

# **Playing with power: Structural racism, constructions of childhood, and pedagogies of resistance in early childhood education**

An Abstract of the Thesis by

*Betsy Allman*

This thesis builds on the work started in my Human Rights Project (Allman, 2021) to consider in profundity how structural racism and white supremacy manifest in early childhood education; how these systems intersect with constructions of childhood; and what counter-pedagogies exist to challenge and resist the dominant flow of power. The first section uses a critical race, postcolonial, and intersectional lens to analyze discipline and curriculum in early childhood education. The second section investigates childhood as a raced and powered social construction. The third section considers what it means to implement anti-racist, abolitionist pedagogy predicated on hope in the early childhood classroom. It isolates radical picture books as one channel through which to begin this work.

Key words: early childhood education, critical race theory, post-colonial theory, intersectionality, critical childhood studies, counter-pedagogy, radical children's literature.