

Beginnings & Beyond

F O U R T H E D I T I O N



Ann Miles Gordon

Kathryn Williams-Browne

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Dedication

For my mother, Evelyn Kearney Lacock, Eileen Allen, and Jay Thorp.
May I always reflect your influence with grace and affection.—*AMG*

This one's for Marty.—*KWB*

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Preface

As classroom teachers we have often used Pat Hutchin's wordless book *Changes! Changes!* (MacMillan, 1971). While revising the fourth edition of *Beginnings and Beyond: Foundations in Early Childhood Education*, we were reminded of that delightful book and felt a kinship with its message. The two characters in the story are called upon to rearrange their original building, which was made of blocks, several times over. They form a new version when circumstances dictate that it is time for a change. The original purpose remains the same, as does the substance; only the structure is altered. So it is with this edition of *Beginnings and Beyond*.

What changes and what stays the same are decided by people and circumstances. As early childhood educators, active in the field and involved in teaching, we have our own ideas of what we want to keep and what we want to change. So do the people who have to use the book previously as well as those who have not yet adopted *Beginnings and Beyond* for their classes. Changes, therefore, come from what we hear and learn is current and useful for teaching about young children.

New users as well as old friends will appreciate that we maintain our original purpose: "to promote the competence and effectiveness of new teachers through a presentation of basic knowledge, skills, attitudes, and philosophies . . . based on the premise that new teachers must have opportunities to learn fundamental skills as they begin their teaching experience." That remains our primary commitment.

Changes have occurred with each of the Guest Editorials and Focus Boxes. New contributors bring diverse opinions and perspective to the students' learning, and we hope these voices from other early childhood educators provoke discussion and reflection.

Why change? If a book is serving a useful purpose, why do we alter it? As authors, we are aware that the moment the book is in print, there is something else to add, new data to include, or an issue that has suddenly become national news. Each edition provides us with the opportunity to make necessary updates, but more than that, reflects the vitality, life, and energy of the field of early childhood education.

Why some changes and not others? Each change is weighed carefully. We walk that fine line between raising issues that a beginning teacher should be familiar with and an in-depth discourse on a given subject. That is a tension that will always be present in a text that serves the purposes of *Beginnings and Beyond*. Some of the changes obviously reflect our own biases as teacher educators.

Why not add more curriculum to all the chapters? Why not take out all the curriculum? Since *Beginnings and Beyond* is used in a variety of introductory courses, it is designed to meet the requirements for the majority of those classes. Some instructors want and need more on curriculum areas; others require less since a separate curriculum course is available for their students. Again, we strike a middle ground. As teachers, it is natural for us to use curriculum examples and activities to

demonstrate a point about how children learn and how teachers teach. We are heartened by the creative use many instructors make of this book in the wide variety of courses for which it is used.

Chapters 1 and 15 serve as bookends for the text, reflecting the continuum from past to future. We believe that you should begin to teach about early childhood by placing it in its historical context so that students will have a perspective about the field of education and the depth of history underlying the early childhood movement. The last chapter raises today's critical issues, the ones students will read about in today's newspapers, and repeats the same themes of early childhood cited in the first chapter.

Like the building blocks in *Changes! Changes!*, a revision allows us to expand and modify *Beginnings and Beyond* to meet the challenges of educating today's student for the twenty-first century. It is a world that requires changes: changing your opinion, changing your mind, changing attitudes, and perhaps even changing the course you are now on. We hope the changes we have made and the issues we have raised will help you transform tomorrow's teachers into competent and caring early childhood professionals.

