

FALL 2012

CONNECTIONS

AERA Graduate Student Council

In This Issue:

In-Progress Research Call.....	pg. 2
Message from the Chair.....	pg. 3
Message from the Chair Elect.....	pg. 5
Message from the Past Chair.....	pg. 6
Reflection of Brown Lecture and CCM.....	pg. 7
Program in San Francisco.....	pg. 8
GSC Student Paper by Carleen Carey.....	pg. 9
Division Updates.....	pg. 13
GSC Student Paper by Stuart Rhoden.....	pg. 22
Thank you from the GSC.....	pg. 25



SAVE THE DATE: Annual Meeting
April 27- May 1, 2013 San Francisco, CA

Fall Newsletter December 2012

This newsletter reflects on events that took place in the Summer and Fall of 2012 including the Brown Lecture and Coordinated Committee Meeting in Washington DC.

Spring Newsletter March 2013

This newsletter reflects on events that took place in the Winter of 2013 and the planning involved in the Spring 2013 Annual Meeting in San Francisco, CA.

Bryce Walker

Senior Newsletter Editor

Laureen Adams

Junior Newsletter Editor

Important Message to All GSC Members

The AERA Graduate Student Council is pleased to announce the first 2013 In-Progress Research Session to be held during the Annual Meeting, which will take place in San Francisco, CA April 27 – May 1, 2013. We are seeking graduate students who are interested in sharing their in progress research with an audience of interested researchers.

Participants will prepare a summary of the research project by January 18, 2013, which will be submitted to the panel of reviewers prior to the In-Progress Research Roundtable Session to ensure adequate time for thoughtful feedback to participants. These should be submitted via email as Microsoft Word Documents (*.doc or *.docx files) to GSC2013AERA@gmail.com and are due by January 18, 2013, 11:59 p.m. EST. Late entries will not be accepted.

In-progress works may include research proposals, literature reviews, conceptual-theoretical pieces, and research projects not completed. They must adhere to the Annual Meeting Theme: Education & Poverty. The in-progress research proposal should include the following:

- A one-paragraph abstract
- Goal: What is the project's goal?
- Conceptual Framework: What theoretical bases are being used?
- Background: Briefly discuss relevant research.
- Research Questions: What are the research questions that you plan to answer during this study?
- Research Design: Provide specifications of the research (i.e., sample, instrumentation, procedures, analyses, simulation environment).
- A figure or conceptual model (if appropriate)
- Preliminary Results (if any)
- Impact: What is the potential impact of the project on the field?
- Future Research: Briefly discuss plans for future development of the research program.
- Limitations: Briefly discuss potential limitations of the research.
- Timeline: What is the timeline for accomplishing the activities with the in-progress research?

The in-progress research work should not exceed 8 pages single-spaced (1-inch margins, no smaller than 11-point font, Times New Roman). This is inclusive of all figures, tables, and appendices but not references.

In addition, please include in the following demographic information within the text of your email. This information will not be shared with reviewers:

- Name
- Institution
- Year in Graduate School
- Research Interests
- Advisor
- Divisions Associated With (if any)

Judging of the research proposals will be based on a rubric and will focus on how well the research project is related to the conference theme, the strength and importance of the research question(s), strength of the conceptual framework/background, the strength of the methodological model and proposed analyses of the study, and the grounding in previous research. Some questions the reviewers will be considering include:

To what extent does the work show an in-depth knowledge of relevant research in the field? To what extent does it display an adequate grounding in theory? To what extent are the design and methods appropriate to answer the research question(s)? To what extent does the work display strong authorship skills, with clear organization and structure?

Proposals will undergo the peer-review process. As such, efforts should be made by those submitting to remove references to the author. Those submitting proposals will know by *February 22, 2013 *if their proposal was selected to participate in the In-Progress Research Session. *Please note that preference will be given to first and second year graduate students who are not working on their thesis/dissertation.

Participants will be responsible for preparing a handout and a fifteen minute presentation, which will be presented at the In-Progress Research Roundtable Session. It is expected that participants will register for the Annual Meeting, will attend the In-Progress Research Roundtable session, and will be available during the session to discuss and answer questions related to the research project.

On behalf of the Graduate Student Council, we urge you to consider this professional opportunity. If you have any questions, contact us at GSC2013AERA@gmail.com. We look forward to showcasing the collective proposals of the next generation of scholars.



Message from the Chair: Cathy A.R. Brant

2) Life on the Other Side: Recent Graduates Discuss their Experiences on the Other Side of the Desk.

This session is geared towards helping graduate students, especially those nearing graduation, gain a better understanding of life on the other side of the graduate program. Recent graduates will share their experiences finishing up their graduate programs and what career choices, besides academia, are available to them. Topics to be discussed during this session include (but are not limited to): Getting Your Dissertation/Thesis Published, The Job Search, and Life after Graduate School.

3) Our Stories: Women of Color in the Academy

The goal of this session is to bring together female scholars of color and graduate students. The session highlights the work of several women of color. They will discuss their research interest and current research projects. In addition to talking about their academic work, these scholars will focus on the highlights and struggles of being women of color in the academy, as graduate students and as faculty.

After a riveting presentation at the Brown Lecture by Vanessa Siddle Walker, The GSC held their annual planning meeting as a part of AERA's Coordinated Committee Meeting. During the CCM, the Graduate Student Council began to edit and revise the Policies & Procedures Manual. We continued the discussion about the needs of graduate students for leadership opportunities with the GSC as well as in Divisions and SIG's, as well as strategized ways to provide graduate students with more mentorship opportunities. As a part of this meeting, we also met with other committees and Individuals, including AERA President William Tierney, AERA Program Chair Kris Renn, The SIG Executive Committee and Annual Meeting Policy & Procedures Committee. At the conclusion of the CCM, I attended an AERA council meeting. At this meeting we discussed some specific for AERA's centennial.

1) Continuing the Conversation: Doing LGBTQI and Ally Work in the Ph.D. Program and Beyond

This session is a continuation of the Chair-Elect session that was held last year. The session is an attempt to build a community of learners between these two groups. In this session, the panelists and the participants will have an opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges of doing LGBTQI and ally work in Ph.D. programs, the academy, and the community at large as well as meet in small breakout groups to discuss in more detail each individual's work.

Participants will become familiar with national survey databases, how to approach organizations to request data access, the ins and outs of formulating data collaborations, navigating MOUs and publishing concerns, as well as other useful insider tips.

GSC members will benefit from the experience of panelists representing different types of agencies and sharing their experiences obtaining data as researchers and former graduate students. Publishing and completing a dissertation are major concerns of graduate students. Success at these activities requires access to data sources. While some schools and advisors afford students access to data, students who are from schools with limited resources or whose research interests differ from their advisors' often struggle to gain access to appropriate data to address their research questions. Additionally, refining collaborations and networking skills related to data will benefit any graduate student looking to build a research program upon dissertation completion.

Panelists:

Felice J. Levine

American Educational Research Association
flevine@aera.net

Michael W. Stetter

Delaware Department of Education
MWStetter@comcast.net

Evelyn Belton-Kocher

Saint Paul Public Schools
evelyn.belton-kocher@spps.org

Karen Elizabeth Banks

Data Detectives
datadetectives@comcast.net

II. Don't let lack of funding stop you from achieving your research goals, undertaking rigorous projects, and realizing your big ideas. This panel will provide the tips you need to obtain the funding you want even in today's tough budget conditions to help you secure funding for your dissertation, research fellowships, and emerging career as a researcher. Topics will include trends in education funding, researching and identifying potential funding sources, understanding current federal guidelines for writing winning grants, developing focused and realistic budgets, understanding general review practices, addressing key points for reviewers, common mistakes, and how to stand

out against your competitors.

