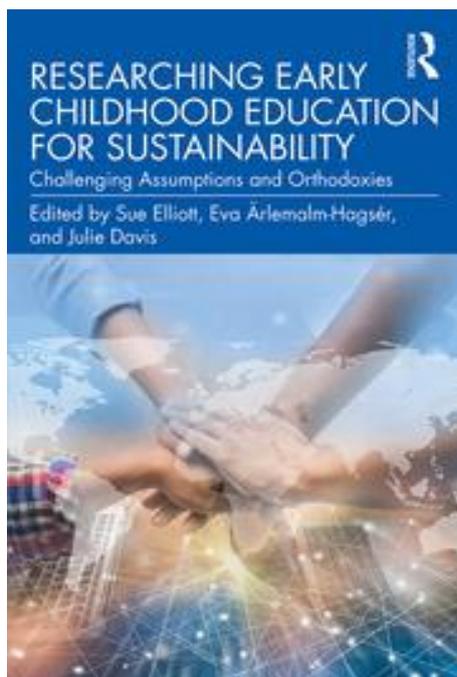




Publication Review

Researching Early Childhood Education for Sustainability

April 2021



Editor Review: *Researching early childhood education for sustainability: Challenging assumptions and orthodoxies*

Co-editors: Dr Sue Elliott, University of New England, Australia, Professor Eva Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Mälardalen University, Sweden and Adjunct Professor Julie Davis, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.

The co-editors are all long-standing active researchers, authors and advocates in the field of Early Childhood Education for Sustainability (ECEfS). They capture the international ECEfS research field at a time of increasing urgency around global climate disruptions, now compounded by the COVID pandemic. There is a foundational role for ECEfS across every sphere to advocate for children in the present and future. As Clark et al. (2020) have stated, “We live in an era like no other. Our children face a future of great opportunity, but they stand on the precipice of a climate crisis” (p. 649). Central to this text is the perspective that young children can, and should, be active participants in transformative change for healthy, just and sustainable



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futures. More importantly, the book offers some practical advice to inspire early years' educators to implement ECEfS in their early learning communities.

The book chapters are arranged in three clusters Cluster 1: Ethics and Values; Cluster 2: Historical and Sociocultural Contexts; and, Cluster 3: Curriculum and Pedagogy. Cluster 1 includes an analysis of historical and contemporary early childhood theories and critical reflection about the interactions between humans and the Earth. Cluster 2 charts ECEfS policy directions and initiatives across a range of countries, offering a snapshot of changing national landscapes and there are implications here for the recently proposed *Early Years Learning Framework* (DEEWR, 2009) review. In Cluster 3, the chapters feature curriculum and pedagogy research around two foci. Firstly, a re-examination of the historical legacies of children's outdoor play in nature. Some chapter authors invite educators to look beyond simply nature as an engaging playspace. For example, post humanist theories involve a shift away from nature perceived as a human resource to the embedding of ethical sustainable relationships with nature. Secondly, the key role of EfS in teacher education courses is considered and concerns raised about its total absence across many courses.

The co-editors argue we need significant shifts in thinking and practice and invite policy makers, researchers and practitioners to 'challenge assumptions and orthodoxies' for transformative change to happen sooner rather than later.

To locate a copy of the book, please visit:

<https://www.routledge.com/Researching-Early-Childhood-Education-for-Sustainability-Challenging-Assumptions/Elliott-Arlemalm-Hagser-Davis/p/book/9781138332263>

Clark, H., Coll-Seck, A., Banerjee, A., Peterson, S. et al. (2020). A future for the world's children? A WHO–UNICEF–Lancet, *The Lancet Commissions*, 395, 605-658.
Elliott, S., Ärlemalm-Hagsér, E. & Davis, J. (Eds.)(2020). *Researching early childhood education for sustainability: Challenging assumptions and orthodoxies* (Vol. 2). Routledge.



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