

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18764/2178-2229v33n2e26394>

A history of the present: the creation of an early childhood education school that promotes genders equality

Lara Torrada

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0088-7310>

Paula Regina Costa Ribeiro

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7798-996X>

Juliana Lapa Rizza

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0985-0282>

Abstract: This article analyzes the conditions that enabled a Municipal Early Childhood Education School (EMEI) in a municipality in the southern region of Rio Grande do Sul to constitute itself as an institution that promotes an engagement with issues of gender and sexuality. We draw on the understanding of history proposed by Michel Foucault (2004), while also engaging with other concepts at the interface of gender and sexuality studies, enabling a consideration of these terms in conjunction with early childhood education. Data production was carried out using a narrative inquiry methodology, including interviews with members of the EMEI's administrative team and with two teachers who participated in the Gender Equality Promoting School Project; the compilation of a field journal; and other sources of narrative data, such as academic works by the teacher after whom the school is named, the EMEI's Political-Pedagogical Project, and a book chapter produced by members of the teaching staff. In the analysis, we problematize events in the EMEI's historical trajectories, as evidenced in the community's struggle for the school's establishment in that space; in the participation of children's families in the activities and daily life of the institution; in the academic trajectory of the teacher for whom the school is named; and in the incursions of the anti-gender movement. Based on the findings, we point to the need to expand opportunities for teacher education addressing gender and sexuality, with the aim that schools—beginning in early childhood—collectively rethink the norms that (re)produce discrimination and prejudice.

Keywords: gender; sexuality; early childhood education; history.

1 Introduction

For every reader endowed with a critical spirit, and for most professionals, a history book is not, in reality, what it appears to be; for it does not deal with the Roman Empire itself, but with what we can still know about that empire (Veyne, 2008, p. 26).



Esta licença permite que outros distribuam, remixem, adaptem e criem a partir do seu trabalho, mesmo para fins comerciais, desde que lhe atribuíam o devido crédito pela criação original.

In writing this article¹, we adopt the understanding that, in the words of Paul Veyne (2008), no form of writing – revisiting historical facts or engaging with the present – is neutral; all writing involves choices made by the author and thus constitutes a political act. Accordingly, every word in this study reflects what we have chosen to present so that you, readers, may read, reflect, disagree, agree, think about other matters, and perhaps even undertake your own writing.

In this manner, we do not seek “the truth,” nor a form of writing that would establish a single and definitive body of knowledge; rather, we seek a form of writing that creates possibilities for thinking differently from what has already been thought. Drawing on Michel Foucault (2004, p. 295), we take up the commitment to “[...] show people that they are much freer than they think, that they take as true, as self-evident, certain themes fabricated at a particular moment in history, and that this supposed evidence can be criticized and destroyed.” After all, evidence, like history itself, are social and cultural constructions, saturated with intentions.

In referring to historical plots, we ground our approach in a Foucauldian understanding of history (Foucault, 2004), mobilizing perspectives that seek to think about the present—understood as a present fact—through historical traces that help illuminate the conditions that have led to it. To look at history is to select certain aspects or moments that are significant, representative, and/or intertwined with the conditions that made the emergence of the theme under study possible.

Thus, this article aims to analyze the conditions that enabled a Municipal Early Childhood Education School (EMEI), located in a municipality in the southern region of Rio Grande do Sul, to constitute itself as an institution that promotes gender and sexuality issues. To this end, we analyze selected fragments of the EMEI’s history that allow us to reflect on these conditions of possibility, namely: the EMEI’s participation in the Gender Equality Promoting School Project; the school founding as the outcome of collective struggle by the community in which it is geographically situated; the participation of children’s families in the EMEI’s activities and daily

¹ This article is part of a doctoral research project entitled “The constitution of an early childhood education school as a promoter of gender and sexuality issues,” which aims to investigate how an EMEI, located in the municipality of Rio Grande, has been constituted amid power/knowledge relations as an institution that promotes debate on gender and sexuality issues. Dissertation available at: <https://argo.furg.br/?BDTD14086>.

routine; traces of the academic trajectory of Professor Deborah Thomé Sayão², after whom the school is named; the incursions of the anti-gender movement; and actions undertaken by the school in response to these dynamics.

The history to which we refer here is not based on the traditional model, constructed by historians, which seeks to identify an origin and a justification for events. On the contrary, to look at history from a Foucauldian perspective implies recognizing that “the object of study is never the totality of all observable phenomena, at a given moment or in a given place, but only certain selected aspects [...]” (Veyne, 2008, p. 44); that is, the selection of particular historical facts is intentional. Thus, we seek traces that interest us and, in this sense, there is no possibility of capturing their essence.

History is subjective, and the selected facts do not exist in isolation; rather, they are produced and brought together within a plot (*trame*) that does not necessarily follow a chronological order. In this sense, Paul Veyne (2008) affirms that “[...] it may present itself as a transversal cross-section of different temporal rhythms [...]” (p. 42). Such an understanding allows us to consider events in terms of multiple temporalities that intersect and generate tensions.

In examining traces of the past and seeking the conditions that made possible the emergence of particular forms of knowledge in the present, we make use of history in a “strictly instrumental” manner (Droit, 2006, p. 98). It is from a present situation that “[...] the possibility of a history takes shape [...]” (Droit, 2006, p. 98), which entails understanding historical analysis as an exercise traversed by the questions and problematics of the present.

Rather than presenting past events in an explanatory manner in order to ensure their survival over time, Foucault, in an interview with Roger-Pol Droit (2006), invites us to foreground impossibility—that is, to attend to events situated at the margins and to rethink the chains of events through which the impossible comes to be produced. In this sense, in response to Droit’s question as to how he would define history, Foucault (Droit, 2006, p. 98) states that “everything that may be irregular, contingent, or unpredictable in a historical process is of considerable interest to me.”

² The names of the research participants have been changed and are presented under pseudonyms to preserve anonymity. However, the name of the teacher after whom the EMEI is named has been retained, as she is deceased and because she is the school’s namesake.

This form of history was termed by Foucault (2007) a “history of the present.” It is not the kind that offers the investigator a safe harbor—a past in which we might comfortably recognize ourselves—a supra-history, the sort conceived by metaphysicians. Referred to by Foucault as the history of historians, it “[...] seeks to judge everything according to an apocalyptic objectivity; [...] an eternal truth, an immortal soul, a consciousness always identical to itself” (Foucault, 2007, p. 26).

For Veyne (2008, p. 12), “[...] it is not a science and has little to expect from the sciences; it does not explain and has no method; better still, History—the one so much discussed over the past two centuries—does not exist.” In this sense, he refers to a narrative of certainties that purports to express a totality within which human diversity is constituted—the version advanced by those historians who construct “an apocalyptic objectivity” (Foucault, 2007, p. 26).

Moreover, historical facts do not exist in isolation. They are produced and articulated within this fabric we call plot (*trame*), understood as “[...] a very human and very unscientific mixture of material causes, ends, and chance events; a slice of life that the historian has isolated according to their own convenience, in which facts have their objective links and their relative importance [...]” (Veyne, 2008, p. 42).