The purpose of the panel is to help graduate students enter the arena of grant writing by providing advice on elements critically important to crafting a successful grant proposal. Participants will share their experiences developing successful grant proposals, experiences reviewing proposals, advice specific to major funding sources (e.g. The Spencer Foundation, IES, and AERA), grants for large-scale secondary data sets, and typical downfalls of new applicants. Most of the session will be devoted to an interactive question and answer session with attendees to maximize their benefit.

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

Many graduate students are on tight budgets and receive limited funding that often comes with strings attached such as demands on their time. Grants are one way to alleviate some of this stress and allow for more rigorous exploration. As students transition to roles as independent researchers, grant writing frequently seems daunting, as specific guidance regarding securing funding is not a part of many programs or fostered by advisors. This panel will provide a forum where graduate students can ask experts about lingering concerns and learn to more efficiently manage the proposal process. Familiarizing themselves with the dos and don'ts of grant writing will help graduate students remove a major obstacle to realizing their research agenda.

Panelists:

William H. Schmidt
Michigan State University
bschmidt@msu.edu

Meredith J. Larson

National Center for Education Research
meredithjlarson@gmail.com

Chandra Muller

The University of Texas - Austin
cmuller@soc.utexas.edu

James A. Griffin

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
James.Griffin@nih.gov

Andrea Conklin Bueschel

The Spencer Foundation
abueschel@spencer.org

Thanks,

Cathy A.R. Brant

cathyarbrant@gmail.com



Message from the Chair Elect: Jennifer Carinci

graduate students, find out about AERA sessions relevant to graduate students, and get some tips for navigating the meeting. Many new AERA members are overwhelmed by the size of the program and amount of Divisions and SIGs at AERA. Therefore, I would love to know what advice you have for newbies or resources you want to see in the Graduate Student Resource Room or online.

- Please contact me if you would like to help with
- connecting grad students to places of interest in Philadelphia
 - connecting relevant Philadelphia educators or education organizations to collaborate with us
 - other ideas for linking research and practice
 - organizing or participating in a community service project
 - meeting programming
 - better systems of spreading GSC news to your campus
 - resources you think the GSC should have on our site or available at the meeting
 - other opportunities or ideas to help graduate students
 - items you would like us to bring up with the AERA Council

Fireside Chats

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

Much of graduate school is devoted to developing skills needed for formulating research questions, synthesizing prior literature, and analyzing data. However, often very little, if any, time is devoted to the practical side of where to find data to answer your research questions, how to form partnerships with organizations to request access, or obtaining permission to collect data. Therefore, panelists representing federal, state, and district agencies, as well as research organizations and independent consultants have been assembled to share best practices regarding accessing data.

I look forward to working with you,
Jennifer Carinci
jcarinc1@jhu.edu

Greetings fellow graduate students,

Even as we prepare for San Francisco, the Graduate Student Council is looking forward to the 2014 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. In the coming year I will be working closely with my newly appointed officers for next year Marisa Del Campo, Program Chair, and Dorothy Hines, Community Leader to work on ideas for improving the AERA experience for GSC members. In order to be successful in meeting your needs, we want your help! Thank you to the new AERA members who have reached out to me asking for opportunities to get involved. Many of you did so upon advice from your advisors that the best way to familiarize yourselves with AERA is to volunteer. I couldn't agree more, considering this is a reason why I decided to get involved. We will be organizing committees of volunteers for various tasks and would love for you to join our team. As Program Chair, Marisa's main task will be to put together the meeting program sessions geared towards graduate students. These sessions range from professional development, content exploration, and career panels to a community service project and local artist and culture sessions to help you take a break from the conference and meet other students. Dorothy will be working hard to establish connections with teachers and educational organizations in Philadelphia, maintain and grow a network of graduate student campus liaisons, and archive the GSC's work to better serve you in her work as Community Leader. I will be working on our Graduate Student Resource Center which is a physical space at this year's meeting for you to come meet GSC members, network with other



Message from the Past Chair: Nicholas D. Hartlep

Secretary-Historian

1. Chester Tadeja, Pepperdine University
2. Christine Hardigree, University of Virginia
3. Ashley McKinney, University of Utah
4. Barbara Escobar, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Newsletter Editor

1. Thomas Huston, Indiana University-Bloomington
2. Liza Renee Lizcano, Stanford University
3. Lisa De La Rue, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
4. Maryann Krikorian, Chapman University

Please participate in the voting by re-registering as an AERA member and submitting your online ballot when it becomes available in January.

Along with an elections committee (Karia Manning, Laureen Adams, Erika Bullock, Dorthy Hines), I carried out a successful call for candidates for the upcoming AERA GSC elections. Below is the final roster. Each candidate will have his/her biography and a brief statement published in the Educational Researcher journal.

Chair Elect

1. Betty Jean Usher-Tate, University of Nebraska Lincoln
2. Richard Barajas, University of Iowa
3. Ashley Patterson, The Ohio State University

Web-Secretary

1. Peggy Shannon-Baker, University of Cincinnati
2. Vanessa Monterosa, University of Southern California
3. Benedict Lai, University of Connecticut
4. Akisha Jones, University of Delaware



Fireside Chat Theme:

Life as a Professor: Key Insights from a Diverse Group of Faculty Members"

Fireside Chat Info:

This will be of interest for soon-to-be graduates looking for an academic position as well as graduate students and junior faculty who are interested in learning strategies to become a more effective writer. The demands that come with being a professor are intense and "Life as a Professor" is surely a fireside chat emerging scholars will not want to miss. Successful faculty members will share their insights and strategies in how to become the scholar-practitioner one aspires to be—this includes publishing writing, and the transition from graduate school into the professoriate.

Reflection of Brown Lecture and Coordinated Committee Meeting 2012- Washington, DC.

Washington D.C. is beautiful, especially in the fall. As several GSC members walked from the hotel to the Brown Lecture, I was struck by the east coast weather (slightly warm), the fast, but not rushed pace of the city and the clean streets.

I was not entirely sure what to expect at the Brown Lecture. As a follower of Dr. Siddle Walker's work, I was eager to hear her lecture. She discussed the ways in which Black educators were central to the Brown v. Board case. In fact, it was the work that these educators did that served as data sets for the NAACP and the legal team to use as evidence to propel this case. What I appreciate most about her work, in addition to the thorough historical research, is the way in which she humanizes history. Siddle Walker incorporated images of the places and faces in this history, which yielded a powerful narrative. I left the lecture feeling even more committed to education and even more appreciative of educators committed to social justice.

The next morning marked the beginning of the CCM. It was an early morning, especially for my jet lagged, Pacific time self. The morning began in a large meeting room filled with scholars and graduate students. We broke into our "teams" and that was my first time seeing all of the GSC student representatives in person. We spent some time introducing ourselves and checking in. Then we talked about what we will do at the Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

The GSC is an excellent resource at the Annual Meeting. Last year was my first time attending and I went to the GSC room first. I was able to get some guidance in navigating the conference and found out about some very interesting Fireside Chats. Plus, it is



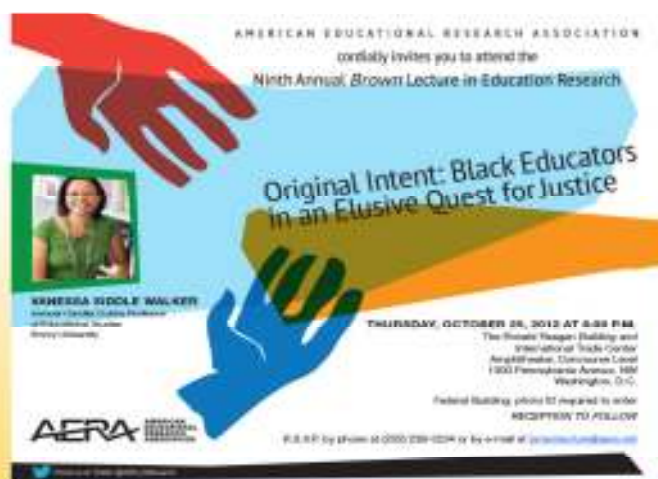
a great place to find out how to get involved in the GSC and network with fellow grad students.

