

Arts-based Youth Participatory Action Research:  
Latinx Performances of Multidimensional Identity and Transformational Resistance

by

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## ABSTRACT

This seven-month critical performance ethnographic study explores the lived experiences of Latinx youth activist-researchers. The data collected through participant observations, arts-based elicitation and semi-structured interviews, artifacts, and analytic memos reveal how Latinx youth utilize artmaking towards transformational resistance. Their participation in an arts-based youth participatory action research project and intergenerational theatre ensemble I call Estrella Theatre (ET) company indicates how art and social justice-driven inquiry produce powerful benefits towards positive youth development; a transformational pedagogy that fosters critical consciousness, civic engagement, and identity construction. To illustrate these distinct yet intertwined processes, I composed an ethnodrama to show how Latinx youth in the U.S. embody transformational resistance in their lives as they traverse school, home, and community spaces. The purpose of the play is to utilize the experiences of the participants to spark critical dialogue and generate knowledge to help society understand the experiences of Latinx youth in K-12 schooling and challenge majoritarian narratives by showcasing how they combine art, research, and social justice towards educational leadership.

## DEDICATION

For all young people who have ever felt silenced.

May you seek your voice and find yourselves.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
GLOSSARY OF TERMS.....	ix
PREFACE .....	xi
CHAPTER	
1. SETTING THE STAGE .....	1
Constructing an Understanding of Youth.....	5
Youth Participatory Action Research.....	7
Youth & Applied Theatre.....	12
Purpose & Research Questions.....	23
Outline of Chapters.....	25
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	26
A Brief Definition of Art.....	26
Moving Art into Research.....	27
Features of Arts-based Research.....	31
The Nexus of Youth, Artistic Inquiry, and Social Justice: Arts-based YPAR.....	35
<i>Theoretical Frameworks</i> .....	42
Identity Scripts & Performances.....	43
Performance as Praxis.....	45
Cognitive Resonance/Dissonance.....	46

CHAPTER	Page
CRT & LatCrit.....	48
Transformational Resistance.....	57
Critical Civic Praxis.....	59
3. METHODOLOGY.....	64
Methodological Influences.....	67
My Positionality.....	71
Estrella Theatre Company.....	72
Recruitment & Participants.....	73
Applied Theatre as YPAR.....	75
Arts-based YPAR Project/Study.....	77
Methods.....	80
Data Analysis.....	82
4. FINDINGS.....	86
Introduction.....	86
“Blue”.....	88
5. EPILOGUE.....	139
Discussion.....	139
Summary of Findings.....	141
Implications for Practice and Research.....	153
Significance.....	161
Dissemination Plan.....	161
Conclusion.....	162

CHAPTER	Page
REFERENCES .....	165
APPENDIX	
A. ARTS-BASED ELICITATION & SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	175
B. REHEARSAL AGENDAS.....	181
C. COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS.....	200
D. THE ACT UNSPOKEN: A FORUM PLAY.....	202
E. IRB APPROVAL.....	208
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .....	211

## LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Participant Table.....	71
2.	Project Timeline from November 2020-May 2022.....	79



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. The Benefits of Applied Theatre on Young People .....	14
2. Participatory Research Design .....	73
3. Analytic Approach.....	80
4. Performance as Praxis.....	130

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Applied Theatre:** Helen Nicholson (2005) contends the central legacy of applied theatre is when “processes of working are embodied and involved rather than passive and detached, as participants are invited to engage physically and emotionally...” with a “political concern to demystify the arts by encouraging people from many different backgrounds and contexts to participate actively in drama and theatre, whether as reflexive participants in different forms of drama workshops, as thinking members of theatre audiences, or as informed and creative participants ... “(p.10).

**Artist-researcher:** A term to describe anyone who identifies as both an artist, social justice advocate, and a researcher.

**Artivism:** “The term artivism is a hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism” (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p.82).

**Educational Leadership:** Formal education leaders are important actors; however, they are not only the individual’s enacting leadership. Nondominant families, youth, and communities are critical, but typically overlooked actors in educational leadership for educational justice (Ishimaru, 2020).

**Latinx:** The non-gendered term to describe someone of Latino or Hispanic descent.

**Transformational Resistance:** Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) state transformational resistance in when young people demonstrate both a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice. They posit transformational resistance, framed within the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT), enables researchers to examine resistance among youth of color that is “political, collective, conscious, and motivated by a sense that individual and social change in possible” (p.3).

## PREFACE

The protest begins at five o'clock. We parked the car and look at Instagram to see if the organizers posted the starting point. Other groups of people start heading east on Fillmore, so we follow behind them. Masks on. *Check*. Hand sanitizer. *Check*. Cardboard sign. *Check*. Sunglasses. *Check*. Even in the later part of the day it's still well over 100 degrees. We anxiously scuffle through the streets, hurrying to make it before the march begins. Gradually, more and more people emerge on the public sidewalks. Then, in the distance, we hear a roar of thunderous voices. We cut south on Third Street to Van Buren, everyone's pace is picking up to a slow jog. Before we know it our five bodies are encompassed by a sea of thousands. Black bodies. Brown bodies. White bodies. Bodies with signs. Bodies chanting on microphones. Bodies on the sidelines passing out water and snacks. Young bodies walking hand in hand with their guardians. Older bodies on the periphery. Homeless bodies and bodies with homes. LGBTQ bodies. Dis/abled bodies in wheelchairs. My gut clenches, yet my mask conceals my emotion. One of the organizers begins "*No justice, no peace, no racist police!*" We join in unison, louder, stronger, "*No justice, no peace, no racist police!*" Eventually, we approach a unit of policemen and women lining the road. One of the organizers stops and orchestrates us to turn and face the armed and ready officers. "*No justice, no peace, no racist police!*" I flashback to the morning media coverage of an innocent boy shot and murdered at distance by a pellet gun, yet here we are, less than 10 feet away. We take a knee as the organizer calls on people to the microphone to share their stories to our audience in blue. One by one, we listened to raw and painful stories of missing children, police brutality, and wrongful

murders. No response, no applause, no reaction. *But we were the lucky ones.* We got up and marched on. For a better today. For a better tomorrow. We marched for our youth and the next generation. We marched so they can breathe. No justice, no peace.

## CHAPTER 1

### SETTING THE STAGE

The scene described above exemplifies how performance is not only a theatrical technique, but a tactic commonly used in protests and other sites of activism. Yet here the stage is not in a fancy auditorium, but one grounded in the streets of downtown Phoenix amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic. Here the actors are not fictional characters dressed in costume, the actors are real world people who are so enraged by injustice they are willing to put their bodies on the line in the name of justice. In the aftermath of the wicked murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and many, many more innocent Black souls, ordinary people from every background walk in solidarity of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. A movement that fights against incidents of police brutality and all racially motivated violence against black people.

Young people have a long and rich history of participating in liberation movements that demonstrate their agency, resiliency, and ingenuity as agents of social change. From the Chicano Walkouts in 1968 to the Black Lives Matter Movement prominent today, I contend alongside numerous critical youth studies scholars that young people are indeed active contributing participants of society that help define what it means to be a citizen in today's diverse multicultural society (Ayala et al., 2018; Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Mirra, Garcia, & Morrell, 2015; Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013; Radina & Schwartz, 2019). Despite this history of youth agency and leadership, a perpetual and damaging narrative surrounding the intersection of youth and

people of color lingers. The concept of adultism (Bell, 2010; Bettencourt; 2018), the idea that youth are marginalized because of their age and experience, helps explain young people's inferior position in society. Historically prominent in K-12 schooling, Ishimaru (2020) argues that nondominant families, youth, and communities are critical, but typically overlooked actors in educational leadership for educational justice. Today youth, especially youth of color, continue to be othered to the bottom of hegemonic societal and school hierarchies that perpetuate a stereotype of young people as less knowledgeable, lazy, incapable, and criminalistic (Fox, 2014). During a global pandemic and racial war in the US, these intersections of identity become an even more painful and fearful one to bear. Yet, there is hope. My hope is that youth of color be supported by equity-minded adults who can equip them with creative tools to respond culturally, agentically, and artistically to the discrimination and inequities that intend to stifle them.

In recent years, a rise in arts-based research methodologies and pedagogies have emerged in youth participatory action research (YPAR) literature (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Domínguez & Cammarota, 2021; Fox, 2014; 2015; 2016; 2019, 2020; Green, 2020; Goessling, 2020; Wright, 2019). YPAR invites youth to examine social problems that affect their lives and then take action to address them (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). YPAR aims to challenge pre-existing school/organizational roles, routines, and expectations by redefining power sharing practices with youth (Domínguez, Bertrand & Clement, 2021). *Arts-based YPAR*, or YPAR projects that rely primarily on critical theories and arts-based research methods from project conception to dissemination. The process of performance as praxis underpins how art can serve as a vehicle for critical

thought and action. Arts-based YPAR combines art and activism, or activism, to the research process “...that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism” (Sandoval & Latorre, 2008, p. 82). Therefore, I utilize the term *activist-researcher* to describe arts-based YPAR participants who combine their interests for art making, social justice, and research. In addition, arts-based YPAR can be utilized as a critical performance pedagogy--an artistic participatory process that supports students to embody and challenge socio-political issues and re-imagine social landscapes (Denzin, 2003).

Arts-based YPAR studies have produced a multitude of benefits. For instance, several arts-based YPAR studies highlight the importance of the body as a site of creative critical inquiry and how theatre processes support youth to question the world as it is and understand the current youth discourses and resultant systems of oppression (Delgado, 2018; Perry & Medina, 2011; Winn, 2013; Wager, 2015). Some arts-based YPAR studies posit their decolonizing methodologies advanced a humanizing research paradigm that fostered horizontal youth-adult power sharing and decision-making (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Bird-Naytowhow et al., 2017; Fox, 2020; Green, 2020). Other arts-based YPAR studies have found the praxis of creative collective inquiry is a scaffolding tool for youth to rehearse their activism and multidimensional identities with a goal of personal and social transformation (Goessling, 2020; Wright, 2019). These various studies examined the effects of fusing art and critical inquiry on a broad array of youth outcomes and the evidence suggests arts-based YPAR projects positively contribute to youth critical consciousness and youth civic engagement.



While some YPAR researchers center the arts and value art-making during the research process, it is often that YPAR facilitators add the arts as an ‘add-on’ or additional component to the work (Goessling et al., 2019) which limits the possibilities of authentic and holistic arts-based inquiry. In addition, few scholars have investigated the intersection of arts-based inquiry and participatory engagement in ways that engage youth participants as researchers, artists, and advocates who utilize non-traditional, performance methods (Bernard & Rezzano, 2018; Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014). Conversely, empirical research finds that both participatory inquiry and art, such as theatre, are powerful tools for creating multi-level social and personal change (Bagamoyo College of Arts et al., 2002; Gutierrez et al., 2005). However, the degree to which arts-based YPAR projects impact positive youth development as they traverse critical inquiry, art, and social justice issues remains unanswered.

The lack of information on the benefits of how youth engage a praxis of creative collective inquiry, from beginning to end, indicates a turn for future youth participatory action research. The field of critical youth studies would benefit by further exploring how arts-based methods in youth inquiry projects can activate imagination, elevate understanding of injustice and anticipate change, nurture identity construction, rehearse for future action, and foster healing. More importantly, given our current state of racial and social unrest in the US, is the potential of this study to support youth and adult usage of arts-based methods to co-investigate and respond to on-going issues of equity in their schools and communities.

However, before we can work to support young people, we must first understand them. In the next section we move to build an understanding of youth by delineating the dominant discourse surrounding young people.

### **Constructing an Understanding of “Youth”**

Society has long perceived, politicized, and defined the term “youth” in a multitude of ways. In some ways these perceptions are damaging to youth, especially youth of color. I challenge this narrative in conjunction with several scholars that recognize the potential of young people as contributing members of society (Ayala et al., 2018; Cammarota & Fine, 2008; Mirra, Garcia, & Morrell, 2015; Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013; Radina & Schwartz, 2019). “To this end, young people are not passive receivers of information who are solely understood through socializing discourses that presume to shape them into future citizens. Instead, young people are active participants in defining what it means to be a citizen in today’s diverse multicultural society” (Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013, p. 217). Quijada and authors explain youth are conventionally understood through biological determinism grounded in children’s developmental stages. On the contrary, as cited by Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, and Bradley (2013), critical youth studies scholars aspire to widen analysis by transgressing a transitional life-stage paradigm that detaches childhood from adulthood (Sibley, 1995).

The field of critical youth studies (CYS) aims to resist linear stages of youth development that are arbitrarily labeled by developmental milestones (Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013). For example, ones’ age normally determines when young

people can legally drive, drink alcohol, vote, or work. These age-determined categories assume youth to be developmentally incomplete and partial human beings who need supervision and protection before bestowed adult legal privileges (Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013). Community-based artist and scholar, Stephani Etheridge-Woodson (2007) describes how youth roles in culture and youth agency relates to how childhood is a performed social construct. In other words, how youth internalize messages of ageism and therefore reproduce cultural and behavioral typecasts such as “cute” “cool” “innocent” and “dangerous. In turn, critical youth studies offer a necessary criticism of social reproduction and adult-centered institutions that intend to educate youth toward adulthood.

The importance of critical youth studies as a field of academic inquiry is that it recognizes that young people have the capacity to analyze their social context, to collectively engage in critical research, and resist dominant structures of social reproduction (Akom, Cammarota, & Ginwright, 2008; Woodson, 2007). In educational spaces, CYS scholars share a concern for supporting pedagogical spaces to be places of resistance and resiliency grounded on the examination of how race is lived inside and outside of schools, how young people think about their identities, and the covert ways that labels of dominance (e.g., race, class, gender, and sexual orientation) are camouflaged and reproduced through curricula (Akom, Cammarota, & Ginwright, 2008). Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, and Bradley (2013) argue how the theory and practice of critical youth studies could help reorient perspectives about youth and offer a needed critique of how institutions that shape policy and educational reform for youth.

Tuck and Yang (2014) argue there is a history of multi-faceted opposition to CYS. This is made evident when we look at images of youth resistance in the media. Youth are juxtaposed in their portrayal as either rebels and criminals or in contrast, small, powerless, and helpless bodies dominated by government and institutions. Relatedly, society employs the descriptor “youth” in a variety of ways. While some regard youth as underdeveloped people who lack self-determination, Tuck and Yang (2014) posit youth in a structural (and historical, generational, political) location: “Youth is a legally, materially, and always raced/gendered/classed/sexualized category around which social institutions are built, disciplinary sciences created, and legal apparatuses mounted” (p. 4). Consequently, “youth” is a loaded term that has implications for how young people internalize societal messages related to their age and consequently how they perform their identity scripts to socially reproduce or resist.

In the next section, we discuss one approach young people assume to resist negative societal conditions and messages, youth participatory action research.

### **Youth Participatory Action Research**

For generations positivist epistemologies streamlined traditional and objective approaches to inquiry that were regarded as highly rigorous across scholarly discourse and practices. On the contrary, some academics challenge positivist research by continuing to pioneer towards novel and creative ways of co-constructing knowledge *with* participant-collaborators, not *over* them (Irizarry & Brown, 2014). For example, co-constructing knowledge with youth participant-collaborators has proven to foster what Julio Cammarota calls a pedagogy of transformational resistance (Cammarota, 2017). A

pedagogy of transformational resistance invites youth to develop critical insights, “These insights lead to resistances that have the potential to transform young people’s subjectivities while allowing them to envision ways of learning to counteract oppressive and reproductive schooling” (Cammarota, 2017, p. 189). Transformational pedagogy invites youth to enter and re-enter stages of praxis, a process that deepens critical consciousness through cycles of intellectual work and action, a “feedback loop” (Cammarota, 2015) that informs student learning. Critical insights lead to critical consciousness (Freire, 2000), the recognition and awareness of the oppressive forces in one’s life and then act against them. In this paper, I follow Cammarota’s posture and argue the possibility of a pedagogy of transformational resistance through arts-based youth participatory action research (YPAR).

YPAR projects are collective investigations that draw on local knowledge, coupled with the willingness to take individual and/or collective action (Torre et al. 2004). YPAR invites youth to examine social problems that affect their lives and then take action to address them (Cammarota & Fine, 2008). In this paper I define YPAR as a critical and iterative process of youth-driven inquiry that is informed by the lived experiences of young people. YPAR investigates a myriad of topics and has the potential to bridge classroom learning to students’ lived realities (Cammarota & Romero, 2009). By centering the youth perspective and positioning youth as experts of their lived experiences, YPAR provides students with a language and consciousness to name and challenge their oppression within those lived realities (Cammarota, 2015). In this way, YPAR offers an alternative approach to teaching and learning, a pedagogy grounded in

social change and the recognition of student's capacities in all areas of life (Mirra, Garcia & Morrell, 2015). The participatory process requires role-remediation by youth, to redefine their self-perceptions from "knowledge consumers to knowledge producers" and "actors who can change the world versus people who are acted on" (Radina & Schwartz, 2019, p. 112). Thus, in YPAR, youth research is a fundamental mechanism for change that underpins the transformation of critical reflection to liberatory action.

While the foundations and definitions of PAR are numerous, there are several common principles echoed across YPAR practitioners and researchers. According to Rodríguez and Brown (2009), there are three guiding principles to participatory action research: (a) situated and inquiry based; (b) participatory; and (c) transformative and activist. Rodríguez and Brown (2009) stressed the need for youths' work in PAR projects to be situated within the social contexts in which they live and learn. For it is the youth who have emic perspectives to "schooling conditions that university researchers lack," thus by utilizing the environment to inform topics of inquiry, the learning and knowledge could reflect and address real-world problems based on the needs, desires, and experiences of youth researchers (Rodríguez & Brown, 2009). Next, the second principle is "a commitment to genuinely collaborative methodological and pedagogical processes that validate, incorporate, and build on knowledge and skills of youth researchers and support critical and creative engagement in research and learning" (Rodríguez & Brown, 2009, p.27). While the participatory element of PAR may appear self-evident, it is paramount to monitor youth and adult participation throughout all stages of any project in order to assess dialogic processes, equitable power sharing, and shared decision-making.

Rodríguez and Brown's (2009) third principle acknowledges the goals of transformation and activism, a commitment to improve the lives of marginalized youth through the elevation of consciousness and active interventions. Be it youths' internal transformations (e.g., critical consciousness, identity building, learning) or external transformations (e.g., changes in school policies and practices) (Cammarota, 2015), transformation is the ultimate, yet achievable goal.

However, Freire warns "if action is emphasized exclusively, to the detriment of reflection, the word is converted into *activism*. The latter—action for action's sake—negates the true praxis and makes dialogue impossible" (Freire, 2000, p. 88). Here Freire highlights how activism and YPAR have fundamental different purposes and are two separate entities. Most YPAR projects are not organizing and mobilizing, which is often due to institutional policies and practices. While some YPAR projects may lead to activist efforts, not all projects will or should. Caraballo, Lozenski, and Lyiscott (2017) describe four entry points of YPAR: *academic learning and literacies*, *cultural and critical epistemological*, *youth development and leadership*, and *youth organizing and civic engagement*. These entry points help explain "the significant and tangible differences in how YPAR is conceived and practiced" (p.317). According to Caraballo and authors, youth organizing and civic engagement that induce performances of activism accounts for only one of the four YPAR sectors.

In 2012, a group of leaders in the YPAR field came together to offer eight principles to guide the PAR process: (a) participation; (b) critical inquiry; (c) knowledge co-construction; (d) power with(in); (e) indigenous cosmologies; (f) creative praxes; (g)

transformational action; and (h) conscientization para la colectiva (Ayala et al., 2012). While some of these principles resonate with Rodríguez and Brown's (2009) offering (participation, critical inquiry, knowledge co-construction, transformational action), Ayala et al. (2012) expanded to include other salient characteristics of PAR. For example, *power with(in)* accounts for the importance to foster relationships of mutual trust and to continually examine the intragroup power dynamics in a group through deep-self inquiry. Next, PAR should rely on *indigenous cosmologies*, ancestral knowledge forms that engage youth to explore their indigeneity as a tool for process and reflection through the work. Further, this approach to humanizing research presents an alternative paradigm, one that relies on youths' Indigenous knowledge and nudges a neoliberal shift from personal accountability to collective responsibility for social change (Cahill et al., 2008). Ayala et al. (2012) highlights another component of PAR is *creative praxes*- to draw on cultural and creative research methods such as poetry, theatre, music, dance, song, and other forms of artistic expressions. Lastly, Ayala and colleagues posit PAR aims to enhance *concientizacion para la colectiva* (for the collective), the tipping point where the work contributes towards a larger movement of consciousness raising, social justice, and liberatory action.

In 2021, I collaborated with Julio Cammarota to create a synthesis model of these guiding principles called the arc of transformation in YPAR (Domínguez & Cammarota, 2021). The model examines points of convergence and divergence in how these principles are employed across YPAR methods and pedagogies. Distinct to the previous literature, our model also integrates rehearsals for future action, cultural action, internal



and external transformational change, potential youth outcomes (Ayala et al., 2017; Boal, 1979; Freire, 2000; Rodríguez & Brown, 2009).

The principles of YPAR (Ayala et al., 2012; Domínguez & Cammarota, 2021; Rodríguez & Brown, 2009) inform the values in how to approach research with youth. However, in my search I found several parallel features between the guiding principles of YPAR and youth projects that utilize applied theatre process to collect, analyze, and disseminate embodied data. Specifically, arts-based YPAR projects that utilize theatre processes and applied theater projects are currently siloed and detached from one another despite their overlapping nature. In the next section, I attempt to put these two fields into conversation with one another by outlining five key benefits applied theatre has on young people as a research process and as a pedagogy of transformational resistance.

### **Youth & Applied Theatre**

Forms of applied theatre take on many forms, which explains the numerous names used to describe the practice: applied drama/theatre, popular theatre, community theatre, grassroots theatre, participatory theatre, interactive theatre, outreach theatre, theatre for development, critical performative pedagogy, Theatre of the Oppressed and more. The considerable overlap between these different yet similar traditions coincides with the widespread debate of their respective meanings (Applied Theatre/Drama: an e-debate, 2006). Phillip Taylor (2003b) posits all these various applications of reflective theatre are concerned with facilitating dialogue on who we are and what we aspire to become. Helen Nicholson (2005) contends the central legacy of applied theatre is when “processes of working are embodied and involved rather than passive and detached, as

participants are invited to engage physically and emotionally...” with a “political concern to demystify the arts by encouraging people from many different backgrounds and contexts to participate actively in drama and theatre, whether as reflexive participants in different forms of drama workshops, as thinking members of theatre audiences, or as informed and creative participants ... “(p.10).

The notion of “applied” represents *to what* or *to whom* the drama and theatre is applied to, and for what reasons or motivations the application of theatre-making intends to serve (Nicholson, 2005). However, I must note the word “applied” can be highly problematic when considering the origins of the theatre, steeped in colonialism, grounded in whiteness, and associated with a legacy of progressivism. This project doesn’t intend to *apply* theatre onto youth, instead to use theatre as a methodological tool for us to collectively investigate and combat a social issue. However, for this paper I use the term “applied theatre” because it is widely accepted and understood.

Participatory and reciprocal approaches to theatre attempt to neutralize the colonial structures upon which the theatre field is predicated on. Such applied theatre/drama projects that aim to be more explicit about the political nature of the work strive to dance between the spheres of theatre practice, social efficacy, and community building. For Nicholson (2005), it is a form of dramatic activity that can exist outside conventional mainstream theatre organizations that is designed to benefit individuals, communities, and societies through powerful social critique. Phillip Taylor (2003b) explains applied theatre work is commissioned where artists generate scenarios and craft openings for the community to respond to their pain through the process and performance

of theatre. What is unique about applied theatre is the movement from traditional theatrical settings, and into non-theatrical settings such as community centers, schools, parks and streets, government buildings, prisons and rehabilitation venues, therapy and health sites, housing projects, support services, and other locations, “for the purposes of helping the audience, or the participants, grapple with an issue, event or question which is of immediate public and personal concern (Taylor, 2003b, p. 7).

Youth involvement in applied theatre projects have taken on numerous styles, purposes, and benefits (Conrad, 2006; Gallagher & Rodricks, 2017; Halverson, 2005; Neelands, 2007; Nicholson, 2005; Sloane & Wallin, 2003; Taylor, 2003b; Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014). Gallagher and Rodricks (2017) argue how youth participation in applied theatre projects have the capacity to reproduce and interrupt social relations “...applied drama techniques often bring these formerly undisclosed or ignored relations and dynamics to the foreground and hold out hope, through creative and discursive pedagogies, they have an opportunity to mitigate some of the negative impact of silence and celebratory multicultural discourse experienced by vulnerable students” (p. 123). To expand further on how youth applied theatre projects create pedagogical spaces for embodied transformational resistance, below I outline five key benefits applied theatre has on young people: activate imagination, elevate understanding of injustice and anticipate change, nurture identity construction, rehearse scenarios for future action, and foster healing (Figure 1).

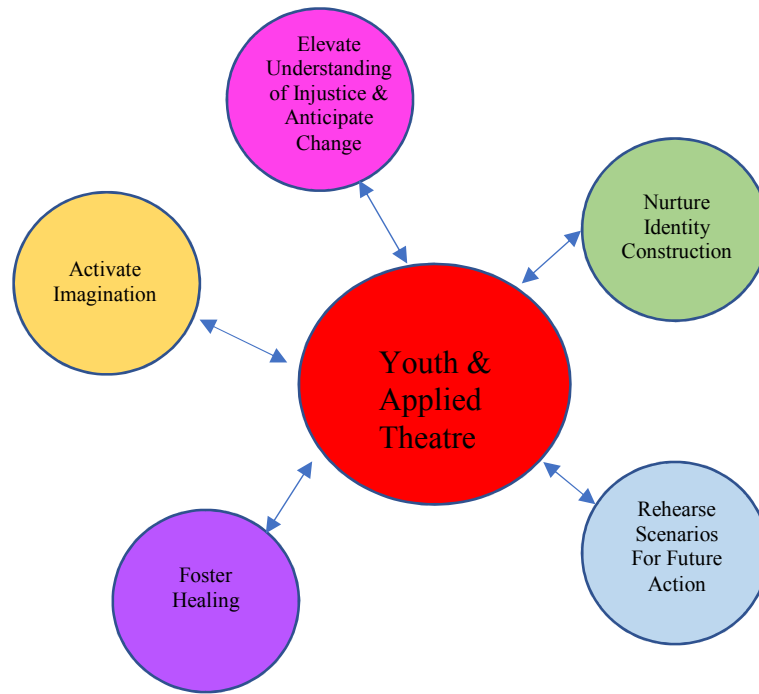


Figure 1. Benefits of applied theatre on young people

**Activate Imagination.** One of the most powerful aspects of theatre is the radical opening to take *what is* and imagine *what could be*. Schechner (1985) posits theatre operates within a play frame that “opens a liminal space where the ‘not me’ encounters the ‘not not me’” (p.123). To play in a role other than self, activates the imagination and provides an alternative, embodied way of knowing. Gallagher and Roderick’s (2017) refers to Anna Deavere Smith and calls this “walking in another person’s words” to know and experience someone else. Though we may never fully *be* the other, there is value in activating the collective imagination about what it is like to be someone other than ourselves. For instance, Conrad (2006) engaged a group of “at-risk” high school students

in a Popular theatre process to investigate the issues they experienced in their rural environment. Based on student's stories, the young people took on various roles, acted out situations, and experimented with alternative solutions. The youth participated in drama activities such as image work, improvisation, role play and collective creation, which prompted youth to activate their imagination, generate, interpret, and re-present their ideas. Conrad (2006) posits when youth engage in role play, the artist exists simultaneously in two worlds: a character inside an imagined world and as an artist evaluating the situation from the real world. Here the artist is both integrated and detached, able to feel and experience from the inside yet observe and analyze from the outside.

**Elevate Understanding of Injustice and Anticipate Change.** To truly know and understand injustice, is to feel it. Theatre processes invite participants to understand injustice through not only what is seen, but what happens when it is put into the body. For those who are familiar with the feeling of injustice, the series of collective embodiments and dialogue provides solidarity. For those who are unfamiliar with the feeling of injustice, the series of collective embodiments and dialogue inculcates a critical consciousness that may otherwise remain absent.

Regardless of who participates in applied theatre processes, Phillip Taylor (2003b) explains how applied theatre is often catalyzed by a community need to change: to process hurt, to respond to disease, hate, or substance abuse, and consider the alternatives.

Before a product, however, applied theatre provides a process to hear multiple perspectives, heighten awareness, and pose options that anticipate change (Taylor, 2003b). For example, Conrad (2006) found the devising process engaged students labeled as “at-risk” in an embodied discussion of the issues that they experienced in their lives and elevated their understanding of injustice by raising questions and re-evaluating aspects of that lived experience. As a result, Conrad (2006) found the youth offered nuanced meaning, a more complex picture, surrounding the label “at-risk” ascribed to them by illustrating how certain behaviors are attempts to undermine unjust social structures.

When youth devise and perform their theatre creations, they are able to elevate their understanding of injustice, but also raise the awareness of their audience members. Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014 utilized participatory action research and theatre with LGBTQ youth to examine how adult school leaders support youth-centered change. After the youth performances, adult audience members demonstrated a variety of responses: wanting to support LGBTQ youth, being unknowingly hostile or unwelcoming, being actively homophobic and/or transphobic, and being resistant (Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014). However, many of the different school performance sites, over time, demonstrated the positive impact the performance had on their school climate. For most sites, the performances initiated a purposeful dialogue on how to better support LGBTQ students in their schools in a way that anticipated change. However, these conversations led to other action-based outcomes such as relationship building, a motivation to learn more about LGBTQ youth and future steps to take, and

zero tolerance policies for anti-LGBTQ and other forms of harassment. Consequently, youth applied theatre creations empowered LGBTQ youth to use their voice and promote institutional change in their schools.

**Nurture Identity Construction.** Through applied theatre processes, identities can be re-imagined and reconfigured to embrace peoples' multiple cultural groups and affiliations. Especially when participants represent people from vulnerable positions, including the homeless, diseased, refugees, survivors of violence and abuse, and people of color (Nicholson, 2005), theatre can serve as powerful tool to understand and embrace our multidimensional identities.

For instance, Erica Halverson (2005) conducted a case study on the identity development of LGBTQ youth in a performance-based youth organization located in Chicago. Specifically, she examined the relationship between narrative and identity, and how the performance of personal narratives invite youth to explore possible selves. Some of the participants described their membership to multiple communities was accompanied by a pressure from the world to privilege one community over the other. Halverson (2005) states in 25% of written stories, youth attempted to merge their planes of identity together in what Coté and Levine (2002) conceptualize as a *viable social identity*. Halverson (2005) explains a viable social identity is understood via three levels of analysis: how we see ourselves, how we relate to others, and how we integrate into the communities to which we belong (Coté & Levine, 2002). Thus, Halverson (2005) suggests storytelling and the performance process encouraged youth to develop a sense of

self, synthesize these three concepts, and emerge as a young person with a heightened sense of how they fit into their communities.

Similarly, Gallagher and Rodrick's (2007) study in a Toronto drama classroom demonstrated how theatre pedagogy elicited student's complex identity negotiations. Specifically, the girls described how they had to negotiate their racial, gender, academic, and other identities within this so-called post-feminist neoliberal moment- a belief that girls now live in a gender-neutral world where anything is possible if they work hard and keep a positive attitude (Gallagher & Rodricks, 2007). Despite this farce, role-play allowed the youth opportunities to try on different aspects of their identities and attempt to resist or reconcile them. Gallagher and Rodricks (2007) agree young people's engagement in artistic practices and drama pedagogies are no remedy for all youth problems "but if they allow young people to break out of prescribed and limiting social roles, even temporarily, and talk back to the larger structures of racism, competition, white privilege, and individualism in schools, they remain hopeful possibilities" (p.127).