Thus, from this way of viewing and understanding history, its object of study is not the observation of the totality of such phenomena, nor the organization of historical plots in an ordered manner across time and space. On the contrary, to study history is to select certain aspects or moments that are significant and representative, such as those intertwined with the conditions that enabled the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão to constitute itself as a promoter of gender and sexuality issues. In what follows, we outline the methodological paths followed that made this writing possible.

2 Methodological Paths

This article is shaped by and produced within the theoretical and methodological framework of a post-structuralist perspective, as well as by the writings of Michel Foucault (2002, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2015) and of scholars who engage with his work. To adopt a post-structuralist theoretical perspective implies proceeding from the understanding that there are no absolute truths, nor single paths that one might wish—or even be expected—to reach. In the

words of Paraíso (2004, p. 284), “[...] post-critical educational research constitutes open systems composed of varied lines; they also compose lines, borrow some, and create others.”

In this way, studies in the field of education produced from this theoretical perspective enable ruptures in educational practices, curricula, and pedagogies. The construction and methodological conduct of a study are likewise a discursive production in which, through specific methodological tools, meanings circulate and contribute to the construction of meaning regarding the theme, the objectives, and the research problems.

Moreover, within this perspective, we do not conceive methodological choices as predetermined. On the contrary, they take shape along the way, throughout the process of producing the study itself (Paraíso, 2004).

From this standpoint, we understand research as “nonlinear,” and the paths of writing, methodological processes, and the study participants’ own trajectories as a production—a construction shaped by what prompts us to think as researchers. Thus, our methodological choice was not made at random; rather, we understood that it required an engagement with the history of this school and with the experiences that constitute the EMEI. We approached these experiences narratively, that is, by seeking to understand them through the process of telling and listening to stories in a sensitive and attentive manner. Narrative, then, is the process of speaking about oneself, of one’s experiences, and, consequently, of producing other narratives and other experiences.

In this sense, we regard narrative inquiry as a powerful strategy for the production and analysis of data, insofar as it enables study participants to speak of themselves and their experiences in dialogue with the focus of investigation and with the interlocutions woven throughout. Narrative inquiry thus constitutes the study of narrated experience, highlighting individual and social dimensions of lived experience and functions as a process of retelling experiences in the researcher’s voice (Mello; Murphy; Clandinin, 2016).

The experiences of participants are transformed and reshaped through the “[...] continuous interaction of human thought with our personal, social, and material environment” (Mello; Murphy; Clandinin, 2016, p. 567). Moreover, experience produces and constitutes human life through its relations “[...] with the world, with

language, with thought, with others, with ourselves, with what is said and what is thought, with what we say and think, with what we are and what we do, with what we are already ceasing to be” (Larrosa, 2018, p. 74).

Thus, working with narratives allows for an engagement with the ways in which participants constitute themselves, with their processes of subjectivation and subjection as implicated in mechanisms and relations of power. In this regard, we employ narrative both as a phenomenon under investigation and as a method of inquiry (Connelly; Clandinin, 1995), since, at the same time that the researcher analyzes narrated experiences, the researcher also produce narratives in the research process.

Thus, we highlight three paths followed in the production of the narratives³:

- **Narrative Interviews:** we examine the narratives of several EMEI professionals, which allowed us to hear stories that constitute the school. We worked with narratives from the EMEI’s administrative and pedagogical team—Belmira⁴, Antonieta and Cecília —as well as from the teachers Nísia and Luma, who participated in the Gender Equality Promoting School Project⁵.
- **Field Journal:** records of what we heard, observed, and felt during fieldwork. The journal includes the meeting in which the research was presented, the interviews conducted, and the conversation circles (which we refer to as narrative encounters). In addition, another space organized by the school was observed by the authors: a meeting with families of children enrolled at the school.
- **Other Sources of Narrative Data:** we also drew upon additional sources that we understand as narrative data of the EMEI. These include the academic publications of Professor Deborah Thomé Sayão, after whom

³ Given that this article involves human subjects in narrative interviews and narrative encounters, and in order to comply with ethical principles, the study was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee in the Human and Social Sciences (CEP) at the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG) and approved under protocol no. 4.934.253.

⁴ All participants in this study signed an informed consent form authorizing the use of their narratives. The participants’ accounts, presented in italics throughout the text and transcribed as spoken—without grammatical adjustments—are grounded in ethical principles. To ensure the anonymity of the teachers and to preserve their identities, we adopted pseudonyms inspired by women who made important contributions to Brazilian history and education.

⁵ This project is affiliated with the Research Group on Sexuality and School (GESE/FURG), in which teachers engage in a space for study and discussion on issues of gender and sexuality, with the aim of developing actions in their schools to foster reflection on gender and sexuality equality and equity.

the school is named; the school's Political-Pedagogical Project; and the chapter "Dialoguing about Gender at EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão," authored by Belmira, Antonieta, and Nísia, in the book *Tecituras sobre corpos, gêneros e sexualidade no espaço escolar* [Weavings on Bodies, Gender, and Sexuality in the School]⁶.

In line with the objective of this study, we turned our attention to analyzing selected events in the history of the EMEI in conjunction with the narratives of teachers and with our theoretical framework. To this end, we undertook an analytical movement grounded in theoretically productive connections, in dialogue with authors such as Foucault (2002, 2008, 2010, 2014), Paraíso (2016a, 2016b), Xavier Filha (2018), Judith Butler (2019), Joan Wallach Scott (1995), among others. In an interview with Droit (2006), Foucault stated that he would like his books to be understood as "book-bombs," a kind of explosive or fireworks, in the sense that his works might be used as sources of destruction. We understand this as a movement of problematizing what interests us, deconstructing truths, fracturing established understandings, suspending what is familiar, and estranging (Droit, 2006).

It is important to underscore that, in producing this study, we do not seek to establish the truth regarding the issues analyzed in this text. Truth is not something inherent to the object described, since "it does not exist outside power or without power" (Foucault, 2015, p. 51). In this sense, it is constructed on the basis of the values that circulate in our society. Thus, according to the author, truth is grounded in the understanding that nothing is constructed outside the discursive network; it is produced through perspectives and meanings shaped by how we understand things.

To carry out these movements in the research, inspired by Foucault (2015), we deployed the "hammer" as a tool that enables the breaking of truths, rupturing fixed ideas, and thereby leading us to construct other ideas, thoughts, and analyses. In examining and investigating the continuities and discontinuities of the discursive network, we allow ourselves to suspend narratives about how the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão has come to constitute itself as an educational institution that fosters debate on gender and sexuality issues.

⁶ Available at: <http://repositorio.furg.br/handle/1/8069>.

Moreover, it was possible to observe how issues of gender and sexuality are articulated within the space of early childhood education. Our aim, therefore, was to reflect on the conditions that enabled this school to constitute itself as a promoter of discussions on gender and sexuality.

3 Facts that Produce the History of the Present

To begin this section, weaving together the historical plot of EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão, it is important to note that since 2017⁷ the school has been part of the Gender Equality Promoting School Project. This project was launched by the Research Group on Sexuality and School (GESE), affiliated with the Federal University of Rio Grande/FURG, and was in its 9th edition in 2025.