The GSC was particularly vocal about how to use more technology at the Annual Meeting. We also discussed the ways in which we can make the sessions more interactive and engaging. Fortunately, the other committee members agreed. On our final day, we were assigned different groups to brainstorm on particular topics. Bryce and I were assigned to the Technology and Publications group.

Great news! AERA is committed to diversifying the Annual

Meetings. This year, we will have TedTalks, film screenings, a short film competition, and Facebook, Twitter, and apps to enhance our meeting experience.

Laureen Adams-Lateef
Jr. Newsletter Editor





Response to 2013 Annual Meeting Theme on Education & Poverty: Theory, Research, Policy, and Praxis

Education has long been seen as a way out of poverty in the United States and globally, yet 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. It affects the lives of students, families, and communities across generations. Our goal at the 2013 AERA Annual Meeting is to consider the relationships of education and poverty from multiple perspectives and through diverse methodologies. We conceive the theme "Education and Poverty" broadly to include the ways that education theory, research, policy, and praxis contribute to alleviating economic, intellectual, and moral poverty. The purpose of this conference is not to require a doctrinaire adherence to one or another viewpoint. Rather, the intent is to have us come together as an academic community to discuss, debate, and consider the relationships of education and poverty.

To stimulate discussion of the conference theme before and during the 2013 Annual Meeting, we invited colleagues with diverse perspectives on education and poverty to write short responses to the theme. We begin with the six authors featured here and will add six more in November.



We want you to join the discussion: Read the essays, listen to the authors answer questions about their perspectives, and leave your comments.*

Bill Tierney,
AERA President

Kristen Renn
Program Chair

* To read these articles and make your comments, go to:
<http://www.aera.net/AnnualMeetingOtherEvents/Responsestothe2013AnnualMeetingTheme/tabid/13496/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/1173/Education-and-Poverty-Theory-Research-Policy-and-Praxis.aspx>

RACE, READING, AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN ADOLESCENT LITERACIES:

USING THE MULTIPLE WORLDS MODEL TO EXAMINE PEER WORLD TO SCHOOL WORLD
LITERACY TRANSITIONSBY CARLEEN CAREY
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY*

Literacy researchers have explored urban African-American adolescents' language and literacies through many lenses and found the continued "underachievement" of African-American adolescent youth to be socially structured, not innate (Hill, 2009; Kinloch, 2011; Kirkland, 2011; Morrell, 2007). Scholars have sought to better understand how identity and literacy intersect in these youths' lives in multiple ways, but have yet to examine this question using the Multiple Worlds Typology (Phelan, Davidson, and Yu, 1998). Using this framework may provide deeper insights into the connections between positive racial identity in the peer world and literacy achievement in the school world.

Through examining the literature on language and literacy practices, this analytic literature review seeks to fill this gap. It also seeks to understand how urban adolescents have been situated in the discourse on literacy achievement in schools. Specifically, I aim to answer the following questions:

- What explanations have researchers offered for the disproportionate literacy underachievement of African-American adolescents? How does identity factor into these explanations?
- What key literacy strategies have proven successful with African-American students, and why?

Theoretical Framework

To best answer the questions above, I will use the theoretical framework of Phelan, Davidson, and Yu's (1998) Multiple Worlds Typology to explore Black Racial Identity (BRI), specifically as it relates to African-American adolescents (Ducuir-Gunby, 2009). To define BRI, Decuir-Gunby (2009) suggests that "...in the case of African-Americans... BRI can be described as the attitudes and beliefs that an African-American has about his or her belonging to the black race individually, the black race collectively, and their perceptions of other racial groups" (Ducuir-Gunby, 2009, p.103). In the context of urban schools, BRI can influence the students' perception of him or her self, and school performance. BRI, as a key component of culture, can also influence the transitions that students make from the worlds of their family, school, and peers. Drawing on notions of Cultural Compatibility Theory, the Multiple Worlds Typology suggests that differences in cultural knowledge and behaviors become apparent "...when schools require children to act in ways that are incongruent with what they have learned at home" which results in "misunderstandings, problems, and conflicts" (Phelan et al, 1998, p.10). To explain why some students are able to manage or avoid these problems successfully while others continue to be confounded by them, the concept of social boundaries and social borders in social worlds, such as home, school, and peer is useful. Social boundaries are sites of cultural difference, which are politically neutral but in which there are culturally different standards of appropriate response. In contrast, social borders are "politically charged sites of cultural difference, in which only one set of appropriate responses is rewarded" (Phelan et al, 1998, p.10). Theorists such as Erickson suggest that the more rigid borders can be converted into permeable boundaries when the personal and psychic cost to adapting behaviors is low (Erickson in Phelan et al, 1998). While the Multiple Worlds Typology seeks to understand how individual navigate multiple borders, for the purposes of this work, I will focus on the sociocultural border between peer world literacy practices and school world literacy practices.

Identity in Schools: The Adolescent Literacy "Crisis" and African-American Language Race and the Literacy "Crisis"

The adolescent literacy "crisis" is thought to be the result of the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk*, which states that "About 13 percent of all 17-year-olds in the United States can be considered functionally illiterate...functional illiteracy among minority youth may run as high as 40 percent (as quoted in Marshall, in Christianbury, Bomer, and Smagorinsky, 2009)". More recently, reports such as "Reading Next" suggest that "about 70 percent of students entering the fifth and ninth grades in 2006 are reading below grade level" (Biancarosa and Snow, 2004). The racial dimensions of this argument are later highlighted by Ladson-Billings (2010), who suggests, "it is no surprise that children of color, particularly African Americans...regularly fail to become proficient readers. What may be surprising is that fact that talk of race is rarely combined with discussions of student academic performance, even when congruence exists between the two"(Ladson-Billings, in McCarty, 2010). Here, it is apparent that there are racially-influenced differences in literacy achievement, which suggest that race may be a productive facet for examining the intersection of identity and literacy, and a possible site of information on how to cross borders between the world of school-based literacies and the peer worlds of students. In defining the "literacy crisis", educational researchers point to the myriad of studies, including those by the National Governor's Association and International Reading Association (IRA), to suggest that the current definitions of literacy need go beyond reading and writing to acquire academic knowledge (Alvermann, in Christianbury, et al., 2009). Alvermann (2009) also highlights the importance of characterizing adolescents as active agents who read for their own purposes in their own worlds. Further, Street (1995) argues that an autonomous definition of literacy, that is one that sees literacy as a discreet skill, distinct from the cultural and social context, and therefore, not a cultural practice. In addition, the work of Kirkland (2011) highlights youth's awareness of, and responses to, the ideologies bound up in the act of reading. . In all three works, we see that the definition of literacy is one that is hotly contested, and may even be widening to include the practices and perspectives of African-American urban youth.

Languages in Adolescents' Literacies

Any discussion on African-American Language in schools would be remiss if it did not begin with the ovarian (not seminal) work of Prof. Geneva Smitherman. In the article "English teacher, why you be doin' the thangs you don't do?", Smitherman (1972) highlights the role of English teachers in attempts to eradicate the home language (i.e. African-American Language) both in speaking and in writing in the classroom, thereby creating a rift between the home and school worlds, and disabling AAL as a cultural resource for learning for urban youth. Calling attention to the meaning-making aspect of literacy instead of the "dialect problem", Smitherman (1972, p.32) proposes a model of English teaching which centers on "girding" African-American students to effectively cope with racism in their lives, thus integrating the peer, home, and family worlds with the school world. This model also focuses on reading as means to ameliorate the disparities resulting from not using pedagogies and curricula consistent with African-American students' language, which has linguistic roots in West African languages and is distinctly different from Dominant American English (DAE) (Paris, 2010). Thus, pedagogies which respect and utilize AAL as a positive resource to connect the home and school worlds of AAL-speaking students can benefit students, an idea which stands in contrast to historic and current hegemonic misconceptions about AAL, and the multiethnic communities who use AAL, including urban adolescents. The work of Smitherman (1973) and Paris (2010) clearly establishes that AAL itself is a shared language which multiple and plural ethnic communities use for communication.

