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Black History in Adult Education in the United States: A Historical Review and Historiographical Critique

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Abstract

This article pushes towards the integration of the history of Black Adult Education (AE) into the broader history of AE literature and it contributes a critique of the field's general omissions and misrepresentations of Black history. The purpose of this paper is two-fold: (1) to critique the white-dominated history of AE texts and (2) to provide a historiographical essay that highlights works focused on the Black history of AE. In doing so, we offer a historical counternarrative rooted in the secondary historical literature that addresses the history of Black education. Ultimately, this paper critiques historiographical essays focused on AE, situates our discussion within debates on approaches to race in AE, and revisits works of Black AE from within the field as well as key works by educational historians that address issues related to Black AE.

Keywords

history, adult education, Black, African American, historiography, Black Adult Education

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Sustained violence against African Americans across all levels of U.S. society and throughout U.S. history require both denunciation of antiBlackness (Bledsoe, 2020; Dumas, 2016) and praxis-based annunciations of counternarratives which emphasize Black agency and human flourishing (Freire, 1985). The field of adult education (AE) has seen its leading professional organizations call for action against racism in light of the ongoing racial reckoning in the United States of America. It is our contention that fulfilling such calls requires multipronged responses that should include revising standing historical narratives (Adams, 1944; Grattan, 1955, Jarvis, 1987/2001; Kett, 1994; Knowles, 1977; Stubblefield, 1988/2019; Stubblefield & Keane, 1994; Swanson & Holton, 2001; Swanson, 2022) that center white perspectives while underrepresenting or misrepresenting Black history. We also have a related responsibility to continue the project of countering damaging narratives (Murray, 2018) by foregrounding extant historical literature that emphasizes Black AE and by conducting new historical research relative to the Black history of AE.

The field of AE expresses strong commitments to social justice, and recent literature reviews have documented a growing body of research focusing on the experiences of Black adult learners (Bowman & Bohonos, 2020; Ross-Gordon et al., 2017); however, dominant histories of the field continue to center white perspectives but also marginalize Black history by erasing African American agency. Underrepresentation and misrepresentation of African Americans and other racially marginalized groups pervade many of the field's most widely recognized historical texts. Disregard for Black history has been identified as a form of antiBlackness in education that perpetuates violence against Black students (Dumas, 2016; King, 2019). Understanding "anti-Blackness as a societal logic which assumes the inhumanity and thus spatial illegitimacy of Black populations" (Bledsoe, 2020, p. 1) clarifies why AE has precluded African Americans from taking up space in the field's dominant historical books. Standards established in AE require historical foundations to be taught "from diverse and critical perspectives" (CPAE, 2014, p. 9). However, the aforementioned history of AE books centers on white perspectives while failing to adequately include Black perspectives and perspectives of other marginalized groups.

Responding to calls for scholars to trouble ways that we "take antiBlackness for granted" (Dumas, 2016), the purpose of this paper is twofold: (1) to critique the white-dominated history of AE texts that represent a dominant narrative in the history of AE, and (2) to provide a historiographical essay that highlights works focused on the Black history of AE while offering historical counternarratives rooted in the secondary historical literature that address the history of Black education. Thus, this article pushes toward the integration of the history of Black AE into the broader history of AE literature. Using race-centered historical methodology, which is rooted in critical race theory (CRT), it contributes a critique of the field's general omissions and misrepresentations of Black history and proposes a corrective based on extant scholarship from the history of education. To accomplish these goals, the remainder of the article will critique historiographical essays focused on AE and revisit works of Black AE from within the field as well as key works by educational historians that address issues related to Black AE.

Following Merriam and Brockett (2007) we define adult education as “activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception, define them as adults” (p. 8). This definition facilitates the inclusion of the history of Black education books that discuss the learning of mixed-age groups because many of the learners discussed are of adult age and many others occupied social roles that defined them as adults while extremely young (i.e., leading scholars of the 19th-century Black education and family life argue that “By age eight or nine childhood effectively ended on the plantation” [Williams, 2012, p. 34]).

Following the lead of foundational scholars of adult education history (Adams, 1944; Denton, 1993; Grattan, 1955; Kett 1994, Knowles, 1977; Neufeldt & McGee, 1990; Peterson, 1996; Stubblefield & Keane, 1994) our paper examines historical periods that predate the formation of adult education as a field because adult educational activities predated the field’s professionalization. In the case of African American adult education, it is especially important that we trace the histories that predate the professionalization of the field because the professionalization efforts were led and funded primarily by white people. Thus, if our histories of AE center on the professionalization of adult education, then African Americans and other people of color will always be relegated to the margins of history in this context.

