for the full Board.¹⁶⁹

Teachers looked for an opportunity to approach McAliley and Kaplan, and then one seemed to appear out of nowhere. As Loupo flipped through *The Miami Herald* on August 12, 1992, he came across a startling headline: “Gay Students Gain Protection Under Code.” With no knowledge of teacher activism in Florida taking place outside of Dade, the news came as a surprise for Loupo and the other members of SFEG. It turned out that the Florida Education Standards Commission, a state body responsible for setting standards for teacher preparation and certification renewal, had quietly amended the Principles of Professional Conduct, a list of

¹⁶⁵ Jodi Mailander, “Overhaul of School Leadership Inevitable,” *The Miami Herald*, May 1, 1994.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Janet McAliley interview.

¹⁶⁸ Lisa Getter, “Panel Hears Opinions on Immigration Rules,” *The Miami Herald*, February 12, 1994; Jodi Mailander Farrell, “Schools Seek Control of Student Expression Prior Review of Press Proposed,” *The Miami Herald*, May 18, 1998.

¹⁶⁹ Janet McAliley interview.

codified standards for teacher behavior, to include “sexual orientation” as a basis on which teachers could “not harass or discriminate against any student” and on which teachers should “make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.”¹⁷⁰

Grace Northrop, a teachers union representative from Alachua County and a member of the Commission, had instigated the inclusion of student protections and presented the Commission’s recommendations to the State Board of Education on July 21, 1992, after which they were adopted and made effective on August 10.¹⁷¹ The Commission, however, did not include “sexual orientation” on the list of categorical protections provided to teachers against harassment and discrimination in their interactions with colleagues. The revisions once again raised the specter of queer teachers as sexual predators, as the Commission moved to tighten its ban on sexual activity between students and teachers.¹⁷² SFEG’s members certainly agreed with this aim, but they worried about the continued connection in the minds of lawmakers between queer identity and predatory activity. The decision reaffirmed SFEG’s belief that winning rights for students would be an easier battle than winning rights for teachers.¹⁷³ The Commission’s revisions did, however, create a tremendous political opening. The Principles of Professional Conduct meant little unless school districts adopted the standards and committed to enforcement.¹⁷⁴ Queer teachers in South Florida now had an example to point to when bringing student protections to the attention of the Dade County School Board. But they knew they had to be careful if they wanted to introduce rights not only for students, but for teachers, too.

¹⁷⁰ Florida Education Standards Commission, “6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.”

¹⁷¹ Florida Education Standards Commission, “Minutes of the August 10 and 11, 1992 Education Standards Commission Meeting,” August 10, 1992, 5, Collection .S 1572, Minutes, 1980-1992, State Archives of Florida.

¹⁷² Associated Press, “Gay Students Gain Protection Under Code,” *The Miami Herald*, August 12, 1992.

¹⁷³ Robert Loupo interview; November 2, 2014.

¹⁷⁴ Janet McAliley interview.

SFEG began to organize. The group learned that Tom Ammiano, one of the gay teachers from San Francisco who came to Dade County in 1977, would be back in town in July 1993 to perform at “Out for Laughs,” the first gay and lesbian comedy series presented in Miami.¹⁷⁵ Ammiano was one of a select few comics in the United States who was openly gay in the early 1990s, but his day job was in education.¹⁷⁶ In 1975, he became the first public school teacher to come out on the job in San Francisco. In 1990, he won a seat on the San Francisco Board of Education, the first openly gay person to do so, and he rose to the presidency of the Board in 1992.¹⁷⁷ Queer teachers around the country saw Ammiano’s work as an example of what they might one day be able to achieve in their own districts. South Florida’s educators were no exception, and when he came to town, SFEG planned a reception in his honor.¹⁷⁸

