



Expanding the Epistemological Terrain: Increasing Equity and Diversity Within the American Educational Research Association

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During the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the quest for civil rights by African Americans and other groups of color reverberated throughout the United States and the world, including within educational professional and research organizations, such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the American Educational Research Association (AERA). In this article, I discuss the presidential addresses of four AERA presidents, the historical and demographic context in which they were presented, and the ways in which these addresses increased equity and diversity within AERA by expanding its epistemological terrain.

Keywords: diversity; epistemological terrain; equity; historical analysis; knowledge construction; minorities

The quest by African Americans for freedom and equality began when they were first captured in Africa and forced to come to this land in chains. The slave revolts led by Denmark Vesey (1822) and Nat Turner (1831) epitomized their long and poignant struggle for freedom. During the 1960s, African Americans began a journey for their rights that was unprecedented in U.S. history. Sometimes in strident voices, they demanded equality in many areas of American life, including public accommodations, transportation, employment, and education. The civil rights movement manifested and symbolized the extent to which Black anger and disillusionment could no longer be denied, ignored, or deferred.

The Black civil rights movement echoed throughout the nation and the world. Other groups of color in the United States—such as Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and Asian Americans—started their own movements that demanded structural inclusion and increased civil rights. Marginalized groups in other nations—such as the Catholics in northern Ireland and Jamaicans in England—were inspired by the Black civil rights movement in the United States, admired its leaders, and used many of its techniques and strategies.

Educational equality and inclusion were important demands made by African Americans as well as other racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic groups. Consequently, educational institutions, such as schools, colleges, and universities—as well as professional educational and research organizations, such as the

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), and the American Educational Research Association (AERA)—experienced problems that resulted from many of their members of color feeling alienated, marginalized, and structurally excluded.

In this article, I describe the addresses of four AERA presidents and how they deepened equity and diversity within AERA by expanding its epistemological terrain. I categorize and analyze these addresses conceptually, not chronologically. I first describe the presidential addresses by James A. Banks (1998) and Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006) because they focus on epistemological and knowledge construction issues. Banks (1993a, 1996) and Ladson-Billings (2000) had written a number of publications that analyzed epistemological issues, concepts, and paradigms before they became presidents of AERA.

I next describe the addresses by Linda Darling-Hammond (1996) and Arnetha Ball (2012) because they focus on bridging the gap between research and practice and on democratic schools that enhance the public good. Darling-Hammond (1995) and Ball (2006) had published extensively on closing the gap between research and practice and creating democratic and just schools prior to becoming presidents of AERA. Banks, Ladson-Billings, Darling-Hammond, and Ball were influenced by the activist

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Table 1
American Educational Research Association Presidents of Color, 1995–1996 to 2016–2017

Year of Presidency	Name of President	Institution
2016–2017	Vivian Gadsden	University of Pennsylvania
2014–2015	Joyce E. King	Georgia State University
2011–2012	Arnetta F. Ball	Stanford University
2010–2011	Kris D. Gutiérrez	University of Colorado–Boulder
2009–2010	Carol D. Lee	Northwestern University
2007–2008	William F. Tate	Washington University, St. Louis
2005–2006	Gloria Ladson-Billings	University of Wisconsin–Madison
1997–1998	James A. Banks	University of Washington, Seattle
1995–1996	Linda Darling-Hammond	Teachers College, Columbia University

tradition within Black scholarship (Collins, 2013) and by African American scholars, such as W. E. B. Du Bois (1953/1961; Morris, 2015), Carter G. Woodson (1933/1977), Kenneth B. Clark (1967), and John Hope Franklin (2005). These influences are revealed in their AERA presidential addresses and in their previous research and publications.

Scholars of Color Become Presidents of Mainstream White Organizations

The turbulent times related to race, structural exclusion, and marginalization within U.S. society writ large were manifested within scholarly and research associations, such as the American Sociological Association, the American Historical Association, and the Organization of American Historians, as well as within educational associations related to practice, such as ASCD, NCSS, and NCTE. These issues were also salient and challenging within AERA during the 1980s and 1990s.

