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The Doctorate as the Framework and the Future of Literacy Research and Pedagogy

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As individuals seek their respective places in the larger community of literacy scholars and practitioners they often find themselves divided by personal allegiance to philosophies, paradigms, and praxis. At times it seems that there is so very much that divides us. Yet there are numerous points of common cause. One important point of convergence would be a personal desire to make our field a stronger force for the common good than it was when we joined the professoriate, regardless of the era and regardless of the reigning philosophy. Such is a worthy legacy for the profession, if not for its potential impact on the greater society.

One commonality that all members of the professoriate share is the doctoral experience. You might refer to it as the completion of the terminal degree. You might call it your inculcation into the community of scholars that provides the fundamental leadership for the profession. You might view it as the last vestiges of the guild system. You might even refer to the experience with a degree of cynicism as gaining the union card. Regardless of the vantage one holds of the experience, the individual who walked across the stage to be hooded was ever so different from the individual who first entered the hallowed halls of ivy to begin coursework on the doctorate.

The fundamental designs of most doctoral programs in literacy education have more in common than in difference, whether these programs are now located in the flagships of the *US News and World Report* ratings, regional institutions, or more evolving institutions. The primary differences are not likely to be in the basic depth of knowledge presented in classes and seminars or in the broadly constituted stages of development that doctoral students transcend. Differences in programs are likely to be found more so in the opportunities for “elbow work” or other ongoing scholarly experiences (e.g., research, teaching, presentation, publication) provided for or even expected of doctoral students and candidates for the doctorate. Furthermore, opportunities for these experiences may have the greatest breadth within individual institutions as opposed to across institutions based on the ratio of commuters to resident students.

Here, then, a question might be raised for your consideration. How did you select the school that would become your alma mater? Did you always know you wanted to undertake your doctoral work at the University of Georgia or the University of California, Berkeley, or Michigan State University? You probably had no clue about where you should undertake advanced work. Indeed, most of us were probably babes in the woods as we started to seek an institution (or more so a location) for advanced study. In my own case, my master's degree mentor came to the rescue. I remember ever so long ago sitting in front of a roaring fire one evening at Larry Carrillo's home deep in the California redwoods going through the second edition of the *IRA Directory of Graduate Programs* (Guthrie, 1976) looking at descriptions of doctoral programs and corresponding faculty from across the country. That evening led me to undertake what might best be explained as an academic version of eharmony.com. It worked, and I'll never regret the opportunity to study under an ever-so-knowledgeable faculty and join with a wonderful cadre of doctoral students at the University of Pittsburgh.

Still, fond memories aside, all fields need to undergo self-scrutiny on a regular basis. To my knowledge, the field of literacy research and pedagogy has not undertaken a serious, cross-institutional review of the doctoral experience. Over the years, the systematic issuance of the International Reading Association's standards documents have not lead the literacy professoriate to undertake such a scholarly discussion. In an era where the doctorate is being reviewed in nearly all of the professional fields, it becomes timely for the literacy field to undertake such discussions before outside forces hijack the scholarly ship of state so as to hold it for ransom.

Hence, with this article the stage is set for examining the state of doctoral training across scholarly fields, followed by a more focused examination of the doctorate in the reading education field. This action begins with reviewing the results from the National Science Foundation's preliminary report from the *Survey of Earned Doctorates* (SED) for the 2007 academic year issued to coincide with the annual meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools.

SURVEY OF EARNED DOCTORATES

The National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration sponsor the SED, which is administered by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago.

Research Doctoral Programs

The survey covers information from all the new graduates of U.S. research doctoral programs, including their educational histories, their funding sources, and their postdoctoral plans. The SED also collects information on trends in the length of time it took to complete the degree and the numbers and types of schools granting the degree.

The annual response rate has been at least 91%.

What is known about the research doctorates (PhD's, DSc's, and research EdD's) granted in the United States? Between July 1, 2006, and June 30, 2007, a total of 48,079 earned doctorates were granted nationwide; that was up 5% from the previous academic year. Of that total number, 6,429 degrees (13.37%) were granted in the education fields, a 5.0% growth since 2006. A total of 24,056 degrees were granted in the sciences (including psychology at 3,294 degrees and the social sciences at 4,415 degrees) with a growth rate of 6.5%. Health-related degrees continued a rapid growth with 2,134 degrees awarded (plus 12% from the previous year) because of the burgeoning growth of public health schools and programs in the recent years. Business also demonstrated growth with 1,505 degrees (plus 14.9% since 2006). The humanities continued a downward slide with 4,890 degrees (less 4.6% since 2006).

Across the overall education field, the breakdown of research doctoral degrees is observed as 2,154 degrees granted in educational administration (plus 5.1% since 2006), 2,653 doctoral degrees granted in educational research (less 3.5% since 2006), 298 research doctorates granted in teacher education (plus 19.2% since 2006), 881 degrees granted in teaching fields (plus 24.6% since 2006), and 443 in other education fields (plus 22% since 2006).

Reading Education Doctoral Programs

In the past years specific information pertaining to the field of literacy was not available. However, we now are able to review an analysis of such data for reading educators.

In December of 2008, the National Reading Conference through the Office of the NRC President commissioned the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) to develop a Profile of Research Doctorates: 1965-2006 for the doctoral specialization of Reading Education (#882). The data were derived from the *Survey of Doctorates 2006*. The final report was delivered in February of 2009. Section I contains a demographic profile of doctorates in reading education and all doctorates. The demographic classifications presented within this section include the following: gender, citizenship, race/ethnicity of U.S. citizens, mother's educational background, father's educational background, median age since baccalaureate, median age at doctorate, and baccalaureate degree field. Section II contains the post-graduation profile of doctorates in reading education and all other doctorates. The classifications presented within this section include post-graduation status, post-graduation plans, post-graduation employment sector, primary post-graduation employment activity, source of post-doctoral study support, and percentage of individuals remaining in the United States after graduation.

The period covered in the commissioned report was from 1965 to 2006 with additional subdivisions of 1965 to 1974, 1975 to 1984, 1985 to 1994, 1995 to 2000, and 2001 to 2006. Since the field of study code for Reading Education did not appear on the questionnaire until 1976, the subdivision of 1965 to 1974 could not be used as a part of the field specific analysis that follows. (It is noted that the commissioned report is in slight variance with Thurgood, Golladay, and Hill (2006), as the latter notes one graduate from the period between 1970 and 1974.)