The project aims to support education professionals by providing a theoretical foundation on gender, diversity, sexualities, gender equity, gender-based violence, and LGBTphobia. Based on this foundation, it seeks to enable teachers to develop educational proposals aimed at promoting discussions of these themes within the school setting.

The EMEI's participation in the project since its first edition constitutes a condition of possibility for the school to recognize itself as an institution that incorporates discussions of gender and sexuality into its everyday pedagogical practices. It is through this connection, and through the work developed within the project between the school and members of GESE, that openings were created for this research to take place. In other words, the EMEI's constitution as a school that promotes gender and sexuality equality was shaped by a series of events that produced the institution as it is. At this moment, our intention is to turn our gaze toward those events.

We propose to look at past events not with the aim of reconstructing a linear history or seeking confirmation of the present, but rather to produce “a history of the present” (Foucault, 2008, p. 29). From this perspective, the goal is not to search for a founding origin of the EMEI, but to understand the interplay of forces, forms of knowledge, and practices at specific historical moments that made possible the constitution of this school as a promoter of gender and sexuality equality. According

⁷ 2017 was the Project's inaugural year.

to Foucault (2002a, p. 13), “history is not the search for an origin, but the analysis of the conditions of existence of discourses.”

We will therefore briefly narrate how EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão came to be established in its community—not as a point of origin, “[...] but, on the contrary, as a rather curious episode in history [...]” (Foucault, 2002b, p. 13). In the narrative of the teacher Belmira, the school emerges as the effect of a mobilization by the community, understood as the result of a collective struggle. Through neighborhood meetings and petitions, Belmira secured the installation of one of the eleven early childhood education schools planned for the municipality of Rio Grande⁸. Her account reveals the political character of this movement, evidencing the active participation of the community in the constitution of the school. Reflecting on this issue, she added:

[...] not all [EMEI]s were completed, and once again it was the organization of the neighborhood community that ensured this one was among those finished. We collected signatures again, held meetings, the neighborhood association president pushed together with city council members—result: this was one of the first three to be completed (Interview with Belmira, 2021).

In our dialogue with participants throughout the research, we observed that community involvement was not limited to the school’s creation but continues to operate as a constitutive element of the EMEI. Members of the local community fought for the school to be established in their territory and remained engaged in its functioning and organization, including the families of enrolled children⁹. On several occasions, participants in this study mentioned the involvement of families in the events and functioning of the school.

An example of this appears in the account of another teacher, Antonieta, who noted the absence of collective involvement in the construction of the Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP), which, as a legal requirement, had to be drafted before the school’s inauguration. According to her:

⁸ These EMEIs are the result of the National Program for the Restructuring and Acquisition of Equipment for Early Childhood Public Education School Network (Proinfância), established by Resolution No. 6 of April 24, 2007. The program was one of the initiatives of the Ministry of Education’s Education Development Plan (PDE), directed at municipalities across the country and includes among its main axes the construction of new daycare centers and preschools. Source: <https://www.fn-de.gov.br/index.php/programas/proinfancia/sobre-o-plano-ou-programa/sobre-o-proinfancia>

⁹ Most of the families of children enrolled in the EMEI reside in the surrounding neighborhood, as proximity between the home and the school is a criterion adopted in the enrollment process, as established by the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA, 1990).

When parents began to arrive in 2016, the fact that the proposal was already in place unsettled me, and so throughout the whole of 2016 we began constructing a new one. Everyone was eager—the group of teachers was very restless, very questioning, very critical [...] we would spend mornings, afternoons, and evenings working, developing the PPP outside school hours; when classes ended, we would sit with the families, read it together, and keep questioning [...] (Interview with Antonieta, 2022)

We may consider that the involvement of families with the school occurred as a result of the community's struggle to establish the school, as Belmira noted. Just as mobilization was necessary to establish the school, it was also required to ensure its functionality. Beyond this, the collective dimension is also sustained by the school leadership's active engagement of families in this process. As Belmira explained:

I also involve these families in social issues—for example, there was that case of the girl who was murdered here in Bolaxa [the neighborhood where the school is located], that adolescent—I mobilized the families, 'this is not a topic for children, but we have to put an end to violence against women; I invite you, let's make a video' [...] Families were willing to send videos or photos with signs; it turned into a very meaningful video. [...] some don't participate, but many do [...] and those who do not also don't say 'I don't want the school's name or the families' names included because I didn't take part'—they don't say that, so I put everyone's name (Interview with Belmira, 2021)

The video, shared on the school's Facebook page, refers to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25). At the same time, it denounces a brutal case of femicide that occurred in a nearby neighborhood. In that case, a 23-year-old woman was sexually assaulted, murdered and left naked on a beach near the area. The news of the violence and her death, which had a significant impact in the municipality, also prompted various forms of public response, including the dissemination of this video.

As Belmira observed, this production was both an initiative and an invitation from the EMEI's administrative team to the school community—teachers, staff, and the children's families. Accompanied by the song “*Nós somos mulheres*” [We Are Women] by the group *Samba Que Elas Querem*, they presented posters, images, photographs, and expressions, demanding an end to violence against women. In Belmira's narrative, the rationale for creating the video is clear. According to her, although the specific case of violence against this young woman was not directly connected to the children, her invitation to participate in the video served as a way of mobilizing the community to combat violence against women.

Thus, returning to the issue of family participation, we observe in this situation that a community social issue is taken up within the space of the EMEI. Families are thus engaged in dialogue: the school administration makes a case for taking action, invites families to participate in the video, and includes those who contribute in line with the perspective advanced by the school, grounded in dialogue and participatory construction.

At this point, a caveat is in order regarding this movement toward family participation. It occurs, above all and rightly so, because it is an early childhood education institution, working with young children. In other words, the proposal of dialogue and parent/guardian participation also arises from the fact that the school depends on them to shape, guide, govern, and manage the children. Thus, this community involvement can be understood as part of a technology of governance that operates not by coercion, but through participation and engagement. As Foucault (2010) states, “to govern is to structure the possible field of action of others” (p. 288), which implies understanding the involvement of families as also productive of specific ways of guiding conduct, expectations, and values within the school.

According to Gouveia (2004), there is a complexity and multiplicity of discourses and practices surrounding childhood which, when operating in the institutional environments, contain a polyphony of forms of knowledge and practices regarding the child. Within this polyphony, the participation of families is fundamental to sustaining particular ways of guiding the conduct of the child subjects.

For Lockmann and Mota (2013), the school gains expression as the institution proper to education in producing different strategies that govern childhood, since “[...] insofar as children are understood in their specificities, they become objects of State intervention and of the fields of science, [...] while at the same time they are perceived as more vulnerable” (Lockmann; Mota, 2013, p. 87). Thus, they are understood as being in need of guidance and protection.

