

The Reggio Emilia Approach in Child Development Programs

Melanie Diederichs

Child Development

Family and Consumer Sciences Department

Mt. San Antonio College

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Sabbatical Project Proposal for 2003-2004

Submitted by:

Melanie Diederichs, Family and Consumer Sciences Department: Child Development

Background Information:

In the quest for models of quality educational programs, American educators have discovered the schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy. These innovative programs, whose name is taken from the town in Italy where the approach was conceived, encompass and implement the theoretical contributions of seminal thinkers including Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky and Bruner. Collaboration among children, teachers, parents, and the community is highly valued and the centers are open to all families regardless of income and supported by the town.

This model was conceived after World War II when the women of Reggio wanted to build a school, literally from the rubble of the devastated town. The parents and children gathered stones and sand from the river, sold scrap from the tanks, and built Reggio Emilia's first school for young children after the war. The curriculum is based on close observation and documentation of the children's ideas by the teacher, who co-constructs knowledge with the children. Their ideology expanded and deepened and

special roles are given to the *atelierista* (helps children express ideas) and the *pedagogista* (the teacher and connector of teachers). Parents continue to be engaged as partners in their child's learning. The environment is used as a valuable source of learning both to inspire, reflect, and to promote the work of the children, which is done in small groups.

Child Development educators have been studying and implementing some of the Reggio Approach methods.

My Project: An Overview

As a professor of Child Development who educates teachers of young children, it is clear that this approach has important implications for the rapidly changing world of early childhood education. I have worked informally to broaden my expertise and infuse information regarding this approach into the courses I teach. But I need to pursue a more in-depth, systematic course of study if I am to attain the level of scholarship required to train Child Development students and colleagues in the Reggio Emilia Approach.

My combination project will occur in four stages:

I will research and study the Reggio Emilia Philosophy using the following methods:

- **Literature Review:** I will read selected works from the following list and complete written reports.
- **Attend Professional Conferences:** I will attend professional conferences regarding the Reggio Emilia

Approach to enhance my understanding of this child development curriculum model.

- I will travel with a Reggio Emilia study tour.
- I will visit children's programs in the United States which are implementing the Reggio Emilia philosophy.
- I will synthesize the information to develop a PowerPoint instructional module on the Reggio Emilia Approach for CHLD 6: Survey of Child Development Curriculum and develop a one unit class for CHLD 81: Curriculum Models in ECD.

The Product of the Project

The visible product of my combination project will take several forms: literature review reports, conference, workshop, and observation notes, and photos. In addition, there will be a PowerPoint instructional module for CHLD 6: Survey of Child Development Curriculum and a complete course outline for CHLD 81: Curriculum Models in ECD.

The final report will compile the notes from all parts of the project and prepare a scholarly overview of the Reggio Emilia Curriculum Approach, which I will gladly share with other Child Development faculty.

Benefits to College and Students

This project will offer benefits to me, to my department, to the college and to the students. My studies will bring me a valuable knowledge base that will enable me to educate my students and colleagues in the philosophy of Reggio Emilia. In a climate of pedagogical change and challenge, my students will profit from having the information to implement strategies from a widely respected and innovative approach to the education of young children.

Timeline (as originally submitted)

A timeline for my sabbatical research project for both semesters is:

Date	Activity	Outcome
August- October, 2003	Literature Review	I will research and gain a knowledge base in the Reggio Emilia Approach. Product: Literature Review Reports
November, 2003- January, 2004	Professional Conferences	I will expand my knowledge base and focus on special interest area by attending professional conferences. Product: Conference Notes
February- March, 2004	Travel to Reggio Emilia, Italy and complete a study tour.	I will have the opportunity to participate in guided instruction and observe and participate in children's schools in Italy, where this philosophy was created. Product: Notes and Photos

Date	Activity	Outcome
April, 2004	Visit and observe children's programs in the United States which are implementing the Reggio Emilia Approach.	I will be able to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States. Product: Observation notes and Photos.
May, 2004	Develop a PowerPoint instructional module on the Reggio Emilia Approach for CHLD 6: Survey of Child Development Curriculum and a one unit class for CHLD 81: Curriculum Models in ECD.	I will synthesize my research to enhance course content for CHLD 6 and to a PowerPoint instructional module on the Reggio Emilia Approach for CHLD 6: Survey of Child Development Curriculum and develop a one unit class to be offered as CHLD 81: Curriculum Models in ECD. Product: PowerPoint instructional module and complete course outline for CHLD 81.

Sabbatical Proposal Revisions

Committee Recommendations (taken from Preliminary Evaluation numbered here)

Addendum: Sabbatical Application Revision

Melanie Diederichs

- Dates of Professional Conferences

[Reference #2: Recommendations for Revision of Sabbatical Application]

The dates of professional conferences listed in the Sabbatical application were intended as examples of annual seminars and workshops held during Fall of the 2002-2003 Academic Year. A number of annual conferences have yet to confirm the dates for Fall, 2003.

I plan to attend at least two in-depth professional conferences during the October to December, 2003 time frame. I will complete conference notes and identify relevant insights into the Reggio Emilia approach.

Conferences that I can confirm the dates of are:

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

November 4 – November 8, 2003

Chicago, Illinois

Note: I have contacted conference organizers and a focus strand of a number of sessions will be devoted to the Reggio Emilia approach.

In addition, I will utilize the time in Chicago and extend my visit beyond the conference dates and observe at least one program in that area utilizing the Reggio Emilia philosophy. I will complete observation notes and take photographs, if allowed.

Reggio Emilia based schools in the greater Chicago area are:

- Chicago Commons Child Development Program

3645 W. Chicago

Chicago, IL 60651

- White Oak School

1211 Bear Lane

Monticello, IL 61856

Zero to Three National Training Institute

December 4- December 7, 2003

New Orleans, LA

Note: I have contacted conference organizers and a focus strand of a number of sessions will be devoted to the Reggio Emilia approach with infants and toddlers.

Conferences and seminars that have not yet confirmed dates are:

Innovations in Early Education:

A Seminar Series for Early Childhood

Wayne State University

Merrill Palmer Institute, Detroit, MI

Note: I have contacted Judith Kaminsky (Wayne State University) and she has assured me that this annual seminar series focusing on aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach is planned during the October to December, 2003 time frame and that specific dates are forthcoming. I will notify the Sabbatical Leave Committee as soon as these dates are confirmed.

California Innovative Teacher Project Roundtables:

Inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach in Collaboration with Mills College

Mills College

Oakland, CA

Note: I have contacted Susan Lyon (Mills College) and she has assured me that this annual roundtable series focusing on aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach is planned during the October to December, 2003 time frame and specific dates are forthcoming. I will notify the Sabbatical Leave Committee as soon as these dates are confirmed.

- Literature Review Timetable

[Reference #3: Recommendations for Revision of Sabbatical Application]

From mid August 2003 until the end of October 2003 I plan to read at least twelve books and at least twelve articles and/or book chapters. I will complete literature review forms for each work selected.

Additional books to be included in the proposal bibliography are:

Along the Levee Road, 2002, published by Reggio Children.

The history and particular identity of the municipal preschool, "Centro Verde Martiri di Villa Sesso," narrated by the protagonists. It recounts the history of an educational community from 1945 to 1997.

Theater Curtain: The Ring of Transformations, May 2002, published by Reggio Children, edited by Vea Vecchi.

The story of a project in which the five- and six-year-old children from the Diana preschool designed and created a new house curtain for the Ariosto Theatre in Reggio Emilia.

The Future is Tomorrow and I Can Only Imagine It . . . I Think It's . . . a Lovely Day, 2002, published by Reggio Children.

From a project carried out in the Fiastri and Rodari Municipal Preschools of Sant'Ilario d'Enza (Province of Emilia), a book that collects thoughts and predictions on the future by five- and six- year-old children.

- Revision: PowerPoint Presentation

[Reference #4: Recommendations for Revision of Sabbatical Application]

I plan to synthesize the information and develop a PowerPoint Presentation and packet to be utilized in an In-service for the staff (most of whom are current Child Development students) of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested faculty.

Revision: Timetable and Summary

[Reference #5: Recommendations for Revision of Sabbatical Application]

Timeline

A timeline for my sabbatical research project for both semesters is:

Dates	Activity	Outcome
August- October, 2003	Literature Review I will read at least 12 books and at least twelve articles and/or book chapters.	I will research and gain a knowledge base in the Reggio Emilia Approach. Product: Literature Review Reports
November, 2003- December, 2004	Professional Conferences I will attend at least two in-depth professional conferences and visit and observe at least one school utilizing this approach in the greater Chicago area.	I will expand my knowledge base and focus on special interest area by attending professional conferences. Product: Conference Notes and Observation notes and photos.

Dates	Activity	Outcome
January, 2003	I will compile information gathered thus far and write and format a preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report	Product: Preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report
February- March, 2004	<p>Travel to Reggio Emilia, Italy and complete a study tour.</p> <p>Note: Note: I have contacted Judith Kaminsky (Wayne State University) and she has assured me that this annual study tour is planned during the February to March, 2004 time frame. and specific dates are forthcoming. I will notify the Sabbatical Leave Committee as soon as these dates are confirmed. The study tour lasts for eight days. In addition, I plan to extend the time in this area of Italy and complete independent research of the various schools in this region.</p>	<p>I will have the opportunity to participate in guided instruction and observe and participate in children's schools in Italy, where this philosophy was created.</p> <p>Product: Notes and Photos</p>

Dates	Activity	Outcome
April, 2004	Visit and observe at least four children's programs in the United States and/or Canada who are implementing the Reggio Emilia Approach.	I will be able to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States and/or Canada. Product: Observation notes and Photos.
May, 2004	Develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation and packet on the Reggio Emilia Approach.	I will synthesize my research to develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation on the Reggio Emilia Approach for the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested faculty. Product: PowerPoint In-service module and packet
May, 2004	I will compile information gathered and complete the Sabbatical Leave Report.	Product: Sabbatical Leave Report

Summary of Activities.

Initially, I will complete an in-depth study and review of literature to gain a knowledge base and a perspective regarding the Reggio Emilia approach. After gaining this awareness, I will then attend at least two, in-depth professional conferences with a Reggio Emilia focus to concentrate on specific aspects of this philosophy. I will also use this opportunity and visit and observe at least one school utilizing this approach in the greater Chicago area. I will then reflect upon the information attained thus far and

compile information to write and format a preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report. I will then build upon this information and travel to Reggio Emilia, Italy and complete a study tour and independent research to experience the children's schools in Italy, where this philosophy was created. I will then expand this awareness and observe children's programs in the United States and/or Canada who are implementing the Reggio Emilia Approach. This will enable me to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States. In response to these experiences, I will develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation on the Reggio Emilia Approach for the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested faculty. This will benefit the college by expanding the current beliefs and philosophy of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center staff (most of whom are current Child Development students) to inspire and consider implementation of quality practices based on the Reggio Emilia Approach.

In conclusion, I will compile information gathered and complete the Sabbatical Leave Report.

- Relevance of Study and expanded Visitation/Observation List
[Reference #6: Recommendations for Revision of Sabbatical
Application]

Even though the Reggio Emilia Approach has long been an accepted and practiced philosophy in Italy, until recently it has been relatively unknown by Early Childhood Development professionals in the United States. The first presentation on Reggio Emilia at an annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) took place in the early 1990's. Since that time, American educators have been inspired and interest in Reggio Emilia has grown at a remarkable pace. Once used as a counter to U.S. notions of developmentally appropriate practices, the revised version of NAEYC's DAP Guidelines (1997) is filled with examples from this Italian city. Interest among American educators is focused on the implications of key features of Reggio Emilia's municipal early childhood program, including:

- the role of the environment-as-teacher,
- children's multiple symbolic languages,
- documentation as assessment and advocacy,
- long-term projects or progettazione,
- the teacher as researcher, and
- home-school relationships.

Efforts to understand and utilize the principles of Reggio Emilia's practices are now described in numerous English-language manuscripts and publications, including theses and dissertations as well as accounts by teachers struggling with the realities of Reggio Emilia's compelling challenge. Reflecting and contributing to this still-rising level of interest are many new publications, a Reggio Emilia track at NAEYC's national conference, multiple electronic discussion lists and study groups, a newsletter, annual U.S. delegations, and reference sites. Thus, it should be no surprise that Reggio Emilia's "image of the child" has become a dominant theme in discussions on early care and educational policies and practices at the local and national levels. It is this influence--to promote not only change, but also reflection, debate, and conversation--that may well be Reggio Emilia's greatest legacy.

While it is premature to make claims about the influence of Reggio Emilia's example on children's lives, there is little question that the field of early childhood education, including teacher education, has been altered as a result of exchanges taking place with Italian colleagues. In settings around the world, educators are now looking with greater attention to children as sources of their own learning, to parents for new ways of thinking about sharing in children's early education, and to each other for support and collaboration in making schools learning communities for adults as well as children.

School: Natomas Infant & Child Development Center
501 San Juan Road
Sacramento, CA 95833
Phone: (916) 641-0015

Colorado

School: Children's Center @ Red Rocks
Red Rocks Community College
13300 W. 6th Avenue
Lakewood, CO. 80228

Oregon

School: Co-op Family Center
2250 Patterson
Eugene, OR 97405
Phone: (541) 346-7400

School: Creative Children's Center
2515 SW 185th
Beaverton, OR
Phone: (503) 591-0604

Washington

School: Imagination Primary Preschool
4530 Union Bay
Seattle, WA 98115
Phone: (206) 524-6073

Canada

School: Adera House
1250 Mathers Avenue
West Vancouver, British Columbia V7V 2R5
Phone: (604) 926-9142

School: Schoolhouse Playcare Centre of Lakehead inc.
627 Grey St.
Thunder Bay, Ont.
Phone: (807) 622-6910

Revisions/Additions to Original Proposal

Revision 7/15/03: Timetable

As reported to the Sabbatical Leave Committee, the dates for the Reggio Emilia study tour were changed to October, 2003 from February, 2004. This timeline reflects these changes.

Timeline

An amended timeline for my sabbatical research project for both semesters is:

Dates	Activity	Outcome
August- September, 2003	Literature Review I will read at least six books and at least six articles and/or book chapters.	I will research and gain a knowledge base in the Reggio Emilia Approach. Product: Literature Review Reports
October, 2003	Travel to Reggio Emilia, Italy and complete a study tour. Note: The dates for the annual study tour planned during the February to March, 2004 time frame were changed to October 18-25. The study tour lasts for eight days. In addition, I plan to arrive a week prior to the study tour in this area of Italy to complete independent research of the various schools in this region.	I will have the opportunity to complete individual research and participate in guided instruction and observe and participate in children's schools in Italy, where this philosophy was created. Product: Notes and Photos

Dates	Activity	Outcome
November, 2003- December, 2004	Professional Conferences I will attend at least two in-depth professional conferences and visit and observe at least one school utilizing this approach in the greater Chicago area.	I will expand my knowledge base and focus on special interest area by attending professional conferences. Product: Conference Notes and Observation notes and photos.
January, 2003	I will compile information gathered thus far and write and format a preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report.	Product: Preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report.
<i>February- March, 2004</i>	Complete Literature Review I will read at least six books and at least six articles and/or book chapters.	I will research and focus upon any questions or gaps in information to facilitate an in-depth knowledge base in the Reggio Emilia Approach. Product: Literature Review Reports.
April, 2004	Visit and observe at least four children's programs in the United States and/or Canada which are implementing the Reggio Emilia Approach.	I will be able to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States and/or Canada. Product: Observation notes and Photos.
May, 2004	Develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation and packet on the Reggio Emilia Approach.	I will synthesize my research to develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation on the Reggio Emilia Approach for the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested

		faculty. Product: PowerPoint In-service module and packet.
May, 2004	I will compile information gathered and complete the Sabbatical Leave Report.	Product: Sabbatical Leave Report.

Summary of Activities

Initially, I will begin an in-depth study and review of literature to gain a knowledge base and a perspective regarding the Reggio Emilia approach. After gaining this awareness I will then build upon this information and travel to Reggio Emilia, Italy, and complete a study tour and independent research to experience the children's schools in Italy, where this philosophy was created. I will return to the United States and attend at least two, in-depth professional conferences with a Reggio Emilia focus to concentrate on specific aspects of this philosophy. I will also use this opportunity and visit and observe at least one school utilizing this approach in the greater Chicago area. I will then reflect upon the information attained thus far and compile information to write and format a preliminary Sabbatical Leave Report. I will then complete the literature review and focus upon any gaps or questions regarding the Reggio Emilia approach. I will then complete my literature review utilizing resources gained from the study tour and conferences. I will then expand this awareness and observe children's programs in the United States and/or

Canada who are implementing the Reggio Emilia Approach. This will enable me to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States. In response to these experiences, I will develop a PowerPoint In-service presentation on the Reggio Emilia Approach for the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested faculty. This will benefit the college by expanding the current beliefs and philosophy of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center staff (most of whom are current Child Development students) to inspire and consider implementation of quality practices based on the Reggio Emilia Approach. In conclusion, I will compile information gathered and complete the Sabbatical Leave Report.

