Critical Educators for Social Justice SIG

Fall 2018

Newsletter

Letter from the Chairs
Subini Ancy Annamma and Kari Kokka

Dear CESJ Members,

Given the sociopolitical conditions of this current moment—which are both reminiscent of past epochs of upheaval and danger for multiply-marginalized communities and yet unprecedented in its current iterations—we have decided to look back to move forward. In other words, to better cultivate a vision for our leadership for the 2018-2019 year, we have returned to CESJ’s roots. We found an important article about the history of CESJ here. We invite you to read this article to learn more about our SIG’s history. CESJ had its inaugural business meeting in 2001 and 40 members attended its 2002 business meeting. By 2009, CESJ was allotted 11 sessions. In 2018, about 150 people attended the business meeting and social. This year we have approximately 1,100 members of CESJ, and are slotted for 14 paper or symposia sessions, 54 papers in roundtable or poster format, and 1 fireside chat along with 2 forums (Graduate Student, Early Career) and 3 awards (Dissertation, Scholar Activist/Community Advocacy Award, and Revolutionary Mentoring). The growth of CESJ has been significant in terms of membership, participation, and presence in the AERA program.

 Returning to the SIG’s history is also constructive in that it reveals some of the original need for and intent of CESJ. In 2001, Hinchey writes, “the SIG’s focus was social activism, the need to build a social movement in education, and providing a forum to share emancipatory teaching and community projects” (p. 155). Given the sociopolitical context of our current times, we find these commitments prescient and useful today.

As we write this, a Supreme Court nominee has been accused of multiple incidents of sexual assault, immigrant children are still locked in cages, multiply-marginalized Black, Latinx, Indigenous and other youth of color are thrust into the school-prison nexus, trans women of color are being murdered at surging rates—and those are just some of the strands of injustice which are enveloping us. Our goal is to recognize these sociopolitical contexts surrounding us and also, we hope to support CESJ SIG members to continue to engage in radical healing and strategic resistance against these forces in order to reimagine and reconstruct different worlds. Consequently, our leadership vision for this year is to continue the lineage of radical work that has been done in CESJ with a focus on: 1) engaging social activism in a variety of forms; 2) building and facilitating social
Letter from Chairs Continued

movements in education—specifically between researchers, educators across the P-20 spectrum, and community members; and 3) providing a forum to share emancipatory projects.

Each of these three constructs of our vision will be animated through different projects that we will both support and lead. We hope to lead by building in more programming which inspires and connects critical educators throughout the year. We encourage our members to approach us with ideas that align with this mission as well so we can support you. Do you want to: (1) lead a twitter chat, (2) organize a solidarity walk-out, (3) build projects with teachers in a local school to implement critical pedagogy, (4) or share a community project you are collaborating on? Please contact us and CESJ will do what we can to support your projects that are committed to liberatory education.

The macrosociopolitical context, the institutions within, and the interactions that inform them continue to be saturated with injustice. CESJ comprises a collective of researchers, educators, and community members tearing down those inequities and building joy and justice. As the co-chairs of CESJ, we hope to support our community members in dismantling, envisioning, and creating education rooted in liberation. Let’s build coalitions and movements together.

Kari & Subini

AERA Report: 2018 Awards

Dissertation Award
Jenna R. Cushing-Leubner
University of Wisconsin, Whitewater

Cati V. de los Ríos
University of California, Riverside

Dr. Antonio Martinez Nieves Scholar Activist & Community Advocacy Award
Dani O’Brien
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Revolutionary Mentor Award
Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz
Teachers College, Columbia University
Graduate Student Forum- Fostering Subversive Scholarship: Toward Critical Hope, Healing & Radical Love in

The 2018 CESJ Graduate Student Forum (GSF) planning committee members Malayka Neith Cornejo, Josephine H. Pham, Bianca N. Haro, Gwendolyn Baxley, Gabriela Kovats, Gabriel Rodriguez, and Melissa A. Navarro, now Dr. Rodriguez and Dr. Navarro, invited five distinguished panelists: Dr. Julio Cammarota, University of Arizona; Dr. Bianca J. Baldrige, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Dr. Django Paris, University of Washington; Dr. Eve Tuck, University of Toronto; and Dr. Nai’lah Nasir Nusad, Spencer Foundation.