Another example of this collective effort to guide and govern childhood emerged in a further account by Belmira. As a member of the EMEI’s leadership, she described holding twelve meetings—all within a short period of time—with the children’s families. The agenda on that occasion was what she called autonomy. She emphasized: *I pushed hard on this issue of autonomy* (Interview with Belmira, 2022), since the school was experiencing difficulties with bathroom use because the

younger ones were not going on their own. Thus, she called on family members in order to discover how this was being addressed at home.

Family involvement in the constitution of this school as a promoter of gender equality also manifests in specific projects, such as the *Ciranda dos Saberes* [Forms of Knowledge Circle], an initiative of the EMEI Deborah administration that began in 2017 (the school's second year since its inauguration in 2016). This project was created because, during the children's initial adjustment week, some family members remained at the school even after the children had entered their classrooms, as it was a period of adaptation. Additionally, the *Ciranda dos Saberes* initiative, according to the teacher Belmira, was developed in response to the recognition of a "potential among families to participate in the school's day-to-day life" (Field Journal), functioning as an apparatus for fostering proximity, listening and problematizing school-related issues with the children's parents/guardians.

Taking advantage of the availability of family members at this time, the school's administration proposed conversation circles in which topics relevant to the school community were addressed. According to Belmira, the meetings—held over the five school days of the first week—covered different themes¹⁰, among them gender and sexuality, which were presented and discussed with families.

In this space the Gender Equality Promoting School Project, with which the school was affiliated, was presented to the school community – teachers, other staff, children and family members – and, in a dynamic and playful manner, families were invited to problematize issues of gender and binarism. In proposing these problematizations, the school disrupts essentialist conceptions that naturalize the differences between boys and girls. According to Scott (1995, p. 86), "gender is a constitutive element of social relations based on perceived differences between the sexes [...]", and is therefore a historical, relational category traversed by relations of power. In the same vein, Butler (2019, p. 59) argues that "gender is not something that one is, it is something one does" reiterated by norms that may also be challenged and subverted in everyday school life.

Continuing the EMEI's history that produces its present, another fundamental aspect must be highlighted in a consideration of the constitution of this institution as a

¹⁰ Presentation of the school's mission and regulations; issues related to inclusion; introduction to some of the school's spaces; explanation of how animals/insects that appeared in the school environment were dealt with; dissemination of first aid methods; among other topics.

promoter of gender and sexuality equality: the posthumous tribute to the educator Deborah Thomé Sayão, after whom the EMEI is named, articulated within the historical plot and thus likewise constituting the present of the school.

Before presenting her academic trajectory, it is worth highlighting the teacher Cecília's account of her encounter with Deborah's mother on the day of the school's inauguration:

Her mother came up to me and said 'I feel that this school will have the enchantment that my daughter wanted for childhood', that moment gave me the chills because I was arriving at a school with the same wish. I didn't know Deborah, but from that moment on I said 'we'll find a way to bring Deborah in here and it will be in the day-to-day, in everyday life with the children, out of respect for this childhood (Interview with Cecília, 2022).

Deborah, who held a degree in physical education, included a focus on childhood in her work and studies. Antonieta told us that, soon after the school was inaugurated, she sought to learn more about Deborah's life and now says that one of the privileges of this EMEI is to carry her name, *because Deborah was a physical education teacher who thought about childhood, who reflected on the questions of the child's body* (Interview with Antonieta, 2022). Cecília (Interview with Cecília, 2022) further added that one of Deborah's aims was to think of *the child in movement, the active child, the child with a voice*. In Deborah's own words, from an article published in 2002,

In early childhood education pedagogy, the child and its interactions among themselves and with adults are the point of departure for the construction and reconstruction of a culture that is alive and dynamic, in which "the body and movement," their meanings and significances, are seen and experienced as specifically human characteristics (Sayão, 2002, p. 65).

Deborah's academic production does not remain merely as a theoretical reference, we observe, but produce effects on how the school thinks about childhood, bodies, gender and sexuality. The educators Antonieta and Cecília recount how, in the month of March, when they organize an activity in tribute to International Women's Day, they set aside a moment to talk about Deborah,

Who is Deborah, we carry her name and everything she did for childhood. We share this with the parents, with the children in different ways, and with the teachers. Deborah is very much alive in our mission and inside the school all these years (Interview with Cecília, 2022).

These narratives, along with the photograph on display in the administration office, are a testament to how Deborah is present within the school. The physical education professor passed away in 2006,¹¹ but during her lifetime she left significant traces in the places she worked, which is why the Municipal Department of Education chose her name to designate this EMEI.

Deborah's life and work mark and constitute the school to this day. Deborah obtained her B.A. in physical education from the University of Pelotas (1981). She worked for 13 years at FURG (from 1991 to 2004), always connected to early childhood education. Between 2000 and 2005, she completed her doctorate at the Federal University of Santa Catarina/UFSC, with a dissertation entitled "Gender Relations and Teaching Work in Early Childhood Education: A Study of Teachers in Daycare".

Throughout her professional life in the academic field, Deborah produced and published various works addressing the themes of gender, sexuality, bodies, and childhood. In the book "Gender in Education: Space for Diversity" (Sartori; Brito, 2004), published in 2004, she presents a text entitled "Childhood, Sexuality, and Education: Aspects of the Relations between Professionals and Children."

In this publication, from nearly twenty years ago, she questions the lack of theoretical production on sexuality and childhood that "accounts for the cultural differences between boys and girls" (Sayão, 2004, p. 44-45). In this text, she revisits the perspective of sexuality beyond the sexual act, referring to "feelings, desires, relationships between people" (Sayão, 2004, p. 45). Furthermore, she problematizes the representation of children as "angelic creatures", treated as "subjects devoid of sexuality, because we associate them with purity and the incapacity to feel desire or pleasure with their own bodies" (Sayão, 2004, p. 45). Deborah concludes by affirming that "the knowledge that is being produced also produces the social reality and, for this reason, it is important to be aware of what is said, written, and spoken about childhood—and we include sexuality here" (Sayão, 2004, p. 46).

She continued her publications and, in 2005, obtained her doctorate with a dissertation that aimed to "understand how men come to constitute themselves as early childhood education teachers in a profession that is considered 'typically

¹¹ Deborah was 45 years old when she passed away on March 8, 2006 following a three-year battle against cancer.

female” (Sayão, 2005, p. 254). We will highlight two excerpts from Deborah’s dissertation that align with what has been proposed at the EMEI as a school that promotes gender and sexuality equality.

The following excerpts address themes concerning childhood and the ways that children are constituted in early childhood education. Deborah notes that the social meanings of gender represented in school position and shape the children according to a given standard of “being a man” and “being a woman”. This standard, in turn, discriminates against and hierarchizes subjects.

If gender is constitutive of social relations between men and women, clearly then thinking about actions within the daycare implies thinking about relations engendered not only from the standpoint of the professionals’ identities, but also from the standpoint of the actions they exercise upon the children (Sayão, 2005, p. 254).

