Early Years: an international research journal Special Issue Call for Papers: Lessons and Legacies of Early Childhood History

Early Childhood Education for Sustainability and the historical legacies of two pioneering giants of early childhood education.

Diane Boyd

School of Education

Liverpool John Moores University

Liverpool, United Kingdom

Email: d.j.boyd@ljmu.ac.uk

This paper considers Early Childhood Education for Sustainable Development from a historical perspective recognising the similar perspectives of two pioneers, Maria Montessori and Rudolph Steiner. These pioneers advocated for strong community ethics based on social justice, peace and equality, discussed around current practices in England. The Early Years Foundation Stage recognises the importance of an inclusive environment but there is little recognition of how the power of education has the ability to transform children and adults. Montessori notes the child as the 'constructor of civilisation' resonates with the idea of a strong capable child in contrast to a passive deficit model as a child that listens 'attentively 'and 'responds appropriately'. Similarly, the key attributes Steiner fostered ensured children have an 'inner voice of conscience and a sense of justice and responsibility.' This paper defines early childhood as a transformative time, empowering children to act as critical agents of change.

Key words –Montessori, Steiner – Waldorf, community, sustainability, early childhood.

<u>Introduction</u>

This paper will highlight how the pedagogies of Montessori and Steiner can support the development of caring, compassionate but critical thinkers needed to challenge policy decisions and practice that affect education for early childhood. Montessori and Steiner – Waldorf pedagogy offer alternative approaches to the centralised early childhood education and care in England. The importance of being able to be aware of different styles and approaches to early childhood ensures the development of a more critical and reflective attitude to education and care. Woods and Woods (2009, 1) suggest that by considering 'alternatives' reflectively, it will 'test and challenge' educators to develop new ways of thinking as Woods and Woods (2009, 1) state policy is framed with one perceived aim for children to '*become* within their inner being the enterprising and instrumentally driven personality 'which is seemingly 'prized'. However, Unger (2005b, 1) would consider this to be a 'dictatorship of no alternatives.'

MacNaughton (2005, 36) pushes early childhood educators to take a journey towards activism. She argues for a need for them to be able to question the 'domination of one truth over another', and suggests that practitioners should not blindly follow official legal statutory frameworks, which effectively tell them how to 'think, act, and feel' (MacNaughton 2005, 35). Foucault (1977, 163) refers to this process of marginalising alternative thinking and ways of doing, as 'violence' against diversity and difference. Education for sustainable development places joint responsibility upon both the adult and child in becoming a political activist in early childhood. Edwards (2015, 09) however suggests that this is against the '*norm* of childhood' as children tend to be viewed as 'decision-recipient' rather than as an agent of change. How the child is viewed in their educational system and society, by practitioners, family and community will impact upon their potential to develop into ecological engaged adults. Edwards (2015, 109) further suggests that the 'way societies engage or ignore children within their political debates

is likely to determine the type of political adults they become,' which further demonstrates the need of early childhood to embrace the pedagogy of education for sustainable development.

Early Childhood

The term early childhood covers a period of development from pregnancy through to around seven. Steiner and Montessori both believed the first seven years were the first phase until the advent of the secondary teeth and the loss of the milk ones, as Elkind (2015, 117) stated this was 'when they attain new mental abilities.' An accepted term that is often used to describe early childhood is 'holistic', which according to Fabian and Mould (2009, 9) originated from the Greek word 'holos' which means 'whole, entire and complete, thus the fundamental interconnectedness of all things'. Steiner considered holism in the truest sense 'for children, everything is one, and they are also one with their surroundings.' (Steiner 1924, 58). Early childhood education and care reflects the wholeness of the child, recognising many influences that impact upon the child. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological model of development centres the child in an environment that is a 'dynamic entity which is constantly changing.' (Keenan and Evans, 2010, 35). The child is surrounded by different layers or 'a series of nested structures', which include family, community, social, cultural or political organisations that impact upon the child's development. (Keenan and Evans, 2010, 35). There are a plethora of theories that are linked to early childhood, with developmental stage psychology theory (Piaget) tending to represent the goals, aims and learning outcomes attributed to the English early years curriculum (EYFS,DfE,2017). However, Keenan and Evans (2010, 41) suggest that a new integrated system that 'connects the child's mind, body and social worlds' is emerging out of 'growing disenchantment of the traditional theories' reflecting both the idea of holism and Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological model of development. Montessori and Steiner advocated for an 'unhurried' approach during these early years without stress or undue assessment, as 'childhood is demanding because there are many challenges' (Waldorf

100.0.103 - 1.22). Both constructed the image of an independent, capable, active co-constructing child, who needs the support and guidance of a qualified adult, not one that is just a transmitter of information.

Education for Sustainable Development –the Sustainable Development goals.

