

Co-Researching School Spaces of Dispossession: A Story of Survival

Patricia Krueger-Henney
University of Massachusetts, Boston

Abstract

Through combining the methodology of portraiture with the epistemological stance of youth participatory action research, this article positions Latino/a youth as experts with their encounters with the school-to-prison pipeline. This article examines what it's like to live within the tight and probational spaces of criminal justice-based school discipline practices. Following the journey of a Black Dominican female high school student, the data from this New York City-based youth participatory action research project find three specific processes of dispossession through which Latin@ youth are profoundly affected by the school-to-prison pipeline: institutional abandonment as disinvestment in young people's personhood, social isolation, and deprivation of agency and self-control.

Introduction

Through traveling to other people's "worlds" we discover that there are "worlds" in which those who are the victims of arrogant perception are really subjects, lively beings, resisters, constructors of visions even though in the mainstream construction they are animated only by the arrogant perceiver and are pliable, foldable, file-awayable, classifiable. (Lugones, 1987, p. 18)

This is a story about survival. It depicts the involvement of Latin@⁴⁵ youth in unequal school discipline practices that determine whether they succeed or fail their schooling. The school-to-prison pipeline lies in wait for any young person facing the circumstances outlined in this article. Literature on the school-to-prison pipeline (hereafter pipeline) parallels U.S. history: unequal social relations in production have placed groups of people on racialized scales of economic vulnerability that are grounded within broader socioeconomic and geographical landscapes. First Nations people and racialized Black communities have been positioned at the frontlines of ongoing structural surveillance. Rarely does social sciences research excavate details to advocate for more restorative justice practices when documenting the pipeline, even at the dawn of significant population changes.

The U.S. Census Bureau's announced in 2009 that Latin@s are now the largest minority group in the United States (16.5% of the total U.S. population and 23.9% of all pre-K-12 student population). Yet, the information about the extent to which Latin@ youth are caught in the spaces of the pipeline remains nebulous, if not very limited (Fry & Lopez, 2012; United States Census Bureau, 2011). The (dominant) non-committal datafication of Latin@s as "Non-White" and/or "Non-Black," the homogenizing label of "Latino" to refer to Spanish-speaking communities, as well as the interchangeable use of "Latino" and "Hispanic" silence racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, and nationality diversities in the many communities who through their colonial pasts find themselves speaking Spanish around the world. "Minority" has the same distancing effects. All these vaguely defining identity markers tend to undercount, or underrepresent, the number of Latin@s in any population, and in school suspensions and expulsions, arrests, and incarceration rates generally. Hence the focus of the story is Latin@ youth.

The 1980s War on Drugs introduced numerous state and federal policies that created a similar ideology of discipline and punishment in the educational and criminal justice systems. Several critical elements are involved in the production and maintenance of this "carceral mesh" (Wacquant, 2001) or "a gateway into a much larger system of racial stigmatization and permanent marginalization" (Alexander, 2012, p. 12), including zero tolerance regulations, surveillance technologies, and the criminalization of in-school discipline practices. Wald and Losen (2003) explain the pipeline as "an institutionalized link that places socially unwanted and undesirable youth

45. To avoid the ascribed traditional gender binary in "Latino" or "Latina," "Latin@" is commonly used as a more gender neutral and thus more inclusive noun.

into the criminal justice system, and with it, guarantees the burgeoning of the U.S. prison industrial complex” (p. 11). The past three decades of zero tolerance policies in the United States (U.S.) have successfully applied penal mechanisms that turn schooling into an isolating and criminalized journey for its travelers, especially along lines of race, gender, and able-bodiedness. Systematically, through the overuse of school suspensions/expulsions, criminal justice-based school discipline policies remove students from school grounds for non-violent offenses coded as disruptive (i.e. breaking school rules: not wearing school uniform, talking back at teachers, walking the hallway without a pass) as groundings for identifying potential future violent offenders (Miller et al., 2011). Black students, Latin@, Native American, and Asian American students (and increasingly gender-non-conforming, working class and immigrant youth), carry the burden of these criminalizing school discipline sanctions, as do male students (Himmelstein & Brückner, 2011; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). These data map onto larger national incarceration trends.

Predominantly urban school districts, which are historically underfunded and more racially/ethnically diverse, have been served with an intensified installation of surveillance technologies and police officers; not rural or suburban areas where the gross majority of tragic school shootings take place (Drum Major Institute for Public Policy, 2005). Nonetheless, to this day there is no evidence available to argue that law enforcement-based safety practices are creating safer learning environments in schools. Neither have there been enough studies that document the life-long effects the pipeline has had on Latin@ students’ emotional and physical development.