Important indications of the degree to which scholars of color were attaining structural inclusion into predominantly White mainstream research and scholarly organizations and societies included the extent to which they were members of committees and governing boards, publishing in the official journals and books, participating in conference sessions, and being elected to the presidency of these organizations. Although E. Franklin Frazier—an eminent African American sociologist—became president of the American Sociological Society (now American Sociological Association) in 1948, most mainstream White associations and societies did not have presidents of color until the 1970s and 1980s. John Hope Franklin, the renowned Black historian, was president of the American Historical Association in 1970 and of the Organization of American Historians in 1975. AERA was among the last of the educational associations to elect an African American president. William Jenkins was president of NCTE in 1969 to 1970, Alvin Loving Sr. was president of ASCD in 1971 to 1972, Dorothy S. Strikland was president of the International Reading (now Literacy) Association in 1978 to 1979, and James A. Banks was president of NCSS in 1982. Linda Darling-Hammond became the first African American and the first president of color of AERA in 1995 to 1996; James A. Banks—the second African American president of AERA—became president 2 years later, in 1997 to 1998.

Although AERA had its first president of color much later than organizations such as NCSS and NCTE, it had far surpassed most

of these organizations in the number of presidents of color by 2015. There had been three Black presidents of NCTE, two of NCSS, and eight of AERA by 2015. By its centennial celebration in 2016, AERA had elected nine presidents of color, which consisted of eight African Americans and one Latina, Kris D. Gutiérrez, who was a professor at the University of Colorado–Boulder when she was elected president of AERA in 2010 (see Table 1).

The Civil Rights Movement and Research and Professional Organizations

The civil rights movement in the United States reached its zenith during the 1960s and 1970s. It had major effects on American society writ large as well on research and professional organizations. Most of the predominantly White scholarly societies and professional organizations had few members of color prior to the 1960s and 1970s. Blacks created their own professional and scholarly organizations—such as the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now African American Life and History)—both because of the ways in which they were marginalized within predominantly White organizations and because their scholarly and professional concerns were often ignored by mainstream White organizations. Consequently, when African Americans and other groups of color began to attend these organizations in significant numbers during the 1960s and 1970s, they often felt ignored, marginalized, and structurally excluded.

An important consequence of the civil rights movement that was spearheaded by African Americans was that marginalized groups gained the inspiration and strategies to demand structural inclusion and visibility within White mainstream scholarly and professional organizations. These organizations were positioned to respond to the demands for inclusion made by diverse groups because they had been influenced by the civil rights movement and were keenly aware of the discrepancy between their public values and ethos and their practices. Myrdal (1944) described the gap between American democratic ideals and racial discrimination within American society as “an American dilemma.” He argued that because most Americans internalize “The American’s Creed,” it can be used effectively to change institutions and society.

Scholarly and professional organizations, such as NCSS, ASCD, NCTE, and AERA, were aware of the gap between their professed ideals and the marginalization of groups of color within their

organizations. These organizations became increasingly sensitive to their racial and cultural dilemmas as the percentage of people of color increased within them. More demands were also made on these organizations to structurally include groups of color as their numbers increased and as they elected leaders of color who articulated the visions of diverse groups, enriched their epistemological terrains, and deepened diversity and equality within them.

Racial Turmoil and Tension Within AERA

When Linda Darling-Hammond became president of AERA in 1995, many African Americans and other groups of color felt structurally excluded and marginalized within it. Darling-Hammond appointed the Task Force on the Role and Future of Minorities to make recommendations for action that AERA could take to enable diverse groups to participate more fully within the organization. Professor Edmund W. Gordon of Teachers College, Columbia University, was appointed chair of the task force. The task force presented its report to the officers and membership of AERA in January 1997. It concluded that although the increasing diversity of the membership was the root cause of the problems related to marginalization and structural exclusion with which AERA was grappling, the problems related to changing demographics would not be solved without dealing with what the task force called the “epistemological crisis” within AERA. The task force stated, “We believe that the shifting *ideological and epistemological ground* [italics added] is as much a part of the association’s problem as are the changing demographics of our membership” (Gordon, 1997, p. 46). The task force added,

AERA is experiencing internal conflicts not only because of these demographic changes, but also because historically its role as guardian of the traditional canon and methodologies of knowledge production related to education have sometimes resulted in maintenance of conditions and processes that often operate in ways that are exclusionary [sic] of some of the diversity that is characteristics of its of members—and even more so of the society of which the association is a part. (Gordon, 1997, p. 47)

Expanding the Epistemological Terrain Within AERA

As the Gordon task force pointed out, the research and knowledge that was normative and dominant within AERA during the 1980s and 1990s—as well as within other mainstream scholarly and professional associations—is what Banks (1993a) calls “mainstream academic knowledge” (p. 8). An important tenet of mainstream academic knowledge is that empirical facts and principles can be established by rigorous and objective research that is uninfluenced by human interests, values, and perspectives. Transformative knowledge, which often originates within marginalized communities and communities of color (Collins, 2000; Harding, 1991), challenges some of the major tenets of mainstream academic knowledge (Banks, 1993a). It assumes that knowledge is not neutral but is influenced by human interests, that all knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society, and that an important purpose of knowledge is to improve the human condition and to increase social and educational equality.

