

AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF THE BOARD OF EDITORS



AMY CUTTER-MACKENZIE, CONSULTING EDITOR

I joined Southern Cross University in December 2011 as an Associate Professor in the School of Education in the area of Sustainability, Environment and Education. I am the Director of Research for the School of Education and Research Leader of the Research Cluster ‘Sustainability, Environment and Education’ (SEE).

I commenced my career as a primary school teacher in Queensland, Australia, and later moved into academia after completing my Ph.D. My research is clearly situated in the area of children’s and teachers’ thinking and experiences in environmental education and sustainability in a range of contexts and spaces (including early childhood education, schools, teacher education, higher education, research and communities). I am the Editor of the Australian Journal of Environmental Education (Cambridge University Press).

Thought Provoking Quotation: “I wonder whether the process ordinarily referred to as growing up is not actually a process of growing down; whether experience, so much touted among adults as the things children lack, is not actually a progressive dilution of the essentials by the trivialities of living. This much at least is sure: my earliest impressions of wildlife and its pursuit retain a vivid sharpness of form, color, and atmosphere that half a century of professional wildlife experience has failed to obliterate or to improve upon” (Aldo Leopold)

BLANCHE DESJEAN-PERROTTA, CONSULTING EDITOR

Blanche Desjean-Perrotta, Ed.D., is professor of early childhood/elementary education at the University of Texas San Antonio. She has been a teacher educator for the last 18 years, and oversees her university’s teacher preparation program as Associate Dean for Teacher Education. Over the last several years her research has evolved to studying the preparedness of early childhood preservice teachers to teach environmental education. This research serves to provide direction for her university and other teacher educator preparation programs in how to better prepare new teachers for this important task before they enter the field of teaching. Her involvement in environmental education has



included chairing the Preservice Teacher Council for the North American Association for Environmental Education, and co-authoring a national study of teacher preparation programs and environmental education for this organization. Dr. Desjean-Perrotta is also a trained facilitator for Project Wild and Project Learning Tree.

Results of her research have manifested recently in publications such as Desjean-Perrotta, B., Moseley, C., & Crim, C. (2010). Raising a generation of environmentally literate children: Assessing the impact of teacher knowledge. In Hoot, J. & Szenter, J. (Eds) *The Earth is our home: children caring for the environment*. Maryland: Association of Childhood Education International; Desjean-Perrotta, B. (in press). Raising a generation of environmentally literate children: Are preservice teachers ready? *Childhood Education*; and Moseley, C., Desjean-Perrotta, B., & Crim, C. (2012). Preservice Teachers' Perceptions of the Environment: Infusing Environmental Education into an Elementary Teacher Preparation Program. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Education*, 11(1), 1-14.

Thought Provoking Quotation: "Love by the way you walk, the way you sit, the way you eat. This world very much needs love." Thich Nhat Hanh

BORA SIMMONS, ASSOCIATE EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Bora Simmons is the founding director of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education. The Project was initiated in 1993 by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) to help educators develop and deliver effective environmental education programs. The Project has drawn on the insights of literally thousands of educators across the United States and around the world to craft guidelines for top-quality environmental education. Publications in the series includes: *Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence* (NAAEE, 2010). After twenty years as a professor of environmental education at Northern Illinois University, Bora retired in 2007 and moved the Project to the Institute for a Sustainable Environment at the University of Oregon.



Bora has been actively involved in environmental education research, evaluation, and professional development for over thirty years. She has taught courses, given presentations, and facilitated workshops internationally. She served on the NAAEE board of directors and as its president. She was chair of the National Council for the Social Studies' (NCSS) Environmental Education SIG, NCATE EE standards writing committee, and ASCD EE Network. She currently serves on numerous steering committees and boards of directors, including the National Project Learning Tree Education Operating Committee and Environmental Education and Conservation Global.

For her achievements in research and service, Bora has received various recognitions, including Walter E. Jeske Award for Outstanding Contributions to Environmental Education (NAAEE), Outstanding Contributions to Research in Environmental Education (NAAEE), and Applied Research Award (*Progressive Architecture*). Bora's research interests center on the development of environmental literacy.

She earned her B.A. in Anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley, M.S. in Natural Resources/Environmental Education from Humboldt State University and Ph.D. in Natural Resources/Environmental Education from the University of Michigan. After graduation from UC

Berkeley, she served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Dae Cheon, South Korea.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” (John Muir)

CHRIS KIEWRA, CONSULTING EDITOR

In her role as Education and Outreach Specialist for the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation/ Nature Explore, Christine devotes her time to several initiatives for creating connections between families and nature as well as expanding quality educational opportunities for children. With a Master’s degree in early childhood special education, she currently provides professional development and coaching for teachers.