Key Concepts, Review Method, and Methodology

In line with CRT’s emphasis on foregrounding counternarratives of racially marginalized groups (Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018), this project works to better integrate Black history into the history of AE. This process is informed by *race-centered historical methodology* (Bohonos & James-Gallaway, 2022; James-Gallaway & Randolph, 2021), which represents “a critical approach to history [and historiography] that centers race and racism alongside [when relevant] other categories of intersectional identity”; additionally, “it seeks to deepen examinations of race’s salience across social systems of the past, connecting these insights to the present” (Bohonos & James-Gallaway, 2022, p. 163). This approach is rooted in CRT, which endeavors to portray racial injustice from the perspective of those who are oppressed—often in the form of counternarratives that undermine hegemony and, alongside its proposition of racial realism, views antiBlack racism as endemic to the United States (Bell, 1992).

In fall 2020, a scoping review of historical literature, in line with historiography expectations, was completed by handsearching journals listed as adult education publications on the website of the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education and journals listed on its partner website Academy of Human Resource Development. Journals that appeared to be defunct were excluded from the search, leaving a total of 17 journals; these were searched for the years 2010 through 2020 for articles that included the word “history” in either the title or keywords. This approach yielded 45 unique publications, which were further reviewed at the abstract level with an eye to identifying research articles centrally focused on the history of Black or African American AE. As the initial review turned up nil findings relative

to African Americans, the authorial team took to using a snowball method of identifying sources which started with reviewing history chapters in the 2020 and 2010 Handbooks in Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), recent foundations of ACE textbook (Ross-Gordon et al., 2017), consultations with scholars who have related research interests, and searches on the website of a leading online bookstore. Many relevant books, annotated bibliographies, dissertations, and articles were identified in the snowball process and an analysis of 40 of these sources is included in the body of this article. The works include research published by historians outside the field of AE as well as publications by AE scholars whose work was published outside the journals that were included in the original search or outside the originally defined timeframe. In fall 2020, we did an additional search in the *Journal of Negro Education* (JNE) from 2000 to the present, identifying three additional articles for inclusion.

Critiquing “Major” Works of AE History

The most widely recognized books on the history of AE have centered on white perspectives (Adams, 1944; Grattan, 1955; Jarvis, 1987/2001; Kett 1994; Knowles, 1977; Stubblefield, 1988/2019; Stubblefield & Keane, 1994), and the recent works that take up historiography of AE (Rose, 2020; Ross-Gordon et al., 2017) have been limited in their treatment of Black history. This makes it difficult for instructors to integrate Black AE history into classes and for historical researchers to situate Black AE history within the field’s larger historiography. The last 13 years have seen three historiographical treatments of AE (Rose, 2020; Ross-Gordon et al., 2017; Welton, 2010). The Welton text provided meaningful critiques of how prominent works of AE history have failed to adequately address issues of race.

Welton’s (2010) historiography highlighted important arguments from critical adult educators who have contended that social movement learning and other left, progressive activities have been repressed within the field’s histories (Rockhill, 1985; Schied, 1991—as cited in Welton, 2010), and amplified the contentions of scholars who have taken issue with the way Black people have been underrepresented in the field’s history (Fitchue, 1993; Colin, 1988—as cited in Welton, 2010). Welton went on to explicate the race-related failings of leading AE history books including Stubblefield (1988)—who wrote an intellectual history of AE that focused squarely on white actors while failing to feature a single Black (or woman) educational theorist—and Kett—whose nearly 600-page history of AE in the United States also centered white perspectives while only including one indexed entry about African Americans. Likewise, Welton provides a series of well-grounded critiques of Stubblefield and Keane’s (1994) failed attempt to meaningfully incorporate discussions of race, gender, and class into a “comprehensive history” (p. xiii) of AE in the United States. Welton (2010) notes Stubblefield and Keane’s aversion from dwelling on “early American conquest of native peoples, enslavement of Blacks, the domination of workers, and other troubling aspects of American history” as well as their lack of “rigor and depth” in relation to these issues (p. 88).