**Rehearse for Future Action.** Rehearsals for performance become rehearsals for future action when they transcend the stage and emerge into the real world. For instance, Theatre of the Oppressed has been used as a weapon by oppressed people to change their social reality. For Boal, his vision was a theatre for the people, by the people, "a rehearsal of revolution" (1979, p.155). Boal (1979) draws on his contemporary and friend, Paulo Freire, and his conceptualization of praxis in his work (Freire, 2000) and posits how theatre rehearsals have the potential to bridge concepts of praxis, reflection, and action, because in rehearsal spaces they become two mutually sustaining practices.



Relatedly, Sloane and Wallin (2013) utilized forum and image theatre with former refugee youth, guardians, parents, and the community to examine how it helped them identify and rehearse ways to address challenges in a public-school community in Canada. One of the central themes to this study was how the play creation process supported participants to develop a critical consciousness for change. Because of developing a critical consciousness surrounding issues like language barriers and repressed voice, participants improved their strategies on how to address them and “claimed center stage”. For example, participants described how the theatre rehearsals made them feel more confident about their position on and off stage to effect change. Specifically, Sloane and Wallin (2013) highlight how the theatre games and exercises gave participants a chance to “try out different ways of being in the world” (p. 466) that could potentially support or hinder their pursuit of individual and community goals. In other words, the rehearsals in the imagined world empowered participant agency and resistance and translated to how participants could apply the rehearsed behavior and language to future scenarios in their real lives.

**Foster Healing.** Theatre has long been linked with therapeutic properties that foster healing. For example, while Augusto Boal was in exile from Brazil, he imagined the Rainbow of Desire (1995) to assume a more therapeutic approach to respond to European participants feelings of anxiety, isolation, and internalized oppressions. “The importance of theatric therapies does not reside solely in our potential to ability to see the individual in action...” instead “it resides essentially in this mechanism of transformation of the protagonist, who moves from being the object-subject of social but also

psychological forces, conscious and unconscious forces, to become the subject of this object-subject...” (Boal, 1995, p. 27). For Boal, theatre engages the participant/patient to ‘do the work’ and identify as the subject, the one with agency to act, instead of one who is acted upon.

Phillip Taylor (2003b) uses the case of a group of fifth graders who witnessed the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers at the World Trade Center in New York City on 9/11 to illuminate how theatre can help heal psychological wounds. A drama therapist was commissioned to work with the students, through dialogue and role-plays, they created a play to process and express their feelings related to the tragic event. Two processes ran parallel in this case study. One, the theatre work was produced to create content for a public presentation for the community. Two, the students used theatre to share their struggles, interrogate challenges, foster healing, and strategize how to rebuild their school and community. While many would argue the latter was the priority, the public performance was reported to contribute to a wider healing process, one that extended healing to the audience members because they observed the theatre creation, identified with the youths’ feelings of trauma, and shared their own stories of loss. In other words, the drama process with youth engaged the students in a process of healing, however the theatre performance perpetuated and shared the opportunity for healing to others. This case confirms Taylor’s claim that theatre work has “a therapeutic quality which aims to rebuild a fracture, a scarring” (2003b, p. 12).

The arts become important experiences for youth and the community to process loss through their narratives of pain and hope (Taylor, 2003b). Returning to Halverson’s

(2005) study of the relationship of narrative and LGBTQ identity, she found that youth found healing in seeing their painful stories outside of themselves which enabled them to find closure over the past events and move towards a positive future. The narrative-performance process, the construction and performance of true stories, had two interrelated effects for youth. First, youth can perform the stories of others and try on various personae. Second, youth can see their personal stories performed by others as an independent piece of work rather than a personal event. The second effect in particular enabled youth to transform “the story into a physical object that was once theirs but is now gone” (Halverson, 2005, p. 86). Metaphors such as “giving up” “letting go” “pull it away from yourself” and “detach yourself” seemed to signify ways the youth were able to distance themselves from the personal events of their past and take healing steps to move past them.

In summary, the literature discussed above suggests applied theatre projects may support youth to activate imagination, elevate understanding of injustice and anticipate change, nurture identity construction, rehearse scenarios for future action, and foster healing. I close this section with a quote from one of my teachers and mentors who has shaped my understanding and value of applied theatre practices, Michael Rohd (1998, p. xix):

The theatre allows us to converse with our souls – to passionately pursue and discover ways of living with ourselves and others. We are all artists, and theatre is a language. We have no better way to work together, to learn about each other, to heal and to grow.

## **Purpose & Research Questions**

My dissertation study takes place in a historical moment in the world, amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic, a racial war in the US, and a highly contentious election year. This trifecta undoubtedly exacerbates inequitable conditions for youth of color and beckons further exploration of how young people embody transformational resistance. As introduced above, we understand that youth have been historically marginalized and perceived as inferior due to their age which positions them at the bottom of oppressive social hierarchies. On the contrary, these hegemonic forces inflicted upon young people have increasingly met programs of youth resistance that demonstrate otherwise. Youth participation in arts-based YPAR projects has proven to be a viable approach to support youth embody transformational resistance – the ability to critique oppression and embody resistance towards the transformation of systems and institutions (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

However, the scarcity of information on the benefits of how youth engage a praxis of creative collective inquiry, from beginning to end, indicates a turn for future youth participatory action research. Specifically, youth participation in arts-based YPAR projects that utilize applied theatre processes demonstrates strong potential to help young people embrace their multidimensional identities. The field of critical youth studies would benefit by further exploring how arts-based methods in youth inquiry projects can activate imagination, elevate understanding of injustice and anticipate change, nurture identity construction, rehearse scenarios for future action, and foster healing. More pressing, given our current state of racial unrest in the U.S., is the potential of this study

to support youth and adult usage of arts-based methods to co-investigate and respond to on-going issues of equity in their schools and communities. Be it virtually or six feet apart.

The purpose of this critical performance ethnographic study is to discover how youth activist-researchers perform their multidimensional identities to embody *transformational resistance* in an arts-based YPAR project and multigenerational theatre ensemble named “Estrella Theatre company” (pseudonym). Grounded in critical theories, my seven-month ethnographic study examined how youth and adults engage in arts-based YPAR to explore issues of equity, and how the intersection of research, art, and justice concurrently contribute to youth identity construction and social transformation across school and community spaces. I hope to offer new insights and understandings related to the central use of artistic embodiment methodologies (Fox, 2014) in youth participatory action research investigations. Especially, the role of performance as praxis to facilitate personal transformations towards cognitive resonance/dissonance--moments when discourses align or don't align with the worldviews of their audiences (McDonnel, Bail & Tavory, 2017). Additionally, the implications it may have for youth identity scripts, or the social expectations of how members of a specific group behave and communicate in relation to their social identity (Jackson & Hogg, 2010), and how this might relate to the performance of transformational resistance. In this dissertation study, I aim to answer the following questions:

- 1) In what ways do the Latinx youth activist-researchers embody transformational resistance, if at all?

- 2) How do young Latinx youth activist-researchers embody their multidimensional identities, if at all?

### **Outline of Chapters**

In these first few pages I outline the key components of this study. In the first chapter, I introduced the main concepts discussed in this dissertation: arts-based YPAR, an understanding of “youth”, the benefits for youth participation in applied theatre, and I presented the purpose and research questions that drive this study. In the second chapter, I ground the dissertation study in the bodies of literature that inform this investigation: a further discussion of art, theoretical foundations, arts-based research, and a review of arts-based YPAR studies. Following this discussion, I present the theoretical frameworks that provide a lens to this study: identity scripts and performances, performance as praxis, cognitive resonance/dissonance, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and LatCrit, transformational resistance, and critical civic praxis (CCP). In the third chapter, I explain the methodologies for conducting this dissertation study: critical performance ethnography, data collection methods, data analysis, and my dissemination plan. In the fourth chapter I present the findings in the form of ethnodrama. Lastly, I conclude the dissertation in the fifth chapter with the discussion, implications for practice and research, and the conclusion.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **A Brief Definition of Art**

There is no one universal meaning of art, yet there is a consensus that art is the mindful creation of something aesthetic and meaningful by means of skill and ingenuity. U.S. American playwright Tony Kushner posits art isn't concerned with passively reproducing cultural values, but actively engaged with cultural and social change. For Kushner, "Art is not merely contemplation, it is also action, and all action changes the world, at least a little" (Nicholson, 2005, p.8). Arts-based researcher Patricia Leavy explains, "Art, at its best, has the potential to be both immediate and lasting" however recent research in neuroscience indicates "that art may have unmatched potential to promote deep engagement, make lasting impressions, and therefore possesses unlimited potential to educate" (Leavy, 2018, p. 3). Narrative researchers Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner (1997) posit "Good art possesses a capacity to pull the person who experiences it into an alternative reality" (p. 73).

Indeed, art can be defined and purposed in a countless number of ways: Art is a system of symbols. Art is a way to make meaning. Art is a communication tool. Art is a process and a product. Art has the power to stimulate emotional and physical responses. Art is appreciated for its' beauty. Art can be used as a form of therapy to foster healing. Art can be a vehicle for social justice. Art is a tool for inquiry. Art is a way for youth to express themselves. For this dissertation study, I hope my youth co-researchers and I

discover even more ways art can make a lasting impact on each of our lives and the lives of others.

I draw on YPAR scholar and arts-based researcher Madeline Fox's (2014) definition and usage of art for this study, "I use the words 'art' and 'artistic' to refer to the realm of human endeavor which has to do with engaging imagination, creativity, form, and aesthetic decisions in order to express vision, insight, knowledge, and meaning, whether in the visual, verbal, or performing arts" (p.20- 21). I use this definition of "art" because I want to be inclusive of every possible form of creative expression and practice. By doing so, I hope to make art accessible to young people to embrace the vast range of possibilities art can offer us in our path of discovery.

### **Moving Art into Research**

Over the last century, art has made its way into various academic disciplines and methodological pursuits. Erving Goffman (1959) first proposed to read society dramaturgically and found that theatre can be witnessed and located everywhere in our day-to-day lives. In this way, individuals construct identity performances to fit their social interactions and environment. For Goffman, performance is a theatrical metaphor to describe how people draw on their multidimensional identities and shift identity performances to achieve successful interpersonal relationships or outcomes. However, some aspects of performance may be contradictory, such as when body language and verbal communication are incongruent. Goffman (1959) posits identity-as-performance is understood through a theatrical model of frontstage and backstage. Where frontstage is the visible space where individuals play their parts and performances are displayed.



Oppositely, back-stage is a more private space that has less observability and heightened vulnerability.

In 1974, anthropologist Clifford Geertz's article, "Art as a Cultural System," introduced a landmark discussion of the role of symbolic forms, like art, in the production of culture. According to Geertz, "the means of art and the feeling for life that animates it are inseparable, and one can no more understand aesthetic objects as concatenations of pure form than one can understand speech as a parade of syntactic variations, or myth as a set of structural transformations" (p.1477). In other words, we cannot separate the sensory experience from art nor reduce it to technical jargon. For Geertz, the feeling one experiences in art is more critical than the language or expression used to describe it. In fact, such language can never provide a comprehensive or sufficient understanding of the art in its entirety because art is more than the words used to describe it, it's a feeling. Geertz (1974) highlights the challenge in understanding art as a cultural system is learning how to place art within other modes of social activity, how it manifests across different lifestyles, and how the location of such art represents cultural significance.

Performance studies scholar and artist, Richard Schechner, draws on Geertz to connect the fields of theatre and anthropology in his 1985 article "Points of Contact Between Anthropological and Theatrical Thought." Schechner (1985) outlines six points of contact: (a) transformation of being and/or consciousness; (b) intensity of performance; (c) audience-performer interaction; (d) the whole performance sequence; (e) transmission of performance knowledge; and (f) how performance is generated and evaluated. The first point of contact, transformation of being and/or consciousness,

argues performers and spectators can be changed by the activity of performing. For the performers, it isn't that they stop being themselves as they perform a character, rather that multiple selves coexist simultaneously. For the spectators, when performances are intentionally incomplete and transparent, they can enjoy the unresolved dialectic and respond by using their own consciousness to fill the gaps of what is not seen with what they know. These temporary complete transformations are what Schechner calls "transportations" which occurs across performers, the performing group, audience members, audience groups and betwixt and between these entities.

Drawing on Goffman, Geertz, and Schechner, the presence of art can be found in an array of social activities, including youth-driven research. The conflict and tensions experienced, researched, and acted upon by youth during inquiry resemble what Victor Turner would refer to as a "social drama". Turner found the structure of social conflict analogous to the structure of a drama. Turner (1982) posits that social dramas happen when the equilibrium of norm-governed social interaction is disrupted. The *actors*, or people engaged in the social drama, enter four main phases of public action: (a) Breach; (b) Crisis; (c) Redressive action; and (d) Reintegration or Schism. According to Turner, the four phases can be defined as:

- 1.) Breach- symbolic trigger of confrontation or encounter
- 2.) Crisis-if the breach widens and worsens, the situation deteriorates
- 3.) Redressive Action- to limit the spread of crisis, certain adjustive measures and mechanisms are put into place to work towards solution
- 4.) Reintegration *or* social recognition and legitimization of irreparable schism

In YPAR, young people tend to orient their research towards issues (a breach and/or crisis) of equity within the domain of their lived experience and research topics are

focused on real world problems that youth encounter in their day-to-day lives. In some cases, there may be a breach and/or crisis already in place and/or these problems could occur or worsen during the research process. For example, youth research could be perceived as one of the many steps to initiate and pursue redressive action. Youth and adults can work together, conduct research, and advocate for change or solutions. I wonder how arts-based tools, such as theatre, can better help youth facilitate redressive action that works toward reintegration during data collection, analysis, and dissemination.

Several youth and adult participatory theatre projects have drawn on Brazilian playwright and activist Augusto Boal for his Theatre of the Oppressed throughout various stages of their investigations (Caldas, 2017, 2018; Goessling, 2020; Rhod, 1998; Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014; Wright, 2019). Theatre of the Oppressed is an interactive theatre technique that targets a social/political problem with the actors, and later the spectators (or spect-actors), through collective analysis, exploration of potential solutions, and rehearsals for action (Boal, 1972). For example, actress and scholar Blanca Caldas (2017) utilized Boal's work as a drama-based pedagogy with preservice bilingual teachers to rehearse how to respond to student issues such as race and immigration. Caldas (2017) found that participant performances fostered deep exploration of critical issues, identification of their stance on those issues, and an opportunity to rehearse identities as future teacher advocates. In relation to Turner's "social drama", Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed is the arts-based tool that becomes the mechanism to mediate and respond to the breach/crisis at hand, alongside youth researchers, adult teachers/researchers, and community members.

Likewise, Boal and Turner, share the vision for arts-based redressive actions to lead to rehabilitation and reintegration. For YPAR practitioners, this is a movement towards social transformation in the people, structures, policies, and/or practices that influence the lives of youth researcher-artists and beyond. However, Turner (1974) argues the other possibility is that such schism is irreparable to the degree that reintegration is not possible. Instead of successful mediation, the situation remains to be determined, in breach and/or crisis. Indeed, some YPAR studies prove such crises remain unresolved despite redressive actions due to a lack of shared responsibility by youth and adults (Bertrand, 2018; Bertrand et al., 2020), racial battle fatigue and internalized racism (Call-Cummings & Martínez, 2017; Lucko, 2018), lack of self-efficacy (Morales et al., 2017), school-to-prison pipeline (Krueger-Henney, 2014) and more. To learn how researchers and practitioners can better facilitate and support arts-based YPAR, we stop to explore contemporary features and approaches to arts-based research.

### **Features of Arts-based Research**

“Arts-based researchers are carving new tools, forging new pathways to knowledge and imagining new shapes for the outcomes of research” (Leavy, 2019, p.11). The wide scope of creative genres in this field demonstrates the immense possibilities that exist within arts-based research (ABR). ABR can be defined as the presence of certain aesthetic qualities or design elements that infuse the inquiry and its writing (Barone & Eisner, 1997). ABR can use any art form such as literary forms, performative forms, visual art, audiovisual forms, multimedia forms, and multimethod forms. This

transdisciplinary approach gives the creative arts a place to exist in research as tools for inquiry.

According to Barone and Eisner (1997), there are seven features of arts-based research. One, the creation of a virtual reality. ABR invites readers and audiences to engage in an alternative reality. Two, the presence of ambiguity. ABR leaves intentional blanks or gaps so the audience has the liberty to reconstruct the fictional world to their imagination. This idea of *indeterminacy* creates active readers and audiences that can imagine possibilities and answers as they read/watch/listen. Three, the use of expressive language. ABR involves creative expression and imaginative language that allows the reader to respond to text with personal meaning. ABR supports connotative and symbolic language choices, opposed to traditional and direct. Fourth, the use of contextualized and vernacular language. ABR weaves written work with thick literary descriptions that ground the writing in context. In addition, writing is less technical with minimal use of jargon. Instead, the writing is focused on using language that is anchored in everyday lived experiences. Such use of vernacular language makes the writing more accessible.

The fifth feature of ABR is the promotion of empathy. Barone and Eisner (1997) state ABR promotes empathy and appreciation for other human lives when language is expressive, accessible, and contextualized it creates a space for empathic understanding. The sixth feature is the personal signature of the researcher/writer/artist. The personal statement of the author remains in a state of negotiation between the writer and the audience: the creation by the writer and the re-creation by the reader/audience. Lastly, seventh, the presence of aesthetic form. The format, manner, or style in which the work is

created and presented. Instead of traditional headings you see in a peer-review journal, ABR follows a plot line (dilemma, tension, complications, resolution).

ABR has the power to transform all those who participate, both researcher and participants. In her book, Listen to the Poet, Wendy Williams (2018) describes how she herself crafted and performed spoken word poetry with her participants- a community of youth poets. In the afterword, she describes how her initial ‘outsider’ role had changed and consequently she felt compelled to give back in poetic style. She writes, “...writing and performing ‘A Poem for the Poets’ helped me better understand what it means to belong to the community, to write for an authentic audience, to heal through writing, and to learn through peripheral participation” (Williams, 2018, p. 167). The duality of her role proved to empower transformation within some of the participants, but also herself.

ABR has the power to raise awareness on social justice issues, build community, and resist dominant societal structures and/or ideologies. Similarly, another benefit to ABR work is how it can unsettle stereotypes, challenge dominant ideologies, and include marginalized voices and perspectives (Leavy, 2019). ABR can communicate experiences related to diversity, prejudice, and differences and confront stereotypes about marginalized populations and engage audiences to alternative viewpoints. For example, Sahay et al., (2016) utilized community-based participatory research (CBPR) and photovoice to investigate five undocumented Mexican-American immigrant youth living in North Carolina. Latinx youth researchers investigated how being an undocumented Latinx person affects their aspirations for postsecondary education. Sahay et al., (2016) found photovoice supported youth to describe their feelings of marginalization,

discrimination, and alienation because many of their teachers and counselors lacked a proper understanding of DACA (deferred action for childhood arrivals) to be able to offer any college guidance. The use of photo images also created an opening for discussion about the discrimination they received from their peers at school, which impacted their academic self-perceptions and perpetuated the stereotype that college wasn't a viable option for Latinx DACA youth recipients.

Arts-based research originates from the intersection of art and science (Leavy, 2019), yet ABR receives a lot of questions about reliability, validity, and generalization. In response, ABR redefines these terms as they pertain to ABR, not conventional research methods. First, Barone and Eisner (1997) state validity is grounded in how ABR allows us to notice, understand, and appraise. The goal of validity in educational research is to further human understanding in a way that it enhances peoples' lives. Barone and Eisner (1997) posit validity within ABR through the terms *competent* and *critical community*. To be *competent* means to have the ability and knowledge to judge the qualifications of ABR inquiry. The term *critical community* implies that validity ought to be a "social affair," and determined by members of that community.

Next, while ABR tends to focus more on the details of each case, there are usually thematic outcomes that relates to groups beyond the case itself. With regards to generalizability in ABR, the audience or readers can make those connections and locate commonalities across text and experiences (Barone & Eisner, 1997). Through stories, images, song, or dance, ABR gives a lens or frame for which to see. From there, the audience uses their schema (background knowledge) to make sense of it all based on their

past lived experiences. Lastly, reliability, or the degree to which claims correspond to reality (Barone & Eisner, 1997) is a rather delicate matter. Everyone's versions of what is true or what reality is can vary greatly. ABR embraces such thinking, and instead, is patient in accepting that truth takes critical acceptance and time (Barone & Eisner, 1997). Within this view, all creators are enabled to express their own original and unique understandings.

In the next section, I will examine the current literature related to AB researchers who conduct arts-based YPAR and discuss how young people forge their creativity and resistance into youth-driven inquiry projects.

### **The Nexus of Youth, Artistic Inquiry, and Social Justice: Arts-based YPAR**

There is a rich legacy of creative expression and creative resistance that converge at the nexus of arts and social justice. Bob Marley used reggae music and song to advocate for the rights of Black people and call for an end to poverty in Jamaica. Marvin Gaye wrote and sang the song "What's Going On," for the U.S. American people in protest to the widespread racial inequality, war, poverty, and drug abuse in the 1970s. Brazilian playwright Augusto Boal invented Theatre of the Oppressed as a theatrical tool for social change that developed from his revolutionary work with impoverished and disenfranchised worker populations in Latin America. The Chicano/a art movement dates to early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is known for the mural artwork painted across the city of Los Angeles to depict the discrimination and pain Mexican Americans experienced living in the city of angels. Dance traditions such as the Puerto Rican Bomba y Plena represent a painful resistance to the enslavement and colonization of African people on the island



and is a creative outlet for embodied political expression. The music and lyrics conveyed their fury and devastation, often a catalyst for rebellion, however the dance also served to celebrate community and identity. Art, in its numerous forms, aims to unite, re-unite, and agitate how we makes sense of our relationships, others, and ourselves (Patel, 2020). Art, be it music, dance, song, murals, or theatre, is an aesthetic vehicle that transports us to reimagine a better world and create radical possibilities for social transformation.

Incorporating the arts while engaging youth and/or communities in social justice research has been used to represent and amplify marginalized voices (Fox, 2020; Green, 2020; Wright, 2019). Arts-based research methods provide alternative pathways to conducting research and represent how scholars may seek an “otherwise” in educational research as they incorporate other methods of collecting, analyzing, and presenting data (Green, 2020). Bell and Desai (2011) argued that engagement with and in the arts can “activate imagination and a broader understanding of injustice, its consequences, and the range of alternative possibilities” (p. 287). Similarly, Fox (2020) claims such an artistic space “ripples with tension and possibility”. Goessling (2020) explains that “Viewing art as a cultural production challenges the dialectic tensions politics of representation – art is not merely a representation of one’s truth or experience – it is an act of sense making, identity construction, and as we create the impulse, intention, and form we are thus transformed” (p. 24). Consequently, the arts are a way to practice meaning making that is both empowering and transformative because artmaking is an embodied affective experience that can enhance youths’ understanding of their own capacities for taking action (Goessling, 2020). Thus, youth-centered participatory inquiry that integrates

performance and/or art throughout every stage of research process has the power and influence to make the complex world they live in more visible, shared, and empathetically understood. Because there are several features and respective titles discussed here (e.g., applied theatre, youth inquiry, arts-based research, YPAR) I feel the need to synthesize. However, it is important to note that each category is its own separate entity with distinctive characteristics as introduced earlier on in this paper. However, when the aforementioned terms overlap, hereinafter I will categorize under one name: *arts-based YPAR*.

Arts-based YPAR has manifested through various modalities and forms. For example, Goessling (2020) states co-learning and creating, storytelling, reflection, dialogue, critique, and support are designed to help youths' radical imagining. With this approach, art and creative practices provide the scaffolding, tools, and resources for young people to radically envision new possibilities, realities, identities, and systems beyond what presently exist (Goessling, 2017). In a multigenerational PAR project, Fox (2016) studied the use of artistic embodied methodologies to collaboratively generate findings about failed policies that reproduced harmful narratives about the failures of youth. While some YPAR researchers center the arts and value art-making as legitimate research, it is often that YPAR facilitators add the arts as an 'add-on' or additional component to the work (Goessling et al., 2019) which limits the possibilities of authentic and holistic arts-based inquiry. I echo Goessling and authors' sentiments and envision moving arts from the periphery to the center.

Goessling (2017) argues that art can provide tools, scaffolding and resources for youth to rehearse their identities as activists and reimagine new visions for their identities, realities, and systems. For instance, in a later study, Goessling (2018) utilized counterstorytelling methodology to argue the potential of photovoice as a praxis of counter storytelling to challenge the ubiquitous deficit stories about Students of Color and urban schools. Goessling (2018) found that the praxis, framed by Critical race theory and photovoice, enabled the youth to construct and tell their own stories, build relationships, and form a shared understanding of their community and school that was consistent with their own identity constructions.

Some research collectives (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Bird-Naytowhow, et al., 2017) guide youth to draw upon ancestral knowledge forms and traditional Indigenous practices through the research process. Situating research in conjunction with Indigenous cosmologies, such as rituals and healing circles, challenges traditional epistemologies. Ansloos and Wager (2020) found that encouraging Indigenous youth to be creators and producers of their own cultures through arts-based practices allowed them to realize their ability to disrupt and resist societal systemic oppressions.

Other studies highlight the importance of the body as a site of creative critical inquiry (Delgado, 2018; Perry & Medina, 2011; Winn, 2013; Wager, 2015). Perry and Medina (2011) revealed the power of theatre with youth for understanding learning as an embodied process, which centers the affective and embodied aspects of performance. Wright (2019) found theatre processes supported youth to question the world as it is and understand the current youth discourses and resultant systems of oppression. Producing

art through critical YPAR enabled the youth to imagine new ways of being seen by the people who make up social systems and enact ways to resist and subvert their oppressive social conditions (Wright, 2019).

Several arts-based YPAR projects have incorporated participatory theatre techniques and games during the research process (Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Fox, 2020; Goessling, 2015, 2020; Wright, 2019). Ansloos and Wager (2020) studied an Indigenous youth-led theatre project to promote dialogue and resistance to the marginalizing and dispossessing social policies related to homelessness and housing. They found the use of the arts-based research method of applied community theatre capable of being critical, anti-oppressive, and decolonizing methodology. Additionally, youth performances provided an opening to make visible, challenge, and reimagine the social constructions of adolescence and adulthood (Ansloos & Wager, 2020). Fox (2020) fused critical participatory action research together with the practices of Playback Theatre to create a more collaborative atmosphere between adults and youth. Playback Theatre, a form of improvisational theatre in which actors enact the real-life stories shared by audience members, was utilized to dismantle the traditional wall that can separate audience from performer-researcher. Fox (2020) and co-artists engaged audiences in collaboratively producing knowledge and utilized the performance process itself to contribute meaningfully to the data analysis process by triangulating community input. To monitor and maintain equitable power sharing practices, adults and youth took turns taking on multiple roles such as ‘director’, ‘actor’, and ‘audience’ during research sessions. As a result, they were able to play with the data, collectively theorize, and dialectically analyze

in rich ways that left intentional space for multiple elucidations and possibilities (Fox, 2020).

Wright (2019) asserts critical arts pedagogies can create more expansive possibilities for research and practices aiming to support youth and allows for a focus on young people's knowledge production, systemic analysis, and ways to support their transformative agency. Drawing on Boal's theatre techniques, the youth research team created skits and performed situations of injustice that they had directly experienced. The creation of skits allowed youth to apply an ecological framework identifying tiers of oppression—internal, interpersonal, institutional, and ideological—to engage in a systemic analysis of the ways in which oppression impacted their lived experiences. Wright found that young people's artmaking allowed them to: “1) Share and discuss injustices they have directly experienced due to their intersecting identities and social locations, 2) Analyze the conditions and root causes of injustice, and 3) Channel their feelings of frustration and indignation into collective artwork and collective action to work toward addressing injustices” (Wright, 2019, p. 10).

Arts-based YPAR, or YPAR projects that rely primarily on critical theories and arts-based research methods, have produced a multitude of benefits. Arts-based methods such as applied theatre hold the potential to be anti-oppressive and/or decolonizing (Ansloos & Wager, 2020), center values of reflexivity, relevancy, relationality, and reciprocity within a humanizing research paradigm (Green, 2020), encourage horizontal youth-adult power sharing (Fox, 2020; Goessling, 2020), interact with and include diverse audience perspectives during data analysis (Fox, 2020), provide scaffolding tools

for youth to rehearse their activism and new identities (Wright, 2019), serve as a cathartic tool that enables youth to process and confront the trauma of their realities and imagine new possibilities (Goessling, 2020; Wright, 2019), implement a praxis of creative collective inquiry with a goal of personal and social transformation (Goessling, 2020), and galvanize youth to materialize their goals and hopes for the future (Fox, 2020).

Implications for threading art, from conception to dissemination, through YPAR projects have immense possibilities for radical thought and innovation. As we engage in humanizing research practices and knowledge mobilization that is truly disruptive of the status quo, arts-based inquiry and education contributes to the wellness and liberation of marginalized youth and communities they live in (Green, 2020). There is great opportunity for engaging youth in social justice arts through cycles of praxis when it is situated in meaningful, collaborative, and creative action and anchored in an ethics of relationality and reciprocity (Goessling, 2020). Green (2020) posits “Invoking a radical aesthetic imagination has the potential to transform current qualitative research paradigms toward an otherwise way of thinking, knowing, being—one that could better help us make sense of us, others, and the world” (p.125). However, fruitful engagement in the overlapping realm of arts and inquiry requires time, love, patience, risk, failure, and the willingness to begin again. Within the context of arts-based inquiry it is also imperative that researchers sustain a holistic approach, one that respects and honors the intrapersonal, communal, structural, and epistemological concerns of participants (Green, 2020). While creative collective inquiry has transformative potential, developing skills as an activist-researcher does not guarantee that arts-based inquiry, creations and/or actions

will realize and enact the collectives' desired outcome. However, adult facilitators should remind themselves and youth the Arts-based YPAR process is equally valuable, if not more, as the final product.

Embracing a framework such as arts-based YPAR allows researchers, policymakers, educators, and youth to acknowledge power asymmetries between youth, the structures they navigate, and the systems they negotiate (Wright, 2009). Like double-dutch methodology, adult arts-based YPAR researchers can be both the jumper and the rope turner during interactions with participants, rather than just the scholar observer on the fringes of the game (Green, 2020). To enhance social justice-oriented research, scholars may consider inviting reflexivity, relevance, and reciprocity into the research process (Green, 2020) which in turn humanizes the researcher, the participants, and their collective creative efforts.

### **Theoretical Frameworks**

In this dissertation study, I will be utilizing the following theoretical frameworks to frame and develop an understanding of the future collected data: identity scripts and performances, performance as praxis, cognitive resonance/dissonance, critical race theory (CRT) and LatCrit, transformational resistance, and critical civic praxis (CCP). Together, these theories will contextualize the investigation of how young people perform their multidimensional identities to embody transformational resistance in an arts-based YPAR project and multigenerational theatre ensemble.

## Identity Scripts and Performances

We perform differently to different audiences at different times. Furthermore, the way in which our audience recognises our identity performance has implications for future performances. The stage for a performance (e.g. the mathematics classroom or the interview room) may also constrain or enable particular types of performance. This view also allows us to consider the notion of co-performances; that is, students simultaneously performing multiple identities. We can question whether these performances work well together or, alternatively, are extremely difficult for some to manage (Darragh, 2014, p.176).

Identity scripts are social expectations of how members of a specific group behave and communicate in relation to their social identity (Jackson & Hogg, 2010). Individuals are active authors of their identity scripts (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016). According to Berger and Luckman (1967), identity scripting is an “iterative process by which individuals creatively engage in provisional interpretive reproduction in which they experiment with probable or potential scripts of identity that reconcile competing institutional pressures” (as cited by Bévort & Suddaby, 2016, p. 18).

For this study, I use the metaphor of performance to explore identity or presentations of self (Goffman, 1959). I consider identity to be measured by what one does rather than a fixed possession and we perform our identities for audiences to see. The ways people perform their identities can be considered a performance script (Darragh, 2014). Thus, identity performances are the consequent enactment or non-enactment of those scripts. Butler’s (1988) understanding of gender identity as performative helps to understand identity performances as acts from a phenomenological perspective.