Few scholars have foregrounded youth as survivors of racialized state-sanctioned “circuits of dispossessions” (Fine & Ruglis, 2009) that run through the inter-institutional constellation of the pipeline. As such, the school-prison nexus inscribes credentials of merit and desirability onto the bodies of most White and elite youth while at the same time it educationally incapacitates low income, non-white and immigrant youth “who either reject or are rejected by the deregulated low-wage labor market” under neoliberal capitalism (Wacquant, 2001, p. 97). Between 1995-1997 and with 17,000 participants, the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study is one of the largest investigations ever to apply a whole life perspective to evaluating the relationship between mistreatment experienced during childhood and health status acquired during adult life (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). Ruglis (2011) and Stevens (2013) took the ACE Study’s framework and applied it to the pipeline to argue that the overuse of suspensions and referrals to the criminal justice system needs to be added to the list of traumatic encounters that contribute to a young person’s inability to fashioning good health behaviors and acquiring statuses of school completion and professional success. I have argued elsewhere that punitive school safety mechanisms are increasingly reducing a young person’s post-secondary options to either pursuing higher education or serving time in a correctional facility (Krueger, 2010). The message current educational leaders are sending to young people is disturbing: not every person deserves an education, and worse, not every person is privileged to control the course of his or her life.

This article asserts that more participatory research designs that position Latin@ youth as co-researchers are needed to identify the dispossessing wires that run through the inter-institutional groundings of the pipeline. Using qualitative data collected with youth co-researchers from a participatory action research project in New York City, this article specifically center stages a Latina student amidst the tight and probational spaces of the school-prison nexus. Specifically, the data presented in this article helps to define the pipeline’s processes of dispossession based on manifestations of institutional abandonment as disinvestment in young people’s personhood, social isolation, and deprivation of agency and self-control.

This study contends that social sciences researchers need to depart from deficit-driven discourses because they fail to reconstruct young people as “resistors” and “lively beings” as Maria Lugones’ words poignantly state in the opening lines. Quantified data of Latin@ bodies who are pushed into spaces of the pipeline only offer windows into “after the fact” phenomena; they contribute to an epistemological paralysis that does not dissect the reigning silencing of racialized practices and processes leading to a young person’s removal from his or her school. Involving Latin@ youth in documenting their lived experiences with and inside the spaces of the pipeline is fundamental to piecing together the multi-faceted processes that systematically deprive them of their mental and emotional defenses they need to survive the sorting mechanisms of the pipeline.

The purpose of this article is to make more transparent the fully propelled racialized mechanisms of the pipeline that also pull Latin@ youth at increasing rates into the warehousing spaces of the pipeline and

the prison industrial complex. By following the method of inquiry of portraiture (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997) and the epistemological stance of youth participatory action research, or YPAR (Cammarota & Fine, 2008), this article presents Latin@ youth-centered qualitative data to argue that Latin@ students find themselves at increasing rates in the emotionally and physically isolating spaces of institutional abandonment, personal isolation and dispossession.

Methods and Introduction of the Protagonist: Dimples

Assembling a composite of narratives is also known as “portraiture.” It is a method of inquiry that weaves together individual life circumstances with the ideological structures and social processes of everyday life (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). “The portraitist insists that the only way to interpret people’s actions, perspectives, and talk is to see them in context” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. 11). By combining some of the methodological tenets of portraiture with the epistemological stance of YPAR, Dimples’ story speaks back to one of the main gaps in the current literature: how young Latina women are entangled within the ideological spaces of the pipeline.

The protagonist and hence the expert of her life is Dimples, who at the time of data collection was a seventeen-year-old Black Dominican high school student from the Bronx, NY. The author and narrator of Dimple’s portraiture is a Dominican scholar who is a former social studies high school teacher and youth advocate in New York City. The data presented in this article reconstruct some of Dimples’ experiences with the pipeline. All data were originally collected through a mixed method YPAR project in New York City with 10 high school student from January 2008 until March 2009. Dimples was one of the youth co-researchers, six females and five males. Prior to the group’s first meeting, all youth co-researchers had indicated that each of their schools operated under increased safety measures (i.e. surveillance cameras, metal detectors, search tables, armed police officers). Youth co-researchers fulfilled a double role in that each was a participant and researcher throughout the duration of the study. While each member collected survey data on how other high schools students perceived manifestations of the pipeline and its impact on their schooling experiences, youth co-researchers also created individual visual and written narratives to depict their understanding and summarize their lived experiences with spatialized practices of school safety and security (Krueger, 2009). Co-researchers’ double role of researcher-participant reduced the hierarchized power dynamics that are usually embedded in more traditional and colonizing researcher-researched dichotomies (Smith, 1999).