While Welton provided much needed critiques of the field’s treatment of race in its histories, Ross-Gordon et al.’s (2017) book chapter on the history of AE summarized

rather than critiqued. This summary captures some of the forward movement in the history of the field by mentioning a new book focused on women adult educators (Imel & Bersch, 2015) and including a few sentences each on the roles of mutual aid societies, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), churches, New Deal era government-sponsored programs, and Highlander in providing educational opportunities to Black adults. These inclusions could have been bolstered, however, through deeper engagement with the historiography around each topic. For example, Ross-Gordon et al. discuss HBCUs only in the context of agricultural education, even though in the early 1900s, thousands of African American adults enrolled in primary or secondary level courses at HBCUs with thousands more in the collegiate curriculum (Anderson, 1988). Exploring such insights can enrich our understanding of the history of Black Adult Basic Education and the history of Black adults in higher education. Rose's (2020) historiography also succeeded in incorporating some important new works of Black AE history, topics including Alain Locke (Nocera, 2018; Stewart, 2018) and Black women's self-help and collective action (Nembhard, 2015). However, Rose neglected to address other important books which were published in her review period including *Black Intellectual Thought in Education: The Missing Traditions of Anna Julia Cooper, Carter G. Woodson, and Alain LeRoy Locke* (Grant et al., 2015) and *Freedom's Teacher: The Life of Septima Clark* (Charron, 2009), as well as articles covering topics including Black officer training in WWI (Harris, 2018), the effects of standardized testing of Black soldiers in WWII (White, 2012), and the 1968 Poor Peoples Campaign (Hamilton, 2013, 2016).

In addition to overlooking some of the recent writing related to Black AE, Rose (2020) dismisses older key works of Black AE history. For example, she argues, "there have been five *major* [emphasis added] histories of the adult and continuing education field in the United States" (p. 22) and goes on to list Adams (1944), Grattan (1955), Knowles (1977), Kett (1994), and Stubblefield and Keane (1994)—all books that centered white historical narratives. We would argue that this list should be expanded to include at least seven additional books on Black AE history (Charron, 2009; Gillespie, 2021; Grant et al., 2015; Neufeldt & McGee, 1990; Peterson, 1996; Stewart, 2018; Williams, 2005) and a work focusing on women's AE history (Imel & Bersch, 2015). Simply put, our critique is that the dominant narrative presented in "major" works of adult education center on white perspectives and treat Black AE history as if it is *minor*. Our aim for the remainder of this article is to counter this narrative by highlighting the strength of the literature related to the history of Black AE, literature produced by scholars within the field and by historians outside the field.

Major Work of Black History From Within the Field of Adult Education

1990s Black Historiography From Within the Adult Education Community

A cadre of AE scholars have underscored African Americans' consequential place in the history of the field. The 1990s saw an outpouring of research on this topic, which

included two edited books (Neufeldt & McGee, 1990; Peterson 1996), a book on Booker T. Washington and AE (Denton, 1993), a bibliographic essay (Guy & Colin, 1998), as well as research about Alain Locke (Cain, 1995; Guy, 1993, 1996). Scholarship examining the history of African American AE underlined the importance of the action and thought of Black historical actors. This historiography clarifies the adult nature of educational efforts given African Americans' ongoing, elusive quest for freedom and racial justice. Below, we discuss two of the major books in AE scholarship that focused specifically on African American history to establish the field's awareness of this topic while also noting that these works remain marginal to dominant renderings of the field's history and African Americans' place in it.

In 1990, Neufeldt and McGee published the first volume dedicated exclusively to the history of African American AE, examining African American education based on the respective editors' original historical research. This edited collection builds upon a book-length annotated bibliography (McGee & Neufeldt, 1985) published by the editors and contains essays primarily focused on Black education efforts since the Civil War. With contributions from notable historians of education including Franklin (1979), Butchart (1980), and Fultz (2004), this book placed these two fields, AE and the history of education, into direct conversation—an approach which should be revisited for the benefit of each field. Topics that cut across the volume included the significance of Black churches and Black civic organizations in African American AE efforts, which expanded after the Civil War. Undergirding the entire project was a cogent premise reflecting African Americans' enduring commitment to education.

