

impulses have played and often play now. Certainly, as this volume makes clear, one cannot fully understand Freire and Illich without recognizing the fact that there were religious roots for key parts of their understandings and actions.

These actions at times went in different directions. But those of us in the multiple traditions of critical education should be very wary of often marginalizing progressive faith communities and the texts that give them justifications for their counter-hegemonic actions at a time when rightist movements are taking up that space. One of the things that *Rethinking Freire and Illich* does is assist us in remembering this.

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Jason Mayernick

*Not Alone: LGB Teachers Organizations from 1970 to 1985*

Rutgers University Press, 2023. 242 pp.

The steady development of LGBTQ history of education scholarship is stretching knowledge about education's fraught yet vital relationship with its queer and gender-fluid constituents. Jason Mayernick's, *Not Alone: LGB Teachers' Organizations from 1970 to 1985*, contributes a valuable layer to this textured landscape through his study of LGB teachers' professional groups and teacher unions' advocacy for the rights of LGB teachers and, in turn, the students they served. In the first book exploring teacher unions' and groups' activism for LGBTQ rights, Mayernick focuses on two national US teacher unions and select teachers' groups active between 1970 and 1985 in major US cities. Small but mighty in their accomplishments, these groups forged communities, increased LGB visibility, and advocated for teachers. This book details how organizing for LGB teachers' rights varies across contexts and animates teacher groups' collective contributions to gay liberation history—scholarship that too often leaves out educators. With useful analysis, Mayernick, an Assistant Professor of Social Foundations and Leadership at the University of North Georgia (USA), contributes to labour, LGBTQ, and educational history by representing efforts to advance LGB school workers' rights.

Mayernick is explicit about his study parameters, which include select US teachers' groups, a fifteen-year time frame, and focusing on LGB rather than transgender educators, which is an area for future study. The politics of the queer archive, archival damage, and sparse records educators leave behind are well-known aspects of the complexities of the LGBTQ history of education scholarship, which Blount detailed years ago, often leaving scholars scrambling for precious archival crumbs for insights into queer pasts.<sup>3</sup> Although Mayernick encounters such silences in his quest

3 Jackie Blount, *Fit to Teach: Same-Sex Desire, Gender, and Schoolwork in the Twentieth Century* (State University of New York Press, 2005).

for resources, he relies on groups' archives (varying from sparse to robust), union records, and activists' oral histories for examining the groups and unions he studied.

Mayernick weaves three levels of organizing (local, state, and national) and four themes (community, professionalism, negotiation, and portrayal of LGB teachers) across four core chapters. After his robust introduction situating the text in the key areas of scholarship to which he contributes, the first two chapters focus on advancing LGB teachers' protections within two US teachers' unions, the National Education Association (NEA; chapter 1), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT; chapter 2). Chapter 3 addresses local organizing in New York City to establish the Gay Teachers Association and their educational and activist efforts amid post-Stonewall energies yet still treacherous conditions for LGB teachers. Chapter 4 introduces the formation and actions of teachers' groups in San Francisco and Los Angeles, California. It also foregrounds anti-gay and LGB allies' contrasting portrayals of LGB teachers during Senator John Briggs' fierce but unsuccessful campaign in the late 1970s to ban LGB people and their allies from teaching. His conclusion summarizes primary themes and rich research trajectories yet to be explored.

This compelling study highlights teachers' unions as the first US national labour unions to advance LGBTQ rights and the significance and limits of their efforts given the vulnerability of LGB teachers to surveillance and demonization. To detail the complex change process within the fifteen years of focus, Mayernick compares actions and arguments within the NEA and the AFT that enabled LGB teachers' growing visibility and protection through each site. He explores social forces and organizational structures supporting the conditions of possibility for the debates and actions that led, step by step, to increased protections. In 1970, the AFT passed the earliest known labour union resolution on behalf of US LGBTQ workers by objecting to discrimination, then in 1973, explicitly opposing actions threatening teachers' jobs based on their private lives. In 1974, the NEA incorporated gays in their non-discrimination policy with the AFT following in the early 1990s, and both added LGB caucuses in the late 1980s. Mayernick's careful analysis of union actions reveals allies' rhetorical efforts to link LGB interests with other human/worker's rights and the limits of unions' support given their dependence on diverse state constituents for their economic vitality.

A strength of the book is its close examination of the nuances, tactics, and obstacles of moving LGB protections forward, the rhetorical dynamics involved, and the varying arguments from teachers' privacy rights to workers' rights that propelled progress. Mayernick importantly portrays members of teachers' groups as strategic agents in a range of activist efforts including delivering lectures about the dangers of the Briggs' initiative, holding social events to celebrate community, working with unions, hosting panels, and supporting LGB youth groups. The anti-gay rhetoric, political comics, and activist portrayals surrounding the Briggs' initiative central to chapter 4 add a rich analytic layer to LGB teacher representations and the public concerns they faced. The educational organizing he explores amplifies awareness of education's role in developing LGBTQ rights, alongside courts, marches, bookstores, and churches.

The book sometimes wrestles with managing the scope of its content across the four primary themes, tracing union and teacher groups' efforts, the complexity of union dynamics, social forces, and anti-gay efforts swirling around LGB teachers during this period. In contrast to the focused first chapters, chapter 4 tackles varied groups and representational strategies both for and against anti-LGB campaigns. Acknowledging the work as a "beginning" to the topic's potential (4), Mayernick also notes its limited attention to race and gender. Other themes emerge as well, including teacher responsibility for gay students, the struggle to navigate change efforts with Out and closeted educators, and the rhetorical forces at times downplaying LGB lives in favour of interpellating a broader community "we" who can see themselves as part of the threatened group. Symbolic forces are also a textual theme; teachers' symbolic roles in schools shape expectations for behaviour; visible LGB teachers provide important role models for gay youth; unions must navigate their symbolic roles in representing diverse stakeholders at the expense, at times, of unpopular minoritized groups; and LGB teacher groups with small numbers represent larger groups of constituents both in and outside of unions. These dynamics underscore the orchestrations LGB educators, allies, and organizations faced to ensure LGB teachers' right to be teachers as foes shifted, and organizational changes unfolded.

As Mayernick notes, community support benefited LGB teacher activists in large cities. Given the significance of context, the strategies and challenges in rural Canada or the US Midwest will undoubtedly differ from those in Toronto or New York City, and the book will provide valuable grounding for exploring and expanding such nuances. As queer archives are always in the making, this book might inspire activists holding archival remnants from those years to contribute to this unfolding history. Indeed, he notes promising areas of future research that include yet unexplored teacher groups in the US and internationally, transgender teacher activism, and group activities beyond his time frame. An important book for the field, Mayernick's work helps convey to LGBTQ teachers, then and now, they are never alone.

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*Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*

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Routledge, 2021. 212 pp.

Holding participants' lived experience as expertise, this book is based on insights shared with the author through a series of qualitative interviews with ten trans, queer, and two-spirit Indigenous young people in Toronto. The original research question was to examine the term "two-spirit" itself, not understanding two-spirit identity, people, or communities. What began with an intent to understand what participants understood two-spirit to mean shifted as conversations developed; it became clear to