In the midst of the study, the research collective bore witness to Dimples traveling through the various emotional and physical spaces of the pipeline. Dimples endured a series of encounters with school safety agents, a local police precinct, a regional booking center, and her borough’s criminal and family court. Her confrontations crystallized the dispossessing processes of the pipeline. Details presented about Dimples are a composite of her narratives during our research project, two cognitive maps, and excerpts from research meetings during which she described the details of a life-marking altercation in school that confirmed her journey through the pipeline.

The findings are organized according to the three themes that surfaced throughout her portraiture and offer epistemological definitions of the pipeline as a process a) of institutionalized disinvestment and systemic abandonment of youth who attend urban schools; b) that socially isolates young Latinas into the pipeline’s tight, contradictory spaces while also invisibilizing their presence; c) that denies and deprives Latinas of voice they need to fashion their agency and personhood. Dimples’ composite narrative reveals that once trapped inside the pipeline, access to life saving support services and networks become increasingly inaccessible for youth who are expected to learn and grow within the pipeline. Finally, in her own voice Dimples teaches about how Latinas are struggling with a constricted schooling process during which they are with increasing despair searching for lifelines in order to complete it. Dimples’ story is about her social (educational) survival.

Institutionalized Disinvestment and Systemic Abandonment of Youth

Throughout the time of working together, Dimples frequently expressed her anger and with how SSAs seem to racially profile Latin@ students throughout the school day for disciplinary action, thus creating unbearable tensions between Latin@ and Black students. For example, Dimples repetitively told the collective

about a particular SSA, officer Johnson, who consistently demanded from Latin@ students, if caught during the school day using their cell phones, to turn their phones in to the school security officer, while Black students were able to maintain their conversations uninterrupted. Throughout the collective research process, Dimples spoke out against her school's overuse of suspensions as defaulted disciplinary practice and officer Johnson's unfair and discretionary school safety practices. It was towards the end of her senior year when Dimples gathered student signatures on a petition she wrote to demand the removal of officer Johnson.

One of her first drawings included her clear conceptual understanding of the pipeline:

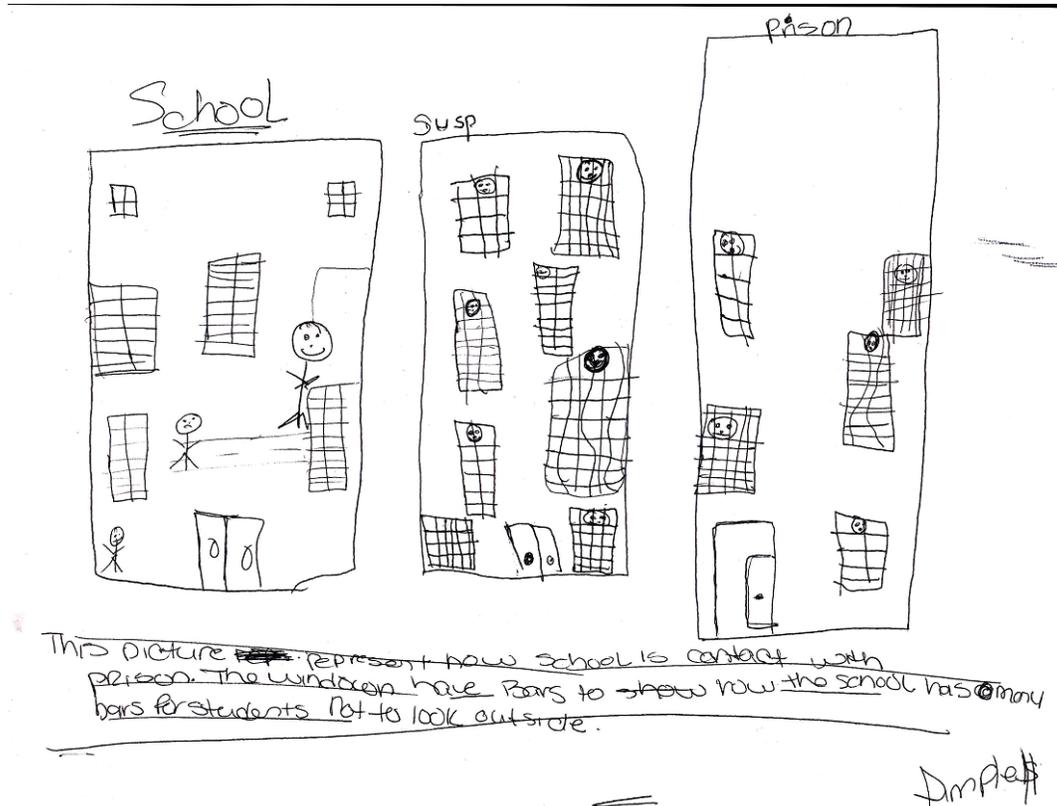


Figure 1. Dimples' conceptual drawing of the pipeline.

Her drawing depicts three large rectangles lined up next to each other. Each of them is labeled. Reading their labels from left to right, the first represents “school,” followed by “susp” (for suspension room) in the middle, and “prison” on the right, as the tallest rectangle. She drew “school” with six barred windows, and two smaller-sized stick figures with sad faces in the free spaces between some of the windows. There is one larger sized and smiling stick figure. The middle rectangle, the “suspension room,” has eight windows with bars; seven out of eight of them show a face behind window bars. “Prison” consists of five windows with bars, and each window displays one face behind bars. All three “spaces” have a door. Below them, Dimples drew a street with its lines stretching horizontally across the bottom of the paper. She wrote within the road lines, “The picture represent how school is contact with prison. The windows have bars to show how the school has many bars for students not to look outside.”

When describing her drawing of the pipeline to her co-researchers, Dimples explained:

You see the guy right here? This is the security guy (pointing at larger smiling stick figure in left rectangle, “school”). And you see this little boy right here? Like he has a sad face cuz he doesn't want to go to class. But that is security in here, and that is the door. And these, the windows, if you see, they have a lot of... you know how they have cages? So people feel like they are in jail. This is supposed to be a suspension room, and this is supposed to be prison. Obviously I didn't finish. And I got the road here, cuz the road, you know, it leads to prison.⁴⁶

46. All qualitative data appears in their original and word-for word compositions to honor Dimples and her co-researchers as authors of their own narratives.

Dimples conceptual drawing of the pipeline is a vivid example of an explosive triad that youth are resisting and reacting to: neoliberalism, policed public education, and the policies of incarceration. Dimples' understanding of the pipeline frames the school suspension room as the intermediary between schools and prisons that facilitates and maintains the road, or the pathway between all three spaces. This is a key insight; according to Citizen's Committee for Children of New York (2010), the suspension room is the last school-based place that suspended youth have access to before they are warehoused inside the Department of Juvenile Justice (via city detention and state facilities).

Her choice of including bars in the windows in all three spaces may be an imagined detail; yet many windows of New York City public schools are equipped with bars to prevent window openings. Dimples' school is one of them. Further, the bars in all three spaces could be interpreted as a reflection of the pipeline's inter-institutional consistency and uniformity to fashion in young people self-managed physical and emotional constrain and containment while in school. This is indicative of what Foucault (1977) had argued; prisons rely on their panoptical and internalized self-regulating mechanisms.

Dimples' choice of not include any visual representations of more "school typical" images, such as books, pencils, teachers, desks, tables, schoolyard, or school bus, for example, illuminates an absence of what is perhaps part of a more conventional imagination of school characteristics that expects schools to be places of teaching and learning. Dimples' picture is stripped off such conventions and depicts schools in the pipeline as disinvested places that abandon youth into the criminalizing spaces of suspension rooms and prisons. After researching some of the pipeline's youth centered reports (Mukherjee, 2007), Dimples concluded:

My opinion of the school to prison pipeline is that school safety agents are ill planned and unfair to students of color in city schools. City schools are over crowded and the money is supposed to be for city schools are used to for other things besides helping students. More than half of people of color are in prison. (Reads directly from report) "High school with permanent metal detectors are over crowded with 18% more students than seats" (p. 1).