The World Commission on Environment and Development published the Brundtland Report (1987, 9) which appealed to 'citizens groups, to non-governmental organisations, to educational institutions, and to the scientific community.' It recognised that in the past they had had 'indispensable roles in the creation of public awareness and political change in the past.' Historically, Early Childhood is recognised for raising public awareness and highlighting political issues, for example, inequality, social justice and care for the environment. Unfortunately, these issues over a hundred years or more later, are still needing international action and public awareness. Siraj-Blatchford, Smith and Pramling Samuelsson (n.d, 6) highlighted the role that early childhood education could play to embed sustainable practice and encourage young children to be transformative, as ' a time when the foundations of many of their fundamental attitudes and values are first put into place.' There are three pillars of education for sustainability – economic, environmental and social/cultural which are interconnecting and non-hierarchical (Brundtland Report, 1987). However, Siraj-Blatchford, Smith and Pramling Samuelsson (n.d,6) note 'any practices and policies developed without taking each into account, are likely to weaken and may even fail.' Davis (2009, 2) identified a 'research hole' in early childhood education for sustainable development internationally. She noted that although there are many examples of research that focuses upon children *in* nature (i.e. their relationship with nature) with significantly fewer studies concerning understandings of key environmental topics (*about* nature), there was a research hole that highlighted children as agents of change (education *for*). However, Davis (2010, 6) was not advocating that early childhood should shift responsibility to children from adults or that 'solving the world's

problems cannot rest on the shoulders of educators'. Significantly, over one hundred years ago Maria Montessori stated that 'humanity must acquire a new consciousness' (2013, 71). Education *for* sustainability is founded upon the very principles of early childhood education and care – 'critical inquiry, empowerment, participation, democratic decision making and the taking of action that supports sustainable living and aims for social change.' Davis (2010, 9).

In contrast to this image of the child as an agent of change, in the English Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2017, 10) they are viewed through a deficit lens, with language such as 'listens attentively' and 'responds appropriately.' Early childhood must recognise the potential within every child and develop a rights based approach, which places the child at the centre of their own development. Montessori said 'the child must not be considered as he is today, in his apparent weakness in relation to us. He must be considered in his power of potential man.' (2013,74). Education for Sustainable development offers early childhood an opportunity to embrace the historical views of key pioneers such as Montessori and Steiner and to ensure that young children are able to become agents of change. Steiner argued that 'people should not remain asleep any longer, particularly in teaching and education' (Steiner 1924, 31) whilst Montessori intuitively stated we can 'radically transform society through education.' (Moretti 2013, 18) This is our challenge today.

Legacies and lessons

The Global Education Monitoring Report (GEM) (UNESCO, 2016, 4) 'starkly' highlighted three clear messages for the international community, one that there is a realisation of the need to develop 'new approaches' to education, with a 'heightened urgency' work to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education) and finally to 'change the way we think about education' (2016, 4). Quality education can only be achieved with the co-operation of political will, creative innovative approaches to policy and new educational resources. At

present it is forecast that by '2030 only 70% of children in low income countries will complete primary school'. (UNESCO, 2016, 4). Kahn (2013, 13) stated that 'Montessori's life was one of social reform and lived as a pedagogy for the oppressed'. It could be argued that Montessori's real legacy was her determination, like Steiner, for children to have equal and inclusive opportunities to be educated. Issues such as equity and social justice were born out of her personal fight to achieve her doctorate at the time of male domination. This is still a contentious issue and an ongoing struggle for girls and education internationally. This empowerment needs to start in the early years with an inclusive practice that includes gender and non-gender references or expectations. Global Citizen (2017) suggest that gender is one of the biggest reasons why education is not offered for all children and this is why female empowerment must be an important characteristic of practise within the early years, as advocated by Montessori. Elkind (2015, 118 citing Steiner 2004, 185) noted the same attitude and similar view of Steiner regarding women noting women need to have 'gained their place in society'.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4 quality education) (UNESCO, 2015, i) must be viewed with a 'sense of urgency and with a long term commitment'. This can be achieved if international communities recognise the potential empowerment of education, developing 21St century skills and attitudes. The Nutbrown review (2012, 5) of quality and qualifications in England, also noted the importance of 'a new long term vision for the early years work force.' One of the recommendations from the Nutbrown review (2012) consolidated findings from the Global Education Monitoring report (UNESCO, 2016), regarding the significance of quality teaching and teachers. This also resonated with the principles of both Montessori and Steiner who advocated for quality practitioners. Steiner perceived 'quality' within the first phase to be through imitation, stating 'that it is for you to see that you are worthy of this imitation.' (Steiner

1924, 45). Montessori also recognised children 'have an instinct to imitate' (Montessori 2012, 148), highlighting that practitioners must demonstrate and model attitudes in their practice, which should potentially transform the youngest child, their families and communities.