Subject: Changes In Sabbatical Leave Activities

(Correspondence relating to the changes can be found in Appendix 6)

July 15, 2003: Change in Sabbatical Leave Timeline

The study tour to Reggio Emilia, which has traditionally been conducted annually in spring, was reformatted and changed. In previous years as many as 150 participants from the United States were permitted to participate, but this year not only the time frame changed, but also the number of participants from the United States was reduced to 60 as part of an international cohort. I feel very fortunate that I was selected.

October 8, 2003: -Change in Professional Conference Attendance

I originally indicated that I would attend the professional conference, "From Zero to Three," December 5-6, in New Orleans, Louisiana. I have

reviewed the preliminary conference schedule that was available and found that the emphasis on Reggio Emilia philosophy that I was told would be available is not. Therefore, I will not be attending that conference.

But, another conference with emphasis on Reggio Emilia philosophy has been scheduled and I had planned to attend this:

November 21-22, 2003: Dialogue with Teachers with Amelia Gambetti

Presidio Child Development Center, San Francisco

Contact: Sandy Osborne

(415) 561-5822

Date: November 21, 2003- Change in Professional Conference

Attendance

Unfortunately, this conference was canceled and the dates for the next Innovative Teacher Project Conference are:

March 26-27, 2004: The Image of the Child and the Role of the Teacher

Kumara School, Mill Valley, California

Contact: Nav Khalsa

(415) 388-5437

In addition, I will be attending:

April 29- May 1, 2004: Creativity Does Not Fall From the Sky: Education and the Expressive Languages

Sponsored by the St. Louis Reggio Collaborative in Collaboration with Webster University, St. Louis, Missouri

Contact: Michael Strange

(314) 807-7716

Date: March 8, 2004- Change in Program Observations and Visitations and Updated Literature Review Titles

Subject: Change In Sabbatical Leave Activity

- Summary of the specifics of the Reggio inspired school visitations/observations that I have completed. These schools differ somewhat from those I projected on my original and amended plans. In my research and investigations schools have been recommended as exemplary programs with unique features and I have found them important to include in my sabbatical activities.

School	Address	Dates
Chicago Commons Child Development Program Nia Family Center	744 N. Monticello, Chicago, Illinois	11/4/03
Chicago Commons Child Development Program Taylor Center for New Experiences	1633 North Hamlin, Chicago, Illinois	11/4/03
First Presbyterian Nursery School	1220 Second St. Santa Monica, California	2/27/04
Kumara School	540 Marin Avenue Mill Valley, California 94941	3/27/04
Presidio Child Development Center	San Francisco, California	4/3/04
Boulder Journey School	Boulder, Colorado	4/24/03
Grossmont College Child Development	8800 Grossmont College Drive El Cajon, California 92020-1799	3/29/04

Center		
School	Address	Dates
Schools in the San Diego area La Jolla United Methodist Church Nursery School	6063 La Jolla Boulevard La Jolla, California 92037	3/30/04
Schools in the San Diego area The Urban Village Head Start	4167 Fairmont Avenue San Diego, California 92105	3/31/04
Schools in the San Diego area: Karen D. Love Head Start	2062 Drescher St San Diego, California 92111	4/1/04
Evergreen Community School	2800 Colorado Ave. Santa Monica, California	5/5/04
The Growing Place (Preschool)	401 Ashland Santa Monica, California	3/24/04
The Growing Place (Infant Toddler Center)	1406 Marine Street Santa Monica, California	3/24/04
The St. Michael School	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04
Clayton Schools Family Center	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04
The College School	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04

Also, I have encountered a number of important, recently published books to add to my literature review. These are:

Literature Review: Added Books

Advisories, 2002. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop

Cadwell, Louise. 2002. *Bringing Learning to Life: The Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Curtis, Deb and Carter Margie. 2003. *Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments*. St. Paul: Redleaf Press.

Dahlberg, Gunilla. 2003. *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care*. Great Britain: RoutledgeFalmer.

Edwards, Carolyn; Gandini, Lella and Forman, George. 1998. *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach—Advanced Reflections* (Second Edition). Greenwich, Conn.: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Hendrick, Joanne, Ed. 2004. *Next Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc

Making Teaching Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners, 2003. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

In addition, I have revised the listing of journal articles that I originally proposed to include a number of recently published articles to add to my literature review. These are:

Article Bibliography

Bennett, Tess. (2001). Reactions to Visiting the Infant-Toddler and Preschool Centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available:

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

Bullard, Julie and Bullock, Janis R. (2002). Modeling Collaboration, In-Depth Projects, and Cognitive Discourse: A Reggio Emilia and Project Approach Course. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 4, Number 2. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2002, Fall]

Chard, Sylvia C. (1999). From Themes to Projects. *Early Childhood Research and Practice: Volume 1 Number 1*. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999, Spring]

Cimino, Angelina and Kuipe, Sharon. (2003) Practical Applications of the Reggio Emilia Approach to Teaching and Learning in American & Australian Schools. [Online]. Available:

[http://louisewww.mit.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/murrayed2/ReggioEmilia/pr
int.html](http://louisewww.mit.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/murrayed2/ReggioEmilia/pr
int.html) [Accessed January 17, 2004]

Dodge, Ellen P., Dulik, Barbara N. and Kulhanek, Jon A. (2001). "Clouds Come from New Hampshire": Confronting the Challenge of Philosophical Change in Early Childhood Programs. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

Edwards, Carolyn Pope. (2002). Three Approaches from Europe: Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 4, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2002, Spring]

Fero, Ian. (2000). Reggio in North American Schools: To What Degree is Transfer Applicable? EGallery; Exemplary Student Scholarship-Master of Teaching Program: Volume 1, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~egallery/fero.html> [2000, March 1]

Glassman, Michael and Whaley, Kimberlee. (2000). The Use of Long-term Projects in Early Childhood Classrooms in Light of Dewey's Educational Philosophy. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 2, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2000, Spring]

Hertzog, Nancy B. (2001). Reflections and Impressions from Reggio

Emilia:

"It's Not about Art!" *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3,

Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html>

[2001, Spring]

Hong, Seong B. and Broderick, Jane T. (2003). Instant Video Revisiting

for Reflection: Extending the Learning of Children and Teachers. *Early*

Childhood Research and Practice, Volume 5, Number 1. [Online].

Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2003, Spring]

Kantrowitz, Barbara and Wingert, Pat. (1991). The 10 Best Schools in the

World. *Newsweek*, December 2, 1991, pp 24-30.

Katz, Lillian G. (1999). International Perspectives on Early Childhood

Education: Lessons from My Travels. *Early Childhood Research and*

Practice: Volume 1, Number 1. [Online]. Available:

<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999, Fall]

New, Rebecca S. (1999). What Should Children Learn?

Making Choices and Taking Chances. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 1, Number 2. [Online]. Available:
<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999,Fall]

New, Rebecca S. (2000). Reggio Emilia: Catalyst For Change and Conversation. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. [2000, December]

Morrison, Norma. (2000). The Reggio Approach: An Inspiration for Inclusion of Children with "Special Rights. " [Online]. Available:
www.milligan.edu/Profeducation/nmorrison/fpworkshop/dkgreggio200.html
[Accessed December 14, 2003]

Tarr, Patricia. (2001) Aesthetic codes in early childhood classrooms: What art educators can learn from Reggio Emilia. Design Share [Online]. Available:
<http://www.designshare.com/Tresearch/Tarr/Aesthetic Codes 1.htm> [2002, February 20]

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this sabbatical leave was to increase my knowledge base and perspective regarding the Reggio Emilia approach in early education.

In order to complete this goal, this sabbatical included five parts.

First, I conducted a literature review in two phases (prior to and after the study tour of schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy) of books and journal articles regarding the Reggio Emilia approach. As a result of this research, I gained an awareness of this educational philosophy which I was able to build upon in the second phase of my project by traveling to Reggio Emilia, Italy, to complete a formal study tour and conduct independent research to experience the children's schools and culture in Italy, where this philosophy was created.

Upon return to the United States, I completed the literature review and focused on gaps and questions regarding the Reggio Emilia approach and I was able to include new literary resources that I had purchased in Italy. I then completed the third part of this project by attending five in-depth professional conferences and seminars with a Reggio Emilia focus to concentrate on specific aspects of this philosophy. I was often able to combine the conference and seminar experiences with visitations to Reggio Emilia inspired schools, and ultimately completed the fourth project phase and visited and observed sixteen different programs in

Chicago, Illinois; Boulder, Colorado; St. Louis, Missouri; Santa Monica, Mill Valley, San Francisco, El Cajon, La Jolla and San Diego, California. I was able to compare and contrast practices in Italy to those in the United States.

In response to these experiences, I completed the fifth and final part and developed and presented a PowerPoint In-service presentation on the Reggio Emilia Approach for the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center and interested faculty. This presentation expanded the current beliefs and philosophy of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center staff (most of whom are past and current Child Development students) and inspired them to consider strategies of ways to implement the quality practices explored based on the Reggio Emilia Approach. This activity will be ongoing and will endure for many years to come.

Literature Review: Discussion of the Reggio Emilia Approach in Child Development Programs

I began my sabbatical work with a literature search and review on the Reggio Emilia Approach in early education. I read and reviewed a wide variety of books and journal articles. The individual reviews of each of these works can be found in Appendix I.

Literature Review: Books

Advisories, 2002. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Along the Levee Road. 2002. Reggio Emilia: Reggio Children.

Brick by Brick, 2000. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Cadwell, Louise. 1997. *Bringing Reggio Emilia Home: An Innovative Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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Discussion of the Reggio Emilia Approach in Child Development Programs

The following is a discussion and a reflection of concepts and ideas that I gained from this literature review.

Reggio Emilia is not a curriculum; it is a philosophical approach to working with children. The philosophy comes from schools in Reggio Emilia, Italy. This approach started in the early 1960's.

For me, understanding Reggio required a paradigm shift or a shift in my thinking. I needed to evaluate how we worked with children in a different way than teachers are typically trained in the U.S.

The image of the child is central to the approach:

Who is the child?

How do we think about children?

Emotion and cognition are recognized as relevant and they contribute to the image of the whole child and the existing knowledge of the child.

The quote below by Loris Malaguzzi, who was a former teacher and considered "the father" of this philosophy in Reggio, sums up how the Italians using this approach view education with children:

"Each child is unique and the protagonist of his or her own growth.

Children desire to acquire knowledge, have much capacity for curiosity and amazement, and yearn to create relationships with others and communicate. "

Another quote by Malaguzzi:

"Children are open to exchange and reciprocity. From early in life they negotiate with the social and physical worlds - with everything the culture brings them." Children are looked at through an "At positive approach, not an "At risk approach." Education is based on relationships.

Children are thought to have a least 100 languages. Art, music, dance, building, writing, talking, signing, etc. are all considered part of the 100 languages of children. The multiple languages are used to help children build knowledge and understand the world around them. The natural environment is incorporated as much as possible.

Environment is very important. The environment itself is very neutral in the use of colors, much like art museums, so the work of the children becomes the focus of the space. Learning spaces are beautiful spaces that are reflections of the children and families who are there. Environment is considered a "third teacher" when it facilitates learning in this way.

The role of the teacher is to be a researcher, a documenter, a supporter of learning, and also to reflect on oneself. Self-reflection as an educator is Key.

Documentation is central to the Reggio approach. Documentation communicates the life of the center to others visiting the center. It also provides opportunities for children to revisit the experience.

Documentation is a process that involves observation, reflection, collaboration, interpretation, analysis, and is made a part of the classroom.

The Project approach is the way in which a topic is explored. The Project involves three phases - Phase 1, Beginning the Project; Phase 2, Developing the project; Phase 3, Concluding the project. This approach uses intense planning and part of the teacher's role is to project the possibilities of a particular project.

Learning is looked at as a spiral process that occurs with constant revisiting. Learning is continual and it goes deeper with each revisitation.

Implementing the Reggio Emilia philosophy is a journey to a better understanding of children and their many languages through which they express themselves. It is a long-term process that begins with each individual and expands and grows in a way that is unique and appropriate to the culture and environment of the school.

Reggio Emilia Study Tour



I was privileged to have the opportunity to visit the municipality of Reggio Emilia, Italy in October, 2003. I participated in this experience with a group of over 100 child care and development experts from around the world. It was the first international study tour that Reggio Emilia has conducted and it added an invaluable depth and richness to the experience. The educators who had visited Reggio previously tried to explain the concepts, but it was not until I visited and was able to experience the "feel" of the city, watch the children, and understand the basis of their philosophies about children could I begin to understand.

Questions that were constantly posed and challenged in seminars, group discussions and program visitations were: "Who is the child? Who

is the teacher? Who are you as a teacher? What are your goals? And what is learning all about?"

Reggio Emilia is a town in northern Italy (of about 130,000 inhabitants) with a rich history of cooperative work in all areas of life. This was reflected when the men and women of the local communities got together shortly after World War II (about 1945) seeking to change their social institutions. It was a good time for change since so much had been destroyed during the war. They were urged to use their inner strength and their own hands to build schools for their children. In the 1950's and early 60's, there was a teachers' movement that focused on innovation in education. Many of their ideas were inspired by Dewey, Piaget and Vygotsky. During this time, a young man named Loris Malaguzzi took time off from teaching to specialize in psychology and soon became a leader in this movement. Malaguzzi led the charge to get the city government to take over running and funding the schools in the municipality.

In the 60's, there was tremendous economic growth in Italy. Women were entering the workforce and demanded support from the government for child care. Between 1968 and 1971, a series of national laws passed, among them equal pay for equal work and free schools for children 3-6 years old. The new law rewarded localities like Reggio Emilia that worked hard to meet the needs of families. Since that time, similar legislation has made public preschools possible for children 3 months to 3 years as well.

Malaguzzi worked in the schools for over 40 years and although he died in 1994, his legacy lives on in the protégés who worked with him to develop an approach of working with children based on socioconstructivism.

Basically, socioconstructivism says that knowledge is constructed through relations. And through re-reading, reflecting and revisiting, children are able to organize what they have learned. A fundamental premise of the "Reggio approach" is the image of the child as an active constructor of knowledge.

Interest in Reggio has been growing rapidly in the United States for several years. The challenge that educators in the United States face, however, is how to interpret Reggio in the US and how to pull from a culturally embedded system and adapt practices to the US. In visiting the municipality of Reggio Emilia, there are some basics that are critical to beginning to understand the Reggio approach.

The first central component of the Reggio approach is that of the image of the child as curious, competent, able to build theories and an adult validation of the competence of the child. In the words of one Italian speaker-- Sergio Spaggiari, "schools lose a lot of potential and capacity thinking we should *fill-up* children like they are an empty container distributing pre-packaged material. We too often see children as consumers of ideas and knowledge and culture, like we are a big network of supermarkets distributing knowledge."

Education is about building relationships with people, both children and adults, and creating connections between ideas and the environment not separating nor isolating subjects, skills or people.

This same speaker (Sergio Spaggiari)- also told a story about two men walking along a road having a discussion about the difference between heaven and hell. One man said that in hell you are given a spoon 2 meters long. This is your condemnation because you can't possibly feed yourself with a spoon this large. In heaven, you are given the same thing-- a spoon 2 meters long. The difference is that in heaven people feed each other with the spoons-- they help each other out in the eating. The Reggio Approach is about relationships and adults modeling working together.

This concept of learning is represented in multiple ways over time; this is supported when schools hire the best teachers trained in the visual arts to work closely with the teachers. A teacher called the atelierista and a special space in the school called an atelier -or studio- use art as an integrated way to use media for symbolic expression. The atelierista helps children find their own best way to represent the ideas they are working on and thinking about. Veia Vecchia, an atelierista in the Diana school for over 20 years now, says that the technique the teacher chooses to help bring about understanding is critical. The technique must not be the final objective, however! She explains, we support children's research and don't just offer adult solutions. For example, in representing a 3-D image, sometimes children will turn the paper over to draw the other two legs of a

horse or the other pedal of a bike. To support their learning, we might show them a real bike, give them clay or wire to let them attempt to continue to develop the 3-D image as they see it. One 4-year-old was drawing a circle of people and could not get the people turned as they wanted. She said, "I am making them with an angry face because they don't like standing on their heads."

Understanding that what is central is the constructivist process--not the end product. Being able to observe the process in children's learning takes great skill and much practice.

Teachers document children's processes of learning in many ways --through photo images, written records, journals, etc. In these ways, they observe and learn about the children to determine how they might further provoke or encourage their learning. This guides an emergent curriculum--or a curriculum formed through the children's emerging interests--not pre-established ideas or a pre-written curriculum selected by a teacher.

Through the Reggio approach, adults help children understand the meaning of their experience more completely. That is why documentation is critical. Behind any experience, there are always many levels of meaning. We need to go beyond appearances. The traveling exhibit of children's work from Reggio Emilia is called *The 100 Languages of Children*. It used to be called "if the eye could jump over the wall." It is

about looking *beyond* the wall. Don't stop with the first barrier--but go beyond.