Participants engaged a guided meditation, an interactive re-mixed artistic ice breaker, meaningful small group discussions, and interacted with panelists through a discussion moderated by Gabriel and Gwen. Vanguard High School, where our CESJ co-chair Dr. Kari Kokka once served as a high school math teacher, was this year’s GSF hosting site. Known as “a community of learners committed to cultivating the resources necessary to become literate, articulate, analytical, reflective and empathetic citizens”, GSF participants were welcomed by Vanguardian student speakers. Two high school seniors shared post-graduation plans and testimonios of their experience at a student-centered school with high expectations and shared accountability between staff, students, and families. Hosting the forum “in a community space where our future leaders learn” (GSF Participant, 2018), grounds us in solidarity with educators for social justice with critical hope, healing and radical love.

Forum feedback included comments like the following: “Guided meditation was just what I needed. The ice breakers worked well because they didn’t read like any ice breakers I’ve done before. Just felt organic and authentic.” “It was refreshing and needed to be in a graduate student space and an academic conference space that was different than what I am used to. It was a reminder that academia can be healing and rooted in justice”. “Thank you to the entire committee for this amazing opportunity to network with like-minded scholars and grow together in LOVE.”

Please express your interest in co-planning or attending the 2019 CESJ Graduate Student Forum at the American Education Research Association, annual conference, in Toronto, Canada via email at cesjgradforum@gmail.com.

The 2018 CESJ GSF planning committee thanks community artist, Ife Williams, for her meaningful art contributions to our community conversation regarding the intersection(s) of justice, education, healing, and subversive scholarship.
AERA Report: Early Scholar Career Forum-Radical Dreaming for Radical Change

The CESJ Early Scholar Career Forum Committee worked together to create a space for early-career tenure track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, and post-doctoral scholars to discuss, reflect, and plan for radical dreaming and radical change. The committee invited the following scholars to share their knowledge, wisdom, and expertise with forum participants:

- Rochelle Gutiérrez- University of Illinois
- Brian Jones, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
- Veronica Velez, Wester Washington University

Panelist began by sharing their current work, what becoming/being a social justice scholar means to them, and advice they would give their pre-tenure or early career self. Participants were then invited to break into small groups where panelists would facilitate discussions on scholarship and publishing, university climate and institutional politics, public advocacy, and wellness and self-care.

The forum was a huge success with 35 participants attending and reports that the discussions were informative and generative. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this event. If you are interested in planning the 2019 Early Scholar Career Forum see pages 6 and 7 for more information.
AERA Report: Early Scholar Career Forum and Graduate Student Form Joint Happy Hour

During the 2018 Annual AERA conference in New York City, for the first time ever, the CESJ Early Scholar Career Forum (ESCF) and Graduate Student Forum (GSF) co-hosted a Joint Happy Hour. The vision behind this shared space was to open possibilities for intergenerational intersections and meaningful connections among graduate students, emerging scholars, and prominent scholars engaging critical work in education and social justice.

CESJ Joint Happy Hour co-organizers Malayka Neith Cornejo and Josephine Pham (GSF), and Dr. Nini Hayes and Dr. Sosanya Jones (ESC), invited participants from the Early Career Scholars and Graduate Student Forum to attend following their respective day sessions. The 2018 CESJ Joint Happy Hour was held at CAMARADAS el barrio, “a worker’s public house where camaraderie is built atop of a fine selection of beverages from around the world, excellent music, gallery space and an innovative blend of the tapas tradition with Puerto Rican cuisine”.

Attendees enjoyed complimentary drinks and snacks served over rhythmic Latinx tunes. Happy Hour guests expressed appreciation for this meaningful community space, which celebrates unsung (s)heroes, factory workers, and laborers, in a historical area of Spanish Harlem that continues to ‘super-vive’ and thrive amidst persistent gentrification. For more information or to express interest in supporting this meaningful space in Toronto, Canada, please contact cesjgrad.

forum@gmail.com or nini.hayes@wwu.edu, or osnavarr@calpoly.edu.
AERA Report: Business Meeting

On Sunday April 15th CESJ hosted our annual business meeting. The meeting began by thanking Dr. Leigh Patel and Dean Valerie Kinloch for providing a well-received webinar titled *Navigating and Thriving in the Academy as a Critical Scholar*. Next the 2018 Awards were given out (see page 2 for more) and a call for nominations for a special election were reviewed. The highlight of the business meeting followed with an outstanding presentation by Dr. Shawn Ginwright, Farima Pour-Khorshid, and Christina “V” Villarreal on *Radical Healing*. They began by discussing the five principles of radical healing:

* Culture
* Agency
* Relationships
* Meaning
* Aspirations

Next they facilitated an activity titled Who Are You? Participants worked with a partner to answer questions such as who are you, who or what do you pretend to be, and who do you want to be. One partner continually repeated the question as they other came up with additional responses.

