ABSTRACT BOOK

(RE)CONNECT, (RE)COLLECT AND (RE)IMAGINE CHILDHOODS FOR PLURIVERSAL POLITICS

AFRICA ONLINE
20-21 OCTOBER 2021

SPINNING THE STICKY THREADS OF CHILDHOOD MEMORIES: FROM COLD WAR TO ANTHROPOCENE

20-21 OCTOBER 2021

In the words of Donna Haraway (2019, 565), "stories nest like Russian dolls inside ever more stories and ramify like fungal webs throwing out ever more sticky threads." We are inspired by this provocation precisely 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, amidst both (re)emerging political divides and the growing awareness of our interdependence with other human beings and the more-than-human world in the face of the anthropocene.

The conference invites researchers, artists, professionals, and activists to probe the "fungal webs" and spin the "sticky threads" of childhood, remembering/forgetting, and childhood memories, to use memory as "a tool with which to think" (Bowker 2005, 15) about the past, present, and future. Memory is a productive process as it entangles in events and generates new events (Fox and Alldred 2019, 25). Memories can materially affect bodies, things, identities, and social processes, as they connect past and present events across time and space, producing both continuities and change.

Our conference organization will be based on a Decentered Satellite Conferencing (DSC) model, following three overarching principles: (1) to reduce the environmental impact of our research and artistic activities on the planet, (2) to trouble established modes of conferencing and create innovative dissemination of cross-national and collaborative research, and (3) to work towards more equal engagements and production of knowledge within and beyond academia. We are acutely aware of the challenges posed by the current times that restrict but also require us to reconsider and minimize air travel. At the same time, we acknowledge the significance of actual personal connections among people during and outside formal conference sessions. This is the reason why our conference blends online and onsite encounters in environmentally and socially sustainable ways.

DSC is an experiment in enabling participants to connect virtually and on a regional level at one of the four hubs – Tampere in Finland, Atlanta in the USA, Berlin in Germany, and Hajdúböszörmény, Hungary. In addition the Africa Hub will connect participants across the continent in an online format. Hub locations were identified by involving researchers across disciplinary fields, taking account of potentially untapped possibilities for collaboration, such as civil society actors and activists, and reaching out and engaging both already active and new project participants – academics and artists – globally.

Each hub is organized thematically around its own local call for participation that connects, contextualizes and adds new directions to engage with the conference's broader theme. Please visit the hub specific pages to explore the local calls. Please note that the conference programme of the Africa Online hub will span for the period of 11-22 October and of the Berlin hub 20-22 October.

We seek to connect disciplines, theoretical and methodological approaches in the humanities and social sciences, research and art, university and wider society across multiple geographical locations, and explore different historical eras through onsite and online synchronous and asynchronous engagements around the conference theme.

The conference is organized by the *Reconnect/Recollect project*
Follow us on *Facebook* and *Twitter*

References

Bowker, G. C. (2005) Memory Practices in the Sciences. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Fox, N.J. and Alldred, P. (2019) The Materiality of Memory: Affects, Remembering and Food Decisions. Cultural Sociology, 13(1), 20–36.

Haraway, D. (2019) It Matters What Stories Tell Stories; It Matters Whose Stories Tell Stories. a/b: Auto/Biography Studies, 34(3), 565-575.

(RE)CONNECT, (RE)COLLECT AND (RE)IMAGINE CHILDHOODS FOR PLURIVERSAL POLITICS

20-21 OCTOBER 2021

The Africa hub will gather online in Howspace to (Re)connect, (re)collect and (re)imagine childhoods for pluriversal politics and to promote meshworks of collectives and communities that "fight for lives of joy, meaning and dignity" and can weave together many possibilities for convivial societies (Escobar 2020, xxvi). This conference is part of a bigger project and conference. Over several years through autobiographic, autoethnographic, and collective biography research, this project has been writing alternative histories to inform current research and thinking about (post)socialist pasts, presents, and futures. Like a spiderweb, the conference will now spin its threads across the physical and virtual space, connecting our virtual Africa hub with hybrid local hubs in Tampere/Finland, Berlin/Germany, Atlanta/USA, and Hajdúböszörmény/Hungary. Through this conversation, we seek to connect disciplines, theoretical and methodological approaches in the humanities and social sciences, research and art, university and wider society across multiple geographical locations, and explore different historical eras through synchronous and asynchronous engagements around the conference theme. We also want to connect researchers, artists, activists and professionals in and beyond this conversation.

