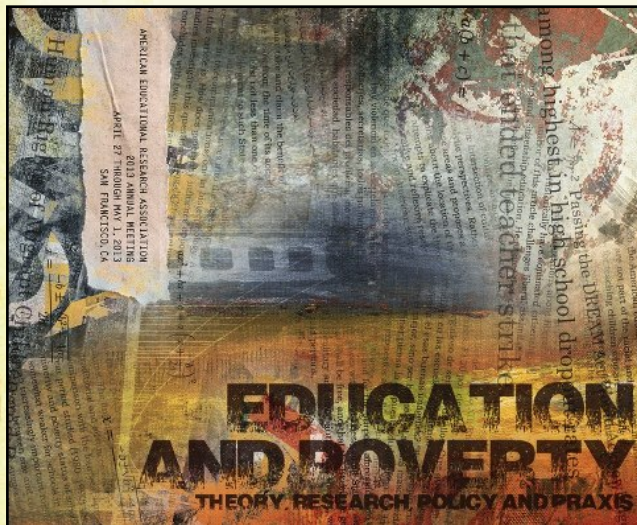


# CONNECTIONS 2013

AERA's Graduate Student Council

Spring 2013

VOL. 5 ISSUE 1



We hope that as you read this message, you are anxiously anticipating your arrival to the AERA Annual Meeting in San Francisco. We are encouraged to know that our readership of this newsletter has increased since the Graduate Student Council was started some years ago. The theme of this newsletter is also the theme of AERA, Education and Poverty: Theory, Research Policy, and Praxis. In AERA's current President-Elect William Tierney's recent

message, he says the following on this theme:

"Education has long been seen as a way out of poverty. Educational systems also perpetuate cycles of poverty and wealth. Poverty interacts with education through local, national, and international systems of financial markets and the global knowledge economy. The goal is to consider the relationships of education and poverty. The theme is conceived broadly to include the ways that education theory, research, policy, and praxis contribute to alleviating economic, intellectual and moral poverty."

Like the theme of the Annual Meeting, the theme of this current issue of Connections will be on Education and Poverty. On each of the next pages, you will find brief statements by division representative who were willing to contribute to the conversation of how they hope to affect change in poverty through education and practice in their future careers.

***The mission of The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is to facilitate and promote the transition from graduate student to professional researcher and/or practitioner by providing opportunities within AERA for growth, development and advancement.***



# CONNECTIONS 2013

AERA's Graduate Student Council

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*The City of San Francisco (Spanish for "Saint Francis") was founded on June 29, 1776, when colonists from Spain established a fort at the Golden Gate and a mission named for St. Francis of Assisi a few miles away. Today, San Francisco is made up of people from all parts of the world, of all beliefs, genders, and political beliefs. While you are visiting this city, take a moment to see the sites. This is St Ignatius Church located on 650 Parker Avenue in San Francisco.*





## Cathy R. Brant Current Chair

### “My AERA Service Journey”

I remember it like it was yesterday. Although I was not presenting, I decided to attend the AERA Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA. Through the GSC listserv, I found a roommate, Julie, from the University of Washington. I was excited, but also really nervous about this adventure. After Julie and I got our big program books from registration, we went back to our hotel room to figure out what sessions to attend. While I wanted to attend as many sessions as possible per day, what was clear to me, though, was that I wanted to attend session specifically created by and for graduate students.

I attended a few Fireside Chats, Orientation and the Open Business Meeting. At one of these events, I approached the Chair, Andrea Tyler, and told her I was eager to get involved. She gave me her contact information and told me to contact her after the meeting; she had just the position for me, hospitality chair! I also vividly remember my new friend, Nicholas Hartlep (the current Past-Chair), taking me with him to the joint Division G/K reception. At the time, it felt so amazing to have someone take me under his wing and show me some of the ropes of AERA. Immediately following the 2008 meeting, I began my duties as Hospitality Chair, preparing for the meeting the following year in Denver, CO. When John Oliver, the Past-Chair at the time, sent out the call for new officers via the listserv and the newsletter, I decided that I was interested in running for Secretary-Historian. I was extremely nervous waiting for the results of that election.

I know that I wanted to help serve my fellow graduate students, so I was ecstatic when I was notified in March, that I had been elected! Once elected to Secretary-Historian, I was excited to travel to Washington, D.C. during October as a part of the AERA Coordinated-Committee Meeting. In addition to getting to know the elected GSC officers and the appointed Divisional Representatives, I also began to network with junior and senior scholars. It was through experiences such as these that I began to find amazing mentors,

outside of my university. I also got to see the inner workings of the GSC. These experiences led me to run for the 3-year term for Chair-Elect, Chair and Past-Chair.

The past two years, serving as Chair-Elect and Chair have been a phenomenal experience. I have had the opportunity to plan my own Fireside Chats, to address issues important to me as a scholar, but more importantly, to other graduate students. I have had opportunities to continue to network with amazing graduate students and faculty. My experiences with the GSC have opened up other doors for me, such as the opportunity to review proposals for the Annual Meeting and journals. I've been able to get to understand the issues that a large national organization has to deal with, and more importantly, the impact of those decisions on the members.

For me, one of the biggest benefits of being a member of the AERA Graduate Student Council, were the relationships I have established with other graduate students. These newfound friends and colleagues have been an amazing support for me as I have navigated the doctoral process. I've been able to collaborate with peers doing similar work. I've been able to “talk shop” with colleagues in the same field. I was also able to find the emotional support I needed as I worked through my program, being able to have genuine interactions with people who really understood what it meant to write long semester-end papers; the stresses of candidacy exams, proposals and defenses; and entering the job market.

In a few months, as I take the position of Past-Chair, I will be sending out a call for the GSC elected positions. I encourage you to consider applying. Please don't hesitate, at that time, to ask any questions you might have. I also encourage you to consider applying for an appointed position within a Division. Each Division has their own procedures for how they select their Representatives and Officers, but contact the people currently in those positions to see how YOU can get involved.