The issue of language in literacy is one that has held the interest of researchers for more than a decade as a possible site of prejudicial treatment for African-American urban youth, as evidenced by the 1979 *Martin Luther King Elementary School Children vs. Ann Arbor School District Board* case, in which the school district of Ann Arbor, Michigan used students' language as a basis for assigning them to special education (Smitherman, 2006). In essence, this case proved that schools treat the language of African-American youth as a negative barrier to education, instead of a bridge between the home and school worlds, and a possible resource and base for becoming bilingual (Smitherman, 2006). In Alim's (2005) "Critical Language Awareness", the author argues that language discrimination is manifested in the re-segregation of schools that ignore the linguistic diversity, and the pedagogical potential, of the African-American Language speech community. Further, Kirkland and Jackson (2009, in Scott, Straker, Katz, 2009), argue that educators need to consider the contrastive analysis approach to teaching ELA, instead of the one way, code-switching from AAL to AE because it communicates a lack of value in AAL to students, Black and White. What is clear from these works is that African-American Language is an important aspect of race and so identity, which has received negative treatment from schools. It is possible that this negative treatment may result in African-American students feeling that their language is not as valuable as others, and this may have a negative effect on academic outcomes. As a result, some African-American students may be reluctant to engage in speaking African-American Language in school, although literacy researchers have proved that AAL features such as signifying can be valuable paths to academic skills like literary interpretation (Lee,). Using the Multiple Worlds typology, we can see that peer-world language may be an empowering resource for students' transitions to the school-world in some instances, yet without teachers who transparently collaborate with students around language, this resource is difficult to activate. In a situation where students who are adept and comfortable with code-switching between AAL and Dominant American English (DAE) may choose to speak AAL to render a rigid border a permeable boundary, such as establishing personal rapport by using a peer-world language with a teacher they wish to become familiar with, this language facility can be a resource. In contrast, students who are not comfortable speaking AAL may not be able to capitalize on their language in the same way, and thus the peer-world and school-world border remains rigid and impermeable.

It is important to note that in today's multilingual and multi-ethnic urban classrooms, many students speak AAL, with or without being a member of the racial group (Paris, 2009). While some students share AAL as a means of communicating membership in both ethnic and social groups in addition to race membership, other students also use other home languages, such as Samoan for the same effect. Educational researchers have handled this language diversity in many ways, and scholars such as Gutierrez and Orellana (2006), have suggested that such diversity is a site where deficit-oriented models can continue, or profit-models may flourish. Further, they argue that the major difference between these two models lies in the ways that researchers shape the "problem" of the English-language learners (Gutierrez and Orellana, 2006, p.27).

Further, a better understanding of how students make choices of when to use World English might help English teachers and researchers to determine when language diversity can be a resource used to cross borders, and when it becomes a barrier to transitions between students' peer and school worlds. Therefore, it is imperative to include urban youths' voices in this discussion.

Conclusion: Urban Fiction as a Border-Crossing

By examining race and language in the literacy practices of African-American urban youth in the context of identity, the Multiple Worlds model might suggest that students' various worlds can provide them with knowledge that informs their ability to cross borders into the school world. In this literature review, I have looked at three facets of identity to suggest instances where they might be resources for border-crossing. I have found that language, literacy practices, and youth culture can all be useful to students' transitions to academic literacy practices in the school world, if the priorities and motivations of the students are considered first in the educators' literacy intervention. In conclusion, I argue that further research is needed that examines how identity markers such as race and may enable African-American adolescents to marshal their peer-world literacy practices into a possible site of transitioning into enhanced academic literacies in the school world. Therefore, scholars seeking to promote such personal and social engagement would do well to frame their research from the perspective of what students' literacy practices mean to them. Further, questions of how students perform literacy, and how teachers can best enable students to perform academic literacies should be taken into primary consideration.

In the preceding literature review, I have argued that literacy researchers focusing on urban youth have made several important steps to lessening the costs of crossing from the peer world of students' lived experiences to the world of school-based literacies. These positive steps include: (1) broadening definitions of literacy to include speaking, drawing, and listening in addition to reading and writing, (2) shifting language-deficit theories to language-profit orientations, (3) using the social worlds of students as the basis for instructional strategies such as genre-specific out of school clubs as a means of promoting positive self-concept. Still, the area of African-American urban youths' conceptions of literacy practices remains an under-theorized area. More research is needed which looks at how these adolescents experience changes in definitions of literacy in response to encountering texts rich with varying aspects of identity, such as texts which feature a protagonist who is simultaneously raced and gendered in the same ways that they are. This research would fulfill the needs of these learners, who are extremely under-researched, and who may have specific literacy requirements that are currently unmet in the world of adolescent literacy research.

* For complete article and references, contact author directly

Carleen Carey
Michigan State University
carleen.carey@gmail.com

Division A: Administration

Division A Update

We are about to embark on many of our Division A graduate student projects leading up to the AERA 2013 conference. We are planning to make some revisions to the format of our Fireside Chat for 2013 so that it lends itself to more conversations between scholars and students. We will soon be finalizing our plans for the continuation of the Division A Graduate Student Dialogic Research Forum that was so well received last year. There are lots of ways for graduate students to get involved with varying levels of commitment. We encourage students to visit the Graduate Student page of the AERA website and contact the Division A Senior or Junior representatives, Pat or Alexandra.

Fireside Chat

"Responding to Poverty's Influence on Education: Our Roles as Researchers of Educational Leadership"

Current economic and social policies have led to a decrease in affordable housing, problems accessing adequate healthcare, and high rates of unemployment and food insecurity for many families.

Thus, many more children are facing disparities in educational opportunities as a consequence of living in poverty. Panelists in this session will discuss the ways in which research into leadership practices can provide insight into ways to eradicate poverty's influences on student learning. This discussion will offer recommendations for future research that can identify and disseminate possible solutions to address the negative effects of poverty on achievement.

New Resources

We, as Division A graduate student representatives, are working with the Division A Vice President, Dr. Terry Orr, to provide information about graduate student activities and opportunities in Division A that will be included on the Division A web page.

We will be advertising information about the Division A Foster Polite scholarships at UCEA and also on the Graduate Student listserv in the next few weeks. The purpose of this scholarship is to recognize and promote scholarly excellence in doctoral students who are members of Division A and who are enrolled in an educational administration/school leadership program. This scholarship supports graduate student travel to the annual AERA conference. Graduate students who are the first author on a proposal accepted for presentation at AERA are eligible to apply for this travel award. Last year four \$500 scholarships were awarded.

Pat Schroeder- Senior Graduate Rep. Div A
Aleksandra Pavlakis- Junior Graduate Rep. Div A



Division B: Curriculum Studies

Division B Update

Two new officers represent curriculum Studies this year.

Mark Helmsing, Senior Representative is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum, Teaching, and Education Policy at Michigan State University. His research and teaching incorporate ideas and methods from across the social sciences and humanities, engaging critical theory, history, and cultural studies in order to critically examine education and its consequences. His dissertation work uses postcolonial and post structural theories to examine the production of American identities and subjectivities in social studies education as a process of making citizens and performing nationhood (www.msu.edu/~helmsing).

Karla Manning, Junior Representative is a Ph.D. student in Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests range greatly from curriculum theory, to multicultural teacher education, deep and designed student learning environments and cultural/media studies. She is a former high school teacher in Chicago and was a volunteer teacher in South Africa. While a teacher, she produced her first documentary about the success stories of African American students in Chicago titled *Black Lights*. (www.teachandtalk.org).

Mark and Karla are working with the Division B officers to plan new initiatives to bring together and support graduate students with diverse interests related to curriculum across the spectrum of educational research. Curriculum Studies - is now represented by two new officers this year.

