



Multiculturalism and Education in the Early Years


Dr Mabel Encinas

London Metropolitan University

Children are not born in a bubble



Centre on the Developing Child (2010)



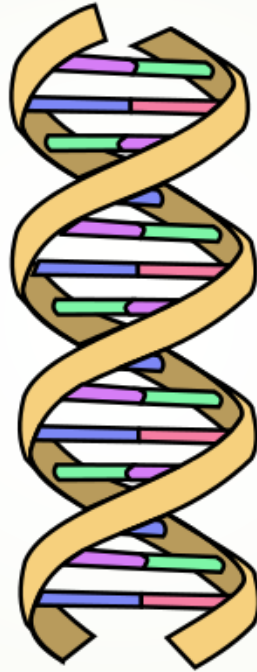
Development is not only
unfolding from what is already
there...



Development is an interactive
process with the environment

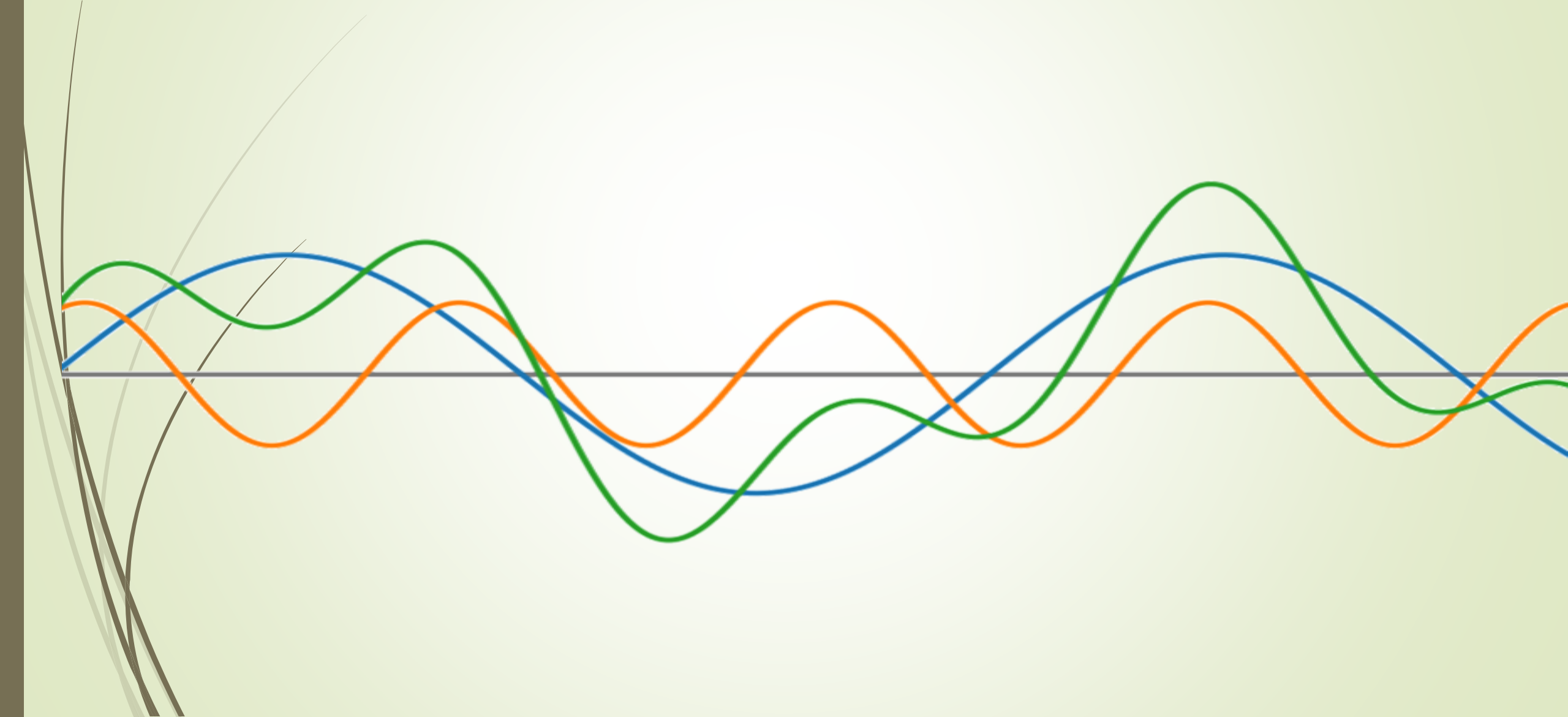
Child Development

We tended to think that the information in the genes was 'set in stone'.