While European imperial powers that invaded, occupied, divided and colonized Africa during the scramble for Africa have all left, the legacy of colonialism continues through colonial thinking and the on-going influence of global extractive economies and military trade. The interests of imperial capitalist powers fashioned a particular notion of the modern child, mirroring the "human realities" of colonization (Cannella & Viruru, 2004, 4). The child functioned as "an index, a signifier of 'civilization' and modernity," while at the same time remaining "the key arena in which to instill such civilization" (Burman, 2008, 77). Since nations started gaining independence, for the most part, leaders, experts, social workers and educators in Africa accepted modernist knowledge and discourses of development (both economic and human) as universal, subjugating Ubuntu philosophy. More recently, we can increasingly find calls for decolonial thinking in childhood research. This conference seeks to bring together researchers, artists and activists living and working in Africa, to illuminate how coloniality continues to use child as figure, define childhood and shape the experiences of children, youth, and caregiving and how we may work together to build a different future in which all can flourish.

The conference invites participants to engage with decolonial and new materialist theories and in particular the broad spectrum of theorists and activists motivated by what Escobar (2020) calls 'pluriversal politics' to promote meshworks of collectives and communities that "fight for lives of joy, meaning and dignity" and can weave together many possibilities for convivial societies (Escobar 2020, xxvi). Pluriversal politics links Ubuntu with Buen Vivir, the social philosophy inspiring movements in South America. It offers a vision of a just world and also includes the more-than-human in the same sociability to enable all to enjoy a good life.

The aim is to get to know other participants as part of building inclusive linked communities and conversations beyond the conference.

References

Burman, E. (2008). Developments: Child, Image, Nation. London Routledge.

Cannella, G. S., and Viruru, R. (2004). Childhood and Postcolonization: Power, Education, And Contemporary Practice. Changing Images of Early Childhood. Retrieved from https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/jyvaskyla-ebooks/detail.action?docID=181991

Craps, S., Crownshaw, R., Wenzel, J., Kennedy, R., Colebrook, C., and Nardizzi, V. (2017). Memory studies and the Anthropocene: A roundtable. Memory Studies, 11(4), 498-515.
Escobar, A. (Ed.) (2020). Pluriversal Politics: The Real and The Possible. Duke University Press.

!Gâ re – Rangatiratanga – Dadirri : Decolonizing the 'capture of knowledge' https://wun.ac.uk/wun/research/view/g-re-rangatiratanga-dadirri-decolonizing-the-capture-of-knowledge

Kumarakulasingam, N., & Ngcoya, M. (2016). Plant Provocations: Botanical Indigeneity and (De)colonial Imaginations. Contexto Internacional, 38, 843-864. doi:10.1590/s0102-8529.2016380300006

Nyamnjoh, Francis. "Incompleteness: Frontier Africa and the Currency of Conviviality." Journal of Asian and African Studies. 2017; 52(3): 253-270.

Wenzel, J. (2009) Bulletproof: Afterlives of Anticolonial Prophecy in South Africa and Beyond. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Contact e-mail for Africa Online hub:
Norma Rudolph normarudolph610@gmail.com

THE COMING OF THE STRANGE ONES - STORYTELLING AS DECOLONIAL PRAXIS (IN NDINXANIWE)

QONDISWA JAMES
NKOSENATHI ERNIE KOELA
THEMBA STEWART

'Ndinxaniwe' is a contemporary adaptation of Credo Mutwa's 'The Coming of the Strange Ones' from his internationally acclaimed collection of African tales 'Indaba, My Children'. The piece follows three teenagers who attend a Catholic school in the forest of a rural town in the Eastern Cape. The teenagers are troubled by a shadow of their past selves which calls them deeper into history. Through drug-induced hallucinations, the boys slip into a deep sleep and arrive in the past, at the first point of contact between the white colonialists and the Black indigenous population.