Teachers meet frequently to discuss their observations and seek various perspectives, interpret together, and have a continuous dialogue. They pay attention and really listen. Sergio Spaggiari said biology gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason. He also explained that Maria Montessori said that children say, "help me learn by myself." Teachers should not teach a child something they can learn for themselves. The very word *infancy* comes from the Latin word meaning one that doesn't speak. We often view children as poor, simple, and lacking something--incapable. Let's consider children from another point of view. Let's give them credit for their potential--make the effort to see each person as a "historical agent." Each person is a producer of history--a protagonist--a champion in his or her own life. We each have a right to our place in history. Children are protagonists of their own experience and life. When we defer to people with power as the only historical agents, and we don't recognize our own potential--or the potential of children, we deny the possibilities.

The Reggio approach is about guiding children's ideas with provocations--not pre-determined curricula. In order to do this, various perspectives among the adults in the children's lives are sought. There is collaboration on many levels. Parents are considered an essential collaborator in this formula. The parents participation is expected and

supported. This cooperative spirit among teachers, parents, community members and city administrators is supported by a team of pedagogical coordinators (one is a pedagoga).

Space and the environment play a powerful role in learning. The environment, in fact, has been called the third teacher. The space is arranged to encourage relationships, choice, problem solving and discoveries.

Vea Vecchia- an atelierista at the Diana school says that there is a relationship between art, science, language and knowledge. It must be provoked and cultivated. Using what is presented in the environment is one way to do this. For example, children were collecting leaves on the playground and were theorizing about how they fall and come back to life. The teachers noticed that children generally encounter dead leaves. They decided to help them encounter life instead. By using what was available and teaching children through the environment of the playground, children were encouraged to look at the veins with what she calls a "feeling eye" and see the roots of trees with a "feeling eye." So outside space may be used to encounter life, the outside may be brought inside, clay may be used to represent the root system and various other methods are used-- lights and shadows, overhead and slide projector lights, and music were used to further provoke their thinking and exploration.

Shared discussions among children, among adults, between adults and children are ways children represent what is learned. Then through repeated conversations, and revisiting ideas, children can reconstruct their earlier theories.

"Exchange is fundamental. Exchange is not just measured in money or goods. Think of exchanging ideas, experiences, cultures. If you give me \$1 and I give you \$1, we each have \$1 but if I give you an idea and you give me an idea, then we have 2 ideas. View each other as a resource--for the potential--not just transmitting something to the other" (Sergio Spaggiari).

Teachers are also constructing knowledge. In Italy, Loris Maliguzzi was considered radical. Credit and power was given to academic circles and not to practitioners or in this case teachers. Teachers are learning in the classroom in addition to the research background they have already accumulated. Both are necessary for teachers to construct knowledge about teaching.

Time is a critical factor but not measured by the clock or calendar. Children's own personal rhythm and own sense of time is considered primary. There is sufficient time for being together. Extended projects are the backbone of learning experiences. Ideas for projects come from every day life of the children and teachers and through discussions, even from a chance event or from some problem posed.

Projects might last a few days or months. What you see in this picture is a group drawing done by preschoolers who were recording (documenting) their experience on a field trip. They may move from a sketch like this to another media such as clay, wire sculpture, natural media, etc..

The first step in planning a project is to watch and listen to the children. Listen carefully. What are the children talking about? What interests them? What themes do you see in their play over and over? What are they drawing or representing? Which ideas hold promise for child research and learning? What fascinates them? What confuses, disturbs, or delights them? Record what they are saying. Studying your transcripts of their conversations will give you many ideas.

One memorable quote spoken by Carlina Rinaldi, who is currently the scientific consultant to the Reggio Children and a protégé of Malaguzzi's and his successor is: "Is education preparation for life--or is education life and life education?" She also posed questions such as: How do children learn? What does education mean? Is one definition always necessary? What is the relationship between teaching and learning? Between school, family, and society? Between school and life? What is the role of school in society? What rights are involved? Does education prepare you for life or is it a part of life?

Children are seen as competent and reaching their potential in every way. Children can explain their own theories and how they

understand concepts. Theory relates to life--it's a research in the meaning of life. If you agree that the child is able to produce theory about the world, then it is not only the role of parents and teachers to explain and transmit--but also to listen to children's explanations.

This kind of listening means opening ourselves to change--being open to what is said. If you change, you don't lose your power. You add your power to that of others. If you can believe in the image of the competent child who can produce theory, then you can understand why the first verb of the Reggio schools is "to listen" (Rinaldi).

This extensive study tour was organized as indicated:

Sunday, October 19, 2003	Morning: Welcome Speakers: Giordana Rabitti, President of Reggio Children Carla Rinaldi, "Pedagogy of Listening"	Afternoon and Evening: Guided visit to the town organized by "Friends of Reggio Children " Association
Monday, October 20, 2003	Morning: Speakers: Ettore Borghi, former commissioner of Education and co-author of the book " <i>Una storia presente</i> " and Sandra Piccinini, President of the Istituzione Nidi e Scuole dell'Infaqnzia- Municipality of Reggio Emilia Topic: Reggio Emilia: the city today, a city that is changing"	Afternoon and Evening: Discussion Groups: (formed to include a well rounded group of programs and countries) Topics: History of Reggio Emilia Experiences; Own Context; Present and Future; Society, Culture and Change; Challenges, Obstacles and Struggles Ended with a large group plenary discussion
Tuesday, October 21, 2004	Morning: Speaker Sergio- Spaggiari, Director of Istituzione Nidi e Scuole Infanzia Topic: Social, cultural, political, philosophical aspects of the Reggio Emilia	Afternoon and Evening: Infant-toddler center visitations: The schools I visited were: Haiku, Peter Pan Picasso and Pieve

	Experience” Discussion Groups: Ended with a large group plenary discussion	
Wednesday, October 22, 2004	Morning Speaker: Carla Rinaldi, pedagofista and pedagogical consultant to Reggio Children Topic: The main values of the Reggio Emilia experience in the daily lives of preschools and infant- toddler centers: Discussion Groups: Ended with a large group plenary discussion	Afternoon and Evening: Visits to the Creative recycling Center Remida and the Documentation and Research Center “Experiences in dialogue:” information booths from various programs in Sweden, Great Britain, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia
Thursday, October 23, 2004	Morning: School Visitations I visited Viletta School and observed for four hours.	Afternoon and Evening: School Visitations; I visited the Bellelli infant- Toddler center, Diana and Neruda Preschools Farewell Dinner held in a community center organized and implemented by the neighborhood senior citizens
Friday, October 24, 2004	Morning; Workshop: Pedagogistas, Teachers and Parents Vea Vecchia Topic: Ideas and Experiences for a participated educational project.	Afternoon and Evening Discussion Groups: Reflections on the experience of the Study Group and exchange and Dialogue among the participants. Conclusions: Carla Rinaldi and Amelia Gambetti

Reggio Emilia Study Tour Handouts, Notes and Images can be found in
Appendix 2 .

Professional Conferences

The Professional Conferences that I attended are summarized in the following table: Conference notes and images can be found in Appendix 3.

Conference Title	Dates	Location
Chicago Commons Experiences in Learning	November 4, 2003	Chicago, Illinois
National Association for the Education of Young Children 2003 Annual Conference	November 5-8, 2003	Chicago, Illinois
The Innovative Teacher Roundtable; The Image of the Child and the Role of the Teacher	March 27, 2004	Mill Valley, California
The Innovative Teacher Project: The Fundamental Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach with Amelia Gambetti	April 3, 2004	San Francisco, California
Boulder Journey School: The Fundamental Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach	April 24, 2003	Boulder, Colorado
Creativity Does Not Fall From the Sky: Education and the Expressive Languages Sponsored by the St. Louis Reggio Collaborative	April 28- May 1, 2003	St. Louis, Missouri

The Workshops and Seminars that I attended provided a wide range of focus topics. At the Chicago Commons Experiences in Learning held November 4, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois, I was able to gain an understanding of how this philosophy is integrated in a low income community and federal and state subsidized program. A criticism of the schools of Reggio Emilia and those inspired by them has been that many are in wealthy communities and generally consist of affluent families. My reaction to this criticism was to locate schools that were in low-income areas such as these and the schools that I observed In San Diego, CA. After a morning with a Video (Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach) and Speakers ("Topic: "Experiences Carried Out With Children, Teachers and Parents"- Amelia Gambetti and Lella Gandini, Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy), I boarded a bus and observed two Chicago Commons programs (Nia Family Center and Taylor Center for New Experiences) located in the inner city. This ended with a closing session with Amelia Gambetti and Lella Gandini at the Chicago Commons Central office.

At the National Association for the Education of Young Children
2003 Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, I was able to attend 16
seminar sessions.

Date	Workshop/Seminar Title	Presenters
Wednesday November 5, 2003	"Sustaining a long term investigation: creating a culture of inquiry"	Andre Stemmel and Victoria Fu: Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University-Blacksburg; Jeanne Goldhaber, University of Vermont-Burlington; Mary Jane Moran, University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Thursday November 6, 2003	"Thinking with parents about learning: ways to support , document and study parents' reflections on children's learning"	Brenda Fyfe, Webster University, St. Louis MO; Jennifer Strange and Sally Hovey, The College School, St. Louis, MO:
	"Helping teachers develop projects throughout an early childhood center: the experience of two center directors providing for teachers to implement the Project Approach (with children age 2 through grade 3)"	Sylvia Chard, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada; Yvonne Kogan, Eton School, Mexico City, Mexico
	""Diverse images of children, families, and teachers: making culture visible in school"	Shareen Abramson, Huggins early Education Center, California State University-Fresno
	"Chicago Commons shares and discusses	Karen Haigh, Dorothy Miller and Sonya

	its experience exploring the Reggio Emilia Approach within an inner-city Head Start, child care and state prekindergarten program”	Class, Chicago Commons, Chicago, IL
	“The role of men in Italian early childhood programs: gender, adult relations, and the negotiation of shared understanding about young children’	Rebecca New, Tufts University, Medford, MA; Bruce Mallory, University of New Hampshire-Durham; Susanna Mantovani, University of Milan-Boca, Milan , Italy
	“Practical suggestions for creating settings for thinking and knowing-highlighting practices from Reggio Emilia”	Gail Perry, Early Childhood Leadership Institute, Washington, DC
	“ A guide to Reggio Emilia resources: Innovations in early education from Reggio Children and the International Reggio Exchange”	Paola Ricco, Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy; Judith Allen Kaminsky, Merrill-Palmer Institute, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI
Friday November 7, 2003	“Strategies for enhancing understanding of the Reggio Emilia Approach: implementing a collaborative learning project in a curriculum planning course for preservices and in-service teachers”	Debra Murphy, Cape Cod Community College, West Barnstable, MA
	“Fundamental issues for American teachers exploring the Reggio Approach- a panel discussion on innovations in early education with international Reggio	Judith Allen Kaminsky, Merrill-Palmer Institute, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI; Amelia Gambetti, Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy; Pam Oken-Wright, St.

	Exchange Editorial Board members”	Catherine’s School, Richmond, VA
	“Authentic partnerships: how listening to children led to parent-educator advocacy for educator in-service time”	Mary Maloney, Amy Strada, and Neil Donahue, Cyert center for Early Education at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
	“Documenting to learn: using documentation to understand children and to uncover constructivist principles of teaching”	Alise Shafer and Patricia Hunter-McGrath, Evergreen Community School, Santa Monica, CA
	“Co-constructing Reggio: creating a Reggio-inspired preschool under the auspices of a national blue-ribbon elementary school, First Five (a tobacco settlement organization), anticipative parents, involved teachers and inspiring children”	Jim MacNerland and Kim Gregorchk, Oak Park, Neighborhood School, Oak Park, CA; Tony Knight , Oak Park Unified School District, Oak Park, CA.
	“Follow a group of teachers, children, and parents as they collect, explore, organize, and transform materials into “beautiful stuff”	Cathy Topal, Smith College, Northampton, MA; Leila Gandini, Liaison for the Reggio Emilia Approach in the United States, Rome, Italy
Saturday November 8, 2003	“Encountering the Reggio Emilia, municipal infant-toddler center and preschool experiences”	Amelia Gambetti and Lella Gandini, Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy
	“How documentation supports positive learning experiences for teachers, children, parents and administrators”	Amelia Gambetti and Lella Gandini, Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy

At The Innovative Teacher Roundtable; The Image of the Child and the Role of the Teacher, held March 27, 2004, in Mill Valley, California, the Kumara School teachers shared their experiences and specific projects inspired by the Reggio Emilia Approach. A surprise visit by Amelia Gambetti of Reggio Children, Reggio Emilia, Italy, provided an impromptu discussion specific to the program at Kumara School.

The Innovative Teacher Project: The Fundamental Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach with Amelia Gambetti held on April 3, 2004, at the Presidio Child Development Center in San Francisco, California again afforded another opportunity to share the insights of the Italian perspective within the context of an American interpretation. The teachers from the school also presented regarding the image of the child; environment; observation; documentation; interpretation; organization as a value; and conducted tours of their school.

The conference entitled "The Fundamental Principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach," held at the Boulder Journey School- Boulder, Colorado, on April 24, 2003, profiled the evolution of this program that was originally frivolously entitled "Make a Mess and Make Believe" to a very Reggio inspired program linked with the University of Colorado. Staff of the Center discussed how the fundamental principles of the Reggio Emilia approach are incorporated in the many facets of their very impressive

program. Overall, the environment of this school was one of the most appealing of all the schools I observed.

The last conference that I attended, " Creativity Does Not Fall From the Sky: Education and the Expressive Languages," sponsored by the St. Louis Reggio Collaborative in St. Louis, Missouri, April 28- May 1, 2003, provided an intensive experience from professionals who have been involved in the Reggio Emilia Approach longer than most programs in the United States. The first two days consisted of school observations linked with workshop sessions. The third day consisted of a seminar conducted by Veia Vecchi, Atelierista at the Diana School in Reggio Emilia, Italy, for 30 years on the development of creativity in children. This was her first visit to the United States. The last day sessions were held at Clayton High School Auditorium. Ron Leax, a professor of Art at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, presented regarding artistic development. Small Group breakout sessions followed with a plenary session paneled by Veia Vecchi, Ron Leax and St. Louis Collaborative educators.

Reggio Inspired Program Observations

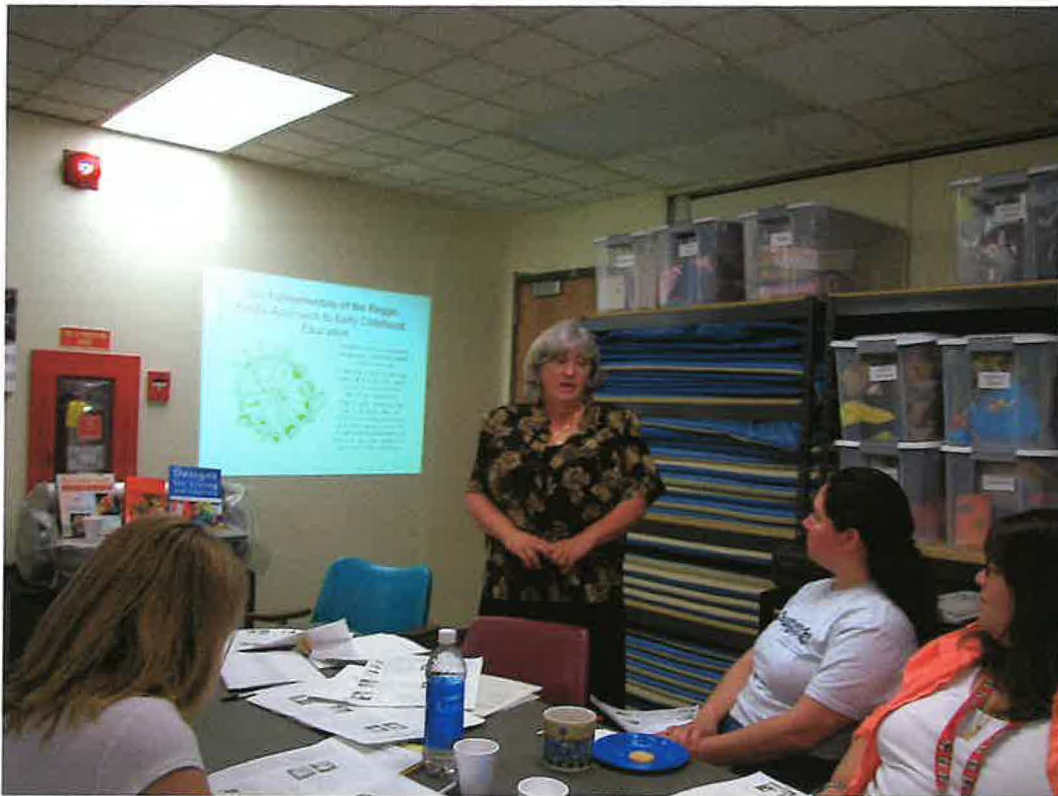
The Reggio Inspired Programs that I visited and observed are summarized in the following table: Observation notes and images can be found in Appendix 4.

