

# **A Study of Access and Quality Early Education for Children And Families: Contexts of Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylum-Seekers**

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## **Description and Goals, Sabbatical Fall 2014**

I proposed sabbatical study that included several aspects of investigation into the contexts and supports for providing access and quality early education to children and families who are immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. This passion and career-long study is seen throughout all aspects of my scholarship, teaching and service and relates to my on-going program building in Early Childhood Studies at CSU Channel Islands and southern California and corresponds with the CI Mission.

One important facet of this proposal involved travel to study approaches of the University of East London, which serves a diverse student body from all over the world, many of whom are first generation university students. At the University of East London I will study the programs of the Cass School of Education and Communities. Specialist areas of this model education program include comparative education, early childhood, diversity and language, multilingualism, professional education, race and community, social work, teacher education and technology enhanced learning.

I spent two days with the co-directors of the International Center for the Study of the Mixed Economy of Childcare, Dr. Helen Penn, Professor Emerita, Early Childhood, Cass School of Education and Dr. Eva Lloyd, Professor Cass School of Education. The International Center at UEL brings together academics and students from across the university and other academic institutions nationally and internationally, as well as childcare business leaders, childcare professionals, national and local policy makers and politicians and representatives of unions and of private equity firms and other financial groups interested in investing in early childhood education. ICMEC aims to influence research agendas and inform early childhood education and care policy and intervention locally, nationally and internationally. This part of the investigation supported not only my personal scholarship, but also inform the work of the Early Childhood Studies and other programs in the School of Education at CI.

I had hoped to revisit Star Primary School in Newham where I had worked with students from study abroad programs from NYU for several visits some years ago. Sadly, the government funding for programs for asylum-seekers and refugees had been drastically cut and the school was not available. So, Dr. Eva Lloyd referred me to Gearies Primary School in Ilford. I spent several days participating and observing in the school and through interviews, documentation of student work, and neighborhood focus groups, I collected data for the final chapter in my book that was currently under contract at that time with Peter Lang Publishers.

## Significance

*To survive the Borderlands  
you must live sin fronteras  
be a crossroads.*

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 195)

The poet, Anzaldúa speaks of surviving in borderlands...of being a crossroad. I believe that the current world, where borders are often in flux with tenuous peace and where governments come and go, families and schools become the crossroads. Our cultural, human roots that we pass on to children are no longer neatly contained within borders. No one develops or learns out of the current context of family, community, country, or world at the present time or without a connection to the past. Learning develops among particularities, among persons and objects in families and communities. I believe that our interactions with immigrant and refugee families and the stories of people who are not currently “heard” will open up an environment of possibility for students and society.

## Timeline

January 2014

I compiled previously collected related qualitative data using a framework of critical theory, addressing research questions that include:

- What are the issues involved as refugees and immigrants move across the world? How do we as citizens of the world support the people and their children to critically address their needs? How can we learn about ways that local issues, including those of indigenous people, are impacted by global trends, both historical and political?
- How, as scholars, can we observe and participate in cultures different from our own? How can one observe the layers of power relations, culture, access, and possibility? How do we maintain respect and promote activism and avoid voyeurism?
- In what ways does our acknowledgement of the location from where we speak become important for scholars who are concerned with transnational issues that bridge communities or national boundaries and with issues of power?
- How do studies of issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality (that are of concern to contemporary critical scholarship) become situated within geopolitical arrangements, and relations of nations and their inter/national histories?

July 2015

I re-established contacts with scholars and professionals at the University of East London, to arrange meeting times for interviews and observations.

October 2014

I traveled to London to interview Dr. Eva Lloyd and Dr. Helen Penn. Through their introduction I participated in Gearies Primary School to begin data collection through interviews and participant observations.

November 2014

I returned to Camarillo to compile and write up new findings and complete my contracted book.

January, 2015

I presented to the Ventura County Office of Education Local Planning Council some selected findings from my research relating to the importance of play in integrated curriculum for early learners of multilingual backgrounds with a variety of family history experiences.

April, 2015

I presented selected findings at American Educational Research Association Conference in Chicago.

October, 2015

I was invited to present findings from my study and book at the Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education Conference in Dublin, Ireland.

### **Summary of Work Completed**

For several years I have researched and written about this topic, both for my work with students in teaching, my community engagement, and my publications, which include:

- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (in press). The Multifaceted Story: Children and Student Teacher Bricoleurs. In Parnell, W. & Iorio, J. (Eds.) *Disrupting Early Childhood Education Research: Imagining New Possibilities*. New York: Routledge.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (in press). Paulo Freire – 1921-1997. In Cohen, L. & Stupianski, S. W., *Theories of Early Childhood Education: Developmental, Behaviorist, and Critical*. New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (in press). Critical Transformative Action: Young Children, Teacher Education Students, and Families. In Naiditch, F., *Critical Thinking and Reflective Practice*. New York: Rowan & Littlefield.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2015) *Storying Learning in Early Childhood: Critical Narrative in Curriculum Design, Implementation, and Assessment*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. & Rummel, Mary K. (2014). *Storying, A Path To Our Future: Artful Thinking, Learning, Teaching, and Research*. New York: Peter Lang, Series on Critical Perspectives in Qualitative Research.
- Martinez, Fabiola A. & Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2014). Conocimiento: Mixtec Youth sin fronteras, in Ibrahim, A. and Steinberg, S. (Eds.) *The Critical Youth Studies Reader* New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2012). The Knowledges of Teacher Education. In Hayes, K., Steinberg, S., Tobin, K. (Editors), *Joe L. Kincheloe: Genies and wishes: a review of Key Works in Critical Pedagogy*. New York: Springer, pp. 245-252.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2012). Early Childhood Collaborations: Learning From Migrant Families and Children. In Blake, Robert W., Jr. and Blake, Brett Elizabeth, *Becoming a teacher: Using Narrative as reflective practice. A cross-disciplinary approach*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2009). *Critical literacy in early childhood education: Artful story and the integrated curriculum*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2009) *Refugee and Immigrant Family Voices: Experience and Education*. The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2009). Young Children and Story: The Path to Transformative Action in Steinberg, S. (Ed.) *Diversity: A Reader*, NY: Peter Lang.
- Quintero, Elizabeth P. (2008) Learning from students' stories. In Lourdes Diaz Soto and Haroon Kharem (Eds.) *Teaching Bilingual/Bicultural Children: Teachers Talk about Language and Learning*. NY: Peter Lang.