Peterson (1996) published *Freedom Road: Adult Education of African Americans*, an edited collection of essays that examined histories of AE through biographical perspectives of Black adult educators, such as Fanny Jackson Coppin, Marcus Garvey, Septima Clark, Malcolm X, Alain Locke, Booker T. Washington, and W. E. B. Du Bois. Pushing the field to integrate such figures into mainstream accounts, Peterson recast the history of AE as one that had clearly been shaped by key Black adult educators, men, and women, who promoted at times opposing strategies for the collective benefit of the Black race—strategies that tended to pivot on Black self-determination. These original historical essays represent an important starting point for discussions about African Americans' contributions to AE. The accomplished AE scholars and practitioners that Peterson's text highlighted are, too, key figures in other areas such as the history of education, African American history, and Black studies. Peterson resituated them within AE literature, underlining the ways their efforts served as defining features of this field.

Unfortunately, decades and editions later, AE has yet to acknowledge these contributions as *major*.

Twenty-First Century Contributions to Black Adult Education History From Within the Field

After a flourishing of historical writing about Black AE in the 1990s, the topic received sustained attention in the 21st century with most of the publications appearing in book

chapters or in journals not listed on AAACE's online resource guide. Contributions have included a variety of subjects, such as the role of adult learning in cultivating resistance among enslaved people (Bohonos & James-Gallaway, 2022), discussions of Black women's market activity in the antebellum era (Smith, 2001), an article about a racially integrated college in Kentucky established in 1850 (Day et al., 2013), AE in the Harlem Renaissance (Johnson-Bailey, 2001, 2006), Black experiences dealing with the American Association for Adult Education (Guy & Brookfield, 2009), Anna Julia Cooper's work in AE in the 1930s and 1940s (Johnson, 2009), Bernice Robinson (Ntiri, 2014), Septima Clark and freedom schools (Baumgartner, 2005; Charron, 2009), Black women self-help and collective action (Nembhard, 2015), Black intellectual thought regarding AE (Grant et al., 2015), the 1968 Poor People's Campaign (Hamilton, 2013, 2016), Alain Locke (Nocera, 2018; Stewart, 2018), Black women and 20th century social movement learning (Roumell & James-Gallaway, 2021), labor organizing (Ross-Gordon & Alston, 2015), welfare reform (Alfred, 2006), and teaching (Chapman, 2015), racialized and gendered public history (Merriweather, 2020), treatments of race and disability history in 20th and 21st century HRD handbooks and textbooks (Bohonos & Johnson-Bailey, in press; Bohonos et al., in press), several chapters in an edited collection of 20th century adult educator biographies (Issac-Savage, 2021; Johnson-Bailey, 2021; Merriweather, 2021; Ntiri, 2021), and Black military education (Harris, 2018, 2022; White, 2012). These recent works have done much to enhance the field's understanding of its history, but also leaves a gap relative to our understandings of Black AE from the Civil War to the end of the 19th century.

Important Contributions to Black AE History in the Civil War and Reconstruction

Given the pivotal role that the Civil War and Reconstruction played in the history of the United States and Black education, it is important that the AE community carefully consider this time period. The last article or chapter-length treatments regarding these eras in the AE literature include Butchart's (1980) discussion of Reconstruction, Paterson's (1996/2002) biographical sketches of Fanny Jackson Coppin, Mary Shadd Cary, and Charlotte Grimke which emphasized their roles as adult educators, and publications exploring the influence of Booker T. Washington in AE (Denton, 1993; Potts, 1996). Because all these publications were completed over 25 years ago, and the broader historiography of these time periods has since progressed immensely, it is past time for the AE community to reengage with Black AE history from the Civil War through the close of the 19th century. It is especially important to pay attention to this era because leading historians have argued that Reconstruction represented a second founding of the United States (Foner, 2019). Also, emancipation from slavery and reconstruction are clear watersheds in Black history that are crucial to understanding of Black history broadly and adult education specifically because this was the era during which most African Americans began to

gain access to formal schooling and establish lives for themselves beyond enslavement. Below we offer a summary of key works that can enrich AE's understanding of this era.

Black AE in the Civil War and Reconstruction

To begin filling the gap in new historical research related to the Civil War and Reconstruction, the following section draws on works by prominent historians of education who have addressed Black AE within their larger works on Black education during roughly the last half of the 19th century. We highlight how this historiography speaks directly to the history of AE, underlining representative works that examined the transition from bondage to freedom (e.g., Anderson, 1988; Butchart, 1980, 2010; Williams, 2005), especially following the Civil War when former Confederate states (nominally) legalized African American education. This consequential change broadened the educational needs of a wide range of differently aged African Americans.