School	Address	Dates
Chicago Commons Child Development Program Nia Family Center	744 N. Monticello, Chicago Illinois	11/4/03
Chicago Commons Child Development Program Taylor Center for New Experiences	1633 North Hamlin, Chicago Illinois	11/4/03
First Presbyterian Nursery School	1220 Second St. Santa Monica, California	2/27/04
Kumara School	540 Marin Avenue Mill Valley, California 94941	3/27/04
Presidio Child Development Center	San Francisco, California	4/3/04
Boulder Journey School	Boulder, Colorado	4/24/03
Grossmont College Child Development Center	8800 Grossmont College Drive El Cajon, California 92020-1799	3/29/04
Schools in the San Diego area La Jolla United Methodist	6063 La Jolla Boulevard La Jolla, California 92037	3/30/04

Church Nursery School		
School	Address	Dates
Schools in the San Diego area The Urban Village Head Start	4167 Fairmont Avenue San Diego, California 92105	3/31/04
Schools in the San Diego area: Karen D. Love Head Start	2062 Drescher St San Diego, California 92111	4/1/04
Evergreen Community School	2800 Colorado Ave. Santa Monica, California	5/5/04
The Growing Place (Preschool)	401 Ashland Santa Monica, California	3/24/04
The Growing Place (Infant Toddler Center)	1406 Marine Street Santa Monica, California	3/24/04
The St. Michael School	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04
Clayton Schools Family Center	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04
The College School	St. Louis, Missouri	4/29-30/04

Powerpoint In-Service Presentation

On May 7, 2004, I presented a Powerpoint program regarding the Reggio Emilia Approach to lead staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center. I conferred with Janette Henry (Director, Mt. SAC CDC) prior to the development of the program and we decided that the best place to begin with the staff would be a basic philosophical discussion with an in-depth examination of environmental aspects of the Reggio Emilia Approach. The staff seemed very inspired and much conversation was generated regarding changes that can be made both environmentally and in program practices. The complete presentation can be found in Appendix 5.



**Conclusions: Value to the College, Family and Consumer Sciences
Department (Child Development) and to Melanie Diederichs**

As projected in my Sabbatical Request, this leave has provided me with a valuable knowledge base that will enable me to educate my students and colleagues in the philosophy of Reggio Emilia. In a climate of pedagogical change and challenge, my students will profit from having the information to implement strategies from a widely respected and innovative approach to the education of young children.

Initially, I completed an in-depth study and review of literature to gain a knowledge base and a perspective regarding the Reggio Emilia approach. Due to the first of many project schedule changes, I completed this activity in two phases. The first phase was completed prior to the Reggio Emilia Study Tour in October, 2003 and the National Association for the Education of Young Children National Conference in November, 2003. Although unplanned, this two-phase literature review structure enabled me to first gain a basic awareness for the philosophy, and secondly, travel and observe the practices in Italy and then be further educated at the conference. I was also able to purchase the latest books and resources both in Italy and at the NAEYC conference, therefore attaining the newest information.

Participating in the first Reggio Emilia international study tour exceeded my expectations. The international aspect enriched the

dialogue markedly but also provided an opportunity to network in a way that was rare and superior. I now have specific contacts of Reggio inspired programs in Guadalajara and Merida, Mexico; Great Britain; New Zealand; Australia; Israel; South America; Sweden and Thailand. The similarities among the differences in these programs as compared to the United States are significant. In addition, to be edified by the Italian teachers and to experience firsthand the culture under which these immaculate, high quality schools flourish provided a well-rounded education that could not have been attained in any better way. The implementation of these beliefs that I observed there are the epitome of developmentally appropriate practices and have provided me with many ideas and strategies for transfer to the children's programs I work with.

I projected in my Sabbatical Request that I would attend at least two, in-depth professional conferences with a Reggio Emilia focus to concentrate on specific aspects of this philosophy. I attended six major conferences and seminars. Each of these experiences helped to deepen my understanding of important aspects of this unique educational philosophy. I was able to use the conferences as a stepping stone to visit and observe Reggio Emilia inspired programs in Chicago, Illinois; Mill Valley, California; San Francisco, California; Boulder, Colorado; and St. Louis, Missouri. I was fortunate to visit and observe at least two schools utilizing this approach in the inner city of Chicago. The opportunity to observe and record images in distinctive and exemplary programs not

only enriched my insight but also provided me with abundant examples to share with my students and colleagues. If the plan to build a new child development center on campus reaches fruition, I have extensive information to contribute to that effort.

I projected in my sabbatical request that I would visit and observe at least four Reggio inspired programs in the United States. I visited and observed sixteen programs. As I attended conferences and networked with colleagues, the list of high quality “must see” programs ballooned from those I originally had submitted. As my knowledge base expanded, the need to observe in these programs became very essential. In addition to the programs I observed in Chicago, Illinois; Mill Valley, California; San Francisco, California; Boulder, Colorado; and St. Louis, Missouri. I was able to observe in programs closer to home in Santa Monica and San Diego. At Grossmont College I also had the opportunity to sit in on a Reggio Emilia community college class. Grossmont teaches two, three-unit Reggio Emilia courses that are heavily attended, as the preschools adopting the Reggio Emilia approach in that area increases. In observing a wide variety of programs serving many different populations I was able to understand how the culture of each school influences the interpretation of the philosophy. The Italian educators tutored us that the Reggio Emilia schools in Italy are only in Italy. The Reggio-inspired schools in the United States have acquired new practices and a similarity in environmental components, but the schools in Santa Monica are very different in culture

than those in the inner city of Chicago. This difference is a good thing; the ability to achieve a unique program relevant to the population it serves is rare in the United States' corporate approach to child care. This of many aspects of the Reggio Emilia philosophy is a worthy goal to strive for.

As my final sabbatical activity, I developed a PowerPoint In-service presentation regarding the Reggio Emilia Approach and presented it to the staff of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center on May 9, 2004. This benefits the college by expanding the current beliefs and philosophy of the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center staff (most of whom are current and past Mt. SAC Child Development students) who were inspired and are moving toward the implementation of the quality practices based on the Reggio Emilia Approach that I was able to share with them.

In May, 2004 I completed my sabbatical report.

Personally, I found the opportunity to experience this extensive and multi-faceted sabbatical project renewed my enthusiasm for teaching. My colleagues at Mt. San Antonio College and our surrounding community colleges (as well as Cal State University at Fullerton!) are eager and excited to share in the ideas and information that I have had the fortune to acquire. Ideas for workshops, classes and in-service presentations are currently being discussed and will likely continue as more and more early childhood programs are embracing this philosophy.

Literature Review: Books

Advisories, 2002. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop

Along the Levee Road. 2002. Reggio Emilia: Reggio Children

Brick by Brick, 2000. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop

Cadwell, Louise. 1997. *Bringing Reggio Emilia Home: An Innovative Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Cadwell, Louise. 2002. *Bringing Learning to Life: The Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Ceppi, Giulio and Zini, Michele. 1998. *Children, Spaces, Relations. Metaproject for an Environment for Young Children*. Reggio Emilia Italy: Reggio Children.

Curtis, Deb and Carter Margie. 2003. *Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments*. St. Paul: Redleaf Press.

Dahlberg, Gunilla. 2003. *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care*. Great Britain: RoutledgeFalmer./

Edwards, Carolyn; Gandini, Lella and Forman, George. 1998. *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach—Advanced Reflections* (Second Edition). Greenwich, Conn.: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Fraser, Susan and Gestwicki, Carol. (2002). *Authentic Childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the Classroom*. Albany, NY: Delmar/Thompson Learning.

Gandini, Lella and Pope, Carolyn. 2001. *Bambini: The Italian Approach to Infant Toddler Care*. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Fu, Victoria; Hill Lynn & Stremmel, Andrew. 2001. *Teaching and Learning, Collaborative Exploration of the Reggio Emilia Approach*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Hendrick, Joanne, Ed. 1997. *First Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Hendrick, Joanne, Ed. 2004. *Next Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc.

Katz, Lillian, 1994. *Reflections on the Reggio Emilia Approach*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Making Learning Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners, 2001. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Making Teaching Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners, 2003. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Gardner, Howard, Feldman, David Henry, and Krechevsky, Mara. (1998) *Project Zero Framework: Project Spectrum-Early Learning Activities*, Vol. 2. Teacher's College Press, New York.

The Municipal Infant-Toddler Centers and Preschools of Reggio Emilia, 2000. Burlington VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Topal, Cathy & Gandini, Leila, 1999. *Beautiful Stuff: Children Learning with Found Materials*, Burlington, VT: Learning Materials Workshop.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Advisories. 2002. Reggio Emilia: Reggio Children.

Summary of Content

Produced by children and educators of the Reggio Emilia "Diana" Preschool, five- and six-year-old children tell incoming three-year-olds about their new preschool. Knowing that their school will welcome new three-year-olds in September, the older children have taken on the task of explaining things and advising the new arrivals. Twenty-five chroniclers, together and in small groups, have engaged in trying to connect their own memories and what they consider to be important with the possible interests and questions of twenty-five three-year-old children they don't know.

Critical Comments

This book would be an excellent supplementary resource to demonstrate the creativity and skill development of children educated via the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Excellent for courses in Early Childhood Education that emphasize the Reggio philosophy.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Along the Levee Road. 2002. Reggio Emilia: Reggio Children.

Background Information

The history and peculiar identity of the Municipal Preschool "Centro Verde Martiri di Villa Sesso" narrated by the direct protagonists. "Protagonist" is a term used in Reggio to describe the active role of the participants in learning. The trio of protagonists in the Reggio philosophy include the child, the teachers and the parents. This word is deliberately chosen to convey the notion of strength and equal participation.

Summary of Content

The book tells the story of the development and the evolution of an Italian, Reggio-inspired educational community over almost half a century (1945-1997).

Critical Comments

This book would be an excellent supplementary resource to convey a historical perspective for courses in Early Childhood Education that emphasize the Reggio philosophy. It is a dynamic illustration of the socio-cultural perspective derived from Vygotsky's theory. It portrays how a community was assisted in constructing new understanding through interactions with others.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Barazzoni, Renzo. 2000. Brick by Brick. Reggio Emilia: Reggio Children.

Background Information

The History of the "XXV Aprile" Municipal Preschool of Villa Cella, one of the first opened in Reggio Emilia after the end of the Second World War.

Summary of Content

The book tells the story of the development and the evolution of one of the first Italian, Reggio inspired educational community over almost half a century (1945-1997). It reconstructs the events which led a civic-minded and hard working population of this outlying Italian village to identify, with more clarity than any academic analysis might have, the need for a renewed philosophy of early childhood education which paralleled a return to democracy from an occupied region of a fascist regime.

Critical Comments

This book would be an excellent supplementary resource to convey a historical perspective for courses in Early Childhood Education that emphasize the Reggio philosophy. It is a dynamic illustration of the socio-cultural perspective derived from Vygotsky's theory. It portrays how a community was assisted in constructing new understanding and a social sense spurred on by the movement of local women.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Cadwell, Louise Boyd. (2002) *Bringing Learning to Life: The Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education*. New York: Teacher's College Press.

Background Information

Between 1989 and 1993, just three educators from the United States were granted permission to spend a year as interns in the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. Louise Cadwell was one of them. She is Atelierista at the College School and consults with a number of schools in St. Louis, Missouri. She has a Ph.D from the Union Institute and has focused on children's development through arts, language and environmental education. She works with both Italian and American educators on the adaption of the Reggio Approach in the United States.

Summary of Content

Building on her book, *Bringing Reggio Emilia Home*, Louise Cadwell helps American educators understand what it means to use ideas from the Reggio Approach in their classrooms. In new and dynamic ways. Cadwell once again takes readers inside the day-to-day practice of a group of early childhood educators. This time she describes the growth and evolution of the work in the St. Louis Reggio Collaborative over the past 10 years.

Specific concepts explored are:

- History of the Reggio Approach
- The "arc" of day; daily format and activities
- Parent Relationships
- Teacher Collaboration
- Transforming Spaces – Transforming Ourselves
- What are the children learning?
- Returning to Italy: Theory and Practice

Critical Comments

Cadwell shares the insights she and her colleagues gained from their experiences of adopting and adapting the philosophy, theory, and early education practices of Reggio Emilia. This book is a rich portrait of the exploration of the meaning of Reggio's work in American schools, giving us vivid portraits of both the teachers' and the students' work and learning.

Literature Review

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Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Ceppi, Giulio and Zini, Michele. 1998. *Children, Spaces, Relations. Metaproject for an Environment for Young Children*. Reggio Emilia Italy: Reggio Children.

Background Information

This book is the result of joint research conducted by Reggio Children and Domus Academy Research Center of Milan.

Summary of Content

This book is presented in three main sections:

- A critical analysis of the cumulative experience of the municipal early childhood system of Reggio Emilia, with the aim of formulating general criteria of quality and presenting possible scenarios, using keywords and metaphors in an attempt to identify the desirable characteristics of a space for young children.
- Reflections on the tools of design, with indications regarding both the distribution of space and the "soft qualities" (light, color, materials, smell, sound, microclimate). The objective is to provide tools of analysis and practical indications for both the interior and exterior design of infant-toddler centers and schools for young children.
- Essays discussing the pedagogical and architecture/design issues that form the theoretical basis of the research.

Critical Comments

Careful observation and reflection about space, program values and goals, can enhance environments for children's growth and learning. It was interesting reading about the Italian project before reading the American experience of transforming children's environments in *Designs for Living and Learning*. I found the comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences in the concrete manifestations of theoretical concepts and ideas enlightening reading. This book would provide important insights for children's programs that are undergoing new building or structural remodeling prior to the development of blueprints.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Curtis , Deb and Carter, Margie. 2003. *Designs for Living and Learning Transforming Early Childhood Environments*. St. Paul: Redleaf Press.

Background Information

Deb Curtis has been teaching and caring for children since 1969, and she has been training teachers for more than 20 years. She is a community college instructor. Previously she was a Head Start education coordinator, and she has served as the vice president for development for her state Association for the Education of Young Children affiliate. She recently returned to the classroom to be a part-time preschool teacher.

Margie Carter writes a regular column in Child Care Information Exchange. She has worked as an elementary school teacher, a preschool teacher, and a child care center director. She has an M.A. from Pacific Oaks College and serves on the adjunct faculty there.

Summary of Content

This book goes beyond rearranging furniture or adding new materials to the classroom. The authors urge early childhood educators to rethink what their program stands for and transform their environments in innovative ways that represent those values. Each chapter begins with a belief about children's needs in early care and education settings, followed by a description of how the teaching and learning environment can meet those needs. Colorful photographs of the many creative ways teachers across the country have used materials or elements, such as light or water, or created special spaces that support the program's vision for children and families.

Five chapters address connections and a sense of belonging; flexible space and open-ended materials; natural materials that engage the senses; wonder curiosity, and intellectual engagement and symbolic representations, literacy, and visual arts.

Specific concepts explored are:

- Laying a Foundation for Living and Learning
- Creating Connections and a Sense of Belonging
- Keeping Spaces Flexible and Materials Open-Ended
- Designing Natural Environments That Engage Our Senses
- Provoking Wonder, Curiosity, and Intellectual Engagement
- Engaging Children in Symbolic Representation, Literacy and the Visual Arts
- Facing Barriers and Negotiating Change

Critical Comments

This book demonstrates how thoughtful observation and reflection about space, program values and goals can make quality environments for children's growth and learning. The readable text is illustrated with photos from a wide variety of programs that reinforce the importance of hand-on activities to structure adults' reflection on their practical experiences in early childhood environments and to encourage the creation of more complex and interesting learning spaces. Also addressed is classroom management through the organization of space and time, the benefits of orderly display of materials, and strategies for cleanup as real shared adult/child work. Active learning is emphasized as necessary to both academic skills and social skills. I found this book insightful with concrete ideas.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Dahlberg, Gunilla; Moss, Peter; Pence, Alan. *Beyond Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: Postmodern Perspectives*. 1999 London, England: Routledge Falmer.

Background Information:

Gunilla Dalhberg is a professor of Education at Stockholm Institute of Education, Department of Child and Youth Studies. Peter Moss is a Professor of Early Childhood Provision at the Institute of Education University of London. Alan Pence is a Professor of Child Care at the School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, British Columbia.