“In this sense, gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and,



hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self” (Butler, 1988, p.519).

If gender identity can be conceptualized as the *stylized repetition of acts through time*, other identities can be conceptualized similarly to explore phenomena related to this study such as youth, leadership, artist, teacher, and activist. Specifically, what identity scripts and performances surround youth voice initiatives and programs. Currently there is insufficient research that applies this lens to the phenomenon of youth voice and the field of critical youth studies, however some research explores identity scripts in the field of education (e.g., Darragh, 2014).

For instance, Darragh (2014) found that there was a mix-up between youth and adults ‘conceptions of performance scripts in a high school mathematics classroom. Teachers would express a desire for student participation, yet not provide welcoming opportunities for students to feel comfortable to do so on a public stage. While other teachers unintentionally promoted a more passive and ‘just listen’ script, which influenced students’ learner identities enacted in the classroom. Darragh (2014) recommends for adult educators to be aware of what scripts they are promoting in their work with young people so students know what is expected of them and can negotiate identity performances accordingly.

Scripts can assist students enact their identities in various settings, although not all scripts are available to all students. For instance, adults may encourage a script for performing ‘youth voice’ but instead reinforce adultism by not providing ample space and time for young people to do so. Or educators may encourage youth voice that is

tethered to latent agendas that result in manipulation, decoration, and/or tokenism (Hart, 1992). As suggested by Darragh (2014), youth voice scripts can also experience mix-ups between what is spoken and what is expected of young people in education. In addition, society, institutions, and people may privilege certain scripts over others. In response, youth may recognize certain scripts as appropriate or inappropriate for them based on their social circumstances (Darragh, 2014). Overall, identity scripts and performances underscore the multidimensionality of Latinx youth identity as stylized repetition of acts through time, situated in context, and performed for an audience.

### **Performance as Praxis**

Performance has been utilized as a method towards psychosocial and socio-political transformation by helping people explore identity and enact personal change (e.g., Boal, 1979, 1995; Conquergood, 1992; Rohd, 1998). I position performance as a form of critical pedagogy and as an intervention to employ across all educational settings and audiences. Also known as critical performance pedagogy, an arts-based participatory process that supports students in embodying and challenging socio-political issues and re-imagining social landscapes (Denzin, 2003). For example, Tintiangco-Cubales et al. (2016) employed critical performance pedagogy to provide urban students an opportunity to act in the classroom, their communities, and on stage. They found that the process encouraged youth to “take their inquiries to action, and the outcomes are the growth of their critical consciousness, their transformative agency, and the belonging to a community bonded through collective action” (p.1323).

Performance, in this case theatrically, can be used as tool to foster critical reflection and action—or praxis. “With its rich capacity for transformation, performance teaches us to examine our values and beliefs, to hone our ability to empathize, and to understand our connections to the larger world” (Howard, 2019, p.6). For instance, Augusto Boal utilized performance as praxis by inviting audience members after a performance to participate in the action on stage to practice change, in turn, becoming a rehearsal for future action (Boal, 1985, 1992). Michael Rohd describes how these theatre processes invite all of us “...’jump in’ to learn this work in practice, it is also important to ‘jump out,’ to sit down...” and reflect. In doing so, performance as praxis unites goals for reflection and action by placing equal value on the body and the mind. A time to speak and a time to listen. A time to think and a time to do. A time to watch and a time to perform.

### **Cognitive Resonance/Dissonance**

Resonance is a useful metaphor to describe culture workings and why certain discourses, messages, or other cultural objects are advantageous compared others because they fit—or resonate with—dominate worldviews of the audiences who receive them (McDonnel, Bail & Tavory, 2017). From a sociological perspective, social movements can inspire people to participate civically by utilizing cultural objects that resonate with the general public’s understanding of a social problem in a way that connects culture and action (McDonnel, Bail & Tavory, 2017). From a psychological perspective, cognitive resonance is believed to be generated in a decision maker’s psychology and mental realm when emotional schema fits well with rational schema (Lee, Chung, & Kim, 2004). “Just

as the good author takes care to present their work in a way that avoids cognitive dissonance, they also allow the possibility of cognitive resonance with the structure and form. Moreover, it is possible to make active use of such cognitive structures to support the learning material itself” (Jones & Lloyd 2013, p.6).

Cognitive resonance and dissonance describe the perception of information. The concept of cognitive resonance can be understood as the moment when discourses align with the worldviews of their audiences (McDonnel, Bail & Tavory, 2017). For example, someone might say I believe I’m a good person. Good people tell the truth, and I told the truth. This line of thought shows that truth and reality are synonymous and match to what one perceives about themselves. The discourse aligns with the worldview. On the contrary, someone might think I believe I am a good person and liars are bad people. But I just lied. This line of thought resembles cognitive dissonance because what you believe to be true is obfuscated by reality. The discourse does not align with the worldview. These examples illustrate the manner our behavior gives us feedback about who we believe ourselves to be.

Similarly, when we embody another character in performance, we can look from the inside out and evaluate to what degree we relate to that character, if at all. For example, Courtney and Battye (2018) utilized Theatre for Development (TfD) in Kenya to study the psychological impact of the performers. This study demonstrates that cognitive dissonance was created in the participants when they performed behaviors that differ from their beliefs (e.g., gender equality and ethnic unity), and that internalization occurred in many of the performers, resulting in articulated and/or demonstrated attitude

change (Courtney & Battye, 2018). They also found cognitive dissonance was revealed in the form of discomfort, sadness, or anger with the behaviors given the actors differing beliefs than the characters. For instance, the women who played the role of a subservient, humble housewife who had no voice and little power beyond her role as a first wife. Overall, Courtney and Battye's (2018) study demonstrates that cognitive dissonance was created in the theatre-making participants when they performed counter-attitudinal behaviors or unfamiliar roles, which was followed by a process of internalization by many of the performers that influenced their attitudes and/or worldviews.

### **Critical Race Theory & LatCrit**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a theoretical framework conceived in the body of legal scholarship that is committed to the struggle against racism and oppression, and is used to cultivate thought, movement, and action towards social justice (Bell, 1995; Delgado, 1995). In Derrick Bell's 1995 essay *Who's Afraid of Critical Race Theory*, he poses two questions: First, what is critical race theory? And second, what ought critical race theory to be? According to Bell, critical race theorists are often people of color and ideologically committed to the struggle against racism, particularly as institutionalized in and by law. On the other hand, those critical race theorists who identify as white are usually critically conscious and committed to overturn their own racial privilege in the name of social justice. Overall, many critical race theorists are committed to a program of scholarly resistance and most hope scholarly resistance will lay the foundation for wide-scale resistance.

Critical race theorists strive for democratic and egalitarian political affairs. They seek to empower and include traditionally excluded views and see all-inclusiveness as the ideal because of a belief in collective wisdom (Bell, 1995). Such inclusion allows for the intimate and personal idiosyncrasy of a specific context to be embedded in theory and practice. Bell (1995) explains how decontextualization “too often masks unregulated -- even unrecognized -- power. We insist, for example, that abstraction, put forth as "rational" or "objective" truth, smuggles the privileged choice of the privileged to depersonify their claims and then pass them off as the universal authority and the universal good” (p. 901).

#### *CRT in Education*

In 1995, Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate published the first article grounded in CRT to the field of education, *Towards a Critical Race Theory in Education*. In their analysis of the CRT perspective in education, they add new considerations regarding race and property to this critical paradigm. They present three propositions that align the critical race theoretical perspective in education to the critical race theory in legal studies. The first proposition affirms race continues to be significant in the United States and an influential factor in determining inequity. In the second proposition they add another aspect to this critical paradigm that disentangles democracy and capitalism in their assertion that U.S. society is based on property rights rather than human rights. However, property can manifest in multiple ways (e.g., curriculum is a form of intellectual property) and its’ value is determined in relation to the property values of the school. “The availability of ‘rich’ (or enriched) intellectual property delimits what is now

called ‘opportunity to learn’ — the presumption that along with providing educational ‘standards’ that detail what students should know and be able to do, they must have the material resources that support their learning” (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995, p. 54).

The third and final proposition states the intersection of race and property creates an analytical tool for understanding social and school inequity. They argue that racism is not a collection of isolated and unrelated events, instead that the cause of poverty in conjunction with the condition of schools and schooling is a manifestation of institutional and structural racism. For example, *Brown vs. Board of Education* exemplifies their perspective on the failure of civil rights laws to adequately address and ameliorate school inequalities and school segregation. They also argue the importance to challenge claims of neutrality, objectivity, color-blindness, and meritocracy by incorporating the *voice*. Voice—or “naming one’s own reality” is engrained in the work of critical race theorists. CRT scholars use parables, chronicles, stories, counterstories, poetry, fiction, revisionist histories and other artistic forms in their methodology to communicate the experience and realities of the oppressed. For it is the plural and singular voice(s) of people of color that is compulsory for a comprehensive and holistic analysis of the educational system and the experiences within it (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995).

Drawing on Fay (1987) and on Tierney (1991, 1993), Daniel Solórzano (1997) expanded the critical theoretical perspective to education to define CRT as a framework with five themes/tenets that form its’ basic perspectives, research methods, and pedagogy. The first tenet is the centrality and intersectionality of race and racism. Race and racism are endemic, thus it is described in four dimensions that illustrate its’ central

position in analysis, while also accounting for their intersectionality with others forms of marginalization such as gender and class discrimination (Crenshaw, 1993). The second tenet is the challenge to dominant ideology. This tenet challenges traditional claims of legal system to objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness race neutrality, and equal opportunity. The third tenet is the commitment to social justice, a commitment to the elimination and abolition of racism and all forms of racial subordination such as gender, class, sexual orientation. Tenet four, the centrality of experiential knowledge, recognizes that the experiential knowledge of Women and Men of Color as legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, practicing, and teaching the law and its relation to racial subordination. Such experiential knowledge is powerful and intimate in how it is grounded in the lived experiences of people of color through storytelling and personal narratives. The fifth and final tenet is the interdisciplinary perspective. This tenet challenges ahistoricism and the unidisciplinary focus of most analyses and insists on shifting race and racism analysis in a historical and contemporary context utilizing interdisciplinary methods.

In 2001, Daniel Solórzano and Tara Yosso posited critical race theorists, especially in education, are influenced and continue to be influenced by a wide array of fields such as ethnic and women studies, cultural nationalism, critical legal studies, Marxist/Neo-Marxist, and internal colonial. Together these fields of study form the foundation of CRT and inform other CRT projects such as LatCrit, FemCrit, AsianCrit, and WhiteCrit. This study is also specifically guided by LatCrit which aims to challenge and overcome oppression to people of Latinx/Hispanic backgrounds related to race,



language, phenotype, immigration, citizenship status and beyond (Pérez Huber, 2010, Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

Drawing on shared CRT and LatCrit ideology, Solórzano and Delgado-Bernal (2001) define CRT in education as a framework that may be utilized to theorize the manner educational structures, processes, and discourses uphold and perpetuate racism and racial subordination. Pérez Huber (2010) defines CRT in educational research by how it unapologetically centers the ways race, class, gender, sexuality and other forms of oppression manifest in the educational experiences of People of Color. In this approach, CRT draws from a wide array of disciplines to challenge dominant ideologies which imply educational institutions are neutral systems that operate in the same ways for all students.

#### *Critical Race Methodology*

The frequent use of the first person, storytelling, narrative, allegory, interdisciplinary treatment of law, and the unapologetic use of creativity are hallmarks of Critical race theory methodology (Bell, 1995). Indeed, there is a rise of education scholars that advocate for the use of CRT and LatCrit to examine the inadequacy and limitations of traditional research methods for working with marginalized communities (Akom et al. 2008; Cammarota and Fine 2008; Solórzano and Yosso 2002 a, b). Solórzano and Yosso (2002a) propose and define critical race methodology as a theoretically grounded approach to research that (p.24):

- 1) foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process. However, it also challenges the separate discourses on race, gender, and class by showing how these three elements intersect to affect the experiences of students of color.

- 2) challenges the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color.
- 3) offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination.
- 4) focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color. Furthermore, it views these experiences as sources of strength.
- 5) uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color.

Storytelling has a long tradition and has served as a form of medicine to heal the wounds of pain caused by oppression (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This type of storytelling, or *counterstorytelling*, leads to the realization of how one came to be oppressed and subjugated and allows one to stop inflicting 'mental violence' on oneself (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). "Oppressed groups have known instinctively that stories are an essential tool to their own survival and liberation" (Delgado, 1989, p. 2436). Critical race scholar Delgado (1989) first introduced counterstorytelling methodology and presented it as a storytelling technique for the untold experiences of those who are marginalized and a tool for analyzing and challenging majoritarian stories. Majoritarian stories are stories that invoke and perpetuate white privilege, are based on racist ideology, are pervasive and are told by whites as well as people of color (Goessling, 2018; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002a). Delgado (1989) reminds us of the goal of CRT scholarship is *not* to make accessible or convey experiences or arguments of discrimination to the majority, *but* to resist and deconstruct dominant racial narratives through the powerful telling of counter narratives. In response,

Solórzano and Yosso (2001, 2002a) proposed a four-phase technique to guide education researchers how to construct counterstories: (a) collect primary data; (b) find existing literature on the topic; (c) draw on professional experience and (d) personal experience as a community member.

Counterstorytelling can effectively subvert the white metanarratives that distort the lived experiences of Latinx groups “whose marginality defines the boundaries of the mainstream, whose voice perspective—whose consciousness—has been suppressed, devalued, and abnormalized” (Delgado, 1989, p. 60). Majoritarian stories, such as white metanarratives, are the stories of those who are in power and whose story is a natural part of the dominant discourse. However, Solórzano and Yosso (2002b) posit majoritarian stories are not just stories of racial privilege, they are also stories of gender, class, and other forms of privilege. They posit that counterstories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform. Scholars that utilize CRT and/or LatCrit framework(s) value oral histories and counterstorytelling as legitimate and appropriate methodologies to analyze the educational experiences of youth of Color.

One example is how Sánchez (2009) and youth researchers utilized PAR findings to coauthor a children’s picture book about a transnational Latino immigrant family with three urban Latina youth. The research team found that many secondary teachers held deficit perspectives about trips between California and Mexico as they felt students would lose English ability, impede students’ academic progress, and result in poor attendance. To respond to teachers’ concerns, Sánchez (2009) and Latinx youth

researchers worked to change the narrative and argue the benefits of transnationalism. Sánchez and her youth colleagues used photovoice and assembled the data to write *Recuerdo Mis Raíces y Vivo Mis Tradiciones/Remembering my Roots and Living My Traditions*. This countertext served to defy the stereotype that immigrants are illegal criminals and illustrated the affection and importance of family to Latinxs that span across borders. This project exemplified two key transformative aspects of PAR and counterstorytelling: (a) participants were empowered to voice and publish their experiences as second-generation immigrant children; and (b) it disrupted the notion of urban Latina youth as academically disengaged.

In education, counterstorytelling can serve as a powerful and critical pedagogical technique because it positions lived experiences and knowledge of youth of color at the focus of research, teaching, and learning. Solórzano and Yosso (2002a) contend that counterstorytelling has powerful and expansive pedagogical possibilities. Drawing from the work of Delgado (1989) and Lawson (1995), they contend that counterstorytelling can: (a) build community among those at the margins of society; (b) challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society's center; (c) open new windows into the reality of those at the margins of society by showing the possibilities beyond the ones they live and showing that they are not alone in their position; (d) teach others that by combining elements from both the story and the current reality, one can construct another world that is richer than either story or the reality alone; and (e) provide a context to understanding and transforming established belief systems.

CRT and counter storytelling have also been utilized to discuss the pervasive deficit stories about urban students and urban schools (Goessling, 2018), colorblindness (Cammarota, 2014), Latina students' self-perceptions (Chang, 2017), the experiences of parents of English language learners (Baird, 2015) and more. For example, Cammarota (2014) used PAR to illuminate the colorblind perspective and its' relationship to the unfair treatment of Latinx students. Latinx youth researchers wrote journal reflections, or counternarratives, about the different ways they experienced alienation and isolation at school by their teachers and peers. Like Irizarry (2011), Cammarota (2014) and youth researchers found that the Spanish language was devalued in scholarly communication, which leads Latinx students to be physically and academically segregated by their English fluency. English language learners were often separated and placed in remedial courses, while other underperforming Latinx students were placed on vocational tracks.

Chang (2017) demonstrates how counterstorytelling was applied in her study with 10 Latina high school students as they denied and refused to accept the culturally constructed label of "smartness" to themselves. Despite most of these Latina students earning a 3.0-grade point average or above, most remarked "smartness" or "being smart" was not how they saw themselves. During initial discussions, students conflated smartness and good grades. However, once given space to analyze the concept further, students were able to deconstruct the word to reveal a more nuanced understanding of the term (Chang, 2017). Students demonstrated the benefit of drawing on personal histories and perceptions and connecting them to other students' experiences, as it allowed them to construct an enhanced definition through dialogic processes.

### *Limitations of CRT*

However, it is of importance to note a few limitations when employing the CRT framework. McClaren (1998) states a problem associated with critical race theory is that it reinforces a racialized politics of identity that ignores capitalism and consequential class divisions within communities of color. As cited by Abrams and Moio (2009), critiques of CRT include race avoidance (Lopez, 2003), the ad hoc nature of multicultural modules (Zeichner, 1992), and the lack of focus on diversity and inclusion in classroom and fieldwork experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Abrams and Moio (2009) agree CRT has had success in teacher preparation, however they contend that the lack of standardized requisites for cultural competency, time constraints, and the obstinate “race neutral” ideology hinder teacher application of CRT. In result, while there is a substantial amount of literature that utilizes CRT in the multicultural training of educators, there is still a high need for literature that focuses on the application of CRT to pedagogy. Parker and Stovall (2004) argue that there is a need for CRT to connect with critical pedagogy because an emphasis on race-based identity politics ignores the persistent tendency of capitalism to homogenize rather than diversify the human experience. To further elucidate the forms of youth resistance, we turn to the key conceptual framework that guides this study: *transformational resistance*.

### **Transformational Resistance**

Despite youths’ social positioning in a social hierarchy that positions them as lesser than, the pain of youth oppression gives rise to the potential power of youth resistance. Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal (2001) reviewed the body of

literature surrounding youth resistance and found it was conceptualized in a multitude of ways. However, most often youth were depicted as youth “acting out” and lacking a critique of the social conditions that elicit poor behavior, or that students critique oppressive social actions but lack agency to enact change. As a result, Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) present four different types of oppositional behavior: (a) reactionary behavior, (b) self-defeating resistance, (c) conformist resistance, and (d) transformational resistance. To qualify what constitutes as resistance, they draw on Henry Giroux’s (1983a, 1983b) two-part definition: (a) Youth must have a critique of social oppression, and (b) youth must be motivated by an interest in social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

The first of the four types of oppositional behavior is reactionary behavior. This behavior is not a form of resistance because it doesn’t meet either of Giroux’s qualifications mentioned above, thus the young people lack a critique of their social conditions and are not motivated by social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Next, they describe *self-defeating resistance* as a negative form of resistance where youth may critique oppression but are not motivated by social justice and fail to act in a way to enact change. Instead, these young people engage in behavior that does not help transform their oppressive status and can even be destructive to oneself or others. Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) define *conformist resistance* as youth who are motivated by social justice yet do not critique oppression, instead they act according to societal norms and strive towards change within the existing social systems and social conventions.

Lastly, Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) introduced the ground-breaking concept *transformational resistance*. Here, young people demonstrate both a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice. Of the four types of oppositional behavior, transformational resistance holds the greatest potential to lead to social change, for young people who both critique oppression and embody resistance have significant potential to transform systems and institutions. Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) posit transformational resistance, framed within the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT), enables researchers to examine resistance among youth of color that is “political, collective, conscious, and motivated by a sense that individual and social change in possible” (p.320).

Julio Cammarota (2017) discusses how these forms of resistance are paramount to the field of critical youth studies and urges scholars to avoid conceptualizing young people as born with predispositions to certain types of resistances, such as self-defeating, conformist, or transformational resistances. Instead, that young people acquire these actions or behaviors in either informal settings (e.g., peer groups or families) or formal settings (e.g., community-based organizations or classrooms).

### **Critical Civic Praxis**

In 1970, Brazilian literacy educator Paulo Freire introduced the concept of praxis to education. According to Freire (2000) *praxis* is reflection and action towards the institutions and structures to be transformed. In education, this means oppressed people develop a critical understanding of their own condition, and together, students and teachers, struggle for liberation. Freire (2000) posits “If students are not able to transform



their lived experiences into knowledge and to use the already acquired knowledge as a process to unveil new knowledge, they will never be able to participate rigorously in a dialogue as a process of reflection and action, where youth critically reflect upon the world and conditions of everyday lived experiences in order to transform it” (p. x). The concept of praxis is characterized as dynamic and evoking change, the capacity to reconfigure ideas into action by engaging, interacting, and rehearsing ideas (Glassman & Erdem, 2014).

Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008) implement five stages of Freire’s cyclical praxis model when teaching youth how to conduct research: (1) identify a problem; (2) analyze a problem; (3) create a plan of action to address the problem; (4) implement the plan of action; and (5) reflect on the plan of action. As youth enter and re-enter stages, praxis deepens critical consciousness through cycles of intellectual work and action, a “feedback loop” (Cammarota, 2015) that informs student learning. Thus, in YPAR, youth research (primary and secondary) is a fundamental mechanism for change that underpins the transformation of critical reflection to liberatory action.

Today urban youth demonstrate differential participation in democratic processes (Checkoway, 2011), yet their participation in public affairs is directly associated with existing problems and issues within their schools and communities (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Youth of color who reside in low-income communities rely on social networks (e.g., family members, peers, school, and community programs) to access knowledge and resources to navigate their life and educational trajectories. However, it is especially important for underrepresented youth who lack social capital to secure these

supports so they may make informed decisions as they advance the educational pipeline. Community-based organizations (CBOs) have become an alternative, informal site for learning that offer youth support to recognize their cultural capital (Yosso, 2005) while empowering youth to engage in pro-social, civic experiences.

CBOs in urban settings can foster youth with opportunities to develop what Ginwright and Cammarota (2007) call *critical civic praxis*- engagement with ideas, social networks, and experiences that build individual and collective capacity to struggle for social justice. Ginwright and Cammarota utilized community spaces in Oakland, California, to engage youth of color in civic action via critical civic praxis to ameliorate problems in their urban communities. "Often, community-based organizations facilitate what we call *critical civic praxis*, a process that develops critical consciousness and builds the capacity for young people to respond and change oppressive conditions in their environment" (Ginwright and Cammarota, 2007, p. 693). Drawing on Freire's (2000) concept of praxis, reflection represents lifting the veil and opening the eyes of marginalized youth to systemic inequities in past and present time, where youth can acknowledge and address the structural constraints that impact their educational trajectories and work to act against them. "As a result of collective engagement in community alliances and intergenerational networks, and exposure to political information and ideas about social change, urban youth collectively respond to community and school problems" (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007, p. 693). For example, youth of color respond to community and school inequities in a multitude of ways such as volunteering, organizing, activism, civic affairs and even pursuing a higher education.

Shiller (2013) found critical civic praxis ‘at the heart’ of CBOs in two case studies with low-income and urban youth located in the Bronx, New York. Both organizations help youth look critically at the world around them and then brainstorm potential solutions to the inequities they see. What made these organizations successful was how the adult facilitators “were able to authentically engage young people in discussions about real problems in their communities and to provide them a set of skills for addressing those problems” (Shiller, 2013, p. 88). By doing so, adults supported youth to first form civic identities (Rubin, 2007) by participating “in civic activities in which they can have an impact and see the concrete results of their work” (p. 88) and then, to engage in civic praxis via real world application.

Allen-Handy, Thomas-EL and Sung (2020) utilized the critical civic praxis theoretical framework to measure youths’ levels of self-awareness, social/community awareness, and global awareness so they may explore their own identities as they relate to power, privilege, and oppression. By entering a continuous cycle between self, community, and global awareness, youth were able to critically reflect upon their identities and experiences to understand how various interconnected spheres and systems (in)directly impact their lives. Allen-Handy and colleagues found the degree to which youth were able to internalize their potential impact on the global community was achieved through youth reaching a critical understanding of how their lived experiences and identities can first impact their local community.

Unique to the previous studies, Rhoades (2012) combined Ginwright and Cammarota’s (2007) *critical civic praxis* and Latorre’s (2008) *artivism* to employ arts-

based critical civic praxis with a group of LGBTQ youth who collectively constructed creative video projects to address socio-cultural inequities. Rhoades utilized both lenses and found that youth built critical consciousnesses surrounding relevant issues directly impacting youth lives by engaging with music, writing, and other forms of embodied learning. In addition, youth built intergenerational connections and networks through co-collaborating on creative and social justice-oriented projects. *Critical civic praxis* and *artivism* fused together to form a “transformational pedagogy” (Rhoades, 2012), meaningful project participation and learning experiences that foster youth identity development and leadership through arts-based activism.

Tintiango-Cubales et al. (2015) built upon the notion of critical civic praxis by developing students’ “critical leadership praxis”, which focuses on building youth leadership skills surrounding issues of equity and social justice. Utilizing a community responsive pedagogy in an Ethnic Studies program, youth critical leadership was founded upon two key relationships, one’s relationship to self and one’s relationships with their communities. By doing so the program was able to build leaders who worked to improve social conditions for themselves and their community.

Despite the growing body of literature, more research is needed to examine the potential benefits and opportunities of engaging critical civic praxis with young people. Freirian praxis has been used extensively in numerous education studies, yet I am curious how critical civic praxis can offer new insights towards youth civic identities as researchers and artists. As was the case with Rhoades (2012) study that fused theoretical concepts of artivism and critical civic praxis, more research is needed to explore how

embodied learning fosters both critical consciousness and civic engagement. While critical civic praxis has chiefly been utilized in CBO spaces, implications for exploring how this framework provides new understandings in both formal and informal learning spaces could help bridge critical theory and critical pedagogy.

For this dissertation study, these theories ground the investigation as my youth co-researchers and I explore issues of power and dominance through the process of performance as praxis. Specifically, LatCrit motivates a social justice focus to confront topics experienced by Latinx youth, such as racism and oppression, in our arts-based research that is committed to local and global resistance of hegemonic forces. Transformational resistance further supports this examination by evaluating how Latinx youth display a desire for social justice and a critique of oppression. CCP describes the means and/or process my co-researchers and I will engage to develop critical consciousness and enhance our capacity to act against oppressive conditions in the community-based learning environment. Together, these theories lay the foundation to why and how we will collectively engage in arts-based YPAR and what I will examine in the study. In alignment with the theoretical frameworks, we transition to methods to discuss the research design of this ethnographic dissertation study.

### CHAPTER 3

#### METHODOLOGY

Constructionism is as an epistemological perspective that believes truth or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world (Crotty, 1998). In this way meaning is constructed, and in this case, the researcher

and the participants emerge as partners of construction. In line with this theory of knowledge, I draw on the symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective which examines basic social interactions, perceptions, attitudes, and values of a community. Specifically, the investigation of language, communication, interrelationships, and community (Crotty, 1998). One of the central tenets of symbolic interactionism is the ability to put ourselves in the place of others. For this reason, ethnography is an appropriate and related methodological choice for this dissertation study.

Ethnographic methods are deeply grounded in critical theory, varying philosophical perspectives, and the complexity of intersectionality (Madison, 2020). According to Kinchloe and McLaren (2000), critical theory finds its method in critical ethnography. In this sense, ethnography becomes the ‘performance of critical theory’ or ‘critical theory in action.’ The ethnographer is often characterized by the hours logged in the field, developing authentic relationships, and participating in daily doings; however, the *critical performance* ethnographer is especially concerned with how the performances (actions and experiences) of subjects are engendered by the social worlds and, in turn, how these social worlds are engendered by them (Madison, 2020). For Taylor (2003a), the term *performance* constitutes as the object/process of analysis in rehearsals or events of dance, theatre, ritual, or other symbolic forms. However, *performance* is also a ‘methodological lens’ that enables researchers to analyze events such as civic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnicity, and sexual identity as rehearsed behavior and performed every day (Taylor, 2003a). For this study, I intend to use performance as a

methodological lens to investigate how Latinx youth activist-researchers perform their multidimensional identities to embody transformational resistance.

The study is a critical performance ethnography that investigates Latinx youth actions and experiences in an arts-based youth participatory action research group and multigenerational theatre ensemble. According to Soynini Madison (2020), “Ethnography is generally defined by its aim to engage, interpret, and record the social meanings, values, structures, and embodiments within a particular domain, setting, or field of human interaction” (p. 3). Whereas a *critical performance ethnography* is the study of local and symbolic enactments of *performances* within the field and on the ground of social life and processes (Madison, 2018). In conclusion of the study, the ethnographic data will be used to compose a script or ethnodrama (Salvatore, 2018) and presented to virtual/public audiences.

In this ‘Methods’ chapter, I describe the bodies of data I collected and how I approached collecting the data. This chapter has five parts. The first part describes the methodological influences that guide this study. Part two offers a brief positionality statement (a more extensive version can be found in the Biographical Sketch). The third part introduces the study participants and context for the investigation. The fourth part outlines specific methodologies I included in this investigation. Lastly, the fifth part provides a description of the analytic approaches I utilized to produce the dissertation findings.

## **Methodological Influences**

In the early days of anthropology, ethnography served as both a methodological tool and a tool of (neo) colonialism during the colonial expansion of Europe.

Consequently, colonialism structured how and why anthropologists studied people, which in present day is critiqued as unethical and exploitative of minoritized population groups (Smith, 2012; Tuck & Yang, 2014). For example, the role of “objective outsider” is now seen as an academic manifestation of colonialism that subjugates research participants as objects of study (Smith, 2012). However, some contemporary anthropological literature offers a needed critique of the traditional role of “ethnographer” and challenges scholars of today to assume more decolonizing and humanizing approaches to research.

With this history of colonialism in mind, this dissertation study draws on scholars who are grounded in critical race theory, decolonizing research methodologies, and/or performance studies (Conquergood, 2002; 2013; Denzin, 2003; Gallagher, 2007; 2011; Heath, 1993; Madison, 2018, 2020; Smith, 2012; Taylor, 2003a). Through reading their work, these scholars have taught me the importance of ethics and protecting human rights, the value of building intimate and close relationships with participants, to be explicit about my own positionality and transparent in sharing it with study participants and audiences to contextualize the research, to recognize there is no single truth, but many partial truths, and how to represent and present these multiple truths.

For instance, ethnographer Dwight Conquergood (2013) made study sites his personal home to ‘inhabit the felt sensing context’ of the participants world. Despite early anthropological beliefs that the ‘the field’ is a journey away, Conquergood moved his



residence to the site of investigation, not solely to study the residents as objects of academic study, but to experience and understand through his own body the pressures of living in that environment. In doing so, Conquergood (2013) reconceptualized fieldwork as “homework” to connect the “being there” (field research) with “being here” (homework) to breakdown the two sites in attempt to bring them together in productive tension. He traversed the research site domain and the academy, which meant his “homeplace” then “was betwixt and between, material and symbolic power, concrete place and cultural space, socioeconomic forces and symbols, the stoop and the podium, a liminal space that allowed him to empathize and advocate from below and from above” (Conquergood, 2013, p.11). For Conquergood, living and conducting research within proximity was his way of “studying up” and learning on-the-ground embodied practices of the marginalized groups he investigated to examine their own theories of self-hood and resistance.

Kathleen Gallagher’s (2007) ethnography of drama classrooms in urban public schools informs my theatre work with youth participants. In her book, The Theatre of Urban Youth and Schooling in Dangerous Times, Gallagher (2007) utilized theatre as both a metaphor and a method in her ethnography of urban North American schooling. Gallagher and co-researchers conducted a three-year investigation in four schools, two in Toronto and two in New York City. The study examined schooling, culture, experience, and relationships in schools. Gallagher incorporated performance and artistic embodied approaches where the theatre work of youth became the data. Gallagher coined the term “situated ethnography” (2007, p.7) to describe her approach which she defines as in-

depth examinations focused on context and specificity with a commitment to decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 2012). As a result, Gallagher (2007) found the drama class to open a “sweet space” for young people where creative conflicts were engaged and critical inquiry was embodied so youth could appreciate, play, and explore their multidimensional identities.