Genes are open to 'experience'

Multiculturalism



Intersectionality

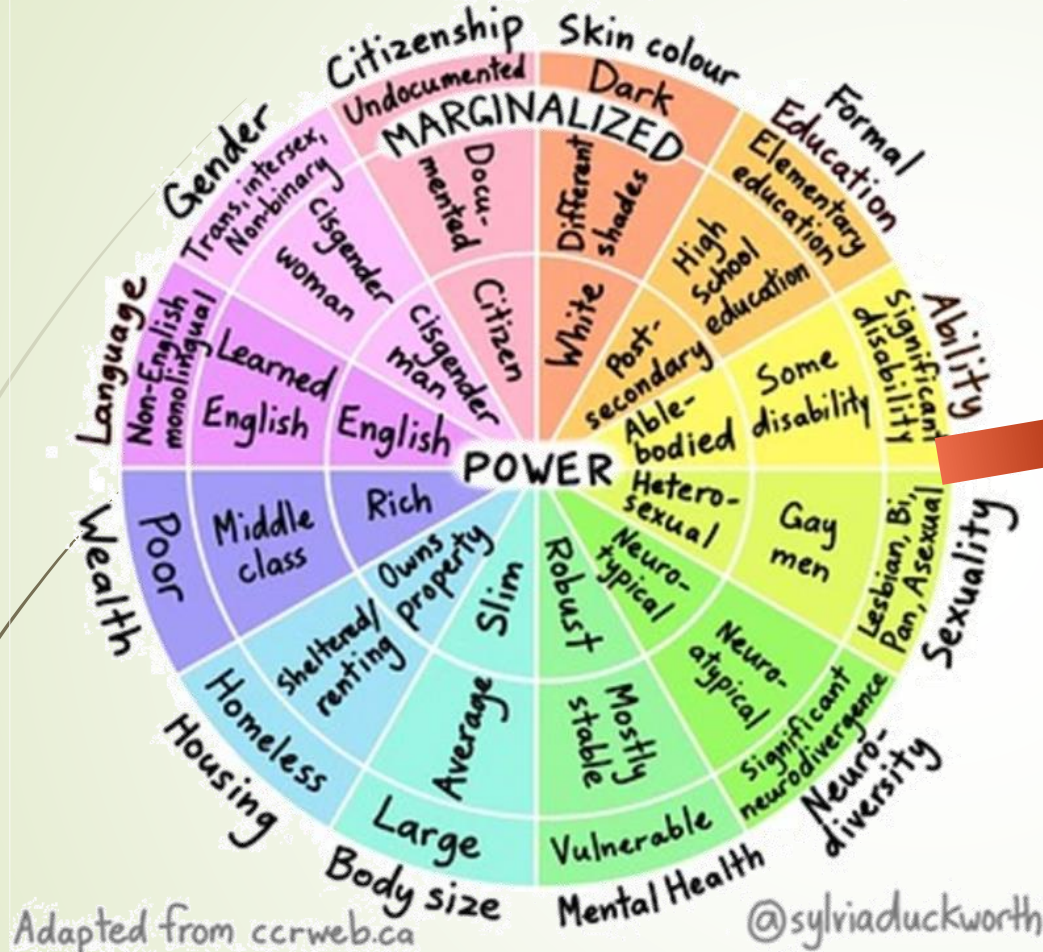




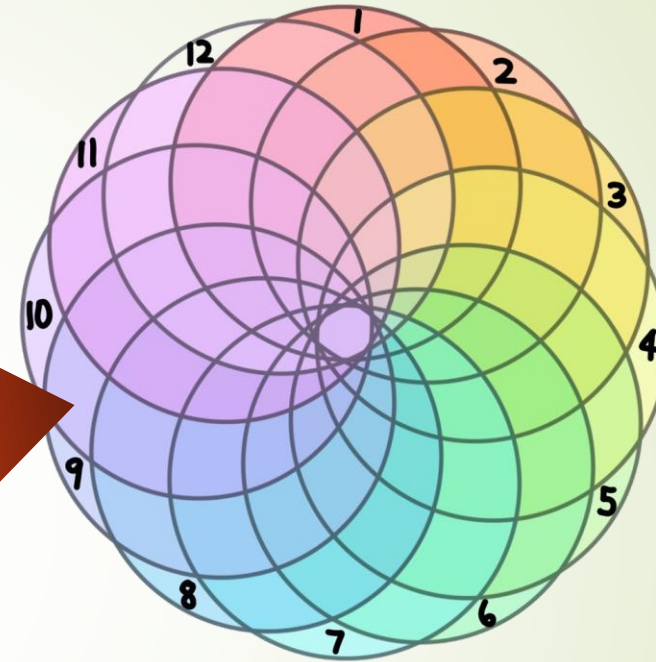
Just another buzzword?