Although the office I have held as a part of the AERA Graduate Student Council have added extra commitments and responsibilities to my already busy schedule as a full time doctoral student, the benefits are certainly worth it. Looking back on my experiences, I would do it all again, in a heartbeat, and I encourage you to find ways to get involved with AERA, whether it be the GSC, divisional opportunities or with SIGs.





## Jennifer Carinci

### Chair Elect

#### “Open Air Investigation”

A typical archaeological dig is similar to the way education research and graduate education is often enacted; it is a hit or miss venture consisting of a guess to determine a spot to dig, carving a rectangular trench and then carefully digging through stratum of modern and ancient cultural remains until the period in which the archaeologist [researcher or student] is interested is hopefully revealed. Once the trench is exhausted, another is begun. As a Fulbright teacher fellow, I viewed many such excavations in Greece the summer before I began my doctoral studies. Walking on monuments I had only previously seen as small two-dimensional rectangles, I had been willing to accept the traditional excavation process - until we reached Corinth. The dig at Corinth was unlike the previous labyrinths of trenches; instead, a unified layer exposed a specific moment in time producing a single contact, open-air investigation. This new technique utilized a method that allowed a more cohesive vision of a single era providing a more detailed and accurate portrayal of conditions in that era.

The design of a single contact, open-air investigation immediately resonated with me, much the way participating in the Graduate Student Council (GSC) made sense to me; developing and pooling the strengths of researchers and graduate students through organizations like AERA creates a more illuminating stratum and a nurturing community of investigators. Becoming involved with the GSC provides perspective on the field that is difficult to obtain as a student in a single institution.

The GSC provides an opportunity to learn from the experiences of peers, network with AERA leadership, and be a part of providing opportunities for others that you wish you had. This emphasis on transparency, evidence, and collaboration creates an environment where graduate students attending the annual meeting aren't faced with decisions lacking evidence leaving them in holes or hole jumping.

I, like many of you, achieve at higher levels when engaged, challenged, and exposed. The GSC is an ideal venue for engaging, challenging, and exposing yourself while also helping other graduate students to do the same. Being a graduate student can be an isolating experience, where you feel at times like you are digging disconnected holes in the dark. Participating in the GSC can help provide layers and context to your work by connecting you to ideas and people to construct a more cohesive and welcoming experience. If you are looking for this kind of professional development experience, please consider putting your skills to work with the GSC. Much like digging, the work you put in will be evident in your results. Most of us became interested in the field of education in order to be a part of the solution. Joining the GSC allows you to meet like-minded people while building relationships to expand your impact. The concept of single contact open air excavation seems obvious in retrospect, just like joining the GSC makes sense but is hard to see when deep in the trenches of day by day efforts. In short, getting your hands your dirty with us will benefit all of us, and you might just have some fun in the process.

Please let me know how I can help you unearth what you are searching for.





## Nicholas Hartlep

### Past Chair

**“If You Want to Be an Academic After you Graduate, You Must Think, Act, and Behave Like One Today”**

I became interested in AERA while I was finishing my master's degree at Winona State University (Winona, MN). At the time (2008) I had just been accepted into the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Urban Education Doctoral Program (UEDP) and I was seeking out professional organizations and associations to help guide me through this process. I stumbled upon the AERA website by chance. In 2008 I had little research experience, but I did know that I wanted to gain as much professional mentorship as possible. On the AERA website I read past Graduate Student Council (GSC) Newsletters and was inspired to join the association as a graduate student by what I came across.

As a Ph.D. student I held the attitude that I needed to produce high quality work inside and outside of my program in order to eventually land a tenure-track position. I understood quickly that publishing professionally and building your personal network are the cornerstones of securing an academic position in higher education. I believe that AERA is not only important for budding scholars, but the GSC is an excellent space for graduate students to learn about the politics of higher education.

The most pivotal moment for graduate students who are reading this *Connections* newsletter will be whether or not they have the drive, perseverance, and dedication to making their dreams realities. I am not implying that one secures an academic position or achieves in the academy only if they work hard; there are many hard-working students and faculty who are not “accomplished.” What a better way to be part of the conversation than to run for a GSC-elected position or volunteer to be a graduate representative for a Division or Special Interest Group (SIG)?

I disbelieve that doctoral students should first exclusively focus on their doctoral coursework and dissertation work and then later become

involved in associations like AERA once they graduate and secure an academic position. It does not work this way. Your likelihood of landing a tenure-track position increase dramatically with increased involvement with AERA (e.g., presenting at annual meetings, volunteering with divisions and SIGs, etc). The current leaders now (not always) were frequently leaders when they were graduate students. Indeed, I suspect the current highly involved AERA leaders were highly involved when they began their graduate programs in years past.

Moreover, I believe that it is inaccurate to perceive doctoral programs to be sequential. The process of developing into an educational scholar is to engage in the work early and often. You do not become less busy when graduate school is over. In my experience I have found it to be the opposite: you actually get busier. Therefore, if you are having a difficult time now staying up to date and on task, you will find it even more challenging when you enter the academy as a professor. Again, this is my personal opinion.

What does this mean for graduate students? If you are reading this *Connections* newsletter and are preparing for a future as an educational researcher/professor, you ought to dive right in and consider joining AERA and the GSC formally. Become an official card-carrying member today! It also means that you must submit proposals to AERA annual meetings and attempt to get involved in leadership opportunities. If you desire becoming an accomplished academic after you mint your graduate degree, start and behave like one today. I was told that the first day that you enter your doctoral program is the first day that you are on the job market. What does this mean? It means your future employer should know your name and the research that you do. This is why graduate students should never underestimate the power and importance of personal and professional networking.

For me, participating officially within the GSC has led to many professional rewards. However, the personal relationships that I have made as a result of service to AERA and its members have also provided wind for my sails. Especially when I find myself becoming frustrated or tired due to the demanding work in which higher academicians engage. I encourage any graduate student reading this *Connections* newsletter to become involved with the GSC and become part of the conversation. You will have no regrets doing so.



