

**EECERA SIG Gender Balance
International Research Conference
Hersonnisos, Crete, Greece, 7th September 2014**



Ryan, Janine* (2014)

A critical analysis of child-adult interactions within ECE

Presentation on the SIG Gender Balance Research Conference, 7.9.2014,
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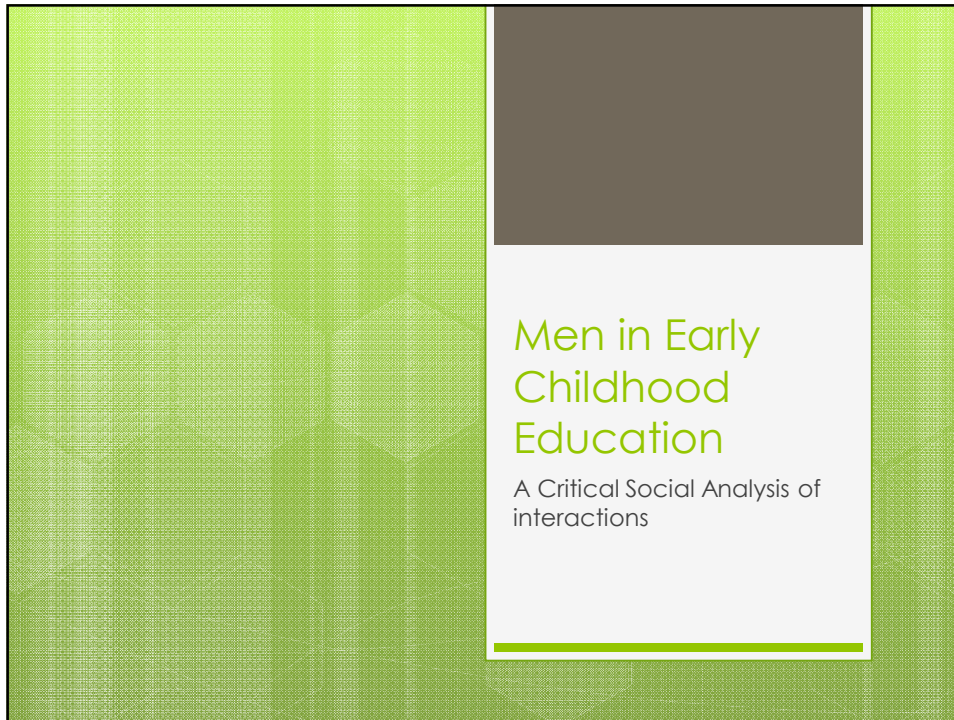
The focus of this on-going research is to examine the interactions of male practitioners working with young children in ECEC. It will attempt to critically analyze the interactions that men have with children, both boys and girls. It will explore the personal and professional qualities that men consider themselves to bring to the ECE sector and the extent to which these enhance both boys' and girls' engagement with learning. By exploring personal profiles, vignettes and evidence gathered from the wider workforce, it will attempt to reflect the qualities that men working in ECE that may be considered unique to their gender.

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Men in Early Childhood Education

A Critical Social Analysis of interactions



Topic- research background
Ryan, J. (2010) Who say's it's a man's world?

- Age,
- Position
- Training pathway
- Employment
- Profile
- Unique
- Qualities
- Barriers

Findings

- The main reason men chose this profession is to make a difference to children's lives. Their career paths are varied and many enter ECE as a serendipitous second choice career option. The potential barriers they face are low status, low pay and the risk of accusation. Within an ever changing ECE landscape the recruitment of a more gender balanced workforce appears to still remain a priority.

Qualities

- Good sense of humour
- Communication
- Enjoyment
- Physical/ Rough and tumble
- Authority
- Role model
- Knowledge and understanding
- Stable male figure
- Ideas

Focus

- Interactions of male practitioners with children; both boys and girls
Explore the personal and professional qualities men have, which maybe unique to them
How these can and do ensure engagement with children's in support of learning

Methods

- Exploration of personal profiles
- Collation of vignettes of practice through digital recording
- Personal interviews

Aaron

- Aged 32 Married, Father of two
- Ex Royal Marine
- Level 6 BA (Hons)Early Childhood Studies, Early Years Professional
- Entering School Based Initial Teacher Training

Nathan

- Aged 22, single gay man
- Early Years Practitioner in private day care setting
- Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care

Declan

- Aged 17, single
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in a private day care setting

Environment

- Play is an essential tool within the context of developing relationships and is determined by the quality of the teaching environment (Curtis and Carter, 2010)

Social Interactions

- Natural gravitation to men who are generally more active (Lamb, 2010)
- Fun filled spontaneous physical play which supports learning
- Engaging, a sharing of enjoyment

Influences

- Experiences in childhood and adult life have impacted on the career choices of young men
- Changing role of the father has facilitated the view of men as caregivers
- Men describe themselves as role models to children representing a caring male presence- big brother or father figure
- Opportunities for confident, young men to train to become EC educators

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