NEW FEATURES OF THE FOURTH EDITION

As we prepare to enter a new millennium, we are aware of a changing and shifting world and its influence on our life in the United States. Some of the changes in this revision of *Beginnings and Beyond* reflect this time of flux in ways which are important to early childhood educators. A thorough assessment of each chapter has also resulted in the addition of several pedagogical devices to make

the material more accessible to the student. The most significant changes and additions to this edition are:

- A feature entitled "Our Diverse World" will highlight the chapter content throughout the text which relates to cultural diversity, antibias curriculum, and children with special needs. A footnote at the bottom of the page provides additional information that will enrich the student's understanding of the diversity of the children they will teach. Demographics and statistics found in many parts of the text, but particularly in Chapter 15, dramatize the need to train teachers who are culturally sensitive to children and their families whose beliefs and values may differ from their own. By highlighting this material, we enhance the multicultural focus begun in previous editions and emphasize the need to help students learn that the children they teach will have to interact in new and different ways with others in a world grown small. Additional material on issues of equity and diversity are found throughout the book.
- The addition, particularly in Chapter 4, of the impact of the Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, as a pioneer in seeing children in a larger social and cultural context than other theorists is an important new feature. Students will learn how his work influences our understanding of children's language, play, and social creative development and how Vygotsky's theory helps us look at the cultural diversity issues of such great importance today.
- Another challenge to our preconceived notion of how children learn are the early childhood programs in Reggio Emilia, Italy. We include more information on this world-renowned approach in the chapters dealing with curriculum planning, the role of the teacher and the way in which children learn. Students will have a greater understanding of the influence of the Reggio Emilia schools on the programs and philosophy of early childhood education in the 1990s.
- The new Focus Box contributors add strength to the chapters by speaking more directly to

issues related to the chapter content. Topics bring additional information, such as working with children with AIDS, portfolio assessment, children and technology, and multicultural perceptions. There is now a Focus Box in every chapter.

- The look of a book is important. The graphics must catch the student's interest, expand their knowledge, and bring the world of early childhood into the readers' experience. The addition of full-color photographs is a great enhancement to this edition.
- The last chapter, "Issues and Trends in Early Childhood Education," has been modified to reflect social and political realities of the day, with particular emphasis on demographics and changing populations.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ann Gordon has been in the field of early childhood for more than 30 years as a teacher of young children, a teacher of parents, and a teacher of college students. She has taught in laboratory schools, church-related centers, and private and public preschool and kindergarten programs. While at Stanford, Ann was at the Bing Nursery School for 11 years and a Lecturer in the Psychology Department. For ten years she also served as an adjunct faculty member in four different colleges, teaching the full gamut of early childhood courses. Today, Ann is the executive director of the National Association of Episcopal Schools, where her commitment and interest in education stretches the full age range from infancy through high school. More than 1,100 early

childhood programs are a part of her network. Ann is the mother of two grown children.

Kathryn Williams Browne, most recently a lecturer in the Early Childhood Education Department of Canada College, has been a teacher of young children for 20 years and a teacher of college students and parents for 15 years. Her work with children includes nursery school, parent co-operatives, full-day child care, pre-kindergarten and bilingual preschools, and kindergarten and first grade. Kate's background in child development research led her to choose early childhood education, for to truly understand child development one needs to *be* with children. While a Head Teacher at Bing Nursery School and Lecturer with Stanford University, Kate developed a professional relationship with Ann, which blossomed into work in teacher- and parent-education. Additionally *Beginnings and Beyond* now has the flavor of a current parent; Kate's two children are in elementary school. The balance of career and family, of work *with* children and *for* children, and of the special challenges of early childhood as a professional field give this edition a unique flavor.

Ann and Kate are co-authors of "Guiding Young Children In a Diverse Society." (Allyn & Bacon, 1996).



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Photographs communicate an immediacy about children and their environments. There are a wide variety of settings and age groups represented from all over the country. For this truly

representative sample, we thank M. Barbee Pleasant of Hampton Va.; Michael Eanes of the American Montessori Society; and Dr. Sergio Spaggiari of Reggio Emilia, Italy.

Reviewers who have participated in this revision are Cleona R. Bazy, Walla Walla College, College Place, Washington and Karen L. Peterson, Ph.D., Washington State University, Vancouver, Washington. We are grateful for their timely and candid evaluations and their constructive suggestions.

