Educational Activism: Social Justice in Classrooms, Schools, and Communities

8:30- 10:15 a.m. OPENING PLENARY in OISE/UT Auditorium, main floor

Opening remarks – Terezia Zoric
Lecturer in Social Diversity in Schooling and
Policy Advisor on Equity
Theory and Policy Studies, OISE/UT
Educational Activism Conference Chair

Welcoming remarks – Dr. Mark Evans, Associate Dean
Teacher Education, OISE/UT

INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM
Panel: Charmaine Pobre (Teacher, High Park Alternative P.S, Toronto DSB)
Ken Jeffers (President, Professional Student Services Personnel District 12 OSSTF), Samiha Mohammad Sharif (Student, Riverdale C.I., Toronto DSB)
and Pat Case (Director of Human Rights and Equity Office, University of Guelph)

SESSION 1 (10:30 A.M. – 12:15 P.M.)

1. Children’s Health and the Environment: Educating for a Just and Healthy Future -- Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg (MES, PhD) (JI/IS) (RM 2-281)

In this session, children’s environmental health will be discussed as an area of education, advocacy and policy change that link health and the physical environment with the worlds of school, home, community, workplace and the media. The session will help participants to develop critical thinking, and practical skills to better understand and take action toward both lifestyle and public policy changes for primary prevention.
Practical resource materials from the Canadian Partnership on Children’s Health and the Environment and other resources will be provided.

2. Survival of “the Richest”- Working With Students on Challenging Class Bias – Jenny Chen (Teacher) and Megan Horsley, Clara Neden and Spiros Vavougios (Students) (Riverdale CI, TDSB) (IS) (RM 2-212)

Participants of this interactive workshop will see different strategies students are using to begin challenging class bias in a school setting. We will be highlighting a life size board game; a student directed video; and other practical tools teachers can use to start what can be difficult, but meaningful dialogues with students, staff, administrators, and the broader community.
3. Math and Social Justice: Finally, Understanding the Real World Using Mathematics! -
   - **David Stocker** (City View Alternative School, TDSB) (PJ/JI) (RM 2-211)

   The problem? Pizza party math: math where the content is frivolous, irrelevant- “Why are we doing this?” Solution? Real-life math: using math to understand race, class, gender, sexuality, immigration, privatization, war. Come and take part in math activities that demonstrate how to teach math better with peace and social justice as your content material. Based on the new book: *Maththatmatters*.

4. Teaching the Greatest Challenge of Them All: Climate Change - **Tim Grant** (Green Teacher) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 2-279)

   Educating young people about climate change is challenging. The science is complex and the solutions are not simple, and the world’s poor are particularly vulnerable. In this session, we will discuss the latest science, the pedagogical challenges, and then learn activities that explore: the greenhouse effect, the importance of a stable climate, walking school buses for elementary schools, and car-trip reduction programs for high schools (to name but a few).

5. Mobilizing Youth Leadership for Social Justice In Your Classroom – **Janis Galway, Eileen Nemzer and Student Leaders** (Community Builders) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 4-422)

   Community Builders is an NGO that has been training students, teachers and parents to be community leaders and social activists in different school communities for over 12 years. They will share some key elements of their program for activists as young as 10 years old, including how to recognize distress patterns that activists encounter (such as chronic hopelessness), how to hold the powerful perspective on challenging situations, how to build alliances across group identity lines, and how to use the skills of listening and appreciation to move people forward. Student leaders from their Jane Finch project will help demonstrate skills.

6. This Is How L’AM Does It: Equity and Social Justice Club at L’Amoreaux C.I, TDSB – **Michelle Forde and students** (IS) (RM 5-250)

   This student-organized and student-facilitated workshop will delve into the issues students feel are important in equity organizing in school. This will include what they knew when they began their work, what they learned, what challenges and resistance they faced, and how all of this was reflected in the action they took and continue to take in their school community.

7. Teaching for Global Justice: Some Curriculum-Based Ideas -- **Antonino Giambrone** (City View Alternative School, TDSB) (JI) (RM 4-414)

   How do you begin to teach for global justice? How do you make global justice issues more than just “add-ons”? In this workshop, global perspectives on issues of equity, human rights, development, environment, and peace are explored through
transformative learning experiences for justice. Find out and share ideas about how to make learning experiences for global justice springboards for authentic student action.

8. Using Parents’ Stories as a Resource to Celebrate Ourselves – Alnaaz Kassam (TDSB/ OISE) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 2-198)

Using parents’ stories collected by the facilitator in the past year, participants will learn how to write their own stories as well as get parents in their school community to share theirs. The facilitator will also demonstrate how the rich resource of stories can become a source of pride and a means to transform the school.