Loupo invited Dade County School Board members to meet teachers from the organization and to hear from Ammiano at his home. As the teachers expected, McAliley and Kaplan showed up to the event. They began their discussion by talking about the change in the state’s Principles of Professional Conduct.¹⁷⁹ They based their argument not only on precedent, however, but also on the importance of child safety.¹⁸⁰ At the event, they cited the findings from the Report of the Secretary’s Task Force on Youth Suicide produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 1989. A pioneering section on “Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide” challenged school districts “to take responsibility for protecting gay and lesbian youth from abuse by peers and providing them with a safe environment to receive an education.”¹⁸¹ Ammiano responded to claims raised by School Board members not in attendance that SFEG

¹⁷⁵ Robert Loupo interview; November 2, 2014.

¹⁷⁶ Chris Garcia, “Gay comics: scene coming into vogue,” *The Press Democrat*, May 26, 1995.

¹⁷⁷ Blount, *Fit to Teach*, 127, 157-9.

¹⁷⁸ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁷⁹ Janet McAliley interview.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Gibson, “Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide,” 136.

was a “special interest” group. “It is a special interest,” he told McAliley and Kaplan, “because the interest is kids.”¹⁸²

The statements made by event organizers revealed how the focus on child protection was both a genuine care for student welfare as well as a strategy for teachers to win their rights. English teacher Edda Cimino began by suggesting, “I guess what we want to do is try and stop the bigotry that hurts,” but she also hinted at a greater intention for the teachers, noting in the same breath that “[t]his is a step toward letting people know who we are.”¹⁸³ Loupo underscored the point, stating, “This was a way to make people aware of our existence.”¹⁸⁴ The “we” and “our” referred to recognition of queer educators. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual teachers had been mostly invisible since the lost election of 1977. By discussing the rights of students, however, they could more safely affirm their identities.

The event motivated McAliley and Kaplan to prioritize gay issues.¹⁸⁵ They spent the next month quietly advocating for student protections. On September 22, 1993, the School Board amended its student discrimination and harassment policies, establishing by statute that “hostile treatment or violence against a student because of his/her ... sexual orientation... will not be tolerated.”¹⁸⁶ Dade became the first school district in the southeastern United States to add “sexual orientation” as a category to its student protections.¹⁸⁷

The teachers’ success in securing protections for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students accelerated their organizing and allowed them to explore in new directions. By the fall of 1993,

¹⁸² Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014; Janet McAliley interview.

¹⁸³ John O’Neill, “Gay Teachers Meet with School Leaders,” *The Miami Herald*, July 29, 1993, Final edition.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Janet McAliley interview; Betsy Kaplan interview.

¹⁸⁶ “Discrimination/Harassment: Complaint Procedures for Students,” box 1, loose papers, GLSEN Miami/Dade, Florida collection, Paul Fasana and Robert S. Graham Archives, Stonewall National Museum and Archives.

¹⁸⁷ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

SFEG's membership consisted of over two hundred teachers from across Dade County.¹⁸⁸ Anywhere from thirty to sixty educators were now actively attending meetings.¹⁸⁹ SFEG heralded this turning of the tide by renaming itself as the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Educators Group of South Florida.¹⁹⁰ The new confidence not only signaled greater numerical strength and a willingness to assert the group's queer identity, but it also marked a shift in focus. Now that the group had won a nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policy for students, queer teachers turned their attention to securing rights for themselves, rooted in the argument that queer educators were necessary in schools as protectors for queer students.

The shift in activism toward teacher protections was reflected in both rhetoric and organization. Whereas group members had hinted at the desire of queer teachers to gain visibility, the only explicit remarks educators made before the policy changes were about gaining protections for students. Queer teachers now proclaimed their interest in employment protections more outright. In a news report on SFEG's organizing in *The Weekly News* written three months after the policy change, Loupo applauded protections for students, but lamented that "the code does not provide the same express protection to educators. Once you're a gay adult, you're more or less on your own."¹⁹¹ The teachers also agreed that while SFEG was its own labor organization, queer educators could benefit from having an established presence in the local teachers union responsible for bargaining with the School Board. They petitioned the United Teachers of Dade (UTD) to form a queer caucus. Pat Tornillo, who teachers had lobbied successfully during SOC, still led the union. While he expressed concerns that the caucus might

¹⁸⁸ O'Neill, "Gay Teachers Meet with School Leaders."