- Way of 'conceptualising power relationships beyond the single axis' (Lapalme, Haines-Saah and Frohlich, 2020, p.495)
- Exploring mechanisms which contribute to (re)production
- Advocacy tool – redressing social inequalities
- Supports in-depth understanding of structural forces
- 'Dual emphasis on theory and praxis' - 'a framework for action on gender oppression that simultaneously accounts for racism, homophobia, ableism, and classism.' (ibid, p. 495)
- Using 'intersectionality to inform critical explorations of policies as a concrete entry point for analysing both structural forces and individual experiences of social inequalities' (p.498)

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE



INTERSECTIONALITY



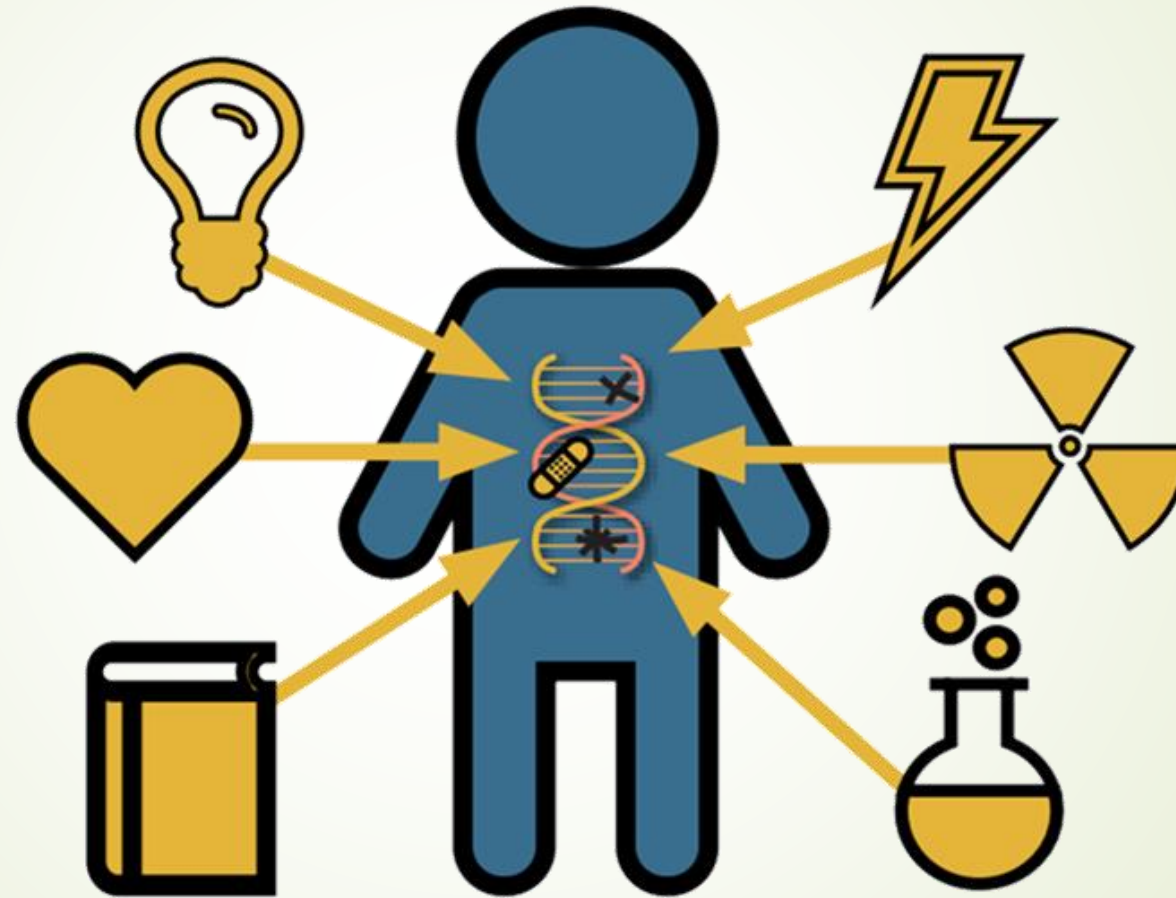
- 1 Race
- 2 Ethnicity
- 3 Gender identity
- 4 Class
- 5 Language
- 6 Religion
- 7 Ability
- 8 Sexuality
- 9 Mental health
- 10 Age
- 11 Education
- 12 Body size
- (...and many more...)

Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it locks and intersects. It is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and privilege.

- Kimberlé Crenshaw -

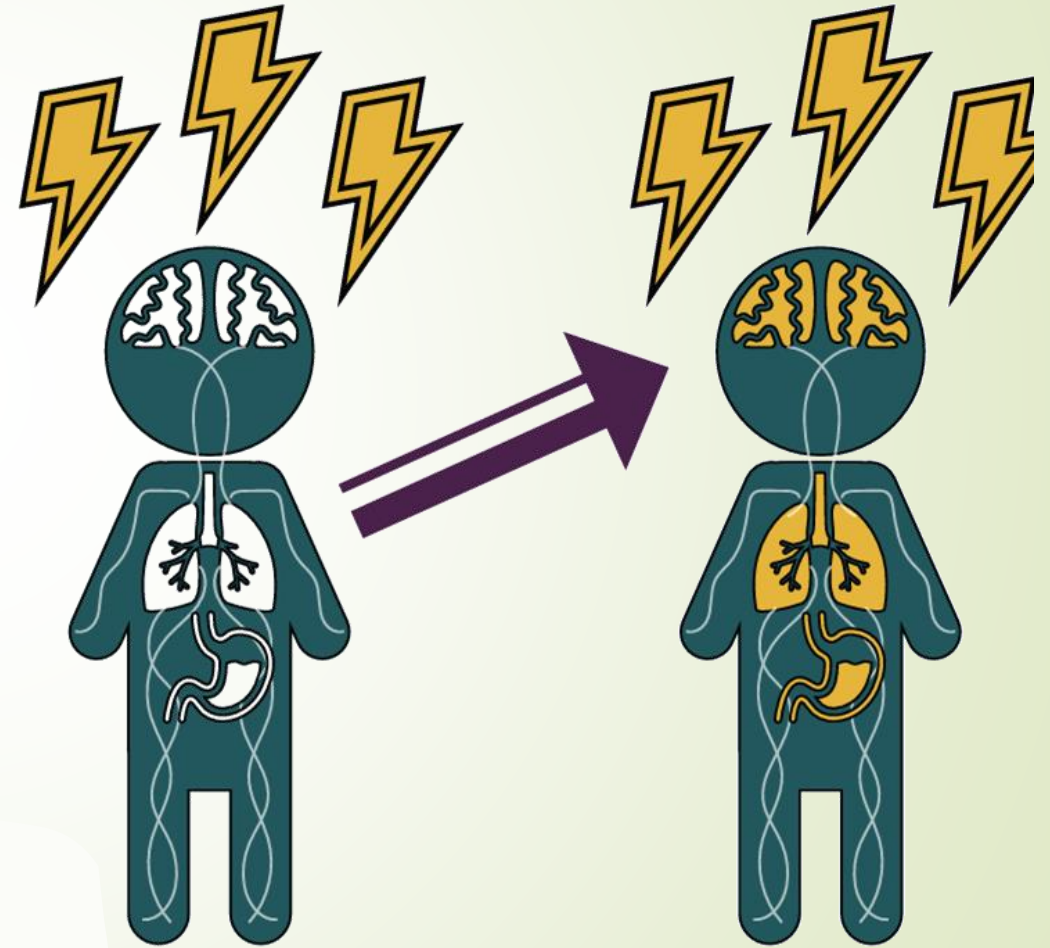
Intersectionality: contemporary critical pedagogy integrates these strands, recognising the interconnected nature of discrimination/oppression

Negative experiences



Racism

A growing body of evidence connect the chronic wear and tear of the biological body to racism





Inequality

Inequality affects

- Health
- Learning and development

Children in poverty





Fiscal Studies:
The short- and medium-term impacts of Sure Start on educational outcomes

300,000 more UK children
fell into absolute poverty
(Guardian, 21 March 2024)

Internal Migrant Farm-Worker Children

Indigenous education:

Bilingual Intercultural

Articulate **local knowledge and values** (ethnic or peasants) with the **conventional school contents** that represent universal culture and whose mastery is mandatory to access to

- higher levels of training,
- ascend the social ladder,
- exercise citizenship and participating in the surrounding society.