After addressing each question participants were asked to debrief how the exercise made them feel, gauge their level of honesty, identify which questions were tough to answer, and discuss the implications these questions may have for those who are critical educators committed to social justice.

After the *Radical Healing*, members of CESJ were joined by members of Queer Studies and Education SIG, Post-Colonial Theory and Education SIG, and Critical Issues in Curriculum and Cultural Studies SIG for a joint META-MEGA SIG Reception! The Executive Board of CESJ thanks everyone who made the business meeting and META-MEGA SIG Social a success!
Join a 2019 AERA CESJ Committee!

Each year we rely on members like yourself to assist with the AERA Pre-Conference Forums and SIG Awards. Please read the descriptions below, and contact the board member listed if you are interested in joining the committee.

**Outstanding Dissertation Award** This award recognizes doctoral level research that utilizes critical theory and focuses on the struggle for social, environmental, racial and/or economic justice or human rights. This award includes a $300 stipend towards the cost of attending the AERA conference. Please contact the committee co-chairs, Sonsanya Jones sosanya@gmail.com and Tanja Burkhard tanjaburkhard@pitt.edu.

**Scholar-Activist & Community Advocacy Award** This award recognizes a scholar-activist (any rank) who has made significant contribution to the promotion of social, environmental, racial and/or economic justice or human rights through collaboration with community partners (this new award has collapsed the Scholar Activist and Community Advocacy Awards). Community activism can be broadly conceptualized and can include political action, service, grassroots organizing and any other advocacy work that directly benefits community members. The AERA member and their community partner(s) will share this award. Please contact the committee co-chairs Subin Annamma subiniannamma@ku.edu and Kari Kok-ka KOKKA@pitt.edu.

**Revolutionary Mentor Award** This new CESJ award recognizes the essential role mentorship plays in supporting critical scholarship. This award recognizes a scholar who has made distinguished contributions in the mentoring of PK-12 students, undergraduate and graduate students, and/or junior scholars, as a means of helping to develop critical social justice scholars, educators, and activists. We seek to honor a scholar (at any rank) who has been vital in supporting others in their research, teaching, and/or critical community engagement. We want to highlight scholars who encourage, support, and help guide critical scholarship inside and outside of the academy. Please contact the committee co-chairs, Alison Dover adover@fullerton.edu and Denisha Jones denishanjones@gmail.com.

**Graduate Student Forum** The Graduate Student Forum is a day-long forum to connect critical graduate student scholars to each other and to more senior scholars in the -eld. The forum typically includes small group discussions, a panel with scholar activists, and other networking activities. The purpose of the Graduate Student Forum is to create space for doctoral students committed to and engaged in social justice and critical education research to 1) Help prepare critical scholars for future scholarship and related work.
AERA 2019 CESJ Committees Continued

2) Identify strategies and tools to share and take back to our colleagues, students, communities, and home institutions. 3) Learn from scholars and peers about the possibilities and tensions that arise in social justice and critical education research. Please contact Malayka Neith Cornejo

barbara.cornejo@unlv.edu

Early Career Scholar Forum The forum is open to early-career tenure track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, and postdoctoral scholars. During the forum, participants gather with scholar-mentors from CESJ to discuss various topics related to research and scholar-ship, teaching, community-engaged scholarship, and service. The purpose of the forum is to provide early career scholars with 1) a sense of community with scholars committed to critical scholarship and social justice; 2) mentorship from a range of scholars (junior and senior level colleagues); 3) practical tools and strategies for navigating academic contexts; 4) a chance to network and build community with other CESJ early career scholars. Please contact Nini Hayes nini.hayes@wwu.edu and Oscar Navarro osnavarro@calpoly.edu

Thank you to the 2018 Committee Members!!

