

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARS

Jaziea Farag is an award-winning Children's author, an Education Advisor for Wales for a Fostering Agency and Speech and Language Specialist Teacher. She is an Early Years and Racial Trauma Consultant and currently completing her PhD. Her research interests include creating feelings of belonging for families in Early Years settings as well as educational and vocational aspirations of Black and Minority Ethnic learners and the links with Racial Trauma.

She has been teaching for over a decade in Wales and formerly taught during the Educational Reform in Abu Dhabi and as a part of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Team for a Local Education Authority. She is an active champion of Anti racist practice in education and works closely with DARPL to facilitate training for Governors, Practitioners and Senior Leaders to nurture their journey to anti-racism. A highlight of her career so far was being asked to set up the first Teacher Network for BERA.

During my years of teaching and now as a consultant my thoughts on the fundamentals of how children learn have stayed predominantly the same. I have always considered that children learn best when they feel safe and valued. I strongly believe that it is meaningless planning for learning unless you first plan how you are going to meet these basic needs for all children in your setting. To do that, I feel that practitioners need to focus not just on the resources, environment and learning experiences but the values, wellbeing and self-awareness of all the adults who are interacting with the little people in your care. I think we sometimes underestimate and undervalue the power of a positive role model and the impact of the connections they build with young people. I therefore always try to reflect on how I am feeling and my responses when I enter a classroom or setting as I truly believe that an enthusiastic adult that shows interest can really spark engagement and therefore learning. Another area of education that I always try to incorporate into my practice no matter where I am working is the involvement of the wider community around a child and ensuring that I am not working in isolation, this should include families and members of the community.

My first memories of school are great ones. Laughter, friendships and lots of outdoor play. I attended a Primary School with a high level of culture and diversity in terms of its pupils until I was 7, and then we moved out of the area, so I attended a very different school from Year 2 onwards. Moving to this school was the first time I became aware of my race and have vivid memories of the first day and several events that followed where I felt othered, alone or very 'on display.' Through the entirety of my education, I was never taught by anyone that looked like me and it is only looking back and reflecting, that I realise the impact that had on me personally and the influence it had on my teaching philosophy. It led me to really spend time when I was in the classroom planning for a diverse and inclusive education, but it wasn't always easy to find the information or resources particularly in Wales. This is when my interest in the family as a source of support and learning began and the quest to ensure that all children get to see themselves reflected in their education. A lot of my professional choices have stemmed from those values and this project looking at Educational Scholars has just filled me with joy and 'a-ha' moments as well as more questions. We need to give learners a fuller education so that they can make their own informed decisions.

Jaziea Farag



DR. BETTINA L. LOVE



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dr. Bettina L. Love (1979 -) is an author, academic, professor, researcher and activist.

She grew up in upstate New York and is the youngest of three children. As a child, music, in particular hip-hop, had a huge impact on Dr. Love's life. She discusses how hip-hop helped her understand Black culture and her own identity.

Through a basketball scholarship, Dr. Love attended the University of Pittsburgh where she gained a Master Of Education in Elementary Education. In 2008, she received her PhD in Educational Policy Studies from Georgia State University.

DR. BETTINA L. LOVE'S WORK

A lot of Dr. Bettina L. Love's work revolves around the concept of "Spirit Murdering".

The term "Spirit Murdering" was coined by Patricia Williams and, in the school context, refers to how systemic racism and racial bias kill the spirit of Black and Brown children. Dr. Love describes this killing of the spirit as a slow death.

Much of her work explores how educational settings have the unique opportunity to be a place where children are supported in understanding who they are in the context of the world around them. Educational settings have the chance to make real changes to intersectional social justice.

"I truly, deeply believe that when you're teaching children of colour, the best thing you can do is politicise them... when I say politicised, what I mean is that you (the children) begin to understand who you are in the world in relationship to all of your identities."

Dr. B. L. Love

Dr. Love encourages us, as educators, to understand how the various parts of who we are (our own identities) impact how we interact with our students. Particularly for white teachers, Dr. Love states that you need to be aware of how political rhetoric (both historical and present) influences your biases, assumptions and beliefs about Black and Brown students.

In her work on 'Spirit Murdering', Dr. Love suggested that educators also need to get to know their students - they need to learn and understand their culture, what brings them joy and what it looks like when they feel joy, what their socio-economic background is, their sexual identity and so on. By understanding who children are, educators can better understand how to provide safe spaces in which children can learn and grow. With this, educators can take time to truly celebrate who their students are, to celebrate their soul.

For white teachers in particular, this is part of their journey to providing equitable, anti-oppressive, abolitionist education.

REFLECTIONS ON DR. BETTINA LOVE'S WORK

Think about your own identities, the parts of who you are? How do they shape you and how do they impact your practice and pedagogy?



How can you help children to understand who they are, their identities, the parts of themselves? Do you get to know them and their families?

Much of our school day is filled by the academic curriculum. Outside of playtime and lunch breaks, what time do you give to children to do something that brings them joy, something they are passionate about?



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