9. Strategies to Promote Gender Equity in the Classroom -- Charmaine Pobre (Teacher, Toronto DSB) (PJ/JI) (RM 5-260)

This activity-based workshop will encourage participants to reflect on their own ideas about gender, as well as to explore ways to promote gender equity in the elementary classroom.

10. Bringing Global Issues to Life in Our Classrooms -- Domenic Bellissimo (Executive Assistant, OSSTF) and Sadhana Hirdaramani (Teacher, Toronto DSB) (IS) (RM 2-286)

Common Threads is the OSSTF international solidarity program that offers curriculum support to Ontario’s schools. Working in partnership with teachers’ unions around the world, team members research and design curriculum materials on a critical current topic. Participants will view some of the classroom-ready materials on the topics of Globalization and Sweatshops; HIV/AIDS and the Privatization of Water.

11. “Teaching from A Place Of Respect.” How to Create Respectful Relationships With First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – Angela Bosco (Facilitator for Aboriginal Education Simcoe County District School Board) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 5-280)

This workshop will employ a circle methodology to look at how non-Aboriginal teachers can build respectful relationships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities, parents and students.

12. Anti-Racism and Equity in Education – David Ast (Instructional Leader, Equity TDSB) (JI/IS) (RM 2-214)

This workshop will invite participants to explore thoughts and attitudes around racism and related discrimination. Participants will develop a common vocabulary to describe the dynamics of racism, as well as understand the social construction of racism in terms of power and privilege. Practical strategies and resources for the school and for the classroom will be provided, with an emphasis on turning theory into practice.
13. The World in Your Classroom: Global Education in Ontario, Grade 4-12 – **Paula Gallo** (Manager, Education for Development – Ontario, UNICEF Canada) (JI/IS) (RM 4-410)

How can you engage students in meaningful activities, lessons and initiatives that will connect them to other children and global issues around the world? Experience an interactive global education workshop in which you explore curriculum-connected and creative classroom activities that you can implement right away! Take away a free package of materials and join our email list to receive quarterly newsletters and invitations to UNICEF education event and initiatives.

14. A First Nation Perspective on Social Justice and Diversity – **Joanne Dallaire** (Healing Works) (JI/IS) (RM 2-296)

An overview of issues facing First Nation peoples, including how these issues transcend the diverse cultures in our schools and society, will be facilitated through discussion and dialogue. We will explore First Nations perspectives through a social justice approach that respectfully acknowledges the individual needs of students.

15. Is There Enough for Everyone? World Vision Canada and Education for All - **Nancy Del Col** (Global Education Coordinator, World Vision Canada) (PJ/JI) (RM 2-213)

An estimated 75 million school-aged children worldwide do not have access to education. Learn how World Vision Canada's international projects address the goals of “Education for All” through support of girls' education, teacher training, school building, and educational programming. Participants will engage in activities from GEAR, World Vision's new Global Education Activity Resource for grades 2 to 8 that teaches Canadian students about global issues affecting children around the world.

12:15 – 1:30 Equity and Social Justice Resource Fair and Lunch

SESSION 2 (1:30 P.M. – 3:15 P.M.)


In this interactive workshop, we will explore the nature of homophobia and how to actively challenge it in K-12 schools. Support for teachers in classroom work, and administrators in the implementation of equity and safe school policies will be discussed in relation to lgbtq parents, community groups and organizations.

2. Teaching about Genocide in a Way that Encourages Active Citizenship – **Margaret Wells** (OISE/UT) (JI/IS) (RM 4-422)
An interactive workshop that introduces the pedagogy of *Facing History and Ourselves*, an international educational organization that supports teachers in examining racism and anti-Semitism in order to promote the development of a more humane, informed and active citizenry. By studying the historical development and lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide, students make the essential connection between history and the moral choices they confront in their own lives.

3. Activism and Global/Environmental Education with 10-14 Year Olds – **Tim Grant** (Green Teacher) (JI/IS) (RM 2-279)

To address the challenges of the 21st century, we need a model of education long advocated by environmental educators that uses integrated, thematic learning to develop critical thinking and places value on long-term outcomes such as environmental responsibility, community service and active citizenship. This presentation outlines eight guiding principles to help reform education but much of this session introduces participants to a variety of innovative learning activities that explore food systems, calculate ecological footprints, develop respect for other points of view and demonstrate our connections to the world's peoples and ecosystems. Participants will take away copies of these activities.

4. Exploring Issues of Social Justice and Equity through Mathematics -- **Bev Caswell** (Initial Teacher Education Instructor, OISE/ UT) and **Members of the Inner City Option** (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 5-260)

This interactive workshop will provide hands-on experience in bringing social justice issues into your mathematics lessons.

