

# Academic Interests

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## Libby Davy

### MA in Education Studies (Person-Centred)

My apologies in advance for the number of interests I have. No doubt one of the greatest benefits I can gain from the MA is synthesis and focus. Oh for mentoring! (These are not listed in order of importance.) Underlined text is hyperlinked in electronic copies.

### Early Learning & Implications of The Reggio Project

Early Learning (0-6 years), with particular reference to:

- the [Infant Toddler Centres & Pre-schools of Reggio Emilia](#), Italy<sup>i</sup>.
- young children & creative expression
- parent & community participation
- learning communities
- environmental & outdoor education
- multi-sensory environments & the environment as the 'Third Teacher'
- Steiner, Montessori, Summerhill-inspired schools, eg. one of my alma maters, [The Lance Holt School](#)<sup>ii</sup>
- Human-scale, person-centred nurseries (child care / early learning centres / infant-toddler centres) (see our attempts to create this [here](#).<sup>iii</sup>)
- Implications of the Reggio project for all learning.

Potential for Brighton & Hove (or other) Council to look at fresh approaches to education throughout the City. To differentiate the City by the quality of its education. The Reggio Project was made possible by a municipal commitment to education.

### Parent voice

- How can parent's flourish as a primary relationship for children's education?
- What do parents want from education for their children? How does this fit with what person-centred researchers would want for children? What are children actually getting?
- Family-friendly work / life balance – macro economic reform and organisational culture, empowering parent's to plan and make choices, even before they are parents – especially women.
- Acknowledging the importance of parents in the education of children, in co-operation (if not collaboration) with school, but with an emphasis on the informal aspects. Empowering parents to confidently undertake this crucial role.

### Children's / Student's voice

- How do children & young people participate in decisions that affect them? What about wider role as citizens? How do we listen? What feedback do we give that we have heard?
- What decisions do they participate in? How does age, verbal ability, notions of entitlement influence this?
- Children's inherent right to childhood, not as custodians of the future.

- Community development models with children and parents inherently at the centre. (Ref: [Children at the Centre](#)<sup>iv</sup> – see CV.)

## **Philosophy, Spirituality & Peace**

- [Children and Spirituality](#) – allowing a place for the sacred and mystical in childhood. Nurturing the innate flame. The role of nature. Being complementary and interfaith.
- The power of forming effective questions (not focussing on answers so much). How do we encourage this?
- Common threads, common vision between religions. Common values. Interfaith learning communities.
- Buddhist philosophy, emphasis on western Buddhism with a person-centred approach.
- Buddhist education - currently assisting The Dharma School in Brighton with development. Have a *delicious* 5-year-old called Bea at the school. Moved from Australia, in part, to have access to such a school. But I don't actually call myself a Buddhist, just inspired by the teachings.
- The nature of reality and existence. The common ground between philosophy and science, with special reference to Buddhist philosophy and quantum theory. Preparing the way for the next renaissance...
- Personal growth and transformation. Consciousness growth. The flourishing and evolution of the human spirit and human consciousness.
- The work of John Macmurray and the personal being primary and foundational.

## **Learning communities**

- How can they form and thrive, within and between organisations and individuals? Locally, internationally.
- How can the internet help vs need for face-to-face human contact?
- What is the impact of number of siblings and extended family dynamics for family as learning community.
- What is the potential of a magazine and website for person-centred education targeted at mainstream teachers?
- Education for transformation & emancipation - community, nurseries, schools, organisational settings, informal, life-long. Learning to love learning. Internationally. At all ages and stages of human evolution. Particular interest at transitional stages, eg. birth, childhood, adolescence, major life events, 'Dark Nights of the Soul'.
- The role of creative expression in child and adult learning, daily life and in therapeutic settings. Including art and music.

- Gardner's work on Multiple Intelligences.
- What concepts of 'madness' and abnormality reveal about the human mind and spirit. What altered states of consciousness reveal.
- Peace within the individual, peace between individuals, peace between nations. The role of communication and dialogue in these processes.
- The implications of educating first world leaders, today. From cradle to grave. The amount of power and potential impact of first world children in 20-40 years time, whether they are in England, Russia or China.
- *Alma Mater* as 'Nourishing Mother'. What could a return to the latin roots of the expression mean for education?

### **Citizen Voice & Education for Activism**

- Critical literacy around issues of [media consumption and production](#)<sup>v</sup> (Ref: TV Turn Off Week – see CV).
- [Education for conscious consumerism](#).<sup>vi</sup> (Ref: The Big Love Gift Guide, see CV)
- Sharemarket / profit-driven takeover of early learning. Control of child care centres / nurseries by large corporations in Australia and beyond. Are schools next? How could we let it happen to 0-6 year olds? Can we stand by and let it happen?

### **Sustainable Development**

- Sustainable development and financial viability of person-centred, human-scale learning environments.
- Fund-raising & development. Major gifts & bequests cultivation & grants.
- Long-term financial planning for viability.
- Social entrepreneurship, sustainable and ethical business, corporate citizenship.
- Policies and legislation around these issues, internationally
- Cross-border co-operation for international learning communities.
- Organisational change and development. What role can communication, culture and education play. Consultancy as facilitation. Empowering clients to learn and grow.
- The psychology of leadership. What motivates 'goodness' and decisions that have a positive impact beyond just the bottom line. What stages of life are most transformational and latent/potent in this respect?

### **Human scale secondary schools**

- The potential for a person-centred, human-scale secondary school in Sussex. (Currently in dialogue with Dharma School parents and others re: this. Hoping to take it out to a wider group.)

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- <sup>i</sup> Reggio Project <http://zerosei.comune.re.it/>  
<sup>ii</sup> Lance Holt School <http://www.lanceholtschool.wa.edu.au>  
<sup>iii</sup> South Fremantle Early Learning Centre <http://barkingowl.com/learning/2005/11/23/updating-cv-work-in-progress/>  
<sup>iv</sup> Children at the Centre <http://barkingowl.com/learning/2006/01/05/a-vision-for-child-care/>  
<sup>v</sup> TV Turn Off Week <http://barkingowl.com/tvturnoff/>  
<sup>vi</sup> The Big Love Gift Guide <http://barkingowl.com/cc/>