Fireside Chat

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

This Fireside Chat with faculty and graduate students seeks to recognize emerging theories of media and curriculum in visual culture studies, gaming studies, and digital media studies. In keeping with the 2013 AERA theme, we will dialogue on how these concepts and theories allow us to "see" poverty in practices of consumption, culture, and access. Participants will engage with the following: What does it mean for learners and educators to understand, on their own terms, the social worlds new forms of media motivate and express? How do these forms of media address and interrogate aspects of poverty and education? How can we engage critically with the discourses of measurement, surveillance, and neoliberalism in curricula of digital and visual culture? Scheduled faculty speakers for the Fireside Chat include:

- Ben Devane: University of Florida,
- Dave Stovall: University of Illinois-Chicago,
- Dennis Carlson: Miami University,
- Erica Halverson: University of Wisconsin-Madison

Mark Helmsing- Senior Graduate Rep. Div B
Karla Manning- Junior Graduate Rep. Div B

New Resources

Recognizing Graduate Student Research in Curriculum Studies

We are finalizing plans to add to the Division B Business Meeting program a new initiative we are tentatively calling "Creating a Curriculum of Vigor: Recognizing Vitalizing Research in Curriculum Studies." This initiative is designed to recognize graduate student research work-in-progress (not completed dissertation research). Applicants will have their manuscripts reviewed by a committee in which they must write a narrative describing the scope of their research, how it contributes to the history and future of curriculum studies, and how they envision their research enacting a possibility for curriculum that is vigorous, not simply rigorous. The outstanding proposal author will receive an award in the amount of a free 2013 AERA Annual Meeting registration. Two finalists will be recognized, along with the winner, at the Division B Business Meeting. All applicants are expected to attend the Business Meeting to network with faculty in curriculum attending the meeting and share their research ideas with all in attendance during the reception.

Check us out on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/172842706187420/>

Division C: Learning and Instruction

Division C Update

We are excitedly recruiting more Division C campus liaisons! We currently have over 100 representing over 80 colleges and universities worldwide.

Check out our blog for student resources and updates:

<http://aera-divc-gsc.blogspot.com/>

Fireside Chat

"Why Education is so Difficult to Improve when Income Inequalities are so Great"

David Berliner is an influential educational researcher who has made significant impact on policy, theory, and practice. His presentation will discuss the powerful effects of poverty on education. Factors residing outside of classrooms and schools in America contribute to the ineffectiveness of school reform. Although the ability of schools and instructors to impact individual students should not be underestimated, the out-of-school factors related to poverty play both an influential and a restraining role in what can be accomplished. After the analysis of many school reform policies, Berliner concludes that reducing family and youth poverty would be the most effective reform effort. Factors such as poverty contribute to the idea that educational research is "the hardest science of all."

Benjamin Heddy- Senior Graduate Rep. Div C
Ariana Vasquez Crowther- Junior Graduate Rep. Div C



Division D: Measurement and Research Methodology

Division D Update

Division D is busy organizing its annual In-Progress Research Gala and Exemplary Work From Promising Researchers session. We look forward to showcasing the high-quality research that graduate students are engaged in.

Fireside Chat

"Educational Research and High-Poverty Students: Contemporary Approaches to Ensuring Validity"

The purpose of this session is to explore threats to the validity of inferences as they relate to students living in poverty. As high-poverty students tend to be those who experience more housing instability and other characteristics that cause them to be removed from data sets (e.g., movement between schools), traditional data approaches may be inappropriate. This session will bring together experts to discuss contemporary approaches that educational researchers can implement to ensure that research findings adequately reflect the experiences of all students.

New Resources

We are currently seeking graduate students who are interested in sharing their in-progress research with an audience of interested researchers, including a panel of reviewers who will provide feedback on the research. A panel of professionals and scholars in the field will review research proposals and the top three will be honored at the Division D Business Meeting. The overall best proposal will receive a complimentary conference registration for the 2014 conference. All participants in the Division D In-Progress Research Gala will have the opportunity to network with researchers in the field of measurement and research methodology, including senior scholars whose work shaped the field and representatives from higher education and industry. The research proposals may *not* include dissertation research. For more information about the 2013 In-progress Research Gala, and to view Proposal winners from the 2012 Gala please visit our website at: <http://bit.ly/TTRUWv>.

Yuan Zhang- Senior Graduate Rep. Div D
Emily Dickinson- Junior Graduate Rep. Div D

Division E: Counseling and Human Development

Fireside Chat

"Staying in the Game: Maintaining Research Productivity"

Students walk down the same path during graduate school but pursue a diverse range of careers upon graduation. Some become faculty at teaching universities; others become researchers/practitioners that work in the field. There is limited guidance on how to pursue different career paths and how to manage research activities while working in the various settings. This presentation seeks to present information on the experiences and scholarly endeavors of various university faculty and practitioners. Such scholars will be invited to serve as a panel, and asked questions such as their experiences of balancing workload (teaching, maintaining research projects, & writing efforts), and how to navigate IRB approval particularly when working in the field. The purpose of this fireside chat is threefold: (a) to present information addressing the uniqueness of the instructor position; (b) to provide first hand dialogue from a diverse panel of faculty representatives; and (c) to allow for attendees to ask the panel question regarding their experiences. This session will provide applicable information for Ph.D. students venturing into academia with the hope to facilitate scholarly-based work in non-research positions.

Ann Kim- Senior Graduate Rep. Div E
Patrick Mullen- Junior Graduate Rep. Div E



Division F: History and Historiography

Fireside Chat

"History of Poverty and Exclusion."

This conversation explores ongoing struggles to access education in the United States. Gender-based exclusion, school desegregation efforts, community control measures, and more recently, pressure for educational opportunities by undocumented students are symptoms of persistent limitations of the US educational landscape. How do historical narratives of access to education inform contemporary issues affecting students within the K-12 and postsecondary systems in the US? How can historical inquiries help us identify patterns of disenfranchisement within US educational systems?"

Check us out on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/AERA.Grads>

New Resources

Division E is accepting applications for a new graduate student representative. Please send a letter of interest and CV to Ann Kim (akim@education.ucsb.edu) and Patrick Mullen (pmullen@knights.ucf.edu).

Please be on the look out for Division E's graduate student pre-conference seminar that takes place every year before the annual AERA meeting.

Any inquiries related to either the graduate student representative position or the pre-conference seminar can be directed to Ann Kim.

Ben Starsky- Senior Graduate Rep. Div F
Andres Castro-Samayoa- Junior Graduate Rep. Div F

Division G: Social Contexts of Education

Division G Update

The Division G Graduate Student Executive Committee has been hard at work planning for the 2013 Annual Meeting. We are currently exploring options to make our Fireside Chat and Student Session more interactive, particularly for those unable to attend the Annual Meeting.

New Resources

We established our blog: <http://aeradivg.wordpress.com/> last year, and we are working on updating and providing information for both graduate students and faculty about job postings, funding opportunities, new published scholarship, and information about the annual meeting, among others.

We encourage students in particular to take a look at the blog, engage with the community and provide suggestions for items to include.

The Division G Graduate Student Executive Committee is planning webinars for Spring 2013. Please watch the blog, Twitter, and Facebook groups for more information.

We are also actively recruiting campus liaisons. Contact us at divggrads@gmail.com for more information.

Twitter – @AERADivG

Facebook – Group Names: “AERA Division G: Social Contexts of Education” and “AERA Division G Students: Social Contexts of Education”

Blog – <http://aeradivg.wordpress.com/>

Fireside Chat

“The Mechanics of Mentoring and the Academic Life”

In the abundance of advice regarding success in academe, the importance of mentoring is a consistent message. While most students acknowledge the benefits of mentoring and may long for a quality mentor, many do not know how to select and communicate with potential mentors. Those who have mentors may not maximize those relationships, see their value to their mentors, or seek multiple mentors to address different layers of their academic lives. In this session, we will address how graduate students can assess their mentorship needs, choose mentors, use peer mentoring, and maintain mentoring relationships. We will also discuss how mentoring relationships change as students enter the professorate and the responsibility of junior faculty to mentor in service to the profession.