5. Breaking it Down: Teaching Social Justice in ESL Classrooms from ESLA to ESL E - **jamie t.s. berrigan** (Secondary Teacher, TDSB) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 4-414)

This concrete skills-centred workshop will focus on introducing participants to the levels of ESL education and students learning English as a multiple language. It will draw on several social justice resources as well as techniques to address all four areas of ESL education in Ontario schools: reading; writing; listening and speaking; it will also speak to socio-cultural competence and media literacy [the new 2007 ESL curriculum].

6. 11. “Teaching from A Place Of Respect.” How to Create Respectful Relationships With First Nation, Métis and Inuit Students – **Angela Bosco** (Facilitator for Aboriginal Education Simcoe County District School Board) (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 5-280)

This workshop will employ a circle methodology to look at how non-Aboriginal teachers can build respectful relationships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities, parents and students.
7. 'Wall of Racism': Inclusive School Practices, an Exemplar Approach – Moira Wong, (Instructor, York University/Instructional Leader, Toronto DSB, Secondary Teacher), Marta Nielson, (Teacher, Toronto DSB), Monika Chawla (Teacher, Toronto DSB) and Martha Peterson (Principal, Toronto DSB) (PJ/JI) (RM 2-211)

In this session, participants learn from student, teacher, parent/guardian, school administrator, and school board equity/human rights education perspectives about the 'Wall of Racism' film project. Workshop participants then use these perspectives to inform their development of a year-end culminating activity that identifies the overall and specific skills that students clearly demonstrate at the end of the project.

8. Exploring Anti-Arab Racism and Islamophobia in the Media -- James Campbell and Lynda Lemberg, (Educators for Peace and Justice) (JI/IS) (RM 2-281)

After a short film, "Planet of the Arabs" showing how Arabs and Muslims are portrayed in Hollywood movies and on TV, we will explore issues of anti-Arab stereotyping, Islamophobia and racial profiling in Canada and the U.S.

9. Tools For Equity – Strategies for the Beginning Secondary School Teacher Activist -- Jill Goodreau (Teacher, UGDSB) and David Montemurro (Lecturer, CTL, OISE/UT) (JI/IS) (RM 2-213)

This interactive workshop will highlight some of the most commonly used equity/social justice/activist strategies that can be modified for classroom use across subjects and grades. Modelled activities will include: The Power Triangle, If The World Were 100 People, The Power Flower, Images in the Media, Musical Chairs, and more....

10. Lessons Learned in Our First Few Years: Beginning Teachers Talk About their Activism -- Ruhee Shirazi, Tiffany Shelton, Heather Hicks, Matina Broumas (PJ/JI/IS) (RM 2-214)

This panel of new and beginning teachers will share educational activism stories, insights, and strategies with workshop participants. They will highlight the barriers encountered and the successes they have enjoyed, as well as the major lessons they have learned in their diverse contexts. The interactive session will conclude with the sharing of advice on effective approaches for teacher candidate participants as they head into the last half of their programs and begin their careers as educational activists.

11. Survival of “the Richest”- Working With Students on Challenging Class Bias – Jenny Chen (Teacher) and Megan Horsley, Clara Neden and Spiros Vavougios (Students) (Riverdale CI, TDSB) (IS) (RM 2-212)

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what can be difficult, but meaningful dialogues with students, staff, administrators, and the broader community.

12. Transforming Lives One Step at a Time: Special Education Teachers as Activists – **Marian Shehata** (David and Mary Thompson, Toronto DSB) (JI/IS) (RM 4-410)

The graphic organizer as an activist tool? In this interactive and informational workshop, we will explore the connection between special education and activism. Participants will walk away with an understanding of the challenges students with learning disabilities encounter. Teacher candidates will also leave with practical strategies and resources to provide equitable opportunities for all students to succeed. Join us as we discover the daily opportunities we have to empower students—one step at a time.

13. Inspiring Global Responsibility and Promoting Global Justice in the Classroom -- **Sarah Lounsbury** (Manager, Youth Programs, War Child Canada) (JI/IS) (RM 2-296)

This workshop will introduce War Child Canada's innovative youth programming that can be used effectively both in the classroom and through extra-curricular activities to foster global accountability and concern among students. War Child Canada is a humanitarian organization that works with war-affected children in conflict zones around the world, and is also committed to promoting global awareness and responsibility in Canadian youth.


Children need the four senses of social capital in order to learn and one of the senses is the opportunity to apply what is learned. In this workshop, we will discuss how to take everyday occurrences and relate them to equity and social justice through grade level expectations across the curriculum.