# Looking Forward to AERA

## *Is this your first time to an AERA conference?*



If this is your first AERA, congratulations! Let me be the first to welcome you to the beautiful city of San Francisco. My first time at a large conference, such as AERA, was a bit scary, but has proved to be a rewarding experience. Making those important connections with a Division (A-L), Special Interest Group (SIG), or university affiliates can help your future academic career and research interest. The Graduate Student Council (GSC) can be the first stop in helping you navigate a large conference of this size. Please stop by the GSC support table for more information about this year's exciting GSC program. Look for all GSC events in your program.

I have extreme adulation for this cities rich civic history, captivating arts community, and unique culture that only San Francisco has to offer. Be sure when you get a chance in between session times, to venture out and see this beautiful city—e.g. San Francisco Bridge, Alcatraz, Muir Woods, Hyde Park, and many, many more. This year's conference is sure to ignite an ethos of awareness, enlightenment, and provoke an engaging dialogue for community, change, and compassion.

Since this is your first time, let me recommend attendance at our *Food-for-Thought* sessions:



Sunday April 28, 2012 @ 12:25

- "Burning Issues," Physically, Politically Relevant Theater
- Presented by *San Francisco Mime Company*



Monday April 29, 2012 @ 2:15

- San Francisco LGBTQ Speakers Bureau
- Presented by *Leigh McLellan*



Tuesday, April 30, 2012 @ 12:10

- Mural Music & Arts Project (MMAP) Performance and Discussion
- Presented by *Mural Music & Arts Project (MMAP)*



# Looking Forward to AERA

**GSC Fireside Chats:** We strongly encourage you to look through the list below and attend the fireside chat for the Graduate Student Council

**GSC Fireside Chat: Closing the Achievement Gap Through Curriculum, Standards, and Assessment: Sustainability for Long-Term Success in Our Schools**

- Mon, Apr. 29 – 8:15am-9:45am / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Fireside Chat: Community Voices: A Dialogue on Undocumented Students and Education.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 8:15am-9:45am / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Graduate Student Current Research Session**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 10:20am-11:50am / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Past Chair Fireside Chat: Life as a Professor: Key Insights From a Diverse Group of Faculty Members**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 2:00pm-3:30pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Chair Fireside Chat: Continuing the Conversation: Doing LGBTQI and Ally Work in the Ph.D. Program and Beyond.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 10:35am-12:05pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Chair Fireside Chat: Life on the Other Side: Recent Graduates Discuss Their Experiences on the Other Side of the Desk**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 2:15pm-3:45pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Chair Fireside Chat: Our Stories: Women of Color in the Academy.**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 5:05pm-6:35pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Chair-Elect Fireside Chat: Grant-Writing Dos and Don'ts for Graduate Students.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 4:05pm-5:35pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street

**GSC Chair-Elect Fireside Chat: Show Me the Data! How to Access Quantitative and Qualitative Data You Need to Answer Your Research Questions**

- Mon, Apr. 29 – 10:35am-12:05pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Market Street



# Looking Forward to AERA

**Division Fireside Chats:** We strongly encourage you to look through the list below and attend the fireside chat for your divisions of interest

**Division A: Responding to Poverty's Influence on Education. Our Roles as Researchers of Educational Leadership.**

- Sat, Apr. 27 – 10:35am-12:05pm / Westin St. Francis, Second Level – Yorkshire

**Division B: Can You See It? Exploring the Intersections of Visual Culture, Digital Media, and Gaming in Poverty & Education.**

- Sat, Apr. 27 – 12:00pm-1:30pm / Grand Hyatt, Ballroom Level – Ballroom West

**Division C: Why Education Is So Difficult To Improve When Income Inequalities Are So Great.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 8:15am-9:45am / Westin St. Francis, Second Level – Kent

**Division D: Educational Research and High-Poverty Students: Contemporary Approaches to Ensuring Validity.**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 5:05pm-6:35pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Powell II

**Division E: Staying in the Game: Maintaining Research Productivity.**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 12:10pm-1:40pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Mason

**Division F: History of Poverty and Exclusion.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 8:15am-9:45am / Hilton Union Square, 4th Level – Tower 3 Union Sq 11

**Division G: The Mechanics of Mentoring and the Academic Life.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 2:15pm-3:45pm / Sir Francis Drake, Second Level – Carmel

**Division H: Starting Fresh, Branching Out, Moving Up: Insights and Experiences of School Researchers Embarking on New Career Paths.**

- Sun, Apr. 28 – 8:15am-9:45pm / Parc 55, Third Level – Powell II

**Division I: What the Future Holds for Scholarship in the Professions: Lessons Learned and Advice for Junior Scholars**

- Sat, Apr. 27 – 2:15pm-3:45pm / Hilton Union Square, 4<sup>th</sup> Level – Tower 3 Union Sq 19&20

**Division J: Establishing a Sustainable Program of Research.**

- Sun. Apr. 28 – 10:35am-12:05pm / Sir Francis Drake, Second Level – Elizabethan B

**Division K: From the Ivory Tower to the Schoolyard: Conducting Research in Contexts with Underserved Populations Living in Poverty.**

- Mon, Apr. 29 – 10:35am-12:05pm / Westin St. Francis, Second Level – Olympic

**Division L: Thirty Years Since A Nation at Risk: Implications for a Second Generation.**

- Tue, Apr. 30 – 2:00pm-3:30pm / Westin St. Francis, Second Level – Olympic



# Looking Forward to AERA

**Our mission:** The mission of The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is to facilitate and promote the transition from graduate student to professional researcher and/or practitioner by providing opportunities within AERA for growth, development and advancement. In addition, the Graduate Student Council seeks to help graduate students navigate the obstacles, rewards, challenges, and support networks of academic life. Further, the Graduate Student Council will carry out the mission of AERA through the research, scholarship, and professional endeavors of graduate students.