In combining the overall data from the two reports, it is observed that 3,244 doctorates have been granted for the classification Reading Education between 1975 and 2006. Between 1975 and 1984 a total of 1,356 doctoral degrees were awarded. From 1985 to 1994, 1,007 Reading Education doctoral degrees were granted. In the next period reported, 1995-2000, 454 degrees were earned. Finally for the most recent data available covering the years 2001 to 2006, 426 doctoral degrees were awarded in the field. With the "rogue" degree from the years 1970-1974, we have the total presented. While the total number of degrees may seem to be impressive, in the total context, the research doctoral degrees in Reading Education account for only 0.00225 of the 1,441,541 research doctorates awarded nationally.

Demographic Profile

Gender

An examination of the survey data in Section I of the report for the category on gender points to a field at the doctoral level that has been predominantly female since the Reading Education identifier was first included on the questionnaire. Further, the data as presented in Table 1 are also clear that the proportion of men to women reporting that they earned the doctorate in Reading Education has been dropping across each report period. This finding may not be surprising to anyone attending professional meetings for the literacy professoriate throughout the period under review. However, during the review period, the data for the Reading Education cohort are skewed

radically when comparing gender data with that for the overall cohort of individuals being awarded research doctorates. While the award of the doctorate has been steadily approaching a form of gender equality for the overall doctoral cohort, the growing gender imbalance within the Reading Education field should be of some concern.

The question must be raised as to whether such a gender distribution influences, negatively or positively, the types of research being undertaken, the nature of curriculum and instructional materials being developed, or the approaches to professional training (both inservice and preservice) being delivered at this time? To go one step further, we should ask whether males interested in literacy research tend to enroll in doctoral programs offered within the fields of psychology or educational psychology. While it is not unusual for members of the education profession to discuss the effects of gender imbalance in the PK-12 teaching force, it is time to have a serious discussion of its impact upon the literacy professoriate and leadership.

Citizenship

In reviewing the data on the citizenship of those individuals receiving the reading doctorate as found in Table 1, it is observed that the field is slowly building a base of doctoral students from around the world studying in U.S. universities. Still, the number of international students in our programs pales in comparison to the overall doctoral cohort.

Nevertheless, such a demographic change in the award of reading research doctorates and hence, membership in doctoral programs, should lead the literacy professoriate to promote a growing understanding of cross-national perspectives within each institution's doctoral cadre. Furthermore, it should promote John Downing's (1982) recommendation that all doctoral students be exposed to the theory, research, and best practice from across the world that is to be found in the comparative reading/literacy field.

Race/Ethnicity

When the reported data on the race/ethnicity of individuals who are U.S. citizens are examined in Table 1, it can be said that there has been slow progress in broadening the diversity of the doctoral community in the Reading Education field. The proportion of individuals in each of the reported racial/ethnic subgroups has been greatest in proportional growth with Blacks followed by Hispanics, Asians, and American Indians. The group noted as Other has also been growing in size. On the other hand, it is observed that the proportion of Whites receiving the reading doctorate has been slowly dropping. When comparing data from the reading field with the overall doctoral cohort, it is found that the reading field is graduating a slightly greater number of Blacks and a slightly less proportion of Asians than found in the overall pool of new doctorates.

While it is good news that the field is diversifying, albeit slowly, it is clear that the road we must travel is steep and long, and our field still has miles to go. Academic programs must develop programming that identifies talented students of color as early as the senior year of undergraduate school to recruit them to enroll in joint master's/doctoral programs all the while assisting them to undertake three years of quality K-12 professional experiences, perhaps in partnership schools. Professional organizations have the responsibility of providing programs that support the mentoring of individuals on the doctoral trail, particularly in cases where the doctoral program itself has limited diversity in the literacy faculty. Grow- your-own programs should be considered at either the

Table 1. Demographic Data Doctorates in Reading Education and All Fields

	1975-1984	1985-1994	1995-2000	2001-2006	All Years
Reading Doctorates	1,356	1,007	454	426	3,244
All Fields Doctorates	315,823	356,693	251,822	252,623	1,176,961
Sex (Reading)					
Male	24.1%	15.6%	14.2%	11.0%	18.4%
Female	75.9%	84.4%	85.8%	89.0%	81.6%
Sex (All Fields)					
Male	71.3%	63.4%	58.5%	54.9%	62.6%
Female	28.7%	36.6%	41.5%	45.1%	37.4%
Citizenship (Reading)					
U.S. Citizen	94.8%	90.8%	91.4%	85.4%	91.8%
Perm. Resident	1.3%	1.0%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%
Temp Visa	2.5%	5.3%	5.7%	8.9%	4.7%
Unknown	1.5%	3.0%	1.5%	4.5%	2.3%
Citizenship (All Fields)					
U.S. Citizen	80.7%	69.1%	66.8%	63.1%	70.4%
Perm. Resident	4.3%	5.4%	7.1%	4.0%	5.1%
Temp Visa	12.4%	21.3%	22.2%	27.2%	20.4%
Unknown	2.7%	4.3%	3.9%	5.7%	4.1%
Race/Ethnicity (Reading) (U.S. citizens only)					
American Indian	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%
Asian	0.5%	0.7%	1.0%	1.7%	0.7%
Black	7.0%	5.7%	8.4%	8.8%	7.1%
Hispanic	1.7%	3.1%	3.9%	4.1%	2.7%
White	90.5%	89.9%	86.0%	83.7%	88.8%
Other	0.2%	0.2%	0.5%	1.4%	0.4%
Race/Ethnicity (All Fields) (U.S. citizens only)					
American Indian	0.3%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%
Asian	1.7%	2.8%	4.4%	5.5%	3.4%
Black	4.2%	3.8%	5.2%	6.5%	4.8%
Hispanic	1.9%	2.8%	3.9%	4.8%	3.2%
White	91.6%	89.6%	84.7%	80.3%	87.0%
Other	0.4%	0.4%	1.1%	2.5%	1.1%

institutional level or at the state/system level. Here is one area where NRC must lead by example as an advocate for greater diversification of the professoriate.

Parental Education

The survey data provided by the NORC analysis do not allow one to draw direct conclusions about the socioeconomic backgrounds of the individuals earning the reading doctorate. However, there are particularly interesting data pertaining to parents' educational background. If one is to consider that having earned the baccalaureate makes the individual highly educated, at least in the academic sense, then the members of the four cohorts covered in this data set are more likely to have had parents who were less educated than the parents of the members of the overall doctoral population. By perusing the data in Table 2, one observes that there is a modest trend for the mothers of doctoral recipients to have completed greater levels of formal education in each subsequent time period from 1975 onward. However, it is noted that a majority of these women have not gone on to college. The same trend is observed for fathers of individuals earning the Reading Education doctorate.