Summary of Content:

Working with postmodern ideas, this book questions the search to define and measure quality in the early childhood field and its tendency to reduce philosophical issues of value to purely technical and managerial issues of expert knowledge and measurement. The book argues that there are ways other than the "discourse of quality" for understanding and evaluating early childhood pedagogical work, and relates these to alternative ways of understanding early childhood itself and the purposes of early childhood institutions, resulting in a reconceptualization of early childhood education and care. Taking a broad perspective, the book relates issues of early childhood to the sociology of childhood, philosophy, ethics, political science, and other fields. The book maintains that the concept and language of quality cannot accommodate issues such as diversity and multiple perspectives, contextual specificity, and subjectivity and asserts that a new concept is required, called "meaning making." The book places these issues in a global context and draws on work from Canada, Sweden, and Italy, including the nurseries in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Critical Comments:

This book is a thoughtful critique of the field of early childhood education. It provokes critical discussion and examination of current practices that is limited and limiting the potential in children and teachers. It challenges the reader to reexamine their views on the nature of the education of young children. It is a work that presents a vision within a global context and not only reinforces the importance of the work of Reggio Emilia but presents findings from Canada and Sweden. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity in meeting with and discussing these issues with Gunilla Dalhberg and Peter Moss, who attended the Reggio Emilia study tour with me in October, 2003.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Edwards, Carolyn, Ed.; Gandini, Lella, Ed.; Forman, George, Ed. (1998) *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach--Advanced Reflections*. Greenwich, Conn: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Background Information

Carolyn Edwards is Professor of Psychology and Family And Consumer Sciences at the University Of Nebraska.

Lella Gandini Is United States Liaison for the Reggio Emilia Program in the United States and Adjunct Professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

George Forman is Professor Of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

This book is an integrated set of essays that describes the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. Fundamentally, the approach fosters children's intellectual development through a systematic focus on symbolic representation. Chapters document the forty-year evolution of the idea and explore how some American classrooms have adopted aspects of the program. Entries offer insight into how the community-teacher partnership functions within Italian society and the critical role of student documentation in developing curriculum. Additionally, an interview with Loris Malaguzzi, founder of the program, provides readers with a glimpse into the historical, ideological, and philosophical underpinnings of the Approach. Black-and-white and color photographs support the text along with a glossary of Reggio Emilia terms and a listing of references for further information.

Summary of Content

This collection of essays and interviews documents the unique approach to early childhood education taken by schools in the Reggio Emilia region of Italy. Howard Gardner and David Hawkins provide reflections in chapters that begin the book. The book is then divided into four major parts.

- Part I includes an introduction by Carolyn Edwards and others, and the essay "What Can We Learn from Reggio Emilia?" (Katz).
- Part II contains six interviews conducted by Lella Gandini with Reggio Emilia educators: "History, Ideas, and Basic Philosophy," with Loris Malaguzzi; "The Community-Teacher Partnership in the Governance of the Schools," with Sergio Spaggiari; "Projected Curriculum Constructed through Documentation--'Progettazione,'" with Carlina Rinaldi; "The Role of the 'Pedagogista,'" with Tiziana Filippini; "The

Role of the 'Atelierista,'" with Veà Vecchi; and "The Voice of Parents," with Gianna Fontanesi and others.

- **Part III** examines the theory and practice of the Reggio Emilia approach through seven essays: "Educational and Caring Spaces" (Gandini); "Partner, Nurturer, and Guide: The Role of the Teacher" (Edwards); "Children with 'Special Rights' in the Preprimary Schools and Infant-Toddler Centers of Reggio Emilia" (Smith); "Curriculum Development in Reggio Emilia: A Long-Term Curriculum Project about Dinosaurs" (Rankin); "Negotiated Learning through Design, Documentation, and Discourse" (Forman and Fyfe); "Theory and Praxis in Reggio Emilia: They Know What They Are Doing, and Why" (New); and "Poppies and the Dance of World Making" (Kaufman).
- **Part IV** examines the extension of the Reggio Emilia approach to American classrooms through eight essays: "The Child in Community: Constraints from the Early Childhood Lore" (Nimmo); "Existing Frameworks and New Ideas from Our Reggio Emilia Experience: Learning at a Lab School with 2- to 4-Year-Old Children" (Kantor and Whaley); (3) "Bridge to Another Culture: The Journey of the Model Early Learning Center" (Lewin and others); "The City in the Snow: Applying the Multisymbolic Approach in Massachusetts" (Forman and others); "Looking in the Mirror: A Reflection of Reggio Practice in Winnetka" (Tarini and White); "The Project Approach Framework for Teacher Education: A Case for Collaborative Learning and Reflective Practice" (Moran); "Adapting the Reggio Emilia Approach: Becoming Reference Points for Study and Practice" (Fyfe and others); and "Reconsidering Early Childhood Education in the United States: Reflections from Our Encounters with Reggio Emilia" (Phillips and Bredekamp). The book concludes with reflections by Edwards, Gandini, and Forman; a glossary of terms used by Reggio Emilia educators; and a list of published resources about the Reggio Emilia approach.

Critical Comments

Educators in the United States have been captivated by the "Reggio Emilia approach" to education since the late 1980s. The extensive documentation of Reggio children's work has toured the world as The Hundred Languages of Children exhibit. This book explores what is truly possible in early education if we are willing to let go of our long-held beliefs about how children learn. The Reggio Emilia approach is much more than "hands-on learning." It is a community effort that involves administrators, teachers, parents, children, and government. This book is a fascinating dialog among the varied members of the Reggio Emilia community and American researchers and teachers.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Fraser, Susan and Gestwicki, Carol. (2002). *Authentic Childhood: Exploring Reggio Emilia in the Classroom*. Albany, NY: Delmar/Thompson Learning.

Background Information

This book was originally published in Canada in 1999 under the authorship of Susan Fraser, a child development educator at Douglas College in British Columbia. Carol Gestwick, a child development educator at Central Piedmont Community College was contacted to create the American Edition. In addition, many other child development educators contributed to this edition that provides a broad, collaborative examination of best practices using the Reggio Emilia approach in the United States and Canada.

Summary of Content

Authentic Childhood: Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the Classroom introduces readers to the principles of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. Developed at the preschools and infant-toddlers center in Reggio Emilia, Italy, this program has received international attention. It offers examples of how Reggio principles have enhanced classroom practices of a variety of child educators and how those involved with Reggio principles have enhanced their own classroom practices. A practical and inspiring work, this book introduces the principles that guide excellent preschools.

Specific concepts explored are:

- Chapter 1: Experiencing Ideas from Reggio Emilia.
- Chapter 2: The Image of the Child.
- Chapter 3: The Role of the Teacher.
- Chapter 4: Relationships. Relationships with Families.
- Chapter 5: The Environment as the Third Teacher.
- Chapter 6: Documentation.
- Chapter 7: Negotiating the Curriculum.
- Chapter 8: The Investigating Classroom.
- Chapter 9 : Aesthetics in the Program.
- Chapter10: The Hundred Languages of Children.

Critical Comments

The book is intended for classroom use and includes separate discussions of key principles to enhance understanding of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. It also provides concrete examples inspire readers to reflect on and improve their individual practices. Although the material is widely appealing, I feel it can best be used by beginning teachers, and practitioners who are new to the Reggio Emilia Philosophy. At the learning tour in Reggio Emilia, Joanne Szamreta of Lesley University and dana Lilly of Mercer University indicated that they use this as a text in courses that they teach.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Gandini, Lella and Edward, Carolyn Pope, Editors. 2001. *Bambini: The Italian Approach to Infant/Toddler Care*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Background Information

Gandini, Lella is an adjunct professor of education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Lesley College, Cambridge.

Carolyn Pope Edward is a professor of psychology and Family and Consumer Sciences at the University of Nebraska.

Summary of Content

This book examines the Reggio Emilia approach, and features the work of prominent scholars, policy-makers, researchers, administrators, and practicing teachers who have created and directed the infant-toddler care systems in four cities in Italy. Joined by American educators and researchers (including Ron Lally, Rebecca New, and Jeanne Goldhaber), their work builds upon and extends inclusionary and family-centered philosophies. It combines missions of care and education, and produces innovations in space and environments. This book contains examples of experiences with dynamic, open systems of organization that support emotional and cognitive development of infants and toddlers—and respect the delicate relationship between parents and their young. Also included are many photos, some in color.

Topics include:

- Complementary family-centered systems of early care, education, and intervention
- Practical experimentation and teaching strategies like the *inserimento* (first transition of child and family into the center), and *diario* (memory book), as well as explanations of the rationale behind them
- Best practices for quality care programs with broad implications for reflective teaching in America's early care program.

Critical Comments

Leading figures in Italy's famous preschool movement (plus a few well-informed foreigners) provide vivid descriptions not only of pedagogical practices, but also of the evolving politics of decentralization that has kept Italy's preschools under local community control with no sacrifice of

standards. Throughout the sixteen chapters—written mostly by the Italians themselves—practices, policies, reflections, and research on how best to serve infants and toddlers and their families are shared. Though the Italian experience cannot simply be transplanted to the United States, by staying in the conversation, we will deepen and sharpen our understanding of what we want for our infant-toddler parent-teacher programs and may even discover some strategies for getting them there.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Fu Victoria R., Stremmel, Andrew J. and Hill, Lynn T. (2002) *Teaching and Learning: Collaborative Exploration of the Reggio Emilia Approach*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Background Information

Victoria R. Fu teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in child development and early childhood education with her colleagues Andy Stremmel and Lynn Hill. She is a professor at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and serves as a pedagogical consultant at the Child Development Laboratory School. She has visited the schools in Reggio Emilia and finds that their philosophy and practice offer possibilities to make meaningful the role of teacher as researcher. As a member of The Lugano-Reggio Teaching Research Collaborative, she is actively engaged in recasting the Reggio Emilia approach to inform teaching in the United States.

Lynn T. Hill lives on a farm in Giles County, Virginia, with her husband, two daughters, and several dogs, cats, and horses. Her love of nature contributes to her work as the Studio Teacher for the Virginia Tech Child Development Lab School, where she is also the Director of Curriculum. She also serves as an instructor in the Department of Human Development, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in Early Childhood Education. She has been inspired and provoked by the Reggio Emilia approach for over a decade and has been most profoundly affected by the concept of "an education based on relationships."

Andrew J. Stremmel is associate professor in Human Development and director of the Child. His research interests are in the areas of early childhood education, particularly the formation and transformation of pre- and inservice early childhood teachers. He has written on issues of early childhood teacher education, including the application of Vygotsky's theory in early educational settings; diversity and the development of multicultural awareness in teachers; and images of teaching and the role of self.

Summary of Content

The Reggio Emilia approach is introduced in this text through stories and examples of children's projects that invite readers to examine their personal learning process. It offers innovative ways to meld theory with teaching and action research while considering the professional development of each reader—pre-service, in-service, teacher educator, teacher researcher. Unlike other texts on Reggio Emilia, it considers assessment, cultural diversity, and teaching issues from a U.S. perspective.

Specific concepts explored are:

- The place of Reggio Emilia in the United States.
- The Story and Foundations of the Reggio Emilia Approach by Lella Gandini.
- The Challenge to Reinvent the Reggio Emilia Approach in the Context of the United States.
- The Cultural Construction of Childhood: United States and Reggio Perspectives.
- The Reggio Emilia Approach and Accountability Assessment in the United States .
- Communities for Learning: Developing a Sense of “We” in Parent/Teacher Relationships; the Reggio Emilia Approach for a Middle School; Learning from Reggio Emilia's Approach to Inclusion.
- Teacher Education: Inquiry Teaching and the Possibilities for Change.
- The Transformation of Self in Early Childhood Education: Connections to the Reggio Emilia Approach.
- The Development of Documentation Strategies to Support Teacher Reflection, Inquiry, and Collaboration.
- The Art of Teaching: Inquiry-based, social constructivist perspective.
- Progettazione and Documentation: Learning Moments Among Protagonists.
- Ordinary Moments, Extraordinary Possibilities, Ideas and the Essence of Intent.
- Reflections: Lessons Learned and Possibilities for the Next Steps by the Authors.

Critical Comments

This text challenges readers to reconsider teaching practices by treating the education process as a reflective inquiry and constructive process. It also introduces this important approach in a social, cultural and political context to educate readers about its relationship to education in the U.S. There are multiple points of view represented in featuring chapters written by a number of influential authors who relate their classroom experiences, along with children's work that resulted from implementing the Reggio Emilia approach. This text challenges students to the possibilities in different teaching-learning contexts and examines their personal learning process. A rich feature provides many examples of projects, case studies, and children's work. It also explores the teacher's role as researcher and teaching as reflective practice through meaningful examples that place instructors and students in the classroom context. The challenging topic of assessment and accountability strategies are supported by multiple forms of documentation, opportunities for reflection/interpretation, and actual projects to demonstrate teaching and learning performance within an inquiry-based constructivist perspective.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Hendrick, Joanne. (1997) *First Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way: Accepting the Challenge to Change*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Background Information

Joanne Hendrick is professor emerita of early childhood education from the University of Oklahoma. In addition to raising four children of her own, her practical experience includes working with children at the Stanford Speech and Hearing Clinic, directing a parent-child workshop, working in Head Start, and chairing the early childhood areas at Santa Barbara City College and the University of Oklahoma. She holds an undergraduate degree from Stanford University in disorders of speech and hearing and graduate degrees from the University of California in counseling and early childhood education. She is past president of the California Association for the Education of Young Children.

Summary of Content

The first book of its kind on the market in 1997, it examines how real teachers in real schools are working to grasp the principles of the Reggio Emilia Approach and apply them in their every day classroom settings. Written for practicing and future teachers by leading advocates of the Reggio philosophy, it explores the most essential features of this emergent constructivist and Italian curriculum by combining discussions of Reggio concepts with examples of their application in American schools.

Specific concepts explored are:

INTRODUCTION TO REGGIO EMILIA.

- The Reggio Emilia Story: History and Organization. *Lella Gandini*.
- Foundations of the Reggio Emilia Approach. *Lella Gandini*.
- Lessons From an Exhibition: Reflections of an Art Educator. *Pam Houck*.
- Reggio Emilia and American Schools: Telling Them Apart and Putting Them Together, Can We Do It? *Joanne Hendrick*.

• APPLYING KEY CONCEPTS OF THE REGGIO APPROACH.

- Reflections on a Year in Reggio Emilia: Key Concepts in Rethinking and Learning the Reggio Way. *Eva Tarini*.
- Collaboration as the Foundation of the Reggio Experience: Learning From and Building on Dewey, Vygotsky, and Piaget. *Baji Rankin*.

- Conversations With Children. *Louise Boyd Cadwell & Brenda Varel Fyfe.*

AMERICAN INTERPRETATIONS OF THE REGGIO APPROACH.

- The Challenges of the Reggio Emilia Approach. *Lilian Katz.*
- The Challenge of Reggio Emilia's Research: One Teacher's Reflections: Preschool. *Donna Carlross Williams & Rebecca Kantor.*
- Implementing the Process of Change in a Public School Setting. *Cheryl Breig-Allen & Janis Ullrich Dillon.*
- Implementing Reggio in an Independent School: What Works? *Barbara Geiger.*

WORKING WITH STAFF TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE.

- How the Reggio Approach Has Influenced an Inner-City Program: Exploring Reggio in Head Start and Subsidized Child Care. *Karen Haigh.*
- The Reggio Emilia Influence at the University of Michigan Dearborn Child Development Center: Challenges and Change. *Rosalyn Saltz.*
- Using the Reggio Approach in a Children's Museum. *Frances Donovan.*

WORKING WITH STUDENT TEACHERS TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE.

- Observing, Recording, Understanding: The Role of Documentation in Early Childhood Teacher Education. *Jeanne Goldhaber, Dee Smith, and Susan Sortino.*
- Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Teacher Education: Preservice Teachers as Ethnographers. *Mary Jane Moran.*

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Next Steps in Teaching "The Reggio Way": Advocating for a New Image of Children. *Rebecca New.*
- Why Not? *Joanne Hendrick.*

Critical Comments

The ideas here are not new- journals, portfolios, collaboration, Dewey, Vygotsky, -Piaget; but the combination can offer a unique synergy, which then must be translated for new locales. In this book American projects that have attempted to incorporate aspects of the Reggio model are described by persons who were involved in the projects. Easy to read and would be an appropriate text for community college child development students.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Hendrick, Joanne. (2004) *Next Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way: Accepting the Challenge to Change*. Prentice Hall, New Jersey.

Background Information

Joanne Hendrick is professor emerita of early childhood education from the University of Oklahoma. In addition to raising four children of her own, her practical experience includes working with children at the Stanford Speech and Hearing Clinic, directing a parent-child workshop, working in Head Start, and chairing the early childhood areas at Santa Barbara City College and the University of Oklahoma. She holds an undergraduate degree from Stanford University in disorders of speech and hearing and graduate degrees from the University of California in counseling and early childhood education. She is past president of the California Association for the Education of Young Children.

Summary of Content

Next Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way: Accepting the Challenge to Change is a progress report of the steps American and Canadian teachers have taken in the last six years since the publishing of *First Steps Toward Teaching the Reggio Way*. This book is comprised of chapters by the leading advocates of the Reggio Emilia approach. It examines how teachers are applying the principles of Reggio Emilia on an everyday basis. By combining discussion of Reggio Emilia concepts with examples of their application in American schools, it explores this emergent curriculum and helps future teachers see how to advocate for it in their own school or program.

Specific concepts explored are:

I. INTRODUCTION TO REGGIO EMILIA.

1. A Brief Reggio Emilia Story, *Lella Gandini*.
2. Foundations of the Reggio Emilia Approach, *Lella Gandini*.
3. Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky: Connections with Malaguzzi and the Reggio Approach, *Baji Rankin*.