The Global Education Monitoring report (GEM, UNESCO, 2016) stressed the importance of staff training and qualifications to help children develop a critical sustainable mind-set. This would also resonate and reinforce Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 (UNESCO, 2015) with an emphasis upon all 'learners'. In a social constructivist environment both adult and child should be co-constructing and being 'learners' together. Both Steiner and Montessori saw the learning environment and all learners within their environment as a 'community of learners' (Lave and Wenger, 1998). For Steiner, the adult is the role model who leads a sustainable lifestyle promoting social, economic and environmental values. Whilst the adult in a Montessori environment tunes in and supports the absorbent mind when they show interest in specific issues and activities, helping them to understand. Steiner commented that 'what teachers need to do is observe life down to the minutest details.' (Steiner, 1924:48) whilst Montessori (1936) suggested that adults miss opportunities to tune in to their environment unlike young children, commenting that as adults grow older they 'pass by unseeing' (Montessori 1936 cited in NAMTA, 2013, 171). In contrast the absorbent mind seeks out the environment giving them 'the faculty of observing in such an intense and meticulous manner.' Boyd and Hirst (2017) noted this with young children on a beach. Adults 'missed' seeing their locality and making connections. Only after it was highlighted to them did they appreciate what had been there all along but had gone unnoticed.

The importance of social relationships are an important aspect of both Steiner and Montessori pedagogy. Both embrace the three year period where children can develop deep meaningful relationships with one educator and are supported in a nurturing environment. Both embrace a

non-traditional role of the teacher. O'Donnell (2013, 34) notes that the 'child could be viewed as superior' to the adult. As Montessori (1964) said,

'In the psychological realm of relationship between teacher and child, the teacher's part and its techniques are analogous to those of a valet, they are to serve, and to serve well: to serve the spirit. This is something new, especially in the field of education." (O'Donnell 2013, 34).

Traditionally children in early childhood settings are seen as needing to be protected, nurtured, cared for but Hart (1996,11) raised the issue of whether a child needs 'protecting' and if so who from, asking if 'children can be protagonists of their own rights?' Montessori ensured children as young as three experienced social justice resonating with the pillars of sustainable development, (Brundtland, 1987) which highlight social justice, equity and democratic participation as a matter of rights for all children worldwide. Early childhood therefore should ensure within practice, children are listened to and are given the necessary rights that should be afforded to them. Montessori challenged the adult perspective of adult v child stating 'all the works of civilisation were done for and by the adult. Therefore, the child remained outside society; he was not considered to be a citizen.' (Montessori 2012, 2). Montessori ensured this within her early childhood environment whilst fighting for children's rights worldwide, 'this new education must foster an understanding of the real values of humanity' (Montessori 2013, 73).

Developing a community ethic will ultimately ensure that children embrace values for others and their world. Within Steiner pedagogy there is a noted 'rhythm in learning' (Avison and Rawson 2016, 31). The day is 'structured in an organic way' which ensures a healthy mix of activities of that are balanced, for example, moving and then resting. Howard (n.d) suggests that meaningful work through activities will 'nurture daily and seasonal life … through gardening, laundry and cleaning.' Avison and Rawson (2016, 31) describe this as 'a balance

and a sense of continuity as well as helping to form a strong community experience.' This 'rhythm' captures the year through seasons with repetition of nature. Randall (2017) notes that these rhythms and activities can provide a direct connection to both physical and biological sustainability. During the daily rhythm there is a respect for the needs of the child to sustain their energy, health and well-being. The longer rhythms develop respect for the environment which also has biologically determined cycles. The child must wait for the bread to rise and the potatoes to grow, therefore gaining an understanding of what is possible, and therefore sustainable, or as Avison and Rawson, (2016, 239) note a 'foundation for grounded judgement and responsibility'. Steiner advocated the ideas of regenerative gardening and sustainable living through his biodynamic programme in 1924 before it was fashionable. His idea of only taking what was needed so that plants can regenerate, ensured a healthy rhythm of the garden and fostered a sense of ecological spirit through community work. It also resonates with the economic values of sustainability through recycling, reusing, regenerating and avoiding waste. Druitt, Fynes and Clinton (1995, 6) are concerned that young children today are becoming desensitised to nature through modern life which is 'arhythmical'. They highlight that children are not enjoying these 'world rhythms', such as daily, weekly or monthly routines, such as preparing food, gathering the apples or cleaning the kitchen. Moretti, (2013, 27) called this the inner organism or the 'work of servants'. Ethically, this developed morality through the community, by loving and respecting their environment and their peers, developing a social sense and ecological attachment. This contrasts to the neo liberalism of market driven privatisation of early childhood, individualism and competition today which Moss (2009) describes as 'an autonomous and rational utility maximiser in pursuit of self-interest.'

