

# Dr. Rachel Heydon

## *Presents*

“Every Day He Has a Different Dream to Tell Me”:  
Five Studies of Kindergarten Literacy Curricula

May 15, 2014

6-8 p.m.

Pond Inlet, Brock University



**Abstract:** The title of this presentation is taken from an Early Childhood Educator who was describing why the practice of listening to the children in her class was so important. Inherent in this one line is a message about the human imperative to communicate, be in relationship, and consider possibilities for one’s self in the world. The message comes with a pressing question as to what educators can do so that children may have expansive options and opportunities for following through with these imperatives. This presentation explores this query through a kaleidoscope of recent studies involving kindergarten children’s wellbeing in and through the literacy/curricula/identity nexus. Specifically, using ethnographic methods and actor-network theory, the first studies in the presentation map the production, practice, and effects of literacy curricula in a half-day kindergarten, child-care-based kindergarten, and full-day kindergarten. A fourth study attempts, through an innovative visual methodology, to capture a typical “day in the life” of one thriving culturally and linguistically diverse kindergarten child. Finally, to offer evidence of what is possible for children when curricula are explicitly designed to forward their literacy and identity options, the presentation offers a taste of a program where kindergartners work with elder partners in an intergenerational multimodal literacy program.

**Bio:** Rachel Heydon, PhD, has been a school teacher and is now Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario where she leads the Curriculum Studies and Studies in Applied Linguistics Academic Research Cluster and coordinates the Master of Professional Education in Early Childhood Education. She is principal investigator of a SSHRC-funded study of kindergarten literacy curricula and the Intergenerational Understanding sub-theme leader of the AIRS research project where she explores wellbeing and singing as a multimodal literacy practice in intergenerational curricula (funded by a SSHRC Major Collaborative Research Initiative). She has also begun working with an international team on a Day In The Life study to understand how culturally and linguistically diverse children can thrive in their transition to school. Her publications include the books: *Learning at the Ends of Life: Children, Elders, and Literacies in Intergenerational Curricula, Early Childhood Curricula and the De-Pathologizing of Childhood* (with Luigi Iannacci), and *Constructing Meaning: Teaching Elementary Language Arts K-8* (5th ed.) (with Joyce Bainbridge), and her articles appear in journals such as the *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, the *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, and *Young Children*.

*This event is sponsored by:*



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