Anthropological linguist and ethnographer Shirley Brice Heath illustrates how theatre is also a powerful pedagogy. Heath (1993) conducted a 5-year ethnographic study of urban youth. Specifically, she explored how theatre was used with English as Second Language (ESL) learners in non-traditional learning spaces. With adult support, youth groups were responsible for selecting themes and writing scripts, as well as fully stage, direct, costume, and produce their plays. Heath (1993) found early on that underperforming youths’ language was at considerably higher range in theatre settings when compared to typical language usage in the classroom. As the youth actors developed authorship skills, they were enabled to use performance to enhance their linguistic capabilities. Heath (1993) writes (p. 181):

The power of role shifting, of framing themselves in play, and of using the new voices acquired through becoming actors seemed to loosen a host of abilities undiscovered in the ordinary run of classroom requests for *displays of knowledge* rather than full *performances of knowing*.

My approach is influenced by the methodological framing of Soynini Madison’s (2010) ethnography of indigenous human rights activism in Africa and how local activists transformed their own culture and society against the harmful local and global forces. In her book Acts of Activism, Madison (2010) documented how the activists used performance, or *performance activism*, as a

way of communication, but also as a subversive tactic to ‘win hearts and minds’ as they strive for social justice. Further, how tactical performances of public protests for gender equity, water rights, public health, and economic justice emerged into other modes of performative gestures and actions. Performances took various forms, such as chants, dance, song, poetry, dramatic testimony, and other symbolic acts. “These tactical and emergent performances encourage an embodied epistemology. They become a transformation of knowledge that literally moves our musculature and the rhythms of our breath and heart, as corporeal knowledge conjoins cognition through enfleshment knowledge” (Madison, 2010, p.7).

I consider my dissertation-ethnography a *participatory performance ethnography*. The manner the study is *participatory* is two-fold: One, I will be participating with a group of youth and adults to conduct my dissertation study; and two, together we will conduct arts-based YPAR to engage in activist work that is motivated by a collective cause for social justice. The element of *performance* signals my examination of symbolic acts and embodied communication with a goal to collect, analyze, construct, and disseminate the embodied data in performance form. Moreover, this *participatory performance ethnography* is focused on the goal of self-determination of youth. Indigenous scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) writes (p.120):

Self-determination in a research agenda becomes something more than a political goal. It becomes a goal of social justice that which is expressed through and across a wide range of psychological, social, cultural, and economic terrains. It necessarily involves the

processes of transformation, of decolonization, of healing and of mobilization as peoples.

The four processes named here –decolonization, healing, transformation, and mobilization-- are not goals, but processes that connect and clarify the tensions across local, regional, and global contexts (Smith, 2012). For this dissertation study, the goal of self-determination is to integrate these processes into practices and methodologies that encourage youth to be active participants in building self-awareness, making informed choices, and advocacy for self and others.

In the next sections, I situate the proposed investigation in context and introduce the main actors of this dissertation study.

### **My Positionality**

I (Ashley) identify as a multiracial woman, educator, researcher, creative facilitator, performing artist and theatre practitioner. My work with young people, especially Latinx youth, is fueled by my own personal experiences in childhood navigating family, education, and society, but also by my experiences as a K-12 teacher in an urban context (see Biographical Sketch). I have a background in the arts, including a dance performer, choreographer, and instructor, as well as the theatre arts in community settings. Combined, these interests propel a commitment to co-investigating social justice issues and advancing educational equity with underrepresented youth. My research and teaching interests encompass critical, ethnographic and performance methodologies, social justice pedagogies, and the use of arts-based inquiry approaches with students towards equity in social, educational, and artistic contexts.

## **Estrella Theatre Company: Context and Participants**

Estrella Theatre (ET) company is an existing multigenerational ensemble of youth and adult artists located in US Southwest. ET first began in 2012 and since has created over 20 productions across schools, light rail stations, and stages. I am an adult ensemble member of ET, and together we engage in participatory and applied theatre processes to create socially relevant original plays with youth voices at the center. The mission of ET is to imagine and build the world we want to live in through youth-driven, multigenerational collaboration and justice-centered artistic process and performance that generates reflection, connection, and action. I approached the ensemble to propose the idea of doing an arts-based YPAR project and we decided it was a mutually beneficial opportunity for all parties. They also elected to not use a pseudonym, because they were proud of the work we accomplished together.

The ensemble consists of diverse racial and sociocultural identities, including Black, Latinx, white, LGBTQ, dis/abled, youth, adults, and more. Currently, there are 16 youth (ages 14-24) and 10 adult (over the age of 25) ensemble members. Based on the total of 26 ensemble members, 54% identify as Latinx, 19% identify as Black, 15% identify as white, and 30% identify as LGBTQ.

ET organizes an annual production focusing on varying social justice topics with youth and adult artists. For example, past productions have tackled issues like body positivity, race, age, and class. Each production cycle consists of four phases: (a) research phase; (b) devising phase; (c) production phase; and (d) ongoing dissemination. In the research phase, the artists utilize theatre games, storytelling, and other research methods

to gather artists' real-world experiences and other information which gradually becomes the organizing framework to base the show. In the devising phase, the artists experiment with the data collected in the research phase and begin to develop scripts and construct scenes based on the stories of injustice told by artists. Next, in the production phase, the artists undergo an extensive rehearsal process where the preliminary script is adapted into a play and we finalize the devised scenes by incorporating theatrical elements (props, costume, sound, lighting, ET.) up until the public community performances. The fourth and final phase is ongoing dissemination, where ET works to continue the life of each project to keep it relevant and meaningful. Over the course of the year-long production cycle, the artists meet approximately twice a week for two hours each rehearsal, and more frequently before a show. Each of the four phases is designed to advance the artists through the research process and on towards opening night.

### **Recruitment & Participants**

I recruited six Latinx youth artists (ages 14-24 years old) and two Latinx adult artists (25 years old and older), for a total of 8 participants in the study (Table 1). Study participants were recruited in two ways. First, I attended a meeting with ET staff and artists to explain the study with all ensemble members. Next, I sent out email recruitment scripts with study information to ET artists (young people and adults) to sign up for the research study. ET artists contacted me, Ashley Domínguez, by email at [adomin4@asu.edu](mailto:adomin4@asu.edu) to join the research study. All artists who agree (verbal or email) to participate in the study were asked to electronically sign and email a consent form. As mentioned during recruitment, participants who agree to participate in the project were

paid \$20 an hour for every rehearsal they virtually attended. Payment was made complete at the end the research and devising stage of the project. The amount of twenty dollars was chosen because it is comparable to what I am paid hourly as a graduate research assistant. I allocated money from my Ford Fellowship to fund the cost. Because artists and young people are often not valued or paid for their time, I elected to pay all participants for their expertise and commitment to the project. In doing so, I hoped to equalize the power differential and resist further exploitation of these participant groups.

Table 1. Participant table

<i><b>PSEUDONYM</b></i>	<i><b>ADULT/ YOUTH</b></i>	<i><b>AGE</b></i>	<i><b>RACE/ ETHNICITY</b></i>	<i><b>PRONOUNS</b></i>	<i><b>SEXUALITY</b></i>
<b>EVE</b>	YOUTH	24	Latinx	she/her/hers	Straight
<b>LUZ</b>	YOUTH	20	Mexican American	she/her/they	Bisexual
<b>PAT</b>	YOUTH	16	Biracial	she/hers/ they/them	Straight
<b>XENON</b>	YOUTH	14	Hispanic	they/them	Straight/Gend erqueer
<b>JADE</b>	YOUTH	16	Chicana	she/her/hers	Bisexual
<b>LEAH</b>	YOUTH	14	Hispanic	she/her	Straight
<b>DOLORES</b>	ADULT	40	Mexican American	she/her/hers	Heterosexual
<b>FRIDA</b>	ADULT	30	Latina	she/her/hers	Bisexual

## **Applied Theatre as Participatory Action Research**

The dynamic process of praxis (Freire, 2000), or reflection and action, is a concept integral to participatory process. As research “for” “with” and “by” the people versus “on” the people, the goal of participatory research is to dissolve the barrier between researchers and the researched where the subject-object relationship transitions to a subject-subject relationship (Conrad, 2006). For Rodríguez and Brown (2009), participatory work with young people is defined as “a commitment to genuinely collaborative methodological and pedagogical processes that validate, incorporate, and build on the knowledge and skills of youth researchers and support critical and creative engagement in research and learning” (p. 27).

Participatory research has a tradition of experimenting with alternative research methods including photography, radio, poetry, music, myths, drawing, sculpture, puppets, and applied/participatory theatre. The centralization of affective logic, or knowledge based on the body/feelings, enhances the collective inquiry process and meaning making. Together, the knowledge and creative practices of all participants forge together in a generative inquiry process based on related contextual factors and advances the process forward to respond to critical and contemporary issues (Conrad, 2006).

For this dissertation study, I take on the roles of ethnographer, participant-observer, YPAR facilitator, artist, and friend. I have selected applied theatre, as a method of youth participatory action research, which involves collective dialogue and analysis, artistic embodiments, and performance, with a motivation for social justice. Consequently, my approach to participatory research invites participants to be involved in



the research process from beginning to end: the conceptualization, collection, analysis, creation, and dissemination. As discussed above in the previous section, I have been an active adult ensemble member of Estrella Theatre company for the past two years. For this reason, I chose the youth-centered community organization as the site for this dissertation study because of my first-hand experience and relationships built with my fellow artistic and socially conscious ensemble members. However, for this study, my role widened as a participant to include my research responsibilities as “ethnographer” and “YPAR facilitator”. I continued to participate as an ensemble member, but also cofacilitated an intergenerational group of participants, youth, and adults, to engage in an arts-based YPAR project about a social problem of the participants’ choosing, conduct arts-based research, and collectively create a performance piece based on our findings.

In participatory research, the participation and data collection process are intermingled (see Figure B). It is important to clarify, I am not reporting on the findings of this YPAR study, I am reporting on the participants and the processes they engage in. Thus, below I outline a description of the arts-based YPAR project and the data collection procedures for this dissertation study.

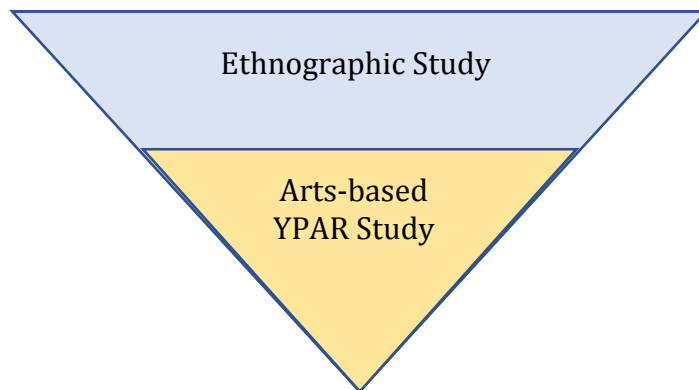


Figure 2. Participatory Research Design

### **Arts-based YPAR Project/Study**

In the roles of ethnographer, YPAR facilitator, and participant, I held group rehearsals with study participants 17 times over the seven-month study. Rehearsals and lasted two hours each meeting. Group rehearsals began in May 2021 and occurred every two weeks, resulting in 34 hours in total. Participants were paid \$20 per hour for their attendance and participation. All group rehearsals took place via Zoom. Unique to this project, I had two youth co-facilitators for the study. Occasionally a ET staff member would join us to collaborate and check-in on our progress. We met bimonthly to plan and prepare rehearsal agendas (see APPENDIX B). During group rehearsals, participants and I engaged in dialogue, story circles, theatre games and image theatre (Boal, 2002; Rohd, 1998), playback theatre (Fox, 2004; Fox, 2020), journaling, watched videos, conducted interviews, wrote memos (Saldaña, 2011), journal reflections, and culminated in the creation of a forum play script. Community building was also a foundational aspect to our process and work together, which was threaded over the course of the project and held accountable to our list of community agreements (see APPENDIX C).

Augusto Boal's (1979) Theatre of Oppressed was instrumental to our process and community approaches to theatrical devising, specifically forum theatre. Forum Theatre is a theatrical game in which a problem is shown in an unsolved form, to which the audience is invited to suggest and enact solutions. However, in forum theatre Boal coined the term 'spect-actor' to describe a member of the audience who takes part in the action in any way (Boal, 1979). Here, the spect-actor is an active spectator, as opposed to the passivity normally associated with the role of audience member. The forum play will

usually present a problem that is characterized as a symptom of an oppression, and typically involves visible oppressor(s) and a protagonist who is oppressed. After a showing of the scene(s), the spec-actors are invited to take the place of the protagonist, or perhaps another character, to try and defeat the oppressors. However, spect-actors must follow an important rule: no magic. Magic refers to interventions in forum theatre which move from reality to the realms of magic or fantasy (Boal, 2002). For example, an easy fix or solution that is unlikely to happen in the real world like an oppressor immediately changing their views or actions.

After weeks of Boalian theatre (Boal, 1972, 1995, 2002), we designed a co-selected research question through the co-creation of art, in tandem with the larger ET ensemble's devising process which studied the topic of mental health. We agreed upon the research question: How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by the patriarchy? All the participants, including myself, described some sort of abuse from a male figure in their lives, be it mental, emotional and/or physical, that impacted their mental health which is what led us to the specific topic for the script. The forum play titled "*The Act Unspoken*" follows the character Roxy, who experiences a form of sexual harassment at school by a male and depicts the struggles she faces following the incident (see APPENDIX D). For instance, not being believed by her friend, fear of being gossiped about, deteriorating mental health, telling a parent, and then reporting the incident to an unsupportive administrator.

In November 2021, at the end of the data collection period for this study, all the participants performed the forum play on Zoom to the larger ensemble to share our work

and garner feedback. The performance of the script segued into the audience integration and dialogue portion. Jade and Luz played the jokers—or the facilitators of the forum workshop. The Joker figure can be operationalized in various contexts and formats, “the director, referee, facilitator and workshop leader; in the context of Forum Theatre, the Joker is the person who acts as intermediary between audience and performers, and is attached to no one party – just as the Joker in a pack of cards belongs to no one suit but floats between them” (Ortiz, 2019, xxvi).

After the script was performed, the jokers engaged the spect-actors to comment on their observations and eventually to jump in to try out alternative interventions to garner different, more positive outcomes. For instance, spect-actors jumped in to assume the roles of Felix, Roxy’s mother, the principal, and Roxy to examine how a young Latina navigates abuse and mental health within the K-12 education system. We humbled ourselves and learned through various scene iterations how quickly blame is shifted to youth-females-of color, clemency is only awarded to those in more privileged positions (e.g., adult, male, ET.), evidence of proof is burdened to the accuser, and how institutions safeguard employees to protect their reputations which induce accuses to remain in a precarious state of further traumatizing ramifications. Lastly, we closed with Luz employing Liz Lerman’s Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) after the performance to collect information and feedback across the Latinx youth activist-researchers and the audience. We utilized a condensed version for the interest of time that

consisted of 1) Statements of Meaning, 2) Artist Asks Questions, 3) Responders Ask Neutral Questions, and 4) Responders Offer Permissioned Opinions.

I closed my data collection for this study immediately following the initial performance however the project and dissemination remains on-going. Since then, we have performed the play again for ET ensemble by Zoom. We have also performed at an environmental justice event hosted by the local university live and in-person. As society begins to re-open and shift to a new normal, we look to perform for more audiences both in-person and virtually across the community.

## **Methods**

I utilized ethnographic approaches (Conquergood, 2013; Gallagher, 2007; Madison, 2018, 2020) with the participants throughout the seven-month research project. To review the project timeline of all research and writing elements for this study, below is a description of the dissertation project schedule and activities (Table 2). I relied on two overarching approaches to collect data: ethnographic methods and arts-based research methods. I participated in various types of Zoom meetings: ET staff meetings, rehearsals, and virtual/in-person performances.

**Participant-observation and Fieldnotes.** In the roles of ethnographer and participant, I collected participant-observation (Green, 2014) data during the study. Observational data is derived from the researchers' field notes (Conquergood, 2013; Saldaña, 2011) which was collected during virtual meetings but reflected and expanded on as "homework" during my "down time". I conducted observations every other week during the research, devising, and production phases. Project meetings, participant-led

research, script writing and devising, performance rehearsals, the community performance(s), and other events comprised the observation data. Because I am also a participant and ensemble member of ET, I reflected after rehearsals/meetings to write/voice-record field notes on my own experiences, feelings, and thoughts after meetings/rehearsals/performances.

**Semi-structured Interviews with Arts-based Elicitation.** In the role of ethnographer, I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with study participants up to six times over the study. Interviews were unpaid; thus, all participants were asked to complete up to six interviews over the study so that we could spend a considerable amount of time together. All interviews took place via Zoom.

Each interview session comprised two parts (see APPENDIX A). The first part of the session invited participants to engage in a series of arts-based elicitation activities. This section lasted approximately 20-40minutes. The second section engaged participants with semi-structured dialogue in relation to the research questions for this study. This section accounted for the remaining time of each interview. My goal was to elicit participants' perspectives, opinions, and experiences related to the ET, art, social justice, research, and their multidimensional identities. Interviews lasted between one to 1.5 hours, depending on conversation flow and time availability. All interviews were video recorded, audio recorded, and transcribed.

**Analytic Memos.** In the role of ethnographer, I wrote analytic memos (Saldaña, 2011) to critically reflect on the research process. The memos allowed me to conduct preliminary analysis on a variety of foci. I considered the connection between the two

concurrent studies: The Arts-based YPAR project and the wider dissertation-ethnography study. As the transcripts and fieldnotes were composed, I wrote analytic memos to document my insights and plans for potential follow-up, as well as emerging themes, trends, and outliers in the data.

**Artifact Collection.** In the role of ethnographer, I collected images/videos of participant-created artifacts, embodiments, and other visual materials produced during the project/study. I used Zoom to record images/videos of material and/or embodied artifacts during rehearsals, however participants were also invited to email/text me other images and video during the investigation.

Table 2. Project Timeline from November 2020-April 2022

		<i>Month</i>																			
		11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4		
<i>Research/Writing Element</i>	IRB Approval	x																			
	Recruit participants	x	x	x																	
	ET Project Planning				x	x	x														
	Data collection							x	x	x	x	x	x	x							
	Data analysis							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
	Dissertation writing																x	x	x	x	
	Prepare manuscripts for publication (academic and public journals)																	x	x	x	
	Script Writing & Table Reads																		x	x	x
	Defend/perform dissertation with ET																				x

**Data Analysis**

To analyze the data based on my research questions, I composed an ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2003) to illustrate the significant moments in our individual and/or group work.

According to Saldaña (2003), “An ethnodrama, the script, consists of analyzed and

dramatized significant selections from interview transcripts, field notes, journal entries, or other written artifacts” (p. 218). “The goal is to investigate a particular facet of the human condition for purposes of adapting those observations and insights into a performance medium” (Saldaña, 2005, p.1). Based on audio and video recordings, fieldnotes, artifacts, I composed a script to illustrate my experiences with the Latinx youth in the arts-based YPAR project in relation to the research questions. In the future, the ethnodrama will undergo a process to become *ethnotheatre*, which “employs the traditional craft and artistic techniques of theatre or media production to mount for an audience a live or mediated performance event of researchers’ experiences and/or the researcher’s interpretations of the data” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 12). My approach to analysis consists of four phases: transcript and fieldnote analysis, table reads, script writing, and member checking (see Figure 3).

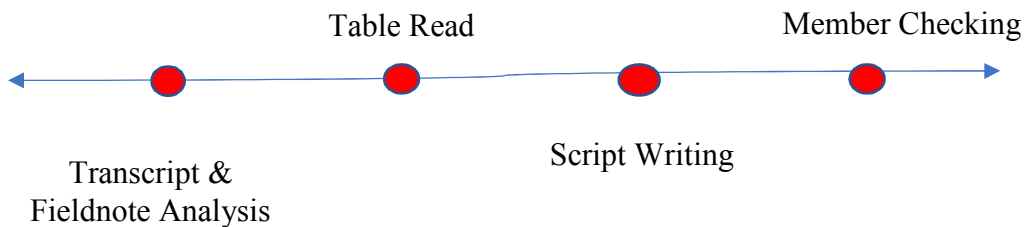


Figure 3. Analytic Approach

**Transcripts and Fieldnotes Analysis.** In the first phase of analysis, I compiled the transcripts and fieldnotes from the study and uploaded to MAXQDA software. Following Salvatore’s (2018) coding approach, I coded for sections of the transcription data for recurring themes and “intersection points” that was constructed into a



performable script. The selections analyzed were based on their relation to the research questions of this study and that I felt were most pertinent for audiences to hear in performance. First, I read all the transcripts and listened to all the recordings. Then I selected up to 3 sections of 2-3 minutes in length from each research participant that addressed the research criteria. Each section extracted will be a continuous, uninterrupted section independent from other transcript sections. According to Salvatore (2018), the length of 3-minutes is comfortable length for an audience to not lose interest and using 3 sections from each participant allows for characters to appear more than once in a script. After the three selections from each participant are made, I transcribed those sections following a near verbatim transcription technique to include all stutters, pauses, misspeaks, and so forth. However, in some cases I erased utterances to improve readability and clarity. I included starting and ending time markings of the recordings for easy reference to rehear or locate. I titled each pulled section to capture the essence of the piece and allude to why it was originally chosen. Lastly, I placed each section in its' own individual document using a cohesive formatting structure that will make it easily integrated later into a script.

**Table Read.** In the second phase, once I completed the initial round of transcribing and coding, the next step was to read the transcribed sections aloud to evaluate their effectiveness and relatability, and then organize sections into thematic bins (Salvatore, 2018). In this phase, I invited non-study participant ET members to participate in the second round of coding and participate as readers. Following Salvatore (2018), we read the transcribed sections aloud, looked and listened for connections and

contradictions, and discussed emerging themes. This was also a preliminary step to determine characters and prepare casting notes.

**Script Writing.** In the third phase, I combined my transcript and field note analysis with the analysis from the table read with participants. These two phases of analysis provided a base for the script. I organized the sections into the first draft of a script, based on themes to focus on one research finding at a time, which can also increase the possibility for analysis and reflection as the performance progresses (Salvatore, 2018). All the names in the vignettes were self-selected pseudonyms that participants chose for themselves. To provide anonymity to participants I opted to fictionalize some writing elements for ethical reasons (Banks & Banks, 1998). I strived to honor the accuracy of our work together in my writing; however, I do not claim that the scripts remain free of subjectivity. Banks and Banks (1998) argue in any case, no text can truly argue to be written without bias.

**Member-checking.** In the fourth phase, I asked the study participants and ET ensemble members to member check my representation of the data by inviting all participants to make additions, revisions, removals, and edits to the script as co-authors. I also enlisted the help of a youth and adult dramaturg to read script drafts and offer feedback. This step enabled the script to be written in collaboration with the study participants and ET ensemble. Member-checking was an iterative process that underwent several cycles of subsequent table reads and script revisions as indicated by the study participants and community collaborators.

In the next section, I reveal the findings of this study in the format of ethnodrama, which is later followed by a summary of the findings and implications for education at large.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### **Introduction**

This ethnodrama is constructed from the stories of Latinx youth and women in an intergenerational theatre troupe, Estrella Theatre (ET) company. The script is based on critical and arts-based qualitative data collected during ET's arts-based youth participatory action research project. The stories were collected during arts-based elicitation, semi-structured interviews, artifacts and PJT ensemble rehearsals over a 7-month period. "*Blue*" combines ethnography, autoethnography, youth participatory action research and arts-based inquiry. To preserve the anonymity of the research participants, I have imagined or fictionalized certain places, names of people, plot elements, dialogue, and some stories have been collapsed under a single character. In addition, all research participants chose the pseudonyms presented as characters here. The intention is to illustrate how Latinx youth in the U.S. embody transformational resistance in their lives as they traverse school, home, and community spaces. The purpose of this play is to utilize the experiences of the participants to spark critical dialogue and generate knowledge to help society understand the experiences of Latinx youth in K-12 schooling and challenge majoritarian narratives by showcasing how they combine art, research, and social justice towards educational leadership.

Before you read the play, I would like to present a few notes to clarify my creative process. At the end of the arts-based YPAR project we created a forum play “*The Act: Unspoken*”, this is not that play, but that creation can be found in APPENDIX D. For “*Blue*”, I compiled participant narratives and quotes from the data sources to present my data findings for this ethnographic dissertation study. Initially, I included myself as a character, however with much thought and deliberation I ultimately decided to erase my presence entirely. I found my role in a play that centers youth voice was reductive. Instead of me retelling their stories in my own words, a more accurate description of my role is the compiler, because I compiled, organized, and presented their words in near-verbatim form. I say near verbatim because I included almost all utters, misspeaks, and pauses to resemble the natural form of the participants’ speech. However, in the member-checking process, some members provided feedback that parts were confusing to read, so I opted to remove select misspeaks only to enhance clarity and understanding.

The main characters in the ethnodrama are directly related to a youth participant in this dissertation study. The supporting cast was developed based on participant stories, but also includes some ET members who were influential to the dissertation study. Most of the character monologues and dialogues are extracted near verbatim from audio transcripts and text files (e.g., text messages, emails, memos, chat room messages). However, certain elements have been fictionalized to preserve participant anonymity and/or to advance the story line. In the play, you will encounter six Latinx youth who combine their interests for art, social justice, and research to present this dissertation (of their experiences) to the community via interactive theatre. The youth characters narrate

the play, sharing personal experiences related to transformational resistance in the community, school, and home, but also by showing how they use art as educational leaders to learn and teach towards raising critical consciousness. Now, I present to you “*Blue*”.

“*Blue*”

Compiled by Ashley D. Domínguez

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### CONTACT INFORMATION

All rights to produce, film, record in whole or in part, in any medium or language by any group, amateur or professional, are retained by the author. If you are interested in obtaining permission to produce this play, please contact Ashley D. Domínguez, [addomin4@asu.edu](mailto:addomin4@asu.edu)

### SETTING

Contemporary. Somewhere in the southwestern region of the United States.

### MAIN CHARACTERS

- JADE Witty, outspoken, Chicana, She/Her, 16-year-old female, identifies as bisexual, visual and performance artist
- LUZ Leader, thoughtful, Mexican American, she/her/they, 20-year-old female, identifies as bisexual, writer, poet, actress

EVE Compassionate, confident, Latinx, she/her/hers, 24-year-old female, identifies as straight, dancer and artist

LEAH Sensitive, smart, Hispanic, she/her, 14-year-old female, identifies as straight, musician and actress

PAT Quiet, tomboy, biracial, she/hers, 16-year-old, visual artist and actress

XENON Eccentric, Hispanic, they/them, 14-year-old, they/them, identifies as gender queer, artist

## SUPPORTING ROLES

ADULT 1  
STUDENT 1  
DANCER  
WHITE MALE 1  
WHITE MALE 2  
AMY  
NANCY  
DOLORES

## SILENT SCENE #1

*(Begins with the sound of the school bell. Students emerge from what seems like their classrooms, with backpacks, books in their hands and wearing N-95 masks as they walk from stage right and stage left. Everything appears to be a typical school day. One poster on the wall reads “Sign Up for the High School Social Justice Coalition!” All actors exit.)*

## SCENE #2: WELCOME TO THE SHOW

*(There are six school desks with a chair behind each spread out across backstage. A powerpoint screen is located on the stage left.)*

EVE  
Bienvenidos! Welcome mi gente! Thanks for joining us at the show!

LEAH  
Show? I thought it was a presentation. *(whispers out of the side of her mouth)*

EVE  
Well, it’s both really. To be specific, it’s a dissertation performance about Latinx youth activist-researchers.

JADE

Wait, what's that?

EVE

That's you, loca. Latinx, you know, the non-gendered term to describe anyone from a Latino or Hispanic descent.

JADE

Duh, I know what that is! The other one...arti-?

LUZ

Artist-researcher. It's someone who identifies as an artist, activist, and researcher.

JADE

*(looks towards an audience member)* Oh, sí soy yo...that IS me. *(flips hair)*

EVE

Te dije. *(rolls eyes)*

PAT

Anyway *(with attitude)*...we're here to share our stories and teach you all about how we use art to learn about and address social injustice, but also to discover ourselves and who we are. We better get started. My mom is cooking Pozolé tonight and I have to be first in line. *(rubs belly)*

EVE

Well before your Pozolé dreams come true, we have an introduction, a literature review, methodology, and conclusion to get to.

LUZ

I'll start with the title "Arts-based Youth Participatory Action Research: Latinx Performances of Embodied Identity and Transformational Resistance."

XENON

*(runs on to stage late)* Hey everyone, sorry I'm late. I was practicing for my solo for the school recital. Wanna see it?

*(begins belting a ballad)* Como la flor, con tanto amor, me diste tu... ay ay ayyy como me duele.

ALL

Shhhhh!

JADE

No they didn't come in hot with the Selena.

XENON

What? *(looks confused)*

ALL

*(points to audience)*

XENON

*(embarrassed)* Oops. Hi. *(waves comically)*

EVE

Wait, hold on a second. Xenon has a point. We're all artists right? Let's use our artistry to show what we know!

PAT

YASS! I have an idea, let's play genre!

### SCENE #3: DISSERTATION INTRODUCTION

*(The characters begin to speak each portion of the introduction in a distinct voice to match their assigned genre category. For example, action movie trailers, British accent, valley girls, soap opera, blizzard, hippies, New Yorker ET.)*

LEAH

What's that?

PAT

We will take turns calling out a genre of speaking. Then each of us will take turns reading the dissertation introduction in that specific voice genre. Get it?

*(actors can call out voice genres based on casting and voice abilities)*

ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*

LUZ

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* Youth, especially youth of color, have been historically marginalized and perceived as inferior due to their age which positions them at the bottom of oppressive social hierarchies that constrains youth voice in decision-making processes.

ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*



## JADE

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* However, youth participation in social justice initiatives have proven to be a viable approach to support youth embody transformational resistance – a desire for social justice and the ability to critique oppression towards the transformation of systems and institutions.

## ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*

## EVE

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* For instance, research indicates the benefits of fusing art into social justice-focused inquiry projects with young people such as activating the imagination, elevating understanding of injustice and anticipating change, nurturing identity construction, rehearsing scenarios for future action, and fostering healing.

## ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*

## LEAH

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* The purpose of this critical performance ethnographic study is to discover how youth perform their multidimensional identities to embody *transformational resistance* in a multigenerational theatre company and arts-based youth participatory action research project.

## ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*

## XENON

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* Also known as YPAR. Arts-based YPAR is a research project grounded in critical theories that invites youth to examine social problems that affect their lives using artistic methods and then take action to address them.

## ALL

*(calls out voice genre)*

## PAT

*(in genre voice called out by youth activists)* During arts-based elicitation and semi-structured interviews, participants, or us (*giggle*), were asked to explain how we made sense of being a Latinx youth activist-researcher.

## ALL

These are our stories.

*All actors exit stage left and right except EVE.*

SCENE #4: "WHAT MAKES HER"

EVE

*(to audience)* I write a little bit of poetry. *(gestures to her journal)* Would you like to hear some?

*(waits for the audience to respond)*

EVE

The title is "*What Makes Her*"

*(pause)*

energy, matter

I am everything

But nothing at the same time

i am woman in the physical flesh,

but i embody the energy

of the masculine and feminine

past the rest

Of what you see on the surface

brown skin,

brown eyes,

brown curly hair- hey keep your eyes on mine

Because my curves and my sway

Doesn't give your immediate power to display  
your perception

Of what you think you're entitled to display

I'll relay this message to those

that deceive

the strength of a woman

and what makes her.

be nothing but everything at the same time

she's energy and she matters

You'll see

-Written by EVE, 10/07/2021

SCENE #5: CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT/MONOLOGUE MONTAGE #1

*(The rest of the cast enters clapping for EVE.)*

XENON

YAS QUEEN! Let's give it up for my girl Eve, killing it with some spoken word!