To Montessori (2012,155) play was work with no external purpose and by providing young children with opportunities to develop 'exactness' they will complete tasks 'carefully down to the last detail.' She further argued that if in the early years children do not have this time of

'exactness' they will develop as weak adults who are unable to finish tasks, concentrate or are satisfied. She said this sense of purpose will provide children with the construction of their personality and 'inner satisfaction' (2012, 155). Mbebeb (2009, 24) suggests that the early years;

'Are critical in priming vocational skills and entrepreneurial mind-sets due to children's acquisition of basic life skills and involvement in problem solving activities.'

In Africa there is an expectation that relationships in families and communities will provide the 'occupational socialisation that facilitates vocational development and entrepreneurial mind-set priming' Mbebeb (2009, 25). Steiner kindergartens also have this community and family ethic which highlights the importance of sustainability, ensuring children mend broken toys, learn to sew, weave and knit developing a sustainable mind-set. This also resonates with the key themes of the economic pillar of sustainability (Brundtland, 1987) and with the GEM report (UNESCO, 2016: 5) which recognises education can give learners the 'key tools – economic, social, technological, and even ethical' essential to embrace the Sustainable Development Goals and achieve them.

There is an urgent need for opportunities to develop creativity, divergence and entrepreneurial skills in early childhood practice rather than focusing upon an assessment and an end product, a dominant feature of Western early childhood. Nsaminang (2007 cited in Mbebeb 2009,24) suggests that 'different cultures invest in children, not as end states but in recognition that tomorrow's adults are the products of their childhood,' resonating with both Montessori and Steiner who advocated for an unhurried approach to childhood embracing nature, relationships and an awareness of the 'other,' not completion or individualism. Montessori believed her first phase for early childhood built a solid foundation for the development of character and recognised peace as a value for all humanity, and 'maximise the seeds of interest' (Montessori

1948, para.1) which is why this is such a crucial period. By embedding sustainable development into early childhood, it will develop adults that 'make social waves by empowering the disenfranchised, the poor or damaged communities of the world' (Kahn 2013, 12) and therefore work towards the Sustainable development goals. (2015, 30).

Montessori considered there were three 'curses' of plague, famine and war, believing that they had to be eradicated but, in her New Education (2013) method, she highlighted that there was no easy solution to war, but the eradication of plague and famine could be achieved. Within the GEM report (UNESCO, 2016, 96) a hundred years later, it also highlights that 'conflict and violence' are still destroying education systems in developing worlds. It is said that 'unfortunately, only 1.4% of humanitarian aid was invested in education in 2015' and Doumbia (2017) further articulates that if world leaders saved only six days of military spending there would be enough money available to close the 30% gap and send all the world's children to school. The GEM report (UNESCO, 2016) also recognises the newer approaches to education could help solve this problem. Steiner noted the 'social chaos accompanying wars end,' whilst Montessori argued in her 1917 lectures that war would not be solved through political alliances or pacifist ideas, stating these contemporary tools were 'proven ineffective' (Moretti 2013,29.) Montessori believed that to prevent war and conflict education needed to follow the 'deep laws that universally regulate the child's body and mind' (Moretti 2013, 29). Steiner advocated 'a renewal of culture' (Steiner 1996 ,17). It could be argued that the two pioneers over a hundred years ago recognised and stressed the need for the 'right type of education' that now the GEM report (UNESCO,2016) is asking international communities to consider. Both Steiner and Montessori recognised that war and the aftermath was a time to rethink societal issues and problems and both wanted to move away from the traditional view of education and proceed towards a new education. These ideas led Loris Malaguzzi famous for the innovative Reggio Emilia approach, born from war and conflict after World War two, to stress that children

needed to 'question, consider and challenge' (Smidt 2013, 55) so as not to follow blindly without thinking. Malaguzzi (1994, 54) noted that education 'must continuously address major social changes and transformations in economy, sciences, arts and human relationships and customs.' The GEM report (UNESCO, 2016) also focuses upon peace, stressing the importance of 'peaceful, just and inclusive communities' (2016, 95).

The Sustainable development goals (2015-30) are the necessary impetus to motivate early childhood to start to make this transformation today. However, Woods (2005, 131 cited in Woods and Woods 2009) notes the difficulties and 'dualities of democracy' (substantive and protective principles) which recognised to achieve a true democratic society there will be tensions and challenges. Substantive principles recognise that in any society the importance of a sense of belonging and unity is paramount. The protective principles emphasise that for a true democratic society, inclusion, equity, diversity, rights and freedom to be different, challenge this sense of belonging and unity (substantive) with the complexities of togetherness and interconnectivity. In the new addition of the English Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2017) British Fundamental values are explicitly acknowledged in regard to rule of law, democracy, mutual respect and tolerance and individual liberty. However, these are explicitly linked to the Prevent Terrorism Act (Home Office, 2015) in regard to radicalisation and therefore could be seem as a move towards these tensions of the 'dualities' noted. Steiner (1923) also acknowledged 'fundamental values' (gratitude, live in the will to love, will to do ones duty) with gratitude specifically developed during the kindergarten years. He said 'it is the universal gratitude towards the world that is of paramount importance' (Steiner 1923). Reciprocity and relationship are important elements of gratitude and Steiner advocated they must be developed not just to each other, but towards the environment too. For example, the practical experience of baking bread and the responsibilities of growing vegetables, take time and effort,

emphasising the deep connection to the earth. This develops an ecological human mind-set with sustainable values deeply embedded.