¹⁸⁹ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁹⁰ Kahler, "South Florida gay educators find support."

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

push the union in directions it was not yet ready to move publicly, he could not ignore the number of signatories and was required to recognize the new group.¹⁹²

The UTD Gay and Lesbian Caucus included the interests of queer students in its mission statement, but its creation as separate from SFEG despite nearly identical membership indicated that teachers were strategically positioning themselves to focus more on employment protections.¹⁹³ The caucus quickly demonstrated its willingness to enter the political arena to fight for queer teachers' rights. In 1993, the American Family Political Committee of Florida (AFPC) began a statewide petition drive to amend the Florida Constitution, hoping to eliminate all local laws throughout the state protecting against discrimination for categories other than "race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, ethnic background, marital status or familial status," that is, to eliminate and bar laws outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation.¹⁹⁴ If passed, the amendment would potentially forestall action by the School Board to extend its nondiscrimination policy to queer teachers. Teachers recognized the threat this presented to their job security and made the amendment a union issue. In its first public political act, the UTD Gay & Lesbian Caucus was a leading signatory on a brief to the state Attorney General dated December 6, 1993 explaining why the proposed amendment was unconstitutional.¹⁹⁵ Presented with a challenge to their employment, South Florida's queer teachers now rallied publicly behind both their identity and their profession. This stood in contrast to their work during SOC in 1977, when they urged the UTD at large to make a political statement on their behalf but without publicly identifying themselves.

¹⁹² Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ "Advisory Opinion to the Attorney General—Restricting Laws Related to Discrimination, Case No. 82-674," December 6, 1993, loose papers, Florida State University Law School Archive.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

In the year after the passage of protections for queer students in Dade County, teachers asserted the need for enforcement through sensitivity training. School administrators agreed that queer teachers were best equipped to lead training sessions guiding other educators in the needs of queer students.¹⁹⁶ In order to fulfill this obligation, however, teachers in SFEG and the UTD Gay & Lesbian Caucus claimed that they needed protections from the School Board to feel comfortable leading the training without fear of losing their jobs. They wanted to do their best, however, to avoid another battle with the religious right.¹⁹⁷ McAliley and Kaplan pledged that they would try to work for protections quietly.¹⁹⁸ They waited until the meeting at the start of the summer to vote on adding “sexual orientation” as a protected category to the School’s Board equal opportunity employment and assignment law (Board Rule 6Gx13-4A-1.01) and its discrimination and harassment law (Board Rule 6Gx13-4A-1.32). During the meeting, however, no one mentioned the phrase “sexual orientation.”¹⁹⁹ McAliley, who introduced both amendments, deliberately portrayed them as routine updates to the code.²⁰⁰ Both passed unanimously with almost no discussion.²⁰¹

By the mid-1990s, SFEG and the UTD Gay & Lesbian Caucus had accomplished their early goals of winning student and teacher protections in Dade County. They now bifurcated their duties. The Gay & Lesbian Caucus shifted its focus to winning same-sex partner benefits for queer teachers, which it secured by the end of the 1990s.²⁰² SFEG now turned its attention to developing quality anti-harassment programming.²⁰³ The group looked to other queer teachers

¹⁹⁶ Janet McAliley interview.

¹⁹⁷ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ School Board of Dade County, Florida, “Minutes of the June 8, 1994 School Board Meeting,” June 8, 1994, Dade County School Board Archives, 62.

²⁰⁰ Janet McAliley interview.

²⁰¹ School Board of Dade County, Florida, “Minutes of the June 8, 1994 School Board Meeting.”