Graduate Student Forum:
Malayka Neith Conejo, UNLV; Josephine H. Pham, UCLA; Bianca N. Haro, UCLA; Gabriel Rodriguez*, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Gabriela Kovats Sanchez, San Diego State; Gwendolyn Baxley, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Melissa A. Navarro*, San Diego State

**Congratulations to Dr. Gabriel Rodriguez and Dr. Melissa Navarro for successfully defending their dissertation.

Early Scholars Career Forum
Kelly Brown, Lamar University; Tanja Burkhard, University of Pittsburg Meagan Call-Cummings, George Mason University; Nini Hayes, Western Washington University; Denisha Jones, Trinity Washington University; Sosanya Jones, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale Leslie Locke, University of Iowa

Dissertation Award
Hannah Carson Baggett, Elyse Hambacher, Nini Hayes, Abigail Rombalski, Vicki Vescio, and Beth Sondel

Scholar-Activist Award Committee
Melanie Acosta, Alison G. Dover, Alyssa Hadley Dunn, Brian Gibbs, Keisha Green, Patricia Krueger-Henney, Denise G. Yull

Revolutionary Mentor Award Committee
Carey Andrzejewski, Kelly Brown, Stephanie Cross, Jeana Hrepec, Lauren Kelly, Shantá Robinson, Caro Valdez
Black Lives Matter in School Week of Action 2019: Call for Higher Education to Get Involved!

February 4-8, 2019 will mark the second National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action (BLM at School). What began as a 1-day event to support black students in Seattle has grown to a multi-city week of action that brings together teachers from across the country educating their students around the 13-guiding principles of the Black Lives Matter movement. Students and community members attend diverse events related to the day's theme and the national/local demands.

#BlackLivesMatter was created by Patrice Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi after the murder of Trayvon Martin. As extrajudicial killings of black men and women and dehumanizing treatment of black boys and girls continue to make national headlines, the #BlackLivesMatter movement spread. In October of 2016 educators in Seattle brought the movement for Black lives into the fight for educational justice. A few months later in 2017, teachers in Philadelphia launched the first Black Lives Matter Week of Action in Schools. They developed a week long curriculum and organized a variety of events to support black students, black families, and black educators.

Last year BLM at School went national with educators in New York; Washington, DC; New Jersey; Philadelphia, Howard County, Maryland; Baltimore; Seattle; Boston; and Chicago organizing their own week of action. Organizing for the 2019 BLM at School of Week of Action is underway with plans to increase the number of cities and schools participating. For more information visit our website www.blacklivesmatteratschool.com and find us on Facebook.

Although BLM at School Week of Action includes a diverse curriculum covering pre-k to 12th grade, one area that requires further attention is the role higher education can play during the week. How might we develop a curriculum to use in our courses? What events can we plan to support educators in our area? How can our research and scholarship support the national movement? If you are interested in exploring the role of higher education in the BLM at School Week of Action please contact Denisha Jones, 2018-2019 National Steering Committee member at denishanjones@gmail.com.
Kari Kokka: Co-Chair

Kari Kokka is an Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education at the University of Pittsburgh. She studies Social Justice Mathematics, STEM teacher activism, and retention of STEM teachers of color in urban schools. Prior to her doctoral studies, she was a math teacher for 11 years in Title I public high schools. Kari completed her doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and earned her M.A. and B.S. at Stanford University. She is co-founder of the Creating Balance in an Unjust World Conference on STEM Education and Social Justice and a core member of the People’s Education Movement Bay Area.

Subini Ancy Annamma: Co-Chair

Subini Ancy Annamma Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at the University of Kansas. Before her doctoral studies, she was a special education teacher in both public schools and youth prisons. All of her research in the academy focuses on increasing access to equitable education for multiply-marginalized communities. She critically examines the mutually constitutive nature of racism and ableism, how they interlock with other marginalizing oppressions, and how these intersections impact education in urban schools, youth prisons, and teacher education. Dr. Annamma’s book, The Pedagogy of Pathologization (Routledge, 2018) focuses on the education trajectories of incarcerated disabled girls of color. She is also a Ford Postdoctoral Fellow for the 2018-19 school year hosted at UCLA.