Steiner kindergartens are also built upon inclusion, trust, and kindness with emphasis placed on a caring environment, community and family ties, whilst another legacy of Montessori was her admirable work towards peace, to which she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize twice in 1949 and 1950. She highlighted the 'devalued child' (Kahn 2013, 8) and stressed the need for 'valorization'. This is a social process within the community which recognised how each child can and should make a contribution to society. However, currently there is in reality of a child who seemingly has no rights, that is a refugee child. Pinson and Arnot (2007:400) labelled these refugee children as 'invisible … a wasteland'. The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015) states clearly that they estimate 50% of the children not currently accessing education live in war torn countries. They cite these children as living 'in vulnerable situations'. These 'devalued' (Kahn 2013, 8) or 'invisible' children are also 'deterritorialised' (Pinson and Arnot 2007, 400). Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggested that this 'deterritorialised' is characterised by how the 'line of flight' operates and that not all lines of flight are positive or as Sellers (2013, 18) suggests 'have potentially altering qualities'. Pinson and Arnot (2007, 400) argue that refugees are not awarded the same 'social rights' as everyone, suggesting there is a 'supra-national entity'. Early Childhood educators are seen as an advocates for all children but especially those that are in vulnerable situations which include war zones. Practitioners must not consider these 'devalued' children as a 'wasteland' or products of radicalisation or outcasts that is often implied.

It is reported that young children are becoming stressed, with mental health problems at earlier stages and O'Donnell (2013, 3) suggests that these are a 'reflection of society.' Both Steiner and Montessori articulated a clear seven year period of childhood which was deeply connected to both humanity and the universe. They both believed that childhood was a

deeply spiritual stage that emphasised connections and an unhurried approach to learning. Montessori said Christianity 'is the form of the human spirit and should enter into the spirit as a help to life.' This 'help to life' must 'come through actions- actions that could guide humanity.' (Moretti 2013, 25). According to Moretti (2013, 25) Montessori believed children possess a 'luminous spirit'. This places huge importance upon the early organic development of the 'luminosity' of each child, with emphasis upon the circulation of blood, digestion and emphasising a holistic development of the child in a biological manner. Interestingly, Steiner also believed that children grew 'with all of the kingdoms of the earth.' (Steiner 1924, 77). Montessori and Steiner both recognised the innate natural disposition to connect with nature. They encouraged children to consider nature through the environment in a truly sensorial experience – an unhurried experience feeling the wind and sunshine on their faces, to hear the chorus of birds, to listen to silence, to feel textures and crunching under foot, to breathe in and smell the connections of their world, the universe, nature itself. The connection with nature and humanity would develop 'human values' rather than 'British Fundamental values '(Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE, 2017) which could foster negative views that exclude rather than positive. It also reminds early childhood of the third 'scourge' that Montessori (1917) stressed that is still undefeated, war. Promoting 'human values' or 'ecological values' must underpin early childhood to foster the unhurried child with deep roots connected to each other and nature. Cambi (2013, 102) reminds us of Kant's work on 'For Perpetual Peace' (2005) where he recognised that 'everlasting peace' can only happen if it becomes a 'nature, and a new nature of man'. This is the societal challenge of the 21st century and it is still a lesson to be learnt. Steiner considered key elements in his pedagogy of 'respect and reverence' (Oldfield 2012, 145) which are embedded deeply into nature and by allowing early

childhood to embrace this, will support the development of children who care, empathise and are truly connected to themselves and each other.

Cambi (2013) notes the idea of human rights in early childhood is growing and by building and incorporating a path of understanding 'others', children will develop a biocentric world view (Davis and Elliott 2014). However, the Kidsrights Index (2017) in their report highlighted a disconnection with policy and practice, with the UK ranked at 156th, New Zealand at 158th and the USA not visible at all in demonstrating 'how countries adhere to and are equipped to improve children's rights'. Significantly, Moss (2009) argues against the introduction of the 'International Early learning and Child Well-being Study' (IELS) with its universal and standardised approach to measure and assess cognitive and social/emotional skills, which both the England and the USA signed up to participate. Moss (2009) further argues that it does not address the wide ranging culturally diverse early childhood sector and worries it is the 'growing standardisation and narrowing of early childhood education, as the IELS tail increasingly wags the early childhood dog'. Crucially he notes that there is little evidence of any consent by children to participate in the study being recognised.