Given the varying ages of newly freed people, AE was evident and necessary because "Blacks emerged from slavery with a strong belief in the desirability of learning to read and write" (Anderson, 1988, p. 5). This historiography established that African Americans' motivation to acquire education represented a defining characteristic of their personhood both before and after enslavement. Examining the individuals who made such learning possible, Butchart (2010) asserted that "black educators played a leading role in assuring that freed people's struggle for literacy began and continued as an expression of black aspirations and intentions" (p. 19), offering a corrective to historical arguments that had credited Yankee schoolmarms (e.g., Jones, 1980) rather than "acknowledg[ing] ... black teachers ... [as] the most important of those who entered the black classroom" (Butchart, 2010, p. 19). Discussing the so-called Yankee schoolmarms, Anderson highlighted that "many missionaries were astonished, and later chagrined ... to discover that many ex-slaves had established their own educational collectives and associations, staffed schools entirely with black teachers, and were unwilling to allow their educational movement to be controlled by the 'civilized' Yankees" (p. 9).

Williams (2005) underlined that in the face of opposition, *de jure* and *de facto*, "ordinary African Americans in the South ... provide[d] education for themselves" (p. 1). Echoing Anderson's (1988) contention that "former slaves were the first among native southerners to ... campaign for universal, state-supported public education" (p. 1), Williams demonstrated that this desire was longstanding, as enslaved people acquired skills related to literacy by perfecting eavesdropping as a skill that facilitated information access among enslaved populations. Williams noted John Quincy Adams in Virginia who

whenever he heard a white person reading aloud, he lingered to listen, replying "nothing" when asked about what he had heard. [His parents], in turn, encouraged him to "try to hear all you can, but don't let them know it." By listening in this manner, Adams was able to inform his parents of an impending election that the owners wanted kept from their slaves. His information gathering skills likely helped the family to escape to Pennsylvania during the Civil War. (p. 9)

Listening in this way allowed Adams to teach adults like his parents, as he was one of many who embarked upon such stealthy endeavors to learn and procure freedom. Information sharing as such literally paved the road to freedom for enslaved family members of all ages. Facilitating AE, these stealthy acts of survival illustrated how enslaved people declined to allow legal restrictions to completely foreclose their educational possibilities. The inter-generational nature of such underscores the importance of AE in the route to freedom.

Before and during the Civil War, clandestine endeavors proved necessary to help protect enslaved people and their educators from violent white retribution. For instance, at this time, “Lydia Judah conducted secret classes for black students” (Butchart, 2010, p. 21), and “James Porter, who had taught secretly in Charleston in the 1850s, opened another school for the city’s freed people along with Lewis B. Toomer, employing an all-black staff” (pp. 21–22). Collaborative attempts to educate themselves were not limited to formal school structures, however, as Williams (2005) observed that “African American soldiers took time to become literate” while engaging “in combat and perform[ing] some of the most difficult work associated with the [Civil] war” (p. 47). Williams elaborated that “Black men who had learned to read and write in slavery taught others. Chaplains, officers and their wives, and missionary teachers joined them in creating a fragile structure of schools within black regiments” (p. 47). Entering the wage labor system, formerly enslaved populations understood that securing employment would require fundamental aspects of literacy and numeracy. Thus, their school-building efforts punctuated much of this era, as the ungraded nature of schools served the AE needs of four million new, albeit second-class, and citizens (Anderson, 1988).

Early HBCUs, Black Higher Education, and AE

In the wake of emancipation, African Americans’ drive for education led to the foundation of many educational institutions that are now recognized as HBCUs, which educated a sizeable number of Black adults. Despite higher education’s white supremacist, antiBlack origins, a small number of free Black people before the Civil War were able to acquire higher education via HBCUs. While some adult education scholars claimed that the Morrill Act of 1890 was the basis of HBCUs (Ross-Gordon et al., 2017), this erases important earlier efforts to provide college education to African Americans. For example, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania was founded decades earlier in 1837. Additional HBCUs were founded in the antebellum era such as Lincoln University of Pennsylvania (1854) and Wilberforce University in Ohio (1856). While these schools operated in non-slave states in the North, their graduates exerted considerable influence on Black education in the South after emancipation (Anderson, 1988). After the Civil War, one near-universal attribute was the need to offer courses in what is now referred to as adult basic education, as the vast majority of the formerly enslaved needed to develop foundational skills before embarking on traditional college curricula. Thus, the antebellum and postbellum periods show that it is nearly impossible to separate the history of Black higher education from the history of Black AE.