Gordon, Miller, and Rollock (1990) refer to the ways in which mainstream knowledge is privileged in the social sciences and how

the experiences of people of color are marginalized as “communitarian bias” (p. 14). They contend that mainstream research and knowledge often “ignores or demeans” marginalized groups, presents distorted interpretations of their experiences, describes their experiences in limited ways and in ways that do not contribute to the improvement of their lives, and often results in knowledge that “may be distorted and truncated as a result of . . . missing perspectives” (Gordon et al., 1990, p. 14). Ladson-Billings (2000) also describes the limitations of mainstream epistemology, which Foucault refers to as the “regime of truth” (as cited in Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 257). She writes,

The hegemony of the dominant paradigm makes it more than just another way to view the world—it claims to be the only legitimate way to view the world. . . . There are well-developed systems of knowledge, or epistemologies, that stand in contrast to the dominant Euro-American epistemology. (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 258)

Blending Scholarship and Action

The four AERA presidents discussed in this article—in their research and previous writings—drew upon insights from and cited scholars such as Carter G. Woodson (1933/1977), W. E. B. Du Bois (1953/1961), John Hope Franklin (1989, 2005), and Kenneth B. Clark (1967). Franklin, Du Bois, and Clark viewed action to improve society and to make it more just an appropriate extension of their research and scholarship. Each of these scholars took action related to their research to increase civil rights and equality for African Americans and other marginalized and excluded groups. The African American tradition of linking and blending scholarship and action to improve the lives of marginalized groups is evident in each of the four presidential addresses discussed in this article. The social psychologist Kenneth B. Clark (1967) argued that social scientists should be “involved observers” and should make their biases explicit (p. xv). In the prologue to his classic book *Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power*, Clark discusses the nature of bias in social science research and why research should be linked to action:

I found that there was no one without some bias and that those who pretended to be the most unbiased either were indifferent or reflected an insidious form of bias. An important part of my creed as a social scientist is that on the grounds of absolute objectivity or on a posture of scientific detachment and indifference, a truly relevant and serious social science cannot ask to be taken seriously by a society desperately in need of moral and empirical guidance in human affairs.

. . . The appropriate technology of serious and relevant social science *would have as its prime goal helping society move toward humanity and justice* with minimum irrationality, stability, and cruelty. (Clark, 1967, pp. xxi–xxii; emphasis added)

Epistemological Frameworks and Research Paradigms

In their AERA presidential addresses, Banks (1998) and Ladson-Billings (2006) explicate concepts and explanations related to constructing paradigms and explanations that will enhance social justice and educational equality. Banks opens his presidential

Table 2
A Typology of Cross-Cultural Researchers

Type of Researcher	Description
The indigenous-insider	This individual endorses the unique values, perspectives, behaviors, beliefs, and knowledge of his or her indigenous community and culture and is perceived by people within the community as a legitimate community member who can speak with authority about it.
The indigenous-outsider	This individual was socialized within his or her indigenous community but has experienced high levels of cultural assimilation into an outsider or oppositional culture. The values, beliefs, perspectives, and knowledge of this individual are identical to those of the outside community. The indigenous-outsider is perceived by indigenous people in the community as an outsider.
The external-insider	The individual was socialized within another culture and acquires its beliefs, values, behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge. However, because of his or her unique experiences, the individual rejects many of the values, beliefs, and knowledge claims within his or her indigenous community and endorses those of the studied community. The external-insider is viewed by the new community as an “adopted” insider.
The external-outsider	The external-outsider is socialized within a community different from the one in which he or she is doing research. The external-outsider has a partial understanding of and little appreciation for the values, perspectives, and knowledge of the community he or she is studying and consequently often misunderstands and misinterprets the behaviors within the studied community.

Note. From “The Lives and Values of Researchers: Implications for Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society,” by J. A. Banks, 1998, *Educational Researcher*, 27, p. 8. Copyright 1998 by the American Educational Research Association. Reprinted with permission.

address by describing his epistemological journey, which began in his segregated school in the Arkansas Delta when he started to question why the slaves in his elementary school textbooks were depicted as happy. When he learned in graduate school that Ulrich B. Phillips (1918/1966)—a Southern historian whose ancestors owned slaves—constructed the image of the happy slaves, he began to investigate ways in which knowledge is related to the biographical journeys of researchers and scholars. Prior to the Gordon task force report (Gordon, 1997) and Banks’s presidential address, there had been little public discussion or scholarship within AERA about how the values and biographies of researchers influence their questions, findings, and interpretations.