[...] For the purposes of this study, what has been and continues to be of interest is how social meanings of gender are represented, how hierarchies, differences, and social meanings are attributed. How these are shown to boys and girls, what are the legitimate positions they should occupy in the social space—the “healthiest” or more normal ones, in contrast to those that must necessarily be rejected. Taking masculinity and femininity as gender constructions, boys and girls are educated from a very early age to conform to pre-determined and exclusionary models of what it means to be a man or woman in each culture or society and gender studies indicate the ways in which we learn to differentiate and hierarchize the sexes (Sayão, 2005, p. 262).

Following this brief overview of some of Deborah’s work, we return to the thread we have been following to relate some experiences in the history of the EMEI that also produce it as a school that promotes gender equality. Deborah’s name was a *political choice*, as Belmira stated in her interview, since it resulted from a vote and a decision by the Municipal Department of Education, even before the inauguration and the selection of the school’s administrators. Belmira added that *she was chosen because she was a teacher in the field of early childhood education and because she had founded the Early Childhood Education Center at FURG, so this was a very strong name*.

Once installed at the EMEI, the school’s leadership sought to study and become familiar with this educator whose name the school bears. In this regard, Belmira (Interview with Belmira, 2021) tells us:

When we studied Deborah, we saw that she was very much aligned with what we believe about childhood and what we believe about gender identity

and gender equality, because Deborah also carried this banner. Thus, being EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão also means being Professor Deborah.

This identification with Deborah is not merely nominal, but also articulated with a conception of childhood and education aligned with the Reggio Emilia approach (Sá, 2010), reinforcing a pedagogy that recognizes the child as an active subject and producer of meaning. As Belmira, Antonieta and Cecília related, this has been the school's pedagogical proposal since its inauguration, and to which they are committed.

We take Reggio Emilia as an inspiration. Reggio Emilia is about seeing the child as active, as creative, with the potential to create. The potential comes entirely from the child, and the teacher, who is also a protagonist, engages with what the child brings and continues to offer pedagogical support within this approach (Interview with Cecília, 2022).

This educational approach comes from the history of a province in Italy called Reggio Emilia, where workers and residents who had lost everything in the Second World War came together to build a school for children (Sá, 2010). Loris Malaguzzi (1999), an Italian educator and psychologist, went to the city and closely followed the building of schools based on this model. He recognized the potential of this project, since it was rooted in the desire of the entire community, especially the families, to rebuild their own history and create possibilities for the children (Sá, 2010). According to Malaguzzi (1999, p. 62),

What they wanted was to recognize the child's right to be a protagonist and the need to sustain each child's spontaneous curiosity at the highest level. We had to preserve our decision to learn from the children, from the events, and from the families, to the fullest extent of our professional limits, and remain always ready to change our minds, so as to never be too certain.

These points touched on by the author—such as recognizing the child as a protagonist and as spontaneous; the possibility for the educator to learn with the child while teaching; and the idea of the school attentive to changing points of view rather than seeking certainties—are all fundamental to this approach. In this sense, by aligning with this approach, the EMEI's leadership creates the pedagogical and institutional conditions for acknowledging issues of gender and sexuality as part of the child's world, breaking away from the denialist discourses that exclude children from these themes in the name of purity and innocence.

Fostering discussions and debates with children allows them to exercise their thinking and position themselves as active subjects with a capacity to think and create arguments about what affects them. This can be powerful for self-knowledge; for care of oneself and others; for developing values; and for forming opinions, so that the child may transform themselves (Xavier Filha, 2018). This movement toward children's protagonism is evident in another project, called the "Owl League", an initiative developed for Level I A (four-year-old children) at EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão. It emerged from everyday experience with the aim of building a group identity, among the group of "super-heroes" and "super-heroines" in which they could think and work as a collective, exercising listening, sharing, and, above all, respect for others.

According to the school administrators and the class's teacher, "this proposal did not arise to organize the children into a fixed routine, but rather so that they could learn to share experiences with solidarity, critical awareness, and civic-mindedness" (Machado; Rodrigues; Oliveira, 2019, p. 203). In this way the group of "super-heroes" and "super-heroines" develop throughout the year actions in the school to address certain demands within the institution, including activities that debate issues of gender and sexuality, such as combating child sexual abuse.

Thus, the actions developed by the "Owl League" operate as practices of resistance and as sites for the production of other forms of subjectivation, reverberating in the municipality in such a way that they mobilized an ultraconservative movement against the inclusion of gender and sexuality issues in the school environment. Known as the "anti-gender movement", in this study we point to clashes within a process of discontinuity permeated by relations of power and strategies of resistance, which also constitute the EMEI Deborah in its process of recognizing itself as a school that promotes gender and sexuality equality. In the following section we examine the incursions of the anti-gender movement, with its slogan of "gender ideology", as events that have marked the school and that also form part of the EMEI's historical plot.

4 Incursions of an Anti-Gender Movement

Throughout this article, we have been sketching traces of the history of EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão with the aim of problematizing the present—that is, reflecting

on the continuities and discontinuities, on the strategies and effects that past events may have produced in this school. According to Ferrari and Nogueira (2023, p. 118), from a Foucauldian perspective, history “[...] that which shows us that we live within an immensity of events”, which are at play and become visible in history within relations of force. From this perspective, we briefly problematize how the attacks of the anti-gender movement emerged at the EMEI Deborah.

In 2017, the Owl League developed an activity linked to the Gender Equality Promoting School Project. The activity involved storytelling sessions in all the classrooms from the book *Pipo e Fifi*, by Caroline Arcari (2018). The theme of caring for one’s body is addressed playfully in this work, clarifying that intimate parts should not be touched or seen by others without permission. This activity was featured in an open channel television news broadcast, in a segment called Bom Exemplo [Good Example]. In addition to the storytelling activity, the report also highlighted discussions the EMEI was having with the children about the organization of the bathrooms, privacy, and respect in using this space, which at this school was divided by classroom groups rather than by gender.

After this report, the anti-gender movement’s actions began to reverberate more directly and affect the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão.¹² It is therefore not possible to consider the conditions under which this school constitutes itself as an institution promoting gender and sexuality equality without considering the incursions of the anti-gender movement in the school.¹³ When we refer to early childhood education, we are also talking about childhood, and in doing so we encounter a social discourse that presents children as innocent, pure, immature, and too young to talk about sexuality.

This perception of the child as innocent and asexual has been mobilizing a transnational movement that “repudiates gender” (Corrêa, 2018). Since the second

¹² Prior to this, other attacks by the anti-gender movement against the Gender Equality Promoting School Project had already taken place. In this study, however, we address only what occurred directly at the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão.

¹³ The article entitled “Gênero e sexualidade na educação infantil: a ideologia de gênero distorce tudo” [Gender and Sexuality in Early Childhood Education: Gender Ideology Distorts Everything] (<https://periodicos.unifesp.br/index.php/olhares/article/view/15600>) and the article “‘Eu estou sendo temida, eu sou a professora bicho papão’ gênero, sexualidade e educações menores na educação infantil” [‘I Am Feared’: I Am the Bogeyman Teacher: Gender, Sexuality and ‘Minor Educations’ in Early Childhood Education] (<https://periodicos.uem.br/ojs/index.php/ImagensEduc/article/view/74826>) provide further details on the incursions of the anti-gender movement.

half of the 90s this movement has framed discussions of gender and sexuality in a distorted manner as a threat to the family and to children, arguing that these debates threaten moral and traditional values regarding family structure, sexuality, and ways of being a man or a woman.