This is where institutionalized disinvestment and systemic abandonment of youth as central characteristics of the pipeline become most apparent: instead of equipping urban schools with more teachers and counselors to alleviate them from ongoing fiscal pressures of under-resourcing, the school-prison nexus defaults to safety technology to dispose of urban youth. The racialization of youth and their institutionalized categorization of social disposability is a fundamental outcome of the neoliberal capitalist momentum. According to Henry Giroux (2010), under the regime of market fundamentalism or neoliberalism, the pipeline is a widened inter-institutional regime of surveillance of future fit consumers; those who do not demonstrate obedient and loyal behavior of consumerism must sustain "increasingly powerful modes of biopolitical regulation, pacification, and control" (p. 78). Additionally, "with no adequate role to play as consumers, many youth are now considered disposable, forced to inhabit 'zones of social abandonment' extending from homeless shelters and bad schools to bulging detention centers and prisons" (Giroux, 2013). The fact that Dimples connected school and education not with joy, play, humanity, and common good, but with pain, scars, and with an institution that permanently pushes non-white and low income youth into a permanent precarious state of being is a clear example of the long term impact of neoliberal policies in the lives of racially minoritized youth.

Being Pushed Into A Permanently Precarious State of Being

Youth co-researchers were curious about any physical and emotional effects ongoing photographing, fingerprinting, scanning, and x-raying by metal detectors and school security technology could have on their bodies. They imagined themselves to be in the position of medical professionals from where they could view any potential harm done to another young person from their schools to then offer medical help or practical advice. Dimples sketched the following image with her explanation on the back page:



Figure 2: Dimples' map and description of imagined physical inscriptions of the pipeline on a young person's body.

Her picture depicts the body of a female whose forehead is marked by a scar. A thought bubble in the top right corner reads "Dame can school ever be fair?" She left the label for the right hand blank. Her heart is split in the middle by a vertical line, possibly representative of the person's spine. In addition, two arrows pointing in opposite directions emerge from the heart. The person's triangle-shaped feet appear in two colors; the left foot is labeled with "steps closer 2 prison." The right foot is left label-less. The back page provided additional – yet incomplete – insights to her drawing. It reads:

Head-she is thinking about why schools (scarr) are not equal to all there students?

Legs-there 2 colors because one foot is leading her to a right path but the other one is to prison because unfair treatment.

-Heart-

In addition, her medical advice consisted of:

Medical advice-I will give this child advice. I will to (followed by crossing out of "them her") always keep your head high.

These final words of advice are accompanied by a drawing of a smiling individual with a star placed next to the right hand. When sharing her picture with her co-researchers, she explained:

Her head is, it says, she is like, she is wondering why she doesn't have fair treatment in her school. And, you see, the heart, it is split in the middle. And the shoes, there is different colors because, one is like saying, yeah, she should continue in school, and the other one is like, pulling her away and stuff, closer to prison. I don't know her hands, haven't figured out her hands. Her cure is to always keep her head up. Oh yeah, is basically giving her more advice to just always keep her head up and stay in school and stay focused and not care about anybody else.

Dimples' body map of a young person's bodily entanglement in the pipeline speaks back to Wendy Hartcourt's epistemological standpoint towards a body politics that repositions knowledge on bodies as

contested sites amidst colliding economic, political, sexual and intellectual power relations (2009). Harcourt argues, “knowledge on bodies is irreducibly interwoven with other discourses – social, colonial, ethical and economic” (p. 22). Perhaps anchored within her own lived experiences, Dimples identified these dismantling inscriptions of the pipeline on a young person’s body as mental and physical injuries. The scar on the young person’s forehead and the split heart are representative of their manifestations.

Dimples placed young people who learn in spaces of the pipeline at a deadly crossroads that leaves them with only two (and contradictory) destinations: to either stay in school or to go to prison. In other words, Latinas like Dimples must either behave while in school (i.e. subordinate themselves to school authorities), or else they are fast-tracked into the criminal justice system through racialized suspension practices. It is impossible to declare which option is less deadly to their educational survival. With either direction, Latinas remain emotionally and physically stifled and trapped, and thus fully exposed to the inter-institutional violence of the pipeline that wears and tears on their bodies. As identified by Dimples’ advise to students whose bodies “bear the mark of both conscious and unconscious processes” (Krieger, 2005, p. 351) of the pipeline, their survival work entails mental work of imagination. Imagining how the material and social world of systems of dispossession such as the pipeline get incorporated biologically cannot be separated “from how students feel about themselves and others, their bodies, futures, and places in society” (Ruglis, 2011, p. 632). What I call the “permanently precarious state of being” invisibilizes the bodies of Latina students held inside the pipeline. This especially includes the silencing of acknowledgment of the funds of knowledge Latinas may potentially tap into to enable the hard mental work needed around maintaining focus on surviving the pipeline.