This work is a critical analysis of the effects of patriarchal conflict, the conquest of the African continent, and its insidious effects on present-day rural boyhood.

In this session, Qondiswa James, the director and producer, Themba Stewart, the designer and Technical Manager, and Nkosenathi Koela, a music composer and performer of the very successful production at the 2021 National Arts Festival will introduce the piece and the work of Credo Mutwa. They will show some clips from the production and discuss their work.

PANEL: TRACING STICKY THREADS OF APARTHEID CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

KARIN MURRIS
ROSE-ANNE REYNOLDS
JOANNE PEERS

As chair, Karin Murris will briefly introduce the three presenters and the agential realism they are working with. They are enacting Karen Barad's notion of temporal diffraction.

The methodology helps to trace memories that have hitherto not mattered (Barad, 2018, p.222). It is a transindividual commitment to undo the injustices committed to those who are no longer there (including our childhood selves), with no pretense that the past can be undone. Diffracting through (the ghosts of) the past, memory is not the property of individual subjects, but a material condition, "written into the flesh of the world" (Barad, 2017, p.49).

In Barad's posthumanism, the past is not simply given, and re-membering is not a subjective activity of the human mind, nor are ghosts only human. Re-membering, a dis/embodied reconfiguring of past and future, is larger than any individual, because past events are neither singular, nor locatable, and leave traces, but not as a linear record as though beads on a string (p.48). Memories can never simply be erased, overwritten or recovered, because the past is not 'closed' or 'finished'. On the contrary, 'then' bleeds through 'now' (Barad, 2018, p. 224).

While existing in multiple temporalities, the researcher's task is to trace the thick now as a phenomenon and each presenter in this panel in their own powerful way, offer us an intra-active haunting and haunted ghost story, involving a temporal reading of 'post' Apartheid time/s and place/s.

Key words: posthumanism; childhood memories; Apartheid; hauntology; decolonisation

RE-MEMBERING AS A SACRED PRACTICE

ROSE-ANNE REYNOLDS

This paper is a re-membering of a life as a child of Apartheid and a teacher growing out, through and beyond that system in 'post'-Apartheid South Africa. It is not a story or sanitised history. The memories I share in this paper are alive and continuous enactments of a changing universe. I do not turn back to look at these memories and they do not drop into 'this' present, they are already here, but gone, already past, but different. These memories are not bound to an adult human but are entangled with the more-than-human.

Entangled in this chapter is how the concepts of child and childhood can be re-imagined through tracing the entanglements of the delicate complexity of my childhood that is not past or gone, and my adulthood that is not fixed or stable. I struggle with and draw on the work of Karen Barad (2007, 2010, 2014, 2017) and use "travel hopping" which can be understood as temporal diffraction, as a methodology in this paper.

Using the diffractive methodology which contests power producing binaries, I disrupt age as a category of exclusion as 'child' is habitually not considered fully human. Through an image of me in 1981, on a ladder swing suspended from a tree in the back garden of our family home, I think with the child, me as child, in 1981, 1985, 2007, 2017. I think with the orange and black lines of the ladder swing, the washing line in the background, and the lines of the shadow burned into the grass. Attention is drawn to the lines of childhood, Apartheid, colonisation, and racism. Also and the violence these lines enact through separation 'from' while always being entangled 'with'.

I trace the material-discursive entanglements of the human including child and the more-than-human encounters through images, re-memberings, dates and numbers.

SEA-PLACE A FIGURATION WITH WATERY MEMORIES

JOANNE PEERS

In this paper, I trace the multiple temporalities which seep into my body through the watery memories of childhood, through my womb as a place of life and labour in my early twenties and into my salty hair as I find myself floating in False Bay as a researching student in recent years. My own experiences and inheritances of racism, the folding, unfolding and refolding of structural relations of power force different relations with time, memory, place and research. I follow questions which murky the waters of research practices. How can we research and tell stories with-in the ghosts of the past-present in ways that pay attention to the very real but often invisible questions of displacement and its relations with time, memory, place and research (Barad 2007, Derrida 1994, Haraway 2017, Tsing 2017)? How can environmental education research practices be reconfigured through "learning to live with ghosts'' in a country haunted by racial and spatialised exclusions (Derrida 1994:viii)? I linger with the figuration of Sea-Place, to do justice to the response-ability of be-coming researcher.