In his address, Banks (1998) describes how the values and experiences of scholars from different racial and ethnic groups were major factors that motivated them to engage in research and scholarship that contributed to social and educational equality for marginalized racial and ethnic groups. Banks maintains that *objectivity* should be an important aim of social science research even though it has significant value dimensions. However, social scientists should make their value claims explicit, and objectivity should be reconceptualized so that scholars from diverse groups will participate in its formulation. This will result in what Harding (1991) calls “strong objectivity” (p. 138).

Influenced by Merton’s (1972) “insiders and outsiders” conceptualization and Collins’s (2000) idea of the “outsiders within,” Banks (1998) developed a typology of *cross-cultural researchers* to describe the ways in which a researcher’s positionality might influence his or her work. The typology consists of four categories: (a) the indigenous-insider, (b) the indigenous-outsider, (c) the external-insider, and (d) the external-outsider (see Table 2). This typology expands the epistemological terrain by providing researchers with a conceptual framework for perceiving and conceptualizing the ways in which a researcher’s race, class, and gender may mediate and influence research findings and interpretations in complex ways. Collins (2000), for example, describes the ways in which African Americans—who are “outsiders within” predominantly White mainstream institutions—can bring a unique cultural lens to social and historical events and situations that differ in significant ways from mainstream observations, perspectives, and interpretations. Irvine (2003) calls this phenomenon “seeing with [a] cultural eye” (p. xix).

In addition to expanding the epistemological terrain within AERA in his presidential address, Banks broadened it with the theme of the 1998 AERA program, “Diversity and Citizenship Education in Multicultural Societies,” and with keynote and major presentations by scholars who were experts in diversity topics, such as William Julius Wilson, Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, Guadalupe Valdés, Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Patricia Hill Collins, Sandra Harding, and Shirley Brice Heath. The 1998 AERA program also included a special session on “Citizenship Education in Multicultural Societies,” which featured leading scholars from other nations, such as John Eggleston from England and Moshe Tatar from Israel. Banks also initiated a project on diversity with AERA and the Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity at Stanford University that he invited Kenji Hakuta to lead. This project resulted in the publication of a book, *Compelling Interest: Examining the Evidence on Racial Dynamics in Colleges and Universities* (Chang, Witt, Jones, & Hakuta, 2003). Banks and the AERA council established a new position at the AERA headquarters office, director of social justice. Banks recruited Gwendolyn C. Baker—an expert in multicultural education and former CEO of the U.S. Committee for the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)—to serve in this position.

Gloria Ladson-Billings’s (2006) presidential address—similar to the address by Banks—focuses on epistemological issues and the need to expand theoretical and research concepts, explanations, and paradigms. Her presidential address expanded the epistemological terrain within AERA by deconstructing the “achievement gap” concept. She states why educators need to expand this concept in ways that will enable them to focus on the structural causes of the differential achievement of students of color and mainstream White American students rather than on the deficits of marginalized students as the major cause of their lower academic achievement. Ladson-Billings argues that rather than focus on the *achievement gap*, educators should concentrate on the *education debt* in order to make progress in improving the academic achievement of students who are members of marginalized racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural groups. She writes, “We do not have an achievement gap; we have an education debt” (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 5). She explains why a focus on the achievement gap will divert attention from dealing with the deep *structural problems* that

are the root cause of the differential achievement of low-income students of color and mainstream White students. She writes,

[I] want to use this opportunity to call into question the wisdom of focusing on the achievement gap as a way of explaining and understanding the persistent inequality that exists (and has always existed) in our nation's schools. I want to argue that this all-out focus on the "Achievement Gap" moves us toward short solutions that are unlikely to address the long-term underlying problem. (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 4)

Ladson-Billings (2006) explicates the education debt concept by using the national debt analogy. She writes, "The debt . . . is the sum of all previously incurred federal deficits. Since the deficits are financed by government borrowing, national debt is equal to all government debt" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 4).

Ladson-Billings (2006) states that the education debt has been created in U.S. society by *historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral* decisions. The historical debt results from the educational inequalities that students of color have experienced in the past in U.S. society and schools. Funding disparities between schools in low-income communities and those in wealthier communities is the major cause of the economic debt. The exclusion of people of color from the political process created the sociopolitical debt. The discrepancy between our values and our actions constitute the moral debt. Ladson-Billings writes, "Perhaps our largest moral debt is to the indigenous peoples whose presence was all but eradicated from the nation" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 8).