Deprivation of Voice and Agency

This last piece of Dimples’ composite narrative comes from excerpts of a transcribed conversation between Dimples and all of us in the research collective. At the beginning of one of our weekly research meetings in March 2008, Dimples told her co-researchers about a fight she had at school with another female student. The details of the fight triggered Dimples’ journey through numerous spaces of the pipeline (local jail, regional booking center, and criminal court) as well as a series of life-marking encounters with authorities within each. Her voice echoed sound waves of panic, anger, and hurt, while simultaneously accentuating underlying feelings of alienation, loneliness and fear. The task is not to privilege the pipeline’s structural violence over Dimples’ deliberate decision to severely injure another female student. This is not a request to forgive Dimples for intentionally endangering another young person. Applying physical violence to redeem herself for a student’s unresponsiveness to requested peer mediation is inexcusable. However, it is through Dimples’ enacted violence that the criminalizing and pathologizing processes of the pipeline become highly visible. Further, placing judgment based on opposite binaries of innocence versus culpability but without taking into account the processes and larger social contexts in which individual acts are grounded only contributes to strengthening the pipeline’s default mechanisms of pathologizing and institutionalizing Dimples and other Latin@ youth. When reading the following exchange between Dimples and her co-researchers, I ask the reader to pay close attention to some of these processes and contexts:

Dimples: Don’t ever go to jail. I am getting tears just talking about it (*emotional, voice shaking, in tears*). First, I have a urine infection. Cuz, I didn’t pee in a day. Second of all, all this stuff happened because of Johnson.¹ Mind you, now they are trying to put me on assault and felony. That’s gonna be on my record forever. Now I have to do 2 weeks either in Rikers Island² or I do rehab for anger management. (*Co-researchers quite down and listen attentively*).

Patricia: What happened?

- Dimples: The girl, Shareen, the girl that jumped me, you know, with her friends 2 years ago, I done harassment reports, I done try to press charges. They say I can't because I attacked her first. Then, while I am in the school, and when they arrested me they didn't give me my rights. They didn't say why I am charged. I said, am I getting arrested? Am I going to jail? They said, no, we are just going to take you to the precinct to talk to you. Little did I know I am there til Thursday. Thursday night, that's when I came out.
- Co-Researcher I: Then don't go with them!
- Dimples: No! I couldn't. They had handcuffs.
- Co-Researcher I: Then you were under arrest.
- Dimples: Yeah. I was arrested, and then he put me to the 42nd precinct. Then they was gonna send me upstate. I wasn't gonna come out til Monday. My bail was \$5000. And they put it to \$750. First, I said, what's my charge? He said, oh, your charge is assault and a felony. I said, damn, ... a felony is what, is 3-7 years. So I am like, damn, I am a be here for a long time. Then, a cop came. I was like, what am I here for? They said, assault with a deadly weapon. Cuz I hit her with a stapler. And she had stitches and bruises. They have it all, the report is right here (*opens it, flips through a few pages*).... I am so angry at this girl. You don't understand, 3 years she put me through hell! Bumped me in the hallway in front of principals, in front of everybody (*emphasized*). And nobody was on my side. And I was so angry so when I saw her, I had this stapler and I just kept on hitting her with it.... And then, the fight was not only in the school, the fight took it all the way outside in the streets. The teachers let us fight and the security guards let us fight. They pushed everybody to the sides, is like, let them fight.... I said, can I get an order protection? And he said, no, cuz you attacked her first. And I said, what happened to all the years of harassment? Where is my reports at? Where are my statements at? Where is witnesses? He is like, the girl has 15 witnesses.... you either do 2 weeks in Rikers Island or you just go to rehab. The rehab that I am gonna go to is not outpatient, it's inpatient. That means that I have to stay there for at least 6 months. They are saying that I have mental health problems, cuz I am bipolar, and I have a therapist and anger problem. They are making a little thing come to nothing cuz I go to therapy so they are trying to use that against me like.... she was in therapy for 5 years, she is crazy. Yeah, I told the judge, I did dirt in my past. I messed up a lot, you understand? I was bad, yeah, I got arrested before and stuff like that. I came to realize that's not me. I want to go to college, I am trying to do better for myself. I got a 80 average, I got more credits than I need to have. I am only there because I failed the regents.³ Teachers let us fight. I fought her since 11:30 to 12. A half an hour fight.
- Patricia: The original incident, 3 years or so back, whatever she did to you, is that on anybody's record?
- Dimples: Yes, they have that. I reported it, I did. At least 6. I went to the principal. I went to the assistant principal. I done had mediation with this girl, and this girl done walked out and said, (*imitating*) I am done having mediation with this bitch! In front of the principal, and they didn't do anything.