As a figuration, Sea-Place is about unboundedness and emphasises the porous nature of time, place, memory and research as it is already a part of the formation of other chapters in my PhD. As a figure, Sea-Place shifts the stable nature of research and murkies the singular ways of thinking about the world. It's appearance in brown in this paper is an articulation of its entanglement with my skin. Colour matters. My skin is brown and I see, feel and sense myself as a porous brown body. As a watery life my skin like Sea-Place is open to absorption and recognising bodies as leaky. As I re-turn to memories and events in time, my brown skin follows (Barad 2007; Haraway 2000).

PANEL: TRANSVERSING CHILDHOODS

JANE QUIN
LUCI COELHO
ANNE NTOMBELA
FAITH KIMATHI

Gathering together experiences of childhood over our lifetime, three panellists from the current/present grandparent generation, present a genealogical bricolage of shifting possibilities through the metaphor of 'doing it like a dung beetle: in better balance between self, other and all'. Considering education as the ongoing cyclical struggle of living, learning, liberation for life, the conversation will be looking at the matter from the inside out: from ecosystemically centred grounded dreams to multiple experiential realities, comparing common pivots with plural possibilities we play with how to make better worlds possible from here now.

Key words: experiences of childhood; better balance between self, other and all; living, learning, liberation for life

REFLECTIONS ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA -PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

ALAN PENCE
PATRICK MAKOKORO

The presenters will provide a book "teaser" and overview of a new edited volume that they are working on. This book has been many years in incubation—picked up and put down numerous times. The 2020/2021 disruption of COVID 19, with its asymmetric impact on the oldest generations while largely (thankfully) passing over the youngest, brought to mind the need to revisit the past and document events and what could be learned from them.

Other periods, and certainly those that are earlier in Africa's ECD history, are also at threat of 'being left behind'. No single book could hope to capture all the relevant periods with the detail they deserve, but some sense of what 'came before' is valuable for those who will be tasked to 'build-back-better' as COVID relaxes its hold on peoples around the world, and we collectively reflect on 'where now?'

This presentation will provide an insight into the following topics that various chapter authors are working on:
- Reflections on ECD during the liberation period
- Transformative events (early 90s)
- Key Influencers in African early childhood development
- Africentrism and learning from Indigenous Knowledge
- Promoting Capacity and Cohesion through Early Childhood Development Virtual University

Key words: early childhood development, history, Indigenous knowledge

REMEMBERING RURAL CHILDHOOD FOR FUTURE RURAL CHILDREN IN CHILE

FRANCESCO SEPÚLVEDA CERDA

In Chile, as surely in many other territories in the world, remembering the rural is like remembering childhood. There is a parallelism between this two dimensions. Due to the fast transformations of both territories and bodies, an abyss separates these beings of the present from what they already were and never will be again. From this insurmountable, irrecoverable gap, the construction of an identity, and above all of a future for rural communities, becomes a difficult task. How does a way of life continue for communities if its constitutive material and symbolic elements are in extinction? How do rural children of the present dialogue with adults who remember their past childhoods? The memories of adult's childhoods are influenced by socially and morally constructed discourses about the 'must be' of the experiences of children. This implies that the expectations of a certain way of dwelling the rural area weigh on the practices of the children of the present, which puts into play pre-existing normative imaginary mediated by the memories of adults. In addition, those more intimate, non-representational memories have been detached from the daily experience to the extent that the sensory materiality of the rural (especially the relationship with nature) has deeply changed. This was mainly due to rapid urbanization, the intensification of productive activities and the emergence of new activities in rural areas. This presentation discusses the tensions about dwelling a changing territory in Chile that puts children and adults in a dispute over a territorial identity. The search for a resolution to this dispute through dialogue could help give meaning to the life experiences shared in the present of daily life, and could build convergent projections of different generations about a common future for their territories.