One of the strategies deployed by this movement is to label gender and sexuality studies as “gender ideology”, in an effort to disqualify and delegitimize them, presenting them as ideology and stripping them of their scientific character (Paraíso, 2016a). In this sense, the discourse and claims made by the anti-gender movement against gender and sexuality studies are fallacious: “gender ideology” is an invention designed to contain and control social thought and to maintain the gender and sexuality norms to which our society is confined, reiterating cis-heteronormativity as the standard—as correct, “normal”, and traditional.

The term “gender ideology” functions as a discursive dispositive that produces fear, surveillance, and silencing. As Paraíso argues, “to call gender studies an ideology is a political strategy that delegitimizes scientific knowledge” (Paraíso, 2016b, p. 394). In line with Foucault (2014), it is understood that discourses do not only describe reality, but produce it, establishing regimes of truth that authorize certain practices and prohibit others.

This discourse reached the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão deliberately through a social media movement following the television report. Concerns were raised regarding the EMEI exposing children through the use of shared bathrooms. Additionally, the school was criticized for openly addressing sexuality.

Beyond this, the day after the broadcast of the report, a city councilor proposed a bill entitled “School without Gender Ideology Program.”¹⁴ This bill, echoing what had already been circulated under the slogan “gender ideology,” was grounded in a discourse aimed at restricting discussions of diversity and difference within the school. It was therefore necessary to create strategies of resistance to confront the accusations and keep the project going.

The EMEI subsequently proposed meetings with the children’s families, with the aim of clarifying the topics under discussion in the school. According to Belmira, Antonieta and Nísia, writing in *Tecituras sobre corpos, gêneros e sexualidade no*

¹⁴ The bill is not publicly available; to access it, please contact the authors of this article. Moreover, it was rejected by the Municipal Chamber of Councilors’ Committee on Constitution and Justice on the grounds that it was deemed unconstitutional.

espaço escolar [Weavings on Bodies: Gender and Sexuality in the School], the support they received from families that year was crucial to sustaining the work at the EMEI.

The parents' sense of belonging to the mission generated both a defense of the topics, as well as mobilization, so that the city councilors who had 'distorted' the facts, would issue a retraction and show what was actually happening. The latter did not occur, but with the support we received, we continued to promote dialogues on gender equality (Machado; Rodrigues; Oliveira, 2019, p. 207).

These situations occurred during the first year of the Gender Equality Promoting School Project, in 2017; however, the rhetoric of "gender ideology" has accompanied the EMEI in different ways in subsequent years. Briefly, we cite part of the narrative by Cecília, referring to a disagreement with a teacher from the same EMEI who subscribes to and echoes the discourse of "gender ideology." In recounting a conversation about the importance of dialogue with the children about gender equality and equity, Cecília (Interview with Cecília, 2022) says: [...] *there's a teacher here who says to me like this 'you just don't see it, you see it in a simple way, you see this childhood, but there's a lot behind it' and I also try to respect this teacher's perspective.*

In this narrative, an important point echoed by the anti-gender discourse needs to be highlighted: the idea that there is something "behind" work on issues of gender and sexuality in the school setting, insofar as such discourses "undermine the scientific legitimacy of gender and sexuality studies" (Pereira, 2019, p. 41), endeavoring to delegitimize and destabilize the actions and implementation of activities developed at the school.

Moreover, there is an alarmist tone in the anti-gender discourses and, consequently, in the narrative of the teacher mentioned by Cecília, in considering the debates as going beyond the pursuit of gender and sexuality equality and equity, generating harmful consequences for Brazilian society. The hypothesis of a threat to childhood and youth culminates in the idea of moral corruption, in which children and young people would be indoctrinated to be homosexuals, to choose their gender, and be incited to sexual practices.

This moral panic fomented by the anti-gender movement reverberates in the political sphere, as we saw with the bill entitled "School without Gender Ideology,"

proposed in 2017. Along these lines, in 2021, another city councilor, from the same municipality as the EMEI, sent a formal inquiry to the Coordinator of Affirmative Action, Inclusion, and Diversity, as well as the rector's office, and the Education Institute at FURG, to which the Gender Equality Promoting School Project is connected, questioning what the project consisted of and what were the activities carried out by its members.

The letter also contained an image of a photograph of a plaque (the seal of the Gender Equality Promoting School Project) affixed to the premises of the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão. The document's contents conveyed a message of surveillance over the school and the project, while at the same time expressing doubt about what was actually being addressed regarding gender and sexuality—an attempt at intimidation characteristic of the “gender ideology” narrative.

The anti-gender discourse has been disseminated in society and within the school community. Various speculations have arisen regarding the use of bathrooms, which made the issue of bathrooms a topic of discussion among the families of children at the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão. Cecília (Interview with Cecília, 2022) offered the following report:

[...] this year [2022] we had parents come to us saying they didn't want the bathrooms this way [separated by classes], others saying 'my child is here, I'll have to accept it anyway, but I don't agree,' children are also going to the bathroom saying that a classmate was in there 'I don't want to go to the bathroom because I'm afraid because at home my mother said everyone uses this bathroom.' This happened because both these parents and the newer teachers did not build this together, did not think it through together [...] and arrived here already influenced by a lot of media out there; they brought their children here, but thinking I'll go there, but I'll speak up about the bathrooms and I'll change that.

The media influence Cecília refers to is the dissemination—mainly through social media—of the moral panic generated by supporters of the anti-gender movement regarding gender, sexuality, and the body as topics considered inappropriate for children. Thus emerges a rhetoric that frames society, families, and children as being under threat, thereby seeking to strengthen and expand the anti-gender movement by restricting the possibility of speaking and thinking about equality between men and women; about the multiple forms of family beyond the heteronormative; and about children's knowledge of their own bodies, self-care, and information to confront the many instances of child sexual abuse.

The slogan “gender ideology” has been spreading and trying to control debates in schools, with the aim of excluding issues of gender and sexuality from school curricula as educational content. These themes, however, come from the children themselves, confirming the school as a gendered and sexualized space, not because adults impose these themes, but because they are part of children’s lives, emerging from their bodies, play, fantasies, and from the relationships and configurations of their own families.

In this sense, contrary to what anti-gender discourses claim, the school does not introduce sexuality into children’s lives, as they are already situated within a gendered and sexualized world. As Louro (2008, p. 16) point out, “[...] the school always spoken about sexuality, even when it claimed to silence it,” producing norms, expectations and hierarchies regarding children’s bodies.

Given this, we argue that anti-gender discourses produce a disturbance that ultimately generates a movement of resistance and struggle. Hence, the effects of the anti-gender movement are understood here as a condition that enabled the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão to mobilize strategies of resistance that facilitated and sustained the emergence and repercussion of issues of gender and sexuality within the school.

