

Gunn & Surtees, (2008). (Re)Marking heteronormativity: Resisting practices in ece. ECA Conference, Canberra, October.

**(Re)marking heteronormativity:  
Resisting practices in early  
childhood education contexts**

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**Children: A nation's capital.  
Investing in our children**

- Capital: *n.* wealth owned by a person or organization or invested, lent or borrowed.
- Invest: *v.* devote (one's time or energy) to an undertaking with the expectation of a worthwhile result; endow someone or something with (a particular quality or attribute).

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**Heteronormativity: What kind  
of investment is this?**

- It is an investment in constituting 'the other'.
- It is an investment in discrimination and limiting discourses.
- It is an investment in unfairness, inequity and disrespect.
- It is an investment in silence.

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**Investing in heteronormativity:  
Investing in silence**

- Sexualities issues are silenced through dominant discourses despite awareness of alternative discourses that enable access to notions of diverse sexualities and family forms.
- How does a continued investment in silence lead to or diminish possibilities for high quality teaching and learning in early childhood education?

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**Dominant discourses assisting  
investments in silence**

- Discourses of the nuclear family.
- Discourses of sexualities as dangerous and risky.
- Discourses of childhood innocence and developmentalism.

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**Investing in silence: Discourses  
of the nuclear family**

- "Hullo Mrs Duck!"
- "Girls don't kiss each other!"

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**Investing in silence: Discourses of sexualities as dangerous and risky**

- “If we talk about it, won’t normal parents be scared their children will grow up to be like that?”
- Opening cans of worms and boundary crossing.

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**Investing in silence: Discourses of childhood innocence and developmentalism**

- Rona and Pat discuss sexualities, parents and children’s development.
- “Sexuality to me is an adult thing...and so I couldn’t see it, you know, like as a focus, as something that yeah would come through.”

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**The consequences of silence: ‘Masking possibilities’**

- Silence about sexualities issues masks possibilities for who and how teacher educators, teachers, children and families can be.
- Silence masks possibilities in terms of how we might work effectively together.
- Silence also masks possibilities for understanding the world beyond the constraints of heteronormativity.

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**Alternative investments: What might they look like and why might they be useful?**

- Investments in recognition.
- Investments in social justice.
- Investments in confronting prejudice, homophobia and discrimination.

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**Forging ahead: Investing in a socially just future**

- Talk
- Think
- Evaluate
- Read
- Gather
- Connect

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