CALL FOR PAPERS
Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood (www.wwwords.co.uk/CIEC)

SPECIAL ISSUE: Early Literacy in Contested Spaces

GUEST EDITORS
Tamara Glupczynski Spencer, Montclair State University
Maria Paula Ghiso, Teachers College, Columbia University

Early childhood contexts across the globe increasingly have become shaped by top-down policy initiatives, particularly with respect to the teaching and learning of literacy. In many cases, this trend has resulted in the privileging of narrow skills-based notions of literacy and the standardization of pedagogy, to the exclusion of the many and varied ways that children read words and their social worlds. Despite a wealth of earlier research documenting the importance of literacy learning as embedded in opportunities for young children to actively make meaning from texts as connected to their lives—through, for instance, language play—there has been a resurgence of policies and programs that circumscribe early literacy learning into a predetermined trajectory. Such initiatives are often at odds with children’s multilingual and multimodal literacy practices, social impulses, and cultural knowledge, as well as with educators’ professional expertise in creating opportunities for children to flourish in early childhood contexts.

In this themed issue, we aim to bring together international perspectives on literacy within the increasingly contested space of early childhood education, in order to consider how such settings might provide opportunities to attend to the diversity of young children’s identities and literacy practices. Potential questions to address include: How do children from birth to age 8 engage in and play with literacy away from direction of adults or a prescriptive curriculum? How does their engagement with literacy relate to/resist/transform early childhood literacy mandates as they affect particular contexts? How do early childhood professionals make space for early literacy play within and/or against the constraints of curricular and policy mandates? How do schools and community organizations (e.g. parent groups, cultural centers, out-of-school programs) construct alternative visions of literacy engagement for young children that take into account their cultural, linguistic, and social knowledge? How do (or can) educational spaces nurture the wellbeing and flourishing of young children in the broadest sense – intellectually, socially, creatively, physically?

Manuscripts are due by April 1, 2011 and can be submitted via email to: Tamara Glupczynski Spencer (spencert@mail.montclair.edu)

Timeline
April 1, 2011: deadline for submitting manuscripts for special issue
April-June 2011: review process
June-August 2011: revisions of selected manuscripts
November 2011: finalization of issue