Even though her co-researchers' initial silence indicated shock and disturbance about the violence to which Dimples resorted to respond to her female peer, the group also learned about the institutionalizing aftershocks the dispossessing wires of the pipeline had sent through Dimples' body.

The series of events that her fight at school triggered show insights to the varying degrees of how adults in school abandon Latin@ youth. First, the hands-off approach of security guards and teachers to break up the fight between the two girls participated in Dimples' entanglement with structures of the pipeline. Secondly, school staff not acknowledging the multiple and long-term reporting efforts Dimples initiated to document her physical assault by the same young female she fought added to the institutional silencing of her self-chosen method of non-violent self-defense. Thirdly, the disappearance of paper trails that Dimples created during her proactive help seeking is charged with the pipeline's carelessness and inability to properly re/store life-saving evidence. Instead, it appears that institutionalized deliveries of evidence privilege a chronological order of events. As a result, "offenders" are denied access to previously filed reports with viable contextual information about processes or encounters ("They say I can't because I attacked her first"). The inter-institutional composition of the pipeline honors the present and deliberately ignores the past. And finally, Dimples' account suggests that cases of students with mental health issues receive additional scrutinizing attention ("They are saying that I have mental health problems, cuz I am bipolar, and I have a therapist and anger problem"). Dimples does not reveal whether or not she was working with a professional for her mental health care. Her co-researchers did not care; instead they were taken back by the pipeline's quick willingness to use Dimples' mental health status as a primary rationale for throwing her into the pathologizing and demonizing spaces of her regional booking center. Her self-defending voice as well as her willing agency to openly display the extent to which she was institutionally neglected by the staff and officers at her school and the local precinct could not sustain the dismantling ambush on her mental and physical capacities.

Dimples also felt regret, as she understands the serious consequences of her action. But she also reveals an intense level of anger that she directed at the adults of a system whom she perceived as holding positions from where her institutionalization would be supervised, documented, and communicated to her family:

Dimples: Yeah, I was wrong for handling her with a stapler, but no lie (*pauses*) ... I have so much anger in me.... They are making my mother go through hell right now. My mother went to court, my mother did not come out of court til I o'clock in the morning. My name wasn't on the list, somebody kicked me off the list. Then put me back on the list. I was supposed to be out the same day Monday.

Dimples became profoundly aware of how her abandonment implies her disposability within the spaces of the pipeline. Together, the disappearance of her documentation, the disengaged school staff, the silencing of her lived experiences with an unreliable reporting system, and the questioning of her mental health decomposed her personhood and agency to a faceless aggregate of a Latin@ youth inside the pipeline. The significant level of anger she was left with points to the aforementioned unresolvedness of Latin@s' positioning within the pipeline; they remain an open case deserving more attention and caretaking by all of us who are alarmed by the long-term implications the pipeline has for their growing presence in the United States.

Conclusion

At the end of her hearing in the criminal court on March 18, 2008, the judge mandated that Dimples completed two days of anger management. Many of her co-researchers considered her lucky; even though she had to submit to the managing, molding and sculpting treatments of anger management, she walked away without a criminal record. Nonetheless, since the completion of the collective's data collection and her high school graduation in the summer of 2009, none of the author's efforts to reconnect, by phone, mobile, or email with Dimples were successful. It remains troublingly unknown if her plan to move to a major city on the East Coast to attend a liberal arts college for which she had earned a scholarship was fulfilled. Without updates from her, the author's hopes and worries alike remain speculative.

The findings from this study – that the pipeline manifests in institutional abandonment as disinvestment in young people's personhood, social isolation, and deprivation of agency and self-control – suggest that social

sciences research must bear witness to the survival work that Latin@ youth are doing at school in order to inform transformative structural change towards equity and justice. More participatory qualitative research studies with youth-centered methodologies and with Latin@ youth as co-researchers are needed to document the deadly effects that dominant (and racialized) power structures have on Latin@s' lived experiences with current schooling processes.