The attacks of the anti-gender movement should not be understood as isolated events, but rather as part of a network of power relations that seeks to control discourses, bodies, and pedagogical practices. As Foucault (2014, p. 104) notes, “where there is power, there is resistance,” and it is precisely in these confrontations that the EMEI mobilizes strategies to reaffirm their commitment to gender and sexuality equality.

Finally, we want to emphasize the necessity and urgency for schools, starting in early childhood, to collectively rethink gender norms that (re)produce prejudice, violence and precarious lives. Thus, we understand these experiences—encompassing the subjects of the EMEI (teachers and staff, children and their families) and the experiences they have undergone in relation to the school’s name, the pedagogical approach adopted, the involvement of teachers in the Gender Equality Promoting School Project, and the repeated attacks of the anti-gender movement—as productive of activities and actions that engage the school community in thinking about and problematizing gender and sexuality.

5 Final Considerations

As we have noted in this article, the constitution of the EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão as a promoter of gender and sexuality issues was not coincidental. Throughout the study, we identified events that have marked the school, inscribed in its historical trajectories and in its everyday practices.

We draw on the understanding of history proposed by Michel Foucault (2004), placing under investigation the historical conditions that made possible the present fact (Amorim; Mazzei; Ferrari, 2023): the EMEI's recognition of itself as a promoter of gender and sexuality issues. We thus reiterate that the history mobilized here does not constitute neutral knowledge, but rather as a production that selects traces through which to problematize events that are not necessarily in chronological order.

The path constructed enabled thinking critically and the perception of the school's movements in producing itself as a promoter of these themes, at the same time that the EMEI came to recognize itself in this role. In assuming its role as a space for debate, the school acknowledges the educational institution as a gendered and sexualized space and proposes to foster discussions guided by gender and sexuality equity, endeavoring to minimize the inequalities and violence produced by normative standards.

As an example, we highlight the production of a video in response to a case of femicide that occurred in the vicinity of the school. This action demonstrates the commitment of the EMEI to confronting violence against women and to understanding its social and cultural dimensions.

This positioning results from a process of constitution linked to the Gender Equality Promoting School Project, but also from the events that traverse the school's trajectory. Among these, we highlight the community struggle to establish the school, the participation of families, the academic trajectory of professor Deborah Thomé Sayão, and the incursions produced by the anti-gender movement.

In this regard, we emphasize actions developed in 2017, the school's first year participating in the Project. During this period, the EMEI became a target of the anti-gender movement, in a reaction to initiatives aimed at disrupting cis-heteronormative logic and at transforming approaches to gender and sexuality.

Finally, it is important to underscore that this study does not seek to present this EMEI as a model to be followed, but rather to discuss experiences produced in a singular context, which cannot be reproduced in the same way in other schools. These experiences are marked by continuities and discontinuities and are constantly being reconfigured, necessitating ongoing debate, contestation, new constructions, and additional spaces for formation.

The EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão is produced as a promoter of gender and sexuality equality and equity through the historical experiences that have constituted it as an agent of everyday resistance, insofar as it does not remain silent in the face of the diversity of children's lives. Drawing on Gallo and Monteiro (2020), we understand this school as an institution that disrupts, inspires, and amplifies other ways of thinking and acting, reinforcing the need to expand spaces such as the Gender Equality Promoting School Project—spaces oriented toward teacher education and the construction of knowledge committed to gender equality and equity, and toward opening possibilities for thinking differently about what is socially reproduced around these issues.

REFERENCES

- AMORIM, Grazielle Corrêa; MAZZEI, Luiz Davi; FERRARI, Anderson. Meninas comem banana; e meninos, laranja: gênero e sexualidade no contexto escolar. *In*: FERRARI, Anderson; CASTRO, Roney Polato de (eds.). **Produção de conhecimento em gênero, sexualidade e educação**: dez anos do Gesed. Curitiba: Appris, 2023. p. 161-176.
- ARCARI, Caroline. **Pipo e Fifi**: prevenção do abuso sexual na infância. São Paulo: Caqui, 2018.
- BRASIL. Lei nº 8.069, de 13 de julho de 1990. **Dispõe sobre o Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente e dá outras providências**. Diário Oficial da União, Brasília, DF, 16 Jul. 1990.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. Resolução nº 6, de 24 de abril de 2007. **Institui o Programa Nacional de Reestruturação e Aquisição de Equipamentos para a Rede Escolar Pública de Educação Infantil (Proinfância)**. Diário Oficial da União, Brasília, DF, 25 abr. 2007.
- BUTLER, Judith. **Problemas de gênero**: feminismo e subversão da identidade. 16. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2019.
- CONNELLY, Michael F.; CLANDININ, D. Jean. Relatos de experiência e investigação narrativa. *In*: LARROSA, Jorge (Ed.). **Déjame que te cuente**: ensayos sobre narrativa y educación. Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires: Laertes, 1995. p. 11-59.
- CORRÊA, Sonia. A “política do gênero”: um comentário genealógico. **Cadernos Pagu**, Campinas, v. 53, 2018. Available at: <https://pesquisa.bvsalud.org/portal/resource/pt/int-5494>. Accessed on: Dec. 14, 2023.
- DROIT, Roger-Pol. **Michel Foucault**: entrevistas. São Paulo: Graal, 2006. 107 p.
- FERRARI, Anderson; NOGUEIRA, Julia de Castro Martins Ferreira. O conceito de história na perspectiva foucaultiana. *In*: FERRARI, Anderson; CASTRO, Roney Polato de (eds.). **Produção de conhecimento em gênero, sexualidade e educação**: dez anos do Gesed. Curitiba: Appris, 2023. p. 111-126.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. **A arqueologia do saber**. 7. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2002a.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. **A verdade e as formas jurídicas**. Rio de Janeiro: NAU Editora, 2002b. 160p.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. **A ordem do discurso**. 24 ed. São Paulo: Edições Loyola, 2014.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. **Estratégia, poder-saber**. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2015. (Ditos & Escritos, v. 4).

FOUCAULT, Michael. **Microfísica do Poder**. 24. ed. São Paulo: Graal, 2007. 288 p.

FOUCAULT, Michel. **Segurança, território, população**: curso dado no Collège de France (1977–1978). São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2010.

FOUCAULT, Michael. **Vigiar e Punir**. 35. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2008. 295 p.

FOUCAULT, Michel. **Ditos e Escritos**: ética, sexualidade, política. Organização e seleção de textos Manoel Barros da Mota. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 2004. 300p.

GALLO, Silvio; MONTEIRO, Alexandrina. Educação menor como dispositivo potencializador de uma escola outra. **REMATEC**: Revista de Matemática, Ensino e Cultura, ano 15, n. 33, p. 185-200, 2020. Available at: <https://www.rematec.net.br/index.php/rematec/article/view/147/144>. Accessed on: Oct. 12, 2024.

GOUVEIA, Maria Cristina Soares de. Tempos de aprender: a produção histórica da idade escolar. **Revista Brasileira de História da Educação**, n. 8, p. 265-288, Jul./Dec. 2004. Available at: <https://periodicos.uem.br/ojs/index.php/rbhe/article/view/38690/20219>. Accessed on: Nov. 20, 2023.