The early childhood sector needs to listen, tune in to children, observe what they need, desire – as slow unhurried observation will reveal the inner aspects of the child. According to Nicol and Taplin (2012, 48) a Steiner kindergarten should essentially support their 'healthy interest in the world, including a healthy social sense and a healthy aesthetic sense,' whilst Oldfield (2012, 21) notes the kindergarten experience as a time for 'wonder and reverence'. To Maria Montessori's the unfolding nature of the developing child and experience in nature fed the absorbent mind. Through absorbing nature and their world, they 'construct' themselves

through it. Piaget's theory regarding constructivism emphasised a 'pedagogy where action and self-directed problem solving are viewed as being central to learning and development, (Halpenny and Pettersen 2014, 1). As Montessori noted in a course lecture (1945) (2013, 170) the environment both inside and outside 'must be the world- that is, the world that is around him- all of it.' These active connections will develop the love, respect and reverence for their universe, thus developing a critically thinking sustainable mind-set. For Montessori (2013, 179) the ultimate goal was to 'live in nature' as fully as possible. By immersing themselves in the garden which for Montessori was an integral aspect of her prepared environment, the children would become 'masters'. (Montessori 1914 cited in 2013, 179).

Adults should not 'choose' what they consider is needed to discuss, but follow the thoughts, questions of the children in their care. If they do not see or hear the issues that need to be discussed, storing them away as too sensitive, or complex for young children, they are not allowing the true character of the child to emerge. Steiner kindergarten encourages 'an understanding that deeds have consequence' (Avison and Rawson 2016, 17). Montessori highlighted the 'forgotten citizen' (Montessori 1947) stating this leads to adults that either are too afraid to engage in critical and sensitive debates or adults that have no morality about their world. She articulated that by developing a truly spiritual and moral child that can see others perspectives and has a respectful caring attitude to nature, they will not be the 'forgotten citizen'. Hagglund and Johansson (2014 ,46) suggest this resonates with the Polish paediatrician Janusz Korczak often seen as an advocate for children's rights, as he argued that if children only see that the world through one lens as 'fair , sensible, well-motivated and unchangeable' they will not see a true representation. Hagglund and Johansson (2014, 46) further suggest that children should be exposed to the 'dark side of life' as they are more able to fight for these issues in adulthood. These 'belonging and value conflicts' emerge as adults

embed education for sustainability into their practice. Political activism encourages children to become agents of change, and in preparation for the 21st century children need to become critical thinkers that can challenge systems. Rinaldi (2013) reminds us that children are 'citizens, holding rights' but crucially 'human entities in themselves' and that by recognising their potential and relevance to mankind they will not become the 'forgotten citizen' (Montessori 1947).

<u>Future progress</u>

The GEM report (UNESCO, 2016) highlighted the need for new approaches and resources which were needed to tackle the problems the world has created, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030(UNESCO). Policy makers need to move away from the 'head only' focused approach and recognise that creativity and a community ethos is what is needed for the 21st century. Policy makers need to welcome and encourage collaboration from the Early Childhood community with their wealth of knowledge, experience and history rooted in social justice, equity and environment in future decisions.

Early childhood should be unhurried with no testing or assessment but just careful observation tuning into potential interests and questions. It should be a time to unfold, to connect, to listen and understand and embed a community of learners (Lave and Wenger 1998) that is inclusive of all, that welcomes difference, diversity and celebrates culture and tradition. A community that opens its doors to refugees, that empowers all learners, both adult and child and a community that is outward facing towards a fairer connected world. As Rinaldi (2013, 25) notes 'education as a transformative force, and in childhood as a generative source for a peaceful culture.'

A community that supports the image of a child that is strong, capable and with a rights not needs based approach. A child that is an agent of their own learning that is able to transform

themselves, their family and community as a steward of the world. However, to do this children need to 'see' themselves as equal with parents and educators encouraging their strengths. Early childhood must lead with strong leadership vital for embedding sustainable development, as Gibson (2015, 65) states it is 'paramount to the culture of the organisation.'

Early childhood educators must welcome and embrace challenge with a strong reflective ethos. They need to welcome and embrace old ideas of pioneers and current ideas from research that consolidates the original messages. Practice must be willing to try new resources that can support a sustainable ethos, one such example, is the Education Care and Education for Sustainable framework (Boyd, Hirst and McNeill, 2017). This framework has embedded the three pillars of sustainability, human values and a recognition of an ecological identity. This framework will support the development of the 'knowledge and skills' and 'new resources' needed for the 21st century. (UNESCO, 2016 :)

Higher Education has a part to play in this transformation as early childhood degrees should be embracing and championing education for sustainability as advocates for children and families. Educators must be critically reflective of their own practice being inspirational role models with strong moral attributes. The future is a challenge, early childhood must recognise it has a place in transforming young children's lives, the world and helping to achieve the SDG 4 (2015-30). The challenge to work towards a just, equal society as Montessori (2013'74) said 'for not only man has his roots in the child, but so does society'. Little green steps can ultimately lead to big green decisions on policy change and education. That is the hope.

