

LRA Statement against anti-Black racism, anti-Black violence, and all forms of racism and racial violence

Dear LRA Colleagues,

The LRA Leadership Team grieves the recent death of George Floyd, and we condemn anti-Black racism, anti-Black violence, and all forms of racism and racial violence. We reiterate [LRA's Statement of the Role of Literacy Research in Racism and Racial Violence](#) which affirms,

Issues of racism are not peripheral to literacy research, and literacy research need not remain peripheral to issues of racism. The Literacy Research Association resolves that we will not ignore issues of racism and become complicit in the perpetuation of racial inequities, neither in the field nor in the organization itself.

LRA is a community of scholars, dedicated to promoting research that enriches the knowledge, understanding, and development of lifespan literacies in a multicultural and multilingual world. LRA is dedicated to disseminating such research broadly so as to promote generative theories, informed practices and sound policies. (See [LRA Mission Statement](#).)

We are deeply saddened by the continued tragedies incurred disproportionately by our Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities. We cannot sit by in silence. We call for renewed dedication of our scholarly talents to call out racism and injustices and support equitable, inclusive, anti-racist educational practices and spaces.

So, how do we as members of the largest research association dedicated wholly to the study of reading, writing and literacy in all forms enact our privilege for “reconciliation, mutuality, recognition and creative interaction?” First, LRA has a powerful statement against perpetuating racial injustice by (a) not publishing deficit-oriented narratives about persons of color which compare them to white, middle class norms that diminish their language and culture, (b) supporting colleagues of color in our own universities, (c) becoming aware of our own racialized histories as scholars as well as in the sponsorship of literacy research (cf. Willis, 2019) and (d), in particular, being vigilant in LRA’s leadership and governance of procedures and policies which dilute diversity and democratic appointments which maintain the presence of vibrant, dynamic conversations and needful voices of dissent (Haddix, 2019). In a large part, as the elected leaders of LRA, we depend upon the membership, as well as one another, to provide a reflecting mirror of our practices.

Second, as a 1500-member strong organization, each one of us touches an innumerable number of other colleagues, students, public and private school officials, research participants and their families as well as members in our communities in which we participate as consumers, live, work, recreate, and contribute as citizens. In every one of these interactions, we have the opportunity to push back against racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic violence and celebrate the talents and abilities of all persons.

Let’s take a united and individual stand against all forms of racism. It’s time to choose - racism or anti-racism. There is no middle ground.

References

- Haddix, M. (2019). *Presidential address delivered at the 69th annual conference of the Literacy Research Association*. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/2RqC0fNWCU0>.
- Willis, A. I. (2019). Race, response to intervention and reading research. *Journal of Literacy Research, 51*, 394-419.