For the most recent time series for the recipients across all the doctoral fields, the percentage of mothers holding the bachelor's degree or an advanced degree is at 45.6%, and the percentage of fathers holding the bachelor's degree or an advanced degree is at 58.1%. On the other hand, for the mothers of reading educators, the percentage of those holding the bachelor's degree or an advanced degree is at 29%, and the percentage of the fathers of reading educators holding the bachelor's degree or an advanced degree is at 37.1%. The question naturally arises as to what family factors promoted the respective recipient to seek an advanced degree in Reading Education in those families where there was not a history of advanced education. While the data poses a question, it certainly does not provide an answer. What is clear is that a majority of the doctoral population is comprised of those who were first generation college students, and we may postulate that an even greater number were first generation master's and then doctoral students/candidates. Such a situation may point to as great a need for doctoral advisers to understand the research on retention at the graduate level as well as the literature

on the relationship between mentors and doctoral students (see Hall and Burns, 2009).

Median Age at Doctoral Award

If the median age at the time of the granting of the doctorate is a potential measure of the age of the doctorally prepared leadership in the field (professoriate), the data suggest that the field has

Table 2. Parental Education Reading Doctorates and All Fields (Percentage)

	1975-1984	1985-1994	1995-2000	2001-2006
Reading Doctorates	1,356	1,007	454	426
All Fields Doctorates	(315,823)	(356,693)	(251,822)	(252,623)
Mother's Education				
High school or less	63.5 (58.9)	60.0 (51.5)	51.0 (42.5)	53.8 (37.3)
Some College	16.3 (17.1)	19.0 (17.4)	21.2 (17.3)	17.2 (17.1)
Earned Baccalaureate	12.8 (16.0)	13.7 (18.5)	14.6 (21.4)	14.6 (24.1)
Advanced degree	07.5 (08.0)	07.2 (12.6)	13.2 (18.8)	14.4 (21.5)
Father's Education				
High school or less	58.1 (49.2)	55.0 (40.2)	46.6 (32.5)	47.0 (28.7)
Some College	14.0 (13.2)	15.3 (13.0)	17.4 (13.1)	15.8 (13.1)
Earned Baccalaureate	12.0 (18.9)	13.1 (20.6)	16.2 (21.9)	14.5 (23.9)
Advanced degree	15.8 (18.7)	16.5 (26.2)	19.9 (32.5)	22.6 (34.2)

become somewhat more senior in age. The data in Table 3 demonstrate that the median age for the granting of the degree has grown by approximately eight years across the time periods provided by the NORC data. In the initial review period, from 1975 to 1984, the median age was 36.8 years, slightly higher than the median age for all awards of the doctorate (32.2 years). The median age of individuals receiving the Reading Education doctorate peaked in the period between 1995 and 2000 at 45.4 years with a modest decrease in the median age between the years 2001 and 2006 (down to 44.5 years). During the same 30-year period, the median age for all other recipients of the doctorate has remained rather constant at approximately 33 years of age.

Such data forces the field to ponder a number of age-related issues. Individuals in a great range of fields are just about to submit their dossiers to be considered for the rank of professor at the time many reading educators are applying for the entry-level assistant professorship. If our professoriate is older at the onset of the scholarly endeavor, is it likely that scholarly lines of research will not have the same opportunities to flower and then bloom over the years as in Arts and Sciences-oriented fields? On the other hand, does a mature professoriate mean that our entry-level colleagues bring with them a wealth of prior knowledge and prior experiences such that teaching and even research benefits? Finally, do the more mature graduates of Reading Education doctoral programs tend to remain in the same employment sector held at the start of the degree work?

Years from Baccalaureate to Doctorate

Given such a finding about the age of the doctoral award, it comes as little surprise that the median number of years between the award of the baccalaureate and the granting of the doctorate in reading education has also been increasing. During the period from 1975 to 1984, the median number of years from the completion of the undergraduate degree to the award of the reading education doctorate was 13.7 years. By the period of 1995 to 2000, the median years peaked at 21.7 years followed by a drop to 18.7 years for the years 2001 to 2006. Across the 30 years covered in the data, the median number of years from the award of the baccalaureate to the award of the doctorate in the overall doctoral cohort has remained constant at approximately 10 years.

Baccalaureate Degree Field

Individuals receiving the Reading Education doctorate were asked if they completed the doctorate in the same field as the baccalaureate. The data as shown in Table 3 demonstrates that a simple majority of respondents answered in the affirmative during each period under review. Yet, this finding must be taken with a grain of salt since the field of Reading Education does not lead to a standard undergraduate degree (although there could be an endorsement in reading). Hence, while some individuals may see Reading Education to be the part and parcel to the overall education field (thus including undergraduate majors such as elementary education or special education), it is equally possible that other respondents saw Reading Education to be a field different from the other more standard undergraduate pedagogy-oriented degrees. Furthermore, it must be considered that in some states individuals earn both a content-oriented degree (major) and a *de facto* degree in pedagogy (credential/certification) either as part of a four-year baccalaureate or through a fifth-year professional program.

Table 3. Academic Factors for Doctorates in Reading Education and All Fields

	1975-1984	1985-1994	1995-2000	2001-2006
Reading Doctorates	1,356	1,007	454	426
All Fields Doctorates	(315,823)	(356,693)	(251,822)	(252,623)
Median Age At Doctorate	36.8 (32.2)	41.4 (33.8)	45.4 (33.7)	44.5 (33.2)
Median Years Since BA	13.7 (09.2)	18.2 (10.6)	21.7 (10.6)	18.7 (10.0)
BA Same Field	53.5 (60.3)	59.5 (60.5)	59.4 (60.8)	56.0 (60.6)

Post-Graduate Profile

Let us now turn to Section 2 of the NORC data set. The analysis of what might be called the macro-level of the post-graduation profile data of awardees (1965-2006) shows that there are some similarities between the reading educator cadre and the much larger pool of all doctoral graduates. When one examines the post-graduation status of individuals across all available time frames, it is found that 73.3% of the Reading Education doctoral graduates had definite post-graduation commitments while 25.7% were still seeking post-graduate opportunities. Similarly with the overall national doctoral cohort, 73% had definite commitments, and 26% were seeking future endeavors. (For the purpose of this analysis, a definite commitment is defined as employment, further study, or training.)