PAT

As she should. *(slow claps)*

EVE

Yeah I thought I'd prepare a little something for today. Hit you with that live poetry reading.

LEAH

Do you think they *(pointing to the audience)* get why your words are important to us?

ALL

*(look at audience)*

JADE

Hmm. Touché. Maybe it's time we start to tell them some of what we said when we were interviewed on— *(goes blank)*

XENON

*(interrupts)* Zoom.

JADE

Yes, of course. Zoom. How could I forget, we all basically lived the past two years of our lives in the Zoom box. #COVID19.

LEAH

Let's do a check-in question shall we? We can go around and take turns sharing. How about we each say name, pronouns, and a little bit about your identity and who you are.

*(The actors sit across backstage, each with their own desk and chair.. Each actor will have a laptop as if in a Zoom meeting. Each actor will present snippets of their monologue, but will freeze when it's the other actor's turn to speak. To transition, all youth will make the sounds of Zoom chatter for five beats in the background until the next actor stands to speak.)*

*(Zoom chatter)*

LUZ

Hi, I'm Luz. She/hers.

yeah um so I have my mom and dad and then,

I have three siblings my younger sister and then two older brothers

let's see yeah I went to an arts high school,  
and that's kind of how I started getting into arts more  
specifically theater, I did theater a lot.  
And then poetry, and then that's when my friend had introduced Estrella Theatre  
and that's when I like started coming  
which was all new to me because I've never been in a space where I could contribute  
to making art about social justice and I'm like— things that I've never did before,

*(Zoom chatter)*

JADE

*(responding)* Um well, my name is Jade. I use she/her/hers pronouns.  
I was born and raised here  
so I've been here like my whole life.  
And what I— what has led me to where I am now.  
I think of just the culture I've been surrounded with  
I mean I'm sure you know by now I've talked about this a bunch—  
my parents are all artists, my mom is an artist, my dad is an artist and my grandpa is an  
artist.

*(Zoom chatter)*

PAT

So you probably already know my name, I know, but my name is Pat. She/Hers.  
And then I— see, I am 16 years old, 17 in October.  
I attend high school, I will remain there until—until senior year so I'll be doing that.  
I am aspiring to go into a medical based career,  
since I want to help—help people in a way.  
So my hobbies are just drawing  
doing or both—both on paper and digital so and  
Then also one for watching movies, listening to music so.  
Um well, I do consider myself biracial because my-my dad is certainly from Mexico  
so again, is—it is Hispanic roots from there  
and then my mom was born here in the US

*(Zoom chatter)*

XENON

I'm Xenon. They/them.  
Sometimes I like to go by Zena um since not a lot of people can pronounce my name  
right.  
I come from the Southwest.  
I am part of a Hispanic-European family.  
Um.

Oh boy.  
I think– the most important parts about my identity.  
That's a really good question.  
I know some people like confuse me for white or American sometimes  
you know I don't really mind  
but it's better to get it correct rather than assuming.

*(Zoom chatter)*

EVE  
Yeah, so oh man...  
I'm Eve. She/her pronouns.  
So um I am born and raised in the Southwest,  
and I am Hispanic and Mexican American. Both of my parents are Mexican American.  
On both sides, I do know that my–my grandmother on my father side is from Mexico  
my grandfather's also from Mexico, and my great grandmother is from Italy.  
And my great grandfather, I believe, is from Spain on my father's side  
On my mother's side, I don't really more know more so, about like where they were  
from,  
but I am aware that I do have some Latinx, of course,  
and some Italian mix within me somewhere  
and so aside from that, though I am currently 24 years old  
I grew up really just actually being really into music at first  
and then eventually as time went on,  
I took to dance  
and the main reason for that I think is because of the fact that, as a child,  
I did go through a lot of trauma  
like there was certain situations in my life that I dealt with as a child  
that were a form of abuse, in a sense, or assault.

*(Zoom chatter)*

LEAH  
Hello I'm Leah. She/her/hers.  
um well I lived in Texas since maybe I was eight and then I moved to Arizona.  
And I actually had to leave my great grandma behind and my grandma  
basically, my whole family over there,  
so but moving here was a good experience,  
because I didn't really know much about living life in Texas, because  
I wasn't taught a lot of things there like how I am here.  
and especially the culture here is different from the culture in Texas for sure.  
it's more open and out to different–different people, I guess.  
And Texas is more conservative, and we're closed like sticking to one idea, the whole  
time.

My mom just wanted a new life, like a fresh start.

*(Zoom chatter)*

LUZ

Because you know in high school, theatre is all about like oh Shakespeare or stuff like that and

performing in regular theater spaces versus like

When I first joined it was very new to me because you know one, it was on the light rail and I've never done anything like that.

And like being a part of Estrella Theater has made me grow tremendously and I've learned so much over the course of the years.

And sometimes I still feel like it's still new to me but um it's—it's awesome like I'm really grateful that I'm able to be a part of that space,

because I think it's changed for the better now,

but now looking back, I was like yeah like I've gotten a lot, especially in my leadership skills which has helped me perform so well.

*(Zoom chatter)*

JADE

I've grown up completely surrounded by the arts specifically Chicano art is what I have like witnessed and

I just know, like so many artists in the area,

and I think that—that experience has definitely mode—molded me to the most, like who I am now.

um so I guess, yeah that's—that's what I think has made me who I am

I—I'm an artist myself, I'm not a visual artist like my parents,

but performing artist and I'm interested in the same like

political topics they choose to do art about and

that's yeah, my biggest inspirations.

*(Zoom chatter)*

PAT

(responding) um, I think, because most—because when it comes to like filling out those forms where it's like, “what race are you?”

I've always been so confused because

Because like— I would look at my skin tone, and I would think maybe maybe

I'm probably like, when people see me, I'm practically Hispanic or something

Right and—and because I only speak mainly English

but I'm—but I'm like learning Spanish, so to say, so it's—

So it's kind of like I'm bilingual but I'm kind of still working on Spanish

so see I've always just been so confused as to what identify racially

and so from there when I figured out particularly like  
what kind of—what kind of like race to identify as from there.

*(Zoom chatter)*

XENON

Both my parents  
come from Mexico, come from families from Mexico.  
Like my grandmother, for example  
She is native  
I think, is the right word, but she speaks Spanish fluently, not really English.  
But she comes from a family of natives and then that's passed down to my mother  
and then my dad is from Mexico  
he previously became a US citizen a few years ago.

*(Zoom chatter)*

EVE

That kind of led to me needing an outlet and at first like as a kid you don't think like  
oh I'm choosing dance because of this, I went through this and I need an outlet.  
where really to me was like I just I used to watch music videos and MTV all the time  
and I used to like be obsessed with like the dance breakdowns  
and I always tell my family like that's gonna be me like I want to be on that music reality  
TV.  
But as a kid, the more that I realized, when I was dancing  
I felt like I was always releasing something that was bigger.  
That I didn't really understand because, of course, as a child,  
trying to maneuver through that trauma wasn't something  
that I really had the opportunity to do  
I didn't seek therapy at home,  
I kind of just was encouraged to just move forward with my life and,  
as I got older that's where—in middle school and high school,  
I still continue to do music and dance  
once I got to high school that's where I became really aware that dance was something  
that I was always going to do for the rest of my life.

*(Zoom chatter)*

LEAH

I'm an artist  
I can make musical art.  
yeah I play music and I could sing too.  
I started in church, when I was very young, my grandma actually owns a church okay  
my grandma would make me sing.

And I've just been singing like for a very long time now,  
ever since I was a little girl and I've just never stopped

*(Zoom chatter)*

LUZ

Yeah more more about my background  
yeah so my mother is like French and.  
She's French, Spanish.  
I don't remember I don't remember, specifically,  
but my dad's a Mexican so I have like different cultures in my in my life,  
So I don't speak Spanish sadly cuz my dad never taught me or my sister when we're  
growing up  
so that's that disconnect to us like because my dad's other side speaks Spanish most of the  
time so it's like really hard for me to.  
talk to them and—and stuff like that  
it's always been a struggle and even now, it was,  
like working with Estrella Theatre like  
there's a lot of work that I, I would have had the opportunity, if I knew how to speak  
Spanish  
you know if I knew how to speak that  
it's—so it sucks  
um I learned—I know a little bit just because I had to take Spanish in high school  
um so that kind of helped me but I'm still like—I don't—I can't speak to you—  
like I can't have a full on conversation with you.

*(Zoom chatter)*

JADE

yeah um I've never been big on visual art despite like seeing them  
I've always leaned towards performing arts  
my mom—my mom forced me to go to class.  
And then I ended up loving it,  
I actually took classes, my first classes with—with Estrella Theatre  
And I was—oh yeah so I've known them forever and that you know—  
as I've worked more with like organizations,  
like Estrella Theater and just talk to more—like actors or people involved in performance  
art  
I've definitely just leaned way toward more, way more towards that,  
while still focusing on the same issues.  
I think the same issues and topics can be discussed in different art forms  
and that's like just really, really what I love about the arts is that,  
like you can reach an audience make them think  
make them leave with something



and that's what yeah that's what I've always loved about it.

*(Zoom chatter)*

PAT

*(responding)* so I've just been so confused because I don't I don't like—  
Like physically I may look like a girl and stuff like that,  
but mentally I never really felt a connection between being identified as a female,  
and so I wanted to consider myself non binary.

*(Zoom chatter)*

XENON

You know, gender, can be one sometimes.  
Sometimes I would be female  
Sometimes I feel like being male  
or just the binary could like put it aside.  
A little bit of a mess sometimes.  
Sometimes I'm like, you know my parent is like, you know, we have two daughters,  
and you know, it's like but do I want to be a daughter?  
or son? or do I just want to be a child?  
And it always confuses me sometimes.  
I'm kind of somewhere in between, it gets messy.  
Right, and I don't think there's really anything wrong with a little bit of everything.  
it's like a bit of both worlds.

*(Zoom chatter)*

EVE

And then, when I got to college that's where  
At first I was a business communications major for like the first six months,  
and then I decided that I was going to switch to being a dance major  
because I don't like being a business major, that's not what I want to do,  
I was like, I wanted to dance. That's what I've always loved, that's what I've always  
known.  
And so I ended up auditioning for the dance program.  
And from there that's where my journey came about when I started getting involved  
within the hip hop culture and I started getting involved with the dance community  
and that's also where, like all of my other kind of forms of expression really blossomed  
also because I was starting to understand that what I was suppressing for so long,  
really was being released through this form of art,  
that I wasn't aware that I was using as my—as my therapy in a way.

*(Zoom chatter)*

LEAH

Oh um both of my parents are like Latino

mm hmm. yeah.

So I kind of call myself Texan.

Okay cuz I'm from Texas, but

I think that's what I am, a young Latina yeah.

I don't really like describing myself that much because I don't really know.

yeah like. I'm a lot of things...if I'm going on..

and like I can't just be one thing

I'm just like, a mix of things.

*(all actors close laptops)*

*(cue Powerpoint presentation)*

#### SCENE #6: HISTORY OF YOUTH SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

*(actors sit at their desks except for XENON)*

XENON

*(Puts on glasses, grabs a pointer, and walk to the front of the class)*

*School bell rings.*

XENON

Ladies, gentlemen, non-binary friends. Class is in session! You know, we're not the first young people to advocate for social justice. Young people have participated in liberation movements for decades. Students, can you provide some examples?

PAT

*(raises hand)* The numerous waves of the women's liberation movement across the US which seek equal rights and opportunities and just greater personal freedom for women across various topics such as legal, voting, politics, work, family, and sexuality.

JADE

*(raises hand)* The Chicano Walkouts in the 1960s in East LA. A series of protests by Chicano students against unequal conditions in Los Angeles Unified School District high schools.

LEAH

*(raises hand)* The anti-immigration movement that aims to protect immigrant rights, programs such as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or DACA, lobby for stricter

anti-hate crime laws, and counter xenophobia or any other opposition to immigrants in the US.

LUZ

*(raises hand)* The LGBTQ+ movement that advocates for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other sexualities.

EVE

*(raises hand)* Anti-gun and anti-violence campaigns against school shootings.

PAT

*(raises hand)* The Black Lives Matter Movement.

*(pause)*

*(LEAH raises her hand)*

XENON

Yes, Leah?

LEAH

Wanna know something crazy? *(pause)* With all the bans on Critical Race Theory (CRT) going on across the nation, we won't even be allowed to learn about this history at school... That makes me sad.

JADE

*(interjects loudly)* It makes me angry! It's so messed up! All the parents have been protesting at the school board meetings against CRT. Like, what the flute! Why is it a crime to know the history of our people, our race and injustice?

*(other actors chime in agreeing loudly and passionately)*

XENON

*(shouts to get their attention)* Class, class!

ALL

Yes, yes.

XENON

Thank you, class. I understand your frustrations. But this is why it's important to develop youth leaders who are critically conscious! We are the future! Though I must admit, despite this history of youth leadership, young people, especially youth of color, continue to be negatively portrayed in the media and perceived as less knowledgeable, lazy, helpless, rebellious, incapable or even criminal.

*(other actors groan in disdain)*

What are some of the false assumptions you've heard about Latinx youth today?

EVE

All Latinas are hypersexual and that's why we get pregnant young.

PAT

We all speak Spanish.

JADE

That we're all illegal immigrants.

LUZ

Latinx kids aren't smart because we don't work as hard in school.

PAT

That we're all in gangs.

*(pause)*

LEAH

Too bad it can't be proven. They say our stories of injustice and exclusion are anecdotal. Apparently our age makes us less credible—

XENON

*(shakes head)* Ecu- me? Not today, Satan! There is loads of research to back up what we say and prove we are leaders too! You all give me no other choice... bring out the puppets!

#### SCENE #7: LITERATURE REVIEW PUPPET SHOW

*(Stagehand brings out six puppets for each youth artist. Each actor puts a puppet on their hand and stands in a line down front centre stage. XENON facilitates the puppet show.)*

LEAH

Like scientific evidence?

XENON

Indeed. Let's pull out that dissertation. *(grabs dissertation)* Daniel Solórzano and Dolores Delgado Bernal (2001) reviewed the body of literature surrounding youth resistance and found it was conceptualized in a multitude of ways. However, most often youth were depicted as youth "acting out" and lacking a critique of the social conditions that elicit

poor behavior, or that students critique oppressive social actions but lack agency to enact change.

EVE

*(grabs dissertation)* To qualify what constitutes as resistance, they draw on Henry Giroux's (1983a, 1983b) two-part definition: (a) Youth must have a critique of social oppression, and (b) youth must be motivated by an interest in social justice

XENON

*(grabs dissertation)* However, Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) present four different types of oppositional behavior: (a) reactionary behavior, (b) self-defeating resistance, (c) conformist resistance, and (d) transformational resistance.

PAT

*(grabs dissertation)* The first of the four types of oppositional behavior is reactionary behavior. This behavior is not a form of resistance because it doesn't meet either of Giroux's qualifications mentioned above, thus the young people lack a critique of their social conditions and are not motivated by social justice (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

*(beat)*

XENON

Hey Mr. Reactionary, what's your thoughts on the recent abortion rule in Texas?

PAT

*(in puppet voice)* What's that?

XENON

You know, Texas banned abortion for women after six weeks pregnant.

PAT

*(in puppet voice)* Oh I don't know. Mr. Reactionary never even heard of it. I'm just a puppet. Socks for them. Get it *(laughs)* socks.

LUZ

*(steps forward)* Next, they describe *self-defeating resistance* as a negative form of resistance where youth may critique oppression but are not motivated by social justice and fail to act in a way to enact change. Instead, these young people engage in behavior that does not help transform their oppressive status and can even be destructive to oneself or others.

XENON

Howdy there Mr. Self-Defeating Resistance. What do you think about schools who ban ethnic studies?

LUZ

*(in puppet voice)* Hiya folks. It's a darn tootin shame if you ask me. Ethnic Studies is not so bad you see. It's just a way for us to examine history. To open conversation around race and racism in the U.S. of A., Hey! *(whispers)* I reckon we stage a coup. I have some dynamite, let's go burn all the old library books. That'll show 'em! Yee-haw!

XENON

Slow down there cowboy, that's just destructive. They definitely won't listen to you then.

JADE

*(steps forward)* Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) define *conformist resistance* as youth who are motivated by social justice yet do not critique oppression, instead they act according to societal norms and strive towards change within the existing social systems and social conventions.

XENON

Hello there Mr. Conformist. Question: What do you think about gendered bathroom signs? Keep 'em or toss 'em?

JADE

*(in puppet voice)* Good day. Listen, I want everyone to feel respected and have the freedom to poo where they choose. But, restrooms have always been labeled for men and women. We don't have to change laws and policies, that will just upset people. How about trans people just use whichever bathroom they choose?

XENON

Yeah but that's kinda the point, right? Without modifications to laws and/or policies, it's less likely non-binary people feel respected or free to choose...*(rolls eyes)*

LEAH

*(steps forward)* Lastly, Solórzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) introduced the ground-breaking concept *transformational resistance*. Here, young people demonstrate both a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice. Of the four types of oppositional behavior, transformational resistance holds the greatest potential to lead to social change, for young people who both critique oppression and embody resistance have significant potential to transform systems and institutions

XENON: Last, but certainly not least, Miss Transformational. What should we do about youth voice in schools? Historically, students have no role in educational decision-making.

LEAH

*(in puppet voice)* Where do I even begin?

I must say it is a sin.

Universities, colleges and schools,  
you don't have us fooled.

You say it's all about the kids

But I'm about to blow off your lids

Young people are put at the bottom of the hierarchy

No power, no voice, no choice, you see—

Adult-centered institutions

It's time to pay restitution

No more spies and lies,

Who are our allies?

*(puppet groups and puppet solos each step forward to speak at their turn)*

LEAH, LUZ, and XENON

*(alternating puppet voices)*

Domínguez, Clement, and Bertrand, 2021.

Claim power dynamics in and beyond schools can impact youth's ability  
to contribute to educational decision-making authentically

Traditionally, power flows from the top down

Which often leads students to frown

In school, a principal holds greater power than the staff and teachers,  
who hold more power than the students, Lord bring out the preachers!

Don't get us started on intersecting societal hierarchies  
race, social class, religion, gender identities.

EVE

*(in puppet voice)*

Cammarota, 2017.

Explains co-constructing knowledge with youth is pretty cool  
*a pedagogy of transformational resistance*, a learning tool

That transforms young people's subjectivities

to envision ways of learning that embrace our humanities

That counteract oppressive and reproductive education

Now that is what we call emancipation!

PAT and JADE

*(alternating puppet voices)*

Rodríguez and Brown, 2009.

Argue how youth of color can participate in the research process

And Yes, it has garnered quite the success

Youth Participatory Action Research or YPAR

An education that transcends the subpar  
Because youth can use their emic perspectives  
to inform topics of inquiry that are reflective  
to address real-world issues  
based on the needs, desires, and experiences of youth, grab the tissues!

LEAH

[CHORUS]

*(in puppet voice)* Universities, colleges and schools,  
you don't have us fooled.  
You say it's all about the kids  
But I'm about to blow off your lids  
Young people are put at the bottom of the hierarchy  
No power, no voice, no choice, you see—  
Adult-centered institutions  
It's time to pay restitution  
No more spies and lies,  
Who are our allies?

PAT

*(in puppet voice)*

Bell, 2010.

Research indicates schools position students at the bottom of the hierarchy  
which can perpetuate adults to view youth as inferior, such malarkey.  
the concept of adultism is based on the assumption  
that adults are better than young people, but we say fiction!  
Adults shouldn't feel entitled to act upon youth without their agreement  
Even if they can't drive, vote, or make a cent! We want fair treatment!

LUZ, EVE, JADE

*(alternating puppet voices)*

Quijada Cerecer, Cahill, & Bradley, 2013.

We don't agree with adultism, not one bit.

An -ism we deeply lament.

Instead we posit young people are not passive receivers of information  
Youth are active participants in defining their education  
And what it means to be a citizen in today's diverse multicultural society  
So adults, it's time to let go of your notoriety.

XENON and PAT

*(alternating puppet voices)*

Gallagher and Rodricks, 2017.

We recommend youth participation in social justice-focused theatre projects  
to reproduce and interrupt social relations that often go unchecked



applied drama techniques bring undisclosed or ignored dynamics to the foreground  
holding out hope through the art we're around  
creative and discursive pedagogies foster youth an opportunity  
to mitigate some of the negative impact while in community

ALL

[CHORUS]

*(in puppet voices)* Universities, colleges and schools,  
you don't have us fooled.  
You say it's all about the kids  
But I'm about to blow off your lids  
Young people are put at the bottom of the hierarchy  
No power, no voice, no choice, you see—  
Adult-centered institutions  
It's time to pay restitutions  
No more spies and lies,  
Who are our allies?

#### SCENE #8: SO WHAT?

PAT

So what? What does this all mean for us?

JADE

Well, it shows that despite these challenges we face as young, Latinx, females, we are in fact educational leaders.

XENON

It shows we have a voice and we care about improving society.

EVE

But it wouldn't hurt to have some adult allies that provide more opportunities for youth voice in educational spaces.

LEAH

Exactly. *(in puppet voice)* Because according to the research, we have both a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice AKA transformational resistance. Which has significant potential to change unjust systems and structures.

LUZ

Our work with Estrella Theatre and the arts- based YPAR project also proves that we can combine art, research, social justice to address real problems in our community. Like the forum play we created about mental health.

ALL  
(*Reply yes in agreement*)

SCENE #9: LATINX IDENTITY LABELS

(*Each actor takes off their puppet and hold it or put it on the floor. They each pull their chair into a semi-circle facing the audience*)

PAT  
Wow, that's wild. Who knew there were so many research studies that actually agree with our experiences. I wish some of my teachers were here...(*looks into the audience*)  
Ms. Roberts? Mr. Smith? (*snaps her fingers in disappointment*)

EVE  
(*to audience*) Yeah adults, especially adult educators, need to learn more about the Latinx youth experience...

PAT  
Well I actually call myself biracial.

XENON  
I prefer to say Hispanic.

LEAH  
Yeah, I say Hispanic.

JADE  
I identify as Chicana.

LUZ  
I'm Mexican American.

LEAH  
Ay Días mio... (*puts hands on head*)

EVE  
Weird. I guess we all identify differently.

XENON  
As much as like gen Z is all like fitting in and dressing up a certain way and labels. um I think the only label I'll take for now is homosapien.  
Why not? It's a label that's reasonable,  
you're a human,  
I'm human,

my friends are human.  
we're all human.  
we all really believe ourselves homosapien,  
not popular  
not weird  
not odd.  
not-not seen as like something different.  
there's a lot of change- there's-there would be a lot more acceptance than there is today.

JADE

*(to the audience)* Yeah I'll stick with Chicana... but to your point, just because we have Latinx/Hispanic ET. backgrounds that doesn't mean we can all get lumped together. We're far more multidimensional than that. Society just wants to put us in a box, but we can't let them...right?

ALL

Right!

*(All actors exit stage right and left)*

#### SILENT SCENE #10: EVERYTHING IS NOT AS IT SEEMS

*(An actor walks out and tears down the Sign Up for the HS Social Justice Coalition sign. Another actor walks out with a sign that says "No Spanish Allowed." Then another actor emerges holding a sign that says "Freedom! Just say no to Masks!" Next, another actor walks out with a sign that reads "There are only two genders!" Another actor walks out with a sign that says "Go back to Mexico." Then an actor walks out holding a sign that says "Stop Teaching Critical Race Theory to Our Kids!" An actor hangs a sign that reads NO JANGUEO. All actors walk off from both stage right and stage left.)*

#### SCENE #11: THE PRESSURE IS REAL

*(All actors enter playing Bad Bunny music and singing aloud. Some dancing. PAT is the first to notice the NO JANGUEO sign)*

PAT

What... only Latinx kids at this school jangueo? I'm pretty sure other kids do too but for some reason the sign is only posted in Spanish.

EVE

Dang racial profile much. They just want us to be like them.

LEAH

Yeah, the societal pressure to fit in is real. How do you all think you conform to societal pressures and norms?

LUZ

*(standing)* Now I think the perfect examples are school bullies. You know all the time, bully each other, because you know stuff in their life is not going the way that it seemed you know they might be in a very dark place and they just might be lashing out on people.

EVE

*(stands)* So blue is basically your... no green is your heart chakra blue is your throat chakra.

And what's funny is blue is actually the Chakra I struggle with. uh huh... yeah cuz I have, I have a hard time speaking up for myself, especially when I-

When I don't agree with things per se, and I know I'm up against- again a person or an individual of authority or power I tend to shut down because it also reflects that relationship, I had with my dad.

Like the males in family life, seem to always be the ones that are looked at as like a sense of power or like authority or discipline

JADE

*(stands)* I think I conform, in the sense of just like adapting to what is expected in America like what is expected, how you act. Especially, like around other people, like I forget that term... Where the code switch where you code switch around people that's something that I see in myself a lot like when I'm...

PAT

Dude, same! My head gets so scrambled sometimes.

EVE

*(stands)* and for my dad- growing up, again, like in a- in a Mexican household he was very much the father, that was the very disciplinary- not always on the healthiest ways and so with that, I struggled speaking up for myself, because if I would- I would get in trouble, even more, even if I was telling the truth, it was like no.

I don't hear what you're saying

doesn't matter if you are telling the truth or not  
I heard what I heard  
and this is what I'm going off of so

LEAH  
I feel that.

LUZ  
(*stands*) I know that when I, you know, when I used to be a bad person  
I would- you know bully people because, like, I had a lot of fighting at home with my  
parents and It was a lot.  
(*starts crying*) Good because I didn't get the childhood I wanted, we got.  
so angry made me angry and I'm.  
I desired what other people had so.  
Well, one of them, for it, you know.  
yeah.  
(*responding*) yeah and it, I was choosing the wrong way people.

(*XENON and PAT go to comfort LUZ*)

JADE  
(*stands*) I really only have one other too kinda  
friend,  
but when I'm talking to them, they always like.  
I always feel more comfortable around them, because I can tell them things and they'll  
understand what I'm saying, or like I could say things to them related to culture and they  
understand

ALL  
Me too.

LUZ  
(*stands*) Again self-care can look many different ways, whether that's you know staying  
in a weekend and watching movies or  
Going by yourself for ice cream or getting our new Journal and writing your goals  
like it depends on the person  
and how you want it to be and how it helps you.  
But I think it's very important to look- reflect on the choices you're making and what  
you're doing and to take care of yourself. I think a lot of times we just dismiss our  
feelings and we bottle it up, and then we lash on people when we hurt them.

EVE  
(*stands*) (*starts to get emotional*) I- I think growing up too... I've always had a hard time  
where

If I'm in a position of power  
I don't fully know how to embrace that for myself  
like I struggle to be in positions of leadership even because  
I get nervous, because I feel like I'm not meeting the expectation that's needed or...

LUZ

*(goes to embrace EVE)* I just want you to know that you're strong and it's going to be okay. You're an amazing person and you've come so far,  
Take some time to breathe and appreciate yourself!  
I'm sorry for how your dad is, I know it's hard.  
But hopefully maybe one day too he will realize how he is, what he does, and how it affects you, and hopefully will take the time he needs to heal and become and do better.

EVE

*(to LUZ)* Thanks girl.

*(pause)*

JADE

*(stands)* You know, also, growing up in like white schools  
like that's something that I've kind of never had.  
Because they just don't have the same experience.  
So, in that sense, like that's how I've conform with society  
like learning how to talk to certain people.  
When they don't really understand like who I am or where I come from.

LUZ

*(stands)* I think you just have to catch it soon enough and start like intentionally knowing what you're doing and knowing how to fix it and go around it.  
And yeah kind of knowing where to place like how you express everything that you're feeling everything you're going through like how you do it properly, and in the healthy way.

EVE

*(stands) (more upbeat)* And that's what's funny is that dance is the only form,  
where I feel like I can take a sense of leadership because I'm so comfortable with it  
because I know that's what I utilize to express myself, but if I'm using just my words  
I get like.  
I don't know...or i'll be like, I'm good with whatever  
or I get like really, like,  
what do you guys think  
because I don't always like really believe in in what I'm saying  
and I need to do better at that

PAT

I have an idea. Let's play a theatre game!

SCENE #12: THEATRE GAME INTERLUDE

PAT

Okay, listen up people. The game is called Opposite of Jackson and it helps with demechanization.

XENON

De-mek-a-na-who?

PAT

De-mech-a-ni-za-tion. The term comes from Brazilian playwright and theatre maker, Augusto Boal. Basically, he says society programs us to be a certain way so this game or exercise helps us unlearn and defy those societal norms. *(points to audience)* You all are playing too, so follow along.

I'm going to give a series of commands. First, I am going to say STAND and SIT. For now, when I say STAND, you STAND, and when I say SIT, you SIT. Got it?

ALL

Yes.

PAT

STAND. SIT. STAND. STAND. SIT. SIT. SIT. *(pause)* Good job! Now I'm going to switch it up. When I say STAND I want you to SIT, and when I say SIT I want you to STAND. Ready?

ALL

Yes!

PAT

STAND. STAND. SIT. STAND. SIT. SIT. STAND.. *(yells)* STAND.. *(laughing)* Nice work! Audience, how did you do? Let's try another. First, when I say YES, I want you to say YES. And when I say NO, you say NO. Let's go.

PAT

YES. YES. NO. YES. *(pause)* Too easy right? You know what's next. Let's make it harder. When I say YES, you say NO. and when I say NO, you say YES. Vamos.

PAT

YES. YES. YES. NO. NO. YES. NO. Wow, look at that! Killing it!

PAT

Okay, final challenge. Let's put it all together. When I say STAND I want you to SIT, and when I say SIT I want you to STAND. When I say YES, you say NO. and when I say NO, you say YES. Do you think you can handle that?

PAT

STAND. SIT. YES. NO. STAND. SIT. YES. YES. NO. STAND.(yells) STAND. YES. SIT. NO.

PAT

Let's give yourselves a round of applause! Audience, was that hard? (*calls on someone from the audience*) Why was it hard? (*PAT engages audience*)

PAT

Alright folx, now we're all warmed up and demechanized! Let's get back to the dissertation.

SCENE #13: ART-MAKING TOWARDS POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT/  
MONOLOGUE MONTAGE #2

*(Stagehand arrange the chairs in a circle facing outwards in center stage. Similar to musical chairs, each person will rotate towards the front center chair facing the audience where they will deliver their monologue snippet)*

LUZ

I love acting

I love becoming a different person for moments, you know.

and, especially, working with Estrella Theater because we get to talk about issues of love around youth and I've never been able to do that before

um so yeah that's another big part of my identity is like working with Estrella Theater

being an artist

being an actor.

You know, of being a social justice person

that all is me,

you know, connects to me.

*(change chairs)*

LEAH

Well, I gained more acting experience and

You could also learn from interacting with other people.

mm hmm and

How the—

it's like a different family kind of.



yeah it like made me  
think differently also.  
It changed me in a way too.  
Because I used to think I couldn't do anything.  
mm hmm and then I was like Oh, I could do this, so I found something I could do,  
on my own, that I actually can do pretty good.

*(change chairs)*

EVE

Growing up I experienced trauma that that could have led me to being that way, but for  
some reason, because I caught it so early and I was able to utilize art as my form of  
expression, I never reached that point in my life, where I was like I genuinely don't feel  
okay enough to the point that I don't want to be here anymore.

*(change chairs)*

XENON

Then with acting, I just, you know  
hold on, let me get personality that we put this character here,  
let me put their consciousness in here.  
it's like that entire process  
when it's acting and I'm-I know I've been doing arts programs and maybe usually have  
like a play or like a little musical at the end of every session and  
it's developed my acting skills, a lot.

