

Cassanello, Robert, Oswmer Louis, and Lisa Mills, Directors. *Marching Forward*; 2020; Orlando, FL: UCF Burnett Honors College, WUCF.

In April 1964, just months before Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 challenging aspects of racial segregation in American life, the *Orlando Sentinel* published a groundbreaking photograph that included both white and black high school students. The students, two African American girls from Jones High School and two white girls from Edgewater High School, wore their respective marching band uniforms as they collaborated on a community fundraising campaign to help their bands perform at the 1964 World's Fair in New York City. The documentary film, *Marching Forward*, chronicles the experiences of the students and teachers to explore how the city promoted both racial cooperation and the reputation of Orlando, Florida at the height of the civil rights movement.

Produced by students at the University of Central Florida and accessible for free online, the short [documentary](#) relies largely on oral interviews and archival film and photographs to argue that school bands in Orlando during the early 1960s provided both a sense of identity for the city's segregated communities and an important vehicle for racial change. Edgewater High, which was all-white, received the initial invitation to perform in New York, but the stellar reputation of the marching band at Jones High led school officials and community leaders, including the *Orlando Sentinel*, to campaign for the unprecedented inclusion of the city's black high school. While the suggestion that Disney ultimately chose to create Disneyworld in Orlando, rather than St. Augustine, due to the success of the city in minimizing racial conflict and supporting both schools remains unsubstantiated in the film, *Marching Forward* is clear many perceived the issue of the bands at the World's Fair as crucial for the city's image. Political leaders and members of the business community needed the positive story of the marching bands to attract investment, future residents, and tourists to the area that, by 1964, faced increasing public pressure due to the civil rights movement.

At less than an hour, *Marching Forward* is far too short to provide today's students with substantial discussion of many subtopics related to the bands and the World's Fair. Viewers encounter little historical context for developments in 1964 with only brief comments on the history of Jim Crow, the evolving struggle for racial justice, or the broader history of Orlando or the South. More importantly, the film does not address the provocative story of the World's Fair until the second half of the narrative. Even then, viewers hear students describe the excitement and teenage fun associated with visiting New York for the first time without, unfortunately, any sense of how the Florida students, both white and black, encountered northern race relations for the first time. Brief references to strict gender segregation on the trains traveling north, girls and boys were forced to ride in different train cars, and etiquette lessons on public dining before the trip raise unexplored questions about the intersection of race, gender, and class at the time. *Marching Forward* does include some description of efforts to desegregate schools in 1970, including a public drawing aimed at determining where both white and black teachers would work in the newly integrated district. However, the reality today that only 1 percent of students at Jones High School are white and that students of color now make up the majority of students at Edgewater High School underscores the limits of any narratives about Orlando "coming together through music." (www.marchingforwardfilm.org)

In contrast, *Marching Forward*, which also has a [PBS website](#) with film clips and secondary teacher materials, succeeds when the film focuses on the voices of students from both schools and the two accomplished school band directors, James "Chief" Wilson and Del Kieffner. The students describe the challenges black students faced in public places and how little the white students at Edgewater understood about the lives of their black peers. The film prioritizes Wilson and his students at Jones High School as some were involved in civil rights sit-ins and, unlike Kieffner at Edgewater High, Wilson faced ongoing challenges to minimize racial conflict that could threaten his program while also advocating for increased opportunities for his students. These perspectives enrich the film's narrative and provide current students of history with valuable evidence of the breadth of civil rights activism. Contemporary media accounts of the movement often emphasized

dramatic public conflict such as protests, arrests, and violence at the expense of less vivid yet crucial aspects such as community organizing and political negotiation. Historiography, public history, and textbooks frequently reinforce this narrow version of the movement. However, the experiences of individuals in Orlando, both white and black, in using music education in the 1960s to confront racial segregation provides instructors with an accessible example of how activists leveraged visible yet seemingly less important aspects of education in the Jim Crow South to promote meaningful social change.

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Robert Cassanello and Lisa Mills, Directors. *Filthy Dreamers*. Orlando, FL: UCF Burnett Honor's College, WUCF, 2020. Film.

Florida's educators, and other teachers across the nation today, face censorship in their classrooms. Educational institutions are under attack for teaching "divisive concepts" and calls have emerged for books, often those with LGBTQ+ themes, to be removed from library shelves and course readings lists. Unfortunately, this scenario is not something new. In *Filthy Dreamers*, a short documentary film created by students and faculty at the University of Central Florida, the filmmakers look at a moment in the 1920s when religious fundamentalists ridiculed the curriculum, faculty, and administration at Florida State College for Women (FSCW) in an attempt to influence what students could be taught. At the time, this establishment stood as the only college for women in the state, making it a site of particular concern for those interested in policing morality and advocating a conservative definition of white womanhood.

In a period when more American women than ever were attending college, specifically white, middle and upper-class women, and some American women were experimenting with higher skirts, short hair, and taking advantage of their newly won right to vote, increasing anxiety emerged over the proper role for women in American society. At the same time, debates over the teaching of evolution were taking center stage on a national level with William Jennings Bryan and the "Scopes Monkey Trial." Both of these forces are at play in *Filthy Dreamers*, as a local religious crusader and his followers accused FSCW of teaching atheism, free love, and other "unchristian" values to its students. The dispute went so far as to get a state senate committee to investigate supposedly salacious textbooks. Students themselves spoke out against the accusations, writing in a statement from student government that the allegations unfairly stained their reputations, using their position as ladies to fight back. Ultimately, FSCW's President managed to protect an embattled faculty member and made no changes to the curriculum. To tell this story, the film features interviews with women who attended FSCW in the 1940s, archival photographs, footage from the period, political cartoons, and statements from academic experts to paint a picture of the broader period and the specific controversy at FSCW.

With a run time under thirty minutes, *Filthy Dreamers* can be screened and discussed in a single class period. The film would be appropriate for undergraduate courses focused on women's history, gender, the history of Florida, or the history of education. The film could work for advanced high school students, though the focus on college life will likely resonate more strongly with university-level learners.

The film has an accompanying educational website hosted by PBS LearningMedia. The website offers short clips from the documentary as well as a variety of activities, such as a Venn diagram, a graphic organizer, a mock debate, and discussion questions. The activities are geared towards a K-12 audience, though some of the discussion questions could be modified for use in the university classroom. There is one newsletter activity that would benefit from stronger guidance for instructor implementation. Copyright may make this difficult, but it would be enriching to have some of the primary sources used in the film available for students to explore.

The production quality is great, but there are a few aspects of the film that could be improved upon. The first is that the documentary could continue to make more explicit the connections between gender and allegations