Unsolicited reviews, especially from students, are particularly helpful as well as enjoyable. Elaine Lang, of Belleville Area College in Red Bud, Ill., wrote that her students took exception with the order in which the ten essentials of successful teaching were listed (Chapter 5) and, after some lively discussion, suggested changes. We agreed that the students' perceptions and rationale were compelling and have altered the list accordingly. We are grateful to her students for helping us remember that as teachers we are always learners and that from our students we are taught!

We are beholden to Guest Editors James L. Hymes, Jr., Louise Derman-Sparks, Douglas R. Powell, Jim Greenman, Elizabeth Jones, and Jerlean Daniel for sharing their insights and vision and adding new voices to the text. Focus Box contributors Mary Stuart Gile, Monica Bassett, Gretchen Buchenholz, Laura E. Berk, Miriam Silver, Janet Gonzales-Mena, Elizabeth Crary, Yvonne Ricketts, Rebecca New, Gayle Mendez, Edgar Klugman, Paula J. Carreiro, Bernadette Caruso-Davis, and Cary A. Buzzelli earn our everlasting thanks for saying yes to an abbreviated deadline and for coming through with contributions that add depth to this edition.

A special word of thanks goes to our good friend and long-time colleague, Karen McLaughlin of Connecticut College, whose research of new material and contributions to *Our Diverse World* has been invaluable. We are particularly grateful for her insightful observations and questions, which have made this book stronger. Our long association with Delmar publishers has now weathered four revisions. We have been particularly appreciative of a team approach for this edition. Johnny Ross merits praise for keeping a cool head, a warm fax, and a ready wit. The Gordon and Browne households continue to be places from which we thankfully draw support and encouragement.

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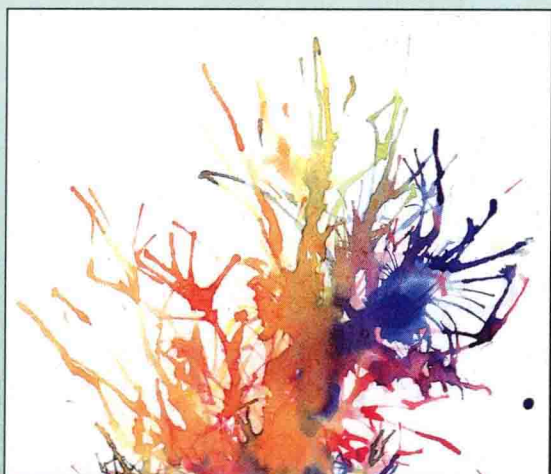
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was nothing there for them. But there was a great need for child care after Kaiser left. In this country there are many other examples where a factory has closed or an industry has been wiped out and the workers are still there and need the care. If a company would give them support in the community it would be good. The one industry in peacetime is hospitals. Another example is flight attendants; some airlines have their own company-sponsored child-care centers.

Q: So what can we take from the War experience?

Dr. Hymes: I think I have learned no end of things, but one has to make generalizations: (1) To me this is the great tragedy, we are held to the notion that you must be trained to be a teacher and that you must be a college graduate who majors in child development. Teachers with that same background and 3 to 4 years of experience get paid the same as new recruits. Today I am troubled by the fact that nobody is paid enough to make this their field. (2) The other thing is that training as such is a giant step forward, but it is not enough to be a head teacher. In many cases a paraprofessional becomes the Head. The original child development associate (CDA) was to bring up the floor, not lower the ceiling.

Q: What is the future for children and teachers?

Dr. Hymes: The only constructive future I can see is that we have public school groups for 3- and 4-year-olds that will operate the necessary hours of the day. So many people work 12 months a year with weekends off. My reason for saying it is I don't know any other ways in which one can guarantee decent salaries and good requirements and so forth. Because of my wife, I have become involved in the progressive education movement. One of my roles is to say, in effect, you've got to

improve the public schools. I know if they take on 4-year-olds and do what they have done with 5-year-olds, it is a real dilemma and no good solution. Except, I think the only kind of solution is that get can get better when there is public support; then you have hope.