Post-Graduation Commitments and Plans

It is when the designated time frames are studied, both within and across them, that one finds differences and ongoing shifts in recipient responses. The percentage of individuals from reading education voicing firm post-graduation commitments grew modestly across the 30 years since the Reading Education code was introduced. As can be viewed in Table 4, 70.4% of the reading educators receiving the terminal research degree between 1975 and 1984 had a professional commitment while 28.8% could be called seekers. By the 2001 to 2006 period, 76.7% of the Reading Education doctoral recipients had definite professional commitments, and 21.2% had yet to have a commitment for employment or postdoctoral study or training. Of interest is that the figures for the overall doctoral pool are essentially reversed in that 80.1% of the recipients had commitments in the 1965 to 1974 timeframe, but this dropped to 71.4% for the period 2001 to 2006. The percentage of individuals seeking employment was set at 19.4% during the earlier period, yet it grew to 27.2% for the period 2001 to 2006.

An unsurprising finding is that the individuals with the Reading Education doctorate who noted a postgraduate commitment stated overwhelmingly that they were employed rather than planning to undertake postgraduate study or training. Table 4 shows that the percentage of people with employment has gone down, ever so slightly across the time periods but not nearly to the degree observed for the overall doctoral pool. One can offer the conjecture that those individuals in the Reading Education pool who are not moving into new positions will likely remain employed in their current positions (e.g., classroom teachers, reading specialists, administrators).

A majority of the reading educators reported that they had employment commitments in academe. A lesser percentage identified the category of "other," which could logically be the PK-12

milieu. A far lower percentage of the respondents stated that employment would be in either the governmental sector or the industry/self-employed arena. Of those going into academe, one finds that most are moving into four-year colleges as opposed to community colleges or other educational settings in academe. When the percentages of individuals in the overall graduate pool were queried, the data show that a slightly lower percentage of individuals will be entering academe. Far more individuals in the overall pool will be entering employment situations in industry/self-employment or government than with the reading educator pool. When entering academe they also tended to find employment in four-year colleges or universities.

Post-Graduate Employment Activity

Finally in this analysis of the data from NORC, there is a finding that should be of particular interest to an organization such as the National Reading Conference as it considers itself to be a body of literacy researchers. Recipients of the doctorate who had a professional commitment for the future were asked what would be the primary post-graduation employment activity. These percentages are presented in Table 4.

Across the four time periods under review, 71.4% of those earning the Reading Education doctorate noted teaching as their primary response. The next most prevalent response was management/administration (16.1%), followed by professional service to others (6.0%), and then research and development (5.5%). The teaching option has remained rather steady across the designated time periods. Such a finding may not be surprising as Reading Education doctoral programs are populated by many individuals who are employed by school districts at the start of their programs of study and who are employed by school districts at the time the degree is completed and the survey submitted. Furthermore, even with lip-service given to the importance of research in the professoriate, a perusal of the Carnegie rankings of institutions with reading programs/courses demonstrates that the vast majority of positions available to graduates are likely to be found in institutions that place greater value on teaching and service than on research.

Still, SED data from the most recent annual report suggests that other fields are far more likely to pick up the mantle of research: business (42.4%), engineering (74.9%), humanities (12.7%), life sciences (41.9%), physical sciences (61.5%), and social sciences (35.4%). What would likely be a promising trend in the eyes of NRC members is that the percentage of individuals in the Reading Education field selecting research and development has been rising across time so that 8.8% of the recipients now select this option. This is still a rather small percentage of the cohort. In considering these data, the question arises as to who will be the researchers of the future? Will they come from the field of Reading Education or from allied fields such as educational psychology or psychology?

Caveats

The data set from NORC as covered in the preceding paragraphs provides interesting demographic information about trends in the field. Still, since the undertaking of this project appears to be the first time that such specific data have been teased out from the much larger annual collection of data from all individuals receiving the research doctorate, there are a number of cautions that must be voiced.

First, the category of Reading Education does not capture data on all of the individuals who have focused on reading research and theory during the doctoral experience. It is safe to postulate

Table 4. Post-Graduation Profiles for Doctorates In Reading Education and All Fields (Percentage)

	1975-1984	1985-1994	1995-2000	2001-2006
Post-Graduation Status				
Definite Commitment	70.4 (73.8)	74.2 (71.0)	76.7 (68.6)	76.7 (71.4)
Seeking	28.8 (25.8)	25.2 (28.3)	21.7 (30.3)	21.2 (27.2)
Other	00.8 (00.4)	00.6 (00.7)	01.6 (01.1)	02.1 (01.3)
Post-Graduation Plans				
Definite Commitments				
Employment	98.1 (80.5)	98.3 (73.4)	96.0 (70.8)	95.2 (67.2)
Further Study/Training	01.9 (19.5)	01.7 (26.6)	04.0 (29.2)	04.8 (32.8)
Post-Graduation Employment				
Sector Definite Commitments				
Academe	53.1 (55.4)	54.5 (52.9)	56.2 (50.5)	61.2 (54.7)
Four-Year	47.7 (49.8)	43.9 (42.7)	49.5 (41.2)	51.4 (44.9)
Two-Year	S (04.5)	06.4 (03.0)	03.7 (03.3)	04.3 (03.2)
Other Education	S (01.1)	04.3 (07.1)	03.0 (06.0)	05.4 (06.6)
Industry/Self-employed	03.2 (16.2)	02.5 (20.0)	04.0 (25.4)	01.4 (23.0)
Government	07.4 (12.9)	05.5 (10.8.)	02.0 (08.8)	02.2 (07.7)
Other	36.3 (15.5)	37.5 (16.3)	37.8 (15.3)	35.3 (14.6)
Post-Graduation Employment				
Activity Definite Commitments				
Research/Development	03.6 (25.7)	06.0 (31.0)	06.6 (31.8)	08.8 (32.9)
Teaching	70.1 (45.0)	70.4 (38.8)	75.5 (38.9)	73.0 (39.5)
Management/Admin	18.2 (14.5)	18.1 (13.7)	10.0 (12.8)	12.0 (13.8)
Prof Service to Others	06.9 (11.9)	04.9 (13.6)	06.9 (13.3)	04.7 (11.3)
Other	01.2 (02.9)	00.7 (02.9)	01.0 (03.2)	01.5 (02.4)

that there are individuals earning degrees in NORC recognized fields of study such as cognitive psychology/psycholinguistics, educational psychology, elementary teacher education, etc., who focused on reading theory and research in their doctoral work.

Without being able to identify these individuals (most of whom cannot be teased out from a larger reporting field, e.g., educational psychology) and then integrate their demographic data into the pool of individuals who identify themselves post-degree as reading scholars and pedagogues, we may not have a true picture. For instance, would such an integration of data suggest that the very stark difference in gender of recent degree awardees be softened? Do we find that the males undertaking reading research are more apt to earn their degrees in any of the aforementioned allied fields? Similar types of questions might be raised pertaining to ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, or career paths of degree awardees. In other words, the data presented here only scratch the surface.