Christine is part of the creation team at Nature Explore that develops resources to support children’s connection to the natural world and is a World Forum Foundation Global Leader for Young Children.

Nature Explore is a collaborative project of Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. For years, Dimensions Foundation has been collecting research data on the benefits of connecting children with nature. At the same time, Arbor Day Foundation has become concerned that children are more disconnected from the natural world than ever before. Working together, Nature Explore resources are developed based on research and field-testing with educators and children in real-life settings. All aspects of the Nature Explore program work together to help bring nature into children’s lives in a significant, sustainable way. Dimensions’ research continues to show how much children benefit when positive experiences with nature come at an early age and are supported by caring adults.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “I sincerely believe that for the child, and for the parent seeking to guide him, it is not half so important to know as to feel. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds must grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare the soil.” (Rachel Carson)

INGRID PRAMLING SAMUELSSON, CONSULTING EDITOR

Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson is Professor of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Education, Communication and Learning at Gothenburg University, Sweden. She is the UNESCO Chair in ECE and ESD and is the current World President of OMEP (Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Prescolaire).

Main topics of my research are young children's learning, preschool education and curriculum, as well as education for sustainable development (ESD). Some of my recent publications include *The Contribution of Early Childhood Education to a Sustainable Society* (UNESCO, 2008); *Education for Sustainable Development in the Early Years* (Svenska OMEP, 2010); *Early childhood education and learning for sustainable development and citizenship* (International Journal of Early Childhood, 2009); and *Why we should begin early with ESD: The role of Early Childhood Education* (International Journal of Early Education, 2011).



Thought Provoking Quotation: "Take children seriously – make early childhood education and sustainable development a priority" (my own)

**JENNY RITCHIE, CONSULTING EDITOR**

Dr Jenny Ritchie has a background as a child-care educator and kindergarten teacher, followed by 22 years of experience in early childhood teacher education. She currently holds the position of Associate Professor in Early Childhood Teacher Education at Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka - Unitec Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand. Her teaching, research, and writing has focused on supporting early childhood educators and teacher educators to enhance their praxis in terms of enacting an awareness of cultural, environmental and social justice issues. She has recently led three consecutive two-year studies funded by the New Zealand Teaching and Learning Research Initiative, focusing on implementing early childhood pedagogies reflecting these commitments.

Her recent publications include *“Caring for Ourselves, Others, and the Environment: Applying an Indigenous Paradigm in Early Childhood Education in Aotearoa, New Zealand”* (2011) in J. Lin & R. Oxford (Eds.), *‘Transformative Eco-Education for Human and Planetary Survival’*(pp. 239-253); *‘Bicultural Journeying in Aotearoa’* (2009) in D. Caracciolo & A. M. Mungai (Eds.), *‘In the Spirit of*

Ubuntu - Stories of Teaching and Research' (pp. 135-146); and 'Early childhood education as a site of ecocentric counter-colonial endeavour in Aotearoa New Zealand' (2012) in 'Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood', 13(2), pp. 86-98.

Thought Provoking Quotation: "Being really means interbeing" (Thich Nhat Hahn)

JULIA TORQUATI, CONSULTING EDITOR

Julia Torquati is an Associate Professor of Child, Youth, and Family Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has been a teacher educator for 18 years, most recently teaching courses in math, science, and nature methods for early childhood education and human dimensions of sustainability. Her program of research focuses on several dimensions of children's interactions with the natural world, including development of biophilia, conservation knowledge and beliefs, and the influence of nature on executive functions and self-regulation. She also studies parents' and teachers' perceptions of the importance of experiences in nature for children's development and learning. She was a member of the writing team for the *Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence* and has presented on early childhood environmental education at conferences in the U.S., Australia, and China.