Ladson-Billings's (2006) presidential address—like much of her earlier work—expands the epistemological terrain by challenging "the hegemonic structures (and symbols) that keep injustice and inequality in place" (Ladson-Billings, 2000, p. 271). When Ladson-Billings presented her AERA presidential address in 2006, the achievement gap concept was very popular among education researchers and practitioners and was embedded within a "deficit paradigm" that focused on the problems of low-income students of color rather than the structural factors within society that were major causes of the achievement differential between low-income students of color and middle-class White students. Her presidential address provided a novel and discerning conceptual lens on this concept that promoted greater equity for low-income students and students of color

Creating Democratic Schools: Closing the Gap Between Research and Practice

The presidential addresses by Linda Darling-Hammond (1996) and Arne F. Ball (2012) conceptualize and envision ways in which the research canon can be expanded and implemented in schools to make them more democratic and serve the public good. A major focus in the addresses by Darling-Hammond and Ball is to use research to improve teaching and the daily life in schools. Darling-Hammond, who focuses on the right to learn and democratic education, begins her address with a compelling quote by W. E. B. Du Bois, which states in part,

Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental. . . . The freedom to learn . . . has been bought by

bitter sacrifice. And whatever we may think of the curtailment of other civil rights, we should fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn, the right to have examined in our schools not only what we believe, but what we do not believe; not only what our leaders say, but what the leaders of other groups and nations, and the leaders of other centuries have said. (as cited in Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 5)

Darling-Hammond (1996) expands the epistemological terrain within AERA by focusing on creating democratic schools in which students from diverse groups have the right to learn and on the need to close the gap between research and practice. She describes the factors that are essential for students to have the right to learn and to experience democratic education. Among the most important are highly qualified teachers who have deep content as well as pedagogical knowledge, equality in school funding, and the opportunity for students to participate in pluralistic communities and democratic schools. Darling-Hammond states that democratic education "gives students access to social understanding by actually participating in a pluralistic community by talking and making decisions with one another and coming to understand multiple perspectives" (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 6). Most schools, she contends, are poor places to foster democracy because they are authoritarian and are characterized by social-class and racial stratification as well as tracking.

The advancement and effective training of teachers and better connecting research to practice are effective ways to create democratic schools in which students will have the right and opportunity to learn. This requires closing the gap between daily life in schools and the ways in which schools are envisioned by researchers. Darling-Hammond (1996) writes, "The capacity of teachers and other educators to deeply understand teaching and learning, to produce and use knowledge on the behalf of their practice . . . is central to the realization of a genuine right to learn" (p. 10). To achieve these goals, constructivist relationships must exist between research, policy, and practice in which reciprocal learning occurs. Darling-Hammond ends her presidential address with a powerful poem by Langston Hughes, "Freedom's Plow," which encapsulates the major themes of her presentation.

Arne F. Ball's (2012) presidential address expands the epistemological terrain within AERA by emphasizing the need to link research findings to action that will democratize schools and enable them to serve "the public good." Ball maintains that knowing is not enough and that researchers have a professional and moral obligation to use the research they create to improve educational practice. Writes Ball (2012), "AERA's mission demands that we not only advance knowledge about education and encourage scholarly inquiry related to education but that we also promote the use of research to improve education and serve the public good" (p. 284).

In conceptualizing ways to close what she calls the "knowing-doing gap," Ball (2012) introduces the concept of "generativity," which describes "a stage in which we strive to create or nurture changes that will outlast us; we strive to contribute to positive changes that benefit others" (p. 287). Ball uses "the zone of generativity" to describe the

region or area that constitutes the distance between what is currently known as determined by the conduct of research and