Key words: rural childhood; memories; extinction; dwelling

CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF ARMED CONFLICT: FROM VICTIMIZATION TO PEACE PROMOTING NARRATIVES

MARÍA CAMILA OSPINA ALVARADO

I Will present the results of My PhD thesis on children in early childhood whose families come from the contexts of armed conflict in Colombia. It is an action research in which children had a protagonic role, and in which their families and teachers also participated.

The results include children's potentials for peace-building as well as those of their families and teachers. I Will also present their future possibilities, which break with the notion of no future characteristic of the armed conflict contexts. These two approaches, potentials and future possibilities integrate what I named as generative peace, which Will also be presented.

Key words: Peace-building, children, early childhood, armed conflict, Colombia

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE EXCLUSION IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF AFRICANS: IMPACT ON BEINGNESS AND BECOMING AN AFRICAN

GUBELA MJI
MELANIE ALPERSTEIN
NON-PRESENTING AUTHORS:
ROSEMARY KALENGA
LIEKETSENG NED
DENNIS BANDA

This paper intends to push the frontiers of knowledge production and raise consciousness of indigenous knowledge systems as an essential strategy that can enable transformation and enhance intergenerational approaches to learning for all Africans. The lack of inclusion of indigenous knowledge that is produced through the daily interaction of African children within the home and their environment in African education systems has had a negative impact and is a threat to the beingness of Africans. This does not only have a negative impact on the beingness of the African child but also on the journey of becoming an African. Becoming an African is an evolving concept that requires consistent self-reflection and adjustment according to the context and ongoing changes that occur in that context. African education systems and research can play a transformative constructive role in the revival of beingness and becoming an African person. This revival of beingness and becoming an African should be facilitated from birth to death and beyond.

Key words: Indigenous Knowledge, Exclusion, Education Systems, African

EXPLORING THE MULTIPLICITY AND PLURALITY OF 'AFRICAN CHILDHOODS': TOWARDS A POLITICS OF JUSTICE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ABOUT 'OTHER' CHILDHOO

JACLYN MURRAY

This presentation centres on the critical reflections of a scholar tasked with teaching final year undergraduate students at a Higher Education institution in the United Kingdom on a module exploring 'global childhoods'. The module, conceptualised and run by the South African author (Murray, 2019a and b), is framed by two key notions. The first is Ngozi Adichie's powerful call for counter-narratives in the face of a dangerous 'single story' (TED, 2009) of childhood that constructs a 'binary and hierarchical arrangement of children's lives across the world' (Balagopalan, 2019: 13). The second responds to Salazar Perez and Saveedra's (2017) call for onto-epistemological diversity of early childhood and the centring of global south conceptualisations of childhood/s to counter hegemonic framings of particular children and childhoods as 'lacking' (Twum-Danso Imoh, 2016). Students on the module are predominantly from a white ethnic background. At the outset they acknowledged that their understanding of childhoods across majority world contexts are largely framed by a) stereotypical and dominant media images of 'African' children (e.g. advertisements for aid appeals across a range of digital platforms) and b) the idea of a 'universal childhood' as enshrined in the United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Drawing on the work of Gayatri C. Spivak (2004) and other postcolonial scholars this presentation aims to critically explore contemporary ways in which children are categorised and how the binary logic of the 'Global South' and the 'Global North' are complicit in these categorisations. Not only does the module aim to "balance the journalistic print and media…which often provide sensationalist stories about poverty and pain as the characteristics of African children and childhood", but to reiterate that "African childhood is not static but dynamic and with a long history, a versatile present and negotiable and promising future" (N.Y.M Botchway, 2019: x).