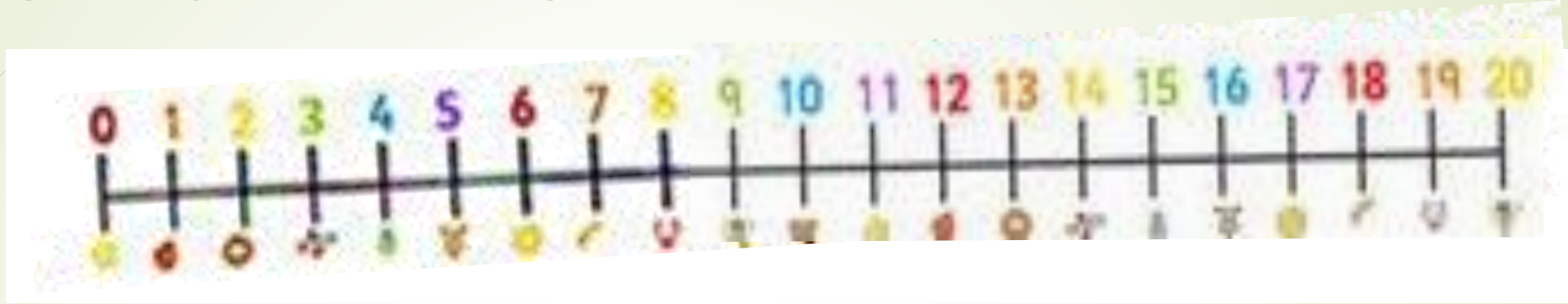
Indigenous Education Internal Migrant Farm- Worker Children

Insofar that local knowledge and values are located within configurations sociocultural characteristics:

- low development of productive forces and
- the validity of social ties of reciprocity (which prevails even in ethnic or migrant peasant populations located in urban environments)
- *Sui generis* people



Our Shared Common Lands



A board-game 4 and 5 year old children, played with their parents Support

- Mathematical development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Parent-child relationship

