

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:SP 2017

Department:Learning, Teaching and Curriculum

Degree:PhD

Title:PEDAGOGICAL BECOMING: ONE TEACHERS JOURNEY TOWARD SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHING IN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM

This dissertation followed the journey of a second grade teacher as she strove to create what she called a “social justice atmosphere” in her classroom. The teacher’s pedagogical approach is situated within the literature on critical literacy, as she worked to interrupt the status quo, value multiple perspectives, and promote social action through the class read alouds on sociopolitical issues. In order to thoroughly depict her teaching processes, decisions, and roadblocks, a Foucauldian lens is used to track the micro-practices of power swirling around her. Insights include a glimpse into the challenges of teaching using a critical literacy framework in early childhood settings, implications for teacher education programs and in-service professional development, and the affordances of using a post-structural lens in studies of critical literacy.