References

Avison, K., and Rawson, M. 2016. *The Tasks and Content of the Steiner –Waldorf Curriculum.* Edinburgh: Floris Books.

Boyd, D., and Hirst, N. 2017. Recognising Beach Kindy as a pedagogical approach for critical agents of change within early childhood education. In: Leal Filho, W. (ed.) *Handbook of Sustainable Science and Research* (2017). London: Springer.

Boyd, D., Hirst, N., and McNeill, C. 2017. *Early Years Eco-Schools Vision (Leadership Pack)* [online]. Available at: https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/microsites/early-childhood-education-for-sustainability

Bronfenbrenner, U .1979. *The Ecological of Human Development.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bruce, T. 2010. *Early Childhood. A guide for Students.* London: Sage.

Childhood Explorer. The effects of war and violence on children.

Available at - http://www.childhoodexplorer.org/effects-war/

Davis, J. 2009. "Revealing the research 'hole' of early childhood education for sustainability: A preliminary survey of literature." *Environmental Education Research* 15 (2): 227-241.

Davis, J. 2012. *Young Children and the Environment. Early Education for sustainability.* Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Davis, J. and Elliott, S. 2014. *Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability. International perspectives and provocations.* London: Routledge.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. 1987. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Department for Education. 2017. *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: setting the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five.* Runcorn: Department for Education.

Doumbia, K.D. 2017. The Effects of War and Violence on Children. *Childhood Explorer* [online], Spring.

Available at: http://www.childhoodexplorer.org/effects-war

Druitt, A., Fynes-Clinton, C., and Rowling, M. 2015. *All Year Round: A calendar of Celebrations.* Stroud: Hawthorne Press.

Edwards, M. 2015. *Global Childhoods. Critical Approaches to the Early Years.* Northwich: Critical Publishing.

Elkind, D. 2015. *Giants in the Nursery. A Biographical History of Developmentally Appropriate Practice.* St Paul, MN: Red Leaf Press.

Emerson, S., and Siraj-Blatchford, J. (2017) The Legacy of Maria Montessori. In *Understanding Sustainability in Early Childhood Education. Case studies and Approaches from across the UK*, edited by Boyd, D., Hirst, N., and Siraj-Blatchford, J. London: Routledge.

Feez, S. 2010. *Montessori and Early Childhood*. London: Sage.

Foucault, M. 1977. Nietzsche, genealogy, history. In *Language, Counter Memory and Practice: selected essays and interviews*, edited by Bouchard, D., 139-164. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Gibson, M. 2015. Leadership for creating cultures of sustainability. In *Young Children and the Environment. Early Education for sustainability*, edited by Davis, J., 76-103. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Global Citizen 2017 *Global Citizen website* [online]

Available at: https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/gb/

Hagglund, S., and Johansson, E. 2014. In Belonging, value conflicts and children's rights in learning for sustainability in early childhood. In *Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability*, edited by Davis, J., and Elliot, S., 38-48. Oxon: Routledge.

Haines, A. 2013. A Science of Peace. *AMI Journal* December: 90-97.

Halpenny, A., and Petterson, J. 2014. *Introducing Piaget. A guide for practitioners and students in early years education*. London: Routledge.

Harper Collins Publishers

Available At - https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/horme

Hart, R. 1997 .*Children's Participation. The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*. London: Earthscan.

Home Office 2015 *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales.* [Online]
Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

Howard, S. n.d. *Essentials of Waldorf Early Childhood Education.*
Available at - http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org/uploads/Howard%20Article.pdf

Isaacs, B. 2010. *Bringing the Montessori Approach to your Early Years Practice*. London: David Fulton books.

Isaacs, B. 2015. *Bringing the Montessori Approach to your Early Years Practice*. London: David Fulton books.

Kahn, D. 2013. Converging Passages: Social Reform, Peace, and Montessori Education for Life (Editorial). *AMI Journal* December: 5-18.

Kant, I. 2005. *Perpetual Peace*. Rome: Riuniti.

Lave, J., and Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Louv, R. 2005. *Last Child in the Woods. Saving our children from nature deficit disorder.* New York: Algonquin books.

Mac Naughton, G. 2005. *Doing Foucault in Early Childhood Studies. Applying post structural ideas.* London: Routledge.