While many early HBCUs emphasized liberal arts education that mirrored the standards of the era's leading white universities and sought to prepare Black people for leadership and civic engagement, arguably the most influential HBCUs of this era, Hampton of Virginia and Tuskegee of Alabama, did not; their educational ideology, the Hampton-Tuskegee model, promoted industrial or vocational education (Anderson, 1988). From the beginning, Black AE played a fundamental role in Tuskegee. The school was founded in 1881 as a "Negro" normal school (i.e., a school specializing in teacher training), and the first 30 students, the oldest aged 50, were adults seeking formal training for their existing roles as teachers (Gyant, 1988). Critics argue that the purpose of the Hampton-Tuskegee model was to promulgate an educational ideology and system that prepared Black people to conduct manual labor as part of an economic underclass while maintaining the South's racial hierarchy (Anderson, 1988). The Hampton-Tuskegee model's emphasis on manual labor curriculum, therefore, garnered great support from white industrial philanthropists and southern segregationists. This white support would eventually help the Tuskegee Institute and its founder Booker T. Washington, a formerly enslaved man, ascend to national prominence. Washington believed educational opportunities would provide Black farmers and laborers with the skills to create better living and working conditions. However, Black contemporaries critiqued Washington's promotion of assimilation, his seeming embrace of the status quo, and the mis-educative aspects of pedagogy, which he learned from engaging with his white patrons (Anderson, 1988; Du Bois, 1903).

Washington and other professors at Tuskegee viewed the social and living conditions of Black rural farmers as a pressing issue meriting intervention. In 1890, 57% of Black Americans were illiterate, and only seven percent of Black farmers owned their land (Jones, 1975). One of the main culprits was the widespread practice of sharecropping, an extension of slavery in the South in which white planters who owned former labor camps (i.e., plantations) unfairly charged Black farmers to use plots of land, keeping Black farmers in debt (Jones, 1975). Sharecropping exacerbated the extreme poverty, educational underinvestment, and economic exclusion of many Black farmers and their families.

The rural setting of Tuskegee facilitated innovation related to agricultural AE. Washington's dedication to reaching geographically isolated Black farmers inspired innovative approaches that represent prototypes of distance or extension AE. Seeking to further the possibilities of educating Black farmers in Alabama, Washington developed the Tuskegee Negro Institute (TNI), an annual conference where Black farmers could voice their concerns and receive education to remedy their farming conditions (Jones, 1975). During the first TNI Conference in 1892, Washington learned about the inadequacies of education and agriculture from the 400 Black farmers in attendance and how soil erosion, land degradation, crop yields, and land cost were exacerbated by the sharecropping system (Gyant, 1988; Jones, 1975). The TNI met yearly, and the number of Black farmers in attendance grew yearly to 2,000 by 1898 (Jones, 1975). The TNI's success in the education of Black farmers spurred other Black institutions in the South to create similar models.

Although scholars cannot predict the exact levels to which the TNI helped Black farmers, one statistic may suggest its success: the financial value of Black-owned farms grew by over 600% between 1900 and 1920 (Jones, 1975).

Seeking to further the education of Black rural farmers, professors at the Tuskegee Institute implemented the Agricultural Farmers Institute (AFI), which offered free monthly lectures to Black farmers. Participants were asked to apply the skills presented during lectures to their labor as farmers (Jones, 1975). As the AFI's mission spread to uplift Black farmers through education, other Black institutions in Southern states began to build their own AFIs. As the education of Black farmers in the South grew, the AFI and, by proxy, Tuskegee, continued to lead in Black AE innovation. In 1904, a free "Short Course in Agriculture" (Jones, 1975, p. 261) began as a way for professors to provide education to Black farmers who were inactive during the farming season when school was not in session. The short courses targeted Black men, women, and children, serving entire families.