Funds of Knowledge



Funds of Knowledge

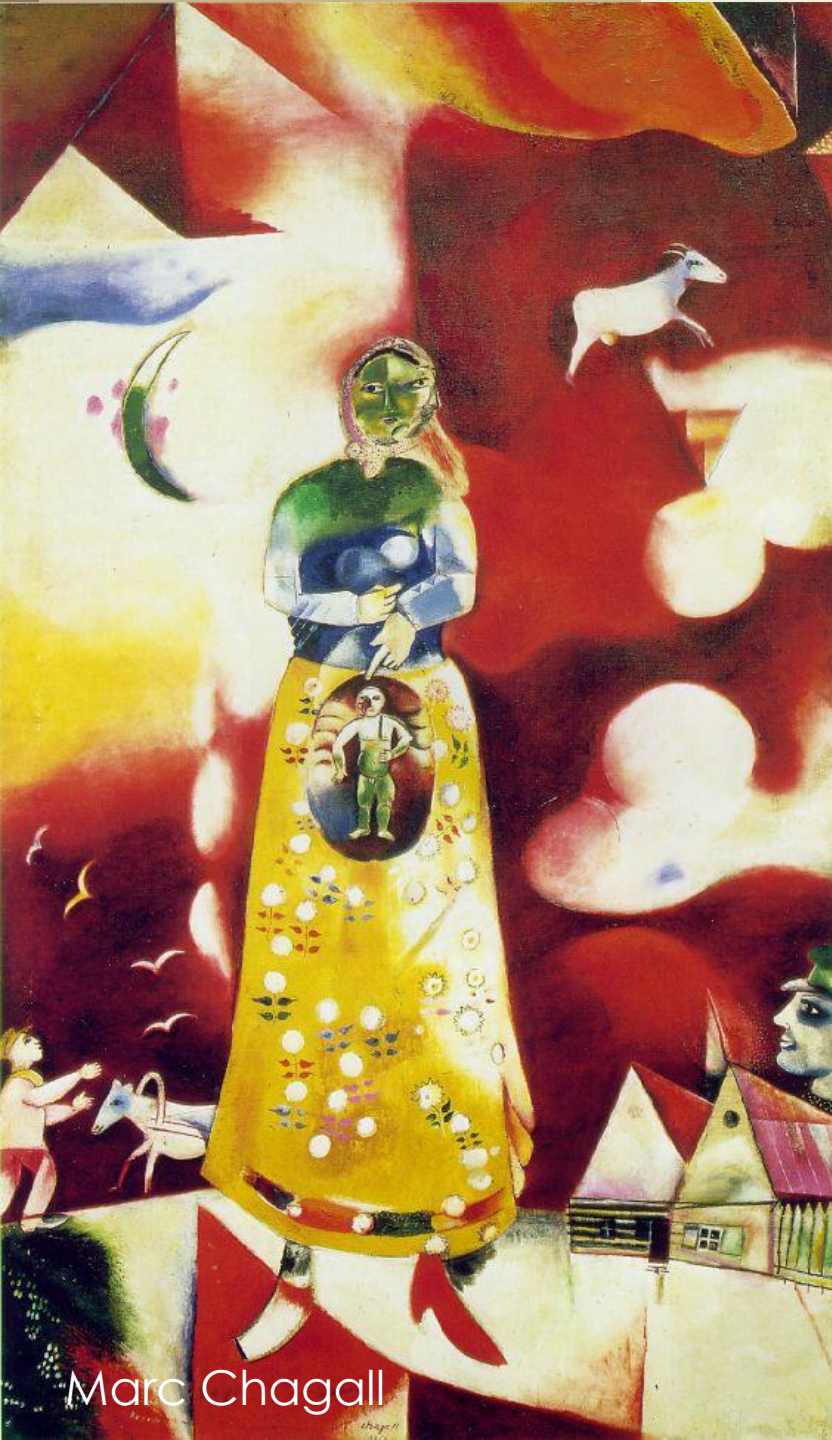
All cultures actively hold assets that comprise **beliefs and values, practices, and knowledge and skills, that emerge and are shared by experiences at home and in the community** (Hogg, 2011)



Funds of Knowledge

- Parent-child relationship
- Patterns of communication
- 'Familismo' – reciprocity