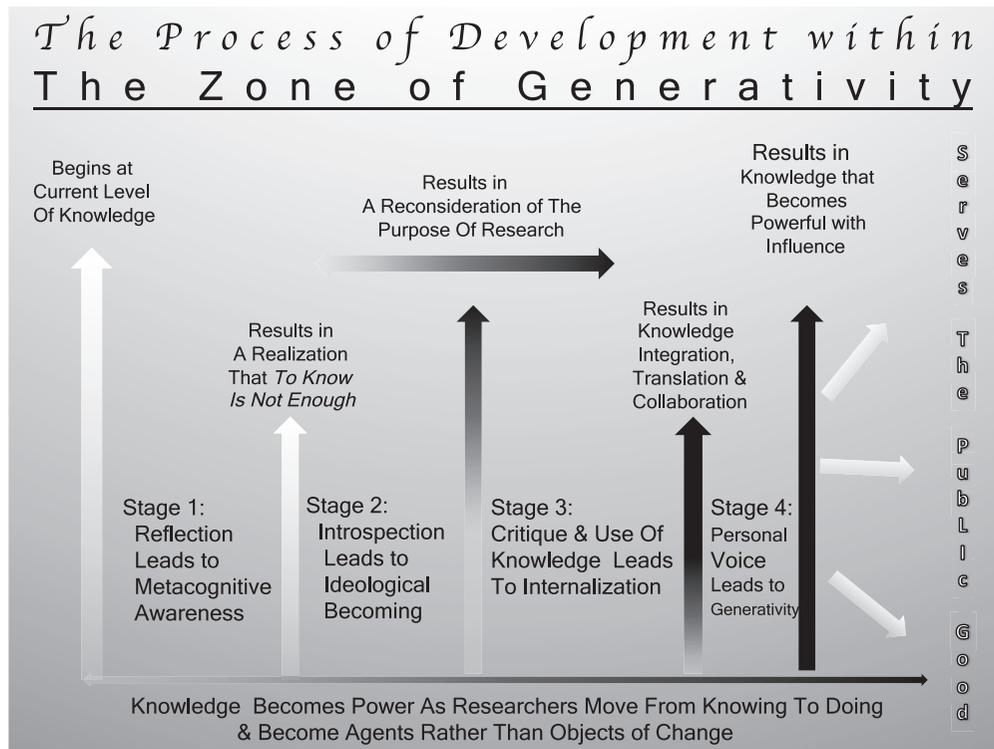


FIGURE 1. *The Process of Development in the Zone of Generativity*

Source. Ball, A. F. (2012). To know is not enough: Knowledge, power, and the zone of generativity. *Educational Researcher*, 41(8), 283–293. Reprinted with permission.

what education researchers have the potential to know through their ability to apply—or promote the application of—what they have learned through the conduct of research. (Ball, 2012, p. 287)

Ball describes four levels of knowledge in her zone of generativity conceptualization: (a) reflection, (b) introspection, (c) critique, and (d) personal voice (see Figure 1). She writes,

Education research must do more than demonstrate that the researcher knows something that can be published while others perish. It must inform others, influence others' thinking, and inspire others to action: It must be generative if it is to close the knowing-doing gap. If researchers will model a kind of generativity that serves the public good, they can inspire policy makers and others stakeholders to become generative in their thinking as well. (Ball, 2012, p. 289)

Paradigms, Knowledge Construction, and Counternarratives

The presidential addresses by Banks, Ladson-Billings, Darling-Hammond, and Ball challenged the dominant paradigms within education research and practice and provided counternarratives based on a transformative paradigm. Kuhn (1970) uses paradigm to describe the “entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on by members of a given [scientific] community” (p. 5). The laws, principles, explanations, and theories of a discipline are also part of its paradigm. Historically within social science and education research, a number of paradigms or explanations have

been used to explain the achievement gap between low-income students of color and middle-class White students.

Each paradigm or explanation reflects the positionality, values, and cultural perspectives of the social science and education researchers who construct them (Banks & Park, 2010). Historically, the paradigms that have had the greatest influence on educational policy and practice were constructed by researchers and theorists who were external to minority communities and viewed low-income students and students of color as “the other” or as “a problem” (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Jensen, 1969; Shuey, 1958/1966).

The genetic and cultural deficit paradigms have had harmful consequences on the education and schooling of low-income students and students of color since IQ testing became popular in the United States during the first decades of the 1900s. Although the genetic paradigm is no longer a legitimate conception within most education research and professional organizations, it still casts a long shadow on education research and practice because it is deeply rooted in American social science and education as well as in the popular imagination. The significant influence of Arthur Jensen’s article that was published in the *Harvard Educational Review* in 1969 and the popular reception of *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life* by Herrnstein and Murray, published in 1994, indicate that the genetic paradigm is still prominent within American culture and society. *The Bell Curve* was on *The New York Times* bestseller list for 15 weeks after it was published. The genetic paradigm maintains that there are distinctive racial groups that have hereditary biological characteristics, such as intellectual and physical abilities, and that some groups are superior to others.