Over time, Washington recognized that the broad scope of education he hoped to impart on rural Black farmers would require his taking it to their communities (Gyant, 1988; James, 1971). Before 1906, Washington sought ultimately to bring Black farmers to Tuskegee. However, he realized that he faced two major issues: (1) Black rural farmers were generally too isolated to travel and (2) some of these farmers were uninterested in traveling because they expected the Black-educated class at Tuskegee to patronize them given their generally low levels of formal education, which were due largely to inaccessibility (James, 1971). As a result, Washington and George Washington Carver, an instructor at Tuskegee and STEM pioneer, invented a traveling agricultural wagon—essentially, a portable school. Traveling by horse and buggy, professors Carver, Charles W. Greene, and John H. Palmer shared their knowledge of agriculture with Black rural farming communities in Alabama and neighboring states (James, 1971; Jones, 1975). This moveable school was outfitted with several agricultural resources like fertilizer, farm tools, and livestock, which were used for demonstrations near or inside community members' homes. In the summer of 1906 alone, the agricultural wagon served over 2,000 people each month across Alabama (Gyant, 1988; James, 1971; Reid, 1945). Instructors utilized the agricultural wagon throughout the South to educate Black rural farmers until WWII (Gyant, 1988).

Implications

Based on our reading of the history of AE literature, we suggest several ways that the field can improve and diversify its historical foundations. These include continuing the recent trend towards publishing more Black AE History, a new push to publish histories of other marginalized groups of adult learners, greater collaboration between AE scholars and professional historians, regular publication of historiographical essays, and a new history of AE book that draws together histories of diverse adult learner populations to provide the field with a comprehensive text for use in foundations of AE classes.

First, AE has a continued need to use race-centered historical methodology (James-Galloway & Randolph, 2021) to publish new histories of Black and other peoples of Color in AE that can enhance our understanding of the history of AE in time periods beyond those discussed in this paper and thus fulfill CRT's call for counter-narratives that challenge white dominance. These efforts could continue the timeline of this review forward into the 20th century; thus, we call for future research to delve into historical research from outside AE that focuses on learning associated with topics including, but not limited to, anti-lynching activism, mutual aid societies, Black labor organizing, the Harlem Renaissance, Freedom Schools, and the long civil rights movement.

Second, those who teach foundations of AE classes should consider the call of Gnanadass and Merriweather (2020) that we center Black historical texts in our teaching.

Third, we must acknowledge that a critical review of research related to the Black history of AE was possible because scholars in the field have done the work of building a body of literature in this area. While it is promising that the field has analyzed the history of Black AE, similar efforts are warranted for the history of people with disabilities, members of the Queer community, and other peoples of color if AE is to have a robust and diverse historical foundation. Currently, historical work centered on non-Black people of color who have experienced structural marginalization in AE is virtually non-existent within AE journals. This absence underscores the pressing need for AE scholars to engage in historical AE research about Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous groups. To take action on this front, we call for an edited book or themed issue that foregrounds underrepresented histories in AE.

Fourth, the history of AE can be enhanced by greater involvement and collaboration with scholars from the fields of history, educational history, anthropology, ethnic studies (including Black studies), and other fields that grapple deeply with history. An example of this can be found in Patterson's (1996) edited text, which included work from scholars who had diverse primary affiliations. Additionally, when presenting early versions of this article at a conference sponsored by the Organization of Educational Historians, the authors of this paper learned that this group not only welcomed discussions of AE history, but contained several scholars with research interests that heavily implicated AE.

A fifth way AE can improve its historical foundations is by continuing to publish historiographical essays that note gaps and problems with the field's extant historical writing. History is a field that advances through critique and revision, and these practices must be part of AE's historiographical growth.

A sixth area of need underscored by our review of AE history books is for a new book on the history of AE. Currently, we have several white-dominated history books, meaning they either ignore or poorly handle the histories of people who are not white, straight, able-bodied, neurotypical, enabled, and male. We also have Black AE-focused history books that deemphasize the experiences of non-Black people of color, people with disabilities, or members of the queer community. For teaching purposes, the field would benefit greatly from a single book that weaves

together historical strands from AE histories of BIPOC, queer, workers, women's, and disability communities and provides analysis from a lens that considers how forms of oppression overlap.

Conclusion

In this article, we utilized race-centered historical methodology to advance CRT-inspired efforts that integrate the history of Black AE into the wider history of AE literature, demonstrating the sizeable overlap between the history of Black education and the history of Black AE. We provided a historiographical analysis underlining the Black history of AE as a counternarrative that challenges extant antiBlack interpretations. Ultimately, we have called for additional history of AE research that foregrounds the experiences of other marginalized groups.


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