²⁰² Tom Lander interview.

²⁰³ Robert Loupo interview, November 2, 2014.

organizations across the country for help in securing training materials. In 1996, Loupo spoke with GLSTN founder Kevin Jennings, who was growing his Massachusetts-based group into a national organization. Jennings recommended turning SFEG into a local chapter of GLSTN.²⁰⁴ Enticed by the resources of a larger organization, Loupo brought the question back to SFEG's members.²⁰⁵

In December 1996, SFEG voted to become GLSTN Miami.²⁰⁶ Despite its new affiliation, the group's commitment to protecting queer children in South Florida's schools remained chief among its aims. "Our big issue is safety," said Edda Cimino, now a retired Dade teacher and vice president of the local GLSTN chapter.²⁰⁷ GLSTN Miami carried on the project of implementing sensitivity training for teachers, but it also took on new endeavors. Inspired by the work of other teachers groups around the country, queer educators in Miami-Dade County helped lobby for queer-targeted student counseling and school-sponsored queer support groups.²⁰⁸ By 1997, 22 of 31 high schools in the County had counselor-run meeting groups for gay and lesbian students.²⁰⁹ Students at five schools formed gay-straight alliances.²¹⁰ Twenty years after Anita Bryant launched her "Save Our Children" campaign against queer teachers in Miami, South Florida's schools were finally becoming places where queer children could feel safe.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Jasmin Thompson, "South Florida Gay/Lesbian Teachers Join National Group," *The Miami Herald*, December 26, 1996.

²⁰⁷ Jodi Mailander Farrell, "Dade Schools Get 'A' for Safety of Gay Kids, Group Ranks Educators Nationwide," *The Miami Herald*, September 10, 1998.

²⁰⁸ Edda Cimino interview, January 6, 2015.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

Epilogue

On December 1, 1998, the Miami-Dade County Commission voted for the second time in its history to make discrimination based on “sexual orientation” in housing, employment, and public accommodations an illegal offense. According to *The Miami Herald*, emotions ran high. The event “triggered whoops of joy among supporters,” a crowd consisting of key attorneys, human rights activists, and religious and ethnic group leaders.²¹¹ *The New York Times* reported that “speakers at today’s hearing included gay police officers, lawyers and others who told of harassment in the workplace and lost job opportunities because of their homosexuality.”²¹² The queer community and its allies turned out diverse and wide-reaching support for the vote, but notably absent in journalistic accounts of the 1998 hearing was a group of people who had been at the center of the debate two decades earlier: teachers.

While certainly in favor of the measure, queer educators possessed little stake in the outcome of the vote; teachers in Miami-Dade had already secured workplace anti-discrimination protections based on “sexual orientation” five years earlier. The accelerated pace at which educators won their employment rights was due in part to events that took place in the same County Commission room on January 18, 1977. That day, Anita Bryant first publicized her claim that “sexually deviant” teachers were a threat to children. As queer children suffered in the years after Bryant spread her message across South Florida, queer teachers found an opportunity to justify their unique place in the school system as supporters and role models for LGBT youth. Their organizing paid off. In 1994, the School Board granted them protections. In 1998, Miami-

²¹¹ Don Finefrock, “Dade Outlaws Bias Against Gays, Narrow Vote Spurs Joy, Prayer, Demonstrations,” *The Miami Herald*, December 2, 1998.

²¹² Mireya Navarro, “2 Decades On, Miami Endorses Gay Rights,” *The New York Times*, December 2, 1998.

Dade County was named one of the safest school districts in the country for gay students.²¹³ Queer teachers, evidently, were saving our children.

Following the success of GLSTN Miami, queer teachers in Broward and Palm Beach also formed chapters in the late 1990s. They adopted the organization's new name, the Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), dropping the focus on "teachers" to demonstrate how queer rights in schools extended beyond a concern for educators. With new organizations fighting for the rights of queer students and teachers, battles over child protection in South Florida's schools continued into the twenty-first century and came to a head in 2002.