Ericka Bullock- Senior Graduate Rep. Div G
Kristi Donaldson- Junior Graduate Rep. Div G



Division H: Research, Evaluation, and Assessment in Schools

Greetings from Division H!

We'd like to share a few updates with the AERA graduate student community about recent news and upcoming events in Division H

In December, we will be issuing several calls

1) Proposals to present, discuss, and receive feedback on your research in the Division H Research Roundtable forum to take place during Division H's Graduate Student Orientation session.

2) Applications for Division H Annual Coffee Mentoring match up. Participants will be matched with an experienced mentor based on shared interests for a conversation over refreshments or lunch, and will receive \$20.00 to offset the cost of food and drink.

3) Keep an eye out for the call for Division H Junior Representative, which will be issued in December!

If you would like to join our Google groups listserve for Division H updates, as well as funding opportunities, and job openings related to assessment, evaluation, and applied research in schools, please email Marisa (marisa.a.delcampo@gmail.com)

Fireside Chat

"Starting Fresh, Branching Out, Moving Up: Insights and Experiences of School Researchers Embarking on New Career Paths"

The chat aims to engage both panelists and participants in a dialogue that will address the challenges inherent in constructing new professional identities during times of transition. In this session, we have convened a panel of individuals at a wide range of places in their careers, from the early career research associate to senior level research director. However, all share the common thread of being, in some way or another, "new" to their respective positions or fields. This session is designed for soon-to-be graduates, as well as anyone else at points of significant change in their professional careers. Our goal is to provide participants with experiences, insight, and advice that will help them to reflect on and navigate significant transitions in their own career paths.

Panelists:

- Vickie Cartwright, Senior Director of Research, Assessment, and Accountability, Orange County Public Schools
- Brandon LeBeau, Assessment Specialist, St. Paul Public Schools
- Antonette Stroter, Assistant Professor/Director of Research, Assessment, and Evaluation, Liberty University
- Winona Vesey, Assistant Professor, University of Houston-Clear Lake
- Whitney Wall, Director of Assessment, Radford University College of Education

Marisa Delcampo- Senior Graduate Rep. Div H
Ruhan Circi- Junior Graduate Rep. Div H

New Resources

We will be again offering a \$50.00 stipend to graduate student Division H members who will be presenting at this year's meeting, including those presenting in our research roundtable forum. We will remind you of how this works closer to the annual meeting time.

Our committee chairs are now planning a pre-annual conference webinar to take place early in 2013 for early career professionals and graduate students preparing for education research/ evaluation careers. Stay tuned for more updates as they become available!

We are now actively soliciting campus liaisons to distribute information about the resources, networking, and mentoring opportunities available to graduate students through Division H. Please contact Marisa del Campo (marisa.a.delcampo@gmail.com) if you are interested in acting as a liaison to your campus community.

Fellowship Opportunities

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's Dissertation Fellowship. This program awards four Fellowships of up to \$25,000 to support advanced doctoral candidates in a variety of fields, including education and the social sciences. The application deadline is February 4, 2013. Additional information is available at <http://www.jkcf.org>.

Division I: Education in the Professions

Division I Update

I. Chairs (include all names, affiliated universities, email contact information)

Note: Chairs are usually the Division Sr. and Jr. Reps.

II. Abstract (120 Words or less—this will be published as a descriptor of the event in the online catalog.)

Scholarship on professional education addresses the development and maintenance of expertise across a wide range of professions. This session will identify the next frontiers, or areas of research, that are especially applicable for young scholars who are developing their career-long research agendas in professional education. Although personal interest in crafting a research agenda cannot be discounted, this session will emphasize the practical and contextual issues to consider. Which areas of scholarship in the professions are likely to be most fruitful? What research areas currently have a poverty of scholarship and need attention? Which areas are likely to increase a young scholar's employability? What can young scholars learn from the masters in education research to apply to their own careers?

IV. Brief Description of the Session (2-3 paragraphs) including Purpose/Objective and Significance/Value to GSC members.

The purpose of this session is to provide practical advice and direction to young scholars in establishing a research agenda, specifically in scholarship related to the professions, e.g., medicine, engineering, business, architecture, teaching, and law. The unique challenge in education research related to the professions is that often, the researcher is working in collaboration with a practitioner. Although there are some instances where researcher and practitioner are one and the same, in many instances the researcher must develop relationships with colleagues and stakeholders whom otherwise would not be in the sphere of the researcher's professional life. While relationship building and strategy are important skills for any researcher, they are absolutely essential for the researcher in professional education. The opportunity to converse with a "master" in education research will offer both advice from lessons learned as well as perspective regarding the future of the field. Several "next frontier" areas of scholarship will be identified within the context of practical concerns. A young scholar must consider not only personal interest in a topic area. Questions to ask will include:

What is the longevity of this research area?

Is this a research area that could potentiate into other areas?

How can one successfully build relationships with practitioners?

Is this a research area that currently has a dearth, or poverty, or scholars?

Is this a research area that will contribute to a young scholar's employability?

While these questions can be pursued by an individual, this Fireside Chat will capitalize on the existing knowledge and experience of an established scholar master in the field, thus adding a unique perspective that otherwise would not be available to those getting started in their research careers.

By the conclusion of this Fireside chat, participants will be able to:

1. Identify 1-2 areas of research in the "next frontier"
2. Examine areas of research in the context of practical concerns
3. Consider establishing a research agenda that benefits both the individual and the field as a whole

V. Names of Tentative panelists/participants including affiliated university and each person's email address. Please be sure to list everyone, and verify spelling and all other information is correct.

Lee Shulman, Ph.D., Stanford University, Shulman@stanford.edu

VI. Estimated attendance. (How many and who do you think will attend this session)

VII. Any Special Requests (ie. do not schedule at the same time as another division (note division), any special needs of panelists)

Please schedule this session on Saturday, April 27 or Sunday, April 28, as Dr. Shulman's schedule will only allow him to participate on one of those two dates.

Angela Blood- Senior Graduate Rep. Div I
Jaime O'Keeffe- Junior Graduate Rep. Div I

Division J: Postsecondary Education

Fireside Chat

"Establishing a Sustainable Program of Research"

The chat will provide insight on how to focus on a particular set of issues within the field of higher education and how establishing a research agenda can essentially prove helpful when selecting coursework, identifying mentors and research opportunities. Panelists include Dr. Stella Flores, Dr. Samuel D. Museus, Dr. Terrell L. Strayhorn, Dr. Michael Bastedo, and Dr. Benita J. Barnes. In addition to the Fireside Chat, we have organized a special session on the topic of "Closing the Interview and Landing the Job: Navigating Today's Academic and Non-Academic Market." The session will provide insight on how graduate students can prepare themselves to be successful job candidates in the academic job market, not-for-profit, research organizations, and other related career options. The panelists, who have served in numerous roles in search committees, include Dr. James C. Hearn, Dr. Ana M. Martinez Aleman, Dr. Georgianna Martin, Dr. Eugene L. Anderson, and Dr. Gregory C. Wolniak. This panel will be included as Division J programming, but is open to all graduate students and faculty members.

Check us out on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DivJGraduateStudents?ref=ts&fref=ts>

New Resources

Division J invites applications for the 2013 Graduate Student Travel Fund. Up to ten \$300 awards will be awarded to graduate students to help support the costs of traveling to the 2013 AERA annual meeting. See the attached application form for more information.

The application can be found at

<http://www.aera.net/DivisionJ/ProfessionalDevelopmentOpportunities/tabid/11233/Default.aspx>

Blanca Rincon- Senior Graduate Rep. Div J
Daisy Alfaro- Junior Graduate Rep. Div J

Division K: Teaching and Teacher Education

We just completed the Division K Newsletter entry where we are looking for individuals interested in serving as campus liaisons. The Jr. Representative and I are also seeking to create a division Facebook page, as one does not exist at this point. This will be a wonderful way to reach other graduate student members. Additionally, Division K does not have a graduate student list serve. We are working with Chester and the Division K VP to obtain graduate student emails.