It would also be fruitful to analyze data by schools' Carnegie classifications. Still, with the NORC data the field has initial information for benchmarking individual programs.

POLICY PROJECTS

Now that we have a foundation of demographic information on the graduates of our doctoral programs, it is time to examine the current policy projects that might eventually have an impact on the research doctorate in reading education.

Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate

The first policy vector comes from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching with its Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate. This project, spanning a half-decade, is designed to restructure doctoral programs in the disciplines of chemistry, education, English, history, mathematics, and neuroscience. The thought is that while doctoral programs have made progress in training students to be better teachers, in part through the influence of the Boyer model (1990), the same attention has not been directed in preparing graduate students to be scholars and researchers.

The project team has issued two important texts available through Jossey-Bass Publications. The first report of interest is *Envisioning the Future of Doctoral Education: Preparing Stewards of the Discipline* (Golde & Walker, 2006). This text builds upon the powerful concept of stewardship of the discipline as the fundamental and foundational purpose of the doctorate. An individual in a stewardship role generates new knowledge imaginatively, conserves valuable and useful ideas critically, and transforms responsibly such understandings through writing, instruction, and application. There are also ethical and moral dimensions to the concept of stewardship in that it is more that the collection of accomplishments and competencies one finds on a vita. The foundation for stewardship is formed through the doctoral experience.

Each of the six disciplines mentioned above was covered in the text by having nationally recognized contributors from each field respond to the following question: "If you could start *de novo*, what would be the best way to structure doctoral education in your field to prepare stewards of the discipline?" On top of this query, three additional questions were posed:

1. What constitutes knowledge and understanding in the discipline?
2. What is the nature of stewardship of the discipline?
3. How ought PhD's be educated and prepared?

Virginia Richardson (2006) and David Berliner (2006) are the authors of the chapters pertaining to the PhD in pedagogy. Richardson points out that education is both a field of study and also an enterprise. Stewards of the field are responsible for the maintenance and enhancement of both facets. Therefore, a doctoral program should train individuals to generate new knowledge, understand the intellectual history of the field, employ best practice and ideas in one's work, and represent such knowledge to other professionals. This calls for three forms of knowledge: formal knowledge, practical knowledge, and the understanding of beliefs and misconceptions. The chapter's most practical contribution is a rendition of David Cohen and Deborah Ball's (Miskel, 1996) table entitled Crucial Elements of Scholarly Inquiry and Student Learning as it can serve as a valid evaluation rubric for language and literacy doctoral programs (whether for the PhD or EdD).

Berliner (2006) approaches the topic through a case method, as he focuses on the field of Educational Psychology. He believes that a steward should understand how a field was established and how it has developed so that the future is both faithful to its roots and appropriate for current endeavors. He then set forth five basic proposals for redesigning the doctorate:

1. Methodological training should lead students to appreciate the varied ways of knowing that influence both the field and pedagogy at large,
2. Training should lead students to value the big ideas that underlie specific theories,
3. Doctoral experiences should introduce graduate students to sites where school-aged students live and learn,
4. Research internships should be in varied and complex environments, and
5. Courses must lead students to understand and respond to educational policy.

He follows with the recommendation that doctoral students develop a fundamental knowledge of technology, brain research, multicultural education, and other content areas such that they understand the influences, the relationships, and the potentials each holds for the field of educational psychology. He ends by advocating that doctoral programs must bridge the world of educational research and the world of practice and pedagogy.

The recommendations from Richardson and Berliner as well as those presented by the scholars from the other fields represented in the text suggest that faculty from every reading education doctoral program in the country should undertake a self-study of their program's mission and goals by pondering the questions posed above and the considered reflections provided by Richardson and Berliner alike. Even in a profession where the PhD and the EdD are often considered to be interchangeable (right or wrong), these questions are quite pertinent if not actual imperatives. Furthermore, the research organizations of the literacy field (as opposed to the big tent and practitioner-oriented organizations) should jointly commission a study group to answer such questions among others, no matter how uncomfortable the process.

The second text of interest in this series issued by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is *The Formation of Scholars: Rethinking Doctoral Education for the Twenty-First Century* (Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, Conklin, & Hutchings, 2008). This text discusses the current state of doctoral education based upon analyses of the literature and survey data from selected departments across the six disciplines. The authors advocate for the invigoration of the doctoral experience through the principles of student formation:

1. Progressive development towards increasing independence and responsibility,
2. Integration across contexts and arenas of scholarly work, and
3. Collaboration with peers and faculty in each stage of the process.

The authors take the stance that graduates of doctoral programs would be better served by approaches to training that prepare them for the evolving roles and responsibilities they will encounter in their respective fields as they enter and then progress through stages of the professoriate.

Of particular interest is that the authors look upon the traditional (medieval) apprenticeship model with a degree of disfavor and propose an alternative approach where doctoral students apprentice with several members of the graduate faculty. The defining features of the new vision include intentionality; multiple relationships; collective responsibility; recognition; and respect,

trust, and reciprocity. The authors end the work by asserting the importance of intellectual community and describing the underlying characteristics. They go on to offer strategies for promoting community as well as to explain the role it plays in the developmental stages of scholarly formation.

The body of the work as it applies to the field of pedagogy draws from a survey of doctoral students and doctoral faculty from 15 education units, either colleges of education or select departments at flagship-level institutions. Still, the study was neither representative of the nation nor specific to the literacy field. It would be most interesting for a colleague in NRC to undertake a comprehensive replication of the survey across Carnegie classifications with literacy doctoral programs. The questionnaires, including both the graduate student survey and the faculty survey, are available in the text for such an endeavor. In an era of online tools such as *Survey Monkey*, undertaking this project is indeed feasible. Each instrument would also be useful either in the complete form or as an abridged version for internal assessment purposes or strategic planning.

Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate

A second policy vector would be the associated Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate, a three-year project co-sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council of Academic Deans in Research Education Institutions (Shulman, Golde, Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006). The project has the mission to strengthen the education doctorate.

Of particular interest is the project's focus on the highest degree leading to careers in professional practice. The goal is a transformation of the doctoral experience for the preparation of school practitioners, clinical faculty, academic leaders, and professional staff members in the schools, colleges, and organizations supporting them. This undertaking is built on the beliefs that across the past 50 years, there has been a blurring of the distinctions between the PhD and the EdD and that the education doctorate is now attempting to serve two masters but neither particularly well: one being to prepare researchers and the other being to prepare practitioners.