In April of that year, GLSEN Fort Lauderdale (Broward) sought to formalize a contract with the Broward County School Board to provide sensitivity training for teachers in county schools. When it came to a final vote in front of the Board, the usual battle lines between queer teachers and religious conservatives were drawn. Hundreds of evangelical churchgoers who were bused to the meeting from local congregations wore stickers that said: "Protect Our Children."²¹⁴ GLSEN supporters, however, countered with buttons proclaiming: "Safe Schools Now."²¹⁵ In a head-to-head battle of child protection arguments, GLSEN won the day in a 6-3 vote by the Board, which endorsed queer teachers leading the sessions.²¹⁶

Also in 2002, educators from GLSEN Palm Beach attempted to secure protections for students against discrimination and harassment based on both "sexual orientation" and "gender identity."²¹⁷ The demonization of "deviant" children by right-wing activists at the final hearing convinced the majority of School Board members that protecting children meant shielding them

²¹³ Farrell, "Dade Schools Get 'A.'"

²¹⁴ Michael Mayo, "Anti-Gay Crusaders Learn a Lesson in Self-Defeat," *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, April 25, 2002.

²¹⁵ Steve Harrison and Sonji Jacobs, "Gay-Rights Group Gets OK to Help with Teacher Training," *The Miami Herald*, April 24, 2002.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Clarence Brooks, phone interview by author, January 6, 2015.

from the views of the religious right.²¹⁸ The Board adopted protections for “sexual orientation” and came close to passing protections for “gender identity.”²¹⁹ Nonetheless, GLSEN Palm Beach laid the groundwork for future fights to help transgender students.

The final showdown in 2002 was yet another repeal battle in Miami-Dade County. Four years after the reinstatement of the human rights ordinance protecting against discrimination based on “sexual orientation,” a group known as Take Back Miami-Dade gathered signatures to put the question of repealing the ordinance on the ballot.²²⁰ The repeal would not affect the employment rights of public school educators, but fearing a repeat of 1977, queer teachers got involved in the election through the UTD Gay & Lesbian Caucus.²²¹ Over the course of the campaign, however, queer UTD members noticed how the religious right’s claims to child protection no longer had the same widespread appeal, and on September 10, voters upheld the ordinance.²²² South Floridians were growing to understand that child safety meant that children should be safe to be themselves. As UTD staffer Merri Mann stated, “[t]his battle has already been fought.”²²³

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Vanessa Bauzm, “Gay Rights Repeal Heading for Ballot,” *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*, December 2, 2000.

²²¹ Tom Lander interview.

²²² “Miami-Dade voters uphold gay rights law,” *The Advocate*, September 12, 2002.

²²³ Bauzm, “Gay Rights Repeal Heading for Ballot.”

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Archival and Manuscript Collections

Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York

Florida State University Law School Archive, Tallahassee, Florida

GLBT Historical Society, San Francisco, California

LGBT Community Center National History Archive, New York, New York

Miami-Dade County School Board Archives, Miami, Florida

Southern Labor Archives, Special Collections and Archives, Georgia State University Library,
Atlanta, Georgia

Paul Fasana and Robert S. Graham Archives, Stonewall National Museum and Archives, Fort
Lauderdale, Florida

State Archives of Florida, Tallahassee, Florida

University of Miami Special Collections, Coral Gables, Florida

Periodicals and Magazines

Advocate, The

Miami Herald, The

New York Times, The

Out Magazine

Palm Beach Post, The

Press Democrat, The

South Florida Sun-Sentinel

Weekly News, The

Books

Bryant, Anita. *The Anita Bryant Story: The Survival of Our Nation's Families and the Threat of Militant Homosexuality*. Old Tappan, NJ: Revel, 1977.