This also involves positioning targeted Latin@s not as damaged research subjects but instead as authors and owners of stories about their dispossessions and the daily violence in their lives. It is the call to "world traveling" that Maria Lugones invited us to be part of and that can bind social justice research to community and communal activism. This includes de-homogenization of research designs to legitimize every body's inscriptions and lived experiences with forms of institutional neglect. Research that privileges survival instead of social death can guide, teach and mentor to do this world-traveling. This humanizing research activates social movements – actual physical movement not just ideological shifting – to embark on journeys that move us away from selective and internalized predispositions about who deserves to be in this world.

References

- Alexander, M. (2012). *The new Jim Crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*. New York, NY: The New Press.
- Cammarota, J., & Fine, M. (2008). *Revolutionizing education: Youth participatory action research in motion*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013, January 18). Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/ace/index.htm>
- Citizen's Committee for Children of New York Inc. (2010). Keeping Track of New York City's Children 2010. Keeping Track of New York City's Children 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.ccnnyork.org/wp-content/publications/CCCLaunch.KeepingTrack.2010.pdf>
- Drum Major Institute for Public Policy. (2005). *A look at the impact schools*. New York, NY.
- Fine, M., & Ruglis, J. (2009). Circuits and consequences of dispossession: The racialized realignment of the public sphere for US youth. *Transforming Anthropology*, 17(1), 20–33.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline & punish*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Fry, R., & Lopez, M. H. (2012, August 20). Hispanic Student Enrollments Reach New Highs in 2011. Pew Hispanic Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/08/20/ii-hispanic-public-school-enrollments/>
- Giroux, H. A. (2010). *Youth in a suspect society: Democracy or disposability?* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Giroux, H. A. (2013, July 22). The Violence of Organized Forgetting. Truthout. Retrieved from <http://www.truthout.org/opinion/item/17647-the-violence-of-organized-forgetting>
- Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (2010). The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap Two Sides of the Same Coin? *Educational Researcher*, 39(1), 59–68.
- Harcourt, W. (2009). *Body politics in development: Critical debates in gender and development*. Zed Books London and New York.
- Himmelstein, K. E., & Brückner, H. (2011). Criminal-justice and school sanctions against nonheterosexual youth: A national longitudinal study. *Pediatrics*, 127(1), 49–57.
- Krieger, N. (2005). Embodiment: a conceptual glossary for epidemiology. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 59(5), 350–355. Retrieved from <http://jech.bmj.com/content/59/5/350.short>
- Krueger, P. (2009). *Navigating the gaze: Young people's intimate knowledge with surveilled spaces at school*. City University of New York, New York, NY.
- Krueger, P. (2010). It's not just a method! The epistemic and political work of young people's lifeworlds at the school-prison nexus. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 13(3), 383–408. doi:10.1080/13613324.2010.500846
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2005). Reflections on Portraiture: A Dialogue Between Art and Science. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 11(1), 3–15. doi:10.1177/1077800404270955
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lugones, M. (1987). Playfulness, "World"-Travelling, and Loving Perception. *Hypatia*, 2(2), 3–19. doi:10.2307/3810013
- Miller, J., Ofer, U., Artz, A., Bahl, T., Foster, T., Phenix, D., ... Thomas, H. A. (2011). *Education interrupted: The growing use of suspensions in New York City's public schools*. New York, New York: New York Civil Liberties Union.
- Mukherjee, E. (2007). *Criminalizing the classroom: The over-policing of New York City schools*. NYCLU.
- Ruglis, J. (2011). Mapping the biopolitics of school dropout and youth resistance. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 24(5), 627–637.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples*. New York, New York: Zed Books.
- Stevens, J. E. (2013, April 9). With Thousands of Schools Curbing Suspensions, There's No Excuse for the Growing Discipline Gap. Huffington Post. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-ellen-stevens/with-thousands-of-schools-curbing-suspensions_b_3041833.html
- United States Census Bureau. (2011, April 26). Profile America Facts for Features. Hispanic Heritage Month 2011:

Sept. 15 - Oct. 15. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff18.html

Wacquant, L. (2001). Deadly symbiosis: When prison and ghetto meet and mesh. *Punishment and Society*, 3(1), 95–134.

Wald, J., & Losen, D. J. (2003). Defining and redirecting a school-to-prison pipeline. *New Directions for Youth Development*, (99), 9–15.