Just let me make one other point: one other possible help in the situation and it would have to merge with some of the other things, there is no reason that women or men or workers in general have to work as many hours a week as they do. There is no reason that we can't have a 30- or 24-hour workweek. I don't really see much movement in this area, but I think that the technology of it has to move at some point. If we can move toward a shorter workweek, then maybe it can be related to better teachers and better salaries.

Q: You talk about getting good training. When you are a product of laboratory school training, you are getting the kind of grounding in the field that helps with quality. What do ECE teachers need to know?

Dr. Hymes: I think you need to know what a good school is like. You can learn when you work in a school that is bad; I did. But I think you need a breath; you need a school experience which may not be real, but is ideal. And you also need reality. I think it is so important for young people who are studying to know some of the real obstacles. And the kind of training that makes them feel as if they are really skilled in understanding kids and know what they are trying to do.

Dr. James Hymes, Jr., is a noted leader in the field of early childhood education, former president of N.A.E.Y.C., author of Living History Interviews (Hacienda Press, Carmel, CA) and The Year in Review (NAEYC, 1979-).



QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

What distinguishes early childhood education from other levels of education?

Why is it important to know about the history of early childhood education?

What other fields have influenced the development of the early childhood philosophy? What has been their impact?

Why are the roots of psychology and early childhood education so intertwined?

What have been the basic themes in early education throughout history?

How do current events—political, social, and economic—affect the direction of education?

CHAPTER

1

History of Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD

Early childhood education has a rich and exciting history. The story of its development is the chronicle of people who took bold steps toward improving children's lives. Critical events have had a hand in shaping the history of early childhood education. As the images of the child change through the centuries, so, too, does the education of the young child and the educators themselves. For example, a national campaign such as the 1960s' "War on Poverty" can bring a nation together to support a program such as Head Start. A new model is forged through necessity and innovation, thus changing what we know about children and their care and education. Across the globe and through the centuries, the education of children has evolved.

Why History?

Most early childhood students and many educators know little about the origins of their chosen profession. The names of Rousseau, Froebel, Montessori, and Dewey may not seem to have much significance at this time (although many teachers are familiar with some of their techniques), but knowing something about the roots of this profession is important.

First of all, there is a sense of *support* that comes from knowing that history. Contemporary education has its roots in the past; finding a suitable beginning point for that past helps provide an educator with perspective. New insights blend with ideas from past traditions, as the history of early childhood education is truly a history of re-discovery.

Think about this, then: the "education" of the 21st century actually stems from children's schooling thousands of years ago. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are a part of the philosophical foundation on which this field is built. Even in ancient Greece and Rome, schools were established where literature, the arts, and science were taught.

Knowing that early childhood *philosophy* has deep roots can be an *inspiration* and helps teachers develop *professional expression*. As early childhood educators, we must learn to express our ideas, finding our own voice. Professionalism in educa-

tion "relates to doing things well, at the right time, and for the right reason" (Spodek, 1988). The past as well as the present and future must be considered when developing sound educational programs for young children. The *tenets* expressed by past educators help develop better methods of teaching. Looking at history gives an overview of how various ages looked at children and their learning, based on the religious, political, and economic pressures of the time. Reviewing the professional record demonstrates how the needs of society affect education. Perhaps some of the mistakes of the past can be avoided if history is remembered.

Drawing upon knowledge of the past creates *an awareness and understanding* of changes in education. Into the fabric of early childhood education are woven many threads of influence that are responsible for current philosophies. By understanding and telling the story of the past, we are better equipped to interpret our own history, to have a sense of mission and purpose. Gile's *Focus* article illustrates why "doing history" is a good idea for early childhood educators. And Spodek tells us

When we [become] early childhood educators, each of us accepts as our own, either deliberately or implicitly, the mission that is central to our field: We are committed to enhancing the education, development, and well-being of young children. Our saga helps renew our sense of identity and commitment to our profession (Spodek in Bauch, 1988).