*(change chairs)*

JADE

I guess, just like, the other biggest part of my identity or just like my everyday hobbies  
like.  
acting, calligraphy and editing  
and how can I use that to reach my goal of reaching out to people.  
With theatre like-I like it, because you can reach out to people

*(change chairs)*

LUZ

with Estrella Theater, since I'm able to explore subjects of social justice and-and  
youth based work.  
I think it's helped me a lot, because now,  
I can talk about things that I wasn't able to before  
I've been exposed to a lot of things,  
and now I can be a leader in certain spaces.

and help others  
I think that's also been such an amazing journey,

*(change chairs)*

LEAH

I guess,

It gave me.

It made me give- to let out my emotions kind of  
because acting is not just something

You can see

it's also something you feel

yeah and sometimes you have to be super open to anything-during when you're acting

So-It can be used as a tool

For people to understand

Why we want to introduce the social topics that sometimes people don't believe in

It gets shown artistically.

By something some people don't expect

So I think it's a really unique way to show people that

We want people to understand.

*(change chairs)*

XENON

yeah...you got something out of it.

it's more of a...

putting another person in me or you know put...installs...

Then it's like, Okay, how do we relate to this character and then it explores a lot.

Like I found out.

I recently just got interested in to play doctors and there was a character that was a play  
doctor that I used to play.

And then he- and then the character.

would like make tea with make- potions, soup, was all done with herbs.

I have a bit of a green thumb (Smug)

And I've grown some herbs in the past, always using them for medicinal purposes.

*(change chairs)*

EVE

But instead I have to flip my mindset really.

and realize that no- the reason, what did keep me wanting to be here was because I did-I  
was aware that I did have a voice. But it wasn't necessarily from me speaking, it was me  
using my body. Or it was me like writing it down and speaking poetry.

That-that aspect is using my voice.

*(change chairs)*

JADE

Before the school year ended  
My teacher had us do a project,  
and I really liked this project because it was pretty much loose  
there was no rubric or anything,  
it was just: make something that makes people leave with a question  
and that's something that I kind of think about whenever I make anything  
or I'm in any performances,  
like, I want to, I want to leave an impact on people

*(change chairs)*

LUZ

for me, is like you know you're not-  
in school you're not given a space to explore  
like for social justice or  
to become a leader  
and exploring like issues around us,  
you know because we're-we're often oppressed and you know people say we are too  
young and something like that,  
but having that space to create you know this amazing original piece  
based around- you know- issues revolving around race  
and you know just like *the last production* like that was amazing to explore.

*(change chairs)*

XENON

Okay, so chamomile is identified as a curator  
ginger is good for inflammation  
milk thistle is good for dementia  
it sells blueberries choose wisely but been and  
ginger is also good for constipation.  
And there are so many wonders with herbs.  
And it can only reflect me by you know  
what the character is supposed to learn  
kind of like character development.  
But it's both, my self-development and the character developing.  
It's like putting myself in their shoes.

*(change chairs)*

LEAH

I just thought I couldn't do it.  
I mean, I also gained experience and who is acting for like four years,  
I believe, four years a little over four years.  
And my acting abilities have gotten better.  
And there are some times, where...  
Great.  
huh and.  
Maybe one day it can be (*gestures so-so and bad*)  
It just takes practice and time  
and you got to believe in yourself.

*(change chairs)*

EVE

But aside from that it's always just been like.  
mostly about being able to help others see what their capabilities are  
when it comes to expressing and releasing  
whatever it is that they may be going through,  
because I think at the end of the day.  
that's really what most people need is that sense of that coping mechanism and and that  
aspect that really helps them regulate and makes them feel like they're comfortable in the  
space that they are in,  
Because there's no one that can share or do it like them  
or express like them and there's no need to like filter it ET,

*(change chairs)*

JADE

I want to use my creative abilities to make an impact on people.  
Just like I've seen my family do my whole life.

*(change chairs)*

LUZ

And like, just being open  
and being having a space to talk about it  
because now everyone thinks it's so taboo  
and everyone is harsh-harsh about it  
when it needs to be something we all need to talk about  
and address because it's such a strong presence in society.

*(change chairs)*

EVE

Because with dance

I know that's something that I've always felt like I don't need to filter my movement for anybody

like that's just who I am

that's how I feel and that's it.

*(all actors exit and stagehand moves chairs behind desks)*

#### SCENE #14: OPENED MY EYES

LEAH

*(singing)* He's gone— here's the thing

I still sit with sad memories

With a phone that won't ring

why are you so mean?

Maybe one day you'll see

I just wanted you to love me

To be there

And show you care

No one asks me how I feel

Only mamá knows the deal

I remember the times

I should have opened my eyes

Now I see it so clear

You're still struck with fear

Trauma unhealed

That leaves our fate sealed

So one day with my own kids

The cycle will end

I'll show them what you couldn't show me

A new generation set free

No one asks me how I feel

Only mamá knows the deal

I remember the times

I should have opened my eyes

Ashley 02/24/22

SCENE #15: TRANSFORMATIONAL RESISTANCE & SEXUALITY

*(LUZ and PAT sit down side by side on two chairs in the centre stage. LUZ has a laptop on her lap, while PAT holds a phone in her hand. They take turns speaking their monologues and freeze when the other character is speaking.)*

LUZ

Um, I think my sexuality has always been hard for me.  
Because.

I.. I mean I don't- I don't know how I would label myself,  
I guess,  
like bi or queer whatever  
I just kind of think like...  
When you experience love it shouldn't matter what,  
you know, gender, they are  
as long as you love that person, they love you back  
and that's amazing

PAT

Um... I think it was the pandemic  
throughout that time that made me like to dig-dig deeper into that because  
I, myself  
was questioning like, okay  
what would I want to be able to... you know?  
What like- what are my labels?  
and am I comfortable with them or not?  
If I am not, I should look into... You know, like the different kinds,  
because I know some of my-some of my friends and acquaintances were saying like,  
hey I'm non binary and I use these pronouns.  
Or you know, hey I'm transsexual,  
and so I enjoy using pronouns but I prefer they call me this,  
and so that sense of people to say their labels you know  
just being diverse and like- like having like these different identifications for themselves.

LUZ

Yeah in seventh grade I came out to my mom.  
And that was like a horrible experience for me,  
because my mom- my mom and dad have always been very close minded and  
They-they would say like, "they don't want their children to be gay"  
or you know, something like that,  
so that was hard,  
but I did it and I told her you know,  
I like girls too,  
and I know you're not going to be in no.... you're not gonna like that,

and knowing I could be comfortable with that,  
but it's part of who I am  
and- and it's something I've been knowing since I was like in fifth grade.

PAT

It started to make me think about what I wanted to be and how?  
And how I wanted to see myself as  
because I know that, like you know I've always wondered...  
Am I just a tomboy?  
Or am I just a girl that just doesn't follow norms of what normal girls should be?

LUZ

And you know, she said some harsh things to me,  
and I think that's always been hard for me, as well  
I think that also set a disconnection between me and my mom.  
And I never told my dad because I know my dad would freak out  
and I don't want to deal with that, because my dad has very bad anger issues  
you know my childhood was rough most of the time  
because he was drunk and he was abusive.

PAT

So I started thinking a little bit more about it,  
and then the Black Lives Matter movement really started coming through throughout the  
pandemic because of the main event of the death of George Floyd  
like that was just a really... just impactful event that happened  
And it just made me think about like  
what's-what society is shaping itself into?

LUZ

Oh yeah oh yeah I definitely, especially when I was younger and confused, I was like  
how do I even know, you know?  
like I'm too young to know like, what does that mean for me?  
Because you know I don't-I've never known someone that was bisexual  
so I didn't have that either  
like the outside help or support

PAT

Yeah, it just got me thinking into that and because it was impactful  
And the LGBTQ, you know,  
I was really starting to look deeper into those two because I wanted to find some way  
that you know if--if, like discrimination or racism  
Or you know homophobia or transphobia happens  
you know to any of my friends...  
I just want to be there to be able to support them.

LUZ

So I learned it and I remember, I could probably find them (glances looking for poems)  
it's just like there, it is the one,  
but I- I remember writing poems about girls that I will have a crush on and  
And you know, looking back, and now I'm like oh yeah that was just me trying to  
express like Well, this is what this is, who I am.  
And I can't feel that, with everyone, so I control it through writing,  
and no one will never know you know..(pause) if I-  
So yeah it has helped me figure out, who I am and  
how I perceive things  
how I perceive the world, everything like that, just like captures everything.  
there's no limit I guess.

PAT

And with learning about those two groups  
like my-my end goal was to be able to  
learn more about those communities and if  
you know just any of the bad things, like racism or transphobia, homophobia ever  
happens,  
like any of my friends in any situation or just wherever  
I can be able to step up for them and to be able to speak up for those who are...  
For those who are victims or vulnerable.

LUZ

Sometimes it takes me a long time to process something and I've noticed that once I've  
written about it, it's easier for me to be like, oh it's clear now you know  
I can see what's going on,  
you know, I can see the patterns or things like that.  
Which I've been grateful, you know, like I said,  
especially like dealing with depression like that's always been hard for me to and  
letting it out through writing lifts a lot of weight off my shoulders  
and it helps me a lot.  
yeah

#### SCENE #16: THEATRE GAME INTERLUDE 2

LEAH

Thank you for sharing Pat and Luz! We so appreciate your honesty and bravery.

XENON

So many people get stuck on seeing people in one way. But that's not reality, we're far  
more multidimensional than that.



LUZ

Well said. Yeah I wish people could open their eyes and see things in a new way. That closed mindedness is what keeps people silent about who they are.

LEAH

Here's a thought. Let's do some object work. How about we play Homage to Magritte? Circle up!

*(the actors stand in a circle and LEAH puts a chair in the middle)*

So for those wondering, Magritte is a famous artist that created a painting of an apple called "Ceci n'est pas une pomme" or "This is not an apple." The aim being to force us to question how we use labels and symbols. So this game pays homage to Magritte by looking at objects and seeing them in a different way other than they are. *(points to chair)* Okay what do we see in the middle?

JADE

A chair.

LEAH

Chair no more. From now on, this is not a chair. It can be anything else but a chair. We each are going to take turns using this no-name object in a unique, new, never been done before way. Then we will all guess what the object's name is. Got it?

XENON

Got it. But maybe we should make the circle bigger.

LEAH

Hmmm...more people, huh. *(turns to audience)* Looks like we need some volunteers to come on stage and play with us. Can I have two volunteers from the audience? *(LEAH calls up two audience members)*

Anyone care to go first?

*(the actors and audience members each take turns until everyone has a turn)*

LEAH

Good job! Way to use your imagination and see things other than they are.

XENON

I bet they'll never see a chair the same again.

*(all laugh)*

LEAH

Let's show some love to our brave audience members for joining us on stage! (*applause*)  
You can make your way back to your seats. Thank you. Up next, Jade explains how transformational resistance can occur at the micro-level, through interactions and relations with peers.

(*all actors exit stage right*)

SCENE #17: A SOLILOQUY OF INTERPERSONAL TRANSFORMATIONAL  
RESISTANCE

JADE

(*sits in a chair facing the audience in the front of stage right holding her cellphone to speak on a Zoom video call*)

JADE

(*responding*) another thing that came to mind was something that I just can't dial up or dial down  
and that's just being a woman in general,  
like my—an issue I felt a lot...hard like.  
a lot harder than I ever have  
recently, is that I have friends who are white because of the school I go to  
or I hang out with brown people, or people who are white and are friends with my  
friends  
and they'll say stuff...  
Then I'm like, you know, that—that's wrong and I'll tell you why that's wrong,  
but something that I've experienced recently with like an acquaintance is that I would  
like,  
he would say something really like micro aggressive or something  
and then I would call him out on it and be like:

(*flashback begins*)

LEAH

(*as JADE*)

(*waves to WHITE MALE 1 and approaches him while both students are wearing backpacks and masks*)

WHITE MALE 1: I'm so over masks, it sucks. I'm never going to China after what they put us through.

LEAH

(*as JADE*)

Hey, you know that is wrong. You know that this is—like, xenophobic, right? You can't blame an entire population of a country for COVID-19. The whole world has been affected by it

WHITE MALE 1: You don't know what you're talking about. That's not what xenophobia is. That's facts. That's where the virus started. Don't you watch the news?  
*(freezes after line)*

LEAH  
*(as JADE)*  
*(turns to speak to audience)* Oh my God, just being questioned on like My own humanity or other's humanity or like these, like activist things I'm supposed to know I'm just to be ignored at the end and then dismissed And like what a slap in the face moment

*(WHITE MALE 1 approaches WHITE MALE 2 to fact check JADE)*

WHITE MALE 1  
Hey so, Jade said me saying I don't want to ever go to China because of COVID is xenophobic. That's not what that is right?

WHITE MALE 2  
Nah bro you're really in the wrong for this one.

*(WHITE MALE 1 and 2 freeze)*

LEAH  
*(as JADE)*  
*(speaking to audience)* and then he came back to me and apologized after going to the white man, and you know just thinking about that experience in general, just like makes me mad and I didn't even end up accepting his apology

WHITE MALE 1  
Hey, Jade. My bad about what I said earlier. I talked it over with my friend and yeah, I didn't mean it like that. We good?

LEAH  
*(as JADE)* Nah, we're not good. Straight up like you know—I know that you went to this guy and the fact that you needed to go to like a white dude before you could come back to me and say—like, that,

you own up to your mistakes  
makes me believe that you never like cared about me in the first place.  
Never cared about what I had to say and you only care when a man says it.

*(flashback ends)*

*(Actors exit stage right)*

### SCENE #18: THEATRE GAME INTERLUDE 3

LUZ

Microaggressions to macroaggressions, at the end of the day they're both aggressive.

XENON

Those moments are so awkward and uncomfortable! It's like, do I say something? Do I not say something? Do I ignore it, laugh it off, or pretend I didn't hear it at all? Or do I make a big stink? Do I say it nicely or firmly? Or both? What if it's an adult? A parent? A teacher? Are we supposed to speak up then? I have so many questions.

PAT

It's not always strangers too, oftentimes it's the people closest to you that can cause the most hurt.

LEAH

It's almost like we should rehearse comebacks for those moments, ya' know what I mean? Because in the moment I just freeze up in a state of shock and then I regret later that I didn't have the right words to say.

XENON

Or any words for that matter.

EVE

I know a way we can practice, Three Line Improv! Line up everyone. We'll go two people at a time. Person A will make a statement, then Person B will give a criticism, lastly Person A will give a comeback. Listo?

PAT

Should we invite some of our new friends?

EVE

*(looks at audience)* Good call. I need two volunteers to join us. *(calls up two volunteers from the audience)*

ALL

Listos.

*(The group improvisations the game live in front of the audience until everyone has a turn to play both Person A and Person B)*

EVE

*(Applauses actors)* Good work everyone. How did that feel for everyone?

ALL

*(actors improv reflective responses)*

EVE

Let's give another round of applause for all our actors, especially our spect-actors! Now back to the dissertation.

#### SCENE #19: TRANSFORMATIONAL RESISTANCE AT SCHOOL

EVE

Youth resistance can take place in a variety of places, including school.

JADE

Definitely at school. Did I tell you about that one time? With the High School Social Justice Coalition?

*(Four youth arrange themselves into two rows of three facing each other. EVE remains standing watching the flashback from the stage right. The first of two flashbacks begin.)*

STUDENT 1

Great job everyone! We killed it at the antiracism grade level meeting. So I talked to Principal Jenkins and proposed our idea to help co-facilitate the antiracist training with the teachers. Clearly they need help on how they should be handling it because, clearly, nothing is happening. Well the principal agreed. Let's get to work.

JADE

*(calls for some students to come work by her, begins to talk excitedly)* Perfect. I have an idea I've been thinking about... Maybe we can have artists *(she continues to chat in the background)*

*(An actor walks by with a sign that reads one week later)*

*(STUDENT 1 is called out of the meeting to the far stage left by ADULT 1 while the rest of the coalition members continue to work and plan. ADULT 1 and STUDENT 1 have a conversation out of view of the coalition members.)*

STUDENT 1

*(returns to the room with disappointment)* Hey, can I get everyone's attention? So I just got the news from the principal. Turns out they don't want us to help co-facilitate the antiracist trainings for the teachers and staff. I'm sorry everyone.

JADE

What?! We've been working on this and now all of a sudden she's going to go back on her word? What did she say?

STUDENT 1

She kinda backed me into like a corner and being like you can't do that, like. you're not going to do that, like we can't make time for you and I'm sorry, but this is like not going to happen, I know that your clubs gonna be mad, but you can't do it. Sorry, I know we worked so hard to do that just for it to be just thrown out the window.

*(everyone looks down sad and disappointed)*

JADE

*(long pause before she begins interior monologue)*

Privilege  
What you have  
They will never receive it.

Don't speak  
No need  
There's no effect, anyways.

Mexican--  
Before it was  
American.

Sit at the coalition and create  
Make a new string  
To add to your tangled mess.

You're uncomfortable  
Forced to see me  
With the mess you created.

Regret--  
Not because of your actions,  
Only that it happened.

We're done  
"You're too loud"  
I will just be louder.

*(pause. ends interior monologue)*

JADE

Let's stage a school walkout.

*Everyone agrees enthusiastically.*

*(flashback ends)*

EVE

En serio? OMG I feel they don't want to hear our voices at school. It's like they say one thing in public and then do another behind closed doors. So messed up. And people say school isn't political.

JADE

Facts.

EVE

Well, my story is about resistance, but my oppressor isn't from the present, but from my childhood...

*Flashback begins.*

EVE

*(speaks to audience)* I feel like I'm—I'm at peace,  
knowing that I am a survivor and I have a story that honestly can help others.  
figure out, you know, maybe what their sense of peace is or  
how to heal their own sense of trauma  
that is something that I came to peace with

*(Dancer enters the stage and begins to perform as EVE speaks her monologue. The dancer illustrates EVE's narrative with her movement.)*

around college when I got invited to do a showcase at a domestic abuse violence showcase. I got asked- us- the survivors, to perform a dance, and that was a day, where I realized, I was like whoa. I went through this as a child and it wasn't domestic abuse it was more sexual abuse and then, as I got older. I was provided a platform to be able to share and express myself through a form of dance, and that for me was the moment where I was like whoa.

I didn't know that I could feel this way, I didn't know that I could feel this sense of release and having to think about those things as-as what happened, back then, as my form of inspiration to move.  
Even though I have been doing that for whole—my whole life, but it was that moment, where I was like dance healed me like it really did that, and I think that  
That was the day that I realized also that I feel like my purpose is not only to just like to share and express with others around me and and create with others, but to really acknowledge that  
As a survivor, as someone who's went through something that is very traumatizing and that you can't give back  
is something that I became really passionate about for others, especially young—young teens or young children at that fact.  
And then even, at times, young adults, because I'm aware, it still happens it doesn't matter what age you are  
it's possible, no matter what and so that's something that I've really come to peace with this, knowing that I do have a story, I am a survivor,  
but I also do have a way of expressing that  
and I'm willing to be a piece of sharing that story.

*Flashback ends.*

JADE

Wow. Thank you for sharing that with me. Your story is so powerful. It's like you used your art to not only cope, but also to bring awareness around domestic violence and abuse. That's not just resistance...that's creative resistance!

EVE

Yeah, it's not always easy. It's a process, but one I am willing to participate in because as much as it helps me, I know my story can help others too.

JADE

Yes! You go girl!

EVE

Yes, I'm blessed to have found dance. Dance saved me.

JADE

You're going to have to teach me some moves some time, because ya' girl has no rhythm.

EVE

How about now?



JADE  
*(laughs nervously)* Uhh...now..umm...okay....

EVE  
Try this. *(does dance move)*

JADE  
Like this? *(attempts to imitate the dance move but fails hilariously)*

EVE  
Um...*(chuckles)* yeah, nice try, maybe a bit more like this...*(repeats dance move)*

JADE  
*(re-attempts to imitate the dance move but still fails hilariously)*

EVE  
Yeah, girl...we'll work on that, but good start. *(gives JADE high five)*

JADE  
I guess we both have our own unique way of expressing ourselves.

EVE  
Hey, that's the way it's always been and the way it should always be.

#### SCENE #20: TABLE READ

*(All of the youth, including AMY, NANCY and DOLORES sit at a long table with a copy of their interview transcripts and laptop in front of them. They take turns reading sections aloud and providing feedback to demonstrate the member-checking and table read process)*

PAT  
*(to audience)* At the end of the study, we were all invited to read the data aloud to help the analytic process, but also to member check the representation of the data. Member checking means that as a participant I can make edits, additions, removals, and other recommendations before the dissertation is published.

*(All characters are typing and working on the computer while a montage of different participant responses is spoken aloud. Despite being seated together, the participants are only connecting over Google Docs or Zoom.)*

NANCY  
Love this above intro and framing context

DOLORES

It seems that these two dialogues say the same thing. Or it seems that one is a longer definition than the other?

PAT

Hmm... delete.

NANCY

A couple questions: is there intentional repetition of themes throughout the piece, and is there a way to layer more into why the repetition is a part of the layered process documentation? Is there another part of the dissertation that goes with this, or does this stand on its own? And, is there a reason why we can't name Estrella Theatre? If it feels OK to you, I don't think we need a pseudonym! I think its an honor to be named in this. I do think its good idea to use different names for youth participants.

DOLORES

What I gather from this scene is that the actors will be introducing themselves but in zoom format. If so, maybe have whoever the lead speaker is give an example of check in question or questions. Example: What do you consider your heritage or ethnicity to be? What kind of art do you practice or like to do? And What are your pronouns? I say these questions, as most of the actors are answering those in their monologues it seems. I believe this will make this part of the play go a bit faster and be more clear as to what the characters are trying to convey.

NANCY

Yes, I agree!

PAT

Hmm...Maybe take this part out?

DOLORES

This dialogue is very repetitive in some parts. Not sure if it is meant to be or sound that way.

PAT

There are some things in here I need to change.  
...after having a long conversation with my mother,  
I finally understood that sometimes peer pressure can get real nasty in my head.  
Let's just say, that I've questioned my identity several times, on several occasions,  
but after that encounter, I'd just want to be label free.  
So after that, I realized that I want to be my own me,  
I want to be a lady!  
And yes, even if it means wearing, saying, and doing the things that represent my  
identity.

*(pause)*

So, if it wouldn't be too much trouble, can the pronouns be she/hers, and gender identity be a girl?

NANCY

I wonder if there's a little more to dig into here? How do all these ideas come together to catalyze and shape what this project adds to the conversation?

PAT

Add quotation marks.

DOLORES

Maybe clean up the dialogue of this whole scene a bit so it sounds clearer, I get that it is youth speaking but I feel there are a lot of "likes" in there and some repetitive words that makes it confusing to read at times.

PAT

Replace lower case i with upper case I...

NANCY

Wow! What a cool documentation of process! I think this is really layered and I appreciate so much how it activates the concept of praxis- like framing the theory through and inside of the artistic process.

*(pause)*

Thank you for all this beautiful work!!!

## SCENE #21: AUDIENCE SURVEY

XENON

*(Enters dancing confidently, but also comically)* See I got all the moves. I taught Eve everything she knows *(laughing)*.

My dear audience, we are moving into the final segment of the presentation today. Coming up we have an audience survey, a Q&A, and a small group activity before we close. Buckle up!

First, let's do an audience survey and see how you all resonated with the stories we've shared today. Take out your phones and please enter the Kahoot code on the projector

screen. The survey consists of seven questions. For each question you will choose from one of the responses: Always, Often, Sometimes, or Never.

*(XENON facilitates the survey and offers feedback after each question based on audience responses and results.)*

XENON

I've had a voice in my learning and education.

I've had opportunities to--to be a leader in my education

I've experienced injustice in my learning.

I have a desire to learn about social justice issues.

I feel comfortable speaking to people in power.

I feel confident critiquing oppression and calling out injustice.

I enjoy being creative.

## SCENE #22: POST-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS & DIALOGUE

EVE

Based on your audience responses, it appears that... *(riff)*

EVE

Before we get to the Q&A, audience I have a few questions for you.

*(Facilitates post-performance group dialogue with audience)*

1. What are the social problems/issues we see the characters face in the play?
2. In what ways do the Latinx youth critique oppression and display a desire for social justice?
3. How does making socially relevant art and performance affect the youth?
4. youth, what scenes or characters resonated most with you? challenged you? inspired you?
5. adults, what scenes or characters resonated most with you? challenged you? inspired you?
6. What would help k-12 schools and learning spaces better nurture and educate students, especially students of color?
7. What else could help encourage youth voice and leadership in learning spaces?

EVE

Now, what questions do you have for us?

*(Actors sit in a row of chairs at stage centre)*

## SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

LUZ

Thank you for your participation and thoughtful questions. Now I would like to invite you all to participate in a small group activity.

Find 2-3 people to form a group. Based on the play, together I want you to brainstorm how adults can better educate and collaborate with youth, especially youth of color, in learning spaces? After 5 minutes of discussion, I want your group to use one of the poster papers on the wall and the markers to create a graphic to illustrate your discussion. Each group will present at the end of the activity.

*(Youth artists facilitate activity and presentations)*

LUZ

Thank you all for your participation and being a great audience today. We want to leave you with a poem written by our house poet, Luz.

#### EPILOGUE

SCENE #23: "UNDEFINED" A poem by Luz

*(All YOUTH ARTIVISTS stand at center stage facing the audience.)*

LUZ

I am not defined by my beauty  
or by how I dress  
I am defined by my words  
and how I express myself to the outside world

EVE

I am defined by my art  
and my sense of the unknown  
I am a leader and a young artist  
just trying to make art in this mundane but vast place

XENON

I am defined by the amount of freckles  
on my face  
but not my eyes, or nose, or lips  
I breathe in the world  
and exhale it out into something more

PAT

I am defined by my hard work,  
my passion, and I lead with my heart and soul  
Do not number me like everyone else

in this unfair system

LEAH

I don't try to fit in like a puzzle piece  
I like to believe I'm more complex and random than that  
my power is what drives me  
to keep growing and learning

JADE

I want to become wise and one with myself  
I don't want money, I'm not driven by it, I don't abuse my power  
like those in control.  
I want to share my life and feelings and times  
with everyone I love

LUZ

I don't want to live life  
occupied by everything out of my control  
I want to share time and love  
and I want to master the idea of life  
and what it should be  
It's endless and beautiful

EVE

I will stay in my lane  
I will do good  
I will do everything I must  
with truth and opened eyes

XENON

I seek the truth, I seek the justice,  
I seek to understand everything and everyone  
there is more than what meets the eye  
and speaks to the mind

PAT

I am ready listen  
and to cry and go through  
the good and the bad  
and the extraordinary  
because I only get one chance

JADE

and I want to do it right

EVE  
because in the end

LUZ  
I will have a free mind and beautiful memories

LEAH  
that will live on through me

ALL  
until the end of it all.

THE END

## CHAPTER 5

### EPILOGUE

#### **Discussion**

In “*Blue*” I highlight four overarching findings throughout the play: 1) Art is a language for transformational resistance; 2) Latinx youth negotiate identity scripts and performances based on their social circumstances; 3) Performance as praxis foster’s identity exploration towards cognitive resonance and/or cognitive dissonance; 4) Latinx youth activist-researchers perform transformational resistance towards educational leadership.

The first finding correlates to research question one and reveals that Latinx youth activist-researchers use art to display a desire for social justice and critique oppression (Q1). The second finding correlates to research questions one and two and reveals how Latinx youth activist-researchers struggle to negotiate and embody their multidimensional identities amidst oppressive social circumstances (Q1; Q2). The third finding correlates to Q2 and reveals how Latinx youth activist-researchers utilize artistic embodiment and performance as praxis to explore identity towards cognitive resonance/dissonance. The fourth and final finding correlates to Q1 and reveals that Latinx youth activist-researchers leverage their desire for social justice and critique of oppression as educational leaders in their homes, schools, and communities.

This critical performance ethnographic study combines concepts of CRT and LatCrit, transformational resistance, critical civic praxis, identity scripts and performances, performance as praxis, and cognitive resonance/dissonance to understand



Latinx youth activist-researchers as they strive for social justice across various contexts. In addition, the ethnodrama weaves the theoretical frameworks in this study throughout the play. For instance, “*Blue*” demonstrates how a community-based organization fosters critical civic praxis to support Latinx youth to cultivate critical knowledge and skills through the creation of socially relevant art (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Also, it widens the scope of transformational resistance by including arts-based YPAR as youth voice and products of performance as praxis (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal 2001; Denzin, 2003). Additionally, these frameworks help us to understand Latinx youth (mostly female gender identifying) motivations to challenge oppression by creating socially relevant art as they navigate various identity scripts and performances across society (Jackson & Hogg, 2010; Pérez Huber, 2010).

The study methodology forefronts the rich and compelling stories of youth identity and resistance. I weaved youth participant voices from transcript and text data that enhanced triangulation through supporting statements, highlighted disconfirming evidence, and created a collective story creation (Leavy, 2020). I intentionally employed a repetition of themes throughout the piece to corroborate and contradict youth statements. For instance, I showed that the Latinx youth also demonstrated examples of conformist resistance to juxtapose the evidence of transformational resistance that appears numerously throughout the play. I was also attentive to how power operates based on my epistemological choices as a researcher concerning disclosure and authority (Leavy, 2020). For instance, my intentional choice to remove myself from the script entirely. Initially, I included myself in the play, however over time I came to the

realization my role detracted rather than amplified youth voices. Just as in real life, the participants didn't need another adult to enact adultism (Bettencourt, 2018) in a play that is creatively designed to center youth voice.

This ethnodrama and ethnographic study highlights how Latinx young people utilize art as a language for youth voice and resistance. In addition, this study suggests that Latinx youth activist-researchers perform transformational resistance towards educational leadership roles. Given that all the participants have Latinx backgrounds, the findings have implications related to race. The findings also provide insight related to age, gender, gender identity, and sexuality, which I argue further attributes to the participants intersectionality and axes of societal oppression. *“Blue”* offers an inside view to how Latinx youth make sense of these identities, and implications for education practitioners and researchers in their work with these young people which I outline below, but first I review a summary of my findings and conclusions.

*Art is a language for transformational resistance. (Q1)*

Art is powerful and has transformative potential in fostering youth to explore their voice, whether that is through written work, painting, theatre, or other creative modalities. For instance, in Scene 11 Luz shared how her identity as an artist while in ET was developed, but also how it fostered her to explore oppressive home circumstances. Further, how she internalized and enacted that hurt into bullying, “I know that when I, you know, when I used to be a bad person I would- you know bully people because, like, I had a lot of fighting at home with my parents and it was a lot.” Luz’s later description of this exploration suggests that art presented her the means to uncover a new truth about

her identity and probe possible internalized oppression. However, her involvement with ET and art allowed for Luz to grapple with this truth and work towards reconciliation. She also described how her involvement with ET allowed her to process and understand how her family problems at home affected her mental health. As result, art became a language for her reflect and build transformational resistance—a critique of oppression and a desire for social justice.

In Scene 19, Eve’s final monologue bravely recounted the traumatic experience of sexual assault she endured as a young girl. She described how she failed to process it during childhood, and how it is an experience she continues to process till this day. However, she explains how dance and artmaking provided her with an outlet to cope and heal from this reality. Eve described how using her body, instead of her words, became her voice and way to share her truth. In Scene 13, Eve states “...what did keep me wanting to be here was because I did—I was aware that I did have a voice. But it wasn't necessarily from me speaking, it was me using my body or it was me like writing it down and speaking poetry. That—that aspect is using my voice.” Not only did she reap cathartic benefits, but she also utilized dance to share her story and bring awareness to domestic violence and abuse to various audiences. Eve’s story highlighted the importance for young people to find community where they can make sense of their feelings in dialogic inquiry with others (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007) and rehearse for future action (Boal, 1979).