II. REGGIO EMILIA AS SEEN THROUGH AMERICAN EYES.

4. Reggio Emilia and American Schools: Telling Them Apart and Putting Them Together—Can We Do It?, *Joanne Hendrick*.

5. Being There: Reflections on a First-Time Visit to Reggio Emilia, *Jeanne Goldhaber, Beth Dall, Nicole DiMario, Sara Lovell, Kelly Morrison.*

III. THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE.

6. The Challenges of the Reggio Emilia Approach, *Lilian Katz.*

IV. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE BY CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS.

7. Creating, Encouraging, and Supporting Relationships at Chicago Commons Child Development Program, *Karen Haigh.*

8. Teachers as Co-Inquirers: Fostering Positive Relationships in a Multicultural Community, *Shareen Abramson, Kabeljit Atwal.*

9. Thinking with Parents About Learning, *Brenda Fyfe, Sally Miller Hovey, Jennifer Strange.*

10. Parents as Partners, *Mary Hartzell, Becky Zlotoff.*

11. Caregiving Through a Relationship Lens, *Carolyn Pope Edwards.*

12. The Relational Rights of Children in Our Care, *Alexandrea Doherty.*

V. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE BY DOING PROJECT WORK.

13. Conversations with Children, *Louise Boyd Cadwell, Brenda Fyfe.*

14. The Challenge of Reggio Emilia's Research: One Teacher's Reflections, *Donna Carloss Williams, Rebecca Kantor.*

15. There It Is! Exploring the Permanence of Objects and the Power of Self with Infants and Toddlers, *Nicole May, Rebecca Kantor, Michele Sanderson.*

16. Embracing Snow: A Story of Negotiated Learning, *Pam Oken-Wright.*

VI. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE BY CREATING THE APPROPRIATE SETTINGS.

17. Reflecting on Changes Within Our Learning and Living Environments at Chicago Commons, *Karen Haigh.*

18. The *Atelier* Environment: Recognizing the Power of Materials as Languages, *Charles Schwall.*

19. In Our Real World: An Anatomy of Documentation, *Barbara Burrington, Susan Sortino*

VII. ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE ON A LARGER SCALE.

20. Reflections on a Journey of Inspiration: Teacher Change in Public Education, *Sandra Miller, Sonya Stoptaugh.*

VIII. CREATING A VISION FOR FUTURE CHANGE: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

21. Experiences in Advocacy: Expanding the Role of the Early Childhood Educator, *Judith Allen Kaminsky with Margie Cooper, Jeanne Goldhaber, Karen Haigh.*

NEW - Chapter 15, *There It Is! Exploring the Permanence of Objects and the Power of Self with Infants and Toddlers* —Discusses the Reggio approaches for the rights of the very young.

Critical Comments

This text is written in simple, clear language by foremost American and Italian authorities in the field. It offers practical, real-life examples and advice, and shares experiences of teachers working to apply the Reggio Approach in their own classrooms. In addition, it demonstrates the wide applicability of the Reggio Approach, discussing its implementation in a variety of teaching settings, including preschool, elementary school, with inner city children, in children's museums and with college students themselves.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Katz, Lillian. (1994). *Reflections on the Reggio Emilia Approach*
ERIC/EECE, Illinois.

Background Information

Lillian G. Katz is Professor of Early Childhood Education (Ph.D., Stanford University, 1968) in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and Director of ERIC/EECE Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. Author of more than 100 articles and chapters on the education of young children, most recently *Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach*, (with S. C. Chard), and *Talks with Teachers of Young Children: A Collection*. Founding editor of *The Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, and President of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (1992-1994).

Summary of Content

A collection of seven papers representing a variety of perspectives on the implications of the Reggio Approach on early childhood education. Brenda Fyfe shares insights by a group of teachers in St. Louis as they begin to implement the Reggio approach in their US classrooms. Rebecca New focuses on the issues of the larger cultural context in which early childhood practitioners work and draws attention to the similarities and differences in which teachers in Italy and the United States influences them in their daily performance. George Forman explores the role of "graphic languages" in young children's learning and deepens our understanding of the potential of visual representation in children's growth and development. Carla Rinaldi outlines Reggio's approach to staff development and staff relationships. Giordana Rabbitti's article is a detailed case study of a long-term project conducted in Reggio Emilia which exemplifies the day to day implementation of that approach. The articles by Edwards, Gandini and Nimmo focuses on how teachers in three communities (two in Italy and one in the United States) define their roles and their beliefs regarding children's learning.

Critical Comments

This collection explores relevant concepts and issues of the Reggio Emilia philosophy. It offers practical, real-life examples and advice, and shares experiences of teachers working to apply the Reggio Approach in their own classrooms.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Giudici, Claudia and Rinaldi, Carla. 2001. *Making Learning Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners*. Italy: Reggio Children.

Background Information

This text is compiled from a research project carried out from 1997 to 1999 by Harvards Project Zero and Reggio Children, involving teachers and pedagogistas from the Municipal infant-toddler centers and preschools of Reggio Emilia.

Raising questions like: what extent is individual learning reinforced and enhanced or, on the contrary, stifled and inhibited, in a learning group; does group learning actually exist; can a group construct its own way of learning; to what extent can documentation foster new ways of learning; what is the relationship between documentation and assessment. These are some issues addressed by the authors.

Summary of Content

Building on research conducted with educators from the Municipal Infant-toddler Centers and Preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy, researchers from Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education collaborated with pre-kindergarten to grade 8 teachers in Massachusetts to examine how ideas developed in Italian preschools could enhance preschool, elementary, and middle-school education in the United States.

Critical Comments

I gained a clearer and richer insight into the heart and mind of children and teachers in the preschools of Reggio Emilia. The detailed description of children's engagement in the process of inquiry and investigation of a topic or a curiosity was clear and powerful. The depth of exploration on the part of teachers as well as the children is impressive. The "what ifs" of children's curiosity require strong teacher skills. Particularly important are: listening to children, observing them astutely, deciding when to step in or step back, reviewing, reflecting, questioning, provoking, stretching, wondering, and transforming information. The thoughtful teacher guides children and extends invitations, helping them grow in their thinking as they proceed in varying paths in their relationships with others, as well as in their developmental learning.

A significant aspect explored how the Reggio teachers "live" their own learning. Clearly, their goal is to be a teacher researcher. How do children learn? What is the impact of group size? Gender? Age? Which provocations promote or inhibit? What environmental change will stimulate, delight, or surprise, as the child confronts, constructs, and chooses solutions either alone or in collaboration with one or more peers?

I felt that the information presented regarding the process of documentation illustrated how Reggio teachers value documentation as a significant aspect of professional development. This process results in an assessment of teachers teaching and children learning.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Making Teaching Visible: Documenting Individual and Group Learning as Professional Development . 2003. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Project Zero.

Background Information

This text is compiled from the "second phase" of the research project carried out from 1997 to 1999 by Harvard's Project Zero and Reggio Children, involving teachers and pedagogistas from the Municipal infant-toddler centers and preschools of Reggio Emilia. This monograph explores the process that American educators experienced as they documented individual and group learning.

Summary of Content

This text tells the stories of what the teachers learned through documentation and provides a framework for considering how documentation of individual and group learning can serve as professional development. It also contains thoughts on how to support this type of professional development, it provides a insights for making classrooms and schools more powerful learning environments.

Critical Comments

This examination of how the Reggio Emilia ideas and practices found in the Italian preschools translated and enhanced preschool, elementary and middle school education was thought provoking.

Significant aspects for me were:

- Having students care about their work- in effective learning groups, students care about their work
- Strategies of documentation- it is clear that the culture of the school must "evolve" their own strategies for documentation that match the dynamics of the institution. Italian practices can be used and adapted, but the ultimate process is unique to the school.
- Meta-Cognition, Content, Caring and Documentation- the interrelationship of these processes seems key in enhancing group effectiveness.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Gardner, Howard, Feldman, David Henry, and Krechevsky, Mara. (1998)
Project Zero Framework: Project Spectrum-Early Learning Activities, Vol. 2.
Teacher's College Press, New York.

Background Informatin

Project Zero Framework: Project Spectrum-Early Learning Activities, Vol. 2. is the work of Harvard University psychologist Howard Gardner and Tufts University psychologist David Henry Feldman in which children's intelligence and cognitive development is the basis of an alternative approach to assessment and curriculum development for the preschool and the primary years. It builds on concepts first explored in *Making Learning Visible*.

Summary of Content

Project Zero Framework: Project Spectrum-Early Learning Activities, Vol. 2. Is a curriculum resource provides enriching activities in a wide variety of disciplines, including mechanics and construction, movement, and music. These activities are conducive to the Reggio Emilia philosophy of curriculum development.

Critical Comments

This book would be an excellent supplementary resource for courses in Early Childhood Education that emphasize the Reggio philosophy, emergent curriculum and the project approach to early childhood instruction.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

The Municipal Infant-Toddler Centers and Preschools of Reggio Emilia. 2000. Reggio Emilia, Italy: Reggio Children.

Summary of Content

Historical notes and general information regarding the experience of the Municipal Infant-toddler Centers and Preschools of Reggio Emilia which began in 1963 with the opening of the first preschools (children aged three to six), followed in 1970 by the infant-toddler centers (children three months to three years old).

Critical Comments

This educational experience for children aged three months to six years is based on the image of a child who has great potentials for development and is the subject of rights, a child who learns and grows in relation with others.

The specific identity of the early childhood services managed by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia is based on a number of distinct features: the participation of the families, the collegial work of the staff, the importance given to the school environment, the presence of the atelier and the on-site kitchen, and the pedagogical-didactic coordinating team.

The project of family participation in the life and management of the municipal early childhood services is deeply rooted in the history of the experience: the first schools were built and opened on popular initiative, and the local territory has a longstanding culture and spirit of participation.

These infant-toddler centers and preschools have always contributed to building a more attentive and aware culture of childhood in the city. They are offered as places for meeting and discussion with families and citizens on the local pedagogical experience as well as educational issues in general.

Each infant-toddler center and preschool has a Community based Early Childhood Council composed of parents, community members, teachers, staff, and the pedagogical coordinator (*pedagogista*). Elected every three years, the Council represents the basic democratic structure having the responsibility to promote family participation in the educational project of the infant-toddler centers and preschools, contributing to maintaining the quality of the service.

The organization of the staff of each infant-toddler center and preschool is based on the values of collegiality, relationships, exchange, and co-responsibility. The teaching staff's weekly work schedule comprises thirty-six hours, including direct contact hours with the children and time for staff meetings, professional development, and meetings with the families.

The work shifts are arranged so that the entire staff (teachers, cook, helpers, atelierista) is present during the morning hours, a period of intense activity at the center and school. This helps to create the conditions that give shape to the educational quality of the service.

In the infant-toddler centers and preschools, the physical environment and spaces are organized and designed from the architectural and functional point of view to support the interweaving of relationships and encounters between adults and children, among the children, and among the adults. The environment is conceived and lived as an educational interlocutor, offering opportunities and structured spaces that provide each child and the group of children with stimuli for play, discovery, and research.

Another particular feature of these services is the presence of spaces called the atelier and mini-atelier in both the infant-toddler centers and preschools, and a teacher called atelierista in the preschool.

The atelier and the mini-ateliers are spaces designed to offer daily opportunities for each child and the group of children to encounter a wide variety of materials and expressive languages, and different points of view, where hands, mind, and emotions are all active contemporaneously, giving value to the expressiveness and creativity of each child.

The choice of having an on-site kitchen in each infant-toddler center and preschool is another distinctive characteristic of the service. The highly qualified kitchen staff prepares meals daily for the children and adults following a balanced diet developed by a team of dieticians, pediatricians, and cooks. New parents are given a copy of the dietary menu when their child enters the infant-toddler center. The diet may vary in relation to a child's particular health conditions certified by the pediatrician, but also in relation to dietary prohibitions dictated by religious choices that the families ask be respected. At the infant-toddler center, the cook is available to talk to the families and ensures that a personalized diet is maintained for each child up to one year of age.

The infant-toddler centers and preschools are overseen by a single pedagogical-didactic coordinating team composed of the Director of Education, the Director of the Infant-toddler Centers and Preschools, and a group of pedagogistas who coordinate and are responsible for the centers and schools assigned to them, with one pedagogista specifically in charge of following the children with special rights (special needs) and their families.

The pedagogistas establish the pedagogical guidelines and organization of the services, participate in meetings with the families, organize and carry out professional development initiatives, and coordinate the teachers and staff of the centers and schools.

Literature Review

Bibliographical Information

Topal, Cathy Weisman and Gandini, Lella. 1999. *Beautiful Stuff: Children Learning with Found Materials*. Worcester, Massachusetts: Davis Publication.

Background Information

Cathy Weisman Topal has been an art teacher for over 20 years. She teaches three- to eight-year-olds at the Smith College Campus School, and also teaches art education at Smith College. She is the author of *Children, Clay, and Sculpture* and *Children and Painting*.

Lella Gandini is an author, a correspondent for the Italian early childhood magazine *Bambini*, and adjunct professor in the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She serves as Reggio Children Liason in the United States for Dissemination of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

Summary of Content

Beautiful stuff outlines the projects developed with found materials at the pre-school in Reggio Emilia, Italy. It starts at the beginning with the ideas of the teachers, the method of including parents and increasing children's awareness of everyday objects.

Critical Comments

The primary goal of this text examines the exploration of materials with children, observing and recording what happens and the importance of the focus being on the process rather than product. This book suggests to the reader new approaches to nurturing the creativity of children that can be adapted to any reaching situation. The process of curriculum and beliefs discussed in this book have been inspired by educators from Reggio Emilia, and by the exhibition *The Hundred Languages of Children*. This book represents an American interpretation of those ideas and beliefs.

This text demonstrates how teachers observe the processes of collecting, exploring, and using their materials. They record conversations and actions of the children and offer examples of ways teachers listen to children's thoughts. Full-color photographs illustrate ideas that link exploration to drawing, sculpture, and other forms of representation.

The process that children and staff went through in developing this long term project is demonstrated in an easy to read and understandable format. Excellent resource for the beginning teacher and child development student.

Article Bibliography

Bennett, Tess. (2001). Reactions to Visiting the Infant-Toddler and Preschool Centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

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Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Bennett, Tess. (2001). Reactions to Visiting the Infant-Toddler and Preschool Centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

Author Information

Tess Bennett, Ph.D., is visiting assistant professor in early childhood special education at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and the director of the Great Lakes Quality Improvement Center for Disabilities for Region V, funded by the Head Start Bureau and the Department of Health and Human Services. She is past president of DEC (Division for Early Childhood) of CEC (Council for Exceptional Children). Dr. Bennett was a Fulbright Scholar at the Center for Child Research at the University of Trondheim, Norway, during the 1992-93 academic year.

Summary of Content

This article discusses the reflections of an early childhood special education professional on her visit to the preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. After describing the activities observed, the schools' philosophy, and the schools' environments, the paper discusses how the schools work with children with "special rights" (i.e., special needs). The paper concludes with observations on the role of parents and the community, and lessons learned from the trip.

Critical Comments

Children who are designated "special needs" in the American school system are termed children with "special rights" in Reggio Emilia. I find this distinction in terms important in how the child is viewed and the interaction that transpires. In the American school system children with special needs are often excluded and housed in special day classes and sometimes "included" or "mainstreamed" into regular classes for short periods. In the Reggio Emilia schools children with "special rights" have priority in enrolling in the Reggio Emilia schools and are included in all of the activities with other children. Every effort is made not to call attention to the special needs of the child. The Reggio Emilia philosophy, in which each child is accepted for his or her unique learning style, facilitates acceptance of all children. The continuum for acceptable behavior is quite broad. A child who is very active is not seen as a problem but as a child who needs to move around during the day, and adaptations are made for that child. Drugs are not given to children for behavior problems. Adaptations are made in the environment through thoughtful observation of the child. Children are valued because of their differences and are not medicated or expected to change. This assumption fosters a flexible and adaptive attitude that children and families find very supportive. This attitude also supports the process of assisting the children

in developing self-knowledge and insight about their own learning style, interests, and strengths.

This respectful approach has facilitated amazing growth and development, not only in the children with "special rights" but also in the "typical" children who interact with them. These attitudes and perceptions are long lasting and extend into the community as a whole.

This humanistic (and effective) approach has been so successful that families with children with "special rights" are moving in great numbers to the Reggio Emilia region to avail themselves to the quality programming. There has been such an influx that the schools are now feeling very challenged to serve all these families and maintain the high quality and standards that their philosophy dictates.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Bullard, Julie and Bullock, Janis R. (2002). Modeling Collaboration, In-Depth Projects, and Cognitive Discourse: A Reggio Emilia and Project Approach Course. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 4, Number 2. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2002, Fall]

Author Information

Julie Bullard, Ed.D., is an early childhood professor and director of the Early Childhood Education Department at the University of Montana-Western. Current research interests include ADHD and its impact on children and families, the Reggio Emilia approach, and transformative and constructivist education within early childhood higher education.