In this chapter, the people, the ideas, and the circumstances that have influenced early childhood are introduced by examining historical forces that have affected educational trends. It is important to note that the historical resources available are dominated by works from Europe and America, and schools of the past were overwhelmingly created for boys and men. However, educational programs that included girls and the role of people of color in the early childhood movement are documented whenever such resources are available.¹ Educational changes of a more recent nature follow. The impact of other disciplines, such as medicine and psychology, and the recurrent themes of early childhood education are also explored.



Defining the Terms

The term early **childhood education** refers to group settings deliberately intended to effect developmental changes in children from birth to the age of entering first grade. More recent definitions include the elementary years as well. For our purposes, we shall define early childhood as from infancy through third grade. In terms of a child's life, that is roughly from birth to eight years of age. In school terms, it includes group settings for infants through the primary years of elementary school, grades one through three. In programmatic terms, the education of young children includes formal and informal group settings regardless of their initial purpose. For instance, after-school programs for kindergarten and first-graders are included, as are their formal academic sessions.

Early childhood educators thus build bridges between a child's two worlds, school (or group experience) and home. It is during these years that the foundation for future learning is set; these are the building block years, during which a child learns to walk, talk, establish an identity, print, and count. In later years, that same child builds on these skills to be able to climb mountains, speak a foreign language, learn to express and negotiate, learn cursive writing, and understand multiplication.

INFLUENCES FROM ABROAD

When did early childhood education first begin? *A Timeline for Early Childhood Education* can be found in Appendix A. It is impossible to pinpoint the origins of humankind, since there are few records from millions of years ago. Some preparation for adult life was done informally, mostly through imitation. As language developed, communication took place. Children learned dances, rituals, and ceremonies, and both boys and girls were taught skills or their respective roles in the tribe. Ancient historical documents seem to indicate that child-rearing practices were somewhat crude; De Mause (1974) even suggests that

the further one goes back in history, the more likely the case of abandonment and brutality.

In Ancient Times

The definition of childhood has varied greatly throughout history. For example, in ancient times children were considered adults by age seven. A society's definition of childhood influences how it educates its children.

Many of our own beliefs are founded on those developed in Greece and Rome. Greek education—and virtually all classical European schooling—was provided for the boys of wealthy families, while girls and working-class children received training for domestic work or a trade.² Education began by age 6 or 7, although Plato and Aristotle both spoke of the need to educate the younger child. Some ancient Romans felt that education should begin at home as soon as a child began to talk, and highlighted the use of rewards and ineffectiveness of corporal punishment. (Hewes & Hartman, 1974).

Through medieval times (approximately the fifth through the thirteenth centuries), childhood hardly lasted beyond infancy. This period was largely an era of ignorance. Faced with the fall of the Roman Empire and the beginning of lawlessness and anarchy, people left villages and towns for the safety of a local baron or king, and schools ceased to exist. Few members of the ruling class could read or write their names, and the monastery schools were for priests and religious instruction only. The education of children was fairly simple before the fifteenth century; there was no educational system, and the way of life was uncomplicated as well. The church control of school in the medieval period meant that education projected a view of children as basically evil in their natural state. The value of education was in preparation for an afterlife. Children learned mostly through their parents or by apprenticeship outside the family. The child was expected and encouraged to move into adulthood as fast as possible.

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¹Early childhood professionals need to keep in mind the heavy influence of Western European thought in the philosophy that dictates our teaching practice; especially when working with children from families of non-Western European cultures.

²Keep in mind of how much of the research and history in our field has a race, class, and gender bias (i.e. the tendency to be based on the experiences of and research on White, middle-upper class males).