Fireside Chat

"From The Ivory Tower To The Schoolyard: Conducting Research In Contexts with Underserved Populations Living In Poverty"

The purpose of this Fireside Chat is to encourage current graduate students, alternative certification teachers, policymakers, professors, and university personnel to discuss methods for identifying, challenging, and explaining issues of poverty in rural and urban teacher education. Panelists will share strategies for conducting research in rural and urban districts with students, parents, and communities in poverty. Operating as an open forum, attendees will be able to explore challenges and successes of teaching and learning in these contexts.

The objective of the Fireside Chat is to create dialogue on teaching and learning in rural and urban environments. This will allow participants to examine similarities and differences of being educators in these areas while discussing methods that can be used by pre-service teachers, researchers, and university personnel to prepare future educators while fostering curriculum that addresses emerging issues in K-12 education. Participants and panelists will have the opportunity to raise questions about their research and teaching practice to allow for further dialogue in the forum.

Given that urban education is often the focus on past research in teaching and teacher education, this Fireside Chat includes rural educators' perspectives to enhance our discussion. This session is particularly framed for graduate students who are interested in exploring issues of diversity in a deeper context and in crafting research skills that seek to collaborate with students, parents, and communities that are often the most marginalized.

Dorothy Hines- Senior Graduate Rep. Div K
Kathryn Struther- Junior Graduate Rep. Div K

Division L: Education Policy and Politics

UCEA conference continues partnership between Division A and Division L

AERA Divisions A and L continued to partner at the 2012 University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Convention held November 14-18 in Denver, CO. This year, the two divisions helped to sponsor the new Graduate Student Summit, which offered two days of events and workshops targeted towards graduate students, and offered two sessions aimed at graduate students and early career scholars. In the Graduate Student Breakfast and Workshop, we extended last year's discussion about how to publish as a graduate student to focus specifically on how to turn the dissertation into published academic articles. Journal editors, recent grads, and faculty members talked about what to consider while you're in the early stages of your proposal writing, as well as what to do when you're at the analysis and writing stage, and how to take appropriate slices of your dissertation and target it towards particular journals. Attendance at this breakfast was outstanding, and our panelists provided our graduate students with great insight.

Reviewing the 2012 Annual Meeting and Looking forward to the 2013 Meeting

The Division L Fireside Chat continued to be a big success at 2012's AERA convention in Vancouver, with about 50 graduate students and other attendees present. This year's topic, "The Evolving Role of the Teacher's Union: How Changing Union Strength Affects Education," inspired more great discussion as panelists Susan Moore Johnson of Harvard University and F. Howard Nelson of the American Federation of Teachers explored the impact of collective bargaining and unions on educational policies and outcomes. The question and answer session was especially lively once again, and we are delighted that these sessions have inspired so much thoughtful and critical debate.

Fireside Chat

Thirty Years Since A Nation at Risk: Implications for a Second Generation

A Nation at Risk, one of the most influential policy documents in American history, was released in April 1983, 30 years prior to the 2013 AERA Annual Meeting. A child born in April 1983 may have graduated from the K-12 public school system and has had time to obtain a bachelor's degree and enter the work force. Another student born in April 1983 may have dropped out prior to completion of high school. Furthermore, for the first time, a large number of students entering the K-12 system were born to parents who started school after the release of this landmark report.

The focus of the session is to discuss the effect of A Nation at Risk on both the first and second generation of students to go through school after the release of the report. For the first generation, are there effects on their school achievement and labor market participation?

For the second generation, which is just now entering, how, if at all, has the report led to lasting change in the education they will receive in the K-12 system? What changes that were made in response to A Nation at Risk have persisted and what changes have been forgotten.

Lastly, what direction can research take in examining the lasting effects of the report on both generations of students and the school systems responsible for their education?

"Participants in the Fireside Chat include:

Laura Desimone, University of Pennsylvania
David Labaree, Stanford University
Henry Levin, Teachers College

We will be creating a brand new facebook page over the winter, and debuting it after the new year. Also, we have created a division L graduate student list serve. If any of our members would like to email to the list serve, please contact:

Todd Hutner- Senior Graduate Rep. Div L
Huriya Jabbar- Junior Graduate Rep. Div L

IS SMALLER BETTER? URBAN SCHOOL REFORM AND THE PUSH TOWARD SMALLER SCHOOLS

BY STUART RHODEN
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY*

For a number of years, many politicians, pundits and educational experts have proclaimed public education is in trouble (*A Nation At Risk*, 1983; Anyon 1997; Ravitch 2011). Oftentimes they cannot point specifically to a singular phenomenon, which ails public schools, but they do know, or believe they know, that things are bad. Overcrowding, high dropout rates among Black and Latino students ranging from 50% to 70% (Neild & Balfanz, 2006), test scores far below basic competence levels, and of course low graduation rates are among the most cited problems plaguing schools in urban America.

One of the more innovative reforms of the past 30 years which can be found in urban school districts as diverse as Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Denver, and Seattle has been the move towards reorganizing massive, comprehensive "warehouse" high schools (usually with more than 1500 enrolled students, and even upwards of 5000 students) into Small Learning Communities (SLCs), schools-within-schools (also known as academies), or completely autonomous Small Schools (Cotton, 2001). Unlike charter schools, which are autonomous from the School Districts where they reside, this innovative way to reclassify large schools into smaller, more manageable components is a unique step for urban public schools. Each of these seemingly similar objectives; to reduce large schools into smaller and more manageable parts, have their own advocates, critics, benefits and challenges. For these types of small schools to succeed, it is believed that autonomy and teacher training are key components for successful implementation (see: Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The reason small schools seem to be successful is that by creating smaller environments within larger schools in which students are at the center of the learning process and are being taught not only academic standards, but real world technical skills they will need as they transition into either post-secondary education or professional careers they feel empowered (Conchas & Vigil, 2012).

In articulating the three types of small schools, questions remain about the best option for a particular school or school district. One size does not fit all. Usually the issues surrounding capacity and cost are influential determinants in deciding which option of small school a particular school chooses. If a particular school chooses a "Schools-within-schools" (SWS) model, the comprehensive school continues to be the arbiter of how the building is organized, how funds are appropriated and how teachers are allocated. However, if a comprehensive school is divided into multiple self-regulating small schools or becomes a cluster of small schools in either the same building or on the same grounds, in extremely rare circumstances each school is given the autonomy to hire/fire teachers, manage their own budget, and structure the school in a manner that is conducive to their unique academic goals.

Variations of Small Schools:

Deborah Meier, who is often called the "mother of the small schools movement" framed a pivotal question in her book *The Power of Their Ideas*: "Could schools, if organized differently, keep this nascent power alive, extend it and thus make a difference in what we grow up to be?" (Meier, 1995) The "nascent power" she is referring to is the power of the teacher and the power of ideas, which has historically been the main focus of education. In the this era where many progressives quarrel that many at the forefront of school reform, some of whom are closely aligned with businesses, are actually "education deformers" because of their insistence on the bottom line. What is worse is that there is an increasingly vitriolic climate of the debate surrounding education reform as a whole.

As such, we are at a critical juncture in the history of American public education. Many question whether the goal of our public education system is to nurture and create engaged and active learners who will be productive citizens in society, while some see the trends towards students taking tests and becoming a generation of passive learners. Unfortunately there are strong proponents on both sides unwilling to compromise.

Public Schooling Today

Another perspective is that high schools as we have historically known them are "failing." Thom Vander Ark of the Gates Foundation describes comprehensive high schools not only as "failing" but more to the point, "obsolete." He further describes public schools as being inept and inhibiting when it comes to systems building; students and teachers building sustainable relationships, teaching students how to work as collaborative members of a team and how to allow for creativity and increase their ability to communicate in a variety of ways. (Copland & Boatright, 2004).