Reports

Gibson, Paul. "Gay Male and Lesbian Youth Suicide." In Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration, *Report of the Secretary's Task Force on Youth Suicide*, edited by Marcia R. Feinleb, 110-42. Washington, DC: Supt. of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1989.

McKeown, Robert E., Steven P. Cuffe, and Richard M. Schulz. "US Suicide Rates by Age Group, 1970–2002: An Examination of Recent Trends." *American Journal of Public Health* 96, no. 10 (2006): 1744–1751.

Interviews

Brooks, Clarence, phone interview by author, January 6, 2015.

Cimino, Edda, interview by Fred Fejes, Miami, Florida, December 13, 1997.

Cimino, Edda, phone interview by author, January 6, 2015.

Coyle, Tom, interview by author, Hollywood, Florida, December 29, 2014.

Jennings, Kevin, phone interview by author, March 2, 2015.

Hoch, Rand, phone interview by author, March 28, 2015.

Kaplan, Betsy, interview by author, Coconut Grove, Florida, January 5, 2015.

Keating, Gary, phone interview by author, December 29, 2014.

Lander, Tom, interview by author, Hollywood, Florida, December 24, 2014.

Loupo, Robert, interview by author, Coconut Grove, Florida, November 2, 2014.

Loupo, Robert, interview by author, Coconut Grove, Florida, December 22, 2014.

Linn, Helene, interview by Fred Fejes, Miami, Florida, February 22, 1998.

Mann, Merri, phone interview by author, December 31, 2014.

McAliley, Janet, interview by author, Coconut Grove, Florida, January 5, 2015.

Molnar, Michael, phone interview by author, March 3, 2015.

Palazzo, De, phone interview by author, September 20, 2014.

Palazzo, De, phone interview by author, January 1, 2015.

Secondary Literature

Articles, Theses, and Dissertations

Boucai, Michael. "Anita Bryant and the First Crusade: Miami-Dade County's 1977 Referendum on Gay Rights." Undergraduate thesis, Yale University, 2002.

Capó, Julio. "'It's Not Queer to Be Gay': Miami and the Emergence of the Gay Rights Movement, 1945-1995." PhD diss., Florida International University, 2011.

Frank, Gillian. "'The Civil Rights of Parents': Race and Conservative Politics in Anita Bryant's Campaign against Gay Rights in 1970s Florida." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 22, no. 1 (January 2013): 126-160.

Frank, Miriam. "Lesbian and Gay Caucuses in the U.S. Labor Movement." In *Laboring for Rights: Unions and Sexual Diversity Across Nations*, edited by Gerald Hunt, 87-102. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.

Frank, Miriam. "Organized Labor, Gay Liberation and the Battle Against the Religious Right, 1977-1994." *Notches*. March 17, 2015. <http://notchesblog.com/2015/03/17/organized-labor-and-gay-rights/>.

Graves, Karen. "Presidential Address Political Pawns in an Educational Endgame: Reflections on Bryant, Briggs, and Some Twentieth-Century School Questions." *History of Education Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 1-20.

Harbeck, Karen M. "Gay and Lesbian Educators: Past History/Future Prospects." In *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet: Gay and Lesbian Students, Teachers, and Curricula*, edited by Karen M. Harbeck, 121-40. Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 1992.

Makowsky, Michael R. "The Origins and Development of Teacher Unions in Florida, 1945 to 1975: A Study in Organizational Politics." PhD diss., Florida State University, 1998.

McCreery, Patrick. "Miami Vice: Anita Bryant, Gay Rights, and Child Protectionism." PhD diss., New York University, 2009.

Schnur, James A. "Closet Crusaders: The Johns Committee and Homophobia, 1956-65." In *Carryin' On in the Lesbian and Gay South*, edited by John Howard, 132-163. New York, NY: New York University Press, 1997.