LARROSA, Jorge. **Tremores**: escritos sobre experiência. Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2018. 175p.

LOCKMANN, Kamila; MOTA, Maria Renata Alonso. Práticas de assistência à infância no Brasil: uma abordagem histórica. **Revista Linhas**, Florianópolis, v. 14, n. 26, p. 76-111, Jan./Jun. 2013. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269748433_Praticas_de_assistencia_a_infancia_no_Brasil_uma_abordagem_historica. Accessed on: Dec. 20, 2022.

LOURO, Guacira Lopes. **Gênero, sexualidade e educação**: uma perspectiva pós-estruturalista. 10. ed. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2008.

MACHADO, Maria Angélica; RODRIGUES Roselle Solano; OLIVEIRA Vânia. Dialogando sobre gênero na EMEI Deborah Thomé Sayão. In: RIZZA, Juliana Lapa; MAGALHÃES, Joanalira Corpes; RIBEIRO, Paula Regina Costa; COSTA, Ana Luiza Chaffe (eds.). **Tecituras sobre corpos, gêneros e sexualidades no espaço escolar**. Rio Grande: Ed. da Furg, 2019. p. 203-209.

MALAGUZZI, Loris. História, ideias e filosofia básica. In: EDWARDS, Carolyn; GANDINI, Lella; FORMAN, George. **As cem linguagens da criança**: a abordagem de Reggio Emilia na educação da primeira infância. Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas Sul, 1999. p. 59-104.

MELLO, Dilma; MURPHY, Shaun; CLANDININ, D. Jean. Introduzindo a investigação narrativa nos contextos de nossas vidas: uma conversa sobre nosso trabalho como investigadores narrativos. **Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa (Auto)Biográfica**, Salvador, v. 1, n. 3, p. 565-583, Sept./Dec. 2016. Available at:

<https://app.amanote.com/v4.0.66/research/note-taking?resourceId=uaIWAnQBKQvf0Bhiuafa>. Accessed on: Sept. 5, 2024.

PARAÍSO, Marlucy Alves. A ciranda do currículo com gênero, poder e resistência. **Currículo sem Fronteiras**, v. 16, n. 3, p. 388-415, Sept./Dec. 2016a. Available at: <https://www.curriculosemfronteiras.org/vol16iss3articles/paraiso.pdf>. Accessed on: May, 3, 2024.

PARAÍSO, Marlucy Alves. “Ideologia de gênero”: uma falácia para deslegitimar os estudos de gênero. **Revista Educação e Sociedade**, Campinas, v. 37, n. 136, p. 381-398, 2016b. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/es/a/htcmPttvFjg4sb8rYT8CzPD/?lang=pt>. Accessed on: May, 10, 2024.

PARAÍSO, Marlucy Alves. Pesquisas pós-críticas em educação no Brasil: esboço de um mapa. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**, v. 34, n. 122, p. 283-303, May/Aug. 2004. Available at: <https://www.scielo.br/j/cp/a/JrF5H8r96wRTvTDLShYpcM/abstract/?lang=pt>. Accessed on: Oct. 18, 2024.

PEREIRA, Lara Torrada. **Escolas promotoras da igualdade de gênero: tessituras de um projeto-experiência**. Thesis (Master's) – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande – Furg, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação em Ciências: Química da Vida e Saúde. Rio Grande/RS. 2019. 138p

PEREIRA, Lara Torrada; RIBEIRO, Paula Regina Costa; RIZZA, Juliana Lapa. A ofensiva antigênero e seus efeitos: Um projeto-experiência com professoras/es da Educação Básica. **Revista Retratos da Escola**, Brasília, v. 14, n. 28, p. 107-126, Jan./Apr., 2020. Available at: <http://retratosdaescola.emnuvens.com.br/rde/article/view/1093>. Accessed on: Feb. 25, 2024.

SÁ, Alessandra Latalisa de. Um olhar sobre a abordagem educacional de Reggio Emilia. **Paidéia: Revista do curso de Pedagogia da Universidade FUMEC**. Belo Horizonte, n. 8, p. 55-80, Jan./Jun. 2010. Available at: <http://revista.fumec.br/index.php/paideia/article/view/1281>. Accessed on: Oct. 4, 2022.

SCOTT, Joan Wallach. Gênero: uma categoria útil de análise histórica. **Educação & Realidade**, Porto Alegre, v. 20, n. 2, p. 71-99, Jul./Dec. 1995. Available at: <https://lume.ufrgs.br/handle/10183/257862>. Accessed on: Oct. 20, 2024.

SARTORI, Ari José; BRITTO, Néli Suzana (eds.). **Gênero na educação: espaço para diversidade**. Florianópolis: Genus, 2004. 120p.

SAYÃO, Deborah Thomé. **Relações de gênero e trabalho docente na Educação Infantil: um estudo de professores em creche**. Doctoral dissertation. Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina – UFSC. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação. Florianópolis. 2005.

SAYÃO, Deborah Thomé. Infância, sexualidade e educação: aspectos das relações entre profissionais e crianças. *In*: SARTORI, Ari José; BRITTO, Néli Suzana (eds.). **Gênero na educação: espaço para diversidade**. Florianópolis: Genus, 2004. p. 40-47.

SAYÃO, Deborah Thomé. Corpo e movimento: notas para problematizar algumas questões relacionadas à educação infantil e à educação física. **Rev. Bras. Cienc. Esporte**, Campinas, v. 23, n. 2, jan., p. 55-67, 2002. Available at: <http://revista.cbce.org.br/index.php/RBCE/article/view/270>. Accessed on: Aug. 23, 2022.

VEYNE, Paul Marie. **Como se escreve a história: Foucault revoluciona a história**. Brasília: Editora Universidade de Brasília, 2008. 285p.

XAVIER FILHA, Constantina. Gênero e sexualidade na infância: construção de pânico morais. *In*: RIBEIRO, Paula Regina Costa; MAGALHÃES, Joanalira Corpes (eds.). **Interlocuções sobre gêneros e sexualidades na educação**. Rio Grande: Ed. da FURG, 2018. p. 123-140.

Received in december 2025 | Approved in march 2026

MINI BIOGRAPHY

Lara Torrada

Phd in science education from the Federal University of Rio Grande - FURG. Master's degree in science education: chemistry of life and health at the FURG. Psychologist graduated at the FURG. Member of the Sexuality and School Research Group - Gese/ FURG. E-mail: lara.torrada@gmail.com

Paula Regina Costa Ribeiro

Phd in biological sciences from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul - UFRGS. Postdoctoral researcher in education at the Coimbra Higher School of Education (Portugal). Full Professor at the Institute of Education and the Graduate Program in science education at the FURG, and coordinator of the Gese/ FURG. E-mail: pribeiro.furg@gmail.com

Juliana Lapa Rizza

Phd in environmental education from the Federal University of Rio Grande – FURG. Postdoctoral researcher in science education at FURG. Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Education, Federal University of Rio Grande - FURG. E-mail: rizzalapajuliana@gmail.com

Translated by **Sean Michael McIntyre**