Recent publications of Dr. Torquati's research include: Torquati, J.C. & Ernst J. (2013). Beyond the Walls: Conceptualizing Natural Environments as "Third Educators." *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 34, 191-208; Rice, C. & Torquati, J.C. (2013). Assessing Connections between Young Children's Affinity for Nature and Their Experiences in Natural Outdoor Settings in Preschools. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 23(2), 78-102 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.23.2.0078>; Torquati, J.C., Cutler, K., Gilkerson, D., & Sarver, S. (2013). Early Childhood Educators' Perceptions of Nature, Science, and Environmental Education. *Early Education and Development*, 24(5), 1-23 <http://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/rRmiBCwebvt5t7eDJRyu/full>; Hong, S-Y, Torquati, J., & Molfese, V.J. (2013). Theory guided professional development in early childhood science education. In L. Cohen and S. Waite-Stupiansky (Eds.) *Advances in Early Education and Day Care, Volume 17: Learning across the Early Childhood Curriculum*, (pp. 1-32). Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing; and Torquati, J.C., Gabriel, M., Jones-Branch, J., & Leeper Miller, J. (2011). Environmental Education: A Natural Way to Nurture Children's Development and Learning. In A. Shillady (Ed.), *Spotlight on Young Children and Nature* (pp. 8-14). Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Thought-provoking quotation: "Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better" (Albert Einstein)

JULIE DAVIS, CONSULTING EDITOR

Julie is Associate Professor in the School of Early Childhood, Queensland University of Technology. Julie's teaching and research interests are in early childhood education for sustainability (ECEfs), particularly those forms that support and promote the decision-making and action-taking of young children, and embedding education for sustainability into teacher education. Julie co-founded a network for those with an interest in early childhood environmental education/education for sustainability in 1996 - the *Queensland Early Childhood Environmental Education*

Network, now the Queensland Early Childhood Sustainability Network (QECSN), of which she is now Patron. In 2007 and 2008, she attended meetings in Sweden, hosted by Prof Ingrid Pramling Samuelsson, that led to early childhood education being acknowledged as a 'natural starting point for lifelong learning in Education for Sustainable Development' in *The Gothenburg Recommendations on Education for Sustainable Development*. She edited of the 2010 textbook for early childhood preservice educators *Young Children and the Environment: Early Education for Sustainability*, published by Cambridge University Press, a world-first for early childhood teacher education. Julie is keenly interested in the promotion of research into the field of early childhood education for sustainability and, consequently, led the *Transnational Dialogues in Research in Early Childhood Education for Sustainability* - the first in 2010 (Stavanger, Norway), and the second in 2011 (Brisbane, Australia).

Thought Provoking Quotation: "Good planets are hard to find" (unknown)

JULIE ATHMAN ERNST, CONSULTING EDITOR

Julie is an Associate Professor and director of the Master of Environmental Education program at the University of Minnesota Duluth, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate coursework in environmental education methods, classroom applications, program evaluation, research methods, and statistics. Her prior experience includes environmental and conservation education work for the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Her research line includes evaluation of nonformal environmental education programs, environment-



based formal education programs, and early childhood environmental education. Recent publications pertaining to early childhood environmental education include *Early Childhood Educators' Use of Natural Outdoor Settings as Learning Environments: An Exploratory Study of Beliefs, Practices, and Barriers* (2013, Environmental Education Research); *Early Childhood Nature Play: A Needs Assessment of Minnesota Licensed Childcare Providers* (2012, Journal of Interpretation Research); *Preservice Early Childhood Educators' Perceptions of Outdoor Settings as Learning Environments* (2012, Environmental Education Research); and *The Real Benefits of Nature Play Every Day* (2011, Childcare Exchange/Nature Action Collaborative for Children). She is

currently working with a local nature center on the development and establishment of a nature-based preschool and on the design and implementation of a natural playscape.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “Because children grow up, we think a child's purpose is to grow up. But a child's purpose is to be a child.” (Tom Stoppard)

KEUM HO SHIN, CONSULTING EDITOR

I am working as an Assistant Professor of the Department of Early Childhood Education in Daegu University, South Korea. I also have been a principal of the kindergarten affiliated with the College of Education in Daegu University for past 4 years. While I was in the doctoral program in University of Victoria, Canada, I was interested in environmental education for young children and focused on the development of environmental education in the Korean kindergarten context. Since the last year, I have been conducting the project *Korean Kindergarten Teachers' Mental Models of the Environment* funded by the National Research Foundation of Korea.



