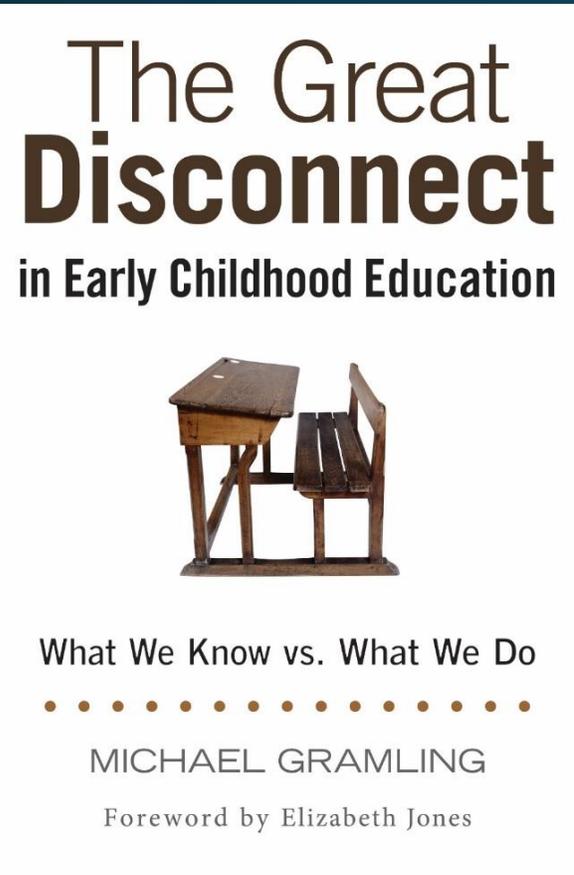


Poverty Perpetuated: Early Childhood Education in America

Michael Gramling

michael.gramling@wku.edu



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Inexcusable Inequality

- Poor Nutrition
- Lack of Medical Care
- Lack of Dental Care
- Developmental Disabilities
- Chaos and Trauma (Toxic Stress)
 - Language Deprivation

Head Start is Born...

Food Security

Medical Home

Dental Home

- Family Services
- Disability Services
- Early Childhood Education

- It was the right thing to do.

And Pre-K soon follows

- Eligibility initially based on income and or disability.
- Schools hire social workers, serve breakfast, offer after school care and free and reduced lunch.
 - Learning Standards
 - Decoding Print
 - Kindergarten Readiness

And Head Start Soon Follows

- Learning Standards
- Decoding Print
- Kindergarten Readiness

- Up to 40% of age eligible children are now enrolled in some sort of school readiness program.
- But according to Robert Pianta, in a study of 700 programs across 11 states ...
- only about 15 % of these programs provide high quality interactions.
- Who attends the programs that are not high quality, and what are the consequences?

Early Childhood Education...

- Swiss Psychologist Jean Piaget demonstrated early in the 20th century that young children think differently, learn differently and process information differently than do school age children and adults.
- It was a fair assumption, therefore, that the brain works very differently during the early years than it does in later life.
- Those assumptions have been completely validated by modern research.

Early Childhood Education

- But if the brain operates very differently in early childhood,
- Shouldn't Early Childhood Education look very different?
 - Isn't that why we call it *Early* Childhood education?

Early Childhood Education

- There was a time when it was in fact quite different.
 - Kindergarten was once the “Child’s Garden.”
 - Now it is the Child’s Job.

The Child's Job

- Ask any group of teachers, for example, how they “individualize.”
 - They will respond in terms of learning standards or “school readiness goals.”

The Child's Job

- Can the child name alphabet letters?
- Does the child know basic prepositions like on, under, inside and outside?
- Can the child follow directions, attend to tasks, follow the daily routine and participate in groups?
 - Can the child stand on one foot to the count of ten?

Key Strategies: Achieving School Readiness Goals

Teach to the test.

Replicate Kindergarten

And where does this approach to
education come from?

The Output Model (The Student Will...)