Eve and Luz’s monologue highlights the importance for young people to find community where they can make sense of their feelings in dialogue with others and

rehearse for future action. Luz highlights the concept of critical civic praxis (CCP) in that her membership to a community organization, intergenerational networks, and exposure to political ideas helped her achieve critical consciousness and use this newly acquired knowledge to implement changes in her interpersonal relationships (see Ginwright & Cammarota, 2007). Following Solórzano and Delgado Bernal's (2001) definition, Luz embodies transformational resistance in how she was able to critique her own enactment of oppression and desire to make changes towards social justice in how she treats people, but also in her activism and civic engagement in ET. Although, Eve noted how she wasn't entirely aware of why she was using dance initially, and not with the purpose of embodying transformational resistance, but her critical consciousness raised to a level where that belief shifted over time. Her primary motive was the pleasure she gained from dance. However, Eve later embodied transformational resistance in how she was able to convert her pain towards youth resistance in how she advocates for survivors of abuse, especially young people, through artistic methods. Overall, these examples show how art invites Latinx youth to interrogate their traumas and oppressive circumstances, and then leverage their artmaking to address injustice.

*Latinx youth negotiate identity scripts and performances based on their social circumstances. (Q1 & Q2)*

Latinx identity is multidimensional (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001), thus identity scripts are enacted in various forms depending on the environment and people surrounding. This finding also highlights disconfirming evidence from Q1 by showing how some Latinx youth struggle to embody transformational resistance because of their

unique positionalities as youth-Latinx-females. In Scene 11, Jade explained ways she feels compelled to conform to societal standards. In particular, she described how she enacts identity performances at school through codeswitching. Where with people who understand her culture, she felt able to fully be herself, where with other people in her predominant white schools she felt they can't relate to her as well. Consequently, she negotiates her behavior by abandoning her Chicana identity script and mediates identity performances through code switching. Jade's commentary echoes other research I've done surrounding the academic barriers Latinx youth face in secondary school (Domínguez, 2021), because Jade is exerting additional labor, outside of her academic responsibilities, just so she can feel like she fits in and navigate high school without the added pressures of feeling different. Jade also exemplifies conformist resistance, in that she has a critique over this social circumstance, yet still decides to not enact any agency to change it (see Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).

As a reminder, Jade's codeswitching is an identity performance, and it allows her to forefront certain aspects of her Latinx identity while concealing other parts. Based on understandings of CRT and LatCrit, the performance of codeswitching becomes a necessary survival tool to navigate racist structures and/or predominantly white settings. While this may socially benefit Jade in the short term, Jade's behavior could also be interpreted as uplifting the colonial mentality, in that she feels the need to change herself to assimilate into dominant culture. Ultimately, it is for Jade herself to define how and why she enacts codeswitching behavior, what type of resistance she employs, and whether the identity performance is a linguistic resource or setback.

Similarly, Pat and Luz allude to codeswitching behavior in Scene 15 regarding how they describe gender identity and sexuality. During our interviews, Pat often spoke of the work she was doing to explore identity by becoming more aware and critical consciousness at that start of the pandemic. Pat also mentioned how they engaged in dialogue with peers and their sister about this period of self-discovery. Yet, when I asked Pat whether they share these aspects of themselves with their parents they said no. Pat exhibited reluctance, admitting their fear of being questioned and readily listed potential repercussions that they felt justified why it was not worth sharing their truth with the parents. In this case, Pat silenced and quieted their gender identity and sexuality based on familial circumstances. On the contrary, Luz shared that she did tell her mom about her sexuality but experienced an adverse response that she decided it wasn't worth mentioning to her dad. Their distinct responses show competing resistances, one conforming and one transformational, and highlights how time, audience, and stage matters when performing identity scripts (Jackson & Hogg, 2010; Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Luz and Pat's comments explain young people's fears of "coming out" to their parents, because it appears to be safer to stay on script by conducting identity performances of heteronormativity rather than risk adverse responses from unsupportive audiences. Since writing this section, Pat's identity script has changed once more, as she recently informed me she would now prefer to identify as a "lady" after having a long conversation with her mother and realizing the effects of "peer pressure" (Pat, personal communication, 3/16/2022). Identity scripts and performances can influence youth voice

in numerous ways, yet this study particularly highlights how young people can self-regulate their identities and behaviors in ways that both edify and disrupt societal norms. *Performance as praxis fosters identity exploration towards cognitive resonance and/or cognitive dissonance. (Q2)*

The process of performance as praxis can lead artists to explore their self-perceptions towards cognitive resonance and/or cognitive dissonance (see Figure 4). This process illustrates the manner our behavior gives us feedback about who we believe ourselves to be. Similarly, when we embody another character in performance, we can look from the inside out and evaluate to what degree we relate to that character, if at all.

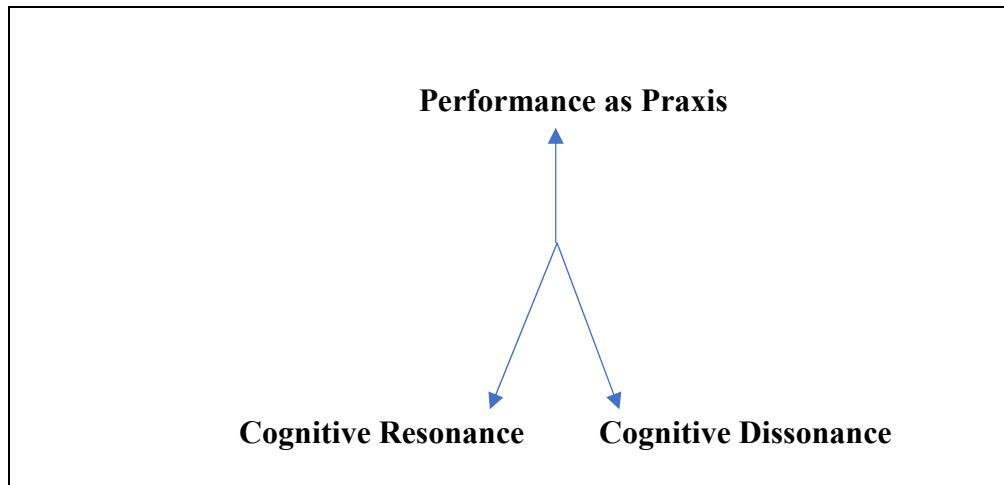


Figure 4. Performance as praxis

By the end of the project and our YPAR process, we devised a forum play based on mental health. Specifically mental health that was affected by abuse from a male figure in our lives which is what led us to the topic and story selection for the script. The play follows the character Roxy, who experiences a form of sexual harassment at school

by a male and depicts the struggles she faces following the incident. For instance, these struggles include not being believed by her friend, fear of being gossiped about, deteriorating mental health, telling a parent, and then reporting the incident to an unsupportive administrator. Eve played the role of Roxy; however, it wasn't until she embodied the character that she saw how it took her to deeper understanding of her own lived experiences, a process of cognitive resonance. Eve stated during rehearsal, "As a performer, I felt a sense of my own trauma resurface which did help to embody the character of Roxy, but it took me back to my own process of coping and healing."

Eve's comment suggests that, embodying the role Roxy, she experienced cognitive resonance in that she identified a connection that resembled her previous traumatic experience. In other words, the script text matched her individual schema. However, what I appreciated about the quote was her awareness of cognitive resonance and how it led her to a process of characterization, but also further coping and healing. She later described how she was able to incorporate this element into the character of Roxy as we navigated alternative scenes and responses she could employ while interacting with other characters which made for a compelling improv performance. In other words, Eve's performance as praxis fostered cognitive resonance in a way that was both emotionally triggering and healing.

Eve's words highlight a significant opportunity on the benefits of arts-based YPAR to encourage performance as praxis towards cognitive resonance/dissonance. Like Courtney and Battye's (2018) study that demonstrated how the actors experienced cognitive dissonance after performing counter-attitudinal behaviors or unfamiliar roles, a



process of internalization that influenced the performers attitudes and/or worldviews. In this way, performance as praxis is a tool to process text, past hurt and pain, and benefit from the healing cathartic benefits of putting that energy into a character and performing it. For instance, in Scene 19, Eve described cognitive resonance achieved through performance “I was provided a platform to be able to share and express myself through a form of dance, and that for me was the moment where I was like whoa. I didn't know that I could feel this way, I didn't know that I could feel this sense of release... like danced healed me.” The performance also benefited Jade, to whom the forum scene and the character of Roxy was based on, where she was able to experience cognitive resonance by watching someone else portray herself endure sexual harassment. Jade noted how it was relieving to her; in a way it helped reaffirm to her that what happened was not her fault and that she is not alone. But the potential for healing or transformation does not stop there. There are also benefits to ensemble members who watched the scene workshopped, but also future potential audience members to bring awareness around sexual harassment and abuse.

I think it's important to note how identity is explored while in role play and other performance as praxis processes. For example, in Scene 13, Xenon described how she experienced cognitive dissonance and found a sudden interest in herbs and medicine after playing a doctor character that helped in her personal health journey, “...and there are so many wonders with herbs and it can only reflect to me, by you know, what the character is supposed to learn. Kind of like character development. But it's both, my self-development and the character developing. It's like putting myself in their shoes.”

Xenon's cognitive dissonance was the result of them performing an unfamiliar role, yet it also provided a pedagogical and personal opportunity to discover a new interest. Like each of our own identities, characters are also multidimensional. Each time we try on a character, we learn what aspects we must change about ourselves to serve the needs of the role, cast, and performance. This is an iterative and embodied analytic process that also serves to nurture identity exploration towards cognitive resonance and/or cognitive dissonance. Sometimes trying on various characteristics help us to learn who we are not and who we are. As with social justice initiatives, we engage in critical consciousness raising experiences to help us learn who we are and who we are not. What is just and what is unjust. When these goals are aligned, we maximize the potential for both personal and social transformation.

*Latinx youth activist-researchers perform transformational resistance towards educational leadership. (Q1)*

Formal education leaders are important actors; however, they are not only the individuals enacting leadership (Ishimaru, 2020). Ishimaru (2020) argues that nondominant families, youth, and communities are critical, but typically overlooked actors in educational leadership for educational justice. The Latinx youth activist-researchers in this study performed transformational resistance, a desire for social justice and a critique of oppression, towards how they learn, teach, advocate for/against others (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). Despite deficit-based literature that fails to recognize their assets, the Latinx youth in ET positioned themselves as educational leaders in various fashions.

First, the young people demonstrated high interest and a willingness to learn about social issues that accompanied action. For instance, in Scene 15, Pat spoke about how the pandemic opened time for them to independently study up on social movements such as LGBTQ+ and Black Lives Matter, which in turn sparked critical reflection and identity exploration: “Yeah, it just got me thinking into that and because it was impactful. And the LGBTQ+, you know, I was really starting to look deeper into those two because I wanted to find some way, that you know if, like discrimination or racism or you know homophobia or transphobia happens, you know to any of my friends. I just want to be there to be able to support them.” Pat’s discussion suggests she performed educational leadership by acting towards learning about recent social movements with the goals of defending her friends in marginalized groups against oppression. As much as leadership is defined by what you do on the front stage, it is also equally determined by what you do back stage (Goffman, 1959). This active learning process is a foundational component of transformational resistance because it births possibilities for future youth leadership and advocacy.

Next, Latinx young people demonstrated various ways they were able to utilize their knowledge to inform and teach others in traditional and non-traditional learning environments. Luz often spoke of how the community setting of ET fostered formal teacher-leader skills in how she facilitated rehearsals, activities, and community events. In Scene 5, Luz states “And like being a part of Estrella Theater has made me grow tremendously and I’ve learned so much over the course of the years. And sometimes I still feel like it’s still new to me but um it’s—it’s awesome, like I’m really grateful that I’m

able to be a part of that space, because I think it's changed for the better now, but now looking back, I was like yeah, like I've gotten a lot [better], especially in my leadership skills which has helped me perform so well.”

While in interviews Leah highlighted how ET helped build her confidence as an actor, but also an interest to informally teach and share what she knows while in dialogue with other people. In Scene 13, Leah shares “Well, I gained more acting experience and you could also learn from interacting with other people and how the—it's like a different family kind of. Yeah, it like made me think differently also. It changed me in a way too because I used to think I couldn't do anything, and then I was like Oh, I could do this. So, I found something I could do, on my own, that I actually can do pretty good.” Like Luz and Leah, most of the activist-researchers reported ways they leveraged the knowledge they acquired through critical civic praxis to serve as a leader to improve learning and educational processes for others. Though, educational leadership is not a fixed identity. Like Latinx identity, gender identity, ally identity, youth leadership can be understood as stylized repeated acts over time (Butler, 1988). For example, in Scene 11, Eve said “...but if I'm using just my words, I get like, ‘I don't know’ ...or I'll be like, ‘I'm good with whatever’ or I get like really, like, ‘what do you guys think’ because I don't always like really believe in in what I'm saying and I need to do better at that.” Eve's quote shows how's her confidence and leadership wavers, despite other data that supports her actions as an educational leader. Overall, the data reveals that Latinx youth indeed are educational leaders who demonstrate a desire to teach and help others build critical consciousness beyond the learning they undertake for themselves.

Lastly, the Latinx youth activist-researchers performed transformational resistance towards educational leadership by using their voice to advocate for/against others. For instance, on a personal level Eve used art, specifically dance, as her voice in performances to cope and heal, but also at the public level to raise awareness about domestic abuse to the community. While Eve used her artmaking as a language of youth voice and resistance, she also utilized dance as a pedagogical tool at the public level to educate others on the topic. In Scene 19, Eve comments “That was the day that I realized also that I feel like my purpose is not only to just like to share and express with others around me and create with others, but to really acknowledge that as a survivor, as someone who's went through something that is very traumatizing and that you can't give back, it's something that I became really passionate about for [helping] others, especially young–young teens or young children...”. At the interpersonal level, Jade described how she has used her literal voice to teach and advocate for/against others despite the pushback she encounters. In the play, one of her monologues describes an incident with a white male who fails to validate her critique of his oppressive comment, to which she credits to her intersectional positionality as a young-Chicana-female, and only acknowledges his mistake after consulting with another white male. In Scene 17, Jade retells her response “I know that you went to this guy and the fact that you needed to go to like a white dude before you could come back to me and say–like, that, you own up to your mistakes, makes me believe that you never cared about me in the first place. Never cared about what I had to say, and you only care when a man says it.” Both Eve and Jade

performed transformational resistance, though with distinct approaches, with goals to inform and educate towards justice on the behalf of others and self.

Eve inspired to name the title of this ethnodrama “*Blue*”. In Scene 11, Eve said “...blue is your throat chakra and what's funny is blue is actually the chakra I struggle with. Uh huh... yeah cuz I have, I have a hard time speaking up for myself.” While this may be her truth, I admired Eves’, and all participants’ courage, and resourcefulness to find ways to use their voice in a way they felt powerful—through art. Despite the fears young people face to speak up, this study reports how the Latinx youth activist-researchers used their art and voice to communicate with others at various levels—personal, interpersonal, and public—as educational leaders who advocate for/against others in hopes of maximizing social justice despite the additional labor and potential costs.

### **Implications for Practice & Research**

In this section, I present implications related to YPAR projects and people, K-16 educators and preparation programs, creative and innovative methodologies in critical youth studies, and educational researchers.

#### *YPAR: Projects and People*

In the past, YPAR facilitators used the arts as an ‘add-on’ or additional component to the work (Goessling et al., 2019). However, this study/project fused art from beginning to end and we placed equal priority on both the mind and the body as sites of creative critical inquiry. As with other studies, the theatre processes in our project supported youth to question the world as it is and understand the current youth discourses

and resultant systems of oppression (Delgado, 2018; Perry & Medina, 2011; Winn, 2013; Wager, 2015). I also found the praxis of creative collective inquiry to be scaffolding tool for youth to rehearse their activism and multidimensional identities with a goal of personal and social transformation (Goessling, 2020; Wright, 2019). However, I knowingly privileged personal over social transformation in my work with the young people. Evidenced by my research questions, I was most interested in the degree to which arts-based YPAR projects help youth to explore their identities and transformational resistance through artmaking and performance.

I learned many lessons over the course of the study that have implications for YPAR practice. One lesson I learned was related to the fact that the project was impacted by COVID-19, which meant we completed the research and devising stages of the YPAR project virtually by Zoom. While the global pandemic presented uncontrollable circumstances, it also presented a novel opportunity to plan and execute this preliminary phase of the project entirely online. We benefitted by convenient meetings from home, Google docs, and Zoom video/audio recording, chat rooms, break out rooms, and transcribing features. However, completing a virtual project did create challenges such as building community, reformatting theatre games for digital art making, and active engagement. I admit, there is no supplement to in-person artistic inquiry, however future research should examine hybrid YPAR projects because I see great value in both formats. Specifically, the research and writing components functioned extremely well in virtual format, while I believe community building, scene activation, and production is better suited to in-person formats.

Unique to some other arts-based YPAR projects, all youth and adult participants were paid \$20 per hour for their rehearsal attendance and participation. The amount of \$20 per hour was chosen because it is comparable to what I earned as a graduate research assistant, thus by paying them the same, it shows their work is just as valuable as my own. The importance in paying artists for their time and expertise is two-fold: One, payment honors participants especially artists and youth who are not often valued for their abilities; and two, helps minimize attrition and sustain engagement over the course of long-term projects. I want to highlight here that none of the youth participants abandoned the project over the course of seven months. While youth occasionally missed rehearsals, overall, they maintained a commitment to our work together. I recommend future YPAR facilitators/researchers to follow suit and compensate youth artists competitively to garner similar effects.

To address previous gaps in the literature, this project invited youth to co-facilitate the YPAR project. Luz and Eve both agreed to co-lead the project with me which means these two research participants played dynamic roles as youth researchers, cofacilitators, artists, and advocates who utilize non-traditional, performance methods (Bernard & Rezzano, 2018; Wernick, Woodford, & Kulick, 2014). As we continue to consider participatory, meaningful engagement in youth-led research initiatives, I argue the importance of youth co-facilitator roles in youth-led research because it makes the “youth-led” descriptor true. While I was also a leader on the project, I organized core team meetings with these youth leaders to plan rehearsal agendas that allowed us to build and lead together in collaboration which fostered horizontal power-sharing dynamics (see



Ansloos & Wager, 2020; Bird-Naytowhow et al., 2017; Fox, 2020; Green, 2020). In addition, Jade and Luz modeled leadership to other youth activist-researchers who were able to observe, learn, and practice facilitation skills during rehearsal as time progressed in the project.

Lastly and perhaps most importantly, more research is needed to explore the potential of arts-based YPAR projects to foster opportunities for youth to cope and heal from social issues that affect their lives, especially as we continue to endure the harsh complexities of COVID-19 and how it's impacting all of us in ways that we may not even be fully aware of yet. All the participants described ways art catalyzed therapeutic properties through critical dialogue, artmaking, and performance which aligned to their overall positive youth development.

#### *K-16 Educators & Preparation Programs*

With continuous cuts to arts programs in K-12 education, especially after the onset of COVID-19, teaching and learning programs could help support students learn how to integrate arts-based inquiry into content area classrooms and clubs. I experimented with youth inquiry projects when I was a 6th grade English Language Arts teacher and found great benefit to how youth driven research can amplify youth voice and encourage youth-adult power sharing in educational decision making. Echoed in this dissertation study, the fusion of art into a research project amplified youth voice and enabled Latinx youth to use their art as a language to express resistance. Given the circumstances, I think it's important to highlight that current K-16 educators can adapt arts-based YPAR to their curricula and existing classrooms to address real world

problems in their schools and communities. In-service teachers do not have to wait for change, they can be the change in their own classrooms.

In addition, K-16 learning institutions and teacher preparation programs would benefit by engaging in school-community partnerships to develop culturally competent educators. Educators can cultivate relationships with young people while also learning with and from them. Evident in this study, where I was able to foster a mutually beneficial partnership between myself (a doctoral candidate at ASU) and a community-based organization (ET). A partnership founded on the collaboration and development of youth activist-researchers to investigate mental health and spread awareness to the community through art and performance. As much as positive youth development was observed, I also can say I experienced tremendous growth as an adult human and an educator who aims to foster youth driven education. This finding was echoed in other studies I've conducted (Casanova & Domínguez, forthcoming), where we discuss how community partnerships can prepare pre-service teachers through humanizing pedagogies and building relationships with students who live in areas they could potentially teach. Similarly, arts-based YPAR can be used as not only a transformational pedagogy with young people (Cammarota, 2017), but with adults who aim to explore more critical, creative, humanizing, and student-centered approaches to education.

#### *Creative and Innovative Methodologies in Critical Youth Studies*

This study also presents opportunities to expand beyond traditional approaches to YPAR and ethnographic investigations with young people that evolve towards integrating creative and arts-based methodologies in the field of critical youth studies. For instance,

in the arts-based YPAR project we employed storytelling and theatre as an embodied analytic process (Fox, 2014). Applied theatre projects have long engaged in this valuable work yet has failed to be proportionately recognized as a viable or credible research method in comparison to other positivist or traditional approaches to research. While we paired community interviews into our process, the embodied approach was the heart and driving approach in our arts-based YPAR study. More work is needed to connect the current siloed nature of YPAR investigations and applied theatre with youth in the literature, specifically more studies that examine how and what is deemed as legitimate research when advocating for policy changes, why, and how adults respond to this type of research, especially as it pertains to youth and artistic inquiry.

In addition, arts-based YPAR researchers should explore artistic approaches to data analysis and construction, such as poetic inquiry, film, visual art, music, dance and beyond. While art can be fused from beginning to end of the YPAR process, it can also be fused beginning to end in future ethnographic studies, which further counters the notion that the arts are to be merely used as an add-on component. I elected ethnodrama (Salvatore, 2018) as my choice of methodology because I aimed to forefront the voices and stories of Latinx youth in a way that honors their art, culture, leadership, and humanity, but also to incorporate my abilities as a theatre practitioner. In my perspective, a traditional paper would have only further obstructed these goals and hindered audiences to richly imagine and connect with Latinx youth experiences like I have. For these reasons I believe we should expect to see a rise in creative and innovative methodologies in research with and for young people.

### *Educational Researchers*

I look forward to future research that prioritizes merging the mind and body towards arts-based inquiry, goals of personal and social transformation, youth co-facilitator roles, hybrid formats, participant compensation, and opportunities for healing as values and pillars in their work with young people as was explored by this dissertation study. Especially for Latinx youth who often reported feeling disconnected to their K-16 learning because it fails to recognize the multidimensionality of their youth-Latinx-female-identities and capabilities as educational leaders. The data from this study shows the benefits of performance as praxis on the Latinx youth activist-researchers are plenty because it provides a space to both interrogate and heal from the world. As argued by Howard (2019), performance teaches us to examine our values and beliefs, to hone our ability to empathize, and to understand our connections to the larger world.

The intergenerational setting in this study was underexplored, thus I invite educational researchers to conduct future intergenerational YPAR projects that investigate youth-adult relationships in an arts-based YPAR setting. Specifically, I'd recommend for studies to invite K-16 educational leaders and families in inquiry alongside young people to examine how identity performances and scripts are influenced by other familiar adult authority figures (e.g., parent, principal, teacher, ET.). As indicated by Darragh (2014), performing "youth voice" and "leadership" can be understood as stylized repetition of acts through time, situated in context, and performed for an audience. Thus, a wider range of audiences and co-performers will influence how youth voice and leadership is enacted.

In this study, some of the Latinx youth also identified as biracial or mentioned other ethnic backgrounds. Future research should explore multiracial youth, especially due to their rapid growth in the US. Estimates predict that by 2040 over half of the US population will identify as mixed race (Mahiri, 2017). Specifically, educational researchers ought to explore the relationship between youth multiracial identity and educational decision-making in relationship to cognitive resonance/dissonance. If cognitive resonance can be understood as the moment when discourses align with one's worldview (McDonnell, Bail & Tavory, 2017), what happens when youth possess two or more competing worldviews? More research should explore this phenomenon and how multiracial identity might influence youth voice in educational contexts.

Lastly, I recommend educational researchers to consider the implications of this study to contribute to theory. My study combines ideas from critical, sociological, and performance disciplines: identity scripts and performances, performance as praxis, cognitive resonance/dissonance, CRT and LatCrit, transformational resistance, and critical civic praxis. These theoretical frameworks produced nuanced data findings that revealed how Latinx youth (mostly female identifying) endure harsh societal pressures along axes of age, race, gender, and sexuality, which seep into K-16 educational spaces and scripts. Yet this study showed how an arts-based community organization can foster these young people with knowledge and skills to embody resistance as they forge a path to discover who they are. Thus, a theoretical implication of this study is to examine the performance of youth voice and resistance as it relates to identity scripts, because it offers a more robust explanation for how the phenomenon may or may not occur.

## **Significance**

My dissertation contributes to the research literature on arts-based YPAR, Latinx youth, applied theatre, and transformational resistance. The importance and progressive nature of this study/project crosses several boundaries. First, Latinx youth engaged in a critical civic praxis of creative collective inquiry, from beginning to end. The use of art in all aspects of research and dissemination indicates a turn for future youth participatory action research and its' potential benefits. For instance, the potential to mobilize intergenerational collectives, broaden accessibility and viewability to artistic formats, and increase opportunities for youth research to reach various audiences indicates a future rise in creative and innovative methodologies. My study reveals how the field of critical youth studies benefits to utilize arts-based methods in youth inquiry projects because of the potential to foster positive youth development and social transformation, as well as its's potential to develop K-16 educators.

Given the state of heightened racial and social unrest in the US the past couple years, data from this study suggest youth usage of arts-based methods supported us to co-investigate and respond to educational disparities, such as mental health, in our schools and communities. My study also argues that our space together gave all of us a place to share our pandemic struggles in real time which would otherwise be unavailable due to months of quarantine if it wasn't for Zoom. Zoom shaped our programming and format, presented both advantages and challenges to the implementation of arts-based YPAR, which can influence future studies. Nonetheless, it provided us a space to create, learn, process, challenge, and heal. Finally, my research reveals that despite their

intersectionality and axes of oppression, Latinx youth activist-researchers are educational leaders that combine their critical consciousness and art to share knowledge that advocates for the rights of others. For some, their voice is found in their art, a language and pedagogy of transformational resistance.

### **Dissemination Plan**

As a result of this study, I intend to contribute to the literature on arts-based approaches to youth participatory action research with intergenerational collectives and I hope to offer methodological insights into how youth and adults' partner to engage a praxis of creative collective inquiry to impact their local communities. These new understandings could contribute to the field of critical youth studies and future arts-based YPAR projects. The findings of the study will be published as a part of my dissertation; however, the findings have also been organized into an ethnodrama to be later performed for community and scholarly audiences. Potential journals that could house my work include the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *The International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *Youth Theatre Journal*, *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *Qualitative Inquiry*, and *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*.

### **Conclusion**

While the COVID-19 pandemic undoubtedly wreaked havoc on society, it also enforced a necessary pause for us to all open our minds and see the world for what it is. An opportunity for provocative thought and a call to action towards addressing unjust systems, structures, and people. I've read the quote "After the plague came the renaissance," and I find it uncannily fitting for this very moment of time we exist. I pray

we experience our own renaissance—or rebirth--to disrupt and transform the current political, educational, and artistic development in the world.

My hope is that dissertation research demonstrates thoughtful, rigorous, and compelling engagement on the potential for youth and adults to engage in arts-based YPAR to explore issues of equity, and how the intersection of research, art, and justice concurrently contribute to positive youth development. The pressures for Latinx youth to strip themselves of their identities and assimilate into white America are real ones. However, I argue here youth participation in arts-based research is a powerful modality for young people to embrace the multidimensionality of their identities, investigate real world problems, and transform their critical consciousness and civic engagement. Specifically, the potential benefits applied theatre processes can support youth to activate imagination, elevate understanding of injustice and anticipate change, nurture identity construction, rehearse scenarios for future action, and foster healing (Domínguez, 2021).

I collaborated with the multigenerational theatre ensemble, Estrella Theatre company, to work alongside community and youth partners in social justice-driven and arts-based research. My investigation shows how Latinx youth activist-researchers involvement in an arts-based YPAR project and theatre ensemble shapes their critical consciousness and civic engagement positively, and in turn how these processes encouraged these young people to perform their multidimensional identities towards the embodiment of transformational resistance. I have also articulated the methodological approach, the process of writing an ethnodrama to depict the rich data present in this site and an ethical approach to co-create method and meaning through the collective,



participatory work. “*Blue*” illustrates how Latinx youth in the U.S. embody transformational resistance in their lives as they traverse school, home, and community spaces. I hope the play helps society understand the experiences of Latinx youth in education and challenge majoritarian narratives by showcasing how they combine art, research, and social justice towards educational leadership.

I believe the unique setting of Estrella Theatre company, the critical performance ethnographic methods coupled with a humanizing approach to working with research participants, opens radical imaginaries for what Boal (1979) calls “rehearsing the revolution.”

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APPENDIX A

ARTS-BASED ELICITATION & SEMI-STRUCTURED  
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Overview:**

This protocol will be used for the six individual hang-out sessions each participant will engage in. Each hang-out session will comprise of two parts. The first part of the session will invite participants to engage in a series of arts-based elicitation activities. This section will last approximately 20 minutes. The second section will be semi-structured dialogue in relation to the three research questions for this study. This section will account for the remaining time of each hang out session.

**Part One: Arts-based Elicitation Activity (20 minutes)**

The first half of each hang-out session will comprise of an arts-based elicitation activity. The purpose of these activities is to measure the growth of youth critical consciousness and how youth embody and perform their multidimensional identities over the year-long project via arts-based inquiry methods. Each hang-out session (1-6) will invite participants to complete a task and create a piece of art in response to various prompts. Participants will be informed that artistic creations for sessions 2-5 will be shared with the other ET members in a culminating event: The ET Identity Museum. All pieces may be rehearsed and edited before the culminating event.

**Guiding Questions:**

1. **Who are you?**
2. **How do you defy societal norms and systems of power?**
3. **How do you conform to societal norms and systems of power?**

**Hang-out Session #1: Storytelling**

This activity will invite participants to reflect and talk through the guiding questions. This step will prepare participants for the following weeks and allow me to understand how participants self-identify at the beginning of the project.

**Hang-out Session #2: Sculpture (clean trash)**

During this session, participants will be invited to gather some clean trash or other household items to create a sculpture to respond to our guiding questions. They will have up to 20 minutes to create their sculpture. The sculpture should connect and extend the art from the previous week. Participants will be instructed to not use words for this activity. Participants will be asked to explain their piece for me at the end of the allotted time.

**Hang-out Session #3: 2D Art**

During this session, participants will be invited to create a piece of 2D art to respond to the guiding questions. They will have up to 20 minutes to create their 2D art. The 2D art should connect and extend the art from the previous weeks. Participants will be instructed to not use words for this activity. Participants will be asked to explain their piece for me at the end of the allotted time.

**Hang-out Session #4: Poetry (song, rap, or other non-literal expression in words)**

During this session, participants will be invited to create a form of poetry to respond to the guiding questions. They will have up to 20 minutes to create their poem. The poem should connect and extend the art from the previous weeks. Words are allowed for this activity and will be read aloud dramatically to me at the end of the allotted time.

**Hang-out Session #5: Embodiment without words (dance, puppetry, mime, theatre)**

During this session, participants will be invited to create an artistic embodiment to respond to the guiding questions. They will have up to 20 minutes to create their artistic embodiment. The creation should connect and extend the art from the previous weeks. Participants will be instructed to not use words for this activity. Participants will be asked to will perform their piece for me at the end of the allotted time.

**Hang-out Session #6: ET Identity Museum & Exhibits**

Participants will use the artifacts (sculpture, 2D art, poetry, embodiment) to create their own unique and individual exhibit to be curated for the ET Identity Museum. The purpose of the museum is to build art to tell our real-life stories, but not in narrative form. Each participant will be invited to showcase their exhibit to the other ET members as artists, while also attend and experience other exhibits by fellow ET members as audience members. Each participant-audience member will write objective and subjective comments as they visit the exhibit.

**Part Two: Semi-structured Dialogue Protocol**

The second half of each hang-out session will comprise of semi-structured dialogue. The following interview protocol will be gradually discussed over the year-long project. We will move through the protocol to guide our conversation and focus on new sections in each respective hang-out session.