Key words: African childhoods, postcolonialism, teaching and learning

SEEING' WITH/IN THE WORLD: BECOMING-LITTLE

THERESA GIORZA
KARIN MURRIS

Critical posthumanism is an invitation to think differently about knowledge and educational relationality between humans and the more-than-human. This philosophical and political shift in subjectivity builds on, and is entangled with, poststructuralism and phenomenology. In this paper we read diffractively through one another the theories of Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa and feminist posthumanists Karen Barad and Rosi Braidotti. We explore the implications of the so-called 'ontological turn' for early childhood education. With its emphasis on a moving away from the dominant role of human vision (knowing and seeing) in educational research we show how videoing and photographing works as an apparatus in an analysis of data from an inner-city school in Johannesburg, South Africa. We are struck by children's seeing with the 'eyes of their skin' (Pallasmaa) and 'seeing' with/in the world (posthumanism) as their obvious distress is felt when a small tree sapling has been mowed down in a nearby park. We analyse the event with the help of a variation on Deleuze's notion of 'becoming-child': 'becoming-little', and Anna Tsing's 'the arts of noticing'. 'Becoming-little' as a methodology disrupts the adult/child binary that positions 'little', younger humans as inferior to their 'bigger' fully human counterparts. We exemplify 'becoming-little' through 4 and 5 year-olds' learning with the little tree and adopt Barad's temporal diffraction to 'see' what is in/visible in the park: the extractive, exploitative, colonising mining practices of White settlers in Johannesburg (SA). These are still part of the land on which the park was created but are in/visible beneath the 'skin' of the earth.

Key words: early childhood education; posthumanism; temporal diffraction; critical geography; Barad

LET GOOD FOOD BE THY MEDICINE

TIM ABAA

Over 7.2 million people go to bed on an empty stomach every day in SA. Most people are on chronic medication and the death rate keeps piling up unlike the olden days. There is so much rural urban migration. Youths are running away from rural areas and leaving behind the elderly. In urban areas people have become consumers rather than producers. Not many are playing their role in the food chain. Due to overpopulation dumping sites are mushrooming everyday leading to more pollution and they end up becoming a threat to our beautiful ecosystem. More chemicals, synthetic fertilizers and other poisonous inputs are used in food production, leading to disease outbreak and weak immune systems among our communities. Above are just some of the challenges that face our communities and I took the initiative and saw the need to help create and alternative food systems by promoting food gardens establishment through knowledge and skills transfer by training kids from ages 3 years to 100 year-old elderly. Am also helping establish farming enterprises with specific emphasis on rural areas to help curb rural urban migration, both township and urban so that people make maximum use of spaces to grow their own food.

Key words: Food gardens, intergeneration training, food sovereignty

RECONCEPTUALISING LANGUAGE PRACTICE IN AFRICAN INNER-CITY EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

NORA SANEKA

This research project, carried out in 2018, engaged in 'acts of enquiry' with early childhood teachers and parents in an African inner-city context. The post-colonial legacy of the English language makes English competence into a measure of economic and social success. The research process revealed insights into various cultural assumptions about the young children's language practice in relation to issues of culture, power, identity and agency. The data reveals how uBuntu-praxis, as the teachers' 'wise judgement' on language practices, became a way to negotiate the relationship between home language(s) and culture(s) and English. The researcher engaged in dialogue with the parents and teachers on their family histories, as well as how the child's social situation of language development is revealed in the changing 'drama', the perezhivanie or prism through which their emotions are refracted (Veresov & Fleer, 2016). The research exposed the nature of racio-linguistic ideology in post-Apartheid South Africa. Cultural Historical Activity Theory was used as a 'heuristic' or 'map' to understand tensions and contradictions and to open up 'ways of listening' to the children as a means of 'double stimulation' as transformative action. The agency of the children could be seen in how in how knowledge was co-generated. These 'acts of enquiry' could challenge the 'banking' concept of education (Freire, 1972: 72) with English as a way to 'deposit' knowledge into those seen as ignorant. Another "possible becomes possible" when listening to the "complexity, contingency, and instability" (Escobar, 2020) of the children's social situation of language development.

• Freire, Paulo. 1972. Pedagogy of the oppressed. [New York]: Herder and Herder.
• Escobar, A. (Ed.) (2020). Pluriversal Politics: The Real and The Possible. Duke University Press.
• Nikolai Veresov & Marilyn Fleer (2016): Perezhivanie as a Theoretical
• Concept for Researching Young Children's Development, Mind, Culture, and Activity, URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10749039.2016.1186198

Key words: uBuntu-praxis, perezhivanie, post-Apartheid, language practice

A TINY WOODEN MOUSE ETHNOGRAPHER: ATTENDING TO THE COMPLEXITIES OF PHILOSOPHICAL PLAY

SARA STANLEY

In this paper I invite participants to walk (and scurry), with a small wooden mouse and share the philosophical narratives of storyworlds co-created by humans and nonhumans.

