

Throwing the Baby Out With the Bathwater 12, Part 2: Gender and the Arts, Melbourne

Saturday 21st November 2015, 8.30am – 4.00pm

Australian Education Union, 112 Trenerry Cres, Abbotsford, Melbourne



TIME	PROGRAM
8.30 – 9.00am	Arrival, registration, tea & coffee
9.00 – 9.10	Acknowledgment of Country
9:10 – 9:30	A tribute to the life of Elizabeth Dau: Early childhood educator, loved activist, anti-bias pioneer <i>Brigitte Mitchell and Marian Rakosi (Activists: the next generation)</i>
9:30 – 10:30	Annual Nick Murphie Memorial Keynote Becoming worldly: Stories from an activist early childhood teacher, artist and academic researcher <i>Dr Red Ruby Scarlet (MultiVerse Creative & Performance)</i>
10:30 – 10:50	Fruit and water break
10:50 – 11:35	Bush Kinder – no art supplies, no equipment, no boundaries <i>BushKinder Doug (Doug Fargher) and Hermoso Monstruo (Ben Goodes) (Westgarth Kindergarten)</i>
11:35 – 12:35pm	Gender diversity and the arts in early childhood <i>Dr Red Ruby Scarlet, Harrison Harding, Paige Phoenix and Isaac Green (MultiVerse Creative & Performance)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The composition of Batman • Children’s aGender: World changing narratives from gender diverse children • Word play: The poetics of pedagogical documentation
12:35 – 1:30	Lunch break
1.30 – 2.15	Creative approaches to activism: Insights from further afield <i>Van Badham (Feminist, social commentator and artist)</i>
2:15 – 3:30	Industrial Relations and Political Commentary Panel <i>Tamika Hicks (United Voice), Martel Menz (Australian Education Union) & Van Badham</i>
3.30 – 3.50	Getting active – Turning passion into activism with letter writing
3.50 – 4:00pm	Activists in action...

Keynote abstracts

Nick Murphie Memorial Keynote – Becoming worldly: Stories from an activist early childhood teacher, artist and academic researcher (Dr Red Ruby Scarlet)

Becoming worldly is an everyday practice of living life as an activist in many diverse and different ways. In this keynote address, I will share stories about how I 'become worldly with' (Haraway, 2007) the places, people, politics, policies, practices and pedagogies that are generated in a life made up of activism, early childhood education, art and academic research. The worldliness of the Social Justice In Early Childhood group will be the precipice from which I launch a cascading stream of stories of what it means to be(come) 'act'ivist in everyday life personally and professionally. My stories are imbricated with the stories of children who have been my co-researchers and teachers, activist colleagues in early childhood and the current projects I am embarking on with my arts activist colleagues to continually grow the collectives in which we can, do and must create change. I call this 'anotherworldliness' (rather than otherworldliness) in a pursuit to reconfigure the world instead of merely including people and their diverse and different cultures into the existing one. These concepts will be demonstrated through everyday practical examples of my pedagogical practices with children in early childhood over 25 years. Next I'll accompany these stories with a history of beautiful activist work undertaken collectively in the Social Justice In Early Childhood group to show that it has not only impacted policy and changed it, but also how we created policy and influenced the National Quality Framework and in turn the EYLF. While these stories may seem rare, my position is that every early childhood educator, and their allies, can make a significant difference when we become worldly and live our profession as activist early childhood educators.

Bush Kinder – no art supplies, no equipment, no boundaries (BushKinder Doug and Hermoso Monstruo)

The educators at Bush Kinder have noticed the profound and positive influence the natural environment has on children. With less made and built stuff available to them the children explore gender and art with a freedom not afforded to them in a traditional early childhood service. During this workshop Doug and Ben will share their experiences through video and storytelling. Participants will be invited to add their voice to a meaningful and thought provoking discussion.

Gender diversity and the arts in early childhood (Dr Red Ruby Scarlet, Harrison Harding, Paige Phoenix and Isaac Green)

Gender diversity in early childhood is unfinished business. The collective presentations that comprise this panel offer creative and pedagogical insights into the work of four activists, artists, and educators who are currently working with children and educators in diverse ways to share a selection of our world changing experiences! Our approach to engaging diversity and difference expresses the rich experiences and success we draw from in our professional and personal lives. Themes that crisscross this beautiful panel discussion include transgender cultures, arts practice in education, reconfiguring practices such as pedagogical documentation through creative arts and children's perspectives on their own experiences with a particular focus on gender identity.

Creative approaches to activism: Insights from further afield (Van Badham)

Van Badham is a theatre-maker and novelist, occasional broadcaster and critic, feminist, bogon and trollfighter. Van's presentation will respond to questions such as: How can we further activate our sector? How do people find their political voice and engage? What actions have the greatest influence? What strategies can we use in campaigning? How do we make advocacy integral to being a professional?

Industrial Relations and Political Commentary Panel (Tamika Hicks, Martel Menz & Van Badham)

How can we pursue a rights agenda through unionism and activism? Where do we sit now? Are we ready to take up the next set of challenges? Workers' Rights and Human Rights are universal and indivisible, but do early childhood educators see a role for themselves as active members of their union? A long-standing grievance from the early childhood workforce is a lack of professional pay, poor conditions, and inadequate recognition for our professional identity, not only by the wider community but amongst ourselves. So where do we go from here, when our industrial rights and professional identities are under threat?

The panel will consider how we protect and advance our industrial rights by sharpening the tools in our industrial toolkit. We'll look at an engaged membership, organising, collective bargaining, campaigning and industrial action as a means of achieving what we deserve. We'll consider how improvements to wages and conditions can shape and influence our professional identities. We'll discuss the barriers we face and how to overcome them. This is a session of imagining – what if we stood up and demanded better? What relationships do we need to forge and what strategies will facilitate our successes? Where do we begin? Imagine what we could achieve for ourselves and the profession, and how might this impact on children and families?

- Should a union be campaigning on the issue of quality?
- What role can unions play in advocating in this space when they cannot resolve the relationships between them?
- How high a priority should be given for advocacy around educators' rights?
- Do educators have the right to advocate for their rights when children's rights are not preserved?
- Does the alignment of unions with the ALP mean their advocacy message becomes tainted?
- Is pursuing workers' rights a social justice issue?