Lee S. Shulman, a champion of the Carnegie Project, was quoted as stating (cited in Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2007),

Today, the Ed.D. is perceived as "PhD-lite..." More important than the public relations problem, however, is the real risk that schools of education are becoming impotent in carrying out their primary missions to prepare leading practitioners as well as leading scholars. We must move forward on two fronts: rethinking and reclaiming the research doctorate (the PhD) and the developing a distinct professional practice doctorate (the PPD), whether we continue to call it an EdD or decide to give it another name. (p. 1).

The sponsoring organizations invited 21 education colleges to come together to design programming that better distinguishes between the doctorate for preparing scholars and the doctorate for preparing a highly skilled cadre of K-12 school and educational leaders, postsecondary education leaders, and teacher educators from pre-service through professional development levels. The idea has been to revise programming for a professional practice degree so as to focus on: 1. the scholarship of teaching, 2. the identification of signature pedagogy to guide the work, 3. the creation of laboratories of practice in which future practitioners experiment and undertake best

evidence analyses, and 4. new capstone experiences in which future practitioners can work together to produce outstanding demonstrations of their proficiency.

Such a set of recommendations no doubt resonates with many in the field. The data from the NORC survey on future employment plans of doctoral graduates as mentioned earlier suggest that these recommendations should be considered when literacy programs conduct self-studies of doctoral programs. A logical concern, however, would be that with the full implementation of these proposals we might find in the future a doctoral-level caste system that parallels an already existing institutional caste system. On the other hand, such a model could open the doors to a new vision and a new valuing of scholarship particularly if you accept that scholarship is ever so much more than simply research.

The new President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Anthony S. Bryk, along with his co-author, Louis Gomez, propose that educational research is not sufficient to meet the requirements for developing a stronger PK-12 system in that most educational research is conducted in postsecondary settings where the development of new theory is more valued than solutions to practical problems (Bryk & Gomez, 2008). An environment where the end product of research is a publication in a prestigious refereed journal does not necessarily promote viable answers to the issues plaguing the classroom. These noted scholars point out that teachers and policy makers generally see the work of researchers as irrelevant to the day-to-day educational environment as it is simply targeted at their peers—other researchers.

The proposal, then, is that educational research must be focused on what practitioners require to promote the quality education of children. In other words, the problems of practice must become the problems for research. What does this set of beliefs offered by the new Carnegie Foundation president have to do with the future of doctorate as suggested in the propositional papers from the Shulman era? Perhaps here is a perfect role for the graduates of PPD or EdD programs to serve as highly trained applied researchers and translators of basic research. The new mission of the EdD or PPD might be based on the multifaceted research domains found in the Boyer *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) model. Then PhD graduates might be more focused on basic research. In a sense a model evolves that integrates the work and vision of three generations of Carnegie Foundation presidents.

Education Schools Project

Another converging vector comes out of the Education Schools Project under the direction of Arthur Levine, President of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. In April of 2007 a topical report was released titled *Educating Researchers*. Such had been preceded by two earlier impactful reports (Levine, 2005; Levine, 2006) dealing with teacher education and educational administration.

Educating Researchers focused on a primary question, “Do current preparation programs have the capacity to educate researchers with the skills and knowledge necessary to carry out research required to improve education policy, strengthen education practice, or advance our understanding of how human beings develop and learn?” (p. 71). Levine felt that only a minority of the programs training future researchers could be viewed in the affirmative when it came to this query. He posited that there were three roadblocks to forming and then maintaining quality programs. These would be: 1. The field of education is amorphous, lacking agreed-upon methodologies for advancing

knowledge, common standards of quality and shared mechanisms for quality control, 2. Education doctoral programs have conflicting purposes and award inconsistent degrees, and 3. Research preparation programs are under-resourced, with inadequate funding and insufficient faculty expertise. These problems lead to research of mixed quality that is not read by practitioners in the field or by policy makers on the mall. Overall there are low citation rates by scholars.

Levine follows with five recommendations that he believes will lead to the preparation of more qualified researchers and hence the undertaking of stronger research. These are in accord with ideas found in the previous reports.

Recommendation One: *Award the PhD to students who have successfully completed doctoral programs to prepare researchers.*

As others have noted, Levine believes that at this time the PhD and the EdD are degree objectives that are nearly interchangeable. This was not the design as the former was to train researchers and the latter practitioners. Today you cannot always find a difference in the programs of study even in schools that offer both.

Recommendation Two: *Diversify the research missions of America's colleges and universities; offer programs to prepare education researchers at only Doctoral Extensive universities and selected Doctoral Intensive institutions.*

Levine suggests that Boyer's model from *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) with its four kinds of scholarship should provide the scholarly mission for institutions. For instance, Doctoral Extensives and the very strongest of the Doctoral Intensives would practice the scholarship of the discovery of new knowledge and offer the PhD. Most Doctoral Intensives and Masters 1 institutions would focus on the scholarship of application and the scholarship of integration and offer the master's degree and, with the proper strength, the EdD oriented toward practitioners. The Baccalaureate colleges and the Masters II institutions would practice the scholarship of teaching, and with appropriate faculty, they might deliver the master's in teaching.

Recommendation Three: *Establish high and clearly defined standards for education research and doctoral preparation in research; close doctoral programs that do not meet those standards.*

There are two elements in this recommendation—research quality and doctoral program quality. Research quality would be evaluated on the six guiding principles that form the foundation for scientific inquiry as proposed by the National Research Council's Committee on Scientific Principles. It is proposed that educational researchers should:

1. Pose significant questions that can be investigated empirically,
2. Link research to relevant theory,
3. Use methods that permit direct investigation of the question,
4. Provide a coherent and explicit chain of reasoning,
5. Replicate and generalize across studies, and
6. Disclose research to encourage professional scrutiny and critique.

Through the research reported in this policy document, doctoral program quality was found in programs that demonstrated:

1. Clarity of vision regarding the skills and knowledge that students need to become researchers,

2. Agreement on the contours, methodologies, and quality expectations for their fields,
3. Curriculums that mirrored the vision of what researchers need to know in the context of their fields,
4. Apprenticeships with faculty members that began early in the doctoral programs,
5. Highly productive faculty members with major research funding who served as mentors to their students,
6. Qualified students who wanted to be researchers,
7. Financial aid sufficient to support students' full-time attendance,
8. Enrollments and workloads commensurate with faculty numbers and research commitments, and
9. Resources such as appropriate facilities, equipment, and support services.

Recommendation Four: *Establish effective means of quality control within the education research community.*

Levine points out that the field of education lacks the quality standards and controls of established disciplines. Furthermore, he states that AERA is not an effective arbiter or monitor of quality. He suggests that the Spencer Foundation, in partnership with the National Academy of Education, take on such a role by having an annual conference in which the most distinguished scholars are invited to share their work. Eventually this might become a peer-reviewed venue. The final point is that if we do not set higher standards, an outside force (e.g., government) will do so.