My recent publications include *Validation of the environmental belief and attitude scale for young children (Korean Journal of Early Childhood Education, 2012)*; *The effects of environmental education focusing on interpretative movement activities on emotional intelligence and environment friendly attitude (Korean Journal of Child Care and Education, 2011)*; *An analysis on the young children's pro environmental attitudes, environmental preservation knowledge, and pro-environmental behaviors (Journal of Early Childhood Education Research and Review, 2009)*.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “Human-nature relationship should be treated as a moral issue conditioned or restrained by ethics.” (Roderick Frazier Nash)

MARY RIVKIN, CONSULTING EDITOR

Mary Rivkin, PhD, is associate professor of early childhood education at UMBC (University of Maryland, Baltimore County). She authored *The Great Outdoors: Restoring Children's Right to Play Outside*, for NAEYC, now under revision, and *Science Experiences for the Early Childhood Years*, currently in its 10th edition, and translated into several languages. A new publication is "Schools Going Green: Benefits for Children and Nature" (2012). She was a consulting editor on NAAEE's *Guidelines for Excellence in Early Childhood Education*. Previously she worked for the National Science Foundation, and taught elementary school and nursery school.



She is very concerned about the loss of habitat for our species, particularly for the young, in that many of them in developed countries lack direct experience with nature. Now that research has confirmed what many have known all along, that nature is good for us, we need to work harder to conserve wild nearby nature places for our children.

Mary and her husband Steve have six grandchildren whose outdoor play is of interest and concern.

Thought Provoking Quotation:**PATTI BAILIE, CONSULTING EDITOR**

I have worked in the field of early childhood environmental education for the past 20 years at three different nature centers; as the founding director of the Schlitz Audubon Nature Preschool in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; as co-director of the Early Childhood Outdoors (ECO) Institute at Fontenelle Nature Association in Omaha, Nebraska; and as the Early Childhood Environmental Educator at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes in Cleveland, Ohio.

My research interests focus on nature center preschools (licensed preschools operated by nature centers) and how they integrate early childhood education and environmental education in teaching young children. I recently completed my Ph.D. in Educational Studies (with a focus on early childhood education and science education) from the University of

Nebraska – Lincoln. Working at a nature preschool led me to better understand how nature experiences influence brain development resulting in the production of the Naturally Developing Young Brains packet (in collaboration with Braininsights). As Education Director of The Biosophical Institute, a foundation for peace, I've been involved with integrating peace, nature and spirituality for young children, resulting in a teacher workshop called Deep Teaching – Growing Peace (developed with Ruth Wilson).

I also serve as a trustee of the National Peace Academy and board member of Green Hearts Institute

for Nature in Childhood. As an educational consultant I've worked with various organizations (including National Audubon Society, Sesame Street, and the Children's Ecological Organization in Azerbaijan) to find ways to connect young children to nature and have presented on this subject at regional, national, and international conferences.

Thought Provoking Quotation: "This is what I want for children: a sensual, emotional, and conscious connection to place; the sure, sweet knowledge of earth, air, sky." (Ann Pelo)

RUTH WILSON, CONSULTING EDITOR

I am professor emerita from Bowling Green State University in Ohio with appointments in both special education and environmental education. Since my retirement, I've been working as a consultant and curriculum writer focusing on connecting young children with nature. My recent publications include *Nature and Young Children*, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2012), "Becoming Whole: Developing an Ecological Identity" (*Exchange*, 2011), and "The Spiritual Life of Children" (*Exchange*, 2010). My research in the early



1990's focused on integrating early childhood education and environmental education. During this time, I also developed a framework for using the ecological autobiography as a tool for understanding and enhancing one's connections with the natural world. My current research interests include integrating peace, nature, and spirituality in early childhood education programs.

Thought Provoking Quotation: "Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings while the dawn is still dark." (Rabindranath Tagore)

SUE ELLIOTT, CONSULTING EDITOR

Originally I qualified as a kindergarten teacher, but was soon drawn to further study in the biological sciences. This created the foundation for my work in the areas of early childhood education for sustainability, science education and natural outdoor playspaces. Over thirty years I have worked in various capacities in the early childhood field as a practitioner, lecturer, consultant, trainer and author. In particular, I established the first professional interest group



Environmental Education in Early Childhood Vic. Inc. in 1992 and later was commissioned to undertake a review entitled *Patches of green, early childhood environmental education in Australia: Scope, status and direction* (NSW EPA, 2003). I was also a participant in the inaugural Transnational Dialogues for Early Childhood Education for Sustainability and a researcher for an Australian Research Council funded Schools-Community Partnerships for Sustainability study at RMIT University. My recent publications include the edited book *The Outdoor Playspace: Naturally* (Elliott, 2008) and the book chapter *Children and the natural world* (in Davis, 2010). Currently, I am a senior lecturer in early childhood education with the Faculty of Education, Australian Catholic

University, Melbourne Campus and founding convener of the Association for Environmental Education Early Childhood Special Interest Group established in 2003.