## Who's who in the GSC?

**Chair** presides over the graduate student council and coordinates their efforts and activities; sits on AERA Council, the governing body of AERA and has the same status there as a Divisional VP. *Currently Cathy A.R. Brant*

**Chair-elect** runs the GSRC and assists the chair. *Currently Jennifer Carinci*

**Past Chair** advises the chair; leads election committee. *Currently Dr. Nicholas Hartlep*

**Program Chair** schedules all GSC events during annual meeting. *Currently Cecilia Henríquez Fernández*

**Community Leader** maintains campus liaison network and may work on other outreach efforts, heads orientation committee for annual meeting. *Currently Angela R. Hines.*

**Hospitality Chair** helps plan events for the national meetings, and assists the programing chair. *Currently Carleen Carey*

**Secretary/Historian** keeps contact info for GSC members, takes minutes at meetings and records GSC events using photographs and other means. *Currently Lisa De La Rue*

**Web Secretary** maintains the website. *Currently Chester Tadeja*

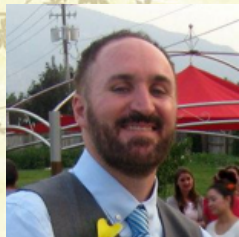
Some of my dearest friends in the field of research, I met in the GSC! I look forward to meeting you and hearing all about your research interests! Your attendance at your first AERA conference will be a memorable and inspiring! I am excited that you will be joining us, and I look forward to meeting all of our graduate supporters!

Cordially,

Angela R. Hines  
Community Chair  
AERA Graduate Student Council

Questions? Please contact the AERA membership team at [202-238-3200](tel:202-238-3200), or [members@aera.net](mailto:members@aera.net)





## A Look at Poverty

By Bryce Walker

For the last 6 months, my view of poverty and the American dream has changed dramatically. Living in DC, I interact with many different immigrants in the city. Most of them come from Latin America or Sub-Saharan Africa. They come to the United States with hopes of a more sustainable life for their family, for better education, and the hope of attaining a middle-class lifestyle in a country that is not politically volatile. America seemed to be this place for them.

Recently, I became friends with a man who has started to attend my church. He is from Malawi. The first time I saw him outside of church was while riding my bike through DC's Dupont Circle. I found out that this man, whom I will call George, is homeless. He has agreed to allow me to briefly tell his story.

His story is different from that of the majority of the homeless who live in Dupont Circle. George, who is in his early 30s, is a faithful husband and father. He has worked in health care research for the last 10 years back in Malawi. He was recently on a special AIDS awareness project throughout Johns Hopkins University in Malawi when he found out that funding was getting cut. Johns Hopkins brought him one last time to America to present his research findings at a conference in downtown DC. George was able to obtain a 6-month work visa in the process. After the conference, he decided to stay for the 6 months to see if he could earn some money to either bring back to his family or to see about having them relocate to America with him.

George quickly learned how tough it is to find work as an immigrant, even legally. It did not take him long to decide that his goal would be to earn money and return to Malawi to his family. The market in DC is especially tough for George, who

only has a preparatory school education from Malawi. Back home, George is considered a bright scholar, but in America those who have had many more educational opportunities overshadow him and his resume. If he is able to save 3-5000 dollars in his time in America, he can live like a king back in Malawi and start a business. In order to do this, he has decided to live as a homeless for these 6 months. He has taken on jobs such as making and selling jewelry, selling perfumes, and this spring he will be working for a landscaping crew. He must sleep outdoors and in shelters in order to save to his goal.

I realize that because of the unprecedented amount of poverty this country is experiencing currently, the American dream is not as certain for immigrants like George.

With the current economic crisis, Americans and immigrants are rethinking the American dream and what it means today. During the presidential election between President Barak Obama and former Governor Mitt Romney, one key topic was how the issue of immigrants would be handled. At the time, I thought that Governor Romney's idea of self-deportation was a bit ridiculous. How would any person decide to self-deport out of America for their home country? I doubted self-deportation would work then and still do now. However, the American dream for immigrants has become as mythical as ever. George is working hard to head back to Malawi; he no longer believes that America is the place of ultimate prosperity.

For immigrant families who have lived legally in the United States for the past 20 years, there is a glimmer of hope. This hope lies with their children. I know several other immigrant families who were wealthy in their home countries, but because they were caught under the wrong political side and had to flee with nothing to America. The parents in these families had to forfeit their American dream so that their children could have it. The way this has been made possible is America's free and public educational system.



# Education & Poverty

## AERA Division Representatives

My current research is regarding ethnic and racial identity of immigrant adolescents. Although I do not examine poverty directly, I believe it is an element that contributes to an individual's identity because in the U.S. race and socioeconomic status is not clearly separated. I have been fortunate to not experience poverty directly, but my time in Washington, DC was quite eye-opening. The clearly visible poverty in the capitol of arguably the strongest nation in the world was jarring. It was not uncommon to see park benches across the street from high-powered and clearly wealthy offices occupied by homeless individuals. The difference in resources between poor schools and rich schools was heart-wrenching. Poverty is a difficult issue because it seems to share characteristics with quicksand: you get stuck and sucked in further. I hope to find a way to encourage adolescents in poverty develop a positive self-identity.

*Ann Y. Kim – Division E*  
*University of California-Santa Barbara*

Before starting my Ph.D. in Educational Psychology I was a classroom teacher for 5 years. 4 of those years were spent working at a KIPP charter school in south Dallas. My students were from traditionally underserved populations, many of them living in poverty. I was inspired by my students, they saw education as a way to improve their lives. Part of why I decided to return to graduate school and start a Ph.D. program was to help find solutions to problems these students commonly faced. Specifically I study motivation and how parental support can help positively influence their motivation and achievement.

*Ariana Crowther – Division C*  
*University of Texas at Austin*

My research is focused on non-cognitive factors that impact access to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) careers for low-income, first-generation, and racial/ethnic minority students. The role of background characteristics, specifically socioeconomic status, plays a critical role on a student's decision to persist in a STEM degree due to the additional financial stressors attributed to pursuing these degrees: foregone income, tuition differentials, and time to degree.