**Research Question 1:** How does Arts-based YPAR shape youth critical consciousness?

Critical Consciousness:

- What are social justice topics that are important to you? Why?
- Do you feel this project has made you more aware of social justice issues?

How or how not?

- What have you learned during this project?
- How does this project affect the way you think about yourself? Your local community? The world?

**Research Question 2:** How do or do not young people engage in performance as praxis to embody their multidimensional identity?

- How do you define your identity?
- What are the most important or influential parts of your identity? Why?
- Which parts of your identity create tension or struggle for you? Why?
- Which parts of your identity are you most proud of? Why?
- Which parts of your identity do you have peace about?
- Do you ever feel like you perform certain identities in some situations and keep other facets of your identity hidden in other situations? Explain.
- How does theatre allow you to explore different parts of your identity?
- How does theatre processes enable you to reflect on who you are?
- How does theatre processes enable you to act or perform who you are?
- What limitations do theatre processes have on your identity development, if any?
- What have you learned about your identity through your involvement with theatre? ET? Arts-based YPAR?
- Do you identify as an activist, ally, or accomplice? How so?
- What identity work do you hope to achieve in the future?

**Research Question 3:** In what ways do the Performative Justice Troupe activist-researchers do or do not critique oppression and embody transformational resistance?

Critique of Oppression:

- What problems in the world affect you the most?
- What are the causes and effects of these problems?
- Why are they still problems? What/who is to blame?
- Do you feel motivated to respond to social justice issues?
- How do these problems affect your personal life?
- How do these problems shape who you are?
- What are potential solutions to the problems you've discussed?

Embodiment of Transformational Resistance:

- What does resistance mean to you? What is the purpose or end goal of resistance?
- Do you ever feel oppressed? How so?
- Do you feel you embody resistance to oppressive forces in your life? How so?
- In what ways do you resist structures or systems of power?
- What are the physical or mental side effects a person feels when they enact resistance?
- Do you ever feel you conform to societal norms and structures? How so?



- Do you ever feel defeated or self-sabotage yourself?
- In what ways do you act to bring about change for you, family/friends, or your community?

APPENDIX B  
REHEARSAL AGENDAS

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #1</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Freddy, Luz, Ashley	
Tuesday May 25th, 2021 5:00-7:00pm	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the Foundation</li> <li>• Building community agreements</li> <li>• Setting the tone/atmosphere for collaborative, participatory work across youth and adults</li> <li>• Setting unified goals</li> <li>• Introduction to YPAR</li> <li>• Initial intro and exploration of mental health topic</li> </ul>	
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google slides</li> <li>• Google jamboard</li> <li>• Zoom breakout rooms</li> </ul>	
AGENDA:	
5:00	Check In Question/Introductions/Pronouns ( <b>FREDDY</b> )
5:20	Warm up game - Touch Blue ( <b>LUZ</b> )
5:40	PJT Project Overview & Explanation (slides) ( <b>ASHLEY</b> )
5:45	YPAR videos Pa ‘lante <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJ5dHttlwRU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJ5dHttlwRU</a> <i>Optional</i> Honolulu YMCA <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jo9RiXpVjYQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jo9RiXpVjYQ</a> Minnesota <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SricMtRlBdk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SricMtRlBdk</a> and Jamboard <a href="https://jamboard.google.com/d/1LwTke8efAIH33scm17STV-5a0wOaG8BaOB39norC5Vk/edit?usp=sharing">https://jamboard.google.com/d/1LwTke8efAIH33scm17STV-5a0wOaG8BaOB39norC5Vk/edit?usp=sharing</a> ( <b>ASHLEY</b> )
5:55	<i>Break</i>
6:00	Building community agreements ( <b>FREDDY</b> )
6:15	Community Building Exercise (EVE)
6:30	What does mental health mean to me? Journal Activity ( <b>LUZ</b> )
6:40	1on1 Interviews: Partner Activity Exploring Mental Health Topic ( <b>EVE &amp; ASHLEY</b> ) What does Mental Health mean to you? What do you wish people knew about mental health? What specific mental health topics do you want to gain more knowledge in? What are 3 things you do to enhance your mental well being?

6:55	<b>Action Items for Next Rehearsal:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a mental health poster on Google Slides: What does mental health mean to me?</li> <li>2. Think of and prepare to share a 2-3 minute story related to your experience with the topic of mental health. Feel free to write or share orally.</li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close
Notes;	

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #2</b>	
Facilitators: Ashley, Luz, Eve & Freddy.	
Date & Time: June 8th / 5:00pm-7:00 pm	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining mental health for ourselves</li> <li>• Sharing personal stories</li> </ul>	
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental Health Gallery Posters <u><a href="#">Mental Health Posters</a></u></li> </ul>	
AGENDA:	
5:00 pm	Check In - If you could be a hero or villain from any movie, tv show, book, ect. Who would you be? Why? (Mariah)
5:10 pm	Warm up game - The Big Wind Blows (Eve)
5:15	The Machine (Luz)
5:25	Boomerang was
5:30	Mental Health Gallery Walk (Ashley)
6:00	Boomerang based on Gallery Walk (Freddy & Ashley)
6:05	5 minute break
6:10	Storytelling as Research (Ashley)

6:40	Critical Response Process - (Luz) 1. Statements of meaning
6:55	Announcements/Reminders (Freddy)
7:00	Power Clap & Close

Notes;

- Reminder of Consent Forms.
- Selfie For ET Yearbook.

**Action Items:**

- 1. Parallel Stories:** Find a buddy to meet with virtually or by phone over our two week break. Share your stories again and look for parallels or similarities between your stories. Now move verbal to aesthetics! Cocreate a piece of art (poetry, skit, dance, boomerangs ET.) to share at the next rehearsal that represents your two stories.
- 2. Research Questions:** Add 5 or more questions you have about mental health based on our story circles. Research Questions

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #3</b>	
Facilitators: Ashley, Luz, Eve, and Freddy	
Date & Time: 6.22.2021	
Objectives:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share Out with buddy</li> <li>• Continue with Story circle around questions of mental health</li> </ul>	
AGENDA:	
5:00 pm	Check In - If you were an apple, describe what you would be doing to represent how you're feeling today? (Ashley)
5:10 pm	Warm up game - Number game (Luz)
5:20	Revisiting Community Agreements and Research Questions (Ashley)
5:30	Digging into story circles (Trini) Story circle prompt: <b>Tell us about a time where you had a personal challenge or struggle with mental health</b>

6:10	Break
6:15	CRP: statements of meaning and cross-talk (Eve)
6:25	Partner Analysis in Break out Rooms: What themes did you see emerge across story circles? Create a piece of art (poem, tableau, skit, movement ET.) to share with the group based on what stood out to you. (Eve)
6:55	Power Clap & Close (Ashley)

Notes;

Homework assignment:

Journal Activity- Reflect upon our story circle, and tell us what you're thinking, what stuck out to you, anything you would like to reflect on and write about PJT

Collective Storytelling Journal

Google doc- Please write down any questions you have about mental health so we can generate topics and ideas to help us narrow down our focus. Research Questions

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #4</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Freddy, Ashley	
Date & Time: 06/06/21, 5-7pm	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a research question</li> <li>• Finish storytelling for those absent?</li> <li>• Review Journal Writings (Break out rooms)</li> <li>• Activate scenes from stories</li> <li>• Share video to absent</li> </ul>	
AGENDA:	
5:00	Check In - Mental Health is like a .... (Simile Game) (Freddy)
5:10	Warm up game - Movement piece (Mariah)
5:20	<del>Continue story circle (Luzi)</del>

5:35	The Boardroom: Pairs will enter breakout groups to review and reflect on PJT journal writings and design a sales pitch for their favorite RQ (1 or 2) (Ashley)
5:50	Boardroom presentations: each pair will deliver their sales pitch (in role) to propose a research question (Ashley)
5:55	Break (During break, Ashley will make a survey to compile all research questions)
6:00	Sale Pitch Activity Debrief and Survey Administration (Freddy)
6:15	Homage to Magritte: "This is not an apple" (Ashley & Eve) lets see about time
6:30	Tableaus (related to RQ) (Trini & Freddy) for next time???
6:50	Debrief and Reflection (Trini)
6:55	Action Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PJT Collective Storytelling Journal (write a story based on the RQ)</li> <li>2. Find <b>2</b> resources based on our research question to bring and present at the next rehearsal.</li> </ul>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

Notes;

**Homework Assignment:** Over the next 2 weeks, find 2 resources based on our research question to bring and present at the next rehearsal.

Reflection: PJT Collective Storytelling Journal. Journal about your personal experience related to the research question

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #5</b>
Facilitators: Eve, Freddy, Luz, Ashley
Date & Time: 07/20/2021
Objectives:

- Activate story circle scenes
- Oppression story format

AGENDA:

5:00	Check In - What is something you have done for yourself this week that you didn't know you needed until you did it? (Luz)
5:10	Warm up game - Word Association (Freddy)
5:20	Revisit Research Questions: Changes, Edits? (Ashley)
5:25	Embody and Build (Eve)
5:35	<p>-Part 1: Write your stories on paper from Story Circles in PJT Journal (it can be the same one or another story that fits our RQs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who is in charge of allocating money for mental health in our state and who is in charge of spending said money and how are they spending it?</li> <li>2. Considering the experiences you've had so far, how does your childhood development impact who you are today? What did you learn from your childhood experiences?</li> <li>3. What is healing to you? What steps do you need to take to heal?</li> </ol> <p><a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cCcI6lFGBSdMVqk-9t-Jar9OGnFeBu0q5p3yGOEZIUo/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1cCcI6lFGBSdMVqk-9t-Jar9OGnFeBu0q5p3yGOEZIUo/edit</a></p>
5:45	-Part 2: Rip the piece of paper in pieces, as much as you'd like. Choose 8 specific pieces of paper, formulate a sentence with those pieces and create a movement gesture for each torn piece of paper. Once you have all 8, move through your sequence as one whole 8 count. Come back to the space, and share.
5:55	Break
6:00	Introduce Playback Theatre and Example (Freddy)
6:10	Break out Rooms (3 or 4): 1 is the storyteller (5 min for story/5 min questions/ 5 min devising)Ad
6:30	Playback Theatre Showcase (Luz)
6:55	Action Items:



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PJT Resource Database (Ashley) <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

Notes; time management (Luz)

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #6</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Freddy, Luz, Ashley	
Date & Time: 08/03/2021	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate story circle scenes</li> <li>• Oppression story format</li> </ul>	
AGENDA:	
5:00	Check In - What art form inspires you most and why? (Luz)
5:15	Warm up game - Homage to Magritte (Ashley)
5:30	Introduce Playback Theatre and Example & Reread stories to pick scenes & groups (Freddy)
5:40	Break out Rooms (3 or 4): 1 is the storyteller (5 min for story/5 min questions/ 5 min devising)
5:55	Break
6:00	Playback Theatre Showcase (Freddy &Luz)
6:20	Debrief & Pick two scenes to focus on? (Ashley)
6:30	Break-out rooms: Scene teams and development?
6:55	Action Items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scene Planning/Script</li> <li>2. PJT Resource Database (Ashley) <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

7:00	Power Clap & Close
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<b>Rehearsal Agenda #7</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Luz, Ashley	
Date & Time: 08/17/2021	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate story circle scenes</li> <li>• Oppression story format</li> </ul>	
: Describe with 3 words on how last rehearsal was, felt, AGENDA:	
5:00	Check In - Reflection from last rehearsal : Describe with 3 words on how last rehearsal was, felt, or any lingering thoughts. (Luz)
5:15	Warm up game - Machine with RQ Keywords (Eve)
5:30	Playback Theatre: Considering the experiences you've had so far, how does your childhood development impact who you are and your mental health today? What did you learn from your childhood experiences? (Ashley & Eve)
5:35	Break out Rooms (3 or 4): 1 is the storyteller (5 min for story/5 min questions/ 5 min devising)
5:50	Playback Theatre
6:05	Break
6:10	Journal Reflection: Pick a playback theatre scene from today or last rehearsal and think of a solution that could help the protagonist in the future.(Luz)
6:20	Statements of Meaning/Debrief/ (Luz)
6:30	Project Goals: Potential audiences, potential final products Break out room (Eve)
6:40	Resource Database Break out Rooms (Ashley)
6:55	Action Items: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Go find something or do something that offers you a sense of healing or self-care. Be prepared to speak on it.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <a href="#">Forum theatre performance   Shannon Ivey and STATE of Reality   TEDxColumbiaSC</a></li> <li>3. PJT Resource Database (Ashley) <a href="#">PJT Resource Database</a>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #8</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Ashley	
Date & Time: 08/31/2021	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro Theatre of the Oppressed</li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In- Share response: Go find something or do something that offers you a sense of healing or self-care. Be prepared to speak on it. (Eve)
5:15	Warm up game - Ball of energy (an imagination game where someone passes the energy ball and shapes it into something and so on) (Luz)
5:30	Last Rehearsal Recap on Project Goals (Ashley)
5:40	Introduce Theatre of the Oppressed (Ashley)
6:00	Journal Reflection: Pick a playback theatre scene from one of our last rehearsals and think of a solution that could help the protagonist in the future.(Luz)
6:10	Break
6:15	Open whole group discussion and journal share out (Freddy)
6:25	Break out rooms: Forum Scene work (Ashley)
6:45	Share out
6:55	Action Items:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finish Scripts</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>b. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #9</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Ashley, Luz	
Date & Time: 09/14/2021	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theatre of the Oppressed</li> <li>• Script Writing/Scene Activation</li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In - One Word Self-Report about Your Mental Health (Trini)
5:15	Warm up game - Three Line Improv (Eve)
5:30	Last Rehearsal Recap on Project Goals (Ashley)
5:35	Forum Scene Teams (A&B): Script Development (Ashley)
6:05	Break
6:10	Table Read (Team A: Reads and then CRP's statements of meaning and artist questions) (Eve and Luz)
6:40	Journal Writing: Themes across two scenes (Ashley)
6:45	<u>PJT Resource Database</u> : Find resources to enhance our scene creations (Eve)
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #10</b>	
Facilitators: Eve, Ashley, Freddy	
Date & Time: 09/28/2021, 5-7pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>	
Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data Collection</li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In - What is something that is quintessentially you?
5:15	Warm up game -Follow the leader (Freddy))
5:30	<u>Pa'lante Restorative Justice: Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR)</u> <u>Arts-based research: definition, procedures &amp; application (Dr Patricia Leavy)</u>
5:40	Data Collection Activity (Ashley) <u>PJT Collective Storytelling Journal</u>
6:05	Break
6:10	Sub Teams Planning in Break out Rooms
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #11</b>	
Facilitators: Luz, Ashley,	
Date & Time: 10/12/2021, 5-7pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>	
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct <b>12</b>, 19, <b>26</b>, Nov 2, <b>9</b>, 16, <b>23</b></li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In -Acknowledge an “Ah-Ha” Moment that stood out to you during the interview. (Luz) Announcement: Adding 3 Rehearsal Dates: (Ashley)
5:15	Warm up game - Yes, And (Luz)
5:20	Story Circles: Interview Share outs - (Ashley)
5:55	Memo Writing: <u>PJT Collective Storytelling Journal</u> (Ashley)
6:05	Break
6:10 6:30 switch	Break Out Rooms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production Development- how, who , where, agenda, roll call sheet (Ashley) 20 min each</li> <li>2. Dramaturgy/Script Development (Eve/Luz) 20 min each</li> </ol>
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are Latinx womyn’s mental health affected by patriarchy? Make art to respond to the question. Freelance artistry</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #12</b>	
Facilitators: Luz, Ashley,	
Date & Time: 10/19/2021, 5-7pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>	
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct <b>12</b>, 19, <b>26</b>, Nov 2, <b>9</b>, 16, <b>23</b></li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In -Schema: What is patriarchy?
5:20	Story Circles: Interview Share outs - (Ashley)
5:30	Break Out Rooms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Production Development- how, who , where, agenda, roll call sheet (Ashley) (A)</li> <li>2. Dramaturgy/Script Development (Eve/Luz) (B)</li> </ol>
6:00	Two Break out rooms: Script development
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are Latinx womyn’s mental health affected by patriarchy? Make art to respond to the question. Freelance artistry</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #13</b>	
Facilitators: Luz, Ashley, Eve	
Date & Time: 10/26/2021, 5-7pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>	
Objective(s):	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct 12, 19, 26, Nov 2, 9, 16, 23</li> </ul>	
5:00	<p>Check In -Positionality (Ashley)</p> <p>Warm-Up: Tableaus (man, woman, latinx, father, mother, mental illness, mental health, patriarchy, matriarchy, power abuse, power sharing (Luz)</p> <p>Overview of what we did last week (Eve)</p>
5:20	Story Circles: Interview Share outs - (Eve)
5:30	<p>Break Out Rooms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy/Script Development A (Luz)</li> <li>2. Dramaturgy/Script Development B (Eve)</li> </ol>
6:30	Data/Art Share out: How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by patriarchy? (Eve)
6:55	<p>Action Items: (Ashley)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by patriarchy? Find an article/text</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #14</b>
Facilitators: Luz, Ashley, Eve
<p>Date &amp; Time: 11/03/2021, 530-730pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a></p> <p>Make up because we cancelled 11/2 for dia de los muertos</p>
<p>Objective(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct <b>12</b>, 19, <b>26</b>, Nov 2, <b>9</b>, 16, <b>23</b></li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In - Rose and Thorn Overview of what we did last week (Eve)
5:20	Story Circles: Art Share outs - (Eve)
5:30	Break Out Rooms: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy/Script Development A (Luz)</li> <li>2. Dramaturgy/Script Development B (Eve)</li> </ol> <p>Story Circles: talk how you would your friends</p>
6:30	Data/Art Share out: How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by patriarchy? (Eve)
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by patriarchy? Find an article/text</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #15</b>
Facilitators: Ashley, Eve
Date & Time: 11/09/2021, 500-700pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct <b>12</b>, 19, <b>26</b>, Nov 2, <b>9</b>, 16, <b>23</b></li> </ul>

5:00	Check In - Tableau Gestures (Ashley) Overview of what we did last week (Eve)
5:20	Story Circles: Art Share outs - (Eve)
5:40	Dramaturgy/Script Development A (Freddy)
6:30	11/23 Planning and Roles (Ashley)
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley)  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are Latinx womyn's mental health affected by patriarchy? Find an article/text</li> <li>2. <u>PJT Resource Database</u>: Find resources to enhance our scene creations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dramaturgy for stories and scene creation</li> <li>2. Ideas/inspiration if you were in the protagonist's position</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #16</b>	
Facilitators: Ashley, Eve	
Date & Time: 11/16/2021, 500-700pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>	
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Dramaturgy</li> <li>• Adding three rehearsal dates</li> <li>• 6 more rehearsals and then show on NOV 23 Dress rehearsal ET</li> <li>• Oct <b>12, 19, 26</b>, Nov <b>2, 9, 16, 23</b></li> </ul>	
5:00	Check In - Tableau Gestures (Ashley) Overview of what we did last week (Eve)
5:20	Story Circles: Art Share outs - (Eve)

5:40	11/23 Planning and Roles (Ashley)
6:10	Forum rehearsal
6:55	Action Items: (Ashley)  1. COME TO NEXT REHEARSAL PREPARED
7:00	Power Clap & Close

<b>Rehearsal Agenda #17</b>
Facilitators: Ashley, Luz, Eve, Freddy
Date & Time: 11/23/2021, 500-700pm <a href="https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289">https://asu.zoom.us/j/2714168289</a>
Objective(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present to ET</li> </ul>
<b>ROLES:</b> Joker 1: Luz Joker 2: Jade MILANIA/FREDDY as Narrator  EVE as Roxy PAT as Felix DOLORES as Roxy's Mom LEAH as Principal Marks  Ashley as Stage Manager/Note taker

5:00	PJT Rehearsal and Run Through
6:00	Welcome ET Staff into PJT Zoom Space (EVE) -intro PJT and members -brief overview of our work
6:02	Check-in: What does mental health support mean to you in one word? Jambo g <a href="https://jamboard.google.com/d/13P1dt_GRB47cDpfLV37sgq73KDrJirAVVi">https://jamboard.google.com/d/13P1dt_GRB47cDpfLV37sgq73KDrJirAVVi</a>
6:10	Intro to Forum Workshop- DOLORES
6:13	Introduce the Scene (FREDDY) -Context -Introduce actors and characters,
	-3-2-1-ACTION (Jokers)
6:15	Perform Scene (ALL)
6:25	<b>Joker Interventions (2-4 times) (LUZ and JADE)</b> -What did we see happen in the scene? -What was the problem? -What could have been done differently to reach a solution?...Actually, can yo (enter the space, improv, with Roxy)  Post-intervention Questions -What did we see that was different? -Did the character reach a different response? -What other ideas do we have to try out? -(Pick another audience member to come up)
6:45	<b>Critical Response Process (Freddy)</b> 1. Statements of Meaning 2. Artist Questions (artists ask the audience) 1. What do you think happened to Roxy?(Ashley) 2. What visceral emotions did you experience? (Freddy) 3. Neutral Questions (open-ended) (Audience asks questions) 4. Permissioned opinions (constructive feedback)
7:00	Power Clap & Close (Ashley)

APPENDIX C  
COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

### **Community Agreements: (Living Document)**

- Make your presence felt.
- Active Listening.
- Take Space, Make Space
- Respect yourself & others (identity, emotions, boundaries)
- Trust your instinct to ask questions and be curious.
- Always ASK when not sure.
- Be your raw and authentic self. Be unapologetic about who you are.
- Power Checks. If someone is abusing their power, speak up.
- Communication: absences, concerns, ideas.
- Respect the time together and the expectations outside of our rehearsals.
- Don't yuck someone else's yum.
- 24-48 Hour Rule: If something is bothering you, clear the air within this time window so we can be proactive about resolving conflict or misunderstandings.
- Be transparent with your needs.

APPENDIX D

THE ACT UNSPOKEN: A FORUM PLAY

## The Act: Unspoken

### Actors:

LUZ as Joker 1  
JADE as Joker 2  
FREDDY as Narrator  
EVE as Roxy  
PAT as Felix  
DOLORES as Roxy's Mom  
LEAH as Principal Marks

### Characters:

Roxy-Student (Protagonist) [Pronouns: She/Her]  
Felix, Roxy's friend: sassy jokester, doesn't take things too seriously [Pronouns: They/Them]  
Roxy's Mom: [Pronouns: She/Her]  
Principal Marks: [Pronouns: They/Them]  
School/Lunch Table Friends (Extras)

### Scene 1- Intro.

**[A text message sound on a phone is heard a few times back to back. We then see two actors enter the stage one on each side of the stage with their cell phones. They are typing and texting with each other.]**

Roxy: Hey, did you hear? The tickets are going on sale tomorrow and there is a contest to win free tickets. We have to try and score our tickets if we want to go.

Felix: Girl, you know I'm soo down, pero cuando? I don't even know what I would wear....

Roxy: We should level up our costumes from last year.

Felix: Heck yeah! Any ideas?

Roxy: We can go shopping at thrift shops and find new fabrics to add layers and details to them.

Felix: Ummm...speaking of layers, are you ready for this year?

Roxy: This year?.....what do you mean?

Felix: Girl....We finally get to wear normal people's clothes. Uniforms are a thing of our past now, like dust....gone, finito, forever.....no more, EEEEEER! I'm so excited about that. It's about time.

Roxy: What does that have to do with layers?



Felix: Nothing, I just wanted to talk about my outfit for tomorrow....(laughs) Here put Facetime..... Look!

**[The actor playing Felix turns to face Roxy and shows off their outfit as if on Facetime.]**

Roxy: That's cute.

Felix: I know right! You better work it girl, don't want you living in my shadow....(smirks)

Roxy: Oh whatever..... You know you don't have to worry about me. I'll bring it, just make sure yours lives up to my outfit.

**[she then turns and shows off her outfit]**

Felix: Looooove it! Yass! Don't forget the bracelet I gave you.

Roxy: Of course not! Wait....are we allowed to wear things like that?

Felix: Who cares.....it's not like it's distracting. I'll be wearing mine. Plus if they have time to be worrying about our bracelets then evidently they are focusing on the wrong things....Specially with the gente that we go to school with. You know there will be others that will be all risqué y toda la cosa.

Roxy: Oh I know. I'm pretty excited about seeing everybody's personalities come through without those nasty plain color shirts anymore.

**[A voice is heard off stage]**

Roxy's Mom: ROXY!!!! Why do I see light coming from your room right now?

Roxy: Oh, I gotta go. It's super late and I'm supposed to be asleep already. See you tomorrow and let's touch base about how we will score those tickets.

Felix: Ugh! I'm still super bummed that we don't have the same schedule. It sucks.

Roxy: I know, it does but at least we have the same lunch and we will hang out after school for sure as usual.

Felix: Alright, deal. Have a goodnight Miss.University track.

Roxy: Whatever (jokingly).....you better stop or I won't give your butt a job when I'm the owner of my own company.

Felix: Like I would even want you as a boss!

Roxy: Okay, anyways....have a goodnight.

Felix: Buenas noches chica. Goodnight.

**[Felix goes off stage. Roxy goes and looks at her reflection with her outfit one last time as if she is convincing herself that she is ready for what is to come of this academic life coming up. She goes to bed and we hear an old fashioned school bell to indicate the shifting of the scene. We are now at school.]**

## **Scene 2- Harassment at end of line**

**Bell rings**

**[Roxy and Felix are laughing and packing up]**

Felix: Uffff..finally.

Roxy: I can't wait for lunch. Ughhh...tengo hambre. (She is silly, joking, looking full of life)

Felix: I knowwww! Me too, but we have to wait until the 4th hour until we can go. Here. *(gives a wink and Sneaks hot cheetos in her bag)*

Roxy: Ayeeee....

Roxy: Ah. Go on ahead, I forgot my book. I'll catch up with you later.

**[Felix exits]**

**[Roxy goes and grabs a book. She pauses, looks uncomfortable, contorts her body in a way that shows what it feels like to experience something traumatizing for the first time. She uses her body in almost a dance form to exit the stage that displays the pain and confusion as she leaves the stage. Some of her school mates glance at her from afar].**

## **Scene 3- Lunch/Talks to friends**

**[Roxy enters lunch looking down/out of it. Fails to make eye contact. She goes and sits next to Felix who is seated with some friends]**

Felix: What's up with you...you look off

Roxy: Oh nothing, everything is cool.(unconvincingly, but Roxy plays it off)

Felix: OK..., Whatever. (eyes her up and down) If you don't want to tell me that's ok. *(Felix ignores it and places his attention towards the other people laughing at the table)*

## **Scene 4- Roxy Solo Dance Scene**

Roxy dances to show mental health struggle.

## Scene 5- Mental health issues

(“weeks later”)

*[Roxy is wearing a hoodie that covers her body and seems more reserved. She goes and sits at an empty table, not with Felix. Felix notices and goes to call her out.]*

Felix: Why are you acting like a bruja? Are you good?

Roxy: Seriously.. *(rolls eyes and repositions her body away from him)*

Felix: Heello? *(Tries to regain her attention)* It’s been three weeks and you’ve been off. What is going on with you? Are you ok?

Roxy: It’s just ...

Felix: What?

Roxy: **[she whispers into Felix’s ear]**

Felix: HAHAHA You’re joking right... *(laughs hysterically).....(shifts to a more serious tone)*. Wait, really?

Roxy: *(glares at him with a straight face)* Why would I joke about this? *(tone escalates)* Yeah I’m serious. *(arms crossed)*

Felix: Who else have you told? *(voice dulls to a whisper)* Have you told your parents yet?

Roxy: No...I don’t know if I should tell them or not...

Felix: Well I’m really sorry that happened to you, but I think you should think REALLY hard before you decide to tell someone.. Don’t you remember what happened to that one girl in the 9th grade who spoke out about him?

Roxy: There was another girl who spoke out about him?

Felix: Uh, yeah! But she totally couldn’t prove it, so who knows! Plus, he was also falsely accused that same year- so a lot of people didn’t believe her.

Roxy: Well don’t you think that might give me more of an upper ground if I’m not the only one who’s had this issue? I can’t even sleep at night and my chest feels tight just thinking about going to class.

Felix: You know they don’t care about people like us! ... but I’m sorry Roxy.

**[Bell rings. Characters exit.]**

**Scene 6- Roxy and her Mom go to the principal**

**Scene 7: ROXY where she dances/moves**

**Scene 8**

**Mom:** don't worry about it you will be fine it's not your fault. You had nothing to do with this. I'm not mad at you.

**(Roxy and her mom meet the principal)**

**Principal Marks:** Welcome, c'mon in and have a seat. I only have 5 minutes to chat. What brings you to see me today?

**Mom:** I want to talk about a disturbing incident that my daughter said she experienced.

**Principal Marks:** Yes?

**Mom:** (*assertive, yet composed*): My daughter explained to me that a person made some inappropriate comments. And this is just unacceptable and terrifying to me. She is 15. This is an unacceptable school environment not just for my child, but for other students like her.

**Principal Marks:** Well let's calm down. I see your upset but I'm going to have to talk to the person you're accusing to see his side of the story to verify if this has any merit. So...

**Mom:** (*interrupts, more assertive*): Are you serious? Are you not believing what I'm telling you? (*mom grabs daughter's hand softly*) Ok, set up that meeting and I want to be there when it takes place..

**Principal Marks:** Per our school handbook and policies... which I'm sure you've read, This is protocol...I'll get back to you.

**Mom:** (*Looks at principal with a sharp look while still holding daughter's hand and says*) Let's go mija. The principal is not going to do anything. They never do, until there is an advocacy group or lawyer involved. (*takes her look off principal and walks out of the office frustrated but confident*)

**Roxy:** (Faces audience) Is it everyday you're forced to sit with the discomfort and trauma of thinking... Why me?

**(Exits stage with mom)**

**END**

APPENDIX E  
IRB APPROVAL



APPROVAL:CONTINUATION

[Carrie Sampson](#)  
[Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - West Campus](#)

-  
csampo4@asu.edu

Dear [Carrie Sampson](#):

On 11/3/2021 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Continuing Review
Title:	Arts-based YPAR: Youth Performances of Embodied Identity and Transformational Resistance
Investigator:	<a href="#">Carrie Sampson</a>
IRB ID:	STUDY00013202
Category of review:	
Funding:	Name: Ford Foundation
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appendix A_ Recruitment Script_051321.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li><li>• Appendix C_Adult Consent Form _051221.pdf, Category: Consent Form;</li><li>• Appendix D_ Youth Assent (under 18) _051221.pdf, Category: Consent Form;</li><li>• Appendix E_ Parent Consent Form_051221.pdf, Category: Consent Form;</li></ul>

The IRB approved the protocol from 11/3/2021 to 11/2/2022 inclusive. Three weeks before 11/2/2022 you are to submit a completed Continuing Review application and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 11/2/2022 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

REMINDER - All in-person interactions with human subjects require the completion of the ASU Daily Health Check by the ASU members prior to the interaction and the use of face coverings by researchers, research teams and research participants during the interaction. These requirements will minimize risk, protect health and support a safe research environment. These requirements apply both on- and off-campus.

The above change is effective as of July 29<sup>th</sup> 2021 until further notice and replaces all previously published guidance. Thank you for your continued commitment to ensuring a healthy and productive ASU community.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Ashley Dominguez

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

An excerpt from “*Entre Dos Mundos, Between Two Worlds*”

Today, I identify as a mixed race woman- both white and Puerto Rican. I am a US American. I am a daughter and a sister. I am a heterosexual female. I am a salsa dancer. I am a performer. I am a Christian. I am a Ph.D. student. I am a scholar and researcher. I am an educator. I am a social justice and youth advocate. I am a *gringa*. I am a *Latina*. I am all these things, yet no single one. I am in a constant state of in-betweenness. The intersections of my identity are not fixed or static, but always evolving. In a way, for me being mixed race means you never quite fit in anywhere. Instead, I remain fluid in racial purgatory. Moving in and out of spaces, *entre dos mundos*, existing on the periphery, a bridge connecting two worlds.