

Neoliberalism and early childhood education: Markets, imaginaries and governance ^[1]

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Excerpt from abstract

Neoliberalism, with its worldview of competition, choice and calculation, its economisation of everything, and its will to govern has ‘sunk its roots deep’ into Early Childhood Education and Care. This book considers its deeply detrimental impacts upon young children, families, settings and the workforce. Through an exploration of possibilities for resistance and refusal, and reflection on the significance of the coronavirus pandemic, Roberts-Holmes and Moss provide hope that neoliberalism’s current hegemony can be successfully contested.

The book provides a critical introduction to neoliberalism and three closely related and influential concepts – Human Capital theory, Public Choice theory and New Public Management – as well as an overview of the impact of neoliberalism on compulsory education, in particular through the Global Education Reform Movement. With its main focus on Early Childhood Education and Care, this book argues that while neoliberalism is a very powerful force, it is ‘deeply problematic, eminently resistible and eventually replaceable’ – and that there are indeed alternatives.

Neoliberalism and Early Childhood Education is an insightful supplement to the studies of students and researchers in Early Childhood Education and Sociology of Education, and is also highly relevant to policy makers.

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Peter Moss is Emeritus Professor of Early Childhood Provision at UCL Institute of Education, University College London, UK. He co-edited the ‘Contesting Early Childhood’ series for its first ten years; his last book for the series was *Alternative Narratives in Early Childhood Education* (2018, Routledge).

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