*Blanca Rincon – Division J*  
*University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana*

My dissertation involves understanding how preservice teachers (PSTs) preparing to work with students from historically marginalized groups in high-needs schools learn to teach literacy. Literacy is a key gate-keeping mechanism for educational access and life opportunities for students from historically marginalized groups and low-income communities (e.g., Freire & Macedo, 1987; Heath, 1991), and teachers are critical to students' literacy learning (e.g., Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). By gaining a nuanced understanding of the processes by which PSTs learn to teach literacy to students from historically marginalized groups and low-income communities, teacher educators will be better equipped to create optimally educative learning opportunities for PSTs preparing to teach literacy in high-needs schools. If teachers are better prepared to teach in culturally responsive ways that research suggests benefit the literacy learning of students from historically marginalized groups and low-income communities (e.g., Au & Mason, 1981; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lee, 1995), students' literacy learning and achievement may well improve, thereby leading to more educational and life opportunities for students.

*Kathryn Struthers – Division K*  
*University of Southern California*



# Education & Poverty

## AERA Division Representatives

Poverty, student homelessness, and student mobility are the cornerstones of my research. I work with Dr. Peter Miller (UW-Madison) on a contextual study of how family, school, and community factors intersect and mold the educational opportunities for students experiencing homelessness and high mobility. For this mixed methods, case study design, we analyzed district level data and relevant documents addressing the service of homeless and highly mobile students and their families. We also conducted semi-structured interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders including parents, teachers, school social workers, principals, nurses, administrative assistants, behavioral specialists, guidance counselors, and community agency employees. My own research examines how the intersection of wide-ranging educational policies, such as curriculum policies, accountability, and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (which outlines the rights of students experiencing homelessness), shape the instructional guidance and professional capacity of schools that are struggling to respond to student mobility.

**Alexandra Pavlakis – Division A**  
**University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Concerns around poverty and access are important considerations in the clinical work and research I am engaging in at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. We have to be cognizant of how our interventions and therapeutic models may or may not be appropriate for all individuals. For instance, within clinical work if we have a proportion of our clientele living in poverty, is it fair to expect them to travel to our offices for services? Likely not, and instead we need to find ways to make our services available to individuals and families in their homes and in the communities in which they live. It is essential that we not impose additional burdens that may then create obstacles to access and treatment for particular groups of people.

**Lisa De La Rue**  
**University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana**

Each year over a million students leave high school without a diploma. In urban school districts, dropout rates average close to 60% (Balfanz, 2010). For low-income students of color in urban schools, the educational ideology of being “college ready” has overlooked the necessity of youth to survive in the most marginalized communities that they reside. High school dropout rates are disproportionately higher in urban districts, and with students of color from low-socioeconomic backgrounds rates increase dramatically (Lagana, 2004). How urban students are able to cope with issues of poverty in their neighborhood and school can influence whether they leave high school with a diploma or simply exit our classrooms ill-equipped to be the leaders of the next generation. Schools play a vital role in how low-income urban youth engage with issues of poverty, and how students who dropout conceptualize the value that society has place on graduating.

Consequently, growing disparities in graduation rates between students of color and their white counterparts has continues to be the normalized reality of schools across the nation. My current research examines how urban youth who reside in low-income communities understand the process of exiting high school. Furthermore, the educational pathways that youth engage and the strategies that they employ as they seek a high school diploma.

**Dorothy Hines**  
**Michigan State University**



# Education & Poverty

## AERA Division Representatives

Broadly, my research areas involve critical analyses of the cultural politics and forces operating in social studies education, occurring both in traditional sites of schooling such as history classrooms, and in sites of public pedagogy, such as television shows like AMC's *Mad Men*. The study that informs my dissertation project examines how teachers and students negotiate the myriad ways "America" can be defined, appropriated, and expressed across and throughout the social studies curriculum. I am interested in how conceptions of "America" are expressed in economics classes when teachers and students explore the role of supply and demand in spaces of poverty, often seen in teaching examples where students learn about food deserts in large cities. This extends, too, in courses such as geography, when the different ways students perceive "America" appear in discussions of how unfortunate poor orphans are in African nations, and what role students can take—if any—in interventions that respond to say, for example, the lives of children in Sudan. Compassion is a powerful, if unarticulated, curricular force in courses such as geography when teachers teach issues such as poverty through emotional and affective registers of compassion and empathy. My experiences teaching social studies with high school students over the years makes me aware of the complex substrata of affects and feelings students bring with them to class from their families, their communities, their peer groups, and other places. Poverty does not stop at particular borders. And the borders of America—however the students and teachers in my dissertation study may define and identify them—are also cartographies of poverty. While poverty is not a direct thematic element in my research, I hope my study can illustrate the complexity involved in social studies education, a "touchy subject" as I call it, one that compels students and teachers alike to work with how they express their conceptions and perceptions of their worlds, worlds that—for many—must make lives in/around/through the borders of poverty no matter how we define "America."

**Mark Helmsing – Division B**  
**Michigan State University**

I am from a working class family, and many of my extended family members and friends are among the growing class of "working poor" in this country. Issues of class have always been a part of my life, often in the background, but many times at the forefront as I sought to fit into a world where most of my school peers didn't have to worry if they could afford to participate in school-sponsored activities or attend college. My personal experience is probably what led me first to the field of sociology, and there I "cut my teeth" evaluating educational programs designed to serve at-risk students. After several years of applied educational research, I returned to the university interested in expanding my skill set in applied research methodology in education. From my perspective, sound research methods are the cornerstone of any research program that will be able to adequately address the problems facing the next generation, a generation for which issues of poverty continue to be associated with gaps in educational outcomes. I am still trying to find my niche, but I hope to build a career that allows me to contribute robust research that addresses problems of significance, and to be a role model to up-and-coming students who may not see where someone like them could fit in.

**Emily Dickinson – Division J**  
**University of Louisville**

Teachers often were raised in very different environments from their students and may not know how to connect classroom content to student experience and background knowledge. If instructors teach in such a way that students apply concepts to their own everyday lives, motivation will increase because the content becomes personally relevant. Moreover, seeing how information learned in school can impact a student's life can increase perceptions of the utility value of material, further increasing motivation and engagement. Getting students from low SES communities to engage with concepts out of school may be an important method for facilitating interest development in school and improving ones academic self-concept.