The cultural deprivation paradigm was robust in the 1960s and was epitomized by the publication of *The Culturally Deprived Child* by Frank Riessman in 1962. It was highly influential in compensatory education programs, such as Head Start and Follow Through. The popularity of the cultural-deprivation paradigm increased after the publication of *Teaching Disadvantaged Children in the Preschool* by Bereiter and Engelmann (1966). This book provided the theoretical and research base for DISTAR (Direct Instruction System for Teaching Arithmetic and Reading), published by Science Research Associates and used in school districts throughout the United States to teach reading and arithmetic to low-income children. Cultural deprivation theorists and researchers assume that the learning problems of low-income students result primarily from the families and cultures in which they are socialized rather than from the social structure and political economy of society. Students will achieve academically if the school is able to compensate for their deprived cultural environment and enable them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively in the mainstream society. Some transformative scholars, such as Baratz and Baratz (1970) and Ginsburg (1972), harshly criticized the cultural deprivation paradigm in the 1960s and 1970s. However, it reemerged in a robust way during the 1990s and 2000s with the publication of books such as *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby K. Payne (1996) and *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning* by Abigail Thernstrom and Stephen Thernstrom (2003).

The Cultural Difference Paradigm, Counternarratives, and the AERA Presidential Addresses

The AERA presidential addresses by Banks, Ladson-Billings, Darling-Hammond, and Ball—which are grounded in the cultural difference paradigm—are counternarratives to the genetic and cultural deprivation paradigms, which perpetuate the mainstream master narratives of assimilationism and deculturalization (Spring, 2004). Their presidential addresses articulate and reflect key tenets of the cultural difference paradigm, which views the cultures of groups such as African Americans, Latinos, and American Indians as strong, diverse, and complex. Cultural difference researchers and theorists believe that the schools should change in ways that will enable them to respond to and reflect the cultural strengths of students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic groups and use culturally responsive teaching strategies that are consistent with their cultural and linguistic characteristics (Au, 2011; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Their AERA presidential addresses provided Banks, Ladson-Billings, Darling-Hammond, and Ball with an influential and international forum to give visibility and credence to work they had been pursuing throughout their careers. Banks’s presidential address incorporated his work on the relationship between epistemology, equity pedagogy, and multicultural curriculum reform (Banks, 1993b, 2016). Ladson-Billings’s (1995) seminal work on culturally relevant pedagogy and critical race theory (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) compelled her to undertake a deep and critical analysis of the achievement gap concept. Darling-Hammond’s (1995) extensive work on equity and teacher education resulted in cogent insights regarding the need for all students to have the right to learn in democratic classrooms and schools. Ball’s (2005)

research in literacy and diversity enabled her to construct visionary conceptions about the relationship between research and action.

In their own and unique ways, each of these AERA presidents expanded the epistemological terrain within AERA by illuminating and advancing key tenets of the cultural difference paradigm and explaining why students from diverse income, ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic groups must experience cultural recognition, empowerment, and equity in schools in order to attain academic and social success and “the right to learn” (Darling-Hammond, 1996, p. 5).

Equity and Diversity Expand and Deepen Within AERA

The changes that initiated the institutionalization of diversity within AERA and other associations and that enabled people of color to assume leadership positions reflected both historic and demographic changes within American society. This confluence of factors resulted in AERA’s electing nine presidents of color between 1995 and 2015 and in a rich array of other developments and activities that focus on diversity, such as the establishment of a wide range of special interest groups (SIGs) that focus on diversity. I categorized 32 of the 150 SIGs as interest groups that focus on diversity, which were 21.3% of AERA SIGs in 2016. Table 3 consists of a list of these 32 SIGs.

Table 3
American Educational Research Association
Diversity Special Interest Groups

Bilingual Education and Research
Caribbean and African Studies in Education
Catholic Education
Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Education
Critical Educators for Social Justice
Critical Examination of Race, Ethnicity, Class, and Gender in Education
Critical Issues in Curriculum and Cultural Studies
Democratic Citizenship in Education
Disability Studies in Education
Hip Hop Theories, Praxis, and Pedagogies
Hispanic Research Issues
Inclusion and Accommodation in Educational Assessment
Indigenous Peoples of the Americas
Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific
International Studies
Marxian Analysis of Society, Schools, and Education
Multicultural/Multiethnic Education: Theory, Research, and Practice
Paulo Freire, Critical Pedagogy, and Emancipation
Postcolonial Studies and Education
Queer Studies
Religion and Education
Research Focus on Black Education
Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans
Research on the Education of Deaf Persons
Research on Women and Education
Rural Education
School Community, Climate, and Culture
Second Language Research
Special Education Research
Spirituality and Education
Tracking and Detracking
Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research

AERA established two lectureships and awards in 2004 that will continue to expand its epistemological terrain in the future. The Social Justice in Education Award was established to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision and the passage of the Civil Right Act of 1964. The *Brown* Lecture in Education Research was also established to mark the 50th anniversary of the *Brown* decision. Table 4 contains a list of the recipients of the Social Justice

Award, titles of their addresses, and institutional affiliations. The *Brown* Lectures are available on the AERA website. The Minority Dissertation Fellowship Program that AERA established in 1991 will also continue to expand its epistemological terrain in the future. Table 5 shows the growth in the population of AERA members of color from 1975–1976 to 2015. This significant population of members of color will also be an important factor in maintaining epistemological diversity within AERA.