As I embark on my PhD research I re-turn to my Masters thesis and experiences with mice in South African ECE settings to pay attention to the affect of the wooden mouse as diffractive ethnographer (Smart Gullion, 2018) immersed in philosophical play and material intra-actions.

Philosophical play as a posthuman pedagogy creates a place to reconfigure the use of stories and who or what authors them. In order to re-view the practice of Philosophy for Children I propose that philosophical play happens as young children connect imaginary and physical encounters to the stories of their worlds. The relational encounters of shared imaginative play construct and reconstruct 'child-story-artefact-movement-talk' assemblages that take on lines of flight and create something new as the process goes along (Davies, 2011).

The morethan narratives of human-mouse-world-entanglements reawaken childhood memories and curiosity. The possibilities of pedagogical shifts of power and meaningful educational knowledge require embodied and authentic understanding of the facilitation and 'difficultation' (Haynes and Kohan, 2018) of philosophical play through open ended encounters. Care full listening offers opportunities to reconfigure the role of imaginative teacher connecting with the materiality of childhood engagement as a mode of philosophical enquiry in the early years.

The paper considers my research questions and children's ideas about imagination, what do we hear, see and experience when we are mouse sized and everything is smaller than adult?

Key words: Imagination, storying, facilitation, enquiry, ethnography

THE ROLE OF IDENTITY, PLACE AND POSITIONALITY IN SHAPING PEDAGOGICAL ORIENTATIONS AND PRACTICES

JEAN BAXEN

This presentation draws on autoethnography to describe the intersectionality between identity, place, and positionality and pedagogical choices and practices. Autoethnography is a methodological approach that seeks to depict and systematically apply personal experience in order to understand social and cultural experiences and their link to practice; bringing together process and product elements. In particular, I use storying as a technique to depict ways in which my own identify, positionality, and sense of place mediated the decisions I made as an educator and purveyor of knowledge. Stories sooth, entertain, teach and are relatable. Stories embody life lessons and at the same time allow for instantiation and distantiation by a researcher; the former enabling us to insert ourselves in the narrative and the other, provide the opportunity for reflection. This fluctuation has potential to rupture narratives about self and others and in so doing, disrupt everyday sensibilities and allow for the inscription and redirection of personal and professional trajectories. I outline ways in which my story formed the undergird for my life work as an educator and the attendant pedagogical choices and decisions I made. I offer insights into how, through reflexive praxis by educators, conceptions and practices in early childhood might be disrupted and transformed.

RE-ORIENTING EDUCATION TO CULTURE AND CONTEXT: REFLECTIONS FROM MALAWI AND KENYA

KHAMA CHIBWANA
RAEL OGWARI

Access to quality education can be better defined through its relevance to the culture and context of local communities. This is the educational approach that prepares graduates to be responsible citizens who are productive and can adapt to their environments. In Sub-Saharan Africa, progress in education has remained a mirage long after independence from colonial rule. Largely, education has failed to adequately respond to the local needs of the people. The indelible marks of colonialization continue to dominate the education landscape over the indigenous philosophies. High rates of education wastage points to an education model that is less attuned to the local contexts. The case of Malawi and Kenya typifies the conditions of postcolonial educational legacy in Sub-Saharan Africa with significant portrayal of the need for a genuine review of the status quo to create an education system that is contextually meaningful, and productive.

The two countries got colonized by Britain from the early 19th century. They both fought and became independent almost at the same time: 1963 for Kenya and 1964 for Malawi. Since independence, they both inherited an education system that was designed by colonialists. While there have been several reviews, the authors posit that much of what is traded out as education in the two countries has remained the same.
Drawing on our lived experiences of the education systems in the two countries from basic to tertiary education, we lay the foundation of our critic of the colonial baggage in our national education systems with the focus on preschool and primary education. In this regard, we intend to show that there is a disconnect between the foreign/postcolonial system of education and the local/indigenous system of education and call for the need to create educational systems that decenter postcolonial forms of education by making our educational systems Afrocentric.