**Benjamin Heddy – Division C**  
**University of Southern California**



# Systems & Gargoyles

By Jenny Wakefield – University of North Texas

Twas close to Christmas.

Twas the end of the semester.

Twas the eerie gargoyle with a smirk smile fresh awoken from his covert hangout, slumberous and perplexed peering across the street into the office of the graduate student still sitting by her computer writing. “Had she not been sitting there also when he fell asleep?” he thought to himself. His perspicacious mind was in a mist as he sat flexed haunches on his turret, shaking his head, rubbing his sanguineous eyes. “How could this be?” he said out loud. He was now perpending if he should go find out.

Eventually, his curiosity for the obscurity took over. Clawing his filifjonk toy he slyly sneaked across the street and scraped her window with his long, sharp nail to catch her attention. Sensitive to the sound caused by the slyboots, she stopped hammering the keys of her keyboard and turned to look at his fiery eyes, his mischievous smile, and his sharpened fangs.

“What’s up gargoyle?” she said softly.

“You write and peruse. You write and write. Why do you do it?”

“Oh you see,” she said to the gargoyle, “I have to. It’s part of a grad-student’s system. You see ‘making goals sensitive to the best performance of the past, instead of the worst’ keeps goals from eroding (Meadows, 2008, p. 123). Therefore, we need to always reach for the stars and aim to function at the highest three levels of Bloom’s taxonomy rather than let ourselves ‘drift to low performance’ (Meadows, 2008, p.122). Only by pushing ourselves a little bit further and a little bit farther can we maintain healthy systems including growth.” She continued, “If I read, study, and practice what I learn, I experience this growth. The more I learn and my ‘understanding grows, the broader [my] point of view can become’ (Hutchins, 1996, p.31) and the more holistic a picture of the world I get.” She added, “Let me explain to you what a system is and how some systems resist

change for the better and instead start spiraling in negative loops towards undesirable ends.”

The gargoyle jiggled his long tongue in excitement. She opened the window ajar; he hopped in, and sat himself hunched on top of her bookshelf to listen while wiggling his large tendon wings.

“We’re all part of systems,” she started, “and ‘a system is what you define it to be’ (Hutchins, 1996, p.31).” She went on, “Romiszowski, for example, explained a system from a system engineer’s point of view as: ‘(...) a little black box, Of which we don’t want to unlock the locks, But find out what it’s all about, By what goes in and what comes out’ (1981, p.7). In a system involving humans and gargoyles though, I think we want to have some say as to what happens inside the system – or the box if you will – because in one way or another we’re all interconnected like pieces or nodes and we relate to each other. ‘As one part of a system is changed, everything else is affected – leading to the simple but important systemic expression, “You can never do just one thing” ’ (Hutchins, 1996, p.27).”

She reached out for a black cardboard iPhone box lying near her computer keyboard and held it up in front of the gargoyle. “Take Romiszowski’s box for example,” she said. “Let us think of it as the doctoral program I am in.

I enter the program rather clueless as to what lies ahead... Well, that is not truly true because I have done some research by reading the website and I am already somewhat familiar with the faculty from my Master’s program. But, I still want to know more about expectations, what I need to do to become successful and to complete my degree while at the same time knowing many students never do complete. Where in this doctoral degree program ‘box’ may I find the information I’m seeking? Everyone is so busy. And, if everyone is so busy with their own work, then they don’t have time for, or care about, the newcomer. A newcomer needs a mentor, someone who can guide in the system, the newcomer needs a support system from existing doctoral



students working in a community of practice taking care of the newcomer.”

“Are you following me gargoyle?” she said and looked closely at his face. He nodded lightly. “What goes into the box may be a student wanting to succeed,” she continued. “After all, deciding to go for a doctoral degree is an important decision. It’s a journey. And the outcome is a terminal degree, the highest connotation of education we have today. However, the inside of the box shapes the outcome. What comes out is colored by the inside of the box.” She lowered the box and continued, “So, as you see gargoyle, I think we do want to know some things about what’s inside any particular box when we enter – so we have a chance to reach the goals we set for ourselves and those around us.”

She stopped silent for a moment and looked at him.

“Was that too complicated?” she said. He now looked like he was wondering what she had been talking about. “Think about the box as your gargoyle family,” she went on, tapping the cardboard box with her left index finger. The gargoyle stretched and perked up when he heard that. “What if Lady Gargoyle doesn’t come home from her seventeen-month Gargoyle Fall Tour? Life on your turret would become much different for you wouldn’t it? Your family system would change dramatically.”

“It would, it would!” exclaimed the gargoyle, with severe pain in his voice.

“We are all part of both small systems like our family system, bigger systems like our work and local environment, further tied to larger systems like government and nation. Even at a larger level our planet is connected in the solar system with our sun and the other planets – all that are part of but one system in larger galactic systems. Thinking in systems allows us a holistic picture of us, how we fit in, how we play a part, and how we contribute either positively to, or affect things negatively in our system and the systems surrounding us.”

“This semester I read a book by Donella Meadows called Thinking in Systems,” said the graduate student. “There is a picture of a slinky on

the cover. Meadows explained in the book what makes the slinky bounce up and down – and the answer she said, “clearly lies within the slinky itself. The hand that manipulate it suppress or release some behavior that is latent within the structure of the spring (Meadows, 2008, p.1). It’s the relationship between the structure and behavior, Meadows (2008) explained.”

“Gargoyle, I mentioned ‘drift to low performance’ (Meadows, 2008) a moment ago. There is this amazing story that Meadows described in her book called the ‘Boiled Frog Syndrome’.”

The Gargoyle lifted his left eyebrow to an amazing height and his eyes looked like popping corn. He sneezed and frowned. He did not like frogs at all. “Tell me about it,” he said under his breath while wiping his nose with the inside of his huge paw.