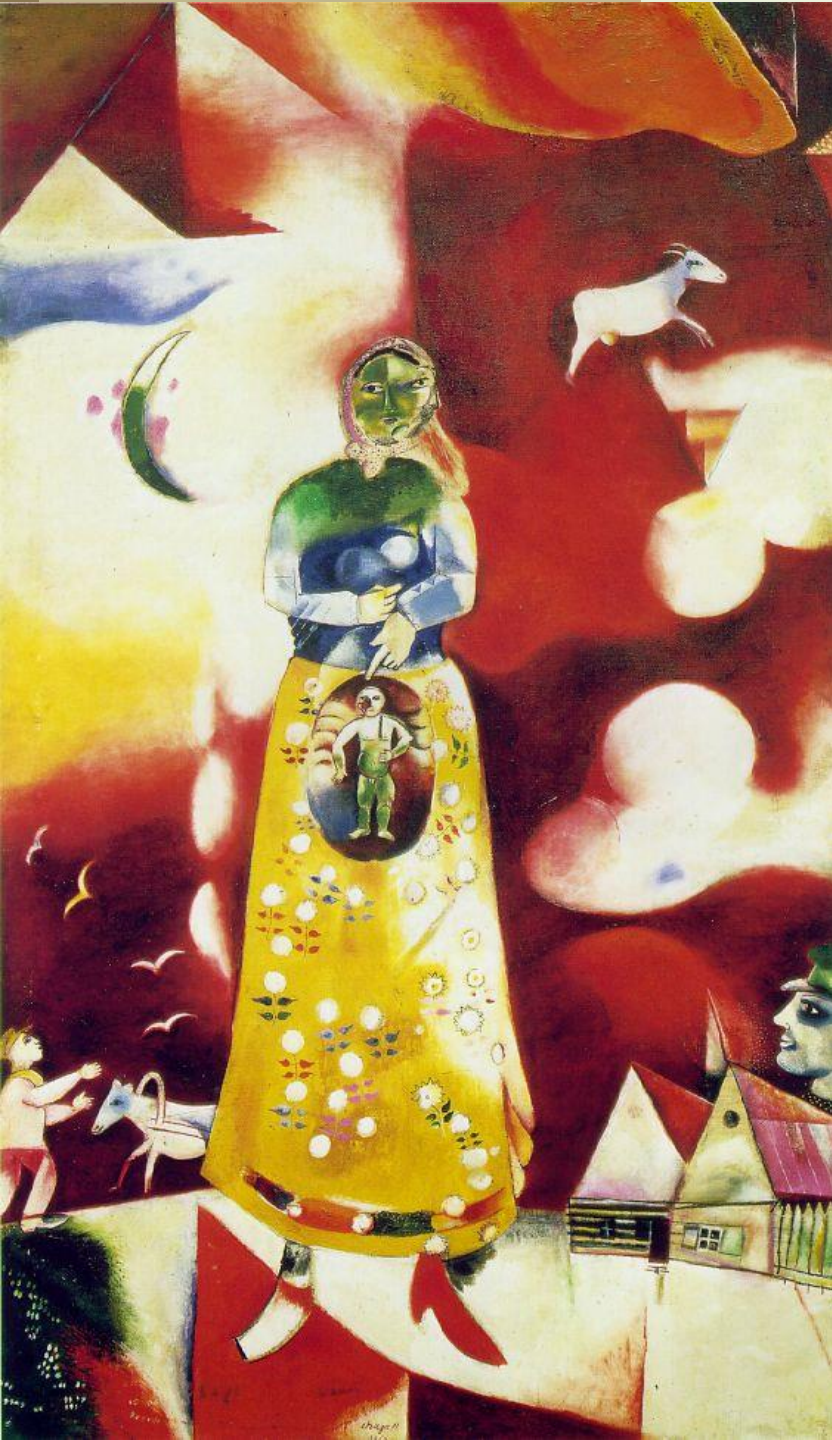
Marc Chagall

Prolepsis

Projection that parents, families and communities offer to a child's imagined future.

This projection guides education and more generally childrearing.

It starts even before birth, informed by social assumptions of gender, race and ethnicity, dis/ability, class, and other distinctions that emerge from and recreate inequalities.



Prolepsis with an intersectional approach

Understanding prolepsis with an intersectional approach can be a powerful tool for researchers, policy makers and practitioners:

- To understand the nuances of the context in which children learn and develop
- To identify and question our blind spots due to privilege, and
- To create material transformations, including new practices, in the environments in which we work with children.

Living Under One Sun (LUOS)

Partnership:

Knowledge exchange

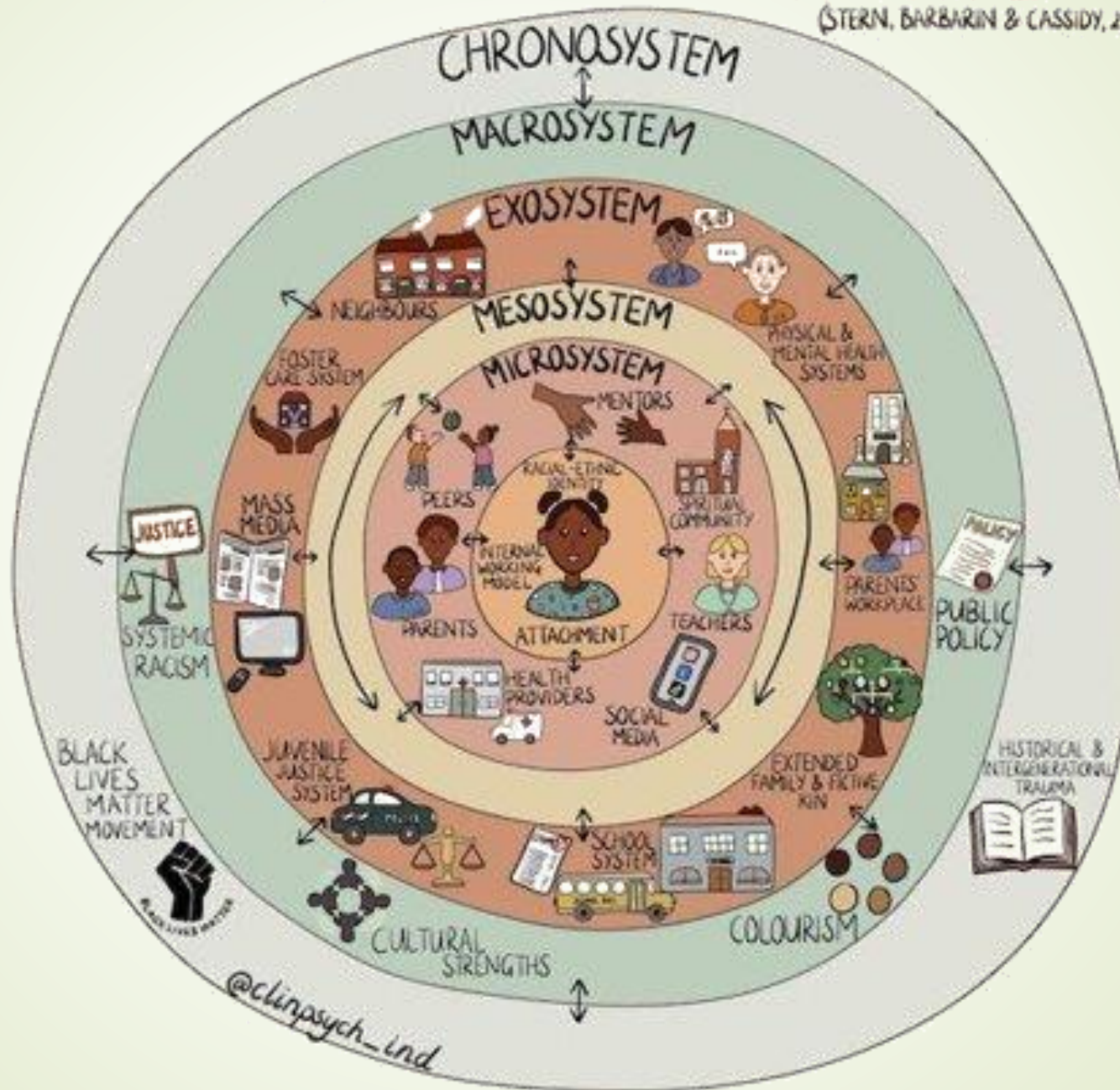
“Our strength lies in being community-led and responsive. In surviving we have shown much resilience as we are both grass root and well networked and considered a community anchor by partners like London Met, and the Local Authority.”



BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MODEL (1974)

ADAPTED TO FOCUS ON BLACK YOUTH DEVELOPMENT & ATTACHMENT PROCESSES IN CONTEXT

(STERN, BARBARIN & CASSIDY, 2021)



Intersectionality



Based on image by Nicole Walsh, Social Justice Advocate

Musiko Musika

In 2023-2024, with funding from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), *Sing & Learn: Train and Lead* programme was delivered in 12 early years settings, with children aged 2-4 years , in Ipswich and Peterborough.

The focus was on fidelity of delivery by early years practitioners and acceptability





Sing & Learn: Train and Lead

- Songs
- A training programme for nursery practitioners to implement the Sing Songo programme, including songs written by Musiko Musika (delivered by the trainers).
- Programme and training materials: digital and printed content, and the Sing Songo app (versions for practitioners and for families to use at home)
- Modelling and observation visits to support development and strengthen practitioners' delivery
- Personalised support and guidance for the trainers
- Support for practitioners, and the creation of a support network for practitioners.

Sing & Learn: Train and Lead

- A universal approach for all children to participate in adult-led group sessions,
- with targeted small groups for children who would benefit from additional support.
- The programme also comprises linguistic activities, such as role play, as well as family music sessions.



Methods of data collection

- Observations
- Pre/post surveys (practitioners and SLT)
- Progress logs
- Focus group with practitioners







Results



- The results of this iteration show that practitioners found the training **valuable, informative and fun**, and they felt **comfortable** during the music sessions.
- 100% of Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) stated they would **recommend the programme** to other settings, and they highlighted the fact **that both children and staff enjoyed the songs** and thought **the impact on children's confidence and C&L development was visible**.
- SLT also noticed the **impact on the practitioners' confidence**. All the settings plan to continue with the programme.



Some of the concepts that I have harvested when thinking about multiculturalism and education

- Inequality
 - Intersectionality
 - Funds of Knowledge
 - Partnership
 - Knowledge Exchange
- 



© Leeds Postcards