Scipes, Kim. "Social Movement Unionism or Social Justice Unionism? Disentangling Theoretical Confusion within the Global Labor Movement." *Class, Race and Corporate Power* 2, no. 3, art. 9 (2014).

Smith, Sara R. "Organizing for Social Justice: Rank-and-File Teachers' Activism and Social Unionism in California, 1948-1978." PhD diss., University of California, Santa Cruz, 2014.

Udell, Sean. "Gaytrification: Financial Incentives and the Making of a Gay Social Enclave in Wilton Manors, Florida, 1990-2000." Undergraduate thesis, Columbia University, 2011.

Films

Not Safe to Be Me. Directed by Laura D'Antoni. Lantana, FL: Downtown Loft Studio, 2015.

Reaching Out to Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth. Directed by Sylvie Rokab. New York, NY: Cinema Guild, 1998.

The Day It Snowed in Miami: A Chronology of the LGBT-Rights Movement. Directed by Joe Cardona. Miami, FL: Miami Herald Media Company, 2014.

Books

Bérubé, Allan. *My Desire for History: Essays in Gay, Community, and Labor History*. Edited by John D'Emilio and Estelle Freedman. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Biegel, Stuart. *The Right to Be Out: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in America's Public Schools*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Blount, Jackie M. *Fit to Teach: Same-Sex Desire, Gender, and School Work in the Twentieth Century*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005.

Bronski, Michael. *A Queer History of the United States*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011.

Clendinen, Dudley, and Adam Nagourney. *Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Connell, Catherine. *School's Out: Gay and Lesbian Teachers in the Classroom*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015.

- D'Emilio, John, and Estelle B. Friedman. *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*. 3rd ed. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Evans, Kate. *Negotiating the Self: Identity, Sexuality, and Emotion in Learning to Teach*. New York, NY: RoutledgeFarmer, 2002.
- Fetner, Tina. *How the Religious Right Shaped Lesbian and Gay Activism*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
- Frank, Miriam. *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2014.
- Fejes, Fred. *Gay Rights and Moral Panic: The Origins of America's Debate on Homosexuality*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Goldstein, Dana. *The Teacher Wars: A History of America's Most Embattled Profession*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 2014.
- Graves, Karen. *And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida's Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- Harbeck, Karen. *Gay and Lesbian Educators: Personal Freedoms, Public Constraints*. Malden, MA: Amethyst Press and Publications, 1997.
- Jackson, Janna M. *Unmasking Identities: An Exploration of the Lives of Gay and Lesbian Teachers*. Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2007.
- Jennings, Kevin. *One Teacher in 10: Gay and Lesbian Educators Share Their Stories*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Alyson Books, 2005.
- Jennings, Kevin. *One Teacher in 10: Gay and Lesbian Educators Tell Their Stories*. 1st ed. Boston, MA: Alyson Publications, 1994.
- Katz, Jonathan Ned. *Gay American History: Lesbians and Gay Men in the U.S.A.* New York, NY: Meridian, 1992.
- Kissen, Rita M. *The Last Closet: The Real Lives of Lesbian and Gay Teachers*. Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1996.
- Mayer, Martin. *Gay, Lesbian, and Heterosexual Teachers: An Investigation of Acceptance of Self, Acceptance of Others, Affectional and Lifestyle Orientation: Their Rightful Place*. San Francisco, CA: Mellen Research University Press, 1993.
- Miller, Neil. *Out of the Past: Gay and Lesbian History From 1869 to the Present*. New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1995.

- Sanlo, Ronni L. *Unheard Voices: The Effects of Silence on Lesbian and Gay Educators*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1999.
- Sears, James T. *Rebels, Rubyfruit, and Rhinestones: Queering Space in the Stonewall South*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001.
- Stone, Amy L. *Gay Rights at the Ballot Box*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012.
- Woog, Dan. *School's Out: The Impact of Gay and Lesbian Issues on America's Schools*. Boston, MA: Alyson Publications, 1995.