Recommendation Five: *Strengthen connections between education research and the worlds of policy and practice; establish closer ties between education researchers and their colleagues in the arts and sciences.*

The research tied to this report found that education school research programs are isolated as they try to focus on more traditional scholarship at the expense of policy and practice. Education schools are not looked at as the first source of information about policy and practice as related to the national debates about education. Government, think tanks, the press, corporations, reform groups, etc., have all moved ahead of schools of education in having influence on policy and practice. Secondly, education programs are disconnected from other schools on campus. It is time to form partnerships that allow interdisciplinary programs to emerge. Such would be the case for doctoral programs particularly at schools where the PhD is the purview of the colleges of arts and sciences.

Levine closes his report by saying that if schools of education cannot do a better job in the research arena (and I would add literacy programs), there are a myriad of others expanding into research, including corporate, government, and not-for-profit education companies. As for the doctorate, he notes that Spencer Foundation is giving a greater number of its education fellowships to individuals outside of schools of education than from within education programs.

Levine's concept of a hierarchy of missions for colleges of education does strike a chord. The longstanding mission of a college of education in a research flagship goes without saying. A college of education in an institution that is striving to be a major research university when the historical mission, research track record, and financial resources have not existed previously over the decades and are unlikely to be there in the future must carefully consider how it might best serve the educational milieu. Indeed we may have done great harm years ago when we did away with the normal school; consider that each state should have a postsecondary institute where the

scholarship of pedagogical science/practice is central to the school's mission. In the Institute of Pedagogical Science, the EdD would have the opportunity to flourish. These schools of pedagogy would be charged with the undertaking of scholarship that would focus on practice and policy, in which research would have a practical application. Much of the scholarly writing would have direct and ready application to the schools of the state. Doctoral students would be trained to conduct research of an applied nature and also trained in the scholarship of practice. Most of Levine's sage advice provides substantive guidance in the design of the doctoral program associated with the scholarship of practice.

Professional development schools across a state would have direct ties to such an institute of pedagogical science/practice. School districts would direct to and then support their most talented future leaders as they undertook doctoral-level training and then returned to the sponsoring district to undertake the dissertation experience so as to tackle the most pressing questions plaguing the public schools. One of the strengths of the faculty and future doctoral program graduates from institutes of pedagogy would be their ability to stand squarely in two worlds based on regular contemporary experience and the scholarship of practice and policy.

Partnerships would need to be developed between the Institutes of Pedagogical Sciences and PhD oriented research centers and laboratories that undertake more basic forms of language and literacy oriented research whether these are in liberal arts and sciences colleges, health sciences and medical colleges, or education colleges. The outcomes of such partnerships would be translation of theory and research as appropriate with a real world reality check when necessary. Such a practice would also have the potential of more directly focusing if not also raising the bar on the nature of the research endeavor currently undertaken by both faculty and students in PhD granting programs.

American Educational Research Association and the National Academy of Education

Let us now consider a final vector. On October 20, 2008, the American Educational Research Association and the National Academy of Education (AERA, 2008) announced there would be a seminal work in the field of education that would assess the (research-oriented) doctoral programs in colleges of education and graduate schools within the U.S. The Spencer Foundation provided initial funding for the development phase of the work, and a competitive award from the National Science Foundation has provided funding for the three-year investigation of the field.

This research will parallel the study that is to be released shortly as the National Research Council Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs in the Arts and Sciences. The previous National Research Council assessments were released in 1983 and again in 1995. The arts and sciences focused study will examine research doctorates in over 50 fields including life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics, engineering, arts and humanities, and the social and behavioral sciences. (Education has not been, nor will it be, included in National Research Council studies even though the AERA and the NAE petitioned the National Research Council to have the fields of educational research be included as a research doctorate field.)

The AERA and the NAE point out that the overall field of educational research produces roughly 1,800 doctorates annually. However, even with such degree production, there has been no prior comprehensive evaluation of educational research oriented doctoral programs in this country. Hence, we have the need for the AERA/NAE assessment that will focus on educational research doctorates offered by 120 universities. Furthermore, the evaluation will look at 16 distinct major

fields including mathematics and science education, teaching and teacher education, curriculum and instruction, educational psychology, education measurement and statistics, higher education, and educational policy. During the 2008-2009 academic year the preliminary work was to be undertaken in collaboration with participating institutions. The surveys of programs, faculty, and students are planned for the 2009-2010 academic year. The project staff will be located at the AERA headquarters in Washington, DC, and the Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. will collect the data for the investigation.

A logical question might be "What would be the likely impact of such a study upon the doctoral program in my department?" The best way to answer such a question is to consider, and discuss with colleagues, how doctoral programs in arts and sciences will be impacted through the upcoming National Research Council study. Particularly in troubled financial times, the findings from the National Research Council's work will have major influence on decision making process at the institutional level as well as externally by oversight boards on the very continuation of programs. Whether you have such a discussion now or immediately after the report is finally released, we must consider how the NAE study is likely to impact our scholarly work in reading and literacy programs. In an academic world that places far too great a value on or demonstrates far too great a paranoia of national rankings, literacy faculty must understand that a new environment of systemic program evaluation is about to be encountered, for good or bad.

Caveats

With all the many demands literacy faculty face each day, it is not surprising that such reports on the doctorate have flown under the radar. While members of the field tend to keep current with the standards documents issued by specialized professional organizations such as the International Reading Association and by professional accreditation agencies such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, there is less attention directed to policy boards that tend to have major impact upon the future of postsecondary education and professional education. Such a situation puts the literacy field in a forever-reactive stance. We are forced to react to the reports from the policy boards, and we are forced to react to the reactions (if not apologies) from the mainstream guardians of teacher education (NCATE, AACTE, etc.). If the literacy field is to control the future of the doctorate, then the research organizations united must step forward to answer a clarion call so as to control our own destiny when it comes to training the next generation of literacy researchers and scholars. It would seem that the National Reading Conference's Board of Directors should call such a congress forth in the not-so-distant future.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

An individual is granted a bully pulpit as the NRC Presidential Address so few times during one's career. The opportunity to address such an august assemblage of researchers and scholars is indeed awe-inspiring, if not quite humbling. Still, such an opportunity provides one to share with colleagues a modest set of recommendations that might be considered as the field at large along with individual colleges and departments undertake self-studies of their doctoral programs.