Table 4
Social Justice in Education Award Recipients and Lectures

Year	Recipient and Affiliation	Address Title
2015	Gloria Ladson-Billings, University of Wisconsin–Madison	Justice . . . Just Justice
2014	Michael A. Olivas, University of Houston	Drafting Justice: Statutory Language, Public Policy, and Legislative Reform
2013	Jeannie Oakes, University of California–Los Angeles and the Ford Foundation	Social Theory, Evidence, and Activism: Challenging Educational Inequality
2012	Daniel G. Solorzano, University of California–Los Angeles	The Role of Critical Race Theory in the Struggle for Social Justice
2011	William C. Ayers, University of Illinois–Chicago	Lesson One: I Would Sing
2010	Carl A. Grant, University of Wisconsin–Madison	Cultivating Flourishing Lives: A Robust Social Justice Vision of Education
2009	Christine E. Sleeter, California State University–Monterey Bay	Documenting Social Justice-in-Action Using Tools of Research
2008	Sonia Nieto, University of Massachusetts	Doing Educational Justice in Hard Times
2007	Gary A. Orfield, University of California–Los Angeles	Navigating the Science–Values Dichotomy: How a Scholar Can Be Both Rigorously Empirical and an Active Citizen and Advocate
2006	Gwendolyn C. Baker, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor	Pathways to Change
2005	Jacqueline J. Irvine, Emory University, Atlanta	Increasing the Likelihood of Finding a “Significant Difference”: Social Justice and Educational Research
2004	James A. Banks, University of Washington, Seattle	Teaching for Social Justice, Diversity, and Citizenship in a Global World

Table 5
American Educational Research Association (AERA) Trends in Membership by Race/Ethnicity, 1975–1976 to 2015^a

Race/Ethnicity	1975–1976		1980–1981		1985–1986		1990–1991		1995–1996		2000–2001		2005–2006		2011 ^c		2015 ^d	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black/African American	2.8	250	3.7	423	4.2	489	4.0	578	5.2	845	6.5	1,089	7.7	1,778	9.0	2,108	10.0	2,403
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.6	234	2.6	296	3.1	368	4.4	639	5.9	956	7.3	1,218	10.1	2,348	10.3	2,408	11.9	2,867
American Indian/Native American	0.5	48	0.4	45	0.4	44	0.4	61	0.5	84	0.7	117	0.7	158	0.7	175	0.7	165
Hispanic	1.1	94	2.3	264	2.6	300	2.7	397	3.6	587	4.2	701	5.2	1,194	5.9	1,388	8.0	1,915
White, non-Hispanic	90.1	8,015	88.8	10,149	88.1	10,324	86.3	12,564	81.4	13,177	77.9	12,982	71.6	16,600	67.7	15,837	64.2	15,458
Other ^b	2.9	258	2.2	252	1.6	193	2.2	315	3.3	531	3.4	561	4.7	1,095	6.2	1,461	5.3	1,278
Total	100.0	8,899	100.0	11,429	100.0	11,718	100.0	14,554	100.0	16,180	100.0	16,668	100.0	23,173	100.0	23,377	100.0	24,086

Note. From American Educational Research Association (2016). Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/1SCXEDJ>. Reprinted with permission from the American Educational Research Association. Copyright 2016 by the American Educational Research Association.

^aThis table includes only AERA members whose race/ethnicity was known.

^bBeginning in 2013–2014, members could indicate more than one race; individuals indicating two or more races are reported as “Other.”

^cIn 2008, the start of AERA’s membership and fiscal year changed from July 1 to January 1.

^dNote that the interval between 2011 and 2015 is a 4-year interval, not a 5-year interval.

This poem by Langston Hughes (in Bontemps, 1963, p. 64), the African American poet of Harlem Renaissance fame, encapsulates the journey for structural inclusion into mainstream scholarly and professional organizations that was undertaken by the AERA presidents discussed in this article and by scholars of color within AERA and other research and professional organizations.

I, Too (by Langston Hughes)

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong,
Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.
Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America.

—From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes* by Langston Hughes, edited by Arnold Rampersad with David Roessel, Associate Editor, copyright © 1994 by the Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved. Additional rights by permission of Harold Ober Associates Incorporated.

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