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## Southern Perspectives on the Queer Movement: Committed to Home

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## Southern Perspectives on the Queer Movement: Committed to Home

### Abstract

Nancy Shore reviews *Southern Perspectives on the Queer Movement: Committed to Home* by Harlan Greene and Shelia R. Morris.



# BOOK REVIEW

## Southern Perspectives on the Queer Movement: Committed to Home

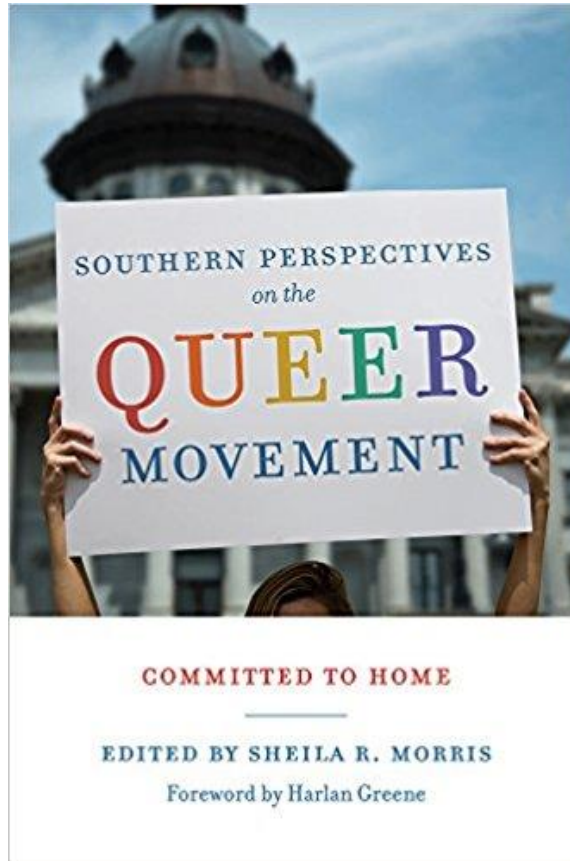
Harlan Greene and Sheila R. Morris

University of South Carolina Press, 2018, \$27.99

This insightful, thoughtful volume compiles stories from South Carolina natives and residents and their journey toward equality in the Palmetto State and beyond. All of the stories involve personal and public struggles and triumphs over bigotry, hatred, misinformation, and ignorance. They are stories of parents, children, siblings, and friends in the LGBTQ community. They come from diverse backgrounds, including pastors, activists, musicians, politicians, and bar owners. Every story contains encouragement about fighting against fear and injustice, wherever they are found. No action is too small to be valued.

Because there are more than nineteen committed, thoughtful activists for gay rights in the State of South Carolina, the author considers this to be volume 1, and hopes to expand into a series. However, she admits that some of the individuals she contacted did decline to be interviewed. With all the progress that has been made toward equity and justice, there remains some prejudice and reluctance.

In this volume, the author presents a collection of personal essays that encourage the reader to identify with the challenges and victories, while remembering that there is still more work to be done. The author shares her personal journey



of activism for equal pay, to women's rights, to marriage equality, while hearing her mother's voice in her head: "Why do those gay people have to make so much noise? I wish they would all go back in the closet. I would slam the door myself" (p. 109). The author credits activist Harvey Milk for the encouragement to "break down those closet doors for once and for all and stand up and start to fight" (p. 109).

This is not a book I would have sought out on my own, but because I value a broad perspective, and seek to understand rather than to be understood, I am grateful for these individuals. That they had the courage to share their personal story, and that they had the perseverance to keep moving forward for a cause they believe in.

From Harriet Hancock's story is a blessing shared with her:

*"May you be blessed with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that*

*you may live deep in your heart. May you be blessed with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people and the earth so that you will work for justice, equality, and peace. May you be blessed with tears to shed for those who suffer so that you will reach out to comfort them and change their pain to joy. And may you be blessed with the foolishness to think that you can make a difference in the world, so you will do the things others say cannot be done" (p. 49).*

All of the stories in this volume are stories of turning discomfort, anger, and pain into change, progress, and love. May there be more volumes to come in this series!

*Nancy Shore* is a graduate of University of South Carolina's School of Library and Information Science. [nancyas@email.sc.edu](mailto:nancyas@email.sc.edu)  
Hoping for a library job on a beach somewhere, and one of a few Gamecocks in Wyoming.