Macro-Level Recommendations

First and foremost, one of the things that I learned over the years is that doctoral programs must provide the student with breadth of knowledge. The concept of "elbow work" with its intimate relationship of doctoral mentor and student/candidate is not without merits. After all, the model has worked for hundreds of years. Yet, is it the model for the next hundred years? Here I find myself in total agreement with the ideas in Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, and Hutchings (2008): too many doctoral students simply major in their primary professor, and not the field of literacy itself. Such is true particularly when the doctoral experience is grant-funded or endowment-funded, and the student's academic residence is a "big science" styled pseudo-laboratory.

If one's doctoral program focuses too greatly on depth of a particular topic from the onset, it is unlikely that the candidate will develop any degree of breadth. For the vast number of positions in the professoriate, breadth of knowledge is not simply desired but mandatory. The very same point can be said for those who find careers in the schools or in the government.

However, if one's program provides for breadth of knowledge, the individual will have greater understanding of any area of depth. In this case, the individual will have greater opportunity to analyze an area of specialization from multiple perspectives. The field will benefit, as there will be more opportunities to grow and generate new vantages to old and new questions.

A second point—a corollary to the first—then emerges: the intellectual community is far more than a single field. The greatest opportunities to envision new ways of learning and new ways to understand the world come from other fields or ways of knowing that are different or foreign, if not a wee bit threatening to us. Doctoral students must have the opportunity to work with individuals from a range of intellectual callings. When one understands something about other ways of knowing, then it becomes easier to collaborate with scholars from varied backgrounds, to take the risk of failure in seeking new knowledge, and to invoke the power of creativity in posing and answering questions. The academic segmentation that has powered the academy since the enlightenment will not prepare us, let alone allow us to survive, in the world of the 21st century with its rapid change in technology, its globalization, its environmental concerns, and its concomitant academic requirements that evolve from their interactions.

The authors of *The Formation of Scholars* (Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008) offer parallel thoughts and go on to question the very conventions that form building blocks of the doctorate, such as qualifying examinations, the discreet coursework stage as separate from the dissertation research, and the design of dissertation as we know it. They point out that the rationale for such steps are either forgotten or at best not clearly understood. History shows us that habit or custom may have a more significant role in designing doctoral programs than the actual value of such components.

Micro-Level Recommendations

In thinking about the future of the doctorate at more of a microstructure level where immediate changes are undertaken before the conduct of the larger self-study, the issues around the training of doctoral students might best be considered through additions to the program of study. Such micro-level change begins with a premise: doctoral students suffer from "here and now" syndrome. Academic myopia abounds. In other words, there is a need to put doctoral students in

academic situations where they are removed in time and space from the present context. In solving this problem two modest propositions can be offered at this moment. First, doctoral students must know the history of our profession. History does not start with issuance the last volume of the *Handbook of Reading Research*. It does not start with the first publication in the career of the doctoral mentor. It's all about defining, valuing, and then being a contributing member of a profession (not unlike the concept of stewardship). The difference between a field and a profession is that with the latter the members of the communal body not only advocate the quest for new theories, research, and best practice, but they also embrace the knowledge gained through the scholarship serving as the historical under-girding of that profession. Given such a premise, a logical question may be posited as to the degree to which the field of literacy has earned the status and rights of a profession (King & Stahl, 2003).

To counter this problem, there are a few individuals across the country who deliver graduate courses focused on the history of our field. The small number of graduate students who have taken such coursework from scholars such as P. David Pearson, Jim Hoffman, James King, and Douglas Hartman are truly privileged. Every school should deliver such coursework. The faculty in literacy at the University of South Florida offers an exemplar for a history of reading course, titled the "History and Foundations of Reading." The course description for RED 6747-799 can be found at [http://www.ugs.edu/sab/sabd.cfm?SABtable_PREN0=RED6747].

The second consideration is for doctoral students to have an understanding that we live in a world that extends beyond the lower 48 states. There is a wide, wide world of literacy research and pedagogy. In many of the arts and sciences-oriented research doctoral degrees the students must demonstrate a capacity to read in a foreign language so that they might be able to draw upon the work of individuals from other countries. Such a requirement is not common in the field of literacy.

As we move into the second decade of the 21st century, the professional worldview of doctoral students can best be described as limited. Ask doctoral students to explain how the United States has used and abused literacy practices from other nations; ask them to describe the mission, goals, findings, and implications of the cross-national literacy studies such as PISA and PIRLS; or ask them to describe the educational systems that exist in the nation states from whence come their English Language Learners (or their ELL's respective parents). It is time that every doctoral student be required to complete a course in comparative literacy as called for by John Downing (1982).

While it is true that neither a doctoral student nor a faculty member can be an expert on all the literacy programs throughout the nations of the world, one can train doctoral students to employ the comparative method to seek information and organize it in a usable manner so as to be less pedagogically ethnocentric and less pedagogically xenophobic. That comes with a pedagogical worldview that goes beyond the borders of the United States if not beyond the borders of the first world, English-speaking nations. The faculty in literacy education at Northern Illinois University offers an exemplar for a comparative literacy course, "Seminar in Comparative Reading." The course outline for LTRE 713 can be found at [<http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lrcy/programs/coursesOutlines/LTRE613.pdf>].

The development and then inclusion of new coursework that leads doctoral students to try on new lenses to investigate the primary questions of our field is a relatively easy step to improve the doctorate in that it expands the expertise of a faculty unit while also benefiting the graduate student.

Still, the simple addition of new coursework should never take the place of a carefully designed self-study of the degree objective.

CLOSING THOUGHT

In an era where reform is in the wind, one must understand that if we do not make sure our house is secure, someone else will do it for us. The desire to reform higher education in general and teacher education and pedagogical research in particular is bipartisan in nature. Higher education is under scrutiny, and teacher education fields are under serious scrutiny. Whether we like it or not, literacy is generally the field that gets the first attention from politicians, policymakers, and gadflies alike. It is time for the current generation of leaders to engage in some very serious conversations about the scholarly preparation for the next generation of leaders for the literacy field.

Literacy is the very field that should power such discussions for the world of pedagogy. Let the membership of NRC grasp the mantle of pedagogical leadership by constituting a study group at our conferences or convening a congress on the future of doctoral study and/or the dissertation with our colleagues in the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, the Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers, and the College Reading and Learning Association along with other research/scholarly groups. NRC has the membership that can serve as the leaders in such discussions as has been demonstrated by the powerful article on the doctorate by Hall and Burns (2008). In that NRC is the foremost research organization in the foremost field in pedagogy, it is our onus to tackle the toughest questions in the field. The future of the doctorate poses just such a question. For the time being, the storm flags have been hoisted, but the hurricane has yet to arrive.

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