Janis R. Bullock is an early childhood education professor at Montana State University, Bozeman. Her research interests focus on applying early childhood practices to adult education; international and cross-cultural early childhood perspectives; and supporting the social and emotional development of children who report loneliness, being bullied, and rejection by friends.

Summary of Content

This article discusses two early childhood professors' experience of teaching a weeklong collaborative course on Reggio Emilia, the Project Approach, and documentation. Principles of adult learning were used as a foundation to structure and organize the course, in which students applied their knowledge and skills to in-depth investigation of projects and documentation of learning. The article discusses issues of conflict that emerged among group members and reflects upon conditions needed to support intellectual discourse. Final reflections from the students and professors are highlighted.

Critical Comments

The value of careful observation, interactions, and written feedback was evident in this project. As a Child Development Professor, I am constantly challenged to offer class experiences where students become fully engaged in the course and in their group project work. The intensive approach represented in this journal article demonstrated the value of creating a dynamic where students were focused, engaged, energized, inspired, and who worked in an environment that lacked "outside distractions." Using the "Reggio" inspired teaching philosophy as a vehicle for both the concept to use with children and the methodology for the college students to experience as adult learners, was inspirational. I feel that this type of "immersion" approach offers many possibilities for classroom use.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Chard, Sylvia C. (1999). From Themes to Projects. *Early Childhood Research and Practice: Volume 1 Number 1*. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999, Spring]

Author Information

Sylvia C. Chard is associate professor in the department of elementary education at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada. She previously served as the head of the department of early childhood education and principal lecturer at the College of St. Paul and St. Mary in Cheltenham, England. Sylvia has taught at the preschool, elementary, and high school levels in England. She is coauthor with Lilian G. Katz of *Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach* (Ablex, 1989), and has written several articles and two *Practical Guides* to the Project Approach (Book 1 & Book 2, Scholastic, 1998). She has taught numerous courses and workshops on the Project Approach in Canada, the United States, Japan, Korea, and Europe; and she co-owns and manages an electronic discussion group (PROJECTS-L), is designing online courses, and continues to develop a Web site (<http://www.ualberta.ca/~schard/projects.htm>) to help teachers share their experiences of project work in classrooms. Sylvia's research is in teacher development and the implementation of the Project Approach in schools.

Summary of Content

This paper presents the reflections of several teachers on their experiences moving from the use of a theme approach in their classrooms to using the Project Approach the curriculum method practiced in the schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. The paper is presented in two parts. First there is a description of how a project on shoes undertaken by a kindergarten class might unfold, based on a synthesis of several teachers' accounts of how they proceeded with such a project. The description serves as an example of the potential of a project for the in-depth study of a topic. The second part of the paper is a commentary, interwoven with the narrative description of the project, and draws on the work of different teachers who have also carried out projects on the topic of shoes. This commentary, which features the different possibilities that may occur for teachers in different locations and working with different ages of children, also discusses a few of the challenges commonly experienced by teachers beginning to do projects, particularly the distinctions between projects and themes.

Critical Comments

This article presented an account of a project on shoes with a kindergarten class. There has long been controversy in the child development community regarding the distinctions between themes, projects and their relation to emergent curriculum. This article does an excellent accounting of this dynamic in the

references made to the challenges faced by teachers beginning to do this kind of work with children. Implementing innovation and change is difficult and the realization that the relationship between teacher and child is likely to be changed through project work, can be perceived as threatening. Application of the Project Work approach can provide a view of a child that most clearly reveals to the teacher what the child is capable of.

Key points that this article emphasizes are:

- students are capable of completing any task they undertake under the appropriate conditions
- developing strengths, rather than on focusing on deficiencies is vital in the developing of an appropriate environment for growth and development for young children
- anecdotes and portfolios directly relating to work completed rather than percentages or marks are more powerful and meaningful in the classroom of the young child

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Cimino, Angelina and Kuiper, Sharon. (2003) Practical Applications of the Reggio Emilia Approach to Teaching and Learning in American & Australian Schools.

[Online]. Available:

<http://louisewww.mit.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/murrayed2/ReggioEmilia/print.html>

[Accessed January 17, 2004]

Author Information

This article was written by Angelina Cimino and Sharon Kuiper, Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) students at Charles Sturt University, Albury City Campus, NSW, Australia.

Summary of Content

This paper presents a discussion of the philosophies and practices of Reggio Emilia that have become an important focus in Australia, America and across the world. It challenges the impact that an approach that comes from this small place, a region of municipalities that have all had very different experiences in the development of their schools has had on the Australian and American child development disciplines.

Critical Comments

The rationale for change emanates from the inspiration from experiencing what has been achieved in Reggio Emilia. Ideas build on what is already valued in existing Australian and American early childhood programs, and the Italian experience exemplifies a standard of excellence that extends the possibilities for quality early childhood experiences.

For many teachers in Australia and America, adoption of the Reggio Emilia Approach has meant giving up old practices and embracing uncertainty. The demands of everyday classroom issues are now met with new issues regarding the approach and how to implement it appropriately in regards to the context and culture that the school is in.

The implementation of a truly collaborative process involving school council, teaching staff, parents, children, and the community is an important and worthwhile goal in the educational world./

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Dodge, Ellen P., Dulik, Barbara N. and Kulhanek, Jon A. (2001). "Clouds Come from New Hampshire": Confronting the Challenge of Philosophical Change in Early Childhood Programs. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

Author Information

Ellen Dodge has been a speech, language, and communication teacher for 16 years. She facilitates children's acquisition of communication skills necessary for social and academic success. She has published five books in the area of communication and presents workshops nationally. She received her bachelor's degree in speech-language pathology from SMU and her master of education from Southwest Texas State University.

Barbara Dulik has 27 years' teaching experience in the elementary grades and as the founding director/teacher of the Pre-School Program at the Phillips Brooks School in Menlo Park, California. She has bachelor's and master's degrees in elementary education from Stanford University. She attended the Winter Study Program in Reggio Emilia in February 1999.

Jon Kulhanek has been an early childhood educator for 16 years. His focus has been on the development of programs that value creativity, intrinsic motivation, and social collaboration within an emergent curriculum. He has a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and a master's in education in early childhood from the University of Minnesota. He attended the Winter Study program in Reggio Emilia in February 1999.

Summary of Content

This paper describes the evolution of an early childhood education program from one that was teacher-directed, traditionally structured, and academically oriented to one that was emergent and child-centered. The paper discusses how philosophical consensus was established, needed changes were prioritized and implemented, and new ways of thinking were presented to the traditionally trained faculty and to some change-resistant parents.

Critical Comments

For an increasing number of early childhood educators a perceived comfort in past and current practices is being replaced with a sense of boredom and an attitude of, "If it isn't broken, why fix it?" No longer are the traditional teaching practices involving academics, units, and themes seen as the best ways to reach and empower the children with whom we work. Instead, an approach that values the emergent ideas, cultures, and creativity of young children is being embraced

in a worldwide community of teachers as the best practice in the early childhood classroom.

While much has been published regarding the Reggio Emilia approaches to early education, "traditional" nursery school practices do remain alive and well, in large part because many of our colleges and universities continue to reinforce these traditional methods in their teacher education programs. Also, the expectations of parents place an additional burden on the early childhood teacher to provide a program that will shape a child capable of reciting facts and constructing "refrigerator art" but often unable to negotiate the day-to-day challenges of solving problems and independent, critical, and creative thinking.

Creating and establishing common goals among teachers and parents is an integral first step in creating change that will create an environment in which children can feel safe, loved, and free to explore the world around them. Just as a child is never a finished product, neither is a quality early childhood program. We must always look for ways to improve and establish ideals, always within the context of putting children first.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Edwards, Carolyn Pope. (2002). Three Approaches from Europe: Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 4, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2002, Spring]

Author Information

Carolyn Pope Edwards is a professor of psychology and family and consumer sciences at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, where she teaches courses in developmental psychology and early childhood education. Her most recent research focuses on parents' cultural belief systems concerning young children's development. She has also conducted quantitative and qualitative research on children's social and moral development and parent-child interaction in Mexico, Kenya, Haiti, Norway, Italy, and the United States. In 1983, she was visiting professor of psychology at the National Research Council in Rome, where she began studying early childhood education in Italy; and in 1988, she was a fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study in Oslo, Norway. She is author or editor of *Promoting Social and Moral Development of Young Children* (1986); *Children of Different Worlds: The Formation of Social Behavior* (1988); *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education* (1993); *The Hundred Languages of Children*, 2nd Edition (1998); and *Bambini: The Italian Approach to Infant-Toddler Care* (2001).

Summary of Content

Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia are three progressive approaches to early childhood education that appear to be growing in influence in North America and to have many points in common. This article provides a brief comparative introduction and highlights several key areas of similarity and contrast. All three approaches represent an explicit idealism and turn away from war and violence toward peace and reconstruction. They are built on coherent visions of how to improve human society by helping children realize their full potential as intelligent, creative, whole persons. In each approach, children are viewed as active authors of their own development, strongly influenced by natural, dynamic, self-righting forces within themselves, opening the way toward growth and learning. Teachers depend for their work with children on carefully prepared, aesthetically pleasing environments that serve as a pedagogical tool and provide strong messages about the curriculum and about respect for children. Partnering with parents is highly valued in all three approaches, and children are evaluated by means other than traditional tests and grades. However, there are also many areas of difference, some at the level of principle and others at the level of strategy. Underlying the three approaches are variant views of the nature of young children's needs, interests, and modes of learning that lead to contrasts in the ways that teachers interact with children in the

classroom, frame and structure learning experiences for children, and follow the children through observation/documentation. The article ends with discussion of the methods that researchers apply to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Critical Comments

Research strategies favored by educators in Reggio Emilia promotes reflective practice and program improvement through formative methods that help educators to better understand the context of their problems, assess the needs and responses of their stakeholders, and analyze "what works and what does not" on an ongoing basis. However, although such research assists educators while programs are ongoing to refine and improve their work, it does not allow outside audiences to understand outcomes and measure impacts over time. This has been a reoccurring question in symposiums and workshops that I have attended, especially where there has been a contingent of educators from the United States.

While we have some research on Montessori education, some policy makers continue to ask for new studies of Waldorf and Reggio Emilia schools that would measure lasting child-related outcomes and evaluate program quality based on external criteria. Educators in dialogue with Reggio Emilia strongly question the validity and usefulness of such research. Nevertheless, educational researchers today are much more sophisticated in designing studies involving a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, including interviews, observations, focus groups, and surveys, as well as ethnographic and narrative techniques, in addition to appropriate and innovative testing and authentic child assessment. These methods could be used to study classrooms, children, and families in ways that would supply a new kind and level of information to validate the effectiveness of the approaches, analyze their specific and unique strengths and weaknesses, and explain how and why children often thrive in and parents support the three progressive educational approaches that are evident in the Waldorf and Reggio Emilia schools.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Fero, Ian. (2000). Reggio in North American Schools: To What Degree is Transfer Applicable? EGallery; Exemplary Student Scholarship-Master of Teaching Program: Volume 1, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~egallery/fero.html> [2000, March 1]

Author Information

Ian Fero was a student in the Master of Teaching program at the University of Calgary when this paper was written. He is now a teacher of young children in Canada.

Summary of Content

This paper examines the history of Reggio from both a physical and philosophical perspective. The term "educational community" is examined in how it applies to both Reggio and North American schools. The factors standing in the way of integrating the Reggio Approach in North American schools is discussed. The issues regarding how North American educators can enhance teaching practices and pedagogy to generate a better understanding of the Reggio model are also scrutinized.

Critical Comments

Three important lessons to take from the Reggio philosophy are:

- The child as protagonist
- the parent as partner
- the teacher as researcher

The fundamental idea of recognizing the child as protagonist where the child is seen as strong, rich, capable and has potential and interest in constructing their own learning, is the foundation of the Reggio Emilia approach.

I question (especially in light of current trends towards earlier formalized testing that our education system is emphasizing) if this is an ideal that North American educators and/or administrators currently have? Or have "best practices" been discarded in order to quantify and qualify data to measure current administrative standards?

Parental involvement is another area that North American educators can gain a better understanding of through the Reggio model. Despite the fact that most schools and educators recognize a need for parental involvement there seems to be little in the way of a realization on this front. Some classic reasons why parents have little involvement in their children's education include lack of time, inflexible work schedules, fear of incompetence, and a belief that education should be left to the "experts."

The triad, which Malaguzzi refers to, requires parents to be an integral part in the education of their children. In Reggio the teachers are so willing to incorporate the parents they are often willing to stay late into the evening to accommodate them. Fero states, in this paper regarding, "...a proactive approach to parent recruitment (Garlett, 1993). It has been stated that "if education is ever going to achieve its stated goal of maximizing potential for all students, then a true partnership between parents and schools must be created" (Alter, 1992, p. 109)."

The concept of a teacher as learner is a principle that can be translated into all levels of education. In Reggio Emilia the teachers work in pairs and maintain strong collegial relationships. Their exchanges and dialogue provide constant theoretical enrichment .

Teachers in Reggio Emilia learn from one another through an extensive analysis of documentation that they gather about the children each day. In essence, what they are doing by going over the material is critiquing their own practice. I feel educators at any level could greatly benefit from this constant, formalized introspection.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Glassman, Michael and Whaley, Kimberlee. (2000). The Use of Long-term Projects in Early Childhood Classrooms in Light of Dewey's Educational Philosophy. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 2, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2000, Spring]

Author Information

Michael Glassman is currently assistant professor of Human Development and Family Sciences at the Ohio State University. He is currently interested in bringing Dewey's philosophy into practice in the early childhood classroom. He is also exploring the varying impact the works of Dewey, Vygotsky, and Piaget might have on early childhood curriculum and teacher training.

Kimberlee Whaley is an associate professor and state extension specialist in Human Development and Family Sciences at the Ohio State University. She also serves as the curriculum coordinator for the A. Sophie Rogers Laboratory School in the department.

Summary of Content

This paper explores the use of the long-term project as an educational tool in early childhood classrooms. In particular, it focuses on the way in which long-term projects can reflect John Dewey's notion of the "dynamic aim" as a primary force in education. In *Democracy and Education*, Dewey suggests that when teaching is dominated by specific goals, the educational process becomes static, and there is an unnatural separation between the activity the student engages in to reach the goal and the goal itself. Thus, the activity has no educational purpose beyond reaching this goal and does not teach the student how to learn beyond this very specific situation. Dewey suggests instead that education be based on a series of dynamic aims. The aims of the activity emerge from the activity itself, and they serve only as temporary beacons for the activity. As soon as an aim is achieved, that achievement creates activity leading to another aim. This paper suggests that long-term projects can be perfect vehicles for this type of approach to education. In particular, the paper focuses on the Reggio Emilia approach to long-term projects, which includes some important attributes such as documentation and *progettazione* (i.e., a discussion of the possible directions that the project might take based on observations of the children and past experience). The paper concludes with examples of long-term projects partially based on the Reggio Emilia approach from two American classrooms—one infant/toddler and one preschool.

Critical Comments

It appears that the Reggio approach in the use of long-term projects in the curriculum can be very useful, especially in bringing many of the educational ideals that Dewey envisioned to realization.

But first and foremost, teachers must embrace becoming learners along with the children. The Reggio concept of "*Progettazione*" seems to parallel Dewey's proverbial "lighthouse" model. Dewey viewed the teacher as setting up the lighthouse to help guide the activity of the student. The lighthouse itself sets a destination, but it also illuminates enough area that students may find port in a different, unanticipated place. Teachers should direct a wide beam of light in their attempts to illuminate areas where children might find their aims. They must be flexible enough to accept the aims that children find through their own activity. In Dewey's developmental framework, children and adults should be able to use each other's strengths in the development of experiences, to feed off of each other and become co-constructors in a true, collaborative activity.

This article stimulated some important questions that educators need to ask themselves in using Dewey's philosophies or long-term projects in their classrooms.

- Is the guide relationship between teacher and child possible with older children?
- Are teachers able and willing to take a shared approach to the education of young children?

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Hertzog, Nancy B. (2001). Reflections and Impressions from Reggio Emilia: "It's Not about Art!" *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 3, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2001, Spring]

Author Information

Nancy B. Hertzog is an assistant professor in the Department of Special Education and the director of University Primary School at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research focuses on curricular approaches and teaching strategies designed to differentiate instruction and challenge children with diverse abilities. Specifically, she has studied teachers' implementation of the Project Approach in classrooms with both high-achieving and low-achieving children. She has been the chair of the Early Childhood Division of the National Association for Gifted Children and currently serves on the Education Commission of the National Association for Gifted Children.

Summary of Content

This article discusses an early childhood program administrator's reflections on her visit to the preschools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. The following six themes are discussed:

- teachers' respect for each child
- teachers' emphasis on relationships
- the importance of art as the medium chosen to represent children's thinking
- the critical role of communication
- the relaxed pace in the schools
- the teachers' different roles

Critical Comments

This article provoked several questions which seem worthy of personal investigation:

- In the Reggio Emilia philosophy, teachers highlighted group work, group products, and group studies. Documentation boards contained pictures of individual children engaged in thinking through a problem. More information is needed to draw conclusions about the delicate balance between individual and group effort in the Reggio Emilia environments.
- The values and beliefs that teachers must hold to implement the philosophy of the teachers in Reggio Emilia is paramount to its success. Which personal values and beliefs are most compatible with the researcher role that teachers play in Reggio Emilia?