“There is a state of a system called equilibrium. Equilibrium is death according to Hutchins (1996), a state of no activity, neither growth nor movement – just rest – a static state where all ‘[the system’s] energy is gone’ (p. 165). It’s highly undesirable. Instead, we want a system in some healthy movement. Sometimes the movement becomes negative as actors provide it feedback, sometimes positive. Meadows said ‘there is a distinction between the actual system state and the perceived state. The actor tends to believe bad news more than good news. As actual performance varies, the best results are dismissed as aberrations, the worst stay in the memory. The actor thinks things are worse than they really are’ (Meadows, 2008, p.122). And, as Meadows added, ‘to complete this tragic archetype, the desired state of the system is influenced by the perceived state. Standards aren’t absolute. When perceived performance slips, the goal is allowed to slip’ (p. 122).”

“Here’s Meadows’ retold frog story,” the grad student said, and went on. “While a frog that jumps into hot water jumps quickly back out because the water is hot, a frog that jumps into cold water quite happily sits in the water. As the cold water then gradually is heated, the frog is eventually boiled as in its mind the water is getting a little bit warmer



yes, however, it's not much warmer than it was a moment ago (p. 123). This is the spiraling drift to low performance: Things were better before – this is as good as it will get now. This is what Meadows means leads to 'lower and lower expectations, lower efforts, lower performance' (p. 123)."

"But think about it gargoyle," she continued, "Think about my degree program again. If everyone just lulls around thinking things were better before when the program was new and everyone was helping each other but this is as good as it will get now, they are letting standards drift and low performance becomes the result. It's the hand that manipulate the slinky that can make the system bounce back, it's the reaching for the stars and setting goals absolute that brings about positive shift. It's the finding the balance and the community of people that all want to contribute to the success of not just themselves but everyone within the system. That is what we should aspire for. We don't want to be far from equilibrium where the system is at risk for crash or at equilibrium where there is no movement. We want to be 'in a state of homeostasis or steady state' (Hutchins, 1996, p.164) – a healthy state of constant change – a balancing."

"What are thinking gargoyle?" She said as she tried to interpret the wrinkled lined on his forehead. He had been sitting quiet and thoughtful.

"I think you study too much grad student," he said. "I think I need to go back to my job of balancing on my turret. You give me much too much to think about," he said.

He hopped down from the shelf and shook his leathery old wings, peeked over his shoulder at the computer screen where the letters the graduate students had keyed in on the keyboard formed words, and the words formed sentences in an imaginary and endless horizontal dance. She leaned down and whispered something into his large leathery ear and the smirky smile re-appeared on his face that for a while had turned very serious.

Twas the peerless and eerie gargoyle with his peculiar smirk smile hopping back out through the open window, scooting back across the street, and climbing back up to his hideout with his filifjonk

toy. He was a purebred creature, a muscular medieval fellow, always ready to pounce on any unsuspecting passersby. He nodded to the graduate student standing by her window looking after him across the street. "Boiled gargoyle syndrome," he frowned. "I'll keep my standards absolute," he said to himself, then picked up his job of keeping his eyes out for trouble ahead.

Twas close to Christmas.

Twas the dramaturgical communicative action submitted by a graduate student to her professor at the end of the semester, explaining her intersubjective understanding of systems.

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# Speech or Language Impairments

By Antonio Ellis – Howard University

In the book that he authored in 2009, Bryan Pitts in his words, wrote a quote that I believe represents the intrinsic realities and feelings of the mass majority of African American males who stutter. He said, "In a new environment without the comfort of people who knew me well, I slipped back into my pattern of silence to avoid the shame of stammering and stuttering." (Pitts, 2009, p. 99)

As I reflect on my epistemological foundations, the power of the message behind those words reverberates within my consciousness. I am reminded of the my lived experiences as an African American male who stutters at academic institutions, in addition to attending more a decade of speech therapy in urban schools with other African American males who stuttered. Now as a doctoral student in the field of education, who aims to lay a new foundation within the academy, I am challenged to revisit my epistemological commencement as a way to evaluate my sources of knowledge, perspectives on the world, and more importantly my beliefs about educational spaces for African American males who are speech and language impaired, particularly focusing on those who stutter.

I share a very similar background with this population of males. Although we may share various experiences due to location, support systems, parental involvement, safety nets, advocacy, self-perceptions, among several other attributes seeks to be uncovered in this study. In light of witnessing the level of embarrassment, humiliation, depression, and marginalization experienced by African American males who stuttered at educational institutions, I am propelled to conduct a deeper investigation in support of this minority population who is rarely discussed, studied, or noticed. As a child who avoided verbally talking because of my stuttering disability, I navigated school buildings in the urban communities in which I was raised, dodging being teased and bullied by teachers and students alike. And now as an adult educator, I endure the pain of seeing African American male students who stutter in primary schools endure the same experiences, as well as

witnessing how stuttering have direct impacts on youth and adults males ability to gain employment in the certain fields, regardless of their educational attainment.

As a formally educated African American male who experience stuttering on a daily bases, I represent the potential brilliance that is embedded within my peers who are seemingly marginalized within various educational spaces. In light of being blessed to have had a high school band director, and a pastor who in my early development, recognized my potential abilities and nurtured my dreams and desires, I have been able to supersede boundaries that many people set for me because of my stuttering disability. My high school band director always demanded that I never give up in the face of adversity and what I perceived to be hopelessness. Therefore I am motivated by my fierce since of self- empowerment, desire to empower others who are marginalized, a passion for educational achievement, and a sense of responsibility to mobilize those who are silenced and have lost the strength to speak up for themselves. These extremely challenging experiences have played significant roles in my development as a budding scholar and they provide meaning to ways educational institutions understand African American males who experience stuttering.