- Popularized in the 1950s and 60s by Educator
Ralph Tyler
the “Father of Performance Objectives”



Who believed that education was a process of ...

- Formal Assessment
- Identification of Incremental, Discrete “Objectives”
- Lesson Planning Designed to “Work” on Objectives
 - Identification of the Next Incremental Objective

- This is a great way to teach chemistry or algebra or the rules of grammar.
- It has nothing to do with how children's brains work in early childhood.

Early Childhood Education

- Perhaps Mr. Tyler was right about education.
 - Everyone seems to think so.
- But he is dead wrong about Early Childhood Education.

The Brain in Early Childhood

- All of us are born with the same potential. Human babies across cultures and “race” and family income have the same number of brain cells at birth.
- But even in the womb and for five or so years afterwards, it begins an extraordinary process of “wiring” itself. Neurons connect, pathways are made, and abilities are acquired.

The Brain in Early Childhood

- Healthy brain development depends on adequate nutrition, rich sensory input, (including human touch), a secure emotional environment, protection from toxins like lead, (and toxic stress) and...
 - Language rich experiences.
- There is a brief window of opportunity in early childhood for this “wiring” to occur. Children who suffer deprivation during these early years may never fully recover.

Here is the problem.

- Low income children in America suffer language deprivation.

- “On average, children growing up in low- income families have dramatically less rich experience with language in their homes than do middle-class children.
- They hear far fewer words and are engaged in fewer extended conversations.

By 36 months of age, substantial socioeconomic disparities already exist in vocabulary knowledge.”

- (NAEYC Position Statement DAP)

- It is time for early childhood educators everywhere in every program – pre-K and Head Start - to get out of the business of school readiness and early literacy.
- It is time to get back into the business of brain development.

Sean Reardon Stanford University

- “Consider two children, one from a family with income of \$165,000 and one from a family with income of \$15,000.”
- “In the 1980s, on an 800-point test scale, the average difference in test scores between two such children would have been about 90 points.”
- “Today it is 125 points.”
 - No Rich Child Left Behind 2014

Dr. Anne Fernald Stanford University

- At 18 months of age, children from low income homes process language at a measurably slower rate than children from more affluent homes.
- By 24 months the gap has widened.
- Stanford Report, September 25, 2013

- But why should income predict success in school?
- What is provided to more affluent children that is not provided their low income competitors?

Hart and Risley

Meaningful Differences

- 42 million words overheard
 - 20,000 word vocabulary
- 12 million words overheard
 - 5,000 word vocabulary

The Great **Disconnect**

in Early Childhood Education



What We Know vs. What We Do



MICHAEL GRAMLING

Foreword by Elizabeth Jones

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- The human brain is already pre-wired to acquire language as fast as it is exposed to it.
- Children acquire language, skills and information simultaneously from direct experience with multiple sources . Their proficiency with language – the ability to communicate that will see them through to college and beyond – is largely formed by age five.

-

- At a time when the brain is a sponge and needs to be immersed in an ocean of words, we administer language with an eyedropper.
- Such is the outcome of accountability in publicly funded early childhood education.

- The “accountability” model assumes that children from low income families simply are not capable of learning in the same way as their more affluent competitors, and
 - Must therefore be relentlessly spoon fed the same basic information in a tedious and mind-numbing fashion so that they can be “ready” for Kindergarten.

But Where do Rich Kids go to Pre-school?

- The achievement gap between the wealthy and the middle class is also growing because wealthy parents are investing in early childhood education. Their children programs like
 - Waldorf
 - Montessori
 - Regio Emilia
- Where they explore, create, and discover. Where everyone assumes they are smart. Where they are exposed to language-rich experiences all day long. Where they are read to intimately throughout the day.

- But children born in Washington Northeast have the same potential as do children born in Georgetown or DuPont Circle.
- Their parents cherish them just as much and have the same dreams for them as you and I.
 - These children deserve better.
 - It's the right thing to do.

The Great Disconnect

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