- How can I, as a teacher educator, inspire teachers to change current practices of creating passive learning environments to engaging children in active, meaningful activities?
- How can I, as a teacher educator, inspire teachers to become facilitators and enhancers of learning? How do we help teachers change their belief systems, which ultimately affect their practices? What are the relationships between practices, values, and beliefs?
- How can I, as a teacher educator, "provide the context" for this type of change in teaching philosophy and style? How can we create communities of teachers, as they do in Reggio Emilia, who value their students' ideas and value the way children come to learn about the world around them?

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Hong, Seong B. and Broderick, Jane T. (2003). Instant Video Revisiting for Reflection: Extending the Learning of Children and Teachers. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, Volume 5, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [2003, Spring]

Author Information

Seong B. Hong, Ed.D., is an assistant professor in early childhood education at the University of Michigan-Dearborn School of Education. She received her doctorate in curriculum development and teacher education from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She has been studying the Reggio-inspired approach since 1991, and she has extensive experience applying documentation and revisiting children's work as a teaching and learning tool. She also has several publications regarding the application of the Reggio-inspired approach, and her current work deals with action research and the use of technology as a tool for constructivist learning.

Jane Tingle Broderick is completing her doctoral work at the University of Massachusetts and has accepted a position as assistant professor of early childhood at East Tennessee State University in Johnson City.

Summary of Content

This article discusses how instant video revisiting (IVR) promotes reflective thinking for both teachers and children. IVR was used as a daily classroom experience with both the children and the teachers throughout one semester in two preschool classrooms with children 2.5 to 5 years old. The teachers used a digital video camera to generate data to help them understand the behavior of the children and revisit the children's actions immediately, with the children using the video clips to extend their learning. Two classroom examples illustrate how IVR supports the children's learning and the teacher's reflection of this learning. The first example describes how IVR helped the children reflect on their actions and solve their own conflicts. The second example describes the use of IVR to scaffold the children's idea of the middle of a story, thereby strengthening their own thought processes in relation to a story construction.

Critical Comments

In our preschool lab class at the Mt. San Antonio College Child Development Center, we have utilized a closed circuit television system, which allows for video taping of the lab experiences for many years. Unfortunately, although it has been useful, I have always felt that we were not maximizing the potential of using this valuable tool for assessment and program planning. Documentation is a key factor in the Reggio Emilia philosophy and unobtrusive videotaping is a natural

way to collect information. Therefore, I found this article very enlightening, in particular to:

- **videotaping and IVR in the classroom with regard to social conflicts-**

The article gave a concrete example of where the IVR gave the teacher the opportunity to discover the true intent of the child who exhibited challenging behavior and to see the child's actions in a new light. The teacher no longer looked at the child as disruptive, but as one who wanted to learn how to have friendship with peers. The ability to revisit videotapes of social interactions involving this child revealed that the child who exhibited challenging behavior indeed had a meaningful and positive friendship with that specific child. After revisiting this positive interaction with that child, the teacher tried to find patterns for him to apply with the other children in the classroom.

The use of IVR as a tool for scaffolding in the early childhood classroom has important and relevant implications.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Kantrowitz, Barbara and Wingert, Pat. (1991). The 10 Best Schools in the World. *Newsweek*, December 2, 1991, pp 24-30.

Summary of Content

This article discusses a survey that NEWSWEEK conducted in 1991 where dozens of American and foreign experts in international education were interviewed to find the best schools in the world. For preschools, Reggio Emilia, in Italy's Emilia-Romagna region, were picked as an example of a grass-roots project that has become an international role model.

Critical Comments

I selected this article to include in my literature review for it was a pivotal piece that first widely enlightened many educators to the existence of this preschool model in Reggio Emilia. The philosophy of Reggio's system is not typical of Italy. In this respect this article recounts this example, "In a poor section of Rome, for example, teacher Simona Manganozzi has been trying to run a special classroom for immigrant and disabled children. She can't even afford toilet paper for her class, never mind pencils, paper, paint or clay. As she looks wistfully through a book on Reggio, she sighs: "This is a dream, not a school."

It is a dream that has become a reality largely because the region is one of Italy's richest, with a sturdy base of small and medium-sized industry and agricultural production. The tax base supports the schools, and families pay a monthly fee, depending on their income and the age of the child. Space is limited and not everyone gets in. Disabled children and those of single parents are admitted automatically; other admissions are based on interviews.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Katz, Lillian G. (1999). International Perspectives on Early Childhood Education: Lessons from My Travels . *Early Childhood Research and Practice*: Volume 1, Number 1. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999,Fall]

Author Information

Lilian G. Katz is a professor of early childhood education at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign where she is also director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary & Early Childhood Education. She is a past president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and recently served as the chair of the board of directors of the National Society for the Study of Education (U.S.). Dr. Katz is author of more than 100 publications including articles, chapters, and books about early childhood education, teacher education, child development, and parenting. She has also served as editor for several publications, including *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* and *Early Childhood Research & Practice*.

Summary of Content

This paper offers seven insights gained from:

- "What It Feels Like To Be a Teacher" discusses observations of student and teacher behavior and attitudes in classrooms in China, a Caribbean island, and India
- "Similarities across Countries" notes that teachers' roles may be more powerful determinants of their ideas, ideals, ideologies, concerns, and beliefs than are the larger political, social, and cultural contexts in which they work
- "Problems with Comparative Studies" discusses the difficulties inherent in comparing educational provisions and effectiveness across countries
- "The Spread of Ideas across Borders" discusses the influence of the British Infant School approach in the 1960s and 1970s, the influence of the innovative province-wide reform work of British Columbia, Canada, in the 1980s, and most recently the influence of the Reggio Emilia approach
- "Issues Unique to the U.S." explores interests that appear of concern only in the United States, such as the development of self-esteem in children
- "Self-criticism in the U.S." discusses one American habit — self-deprecation
- "U.S. Leadership in Anti-bias and Multicultural Awareness" notes that the United States deserves a great deal of credit for leadership in addressing anti-bias and multicultural issues.

Critical Comments

In the United States in the 1990s, one of the strongest movements across borders has been intense interest in the magnificent and stunning preprimary schools of the small northern Italian city of Reggio Emilia. Lillian Katz, a respected authority and theorist in Early Childhood Development was among the first to endorse this philosophy. She poses several questions that seem significant to consider in regards to adoptions of Reggio Emilia ideals into schools in the United States.

"...I have heard no shrill or strident criticism or rejection of this movement on cultural grounds. Why haven't Reggiophiles been accused of cultural irrelevance or hegemony or imperialism with respect to ethnic and culturally diverse groups? Why have the questions raised by scholars like Jipson (1991) and Delpit (1988) about appropriate practice, for example, not been raised in discussion of adopting the Reggio Emilia approach in various parts of our country? Could it have something to do with the fact that the ideas come from Europe rather than from the usual bastions of mainstream American thought? I am puzzled by this situation!"

Perhaps the educational population that is embracing the Reggio Emilia principles are doing so out of choice and not by mandated policy, therefore, there has been no forum to challenge these practices based on cultural relevance. Also, the Italian educators are not trying to "sell" a structured model. One of the basic beliefs is that Reggio Emilia practices must be adapted and practiced within the culture of the school, therefore, making each program relevant to that particular culture, thus making this debate a moot point.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

New, Rebecca S. (1999). What Should Children Learn? Making Choices and Taking Chances. *Early Childhood Research and Practice* Volume 1, Number 2. [Online]. Available: <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/index.html> [1999, Fall]

Author Information

Rebecca S. New (Ed.D, 1984, Harvard University) is associate professor and coordinator of the graduate program in Early Childhood Education at the University of New Hampshire. Research interests in the sociocultural bases of parenting were supported by her doctoral dissertation, based on a year-long ethnographic study of Italian infant care and social development. Follow-up studies in Italy eventually led to her collaborative affiliation with Reggio Emilian and other Italian scholars and early childhood professionals. Dr. New's scholarly interests remain focused on the cultural bases of theory, research, and practice in early education and child development, with particular interest in the relations among cultural values, adult ideologies, and child care policies and practices. Current research foci include the cultural interpretations of national policies in diverse local contexts and the cultural positioning of research as a form of social inquiry. These interests are reflected in an ongoing study (funded by the Spencer Foundation) on "Italian Conceptions of Community, Participation, and Social Responsibility: Child Care as Metaphor," in collaboration with Reggio Emilia and four other cities in north-central Italy.

Summary of Content

The basic premise of this paper is that decisions about children and their early educational experiences are culturally situated and, by definition, will reflect varying interpretations of appropriate educational aims and strategies. Drawing upon three decades of experience in the Italian culture as well as preliminary findings from a collaborative research project with five Italian communities (including Milan, Trento, Reggio Emilia, Parma, and San Miniato), the paper emphasizes the necessity and validity of diverse interpretations of early childhood programs, the relationship between goals for children and societal expectations for adults, and the importance of adult relationships (among parents, teachers, and community members) to the negotiation of educational goals for children growing up in a pluralistic democratic society.

Critical Comment

This paper considers the concept of children's potential as it is interpreted and supported by an early childhood curriculum. I found New's position that the basic understanding that "cultural differences are not necessarily predefined" worthy of consideration. She contends that cultural differences often reflect the choices adults make and the chances they take with their lives and because so many

Italian adults seem to understand that these choices influence the chances, current and future, of young children, they take that responsibility not just *seriously* but also *personally*. This understanding is a major contributing factor for the success of the Reggio Emilia schools. Perhaps it is relevant to create a dialog to emphasize that if young American children would come to understand that what they do and think and feel is important to the adults who know and care about them, future teachers of young children would be willing and able to learn new skills, develop new relationships, and work together on their behalf.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

New, Rebecca S. (2000). *Reggio Emilia: Catalyst For Change and Conversation*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education. [2000, December]

Author Information

Rebecca S. New (Ed.D, 1984, Harvard University) is associate professor and coordinator of the graduate program in Early Childhood Education at the University of New Hampshire. Research interests in the sociocultural bases of parenting were supported by her doctoral dissertation, based on a year-long ethnographic study of Italian infant care and social development. Follow-up studies in Italy eventually led to her collaborative affiliation with Reggio Emilian and other Italian scholars and early childhood professionals. Dr. New's scholarly interests remain focused on the cultural bases of theory, research, and practice in early education and child development, with particular interest in the relations among cultural values, adult ideologies, and child care policies and practices. Current research foci include the cultural interpretations of national policies in diverse local contexts and the cultural positioning of research as a form of social inquiry. These interests are reflected in an ongoing study (funded by the Spencer Foundation) on "Italian Conceptions of Community, Participation, and Social Responsibility: Child Care as Metaphor," in collaboration with Reggio Emilia and four other cities in north-central Italy.

Summary of Content

This paper outlines the history of Reggio Emilia's early childhood programs in order to provide insights to educators in the United States; and it highlights some of Reggio Emilia's less visible contributions, particularly its role in promoting discourse among communities of adults in the United States, as they debate the meaning and significance of their work with young children.

Critical Comment

In settings around the world, educators are now looking with greater attention to children as sources of their own learning, to parents for new ways of thinking about sharing in children's early education, and to each other for support and collaboration in making schools learning communities for adults as well as children. As a result of these cross-cultural conversations, some have begun to use Reggio Emilia as illustrative of how nations might best respond to children's development and learning potentials--in particular, Reggio Emilia's emphasis on local processes of knowledge construction. The impact of this agenda appears to resonate as parents and teachers, citizens and policy makers in schools, in states, and across nations debate the rights and potentials of young children in a changing global society.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Morrison, Norma. (2000). The Reggio Approach: An Inspiration for Inclusion of Children with "Special Rights. [Online]. Available:

www.milligan.edu/Profeducation/nmorrison/fpworkshop/dkgreggio200.html

[Accessed December 14, 2003]

Author Information

Norma Morrison, Ed.D. is a Professor of Education, Milligan College, Tennessee. Her affiliations include:

- Gamma Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma
- Secretary for Local Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma
- Council for Exceptional Children, 1983-Present, served as President, 1991-93
- Phi Kappa Phi, 1978-Present
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1988-1995
- International Reading Association, 1984-Present
- Kappa Delta Pi, 1988-Present
- Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities, 1984-1995
- American Association of Colleges For Teacher Education, 1987-Present
- Association For Retarded Citizens, 1984-1995
- Delta Kappa Gamma, 1989-Present, secretary, 1994-1996
- The Orton Dyslexia Society, Board Member, President, 1994-96
- The Eastern Educational Research Association, 1994
- South Eastern Children's Association, 1995

Summary of Content

The Reggio Approach to early childhood education has become a topic of much interest to teachers desiring a more constructivist classroom for brain-based learning. Many researchers have written reports of effective teaching in the pre schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. However, few have addressed the manner in which the needs of children with "special rights" or children in special education have been met. This paper describes the Reggio Community, the Reggio Approach, and full inclusion of children with special rights.

Critical Comment

One critical difference in the Reggio Emilia philosophy as opposed to North American schools centers on their program for children with special needs or "special rights" as termed in Reggio Emilia. Children with special rights have first priority for enrollment into the schools beginning at three months of age. Generally, there can be one to two children with special rights in each classroom,

or three to four children in each school of 75-100 children. However, if the child's neighborhood school is full, he/she has to go to another municipal school. An additional teacher is added to each class that has a child with special rights. These teachers do not have to be trained in special education but the teachers with special training and/or experience are preferred. The schools have the technical support of a psychologist who trains and offers professional development when needed to the teachers. There is no special support for children with ADHD because it is not needed. Sometimes children with special rights stay an extra year. If possible, sign language is used in the classrooms.

As teachers provide opportunities for projects and recognize the multiple ways that children have of expressing themselves, they create an environment that is conducive for learning by children with special rights. Furthermore, Reggio schools offer a broad selection of media and activities that increase the likelihood that children will be able to fully participate with other children.

The documentation aspect of the Reggio Approach serves to inform parents of what their children can do and how other children react to their children. This is much more authentic than the IEP's used in the American systems. If parents have special requests that are against the philosophy of the school, the teachers compromise, try to include other children in the activity for socialization, document as usual and gain the trust of the parents. This practice enables them to progress to a more developmentally appropriate level for the child.

In Italy, teachers have as their goal to know the child within the disabled child. Teachers believe that best practice for children with special rights is best practice for all children. Their thirty years of development in observing, listening to and researching children has enabled them to be creative problem solvers for these children and their parents.

Literature Review: Journal Article

Bibliographical Information

Tarr, Patricia. (2001) Aesthetic codes in early childhood classrooms: What art educators can learn from Reggio Emilia. Design Share [Online]. Available: <http://www.designshare.com/Tresearch/Tarr/Aesthetic Codes 1.htm> [2002, February 20]

Author Information

Patricia Tarr, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Early Childhood Education Program at the University of Calgary where she has also taught art methods courses for early childhood and elementary education students. She completed her doctoral research while teaching in the ANCHOR Project at UBC's Child Study Centre. She has experience working with children in a variety of settings, including day care centres, preschools, kindergartens and art galleries.

Summary of Content

This article compares the messages contained in the physical environments of early childhood classrooms in Reggio Emilia, Italy with typical early childhood settings in Canada and the United States from the perspective of the "aesthetic codes" (Rosario & Collazo, 1981) embodied in these spaces. The article discusses how these codes reflect each culture's image of the child, cultural values and broad educational goals.

Critical Comment

Early childhood educators can learn a great deal from Reggio educators about creating schools in which all aspects of the physical environment are carefully considered as to their educational potential without sacrificing each culture's unique values and goals. This paper explores the question of, "What are children learning when the goals of art education are at odds with the environment in which they learn?" It concludes that "...educators need to find ways to collaborate with early childhood teachers to critically examine the aesthetic codes which permeate their classrooms and then together find ways to create environments which support children's aesthetic and artistic development. Together they may examine critically the image of the child they hold and how to express this through the both the environment and the learning experiences within this environment. Together they need to explore how to incorporate aspects from the world outside school in ways that are fully integrated into the life in classrooms and not just a "lesson on" Art educators can assist classroom teachers with ideas and techniques for display that value and respect children's work rather than trivialize it."

Also the question of what does this environment teach?" was explored. Reggio has shown how partnerships between artist-teachers and early childhood educators can have a powerful impact on all the learning that occurs. Art educators can be challenged to take on the role of atelierista within a school,

working as partners with teachers to support children to communicate their ideas visually, help to create provocative learning experiences, and design environments that enhance children's perceptual awareness and provide places for wonder, curiosity and the expression of ideas. In a tradition where art specialists are responsible for art education and generalist teachers are responsible for the core subjects, this is a major challenge to rethink roles, responsibilities, how time is spent within the classroom and within the school, and the value of collaboration to support children's learning. However, given the vision of other possibilities from the preprimary schools of Reggio Emilia, this is a challenge worth taking.