My desire to advocate for marginalized groups of people has a sturdy religious base. The majority of people are not aware that my first advanced degree is in theological studies. Besides my high school band director, my second mentor was my pastor. I sought a theological degree hoping the gain a better understanding of my experiences as a stutterer. During my matriculation in divinity school, I gained a deeper understanding of my experiences by studying the writings of contemporary authors such as: Cain Hope Felder, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Marcus Garvey, Reinhold Niehbuhr, and Fannie Lou Hamer. Regardless of their various perspectives, each of them dedicated and



committed their lives to standing on behalf of minority groups who were marginalized by dominant cultures. Therefore my spiritual, religious, and theological base is representative of an extensive amount of social and Black Nationalist movements who were dedicated to altering racism, feminism, dominance, sexism, ageism, and White supremacy within the U.S context.

It is my belief that one of the most influential tools for providing positive change in the life of disenfranchised populations is education and the obtainment of knowledge. However, there is a large possibility that an education model embedded in fluency dominated cultures, where the "gift of gab" is used to maintain social and economic power can be seen as a threat to the dominant culture. Those who are non-fluent often live in poverty and are positioned at the bottom due to the lack of reasonable accommodations, patience, and acceptance by those who can outtalk them. To this extent, educators in urban institutions rarely highlight African American males who have excelled in various careers so that male students who stutter can gain inspiration. To only teach a child, particularly an African American male who stutters, the accomplishments and contributions of non-stutterers leave a sense of doubt and hopelessness that he can achieve his goals in life. Human beings tend to be motivated by what we can see, hear, taste, touch, and smell. The absence of mention lowers our expectations, therefore diminishing our idea of possibilities. For example, in a doctoral program, students are motivated annually at commencement ceremonies because they see other graduating, which shows a sign of possibilities. Therefore, I have been challenged to respond to a pressing question: What is the purpose of urban educational institutions and how has it helped or hindered African American males who stutter?

This question has been extremely instrumental in my decision to become an academic, educational leader, and forerunner on behalf of people who stutter, however, focusing on African American males who the sake of this study. My greatest accomplishment this far has been my presence at urban school buildings, higher education

classrooms, and academic conferences. As an educator and advocate, I am charged to motivate students who are living the same realities that I did as a child, and even as an adult.

My obligation is to assist them in developing strength and boldness to pursue their dreams in the face of the multiple adversities that we all encounter. I have had the privilege and honor of meeting some of the most talented, intelligent, and brightest minds who are silent voices in society.

They possessed an undeniable glow that demands attention and validation, in which I wholeheartedly gave. While spending time with them in classrooms, I reflected on my own experiences and realities. It is because of my students, that I realized that significance of my own life history and now I embrace healing through advocating and unveiling the story of those who face the same obstacles we endure on a daily bases. It is for this reason that I focus my dissertation research on the life histories of African American males who, like myself, have endured educational, social, and environmental challenges within institutions of learning.

As my life mirrors that of many students who were challenged academically addressing the needs of African- American males who have a stuttering disability within school environments in school, I am deeply engaged and immersed in addressing the needs of African- American males who have a stuttering disability within school environments. Much of my success in school is due is due largely to my reflection of how my high school band director supported and guided me when I was a high school student.

His presence for me provided a positive role model of Black manhood and a source of motivation. However, prior to high school, my experiences with African American men are in a severe contrast, which led me to experiencing low self-esteem and a lack of self-worth.

As a former employee in urban schools, and a doctoral student in urban education, I realize that many African American males who stutter are in search of a positive male role model who they can identify and share their stories with. The personal relationships I developed with these African American males as a researcher,



educator, peer, and stutterer have been extremely rewarding throughout the years and I have come to understand and embrace our significance in each other lives. I realize that a large majority of my appeal from their perspectives is deeply engraved in the act that I am emotionally and culturally connected and personally invested in their lives and well-being. I was reared in communities that are identical to theirs and I understood and identified with their struggles, concerns, pains, and cultural codes. Using my personal stories, experiences, and humor, I worked diligently to relate to their everyday lives.

More recently, I have encountered a few African American educators and school administrators who mentioned that they were once stutterers, and are interested in seeking ways to create a better learning environment for students who are speech and language impaired, which includes those who stutter. They too were able to see the advocacy needs for persons who are speech and language impaired. But more importantly, they have expressed a significant understanding of the educational and social struggles that is very likely to be a result of having the disability. Therefore, their interest in speech or language impairments transcends the common practices of simply promoting more speech therapy. In light of my upbringing as a student of social and political movements (e.g. Black Panther Party and Civil Rights), has placed in me a fierce sense of urgency in problematizing systems of inequality, suppression, oppression, and marginalization. Therefore, my intellectual contribution to the field of education will also be to give support to the expansion of novel, innovative, and critical theoretical frameworks. Cornel West (1993) in his article, *The Dilemma of the Black Intellectual* refers to a new "regime of truth" which challenges scholars of color to analyze and critically examine the unique experiences of African-Americans. I have developed a deep commitment to transforming schools such that more African American males who stutter will graduate and become productive and respected citizens in society. Therefore, my research focuses specifically on revealing their stories and developing systems of support, and offer possibilities that may work

toward helping them to be successful in academic institutions and in the larger society. An examination of these "possibilities for success" is meant to prospectively be a catalyst and prototype for disrupting educational institutional practices in regards to how speech or language impaired students are included and/or not included. My goal is deconstruct and challenge the status quo educational spaces that have produced decades of negative experiences stories that are told by persons who stutter, and to identify new systems that work for this population. Scheurich & Young (1997), West (1993), and Dillard (2000) all urge Black scholars to be bold enough to embrace their stance as African Americans within the academy a deliberately focus on the mobility of Black people, if they desire to do so. In the midst of investigating and crafting educational scholarship which gives direct attention to African American male students who stutter, I hope that additional research paradigms and peer review scholarship will emerge addressing and alleviating the challenges, while shedding light on the success stories of African American males who stutter.

Through my research, I will investigate the educational beliefs of this unique population who, I assert, are committed to soliciting advocacy and promoting positivity and awareness among educators, peers, and the society at large. My research will deeply examine the beliefs and cultural practices of those speech and language impaired persons, while concurrently working to elevate social awareness and providing them with resources they need to manifest. Nelson Mandela asserts that "they all possess the glory of God – not just some of them, but each and every one of them."

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