My present research interests are education for sustainability and forest preschool approaches. In my doctoral thesis entitled *Sustainable outdoor playspaces in early childhood settings: Investigating perceptions, facilitating change and generating theory* (Elliott, 2012) I investigated how early childhood communities may engage in transformative processes through action research. Also, forest preschool programs are now emerging in Australia and in 2012 I was commissioned by Westgarth Kindergarten to co-author an evaluative report of a pilot Bush Kinder program.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “for authentic human being the attitude of sustainability is not a bolt on option but a necessity” (Michael Bonnett)



VICKI BOHLING PHILIPPI, CONSULTING EDITOR

I have been a Licensed Parent Educator with Minnesota’s Early Childhood Family Education program for the past 16 years, providing education and support for parents in school-based classes, parents of children with special needs, Head Start parents, teen parents and English language learners. Prior to entering the early childhood field, I earned my M.Ed. in postsecondary administration from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and went on to serve as Director of Leadership Development

and Assistant Dean of Students at Doane College in Crete, Nebraska. In 2003 I became affiliated with the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation, and I am currently serving as trainer, teacher co-researcher, and research analyst for the organization’s Nature Explore program.

My research interests have been devoted to the qualitative study of young children’s skill development within an outdoor classroom setting, with a particular focus on the role parents play in supporting this learning. Manifestations of this study include two recent publications for the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation: *This Never Would Have Happened Indoors: Supporting Preschool-Age Children’s Learning in a Nature Explore Classroom in Minnesota* and *Supporting Parent Engagement in Children’s Learning Outdoors: A Single Case Study*.

Thought Provoking Quotation: “The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” (Marcel Proust)

VICKI D STAYTON, CONSULTING EDITOR

Vicki is a Professor in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) in the School of Teacher Education at Western Kentucky University (WKU) in Bowling Green, Kentucky. She teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses in the blended Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education programs.

Vicki has been the recipient of numerous state and federal grants specific to preservice education and professional development. She has been active in both state and national initiatives having served as a Past-President of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), as chair of DEC's Personnel Preparation Committee, and co-chair of the personnel preparation strand for DEC's recommended practices. She has served on CEC, NAEYC, and state committees specific to personnel standards and accreditation and is now DEC's representative to CEC's Knowledge and Skills Committee. Her involvement in Environmental Education began in 1978 when she coordinated a three year federally funded project, Environmental

Approaches to Special Education, which was designed to facilitate the inclusion of young children with disabilities into "regular" classrooms through Environmental Education. Since that time, her ongoing focus on Environmental Education has included publications; pre-conference workshops; conference presentations; workshops for families, preschool and primary teachers; and the design and implementation of university coursework. She conducts research and has published articles and book chapters specific to issues in ECE and ECSE personnel preparation. Most recently, her research has addressed the extent to which preschool and primary teachers trained in Environmental Education curricula and methods implement these curricula and strategies with children and families.



Thought Provoking Quotation: "This we know. All things are connected." (Chief Seattle)

YASH BHAGWANJI, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

I am an Associate Professor and Coordinator of Early Childhood Programs at Florida Atlantic University. After receiving my Ph.D. in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and prior to FAU, I coordinated the Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education Programs, served as the Co-Director of the Family Support Center, and was the recipient of several national and state-funded grants to conduct research and improve access to quality early care and education while at the University of Louisville in Kentucky.



Based on NAAEE's Guidelines for Excellence: Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs, I had developed the *Early Childhood Environmental Education Rating Scale: A Formative Evaluation Tool to Help Programs Improve Nature Education for Young Children* (NAAEE, 2011). Among my other activities most related to environmental education are professional presentations advocating nature-based curriculum, encouraging green or sustainable practices, and promoting healthy environmental and living conditions for children in early childhood programs. At the university level, the development of undergraduate and graduate courses focusing on topics related to early childhood environmental education has been an important focus.

My research interests focus on the complex relationships among children, families, communities, and policies that impact the well-being of all. Environmental education and places of nature have significant roles to play in enhancing quality of life. I believe quantitative and qualitative designs of study can both contribute in promoting our understanding, and mixed methods can be especially beneficial in providing greater contextualization and interpretation.

Thought Provoking Quotation: "How paramount the future is to the present when one is surrounded by children" (Charles Darwin)

Also serving as IJEECE Consulting Editors are Kristi Cooper, Courtney Crim, and Carolyn Edwards. Their autobiographies will be provided in a future issue.