Key words: Africa, education, culture, context, and post-colonial

THE PROMISE OF THE PLURIVERSE: REGENERATING WATERWAYS, REGENERATING HUMANWAYS

ELSA LEE

In this session we will explore how a new materialist lens can elucidate some of the emerging findings of our study of community-based waterway regeneration projects in England and South Africa. In so doing, we will consider what role engaging with the materiality of water in local waterways through educational and volunteering activities might play in notions of world sensing (Connell, 2018), for example. We will then talk about whether 'world sensing' has the potential to act as a theory that can capture the 'many sciences' (Harding, 2018) including northern notions of global citizenship that are revealed when exploring the impact of material engagement with waterway regeneration in different cultural contexts. Does 'world sensing' in this regard provide a pluriversal space for capturing these different conceptualisations of being active as a citizen in a globalized world? We seek to elucidate a pluriversal space where perspectives built on memories arising from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds can be brought into conversation with each other on equal terms. We will discuss how such a safe space might allow for 'staying with the trouble' to generate new theory in response to the most difficult questions of our times, whether we choose to accept the label of the Anthropocene to name them or not.

PUBLIC SPACES AS PLURIVERSAL LEARNING SPACES

THERESA GIORZA

'Childhood' as both a marker of exclusion and injustice and a "strength, force, or intensity" (Kohan, 2015) underpins much decolonising work being carried out by a growing community of early childhood scholars across the globe. In an a/r/tographical study made with a group of five-year-olds in an inner-city preschool in Johannesburg, South Africa, public space performed as a lively and unpredictable catalyst to enquiry and learning as "a worlding-with" (Haraway, 2016) throwing up questions about human and more-than-human relationships of care. The public suburban park adjoining the preschool site was a deeply contested urban space with powerfully present pasts. Ideas of 'response-ability' and ownership connected with the profound questions being asked about land and ownership in post-post-apartheid South Africa. The paper takes a detour to tell the story of the Eastern Cape community of Xolobeni who, in ways not dissimilar to those employed by the Zapatista of Chiapas, are rejecting the globally pervasive narrative of development and progress in favour of a preservation and commitment to an autonomous collective worlding. I argue that "other ways of having" (Bollier & Helfrich, 2019) need to be explored for the 'others' of the Humanist project: indigenous communities, but also the world's children, to have meaningful access and the right to care for the environments in and with which they live. The work of two art-led interventions in Johannesburg are offered as ways of 'walking with' childhood and as the reclaiming of urban space for and with a more inclusive Pluriverse.

Key words: Childhood, pedagogy, land, worlding-with, care

LINES OF SITE: A WORLDING WITH-IN RELATIONAL RESEARCH

JOANNE PEERS
VERITY FITZGERALD

The legacy of colonialism continues to influence researchers in post-Apartheid South Africa. Dominant western understandings of research sites limits and impacts research possibilities through humanist understandings of place. As a response to the urgency for decolonial thinking in childhood research, this paper reconfigures research sites as a worlding process. Adopting Donna Harways's concept of worlding this paper offers fresh opportunities to dilute and penetrate the bounded nature of place. As a be-coming researcher I engage with decolonial and feminist new materialist theories and concepts to promote meshworks of relational lines of sites rather than bounded lines. This paper raises questions and offers alternatives to how we may work together to build a different future in which all species can flourish. Through a vignette with personal memories and re-turning to the data of one case study child from a large-scale international research project this paper moves between the lines of time, memory and place relations. I trouble the notion of 'research site' by drawing on Ingold's (2015) philosophy of lines and Barad's (2007) intra-active ontology. The vignette flows through time and place in a small one-bedroom apartment where complex human and nonhuman collaborations (e.g., wearable cameras, an octopus, couch, school, pavement) blurs the lines of site. This space is not empty, inert or bounded but porous; mutually constituted by insides and outsides enfolded by spatio-temporal relations. I am entangled in my own lively relations with being a brown body in South Africa and the ongoing current of watery relations with time, memory and place. This meshwork reveals 'site' an infinite worlding (Haraway, 2019), always woven and entangled with/in a lively ecology of relations that are made by images, books, tidal pool, sea star, sand, wind, WhatsApps, photographer, haunted place relations and memory.

Key words: worlding multi-species relational research sites