Tanja Burkhard: Fiscal Co-Chair

Tanja Burkhard is a Postdoctoral Associate in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Tanja’s research agenda examines the intersections of language/literacy, racialization and immigration through a women of color feminist, anticolonial lens. These focal areas emerged from her experiences as a foreign language and English as a Second Language instructor in Germany, Turkey, and the United States. Her most recent work examines the methodological implications of working with immigrant, undocumented and refugee populations for qualitative educational research.
Sosanya Jones: Fiscal, Co-Chair

Sosanya Jones is an assistant professor of Higher Education Leadership and Policy Studies in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Howard University. She currently serves as a member the Financial Accountability and Equity Working Group for The Educational Trust. Sosanya created a student centered Diversity Symposium which featured student proposals for addressing equity and inclusion for different populations at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale. She also volunteered for The Rainbow Cafe of Southern Illinois, a safe space and social/support group for high school age gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth in Southern Illinois. Sosanya’s research interests include governmental policies and practices related to equity and access, the politics of campus diversity, and creating better support, training, and contemplative practice for diversity professionals in higher education.

Alison G. Dover: Communications Co-Chair

Alison G. Dover is a first generation college graduate, a former high school teacher, and an Associate Professor in the Secondary Education Department at California State University, Fullerton. She’s been a member of CESJ since 2010. Alison’s research examines social justice-oriented teacher agency in K-12 and teacher education contexts, with an emphasis on curricular, pedagogical, and activist responses to unjust and restrictive policies. Her recent publications include Preparing to Teach Social Studies for Social Justice: Becoming a Renegade (2016, Teachers College Press), and articles in Teaching and Teacher Education, The Educational Forum, English Journal, and Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy. Contact Alison at adover@fullerton.edu.

Denisha Jones: Communications Co-Chair

Denisha Jones is an Assistant Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at Trinity Washington University. She received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Indiana University in 2013. Dr. Jones began as a kindergarten teacher and then a preschool director before spending the last 12 years in teacher education. Six years ago Dr. Jones became active in the fight to stop the corporate takeover of public education, organizing and speaking at numerous rallies, marches, and conferences. Determined to be a more effective advocate, she began law school as a part-time student in 2014 at the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law and expects to graduate in May 2018. She is a board member and administrator for the Badass Teachers Association, Inc., United Opt Out National; and she is on the advisory board of Defending the Early Years. Her research interests include developing critical consciousness in pre-service teachers, organizing activist research projects that challenge the privatization of public education, and leveraging the intersection of public policy, social movement lawyering, and critical social justice education to dismantle the neoliberal assault on public education.
CESJ Board

Nini Hayes: Program Co-Chair

Nini Hayes is an Assistant Professor in Environmental Education and affiliated faculty for the Education for Social Justice program at Western Washington University. Their teaching, learning, and research is centered on equity, justice in education, and the laboring of critical and justice-centered faculty of color, their work both within and beyond the academy. Prior to graduate school, they were a former fifth grade teacher and environmental educator. They have been both a participant and planner for both the CESJ Graduate Student Forum and Early Career Scholars Forum and look forward to AERA 2019 in Toronto.

Oscar Navarro: Program Co-Chair

Oscar Navarro is an Assistant Professor of Secondary Education at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. His experience as a high school teacher in South Central Los Angeles and involvement in the People’s Education Movement inform his scholarship on improving the teaching and learning for students of Color in secondary schools. Oscar is also a Faculty Associate for Cal Poly’s Office of University Diversity and Inclusion and a steering committee member for the Central Coast Coalition for Undocumented Student Success. He has participated in CESJ’s Graduate Student Forum and Early Career Scholar Forum and excited about joining the board.

Malayka Neith Cornejoy: Graduate Student Representative

Malayka Neith Cornejo, a fourth year Ph.D. student in Teaching & Learning at UNLV, serves as educational technologist for UNLV’s Office of Online Education, adjunct faculty, and program coordinator of the Spanish Language, Culture, and Literacy Advanced Graduate Studies Certificate Program at Touro University Nevada. As a former PK-12 teacher & administrator, Malayka’s research centers on multicultural education, responsive teacher preparation, alternative disciplinary practices, girls of color, school pushout, juvenile adjudication, historical trauma, holistic healing, restorative justice, cultural reproduction, and resistance movements. In addition to co-organizing the CESJ graduate student forum (GSF) for the past three years; Malayka organizes with the Paulo Freire SIG, with Teachers for Social Justice, Las Vegas, and with Youth Escape Arena, Inc., a D.C. based non-profit for at-promise youth, as the National Director of Alternative Practices.