In looking at public schools, many educators and researchers have known that smaller class sizes can significantly impact children's learning (Williams, 1990; Raywid & Klonksy, 1995). To achieve these smaller class sizes, many school districts have chosen the least expensive option of converting their comprehensive schools into smaller schools within schools rather than tearing down antiquated schools and building new structures (Robelen, 2007). In dealing with large schools, the manner in which they are divided (regardless of which option chosen) is one of the central components to the school's future success or failure. If schools are divided from the top down, rather than "holistically" (through the efforts of the teachers, administrators and students working in tandem), then reform can be doomed to failure. If schools are given an opportunity to learn and explore which options best suite their specific, unique needs, then they are more likely to succeed (Meier, 2002).

Today, the movement to some type of small school reform has affected just about every major public school district in the country. Meier's experiences some thirty years ago helped pave the way for current "small schools movement," but it has taken decades for educational communities across the country to begin to completely embrace this reform. One explanation for this delay is the belief that change is difficult or too hard to accomplish amidst the bureaucratic juggernaut known as "the Board" or "the District" (the Board of Education or School District). Drastically changing standard educational practice takes more than one visionary. It takes reflection and profound confidence to articulate publically that existing systems are not effective. Identifying culpability, and getting educational professionals to realize that they have not been achieving their goals to educate children in the best way possible, as well as recognizing that there may be a solution (even if only a partial solution) to this problem that they did not already consider or adopt, can be a power motivator for future change. For example, in the city where I attend graduate school, Philadelphia, we can see how difficult change is simply by observing the contentious discussions surrounding reform efforts in the Philadelphia Public Schools, their proposals to restructure the entire District and the ire directed at former Superintendent Dr. Arlene Ackerman.

Small School Takeaways

It is unfortunate that the move towards small schools did not take heed earlier, but for now, it appears to no longer be a question of whether large comprehensive public schools must move to this model, but rather the more difficult questions of when and how. According to Steinberg and Allen, there are five C's to SLC implementation; "Caring, Cognitive, Culture, Community and Connections" (Steinberg & Allen, 2002). Deborah Meier has noted that the key to successful schools, is the "strong sense of collegiality among the teachers rather than one strong leader... a successful new public school also requires a strong and commonly held vision or shared picture of what staff members consider fundamental" (Meier, 2002). Finally, Anthony Bryk (2010) also cites five essentials to effective schools; instructional guidance, professional capacity of the faculty, strong ties between schools and communities, a productive learning environment, and strong leadership. This goes far beyond putting SLCs in place, and hoping they succeed. It appears that trust, vision and training are essential tools for any successful school, much less a SLC created either haphazardly or through inorganic means. Change is a difficult process, but in this case, seems well worth the effort.

Critics of Small Schools

Although most evaluators are in agreement that reforms are needed in comprehensive urban schools, there are some who argue the implementation of small schools is either a partial solution or entirely not the answer. They believe site level personnel (teachers and administrators), when left alone, are not capable of implementing such an innovative, large scale reform.

According to Lee and Ready in their book *Schools Within Schools: Possibilities and Pitfalls of High School Reform* (2007), there is a difference between the concept of the “theory and reality of what can go wrong if school officials aren’t careful, and of many missed opportunities to make the most of a smaller learning environment” (Robelen, 2007). Further, they argue that “the approach (conversion to SLCs or SWS) requires great effort and vigilance, with close attention to “what is taught, to whom it is taught and how it is taught”” (Robelen, 2007). Critics correctly point out that in the very schools that are most in need of reform, systems are not in place, which can sustain legitimate efforts towards this kind of change. Often Principals leave for better assignments or are replaced due to high stakes test results regularly. There is also an extremely large rate of teacher turnover thus creating an influx of new teachers who repeatedly struggle with teaching lower performing, high-need students in inner cities.

Overall, it appears opponents have not argued about the merits of SLCs but rather their criticisms arise concerning implementation. To them, the smaller size of the school population alone is not the difference-maker. Size only matters when it is coupled to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Further, the catch is to shrink size without reducing instructional resources, which is sometimes hard to do (Fink & Silverman, 2007). The question then becomes one of how to educate the educators on the most effective ways to implement SLCs in their comprehensive school. One of the most important aspects of any reform movement is “buy-in” from those who are going to be implementing the reform. Some of the most successful small independent schools in the country do not struggle with a continual need for “buy-in” from their teachers because they have the autonomy to hire and fire teachers that fit with their institutional model and philosophy (Wasley, et.al., 2000). In urban public schools, however, most administrators are not granted the luxury of hiring the “best and brightest” from teacher education programs or from other districts in their state. Critics argue that one of the problems of breaking down large comprehensive schools into small schools is the “failure to hire exceptional instructional leaders to head the newly created small schools. The same leaders who struggled to run the comprehensive schools are often expected to somehow do a better job in a small school” (Fink & Silverman, 2007).

Conclusion

Systemic change is difficult on all levels – from the district, to the administration, to the classroom. How we train and promote SLCs is critical to their success and to their sustainability. A financial consideration of school districts to promote and convert schools, especially in these difficult economic times, is also an issue, which is being debated. However, regardless of funding issues and other concerns, if we fail to adequately train districts on how to implement SLCs, then we are going to see SLCs fail at the school level. If SLCs fail at the school level, it will be increasingly harder to achieve the “buy-in” that is so necessary to have a successful reform effort. As Fink and Silverman point out one of the critical areas needed for a successful reform to take shape is the ability to “dismiss teachers who are not successful in teaching students” (Fink & Silverman, 2007). Without this crucial tool, schools will forever be plagued with antagonist who can spread misinformation and throw wrenches in reform efforts. It is now the challenge to continue to improve upon implementation, maintenance and organizational structures necessary to make SLCs a critical component of urban school reform of the 21st century.

* For complete article and references, contact author directly

Stuart Rhoden
Temple University
tub47866@temple.edu

Thank You from the 2012-13 AERA Graduate Student Council



Cathy A.R. Brant - Chair
Jennifer Carmici - Chair Elect
Lisa De La Rue - Secretary/Historian
Chester Tadeja - Web Secretary
Cecilia Fernandez - Program Chair
Angelea Hines - Community Chair
Bryce Walker - Senior Newsletter Editor
Laureen Adams-Lateef - Junior Newsletter Editor
Carleen Carey - Hospitality Chair
Nicholar Hartlep - Past Chair

Pat Shroeder - Senior Graduate Rep. Div A
Alexandra Pavlakis - Junior Graduate Rep. Div A
Mark Helmsing - Senior Graduate Rep. Div B
Karl Manning - Junior Graduate Rep. Div B
Benjamin Heddy - Senior Graduate Rep. Div C
Ariana Vasquez Crowther - Junior Graduate Rep. Div C

Yuan Zhang - Senior Graduate Rep. Div D
Emily Dickinson - Junior Graduate Rep. Div D
Ann Kim - Senior Graduate Rep. Div E
Patrick Mullen - Junior Graduate Rep. Div E
Ben Starsky - Senior Graduate Rep. Div F
Andres Castro Samayoa - Junior Graduate Rep. Div F
Erika Bullock - Senior Graduate Rep. Div G
Kristi Donaldson - Junior Graduate Rep. Div G
Marisa del Campo - Senior Graduate Rep. Div H
Ruhan Circi - Junior Graduate Rep. Div H
Angela Blood - Senior Graduate Rep. Div I
Janne O'Keeffe - Junior Graduate Rep. Div I
Daisy Alfaro - Senior Graduate Rep. Div J
Blanca Rincon - Junior Graduate Rep. Div J
Dorothy Hines - Senior Graduate Rep. Div K
Kathryn Struther - Junior Graduate Rep. Div K
Todd Hutner - Senior Graduate Rep. Div L
Huriya Jabbar - Junior Graduate Rep. Div L