Malaguzzi, L (1994) History,Ideas and Basic Philosophy .In C.Edwards , L, Gandini and G, Forman.(eds) *The Hundred Languages of Children.The Reggio Approach to Early Childhood Education* . Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing

Mbebeb, F. 2009. "Developing productive life skills in children: Priming entrepreneurial mind sets through socialisation in family occupations." *International Journal of Early Childhood* 41 (2): 23-34.

Montessori, M. First Lecture on Peace delivered in Feb. 1917, San Diego Course: Document 384 (Amsterdam: AMI, 1917).

Montessori, M. 1947. *The Forgotten Citizen* [Parts From a Letter Written in 1947 and Sent to All Governments] [online] Available at: http://mismanosmontessori.com/content/forgotten-citizen-maria-montessori

Montessori, M. 1948. *To Educate the Human Potential Chapter 1: Six-year-old confronted with the Cosmic Plan* [Selected Excerpts] [online] Available at: http://montessoriguide.org/in-her-words-to-educate-the-human-potential/

Montessori, M. 2012. *Maria Montessori. The 1946 London Lectures*. The Montessori Series vol.17. Amsterdam: Montessori-Pierson Publishing.

Montessori, M. 2013. A New World and Education. (1946/47) (Editorial). *AMI Journal* December: 69-76.

Moretti, E. 2013. Teaching Peace in a Time of War: Maria Montessori's 1917 lectures. (Editorial). *AMI Journal* December: 17-32.

Moss, P. (2017) *OECD's International Early Learning Study: Briefing No.2 August* [online] Available at: http://tactyc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/IELS-briefing2.draft_.2aug20176.docx.

NAMTA. 2013. Guided by Nature Exhibition. *Double Theme Issue on Peace through Education* [online], 2013/1-2,167-208. Available at: montessoridigital.org/system/files/downloads/publications/AMIJournalPreviewDec2013.pdf

Nsaminang, B. A. 2007. *Cultures in early childhood care and education, Education for All Global Monitoring Report*, UNESCO, 2007/ED/EFA/MRT/PI/3.

Nicol, J. 2010. Bringing *the Steiner Waldorf Approach to your early years practice*. London: David Fulton.

Nicol, J., and Taplin, J. 2012. *Understanding the Steiner Waldorf Approach. Early Years education in practice.* London: David Fulton Books.

Nutbrown, C. (2012) *Foundations for Quality: the Independent Review of Early Education and Childcare Qualifications. Final Report (Nutbrown Review)*[online]

Available   at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175463/Nutbr own-Review.pdf

O'Donnell. M. 2013. *Maria Montessori. A Critical Introduction to Key Themes and Debates.* London: Bloomsbury.

OECD (2017) *International Early learning and Child Well-being Study' (IELS)* [online]

Available   at: http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/international-early-learning-and-child-well-being-study.htm

Oldfield, L. 2012. *Free to Learn. Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood and Education.* Stroud: Hawthorne Press.

Piaget, J .1955. *The Construction of Reality in the child*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Pinson, H., and Arnot, M. 2007. "Sociology of Education and the wasteland of refugee education research." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 28 (3): 399-407.

Randall, D. 2017. Personal communication (26/06/2017).

Rinaldi, C. (2013) Foreword. In: Hoyuelos, A. (2013) *The Ethics in Loris Malaguzzi's Philosophy.* Reykjavik: Isalda pp.19-25

Sellers, M. 2013. *Young Children Becoming Curriculum.* London: Routledge.

Smidt, S. 2013. *Introducing Malaguzzi. Exploring the life and work of Reggio Emilia's Founding father.* London: Routledge.

Standing, E. 1998. *Maria Montessori. Her Life and Work.* New York: Plume.

Steiner, R. 1923. *The Child's Changing Consciousness and Waldorf Education: Lecture Six: Dornach April 20*[online] Available at: http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA306/English/RSP1988/19230420a01.html

Steiner, R. 1924. *The Kingdom of Childhood: Seven Lectures and Answers to Questions* [online] Available at: http://wn.rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA311/English/AP1982/KinChi_index.html

Steiner, R. 1996. *The Foundations of the Human Experience* (translated by Robert. R. Lathe and Nancy Parsons Whittaker) [online]. Hudson: Anthroposophic Press.

The Kids Rights Index. 2017. Available at- http://kidsrightsindex.org/

Unger RM (2005) *What Should the Left Propose?* London: Verso.

UNESCO.   2015.   *Sustainable   Development   Goals* [online].   Available
at: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/

UNESCO.   2016. *Global   Education   Monitoring   Report 2016* [online].   Available
at: http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/

United Nations. 2016. *Sustainable Development Goals: Goal 4 Quality Education* [online].
Available at: http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/

Woods, P., and Woods, G. 2009. .*Alternative Education for the 21st Century .Philosophies,
Approaches and Visions.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

World Commission on Environment and Development 1987. *Report of the World Commission
and Development: Our Common Future. (Brundtland Report)* [Online]
Available at – http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf