

Transformative Accomplices: Multicultural Community Organizing in a Transnational
Educational Context

by

Roxanna I. Duntley-Matos

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Social Work and Anthropology)
in The University of Michigan
2011

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Robert M. Ortega, Co-Chair
Emeritus Professor Fernando Coronil, Co-Chair (Deceased)
Professor Lorraine M. Gutierrez
Assistant Professor Julia F. Paley
Associate Professor Norbert O. Ross, Vanderbilt University

Empowering education, as I define it here, is a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change. It is a student-centered program for multicultural democracy in school and society. It approaches individual growth as an active, cooperative, and social process because the self and society create each other.

--Ira Shore (1992). *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. p. 37

The creation of culture is a distinctly human function, perhaps the most human function. In its cultural life, a group is able to affirm its values and to grasp its identity in acts of self-reflection. Frequently, oppressed persons cut off from the cultural apparatus, are denied the exercise of this function entirely.

--Bartky, S.L. (1990) *Femininity and domination: Studies in the phenomenology of oppression*. N.Y. Routledge. p. 30

©Roxanna I. Duntley-Matos

All rights reserved

2011

To my mother María Magdalena Matos and Tío Raúl Serrano Geys for teaching me that the struggle for social justice is worth the personal sacrifice that it entails.

To my children Daniel Alejandro and Alexandra Isabel Cubero-Matos for accompanying me in the unending journey of community organization for the rights of immigrant and minority youth. I can only hope that you will find it in your hearts to continue this struggle long after I am gone.

Preface

Nineteen sixty-six was a year of educational promise and excitement. The Proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual National Conference on Higher Education, which took place from March 13-16 included noted figures from academia and the private sector such as J.W. Fullbright, Talcott Parsons and Frank H. Bowles Director of the Ford Foundation among others. In tune with the climate of hope and the thirst for social equity, there was a discussion of themes such as the massification and the vocational imperative of higher education, which they equated with “democratization.” Democrats and republicans engaged in lengthy debates about “Climbing the Ivory Tower,” “Universal Education in the United States,” “The Leadership Role of Higher Education in Effecting Basic Societal Change,” “Obligations and Services of Higher Education to the Disadvantaged and Underprivileged,” “What Does Society Expect Higher Education To Do for Women: Who Knows and Who Cares?” and “What Should Society Do with Rejects from Higher Education.”¹

These themes, however, were not new. In 1941 a similar meeting of interdisciplinary minds had taken place, which included not only educators, but also psychologists and more interestingly, anthropologists in the restructuring of the educational system. Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson² were primary figures in the design and implementation of educational interventions which would be, in the future, associated with social work and the visiting teachers, rather than anthropology. The mystique that anthropology in the U.S. was to remain an academic rather than an “applied discipline” was highly protected. Such was the case that even in the early to mid-

¹ Smith, Kerry G. Et al. (1966) Higher Education Reflects on Itself and on the Larger Society. Current Issues in Higher Education March 13-16 1966. vii.

² Baba, Marieta L. and Carol E. Hill (2006). What’s in the name “Applied Anthropology”: An Encounter with Global Practice 1. The Globalization of Anthropology. NAPA Bulletin #25. American Anthropological Association (pp. 176-207).

nineties, when post modern debates were all the rage, there was an overwhelming silence about the instrumental role of anthropology in the social re-structuring of what was and still is considered the basis of individual and group socialization, the formal public education system and its dynamics of family intervention and cultural molding.

This part of anthropology would be subtly downplayed, while the theorization of exotic cultures away from home, or within it, would be emphasized. Despite this, the growing awareness of transnational influences was becoming more apparent. The Boasian concept of cultural relativism began to establish itself in a time when the contradictions between theories of cultural isolation, hierarchy and observed dynamics of transference and similarity were becoming clearer to newer generations of researchers.

Margaret Mead, one of Boas' famed students, for example, attempted to study the educational customs of other societies and to use these as positive models for consideration in the educational system of the United States. As an anthropologist, however, her participation in the Society for Applied Anthropology, would be defined very differently from the systematic implementation of the resulting educational policies in the U.S. and its colonial territory of Puerto Rico, as well as the other "post-colonial" nations of Latin America and the Philippines. Here it would be social workers who would be at the forefront of the resulting educational restructuring and the assessment of compliance and deviance focused on what was bureaucratically defined as ideal and acceptable parenting strategies in conjunction with individual motivation and responsibility.

Measures to ensure expected disciplinary strategies, ideas of sanitary living and acceptable behavior were implemented "in mass" in geographic areas considered socially deficient due to poverty, ethnicity, gender and race. It was not the structure of the global economic system which engendered inequality, but the "sheer lack of character" and "inadequate home education" of the individuals who found themselves in these marginal, unkempt pockets of society. Their allegiance to their language and isolated cultural patterns created a toxic shield from the innovative and enlightened wider white male dominant middle class. Although historically intertwined, then, the interventionist ties between anthropology and social work would be diminished and ultimately ignored even

in critical courses of anthropological discourse³. Given this, it is and is not, difficult to understand how the joint program in anthropology and social work came about and why, to this day, there continues to be a strained relationship: Traditional anthropology has managed a self-impression of detached elite and more profoundly interpretive social science while deprecating social work for its intrusive social engineering tactics and deficit in theoretical creativity.

It was in the midst of this political and academic atmosphere, and as a result of my own lived experience as a subject, at times mired and at times aided by the colonial ties between Puerto Rico and the United States, that I developed a keen interest in the role of anthropology as a theoretical tool to understand the process of national, ethnic, racial and gender identity formation. My interest in social work resulted from my previous organizational research experience in the guerrilla-controlled zone of Morazán, El Salvador, which led me to seek the emancipatory potential of a more engaged anthropology. The Joint Doctoral Program in Social Work and Anthropology would be the closest option to this at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In addition, the reality of my financial situation of scarcity as a graduate student, wife of a Costa Rican immigrant, and mother of the first of two children, led me to search for a viable professional option to take care of my family while pursuing my intellectual and social justice interests.

The complex roles of ethnographer, social activist and subject, which I have in this study has made it imperative for me to disclose relevant information about my background and myself. The awareness of the many transnational, academic and socio-political forces that have intertwined to form my evolving identities has had a direct impact on my socially engaged and analytical work.

³ Critical educational ethnography was not included in the Traditions course in Anthropology in the 90s. In fact, the application of anthropology beyond the dynamics of inequity in the theory building research process, or as an ongoing subfield in and of itself, was not discussed either.

What is “identity,” but an allegiance to something, engendered in various, sorts of community, that either give you pride or something that you are forced to assume because of how much you have, how you look, speak, dress, walk, think and feel? What is it, but all of these.⁴

It was 1980. I was 15 and had already been in six different schools. As I walked with my little brother, by my side, into University Gardens High School, one of two “Science Magnet Schools” par excellence of Puerto Rico, I was partially engrossed with fear, but more with so with “fight” for what my mother instructed us to do. When I was in elementary school in Puerto Rico, I stole the rulers from the classroom at the end of the day, after observing how the teacher delighted in striking and humiliating her students. When I was in middle school in Dewitt, N.Y., I emptied my lunch tray on an African American girl who called me a SPIK in front of the class as she tried to gain approval from her white friends. But this time, it was different. At 15, when we tried to enroll in the district belonging to our neighborhood, the principal told my mother not to enroll us because “it would ruin us.”

None of these children have the grade point average that your children have brought from the United States. Here drugs and violence surround us. I recommend you find another school.⁵

My mother had desperately tried to enroll us into the University of Puerto Rico public school where our politically connected neighbors from the Faculty Residences enrolled their children or where wealthy youth such as members from the singing group Menudo had the privilege of attending. We, however, would have no such “luck.” She had also tried to enroll us in Baldwin bilingual private school in Puerto Rico, hoping that we would be granted scholarships for good grades. They allowed us to take their entrance exam. To their surprise, we placed at college level, but even with my mother’s offer to teach English or Spanish literature in exchange for our admittance, we were denied.

⁴ “Old thoughts” R. D. Matos

⁵ Memories of conversation with director. 1981.

University Gardens H.S. had a one level concrete building with modern aluminum-lined see-through glass doors. It gleamed of science--air conditioned science--surrounded by tropical concrete benches in the front patio, embraced by what seemed to be a square wired fence. Youth, dressed in yellow polos and dark blue pants, strolled around the yard discussing each other's romantic adventures, the latest movies, the upcoming parties or school special events, the homework they had failed to complete or tests they would soon have to face. But my brother and I could not hear the conversations; we could only feel the eyes on our skins as we slowly entered the forbidden sterile building. As we walked in resistance, following our mother's instructions, the school seemed starker than any school we had ever seen.

Go into the school and sit in the office until they enroll you, no matter how long it takes. I will go to the superintendent's office and will plead our case. I have already written a letter and I have a meeting in person with him. I will not leave his office until he agrees to enroll you.⁶

My mother had to excuse herself for several days from her responsibilities at the University of Puerto Rico. We had already been turned away once by the principal at University Gardens. We would not be accepted because "we did not belong to the district" and "they were too full." We followed the same routine for three days; my mother desperately realizing it was almost time for the school day to start, running from bedroom to bedroom urging us to wake up, get dressed and eat breakfast while she prayed that the car would start with the first turn of the key and that we would not need to jump-start it on the way.

At this point, there were only two of us remaining from her six children. The others were either married while teaching in Puerto Rico, stationed in the United States Army in Vietnam or Germany, in college in Syracuse or selling cars. When we arrived at the school, just as the bell rang, we walked silently into the office and sat for hours as the principal, teachers and secretaries walked by us with apathetic glances. They continued their normal conversations as if informing us that despite our presence, we were non-existent. We were just waiting, waiting for the letter or phone call to arrive...

We had already been in Puerto Rico for a year. This was my mother's third attempt at getting us into a good school. The private catholic school was not an option.

⁶ Memory of conversation with my mother. 1983.

Our older brothers, who were now out of the house, only had horror stories of the punishments and guilt strategies used by the nuns, which traumatized rather than educated. My older brothers had graphic stories of how the nuns had instilled the fear of hell and God in them. The middle brother was known for running away from that school several times a week since he was six years old. He recalls running away from a 50-student classroom in the first grade and crossing several busy streets until he arrived home. Realizing the nuns did not even know he was gone, led my mother to withdraw him from the school. He became a car salesman.⁷

When we arrived from the United States at 15, because we were advised not to enroll in our district school, my older brother was able to get us into “Los Frailes” a rural school where he taught in the town of Guaynabo. It was far from home, but the best option when we returned from the United States. I would become the English teacher of my tenth grade class after disagreeing with the principal instructor about the correctness of an English as a second language textbook. She told me she would only give me the point if every English teacher in the school agreed with me. After going up and down stairs to ask all of the various grade teachers, she admitted the error and instructed me to take over the class for the rest of the term. Los Frailes was the first and only school I would ever attend which in my mind truly separated me by social-class from the other students. The academic classes were easy, I thought, with the exception of math, which has never been my strong point. They were, in fact, ridiculously easy. But, it was in Los Frailes where I learned the most important lesson of all, and I learned it from a Black Puerto Rican Spanish teacher “Mistel Acosta.”

Having been accustomed to “eating books” as they would say in Spanish, it did not take me long before I was at the head of the class despite my initial deficient Spanish

⁷ **My brother’s comments:** One day as we (the students) were walking our usual transfer from one classroom to another I happened to pass a somewhat empty room with a black leather lined bed, and to my surprise, I also saw my older brother lying on top of it. I became very interested in finding out how I could also acquire the benefits of such luxuries... I immediately thought that it was time to change the venue. As the minutes went by I started to make my body shake and shiver, then the teacher approached me and asked me with concern if I was alright. I told her I was cold and not feeling well... I was treated like royalty; I was fed good food and juice. I liked the treatment so much I started to make a habit of it, but the nuns caught on and stopped the game.

skills due to living in the U.S. for several years. But I carried with me a privilege of which he was invested in making me critically aware. He assigned us an essay where we had to say what we wanted to be when we grew up. By this time, I had been asked to write a similar essay several times before in the U.S. and in some of the other classes at Los Frailes. I was annoyed with the assignment and decided to have fun with it. I stated that I wanted to grow up to be a sugar cane laborer with a latrine in the back, a mangy dog and fifteen children who couldn't read. I had a great time writing this, to the point that I was in tears with laughter while completing it at home. When Mistel Acosta read my essay, I looked at him with amusing curiosity. He called me up to his desk and asked me in a serious voice "Did you write this by yourself?" as he stared at me with a stern look. Now, slightly apprehensive, I answered "yes" ...He then asked, "Do you know what it is like to cut cane?" And this is how the conversation followed:

"No"

Do you know, that on our Island it has been mostly Black Puerto Ricans who were cane cutters? First we were slaves and then sharecroppers. My parents, and even I, had to cut it as a child. The sugar cane leaves were so sharp that they cut into our arms and the salty sweat from our body burned every scratch we had. We worked for hours under the burning sun, just to make a few pennies that would not be enough to put food on the table for us all. We were several children and we often went to bed hungry. We couldn't complain or we would lose our jobs and if we did, the younger children could die. Do you really think this is a joking matter? Can you really see yourself doing this or wanting to do this when you grow up? I want you to go back to your desk and think about this⁸...

My heart sank and the worst part of all was that he never got angry, raised his voice or threatened me. I never forgot that conversation. At the end of the year "Mistel Acosta" was handing out the medal for highest grade in the class. He did not award it to me, however. He gave it to the next best grade, which belonged to the girl who had been the highest grade before I arrived from the United States. As he was about to call out the name of the best student, I could see the expression of worry she had on her face. Her family was of modest economic means and she had worked like no other student; she had worked harder than I. When Mistel Acosta called her name, she was so surprised she could not even muster a smile. He looked at me without saying anything, but with his expression saying it all. "Do you understand?" I nodded "yes."

⁸ Memory of conversation with Mistel Acosta. 1982.

I had already gone to a Puerto Rican elementary school before returning to the United States at age 10. This school was the partner school of University Gardens. It had its own bleak tendencies. Unlike University Gardens, it was not air-conditioned. Its structure was typical of Caribbean schools. It had two concrete cream-colored levels with a wide-open internal court. The lower grades were on the bottom floor and the fifth and sixth grades were at the top. Corporal punishment was an acceptable mode of discipline and some parents actively encouraged the teachers to beat their children into studious submission. Rulers, paddles, twisting of the lips, pulling of the ears for all students and twisting of the sideburns for boys were daily forms of punishment. The infractions, which called for such discipline, included talking in class, not doing our homework, failing a test, and running to be first in line for lunch, among other things.

I recall an especially brutal incident with the assistant principal. They had established the rule that no temporary tattoos would be allowed. My brother, who was six years old, received one in a gum pack and innocently put it on. When the principal saw him, she took him to the office, burned a needle and scraped it off while jabbing him two to three times in the process. My mother took her to court. While the proceedings were going on over several days, the administration pulled my brother out of class to “question him” about what happened. Terrified, my little brother’s response in court was, “She didn’t do it. It wasn’t her because the one who did it had a wart on her nose.” The principal was never prosecuted, but she “voluntarily retired” a year later.

At this time, there were four of us siblings in the school. We had been in Puerto Rico for one year before we enrolled. It was 1971 when I was in first grade. Although several of us were born in Puerto Rico, we had gone to live in Oswego, N.Y. four years before, when my mother decided to take a leave of absence from the University to finish her Ph.D. She had been a faculty member since she was 23, she was on her way to achieving her ABD. She entered the University of Puerto Rico as a student when she was 15 and graduated, with a four-point average, the highest grade in the last 10 years. She was awarded several medals before being accepted to Radcliffe, the women’s component of Harvard at the time, and earned a full grant sponsored by the University of Puerto Rico. Harvard was not her first choice, however. She had also been recommended for the

Guggenheim Award and could have studied in Europe, but her parents wanted her to stay closer to home so they could have more control over her choice of suitors.

Her father was a mechanic who had aspired to be an engineer, but who quit high school in order to support his siblings when his own father abandoned the family and his land to be with his mistress. My grandfather became an apprentice to a mechanic when he was a young teenager and was later able to build what would be the most prosperous auto repair business in his town of Arecibo. He was, without a doubt, the patriarch of the family who enforced my grandmother's law. She was stern and generally sullen, but she repeatedly told her children that they should "kiss the floor that their father stepped on." My grandmother was known for her dreams. She kept a notebook of dreams that had come true. She dreamt of holding her grandchild, my oldest brother, before she died at the age of 51, and described him to perfection. She had lost her own first child at the age of three to meningitis. My grandparent's care of their children was strict, highly structured and all encompassing.

When they moved to Río Piedras, because my mother was going to study at the University of Puerto Rico high school, my grandfather built his own two-story house with his shop on the bottom. He included a magnificent library for my grandmother and the children and hired a chauffeur to drive my mother, aunt and uncle to school and to the University on a daily basis to keep them from "unwanted distractions."

Puerto Rico had been experiencing great economic and political change with the advent of the New Deal during my mother's upbringing. She recalls how her own mother became an educator. After two years of high school she became a visiting teacher sponsored by the Government of Puerto Rico to teach in rural schools. She told of her daily routine climbing hills on a burro to teach the children. My grandmother had enthusiastically taken advantage of the radical educational policies implemented by the United States, and was trained as a rural teacher in the "Escuela Normal"—the teacher's college. Middle class women were actively recruited to enroll in what would be the first college of the University of Puerto Rico and it employed aggressive wide-ranging strategies to complete its agenda.

After marriage, she traveled on Saturdays to the Río Piedras UPR campus with other women to take classes. My grandmother eventually received her master's degree in

literature and became the first university professor in the family. Her younger brother, Raúl Serrano Geyls would attend law school and, unbeknownst to my mother, was admitted to Harvard at the same time she was. They met by coincidence at a Harvard party.

Also attending, were other Puerto Ricans who had known my mother as a college student and who would later be our neighbors in the Faculty Residences. Both my mother's uncle and our neighbors became our godparents. My brother's godfather, Antonio González, would later found the "Partido Unión Puertorriqueña" and would run for Governor. My mother's uncle, Raúl Serrano Geyls (my godfather) would become a researcher and consultant for the drawing of the Constitution of Puerto Rico and one of the Supreme Court Judges on the Island⁹. His daughter later received her Ph.D. from the Psychology Department at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and she then became the Director of the Psychology Department of the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras.

My mother's younger sister, Ivette Matos, became a neurologist and her younger brother, Gregorio Matos, a surgeon in the Veteran's Hospital in Puerto Rico, and later the chief of surgery at two hospitals in Texas. In 2010, he would make a long distance call to intervene on my husband's behalf to save his life when the hospitals in Washington State rushed a misdiagnosis and then delayed his emergency surgery because we could not afford private insurance.

That day at University Gardens High School in 1981, of all the experiences I had encountered in the public school systems in Puerto Rico and the United States, would mark my memory forever. I was an embodiment of colonial transnationalism caught between the U.S. and the Puerto Rican educational bureaucracy, while holding the flag of individual right, a right to an education and to represent whatever part of my identity was most favorable at the moment, rights conferred by the democratic and humanistic ideals taught to me in the same educational system that now denied my brother and I admission into the public school.

While we waited, we would use what we believed to be our secret language, English, just as we used our secret alternative, Spanish, when we were in United States

schools. In both, we chose to distance ourselves through our identities as we were simultaneously distanced and judged by the various administrations. We were gazed at, but we also gazed back. We were resisted, but we also resisted. With smiles we were welcomed, but not too much and with smiles we accepted, but not too much. At home we would speak “Spanglish,” openly and comfortably. Code switching established our chameleon –like capabilities and asserted our transnational identities.

My younger brother completed his associate degree at the University of Puerto Rico in computer science and became employed by an American company that required him to sacrifice sleep and family in order to make a sale. He then transferred to a job with the Banco Popular and maintained a similar position and lifestyle. He owns his own house in the same guarded and window barred neighborhood as my mother. His children attend a private school on the Island and they travel to the U.S. and other countries several times a year.

I transferred out of the University of Puerto Rico after deciding against being a medical doctor or a psychologist, and traveled to Michigan State University to study Music Therapy, I changed my major to anthropology and received my bachelors and masters degrees from this university. My master’s thesis was a result of fieldwork I did in the guerrilla controlled zone of El Salvador under Leigh Binford from the University of Connecticut. He had attended Michigan State University as a visiting faculty member a year or two prior to my fieldwork.

For my doctoral studies I applied to 10 different universities under Project 100, a program for disadvantaged minorities. Although hoping to get a scholarship for my doctoral studies at City University of New York to work on the theme of the construction of race and national identity in Puerto Rico, my hopes did not come true. June Nash called me on several occasions to convince me to attend with a loan. In 1991 I received a call from Fernando Coronil from the University of Michigan Department of Anthropology. He offered me a full scholarship to attend this Institution. I informed my Committee Chair, Joseph Chartkoff, and with what was to me an unexpected emotional congratulatory reaction, he informed me that I had just been accepted into the best Anthropology Department of the nation. From my perspective, I was happy to not have to pay more loans, but not very excited about having to stay in Michigan. The social context

of the Puerto Rican neighborhood and the Latino activist atmosphere I was hoping to find in N.Y. would have to be postponed.

During my last year of course work in the Anthropology Department at U of M, I was consumed by the theoretical excitement of the 90's, the postmodern debates and the innumerable conferences with the stars of our field. I was also dismayed by the division between Euro-American students and minority students in the Traditions class. The limited level of mentorship in the Department, as compared to what I had experienced in the University of Puerto Rico and at Michigan State University was also disappointing. Several of the minority students ended up leaving the program, others, like myself, and a joint program Mexican-American student put it on hold for several years. From an academic perspective, I couldn't help but feel the disillusionment resulting from the gap between theory and practice.

The non-university related Latino population began to grow in Washtenaw County and there were no social services available for them. I began a family, transferred to the joint program in Anthropology and Social work when a colleague, Barbara Ngwenya, who was in the joint program, told me that it was a difficult time to find a tenure track position as an anthropologist. I had also observed one of the stars of the Anthropology Department still teaching a few courses as an adjunct after she had graduated, just hoping to find a job. This was especially worrisome since I knew she was highly regarded for her academic success. My friend explained that, given my interests, the joint program was the closest thing to what, at the time, we called "applied anthropology."

When I was accepted in the joint program I met Robert Ortega, an unfailing mentor who later became my committee Chair from the Social Work Department. Joseph Spielberg from Michigan State University and later Fernando Coronil, Robert Ortega and Lorraine Gutierrez were the first Latino faculty I met after my arrival in Michigan. At first, it was difficult for me to understand, coming from an Island which has struggled for over a century to maintain its language and culture under U.S. colonialism, why a Latino would "choose" not to learn fluent Spanish. My social work doctoral courses, and later more Mexican-American friends, would help me understand their experiences as they unfolded, and not merely as they are written. I would learn to see dignity and pride as not

necessarily expressed through academic expectations of the language to which I had been accustomed. I would better understand the dialectics of language and identity and how they can differ so dramatically depending on the formative socio-political contexts of various Latino groups and how there is a lived language that can be much more powerful than “academic language” as commonly construed.

After this, I embarked on what would be 12 years of organizational, and now participatory research, with the Latino members who would form ALAS, the first Latino community organization of Washtenaw County. My work was highly influenced by Robert Ortega and Lorraine Gutierrez. Lorraine and Robert’s interest in the new theories and practices of participatory action research, as explored in the Social Work Department, inspired me tremendously and fed my motivation to bridge anthropological theory with social engagement. The postmodern, critical anthropological, and cultural studies influences which I gained from studying, primarily under Fernando Coronil, but also under Val Daniels, Nick Dirks, Roger Rouse, Sherry Ortner, Crisca Bierwert and Anne Stoler, exposed me to the sophisticated theoretical tools that would enable me to examine the dynamics between theory and practice which have influenced my dissertation.

I am indebted to Julia Paley and Julie Skurski, in addition to my committee chairs, for helping me through the initial formulation of ideas of my dissertation and for helping maintain an open door in the Anthropology Department, which is no small feat for a retuning non-traditional minority student. I could not have completed this dissertation if it had not been for Norbert Ross, Associate Professor at Vanderbilt University and previous classmate under Fernando Coronil if he had not agreed join my committee when Fernando became ill. Norbert’s collaboration enabled me to have the required number of faculty evaluations stipulated by Rackham Graduate School, and his support prior to this provided me with valuable insights of my work. Despite my best efforts, I was not able to secure the help from relevant anthropology and social work faculty at U of M aside from my original committee members. On this same note, I also owe “muchas gracias” to Lorraine Gutierrez and Robert Ortega for recommending me to various academic positions that would help keep my family afloat during this grueling political experience. In addition, Nancy Burke from the University of Michigan Internal Review Board was

instrumental in helping me align my research methodology to the requirements of her office and the community participation needs of my work.

Similarly, I would not have been able to complete the program if it had not been for the generous economic support of the Rackham Merit Fellowship, The Center for Education of Women, the Rackham Critical Emergency Grant, The Rackham Summer Stipend, The Rosa, King Parks, Chavez Fellowship and the Rackham One-Term Dissertation Grant.

My co-organizers and co-interviewers, who include Martin Gatlin, Mayra Prince and Adriana Hidalgo among others, have contributed to the critically inter-subjective practices which I hope to discuss in this work. In addition, I would like to thank Denise Fielder and Nicholas Brown (Director and Assistant Director) from the Academy of the Americas for their instrumental role in the design and preliminary implementation of our critical theory for youth proposal submitted to the Arts of Citizenship Scholarship Program at the University of Michigan. My utmost gratitude and admiration goes to Lupe Vega, an ALAS mother who has overcome tremendous obstacles and demonstrated an enormous faith in humanity in her struggle to help herself and her son succeed academically and in life in general. Thank you for your brave and eloquent presentation in my Eastern Michigan University undergraduate social work theory and practice class and congratulations on attaining your Green Card! My field placement mentor, and good friend Bertha Lopez deserves my greatest gratitude for standing by me from my MSW to my defense and for teaching me about the realities of the Latino communities in Adrian, Michigan.

I would also like to thank the student panelists and panel moderators from my Eastern Michigan Social Work class for demonstrating an impressive organizational and analytical ability with regards to current topics of social justice and education: Dominic Ortega, David McDonnell Marroquín, Deborah Bryant, Daven Crump, Chelsea Detrick and Aisha Abdul-Aziz. Last, but not least, I wish to thank my mother, Maria M. Matos for her unending support of my community and intellectual work and for her willingness to share rich and theoretically elaborate conversations regarding our family history and the political context of education in Puerto Rico.

In my attempt to honor the spirit and contributions of feminist critical home-ethnography then, this is a story, our story, of lived practice and of what I would like to call “critical intersubjectively engaged anthropology.” In this tale, those of us whom you will meet, are all transnational subjects who, through various neo-colonial histories have come to cross paths in Ann Arbor and Detroit, Michigan, and have, in different ways and for different amounts of time, chosen to work together to create a different future for our Latino and African American children.

The objective of this dissertation is not to focus on the oppressive forces, which perpetuate and renew the achievement gap between minority and Euro-American children and youth. It is not to explain why 30%-50% of these, our children, are failing, even when the parents are faculty members from some of the most prestigious universities in the nation. Rather, the purpose is to try to understand what it is about the dialectic between theories and practices that allow for the current success of 50%-70% of these children who do enter and complete higher education. Needless to say one dynamic cannot be understood without the other, but the focus is strength, rather than deficit based.

By exploring the relationship between transnational, national, institutional, organizational, family and individual dynamics in the context of education, we can better understand the inter-subjectively created ruptures in taken for granted ideologies. These may often appear to be homogenous and overarching, similar to the practices which simultaneously emulate and resist them. We can better understand how community mediated opportunities, structural and behavioral inclusions/exclusions and ideologically conflicting influences can have an impact on the motivation which is essential if our “underprivileged” children are to obtain the achievements which are valued by our society.

Through a feminist and critical social scientific lens, I hope this will elucidate some strategies we can implement to promote the educational success of populations, which, in our socio-economic complicity, we have pushed to the margins. Unfortunately, in various ways, some of us have always been, and will most likely be, members of these marginal and excluded populations, regardless of our academic or economic standing. Although class is an important marker and allows for varying degrees of mobility,

ethnicity, race, gender and sexual orientation are important mediators in the formula of academic success. It is for this reason that we will share our experiences and those of other Latinos and African Americans from k-higher education with you. It is our hope that you will find part of yourself as you find part of us in the development of this story. We hope that you will join us in the exploration of your/our own complicity in the perpetuation of oppression, while investing our energy in the discovery of alternatives to the present social injustices in our transnational educational systems.

Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Preface	iii
List of Figures	xx
List of Abbreviations	xxii
Abstract	xxiii
Chapter	
1. Introduction: Transformative Accomplices: Multicultural Community Organizing in a Transnational Educational Context	1
2. A Review of Methodologies: Home Based and Inter-subjectively Engaged Critical Ethnography	14
3. The Transnational Push of Education in a Neo-Colonial Context: Part One Puerto Rico, Harvard and the Metropolis	56
4. The Transnational Push: Part Two ALAS—A Bumpy Road towards Educational Advocacy and Community Participation	174
5. The Transnational Push: Part Three Expanding the ALAS Collaborative Research Horizons: Detroit, Mexico and the American Go Foundation	297
6. Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations	375
Bibliography	394

List of Figures

1. University of Michigan Employment Office	17
2. Albizu Greets the Puerto Rican People	100
3. Albizu in prison sometime between 1951 and 1953	105
4. Tío Raúl and Tía Irma	127
5. Washtenaw County Population by Age	187
6. First Meetings at William Monroe Trotter House before the Renovation	206
7. Las ALAS de Fuego at Presencia Latina	213
8. ALAS Collaborates with the Ann Arbor Public Library for Story Telling in Spanish	213
9. La Voz News Article on ALAS	214
10. ALAS Karate Program	214
11. Association set up to help Hispanics reach their dreams, become acclimated to area	215
12. Ann Arbor News Article	215
1293. ALAS Circle Award 2002	216
14. Katherine Bartley's Letter Regarding Chuck's Progress	231
15. Elizabeth Delgadillo's Letter Supporting ALAS	234
16. Jimmy McClain's Letter Supporting ALAS	235
17. Maribel's (Parent) and Teresa's (tutor) Letter Supporting ALAS	237
18. Nicholas Mowbray's Letter Supporting ALAS	239
19. Joi Jordan's Letter Supporting ALAS	240
20. Minor Altamirano's Letter Supporting ALAS	241
21. Maricela's (Returning Parent) Letter Supporting ALAS	242
22. Daniel's Letter to the Dean. Supporting ALAS	243
23. Kate Korosh's Letter Supporting ALAS	244

24. Alexandra's Letter Supporting ALAS to University President Mary Sue Coleman	245
25. Daniel and Christina: His First and Favorite Female Tutor	249
26. Son of Co-Founding ALAS Family in Angell School Musical	250
27. ESL and Diversity in Ann Arbor Public Schools	266
28. Last Tutor Cohort from the Romance Languages Spanish Class at William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center	274
29. SCORE Group with ALAS Scholarship Recipients at the Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts	295
30. The Academy of the Americas	334
31. Siddhartha's and Alma's Visit to AOA (Detroit) and ALAS (Ann Arbor). August 2011	368
32. Siddhartha, Alma and the ALAS membership playing Go. August 2011.	371
33. Daniel and Alexandra (my Puerto Rican/Costa Rican bilingual children born in the U.S.) marching against Proposition HR 4437 march 2006, side by side with a First Nation protestor and hundreds of Latino marchers.	393

List of Abbreviations

ALAS: Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños

AOA: Academy of the Americas

AGF: American Go Foundation

Abstract

Transformative Accomplices: Multicultural Community Organizing in a Transnational Educational Context

by

Roxanna I. Duntley-Matos

Co-Chairs: Robert M. Ortega and Fernando Coronil

The long-term existence of K through higher education programs and their discourses of inclusive diversity have not closed the achievement gap of minority students. Some minority students manage to ascend academically and this study examines the emergence of spaces for agency within the context of academic success. A historical framework of external (Puerto Rico) and internal (U.S.) colonialism is used to analyze the politics of academic achievement. La Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños (ALAS), a 12-year dual language program and its engaged research practices with the Academy of the Americas (Detroit), and Pipiolo Elementary (Mexico) supported by the American Go Foundation, are analyzed as a transnational community-based effort to discover ruptures that permit achievement.

This research uses home ethnography and critical intersubjectively engaged methods. Home ethnography uses the researcher as principal informant in her academic

communities. Intersubjectively-engaged methods involves the exchange of experiences, feelings and ideas among research participants. Freirean educational, postcolonial and feminist theories are used to stress a critical awareness that leads to social action. The interweaving of participant and authorial voices in the analysis is used to neutralize power imbalances.

The findings reveal that a critical intersubjectively-engaged research extends the agency of participants from a limited to a systemic understanding of educational oppression. In this process of inclusion, subjugating discourses (e.g. No Child Left Behind Act and discourses on Diversity), which appear to be emancipatory, are demystified. The development of critical awareness among community interviewers and the possibility for action and transnational network formation are examined. A central contribution of this study is understanding the emancipatory power of the participant voices, which through their interwoven presence disrupt my own authorial power and our complicitous hegemonic discourses of oppression.

The study recommends that engaged anthropology, emancipatory social work and universities prioritize a critical education infused with praxis at all levels beginning in their institutional homes. The study further suggests overcoming overly simplistic binary oppositions that are used to marginalize large segments of our population and other potentially emancipatory disciplines. Long-term mentorship and cultural validation are central to this transformative process.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Transformative Accomplices: Multicultural Community Organizing in a Transnational Educational Context

The transnational migration experience of Latinos in the United States has been immersed in ideological and lived contradictions spanning from an idealism typical of the newcomer who expects a land of opportunities and an open and friendly welcome, to one which is often characterized by practices of cultural alienation, stigma and camouflaged disdain. It is not uncommon to hear, for example, from well-intentioned educational representatives, especially in geographic areas constituted by institutions of higher education, that they have the utmost interest in the progress and educational well-being of all their students and that they are open to the multiplicity of cultural and educational needs represented in their schools. These responses, however, beg the question as to why there continues to be a substantial academic achievement gap between minority students (Latinos and African Americans) even in what is considered a resource-rich university area. On the other hand, it also leads us to the question of the discrepancies of achievement within minority and underprivileged populations, which are often used as examples of exceptionality and appropriate educational services by the school representatives and their advertisements.

Despite this reality, it cannot be denied that there have been various kinds of differentially organized indigenous movements of underprivileged populations, which have sought to improve their educational outcomes and have found some degree of success (Escuela del Barrio Domingo in Guaynabo, P.R., Centro Sor Isolina Ferrer; Grand Rapids, MI Spanish Immersion Public School and others).

It is in this context that I, with the assistance of other minority community members, immersion school administrators and staff attempt to understand how

Latino immigrant and African American working class recipients negotiate the competing transnational, national and local policies and practices implemented by politicians, administrators and educators. The principal guiding questions I wish to explore are (1) How can a historical and transnationally focused analysis of ideological discourses and their manifestations help us understand educational practices and their interstices? (2) To what extent do subjects make strategic use of official discourses which purport to promote equal access and respect for difference, but which in practice, are characterized by a series of powerful yet subtle ideological and institutional barriers which limit attainability? (3) What conditions allow underprivileged families to create spaces for agency within a context of neo-colonial and transnational¹⁰ political influences? (4) What aspects of current educational policy need revision in light of this research? And (5) What are the implications of intersubjectively engaged home ethnographic research for the interaction between the fields of anthropology and social work?

In order to answer these questions, I will focus on ALAS—La Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños, a dual language multicultural university-influenced community organization in Washtenaw County, Michigan. This will be

My use of the term “neocolonial” refers to “a continuity of power from colonial to postcolonial times which allows hegemonic groups to exclude people of color from the categories of full citizenship in the imaginary community of the “nation”, thus affirming a coloniality of “power” within the existing and expanding boundaries of the new state”. I have exchanged the concept of neocolonialism for Grosfogel’s “postcolonialism” to prevent confusion. Postcolonialism today is often used to refer to practices instituted to address the exploitative effects of colonialism.

Grosfogel, Ramon et al. “Introduction” in *Puerto Rican Jam: Essays on Culture and Politics*. University of Minnesota Press, p. 20.

The term “transnational” refers to the heightened interconnectivity between people in a global context of production reorganization. It implies the loosening of political boundaries between countries in order to maximize profits and an increased flow of people, ideas and goods across borders. As a result migrants, for example, develop strong transnational ties to more than one country.

Barkan, Elliott Robert, ed. (2003) : *Immigration, Incorporation and Transnationalism*, Somerset, New Jersey, USA, Transaction Publishers. Dolby,

Guarnizo, Luis Eduardo & Michael Peter Smith, eds. (1997) *Transnationalism from Below*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA, Transaction Publishers.

contextualized through the analysis of colonial and neo-colonial educational policies and politico-economic and social interventions at various relevant institutions. These include the Spanish language immersion Academy of the Americas in Detroit, the University of Michigan middle school-through-college bridge programs purportedly focused on multicultural populations, Washtenaw public schools which have an increasing Latino immigrant population and a larger African American constituency, and the University of Puerto Rico educational system which has been an important foundational influence through my participation in the organization.

The university-mediated educational system in Puerto Rico is also important because the Island is a culturally and linguistically distinct nation. Nevertheless, politically and economically, it is a colonized territory of the United States where, paradoxically, its population bears U.S. citizenship. Although the stereotypical view of Puerto Ricans on the mainland is that of an underprivileged minority, in Puerto Rico, it constitutes the majority, which leads to a more complex understanding of class, colonial, race and gender dynamics in an educational context. I focus on four individuals of its educational elite, some my own family members, who were the privileged participants of a dramatic socio-political change on the Island during its transformation from former Governor Tugwell's "Stricken Island¹¹" to the so called "showcase of democracy."

This journey into the academic ascent of the Puerto Rican educational elite seeks to find out what elements contributed to their accomplishments and how these forces influenced their socio-political roles as educators in a colonial context of American imperialism. Most of them were readily accessible and were appropriate because their historical and familial relation to me as the co-founder and continued participant in the organization. A major common characteristic between the Puerto Rican elite and the Latino immigrants is that we are all members of colonized peoples. By this, I am referring to our position of political and economic dependence, which leads to our exploitation and subjugation through such attempted processes as silence, invisibility, erasure and assimilation. This

¹¹ Tugwell, Rexford Guy (1946) *The Stricken Land: The Story of Puerto Rico*. Doubleday Press.

analysis helps us answer the question of our differential success in order to deal with the problems of immigrant youth more successfully. The stories chosen for inclusion are particularly relevant because they answer to questions or circumstances brought up in the literature or historical documents that help us understand the political, economic, social and subjective context of the educational experience under the transnational circumstances of colonialism.

I also include the present educational circumstances and the voice of one of Puerto Rico's current teachers who denounces the effects of the No Child Left Behind policies on the Puerto Rican educational system. His observations serve as a link and a comparative perspective to the experiences of the Academy of the Americans and ALAS in Michigan who are also under the rubric of this policy. All of the institutions previously mentioned are linked through federal policies and aid, the differential role of Spanish as a class and ethnic marker in a transnational global context and through the purported services offered to disadvantaged groups.

ALAS is an ideal context for understanding these links. It is a non-profit, self-governing dual language educational community organization which resulted from a collaboration between myself, a Puerto Rican University of Michigan graduate student, and several Mexican families of recent migration to the United States. Shortly after its inception, it incorporated University of Michigan bilingual tutors as an inherent part of the program. It was created within a context of anthropological critical theory and social work intervention practice, at a time when courses in community-based and participatory action research were beginning to flourish in the social science departments at the university.

Its initial purpose was to increase social networks that would improve access to educational, health and legal services for immigrant families. As the population grew, however, so did community-wide resources leading ALAS to limit its focus mainly to academic enrichment and educational advocacy. Regarding working class community members, the organization has mostly benefitted from the involvement of immigrant mothers who have assumed the responsibility of transporting their children and who have participated in the program as English learners or as teachers of Spanish. Throughout the twelve years of its functioning, the program has

undergone substantial changes in its ethnic composition resulting in important social repercussions to the organization. Finally, the program has attempted to maintain physical well-being through karate, a program taught by an African American instructor, who has also influenced and been influenced by the organization's ethnic diversity in important ways. The effect and influence of African-Americans in the organization and in academia will be discussed in relation to their discourse and actual efforts to improve higher education access for minorities.

ALAS is based on a philosophy of community service where the children and parents participate as mutual educators to enhance leadership, strengthen academic skills through teaching and promote a social consciousness and investment in the welfare of others. Another crucial element of the philosophy is one which establishes the long term, rather than remedial focus on educational achievement for immigrants and underprivileged youth. For example, a family-subsidized college scholarship fund, which had been planned for several years, was developed in 2005 to aid in fulfilling the economic demands of higher education with respect to the children. This philosophy has been an important determinant of length of membership for its constituents, thus re-enforcing the level of self-selection of its members.

The Latino families who have remained over the long term are composed of a group of working class parents who have a high school degree or less and who have prioritized the education of their children and the maintenance of their cultural heritage. These families have expressed pride in their national heritage and have voiced the need to face the reality that they might return to their countries of origin. In addition to this, several of them have mentioned the importance of speaking two languages to broaden their opportunities for employment. Due to the instruction in ALAS, they have also come to realize that second language learning uses the knowledge and skills acquired in the formal education of the native language.

Although similar, or worse, in terms of economic resources, my own family is the exception with relation to formal educational status, which traditionally locates us in the middle class. Regarding income, however, I form part of what is now known as the

“academic working poor” due the exploitative employment conditions in higher education for adjunct lecturers.¹²

The African-American parents have completed a high school degree, for the most part, and were initially attracted to the martial arts portion of the program for their children, but have welcomed the academic tutoring and learning Spanish as a second language. The parents of the African American children have not been actively involved in the organization for the most part; the grandparents and uncle have substituted for them instead, with the exception of one male parent. Recently, a new African-American foster family joined the organization. The mother holds a master’s degree in a social service profession and depends on part time employment while her husband, a high school graduate, works full time in the dessert confection industry.

All families have chosen to remain in the program which requires a monthly fee and volunteer duties, as opposed to joining other programs which are free of charge and which exclude Spanish or heritage language maintenance as a primary component. Due to the fact that the ALAS members represent a sample of highly motivated low income families who prioritize academic achievement and the maintenance of their cultural identity, they are a good venue to better define the forces that facilitate or hinder their goals for the academic success of their children, as well as the philosophies that affect their practice and aspirations in a transnational colonial context.

I have chosen participatory action research methods for this project because of my role as researcher and co-founder of the program, which requires my definition as an activist researcher who shares important characteristics with the other members, while inhabiting, simultaneously, a very different class position. The critical intersubjective process that I propose is one that assumes the agency and power of all participants, including myself. The power between us in our

¹² [vhttp://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8flaepmuvdw&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8flaepmuvdw&feature=related)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkuovJRIZr0&feature=related>.

interactions varies according to the moment, context, and experience. For example, in the context of party organizing, I have often been powerless and even excluded since the women have seen me more as a hindrance than a help. They have had no qualms in stating this. In moments of theoretical discussions, once we begin the application to concrete examples, the women have voiced their agreement or disagreement depending on their own experiences and points of view. In the descriptions where I have mentioned that “I told them” to do one thing or another, the women acted according to their judgment, participated in my request, discussed it to change it, or ignored it altogether. This kind of research expects and encourages disagreements and different reactions derived from our co-construction of the event.

My motivation to participate in this program has been strongly influenced by four important factors. First, my own family history of relative privilege is strongly influenced by the Puerto Rican colonial context of American political, economic and educational hegemony, which corresponds, in several ways, to the social subordination, which immigrants tend to experience in this country. Second, my role as the mother of my two United States born children of Puerto Rican and Costa Rican descent led me to seek ways to reinforce their ethnic pride, native language support and cultural heritage in a Latino community environment. Third, the insights I gained about the power of community-initiated education emerged from my ethnographic fieldwork studying a women’s communal movement in the guerrilla-controlled zone of El Salvador in 1991.

In this context, Freire’s Pedagogy of Liberation, which enables the co-education of communities with scant resources, had an important effect on the alphabetization of rural families. Consequently, the impressive results that I observed in literacy attainment and motivation influenced my organizational efforts with Latino immigrants in Washtenaw County, Michigan. These families also had minimal resources and were completely alienated from the social service system in general when the organization was created. Fourth, my role as an intermediary between higher education, interdisciplinary critical theory and community based

organizing facilitated collaborative efforts to create broader spaces for mutual learning and the academic and vocational ascent of community members.

The nature of the Joint Doctoral Program of Anthropology and Social Work, by its very definition, requires a work which attends to two seemingly different disciplinary objectives. As stated by Dirks, Eley and Ortner¹³, these are based on “established meanings of university-based cross-departmental negotiation.” However, the intent of my dissertation is to explore and represent the fluid interconnections that negate the illusion of “secure disciplinary foundations” and which celebrate a “trans-disciplinary” flow representative of current theoretical and practice interventions. The concept of critical theory, as used in the social sciences, humanities, women’s studies and cultural studies, is a trans-disciplinary effort to critique domination, cultural hegemony and subalterity through socio-cultural and politico-economic analysis.

The relevant bodies of critical theory which inform my analysis of equity, agency and complicity within the educational alienation of immigrant and underprivileged families include: postcolonial, Freirean and feminist theories, anthropologically engaged frameworks, and structural and critical social work influences related to practice. Other primary theoretical resources include community-based participatory action theories and literature about the role of higher and lower education in a transnational setting. Freire is particularly important because his philosophy of education, not only allows, learning to take place without the usual resources, but it facilitates the breakdown of psychological and social barriers in the context of power differentials that are generally perpetuated in traditional education.

I have chosen qualitative research to carry out this analysis because it is used to understand how the participants in a study make sense of their experiences and how their understandings influence their view of options and consequently their reactions. According to Joseph Maxwell, qualitative research is based on the ongoing and simultaneous activities of “collecting and analyzing data, developing and

¹³ Dirks, Nicholas, Geoff Eley, Sherry Ortner (1994) *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*. Pp. ix-x. Princeton University Press.

modifying theory, elaborating and refocusing the research question, and identifying and addressing validity threats which” influence each other and occur simultaneously¹⁴.

My position as a cofounder of ALAS signals an inherent inter-subjectivity between myself and the other organization members which calls for the inclusion of current and past members as co-interviewers and dialogic partners. Thus, individual and focus group interviews with both, children and adults, was to some extent, shared by us all. In order to contextualize how educational policies are interpreted, negotiated and practiced by their respective providers and targeted ALAS recipients, the university-influenced academic programs mentioned previously, and their administrators, were observed and interviewed. We also used existing basic demographic data and recorded migration histories and patterns as well as analyzed interpersonal dynamics within these programs/organizations.

Participant observation, semi-structured questionnaires, attendance to public talks in higher education and focus groups within the k-12 educational systems were used to obtain information of various policies and associated discourses¹⁵. The discursive analysis of historical and current documents related to the links between higher and k-12 American educational transnational and national efforts served as a means of understanding ALAS and the implications of its relationship to the university system as compared to other university influenced organizations. In other words, we analyzed how American colonial educational policies continue to function internally and externally and how they affect the educational formation of its Latino minority citizens, immigrant residents and Puerto Rican Island nationals who negotiate educational practices and discourses experienced through the complicated continuum of higher and lower educational influences.

¹⁴ Maxwell, Joseph. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interpretive Approach*. Sage. 2005.

¹⁵ Melendez, Edwin et al. (1993) *Colonial Dilemma: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary P.R.* South End Press.

The research with ALAS has implications for the improvement of multicultural community action related to education and the potential for addressing institutional and state policies which impede, through discursive and actual practices, the academic attainment of multicultural underprivileged youth in a neocolonial context. Neocolonialism in this work follows Grosfogel's definition of postcolonialism. My preference for the concept of Neocolonialism is an attempt to prevent confusion since postcolonialism is generally used, at the present time, to refer to practices that have been instituted to combat the effects of colonialism. The concept of transnationalism is also modified as a result of our analysis. It goes beyond Portes' limitation to individuals who own businesses in more than one country.

An important contribution of this research lies in the trans-disciplinary involvement of anthropology as an eclectic participant of much broader and interconnected theoretical flows, and the testing of theory in the context of human interactions where they are given life. Similarly, social work is used as a conduit to an array of equally critical interventions of participatory engagement leading to the understanding and practice of emancipatory social justice efforts.

The style of this dissertation is an attempt to respond to the now more than thirty year old debate about the need to include the voices of those who have been marginalized and who are generally the focus and co-participants of our research. Besides the moral and ethical concerns of representation this also attends to the philosophical debate over how "truth" is constructed and who has the power to participate in and express its development.

In our attempt to maintain a cohesive and understandable argument while also reflecting the many dialogic ruptures that normally occur in the process of critically engaged conversations and interactions, I have included the voices, reactions and ideas in the footnotes that have been spurred by the reading of my narrations and arguments. Sometimes these are reflection on the content, other times they are memories, feelings or insights that are not apparently related to the topic at hand, but which are brought forth by the listener in the process of inter-subjectivity. I have generally resisted including the footnoted remarks in my

analysis to prevent the imposition of my interpretation on their voices. In this way they are able to speak to other readers directly without further translation. I do admit, however, that sometimes their comments have played such an important part in the clarification of some of the political dynamics that we are trying to understand that I have made reference to them in other parts of the text.

The inclusion of these voices is important because they become a space of communication that is controlled by the community member, in opposition to my overall imposed structure. As much as I have tried to create an inclusive writing process, it has been constrained by several factors, the dissertation stipulations, the inclusion of my own history, the parameters of theory and my attempt to achieve coherence. Another advantage of this style of writing is that through the interweaving of voices it helps to reveal the complexity of the subject and her theoretical and pragmatic underpinnings. It is a very time consuming and difficult process because it requires an evolving exploration and revisiting of multiple threads that reveal themselves through the process of analysis itself. In addition, in my effort to be inclusive of English and Spanish speaking audiences, I have had to translate all of the original Spanish texts included in the pages of this work.

The structure of this dissertation is composed of the preface, introduction, three developmental chapters and the conclusions and implications. Chapter one discusses the meaning and importance of home ethnography and emotion in the dissertation. It emphasizes the dislocations that this type of ethnography reveals and creates within its sponsoring institutions. The role of critical theory and transnational influences in social work are discussed, as is the subordinate role of educational ethnography within the generalized field of anthropology due to its association with practice and home research. This chapter ends with a discussion of the relevance of this work to the Joint Program in Anthropology and Social Work, and with the methodological procedures of dissertation.

Chapter two provides a critical review of the educational influences of American colonialism in Puerto Rico. It focuses on the rise of a Puerto Rican elite educated in Harvard. It examines the political, economic and social forces that led to their achievements and later role as educators who were critical of the colonial

influences on the Island. Similarly, this chapter examines the role of the University of Puerto Rico and of American academics in the process of industrial, social and economic reformation. It reveals the causes and construction of so called educational exceptionalism. The interstices and ruptures that permit academic advancement in relation to ideas of democracy and colonialism are discussed in order to understand their relevance in the context of the achievement gap experienced by minorities in the U.S. and Michigan more specifically. The theme of institutional corruption is introduced as a major obstacle perpetuating this gap.

Chapter three analyzes the trajectory, politics and accomplishments of ALAS; a community organizational effort born within the University of Michigan to address the achievement gap in Washtenaw County. Through my previous ethnographic work it addresses the theoretical and experiential influences that have affected my participation in ALAS. It begins by establishing a link between the imperialist practices of the United States in El Salvador and the politics of gender subjugation under mystifying representations of equity. It also discusses the alienating effects of traditional ethnographic research due to its subordination of emotion and the repression of inter-subjectivity. This chapter begins a theoretical incursion into the concepts of community organizing, participatory research, action research and participatory action research. Furthermore, it discusses the University of Michigan involvement in the process ALAS' development and the politics of race. In addition it begins to reveal the contradictory roles of the Ann Arbor Public School System and the University of Michigan in the education of Latino students.

Chapter four introduces the critical intersubjectively-engaged research efforts of former and present ALAS community members who attempt to understand the experience of Latinos in the educational system. It discusses the process of critical theory education in the research effort, the difficulties of our inclusion in the University's research protocols and the unexpected emancipatory results. It reveals the transformative effects of this process on its participants as we grappled with our preconceived ideas about race, language, gender and status. This chapter also contextualizes the political, educational and social dynamics of ALAS through a discussion of the Academy of the Americas, a public school in Detroit, Michigan with

similar objectives. It examines the exclusionary practices towards Latinos that are obscured by official discourses of diversity in lower and higher education. Finally, it describes our efforts to extend our critically engaged research and organizational efforts to the Academy of the Americas and Pipiolo Elementary School in Mexico with the support of the American Go Foundation. The result thus far has been the creation of a trans-city and transnational collaboration with the purpose of promoting a culturally and linguistically validating educational cosmopolitanism that will result in truly equitable and high quality education for all youth.

The last chapter reviews our findings and answers the primary questions of this research. The contributions of home ethnography from a critically engaged intersubjective perspective are also discussed. Finally, it provides recommendations for further research and for the role of anthropology, social work and the university in creating and promoting a high quality and truly inclusive/diverse educational environment.

Chapter 2

A Review of Methodologies: Home Based and Inter-subjectively Engaged Critical Ethnography

An anthropologist of home does not go ‘elsewhere’ to produce the experiential shifts that can lead to anthropological knowledge. She experiences shifts at home... I want to suggest that ‘dislocation insights’, as I call them, can come about not just when crossing geographical distance but also when confronted with familiar categories that suddenly become strange, when confronted with yourself in a new way, or when confronted with the *unheimlich*—the unhomelike—at home.¹⁶

A number of anthropological practices have come slowly and intermittently to what we would call “home ethnography”¹⁷. Far from being accepted with open arms, even in the age of experimental anthropological work, these ethnographers have not found it an easy or welcoming task to commit to the critical practices that this type of research demands. They have been fearful of inciting harsh criticisms of subjectivity (i.e. “navel gazing”) from traditional academics¹⁸ and have met up with substantial institutional resistance because of what this type of research could uncover about the relationship between institutional practices, their preferred discursive representations and their impact on us as subjects.

In her article, “Anthropology of Home,” Ingie Hovland, as demonstrated in the initial quote of this chapter and in the one that follows, introduces us to the relationship

¹⁶ Hovland, Ingie (2004) *Anthropology Matters Journal*, Vol 6 (2), p. 1.

¹⁷ All auto-ethnographies would fall within this category to the extent that the self in the primary constituent of “home”.

¹⁸ Hemingson, Michael (2006) *Here Come the Navel Gazers: Definitions and Defenses for Auto/Ethnography*. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1099750>

of the home field to personal experience and its relevance to ethnographic research. She offers us a refreshingly self-revealing and somewhat irreverent justification for her decision to study a place which is familiar to her as a subject, but which becomes increasingly unfamiliar and problematic as she positions herself as an institutionally-sponsored researcher.

[Anthropologists] are at home in these spaces in different and sometimes difficult ways. But what they have in common is that they turn home into a critical category. These anthropologists use themselves, at home, as ‘principal informants’. Anthropology of home is concerned with the category of home as an experiential plane—a feeling or frame of mind. We long for spaces where we can feel at home, and yet these very spaces are the ones that can hurt us the most.¹⁹

When Hovland refers to the “hurt” of home ethnography, she is likely pointing to the normative/retaliatory forces of higher education that constrain and resist an evaluation of its discourses and practices from the “lower levels” of its entrails. Those of us who “should know better” than to scrutinize our “parent institutions” and who reveal and question our secrets of privilege run the risk of incurring disciplinary action, or worse than that, risk “exile” from the select circles that almost guarantee our survival or demise as academics.²⁰

Hovland, when discussing her own disciplinary training, refers to Gupta and Fergusson’s discussion of “the field” in anthropology as one which enables and produces the necessary distance to create the illusion of purity in the discovery and recognition of our “other” for the purpose of knowledge production.²¹ Her inclusion of the ingrained perceptions of disdain that she has experienced, reveal the pre-conceptions she has

¹⁹ Hovland, Ingie (2004) *Anthropology Matters Journal*, Vol. 6 (2), p.1.

Comment made by Martin: When I think of home, I think of family, not karate, not the associations that I belong to. Those “spaces that we long for” hurt us the most because if we are not included in them, then we are outsiders. I would feel like the black sheep. Maybe the hurt is “I thought that my home life was good and now I find out that it is no better than that of everyone else.” Part of analyzing is that you are going to find good things and bad things, but no matter what the good things are, you are going to always feel that the bad outweigh the good. It’s human nature. Home research is enlightening, but the problem is that if you find something wrong...”how can you fix it?” You ask people for solutions to figure it out, but because it’s the home they’re not going to give you any ammunition to fire on them. Knowing you, you are going to give them too much information, even information that they don’t want to even hear.

²⁰ Personally experienced home ethnographic observation 1996-Present. As subjects of and within the institution we are called upon by various agents and warned through discourses which may be more or less veiled about the reprisals we may face if we continue to critique “our”/their departments.

²¹ Ibid.

subconsciously internalized about the “impurity of her home-field.” This, in turn, causes her discomfort and leads her to participate in this self-deprecation by questioning the value of her work. Alienation results as she becomes separated from the institution of higher learning that has reared her as a professional. In this context, her “home” is conflictively shared between the field where she grew up and the academic field, which has re-socialized her.

I felt out-of-joint with my university and my discipline. These were the first dislocation insights that provoked questions around the categories of home and field for me.²²

In the case of this dissertation, the methodology of my work can only be understood in relation to the heightened pain, which results from the self-protective and defensive gaze of anthropological academia, which, ironically, is somewhat contradicted yet simultaneously elided by that of academic social work and its institutional guardians. Whereas anthropology traditionally deals with “the other” from a Western perspective of intractable difference, removed in space or cultural representation, social work intervenes on its subjects in a home field of predefined state certified “objective” practice.

Social workers understand their profession to be categorized along somewhat limited yet permeable parameters of service provision.²³ These inevitably define, constrain and relegate the subjects of their/our work to the margins as our professional categorizations objectify them. The social worker lives within a profession that, on the one hand, prescribes heightened ideals of social justice and, on the other, socializes us to police and diagnose others: It almost requires the development of multiple personalities where one can be switched off, unbeknownst to, or in collusion with, the other. Within institutional practice, be it academic, bureaucratic or therapeutic, the “personality” that is most likely to be pushed to the margins, or altogether dissolved, is that of social justice as it pertains to the ideals of “self-determination” and “empowerment”: ideals that are

²² Ibid.

²³ Malcolm Payne, for example, discusses two social work models which he relates to discursive practices and social construction arenas that encompass the interactions between social workers, their objects of intervention and their employers: client-worker-agency, agency-profession and political-social-ideological arenas (Payne 2005, p.18). Consequently, his discursive practice model is characterized, in a parallel relationship to his arena of practice model, by individualist-reformist, reflexive-therapeutic and social-collectivist ideologies (Payne, p. 10). These discursive practices, in conjunction with each other and with the arenas of practice, lead to specific types of interventions on the part of the practitioner. Payne, Malcolm (2005) *Modern Social Work Theory*. Third Edition. Lyceum Books.

unlikely to be accomplished when they are used in the context of reforming subjects to the institutional expectations of “home.”

Home, outside of academia, from the stance of the official social worker, is an inherently “othering” space which separates the “have-nots” from the “haves” in our own neighborhoods, in our places of work and in the wider community. In the social sciences, “home as academia,” is overtly represented and discussed as if it were an inclusive and inviting place of creative collaboration among peers, peers-to-be and, sometimes, the larger community. Indeed, substantial amounts of resources are invested in advertising such an image in order to recruit faculty, students and more recently “community partners.”²⁴



"Working toward your future!"

1. *University of Michigan Employment Office*

“The Ginsberg Center strengthens community service learning across the University of Michigan.”²⁵

²⁴ https://studentemployment.umich.edu/JobX_Home.aspx

“To reaffirm and restate the University’s continuing commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity; to increase effectiveness by setting forth the action being taken and to be taken by the University and its employees concerning employment opportunities; and to provide for implementation, self-monitoring, and a measure for achievement through a comprehensive affirmative action program.” The University of Michigan Standard Practice Guide. <http://spg.umich.edu/200/201%20-%20Human%20Resources%20&%20Affirmative%20Action/201.82%20%20%20%20EEO%5CAffirmative%20Action%20Policy.pdf>

²⁵ <http://ginsberg.umich.edu/>

The CEO [Center for Educational Outreach] is a [University](#) initiative that seeks to ensure academic excellence for all K-12 schoolchildren in the state of Michigan.

We focus on continuing U-M's commitment to educational outreach and to promoting collaboration between schools, organizations, and the community.²⁶

Welcome!

The Program for Multicultural Health (PMCH), a unit of the [University](#) of Michigan Health System (UMHS), is committed to reducing health disparities among cultural populations. PMCH conducts culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive health promotion, education and research programs for surrounding communities. PMCH acts to improve the health status of diverse populations by identifying both culturally specific health needs and addressing culturally targeted approaches.²⁷

[U-M's public scholars] Public scholarship in the humanities, arts, and design, according to Nancy Cantor and Stephen Lavine, "comprises research, scholarship, or creative activity that connects directly to the work of specific public groups in specific contexts; arises from a faculty member's field of knowledge; involves a cohesive series of activities contributing to the public welfare and results in 'public good' products; is jointly planned and carried out by coequal partners; and integrates discovery, learning, and public engagement." (Nancy Cantor and Stephen D. Lavine, "Point of View: Taking Public Scholarship Seriously," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 9, 2006).²⁸

On the other hand, home, from the perspective of traditional anthropology outside of academia, is not the anthropologist's home. It is an intrusive place with the other, a place that carries the danger of "going too native" --a place that as an anthropologist one must be able to leave behind in order to write about it so as to achieve a proper place in the "ivory towers."

The concept of "home" as it relates to distance and proximity in the context of academia, then, encompasses the contradictory duality of "objectivity" and "subjectivity." These seemingly opposing categories are ambiguously intertwined or vehemently separated depending on the desired interpellation/inclusion of contextually differentiated subjects.²⁹ In "Social Security and Social Exclusion: Old and New Challenges for Social

²⁶University of Michigan Center for Educational Outreach <http://ceo.umich.edu/>

²⁷ University of Michigan Program for Multicultural Health <http://www.med.umich.edu/multicultural/>

²⁸ Arts of Citizenship: Public Scholarship at the University of Michigan.

<http://www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/>

²⁹ "Several indicators are needed to measure social security, irrespective of whether its objective or subjective side is being emphasized. Indicators that express the society's objective structures can be used, or conversely, the researcher may choose to operate with the individuals' subjective feelings, experiences and ideas. People's mental images of their social conditions do not always correspond to their living

Policy and Social Work,” for example, Juha Hämäläinen et al. reify the dichotomous relationship between “objectivity” and “subjectivity.” They reveal how this opposition is generally taken for granted in the profession by attributing “objectivity” to institutional practices employed to define and address “social security,” and “subjectivity” to the feelings and ideas of service recipients. Although these authors mention Riihinen’s³⁰ position that “social welfare is connected to various “operational” definitions influenced by different concepts of “man,³¹” they miss the inherent critique of this statement of “objectivity,” and limit their proposal to urging social policy advocates to include both the “objective” operationalized concepts and the “subjective” ideas of clients in the creation of more equitable social security policies.

The representations that cloud the internal divisions and less than “homelike” qualities of our academic disciplines of social work and anthropology and that, in turn, affect our views about “home ethnography” are infused with underlying discourses of objectivity and subjectivity that often go unnoticed as related to subject validation. In fact, these have much to do with the discourses about empowerment, equity and social justice which we use to construct our professional identities.³² An often-overlooked contradiction is the common focus on the social worker/academic taking the spotlight of fame in the media and universities for community engagements involving their “collaborative” Scholarship.³³ This is largely due to the strong individual emphasis of the corporate structure of the institutions, which prioritize “objective measures” and require individual

circumstances, with the result that the task of measuring social security becomes a somewhat complicated one.”

³⁰ Riihinen comment addressed in Juha Hämäläinen et al. “Social Security and Social Exclusion: Old and New Challenges for Social Policy and Social Work”. IUC Journal of Social Work: Theory and Practice. Issue 10, 2004-2005.

http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/publications/social_work_journal/issue10/articles/4_Insecurity.htm

³¹ Riihinen 1983, 74–83 in Hämäläinen

³² The social work code of ethics attempts to depict the role of the profession as one which seeks equity for all despite differences in gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, age, race or ability. Consumers, clients, patients are depicted as being in a continuum of recovery towards independence.

(<http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>). Anthropology has a tradition, starting with Boas, based on ideas of cultural relativism to promote an equal validation of various cultures, and later on the incorporation of critical, subaltern, feminist theories to reveal the exploitative power relations in and across various societies linked through global capitalism.

³³ Numerous celebratory e-mails were produced in the School of Social Work either for self-aggrandizement by adjunct lecturers who found themselves in the interstices of validation and deprecation due to their “incomplete” academic status. Several similar e-mails were produced about a few distinct tenured faculty who have focused on youth group self-evaluation or participatory organization.

validation to maintain a competitive edge through representations of exceptionality.

Contrary to its accompanying discourses of communitarian efforts and the validation of such knowledge, then, academia tends to exhibit a disdain, as veiled as it may be, towards true community-based representation and collaborative scholarly work with those from the margins. In other words, the resistance to community collaboration, at the level of the social sciences, is a primary tool of privilege preservation; the restrictions and definitions of who is and is not qualified to do research and to provide valid knowledge according to academic standards is zealously guarded. As stated by Mora and Díaz;

Faculty in the university who promote counterhegemonic ideals and practices often find that they are in a “war zone,” engaged in the ongoing battle about what constitutes legitimate knowledge and action...unfortunately we spend endless hours in battles against those who function as agents of colonial power—the overseer...Once we recognize and name their interference without letting it stop us, we can proceed with the production of positive action and problem-solving research.³⁴

The counterhegemonic ideals and practices of some researchers, like Hovland, reveal hidden institutional strategies which combine “communitarian” and individualizing discourses of “exceptionality” in an effort to create and nourish an “amicable” or even active acceptance of hierarchical power. One such example of the pedestrian dynamics of daily life in this context is the de facto difference in expectations between doctoral and masters students in our departments. For example, in a late 90s doctoral pro-seminar of social work and social science³⁵ in the School of Social Work, the instructor of the course and Director of the School at the time, announced to its 100% female class that there was going to be an activity to help the elderly rake their yards. She asked for volunteers, but only one doctoral student raised her hand. The volunteer immediately received silent glances of disapproval from the rest, while the instructor received uncomfortably subdued complaints to justify why they could not participate. No additional urgings were heard and, thus, the seeds of exceptionality began to come to life.

³⁴ Mora, Juana, Ph.D. and David R. Díaz, Ph.D. (2004) *Plugging the Brain Drain: Bringing Our Education Back Home* in Section I: Creating a New Vision and Role for Research in Latino Communities. *Latino Social Policy: A Participatory Research Model*. The Haworth Press. Pp. 29-30.

³⁵ This course, which attempts to teach students how faculty and other researchers integrate social work and the social sciences, was a requirement of all incoming Joint Program students.

Administrative efforts to organize master level students for “social work service” at the University of Michigan School of Social Work are much more structured, common and actively implemented. They attract a substantially larger number of volunteers from these levels than from doctoral students or faculty. The latter are more commonly called upon to join various administrative committees, conferences and research-based activities instead of involving themselves in direct volunteer work.

An example, related to public scholarship, another potential venue for creating equity between academia and the community, and of validating the knowledge produced in “home research,” occurred more recently in 2011, at a workshop sponsored by the Arts of Citizenship Grant Program, now part of Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan. There were several different representatives from the School of Social Work as well as faculty from departments such as Cultural Studies, Women’s Studies and Urban Planning among others, seeking funding for their projects.

A School of Social Work associate dean was asked to speak on the difficulties encountered when doing collaborative research with the community. He responded that the community was often unwilling to entertain short-term projects that were only funded for three months. An awkward discursive atmosphere was created and exacerbated by a majority presence of academics vs. community collaborators. There appeared to be an implied agreement that the community should understand the constraints of academia and be more flexible. One of the community collaborators who worked in a disadvantaged urban location whispered a remark about the privileged and alienating posture of the university (as he pushed his nose up mimicking arrogance). A thirteen-year-old community organizer, who heard of this incident a few days later, said

Honestly, how can anyone do good community research in three months? They are probably just taking off and using whatever they find for themselves. What about the needs of the community? How can they even expect the community to just agree to this? What is the community supposed to get out of it?³⁶

As demonstrated in this example, there are contexts within academia that seek to provide interdisciplinary spaces for traditionally oriented and more community-based

³⁶ My daughter has been a member of ALAS since she was two years old. She has tutored Latino heritage speaking kids for two years now. Both my daughter and son have been involved in marches against immigration raids and in favor of the Dream Act. This act advocates for the admission of undocumented children into higher education with no reprisals for their status.

practice fields to share common interests outside of long-standing official relationships. But, ironically, it is in these spaces that it is often more evident how much the two apparently “opposing camps” within academia have in common in terms of their institutional embeddedness and loyalty to traditional ideas regarding the validity of knowledge and who is qualified to produce it. Despite this, however, important representational differences are actively maintained which enable these disciplines to create bounded images of their identities in order to assert their “exceptionality.”

How do these dualities and confluences relate to the concept of home in the context of anthropology and social work? Unlike Hovland’s experience with anthropology, “home,” is not an unusual place for a social worker to do research, given that our interventions often happen in “our own backyards.” Any discomfort from “othering” is (said to be) handled with the “reflexive” focus of the field. We see this emphasized in every course at the bachelor and master levels. Doctoral students and faculty are increasingly disengaged from direct and ongoing community practice as they are called upon by funding agencies and programs to produce “objective” research within limited prescribed contexts³⁷. This does not preclude, however, the vociferous rhetorical support of “activist, engaged and collaborative research” in social work and, although still minimal, it is more common in anthropology, especially during times of a national economic recession and the renewed push for the inclusion of “the masses” in academia.³⁸

Ironically, the institutionalization of reflexive practice³⁹, divorced from critical

³⁷ Home ethnographic experience 1996-present. Most grant applications will provide stipulations about what is acceptable research, the geographic area where it may take place and what would constitute immediate grounds for denial. See appendix for grant application from the American Anthropological Association

³⁸ Recent home-ethnographic observation and receipt of e-mails

³⁹ Reflexive thinking in social work pertains to “taking into account as many different perspectives on a situation as possible, and especially different perspectives among clients and their social networks” in Payne, 2005; p. 32. In anthropology, “reflexivity” has taken on various meanings through time, but, as stated by Jennifer Robertson from the University of Michigan Anthropology Department, “Twenty years ago, reflexivity was proposed as a corrective to a mode of ethnographic writing in which factual material was presented by an omniscient yet invisible author-narrator whose methods of fieldwork and data collecting were not always manifest, and who did not address the effect of her or his presence.”

Robertson, Jennifer (2002) Reflexivity Redux: A Pithy Polemic on "Positionality"
Anthropological Quarterly - Volume 75, Number 4, Fall 2002, pp. 785-792

http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/anthropological_quarterly/v075/75.4robertson.html.

My point of view is that reflexivity must take into account both points of view, with a stronger emphasis on the anthropological version as stated by J. Robertson.

systemic thinking about the researcher's "home field," often plays a primary role in the "division of labor" between "researchers," "practitioners" and "community members." The determination of which subjects are charged with the task of "reflexivity" and the context in which they are to go about it, helps maintain the home/other ethnographic binary. The division of labor related to reflexive practice can be gleaned quite easily in the daily processes of academic life: practices that maintain an ongoing imaginary of a benefactor and caring atmosphere so important for institutional preservation.

Qualitatively based critical and feminist research discussions, as well as educational ethnographic work by minorities and their scholarly advocates have revealed how skillfully the biases and preconceptions of "objective/operationalized" research can be hidden so that efforts of social engineering based on notions of inferiority, pathology and merit can be perpetuated. Traditional research has played a primary role in maintaining and nourishing our socio-political and economic system so responsible for the global ecological, political and economic dilemmas that characterize our world. We are at a critical cross-point in our history where combining the interpretive strengths of qualitative and critically oriented research with a selective and careful use of quantitative tools can help us gain more insight about how to practice increasingly collaborative research with emancipatory objectives.

It is to be expected, however, that those whose identities and professional positions have benefited from an allegiance to notions of "objectivity" may find the discussion about my own transnationally embodied role and the multiple venues of interpretation of what I experience as "homes" quite discomfoting. These "homes" include the experiences and voices of those often defined by general society as marginal. Among these are the colonial academic world of Puerto Rico in the context of the United States, the neoliberal academic world of Ann Arbor, Michigan, the transnational neocolonial immersion of female immigrant workers and their children in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti and the ironic world of "protected, unprotected and promoted" minority students in public schools and academia who continue to struggle despite being in the context of U of M (heralded as the last institutional battle ground for affirmative action).⁴⁰ My homes also encompass the world of white and minority faculty who represent themselves as the

⁴⁰ <http://aad.english.ucsb.edu/pages/michigannews.html>

“protectors” of Latinos and black students, but who often participate in many of the same alienating practices that we criticize.

The context of my research/practice/community participation involves the irreverent inclusion of the “undeserving” into the lap of the “ivory tower” through the various processes of activist/engaged home-based research. My analysis of home reveals the “othering” of subjects who do not acquiesce to the demands and expectations of “the cream of the crop” of administrative academics and their assistants, as much as the latter would like.⁴¹

Transnational “Homes” in Education

The Roles of Social Work and Anthropology within Our Educational Systems: Origins, Theory and Practice

From emancipatory perspectives, such as subaltern, postmodern critical and meta-theories,⁴² the ones so often voiced within the halls of anthropology, it is easy to understand how the construction of theory vs. practice debates arise and why comments of disdain from anthropology to social work are produced. School social workers are trained to participate in the diagnosis of learning disabilities, to interpret intelligence and learning evaluations. In essence, they are trained to design overt interventions constructed from a deficit-based perspective, but which are camouflaged in various levels of strength-based discourses.⁴³ School social workers are encouraged to help families find community and institutional resources that are supportive of their children who have been

⁴¹ Term used by incoming U of M Anthropology Department Director in 1993 to refer to the entering anthropology graduate student cohort. This cohort was composed of doctoral students from various countries and ethnicities with a majority of them being white upper middle class. A noticeable number of the minority students would leave or postpone their studies as the program progressed.

⁴² Subaltern theory originates with a South Asian group of historians in the 1970s-80s which appropriated the term from Antonio Gramsci in order to refer to the historical perspective of colonized peoples. Depending on the theoretician, these groups are defined as being rendered without agency by virtue of their oppression (Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988: 271-313) or as groups who have agency despite their oppression (Bhabha, Homi K. "Unsatisfied: notes on vernacular cosmopolitanism." *Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities*. Ed. Laura Garcia-Moreno and Peter C. Pfeiffer. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1996: 191-207.). Postmodern critical theory refers to the politicization of social problems by contextualizing them historically and culturally as the notion of objectivity or a stable “other” is rejected following a Foucauldian influence (Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.). Metatheory refers to a theory about other theories.

⁴³ Participant Observation in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti Public Schools 2002-present. University of Michigan School Social Worker Certification Program, 2009.

referred to them because they are “not performing well” in school, whether behaviorally, academically, or both.

School social work, in this context, is largely limited today to something akin to Mary Richmond’s social diagnosis model⁴⁴ and it is based on the casework tradition of social workers/visiting teachers who traveled from school to school attempting to reform and acculturate “maladjusted children.”⁴⁵ Its origins lie in the sponsorship of private agencies in the states of New York City, Connecticut, Boston, Chicago and Hartford, where it later gained approval from the school board of education to become an additional component of public educational provisions. The dual professions of visiting teachers and social work

...led to the forging of an exclusive association with the social work profession. The process began in 1916 and in 1919 [when] the National Association of visiting teachers was developed. The Association established multidimensional qualifications for visiting teacher membership in the late 1920s. The visiting teacher association strove to unite and make professional, home and school visitors, visiting teachers, and later, school social workers. By 1921, School Social Work had been expanded to the mid-western states. A national professional association had emerged - The National Association of Visiting Teachers...School of Social Work underwent a rapid expansion in the 20s as a result of a series of 3-year demonstration projects in various communities under the auspices of the Commonwealth Fund. This program emphasized "the visiting teacher prevention work in the field of children's maladjustments, individual juvenile delinquency and school social casework [was] valuable in making the work of a school more effective"...Based on research[,] community responsibility was downplayed and casework in the school setting was emphasized. By the 1940s, the transition was fully complete from an earlier focus on school and neighborhood and social change to a clinical presentation in relation to the personality needs of the individual school child.⁴⁶

The true strength-based origins of social work interventions in education with minorities, as stated previously, are not related to Mary Richmond or to the rising field of school social work that began in 1916. In the United States, it was Jane Addams with her Hull House movement that became known for accepting and celebrating the various

⁴⁴ Howe, David (2009) *A Brief Introduction to Social Work Theory*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

⁴⁵ <http://socialwork.siuc.edu/sswcp/history.htm>

Zalduondo, Celestina (1981) *Celestina Zalduondo Trabajadora Social, Su Vida, Su Obra Profesional*. Publicación del Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico.

⁴⁶ <http://socialwork.siuc.edu/sswcp/history.htm>

cultures of immigrant children and their families, and for creating living museums and native language classes to promote pride in their identities and in their cultural heritage.⁴⁷ Addams is known for providing a space for minorities and immigrants to contribute their talents to the wider society and for providing them context-relevant vocational instruction so they could prosper in their new urban environment. According to her obituary published in the New York Times in 1935:

At Hull House, in the squalid slums of Chicago's West Side, Jane Addams, a priestess of understanding among neighbors and of peace among nations, kept open hours for prince and pauper alike. It was her shrine and it will remain her monument.

This pioneer settlement house, which she founded forty-six years ago, blazed the trail for a scientific approach to the relief of poverty and suffering and was the parent of much of the social legislation of the last four decades...

She made enemies. Her views were sometimes considered dangerously radical. Socialists and other radicals met at Hull House, and her opponents sometimes forgot that her liberal attitude in permitting such meetings did not include a membership in the groups she tolerated...

Hull House grew to be known as one of the largest and best-known of the nation's settlements. It commenced with the ordinary activities of children's clubs and free kindergartens and later it sponsored courses in languages, literature, music, painting, history, mathematics, elocution, dancing, wood-carving, pottery, metal work, bookbinding, dressmaking, lacework, cooking and basketwork. A labor museum was also established at Hull House.

Dozens of clubs were organized to aid working women. A lunch-room was opened, as was a nursery for the children of employed women. There was also a gymnasium, a natatorium, a penny savings bank, a lodging house, as well as a circulating library and an employment bureau. Miss Addams personally directed all these activities, which were models for hundreds of others throughout the world.⁴⁸

Social work, then, from its very beginning with Jane Addams in the late 1800s employed a critically analytical perspective deconstructing taken-for-granted assumptions about the relationship between pathology, poverty and minority status. It had an empowering role to play with the subjects and in some instances, with their collaborators. Unfortunately, this was later transformed, and de-railed into becoming a disciplinary and

⁴⁷ Elshstain, Bethke (2002) *The Jane Addams Reader*. Basic Books.

⁴⁸ New York Times (1935) "Obituary: Jane Addams a Foe of War and Need".
<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0906.html>

individualizing tool of the state that would interpellate⁴⁹ its subjects as pathological beings in its complicity with class hierarchy.

Historically in the quest for professional status, social work's relatively early adoption of psychoanalytic theory led to a narrow individual and intrapsychic view of people and ushered in a medical model of practice that represented a sharp departure from the socioeconomic base of practice that was apparent in the earlier Settlement House Movement.⁵⁰

In other words, the relation between strength-based research and practice, which Addams embodied and implemented, would fall in the background as the profession became institutionalized and as it was used to police the marginal populations that were defined as somehow lacking in character. The radical influences inspired by her which

carefully documented the living conditions and the ethnicity of area residents, often as a prelude to seeking corrective legislation from local and state governments...[the provision of] an array of services to immigrants...[and her efforts to] organize immigrants against the political machine, on the grounds that it was corrupt and did not seek ameliorative reforms⁵¹...

would dissipate into the background, letting its more conservative and reformist trend take the fore.

This practice moved beyond mainland U.S. borders and aggressively infiltrated its colonial possessions, "the other" per excellence, with an even greater focus. Its "foreign born" would require twice as much supervision and disciplinary action than those "privileged enough" to have been "socialized" on the mainland. Vestiges of military discourses and hegemonic ideologies about Puerto Rican islander inferiority and

⁴⁹ Interpellation was coined by Althusser in his essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation)", 1972). According to him, ideology functioned as a mediator between systems of power and individuals, and allowed the perpetuation and reproduction of hegemonic power through the incorporation of subjects into the power structure that was active in obscuring its various forms of repression. Individuals are interpellated, recognized and called upon by and within the power structure and by responding we become complicitous in the power dynamics: we become both subjects of and subjected to the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA's) such as the family, the educational institutions, and the media. Althusser added that ideology, interpellation and subjecthood are mutually reinforcing so that subjects are always "already interpellated" as such. Subjecthood, then encompasses a duality of passivity and voluntary resistance created as a result of the multiple and oftentimes contradictory interpellations by competing systems of power. <http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/interpellation.htm>

⁵⁰Trattner, 1986, p. 245 in Robbins, S. Chatterjee Pranab and Canda Edward (1999)

⁵¹ Jansson, Bruce (1997) *The Reluctant Welfare State: American Social Welfare Policies: Past, Present and Future*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Co. p. 123.

contamination, for example, would permeate educational, health and population control interventions on the Island throughout its history as an American colony. A variety of imperial political discourses and practices would be perpetuated through anthropology and social work practices. In 1900, Brigadier General Herrmann, for example, helped begin the American prescription required to “civilize” the Puerto Rican character:

About one sixth of the people of Porto Rico are educated and of Spanish blood, of the rest, perhaps one-half can be molded by a firm hand into something approaching decency; but the remainder are...ignorant, filthy, untruthful, lazy treacherous, murderous brutal and black.⁵²

Thirty years later, the molding process was well on its way and middle class Puerto Rican women were recruited to learn the necessary strategies, within prestigious institutions of higher education, to direct its implementation on the Island. But, as we shall see, this plan did not come to fruition as easily as expected. Prior to the Spanish American war, Puerto Rico had already won autonomy from Spain after many years of struggle to be accepted as equals. A strong sense of national and cultural identity was actively nurtured in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Like the U.S., Puerto Rican literature and arts were flourishing during this time. Puerto Ricans had already survived similar imperialist sentiments of disdain from Spaniards as the ones now being instituted by Americans through the professionalization of the Island. With regards to social work, for example, Celestina Zalduondo Goodsaid, a well-educated professional who began her career in the 1930s, became an icon on the Island after undertaking doctoral studies at the University of Chicago.

Like Jane Addams, she questioned the predominant derogatory beliefs held by the American government officials and its social service representatives regarding the nature and abilities of underprivileged populations. She sacrificed her personal comfort to help others and became an outspoken social justice advocate.

Celestina and a group of colleagues, among them Dorothy Bournes, who started the social work program at the University of Puerto Rico, went to Congress and visited Mrs. Roosevelt in the first lobbying effort to include the Island in the law...She opposed the war in Vietnam, speaking against it at the Río Piedras public square during a Mother’s Day celebration. For this she was severely

⁵² Herrmann, Karl Stephen, Brigadier-General U.S. Volunteers, 1900 in Angel Quintero Rivera *Conflictos de clase y política en Puerto Rico*. Ediciones Huracán, fifth edition 1987, p. 14. Original source, K.J. Herrmann, *From Yauco to Las Marías*, Boston 1990, p. 35.

reprimanded. She also fought against the law to form the Association of Social Workers and once formed, she fought against the insistence that only licensed social workers be allowed to work on the Island... She risked ex-communication from the church in her efforts to address the urban overpopulation, which social science and economic experts of the time believed to be one of the main causes of poverty... She fought for the privacy and dignity of public service beneficiaries by going against the mayor's wishes when she insisted that their names remain confidential.⁵³

Unlike Addams, however, she was highly influenced by psychoanalytic theory, which led her to begin her work in a psychiatric hospital rather than in the context of community organizing or social science research. Due to her assimilation of the positivistic values of the times, her interventions, in some ways, privileged U.S. mores directed towards individual reform and social fit. For example, Zalduondo accepted U.S. ideas about overpopulation that resulted from so called "objective" social scientific research as the main cause of poverty on the Island. Interestingly, the practice of itinerant health educators began with the tradition of "visiting teachers" later constituted as social workers.

The theme of "overpopulation" in Puerto Rico had been a behind-the-doors conversation for some time in the American political bureaucracies during the 1930s. The last appointed U.S. Governor on the Island Rexford G. Tugwell stated in his 1946 memoirs about Puerto Rico that

There was one other matter on which the President was clear; the frightening increase in population had to be stopped. He was inclined in this matter to follow the prevalent line of thought among social workers and others who came into close contact with poor people; there were too many of them and it was better to stop them at the source than to connive at the high death rate which is nature's way of keeping a workable balance between numbers and resources. It is a simple theory to which I could never quite assent that there is quantitative ratio between the food supply and the numbers there are to use it... I have always been a little concerned with the dysgenic⁵⁴ probabilities in such a public policy. It seems almost certain that controls will be effected in proportion to the intelligence and other good qualities of the users and that the worst human stock, for example,

⁵³Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (2009) *The Relevance of Social Work in the Analysis and Intervention of State Related Torture in the Context of Internal Colonialism: A Psychosocial Study of Five Cases in the U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico*. Unpublished paper.

⁵⁴Dysgenic refers to "the study of the accumulation and perpetuation of defective genes and traits in a population, race, or species." <http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/dysgenics>
Tugwell's use of the word "stock" is in line with the genetic concepts related to ideas of "pure races" and eugenic pseudo scientific beliefs which coincided with the propagation of Hitler's views during WWII.

will not be touched by it at all and will go on breeding while the better stock reduces its contribution to the future population.⁵⁵

This acceptance by Puerto Rican officials would lead to the massive sterilization of Puerto Rican women earning us the title as “The first country in the Western hemisphere to have the government sponsor family planning services⁵⁶.” In fact, it would lead us to be the country with the highest number of sterilizations in the world.⁵⁷ How else was the U.S. going to control the “ignorant, filthy, untruthful, lazy treacherous, murderous, brutal and black” population of the Island referred to by the Brigadier General? In the documentary “La Operación” by Ana Maria Garcia, the interviewer of the filmmaker emphasizes the direct relationship between female sterilization, United States industrial policy on the Island and the role of social workers in carrying out the plan.

LA OPERACIÓN successfully shows sterilization as an integral part of U.S. policy in Puerto Rico, a futile attempt (along with emigration) to lower unemployment and decrease social tensions created by forced, rapid industrialization (Operation Bootstrap). However, as the film shows, all the problems attributed to "overpopulation" (unemployment, inadequate housing, poor nutrition, sub-standard healthcare and education) have never gone away. One mayor, in an interview in the film, proudly explains how nearly every woman in his town was sterilized. Gesturing to a group of men sitting idly, he explains, "They are resting, while the women are working at the factory over there (for lower wages than men)."

One scene in LA OPERACIÓN follows a social worker from house to house, reminding women to visit the clinics. Teetering on high heels in the working-class

⁵⁵ Tugwell, Rexford G (1946) *The Stricken Island: The Story of Puerto Rico*. Double Day and Company. p. 35-36. In another section of his memoirs, Tugwell discussed the Organic Act approved as law by the Federal Government which limited the corporate use of land to 500 acres. American absentee landowning corporations were using between 20 and sixty thousand acres in violation of the law with no penalties. It is interesting that Tugwell did not mention this in the context of the U.S. policy's intent to reduce the “bad stock” of poor Puerto Ricans. However, it is also notable that Tugwell did understand the malicious and self-interested use of “objective” science to justify capitalistic economic exploitation in the colonial context of Puerto Rico. See pages 8-17.

⁵⁶ Marchand, Julia Carmen (1981) “Su Obra Pro Bienestar de la Familia” in Celestina Zalduondo, *Trabajadora Social: Su Vida, Su Obra Profesional*. Publicación del Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico. Febrero, p. 30

⁵⁷ Garcia, Ana Maria (1984) “La Operación.” "Over one-third of all Puerto Rican women of childbearing age have been sterilized. The procedure is so common that it is simply known as La Operación." <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC29folder/LaOperacion.html>
— sound track of LA OPERACIÓN

front yards, she is shown as well meaning but patronizing, clearly out of place, intrusive.⁵⁸

This program of social engineering, however, did not come about without resistance. According to Julia Marchand, Celestina's co-worker and friend, the birth control educational program in the rural areas met with the following experiences:

Nuestra experiencia fue maravillosa, incluyendo el rechazo abierto de que fuimos objeto en muchos sitios. En algunos lugares nos invitaban a presentar la discusión y luego no se presentaba nadie en el local. En un pueblo nos apagaron las luces del edificio y en otro habían inundado el local, desproveyéndolo de asientos y por supuesto de público. Pero el colmo fue en el pueblo de Guánica donde, luego de haber denunciado el cura nuestra presencia y nuestro propósito, cada vez que uno de nosotros abría la boca para expresarse, las ramas de unos arbustos adyacentes al local donde nos reuníamos eran sacudidas, para provocar el graznido de innumerables guineas que con sus "choclás" ahogaban nuestras voces.⁵⁹

The prestige of Celestina's educational training in the U.S. and her acceptance of some of the most "authoritative" social scientific tenets of the time, then, likely facilitated her employment as the director of various social service agencies such as of the Division of Social Services (1934-35), the Social Services of the Clinic of Children's Orientation (1935-36), the Social Service Office of the Insular Department of Sanitation, the Association for Family Social Services from (1957-1971) and her position as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Superior Educational Council of the University of Puerto Rico from 1966-1971.

⁵⁸ Safford, Kimberly (1984) "La Operación: Forced Sterilization" from *Jump Cut: A review of Contemporary Media*, No. 29, p. 37-38.

⁵⁹: Marchand, p. 30. **Translation:** "Our experience was marvelous, including the open rejection which we faced in many places. In some places they would invite us to present the discussion and then no one would show up. In one town they turned off the lights of the building and in another they had flooded the place, leaving it without chairs and of course, of people. But the extreme took place in the town of Guánica where, after the priest had denounced our purpose and presence, every time that one of us opened our mouths to express ourselves, the branches of some trees that were adjacent to our meeting place were vigorously shaken in order to provoke the squawking of innumerable guinea hens that with their noise drowned our voices."

My question to Martin: Does this make you think of anything? Something else that was mentioned in the documentary of "La Operación" is that many of the women were not told that they were being sterilized or they were told that the operation was reversible. The documentary reveals how the argument of overpopulation used to justify this did not make sense since N.Y. City was much more overpopulated per square mile than Puerto Rico. Did you ever experience any "health promoters" coming by your house to talk about this in Tennessee? **Martin:** No, because we were a farm based community and you needed a big family to help with the farm...and, plus, everybody had a shotgun over their door! (Laughter).

Her individualist reformist bent, however, was balanced and sometimes outweighed by an embodied understanding and rejection of the instrumental use of political discourse employed to exploit and deceive colonial subjects, like that of the rural people of Puerto Rico. Her education at the University of Chicago would, ironically, strengthen her ability to think critically of her lived experiences with the “less fortunate” within certain constrained parameters. In her coursework she did not limit herself to the traditional curriculum, adding criminology courses in the law school, economy and social security in other colleges. She chose her courses based on the subjects that attracted her and the reputation and intellectual caliber of the professors.⁶⁰ Dorothy Bourne, her friend, later started the social work program at the University of Puerto Rico revealing a clear link between social work and the educational continuum.

Celestina provided a harsh and incisive analysis of society. Like Jane Addams, she was a public intellectual. She gave speeches, spoke before Congress and the Puerto Rican legislature and wrote several articles and she was especially aware of the contradictions between rhetoric and institutional practice within hierarchies of class. In her own (yet translated) words:

It does not seem to us that much research is needed to understand that as long as society as a whole does not decide to abandon its practice of strife and deceit, it will not succeed, in having delinquency disappear...As long as we see with tolerance the corrupting activities of politicking, advertisements which attribute false qualities to some products which are presented to the public...by those who maintain social prestige and hundreds of other social offenses which annually cause great life and property loss, we will not be able to think about eliminating the acts which are based, the same as the others, on lies, deceit and lack of consideration towards our fellow human beings.⁶¹

Another figure of great importance who captured the hearts of the Puerto Rican people was Abelardo Díaz Alfaro, a social worker and short story writer who described the incredible moral strength of the Puerto Rican farmers and share croppers who were physically, culturally and spiritually starved by American corporate exploitation and the imposition of English. During his career as a social worker he worked as an investigator for the Labor Department. He was in charge of analyzing child welfare laws. In 1947, he

⁶⁰ Pintado de Rahn, María (1981) “Sus Primeros Años Profesionales” in Celestina Zalduondo, *Trabajadora Social: Su Vida, Su Obra Profesional*. Publicación del Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico. Febrero, p. 13

⁶¹ Stated in 1947 in Zalduondo Goodsaid, Celestina (1981), pp. 55-56.

wrote his first collection of short stories, an example of “public scholarship,” which was recognized internationally for his incisive ability to describe the tragic effects of the exploitation of American capitalist imperialism.⁶² Two of his most famous stories titled “Santa Clo Va a la Cuchilla” or “Peyo Mercé Enseña Inglés” narrate the violent assimilationist effects of the imposition of English and American values on the rural students of Puerto Rico during the process of colonization, which continues to this day.⁶³

Of his work, Venezuelan Professor Mariano Picón Salas stated the following in 1947, a few years after Margaret Mead began to promote educational ethnography in the United States as a way to address the “overpopulation” and poverty in its urban areas.

Ese noble jíbaro que todavía habla en Español, que opuso a las empresas del Capitalismo más implacable y más ciego, su virtud estoica; y la profunda sabiduría, superior a la de todos los técnicos y la de todos los libros, que viene del duro contacto con la naturaleza, con el dolor familiar, con la acendrada paciencia, que es la riqueza del pobre. Pero sus jíbaros, querido Díaz Alfaro...hablan en un lenguaje que por su gracia viviente, por su fresca naturalidad ya lo envidiaron muchos doctores. Expresan para mí lo entrañablemente hispánico, mestizo, puertorriqueño, en una palabra, que hay en Puerto Rico...[Se aparta de](aquellos que ya no necesitan siquiera de la literatura...ni Española ni Inglesa: les bastaría con un librito de “Basic English” para realizar sus negocios y cumplir con las necesidades humanas más elementales).⁶⁴

⁶²http://www.salonhogar.net/BiografiasPr/abelardo_diaz_%20alfaro.htm

⁶³ **Comment made by Martin:** You know how they say that the whites capitalize during Christmas on the poor by having them buy gifts for their kids, well they did this to you guys twice because of Christmas and Three Kings Day. **Me:** Well, remember that in those days in rural Puerto Rico people were very poor and the parents would make wooden toys for their kids from whatever they had available. Also, this was the time to give them a set of new clothes that would have to last them all year long. **Martin:** When I was a kid, when my mom got to working cleaning houses, she was able to buy us store bought gifts, like toys and other things. But when she wasn't working all we would get, was clothing for school and stuff. **Me:** Were you excited about getting new clothes for school? **Martin:** Yes, anything new was good, but I was more excited about the bag of oranges and fruit. **Me:** Didn't you get bananas and oranges the rest of the year? **Martin:** Yes, but in Christmas, each one of us got a whole bag for ourselves! (Smiling). Do you remember when I told you about the time my Dad gave me an authentic fingerprinting set from the navy? **Me:** Sort of, what happened? **Martin:** I didn't care for it because I wanted a toy! I didn't tell him because he knew I didn't like it because I didn't play with it. But the following Christmas we all got bicycles. **Me:** He got money? **Martin:** No, he put it on charge. You could go up to Johnson, he was a fat guy who used to sell all sorts of stuff. He ran the Western Auto Shop where you could buy things on credit. **Me:** So why did your Dad get you bicycles this time? **Martin:** Because everyone in the neighborhood except for us had some.

⁶⁴ The noble jíbaro that still speaks Spanish, who opposed the most insatiable and blind capitalist corporations, his stoic virtue; and his profound wisdom, superior to that of all technicians and to that of all books, that comes from the hard contact with nature, from the familiarity of pain, with the rooted patience, that is the wealth of the poor. But your jíbaros, dear Diaz Alfaro...speak in a language that, due to its living grace, for its natural freshness, many doctors will envy it. They express to me the inherently Latino, mixed [being] that there is, in one word, in Puerto Rico...[It moves away] from those who do not even need of literature...Spanish or English: it would be enough

Years of a growing awareness of the silenced voices social work practiced upon and the profession's dependence on the guidance of social scientific disciplines would lead it on a path towards the consideration of the critical theory of the late 20th century. The profession would soon gain some interest in the burgeoning trends espoused by feminist, anti-racial, anti-discriminatory and anti-colonial theories among others. It is of interest that it was not until 1996 that the Social Work Code of Ethics, which emphasized "doing no harm" and advocated for the oppressed from an emancipatory and empowerment perspective was approved.⁶⁵ The Puerto Rican code of ethics followed soon after. Social Work critical theory emanating primarily from Canada and Australia, in an edited volume by Pease and Fook, would address the relevance of the profession to today's reality and to the emancipatory spirit of the professional code of ethics.⁶⁶ These authors discussed, from a clearly reflexive point of view, how they came to believe that traditional social theory was not adequate to address the realm of practice.

Social work...by virtue of its role outside of academia was able to experiment with alternative community-base social service projects, alternative collectivist democratic structures and to attempt to link services to collective action on a continued basis. According to Pease, post modern and feminist theories enabled him to move beyond the dualism between voluntarism and structural determinism. He was able to understand how the subject positions between the genders were discursively produced. Jan Fook, on the other hand, realized, while she was studying traditional social science theories during her course work, that they did not "represent her own experiences and identity." How was structural analysis to deal with the contradictions within the behavior and identities of the subjects of its analysis? Fook was able to discern the disempowering effects of radical thinking as it devalued the lived experience of ordinary people...[She argued that] it was not able to develop its theory around the more "personalized side of experience." It perpetuated the binary oppositions of positivistic science such as oppressor/oppressed, powerful/powerless, male/female without analyzing the complexities and contradictions inherent in these categories.⁶⁷

to have a little book of "Basic English" to complete their business transactions and to satisfy the most basic human needs.

Picón Salas Mariano (1947) Prologue in Terrazo by Abelardo Díaz Alfaro. Decimonovena Edición. Librería La Biblioteca Inc. Editora Corripio. 1986.

⁶⁵ <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/default.asp>

⁶⁶ Fook, Jan and Bob Pease (1999) Transforming Social Work Practice: Postmodern Critical Perspectives. Bob Pease and Jan Fook eds.

⁶⁷ Duntley-Matos, p. 32-33.

Pease and Fook, in other words, urged social workers to question how our cultural and gendered experiences lead us to privilege some aspects of reality while marginalizing others. They asked that we invite the subjects of our services or the collaborators of our organizational efforts to challenge our authority in the process of an inter-subjective and co-constructed dialogue. This is the only way of truly addressing the emancipatory calling of our profession which, according to our code of ethics strives to change internalized as well as externalized forms of oppression.⁶⁸ Fook and Pease would advocate for interpretations that would move beyond simple binary oppositions and that would focus on the discursive construction of identities and the creative experimentation of alternative forms of democratic⁶⁹ action, all similar recommendations to the ones offered by engaged educational ethnographers who began their work in the 80s and 90s such as Trueba and Giroux.⁷⁰

What then, can we say of the intersection between social work and anthropology in the schools, given this theoretical critical turn in both professions? Unfortunately, in the context of school social work, this turn has not been widely embraced, despite the passage of 30-60 years of the development of critical theory and grounded social work practice. The emphasis on psychodynamic and developmentally based theories continues to predominate in interpersonal practice settings, especially in the context of the restrictions of managed care regarding what services are paid for and how many therapeutic sessions a client is entitled to. Regarding research, there continues to be a strong positivistic and linear cause/effect model expectation for degree attainment within the discipline. This is one of the areas of discord faced by students in the joint program with anthropology.

⁶⁸ Ibid. pp. 33-34

⁶⁹ Discourses on democracy will be discussed further in the chapters to come.

⁷⁰ Henry Trueba and Henry Giroux are two critically engaged educational ethnographers of great renown who will be discussed in the coming chapters.

My question to Martin as I read this page: Did you ever see a social worker in your town when you were growing up? **Martin:** I didn't know what a social worker was. If I had known I would have killed him. Plus, there is no money in it anyway. It is not just you, look at all these social workers in the dojo that are struggling...Hell, I'm better off with a factory job! I told you that when I worked at the plant several college teachers left teaching and became factory workers because there was more money in it. They had all kinds of opportunities to work over time. Those with education—book knowledge—had an easier time of moving up the ladder to become plant superintendents or higher officers. They wanted someone who could put directions or whatever was necessary in print.

Anthropology is not innocent or completely unrelated to the difficulties encountered by social work and its collusions within practices of social engineering in the schools, however. In fact it was Margaret Mead's work and that of other anthropologists, which would provide the theory behind the push for the role of the visiting teachers, later to be called school social workers. And, as we shall see through my own experiences in academia, anthropology with its "detached" administrative stance continues to objectify those rhetorically defined as its subjects.

Educational Ethnography

Anthropology's place at the heart of academia and social science has afforded it a very different institutional position to that of social work. Instead of being an adjunct to or follower of "theory producing" disciplines, it has, in its own right been one of the main contributors of social thought. Anthropology, has in effect, along with the other social sciences perpetuated the traditional discursive antipathy for directed practice, of which it views social work as a primary culprit. Despite this image, however, anthropologists have been involved in positions of social engineering in this country's educational system, for decades. To reveal how this has been so, I will summarize Daniel Yon's overview of educational ethnography⁷¹ and intersperse it with the voices of other educational ethnographers who also look back at the trajectory of this field and their participation within it.

The application of anthropology in the schools can be traced to shortly after WWI when Margaret Mead contrasted and applied her culturally idealistic descriptors of a harmonious primitivism, to what she viewed as the "pathology of American culture." This occurred in the context of urban overpopulation and poverty among working class citizens and immigrants.⁷² Yon, explains that it was in 1949 that Mead convened a conference

for the purpose of exploring the educational problems of special cultural groups, foreshadow[ing] the direction of future educational ethnography and challeng[ing] notions of the detached observer. Educational ethnography came increasingly to champion the rights and interests of marginalized groups, initially in the United

⁷¹ Yon, Daniel (2003) Highlights and Overview of the History of Educational Ethnography. Annual. Rev. Anthropology. 2003. 32:411-29

⁷²Yon, p. 413

States. Among the early examples of the overarching concern with the marginalized was a six-year social action program on Native American personality, education, and administration, designed to collect scientific data (by using participant observation) for the U.S. Department of the Interior and Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1941 (Mead 1951). Such interest in the education of Native American children suggests that the beginnings of educational ethnography in North America grew out of anthropology's conventional preoccupation with native "others," within the dominant paradigm of cultural relativism, albeit the native was "at home."⁷³

It was the work of Mead and Franz Boas, her instructor (acknowledged as the "father of anthropology") that helped shift the discipline to a more engaged and "what later became [known as] "activist research" in the field"⁷⁴. As we can see from his quote, Mead was already critiquing the notion of the detached anthropological observer in 1941, an idea that continues to be a source of tension to this day. It was in 1968, that Margaret Mead participated in "a highly charged and confrontational session at the annual AAA meeting in Seattle" which would culminate in the

establishment of the Council of Education's Newsletter, which became the Education Quarterly Journal in 1970 and [which] confirmed the institutionalization of the field in North America."⁷⁵

The United States was faced with increasing immigration and anthropology, with its educational interventions, helped reinforce the notion of the "melting pot" in the context of population movements such as African Americans, Puerto Ricans and Southern Appalachian white groups "where they collectively came to constitute the urban poor." It was in this context that prescriptive, applied and reformist research based on notions of rational and directed change would be emphasized through its strong links with increased government funding for research on poverty, desegregation and the assimilation of "minorities, and the marginalized into the dominant cultures."⁷⁶

George Spindler, followed Mead's initial incursions into the anthropology of education in 1954 by convening "the first Educational Anthropology Conference at Stanford" where he

⁷³ Yon, Daniel p. 413.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 414.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 414

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 415.

emphasized his interest in culture and personality [which] focused on the evolving, enduring, and situated self, with culture increasingly being seen as heritage and a resource that can be utilized in the processes of making the self. Culture in the formative years of educational ethnography, was increasingly understood as dynamically changing in the process of transmission.⁷⁷

Spindler would publish his *Education and Anthropology* in 1955.⁷⁸

In “The Collusion of Illusions and How to Get People to Tell You What They Don’t Know,” he describes his first educational ethnography experience in 1950.⁷⁹

Dr. Robert Bush, the director of the project, did not know exactly what an anthropologist should do in a study of schooling, but he wanted to try one out. The objective of the study...was to do case studies of the teachers in their classrooms, principals in their schools, and superintendents in their school systems. Our mode of operation was to go to a school, or a principal, or a superintendent, explain what we wanted to do, and describe it as a way of “improving professional competence.”...I wondered what I should observe and take notes on the first day and continued to wonder for the next few weeks. It was so boring!..But there was nothing to see, nothing to take notes on, in Roger Harker’s classroom I thought. But one day, as I looked over the class of thirty-five fifth graders, I noticed that all of the good readers were on one side of the class and all of the poor readers were on the other side...I further noticed that all of the good readers excepting two were white, quite middle class, and that all of the poor readers appeared to be members of minority groups and seemed to be of lower socio-economic status...This started the ethnographic engine...everything pointed in the same direction. He was very strongly biased on the side of the white-middle class and upper-middle class children. He knew more information about them, he predicted success for them and failure for the lower socio-economic status, he described the relations with each other in quite different terms, and complimentary to the upper-status children. He wasn’t mean or hostile to the lower-status children. He was a “nice” teacher. But he constructed a classroom that was conducive to learning for the upper status children and discouraging to the lower-status children.

He constructed a mirror in which he, himself, was reflected. What was particularly impressive about all of this was that he was quite unaware that it was happening, and so were all of the “others” that rated him. He was uniformly regarded as one of their best young teachers and he regarded himself...as one of the best. Only the children detected anything amiss...what impressed me the most was that the whole educational situation in which Roger was imbedded was biased in the same way that he was. (I later did a study of the success or failure of Mexican-American children in that community and discovered that the longer the

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Spindler, G. (Ed.) (1955). *Education and Anthropology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

⁷⁹Spindler, George (2002) *The Collusion of Illusions and How to Get People to Tell You What They Don’t Know in Ethnography and Schools: Qualitative Approaches to the Study of Education*. Rowmann and Littlefield Publishers. P. 13.

child of that ethnicity attended the school, the lower his or her academic achievement score, and the lower the score on the mental maturity scale.)⁸⁰

Spindler's tale of his first participant observation in schools is telling in many respects.⁸¹ As a white-middle class anthropologist, it took him several weeks to figure out that there were deeply ingrained inequalities in the treatment of lower-class and minority children, but despite his privileged status, he was able at that time, to become aware of the extent of long-term damage that such a taken-for-granted educational system could have on these children. He was able to describe how "niceness" can hide highly discriminatory and oppressive educational interventions, even to the point of being unnoticed by the educators who have the power to employ them and the institutions that provide the services. He also noticed how such interpellations resulted in a lowering of academic achievement and "mental maturity scores."

According to Yon, Spindler's, Jackson's⁸² and other educational ethnographic work paid increasing attention to

The unintended consequences of the "natural" processes of schooling and the hidden cultural influences that, in everyday practices, superseded conscious attention. Out of this tension came a growing focus on what variously came to be understood as the hidden curriculum as well as attention to subcultures as units of analysis within the larger cultural context of education. This trend was evident at

⁸⁰ Spindler, pp. 15-16

Comment from my mother: Los exámenes que han hecho en Puerto Rico a través de los años demuestran ese decaimiento, ese resbalón también. **Me:** Sí, también está ocurriendo lo mismo en Michigan.

⁸¹ **Comment made by Martin:** You noticed that he put all the good readers on one side; they were all white except for two. When did this take place? **Me:** This was in the 50's. **Martin:** It must have been in Bolivar, Tennessee, my town because at that time they had a black school and a white school. You know when it stopped becoming black and white?...I think Lee, one of my baby brothers—he's number six—was going into junior high school when the school became mixed. At that time, we thought that since we were black and we thought whites had a better education than us, so we thought they were smarter than us, but we did run across some white students that were just as dumb! We thought all whites were smart because they had a better school system than us. Now, this is the interpretation I had when I was a kid. Now, me thinking in 2011 is that the white teacher from Spindler's ethnography should have mixed the smart kids with the kids that weren't doing so well so that they would get motivated to bring their grades up. Nineteen sixty four, sixty five and six: the classes were split up into A, B and C groups. All the smart students were in the A class and the kids that were average were in class B and the students that were poor, academically, were put in class C. When entering high school, everyone started out on an equal footing again, but by tenth grade the teachers had made their decision and the groups started over again. That went on for quite a few years, so it does not seem that Spindler's research had any effect at the time. Today it still goes on, but we just talk about it different. This reminds me of a joke of the first Black school bus driver sittin in the back of the bus with a fifty foot long steering wheel. How in the hell do you see from sittin in the back of the bus? **Comments made by my mother after listening to my reading of Martin's observations:** Sí, así era en Puerto Rico también en la escuela elemental.

⁸²In Yon, p. 416

the onset of the 1960s as educational ethnography moved far beyond schools and beyond the discipline of anthropology to include critical cultural studies.⁸³ The educational ethnography of the 1970s which included Rist's (1973)

The Urban School: A Factory of Failure, Walcott's (1973) *Man in the Principal's Office: An Ethnography*, Ogbu's (1974) *The Next Generation: An Ethnography of Education in an Urban Neighborhood*, Sullivan's (1979) "*Contacts among cultures: school desegregation in a polyethnic New York city High School*, among others, was characterized by a functionalist perspective which viewed the classroom as a smaller version of the wider society with similar dynamics of inequality and the validation of their inherent assumptions.⁸⁴ The previous efforts towards assimilation and desegregation assumed to be the solution to urban problems during the 50s were now being called into question as unequal relations of power were seen as constituting competing interests. The efforts to "accommodate differences" were now interpreted as a major source of "subordination, discrimination and marginalization. " According to Yon, the previous view of schools as "democratic engines" whose function was to adapt the personalities of students to the wider culture was now seen as "perpetuating academic failure."⁸⁵

It was also during the 70's that ethnography was incorporated outside of anthropology in the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies. Paul Willis would challenge the Marxist-based ethnographies that saw students as unknowingly determined by their class position and would argue that working-class youth were active agents in this production. Their agency would lead them to create, as well as take advantage of, spaces for resistance, which, ironically, perpetuated the class hierarchy. Willis' work set the trend for the focus on "countercultures under the umbrella of resistance theory."⁸⁶

⁸³ Yon, p. 416. I will revisit this theme of the "hidden curriculum that "supersedes conscious attention" in my own ethnographic analysis in the context of the continuum between lower and higher education in the last twelve years. More specifically, I will discuss it in the context of my personal experience as a doctoral student with classmates, administrators, university employers and committee members.

⁸⁴ Yon, p. 418.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Yon, p. 419, Foley, Ibid.

The theoretical influences of Willis' ethnography included the concepts of "hegemony" and "counter-hegemony" developed by Antonio Gramsci.⁸⁷ Gramsci argued that people were "socialized into different levels of class awareness and consciousness" within the cultural sphere. Thus, "agents were reconstituted and mutually implicated in the production of the structures...as opposed to being simply products of the structures."⁸⁸

The 1980's were characterized by an influence of Habermas' notion of symbolic action within popular culture. Everhart's (1983) ethnography *Reading, Writing and Resistance: Adolescence and Labour in a Junior High School, for example*, brought to light how students "resist, mediate and transform the domination and exploitation they experience." He revealed how students in effect, often resist, rather than completely reject the standard curriculum so "as to not endanger their possible mobility."⁸⁹

The 1990s saw the convergence of feminist, critical and neo-Marxist theories. [T]he crucial links between knowledge and power were emphasized not simply as a force that comes from outside but that is also present in notions of cultural capital... Identity formations through class, gender, and race came to be viewed in educational ethnographies as dynamic and relational rather than static and foreclosed. Furthermore, the identities invoked by these categories are not unidimensional. Class, for example, cannot be easily disarticulated from gender or gender from race.⁹⁰

Weis' (1990) *Working Class Without Work: High School Students in a De-industrializing Economy*, for instance, revealed the contradictory relationships between official school knowledge and culture, and the instrumental use of its structure by its agents (teachers, administrators and students) for surviving and moving up within it, rather than emphasizing the substance of education itself.⁹¹ The 90s were characterized by a "move away from essentialism" and a more complex view of the fluidity and contextual interaction (conscious and unconscious manipulation of various identities) in relation to class.

Minorities were positioned in multiple struggles as knowledge production was

⁸⁷ Gramsci, Antonio (1985) *Selections from Cultural Writings*. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Yon, p. 420.

⁹⁰ Yon, p. 421.

⁹¹ Yon, p. 422.

viewed as systematically relational and heterogeneous... No longer could culture be viewed as the property of social groups, bounded, determined, and internally coherent, and the kinds of certainty that characterized ethnographic findings in earlier eras could no longer be guaranteed.”⁹²

Influenced by postmodernism, ethnographies of schools during this period stressed the knowledge that could be gained from the disjunctures and contradictions of incompatible perspectives that were equally valid. It was the tensions rather than the emphasis on consensus that would lead us to new reflections and deeper understandings of the relationship between class, structure, the formation of relational identities and the possibilities for agency. Donna Haraway (1985) with her *Manifesto for cyborgs*: science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980’s and Michael Bakhtin (1981) with his *Dialogical Imagination* greatly influenced this era with their stress on “holding together incompatible perspectives and the dialogic and heteroglossic nature of discursive practices”⁹³. Postcolonial theory, its critique of “foundational practices of “othering” and its attempt to dissolve the insider/outsider binary, characteristic of imperialist discourse, was also influential and foregrounds this research. It pointed to the need for increased “self-reflexive” strategies in the production of knowledge and the recognition of the inherent subjectivity of its producers.

[Postcolonial theory] acknowledge[d] that subjects work on discourses just as discourses work on subjects...[It] open[ed] educational ethnographies to the surprises, contradictions, conflicting desires, ironies, and ambivalence of the everyday life of students and teachers...and they [did] so without trying to domesticate the incongruities for the sake of theoretical coherence.⁹⁴

These powerful findings resulting from this more visibly applied educational sub-field of anthropology—that of educational ethnography, however, would not, to this day, resolve the inherent contradictions resulting from a need to be validated as an objective social science based on levels of detached research. Any qualitative methodology text, which emphasizes validity within a discourse of positivistic science, or which attempts to justify itself vis-à-vis quantitative research is a recognition of this. Anthropology has continued to suffer from its unequivocally elite position within academia and to its

⁹² Yon, p. 423.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Yon, p. 424.

subjection under university research protocols based on the medical model of validation demanded by such departments as the “Institutional Review Board,” purportedly created to protect the research subjects, but in practice, according to some faculty members, truly designed to protect the university from lawsuits.⁹⁵

The difficulties faced by this and other engaged subfields of anthropology are revealed in the only encounter I had with educational ethnography prior to my decision to study minority student academic achievement gaps and spaces for agency. This occurred at Michigan State University when I was an undergraduate student in anthropology. I read Douglas Foley’s educational ethnography *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Texas* (1990)⁹⁶ in the context of a course on capitalism and culture taught by Joseph Spielberg. He was a Mexican-American anthropologist who was also the interim Director of the Julian Samora Institute during that time.⁹⁷ Foley’s ethnography was taught in the context of experimental ethnography due to his attempt to communicate simultaneously to two different audiences; first that of the town he studied and secondly that of his academic colleagues.

Some contemporary ethnographers argue that a strong we/they dichotomy may pervade interpretation and reify those studied into an imaginary “other,” or fictitious object of study. That criticism entreats ethnographers to search for ways of being “dialogic” and putting themselves into the account... Ethnographers drop their scientific pretensions, toss... their imperial advantages, and close the distance between themselves and the imaginary other being studied⁹⁸ Too many ethnographies are written largely for other ethnographers... In the end, the people’s and cultures portrayed tend to be subjugated to a theory-driven text that showcases the author’s thesis... I have been influenced by these debates and have tried to write an intimate, engaging, and “popular” text that is also reflexive and critical. This “realist” text tries to bridge the we/they split with a narrative language filled with real people and events and less technical jargon... Unlike these monographs, however, this ethnography concludes with extended reflections on theory and on field methods. I have consciously separated my description of a people and their place from a technical, theoretical discussion of the interpretive framework

⁹⁵ Interview with faculty member, May 14, 2010

⁹⁶ Foley, Douglas (1990) *Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Texas*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

⁹⁷ Julio Guerrero informed me via e-mail that Joseph Spielberg passed away this past fall. I never received a response from Julio informing me of the cause of his death. (May 2011)

⁹⁸ Foley, p. xvii

writing the study. These technical discussions of ideas are radically different from the ethnographic narrative about North Town.⁹⁹

Based on Foley's own words and Yon's review of the primary theoretical trends during the 90's, the influences on Foley by postcolonial theory, the emphasis of reflexivity, relational nature of identity formation and the dialogic character of social construction within a capitalist system of cultural production became clear. When studying his work as a bachelor-level student, these were not the points of emphasis of our review, however. Instead, we looked at how he did his fieldwork and what he found in terms of the representation of class divisions as portrayed through the cultural activities of the informants and town members.

The ethnography was not placed in relation to the expectations of academia related to foreign or home-based research despite Foley's intent to disrupt these categories to some extent. He was attempting to get closer to what, in his mind, was "home ethnography" by studying cultures within the United States, rather than taking the typical route of foreign research. In fact, he admitted being inspired by Paul Willis's work on British working class youth, which reminded Willis of his own upbringing,¹⁰⁰ in other words, his own home. Similarly, he informed us that "This ethnography is myself trying to think critically and imaginatively about my country and how these youth and I have been shaped¹⁰¹." Thus, Foley, who was highly affected by the experimental ethnographies of the 80's and 90's and the strong critiques of traditional "realist ethnographies," was pulled to re-examine the definition, purpose and underlying ideology of ethnography itself. He concluded that:

Reduced to its most basic level, an ethnography, is simply a record of the ethnographer's experience with a group of people... Experimental ethnographic texts derive their authority from the author's tone and posture as a reflective, skeptical, philosopher-poet... Moreover, this new ferment and experimentation opens up intellectual space.¹⁰²

Experimental ethnography in the context of Foley's work was an initial attempt to bring "the emotive" and "the creative" aspect of research to the fore, rather than to

⁹⁹ Foley, p. xiii

¹⁰⁰ Willis, Paul (1977). *Learning to Labor*. Columbia University Press.

¹⁰¹ Foley, Introduction, p. xix.

¹⁰² Foley, Introduction, p. xvii.

position it as an adjunct in the appendix. However, at this time, he was still tightly constrained by the mores of traditional research. His work was, in essence, more traditional than that of Willis. It was probably not difficult for Foley's ethnography to be accepted given that it fit well into the expectations of the discipline despite his interest in studying his "own country" and focusing on the "non-objective." Foley is not Mexican-American and thus, was probably seen as sufficiently detached to report on the "other." In the sense of his relation to the field, then, his work was not that different from that of Boas who had already established the study of "the other" within the United States in his ethnographies of Native Americans. In fact, his field of research became similar to that of social work since "the other" was still "other" in our own home. As alluded to by Gloria Anzaldúa (a Mexican American feminist writer) and re-emphasized by Ruth Behar (a Cuban-American reflexive anthropologist) although Mexican-Americans (similar to other minority groups), are "in and from" the United States, they are "foreign and exotic enough" to justify their inclusion in the wider discipline without too much reproach.

The focus of anthropology on faraway cultures made us unaware, until recently, of the internally colonized cultures within this America that we were always leaving behind in search of the Other somewhere else. We traveled back and forth, from our comfortable posts in the American academy to sites across the border, without questioning sufficiently the privileges and exclusions at home that made our work possible in the first place. As Gloria Anzaldúa has stated in an interview, "Even though we are in the United States, we're not really of it because we do not partake of the privileges of being white" (Valverde 1988: 30).¹⁰³

In 1981, twenty six years after Spindler's first educational ethnography Henry Giroux published his critical educational study "Ideology, Culture and the Process of Schooling," which due to its critical theory, interventionist content and its emphasis on a subfield that lacked traditional legitimacy within anthropology, it was not widely disseminated. Two years later he published his second study which was clearly influenced by the work of Paulo Freire "Theory and Resistance in Education: Towards a Pedagogy of Opposition."¹⁰⁴ His work would later become recognized, if not for the depth of his insight then, for the sheer potency of his voluminous production.

¹⁰³ Behar, Ruth (1993) Expanding the Boundaries of Anthropology: The Cultural Criticism of Gloria Anzaldúa and Marlon Briggs. *Visual Anthropology Review*. Vol. 9. No. 2 Fall. Pp. 83-84

¹⁰⁴ Robbins Christopher (2006) "Introduction" in *The Giroux Reader*. Christopher G. Robbins ed. Paradigm Publishers. Pp. XII-XIII.

Evolving over the course of 40 years, [he] authored [and] coauthored 40 edited and coedited volumes, 280 scholarly popular press articles and 154 contributions to edited collections.¹⁰⁵

In 89, four years before Behar's article citing Gloria Anzaldúa, eight years after Giroux's first study and 34 years after Spindler's first educational ethnography, a Mexican Educational Ethnographer and former Jesuit priest, Enrique Trueba, wrote *Raising Silent Voices: Educating the Linguistic Minorities for the 21st Century* (1989), the first of over "twenty five books and eighty-five articles" on the inequity of the educational system and effective interventions needed to address them¹⁰⁶. Trueba won numerous awards and honorary degrees for his work based on Vigotsky, Spindler and Freire. Among these he received the George and Louise Spindler Award for his contributions in educational anthropology from the American Anthropological Association's Council on Anthropology and Education¹⁰⁷. Various other educational ethnographers would continue with the task of addressing the educational system as foundational in the socialization of subjects. The creation of a hierarchical class system supported, in turn, by the differential construction and validation of its subjects through changing identity markers would continue to be emphasized in their analysis.

In 1995, a black educational anthropologist, Lisa Delpit,¹⁰⁸ would offer some incisive critiques about the effectiveness of teaching practices used with minority children, primarily African Americans. Lisa, by her own confession, was "a single mom" who was working full time while attempting to complete her book. Born into segregation, she experienced the injustices similar to other black children of this time period. Her experiences as those of the students, instructors and colleagues whom she met during her work, would begin to reveal a canvas of the fluid complicity of the subjects who are differentially positioned in the power structure of socialization.

Thanks to her reflexive work and awareness of the multiplicity of insidious oppressive strategies that keep minority and working class children fulfilling the prophecies of failure doled out to them throughout their lives, she would temporarily

¹⁰⁵ Robbins, Christopher in Giroux (2006) p. VII.

¹⁰⁶ Faulkner, Larry, President "In Memoriam Enrique (Henry) T. Trueba. University of Texas at Austin. <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/2004-2005/memorials/trueba/trueba.html>

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Delpit, Lisa (1995) *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*. NY. New Press.

revolutionize the way white and black educators alike, would reflect on their educational assumptions. She published *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* in 1995, five years after Douglas Foley published his experimental ethnography about the creation and maintenance of class culture in an Anglo dominated Mexican-American town, and six years after Enrique Trueba's first ethnography. Delpit would also revisit Spindler's observation about the detrimental effects of "white niceness" in his educational ethnography from the fifties.

We will revisit the embodied work and voices of Trueba, Delpit, Giroux, as well as that of social workers like Jane Adams, Diaz Alfaro and Zalduondo among others who have invested themselves in a critically engaged analysis of the educational system, as we experience the voices and lives "of ourselves," as transnational subjects of this research from K through higher education. Engaged collaborative research is highly affected by its agents in different ways due to taken-for-granted and unexplored hierarchies that are inherently included in the programs projects and relationships of our production. Hierarchies, by their very nature, define, categorize and inscribe exclusivity in their practices and discourses while, ironically also calling for, and emphasizing, images of controlled inclusivity. These are not discrete or impermeable dynamics, however. Crevices arise as categories flow into each other and, in so doing, resist easy definition. How hierarchies are imposed and maintained, and how concepts such as democracy are defined implemented and actively appropriated by those relegated to the margins need to be explored time and time again so as to be kept present in our living memory and in our incarnated present/future. When considering how best to do this in our search for understanding and expression, however, it behooves us to remember the words of Clifford Geertz and Angie Chabrán:

Historically, ethnography has been an important medium for Chicano expression."
*Angie Chabrán*¹⁰⁹

man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not experimental science in search of law but an interpretative one in search of meaning."
*C. Geertz*¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

Relevance to the Joint Program in Anthropology and Social Work and Methodological Procedures

...[B]y not attending to the nature of our own subjectivity, and the roles it plays in the reproduction of an inequitable status quo, we too are guilty of participating in the creation of the status quo. We can criticize the world out there day after day, but if we don't also criticize our own subjectivity, we leave one of the main tropes of white racist modernism not only untouched but also active in reproduction.¹¹¹

Scheurich's call for anthropologists/researchers/academics to attend to our own "subjectivity" can be interpreted as a demand to assume ownership over our own reflexivity for "un-reflexively," policing the subjectivity of those who we deem to be subordinate: community members, students, adjunct lecturers etc. while we remain comfortably in our positions of privilege as the definers and critics of others.

For this reason, in this research we explore how discourses of democratic and equitable access, in conjunction with fluid practices of hierarchy maintenance, are often employed to manage and subdue our awareness of exploitation. We analyze the creation of potential and actual spaces for agency that subvert or, at the very least, threaten the stability of exclusionary class and ethnic/racially-constructed hierarchies. Finally, we explore how these contradictory struggles are embodied within us and require the use of auto/home ethnography to understand how, as stated by Scheurich, we are complicit in this process.

Reflexivity in Educational Ethnography as Home Ethnography

In alignment with Scheurich's message and in the context of intra-disciplinary "othering" within anthropology, Harry Wolcott¹¹² in his chapter "Ethnography? Or Educational Travel Writing?" tells us of his experience as G. Spindler's graduate student

¹¹⁰ In *Changing Paradigms in Chicano Studies: Ethnography, Oppositional Ethnography and Ethnobiography* by Rafael Chabrán. JSRI Occasional Papers No. 31 in Latino Studies Series. Julian Samora Institute. Dec. 1997

¹¹¹ Scheurich (2002) *The Destructive Desire for a Depoliticized Ethnographic Methodology: Response to Harry F. Walcott* in *Ethnography and Schools: Qualitative Approaches to the Study of Education*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers

¹¹² Wolcott, Harry (2002) *Ethnography? Or Educational Travel Writing?* in *Ethnography and Schools*. Henry Trueba and Yali Zou eds. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. p. 29

at Stanford University in the 60's as he tried to unite the education and anthropology in his own work:

Spindler's *Education and Anthropology* appeared in 1955. Although that publication had anthropology and anthropologists rigorously and well represented, and in spite of what it became through successive iterations, beginning with *Education and Culture* in 1963... It was met with mixed reviews in spite of the brilliance of many of the papers themselves. Further, a new cohort of Stanford graduates, myself included and a similarly trained cohort working with Solon K. Timball at Teacher's College Columbia, were more likely perceived as part of the problem than part of the answer, for if our minds and hearts were in anthropology, our degrees were in education. We were hyphenated or "halfie" anthropologists, already "one step removed." (And get this, initially our collective applications to become Fellows of the American Anthropological Association were categorically denied, on the basis that our highest degrees were not in anthropology).¹¹³

The experiences of joint program students, whether anthropology and education or social work and anthropology, have often been characterized by an academic world which simultaneously validates and rejects them due to the non-academic association of social work or education as fields of practice. Yet their sponsoring disciplines have had somewhat parallel trajectories with regards to their relation to research subjects. As revealed in the *Arts of Citizenship* example discussed previously, academically related research practices have been for the ultimate benefit of those who are in a position to do the examining and interpretation of others while, losing sight of or justifying their complicity in the exploitative nature of the relationship. Home ethnography, is invaluable if we are to produce a disruptive space which enables a different kind of questioning of our complicitous roles in that which we say we wish to struggle against; the disempowerment, exploitation and silencing of others. As affirmed by Harry Wolcott;

... critical theorists want the critique and political struggle to be out there in the world. In general...we are very good at criticizing the inequitable world. But this overload, this imbalance in one direction toward the critique of the world out there, is itself a failure of critical theory, an instance of reproduction within ourselves of the white racist ontology.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Wolcott, Harry F. (2002) *Ethnography? Or Educational Travel Writing?*

¹¹⁴ Scheurich, James (2002) p. 52.

In the dissertation I attempt to present a participatory dialogue throughout in an effort to address the “white racist ontology” referred to by Scheurich and my/our complicity within it by virtue of my aspiring position within academia. This work includes, not only my voice and that of community participants, community interviewers, organization members and my family members, but the voices of authors whom I have found to be of special relevance to the themes of educational equity and intervention from kindergarten through higher education and beyond in my own homes.

A discussion of a continuously dialogic and evolving methodology is inevitable, I believe, if one is to come close to an inter-subjective conversation between participants, the readers and myself. We will gain an understanding of how subjects are called upon--“interpellated”-- in different capacities and how these partial inclusions help create a multidimensional, multi-leveled and flowing context of awareness, ignorance and complicity in the inherent injustices of our class-based system. We will also become aware of how this necessary, yet problematic grist enables the overall perpetuation of social inequality, while creating potential and actual spaces for moderate change.

The methodology of this research has gone, in general ways, through the traditional dissertation expectations stipulated by degree granting institutions. The appropriate paper work was completed and submitted to the Departments and Graduate School, the collaboration with the Internal Review Board (IRB) went as expected with its requirements for the ethical management of subjects and respect for their privacy, the justifications for the use of funds and the procurement of the necessary official signatures from dissertation committee members were obtained. Similarly to other anthropologically or qualitatively-based research projects, I confronted difficulties in restructuring the presentation of my methodology for the IRB due to the medical model used by that office for approval.

This work, however, due to its inclusive characteristics and the nature of the community interviewers employed, required some special adaptations on the part of the IRB and a rethinking about the appropriateness of those requirements for increasingly engaged types of research. The research process provided, in and of itself, some important spaces for agency that were created as academia opened itself (with some resistance) to the inclusion of relegated and devalued voices from the community.

During the 12 years of this ethnography we took notes about the members' ethnicity, time in the United States, academic beliefs, practices and experiences adapting to Ann Arbor schools and other institutions. We also kept in contact with previous and current members. For the final and most recent part of this research, I constructed structured interviews based on the 12 years of ethnographic work related to Latino experiences with the public educational system, which were later discussed and edited with the community members prior to their use. We held focus groups with teachers, parents and youth and conducted weekly critical theory sessions with the community interviewers. The theory sessions emphasized an overview of chapters from the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire and various videos/CDs on the benefits of immersion Spanish programs for Latino youth.

The weekly sessions served to inform each other of our research findings, difficulties and accomplishments as well as to exchange ideas about our interpretations and experiences with the interview process, the Latino/African American realities we were learning about, and their relevance to our own.

The interviewers helped edit surveys based on their growing knowledge of the population, which resulted from their own interviews and ethnographic experience. They were trained in the PEERS modules so they could be certified, like any faculty member conducting research, according to IRB stipulations. They were all monolingual Spanish speakers except for Martin, the ALAS Co-Director who is African American, the mother whom I had trained several years before to become the WISD Latino consultant for Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, and another mother who had participated as a Board Director in the past. The educational level of the community interviewers, as opposed to that of faculty or doctoral students who generally become certified by PEERS, varied from fourth grade of elementary school to high school. To them it was a great sense of accomplishment to receive the certification from the University, especially after the librarian informed us that university researchers sometimes have difficulty completing the certification without assistance. In fact, several of them framed the computer-generated certificates and placed them on their walls.

We also recorded the inter-ethnic dynamics, which occurred in ALAS and in the community interviewer discussion sessions. We were able to learn about our changing

perspectives thanks to our mutual influence, the influence of Freirean theory, the influence of our various experiences with the public educational system and that of other sources including the media, documentaries and readings.

The greatest difficulties faced during the research process with community interviewers were related to interviewer incentive payments. Several e-mails were exchanged between myself and the IRB office due to stipulations about levels of confidentiality, amount of payment as related to what they considered an acceptable definition of “incentive” and the requirement to have/or not have taxes withdrawn from their checks. Some moderate yet veiled interpersonal frictions also arose between the previous and current ALAS members due to their perceptions about each other’s status/relationship to the organization, to me and to the ALAS physical activity director. The meetings were also somewhat uncomfortable for Martin, the African American community interviewer because he felt “left out” when we spoke in Spanish even though I tried to translate what we spoke about.¹¹⁵ We took turns meeting at the homes of the various community interviewers and at ALAS. We all demonstrated enthusiasm when it was our turn to have the others over as guests.

For contextualization purposes, resulting from the advice of my committee, my ethnographic work expanded to the Academy of the Americas. My dissertation committee recommended that I find another organization with similar interests to those of ALAS. I searched the web and found two Spanish bilingual schools in Detroit, one was AOA and the other was FLICS, a public school that had several different language programs. AOA had much better reviews at the time and it catered to a larger Latino working class student population which was of interest to me.

One community interviewer was able to travel to AOA and assisted me in informing the others what we had learned. We were able to carry out a focus group with the founders of the school, several teachers, and middle school students. I did participant

¹¹⁵ **Comments made by Martin:** “When there was a meeting when you were not there, I felt it was a waste of time because it felt like there was more socializing than actually meeting. Once in a while, they would listen to the “Gringo”, otherwise they didn’t give a shit. It didn’t seem like they were interested in a meeting, only in socializing. I got more out of it when you and I would meet separately. This is just my opinion, when we had a meeting it was mostly about what food to set on the table.” (6/8/11). **Lupe:** “Sabe, cuando nos reunimos sin usted la semana pasada para el GED fuimos a la casa de la otra Lupe. No me quedé mucho porque mayormente hablamos de cómo asar carnita.” (6/18/2011).

observation in the classrooms from K-5, but spent most of June through August of 2010 in the classroom with the middle school children who attended summer school.

I continued my research over the following year with the staff as we worked on a proposal for a public scholarship effort through the Arts of Citizenship Program from Rackham Graduate School. This project aimed to teach critical theory to the Academy of the Americas's children and to expand their support networks through high school and various higher education institutions so as to reduce the achievement gap. It also aimed to get them involved in various public scholarship projects including talks at different k through higher education institutions, art and photojournalism presentations and portfolios of their reality as they perceived it.

We then worked on introducing a Go (Asian board game) program which would encourage heritage language maintenance and cultural pride through the collaboration with a K-6 school in Mexico as well as the learning and use of critical theory to help the children understand their own and mutual realities. Although the request for funding was initially going to be provided through a grant from the Arts of Citizenship program from U of M, ALAS, the Academy of the Americas and the American Go Foundation (AGF), U of M was not supportive of the project despite initial interest. Details and an analysis of this process will be discussed later in the dissertation.

Despite U of M's denial, the other collaborators moved forward. The American Go Foundation provided a free starter kit which included games, instruction books, and matching funds for Go instructors which it helped us recruit from Renaissance High School in Detroit. This also allowed us to begin to build the networks between the high schools and AOA as intended in our original proposal. AOA provided once weekly transportation for the teachers and purchased the leveled Go game workbooks from a fundraiser they had done a few weeks before. It also provided the classroom for us to hold the Go interaction with the Mexican School (Piopiolo) and the screen, computer and SKYPE connection to do so. Finally, it provided the after-school component of the program and assigned an AOA teacher to direct it. ALAS provided the funding for gas for me to travel back and forth with four ALAS "Youth Cultural Ambassadors" who attended the twice monthly Go session at AOA. I provided the transportation and the children's parents provided money for them to buy lunch after the program.

Stylistic Elements

More likely than not, in long standing social issues, it is not the facts of everyday suffering that need to be discovered, for these are common knowledge. Social research-based contributions often have more to do with understanding how the powers that create contexts of injustice and spaces for agency come together from the point of view of various “actors.” The vocabulary used in the description and theoretical analysis informs the reader about our perspectives as a researchers and, in conjunction with tone, it helps reaffirm such a view.

This is a home/auto-ethnographic account about what could, in some respects, be considered an inverse relationship between a small and relatively unknown/marginal community organization, which, due to its position and cross-class, multicultural and transnational constituency, has been at times an aid, and at others, a threat to larger educational institutions including primary schools and higher education. In order to understand the many obstacles and opportunities within the continuum between k through higher education, and why it is that minority and underprivileged students and academics continue to have difficulty closing the achievement gap, I have not only participated with other minorities in their experiences with the school system, but have analyzed my own experiences and those of my children.

The analysis also takes into consideration the interrelationship between class, gender and inter-minority relations in the creation and sponsorship of educational enrichment programs purportedly designed to support the academic and social success of minority youth, and most specifically, it reveals the underlying and negligibly visible strategies of exclusion and inclusion of intra-minority preference.

The multiple uses of silence by bureaucracies and those who attempt to create a space for themselves to break the walls of exclusion are analyzed through various discursive media such as conversations, participant observation, interviews, published works, academic documentaries and e-mails. The ideological stance behind this work is one of emancipation, and social-democratic idealism of inclusive participation. generally espoused by eco-critical feminist perspectives.¹¹⁶ For this reason, despite its elaborate

¹¹⁶ Reference to the work of Fook (2002) and Healy (2000) in Payne, Malcolm (2005) *Modern Social Work Theory*. Third Ed. Lyceum Books. P. 262. Critical feminism is a perspective that goes beyond the

discussion of various practices of social injustice, its purpose is to understand the possibilities in our society for the struggle and achievement of equity in education and future success in the academic employment of minority and underprivileged groups.

The following chapter addresses my experiences first, as a Puerto Rican transnational elementary school student and then as an undergraduate student at Michigan State University. A discussion of the contrasting discourses in the educational conference of 1965, celebrating international education as “the way of the future,” is compared to early century debates regarding transnationalism, cultural pluralism and cosmopolitanism as opposed to the melting pot policies prevalent throughout this and the previous century. The process of transnationalism is then traced and related to the colonial incursions of the United States in Puerto Rico to clarify the role of language and differential conceptualization of “democracy” in the trajectories of five academically exceptional individuals, four of whom attended Harvard. Their lives serve to illustrate the multiple ideologies and practices that enabled their educational ascent within clearly defined colonial circumstances. Finally, the effects of this colonial context are explored in the present reality of the continuum of lower and higher education with an emphasis on the University of Puerto Rico as described in the media and experienced by a Puerto Rican educator. Puerto Rico—as a non-incorporated territory of the United States which is nevertheless, subjected to the policies and practices of the mainland and thus—serves as point of comparison of how these forces operate on underprivileged populations in the US.

traditional critical theoretical emphasis on class and racial divisions. It broadens theories of class hierarchy to “a wider range of explanations of oppression” and it prioritizes “interpersonal and personal experience” within and alongside class and other types of oppression in the context of an ecological framework. It “refuses to take the present social order for granted” and “emphasizes the way in which difference and power are linked” (Payne, p. 262)

Chapter 3

The Transnational Push of Education in a Neo-Colonial Context: Part One Puerto Rico, Harvard and the Metropolis

I have often found myself in situations where I have had to interpret a conversation between an English and a Spanish speaker. More than once, I have experienced the embarrassing realization of speaking to the English speaker in Spanish and to the Spanish speaker in English in my frenzy to keep up with each other's thoughts. Of course, the result has always been a somewhat confused shared laughter. My identity as a "transnational" has been more consolidated or, should I say, more conscious in those moments which have forced me to grapple with cultural identities, whether self-promoted or ascribed, before others and myself. By cultural, I am referring to the changing assumptions about the meanings that my ethnicity, race, gender, language, economic and educational status may acquire. These depend on the context in which I find myself, and the prioritization I give to them in relation to each other and to those with whom I interact. More often than not, while in Michigan, I have carried and represented myself as an Island Puerto Rican and have generally received the expected validation from other Latinos: a combination of interested enthusiasm with a joke or two about how Puerto Ricans exchange our rs for ls has helped level out any differential that may have existed between our economic or educational backgrounds.

My Island identity has become somewhat suspect from the point of view of other Puerto Ricans whom I have encountered, however, when they have come to realize that, despite my enthusiastic assurance of my birth place and upbringing, my Spanish accent, although not American, has also not been easily distinguishable as Puerto Rican. Typically, as I have noticed their silent, yet mildly incredulous looks, I have begun to justify the anomaly by discussing the influence that other Latin American cultures have had on me "regardless of my conscious intentions": my work in El Salvador, my 12 years with a mostly Mexican immigrant population in ALAS, my marriage to a Costa

Rican and my experience teaching English speakers formal and “unnaturally pronounced” Spanish which have all taken their toll on the projection of my identity as I would have it. It is at these times that I think of and cherish the few occasions when my children say with a smile, “Mami, cuando hablas con “Lita” suenas como una puertorriqueña.”¹¹⁷

Transnationality involves more than “the heightened interconnectivity between people in a global context of production reorganization” and “the loosening of political boundaries between countries in order to maximize profits, an increased flow of people, and ideas and goods across borders.” It even goes beyond the development of “strong transnational ties to more than one country.”¹¹⁸ Transnationality may also involve a halting psychic fluidity in cultural identity which at some times may transform from one thing to the next with unconscious ease and at others may remain firm in just one, in complete or partial exclusion of the other. Transnationality is almost impossible to understand without taking into consideration the political and social roles of language and education in the consolidation, fragmentation and transformation of identities that are used to maintain various relationships of exchange, capital accumulation and political control in a global economy. Language and education become some of the most salient arenas of struggle and ruptures that provide the spaces for creativity, hope and assertions of the self.

How our identities are manifested has much to do with the type and level of validation they have received during their development and to the circumstances to which they continue to adapt. Our identities depend on how, and to what extent, they are called forth to socialize, represent themselves, and function in the process of interconnectivity with other subjects and institutions within broader national frameworks of representation. Subjects construct their sense of self through language and through the provision of conscious and unconscious information about themselves by way of the vocabulary, accent, rhythm, tone, volume and non-verbal expressions used to make themselves known.

¹¹⁷ “Mom, when you speak to grandma you sound like a Puerto Rican!”

¹¹⁸ Duntley-Matos (2011) Dissertation Introduction.

The languages we use, as a projection of who we are, incite reactions of appreciation or disdain which can occur almost simultaneously in our transnational milieu. The Language we use to communicate can have the effect of verifying ideas or casting doubt about our physiognomy and its relation to our social standing. The educational system, whether formal or informal has much to do with how this happens and the expansive effect that it may have. Education provides the contexts for heightened engagement between groups and individuals and prepares the basis of continuing relationships as a result of intersubjective instances of mutual learning . It also offers, however, the spaces for differentiation, hierarchy and exclusion.

Three incidents come to mind from my past, for example. When you travel from one country to the next as a child, when you pass from being a member of the majority to a member of the minority strange things happen through communication and language. When my mother brought my brothers and myself to a working class neighborhood in Syracuse to reside while she was completing her Ph.D., I was enrolled in the district school, which I came to realize was mostly black. I also noticed that there was a sort of strange segregation of “races” that appeared to be voluntary from the perspective of an eleven year-old. After all, “weren’t people free to choose where they lived given certain economic limits? “Why would people choose to divide themselves up that way?” In the faculty residences, although I do not recall seeing a single black faculty member, there was a conglomeration of shades of brown with the lightest ones often being foreigners (Americans and Spaniards) or various European descendants.

The street in Syracuse, however, looked largely half black and half white, but my classroom did not reflect that composition. There were several round tables: two of these were different in that one of them had the only four white children in the class sitting around it, and the other had the only three Asian children. On my first day, just having arrived from Puerto Rico a few weeks before, I had to choose a table. The white kids, who sat at the back, looked too alienated and the Asian kids , who sat to the far left in the front, looked too privileged. The first had highly worn and dingy clothing with a look on their faces that they would rather be anywhere but there, and the second were much better dressed, apparently self-confident and ready to start the day. The rest of the tables were

surrounded by black kids,¹¹⁹ so I chose the one up front with four girls who just stared at me in silence.

After sitting down, one of them asked me “What are you?” I looked confused and said “What?” and the other girl joined in and said “What is you, white or black?” I was completely confused with images of myself running through my mind, de-layering my skin, my body, bit by bit trying to understand the reason for the question and trying to find a clue to the answer. I had never been asked or even really asked myself this before and it seemed terribly odd that this would be the first thing to come out of their mouth on my first day of class. My response was “I don’t know,” in what probably revealed my somewhat Spanish inflected accent at that time. One of the girls stood up and said “I know how to find out! Let’s part her hair and look at the skin on her head.” So they did and the girl proclaimed “You ‘s white!” In that context, I was not sure if that was a good thing or if that meant I should be sitting somewhere else. In the process of their discovery they separated me from themselves, through the third person, as an object to be examined. Once they were able to find something in me that appeared familiar, they were able to move me from a place of objective ambiguity to objective certainty.

After some consideration and search in my archive of memories, their answer diminished in shock value because I remembered walking with the niece of my babysitter and housekeeper from the Dominican Republic who had stayed overnight in my room in Puerto Rico. I remembered wondering why she was dark black while I was a light brown like most of the children at the Faculty Residences. My answer to my black classmate’s pronouncement of her new discovery was “Ok?”.... My thought was “Now what?...”

Many years later, after having returned to Puerto Rico and finished three years of college at the U.P.R., I decided to transfer to Michigan State University to enroll in their Music Therapy program. Lacking in musical talent and due to my strong interest in cultural identity formation, I transferred to the Anthropology Dept. while I helped pay my way through college as a research assistant for a sociologist. He had a Russian friend who was a visiting professor. We all went to eat when they began talking about their home towns in the U.S or Russia (depending on who was speaking.) The Russian

¹¹⁹ **My Question to Martin:** Where do you think I sat?¹¹⁹ **Martin’s answer:** Knowing you, I think you chose somewhere in the middle, not too close to the front and not too far back. **Me:** Why do you think I sat in the front?

professor asked me about my home and I answered “I am from Puerto Rico.” He answered with a surprised, yet puzzled look, “Now I see! I had not noticed it before...your skin color, the texture of your hair. Ah, yes, now I can hear your accent! He appeared disappointed in himself because he had not figured out my origin on his own. In fact, it was my self-identification that enabled him to “see and hear” things about me that he had not been aware of earlier: “things” that he was actively constructing as we spoke.

Similarly, I recall an anthropology classmate and good friend who while looking at me asked “I hope you don’t mind me asking this question, but are all Puerto Ricans black?” Again, as one of my eyebrows rose up in confusion, I could not help but wonder what she was seeing that I had not seen of myself before. I asked myself about the classificatory schema she was taking for granted as she looked me straight in the face. My answer was “If you went to Puerto Rico with your husband and had a child there, what color would she be?” My friend just stared at me in silence.

Now, in higher education, like elementary school, I had experienced my self being dissected and molded like a piece of clay right before my eyes, forcing me to do the same and join in on the exercise as I resented every moment of it. The pride I had arrived with due to being bilingual and bicultural quickly became a stain rather than a marker of positive exceptionality in the context of this country.¹²⁰ Unlike Puerto Rico—the “showcase of democracy”—these characteristics did not signify an empowering cosmopolitanism or embodied cultural bridge in the creation of a more enlightened and peaceful world.

It was through these encounters of cultures across multiple borders, which had occurred in a more fragmented way, in varying forms of contact with each other that I was being actively transformed into categorizations which they, “blacks” and “whites,” held to be pure and true. Other aspects of my identity; educational background, cultural affiliations and talents were unimportant to them, but to me, these characteristics became

¹²⁰ W.E.B. Dubois addressed the intersection of one’s unconscious self-vision and the outsider’s imposing objectification in his theory of “double consciousness”. This dynamic was also discussed in detail in the works of Fanon and Freire.

Black, Michael (2007) Fanon and Du Boisian Double Consciousness
Human Architecture: Journal of Sociology: Self-Knowledge, V, Special Double-Issue, Summer 2007, 393-404.

all the more salient because I believed that they were what differentiated me from them. Their language and the way the educational system was structured and delivered was lived evidence that what I had heard and learned in Puerto Rico about colonialism was, in fact, true and very much alive.

Even at the age of eleven, while in that “segregated-like” classroom in Syracuse, I was painfully aware of how ideas about race manifested themselves very differently through the content and structure of the curriculum although I could not understand the reasons behind them at that time. In addition, the classroom practices revealed this as well. The principal of the school was a tall white man in his 40s. My teacher, Mrs. Johnson,¹²¹ however, was African-American. I recall one incident where she called one of the white boys who answered “What?.” She did a football type leap from the front of the room towards the back and tackled him chest first while yelling numerous proclamations about what kind of response she would and would not tolerate, as he tried to squirm out desperately from under her. The other incident occurred when I told her: “Mrs. Johnson¹²², I need to go to the bathroom.” She looked at me with anger and said “You ain’t need to do nothin! Only what I say you need to do and you ain’t going nowhere!” At that time, I had been attending their English as a Second Language Class which I enrolled in just in case the readings I was going to be doing were at the level of my Spanish classes in Puerto Rico. They were not, and it became evident that Mrs. Johnson was not using her English the way I was being taught in Puerto Rico or in the ESL class.

I remember her having a special liking for the Asian students; public smiles and compliments abounded with regards to them. The rest of the class made of black students “just was.” I only remember one boy whose name was “Carter.” I thought this was a strange name for a boy because in Spanish “cartero” means postman and I did not understand why someone would give their son a name that sounded like an occupation. Carter was the sweet jokester of the class who tended to get laughs out of everyone and at times, even out of Mrs. Johnson. Little did I know that he was going to be my helping

¹²¹ Alias.

hand in one of the most traumatic experiences I was to have in my educational experience.

Several weeks after studying in Mrs. Johnson's class there was a white girl whom I will call "Charity." She began offering me "free marihuana." She explained the virtues of smoking it as compared to tobacco and said "It's natural you see, so it doesn't have all those toxins and poisons." She even took me to her house so I could see all the little plants she kept in her refrigerator. She insisted for several weeks that I should accept her gift and I politely refused the offer informing her that we did not do drugs in my family.

Once she realized she was not going to make any headway, she distanced herself and began talking to other classmates to do so as well. One afternoon, I was on my crossing guard station helping the last few kids cross over when I saw a crowd of black kids coming my way, yelling different sorts of things and in the middle was this white girl whom I finally recognized as "Charity." They formed a wide circle around us while Charity stood in front of me yelling "You cussed at my mother!" As I tried to explain that I did not even know her mother, the crowd began screaming "rumble!" "rumble!" Charity took her first swing at me which I managed to move away from with enough time to restrain her against the ground. There may have been a few more "slugs" exchanged between these two events, but that was the culminating point.

Shortly after, there was a new black student in the school of substantial size (whom I will call "Jazmine"). She brought with her the reputation of being the best fighter of her previous school. Apparently she heard I had beaten Charity who "used to be," according to the talk of the students, the best at our school. A few weeks later the same scene repeated itself while I crossed the last few kids to the other side of the street. This time it was Jazmine who was at the center of the rumble chants. Again, she yelled that I had cussed at her mother. Again, I tried to explain the I had no idea who her mother was nor did I know who she was. Before I realized it, her hands were on my hair and my head was swinging back and forth until, finally Mrs. Johnson caught on and stopped the fight. As I tried to explain what happened, I noticed my face was stinging. I touched it and found blood all over my hands. At this point I began to cry only to hear Mrs. Johnson yell "Why are you crying? You weren't crying before!" I later found out from Jazmine herself that she had given me what she called "the zebra treatment." She

had connected two stoned rings on her fingers with a wire so she could cut my face while she was hitting me. Now that she had established her reputation, she congratulated me for “putting up a good fight” and informed me that she did not need to “mess with me” anymore.

That day, after everyone left, while I was still in tears standing where the fight had been, Carter and few of his friends stayed behind. He asked me, “would you like us to walk you home?” I answered that it would do no good because my mother was teaching at the University and the door was locked. Carter answered “Don’t worry, that’s not a problem” as his friends agreed with reassuring smiles. They managed to get into my house and let me in so I could call my mother. A rupture of the most important kind had occurred; the racial boundaries had been dismantled. Carter and I had never had extensive conversations before or after this incident. On that afternoon, Jazmine was left to walk away on her own while Carter, who was black like her, tried to make amends for something he did not have anything to do with, except, perhaps, for watching from the sidelines to see what was going to happen, like many people do when there is a conflict.

The nature of race as a “floating signifier,” a symbol whose meanings change depending on the context, in which it is used,¹²³ became apparent in this example. A rupture within acceptable racial allegiances of that school most likely occurred because the children perceived that an injustice had been committed not only by Jazmine, but by Mrs. Johnson as well. This disjuncture allowed Carter and his friends to respond to a commitment that went beyond the attributions of skin color, and even beyond the fear of legal reprisals for their “breaking and entering talents” in order to address what they believed to be a deeper social justice. It is possible that a new space of commonality was opened because of a shared emotive awareness of oppression.

The way class values and the variances of colonial links which called upon us, the students in Mrs. Johnson’s class, manifested themselves in very different ways, often clashing because of our historicized positions. The black and white students at the school had shared rituals for establishing worth and hierarchy of which I was unaware. On the other hand, I brought my own “common sense” understandings about the value of family

¹²³ Hall, Stuart (2009). Race the Floating Signifier. Parts 1-7.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRk9MZvOd2c&feature=related>

loyalty, especially in the face of a foreign land. The discourses and interventions by administrators and teachers were represented as if they were geared towards a homogenous mass of children even though their actual practices were quite exacting in their differential application as revealed in the treatment given to Asian, black, white and Latino/foreign students.

I recall the day, for example, when I asked Mrs. Johnson “Are we going to study history in this class?” I was craving the books that told us of European explorers who found fantastic lands and exalted the beauty of Puerto Rico and Latin America, the creativity of their now extinct or highly reduced indigenous populations and the bravery of our pirates. I wanted to learn about world geography as I had done on the Island. This I held in stark contrast to the “free reading time” in her Syracuse classroom that had “little readers” that were of no interest to me.

When I asked Mrs. Johnson when we were going to study history she answered somewhat sarcastically “We **do** study history. Our history is over there” as she pointed to small packets of leveled index cards that told of various heroic deeds of present day African-American children. The cards had stories such as a boy who had helped a grandmother walk across the street, preventing her from getting hit by a car which led him to earn some sort of “Good Samaritan award.” The idea of “history” was another contested terrain between Mrs. Johnson and I. Whereas for her it was the day to day lives of African-Americans that needed to be revealed at the expense of any other history, for me, history was a wide search for my place as a Puerto Rican in the broader global context.

For example, Mrs. Johnson had a bookshelf. Looked at from a distance, we assume that a bookshelf contains books that are windows to a wide variety of subjects, experiences and cultures. In a classroom we expect that they will represent the interests of the student body and that the books will move them beyond their immediate surroundings and experiences to the discovery of “new worlds.” I felt particularly attracted to bookshelves because in my home at the faculty residences I was always surrounded by them, even though I could not yet read them. Also, after realizing I would not have the history class that I was craving, I hoped that I could learn it on my own through the books on the shelf.

Once I went through it several times, I found one book on Roberto Clemente, the baseball player. This was the first full book I had ever read. I was quite proud of myself because in Puerto Rico I had only read the short stories included in my textbooks. I chose the book about Roberto even though I had no interest in sports because I knew that he had created a sports center for needy children on the Island. I remembered the commercials I had seen on T.V. before we moved to Syracuse. It was his heroism and his relation to me as a Puerto Rican (the only one in that school besides my little brother) that connected with me and helped me reinforce a sense of who I was. This validation was important because the “white” administrators assumed I could not speak English correctly and that I was something to be repaired through ESL, and the “black” teacher wanted to make sure I knew my place in the micro-society she was building in the classroom. Like Franz Fanon, the black critical and revolutionary theorist from Martinique (a department/colony of France), I had found myself objectified into something appropriate for intervention. I was taken outside of the world and restored to it through the eyes of others.

Sealed into that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others. Their attention was a liberation, running over my body suddenly abraded into nonbeing, endowing me once more with an agility that I had thought I had lost, and by taking me outside the world, restoring me to it. I stumbled, and the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there¹²⁴.

With time, I came to understand that Roberto Clemente had not been included in Mrs. Johnson’s bookshelf because he was Puerto Rican, but rather, he was placed there because he was “black.” Like me, he had been redefined into, and through, a discrete color scheme that was based on exclusions and an amalgam of referents that went beyond the immediately visible. Later, I would come to understand that this was the case in higher education as well. It is much clearer now, that the education on the Island and in Syracuse were both characterized by important variants of colonial ideology and social restructuring. Whereas the Island schools tended to exalt the cultural and political hegemony of Spain and the United States, the school in Syracuse (through Mrs. Johnson) looked to the internally colonizing power—white power—with resistance and anger. The

¹²⁴ Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks* (C. L. Markmann, Trans.) [Peau Noir, Masques Blancs]. New York: Grove Weidenfeld. (Original work published 1952)

definitional emphasis of the power hierarchy was and continues to be constrained by their divergent relation to national autonomy and to the particularities of the development of the slave economy within each one.¹²⁵

Puerto Rican nationalism, infused with a growing understanding of racial categorizations within the United States, undoubtedly influenced my views of society and, more specifically, of the educational continuum. That the resources and economic context of the schools and their student bodies had much to do with the process of colonization became increasingly apparent as well. Julio Sellés Solá, my elementary school in Puerto Rico (the magnet school that preceded the science-focused public school of University Gardens) was not like Los Frailes—the rural school where I learned so much from Mistel Acosta, and it was certainly not like Percy Hughes, the working class school where Mrs. Johnson tried to assert her radicalized disdain. But it was through me as a transnational subject, that they would, in their fluid interaction, interpellate others while simultaneously calling upon and challenging me.

Thus, my movements between “cultural nations and internal colonies” have allowed me to consider how the language, structures and points of reference of the educational systems relate to each other and to ideas of equity, freedom, democracy, exclusion and exceptionality in a global capitalist context. The plethora of contradictions that not only become apparent to us as onlookers, but which we embody as agents have begun to surface. But, in order to understand these experiences and the discourses within them, it is helpful to think in a more in-depth way about their theorization within Western anthropology and social philosophy more generally.

Theorizations about Transnationality

Within anthropology, transnationality has been thought of as a relatively recent phenomenon, and, as we saw in the definition discussed earlier, it has often been represented as something that is done “out there” to us. Researchers, from the 90s who realized its relevance to the understanding of our present societal exchanges, acknowledged its “slippery nature.”

Portes, for example, believed that “transnationalism” was a new and very much needed metaphor of the mutually influential economic and migrational effects between nations.¹²⁶ Unlike his early 20th century predecessors, he emphasized its economic components to the exclusion of the psycho-social motivations, and transcultural forces that are embedded in it and its subjects. In other words, the increasingly global capitalist economy and the mutually exclusive characterizations made between those things which are considered “objectively observable” and the multiplicity of forces which affect its emotive dynamics have dominated the context of the remaking of “transnationality” as theory.

In the following quote, Portes impressed on us the need to examine systematically, and in an ongoing way, the processes and nature of mass movements, communication and entrepreneurship across borders. He implied that it had, until that time been ignored. He attributed credit to several anthropologists: Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc- Szanton for pioneering its theorization, and proceeded to cite their definition:

We define “transnationalism” as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. We call these processes transnationalism to emphasize that many immigrants today build social fields that cross-geographic, cultural, and political borders. An essential element is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies. We are still groping for a language to describe these social locations.¹²⁷

In this article, Portes and the anthropologists he quoted, appeared to ignore that Randolph Bourne’s “Trans-National America” written in 1916, had already created an in-depth analysis of the “multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.” He, as well as Horace Kallen (1915)¹²⁸ provided a detailed discussion of how immigrants “build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders.” Bourne and Kallen, in fact, were able to go beyond a primarily economic analysis such as that proposed by Portes in their discussion of the cultural confluences and contributions of immigrant populations. They critiqued the “melting pot” theory as a conservative reaction against the diversity that transnational subjects

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid. p. 4

¹²⁸ Kallen, Horace (1915) Democracy versus the Melting Pot in the Nation: A Study of American Nationality. February 25. <http://www.expo98.msu.edu/people/Kallen.htm>

contribute to the United States. They addressed the “melting pot” theory’s racist and ethnocentric roots, which often spur violent reactions against immigrants and which became increasingly evident as a result of WWI.

No reverberatory effect of the great war has caused American public opinion more solicitude than the failure of the "melting-pot." The discovery of diverse nationalistic feelings among our great alien population has come to most people as an intense shock. It has brought out the unpleasant inconsistencies of our traditional beliefs. We have had to watch hard-hearted old Brahmins virtuously indignant at the spectacle of the immigrant refusing to be melted, while they jeer at patriots like Mary Antin who write about our "forefathers."¹²⁹

Not only did they address the economic dynamics of capitalistic exploitation, but they also discussed the deleterious psychological effects of this policy and the imposition of a “hyphenated-American” identity robbed of what they believed to be its original cultural richness. Kallen observed that

What we emphatically do not want is that these distinctive qualities should be washed out into a tasteless, colorless fluid of uniformity. Already we have far too much of this insipidity, masses of people who are cultural half-breeds, neither assimilated Anglo-Saxons nor nationals of another culture... From this nucleus the colony extends out by imperceptible gradations to a fringe where national characteristics are all but lost. Our cities are filled with these half-breeds who retain their foreign names but have lost the foreign savor. This does not mean that they have actually been changed into New Englanders or Middle Westerners. It does not mean that they have been really Americanized. It means that, letting slip from them whatever native culture they had, they have substituted for it only the most rudimentary American... The great American public school has done its work... With these people our institutions are safe... The same molders of opinion whose ideal is to melt the different races into Anglo-Saxon gold hail this poor product as the satisfying result of their alchemy.¹³⁰

In this context, and much prior to Portes, they also addressed the many cultural and economic benefits that “un-hyphenated” immigrants provided to their new American nation. For Bourne and Kallen the ideal that new working class immigrants would, by virtue of their presence in the United States, have access and contribute to the culture in general and to higher education more specifically was a natural consequence of the “cosmopolitanism” that they brought to the nation.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Bourne, Randolph (1916) “Trans-National America” *Atlantic Monthly*, 118 (July 1916), 86-97
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rbannis1/AIH19th/Bourne.html>

... It is for the American of the younger generation to accept this cosmopolitanism, and carry it along with self-conscious and fruitful purpose. In his colleges, he is already getting, with the study of modern history and politics, the modern literatures, economic geography, the privilege of a cosmopolitan outlook such as the people of no other nation of to-day in Europe can possibly secure. ... He is a colonial of the world. Colonialism has grown into cosmopolitanism, and his motherland is no one nation, but all who have anything life enhancing to offer to the spirit... They believe that the most effective integration will be one that coordinates the diverse elements and turns them consciously toward working out together the place of America in the world-situation.¹³¹

In his allusion to “a colonial of the world,” Bourne he was referring to a “citizen of the world” and in “colonialism to cosmopolitanism” he appeared to be referring to a transformation of the individual from one who seeks power over others, to one who shares and contributes to the cultural wealth of all nations without losing pride in a culturally historicized sense of self. Bourne and Kallen opposed the exploitation of colonialism and imperialism and advocated for a transnational community, a cosmopolitan community that opposed that “chauvinism” of nationalism through a dual citizenship such as that permitted in France at the time.

[Immigrants] demand for integration a genuine integrity, a wholeness and soundness of enthusiasm and purpose which can only come when no national colony within our America feels that it is being discriminated against or that its cultural case is being prejudged. This strength of cooperation, this feeling that all who are here may have a hand in the destiny of America, will make for a finer spirit of integration than any narrow "Americanism" or forced chauvinism. In this effort we may have to accept some form of that dual citizenship which meets with so much articulate horror among us. Dual citizenship we may have to recognize as the rudimentary form of that international citizenship to which, if our words mean anything, we aspire.¹³²

In this passage Bourne revealed himself to be, in important ways, a person who was much ahead of his times; one who advocated for a world of multicultural sharing and inclusion with the ultimate goal of global citizenship. The limits of his vision, however, were not completely different from those of his contemporaries and many of those which characterize our present societies. Although he alluded to the transcendence of humanity through cosmopolitanism, this tolerance for the enriching qualities of the

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

coming together of various cultures was built upon a notion of extremes similar to that which he critiqued. In his efforts to do away with the damaging effects of cultural suppression, it is evident that to a large extent, he viewed cultures as discrete categories based on a spectrum of purity. He, in effect, disregarded any kind of cultural value or agency that the children of immigrants, who had been repressed by way of “melting pot” strategies, might have.

In his attempt to contextualize his own work, Portes established some important differences between current immigrant groups and those which were more characteristic of the Bourne and Kallen era, but his definition was more limited in scope than that of the latter. He established a differentiation between earlier immigrant adaptation composed by a large number of highly economically impoverished individuals who came to stay, and those who characterize our present society. These he described as migrating back and forth to their home countries while belonging to wealthier laboring or middle class sectors. He excluded from “the pool of transnationals” those immigrants who were not involved in entrepreneurial activities across national borders. Thus, the economic focus would inevitably hamper the depth of analysis attainable by him as compared to Bourne and Kallen.

It is important to note...that not all immigrants are involved in transnational activities, nor everyone in the countries of origin is affected by them. The sudden popularity of this term may make it appear as if everybody is “going transnational,” which is far from being the case. In this sense, little is gained, by the re-labeling, of immigrants as “transmigrants” since the new term adds nothing to what is already known. It is preferable to reserve the term “transnational” for activities of an economic, political, and cultural sort that require the involvement of participants on a regular basis as a major part of their- occupation. Hence, the Salvadoran merchant who travels regularly back home to replenish supplies or the Dominican builder who comes periodically to New York to advertise among his compatriots is a transnational entrepreneur; the immigrant who buys one of those houses or who travels home yearly bearing gifts for his family and friends is not.¹³³

Although it may be true that there are some important distinguishing markers between previous and current migratory waves, there are some significant characteristics of the transnational experience mentioned by Bourne and Kallen that Portes failed to

¹³³ Portes, Alejandro (1997) p. 17

consider. According to him, the distinguishing markers are characterized by the cross border possibilities for instant communication that, with time, become normative.

Although some activities that could be dubbed “transnational” according to a strict definition of the term did occur among earlier European immigrants, the present process is characterized by three features: First, the near-instantaneous character of communication across national borders and long distances. Second, the numbers involved in these activities; and third, the fact that, after a critical mass is reached, they tend to become “normative.”

Portes, Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc- Szanton focused on how capitalism was tied to the “emergence of transnational communities” in relation to the interests of “investors and employers in advanced countries” which they saw as a “distinct phenomenon at variance with traditional patterns of immigrant adaptation.” These, they asserted, would lead to a “broader field for autonomous popular initiatives” to deal with the “depredations of world-roaming capital.” Bourne and Kallen decried the exploitative effects of imperialist capitalism as well, and also mentioned the complicity of capitalism in attracting labor. But, prior to Basch et al., they celebrated the empowering, socially transforming and enriching effects that would result from the sharing of cultural mores and the vocational talents they contributed to the nation. Portes’ contribution is that he demonstrated, specifically, how capitalism is complicitous in the increase of immigrant populations. For example, he illustrated how policies such as I.R.C.A. of 1986 which appeared to limit immigration, actually promoted it through special concessions.

Because of trade union and public opposition, the continuation of the immigrant labor flow has often taken place surreptitiously, under various legal subterfuges. In the United States, public outcry at the volume of unauthorized immigration led to the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act or IRCA. This piece of legislation reflects with notable clarity the resilient need for immigrant labor and the enduring, power of employer associations. Instead of reducing the volume of immigration, the 1986 law actually increased it through several ingenious loopholes¹³⁴.

Some 2.5 million formerly unauthorized aliens were legalized under IRCA. Subsequent legislation contained generous provisions for newly legalized immigrants to bring their relative[s]. More importantly, IRCA retained a large loophole allowing for the continuation of the unauthorized flow by requiring employers to check prospective workers' documents but not to establish their

¹³⁴ Portes (1997) p. 5

validity. Predictably, a massive fraudulent document industry sprung up to service the new immigrants and their employers (Bach and Brill 1991).¹³⁵

With regards to the social climate of present day immigrants, however, it is likely that the imagery of today is quite unlike that of the waves of the 19th century. Today, images of foreign-speaking dark-complected individuals come to mind. The media is saturated with polls and statistical accounts about the growing population of “colored minorities” and the decrease of Anglo-Saxons. Discussions of a changing balance in the ethnic and racial power structure are emphasized as some groups react with a hyper-conservative fear, while others rejoice with the thought that their turn at the top of the socio-economic pyramid is at hand.¹³⁶ The nationalistic chauvinism that Bourne and Kallen tried to warn us against has maintained its presence in a close relationship to the economic ebbs and flows in more or less visible and aggressive ways. Such is the view of the blogger who, in February 2010, wrote “The Darkening of America”:

AMERICA IS GETTING DARKER and whites are getting scared...this is one reason they are lashing out so hard with their racist hatred...it's because they know they are becoming a minority.

The “racist hatred” to which he is referring is clearly represented in the following post by David Duke titled “For Our Heritage and Freedom”:

America is changing from the land of our forefathers to a place where we are no longer at home in spirit, and where our families are no longer safe in their own homes. New Orleans has become increasingly like Haiti since the 1960's Civil Rights movement integrated the schools...Massive non-white immigration, differential birthrates, and intermarriage will make our people a rapidly shrinking minority. Our racial enemies will not stop their darkening of America until there is no refuge for our people, only annihilation.¹³⁷

The excerpt from this website invokes powerful images of fear, violence and demands the necessary exclusion of “non-white” populations that Duke associates directly with the concept of “freedom” (for the white-born)—an inherent right believed to be embodied in the philosophy of democracy and education—the civilizing institution charged with socializing youth around such concepts. Both writers agree that “whites”

¹³⁵ Ibid. p. 5 Footnote 2.

¹³⁶ “The Darkening of America”: “.http://conversations.blackvoices.com/

¹³⁷ Duke, David (2004) “David Duke for Our Heritage and Freedom”
http://www.davidduke.com/general/there-is-no-escape_17.html

are becoming a minority and that the darkening of it is the principal rallying point for “justice.” However, while the blogger rejoices over the hope for the culmination of a natural process of darkening which signals an increase in voice, presence and power for this population, Duke angrily laments and fears it. He equates immigration and New Orleans with darkness and incites “whites” to seek protection.

His choice of words such as “enemies” and “annihilation” implies the actions that are necessary for the survival of the “white race” as he sees it. What makes this ideological exchange so urgent is the agreement of both parties that the power associated with embodied darkness is surpassing that of “whites.” The relationship of color to power, as compared to the experiences I had in the educational system is different in some respects, however. In my case, I was drawn into an unexpected state of double consciousness as members of two different “racial” affiliations placed me in a position of relative uncertainty regarding my own identity and the status they intended to project on me. In the case of Duke and the blogger, Duke’s identity is validated through a mutuality of understanding regarding its historical hegemonic and currently diminishing status. Its deconstruction occurs as a result of the increased potential for categorical blurring that is already taking its toll through “differential birth rates and intermarriage.” They both realize the growing inversion of power and address it through racially biased taunts and exclusions.

The discursive exchange designed to mobilize national audiences via the web and the interactions I experienced from the racialization ascribed to me in the educational continuum have similar ideological underpinnings. They are all embedded within a broader ideology of democracy that, through its internal referent to equity and freedom, inevitably implies the existence of discrete and distinctively separate categories of subjects. The idea of democracy becomes more complex as the equity and freedom within it are applied differentially by various subjects according to their social positions. For example, where Duke sees “freedom” as a protective shield of what he believes to be his “race,” in the blogger’s discourse, freedom is implied through his growing ability as a non-white to break with the silence of color-based exploitation. In other words, it is not a protective freedom like Duke that the blogger is addressing, but one of inverted invasion and emancipatory openness due to the increasing numbers of “non-whites.”

How is it then that both groups appear to be using the idea of democracy and its underlying notions of freedom and equity in such mutually exclusionary ways? Attempts to understand the contradictions between the democratic foundation of the U.S. nation and the human exploitation within it are, in fact, almost a century old and it was Kallen, a highly educated immigrant, who took it upon himself to explain it.

That [the] doctrine [of the Declaration of Independence] did not describe a condition, that it even contradicted conditions, that many of the signatories owned other men and bought and sold them, that many were eminent by birth, many by wealth, and only a few by merit—all this is acknowledged. Indeed, they were aware of these inequalities. They would probably have fought their abolition. But they did not regard them as incompatible with the Declaration of Independence. For to them the Declaration was neither a pronouncement of abstract principles nor an exercise in formal logic. It was an instrument in a political and economic conflict, a weapon of offense and defense. The doctrine of “natural rights” which is its essence was formulated to shield social orders against the aggrandizement of persons acting under the doctrine of “divine right”: its function was to afford sanction for refusing customary obedience to traditional superiority...Whereupon the colonists, through their representatives, the signatories to the Declaration, replied that they were quite as good as their traditional betters, and that no one should take from them certain possessions which were theirs.¹³⁸

This quote, which appeared in “The Nation” in 1915, was Kallen’s preamble to his development of a critique of American nationality in reference to the meaning and practice of democracy in the United States. Perhaps, similar to Boas¹³⁹, his Jewish immigrant identity and his education and status as an Ivy League professor, enabled him to view the politics of population definition from a broad and critically embodied perspective. Kallen, in consonance with Bourne who proposed the concept of transnationalism—the cooperation of distinct cultures and nations as equals—Adamic, who “demanded the revision of American history textbooks to acknowledge [immigrant] contributions to the development of the American nation¹⁴⁰,” and Covello who developed “community-centered schools,” was an avid opponent of the coercive strategies of

¹³⁸ Kallen, Horace (1915) Democratization versus the Melting Pot in the Nation. February 15.

¹³⁹ Boas, Franz (1940). *Race, Language, and Culture*

¹⁴⁰ Meyer, Gerald (?) The Cultural Pluralist Response to Americanization: Horace Kallen, Randolph Bourne, Louis Adamic and Leonard Covello. *Journal of the Research Group on Socialism and Democracy Online*. 54, Vol 24, No. 3 <http://sdonline.org/48/the-cultural-pluralist-response-to-americanization-horace-kallen-randolph-bourne-louis-adamic-and-leonard-covello/>

melting pot theory advocates¹⁴¹ and of the economic emphasis which, as we have seen in Portes, article, continues to this day.

Americanization constituted a Nativist movement dedicated to erasing the original cultures, and especially the languages, of the twenty-seven million New Immigrants (that is, the Italians and Eastern Europeans) who entered the United States from 1880 to 1920.... By 1924, powerful anti-immigrant movements had succeeded in obtaining the passage of the Johnson-Reed Act, which restricted immigration annually to quotas based on 2% of the number of each nationality residing in the United States at the time of the 1890 census, that is, prior to the great influx of Italian and Eastern European immigrants... In this way, US immigration laws imposed – on top of existing class and racial divisions – a hierarchy of nationalities, thereby adding a veritable caste system privileging “Anglo Saxons” (so-called Old Stock Americans and those coming from Northwest Europe) as opposed to the New Immigrants. The organizing principle of US immigration policy remained unchanged until October 3, 1965, when the McCarran-Walter Act set aside quotas based on national origin and replaced them with other criteria, thereby allowing for immigration from all regions of Europe as well as the other continents.¹⁴²

Kallen, Bourne and Covello demonstrated a keen awareness and impressive courage through publicly engaged intellectual efforts. They pointed to the inconsistencies and harsh realities of human exploitation that were shielded from view by powerful, yet unexamined discourses of democracy that continue to have an impact to this day. Kallen examined the concept of class in American society and came to the conclusion that its economic emphasis, isolated from race and ethnicity did not reveal the underlying cause of the disparity between the rich and the poor.

Only race prejudice, primitive, spontaneous, and unconscious, could have caused a trained economist [Mr. Ross] to ignore the sole obvious fact that in a capitalist industrial society labor is useless and helpless without capital; that hence the external dangers of immigration are in the greed of the capitalist and the indifference of the government. The restriction of immigration can naturally succeed only with the restriction of the entrepreneur’s greed which is its cause.¹⁴³

Kallen saw racism, often unconscious, as the root of class distinction and exploitation. He noticed that “Americanization” implied the imitation of external characteristics exhibited by Anglo-Saxons and white Europeans to the exclusion of

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Boas. Ibid.

blacks, even under equal economic conditions. Furthermore, he saw the “danger of immigration” as emanating from the indifference of the government supported by the entrepreneurial greed which attracted the immigrant work force in the first place.

It is important to remember, that as early as 1915, Kallen, was aware of the function of the public schools and state universities in this process of Anglo-Saxon-based assimilation. His understanding of the interdependent relationship between all levels of the educational system in the process of Americanization is significant given the bureaucratic strategies which were and continue to be commonly instituted to create the impression of a distinct separation between lower and higher education.

Apart from the unintentional impulsion [to Americanize the Anglo-Saxon and white European offspring] towards this end of the conditions that I have just enumerated, there exists the instrument especially devised for this purpose which we call the public school--and to some extent there is the state university.¹⁴⁴

Kallen’s forewarnings ironically lead us forward, from their perspective, and backwards from ours, to the educational discourses of 1965 with their passionate emphasis on the need for “international education” within veiled allusions to global capitalist imperialism.

Colonial Silences of the Past and the 1965 National Conference on Higher Education

The 1965 National Conference on Higher Education, with its ambivalent yet forceful discourses of “democratization,” appeared oblivious to Kallen’s, Adamic’s, Bourne’s and Covello’s critiques voiced thirty-five years before, however. Contrary to their recommendations, the conference brought with it an imperative regarding the role that the university should play in responding to its growing corporate investors and the interests of state and foreign policy. In his article “Higher Education Reflects on Itself and on the Larger Society,” Harry Kerr discussed the pressures applied against the university’s traditional “detached observer” stance within a similarly based instrumental definition of the concept of democracy as the one mentioned by Kallen in reference to the Declaration of Independence. The opposing voices of corporate vs. university representatives were attempting to gain center stage during this “revolutionary” gathering

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

of the conference. The idea of “truth” combined, in an interesting concoction, with “subjectivity” and “passion,” as it related to the inclusion of the wider community.

The headlines, at the time, were about war and racial tension and drug-taking and population pressures and space exploration. No longer, in any of these matters, was U.S. higher education the detached observer, the aloof critic, the disinterested watcher from an ivied tower¹⁴⁵ ...

There was Senator J. W. Fullbright, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, arguing for the case of a critical appraisal of U.S. foreign policy and, in the process, stating a set of expectations for colleges and universities.¹⁴⁶

Its mission would be to search for truth, unswayed by temporary passions, and to serve all mankind, not merely the rarefied ranks of scholars.”¹⁴⁷

The internationalization of education was seen as a new concept in what was understood to be a post-colonial and excitingly modern world.

... Clearly, said Lawrence E. Dennis, of the Ford Foundation, “international education is to be the new frontier in the Great Society... International education is an idea whose time is at hand” ... Most notable was the Higher Education Act—climaxing a lawmaking program which Frank H. Bowles, of the Ford Foundation, called the “opening phase of an educational revolution.”¹⁴⁸

The only apparently Latino voice heard in Kerry Smith’s narration of this memorable conference was that of Mr. Manning Patillo¹⁴⁹ who questioned the meaning and context of “truth” and “value” as opposed to Mr. Kerr’s depiction of them. Was “truth” that which the academic should seek through the engagement with practices of daily life and “value,” that which is co-constructed and experienced as a result of the interaction? Was

¹⁴⁵ Smith, Kerry G. Et al. (1966) Higher Education Reflects on Itself and on the Larger Society. Current Issues in Higher Education March 13-16 1966. P. 1

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Vice President Humphrey. P. 2

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 2

¹⁴⁹ In 1968 Manning Patillo was the “Executive Director for Education with the Lilly Foundation and Director of the Danforth Foundation's Commission on Church-related Colleges and Universities, Dr. Patillo continued to study higher education, especially in schools with church affiliation.” According to the speaker at the commencement ceremony of the University of Detroit who introduced him for the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, he [was] “a friend of this kind of education, the best kind of friend: one who [was] appreciative of the strengths of our schools, but also insistent that we perform even greater service to our students and society.”

http://research.udmercy.edu/find/special_collections/digital/honors/item.php?record_id=236&collectionCode=honors_hon

truth that “objective” fact based on observation that could be used strategically and pragmatically to achieve increased capital and power in the international sector? Or, was “truth” that ultimate Hegelian ideal for which humanity is always striving, where the “values” he referred to were about the teaching of morality that would lead humanity to a righteous life?

The ambiguity created by the different concepts of truth and value could have been interpreted in various ways, opening the possibility for discursive engagement with all proponents and creating a space for alternate constructions. In fact, Mr. Patillo directly acknowledged the confluence between both principles in so far as they were “bound together” in the production of “justice.” Mr. Patillo, in effect, was able to push the idea of objectivity to the margins by ironically privileging “truth”—the focus of positivism—and transforming it from an object to be discovered, to a malleable and subjectively influenced agent of something greater: social justice.

Any proper teaching of values,” said Manning M. Patillo, “will seek to inculcate a respect for truth... Thus truth and value, far from being separate and distinct, are bound together so closely that an educational program must take account of both, if it is to do justice to either.¹⁵⁰

And, thus, the conflicts between those who stood for the values of morality based on traditional notions of a classical education and intellectual enlightenment would begin to clash with those who had clearly defined business priorities.

There was evidence that business and industry had their demands and expectations for higher education, also, and that they did not always coincide with the ideas of the educators. “Why can’t more educational time be spent in the area of [standards, values, and business ethics]?” Roy Walters of the American Telephone Company asked.¹⁵¹

In this context the University of Michigan would shine prominently in favor of business and state policy, earning two citations in Kerry Smith’s article:

...others wondered, with John S. Brubacher, of the Center for the Study of Higher Education at The University of Michigan, “whether such traditional autonomy is any longer possible in the modern world. In the interdependent world of today, higher education must on occasion be an arm of state policy...

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. P.3

¹⁵¹ Ibid. P. 3

As a public university created to promote, in principle—if not in practice—the inclusion of the broader community in its “ivied halls,” its participation in the post 1900’s industrial and natural science priorities were now being interpellated actively as an arm of “state policy.” Similarly to Berkeley during the 60s, the University of Michigan was experiencing a growing discontent from younger faculty and incoming students whose engagement with the politics of the day openly questioned the detachment characterized by older faculty.

Richard Cutler, vice president for student affairs at the University of Michigan, felt the reason for this widening gap was to be found in the changed nature of American society since 1945. The post 1945 world is the only world that the typical undergraduate has known: in his lifetime, he has known none of the triumphs of Western civilization.¹⁵²

Some of the “triumphs” of Western Civilization that went unmentioned during this conference were precisely those experimental steps in international education as an arm of state policy already implemented in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico. The political climate and interventions associated with the colonial state of the Island help clarify their effect on the transformation of the Puerto Rican educational continuum and the role of the University within it. An analysis of these forces will help us understand the consequences of New Deal policies and the reification of Puerto Rico as a “showcase of democracy” in relation to current and broader transnational developments and their effects on educational politics as it relates to internalized colonialism within the United States. The detailed depictions of Rexford Guy Tugwell, while Governor of the Island in the 1940’s, offer us a window into the forces which simultaneously impeded and created interstices of possibility for educational advancement in a colonial context of racism, ignorance and indifference.

First, however, it is necessary to discuss how this notion of “international” education discussed in the Conference of 1965 had its “baby steps” even before the Spanish-American war of 1898 and had, actually, been standard practice among the colonial powers with regard to the elite of their colonies, whether Spanish, French, British or other. Franz Fanon, for example, as well as other members of colonized nations studied in the most prestigious institutions of Europe. It was there, as we saw

¹⁵² Ibid. p. 5

previously, that they became aware of their own internalized colonialism which, in turn, incited them to use the knowledge and skills that they had perfected in these institutions to actively resist colonialism, not only through their public scholarship, but through active protests and participation in the planning or practice of armed struggle. Such was the case of Ramón Emeterio Betances and Eugenio María de Hostos. These two “hombres ilustres de Puerto Rico” were elites who, as activists against colonialism, bridged the independence efforts of the Island from Spanish to U.S. colonial status after having studied in Spain and France.

The Puerto Rican Elite: Trends in European Education prior to the Spanish American War

The practice of providing colonized populations with some limited access to the intellectual and political wealth of the various European empires of the past was not uncommon. In fact this was a strategy that was often employed to maintain an elite creole class in the colonies that would, in effect, act as an insulator of resistance or revolutionary fervor from the colonized. It enabled the perpetuation of class hierarchies through individual exceptionalism. Initially, and then in fragmented ways, the effect of this inclusion was often successful enough for the purposes of the colonial power. It encouraged an allegiance to its ideals, which created the imaginary of inclusion. The problem would arise, however, when those subjects which had been entreated through exceptionalism (often times by virtue of family wealth and a European education) came to the realization that beneath the dressings of privilege, their actual inclusion was highly restricted and often times nominal. It ascribed to them, as minorities or colonized individuals, a mark of inferiority based on genetic or cultural determinism. These individuals would become patriots or “celebrated men,” given the patriarchal context, among those who shared their ethnic or racially ascribed origins, but were often labeled as revolutionaries or traitors when they pointed out the contradictory ideologies and practices of the colonial powers which had provided them with the educational opportunities beyond those of the general population.

The earlier patterns of Puerto Rican education during Spanish colonial rule were generally characterized by the European higher education of the creole elite. Eugenio

María De Hostos (1807-1897) for example, completed his high school and university studies in Spain at the Central University of Madrid. Having studied philosophy and law, he became a highly regarded educator and advocate for Puerto Rican independence. He was also a strong supporter of the women's suffragist movement in the 1870s. He was influential in the inclusion of women into higher education in Chile during this time. He gave extensive talks including his speech titled "The Scientific Education of Women," almost 80 years before the 1965 Conference on Higher Education in the United States that included a presentation titled "What Does Society Expect Higher Education to Do for Women: Who Knows and Who Cares?" He also contributed essays on psychology, philosophy and literature and is considered one of the first systematic sociologists of Latin America.

De Hostos, upon realizing that Spain had no intention of supporting Puerto Rican independence, turned to the United States only to receive a similar response after the Spanish-American war when the U.S. turned down his proposal. Instead, he moved against the colonization and military rule of the Island. While in the US, he had participated in the Cuban Revolutionary Committee and advocated for an Antillean Confederation between Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and Cuba. De Hostos founded the first two normal schools in the Dominican Republic and spent his last years there as well. He requested that his remains not be transferred to Puerto Rico until the Island was free.¹⁵³

A contemporary of his was Ramón Emeterio Betances (1827-1898), noted for being of "mixed race." His father, after purchasing land, was able to become quite wealthy and initially provided him with private tutoring. He continued his education and completed his medical degree in France, in what was considered the best medical school in the world. His mother, who was half French, died when he was 10 years old. While in France, Betances' father submitted the paperwork to "whiten his family" by getting government approval to change their family name to the appropriate racial registry in order to gain privileges not afforded to colored people. This process, of reclassification, which Betances abhorred, took his father two years to complete. Betances is known for

¹⁵³ Ainsa, Fernando. "Hostos y la unidad de América Latina: raíces históricas de una utopía necesaria". *Cuadernos Americanos* 16 (1989): 67-88.

saying “We are not whities, we are blackies.” He is remembered as the father of the Puerto Rican independence movement,” a poet, a novelist, a surgeon and a writer. In Paris, he was regarded as the representative of Cuba. Current historians have collected over 48 volumes of his written work.¹⁵⁴

Although within the context of the United States, Kallen, Bourne, Alain Locke¹⁵⁵ and W.E.B. Du Bois may have provided the impulse for transnational cosmopolitanism and anti-racist movements, in the colonies, this type of activity had long been occurring in relation to various European nations. Similar to the Puerto Rican elite, all of these thinkers, with the exception of Bourne, studied in European higher education institutions of prestige, or, at the very least, emigrated from there to the United States. This provided them a much broader vision and understanding of international power relations as compared to the general American population which had not traveled outside of the country in the context of continued and intensive philosophically-based education.

Puerto Rico: Tugwell’s Stricken Island as Experiment, Example and Showcase of Educational Colonialism

In his 1946 memoirs titled *The Stricken Land: The Story of Puerto Rico*, Rexford Tugwell, a Columbia University graduate in agricultural economics and the last U.S. appointed governor for the Island, discussed the state and goals of the University of Puerto Rico as he, the insular and mainland U.S. governments saw it and wished it to be:

(here again was my old friend, the Farm Bureau, acting as stooge for the absentee corporations); they supported research at the University and furnished the only extensive market for its graduates and so had the expected influence on University policy....In any colonial situation the emotions of the governed towards the government are mixed. The Spanish and Puerto Rican landlords wanted the conservatism and order which came from the kind of outside rule they were getting; but all the same they had enough local feeling to resent interference. They seemed, at times, when their pride was involved, to be at one with the most radical independentistas. Puerto Ricans could take care of their own problems.

¹⁵⁴ Ojeda Reyes, Felix *La Voz del Centro*. WKQ Radio Reloj.

http://www.vozdelcentro.org/mp3/prog_17.mp3

¹⁵⁵ Alain Locke (1885-1954) was a Harvard Graduate and the first African American Rhodes scholar. He specialized in philosophy and is regarded as the “Father of the Harlem Renaissance”. He encouraged other African Americans to use Africa as a source of inspiration.

Buck, Christopher. *Alain Locke: Race Leader, Social Philosopher, Bahá’í Pluralist*. *World Order* 36.3 (2005): 7–36.

Buck, Christopher. *Alain Locke in His Own Words: Three Essays*. *World Order* 36.3 (2005): 37–48.

They did not need any outsiders to tell them what to do, and so on. At the same time many of them advocated statehood, or belonged to the political party which advocated it; and they were sending their sons, and even some of their daughters, to American institutions of education. This last seemed to me a significant change. Few of the young people were going to Spain anymore; the influence of Seville and Madrid was cultural, almost purely precious, and declining in importance. A few reactionaries—in the cultural sense—hung about the University, centering largely in the department of Spanish studies. But there were not many.¹⁵⁶

The inner contradictions of colonialism and those of the struggle for independence, as related to the protection of economic privilege, were striking in Governor Tugwell's words. Discourses of a conservative and radical nature were proclaimed by the same groups and involved remarkable contrasts in terms of ideology depending on the contexts of their engagements. Cultural loyalties varied in relation to the prestige and economic possibilities associated with the colonial government in power. The class background of the constituents had a profound influence on political allegiances and on their access to Tugwell and to Luis Muñoz Marín,¹⁵⁷ the soon-to-be-elected Puerto Rican Governor who would envision a very different future for higher education in Puerto Rico.

Both, Tugwell and Muñoz Marín, were pulled into the inconsistent colonial politics of the U.S. towards Puerto Rico. Tugwell's view of Island culture, would at times seem "purely precious, and declining in importance" while at others, the manifestation of what he believed to be the Spanish colonial imprint of "dignidad," would color all forms of Puerto Rican engagement as an overpowering cultural sentiment, making it very difficult, in his view, for the population to take advantage of the "democratic" promise "offered" by the United States. In his memoirs, Tugwell alluded to the academically deficient conditions of the University of Puerto Rico which resulted from its colonial status within the United States. He also demonstrated a clear, yet intermittent, awareness of the type of subjugation imposed on the Puerto Rican people by the United States.

In that sense Puerto Rico was a colony just as New York and Massachusetts had been colonies... And relief was something which Congress made Puerto Rico beg for, hard, and in the most revolting ways, as a beggar does on a church step, filthy hat in hand, exhibiting sores, calling and grimacing in exaggerated humility. And

¹⁵⁶ Tugwell, p. 38

¹⁵⁷ Luís Muñoz Marín the founder of the Partido Popular Democrático was the son of Muñoz Rivera the Puerto Rican political leader who accomplished Puerto Rican Autonomy from Spain prior to the American invasion of Puerto Rico.

in this last was the real crime of America in the Caribbean, making of Puerto Ricans something less than the men they were born to be.¹⁵⁸

His imagery was telling and even futuristic. The “sores” and “grimaces” which would be inflicted on Puerto Ricans would be embodied in Albizu Campos, the nationalist leader who was submitted to radiation torture and silence during his years of imprisonment to make an example of what would happen, even to the most resistant patriots, especially if they had benefitted from the highest rewards of an American Ivy League education such as Albizu.

Although speaking metaphorically at the time, Tugwell was very much aware of the deleterious effect of the class exploitation of those colonized by American “continentals” and by the Puerto Rican agrarian elites.

There is a sense of permanence and continuity [in Europe], no matter how meager the living, which is tragically lacking in Puerto Rico...A man works and gets poorer, lives in a shack, and knows that even his remains will find only a temporary resting place; in ten years they will be thrown out on a common bone heap to make way for the others. Maybe this is why, against all reason and sense of responsibility, such a man has seven or ten children instead of two or three.

From Tugwell’s perspective, the Puerto Rican poor did not address the problem of “overpopulation” as he saw it, due to their hope that if not through them, transcendence could be achieved through their children. The damage caused by greed referred to by Tugwell’s contemporary academics, however, was not only observable in the higher class, but insidiously reflected in the desensitization of those who were addicted to power and profit, and who, in their avoidance of guilt and need to justify their position of privilege, would find whatever means necessary to define the laboring forces as somehow less than human or, at the very least, highly deficient in comparison to themselves.

These are practical men, lawyers, or engineers, or accountants, not necessarily Puerto Ricans, sometimes Continentals. They have got over any shock over poverty or any enthusiasms about beauty or any irritation over the contrast between the two. They are full of complaints over workers’ laziness...Part of the pathology of exploitation, necessary to the maintenance of peace of mind and avoidance of guilt.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Tugwell, p. 42

¹⁵⁹ Tugwell, p. 46

Tugwell, himself, despite his position as consultant and then Governor of Puerto Rico, would be a target of intrigue and deception in his efforts to address the exploitation of the islanders. Strong conservative trends ran side by side and in opposition to the liberal and humanitarian atmosphere proposed by the paternalistic advances of the New Deal which were to be implemented by Tugwell. To his pleasant surprise, it would be the appearance of a Spanish speaking Mexican American senator from the mainland who would provide the validation he needed before Roosevelt and Congress to continue with his economic and educational improvement plans for the Island.

But there are other more sophisticated symptoms, these run the general carpings of the New Deal, the destructiveness of high taxes, the lack of protection for property in strikes...assertions to hostility to private enterprise, leanings towards communism (or fascism if that was more unpopular) and the general unfitness to take part in government of those to whom they care to attach those fantastic labels. I was treated to all this in the spring of 1934. The Bell Committee was to hear it all in the spring of 1943 as the Chavez Committee had earlier that year.¹⁶⁰

Senator Dennis Chávez was born in a farming community in New Mexico in 1888 and was known for his strong defense of civil rights, even as a youth. At the age of seventeen he left school to help support his family and began working at a grocery store from which he was fired for refusing to deliver groceries to strike breakers. He later continued his education and practiced criminal law while remaining active in the Democratic Party. He was elected to the State House of Representatives in 1922 “where he sponsored a bill for the provision of free textbooks in public schools.”¹⁶¹

It is evident in Tugwell’s memoirs that Chávez embodied several important characteristics to help him move his plan forward. Chávez, like Muñoz Marín was a “man of the people” who, by virtue of his bilingual ability and Latino identity, was able to function as a cultural and political liaison between Puerto Rico and the U.S. governmental bureaucracies. Although originating from different class backgrounds, both men were, to some extent, a representation of the cosmopolitan ideals described by Kallen and Bourne. Chávez was active in the political debates of the time and Muñoz

¹⁶⁰ Tugwell, p. 46.

¹⁶¹ Hispanic Americans in Congress 1822-1995. Dennis Chávez: United States Representative Democrat of New Mexico. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/chavez.html>

was a philosopher-poet who resided in Greenwich Village in contact with radical artists and intellectuals prior to returning to the Island. They were probably well aware of the ongoing debates regarding the “melting pot” and opposing transnational/cosmopolitan philosophies related to democratic inclusion and the meaning of Americanization. Both were men worked to create a strong and trusting connection with the poor of the countryside and urban areas.

The Chávez Committee, however, would have seen a good deal more of the island, have talked with a greater range of people and held hearings in other cities than San Juan. Fortunately, also, Senator Chávez himself would speak Spanish, being himself New Mexican Spanish-American, and he would like to wander in and out of stores, to stop at roadsides and to walk through coffee fincas and cane fields.¹⁶²

His efforts, like those of Tugwell and Muñoz Marín, would not go unscathed, however. The rivalries in Puerto Rico and the conservative resistance were strong in a political battle that spanned from the mainland to the colony. Tugwell would provide a detailed description of the tactics of media and political manipulation essential for the creation of a partisan imaginary.

The prospect was that the Chávez investigators would be with us in February. Meanwhile Mr. Bolívar Pagán¹⁶³ and others in Washington ... began a campaign to convince the American public that Puerto Rico with its present management was a place of violence, disorder, suppression of civil liberties and incipient revolt. This kind of picture is newsworthy always, since it is sensational; and it can be repeated frequently, with slight variations and still carry widely. This tactic would be so effective that it would be followed right up to the election of 1944. I thought by this time that everything possible had been produced in the way of insult and injury. I was mistaken... Incredibly enough, a *Coalicionista*¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Tugwell, p. 47

¹⁶³ Bolívar Pagán was elected as the socialist party candidate to the Puerto Rican Senate on several occasions and was also elected Resident Commissioner to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1940 “under the auspices of a coalition between the Socialist Party and the Republican Union Party.” Similarly to Governor Tugwell and Muñoz Marín, Pagán sought social security benefits and the application of workers' compensation laws for Puerto Rico. He was a member of the coalition between the socialist and the Republican Union Party which sought statehood for Puerto Rico and which represented the interests of the United States sugar corporations. Pagan was also the founder of the Institute of Puerto Rican Literature. Although today this may seem contradictory, it was not at the time and until recently, since the Puerto Rican elite was seeking “una estadidad jfbara”, which implied a statehood that would respect the culture and language of the Puerto Rican people.

¹⁶⁴ The Coalicionista Party was an alliance between the socialist and the Republican Union party which sought statehood for Puerto Rico and which controlled the Island legislature from 1932-1940. Rexford Tugwell described them as constantly opposing and misrepresenting his and Muñoz' policies and of being a small elite which had the funds to travel to the U.S. and fabricate lies as if they were speaking on behalf of the majority impoverished Puerto Rican population.

municipal judge found not only Mr. Lear, but me as well, who had nothing whatever to do with the program, guilty of criminal libel and fined us \$200.00 apiece. The object was, of course, to manufacture another incident to bolster the thesis of dictatorial oppression¹⁶⁵ ... When the case would get to the District Court shortly it would be thrown out with ridicule

It was to Tugwell's advantage that Chávez would be the one leading the committee to assess the *Coalicionista* accusations about his work on the Island.

... The idea was of course, to set the scene for the visit of the Chávez Committee. There was need now on the part of the opposition to produce for the continental visitors visible evidence of the fantasy they had created. It was one thing to describe conditions of those who would never visit the spot; it was quite another to maintain the fiction against contrary reality. However, having gone so far, and having put so much into the campaign in money and effort that they half believed it themselves, our enemies were not going to retreat. They went boldly on—and over the cliff! For the Chávez group came, and after taking a look for themselves, made up their minds that they had been hoaxed by their Washington informants... The gas went out of the *Coalicionista* bag so fast that the sound of deflation could be heard quite clearly as far away as Washington; and in San Juan it smothered the shrill testimony of our detractors. Presently—although they were careful enough never to say a good or pleasant word about me—the Chávez group would become known as the “whitewash committee.” Members of the later group led our way by Mr. Bell who would take some satisfaction in this and resolve for themselves to do better.¹⁶⁶

These kinds of political divisions among the United States Republicans, in alliance with the Puerto Rican agrarian and corporate elite, combined extreme profit accumulation interests with the favoritism characteristic of privileged bureaucracies. There was a resulting split between various self-identified “socialist groups” and those affiliated to the Popular Democratic Party. These would have serious repercussions on University policies regarding the persecution and withholding of grants from meritorious “*Independentista*” students chosen to study at prestigious universities in the United States. The schisms, present prior to the University's transformation into “*La Casa de Estudios*”—“The House of Learning,” in theory unmarred by political struggles—would continue during the tenancy of Muñoz Marín as Governor and Jaime Benítez' eight year tenure as Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico. It was the beginning of the Renaissance or Golden Age of the University.

¹⁶⁵ Tugwell, p.466

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Similarly, the Democratic Party was also marred with ambiguities and insecurities with regards to its “humanitarian” efforts towards the colony. Americans were conflicted about incorporating a territory that was not only poor, but which was also filled with dark Spanish speaking people who wished to retain their culture and language. The melting pot politic of the colonial power reared its ugly head in its attempt to create what Bourne had previously referred to as another brand of “hyphenated-Americans.” Aimé Césaire (1913-2008), the black educator and poet from Martinique who devoted his life to denouncing colonialism, would also refer to the culturally nullifying effects of this process.

They talk to me about progress, about “achievements,” diseases cured, improved standards of living. I am talking about societies drained of their essence...extraordinary possibilities wiped out.¹⁶⁷

Pablo Navarro-Rivera, in his article *The University of Puerto Rico: Colonialism and the Language of Teaching and Learning 1903-1952* discussed the role of language in the socialization process instituted by the United States which relates to the “drainage of essence” referred to by Césaire. For example, he revealed how the colonial language policies attempted in Puerto Rico were modeled on those used on American Indians from 1885-1888, which, according to the Atkins report of 1868, were “essential to their comprehension of the duties and obligations of citizenship.”¹⁶⁸

Through sameness of language is produced sameness of sentiment, and thought; customs and habits are moulded [sic] and assimilated in the same way, and thus in process of time the differences producing trouble would have been gradually obliterated...Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language substituted¹⁶⁹ ...

Similarly, Navarro-Rivera also cited the 1889 report by Thomas J. Morgan, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The Indians must conform to the “white man’s ways, “ peacefully if they will, forcibly if they must...They cannot escape it, and must either conform to it or be crushed by it. The tribal relations should be broken up, socialism destroyed, and

¹⁶⁷ Césaire, Aimé in *Black* (2007)

¹⁶⁸ Navarro-Rivera, Pablo *The University of Puerto Rico: Colonialism and the Language of Teaching and Learning 1903-1952*. School of Undergraduate Studies. Leslies College, Cambridge, MA. p.2.

¹⁶⁹ Cited in Navarro-Rivera, p. 2.

the family and the autonomy of the individual substituted...and the universal adoption of the English language are means to this end.¹⁷⁰

Thus, language was equated with darkness of skin and character. In the context of Puerto Rico, however, Muñoz-Marín and Jaime Benítez, the chancellor of the University, would fight against the U.S opposition to the maintenance of Spanish as our official language. Chávez would again be involved in negotiations related to Puerto Rican rights, in this context, but this time he would turn his back on this Puerto Rican struggle first, by openly arguing against it, and then by remaining silent. Navarro-Rivera, upon doing documentary research was not able to establish a response from Chávez to Chancellor Benítez' letter of dissent beyond the mere acknowledgment of having received it.

That Spanish could become the language of instruction in Puerto Rico, including the UPR, was a source of concern in the United States. When the newspaper "El Mundo" reported in February, 1943 that United States Senator Dennis Chávez, from New Mexico, was considering filing legislation to have English as the required language of instruction in Puerto Rico. Chancellor Benítez responded to Chávez stating his opposition to any such legislation. Benítez added that in his opinion, as well as that of the absolute majority of teachers in Puerto Rico, such legislation would be "an attempt against the creative potential, the spiritual development and the capacity of the children of Puerto Rico to express themselves." He criticized Chávez for proposing policies that had already failed in Puerto Rico and which negatively impacted teachers and students, as well as the teaching and learning process. Benítez further noted "A people cannot be uprooted from its language without mutilating the way they think."¹⁷¹

Navarro-Rivera adds that Benítez was supported not only by the Teachers Association, but by advocates of statehood as well.

Puerto Ricans, even those who supported the presence of the United States in Puerto Rico, objected to the requirements of English as the language of instruction. Among those opposed to the use of English as the mandated language of instruction was the Teacher's Association of Puerto Rico. As early as 1912 this association expressed its concerns about the directives related to the language of instruction...[They argued that the] language used in the classroom should be determined by pedagogical reasons.

Unfortunately, the political strategies used during these important transitions were often of apparent and relative acquiescence. There were those in positions of power who sought to protect the cultural and political values of the Island by diminishing, in their

¹⁷⁰ Cited in Navarro-Rivera, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ Navarro-Rivera, p. 9.

letters, the political and moral energies which were, in fact, guiding their efforts. Benítez, for example although willing to support English as a required second language at the university level, tried to assure Chávez that at that time language was not a political issue, but he made it clear to him, as well, that it could become one “if the United States insisted on prohibiting the use of Spanish as the language of instruction in Puerto Rico.”¹⁷² Nevertheless, the official diplomatic message was that the Benítez administration “was committed to the development of new methodology that would improve the teaching of English in Puerto Rico’s schools, including the University. Such diplomatic responses would happen repeatedly, not only in Puerto Rico, but as we shall see, it also continues to happen in the University of Michigan struggles for Affirmative Action and nation-wide Latino movements like “Excelencia” where the primary reason given for the inclusion of minority students is not so much a moral imperative, but rather it is justified as improving the international and social skills of the white students.

The most radical opposition to the imposition of English would come, not from politicians, but from the literary world as well as those educated in philosophy and social theory; the intellectual elite of the Island. The capacity for critical thought, nationalist sentiment and, more importantly the impulse and willingness to act on those beliefs, came from the freedom to analyze the colonial reality afforded to students and intellectuals in institutions of higher learning. The students who wrote the protest letters to President Truman and who inspired Puerto Rico’s legislature Bill #51 of 1946 were, according to Navarro-Rivera, students who had suffered the ills of an English imposed instruction in the public schools.

Using a language not understood by both teachers and students they felt was detrimental to the educational process... Significant opposition to the requirement of English came from Puerto Rican intellectuals, in particular those involved in literature. Convinced that the requirements of English threatened Puerto Rico’s national culture, they produced a significant body of work characterized by the affirmation and defense of Puerto Rican nationality and its culture¹⁷³.

In 1948 Puerto Ricans were allowed to elect their own Governor and he, in turn, was permitted to appoint the Commissioner of Education. Muñoz-Marin, the newly elected

¹⁷² Navarro-Rivera, p. 9

¹⁷³ Ibid p. 3.

Governor “instituted Spanish as the language of education in Puerto Rico in [the] 1949-1950 school year¹⁷⁴” by administrative fiat. The over 39 years of English imposition did not result in an improvement in education or in English among islanders at any educational level. And, similar to the resistance measures instituted by the “campesinos” against social workers and visiting teachers who promoted the sterilization of Puerto Rican women, they, as well as the rural and urban teachers and faculty, opposed the English only policy on the Island through various means.

It is known that such resistance manifested itself in the political, cultural, and educational arenas. From short stories written about the attempts to impose English in schools, for example, we have learned that teachers might have resisted by teaching in Spanish with the exception of those days that they expected school supervisors to visit their schools.¹⁷⁵

The Corporate and Colonial Politics of the University of Puerto Rico in the Early 20th Century

As we have seen in the exchanges between Benítez and Chávez, the University of Puerto Rico was at the center of the debate of language and cultural maintenance from the Puerto Rican perspective, just as it was at the center of U.S. attempts at using it as a focal point for assimilation. The University was established in 1903 in the coastal town of Fajardo as a “Normal School” for the Teachers and Agricultural College with the purpose of accelerating the Americanization of Island residents. It was a land grant college, which fell under the stipulations of all such colleges in the nation, according to the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890¹⁷⁶. This included the requirement that it teach military sciences and that it focus on careers that would promote industrial development. According to the U.S. Code § 304 concerning the “Investments of proceeds of sale of land or scrip,”

... the moneys so invested or loaned [would] constitute a perpetual fund, the capital of which [would] remain forever undiminished (except so far as may be provided in section 305 of this title), and the interest of which [would be] inviolably appropriated, by each State which [could] take and claim the benefit of this subchapter, to the endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object [would] be, without excluding other scientific

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁷⁵ Navarro-Rivera, p. 15

¹⁷⁶ § 301. Land grant aid of colleges. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/301.html>

§ 321. Secretary of Agriculture to administer annual college-aid appropriation
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/321.html>

and classical studies and including military tactic, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.¹⁷⁷

The University of Puerto Rico was moved one year after its initial location in Fajardo, to the town of Río Piedras, an area closer to the Capital. This would improve the access of a larger part of the population and would strengthen the recruitment of future teachers, visiting teachers and social workers: they would be “civilizing troops” of the Puerto Rican masses in its new industrial project.

Cuando se crea por acto legislativo de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, el país llevaba apenas cinco años bajo la tutela de Estados Unidos. No éramos aún ciudadanos americanos y aún los anexionistas más convencidos se confesaban decepcionados con la ley Foraker¹⁷⁸... Puerto Rico, con el sino inapelable de la plantación, se convertiría en un gigantesco cañaveral con las chimeneas humeantes de las centrales separando los tiempos donde había trabajo de los tiempos muertos¹⁷⁹ de la desesperanza. La universidad nació chiquita con misión dictada por un modelo colonial que requería con urgencia maestros y técnicos agrícolas. Con ello no satisfacía por mucho los anhelos criollos por una Universidad los cuales habían sido una y otra vez negados desde el poder... todavía hoy su rostro más emblemático: el Cuadrángulo hispanófilo, financiado con dineros del norteamericano Nuevo Trato, con su Torre majestuosa, la mayor en el Puerto Rico de aquel entonces.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/304.html>

¹⁷⁸ The Foraker Act was passed in 1900 after the ceding of Puerto Rico by Spain as a result of its loss in the Spanish American War and the United States invasion of the Island in 1898. The Act, also called the Organic Act was designed, among other things, to establish an American appointed governor to be the executive officer of the Island. This Act led to the rise of a movement for the independence of Puerto Rico on the Island. <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h827.html>

¹⁷⁹ **Conversation with Martin: Me:** When you picked cotton as a child, how did you call the period of time when you were waiting for the cotton to grow and had nothing else to do? **Martin:** We always had something to do. When there was no cotton to harvest you worked on other crops such as corn, strawberries, soybeans and hay. Why are you asking me this? **Me:** Because with the Americans Puerto Rico was turned into a huge sugar cane plantation and when it was growing there was nothing to do but starve. It was turned into a one-crop economy. **Martin:** Now you see why General Motors doesn't just make one type of car! (Laughter.)

¹⁸⁰ **Translation:** When the University of Puerto Rico is created by a legislative act, the country had only been under United States tutelage for five years. We were not yet American citizens and even the most convinced annexionists confessed their disillusion with the Foraker law... Puerto Rico, with the unchangeable destiny of the plantation, would become a giant sugar cane field with its smoking chimneys from the mills separating the times when there was work from “dead time”. The university was born small with a mission dictated by a colonial model that urgently required teachers and agricultural technicians. With this it did not come close to satisfying the dreams of the creoles for a university which had one and time again been denied by the [colonial] powers... even today, its most emblematic face: the Spanish

The University of Puerto Rico, during the New Deal, was to be an effervescent symbol of intellectual progress. During its foundation, Curbelo and Raffuchi explain, however, that its focus, far from being the intellectual Renaissance that the Puerto Rican elite had hoped for; it had been limited to the American colonial project which emphasized teachers and agricultural technicians. The “intellectual symbols of the University” would come later with the New Deal. This program would, ironically, provide a large amount of funding which was used to build the University’s Spanish styled tower.

Since then some additions to the plant had been made with grants from P.R.R.A. [Puerto Rico Rehabilitation Agency]. Most of the funds had gone into an elaborate bell tower and a theater rather than into laboratory facilities and classrooms; and the whole campus had an unfinished and disreputable air which went well with the mental processes of students who insisted successfully on snap courses and excuse from examination; but the one was as remediable as the other.¹⁸¹

Despite an expanding curriculum prior to Tugwell’s arrival, he viewed this time as one of corruption and low educational expectations. He tells of his first encounter with the University of Puerto Rico as he looked at it from the perspective of his own

influenced Quadrangle, financed with North American New Deal money, with its majestic tower, the largest in the Puerto Rico of that time.

Curbelo, Silvia A. y Carmen I. Raffucci (2005) “Frente a la Torre” in Frente a la Torre: Ensayos del Centenario de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. La Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico. P. XII.

¹⁸¹ Tugwell, p. 111.

Comentarios de mi Madre: Tugwell no se dio cuenta de la importancia y del alcance que tenían esos símbolos...como que no se proyectaba hacia el futuro. Tanto el teatro como la torre cobraron un poder simbólico a través del tiempo que sirvieron de inspiración, no solamente para los estudiantes sino para los mismos intelectuales de la Universidad. La Torre, por ejemplo, se convirtió en el nombre de la prestigiosa revista de la Universidad, reconocida internacionalmente y el teatro amplió los horizontes culturales de la Universidad y de la comunidad a través de sus actividades en música, el teatro, ballet, el Festival Casals. Era una Universidad de verdad, mucho más que enceres y pupitres y lo que sea...Le puedes preguntar a ...como se llevaba Muñoz con Tugwell. Sería bien interesante ver que era lo que pensaban los nuestros con respecto a Tugwell.

Translation: Tugwell did not realize the importance and reach of those symbols...it is as if he did not project himself towards the future. Both, the theatre and the tower gained a symbolic power through time that enabled them to serve as an inspiration, not only for the students, but for the university intellectuals as well. The Tower, for example, became the name of the prestigious journal of the University, recognized internationally and the theatre broadened the cultural horizons of the University and the community through its musical activities, theatre, ballet and the Casals Festival. It was a true university, much more than equipment and desks, or whatever... You can ask...how he got along with Tugwell. It would be very interesting to see what our own people thought of Tugwell.

elite socialization at Columbia University; an institution which was at the opposite extreme with relation to the colonization of the Island. Rather than being the object of colonial interventions, it was a highly valued participant in the colonization impetus itself, which was broadly embodied in Rexford Tugwell, Columbia University Research Projects and, as we shall see, more ambiguously in Jaime Benítez, who had graduated from the University of Chicago.

[T]here was a whole group which was anxious to have me at the head of the University...among [“the worthy scholars and sincere teachers] were Jaime Benitez... It had fallen on evil political years. While the Coalición had been in power the institution had been used as the rest of the Government, both insular and municipal, as a source of party plums. Appointments in large numbers, of incompetent or mediocre instructors with consequent damage to the standards of teaching [which] had reduced the reputation of the institution. It was not recognized by any of the associations which act as accrediting agencies for American universities, which indicates that it was by any objective test below the level of other institutions which were so recognized¹⁸²... Having a chancellor, a party hack, student indiscipline was almost incredibly prevalent. Whenever it liked, a small clique could demand and secure the suspension of classes to discuss and resolve on public questions. They objected to difficult courses and stiff examinations, and since they could blackmail many of the faculty through their parents political influence, they had established, in many of the courses and in some whole schools, what was no more than a parody of the educational process.¹⁸³

The Popular Democratic Party of Muñoz Marín focused on a modernist project of creating professional positions of leadership that emphasized geologists, administrators, social scientists, planners, psychologists and social workers¹⁸⁴. In so doing, however, it had to abide by Tugwell’s imposed proceedings.

The worthy scholars and sincere teachers who had stayed on loyally, as happens in any educational institution, however degenerate, and the students who were earnestly seeking an education, rather than a fortuitous advantage over other Puerto Ricans, were in despair. Among these was Mr. Jaime Benítez, for instance, who, along with the others, implored me to undertake leadership in the necessary work of rehabilitation. It was an appalling task, requiring legislation, educational planning, the discharge of large numbers of teachers (which can always be made to seem illiberal and oppressive) and the recruiting for an institution of doubtful reputation of a new group of instructors. The fact that these would have to be mostly from outside Puerto Rico would make the job much worse; it would make

¹⁸² Tugwell, p. 108

¹⁸³ Ibid. p. 109

¹⁸⁴ Curbelo and Raffucci. XIII

sure to raise all the latent provincialism which is never far under the surface of any islander. Even Muñoz shuddered when I told him what was the minimum reform, and plaintively asked if a Puerto Rican faculty could not be found.¹⁸⁵

During Tugwell's short spell at the Chancellorship prior to becoming Governor and being substituted in the University by Benítez, the cultural lens regarding the academic symbols of Puerto Rican education were clearly contested. The dissenting voices of the colonized were quickly dismissed as if they were exaggerated in emotion ("made to appear illiberal or oppressive") or as if they were ignorant and limited in vision ("provincial").

As in other occasions in the memoirs, when Tugwell was attempting to understand the Puerto Rican ethos, he found himself perplexed and quickly revealed his own cultural preconceptions which were colored by the industrial expectations of U.S. presentism and expansionism.

Also, from the vantage point of the University, even better than from that of the governorship, I could pursue my growing interest in the Caribbean outside Puerto Rico. That this bulked large in my decision, finally, to accept, is clear from my notes at the time which repeatedly mention the significance of the Caribbean in world affairs and the possible role of Puerto Rico as the administrative and cultural center of the area.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Tugwell, p. 110.

Conversación con mi madre: Como tu dices, Tugwell tiene unas grandes contradicciones porque tiene el mejor deseo de ayudar y tiene también una mente crítica pero no se critica a sí mismo. No ve la fuerza de la visión imperialista que tienen sus decisiones. Cuando yo entré en el 48 ya estaba Don Jaime Benítez y la universidad estaba totalmente acreditada. La universidad brillaba: físicamente y en cuanto al fervor de estudiantes y profesores por ella. Había un fervor intelectual debido a los intelectuales que llegaban de España, Estados Unidos, los maestros puertorriqueños de humanidades: Domingo Marrero Navarro estaba en Estudios Generales. Era filósofo y humanista. Estaba Facundo Bueso en Ciencias Naturales. En Estudios Hispánicos estaba Doña Margot Arce de Vázquez... Aún así, antes de yo llegar habían figuras notables. Estaban Don Manuel García Díaz y su hermano en Ciencias, José Pedreira en Estudios Hispánicos, figuras de las cuales se hablaba con muchísimo respeto y reverencia. **Yo:** O sea que ¿en tres años desde que llegó Benítez se transformó totalmente la Universidad por los cambios discutidos con Tugwell?

Translation: As you mentioned, Tugwell had great contradictions because he had the best intentions of helping and he had a critical mind, but he did not critique himself. He was not aware of the imperialist vision in his decisions. When I entered the University in 48, Don Jaime Benítez was already there and the University was completely accredited. The University shone, both physically and in terms of students and faculty fervor. There was an intellectual fervor due to all the intellectuals that came from Spain, the U.S. the Puerto Rican humanities professors. Domingo Marrero Navarro from General Studies was a philosopher and a humanist. Facundo Bueso from Natural Sciences was also there. From Hispanic Studies came Doña Margot Arce de Vázquez. Even before I arrived, there were notable figures. Don Manuel García Díaz and his brother in the sciences, José Pedreira in Hispanic Studies: Figures of whom we all spoke with respect and reverence... **Me:** In other words, in three years, since Benitez' arrival, the University was completely transformed as a result of the changes discussed with Tugwell?

¹⁸⁶ Tugwell, p. 111.

All the academic and political accomplishments that were to come, were founded within an ideological context of extreme paternalism and disregard for the value of native talent, cultures and exceptionality, irrespective of American interventionist education. As revealed above, in Tugwell's various quotes, he was unaware of the effects of the contradictions of his own colonial goals and practices, disregarding any effects that these may have had in what he considered to be the "Puerto Rican mentality." He believed Puerto Rican intellectuals to have an underlying provincialism, which led them to prioritize the funding of fabulous symbols of prestige (i.e. the University tower and theater) rather than the practicalities of classrooms. He did not see, however, the extent to which this was a resistance to the transformative impulses and academic monopoly of the United States geared towards creating a primarily technological class under the rule of its capitalist power. In its role as guardian of knowledge reproduction, revision and perpetuation, the United States, ironically, provided the opportunity for the creation of transcendental hope for Puerto Ricans through those very symbols and through the emphasis on U.S. educated Island intellectuals who harbored very different ideas about what a true and high quality education for Puerto Ricans should be.

Tugwell saw the Puerto Rican fervor for national symbols as evidence of Spanish colonial parochialism, yet at the same time, he was blinded to the reality that his own hopes to turn Puerto Rico into a cultural and social liaison between Latin America and the United States (for the glory of the metropolis) required the merging of icons that would enable his and Roosevelt's dreams to become true. He derided the favoritism going on in politically-based appointments in the University and in the pro-forma evaluation of students. Ironically, however, in so doing, he disregarded the similarity between this and the fact that the US officials appointed to govern the Island had often achieved those positions thanks to political preference, rather than to proven administrative competence. Tugwell, in essence had the unrealistic expectation that Puerto Rico, a perpetually colonized territory that had functioned mostly as a bastion of military defense, should reflect the social, economic and political resources of the United States, a nation which, unlike the Island, had already benefitted from centuries of

independent rule geared towards democratic ideals, regardless of their actual implementation.

There is no doubt that these contradictory ideologies and practices have continued to be a strong undercurrent in the governmental and educational functioning directed towards colonized populations in general. Similar to Tugwell, current American politicians and intellectuals have continued to expect “plaintive” requests of Puerto Ricans and other minorities to be treated as equal citizens—with gratitude and worthiness clearly demonstrated. It has become equally clear, however, that important opportunities ensued as a result of the contradictions between ambiguous democratic ideals, which were interpreted commonsensically, and the real effects of capitalist and cultural power over other nations.

The University of Puerto Rico, as a result of the intensified aperture for greater cross-class access, had an intellectually enriching effect among a growing middle class on the Island. In the three years since Jaime Benitez’ work as Chancellor, the University flourished and went beyond the expectations of the “showcase of democracy.” The Middle States Association of Colleges and Universities accredited it in 1946¹⁸⁷. Soon afterwards it received public recognition for its numerous elite cultural activities and for its debate team, which competed against Harvard, bringing first place to the Island on more than one occasion¹⁸⁸.

This accomplishment is especially significant in light of the many prejudicial perceptions previously discussed of subjects within colonial situations. It helps us gain a glimpse of the construction of educational exceptionality from the perspective of the subjects or of remaining family members who recount what their loved ones told them or what they experienced in the struggle for personal and social emancipation. Representations of exceptionality, whether institutional or individual, also reveal the

¹⁸⁷ Curbelo, Silvia A. y Carmen I. Raffucci (2005) p. 361

¹⁸⁸ Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (1982) Documentary Research “El Mundo” Newspaper 1940-1950. This I would find out in my first employment at the age of 16 when I was hired to do documentary research by Dr. Francisco López Cruz, music professor, musician and founder of “El Instituto del Cuatro Puertorriqueño. Don Paquito, as we called him, had been my mother’s music professor at the University of Puerto Rico. He was generally known for revitalizing the cuatro, our native stringed instrument, on the Island. The cuatro suffered near extinction due to the massive migration of Puerto Ricans to New York spurred on by “Operation Bootstrap”—the program of industrialization instituted in 1947 along with an agrarian reform to combat the sugar monoculture.

forces at play in the perpetuation, tolerance and resistance to colonialism. The lives of the following “exceptional individuals,” all Puerto Rican Harvard graduates, provide us with an initial insight into the social prism and making of “academic success” under past and current colonial conditions. They provide important spaces that make this process possible for future generations within their capacity as public figures: politicians, legal counselors and faculty.

Puerto Ricans in Harvard: Postcolonial Voices and Political Ruptures

The first prominent Puerto Rican to have graduated from Harvard was Pedro Albizu Campos. There were others who graduated from this institution, the oldest and most prestigious university in the United States¹⁸⁹, but they did not leave their mark on history, to the same extent¹⁹⁰. Albizu was the out-of-wedlock son of a Spanish landowner, Don Alejandro Albizu y Romero, and Juliana Campos, a descendant of a slave¹⁹¹. He was orphaned at a young age and was raised by his aunt¹⁹². He entered the educational system between the ages of 8-10.¹⁹³ His daughter tells of how he was playing outside when he saw some children walking by with books. He asked them “Where are you going?” They answered “To school.”¹⁹⁴ He asked if he could go along. After this he enrolled in McKinley agricultural school with the hopes of becoming an agricultural engineer.¹⁹⁵

Albizu graduated from the high school in Ponce and due to his outstanding academic achievements, he was referred by one of the many American teachers there (Prof. Garish), to receive a scholarship to enter the University of Vermont¹⁹⁶. According to historian Maldonado Denis, he was awarded the scholarship by the masonic lodge of

¹⁸⁹ Rudolph, Frederick (1961). *The American College and University*. University of Georgia Press. p. 3.

¹⁹⁰ Dávila, Ovidio (2007) *Albizu Campos en Harvard y América Latina*. *La Voz del Centro* con Angel Collado Schwarz. <http://www.vozdelcentro.org/?p=316>

¹⁹¹ Dávila, Ovidio(2007)

¹⁹² Albizu Campos-Meneses, Laura. “Mis Padres: Pedro Albizu Campos y Laura Meneses. *Collado Schwarz, Angel* (2008). *La Voz del Centro*. <http://www.vozdelcentro.org/?p=619>

¹⁹³ Dávila, Ovidio (2007)

¹⁹⁴ Albizu Campos-Meneses, Laura (2008).

¹⁹⁵ Dávila, Ovidio (2007)

¹⁹⁶ Dávila, Ovidio (2007)

Ponce called “La Logia de la Aurora¹⁹⁷” to study engineering with a specialization in chemistry at that University. In 1913, one year after entering the University of Vermont, Professor Sumpton, the Director of the Electric Engineering Department, noticed that Albizu required a more challenging program than what was available to him in Vermont and recommended him to Harvard¹⁹⁸. When the First World War began, Albizu Campos volunteered and fought on behalf of the American Army. During this time he was assigned to the 375th all black Regiment “in accordance with United States segregation policies.” He was discharged with honorable mention as a First Lieutenant.

Albizu continued his studies at Harvard University, but ran into some difficulties on his way to earning a doctorate in law. There is a difference of opinion regarding the delay in the completion of his degree. Whereas historian Ovidio Dávila explains that he was allowed to take his exams in Puerto Rico via correspondence after failing two courses in Harvard, an article in “La Voz de la Playa de Ponce” published in 2010 stated that the delay was due to racism.

On June 23, 1921, at the end of his senior year of law school, Albizu returned to Puerto Rico, but without his law diploma or degree. He had been the victim of racial discrimination by one of his professors delaying his taking of the senior year final exams for the two courses of Evidence and Corporations. Albizu left the U.S. for Puerto Rico from where he attempted to make further progress for the completion of the needed examinations, taking and passing the two required Harvard exams in Puerto Rico in June 1922.¹⁹⁹

Albizu ultimately received a doctorate in chemical engineering and law and acquired fluency in German, French, Italian, Portuguese, Latin and Greek.²⁰⁰ While at Harvard, Albizu became a consultant to the constitution of the Irish Free State.²⁰¹ He was also offered a position as the U.S. State Departments Diplomatic Corps in Mexico which he refused in order to continue his nationalist struggle.²⁰² He married an upper middle-class Peruvian, a chemist, who had also been the first woman from Latin America to

¹⁹⁷ Maldonado, Denis, Manuel (2002) Albizu Campos y el Desarrollo de la Conciencia Nacional Puertorriqueña en el Siglo XX. <http://mictlantecuhtli.tripod.com/Albizu/concnal.html>

¹⁹⁸ Dávila, Ovidio (2007)

¹⁹⁹ “Juramentación de Pedro Albizu Campos como Abogado: Regreso de Harvard a Puerto Rico.” Periódico “La Voz de la Playa de Ponce”. November 2010.

http://entraysale.com/noticias.php?id_noticia=83 in http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

²⁰⁰ Collado Schwarz, Angel (2008). La Voz del Centro

²⁰¹ Albizu is said to have been fluent in Spanish, English, German, French, Portuguese, Italian, Latin and Greek, Angel Collado Schwarz (2008). La Voz del Centro

²⁰² Ibid. and Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

attend Harvard. She sacrificed her career to devote her life to his dream of achieving independence for Puerto Rico.²⁰³



2. *Albizu Greets the Puerto Rican People*²⁰⁴

According to his daughter and to historian Manuel Maldonado Denis,²⁰⁵ his fervor for the independence of the Island was strengthened at Harvard as a result of the on-going

²⁰³ Collado Schwarz, Angel (2008). *La Voz del Centro*. Laura Meneses had already achieved a doctorate in her country before being admitted to Harvard. She had arrived for the purpose of doing research. Her daughter recounts how, due to the sexism of the time, her country had denied her the scholarship on several occasions despite her outperformance of her male competitors. In the same spirit, her parents advised that she go to Harvard to study piano instead of doing research.

²⁰⁴ 1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

²⁰⁵ **Puerto Rican Faculty Member's Comments:** Manuel Maldonado Denis studied in the University of Puerto Rico High School with me from 1945-1948. I remember he used to sit next to me in history class. He became a well-paid baseball player in the Major Leagues in the U.S. I don't know what experiences he had there, but he came back to Puerto Rico as an advocate of the independence movement. He later became a social science professor at the UPR. It is rumored that the FBI killed his son. Manuel became very ill after this and died at young age from sadness. There have been at least three suspected cases of FBI killings of the children of Independence Party advocates. Generally what happens is that the Secretary of Justice asks the U.S. Government for information and then we never hear anything further about it. The irony here is that we supposedly live in a democracy under an American nation that supposedly values free speech. None of the three Independence Party advocates (Juan Mari Bras, Pedro Juan Soto and

protests in favor of the independence movements of Ireland and India. He was especially attracted to that of Ireland due to its focus on Catholicism which he believed could be a strong mobilizing force for the independence of Puerto Rico²⁰⁶. Ironically, as demonstrated by Puerto Rican religious historian Samuel Silva Gotay²⁰⁷, it was the Irish who led the Catholic Church in the United States towards Americanization. This resulted from a split in the Church between those who advocated continued loyalty to European authority and practices (such as the maintenance of the native languages and cultures) and those who believed that the Church should adjust to the cultural conditions in the United States to promote national and capitalist interests.

Concluimos hasta aquí, que tanto las iglesias protestantes como la Iglesia Católica de EE.UU. alimentaron el expansionismo nacionalista norteamericano al sacralizar los procesos políticos de imposición cultural, militar y política sobre Puerto Rico. Asistimos, pues, a la sustitución de una cristiandad por otra como resultado del cambio de poderes coloniales que representaban dos niveles diferentes de desarrollo del modo de producción capitalista y, en muchos aspectos dos modos de producción diferentes.²⁰⁸

If the support of these revolutionary movements that Albizu witnessed in the United States nourished his own desire of an independent Puerto Rico, it was his legal and philosophical education at Harvard that sharpened his awareness of how the Island's rights as an autonomous nation had been violated. The racism that he experienced in the

Manuel Maldonado Denis) was a revolutionary. They were writers. Their children were killed and they had nothing to do with anything. This has been a way to send Puerto Rican independence advocates a very clear message.

²⁰⁶ **My Mother's Comments:** But it was not successful. Priests who advocated for independence became relegated to the outposts by the Catholic Church so they would not have contact with the parishioners. This was the case of Bishop Antulio Parrilla "Obispo Titular de Ures". The Church criticized him and gave him a nominal position that no one knew what it was and sent him off to the margins.

²⁰⁷ **My Mother's Comments:** Samuel has been a friend. We were faculty members together. We sometimes met at the Faculty Center for lunch for casual conversations. In the past I also attended several of his talks on religion. He is known as the Puerto Rican authority in his field.

²⁰⁸ Silva Gotay, Samuel (1990) Desarrollo de la Dimensión Religiosa del Nacionalismo en Puerto Rico; 1898-1989. Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe. Vol. 1, No. 1 (enero-junio). http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/1_1/gotay.htm

Translation: We conclude up to this point, that the protestant churches as well as the Catholic church of the United States nourished the American nationalist expansionism by sacralizing the political processes of cultural, military and political imposition over Puerto Rico. We attended, then, to the substitution of one form of Christianity for another as a result of the change of colonial powers that represented two different levels of development of capitalist production methods, and in many ways two different modes of production.

military and his understanding of the injustices of colonialism led to his life struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico.

Albizu argued that Puerto Rico had been retained illegally as booty of war because Spain did not have the right to cede an autonomous nation nor did the U.S. have the right to accept it. He proclaimed that the Treaty of Paris was, therefore, illegal and thus violated international law. This was a fact that would later be re-emphasized by Raúl Serrano Geyls, Law professor at the University of Puerto Rico, in an article titled “El colonialismo jurídico en Puerto Rico.”²⁰⁹

En el segundo [artículo, Serrano Geyls] intenta demostrar los rasgos peculiares del coloniaje [de Puerto Rico] e ilustra cómo de un plumazo todo el derecho público de Puerto Rico constitucional, administrativo, político, social, procesal y gran parte del derecho privado, se convirtieron en derecho norteamericano mediante sólo el más superficial de los estudios y con traducciones al español que, en muchos casos, eran muy extrañas.²¹⁰

Pedro Albizu Campos dedicated his life to creating national and international awareness of the continued colonization and human rights violations of Puerto Ricans, despite American representations of humanitarian support in its New Deal incursions. His recourse to violence did not only take place in the context of Latin American independence movements, of de Hostos’ and Betances’ enduring ideological influences, and the independence efforts of India and Ireland, it took place in the context of the massacre of innocent Puerto Rican families and of the unethical medical experimentation on Puerto Rican citizens.

The Ponce Massacre is known as the worst in the history of the Island. It was ordered by the then U.S. military appointed Governor Blanton Winship on March 31, 1937—Palm Sunday²¹¹. The marchers were fired upon, non-stop, for fifteen minutes with Thompson submachine guns. It took the lives of 17 unarmed civilians including a seven-year old girl and one woman. Two hundred and thirty five civilians were

²⁰⁹ Rivera Ramos, Efrén (2011) Don Raul, el Profesor: un Testimonio Personal. Revista Juridica Universidad de Puerto Rico. Vol. 80 No. 4. p. 926 <http://www.scribd.com/doc/61551579/Efren-Rivera-Ramos-Serrano-Geyls>, p. 932.

²¹⁰ In Rivera Ramos, Efrén, p. 932. **Translation:** “In the second [article, Serrano Geyls] tries to demonstrate the peculiar characteristics of the colonialism [of Puerto Rico] which illustrates how by the stroke of a pen, all of the public, administrative, political, social, procedural and a great part of the private constitutional rights of Puerto Rico, became North American rights by means of a superficial study and with Spanish translations, that in many cases, were very strange.”

²¹¹ Rexford Tugwell would reveal his own disdain for Winship in his memoirs of Puerto Rico.

wounded, some of whom were mere passersby. The protestors had received prior permission to march from Mayor José Tornos Diego, which was revoked at the last minute by the Governor. The marchers had organized to commemorate the end of slavery on the Island during Spanish rule and to protest the incarceration of Pedro Albizu Campos. Luis Muñoz Marín, after returning from Washington to investigate the Ponce Massacre, wrote to the Department of the Interior and stated that the picture taken by Carlos Torres Morales, a journalist of “El Imparcial” demonstrated that “the police were not shooting at the uniformed nationalists but at a terrorized crowd in full flight.”²¹²

Pedro Albizu Campos was arrested for “seditious activity” against the U.S. This “activity” included protesting against Dr. Cornelius P. Rhoads for injecting Puerto Rican patients with live cancer cells as part of his experiments, which took place in San Juan’s Presbyterian Hospital under the auspices of the Rockefeller Institute²¹³. No evidence “was found” at the time, leading Albizu to be discredited. Rhoads, on the other hand, was awarded the U.S. Legion of Merit. In 2003, Dr. Jay Katz, an independent investigator from Yale University, led the American Association for Cancer Research to remove Dr. Rhoads' name from their annual award intended for an "individual on the basis of meritorious achievement in cancer research"²¹⁴. The letter written by Rhoads, which allegedly came into Albizu’s hands stated:

The Porto Ricans (sic) are the dirtiest, laziest, most degenerate and thievish race of men ever to inhabit this sphere... I have done my best to further the process of extermination by killing off eight and transplanting cancer into several more... All physicians take delight in the abuse and torture of the unfortunate subjects.²¹⁵

Carmelo Ruiz-Marrero, journalist from the website Puerto Rico Herald: [www.Puerto Rico-Herald.org](http://www.Puerto-Rico-Herald.org), stated the following in his 2003 posting where he was also denouncing the present day experiments of the U.S. military on their own Puerto Rican soldiers and civilians:

²¹² Rosario Natal, Carmelo (2007) Luis Muñoz Marín, Arthur Garfield Hays y la Masacre de Ponce: Una Revelación Documental Inédita. Kálathos. Vol. 1, No. 1. 10 de mayo.

http://kalathos.metro.inter.edu/Num_1/Mu%F1oz_y_Masacre_de_Ponce.pdf

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponce_massacre

²¹³ Packard, Gabriel. RIGHTS: Group Strips Racist Scientist's Name from Award. IPS.org 29 April 2003 21:45:36 GMT

<http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2002/vol6n44/PROutragMedExp-en.html>

²¹⁴ “Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos” <http://albizu.8m.com/>

²¹⁵ Packard, Gabriel. (2003)

The military tests came to light just as the independence movement began a campaign to persuade the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) to change the name of an award named after a scientist that the movement accuses of conducting unethical medical experiments on Puerto Ricans.

The prize in question, the Cornelius P. Rhoads Scientific Achievement Award, is given yearly to outstanding young cancer researchers. In the 1930s, Rhoads worked in the Puerto Rico Presbyterian Hospital under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation for Medical Research.

A measure of Pedro Albizu Campos' success in raising awareness between 1930-50's was not only apparent by the extent of U.S. Government reprisals, however. The Puerto Rican Government's support of these, which would seem contradictory under normal circumstances, often became the standard under colonial rule. The U.S. incursions on the Island led to and revealed the aggressive retaliation of Chancellor Jaime Benítez against students and faculty who supported independence and who had invited Albizu to speak at the University of Puerto Rico during this time.

El 1948 será un año muy significativo en las luchas estudiantiles puertorriqueñas. Como represalia contra el izamiento de la bandera puertorriqueña a que acabamos de aludir, el rector Jaime Benítez suspende sumariamente a los estudiantes Juan Mari Bras, Jorge Luis Landring y Juan Noriega Maldonado. Al comenzar el segundo semestre 1947-48, la lucha entre el rector y los estudiantes se intensifica. Los estudiantes deciden decretar una huelga. Benítez llama a la policía a los terrenos universitarios y procede a suspender a un número mayor aún de estudiantes. A algunos profesores no se les renuevan los contratos. En conjunción con la huelga universitaria y el retorno de Albizu Campos, la Asamblea Legislativa de Puerto Rico aprueba la Ley 53, mejor conocida como la Ley de la Mordaza... Con la ayuda de la policía y el uso de mano dura contra los estudiantes, el rector Benítez logra conjurar la crisis y emerge victorioso mediante la virtual emasculación del movimiento estudiantil universitario.²¹⁶

²¹⁶ Maldonado, Denis (2002)

<http://mictlantecuhli.tripod.com/Albizu/concnal3.html>

Translation: Nineteen forty-eight will be a very significant year in the Puerto Rican student struggles. In retaliation against the raising of the Puerto Rican flag that to which we just alluded, Chancellor Jaime Benitez summarily suspended the students Juan Mari Bras, Jorge Luis Landring and Juan Noriega Maldonado. At the beginning of the second term 1947-48, the struggle between the Chancellor and the students is intensified. The students decide to decree a strike. Benitez brings the police to University land and proceeds to suspend an even greater number of students.

Some professors had their contracts permanently suspended. In conjunction with the University strike and the return of Albizu Campos, the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico approves Law 53, better known as the Gag Law...With the aid of the police and a strong hand against students Chancellor Benítez is able to conjure a crisis and emerges victorious through the virtual emasculation of the university student movement.

As a result of his political activism, Albizu spent more than 25 years in prison and was a victim of radioactive torture in his cell on the Island. Files and pictures from the FBI revealed the deterioration of his health while incarcerated. Albizu alleged that he was the subject of human radiation experiments in prison and stated that he could see colored rays bombarding him. Officials suggested that Albizu was insane. The President of the Cuban Cancer Association, Dr. Orlando Damuy, traveled to P.R. to examine him. Dr. Damuy concluded, from his evaluation of Albizu, that the burns on Albizu's body were caused by intense radiation. His report also stated that he did not receive any medical attention for five days and instead suffered. On November 15, 1964, Muñoz Marín again pardoned Albizu. He died on April 21, 1965; the same year of the educational conference in the United States. More than 75,000 Puerto Ricans carried the remains of his body to the Old San Juan Cemetery.²¹⁷



3. *Albizu Campos in prison sometime between 1951 and 1953.*²¹⁸

²¹⁷ “Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos” <http://albizu.8m.com/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

²¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

On October 3, 1995 President Bill Clinton addressed the issue of human radiation experimentation by the U.S. Government and emphasized his appointment of an investigative committee in his effort to restore the confidence of the American people in their Government...that at the very least they could trust the American Government to tell the truth and do the right thing...

President Clinton continued to explain the investigative procedures that his appointed committee had used, over one and a half years, in an effort which he defined as consistent with American values. Before discussing the numerous human rights violations by the Government, he first made sure to justify the origin of the research as one whose intention was to “prevent an Armageddon.”

We have declassified thousands of Government documents from the Second World War, the Cold War...These actions are not only consistent with national security, they are essential to our values...We discovered soon after I entered office that with the specter of an atomic war looming like Armageddon, far nearer than it does today, the United States Government actually did carry out on our citizens experiments involving radiation. That’s when I ordered the formation of this committee²¹⁹...

Finally, President Clinton admitted to “thousands” of human ethics violations and proceeded to criticize these and to acknowledge the Government’s responsibility in order to make amends to restore the faith of the American people in its proceedings.

Thousands of Governmental experiments did take place at hospitals, universities and military bases around our nation. The goal was to understand the effects of radiation on the human body...some [tests] were unethical, not only by today’s standards, but by the standards of the time in which they were conducted. They failed both the tests of our national values and the test of humanity. In one experiment, scientists injected plutonium into 18 patients without their knowledge. In another, doctors exposed indigent cancer patients to excessive dosages of radiation, a treatment from which it is virtually impossible that they could ever benefit. The report also demonstrates that these and other experiments were carried out on precisely those citizens who count most on the Government for its health; the destitute and the gravely ill. But the destitute were not alone: members of the military, precisely those on whom we and the Government count most, they were also test subjects...In too many cases informed consent was withheld...The deception extended beyond the test subjects themselves to

²¹⁹ Clinton, Bill (1995) “President Clinton commented on the Final Report on Human Radiation Experiments. YouTube Video. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE878DWbO0w>

encompass their families and the American people as a whole for these experiments were kept secret and they were shrouded not for a compelling reason of national security, but for the simple reason of an embarrassment and that was wrong²²⁰....

Albizu died at the age of 72, leaving several of his staunchest followers to continue his work. One of these was Juan Mari-Bras who would later lose his own son to a rumored FBI assassination. He was never able to find justice because both the Federal and Puerto Rican authorities denied him access to evidence. I would meet his other son who was an older student when I entered the General Studies Department at the U.P.R. in the mid 80's as an undergraduate student. Another case is that of the son of Pedro Juan Soto, the Puerto Rican writer and professor who advocated for independence. He was my mother's colleague when she taught at the College of General Studies. His son suffered police entrapment, torture and death with a friend. The trials of the policemen, presented by the Popular Democratic Party on television, went on for months. The Puerto Rican New Progressive Party Governor, Romero Barceló, a staunch advocate for Puerto Rican statehood, denied any responsibility for the incident, as did the FBI, despite allegations during the trial.

The severity of the persecution of independence followers since Albizu, has not managed to obliterate, however, his endurance as a symbol of national emancipation, human rights and education, even on the part of those who do not believe in his methods of violent resistance. Albizu, also called "El Maestro" did not devote his life to formal academic teaching. However, his influence on education lives on through multiple venues. His discourses went beyond educating Puerto Ricans about their political situation and human rights, to extending this knowledge through his visits to the United Nations and to Latin America in general. In addition to this, his persona, in and of itself, embodied the fact that even the most disenfranchised and racially despised individual can climb to the highest levels of education with success. His life became a model of steadfastness in achievement of educational ideals for present and future generations even

²²⁰ Clinton, Bill (1995) President Clinton commented on the final report on the human radiation experiments. Youtube. Uploaded in 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE878DWbO0w> [Underlining represents Former President Clinton's Emphasis]

in the face alienation from the power holders of the Government and the educational authorities of the University of Puerto Rico.

The 1940s were a time of great political and social change on the Island where any Puerto Rican would probably have advocated for independence if they had been assured of a healthy economy. At the higher educational level, Puerto Rico was becoming an elite transnational mecca after centuries of waiting for the Spanish Government to support higher education on the Island. There was a generation of up and coming intellectuals, children of different social classes, who were still young when Albizu was at the cusp of his political activities with the Nationalist Party in the late 30s to early 40s. The three academics, which I will discuss, also attended Harvard, but this time, it was not an independent Masonic Lodge that provided scholarships. Rather, the political and academic openings were sponsored by the New Deal through Muñoz Marín, Benítez, Tugwell and Roosevelt.

The infusion of funds came from the United States Government and various private grants from American foundations. Benítez and several faculty members were charged with carefully choosing those students considered to be the “most exceptional”: students whom they hoped would further the imaginary of Puerto Rico as the “showcase of democracy.” This historical record and the lived experiences of the academics interviewed herein demonstrate, however, that the U.S. Government and the Island elites were interpreting “democracy” and “showcase” in very different ways, which in turn, reflected their differential position of power in relation to each other. Whereas Americans came to the Island on various time-limited political and religious missions, the Puerto Rican academic elites returned to devote their lives to the development of their society. For American politicians the “democracy” offered to colonized peoples was primarily restricted, through military rule, to creating an imaginary of benevolence and prowess in nation building, otherwise referred to as a “showcase.” For the Puerto Rican academic elite, “democracy” was the enduring investment in the development of its citizenry and of Puerto Rico as a cultural and political nation. That this process was wrought with contradictions and its own internal oppression, especially within the political ruling class (the Popular Democratic and the New Progressive Parties), however, cannot be denied.

The three interviews that follow were held in October of 2010. They all present us with a view of the changing colonial panorama experienced by these academics with regards to the educational system and its related class and gender hierarchies in a transnational context. In so doing, they reveal the numerous ideological and institutional influences and obstacles faced by each as well as the strategies which they used to pursue the promise of “extraordinary” intellectual opportunity.

Licenciado Raúl Serrano Geyls: An Educational Trajectory from Landed Gentry to Urban Need on the Way to the Supreme Court and Beyond

Raúl Serrano Geyls, my great uncle and godfather, was instrumental in the creation of the Puerto Rican constitution. He was born 23 years after the Spanish-American War of 1998. His initial and later elite status was a product of the interstices and ruptures created by the clashing and coming together of Spanish and American colonial economic and ideological practices vis-à-vis those of the colonized elite immersed in a background of generalized poverty. The latter, objectified and exploited to extremes, were those to whom Fanon may have referred as “the wretched of the earth”: the starving and illiterate peasantry and urban poor who would become emblems, like the University Tower, of very different things. Puerto Ricans were coalesced under the symbol of the white, male jíbaro, depicted with the solid red silhouette of a peasant head wearing a “pava” or straw hat. Under this symbol the poor would be the justification for family planning interventions on behalf of the U.S. and Puerto Rican governments, and on the other hand, the peasantry would be the mobilizing symbol of the Popular Democratic Party, led by Luis Muñoz Marín under the banner of “Pan, Tierra y Libertad” (“Bread, Land and Liberty).

Tío Raúl, as I called him, would, like many others, distance himself from the Nationalist Party led by Albizu, not because of a difference in sentiment, but rather because of his belief that independence could not be reached through violent means. He was also skeptical of Gilberto Concepcion’s stage-based independence.

Cuando colaboré con Muñoz Marín yo creía en la independencia, aunque estimaba que no podría conseguirse por la vía de la confrontación abierta de

Pedro Albizu Campos ni con la táctica etapista de Gilberto Concepción de Gracia.²²¹

With youthful idealism, he joined the ranks of Muñoz Marín's most trusted counselors, hoping that through legal rather than armed struggle, Puerto Rico would be free.²²² In his master's thesis from Columbia University he stated:

It should not be understood that we have been advocating here for the incorporation of Puerto Rico into the United States as a matter of policy. On the contrary, we deemed this to be a very unwise step which will greatly prejudice the opportunities for political independence that the Island now has. Independence is in the opinion of the writer the best solution for many problems which Puerto Rico is facing in this period of its history.

In the late 1950's he was forced to discontinue his doctoral studies at Harvard after completing his courses when Muñoz Marín called upon him to be a Supreme Court Judge on the Island. He had been awarded the Harvard Littauer²²³ Fellowship and two small grants from the University of Puerto Rico to do a second master's degree in political science and public administration which he extended into doctoral work. His professional responsibilities as a judge did not afford him the time needed to complete his dissertation within the five-year limit allowed by Harvard, however. In other words, it was his position within the administration during changing colonial circumstances that both provided and limited his options for the completion of his degree. However, this did not affect his ability to ascend professionally in the least. He had acquired the highest degree necessary to function in his professional capacity and beyond. He wrote several internationally known texts on constitutional law as well as the definitive text regarding this law in Puerto Rico.²²⁴ He wrote several articles and a book about family law, child welfare and the rights of women and gays in marriage.

²²¹Quoted in Rivera Ramos. p. 931. **Translation:** "When I collaborated with Muñoz Marín I believed in independence, although I thought we would not be able to achieve it through open confrontation of Pedro Albizu Campos nor through the stage-based strategy of Gilberto Concepción de Gracia."

²²² Allí, cuando examiné la doctrina de Balzac v. People of Porto Rico, sentí la necesidad de hacer una aclaración, y en efecto la hice en la nota al calce 229 del documento: "

²²³ "The idea of a school of public affairs at Harvard was born in the midst of the Great Depression and on the eve of World War II. As government grappled with historic challenges both domestic and international, Harvard alumnus Lucius N. Littauer backed his vision of a school for a new professional governing class with an unprecedented \$2 million gift, then the largest single gift from an individual donor ever given to a university." <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/about/history>.

²²⁴ Rivera Ramos, Efrén

Like Bourne, Kallen, de Hostos, Betances, Muñoz Marín and Albizu, his transnational experience gave him a more holistic and comparative perspective. He argued that changing times required a historically founded critical appraisal of the law to promote true justice and equity for all. Prior to this, in 1957, it was his idea to establish the Journal of Social Sciences (La Revista de Ciencias Sociales) of the University of Puerto Rico of which he became its first Director. Renowned international academics that came to teach at the UPR such as Sidney Mintz, Oscar Lewis, C. Wright Mills among others published there, as well as prestigious Puerto Rican authors.

He was honored by Columbia University Law School as one of its most accomplished graduates who worked for the public good.

Outstanding Judges Honored at Alumni Gala in Puerto Rico

COLUMBIA LAW SCHOOL HONORS OUTSTANDING JUDGES

Dean David M. Schizer visits Puerto Rico

SANTURCE, PUERTO RICO- Columbia Law School will honor six alumni judges who have put their legal skills to work for the public good on Thursday, November 3, 2005, at the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico. The event takes place at 7:00 pm... THE HONORABLE RAUL SERRANO-GEYLS, '46 LL.M. CLS alumnus Raoul Slavin, '98, will introduce Serrano-Geyls.²²⁵...

His previous students, now renowned judges and academics themselves, also honored Tío Raúl at the Inter-American University. This was his second institution after retiring from the University of Puerto Rico where he had carried out most of his academic career²²⁶. His desire to achieve a quality education at the University of Puerto Rico motivated his activism as a student and faculty member.

Como estudiante y profesor, participé en las luchas internas universitarias para crear una institución que fuera orgullo del país, así como en las grandes reformas económicas, sociales y administrativas de la época. Por todo eso, tengo muy fuertes lazos de afecto y respeto con la Universidad de Puerto Rico.²²⁷

225

http://www.law.columbia.edu/media_inquiries/news_events/2005_older/2005/November_1/puerto_rico.
<http://calendar.columbia.edu/sundial/webapi/get.php?vt=detail&id=4844&con=embedded&br=uar>.

²²⁶ Rivera Ramos, Efrén

²²⁷ **Translation:** As a student and professor, I participated in the internal struggles of the university to create an institution of pride for the country, similar to the great economic, social and administrative

In the 1970's, he came to realize that independence would never be reached through our current colonial/"commonwealth" status: the one which had provided him with the opportunities to attend Columbia University and Harvard. When asked if he saw any contradictions between being in favor of independence and attending prestigious universities in the United States he replied "ninguna" ("none whatsoever") since Puerto Ricans had been going to prestigious institutions in the colonizing countries much before the current relationship with the United States. It was the way for the elite to improve themselves and contribute to their countries.

Harvard era como un nombre mágico. La idea de que un puertorriqueño se graduara de Harvard era un símbolo de orgullo, además de la fama académica. Se le suponía la mejor universidad de EU y del mundo. Ser admitido era un honor y terminar, más todavía. No había ningún conflicto en irse a preparar al mejor sitio. Eso hacen todavía algunos revolucionarios, presidentes de Latino América. Estar en Harvard me dio los conocimientos de ciencias políticas que yo no tenía. Eso me ayudó en mis posturas. Yo era Popular antes de ir a Harvard.

Throughout his and the following interviews several important themes emerge which include the changing sources of wealth and their relation to educational priorities and styles within the contradictions of a colonial and transnational relationship. Others include the role of mentorship and didactic interventions in the creation of academic excellence at the institutional and individual level, the effects and changing dynamics of racism and sexism in the transition between colonial powers, the struggle for power and the institutional corruption which is so often overlooked in explanations of minority student failure and success in academia.

[Soy] Raúl Serrano Geyls. [Tengo] 89 años. Estoy retirado. Nací en Arecibo P.R. el 6 de mayo de 1921. Hijo de una familia acomodada. Mis padres eran dueños de una finca bien grande en el camino a la salida de Arecibo para San Juan, sembrada de caña. Sembrada casi totalmente de caña de azúcar. Mi padre se dedicaba a administrarla. Mi madre se quedaba en la casa a cuidar a los hijos. Fui el último de 13 hijos. Vivíamos en una casa muy grande frente a la plaza de recreo. Estudié mi primer grado en la Escuela Jefferson en Arecibo.

Habían [escuelas] privadas para niñas. Pero muy poca gente llevaba a los niños a escuelas privadas [solo] los más ricos del pueblo, pues los que llevaban mucho

reforms of the time. Due to all of that, I have very strong ties of affection and respect towards the University of Puerto Rico. In Rivera-Ramos, p. 942.

tiempo ahí. Bien ricos...pero principalmente era una cuestión de dinero. Y recuerdo que sólo había una escuela privada... Esteee, terminó la Guerra Mundial y con ello la necesidad de sembrar y vender el azúcar. Surgió una crisis económica y mis padres decidieron mudarse para San Juan.

Pues me acuerdo que era una escuela grandísima [donde cursé el primer grado]; que llevaba ese nombre de Jefferson. Era una costumbre en Puerto Rico de ponerle nombre de americanos a las escuelas. Me acuerdo de que yo era el mejor estudiante de mi clase. Me acuerdo de mi gradación donde me vistieron de un traje de una tela de “pongee.” [Era una tela de seda.]Carísima. Y me sentaron ante toda la clase (se ríe) y me aplaudieron. Hasta donde yo sé venía de E.U. porque los españoles no tenían pongee.

Tío Raúl was 89 years old at the time of this interview. Before this conversation I had only spoken to him for a short while during informal meetings on four occasions throughout my upbringing. Our first meeting occurred when I was 15 or 16 years old when I offered to keep his mother/my great-great grandmother company as she passed away in the hospital. His mother, I had been told, was strongly resented by several of her daughters for reasons that were not clear to me. What I heard would be confirmed when I witnessed the visit of two of them who put ice cubes on her eyelids with the purpose of waking her up and forcing her to eat while they laughed.

Tío Raúl, however, loved her deeply and took it upon himself to pay for an assistant to care for her during her final days in the hospital. The role that she played in his upbringing and that of his sisters would become more obvious to me than to him, as as compared to that of his brother and sisters. He believed that they had all had the same opportunity to study and that those who “chose not to,” did so precisely because of individual choice and nothing more.

Tío Raúl was born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico in 1921 from a well-to-do family. His parents owned one of the largest sugar cane fields on the outskirts of the town. His father administered it while his mother stayed home to raise their 13 children of which he was the youngest. His home was large and it was located in front of the town square. He completed the first grade at Jefferson Public School in Arecibo, where he recalls being the best student. He noted that it was customary in those days to give American names to the schools. He remembered with delight how he was honored by applause from all of his classmates after having been sat at the front of the room while dressed in an expensive

American silk outfit (Pongee) during his graduation. Pongee, he said, “was not sold in Spain!”

His classmates represented all the various social classes with the exception of the richest girls who attended the only private school in the town, a Catholic school called San Felipe. He observed that children of all colors, “even bi-racial” children would play at his house. Tío Raúl never knew very much about his paternal and maternal grandparents and he could not explain why.

Mi padre se llamaba Narciso Serrano Rodríguez. Mi madre se llamaba María Geyls Olmos. Nunca conocí a mis abuelos paternos. Nunca he sabido nada. Ni a los hermanos que les he preguntado. No sabemos, no sé decirte la razón. Lo mismo me pasó con los abuelos maternos. Algunos decían que era Danés y otros que Holandés. Tengo una foto grande de Papito, otra foto grande de Mamá y otra foto grande del abuelo.

La información que yo tengo es que Jan se arruinó, o sea perdió su fortuna su negocio, quedándole únicamente unas fincas y que luego se suicidó. [Otros dicen que se murió en la tormenta que hundió sus barcos.] [Parece que se dedicaba al negocio entre las islas.] Y que tenía un socio [y que en esa época el guardaba toda su riqueza en el sótano de su casa] y cuando el se murió el socio se quedó con todo y crió a abuelita María]. . .Narciso fue el que la sacó de todo eso. [El tutor la crió], no de acuerdo con su posición, sino que la tenía corriendo descuidada y que fue Narciso el que la sacó del lío.²²⁸]

He knew that his maternal grandfather was either from Holland or Denmark. Both his grandfather, father and older brother had a reputation for being womanizers, unlike himself. He “was the only chaste one!” he said as he laughed.

El abuelo era hombre rico, mujeriego. Geyls. ¡De ahí el único casto salí yo! Porque mi hermano, eso es terrible! (Risa) Todavía a los 94. . .El abuelo se tiraba por los campos. Recogía frutas y mujeres. (risa). Recuerda que estábamos en plena cultura rural y los dueños de finca vivían como en la edad media y donde, bueno, las mujeres se ofrecían porque les aseguraban que podrían comer. Porque el dueño de finca les daba pedacitos de terreno para sembrar.

He described the time period as “feudal” where the people depended on the land and the landowner would provide food and a plot in exchange for sexual favors from the female sharecroppers. It was common practice to lock the sharecroppers up on the farm or to instruct them not to vote when election time came around. Tío Raúl acknowledged that

²²⁸ All bracketed statements were made by my mother during our interview with Tío Raúl.

today this continues to take place, but it is done with more “sophistication” as money is given away or jobs are offered for the same purpose.

During his upbringing there was barely a middle class and he remembers his family as one of the richest of the town.

No había clase media en PR prácticamente. Nosotros éramos parte de los ricos porque mamá, María Geys, se casó con Narciso Serrano de quien yo no sé mucho... que era un agricultor de finca pequeña y que se enamoró [de ella] ... o que vio que era un buen partido, una buena oportunidad de hacerse de dinero... Nosotros nos convertimos en una de las familias más ricas del pueblo... Recuerdo que mamá le compraba a los árabes. Entonces habían unos vendedores itinerantes que generalmente eran árabes. Y llegaba el árabe que mamá tenía y lo que tenía lo tiraba en la alfombra de la sala. Tenía de todo ahí...

There was an American doctor, a “tall white man with a little mustache who was the most elegant and kindest man [he] had ever seen.” Dr. Morris visited his family, almost on a weekly basis. Due to the large number of children, one was always bound to have a fever or a cold. He does not recall ever seeing Dr. Morris take care of the black housekeepers, however, and he was uncertain as to whether his mother would have approved of it.²²⁹

An Arab itinerant salesman would visit their house and open a large suitcase in the middle of the living room floor with all sorts of merchandise for sale, while his mother searched enthusiastically for what she wanted to buy. He is uncertain as to whether his father married his mother because he loved her or because she had money. He describes her, however, as actually falling in love with his father. The stories of his father’s hot temper abound. One of them related to his confrontation with his wife’s tutor, her father’s ex-business partner, prior to their marriage. Tío Raúl’s father put his gun in the holster and threatened to kill him if he did not hand over the lands he had taken from her. He also described his father as being an extremely intelligent person who loved to read, despite not having gone beyond the third grade. His school was “the school of life” which, “if not the best, was very important,” he noted. His father believed that formal education was only necessary until the eighth grade, after this it was important for his sons to find work. His mother was not interested in studying or reading with the

²²⁹ Summary of other excerpts from our interview of Oct 2010.

exception of Harlequin type love stories and the newspaper. “She was too busy having children.”

¿Quieres que te cuente? Narciso Serrano era un hombre bien inteligente. Cuando yo crecí y empecé a estudiar, como yo fui el último en salir de la casa. Tuto se fue. De las cosas que yo más apreciaba eran mis conversaciones con él. Porque el había leído mucho, ni había terminado la escuela elemental pero le gustaba leer. Nunca le conocí un diploma. Había leído mucho y según en la escuela me iban diciendo cosas yo hablaba con él. El estudió, lo que por aquí llaman la universidad de la vida, según he oído es muy buena.

[Mi madre] no [estudió] mucho, además el montón de hijos. Recuerdo que leía el periódico y unas novelitas que venían allí. Todavía las venden en los quioscos. Donde venden de todo.

Regarding his own trajectory, when the Second World War ended, the need for sugar subsided leading to an economic crisis which forced his parents to move to the Capital to find work. This was his first personal encounter with what he would consider “low economic resources.”

Tío Raúl attributed his completion of high school to several factors. After moving to the Capital, despite having very little money, his parents enrolled him in the best public high school of the Island where he believes there were exceptionally good teachers, even better than in the University at the time. His classmates would be many of the most prestigious intellectuals of the Island such as José Trías, Monge and Pedro Muñoz Amato, the children of the elite. In addition to the quality of the school, he was also highly influenced by his mother’s adamant wish that he continue his studies. She often argued with his father about their economic situation and about her desire that Tío Raúl go on to college. During their arguments, she would cry and his father would ultimately give in. “Estee pero esas peleas las ganó siempre mi madre.”²³⁰ Although he did not see the value of such a plan, his father, due to his natural curiosity and intelligence, would often engage in enthusiastic conversations with Raúl about what he was learning at school.

Que yo recuerde tuvieron conflictos, además de la cosa económica, por la educación de los hijos. Porque mi padre, como él no había podido estudiar en la vida, era agricultor y había hecho dinero como agricultor. Tenía una idea de que

²³⁰ Interview with Tío Raúl October 2010.

My Mother’s Comments: The power behind the throne! (Laughter).

bastaba con el octavo grado. Y empezaban las discusiones de cuantas...de la escuela superior. Este...

He never appeared to question why most of the children from his public school in Arecibo had not attended the best schools in the city and gone to college like he did, despite the fact that he said “they were all treated the same.” In fact, he argued that those students who excelled in the classes he taught at the University, did so because they were “exceptional learners.” With regards to his sisters, Tío Raúl believed that they all had the same opportunities that he had enjoyed. They never got beyond the eighth grade, but believed that the opportunity was there for them and that if they did not continue it was because they chose not to. “La que no quiso sacar más del octavo grado fue porque no quiso.” However, the expectations for them regarding education and the attention given to them appears to have been quite different from that afforded Tío Raúl.

The story is often told of how every time one of his sisters was born, his father would get angry and leave the house for several weeks after proclaiming “Nació otra chancleta!²³¹” (Another sandal was born!). His mother is also known for having left to tour and shop in the Capital after the birth of each of them, leaving the newborn daughter in the care of the older sisters and of the three black housekeepers that lived with them²³². It is very likely that similar to Laura Meneses, Albizu’s Peruvian wife, the expectation for his sisters, whether directly stated or informally implied, was that they find good husbands and learn the skills necessary for tending their needs and those of the home in general.

Tío Raúl was in a different context altogether. He was not only the youngest son, but he almost lost his life on two occasions, one as a baby where a scorpion walked on his shirt while he was sleeping, and another time as a young boy when a fire began in the kitchen. He recalls that his mother would cry every time she told that story. He saw himself as very obedient as compared to his older brother who “would get into trouble all of the time” to the point of getting vicious belt whippings from his father. His brother was also different in that “he chose to not continue his studies beyond the eighth grade.” In a phone interview, a few months later, his brother who was 95 years old at the time,

²³¹ My mother’s recollections of her own mother’s (Raúl’s sister’s) comments.

²³² My mother’s recollections of her own mother’s (Raúl’s sister’s) comments.

stated that he was more like his father than Tío Raúl. He liked to move from place to place finding different business opportunities. In fact, the phone interview took place while he was in Florida getting ready for another move. According to him, during his lifetime, he had traveled to many different states in the U.S. looking for small business opportunities and new adventures.

Tío Raúl's place in the family, his mother's perceived vulnerability of him and the socio-economic context of the Island when he was growing up, may provide some clues into his very different life trajectory as compared to that of his brother and sisters. In the five years of difference between him and his older brother, the Puerto Rican economy had begun drastic changes and so did the family lifestyle. The security of the wealthy land-based "feudal society" that they were accustomed to dissipated quickly after the war. His brother, who had been used to the same lifestyle as his father (with regards to work and women), maintained a similar course after moving to the Capital. Tío Raúl, being much younger and the most protected by his mother, adapted to her interests which appear to have been more in tune with the lifestyle of the Capital which she ventured to every time she gave birth. For her, this was undoubtedly an emancipatory outlet!

When Tío Raúl entered college, he had to work at the library and sell Christmas cards, shoes and graduation rings to pay for his studies.

Yo me pagué mis estudios vendiendo libros, tarjetas de navidad trabajando en teatro como acomodador y vendiendo sortijas de graduación. Y después conseguí trabajo en la biblioteca. Ese trabajo lo logré conseguir por medio de un amigo íntimo que habló con la bibliotecaria de leyes.²³³

His parents had bought a home to rent out rooms to workers who would travel back and forth between the countryside and the Capital in their efforts to maintain their rural based families. He proudly remembers how he devised a moneymaking scheme to make a profit off the worker's bus tickets. He would buy a large number of them ahead of time and then sell them at the bus stop for a slightly higher profit. This made it more accessible for the customer who would otherwise have had to travel to the ticket office to purchase them.

The scholarship program from the University began with the advent of Jaime Benítez and the New Deal. Benítez also instituted the honor's enrollment grant. When

²³³ Interview with Tío Raúl. October, 2010

Tío Raúl entered as a freshman, these economic aids were not available. “Las becas de la universidad llegaron con el New Deal. Muñoz tenía buena relación con Roosevelt. No se sabe quién empezó la matrícula de honor.”²³⁴

With the New Deal, federal funding was given to improve the education in Puerto Rico through one of Puerto Rico’s rehabilitation programs. The Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration Program (PRRA) was established to foster the industrialization of the Island by creating medical centers, an electric system and schools among other things. The Chancellor would distribute these funds to select students who were deemed meritorious or in economic need.

Luis Muñoz Marín y el primer rector que el nombró, Jaime Benítez, establecen un programa de becas que incluye la universidad y a enviar estudiantes destacados a Estados Unidos. Yo me gradúo de la Central High que era la mejor. Entro a la universidad.

Regarding the opportunities for Tío Raúl at the University of Puerto Rico, he faced several initial obstacles. To begin with, he did not get along with Jaime Benítez, the Chancellor. Although he describes him as a very bright and innovative person, he also noted that he could be devious and difficult at times.

Don Jaime Benítez y yo no nos llevábamos. Era muy inquieto a veces... [Benítez] era insidioso y brillante. Hacía sus cosas, las tapaba y después un buen día las destapaba. Duró 20 y pico de años cuando le dio por hacerle competencia a Muñoz Marín por la gobernación y lo botaron.²³⁵

Tío Raúl graduated with the highest grade on the Puerto Rican Bar exam and earned a small grant from the UPR as well as from Columbia University to study his masters in law. He chose Columbia over Harvard, at the time, because he had several sisters living in N.Y. from 1944-45.

Cuando yo llegué con mi maestría de Columbia University con una beca mínima de la UPR y una beca de matrícula de Columbia. Yo me había graduado con la nota más alta de la reválida. El "Bar examination" [de P.R.] Yo solicité a Columbia, porque tenía hermanas en N.Y. de 1944-45. Hice la maestría de

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ [Benítez] was insidious, but brilliant. He would do his things, cover them up, and then, on a good day, uncover them. He lasted 20 and some years when he decided to compete against Muñoz Marín for Governor and they threw him out.

derecho sobre unos casos de la Corte Suprema que son muy importantes. para PR. "Los casos insulares."²³⁶

His master's degree was based on important Supreme Court cases of Puerto Rico: "Insular cases." After graduating he asked Benítez to be placed as a faculty member in the Law School at the UPR, but was initially denied. Benítez wanted him, instead to teach in the School of Social Sciences. A friend from high school who was now the Director of the Rent Control Office offered him \$6,000 per month as opposed to the \$200 per month that he would earn as a faculty member. Jaime Benítez finally agreed to give Tío Raúl the teaching position he wanted in the Law School and Tío Raúl rejected his friend's \$6,000 offer because he had professional goals that he wanted to accomplish. In addition, the prestige and prospects for tenure likely offered a greater incentive.

Fui a ver a Jaime Benítez para una solicitud del nombramiento-en el Colegio de Derecho. Inicialmente me dijo que no, que enseñara ciencias sociales o políticas. Y le dije que no, que buscara a Pedro Amato. Ahí me encontré a un amigo muy querido: José Trías Monje. Habíamos estudiado juntos en la Central. En esos momentos el dirigía la Oficina de Control de Alquileres. Pepe, le decíamos. Cuando el dijo, "Tu sabes lo que te van a pagar verdad? 200.00. Si lo de allá no te sale, yo te ofrezco un puesto de \$6.000."²³⁷

His relation to Benítez was a mildly turbulent one at best. On one occasion, his friend Pedro Muñoz Amato told him that Chancellor Benítez asked that Raúl write an evaluation of the Law School, but not to inform the Dean of what he was doing. Tío Raúl refused initially. He was then assured that the author of the study would remain confidential. Before he knew it, the Chancellor announced that Tío Raúl had done it. When protests were voiced by the Dean, Tío Raúl's defense was that he was only following the orders of the highest authority there; the Chancellor.

Benítez held Tío Raúl in high esteem, but at the same time he saw him as a rival. Apparently, at one point in his career, Tío Raúl was offered the Chancellorship by Muñoz Marín, but lacking an interest in administrative positions, he declined the offer. Rather, he accepted Muñoz' offer to become his consultant to the Constitution. He recalls that he barely got paid, but that the learning experience was tremendous. Muñoz was a very cultured man who was completely bilingual and knew a great deal of political science and

²³⁶ Interview with Tío Raúl. October, 2010

²³⁷ Interview with Tío Raúl. October 2010.

law because he had lived, both on the Island and in the United States, during his father's position as Resident Commissioner.

Vi una gran oportunidad de ver a Muñoz de quien aprendí muchísimo y me pagaron una miseria. Pero en algo me ayudada.. Muñoz hablaba como un Americano culto. El se crió en los Estados Unidos porque su padre era Comisionado Residente. También hablaba un español extraordinario. Era muy culto. Era poeta. Como yo, tenía viva la preparación de ciencias políticas y derechos.

Tío Raúl, in agreement with Tugwell's appraisal of the education at the Law School of the UPR during the early 40's, argued that it was highly deficient. The school was composed of older prestigious lawyers who prioritized their private cases over their teaching duties and would miss classes or arrive late at whim. In 1941, at Benitez' instigation, Tío Raúl and other students participated in the first strike against academic mediocrity.

La única forma de reformar el Colegio de Leyes era trayendo gente joven nueva. Los maestros eran malísimos y vaguísimos. Eran abogados viejos de prestigio. Faltaban muchísimo porque tenían casos en las cortes. Yo me eduqué. Rexford Guy Tugwell escribió libros sobre Puerto Rico. Con esa excepción los demás hacían lo que les daba la gana.

Nosotros decidimos hacer una huelga por debilidad académica en 1941. La primera huelga por debilidad académica. Jaime Benítez. Les dijo que les iba a dar beca para que estudiaran afuera.

At this time Benítez began to offer grants to study in the United States and brought in Puerto Ricans and foreigners who had been educated outside of the Island to teach. Columbia, Harvard and Chicago were three of the preferred institutions for educating the grant recipients from the U.P.R. It was due to Tío Raúl's knowledge of the prior education deficiencies at the University that, when his class was interrupted to have a meeting with Muñoz, he voiced his complaint directly to him. He reminded him that the agreement between them had been that his lectures would never be sacrificed due to his responsibilities as a consultant. "His classes were sacred." Although Muñoz was known to lose his temper and was almost led into a swearing frenzy, he was able to restrain himself and acknowledge the agreement as he apologized for forgetting.

... Hubo un incidente el primer día que yo llegué a la fortaleza a trabajar. Muñoz me mandó un carro a que me llevara. Ese día yo tenía que dar clases. Yo le había dicho que mis horas de clases eran sagradas. Muñoz era un ídolo, un

monstruo político y cultural. Le dio la bienvenida y pudieron empezar inmediatamente. Había hablado con Roberto de Jesús Toro que había sido nombrado Director del Negociado de presupuesto. Muñoz era famoso por el uso del "carajo." De momento se le fue la ira y admitió se le había olvidado [lo de su acuerdo de no interrumpir sus clases.]

His first experience in higher education in the United States when attending Columbia University, Tío Raúl explained, was wrought with classroom fear on his part. There were only 10-15 students in the class because most young men had gone to war. No lectures were given in the Law School. Students were assigned readings “and that is when the questions would begin.” There were students from Europe, the U.S. and Latin America in a class which compared the constitutional rights of the US with those of the other countries represented. He could not participate because at that time the Constitution of Puerto Rico was that of the United States. The first time his instructor called upon him to ask a question from the readings, however, he answered without a problem, and from then on “No one could silence [him].” During our interview, he referred to the style of teaching that most impressed him and affected his own as the “Socratic Style” where students were asked questions and became engaged in critical thought rather than being lectured.

Upon recalling his teaching style, the students chosen to honor him with their written memoirs criticized the limits sometimes found in those professors charged with teaching in professional schools who are “overly specialized, lack natural talent and an adequate and formal educational background.” In comparison, they stated that Tío Raúl would ask questions, incessantly, analyzing texts which reflected the Socratic influences that he gained while undertaking graduate studies in the United States.

Pronto me di cuenta de las dotes pedagógicas de [Don Raúl Serrano Geyls], no siempre presentes en los profesores de escuelas profesionales que, en ocasiones, sólo han recibido la formación especializada de sus disciplinas y no tienen ni la educación formal ni el talento natural para la enseñanza... Formulaba preguntas sin cesar. Escudriñaba los textos asignados... Años después entendería que el profesor Raúl Serrano Geyls, expuesto como había estado a la enseñanza del Derecho en los Estados Unidos por sus estudios de posgrado en la disciplina, conocía bien el llamado método socrático empleado por los profesores de Derecho en ese mundo académico.

He voiced distrust towards, and concern about power. His extensive experience as a faculty member, consultant to the Governor and judge, led him to reject the numerous administrative positions that had been offered to him.²³⁸ In the articles written in his honor by his previous students, they remembered with admiration a statement made by my uncle that has been published in various sources. Efrén Rivera Ramos recalls:

No se me olvida, por ejemplo, que solía decir: “si quieres saber cómo es una persona de verdad, sólo tienes que darle una uñita de poder.” Juntaba entonces su dedo pulgar con su dedo meñique para ilustrarnos mejor el sentido del aforismo que acababa de soltar que, hasta donde sé, era de su hechura. No era liviana aquella advertencia, que provenía de alguien que había andado por las cumbres del poder isleño.²³⁹

Tío Raúl passed away August 5, 2011. I received the news via phone call from his daughter Irma Serrano García, as I was working on this chapter. I was hoping to send it to him in time to benefit from his comments before my defense which was scheduled to take place on September 20, 2011. During our last interview, he requested that I provide him with this chapter in particular, as he said, “You know, interviews are supposed to be confidential.” When I answered, “Well, that all depends if I get your permission. Because I am so proud of you, I was hoping you would give it to me.” Upon hearing this he smiled and said “Well, in that case, you have it!” giving me a gentle wave of authority demonstrating I had his permission to proceed.

-Sabes, las entrevistas se suponen que sean confidenciales.
-Eso depende de si me das tu permiso. Estoy tan orgullosa de ti que esperaba que me lo dieras.
-(Risa) Bueno, siendo así, ¡Está bien!

Relationships of power abound in Tío Raúl’s interview. They begin with his experience as a son of a wealthy landowner which materialized itself in a saturated atmosphere of white/male privilege that he described as “the way things were,” as he identified the numerous “vices of the feudal society” of his youth. Sharecropping women

²³⁸ Interview with Raúl Serrano Geyls 10/2010

²³⁹ Rivera Ramos, Efrén, 2011, p. 897

Translation: I cannot forget, for example, that he used to say: “If you want to know what a person is really like, you just have to give him a small nailfull of power.” He would put together his thumb and his pinky to illustrate more accurately the meaning of his aphorism that he had just pronounced, which, as far as I know, was of his own creation. This was not a lighthearted warning which originated from someone who had journeyed through the heights of Island power.

were highly subordinate and regularly used as sexual objects by his father, grandfather and other landowners. Wealthier women, such as his mother, sought refuge in the city from the multiple births and recriminations of his father, whenever a girl was born. The daughters were expected to tend to the younger siblings and remain in the household that did not offer the same escapes that were available to the older brother. Racial power was shared by men, women and children over their black counterparts who carried the burden of the household chores and child rearing; only receiving one day off a month, while excluded from the medical attentions reserved for family members. The sense of what was valued as beautiful and of merit was constructed within the image of the colonial powers. It was the American doctor; “white, tall, competent and kind” who provided the image of what was good. The New Deal would similarly embody such imagery of industrial sophistication with gleaming institutions and financial injections that could not be appropriated or truly controlled entirely by the islanders, or even their American representatives such as Tugwell.

Herein lies another rupture. Deceptive strategies employed by islanders and Americans alike, ran side by side with charismatic personalities of high intellect that, while accepting and even demanding monetary aid from the U.S., also rebelled and maneuvered themselves around the limitation of a technologically focused education and the imposition of English as the official language.

While the University of Puerto Rico and the demands to Americanize the schools were taking place under the industrial philosophy of the land grant colleges, the Puerto Rican intellectuals were forging something quite different. It was the main campus under Jaime Benítez and Muñoz Marín that became an international intellectual mecca rather than the mere hub of industrial development. The Puerto Rican elite, now educated in the United States in the most prestigious universities, continued with their dreams of creating a European style “House of Learning” where philosophical discourses, literary analysis and Socratic dialogue reigned over the degree mills which characterized the University prior to the 1940s; the first 30 or more years of American colonization.

With the change in Tío Raúl’s family economy, came a drastic rupture in lifestyle, providing him and his siblings with the possibility of a quality education in the most prestigious high school on the Island: “La Central.” Its name alone, as pronounced in

English, embodied a variety of implicit meanings reflective of the cultural struggles that defined the Island. On the one hand, it was, like so many other schools “baptized” with American names. It referred to a centralization of power, located in the Capital, the crux of the insular metropolis. It was geared towards the forging of the new Island elite that, like other schools, maintained the visual impression of a democratic inclusion characterized by the broad population demographics of its surroundings. In effect, it downplayed the class and racial differences characteristic of the time. “La Central,” with its Spanish pronunciation and its Spanish Renaissance architecture, however, also alluded to the vestiges of the sugar plantation symbolized by “La Central de Caña” and all that an agricultural economy embodies: their national lore with relation to the land and the spirit of the people as, they saw it, along with the poverty caused by the American sugar cane monoculture and its “dead time.” Like many other schools, it became a front of resistance against the imposition of English as the official language and against the dismantling of Puerto Rican “Dignidad.”

The forging of Tío Raúl’s “exceptional status” in elementary school, no doubt supported by his family’s wealth and his special circumstances growing up, became “average” at Central High School as he “struggled with geometry”²⁴⁰ and worked to support himself. But the quality of his teachers, the discussions about what he was learning with his father, and his mother’s insistence that he finish school, would leave an enduring mark. The ideological interpellations, which called upon him as a subject, were very different as he worked at the University of Puerto Rico library and expanded his intellectual horizons. These led him again to reach first place; this time, in the feared Puerto Rican Bar Exam which preceded his scholarship to Columbia and then Harvard University.

His privileged family background and public validation as an elementary school student affirmed a strong sense of self-efficacy in an atmosphere of public ideological clashes emanating from colonial politics. The transnational trends in education persisted as muted undercurrents throughout. Due to his previous elite standing prior to his arrival at Columbia, Tío Raúl experienced the “double consciousness” referred to by Fanon and Paolo Freire to the point of remaining in silence for the first few weeks when he became

²⁴⁰ Interview with Tío Raúl: 10/2010

aware of the disintegration of his class, gender and racial privilege all in one instant. He became the object of an alienating gaze, lacking what everyone else in his class possessed: national independence and a constitution that could represent the essence of his people.

With regards to the Island, there was a focus on the construction of a mini industrial mecca that would show the world that capitalism was the answer to all social ills. It was an alluring force that would provide Puerto Ricans the opportunity to prove themselves before the entire world through other means besides independence. From the point of view of the colonizers, the latter was not necessary because “industry” and “controlled creativity” would prevail under their watchful eyes.

The idea of individual excellence was both fostered and impeded by the educational bureaucracies affecting Tío Raúl, Albizu and other “independentistas” in different ways. For Albizu, institutional racism was apparent during his time in the army and is suspected during his doctoral experience with at least one Harvard faculty member who may have delayed his ability to take his qualifying examinations. The strongest obstacle, however, was when a majority of independence advocates, his compatriots within the university ranks, turned their backs on him, favoring the Popular Democratic Party and its repressive tactics. The reasons often voiced for this are expressed in terms of the violence/non-violence binary. One cannot help but wonder the extent to which racism may have played an important role in their reaction as well.

Tío Raúl, felt great pride in his development within the University of Puerto Rico Law School, but he did not receive the clerical support required for his publication that he was later provided by the Inter-American University upon his tenure there. The reason for this is unclear. However, other independence party affiliated faculty from the University of Puerto Rico complained about similar treatment. The power of bureaucracies is no small matter. If, Jaime Benítez, as a result of personal bias, had denied Tío Raúl the position he requested in the Law School, it is likely that he would have accepted José Trías Monge’s administrative position which may have prevented him from taking on the role as constitutional consultant. This may have also had a detrimental effect on his position as a faculty member, taking him out of the political

circles that would fuel his analysis within future publications about constitutional and civil law.



4. *Tío Raúl and Tía Irma*

Beliefs, sentiment and practices generally accompany each other in complicated and contradictory ways. Images are manipulated with apparent similarity, while driven by very different emotions. In the mid nineteenth hundreds, a profusion of public discourses on the evils of colonialism were kept ardently present in the minds of the most disenfranchised by leaders such as Albizu. He was proof that the most rejected of society, the poor black descendants of slaves could, given adequate circumstances, rise up to be leaders. Similarly, the story of Tío Raúl, due to the greater detail of his formative years, reveals the networks that enabled him to achieve academic and professional success despite the economic downturn of the nation and of his family. The “adequate” circumstances for both would begin to be constructed through the ethos of industrialization, the imposition of military power within the ambiguous carriage of “democracy” which promised endless opportunities, while reducing the options for action.

The third Puerto Rican faculty member who studied at Harvard is of Tío Raúl's generation and also participated in the research process of the Puerto Rican Constitution. He later became a candidate for Governor with his own independence party el "Partido Unión Puertorriqueña." Unlike Albizu and Tío Raúl, he is the descendant of a small white farming family that struggled to make ends meet prior to entering the United States Army during WWII. Antonio J. González, 89 years old at the time of the interview on October of 2010, graduated with honors from the University of Puerto Rico after benefitting from the GI Bill. His known affiliation to the independence movement disqualified him from the Harvard grant endorsed by Chancellor Benítez. Despite this, and with the support of his wife who was expecting a child, he headed for Harvard to study economics and later completed his Ph.D. at la Universidad Complutense de Madrid to "address the deficits of Harvard"²⁴¹.

Antonio J. González: From Small Farmer to an Elite GI Bill Education

Don Toño, as we, the children from the Faculty Residences call him, has always been a close friend of the family. He and his wife, Doña Gina, were asked by my mother to be the godparents of one my brothers. His youngest son grew up with my younger brother as best friends. His family was known for throwing fantastic Three Kings Day Christmas parties which included poets,"cuatro and guitar" musicians and all the assortment of traditional foods for the holidays such as coquito (coconut rum drink), lechón (roasted pig), arroz con gandules (rice and pigeon peas), tembleque (coconut type pudding), arroz con dulce (sweet rice with raisins), pasteles (a dish made of plantain, rice or manioc dough filled with pork, olives raisins, red peppers, garbanzos and spices) and many other dishes. They were also co-organizers of the "Alborada," the Catholic practice of singing songs from house-to-house at 5:00 am on Christmas Eve, followed by a mass with a warm breakfast of coffee, orange juice, warm French bread with butter and sorullos (sweet cheese-filled corn "fingers"). As children, we would rush home to look under our imported Christmas tree for our gifts after this event. Whereas most of us were looking for the presents left by Santa Claus, Don Toño's and Dona Gina's son would look for the gifts left by "El Niñito Jesús" (the Baby Jesus). This was an example of

²⁴¹ Interview with Don Toño: 10/2010

how, while sharing the same religious traditions, the clash of cultures brought about different interpretations of the same event.

As I was growing up, all I knew about Don Toño and his family were three things. The first is that they were the symbols and guardians of the best of Puerto Rican culture within the Faculty Residences. This is not surprising because the mountain region from where they came, was the place where small farmers of Spanish descent maintained their traditions, more so than the coastal areas which were more influenced by commerce. They were staunch “Independentistas,” which I felt myself to be as well, and they were like an extended family. I also remember a few more things, Don Toño had gone to the University of Puerto Rico while my mother was a student there, and he had studied in Harvard at the same time as her and Tío Raúl. Like them, he was a faculty member at the UPR. I had also heard from him, when I was a child, during WWII that he had been held and tortured as a prisoner of war by the Nazis. I remember that his middle son, who was several years older than I, was an artist. Don Toño and Doña Gina displayed his artwork in the living room on the same spot where I found it twenty-seven years later when I conducted their interview.

When I visited their home after so many years, the Faculty Residences gate was wide open, the buildings had black fungus on several areas and the grass in front of the residences was unkempt and overgrown. It was easy to tell that many apartments were empty. When we walked towards their home, Doña Gina came to greet us. She looked very similar to how I remembered her, with the exception that her hair had whitened. Don Toño, who arrived later, was happy as usual, but appeared to be somewhat rushed for time. I interviewed several residents about the current neglect of the Faculty Residences and I was told that the encroachment of vandalism increased since the University changed its residency policies.

It used to be that the University extended indefinite contracts to professors and this policy allowed the development of a community among the residents. As the land of the Faculty Residences increased in value, and living in Río Piedras became more crowded, the University decided to restrict contracts to two years and to open the Residences to a large number of professors from India, China and other Asian countries for a short term. This, in addition to the increasing economic pressures, led the University to discharge more and more of its maintenance responsibilities on the tenants, while not fully carrying out its supervisory responsibilities. Comments were often made that workers became

more lax, disregarded rules, and began using the empty garages for their personal preferences. This, in conjunction with the reduced renewal of contracts, the weakening community relations due to the temporary nature of the contracts that were awarded, and the passing of the older generations led to the current state of “La Resi.”²⁴²

Several of the elderly faculty members stated their fear of being alone there. It was clearly a different world from the one I had known. An eerie and sad feeling came over me as I remembered its vibrancy when I was growing up and when most residents knew each other. On the other hand, I could not but remember the images of the poor barefoot children dressed in muted and often dirty clothes who used to cross through it from beyond its limits, smelling paper sacks filled with glue—“Los huele-pegas,” as they pulled a horse or a cow behind them. “La Resi,” as we referred to it, had a large basketball court in front of what used to be my building, where community members and resident youth would often play. Now it was as silent as everything else. Whereas during my youth, the outside gate ensured a broad space of tropical beauty protected from the outside main street and business sector of Río Piedras, now the gates were positioned as a second front door encroached by the outer world. It was evident that its role in the “showcase of democracy” had dwindled dramatically, similarly to the temporary, yet flashy interest of the U.S. and Puerto Rican Governments in the academic nurturing of the Islanders as it stands today.

Doña Gina offered us coffee and orange juice as she always had when I was a child. After she asked me a few questions about my life in the U.S. and that of my brothers, we began our conversation about the educational trajectory of her husband and of herself.

Los papás de Toño tuvieron 10 hijos de los cuales tres murieron. Sus padres eran del Barrio Frontón de Ciales. El primer y el último hijo nacieron allí., los demás en Manatí; cuatro mujeres y tres hombres. Su abuelo era hacendado cafetalero en el Barrio Guilarte de Adjuntas Ulpiano. Los herederos la vendieron y se la repartieron. En 1815 fue el período de mejor crecimiento de la hacienda. La Cédula de Gracia tenía el mismo espíritu de la ley de incentivos industriales de 1950. Las dos estimularon el crecimiento económico.²⁴³

²⁴² Interview with a faculty resident. Oct 2011.

²⁴³ Interview with “Dona Gina”—Antonio Gonzalez’ wife 10/2010

Translation: Toño’s parents had ten children of whom three died. His parents were from the Barrio Frontón of Ciales. The first and last child were born there. The rest in Manatí, four girls and four boys. His grandfather was a coffee plantation owner in Barrio Guilarte of Adjuntas Ulpiano. The heirs sold it and

La Cédula de Gracias or “The Royal Decree of Graces” of 1815 had the purpose of promoting increased European settlement in Cuba and Puerto Rico by Spanish decree. Puerto Rico and Cuba were the only remaining Spanish colonies when Spain wished to reduce the independence fervor of the islanders by offering free land to European settlers who would swear allegiance to the Spanish crown and the Catholic Church. This was, according to Doña Gina, the most prosperous time of Don Toño’s family farm. Despite this, he remembers living in relative poverty. He came from a family of ten children where three of them died. They owned a small coffee plantation they had inherited from his grandfather in Barrio Guilarte of the mountain town of Adjuntas. The plots decreased in size due the land re-distribution among the children when the grandfather passed away. Thus, the earlier gains they had made thanks to the Cédula de Gracias had been reversed.

Don Toño recalls that most of his siblings had not reached beyond the third grade in school. He was able to complete the eighth grade by the age of 24 when he entered the army. Upon being discharged with honors, due to his imprisonment in the war camps, he completed 9th -12th grade in two years at Ciales High School. He was admitted to the University of Puerto Rico in 1947. He graduated in three years with honors after taking 18-21 credits per term.

Don Toño’s view of the place of education in the Island is important in terms of its relation to the political and economic status of Puerto Rico. He believes, first of all that a differentiation must be established between “developed” and “underdeveloped countries” in relation to their ability to create venues for the upward mobility of the masses. Whereas in the earlier years of American colonization two thirds of the Puerto Rican population was illiterate and poor, during the New Deal, the ability to study became the most efficient way to enter the middle class leaving poverty behind. Don Toño mentioned how his uncle-in-law, who enrolled his children in “La Central”—the elite public school, was an example of how the middle class was composed of those who went from high school to the university. In the case of Puerto Rico, according to him, 80% of the middle class during 1940 was composed of teachers.

distributed it amongst themselves. Eighteen fifteen was the period of greatest growth for the plantation. The Cédula de Gracia had the same spirit as the law of industrial incentives of the 1950s. They both stimulated economic growth.

Hay que hacer una diferencia entre países altamente desarrollados y subdesarrollados. En los subdesarrollados no habían sistemas educativos para facilitar que subieran las masas de pobres. Dos terceras partes de la población de P.R. era pobre, campesina, analfabeta. Yo tenía un tío político y todos sus hijos estudiaron en la Central. Estudiar se convirtió en el instrumento más eficaz para salir de la pobreza y entrar a la clase media. La clase media estaba hecha de personas que pasaron de la escuela superior a la universidad. De estos, en 1940 el 80% eran maestros. La clase laboral constituía el 40%. A la Central High fue una elite de amigos que fue a estudiar allá.²⁴⁴

Don Toño, who also took advantage of these trends, was asked in 1950 by Pedro Muñoz Amato, the Dean of Social Sciences, what he wanted to study. Don Toño who had excelled as his student, received an A on all his papers. He answered that he had a preference for law.

La segunda monografía era hacer un sistema unicameral en P.R. Ahí se empezó a discutir hacer una constitución para Puerto Rico donde yo trabajé con Raúl. En Harvard yo iba a estudiar economía...Se iba a autorizar la Constitución y el Ford Foundation iba a dar 1.5 millones para trabajar la Constitución.²⁴⁵

Upon hearing about his interest, Muñoz Amato recommended that he apply to Harvard given that otherwise, the competition for employment on the Island would be tough. There were already too many lawyers—the elite of Puerto Rico, he said. When Don Toño informed him that he was a poor farmer, the Dean suggested that he apply for a grant from the UPR and Harvard. Excited, he rushed to his wife and said “Mira Ginín, me van a dar una beca para ir a Harvard” (Look Ginín, I am going to get a grant to go to Harvard!) and she answered, “Solo te quedarás!” (Alone you will stay!). The University of Puerto Rico denied him the grant even though he was admitted into Harvard.

Fui a Harvard con licencia sin sueldo, sin beca, llenando una plaza de asistente investigativo. A Jaime Benítez yo le agradezco que no tomara en consideración que yo fuera independentista a pesar de que yo lo había fastidiado. Me nombró

²⁴⁴ Interview with Antonio J. Gonzalez 10/2010

The quote was summarized in the main text.

²⁴⁵ Interview with Antonio J. Gonzalez. 10/2010

Translation: The requirement for the second monograph was to design a unicameral system for P.R. This is when the discussion about creating a constitution for Puerto Rico began and when I worked with Raúl [Serrano Geyls]. I was going to study economics in Harvard...The constitution was going to be authorized and the Ford Foundation was going to provide 1.5 million dollars to work on the Constitution.

ayudante administrativo. Gina trabajaba en una fábrica con cinco meses de embarazo [para ayudarme a pagar los gastos.]

Don Toño expressed his gratitude to Jaime Benítez for offering him an administrative assistant position despite the fact that Don Toño, being in favor of independence, had “caused him several headaches.” The Chancellor, on the other hand, gave Tío Raúl a full scholarship, given his affiliation to the Popular Democratic Party, in addition to being an outstanding student. The group chosen to go to Harvard by the U.P.R. “was brilliant,” according to Don Toño, and funding was never lacking for those types of grants because of the money being forwarded to Puerto Rico by various American foundations.

Harvard era la número uno en el mundo. El [Jaime Benítez?] recomendó a Raúl. El grupo de muchachos era brillante. Siempre hubo dinero para esas becas. Habían instituciones de Estados Unidos que mandaban dinero a la UPR para becas. Terminé el doctorado en La Complutense de Madrid en España. En Harvard estudié con sabática sin sueldo.²⁴⁶

Don Toño, however, had to study with an unpaid sabbatical leave while his wife worked in a factory to support him and their soon-to-be-born child. In Harvard, he became the student of Carl Joachim Friedrich, the German political theorist most renowned during WWII for his work on law and constitutionalism, and for his activism in the repatriation of German Jewish scholars to the United States. He advised on the constitutions of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Israel²⁴⁷. It is apparent that in the context of WWII, transnational influences were at play in the construction of a new world. Whereas Albizu was consulted for the Irish constitution, Friedrich, a German, was instrumental in that of Puerto Rico.

During Don Toño’s administrative assistant position, independence advocates were protesting the Congressional 600 Law, which approved the creation of the Constitution. Because of his political views, Benítez falsely accused him of divulging confidential information related to his work. It was later discovered that Gilberto Concepción de Gracia, founder and president of the Independence Party, was the culprit.

²⁴⁶ Interview with Don Toño. October 2010

²⁴⁷ Interview with Don Toño. October 2010
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Joachim_Friedrich

From 1948-1972 he ran for mayor of Ciales, San Juan and for Governor, losing all elections as an independence candidate. He retired from the University of Puerto Rico in 1982 and, at the time of the interview, was working as an adjunct lecturer at the Centro de Estudios Avanzados de P.R. y el Caribe founded by archeologist Ricardo Alegría. The focus of this graduate program was history, literature, law and the arts.

Doña Gina, his wife, also graduated from Ciales High School. She took summer courses in the Normal School focusing on “native industry” and home economics. On the weekends she took courses in Arecibo, which enabled her to teach in the rural area of Morovis during a time when the war had taken the youth and most of the teachers. Doña Gina ultimately devoted her life to her family and being a homemaker. Her work enabled her husband to move forward academically while she worked in the factory and raised her children when he was in Harvard.

Nos decían “maestros pisicorre.” Yo empecé con industrias nativas y casi terminé economía doméstica. Empecé en el campo de Moro vis por 2-3 meses. Había guerra y se llevaban a los jóvenes y no habían maestros. Me gustó enseñar porque eran cosas que a mí me gustaban, que se comían, el valor de cada cosa. Me hubiera gustado ser nutricionista.²⁴⁸

As revealed in the life of Dona Gina, the role of women in the Faculty Residences was quite varied. Several were homemakers; others were either married or single faculty members. Regardless of their situation, all women carried, by association, the academic prestige gained through their husbands or through their own academic standing. There were examples, however, of women given less priority by the building administration if they were single women or heads of family. “They often had to wait a long time before a worker would be sent to help them with various apartment repairs.”²⁴⁹

For Don Toño and Doña Gina it was clear that education was the anticipated dream for the masses of Puerto Ricans to be able to ascend into the middle class. Such was their own trajectory; from scarce agrarian resources to a position nurtured through the most prestigious international universities and academic departments of the UPR.

²⁴⁸ Interview with Doña Gina. October 2010

Translation: They called us “stop and go” teachers. I began with native crafts and I almost completed home economics. I began [teaching] in the rural town of Morovis for 2-3 months. The war was going on and it took the youth. There were no teachers. I liked teaching because I taught things that I enjoyed doing, things you could eat, the value of each thing. I would have liked to have been a nutritionist.

²⁴⁹ Interview with my mother. May 2011

Education, was a means, as it was for Albizu and Tío Raúl, to struggle for sovereignty, cultural validation and dignity as a people and as subjects. All three experienced repression due to their political beliefs; some more than others depending on how radical they were. Tío Raúl, who had been better off economically and socially, benefitted from an earlier and more consistent formal education. Don Toño, who was similarly privileged by race, began school at a much later date due to economic scarcity and reduced ties to the elite. However, his connection to tradition was much more profound and provided a cultural wealth that would, paradoxically, become the unifying glue of the Faculty Residences community and of its descendants.

Estas tradiciones se han mantenido vivas últimamente con la ayuda de la hija de un matrimonio de profesores que estudia en los Estados Unidos y que se dio a la tarea de llamar a los residentes antiguos que ya no vivían en La Resi y convocarlos para que fueran a la alborada.²⁵⁰

In fact, he would use his experience and knowledge in law to defend the rights of the older faculty who were now relegated and forgotten by the University of Puerto Rico. Some of these professors were living off of \$300 meager pensions in the 1990s because these were based on a portion of their original salaries from the 1940s. Don Toño, often offered his services to them at no cost or at reduced prices. Similar to Albizu, he fought in the war as a result of our imposed US citizenship of 1917. He also faced the stark reality of the injustice of this experience—Albizu through racial segregation and Don Toño through forced conscription that ended in physical and mental torture. Tío Raúl’s awareness grew at Columbia University, having no other alternative, but to examine the “insular cases” when asked to analyze the Constitution: those Supreme Court cases which established that despite our US citizenship, some aspects of the Bill of Rights and the full extent of the American Constitutions did not apply to us as an unincorporated territory²⁵¹.

²⁵⁰ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

Translation: Lately, these traditions have been maintained with the help of the daughter [who is earning her graduate degree in the US] of two professors who took it upon herself to call those faculty members who no longer live in La Resi to invite them to the “alborada”.

²⁵¹ Torruella, Juan (2001) *One Hundred Years of Solitude: Puerto Rico's American Century*. In, *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, The American Expansion, and the Constitution*. Ed. by Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall. 2001. Duke University Press. p. 243, 248.

Trías Monge, José (2001) *Injustice According to Law: The Insular Cases and Other Oddities*. In, *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, The American Expansion, and the Constitution*. Ed. by Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall. 2001. Duke University Press. p. 239.

Don Toño, like Albizu, has firmly adhered to the ideals of independence throughout his life. Unlike him, but more like Tío Raúl, he believes in the rule of law and non-violence.

Tío Raúl, being much more tied to the elite networks of the 40s, was better able to transition into what, at that time, was considered the best and most realistic political option for the Island to achieve independence. This was the Popular Democratic Party's recommendation for a "free associated state" or "commonwealth" that would achieve autonomy incrementally. The differential position of these men vis-à-vis their social, gendered and economic privilege helps clarify the compromises they were or were not willing to make with regards to the construction of the Puerto Rican nation. It is significant, however, that despite these differences, and despite their commonality with regards to their education in Harvard—"a gift of the United States"--they held firmly to the common principle that a quality education in Spanish, with an emphasis on Puerto Rican culture, needed to be maintained.

Doña Gina's role in this process is significant. She collaborated in the maintenance of tradition in our community and enabled her husband, who had come from a humble background to resist all barriers, even those imposed by Jaime Benítez--a compatriot--when he was denied the scholarship to attend Harvard. Her dreams to become a nutritionist were postponed indefinitely. Although she began her educational ascent as a visiting teacher, she did not have the economic stability in the early years of her formation that would facilitate their accomplishment. Like Laura Meneses, Albizu's wife, she provided the stability necessary in the home for the children to grow up while they supported their husbands with their political missions. Thus, the New Deal, with its perpetuation of colonial rulings of the "insular cases," also brought with it the benefits and continued contradictions that would plant the seeds for a widening array of options for Puerto Rican women. This leads us to our fourth Harvard graduate; my mother.

María M. Matos Serrano: A Life Long Immersion in the Academy

My mother is 78 years old. Her mother, María Magdalena Serrano Geyls was one of Tío Raúl's older sisters. Tío Raúl apparently forgot that my grandmother, unlike his other sisters who had only studied until the eighth grade, had continued on to a master's degree in the early 50s, becoming a Spanish professor in the School of Commerce at the

U.P.R. My grandmother left her childhood home when she was a teenager after two years of high school to become a visiting teacher. She often mentioned to my mother that she decided to leave in order to escape the “feudal times” to which Tío Raúl had referred, but for which she had a different name...

My grandfather, Gregorio Matos Geysls began his career as an apprentice mechanic in his effort to save his mother’s farm and put his older brother through high school and the university. At that time, he sacrificed his own desire to become an engineer.

Mi papá idolotraba a su mamá. El asumió el papel de proveedor ante su familia cuando su padre se fue con su amante, una agregada. Se escapó por la ventana tratando de huirle a las tijeras amenazantes de mi abuela que se acababa de enterar de sus “aventuras.” No sé por qué Antonio, su hermano mayor, no fue el que asumió ese papel tradicional en vez de él. Quién sabe si abuelita le pidió a papi que ayudara a su hermano mayor porque papi era el que estaba ganando dinero como mecánico. Mi papá quería mucho a su madre y era muy dulce y respetuoso hacia ella. Nosotros la visitábamos todos los domingos. Abuelita vivía con su única hija, Lolita. A ella la llamaban la flor del Coto por su belleza.

Abuelita era muy sabia y nos transmitía a los nietos su sabiduría que estaba ligada a su contacto con la tierra y los animales, especialmente las palomas. Ella tenía un palomar. Puedo darte dos ejemplos: un día fuimos al patio y ella estaba atendiendo las palomas y entonces yo le hice un comentario sobre cómo las palomas se arremolinaban y lo contentas que parecían. Ella me dijo que los animalitos eran como la gente, que si no les dabas cariño, se iban. En otras ocasiones nos hablaba de las cualidades curativas de distintas plantas que servían para la salud.²⁵²

²⁵² Interview with my mother 10/2010

Translation: My father idolized his mother. He assumed the role of the provider of his family when his own father left with his mistress who was a sharecropper. He “bolted” through a window trying to escape from my grandmother’s menacing scissors. She had just found about his “adventures.” I don’t know why Antonio, his older brother, did not assume the traditional role of provider instead of my father. Who knows if grandma asked Dad to help his older brother because Dad was the one earning money as a mechanic. My father loved his mother very much and he was very affectionate and respectful towards her. We would visit her every Sunday Grandma lived with her only daughter, Lolita. They called her the flower of El Coto [name of the neighborhood] for her beauty. Grandma was very wise and she transmitted her wisdom to us, her grandchildren: a wisdom which came from her contact with the land and animals. She had pigeons. I can give you two examples: one day we went to the yard and she was tending to her birds and then I made the comment about how the pigeons would flock around each other and her and how happy they appeared to be. She told me that animals were like people that if they felt unloved, they would leave. On other occasions she spoke to us about the curative qualities of various plants that were good for our health.

It is possible that his sacrifice was a result of his mother's request that he help his older brother with his schooling, given that he (my grandfather) was the only one employed at the time. The relationship between him and his mother was one of great respect and love. My grandfather's mother taught my mother, when she was a child, for example, that animals are like people, if they are "not treated with affection, they leave." The extent to which this may have been a reflection on her own life can only be inferred.

Upon winning the lottery, my grandfather began his own shop in a rented area and married my grandmother. Prior to this, he had worked for one of the richest families in the town. My grandfather was the chief mechanic in charge of car repairs, but felt that the salary he was receiving was unfair given the services he was providing. My grandfather's mechanic shop became the most prosperous in the area. This enabled him to build his family home, one of the first constructed in the "Urbanización Oliver." As a result of my grandmother's influence, they made sure to include a substantial library in its design. They also built a mechanic's garage with a display room for cars and an office for my grandmother's Sears business²⁵³. This was acceptable to my grandfather who had not allowed her to work before because he took pride in his role as provider. The Sears business was seen as a family affair because it shared space with his own. Despite this, it is worth noting that her role as a Sears business manager marked the beginning of a change in her traditional gender role. Not many women at that time occupied such a position. This was a role often left to men.

At this time, my grandfather's shop included trucks, which transported merchandise around the Island. He became a dealer of European and American cars. Moreover, with the New Deal funds, he became a teacher of mechanics. The New Deal did not only provide monetary support for higher education, its main focus was actually the revitalization of the economy through technical programs.

My mother's parents earned enough to be "more than comfortable" and to pay for the private Catholic education of their children. Both her parents were able to complete high school and go to college by studying on the weekends. My grandfather, like Don Toño accelerated his high school graduation by studying through the correspondence

²⁵³ Interview with my mother. 10/2010.

module program of the Department of Education. My grandmother went on to complete her master's degree on Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, the Puerto Rican 19th century playwright. Among her topics, she included a feminist analysis of this author's work. My grandfather took college courses in insurance, earning a certificate from the University of Puerto Rico.

The education they provided my mother, aunt and uncle was quite different from that experienced by most other children, including that of Tío Raúl when he was a child.

La educación en el hogar, desde lo que yo me acuerde, en mi casa se privilegiaba. Habían horas fijas para bañarse, estudiar, acostarse y aprender piano desde los tres años. Mi madre se sentaba con nosotros en una mesa grande, la mesa del comedor, y ahí cada cual hacía sus asignaciones, incluyéndola a ella si estaba estudiando. Si alguien tenía preguntas tenía la oportunidad de hacerlas en ese momento o buscábamos los diccionarios para hacer la asignación.²⁵⁴

They had a very structured schedule with a shared family goal of academic excellence. In her house the kind of struggles that Tío Raúl mentioned between his parents regarding his own education, did not occur. Her parents, she explained, “discussed family and other private matters in their bedroom, but when they came out, they were of one mind. Its true!”²⁵⁵

The study and daily schedule of her family was quite rigid. The children would go to bed at 6:00 pm while there was still daylight and they would wake up at 6:00 am. On school days, they did homework after school, and then they promptly went to bed. Their only playtime was on weekends. My mother was taught piano at 3 years of age, the same age she entered first grade. She practiced one hour daily. She was a voracious reader and would use any free time to delve into children's stories and heroic Spanish novels.

She recalled the atmosphere in her house when her parents went to the Arcibo Casino balls or to the movies. The house, suddenly, became a playground and place of adventure and discovery as she and her siblings explored her mother's fantastic wardrobe

²⁵⁴ Interview with my mother 10/2010

Translation: From what I can remember, the education in my home was prioritized. There were scheduled times for bathing, studying, sleeping and practicing the piano since I was three years old. My mother would sit with us at a large table, the dining table and that is where everyone of us did our homework, including her who was studying as well. If anyone had questions, they had the opportunity to ask them at that moment or we would look for the dictionaries to do our homework.

²⁵⁵ Interview with my mother 10/2010.

in the presence of her older brother's two-and-half foot oval baby picture. He died at the age of three of what appears to have been gastroenteritis. In those days, diseases such as cancer, tuberculosis and meningitis were kept as family secrets. For some reason, it was considered to be a shameful family event. My grandfather told my mother that my grandmother became traumatized when the baby died.

En las vacaciones, o en día feriados estábamos en la cama a las seis de la tarde. Comíamos entre cinco y cinco y media y entonces a bañarse y a las seis, en la cama. Todavía había luz del día. Pero cuando mis padres salían a algún baile del Casino de Arecibo, nosotros aprovechábamos y nos salíamos de las camas (risa) y nos poníamos a jugar debajo de las mesas y corríamos por todos lados. Tratábamos de escondernos de la señora que limpiaba y nos cuidaba. Otro pasatiempo favorito en esos días que ellos salían, especialmente para mí, era ir al cuarto de mi madre. Ella tenía un guardarropa grande de caoba pintado con laca negra y tenía dos espejos. En ese guardarropa, ella guardaba sus tesoros. Entonces yo me iba y lo abría porque la llave estaba en el ojo de la cerradura. Adentro habían trajes largos de baile de seda, mantones españoles de Manila bordados de colores vivos sobre fondo negro, que terminaban en flecos. Mi madre tenía otro objeto que excitaba mi imaginación. Era una moneda española de oro que ella guardaba allí. Para mi todo eso era como un cofre de tesoros. Y muchas veces yo iba tocar los trajes y a pensar en como consiguió la moneda. ¿Qué historias fantásticas habían sobre la trayectoria de esa moneda? En el cuarto también, en la pared detrás de la cama, había un retrato grande, ovalado de un bebé precioso. Era el retrato de mi hermanito “Cuqui.” Le decían así pero su nombre era Gregorio, muerto a los tres años de edad. No sé de que murió pero a mi me dijeron que fue de gastroenteritis. Me contó papi que mami se volvió loca cuando murió. Yo todavía no había nacido. Así que por un lado habían los tesoros pero por otro lado estaba el retrato de Cuqui que me llenaba de misterio; algo que yo no comprendía. Encima de la coqueta había un conjunto de cepillos y espejo de tocador de plata que el Dr. López le había regalado en alguna navidad a mami.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ Interview with my mother. 08/2010

Translation: During our vacations or holidays, we were in bed at six in the afternoon. We ate between five and five thirty and then to bathe, and to bed at six. There was still light outside. But when our parents went out to a dance at the Casino of Arecibo, we would take advantage [of their absence] and get out of bed (laugh) and we would play under the tables and run all over the place. We tried to hide from the lady who cleaned and took care of us. Another pastime on those days when they would go out, at least for me, was to go to my mother's bedroom. She had a large oak dresser painted in black lacquer with mirrors. She would keep her treasures in that dresser. I would go and open it because the key was in the lock. Inside there were long ballroom dresses made of silk, Spanish Manila scarves made of silk, embroidered with lively colors over a black background, that ended in fringes. My mother had another object that excited my imagination. It was an old Spanish gold coin that she kept there. For me, all of that was like a treasure chest. Many times I would take out the dresses and wonder how she got the gold coin. What fantastic stories were there of the journeys of that coin? In the room, there was also, on the wall behind the bed, a large oval picture of a beautiful baby. It was the picture of my brother “Cuqui”. This is what they called him, but his name was Gregorio; he died at three years of age. I don't know what he died of, but I was told it was from gastroenteritis. Dad told me that mom went crazy when he died. I had not been born at this

Although my grandfather did experience a period of poverty when his father abandoned his mother and his siblings, he actively sought to improve the family fortune and enter the middle class. He was especially influenced by my grandmother's desire to introduce their children "into society." Thus, their elementary education took place in the school that had previously only been for "rich girls," as Tío Raúl informed us. In fact, he was shocked when, during the interview, my mother told him that she had studied there.

M: Yo estude ahí.

TR: ¿Tu fuiste a esa escuela?

M: Sí

TR: No

M: Sí

TR: No (Silencio pensativo.²⁵⁷)

This is especially interesting because Tío Raúl, who used to visit his sister (my grandmother and her family) as a boy, told us that he had always thought of my grandfather as working-class in contrast to his side of the family because his aunt, my grandfather's mother, lived humbly on her farm and her son "was always fixing cars."

My mother's primary education took place at San Felipe, the Catholic school which had become co-educational. It was still the only private school in Arecibo and she recalls that the teachers, with the exception of one—Sister Carmencita—were all American.

The American influence during WWII was apparent in two additional childhood memories. Her mother had a close friend who lived in Aguadilla where the Ramey Air Base was located. She befriended some American soldiers and began taking them to my mother's house on some Sundays. There were two other soldiers who ate and spent the day with them. The war effort and the company of these men led her to organize a youth play militia with her neighbors and to plan a sort of guerrilla warfare encounter with her friends. She invented a uniform with a band around her arm with ranks used when they "attacked the enemy." She collected nylon stockings for parachutes, toothpaste tubes

time. So, on the one hand, there were the treasures, but on the other Cuqui's picture that filled me with mystery: something that I did not understand. On top of the dressing table, there was a set of brushes and a mirror made of silver that Dr. López had given to my mother on one Christmas.

²⁵⁷ Conversation between Tío Raúl and my mother.

and other metals for weapons factories. Her parents sent them to places where they recycled them for the war. She believes that if there was ever a “just war” that was it.

Who would think that many years afterwards, as a member of the faculty at State University College at Oswego, N.Y. I would sign a faculty cable to the President of the United States, protesting the Vietnam War? A Puerto Rican colleague there warned me that signers would face reprisals. When I returned to Puerto Rico after my sabbatical, a Puerto Rican representative of the IRS harassed me regarding my ex-husband’s non-existent contributions to the family.²⁵⁸

During my mother’s elementary school years at San Felipe, all classes were taught in English with the exception of Spanish and the children were expected to pledge allegiance to the American flag in English, every morning, while they stood in a row outside the school.

Yo estudié en mi escuela elemental en el Colegio San Felipe, la escuela privada católica de Arecibo. Cuando yo estudié habían tanto niñas como niños, a diferencia de la época de Tío Raúl. Había una marcada presencia Americana que se hacía sentir porque antes de entrar a la escuela, los niños formaban una fila donde había que saludar la bandera Americana en inglés. Además, la gran mayoría de las maestras que eran Hermanitas Carmelitas, eran americanas.²⁵⁹

Sister Carmencita was the only Puerto Rican teacher, as far as my mother remembers, and she taught all subjects from the first to the fourth grade. In her view, Sister Carmencita was excellent and prepared her not only for middle school, but for high school and the university as well. This is where she learned grammar and how to write and organize her thoughts appropriately; skills she was able to transfer into English and which later led her to Harvard.

Recuerdo que entre mis maestras había una sola maestra puertorriqueña que era “Sister Carmencita.” Ella me dio clases desde el primer al cuarto grado. Era una excelente maestra. Todo se enseñaba en inglés menos la clase de español. Pero esa clase de español era tan buena que me sirvió de base para todos los estudios que hice después en la intermedia, superior y hasta en la universidad. Entre otras cosas aprendí muy buena gramática. Aprendí a hacer bosquejos para las composiciones y a organizar mis ideas.²⁶⁰

San Felipe had a mostly white student population. My mother only recalls one light skinned “mulata” girl who also appeared to her to be on a scholarship because her

²⁵⁸ Interview with my mother 10/2010

²⁵⁹ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

²⁶⁰ Interview with my mother 10/2010

uniform, although well ironed, was visibly overused. Looking back, my mother was able to realize that things that she noticed as a child, but did not dwell on in those years, today are signs of class and racial disparities that characterized her environment. The girl that my mother referred to was much older than her, but was in the same grade. She was one of her best friends.

En esa escuela, la gran mayoría éramos blancos. Yo tenía una amiga que era, aparentemente, mulata de tez clara, pero se notaba la diferencia en las facciones y el pelo. Pero nada, nos llevábamos muy bien. El otro incidente que recuerdo con respecto a raza es que un día vino un muchacho alto a buscar admisión a la escuela. Era negro y hablaba inglés. Era americano. Recuerdo que la conserje lo observó y después que se fue, comentó entre nosotros, que le parecía que ese muchacho no era americano porque era negro.²⁶¹

A more apparent example of racism within the school was an incident where a tall black American sought enrollment. Despite his ability to speak English, the custodian could not believe he was American because “he was black.” “She said that he was a liar.”²⁶²

My mother left San Felipe in sixth grade and was enrolled in Jefferson Public School from seventh to ninth grade, the same school that Tío Raúl had attended several years before. Her mother explained to her that she was taking her out of San Felipe so that she would get to experience “the people” so she could begin to understand the “meaning of democracy.” My mother recalled with a laugh, that her eyes became wide open when she heard that, because she had never noticed any class differences in the school. The conflicts among the pupils in her educational trajectory were unrelated to class, gender or race. The only altercations she had, occurred at San Felipe. It involved “leveling the playing field” with a “plump red headed boy” named Nicolás who was harassing her comparatively frail looking younger brother. She waited for Nicolás after class and “took care of business.” She then chanted a popular jingle as the other children joined in choir to warn him not to continue along his bullying route:

“Nicolás, Nicolás. No te vistas que no vas.
Ni te pongas los zapatos, ni las medias colorás.”²⁶³

²⁶¹ Interview with my mother 10/10

²⁶² Interview with my mother 10/2010

²⁶³ **Translation:** Nicolas, Nicolas don't get dressed 'cause you're not going [that route]. Don't even put your shoes on or your red socks.

The experience my mother remembers upon leaving San Felipe to enter Jefferson public school was positive. There were two memories of special importance to her. The first one involved her Spanish teacher la Srta. Amadeo whom she remembers as one of her most excellent teachers because of her teaching methods and her presence at a key point in her development as a student.

She was a pale white older lady with gray thinning straight hair with little curls at the ends. She had meaty lips that were usually open and moist (laugh). She was relatively short and rather ample with breasts that came down to her waist. She generally wore a longer than usual white dress with black figures as if she were continuously mourning. Students called her “the cow” behind her back. In her presence, however, she was always Srta. Amadeo. Despite her physical appearance, she was an excellent teacher. The students respected her intelligence, thoroughness and fairness as a teacher. She opened wide horizons to the world of literature for me. She used to have shelves all around the room filled with all kinds of books: poetry, short stories, novels, autobiography and others. Her method was to motivate the students to read after finishing their classwork. In her classroom I read many books of many different kinds and to me it was the seed that led to my future development in literature.²⁶⁴

The second experience was the discovery of her leadership potential. She became class president in middle school and organized different activities. She realized that these were qualities that she could develop further. Regarding her mother’s wish that she learn about “the people” and “democracy,” she was able to experience a more varied student population. Interestingly, she did not have to salute the flag at Jefferson Public School, nor at the University High School which she later attended. This may have been due to the Puerto Rican Government’s increasing control over the public educational system. All classes at Jefferson High School, while my mother attended, were in Spanish as opposed to my uncles’ experience at the same school years before.

The demonstration of American allegiance required in the private school was possibly due to the role of the Americanization efforts of the Catholic Church mentioned earlier by historian Samuel Silva Gotay. According to my mother, the quality of the public school as compared to San Felipe was also good, but San Felipe was more structured, systematic and a “bit more demanding.” The key to success, according to her experience, is the discipline and study habits established at an early age with consistent home support.

²⁶⁴ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

Te digo que los hábitos de estudio hay que establecerlos desde bien temprano. En San Felipe yo aprendí a hacer las asignaciones diariamente, a pensar críticamente, a organizar mis ideas, a hacer bosquejos, a escribir y me sentaron las bases de las materias. En mi casa le daban seguimiento a todo eso.²⁶⁵

She was awarded the Spanish medal in her middle school graduation. From there, she took a history class during the summer and then she entered the University of Puerto Rico High School the following semester. The same school my brothers and I would never be allowed to attend.

The move from Arecibo to Río Piedras was very difficult for my grandfather. They moved because my grandmother wanted to be with her children during their university years and she felt that it was necessary to protect them. She used to keep a notebook of dreams and often felt that there was going to be some terrible tragedy such as her husband's death. She feared that this would interfere with their studies. This is why she always seemed concerned about "pushing [them] forward."

To my grandfather the move was traumatic, although after much convincing, like Tío Raúl's father, he finally gave in. He was forced to leave his recently built business and home, as well as an established clientele to start from scratch at a new place. The move in itself was costly and forced him to buy a property in the metropolitan area where real estate was also more expensive. At first, they rented a big cement house near the Matienzo Cintrón Residences at the University, which enabled them to walk to the high school. In later years, he bought a property near the U.P.R. President's Office in the outskirts of Río Piedras. Her father remodeled the house, which was also next to the U.P.R. Agricultural Station. In the downstairs section of the house, he sold automotive parts, gas and repaired cars. The family revenue was mediocre at best and when my grandmother became ill, he fell into near bankruptcy.

My mother remembers Don Toño going there at least twice to repair his car. She also remembers her grandfather, the one who had abandoned his family, going there to ask for financial help from her father.

El estaba esperando afuera. No entraba. Yo estaba afuera, preparándome para irme en el carro mientras lo miraba con curiosidad y extrañeza. Se veía solo y enajenado. Era mediano de estatura, delgado, de ojos azules y pelo rubio.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

²⁶⁶ Interview with my mother. 08/2010

The University of Puerto Rico High School, my mother's last school before entering the university, had a large number of excellent faculty and elite students—more so than San Felipe. Many were children of legislators and members of the cabinets of the two ruling parties. There were also writers to-be like Emilio Díaz Varcárcel. Again, her best teacher was her Spanish teacher who taught her a university level course on Cervantes. Her chemistry teacher was also very demanding, but he was able to establish a good rapport with his students.

Her Spanish teacher, Matilde Olivieri, had a wealth of knowledge. Her course was so excellent that it enabled my mother to win the Cervantes Literary Contest. My mother earned one of the highest scores of the Island on the university entrance exam. She also earned the medal of “El Instituto de Las Américas” awarded to first year students at the University of Puerto Rico. This contest demanded that all participants answer a comparative essay question that required them to think, organize, write and edit their essays while in the classroom without the benefit of the novel. She was fifteen years old, the youngest participant and freshman student at this time, when she entered the University and won this award. She believes that an important preparatory experience which led to her multiple academic triumphs at the university was her experience, at the age of 13 or 14, helping her mother conduct research and interviews for her master's thesis.

Dado el empuje académico de la Universidad, el grado de maestría que había sido creado recientemente se usó para probar la excelencia que se esperaba de los estudiantes. El nivel, en realidad, era más de doctorado para asegurarse de que los estudiantes puertorriqueños pudieran competir con los estudiantes de los Estados Unidos.²⁶⁷

Looking back at her high school years, the only black student that she recalls was the daughter Ernesto Ramos Antonini, a famous black orator, co-founder of the Popular

Translation: He was waiting outside. He would not enter. I was outside, getting ready to leave in the car, looking at him with a sense of curiosity and strangeness. He seemed alone and alienated. He was about medium height, slim, blue-eyed and had blonde hair.

²⁶⁷ Interview with my mother. 08/2010

Translation: Given the academic push at the University, the master's degree, that had been recently created, was used to prove the academic excellence demanded of students. Its level was really that of a Ph.D. to ensure that Puerto Rican students could compete with those of the United States.

Democratic Party with Muñoz Marín and President of the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico; a position which he held between 1944 and 1963, the year of his death. Ramos Antonini was known for defending the nationalist marchers who survived the Ponce Massacre and for being an advocate of the working class.

My mother entered the University of Puerto Rico in 1948, at the cusp of Jaime Benítez' tenure as chancellor. The Faculty of General Studies had been created around two years earlier, following the classic canon of the University of Chicago's "Great Books." It also put into practice the philosophy developed in the dissertation of Dr. Angel Quintero Alfaro, which purported to create "responsible and well rounded citizens for democracy."²⁶⁸ This dissertation was based on the idea that all university graduates should have a basic core of humanistic studies and Jaime Benítez interpreted it as being "Western Hemisphere Studies." Accordingly, the very best professors were hired from the United States, Europe and Puerto Rico to teach General Studies students. At that time, the Spanish Civil War was taking place and many exiled intellectuals were invited to join the faculty of the University of Puerto Rico. American Universities such as Columbia and Chicago conducted several studies there as well.

Los estudiantes sentían y se les hacia sentir que era un gran privilegio asistir a la Universidad de Puerto Rico y nos pidieron que hiciéramos el mejor uso posible del espacio que otros deseaban ocupar sin poder hacerlo.²⁶⁹

After completing her General Studies Program, she advanced to the Faculty of Humanities where all students were required to take Latin and one modern language. My mother and one other student advanced to individualized lessons with their language professors. In addition, my mother expanded her language studies to include Homeric Greek, French and German. She would later add Old English to this list when she attended Harvard. This fervor for languages was ignited, no doubt by the cosmopolitan atmosphere which pervaded Jaime Benítez' early years and which was probably influenced by the Kallen and Bourne debates which took place in the United States while

²⁶⁸ Interview with my mother 08/2010

²⁶⁹ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

Translation: Students felt and were made to feel that it was a great privilege to attend the University of Puerto Rico and we were asked to make the best possible use of the space which others wanted to, but could not occupy.

he was studying at the University of Chicago. The autonomist spirit also loomed large in the hearts of the Puerto Rican elite and languages were a necessary tool to begin creating international ties of commerce.

My mother graduated with a four-point average from the University of Puerto Rico and earned the Teodoro Aguilar Medal for the highest average of the graduating class. This is when she was offered the choice between applying for the Guggenheim Award or for a grant to go to Harvard. Her parents decided for her and when they saw that they could not convince her because she wanted to go to a smaller and more intimate college, they sent Tío Raúl, “the heavy artillery” to convince her.

Tío Raúl tenía una autoridad desde que yo era chiquita y había intervenido en varias facetas importantes de la vida de la familia. Mami le pedía consejos cuando había que hacer decisiones importantes, especialmente con el tema de la educación. Ahí ella lo consultaba. El me explicó que mi futuro sería mejor si estudiaba en Harvard en vez de en un colegio pequeño.²⁷⁰

Off she went to Harvard, the place where she would, by chance meet up with Tío Raúl and Don Toño when they were attending to prepare for their roles in the constitutional research process of Puerto Rico.

En Harvard lo que hubo, al principio, fue un sentimiento de enajenación por la separación de mi familia y por la entrada a un mundo y a una cultura nueva. Recuerda que yo sólo tenía 19 años cuando comencé mi maestría en Harvard y era la primera vez que me separaba de mi familia. En la universidad yo no notaba ninguna diferencia en el trato hacia mí. Pero cuando iba a restaurantes del pueblo como la cafetería de Kmart o de Woolworth’s, por ejemplo, notaba que algunas de las meseras, como que resentían el acento. Yo hablaba un inglés muy correcto pero el acento era distinto. Además yo desconocía algunas frases idiomáticas que ellos usaban. Pero, como yo te dije, también había prejuicio con las mujeres hasta por las mujeres. Ir a Harvard para las mujeres se veía como un adorno para el casamiento. Era como tomar clases de piano, bordar y esas cosas. Una de mis compañeras de Atlanta me dijo que ella había ido a Harvard por la experiencia de estar en Harvard antes de casarse y de dedicarse a su familia. A mí me estuvo un poco raro pero no todo el mundo tenía las mismas metas en la vida. Para mí, mi familia siempre fue primera pero mi meta no era estar metida dentro de la casa.

Unlike Tío Raúl, who postponed his admission into Harvard and chose Columbia University because it was close to his sisters, my mother had to venture this experience alone. Initially, Harvard was an alienating and unknown place where “many women went

²⁷⁰ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

only to seek husbands.” She recalls feeling looked down upon at restaurants and stores because of her Puerto Rican accent, despite speaking English correctly and fluently. But she also remembers how women exhibited sexism towards each other. She experienced one incident after graduating from her master’s degree. She went to the Harvard employment office to seek temporary summer employment in N.Y. where she planned to spend her vacation before going to Syracuse University for her Ph.D. The woman in charge of the office looked at her sarcastically and recommended that she get married and leave the employment to her future husband. My mother became offended and left.

At the time of her acceptance to Harvard, she had also received a similar letter from Syracuse University, one of the three to which she had applied for her master’s degree. She chose to do her Ph.D. in Syracuse instead of continuing at Harvard due to feeling bribed by a faculty member who informed her that he would only award her an A if she completed her dissertation on a topic of his interest. My mother rejected this offer, accepted a lower grade than what she deserved and went to Syracuse where she also had family support.

Two experiences came to my mother’s mind when she recalled Syracuse University. The first had to do with a professor whom she considered of mediocre quality. He “spent his time showing off his doctoral gown in his office and talking about his personal life.” She rejected his demand to change her analysis according to his view and accepted a C grade, the only one she received in her entire academic career. She also recalled her discomfort while speaking at the Association of American University Women about Puerto Rico at the time of the Puerto Rican Nationalist attack against the U.S. Congress.

Me hicieron preguntas sobre el ataque y me sentí bien incómoda. Les respondí lo más objetivamente posible y les di información sobre el Partido Nacionalista y la situación electoral de Puerto Rico.²⁷¹

My mother had direct contact with the Dean of Humanities, Don Sebastian González Garcia, a Spaniard who was a good friend and collaborator of Jaime Benítez.

²⁷¹ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

Translation: They asked me about the attack and I felt very uncomfortable. I answered in the most objective way possible and I gave them information about the Nationalist Party and the electoral situation of Puerto Rico.

He had been her professor, mentor and friend at the University of Puerto Rico during her undergraduate years. He maintained contact with her while she was at Harvard and during her second year at Syracuse, he sent her a letter offering her a full time faculty position at the University of Puerto Rico for a salary of \$350.00 a month. My grandmother had become ill at this time so my mother chose to temporarily suspend her doctoral work and accept the offer. She was twenty-two years old when she began her tenure track position. My grandmother passed away in 1955 at the age of 52 from cancer, only a few years after completing her master's degree.

The Politics of Teaching at the University of Puerto Rico and the US

Throughout the various interviews and depictions of the Puerto Rican faculty who studied at Harvard, themes on the politics of teaching have surfaced in varying fashions, flowing surreptitiously and almost indiscernibly in the midst of the myriad of other themes. This is partly due to the difference in the time I had to interview Don Toño and Tío Raúl, as opposed to that of my mother whom I have had by my side on several occasions. Regarding Albizu, information about his upbringing is still rather scattered and unclear. Tío Raúl, passed away leaving mostly memoirs from his students about his professional or didactic work. The more personal perspective of the departmental politics, then have come from my mother's and my own experience aided by the fewer details and similarities with what we know of those of the faculty members previously discussed.

The recounting of departmental politics is important with relation to minority academic achievement, whether it is within a colonized territory or in the colonizing mainland. The dynamics that take place at the administrative level have much to do with the equity of access for academic candidates and with their chances for survival in a tenure track position. The following interview reveals the significant obstacles that can hinder this process as well as the opportunities and strategies that can be employed to address them.

The purpose of the Personnel Committee is to hire, fire, promote, and guide professors according to a set of agreed upon procedures that should provide a level ground for all candidates. In order to carry out these processes the committee evaluates

them several times a year and meets with them in order to discuss findings. When the evaluation is complete, it is discussed with the director and the candidate is called in to inform him/her of the results and the reasons behind them. Throughout the year, the candidate is mentored and given the opportunity to add any necessary material or to contest any fact or decision that is made by bringing and discussing evidence that may have been overlooked. The candidate also has a right to see his or her personnel file.

La recomendación del comité casi siempre se seguía. Aunque supuestamente no tenemos poder ejecutivo, pero de hecho si tenemos mucha influencia porque por lo menos el 90% de las veces se siguen las recomendaciones... Después de que habíamos hecho todo eso empezamos a notar que cuando llamamos a los candidatos para explicarles las evaluaciones, ellas estaban cambiadas y nosotros no sabíamos cómo explicarles eso.²⁷²

In the following experience the procedures were breached. The Personnel Committee found, on at least three occasions, that its recommendations had been changed overnight without their knowledge. They were face to face with the candidate to be promoted and they could not explain the sudden changes. They noticed that those who were liked by the Director had positive evaluations and those who were not, received negative ones. They were forced to suspend the meetings until the matter was cleared up. My mother wrote the Director a letter stating that the procedures had not been followed fairly after she voiced her concerns before the Director and the Committee. Both attempts were ignored. They did not discuss the matter and moved on to other issues. My mother decided to speak to the candidates who were affected by this and one of them confronted the Committee.

My mother was accused of violating the confidentiality of the process, leading her to defend her position with the Committee. In effect, she was really being accused of not participating in the cover-up. The Director decided to take revenge and she called a meeting of the entire Department faculty, ostensibly to discuss other matters. When my mother was attempting to give a report, the Director accused her again of violating confidentiality, and asked the Department to remove her from the Committee. Due to the ruckus she was not able to speak to defend herself, so she listened to the arguments and took mental notes that she later shared with the Assistant Dean who was a lawyer.

²⁷² Interview with my mother. 10/2010.

Estaban gritando como gallinas en un gallinero. Imagínate que ese Departamento era casi todo de mujeres²⁷³ ... (Risa)

He advised her to write an even-toned letter stating the moral grounds on which her decision was based. On his advice, she included a comparison to the Nuremberg trials after WWII stating two things: that there is a hierarchy of values and that there is an individual responsibility for making choices, whether the person is under orders or not. In other words her argument was that justice comes before “confidentiality” and that we all have a moral responsibility to do what is right. She placed the letter in the mailboxes of all faculty members, giving them the time and space to read it carefully. The end result was that she was re-instated receiving overwhelming support from the general faculty.

The Director mentioned in this incident, kept secret files on the faculty which she used to make her personnel decisions without the knowledge of the professors. Another outcome of my mother’s success in bringing the violation of procedures to the attention of the faculty was that the secret files were removed and new procedures, which stressed transparency and equity, were instituted when she was elected Chairperson of the Committee. This achievement, however, prevented her from ever reaching the Department Directorship. On three different occasions she was elected into the position, but the appointment letters never reached her. The previous Director withheld them.

When asked if she noticed any differences in the academic climate of the classroom and the departments between Puerto Rico, Harvard, Syracuse, Oswego and Michigan State, she mentioned several that she attributed, mostly to the historical period and the prestige of the university. Harvard had the most prestige and the best qualified students to the point that even outside of classes students would gather to gather to discuss the themes of their various classes. The conversations had more depth and complexity than those of the other colleges. However, the professors were oriented towards publishing and had very little time or interest in the needs of their students. Years later, Harvard attended to this problem and emphasized teaching at all levels.

²⁷³ Interview with my mother: 10/2010

Translation: They were squawking like hens in a chicken pen. Imagine, that Department was overwhelmingly composed of women... (Laugh)

Her work at State University of New York at Oswego occurred during the Vietnam War. This was a small college with good and mediocre professors and students. Because of the political outcry against the Vietnam War there was an atmosphere of innovation. This affected course options and the attitude of the students. “At this time students were rebellious and questioned everything.” In one of her classes, the students requested that the course be taught as a seminar. She agreed and changed the room and the format of the class, explaining that in a seminar, the students were responsible for reading and discussing the material in much more depth. When the work was distributed, however, few students were up to the challenge.

One day a student approached her and commented that the students who demanded the seminar class were unwilling to take-on the responsibility that went along with it. They did not want to do the work. While laughing he said “You called their bluff and they didn’t expect you to do that.” She completed the course as a seminar regardless of their complaints. The class was split between those who worked hard and commented on how much they had learned, and those who just went along and were “not very happy.” Student demands forced professors to compete with each other regarding the novelty and degree of interest of their courses in order to attract them. This had good and bad results: some of the courses produced were mere fluff while other pursued new avenues in depth. She knows of a case where department politics interfered with teaching and retention of faculty. There was a conflict between the Director of the Department and a group of professors. The leader of those professors befriended the faculty member without him knowing about the conflict. Eventually, he was accused behind his back of being a member of the group and lost his job as a result of this.

In general, she found that the students at Syracuse worked hard and were well prepared. The English Department had designed a highly structured English course because there were many sections of the same class. Instructors had to teach in a particular way and follow specific rules about how to grade papers. The incident she recalls the most, had to do with a student who actively rebelled.

The student was very creative and was also a fanatic of Star Trek. Every time she wrote a composition she started with “Star Trek year such and such and wrote a short story, as if it were an episode of the series. She was supposed to be writing an argumentative paper and to follow an outline of introductory

paragraph, rebuttal of opposing positions, development of her ideas and conclusion. I took her into my office and explained the process to her, but noticed that she was not willing to comply. After about four papers, she finally produced what looked like an argumentative paper. It wasn't perfect, but it was argumentative, so I passed her. The Director and his assistant reviewed a sample of papers from all the sections and among them was hers. I was called into the office to explain why the student had passed when the paper was not a "perfect argumentative paper." First I showed the Director the first papers she wrote, plus the one where she got the passing grade and I told him to compare them. I informed him that I had been teaching for more than 20 years and that I knew my students. The passing was a way to motivate her to continue her improvement. The Director recognized that this was true and apologized. I never had any problems in my Spanish classes.²⁷⁴

My mother's experience teaching at Michigan State occurred in the early 90s. She had a small group of two or three students who were bright, but according to her, "did not want to do the work." She noticed that the class had certain shortcomings in writing research papers. She taught them the process and the students went to the Director to complain that she was "hand feeding them." They argued that they were third year students and that they wanted higher-level material. The Assistant Director spoke to her respectfully and discussed the situation. When he reviewed their papers he agreed with her. She asked them why they had not gone to her first and the class remained in silence. My mother suspects that they may have assumed various things about her because of her Spanish accent, but when the Department validated her before them, they did their work and improved.

My mother retired from the University of Puerto Rico in 1994 at the age of 61. She had taught at the University for over 35 years. After this, she visited me while I was as student at Michigan State University and taught there for one year as a Parks, King, Chávez Fellow. Her accomplishments during her tenure included publications on literary criticism and reviews for *La Revista de Estudios Generales* and the renowned University of Puerto Rico journal "La Torre." She participated and organized many interdisciplinary conferences, directed the Honors Course at the College of General Studies, created and directed the second year interdisciplinary course, co-authored two text books and taught Shakespeare at Stratford-Upon-Avon My mother was appointed as the President of the Evaluating Committee of a college system on the Island by the Council of Higher

²⁷⁴ Interview with my mother. 10/2010

Education. The Council recognized her for the quality of her work. Finally, she was a member of the group presided by Professor Pedro Juan Rúa to oppose the English only movement in the United States and its repercussions in Puerto Rico. As a result of that, they travelled throughout the Island giving public speeches, wrote articles in the newspapers and gave radio and televised interviews. In essence, they became public scholars.

In order to understand the various discourses that intervened on and influenced my mother's life, it is important to consider the insertion of her family—her ancestors—in the socio-economic context of the times. Education was seen as an important addition to the existing wealth of the small percentage of medium and larger land owning families during the time of Spanish colonialism and during the first thirty years of American imperialism on the Island. Education, as the primary means of ascent into the middle class for the population in general, however, became the overarching discourse with the advent of the New Deal.

The small land owning poor and the small business entrepreneurs were highly influenced by the funds provided for public school enhancement as compared to before. The influx of teachers and the aggressive efforts of the government to train new instructors through the visiting teachers initiative created motivation in three ways: it provided an initial way to earn money and status without having to complete high school, an additional motivation because it demystified the process and possibility of becoming a teacher in an of itself and it provided another way for women to escape their home lives in addition to the traditional recourse of marriage. The visiting and increasing numbers of permanent teachers were a living example that upward mobility was actually possible. The messages and nurturance that teachers provided to incoming students was one of triumph and possibility. This created hope and an opening of horizons for those who might not have considered this as an option before. If teaching was an option, so were all those other prestigious careers that in the past were relegated to the wealthiest land-owning aristocracy.

The case of my grandmother is of interest because of her resistance towards the patriarchal and “feudal” tendencies of her upbringing. The social status of her family in addition to her father's diminished interest in the home and his daughters, provided an

aperture for education as an alluring option to escape the home. For humbler families, which had a strong control over the women of the household, education was not necessarily seen in the same way. Ideas about an eighth grade or less, as sufficient for women and even for men were prevalent, possibly due to the requirements of an earlier agrarian economy where the children were expected to work the land. Women often used marriage as an escape out of the oppressive atmosphere of the home, but wealthier women may have been more likely to take advantage of the association of education as a status enhancer that was more acceptable within their household environment than that of less privileged homes.

An illustrative example is that of the mother of Dr. Fermín Miranda, the first pediatric gastroenterologist on the Island and a former UPR student of my mother's who, due to his friendship and support, became an extended family member of ours—a mentor and father figure to me when I was a young teenager. His father was a sugar cane inspector in a plantation. He was 35 years old when he married his mother, who was only 18. She married his father in order to escape what she considered the exaggerated control of her father. Despite not loving her much older husband, she agreed to have children just to prevent him from carrying out his threat that, otherwise, he would send her back home.

Dr. Miranda's mother was 16 years younger than my grandmother. It is not clear whether the visiting teacher high school certification still existed at that time, but if it did, his mother did not take advantage of it. Dr. Miranda believes that she would not have been interested despite wanting to leave her home because her father was overly strict and controlling, and would not have permitted her to do so. In addition, she was a highly skilled homemaker who helped support her family as a seamstress. "Lo Académico no le interesaba." ("Academics did not interest her.")

Dr. Miranda recalled that his father was a very conservative man. He was not a womanizer like his paternal grandfather who read the rosary every night in spite of being known for impregnating 11 women. To this Dr. Miranda said "Vivía rogando y con el mazo dando." ("He lived praying while the hammer was swaying"²⁷⁵) His own father, however, was well loved by his town's people. "Se codeaba entre los ricos pero no era

pretencioso.” (“He socialized with the rich, but he was not pretentious.”) He was a civic leader and became Vice President of the Republican Party—the predecessor to the statehood party. He was also the consultant to the mayors of different parties, among other things.

According to Dr. Miranda, everyone believed he was lawyer even though he never studied beyond the eighth grade. He even had a street in Aguadilla named after him. Despite his many interactions with the political elite, he did not believe that his sons should go beyond the eighth grade in school; they should work instead. He was especially adamant about this with his oldest son from his second marriage, Dr. Miranda’s older brother. “Aunque tenía pelo lacio era trigueño y parece que a él eso no le gustaba.” (Even though he had straight hair, he was darker skinned and it seemed like [his father] didn’t like that”). His older brother rebelled and his mother, for the first time, took a strong stance before her husband and told him that if he did not pay for her son’s college education, she would; and she did. Her eldest son became a lawyer and Dr. Miranda earned the UPR honors scholarship and completed his bachelor’s and medical degrees before serving in the Vietnam War.²⁷⁶

Whereas the influence of the official discourse of education for the masses may have taken more time to be assimilated by the laboring classes, as revealed in the example just discussed, it began to have an effect, if not through the parents’ interventions in the home, through the youth who were in the public schools. In families who had a history of prior social and economic prestige, such as that of my grandmother’s and of Tío Raúl’s, the impact of the official discourse was greater and more rapid. My grandmother restructured the upbringing of her children (my mother and her siblings) to accomplish what she believed was necessary for them to be the highest caliber professionals on the road to “society.” Although my mother believes that my grandmother did not necessarily want the latter for herself, she thought it was important to be a role model for her children and, thus, set out to establish contacts with the elites in the Casino of Arecibo.

²⁷⁶ **Conversacion con el Dr. Miranda: Yo:** Seguramente vio cosas terribles. **Dr. Miranda:** Así es. Algún día te cuento cuando nos veamos en persona.

Translation: Me: You must have seen horrible things. Dr. Miranda: Yes, I did. Someday I will tell you when we see each other in person. 08/2011

As far as her mother's aspirations and degree attainment, it helped socialize my mother into academia since she helped with note taking, interview itself and its debriefing since the age of 13. My mother recalls that when my grandmother was finishing her master's degree, the expectations were much higher. She would find my grandmother lying asleep and exhausted on the sofa after having studied all night long. At this time she was already suffering from cancer. In addition, the requirements were the equivalent of a Ph.D. because it was the first time that the master's degree was organized and implemented on the Island and the administration wanted to make sure that it competed with the best American universities. By the time my mother reached high school, her study schedule had become more flexible with her bedtime. However, she had already developed important strategies because her prior daily routine had been possible due to the economic stability of the family and to her parents' emphasis on academics: she would start with the hardest classes and organize all of her notebooks which she later used as references, even when teaching.

In addition to a consistent structure, my mother's academic upbringing had several elements which facilitated the achievements that she later accomplished. She was surrounded by books of interest in the home and in the classrooms where she studied, whether private or public school. She had teachers who encouraged her and helped her to think critically and creatively about what she read. Teachers made sure that at an early age, she developed appropriate writing and reading comprehension skills. In addition, due to the lack of distractions and limited free time in the home, she did not have much of an option, but to find adventure in the forbidden surroundings of her parent's bedroom which was saturated with artifacts of days gone by: the Spanish gold coin and the picture of her deceased baby brother. Wonder permeated her experience as she grew older and took on a more collegial role with her mother during the latter's graduate studies. The value system, which was imparted in the home, was one of family and individual exceptional achievement. "Mami siempre nos decía que los valores de allá afuera no eran los valores de la casa. Aquí teníamos otros valores."²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ **Translation:** "Mom always told us that the values out there were not the values of our household. Here we had other values."

My mother lived in the midst of multiple and contradicting official discourses. On the one hand, she was enrolled in the public school because her mother wanted her to “know the people” and to expose her to “democracy” and on the other she was actively preparing her to become part of the elite social hierarchy. Family ideas about democracy took place within heightened discourses of racist patriarchy. Her mother’s words that “Deben besar el suelo por dónde camina su padre.” (“You should kiss the ground on which your father walks.”), my grandfather’s analogies of “Un pajarito quiso volar antes de tiempo y cayó reventao” (“A little bird wished to fly before its time and landed in a splat.” and their enlisting of Tío Raúl to convince my mother to study in Harvard, abounded. Their efforts to maintain a clear respect for patriarchal obedience and hierarchy in an increasing industrial world that demanded some level of change, in the context and manner, in which these discourses were to manifest themselves became apparent. Small ruptures in these transnationally shared hegemonic ideologies, would emerge despite appearances to the contrary in Harvard itself. The employment office representative’s, comments that my mother should find a husband rather than a job, is an example of this.

Interstices surfaced throughout as well. Despite my grandmother’s extreme patriarchal sayings and relegation of the harshest corporal discipline to my grandfather, she also resented the constraints and injustices which she lived in her childhood household due to being a woman. This led her to include feminist themes in her master’s thesis analysis, to wear pants in a picture when women generally wore skirts and to reach the highest levels of academia available to her at the time, an arena that had been traditionally reserved for men. My grandfather’s comment to my mother, that she should achieve the highest level of professional preparation so that she would never have to depend on a man, was an example of the ruptures that resulted from the contradiction between the ideals of patriarchal power and the irresponsibility that his own mother and family had to endure when they were abandoned by his father.

My mother’s experiences in academia were reflective of a continuation of these contradictions, even in the midst of a department that was mostly constituted by women. The University of Puerto Rico is a land grant college and as such, is under the control of the Governor in so far as he chooses the Board of Trustees. In Puerto Rico, party politics

have permeated administrative dynamics under the guise of a democratic ideology of equal representation, freedom of speech and objective procedures. The abuse of hierarchy, authority and individual privilege manifested itself, however, through strategies of deception, and silence at some levels. These themes also surfaced, in a more limited way, in City University of New York at Oswego, Harvard and Syracuse University.

The effect of major transitions in the economy characterized by the aftermath of depression, war and social disjuncture also had direct effects on the way the educational system and its purpose was redefined. In Tío Raúl's time students arose in protest, with the support of a young new Chicago University chancellor, against academic mediocrity when they were faced with the need to compete with the most prestigious universities of the world in their new role as representatives of the "showcase of democracy" as viewed by the Puerto Rican elite. Ruptures and contestations resulted from the clash of interpretations between them and the industrial and bureaucratic elite of the United States Government and their academic emissaries within the context of colonialism.

The "Puerto Rican Harvard Circle," who in actuality did not constitute a "circle" at all, did share at least three things: an elite University of Puerto Rico education (with the exception of Albizu), an elite Harvard education which expanded their critical reasoning abilities and their understanding of international constitutional law, their adherence to values which they associated with Puerto Rican culture that they were not willing to sacrifice (Dignidad and Spanish as a vehicle for Island education), their family ties (whether real or fictive—with the exception of Albizu) and their willingness to struggle for the less privileged, whether they were the poor, women, neglected children, gays, or oppressed faculty members. They all shared a spirit of struggle, as Clinton mentioned in his admission of US Government unethical medical experimentation, "to do the right thing."

The clash of experiences of oppression which surfaced dramatically in what should have been the most guarded spaces of justice within academia: the evaluation procedures were permeated by the corruption engendered by colonialism itself with its arrogance of power in the hands of the director and administrative bureaucrats. The interstices of resistance resulted from the procedural knowledge and ethical

understanding of those faculty members in lower positions, such as my mother at the time. Despite its contradictory revelations, they had been socialized within a discourse of exceptionality within and through a democracy that involved personal honesty and family sacrifice through education for the benefit of others. The stories of my grandfather's neglect of his own educational dreams to enable his siblings to study were often repeated and the example of my grandmother completing her master's degree through her bout with cancer until her death, were alive, albeit subconscious, in my mother's struggles for others in academia, her struggles for the education of her own children and her efforts to provide her students with the highest quality learning experience possible.

The role of women in the facilitation of "compliant resistance" has been significant. Whereas they maintained enough of their expected gender roles to survive in a society that has defined us as subservient, they also held a substantial amount of bargaining power and were in fact, the facilitators of a restrained ideological and cultural change. It was the women in the case of my great grandmother, grandmother and Dr. Miranda's mother who resisted the educational limitations imposed by their husbands on their children. My mother's statement that when there was a disagreement her parents left the bedroom with "one mind" reveals one of their greatest leverage strategies.

Similarly, the image of the woman as weak and in need of care was also used to enforce their will, as revealed in the statement of Tío Raúl where he mentioned that his mother would win the educational battles "with tears." The male chivalry expected within a system where the man's gallant efforts were "rewarded" by the women was, at least ideally expected, in hegemonic discourses of patriarchy. This was brilliantly used by the women within their prescribed and accepted role as primary nurturers and protectors of the best interest of their children. Finally, my mother's description of the ruckus that was created when the director attempted to oust her from the personnel committee unsuccessfully "Estaban gritando como gallinas en un gallinero. Imagínate que ese Departamento era casi todo de mujeres" (They squawked like hens in chicken pen") reflects how, through our assimilation of common phrases, we unconsciously participate in and perpetuate sexist discourses.

Hegemonic interpellations of race and exclusions because of it were numerous despite their open negation. Racist views and practices seemed to rise in the nooks and

crannies of daily life in the intimacy of friendship and family relations, again, in stark contrast to the commonsensical ideals of democracy and equity. The racism of Puerto Rico is generally acknowledged, but within the caveat that it is very different from that of the United States. The discourse of Puerto Ricans as “one” is so prevalent, in fact, that as a child I had never thought of it or seen myself through it until I experienced the graphic segregation in Syracuse. This discourse of Puerto Ricans as one race, however, was ruptured on several occasions, in the interviews with Tío Raúl, my mother and Dr. Miranda. With Tío Raúl, his anecdotes of the services that his black housekeepers received as opposed to those of his family and the fact that he referred to some of his friends as “bi-racial” revealed a certain level of cognitive awareness of difference associated with social standing.

In my mother’s case, on various occasions, she had to admit that one of the biggest contradictions in her parents was, on the one hand, their emphasis of “knowing the people” and on, the other, their active efforts to guide her towards a “white” marriage. In Dr. Miranda’s interview, racism is revealed within the nucleus of the immediate family as his father attempts to deprive his older son of a higher education, to some extent, because he was darker and “he didn’t like that.” The irony and the space for resistance occurs when his son, not only achieves his educational goals thanks to his mother’s additional sacrifice to pay for his studies, but he becomes a lawyer, which is what everyone thought his father had been, but never was.

These contradictory dynamics were also present in the University of Puerto Rico. Racism went unacknowledged because within the acceptable variety of shades of brown and white, it was not noticed that “black” was missing. My mother does not recall, for example, seeing black faculty members in her department. She only noticed a few black students during her entire teaching career there. She recalls one dark skinned student who “had straight hair,” but he was expelled for his political nationalist activism. Like the Harvard “independentistas,” he went to the United States to study. It was there that he became an attorney: an occupation he was not allowed to enter in his own motherland, he was able to complete in the colonial power he was protesting against.

The United States universities provided a space for understanding the relationship between national identity, language and the implied racial constitution of those who are

inter-subjectively engaged within a hierarchical relationship. Such was the case of my own “racial and ethnic reconstitution” by the Russian professor and by my anthropology classmate at Michigan State University. This was also the case of my mother when some of her students, upon hearing her accent, did not put forth effort in her class until the Department Director publicly validated her.

The Spanish language in the context of the United States brings forth a veiled assumption of an inherent racial and class definition of the native or heritage speaker. The notion of race itself produces compartmentalized classifications of subjects (black, white) that in the process of interpellation and inter-subjective exchange, reveals its chameleon-like nature. Thus, race, language and ethnic origin flow into and define each other subconsciously and, in their doing so, they simultaneously dismantle and reinforces the categorization that in effect limits a democratic inclusion.

In the United States there is less room for mobility through the socially constructed racial continuum, than there is in Puerto Rico with its vestiges of European, Taíno and African creole influences in the formation of our national identity, despite the increasing adoption of American schemes. In this context, the struggle against the “English Only” policies in Puerto Rico and in the United States have strengthened the opposition to the standardization of racial categories taken for granted in the U.S. It has also, however, encouraged the examination and deconstruction of hidden racial scripts on the Island that are perpetuated through the focus of a unifying Spanish language in opposition to “English only” policies.

This struggle has begun to complicate the apparent “unification” of identity in Puerto Rico as language and color simultaneously reinforce and contest each other. A vivid example is that of my fourteen-year-old daughter. She was born and raised in Ann Arbor, Michigan with a few summer visits to Puerto Rico, the use of informal Spanish and Spanglish in the household, while learning academic Spanish in ALAS. She told me of a birthday party she attended with many Latino children. When she spoke in Spanish to them, a friend from Central America questioned her reasons for not speaking to the children in English. Her story to me went something like this:

Mami, Emiliana me preguntó que por qué yo le estaba hablando en español a los niños latinos cuando ellos estaban hablando en inglés. Yo le respondí que era importante ayudarles a que no perdieran su español. Emiliana me contestó “I hate

Spanish” y me di cuenta que muchos de los padres hispanos se quedaban mirándome cuando yo les hablaba en español a los niños porque yo, que me veía blanca, estaba hablando en español y los niños que eran más oscuros no podían hacerlo.²⁷⁸

My daughter often looks at me after playing in the outdoors and says “Mami, mi color ya se está pareciendo más al tuyo. ¡Qué bueno! No me gusta ser tan blanca. “ (Mom, my color is starting to look like yours. That’s great! I don’t like to look so white.”) My son on the other hand revels in his color saying the he is proud to look “Mediterranean. “ It has become evident that, depending on the context, they both enjoy the ambiguity of their identities in so far as they can play with the mismatched categories society attempts to impose on them, precisely because, in their transnationalism, they can generally break through and manipulate the “floating signifiers” of race, culture, language and national identity to their advantage. They are able to create comfort or discomfort in others as they feel violated, constrained or validated by what others assume about them.

The stereotype of the hyphenated-American that Bourne and Kallen attempted to portray was really based on what otherwise would be called the “assimilated American” whose efforts are entirely directed towards becoming “someone else” in negation of anything good of whom they “believe themselves to be.” The symbol of the transnational American, which they were attempting to convey, was defined by those who resisted discrete categorizations and actively embodied the multiple ruptures within themselves. In addition to this, transnationalism implied the subjective process of owning these apparent discrepancies and using them to broaden horizons for themselves and others, even if this meant coming to terms with the painful dislocations of identity construction and alterity. The transnational and cosmopolitan citizen was one who moved away from homogenizing identifiers based on “melting pot” or even “la raza cósmica” (the “cosmic

²⁷⁸ Conversation with my daughter. 08/26/2011.

Translation: Mom, Emiliana asked me why I was speaking to the Latino kids in Spanish when they were speaking in English. I told her that it was important to keep them from losing their Spanish. Emiliana answered, “I hate Spanish” and I realized that many of the Latino parents stared at me when I spoke to their kids in Spanish because even though I looked white, I could speak Spanish yet their kids who were darker than I, could not.

race”) discourses²⁷⁹. Both of these involve the melding of races to create a singular and powerful race. With the melting pot, the goal was a unified white, English speaking race that combined the strengths of all of its cultures, and with the cosmic race, it was a single brown, Spanish speaking race that was the culmination of the best of the differences that forged it. The imperial politics of hegemony and resistance were transformed into philosophical incursions that changed both national educational systems in the opposing context of two independent, but bordering nations. These were invested, in turn, in the highly controlled strategies of internal colonization, exploitation and repression of their own indigenous populations.

The politically validated status and colonial dilemma of Puerto Rico as a “commonwealth of the United States” continues to define its reality and that of its educational system in a different way than that of Mexico and the United States. The clashing characterizations of “democracy” and multiple contradictory discourses of exceptionality, merit, privilege, race, gender roles, political exclusion, cultural validation and economic status cannot be understood outside of the historical and ongoing colonial status of the Island and its continuum from pre-school to higher education.

The Island, its administrators, teachers and students are victims to similar ideological struggles characteristic of the United States, although, like Detroit Public Schools, in a much more publicly reported fashion. The educational progress made in the mid-1940s and beyond, under the chancellorship of Jaime Benitez, Luis Muñoz Marín and their team of academics, has been reverted to the chaos and mediocre educational administration discussed by Tugwell: the same one that Tío Raúl and his student cohort protested against in their “first strike against academic mediocrity.” At present, due to the corrupt politics of the current statehood/republican government under Governor Luis Fortuño, the accreditation of 11 branches of the University of Puerto Rico was suspended. The College of Medicine and the College of Agriculture in Mayagüez were exempted. Two other colleges were recently reinstated. It is important to note that these suspensions were not due to academic deficiencies. In fact the Department of

²⁷⁹ Fell, Claude (2000). “Notas explicativas” (in Spanish). *Ulises Criollo*. Colección Archivos. 3. Vasconcelos, José. Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica. pp. 526–573.

“La raza cósmica” was proposed by José Vasconcelos, the Mexican educator and philosopher, in his rejection and retaliation against European white privilege and American melting pot discourses and socialization practices.

Psychology in Río Piedras, for example, was rated 42nd out of 902 universities of Latin America, Portugal and Spain.²⁸⁰ The article of *el Nuevo Día*, also a statehood party inclined newspaper, reported the following.

La agencia acreditadora mantiene a Río Piedras en probatoria por deficiencias en el estándar de liderato y gobernanza. Para cumplir con este requisito, la institución pidió evidencia de que mejoró la comunicación con la comunidad universitaria y de que existe un gobierno compartido.²⁸¹

Student protests at the UPR occurred in March of 2011. Anger was spurred by student and faculty discontent due to the rampant corruption and misuse of university funds by the Government and the lack of transparency and deficient administration resulting from the partisan politics that permeated the University. The students had also been physically assaulted with pepper gas and police clubs during a sit-down protest. Several of the female students suffered physical and sexual violence by armed policemen. The police were called in by Chancellor Ana Guadalupe with Governor Fortuño's approval and this resulted in student violence against her. She stated, in the article quoted above, that major changes were being instituted to conform to the Middle States Association of Colleges Accreditation expectations due on September 1st. She also assured the citizenry that the police had been removed from the University premises, placing instead, the traditional University guards. Guadalupe continues to be accompanied by bodyguards, however. Despite the Middle States' evidence of the inept administration of the University, Chancellor Guadalupe argued that:

“La comunidad ha tenido, tiene y tendrá amplia oportunidad de expresarse sobre la dirección del recinto”... indicó que este año el recinto tiene un presupuesto de \$238.2 millones y \$3 millones mayor al del año pasado. “No hay insuficiencia de ingresos,” aseguró.²⁸²

²⁸⁰ El Nuevo Día (2011) UPR entre las mejores en sicología. Calidad de Vida. El Nuevo Día. Com. 20 de agosto. <http://www.elnuevodia.com/uprentrelasmejoresensicologia-1045032.html>

²⁸¹ López Cabán, Cinthya (2011) Río Piedras Busca Superar la Probatoria. Puerto Rico de Hoy. El Nuevo Día. Com. 16 de agosto.

Translation: The accrediting agency maintains Río Piedras on probation for deficiencies in the standards of leadership and administration. In order to fulfill this requirement, the institution requested evidence that [the UPR] improved its communication with the university community and that there is a shared government in place.

²⁸² Ibid.

The corporatization policies emanating from the United States that are so evident transnationally with regards to higher education, and in Michigan, with regards to the public schools-- especially those of Detroit—is also rampant in Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico, like Michigan, has implemented a massive policy of school closings, teacher and administrator persecution and a hyper-focus on standardized testing following George Bush’s original No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Another article from El Nuevo Día, dated August 8, informed the readers that when confronted with the complaints of the Teacher’s Association, Luis Fortuño, the current governor of Puerto Rico who presides the statehood party (el Partido Nuevo Progresista), announced with glee that the 164 missing teachers and 34 directors, among others, who were missing at the beginning of classes were evidence that his goals for preparing the schools for their first day had been accomplished. According to him and the Secretary of Education (Jesús Rivera Sánchez), those spots were vacant because they were “difficult to recruit positions²⁸³.”

On July 30th, el Nuevo Día reported the teacher strike that was to take place in Hato Rey in front of the Department of Education building against what they believed to be punitive teacher evaluation policies. "Esa nueva evaluación es como la inquisición" y "Secretario dictador, ese no es educador." (“That new evaluation is like the inquisition” and “A dictator Secretary is not an educator”²⁸⁴). The Teachers Association accused the policy of violating the Organic Law of Education since it does not take into consideration the voices of the educational community. The Secretary of Education is also being accused of closing down schools under false pretenses arguing that their enrollment is insufficient.

These accusations are similar to the ones that have been voiced by various teachers and administrators in the Detroit Public Schools who have observed that school resources are being reduced with the justification that their enrollment has diminished, while the reality is that it has increased from the previous year²⁸⁵. In the meantime the Federal Government has provided the Puerto Rican Government with an infusion of

²⁸³ López Cabán, Cynthia (2011) Un éxito el inicio de clases para el Gobernador. El Nuevo Día.com . <http://www.elnuevodia.com/exitosoparaelgobernadoreliniciodeclases-1034463.html>

²⁸⁴ López Cabán, Cynthia (2011) Oposición a la evaluación de los maestros. El Nuevo Día.com . <http://www.elnuevodia.com/oposicionalaevaluaciondemaestros-1031864.html>

²⁸⁵ Interview with Detroit Public School educator. 8/5/2011

funds of \$153.6 million. Arne Duncan, the Secretary of Education of the United States announced on August 10, 2011 that the funds were for schools that had demonstrated a consistent pattern of underachievement²⁸⁶.

The following interview reveals the effect of these policies on a Puerto Rican educator (“Agueybaná”) who is completely bilingual and agreed to voice his concerns over the current educational situation on the Island. He has witnessed the political and administrative changes in the system since 1979 when he began his teaching career.

PR’s educational system has been in a constant flux due to its total subordination to the island’s political changes. I am related to the PR public educational system first as a student and second as a teacher. I began my professional involvement in 1979 as a part time teacher and attained full time permanent status in 1982.

Agueybaná went on to explain the various deficits that he has observed in the system over time: an emphasis on socialization above academics, transient Secretaries of Education and deficient resources. It is notable that this educator also posits a large part of the problem on parents who are seeking to satisfy their basic needs over prioritizing the education of their children.

Up until eight years ago it was common to have two or three secretaries of education during the four-year political period. Policy in our system is established by documents called “Cartas Circulares.” These, in fact are the written directives of the secretary of education.

When I first started teaching it was recognized by my directors that the primary directive in the public school system was social in nature and academics were a secondary priority. The classroom has always been lacking in resources.

As time has passed parents are less and less concerned with the actual learning of the children and more concerned with having the teacher give the student a C or above evaluation, having their food coupon and housing federal aid forms signed, having day care and school food service facilities.

Agueybaná then proceeded to discuss the evolution of standardized testing on the Island, its unrealistic expectations for teachers and students and the resulting harmful effects on the self-esteem of the children. The alignment of Puerto Rican tests to “stateside standards” is significant given the colonial situation of the Island and the

²⁸⁶ López Cabán, Cynthia (2011) Educacion federal anuncia asignación millonaria para Puerto Rico. El Nuevo Día.com. <http://www.elnuevodia.com/educacionfederalanunciaasignacionmillonariaparapuertorico-1036502.html>

disregard for its cultural specificity. The remediation of these incompatibilities by the Government has been to decrease the academic expectations in alternative certification venues which do not, in effect, educate the students.

For years we have had state-wide testing. Originally it was math, English and Spanish. In recent years science has been added. The island government has aligned the current testing instrument to stateside standards. The presumption being that our students study at home, have parental support, have all the necessary resources in school and that the teacher has covered the grades subject content by the beginning of April. Needless to say all these assumptions are false.

[The] effect on the students has been an ever increasing sense of failure, perception that education is not relevant to their physical and social reality and an ever increasing number of them leaving the traditional full term school for accelerated high school diploma institutions (one grade per month). In the last week our current secretary of education has applauded this alternative. The actions of our current government indicate a desire to do away with the public school system and hand over education to for profit private entities.

Agueybaná was clearly cognizant of the political implications and effects of a colonial relationship with regards to the institutionalization of education on the Island and its repercussion for the true educational enhancement of the masses.

We are the only US territory that has a state-wide school administration. It would be wise to get the correct number of students the system currently has enrolled. We do not have Boards of Education nor do we have any say in any aspect of any process related to the education of our children in the public school system. It is for this reason as well as safety that parents with the means elect to place their children in the private school system.

When asked how he explained the achievement gap beyond the bureaucratic difficulties which characterize most institutions, he enumerated a series of factors that he ultimately saw as demonstrating a general lack of interest on the part of the Puerto Rican Government for the welfare of its youth in an effort to maintain the existing class hierarchies. He also blamed the limited employment opportunities for those who do strive to improve themselves through education.

[The reasons for the achievement gap among classes in Puerto Rico include] years of welfare, children having children. Lack of opportunities for people who get an education. In the “barrio” subculture and its equivalents, getting welfare and being part of the underground economy are more rewarding. Your dwelling may be substandard, but you have all the latest gadgets. It is my perception that the powers that be want to keep the poor from competing with their children.

Parents don't read. Children don't get the proper supervision and guidance from their parents and community. Our government is only interested in bringing in federal funds, which are not seen in the communities or schools. In short, there is no coordinated effort between all the shareholders for the benefit of our young.

The dilemmas he saw materialized within the University were not far from those he has described with regards to lower education. He viewed the preparation of young teachers for the reality of the educational system in Puerto Rico as highly deficient. The high attrition of teachers has been a consequence of this.

As I see it, our universities fail in preparing new teachers for the reality of our classrooms. In my school, all the young teachers are studying to leave the profession for other more rewarding occupations...

In addition he provided his views on the mutual violence that had recently characterized the University of Puerto Rico student protests. His "forty eight years" of living through UPR conflicts led him to understand the repressive nature of the Government with its use of the police for brute force. He posited a large part of the blame, again, on the colonial relationship of Puerto Rico and its insignificant level of power within it due to the United States overarching decision-making privilege. In an allusion to George Orwell's 1984 he described the US as "Big Brother."

This opinion is based on 48 years of living with UPR conflicts. However, it is evident that the PR police is ill equipped (as "professionals") for their job. The police are in effect an armed body for the suppression of the people, for the benefit of the governor. The real problem being, the total absence of a university community and a long standing, undue involvement of the Island government in university affairs. As for repercussions from the U.S., they are not warranted (big brother concept). The island needs to address its own problems and stop relying on CONUS to step in and impose their criteria. Of course, he who holds the purse pulls the strings.

Agueybaná was able, by way of a reflexive process of analysis, guided by the interview questions, to arrive at a sophisticated understanding of the systemic nature of the educational problem of the Island. He elaborated on the psychological effects of the repression and the discursive manipulations of the Government through its self-representations. Regarding the deceptive imaginary that the Government has attempted to promote, he alluded to "La Via Verde" (The Green Way) a project that is aimed at crossing the Island from South to North going through La Cordillera Central (the Central

Mountain Range) to carry gas. If implemented, this project would destroy the ecological reserve that, through its semantics it purports to preserve. This pipeline also passes dangerously close to inhabited areas—one hundred and fifty feet from densely inhabited areas. On further examination, Puerto Rican engineers and university experts have proved that it is unnecessary and less efficient than other options, which are safer and less expensive. “They are doing this because they have sold contracts to multimillion dollar companies.”²⁸⁷

“En momentos donde el país sufrirá las consecuencias económicas de la alta dependencia de fondos federales, tirar a la calle cientos de millones de dólares para una infraestructura destinada al fracaso es imprudente,” sentenció Massol González.

Regarding education, Agueybaná concluded that the effect on the self-esteem of students and teachers alike, of the contradictions between expectations and resources is substantial. He added that there are multiple levels of discrimination that affect students on the Island. Unlike the United States, where racial discrimination still runs strong, he asserted that on the Island, class and ethnic discrimination have played a greater role.

In PR, ethnic and socioeconomic discrimination are the most visible and prevalent discriminations. However and to a lesser degree we also have racial discrimination.

However, he did not elaborate, at this time, on similar systemic effects on the parents and he also subscribed to the idea of individual exceptionality. In another interview he felt it necessary to posit the experience of a low income student of his who was able to “make it” and become a successful university scholar “despite her circumstances.” According to him, the parents, in addition to the student’s own motivation enabled this to happen. Thus, the burden ultimately, he believed, fell on the parents. They were somehow relegated from the “system equation.” Parents, as a general rule were, according to his view, overly socialized into a welfare mentality.

This educator’s experience has led him to the conclusion that the interventions that are necessary to address the educational problem of Puerto Rico include intense community involvement, realistic goals (given the conditions of the population), adequate

²⁸⁷ Comments by my mother. 08/2011

“Piden la destitución de Miguel Cordero en la AEE.” El Nuevo Día.com
<http://www.elnuevodia.com/pidenladestituciondemiguelcorderoenlaaee-1034544.html>

resources and pertinent and well administered standardized testing, with a gradual implementation of any necessary changes. In order for the value of education to be “re-instated,” parents should be offered “una Escuelita para Padres” (parenting skills).

1. Perform an evaluation of realistic minimum expectations for the common citizen in the context of his environment.
2. Determine the needed resources to achieve the expectations. Note; all subject matters must integrate and produce a workable plan.
3. Any change must be implemented gradually. Starting with the early grades and adding grade levels as each new school year starts.
4. All text and support materials must be in the classroom at the beginning of the term. Teachers must be trained in the new initiatives during the summer.
5. Standardized diagnostic test in the content area must be provided to the teachers for pre and post-test. The test items must correspond to the same objective on the statewide tool.
6. Intense community involvement by government support agencies along with “Escuelita para padres” is of outmost importance. The value of education must be reinstilled in our society.

As an educator and a parent, Agueybaná has had experience with social work within the school system of the Island and finds that its role “would be the best resource” to accomplish his recommendations. However, his lived experience has demonstrated to him that he has never met a competent one.

In terms of practice, a good school social worker would be your best resource. Unfortunately I can’t recommend one.

This educator’s words reveal, despite his short incursion into the realm of diversity, that the lens which he has used to discuss the educational situation of the Island has been mainly one of class and political affiliation—highly divisive identifiers, with a very limited awareness of the effects of other components of diversity within it or the empowering potential that these could have if appropriately nurtured and strategically used. Puerto Rico inevitably lives in the crux of transnationalism. Despite its political, economic and ever increasing cultural dependence on the United States, it continues to have very strong ties to a history of Spanish cultural roots and, more importantly, to a present of intellectual camaraderie with Latin America, Spain, Portugal and the Spanish Speaking Caribbean, as demonstrated, for example- in the highly competitive placement of the UPR Department of Psychology. Puerto Ricans have also attempted to nurture, to a limited extent, their ties with French and British Caribbean

nations, creating student exchange programs while reinforcing this often-neglected part of their geographic identity.

The transnational influx that has always characterized the Caribbean islands due to their market value and role in the import/export and military economies continues to be in effect and is carried in the mentality and aspirations of its cultural representatives into other nations. Latin America has also shared a long history of colonialism and neo-colonialism relegating it to a similar situation. Identities which have formed in the periphery of privilege in their nations of origin, have ventured into the United States, a nation that is complicitous in the migratory pulls between nations as a result of its neo-liberal economic incursions. These experiences, beliefs and adaptive strategies have been embodied in the migrating subjects who have always participated in the fabric of what our national and global spaces of cohabitation have afforded us. They, we, have come together under various systems of homogenization (political, economic, educational etc.) that intend to create “unified societies” within an ideology of discrete and competing nations, only to find that the global imperative, is the creation of an ecologically viable global cosmopolitanism.

This leads us into our next discussion, the politics of organization building in an effort to provide a space for ascent and multicultural inclusion of those who along that last 12 years have experienced some of the greatest levels of alienation and disenfranchisement in our nation; Latino immigrant families and the African American working class youth in the United States. My own subjectivity as a transnational who ventured between the United States and Puerto Rico, and who later experienced the aftermath of the civil war among revolutionary Salvadorans should remain present in our minds as we venture into the analysis of the politics of organization building in ALAS and what ultimately became the trans-district and transnational educational collaboration which we called the “The ALAS/AOA/Pipiolo Cultural Ambassador Initiative sponsored by the American Go Foundation.

Chapter 4
The Transnational Push: Part Two
ALAS—A Bumpy Road towards Educational Advocacy and Community Participation

My discussion of ALAS with regards to this research should begin with my arrival to Ann Arbor after I had spent six months in the guerrilla-controlled zone of Morazán, El Salvador during the early 90s. I had postponed my admission to the University of Michigan for a year so that I could assist Dr. Leigh Binford on his research on revolutionary movements. I was assigned to the women's communal organization of the area where I began my research on the extent to which feminist discourses affected the actual practices and social status of women in a movement that had sprung in the residues of war.

My work in El Salvador was present in me when I entered the Anthropology Department at University of Michigan and when I transitioned into the School of Social Work; I was completing my master's thesis while taking doctoral courses. Subjects who do formal research embody the experiences of their past and present circumstances. We carry politically-charged transnational referents, which others use to define us, even if we are not ideologically or practically complicitous in the process which they attribute to us.

In El Salvador, I was a symbol of the colonial status of Puerto Rico. This became evident when several of the townspeople whom I attempted to interview initially met me with distrust. They projected onto me the image they had of Puerto Rican soldiers accompanying Americans in their invasive military incursions in Latin America. Several of the townspeople associated me with the United States Government's efforts to supply the Salvadoran Government with the weapons they used to commit their well-documented atrocities on the Salvadoran citizenry. Initially, some of them projected onto me their fears about the infamous "School of the Americas": the Department of Defense academy that translated their educational materials in Spanish and trained the Latin

American military personnel who went on to engage in the most egregious acts of torture.”²⁸⁸ In the context of El Salvador, some of these violations included slitting pregnant women’s wombs and tearing out their babies, separating men, women and children and burning them alive in enclosed buildings or throwing babies in the air and bayonetting them as they came down²⁸⁹. Besides the passage of time and the natural processes of trust building that result from long term interactions, their initial reactions towards me were somewhat put at ease because of my relationship to Dr. Binford who was already somewhat known in the area.

El Salvador was my second journey into ethnographic work, but it was the longest, and certainly, the most emotionally intense I had experienced up to that time. My relatively detached position as a researcher is important to consider as compared to my practice in ALAS where inter-subjective engagement in the process of mutual “concientización” has been my enduring goal. For this reason, I believe it is important to take a short incursion into my previous ethnographic work which I include, in so far as it was this experience that influenced my impetus to move “academic understanding” into immediate community action with regards to the Latino situation in Washtenaw County schools and at U of M as a doctoral student.

²⁸⁸ “Just the Facts: A civilian’s guide to U.S. defense and security assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean, Center for International Policy. <http://www.ciponline.org/facts/soa.htm>

“The School of the Americas had been questioned for years, as it trained many military personnel before and during the years of the “national security doctrine” -- the dirty war years in the Southern Cone and the civil war years in Central America -- in which Latin American militaries ruled or had disproportionate government influence and committed serious human rights violations. Training manuals used at the SOA and elsewhere from the early 1980s through 1991 promoted techniques that violated human rights and democratic standards. SOA graduates continue to surface in news reports regarding both current human rights cases and new reports on past cases...Defenders of the SOA and its successor, however, argue that they do not teach abuse, and that today the curriculum includes human rights as a component of every class. They also argue that no school should be held accountable for the actions of only some of its graduates.”

²⁸⁹ Interviews in El Salvador July to January 1993.

Ethnography in the Guerrilla Controlled Zone of Morazán, El Salvador and its Influence on ALAS

My work in El Salvador was initially that of an assistant ethnographer, but was quickly transformed into independent research as the communication with the other team members became increasingly scarce. Unlike my work with ALAS, which was initially based on the clear knowledge of the social service deficits confronting Latinos in the County, my work in El Salvador was largely explorative. Upon arrival, I knew very little about the area with the exception of a few books I had read. I only remember that two nights prior to my departure, I woke up in cold sweats after dreaming about being in the middle of the atrocities of war. While I was actually there, I came to understand that religion, in which I was not very interested, played an important part in Morazán. It ultimately became a central part of my research about the discursive and practice contradictions in women's lives and provided a background knowledge that I would have when confronting the effects of religious demands on the ALAS membership.

Religious discourses clashed and supported educational discourses of female conformity and submission as revealed in the following interviews, but both institutions were highly influenced by a strange combination of military structures and ideologies combined with Frerian approaches to education and organizational discourses. The organizers in El Salvador verbally espoused critical thinking. Their discourses on gender equity, however, did not appear to have dramatic changes in the behaviors that they professed. The most striking aspect of the women's organizing efforts was their sophisticated eloquence in the public arena when they were in the process of sharing with the international community the politically accepted discourses of gender equity espoused by the Revolutionary rhetoric.

Three interesting interviews, one from a Catholic priest, another from an Assembly of God teenager and another from an ex-combatant who had temporarily left her Baptist Church to fight for social justice, illustrate the multiple contradictions between and within clashing public ideologies confronted and assumed by these women. Although all three shared the history of Morazán, they did so from very different generational, gendered and religious perspectives. They were all affected by a highly limited public discourse of democracy which was couched in the patriarchal structure of

the military and their supporting religious institutions. My thoughts about the relationship between democracy and the institutions that permeated their lives are revealed the Freirean observation that those “who fear liberty find refuge in their vital security...preferring it to the “liberty of risk...only to camouflage it in a game of deception”²⁹⁰ ...

...women were told about democracy, but they were never taught democracy. They were instructed in an authoritarian and centralized regime which attempted to portray an image that it could not substantiate and which, in turn, was reinforced by the authoritarian structure of the family and of male-female relationships where the man made the decisions. Cases in point are those of Carolina and of women whose husbands did not allow them to attend meetings...I found that the traditional view of women was perpetuated in very subtle ways through the most socially powerful institutions: the church and the school...Even though I originally had little interest in getting into the women’s religious practices, I was continuously confronted with the fact that the Council member’s particular denominations were of utmost importance in their lives and acted as strict behavioral guides.²⁹¹

The following explanations provided by the Catholic priest and the women I interviewed are illustrative of the contradictory discourses resulting from the realities of war, international discourses of equity and the traditional gender expectations supported by religious beliefs. The priest, in his attempt to discuss his interpellation of the women as historicized gendered subjects, had difficulty in seeing himself through their eyes. His process of reflexivity became truncated in the absence of an “authentic dialogue” which Freire refers to as “recognition of the self in the other²⁹².” Freirean philosophy was central and highly influential in theology of liberation during the war, but its impact in the development of critical consciousness regarding gender hierarchies was minimal.

Question to Priest: *How do you feel about women becoming Catholic priests?*

In theory I’m convinced that a woman cannot be denied any position. There are no theological arguments to deny her this. Jesus was a man, but this is not the most fundamental thing. However, it is important to evaluate this carefully...To give a woman values is not to make her a priest, but to foster her role in the

²⁹⁰ Paulo Freire (1965) *Pedagogía del Oprimido*. pp. 22-23.

“En el fondo quien teme a la libertad se refugia en la “seguridad vital”...prefiriéndola a la “libertad arriesgada”... Su tendencia es camuflarlo en un juego mañoso”...

²⁹¹ Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (1996) *Representations, Power and Contradictions: The Women’s Communal Movement of Morazán, El Salvador*. Master of Arts Thesis. Department of Anthropology. Michigan State University. Copyright p.160.

²⁹² Freire, Paulo (1965) *Pedagogía del Oprimido*. p.19.

community. I feel that there is a deviation in feminist movements. I'm afraid of these women...It's not the content that bothers me...It's the aggressive tone that they use to badger men rather than society. Frankly, I am more moved by a kind woman with all her beauty, than by a woman who screams²⁹³....

How does this logic apply to men?

[With regards to men] you can never change everything at once because you create an exaggerated feeling of guilt if you tell a man "you can only have one woman" when he already has three. You have to give him a chance...You have to take the social context in mind and lead the people towards a goal²⁹⁴.

How would you counsel a woman who has an unfaithful husband and is being physically abused by him?

First we must listen...We also have to explain that this problem is a product of social circumstances. It must be defined that it is incorrect without insisting that she break up her marriage because it is part of a common cultural pattern. I'm not saying that she should allow herself to be hit. I think that from a moral standpoint, the couple should remain united²⁹⁵...

The organizer, "Magdalena," spoke to me about her affiliation to the Seventh Day Adventist Church. She separated from her Church temporarily to help organize women during the war. When I asked her about the role she played in the Revolution and her Church's view about it, her words revealed the internal conflicts that she had to struggle with because of the opposing patriarchal ideologies espoused by her faith and the urgent social justice demands of her country. Our dialogue led her to question, momentarily, the position of women in the hierarchy of her church. However, the conflicts she continued to experience between the doctrines of her church and her role as revolutionary organizer reveal that the "coming to consciousness as a political subject"²⁹⁶ is not always a progressive journey. It is wrought with disappointments and interpersonal conflicts that may lead to relegating the cause to others.

²⁹³ **Former ALAS Board Member:** ¡Ellos también gritan! (They [the men] also scream!

²⁹⁴ **Lisandra:** ¿Y por qué a la mujer no hay que tenerle paciencia? And why shouldn't he have patience with the women?

²⁹⁵ **Lisandra:** Se debe mantener unido pero eso de que se deje pegar no. ¿Qué ejemplo es ese para la familia? **Translation:** They should remain united but she should not let herself get hit. What kind of example is that for the family?

Former ALAS Board Member: Antes decían que al marido había que aguantarle todo pero ahora no! **Translation:** Before they said that we had to take whatever our husbands dished out, but not now!

²⁹⁶ Freire, p. 20.

Question to Magdalena: *What role do women play in the hierarchy of your Church?*

In the Adventist Church women participated in almost all the levels except the highest which is the Elder's... If a woman is pregnant or is having her menstruation she cannot preach at the altar because she is thought to be impure²⁹⁷. The members of the Assembly of God Church believe this because it is written in the Bible. I have never thought too much about the role of women in the hierarchy of the Church. But I think it is important to see what it is. The problem is that even if we have the ability to be in the hierarchy of the Church, we don't have the appropriate development. Women are never given the opportunity to advance in this society. The Bible doesn't say that women have limits, but no one gives importance to this aspect of the Bible.

What does your Church think about the Revolution?

The Adventists do not allow political topics to enter the Church. In the Catholic Church Jesus is seen as a political figure, but this is not so in the Adventist Church. Jesus is a conformist. They did whatever they wanted to him and he let them do it. Christianity should also be conformist. The Bible says that he who does not humble himself like a child will not enter the Kingdom of God. I participated in the war and in political meetings because I was clearly not faithful to God. The Bible says that no one can serve two masters...I decided to leave my Church because I did not want to contaminate it with political issues...I am going to return to my Church because one has more problems when [she] lacks religious principles.

In times of war I only accomplished criticisms and disagreements with the communities. In this town there are people who are my enemies...I lost the benefits I had within my Church, and I lost the opportunity to educate my children. I lost the formality of being a Christian. When I was an Evangelical I was tested many times by the Lord, but also granted many miracles...

In 1982, my son had leukemia, but with a pill and prayer he was cured without the treatment of a doctor. However, two years ago my oldest daughter also became ill with leukemia. She was seen by many doctors who told me "Buy a coffin and whatever else she will need." I had faith, but I was not one to kneel down. She died because I was more involved in politics than in the Church. I think that was a test...It's more convenient to return to the Church. It's not worth losing your life....

However, it's true that if everybody became Evangelical at this moment, our twelve-year struggle would have been in vain because we would have remained

²⁹⁷ **Former ALAS Member:**! El debe estar hablando del Viejo Testamento! (He must be speaking about the Old Testament.

Lisandra: ¿Y es que tenían que avisar? ¿Poner un anuncio? Were they supposed to let people know. Advertise it?

with our arms crossed. But, personally, I am going to return to Church. Let others continue the struggle.²⁹⁸

The last interview of this series involved a fifteen-year old girl from the Assembly of God Church, “Claridad,” who was intent on converting Christina, an Australian solidarity worker and me. The following excerpt is my narration of the event as I experienced it. It reveals the initial and rather rocky steps of the dialogic process, which often precedes inter-subjectivity.²⁹⁹

[Claridad] kept deviating the conversation away from women and into the need to fear God and humble ourselves before him. This young person was extremely articulate and had plenty of experience preaching before her Congregation. When we met with her, she was tending her mother’s “comedor” and blatantly ignored three customers for the sake of trying to get [Christina and I] to repent and join the Assembly of God. Unfortunately, I was not able to get information from her on the place of women in her Church because she got into a most interesting debate with Christina on social justice. Christina asked the young woman how the Assembly of God Church explained the existence of poor people if he loved everybody the same. The woman responded that God kept giving the rich more and more so they would realize that he was with them. He kept the poor penniless so that he would not lose their souls. “If the poor are given riches” she said, they will forget about God. Everyone knows that.” Christina almost threw a fit so I convinced her it was time to leave.

In a last attempt to get a better impression of women’s participation in this Church, I went to one of their vigils from 12:30-4:00 am. The young woman I had spoken to earlier was ecstatic at my presence and seemed convinced that her Church had gained a new soul. She asked me the whereabouts of Christina and I told her that she was dancing with a few guys at the PADECOSM party. [Claridad’s] eyes opened wide and she told me that dancing was the work of the Devil and that I should go rescue her and bring her to Church.³⁰⁰ I responded that I did not think that Christina would be very pleased with the idea.

²⁹⁸ Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (1996) pp. 133-134.

Comments by former ALAS Member: Jesús nos enseno que debíamos ser tolerantes pero él venía a cambiar el mundo, no era conformista. **Translation:** Jesús taught us that we should be tolerant but he came to change the world, he was not a conformist.

Lisandra: Para todo hay líderes y hay algunos para la iglesia. Hay un dicho que dice “Ayúdate que yo te ayudare.” Así es que si hay que matar, hay que matar. **Translation:** There are leaders for everything and there are some for the church. There is a saying that says “Help yourself and I will help you.” So if one must kill, then one must kill.”

²⁹⁹ “[Hay que partir] desde el nivel donde el educando está o los educandos están, esto es un nivel cultural”... Paulo Freire--Pedagogía. YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwri7pO8UHU>
Translation: “One must start from where the level of the student or students is, this is a level of culture.” Paulo Freire—Pedagogía <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwri7pO8UHU>

³⁰⁰ **Former ALAS Member (Baptist):** Entonces seguramente yo me voy para el infierno! (Risa)
Translation: Then I will surely go to hell! (Laugh).

My beginning incursion into critical consciousness in El Salvador led me to examine the politics of my research activities and philosophy. I remember my continuous discomfort with the ethnographic work I was doing. I could not help, but feel like a parasite leaching the last bit of privacy and humanity out of people who had already been through so much. I was conflicted with my prior academic training which focused on the need for objectivity and detachment in order obtain an adequate level of verifiable knowledge. However, I also sought refuge in the same detachment because it provided a safe space away from an intense emotional involvement in the experiences that the Salvadorans were living. I came to realize upon my departure that the “space” I had so consciously created was not available to the Salvadorans in the same way and this realization is what had the ultimate impact on the methodology I chose for ALAS.

Three days before leaving El Salvador, I bumped into Nora, the person who had introduced me to most of the women I interviewed in Morazán. Her demeanor towards me was rather abrupt as she turned her back to me and walked away. I did not see her after that and the day I was getting ready to ride the bus, I looked around town one more time to say goodbye. Noticing that time was running out I decided to get in line when I heard a woman shout “Roxanna!” I turned around and I saw Nora running towards me. When I greeted her and told her I had been looking for her to say goodbye, she just stood there staring at me for several seconds with a stern expression. She then extended her arm abruptly, hand shaking, and gave me what seemed to be a piece of paper. I took it and turned it around so I could see what it was. She immediately started to cry and hugged me. It was her picture she had given me. I was in a state of shock and I could not but feel guilt since I had never let myself feel that way towards anyone in the town because I knew that I would probably never see them again.

I had prepared myself psychologically to define my ethnographic duties as “work.” I felt my soul shatter into several pieces and the only thing I could think of was to say “What about your signature? I can’t leave without your signature.” I handed her a pencil and noticed the great effort that she put into forming every letter, it seemed to take forever, forcing me to deal with the injustice of the decision I had made to exclude her from my emotions and to relegate her to a role of “principal informant.” I realized as well, the enormous power she had exerted over me during those few minutes. The extra

sacrifice she made to write her name, when writing was so difficult for her, made me think of all those things I took for granted. The fact of the matter was that I was leaving and she could not. I came to realize that there was something that was definitely wrong with this thing we call “detached and objective research.” My last one-way contact with Nora occurred after I arrived at East Lansing. I purchased a bible for her whose edges were glossed in gold paint. She once told me that she had always wished she had one like that because only the wealthier women of the Church possessed such a bible. I sent it to her through Dr. Binford, but I never heard anything from her again.

Despite the fact that religion inevitably took almost center stage in my work, I became aware, a little too late, that my main interest had been education whether geared towards children or adults. During my free time in El Salvador, I often tried to teach the children how to read, what else could an anthropologist do, when all of the solidarity workers were actually “doing something” for others? When working with the children I was captivated by the songs they sang and the games they played. In Morazán, I heard some of the starkest examples of inhumanity that one could imagine. During one of my interviews, I was told of the time when the Government forces were patrolling the town looking for insurgents. The guards hovered around the street where a woman had been brutally killed and was left to decompose under the sun while the town’s people were forced to carry out their daily activities as usual. Two children walked by the dead woman and realized it was their mother. They had no choice but to keep walking for fear that their relation to her would be discovered, risking their own lives.

I noticed that the children of Morazán had great difficulty concentrating and retaining recently learned information. They would sometimes cower under a table when they heard a helicopter flying by. Evidence of the experiences these children had lived still remained in the large holes on the partially destroyed streets where bombs had been dropped. Otherwise, the children appeared like normal happy youth. Their games were simple: the boys played soccer barefoot with a hard plastic/half dented ball, and the girls used soda bottle tops to cut circles into leaves which they called “making tortillas.” Also, due to the death of so many men during the war, female single-headed households abounded. It was not uncommon to see three-year old children babysitting their one-year old siblings while the mothers went to work. I remember one particular girl who sang a

song that I have never been able to forget because of the contrast it provided with the experiences she had actually lived.

Yo tengo, tengo, tengo	I have, have, have
Aquí en mi Corazon	Right here in my heart
¿Y que's lo que yo tengo?	And what is it that I have?
Es el amor de Dios	It's is the love of God.

It was beyond me how a child could sing a song of divine love after having witnessed the darkest depths of inhumanity represented by the guardians of the nation who had decimated the people she knew and loved.

Regarding the style of my ethnography of the Women's communal Movement of Morazán, the beginning traces of postmodern and critical theories were clearly visible. The structuralist tendencies, however, were even more apparent. My analysis was based on the critique of an ecological model of forces of continuity and change that I found, only partially useful. My conclusion pointed to its limitations as an analytical model that did not take into consideration rather imperceptible underlying forces that had the potential for consistent and even dramatic change. I argued that given the appropriate circumstances or "enough time for germination," they could grow into potent ones.

Thus, the notion of "seeds of change" has always been present in my work with ALAS. it is something on which I have based my entire collaboration and philosophy during the 12 years of its duration. I was inspired by the results I witnessed from the Freirean literacy circles and the resilience of the children and women of El Salvador who continued to have the energy to organize and move forward despite the tragedies they had lived. I brought the seeds of El Salvador with me to Michigan and I have seen the triumphs of ALAS occur in unexpected ways. Such is the case, that this led me to re-define my concept of "change" by the ruptures that did not fit neatly into the mental templates that I had brought with me when I began the co-organization of this effort. The actions of children and parents, community supporters and the contradictions of university faculty and administrators, all resist easy classification, prediction and understanding. I have felt moments of great joy, frustration, disappointment and even betrayal, but I have never felt regret.

ALAS was and is a world of transnational confluences and contradictions where identities have adapted, transformed and resisted internal and external forces for the sole purpose of survival. I have come to understand that “survival” means very different things to different people, as I have understood this in relation to the University of Michigan Anthropology Department and School of Social Work. In fact, this ongoing awareness continued to grow during my experience teaching at the School of Social Work at Eastern Michigan University.

When I was doing my work in El Salvador, I was looking in from the outside, despite the effects that my “controlled” inter-subjectivity may have had on me. In my work with ALAS and the various universities, however, I have been looking from the inside out and back to the inside in a non-stop cycle of reflection. One of the most important findings has been that awareness often takes a long time to develop, even when faced on a daily basis with similar contradictory forces. The forces, like the resistance of them, become, to some extent, naturalized, expected and therefore almost subliminal. Such undercurrents of awareness have both the potential of limiting meaningful action and of preserving the hope for one. Again, the theme of “seeds of change” reappears.

To me, ALAS has been of benefit to my own children and thus an extension of my family. I have come to understand, however, that it has also been a strain on them and that often, without wanting to admit it to myself, I have made a choice of one over the other which has led to important repercussions for both. The other ALAS families may not have experienced this ambiguity to the same extent that I have and I think this may have been, in part, because my organizational work has been attached to my research and it has had to continue, at least, until its academic expectation is completed. Their work lay elsewhere and thus their “center” has often been different. Mine has always been inherently related to academia while for them, academia has been a temporary support to reach other more immediate and pressing goals.

It is within this polemic of critically engaged reflexivity and the pull of objective investigation which I experienced in El Salvador and which was somewhat expected of me by the IRB forms and processes at the University of Michigan, that I have positioned myself as a researcher and community organizer. My reason for being a leading and long term organizer in ALAS is a reflection of the multiple social positions I have inhabited

and whose effect and relationship to the other members, and to the development of the organization, has been a primary aspect of consideration. Before entering in the analysis of the ALAS organizational efforts however, it is important to provide a general picture of minority population growth, the graduation rates of Latino, African American and white students in Washtenaw County, Michigan and the Nation in general. With regards to Washtenaw reports it is important to note the representation of Latino inclusion in media publicized articles and demographic documents. This is especially significant for our future discussion of Latino inclusion in bridge programming in Washtenaw County and Detroit as it relates to University of Michigan and Eastern Michigan University interventions.

Minority Demographics in Washtenaw County, the State of Michigan and the Nation

Since the beginning years of ALAS, the Latino population's visibility in the County demographic reports has been intermittent despite its overall incremental growth. The groups such as "Native Hawaiians" which had no actual representation in the County according to a Washtenaw County Demography Report from the State of Michigan in 2000, for example, still had their ethnic identifiers included. The category for Latinos/Hispanics or their subgroups were not mentioned despite their existence as is revealed in a report reflecting the same time period that was published eleven years later.³⁰¹ The culture of representation in the first report was mainly based on a white/black paradigm.

³⁰¹ Washtenaw County Demography. State of Michigan-County of Washtenaw
<http://www.uscitycounty.com/michigan-state/washtenaw-county-demography.htm>

TABLE 2. Washtenaw County Population by Age, Sex, and Race

	Down Top
Total population, 2000 (April 1)	322,895
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > Under 5 years > Number	20,130
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > Under 5 years > Percent	6.20%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 5 to 17 years > Number	51,158
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 5 to 17 years > Percent	15.80%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 18 to 24 years > Number	55,199
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 18 to 24 years > Percent	17.10%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 25 to 44 years > Number	103,640
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 25 to 44 years > Percent	32.10%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 45 to 64 years > Number	66,497
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 45 to 64 years > Percent	20.60%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 65 to 74 years > Number	13,999
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 65 to 74 years > Percent	4.30%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 75 to 84 years > Number	9,073
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 75 to 84 years > Percent	2.80%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 85 years and over > Number	3,199
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > 85 years and over > Percent	1.00%
Population by age, 2000 (April 1) > Median age (years)	31.30
Population by sex, 2000 (April 1) > Males	160,558
Population by sex, 2000 (April 1) > Females	162,337
Population by sex, 2000 (April 1) > Males per 100 females	98.90
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > White > Number	249,916
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > White > Percent	77.40%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Black or African American > Number	39,697
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Black or African American > Percent	12.30%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > American Indian and Alaska Native > Number	1,161
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > American Indian and Alaska Native > Percent	0.40%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Asian > Number	20,338

Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Asian > Percent	6.30%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander > Number	126
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander > Percent	(Z)%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Some other race > Number	3,364
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > One race > Some other race > Percent	1.00%
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > Two or more races > Number	8,293
Population by race, 2000 (April 1) > Two or more races > Percent	2.60%

5. *Washtenaw County Population by Age*

E-Washtenaw Community Profiles posted in 2011 did include a report on Latino demographics from the 2000 Census published by the Washtenaw County Planning Committee, however. It demonstrates, perhaps, the increasing influence of the population in the “conscience” of the County. In addition to a main Hispanic/Latino category, this report included various Latino sub-categories within them.³⁰²

Ann Arbor

Hispanic or Latino and Race (of any race)	3,814
Mexican	1,538
Puerto Rican	438
Cuban	180
Other Hispanic or Latino	1,662
White Hispanic or Latino	2,176
Black or African American Hispanic or Latino	164
American Indian/Alaskan Native Hispanic or Latino ⁴⁵	
Asian Hispanic or Latino	34
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander H/L	7
Some Other Race	998

Manchester

Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	32
Mexican	24
Other Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	8
Barton Hills	
Hispanic or Latino of Any race	4

302

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/planning_environment/planning/comm_prof.html

Mexican	1
Other Hispanic or Latino	3
Chelsea	
Hispanic or Latino of any Race	36
Cuban	4
Mexican	22
Other Hispanic or Latino	10
Dexter	
Hispanic or Latino of Any race	23
Mexican	14
Other Hispanic or Latino	9
Milan	
Hispanic or Latino and Race (of any race)	105
Mexican	123
Puerto Rican	20
Cuban	4
Other Hispanic or Latino	56
Saline	
Hispanic or Latino of Any race	6
Mexican	6
Ypsilanti Township	
Hispanic or Latino and Race (of any race)	1,379
Mexican	735
Puerto Rican	120
Cuban	56
Other Hispanic or Latino	468
Whitmore Lake	
Hispanic or Latino and Race (of any race)	96
Mexican	53
Puerto Rican	13
Cuban	4
Other Hispanic or Latino	26

Statistics regarding the 2010 Census have varied. The figures in the “Hispanic News” website article “Race is on to Cash in on Booming Hispanic Market,”³⁰³ for

³⁰³ http://www.hispanic6.com/race_is_on_to_cash_in_on_booming_hispanic_market.htm

example, almost doubled the numbers informed by the Washtenaw County Planning Committee. This article stated the following regarding the 2000 Census.

Locally, the Hispanic population totaled 8,839 in Washtenaw County, or 3 percent of the population, according to Census 2000. That's up from 5,731 people of Hispanic descent living in the county in 1990. Livingston County also saw a growth in its Hispanic population during the decade, rising from 974 people in 1990 to 1,953 in 2000

According to City-Data.com report of 2009, between the years of 1995-2000, the number of “foreign born” in the County amounted to 13,694. The subgroups of this category are not disclosed, but given the numbers established by the “Hispanic News” article cited above and the fact the Latinos were not included as a category in the “Foreign Born” County Census charts of 2009, it seems to indicate that thousands of Latinos stayed under the radar for lack of documentation reasons. The categories of “foreign born” included were China, Korea, India, Canada, United Kingdom, Japan and Taiwan. “The most common first ancestries reported were German, English, Irish, Polish, United States or American, Italian and French (except Basque).³⁰⁴ An interesting contradiction was apparent in this census, however. Despite not including any Latinos as “foreign born,” it did include Spanish as the primary language of the home for 2.6% of all County residents where “16% speak English not well, 4% don't speak English at all” out of a total County resident population of 347,563. This means that up to 4,699 Latinos could be foreign born.³⁰⁵” A recent article dated March 23, 2011,³⁰⁶ stated that:

The number of residents who call themselves Hispanic has also grown by 22 percent. The city added 852 Hispanic residents since 2000. that brings the total to 4,666, or 4 percent of Ann Arbor's population... Those increases come while the overall population in Ann Arbor fell by a fraction of a percent, from 114,024 in 2000 to 113,934 in 2010, according to [U.S. Census figures released Tuesday](#).

Although the article is titled “U.S. Census figures showed gains in Ann Arbor Asian, Hispanic population, loss of white, black residents,” the only picture it includes is that of a Chinese child. Another article titled “Ann Arbor” Census Shows Ann Arbor becoming more diverse” stated that the Latino and Asian populations have shown an

³⁰⁴ http://www.city-data.com/county/Washtenaw_County-MI.html

³⁰⁵ http://www.city-data.com/county/Washtenaw_County-MI.html

³⁰⁶ <http://www.annarbor.com/news/us-census-figure-reveals-boosts-in-ann-arbor-asian-hispanic-losses-in-white-and-black-residents/>

increase; the Asian population by 34.9% and the Latino population by 56.8 %. Meanwhile the white population decreased by 2.3% and the black population decreased by 12.6%.³⁰⁷ Despite this, the article titled “Washtenaw County’s low Income students have lower graduation rates than any other group,” again, establishes a black-white comparison of why it is more important to discuss class rather than racial or ethnic identity. Latino students are never mentioned.

Ann Arbor had an overall graduation rate of 87.7 percent for the class of 2009. Black students in the district had a 78 percent graduation rate, while poor students had a 63.4 percent graduation rate.³⁰⁸

The Latino education statistics for the Nation have caused worry among many. According to a report citing President Barack Obama, he discussed his concerns stating that Latinos were confronting “challenges of monumental proportions.”³⁰⁹ Among these the article included

lack of a high-school diploma, language barriers and obstacles caused by immigration status. Meanwhile, Hispanics represent a growing share of the U.S. population.

According to the Civic Report of 2001 from the Manhattan Institute, Michigan, African American and Latino students had a graduation rate of 53% and 55% respectively as compared to white students whose rate was 78%³¹⁰. The “Alliance for Excellent Education Report” for 2005-2006 found a general drop in graduation rates for all three groups. Whites suffered a drop of 8%, African Americans of 15% and Latino students of 9%³¹¹. The article added that only 55% of Latinos entering two-year colleges in 2005 had completed their degrees by 2008.

The inconsistent representations of Latinos in Washtenaw County are somewhat understandable given the relatively small size of the population in the late 90s. The growing Latino population, in the early years of ALAS was not clearly visible on the streets and the traditional community and social service organizations did not have any

³⁰⁷

http://www.heritage.com/articles/2011/05/09/ann_arbor_journal/news/doc4dc83d5dc50c6049241512.txt?viewmode=2

³⁰⁸ <http://www.annarbor.com/news/graduation-rates/> posted May, 2010.

³⁰⁹ Banchemo, Stephanie (2010) “Graduation Rates Stagnate as Latinos Continue to Trail”. October 20. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304510704575562352066596296.html>

³¹⁰ <http://www.manhattan-institute.org>

³¹¹ www.all4ed.org

links to them with the exception of documented Latinos who were affiliated, as students or employees, to the universities, hospitals and pharmaceuticals. These had been absorbed as part of the general population. The presence of the most vulnerable Latino members was more easily “heard” than “seen” in the backroom kitchens of Ann Arbor restaurants, although sporadic groups of construction workers were also visible on the yards and houses of upper middle class Ann Arbor residents. The schools began to struggle with Latino students and hoped to solve the problem by applying the same techniques they were using for international students who were related to University faculty and graduate students. It was evident that the County was dealing with a new social challenge.

The reports mentioned above are contradictory because on the one hand, some of them ignored the presence of the Latino population in the County, while others reported a sizeable and important increase when referring to the same time period. It is also worth noting that the level of inclusion and increase also appears to have had something to do with the ideological position of the source of the report. In addition, the political status of the incoming population also lent itself to under-representation in the census. It is an undeniable fact, however, that this population increased substantially and that the social services that now exist know very little about their true needs. This is especially true within the educational system and even more so in the late 90s when their presence in larger numbers was scarcely visible. At that time, nuclear families were beginning to be reunited after five or more years of separation: the women and children waiting for their husbands to bring them to Michigan from their hometowns in Mexico and other places. Their needs increased and so did the burden of the women who now had to take care of their children and husbands in a country that was unfamiliar and in a language that was alien and threatening. Their children were exposed to rejection from the schools, deficient academic placements and grade retention. The mothers often worked cleaning houses, hotel rooms and tables in restaurants.

This was the reality that I noticed in those years when, by chance, I would bump into one of them at a restaurant. They were fearful of talking to anyone, even a Spanish speaker like me. They did not know who they could trust and they always feared the worst. Their apartments were often bare, not because of lack of money, but because of

the fear that they might be caught by immigration and would be forced to leave their possessions behind. This is when it appeared appropriate to start a research-based community organization; one that would reflect the theoretical contributions that had helped me comprehend the reality that I had experienced in El Salvador and that had the potential for bridging understanding and action in an effort to create a growing niche, a safe and productive space of mutual aid for these families and my own.

Research Concerns, Narrative Style, Purpose and Theories

Questions about the classification of research that was not primarily based on quantification, but ongoing oral narrative and inquiry by female actors that occurred on a day-to-day basis began to surface. In our context, as immigrant women, how should we speak of participatory feminist theory when most of the members of ALAS did not proclaim themselves to be feminist, but were creating and applying a wealth of knowledge reflective of their multiple positions as women in their struggle for greater equity and access to resources? How were we to understand the contradictions of our daily lives reflected in our activism while we apparently accepted social norms that were often characterized as oppressive within feminist literature? Most importantly, how could we, as immigrant women organizers and our children (some transnational citizens, others transnational residents) create or increase the ruptures in the social fabric that would enable us to strive for justice and empowerment? These are questions which have been highly pertinent to this research and which have helped position the organization members and myself within a context of convergence, subalterity, conflict and empowerment. These concerns will be discussed in the analysis of this chapter.

In this narrative, you will hear multiple voices in the recounting of the events we will discuss and analyze. The narration style I have chosen and the voices herein, escape in important ways the structure I have imposed as a writer. The inclusion of emotion: pride, frustration, dismay, confusion, creativity and “enthusiasm” (as Jane Addams would describe it) clearly color the tone I use in the discussion of the events I have experienced in my work with ALAS.

The purpose of this chapter then, is to evaluate the community based research and organizational efforts, over a twelve-year span. I will provide a narrative of its historical

trajectory through the lens of the paradigms mentioned earlier. I will discuss the negotiation of community identity and internal differences in the attempt to build consensus as well as the participation of its membership and the dynamics of resource acquisition. The ALAS analysis is a look inward, as critically engaged anthropology might have it, of a native organizational effort to advance disenfranchised and vulnerable populations on the road to self-empowerment through education, leadership and community service. The analysis of human relations, power imbalances and the limitations of representation take the foreground in the development of this work, in order to improve our organizing efforts as well as the relevance of the services we provide.

For the purpose of clarity, this chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section focuses on organizational theories which inform this research. I begin by discussing the complexities inherent in concepts such as “community” and “organizing,” as well as the differences and similarities in three significant models of community-based research: Action Research, Participatory Research and Participatory Action Research. The second section is a narration of the development of ALAS as a community-based organization while emphasizing the difficulties, contradictions and accomplishments in the organization process. I discuss the contradictions inherent in the idea and practice of empowerment as developed by (Healy (1999) and Parker et al (1999). The ambiguity inherent in the relationship between organizer and organized as well as the evolving and changing power relations within and between organizations and academia is left for the reader to reflect on in relation to this project with the hope that it will engender similar questions of other community-based projects.

Theoretical Background

Definitions of “Community” and “Organization” for Research Purposes

The discussion of community as related to organization efforts is particularly important in the context of ALAS given its ongoing fluctuations in ethnic and class composition. Community analysis projects often times refer to communities as being constituted by “a group of people from a social unit based on common location, interest,

identification, culture and/or common activities.”³¹² However, it is not uncommon to find that a combination of these characteristics is present in the formation of any one community, that community members may have differing reasons for their membership or that, as time goes on, the constitution of a particular community may change. For example, throughout the trajectory of ALAS its structural, ethnic, class and gender composition has varied as well as its inter-organizational relations. Organization, as a concept, can be defined as “a structured social system consisting of groups and individuals working together to meet some agreed-upon objectives. Organizations are deemed to be an open and self-sustaining system due to their dynamic and changing nature.”³¹³ It is the ever-changing adaptability that enables their long-term survival.

ALAS is an example of the fluidity inherent in the concepts of community and organization as the two terms meld into each other. The question that becomes apparent is; given the ambiguity of both concepts in the composition they represent, how do community and organization differ from each other? In other words, is community an organization, and organization a community? The answer, in some contexts, may be “yes” and in others “no.” The concept of community implies, if used by one of its members, a shared identity which is voluntarily and internally created and accepted with the aid of external elicitation and influence. The concept of organization implies a structure, but does not inherently require a dynamic of shared identity which is internally accepted. Membership of an organization may be a result of a shared identity among constituents, but this is not a necessary requirement. An organization may be an externally imposed structure for the purpose of work which may not involve a shared identity. It is possible that there may be an active repudiation of such an identity due to unacceptable labor or administrative conditions and relations.

These distinctions then, beg the question “what is a community organization?” For the purposes of initiating the discussion of ALAS, I will define it as a group of people constituted by common interests in one or more of the following services (i.e. low cost

³¹² Garvin and Tropman, 1992 in Rothman et al. 1995

Martin: The only common activity of the people on this block is cutting the grass, because if you don't, the law comes after you! I look at my neighborhood as mixed, but people coming in here would see it as black. Most of the families are black, but three doors down there is a white family, there are about four white families. There are some white college kids here that rent rooms and there used to be one Latino family.

³¹³ Greenberg and Baron 1993, pp. 8-9.

support for academic and social success, maintenance of native language and cultural identity, interest in community service and Spanish as a second language, interest in karate as a health promoting or leisure activity) due to some level of common ethnic, linguistic, cultural, educational, or lifestyle identity.

The membership of ALAS has changed over time. Initially it was mostly composed of non-university affiliated working-class Latino mothers and their children. Once an official organization, the leadership was constituted by representatives of the various Latino groups and one University of Michigan Student Representative. University of Michigan tutors and one instructor also participated. By definition, the main players in the relationship were the Latino community members, my own family and the constituents from the language departments. The location of the organization changed from the homes of the community members to the University of Michigan Multi-Cultural Center and expanded its services to outside terrains as other organizations were attracted to or sought out by ALAS. In 2008, ALAS moved from the University of Michigan, terminated its official status as a student organization and moved to Ypsilanti. As a result of this move, the organization has been constituted by a multicultural membership which has fluctuated between 2/3 Latino, 1/3 African American and equal numbers of both with 90% of all adult members being female. The directorship has been shared between myself, the African-American karate instructor and a Latino ALAS member who is generally in charge of recruitment, membership maintenance and who helps choose program activities.

Between 1999-2011 common interests among the Latino community members included the maintenance of a shared native language (Spanish), of an evolving Latino ethnic identity in the context of a foreign country (the United States), the acquisition of the majority language for the purpose of social and economic survival and the provision of services for those in need. The interests of the African-American community members varied between an emphasis on karate (generally sought by the kids) and the tutoring of academic areas (generally sought by the parents). The interests of the tutors included an inexpensive way to practice their Spanish as a second language in a natural and multi-ethnic Latino environment without leaving the local area. The tutors also benefited from a recommendation for future employment or advanced graduate work for their community

service. Prior to the dissolution of ALAS as a student organization, the University of Michigan tutors benefited from a three-credit course. This allowed them to complete their language requirements for their academic minor. The instructor benefited from teaching a course that, due to its community service requirement, required less classroom time and structure for the same salary.

The department had easy access to an organization that would enable it to satisfy the grant requirements for the purpose of a community-based course without the difficulties of taking students to Detroit and finding an organization that would enable the students to practice their newly acquired Spanish skills. The Multi-Cultural Center was able to prove its ability to meet the needs of the multi-ethnic student body on campus while providing the wider community with services and requesting further funding for building renovation and program development³¹⁴. Outside faculty and organizations that were interested in working with community Latinos enjoyed the grant opportunities that began to focus on Latinos. These differing interests worked together to structure the constituents and group activities depending on the needs of the members.

Community Based Research Models as a Means of Understanding “Community Organizations.”

Community-based research, as a concept, is often used with limited clarity in the research process itself or in the documentation of it. Similarly to community and organization, the concepts of community based research, action research and participatory research seem self-evident yet are often used and confused as interchangeable, even by the theoreticians or researchers who are purportedly involved in such investigative processes. From the academic reader’s perspective, the implication is that there is relatively equal participation in the research practices between the community members and the researcher.³¹⁵ The notion of community is often left as self-evident by merely stating geographic, ethnic or other identity referents or by not stating

³¹⁴ Michigan Daily, 2002.

³¹⁵ **Martin:** To me they have a slightly different flair to them. For me, “community based research” is research that is done in the community, on the community. I don’t know what action research is, but it sounds like they are going to do research on the community to see if they can help organize it better to get things that the community needs like funding or help plant grass. That’s what it seems like. With participatory research I think that I am obligated to participate in the research on the researcher’s time by helping him or her recruit or organize people, however, you want to say it.

anything at all³¹⁶. Seldom, as alluded to by P. Hawe,³¹⁷ are the differences and tensions in the “community” referred to or carefully analyzed within articles about community-based research. This is even more so the case in research which is “consensus focused.”

Community-based research comes in many forms and shapes, but the underlying assumption of this practice, from the perspective of the outside researcher (not a member of the “community”), is that the objective is to include the community in the research process so as to gain more useful and accurate information as well as to empower those who are engaged in the process. A well-known proponent of this type of research is John Gaventa who argues that “research for democracy also implies democratizing research” and that it should be “linked to knowledge building [as well as] to education and action.”³¹⁸ However, as stated by Brown and Tandon³¹⁹, there are some important differences between Action Research founded by Kurt Lewin in the late 60s in the sociopolitical context of the United States, and that of Participatory Research proposed by Paolo Freire in the context of Latin America in the 1970s.

Action Research focuses on the “centrality of the individual, incremental social reform and consensus.”³²⁰ Participatory Action Research also focuses on practical information as does Action Research, but it does not strive for consensus and does not assume common interests. Rather, it is aware that power inequalities based on oppression and dependence exist and must be dealt with actively. Thus, differences among social groups rather than consensus are emphasized.³²¹ As a result of these differences, the methodologies of both research paradigms are affected. Action researchers must respond to the problem definitions of both the organizational authorities and the workers to reach a consensus and thus “tend to ally themselves with

³¹⁶ **Me:** If I were to ask you about your community, what do you think I would be referring to? **Martin:** Ypsilanti. In the past I would have thought of it as a place where there were jobs. Now I think of it as a dying city because the manufactures have left: General Motors and Ford have closed all the factories in the city. They just closed the General Motors transmission factory. This area was known for the auto industry. The first Keizer-Frazer jeeps were made here. Before General Motors bought the transmission factory they used to make M-16 rifles along with cars.

³¹⁷ Hawe, P. 1994,

³¹⁸ Ansley and Gaventa 1997: 46-47

³¹⁹ Tandon, 1983

³²⁰ Ibid., 281.

³²¹ Brown and Tandon Ibid., 281-282.

organizational authorities”³²². Participatory Action Researchers (PAR), on the other hand, tend to ally themselves with the oppressed group and as a result, suffer the consequences of limited resource availability not confronted as much by Action Researchers³²³.

Because PARs often cannot count on resources from the organizations which employ their clients, the funding must necessarily be client generated. Action Research, on the other hand, is often funded in part, or in totality by the organizations which are partners in the research process. The nature of the funding plays an important role in defining the constituents of the communities which are to be researched.

According to Brown and Tandon, Participatory Action Research defines all participants as researchers who are militant observers attempting to “extract information from uncooperative adversaries.”³²⁴ They argue that cross fertilization between these two forms of community-based research does exist and might be useful depending on the context. For example, Action Research could benefit from Participatory Action Research in cases where achieving consensus is difficult. Thus, PAR could help resolve political and economic conflicts of interest because it already presupposes their existence. Participatory Action Research, on the other hand, could use Action Research techniques in contexts where “parties have common interests and accept present power and resource distributions as legitimate.”³²⁵

Clearly, the two forms of community-based research just described have been an improvement in the search for more collaborative relations between researchers and researched. However, skeptical critics still remain. Influential voices that warn us about the illusion of democracy in these two methodologies include feminist theoreticians such as P.H. Collins³²⁶ and P. Maguire.³²⁷ Here meaningful collaboration is not solely determined by the extent of “participation” of different actors, but by the episteme used in the analysis of problems and relations. Collins warns us that we cannot presume to find and understand subjugated knowledges through methods that have been used historically as tools of subjugation. Examples of these are notions of “truth” (the culture

³²² Ibid., 284.

³²³ Ibid. 284-285.

³²⁴ Ibid., 286.

³²⁵ Ibid., 292

³²⁶ Collins, PH. 1991

³²⁷ Maguire 1987.

of the state) and the use of statistics (the science of the state) employed to generalize about, rather than to engage with, populations.

...subordinate groups have long had to use alternative ways to create self-definitions and self-evaluations and to rearticulate them through our own specialists. Like other subordinate groups, African American women have developed a distinctive...standpoint [and] done so by using alternative ways of procuring and validating knowledge...³²⁸ the narrative method [for example] requires that [a] story be told, not torn apart in analysis, and trusted as a core belief, not admired as “science.”³²⁹

Similarly, Maguire alerts us to the biases which PAR has inherited from more traditional methodologies: “the androcentric view” inherent in dominant paradigms of social reality which “reflect women’s exclusion from social power [and] help construct that exclusion.”³³⁰ PAR and other forms of community based research are impregnated with the “dominant [male] social science tenets of objective, value free [and] detached research” assumptions³³¹ which often overlook the “hierarchy of knowers and doers within the research team.”³³² As such, divisions of labor, including the sexual division of labor, in these teams is often ignored.

...key areas of social inquiry [are] overlooked [such as] the role of emotion in social life ...the focus on public domains and official players [rather than the] equally private, unofficial and less visible domains, i.e., those usually assigned to women”³³³ ...[Men] generalize conclusions from all male studies to all people.³³⁴

Interestingly, Maguire acknowledges that qualitative research has not been a saving grace in undermining the androcentric assumptions of dominant research. She quotes Morgan in saying that “qualitative methodology and ethnography has its own brand of machismo³³⁵.” As we shall see in the following sections, the research collaboration in this project is one which emphasizes the emotion in the lives of the women who participate in the organization, as well as our often times contradictory pressures which underlie the

³²⁸ Collins, 20

³²⁹ Ibid., 210.

³³⁰ Maguire, 74

³³¹ Ibid. p.81

³³² Ibid. p.90.

³³³ Ibid. p. 82

³³⁴ Ibid. p. 83.

³³⁵ Morgan in McGuire 1981

continuum between our public and private roles in our efforts to build an acceptable present and future for ourselves and our children.

ALAS and Critically Engaged Inter-subjective Research

Social work and critically engaged anthropology share a commitment to the self-determination, empowerment and social justice of its research subjects. A feminist perspective added to the emphasis on the ideals of equity and justice already present in these paradigms analyzes the position, in voice and action, of participants who are often ignored or actively silenced by traditional and positivistic oriented analyses and methodologies. It explores alternate spaces of presence, discourse and power which have profound effects on social processes and outcomes. ALAS has inhabited such spaces while intersecting with traditional institutions through its formation, development and maintenance. Its development demonstrates important fluctuations in ideas about partnerships, coalition formation and philosophical perpetuation resulting from the negotiations around conflict resolution and goal attainment. These are intrinsically related to the gender and social position of its membership.

As stated earlier, organization efforts preceding ALAS resulted from my concern over the lack of awareness about the needs of incoming Latino immigrants in Washtenaw County and from my desire that my own children grow up in an environment with other Latino and Spanish speaking children. In a conversation with Robert Ortega, I discussed my interest in starting a community organization with Latino immigrants that would be based on their natural networks. He told me that there were not enough of them. Nevertheless, he recommended the Welfare Rights Union as a place to start since it was thought to have services or ties with immigrants. I did a practicum there for one term and translated their material into Spanish only to find that, unlike what was informed to me by their director, the Latinos who approached their office were few and far between. Discouraged, I returned repeatedly to the restaurants where I had previously met a Latino waitress, whom I will call Yanet, and realized that her ability to speak English was almost non-existent. It took six months to establish relations of trust and to be invited into her household.

I began tutoring her children, which led her to agree to introduce me to a relatively large extended family of sisters in law. My interaction with one family quickly escalated to four extended families related to the first. Two children who were cousins of similar ages attended the same school and they were both going to be held back because they did not speak English. This, however, was not the customary practice with the Asian children of the school. Both Latino children were described as “learning disabled”—a label which, after our educational intervention in ALAS, proved to be false. As these patterns of discrimination towards Latinos in the school system became apparent and as news reached us that the schools were refusing undocumented children admission, the women asked me to serve as their advocate.

Tengo una amiga que no ha podido matricular a sus hijos en escuela. Están corriendo por la calle desde hace dos meses sin hacer nada. Mi amiga no ha podido buscar trabajo porque no tiene donde dejarlos. Esta desesperada y no sabe que hacer.³³⁶

I did research on the 1982 Supreme Court Ruling Plyer vs. Doe (<http://www.americanpatrol.com/REFERENCE/PlyerVDoeSummary.html>) which was used in 1994 to defeat Proposition 187 in California. Proposition 187 sought to deny social services to illegal immigrants. Plyer vs. Doe stated that all children in the U.S. have the constitutional right to a free education and to free and reduced lunch if needed. After I shared this information with the women they asked me to take it to the schools. The Public Relations Director of Ann Arbor Public Schools stated ignorance about the court ruling and requested that I provide her with written documentation of it. Once I presented it to her, she wrote a letter to all the schools in the district, informing them that they could not exclude undocumented children, harass them or deprive them of a public education. This was the organization’s first major accomplishment.

The work in our group began with the four extended families mentioned earlier. Our education began by researching our rights as parents in the school system and by performing role-plays where, with the aid of a translator, we were able to advocate for

³³⁶ Yanet’s sister in law talking about a friend. 1/2000.

Translation: I have a friend that has not been able to enroll her kids in school. They have been running around in the street for two months without doing anything [of school work]. My friend has not been able to look for work because she doesn’t have a place to leave them. She is desperate and doesn’t know what to do.

their children and oppose grade retention and unjustified special education labeling. The children and parents were tutored in English. We also discussed social theories related to discrimination patterns in this country, as well as strategies to ensure the rights of immigrant families and children. The strategies used by the school system were in effect practices of domination that were undermining, not only the children's self-concept as learners, but their parents' relation to and view of them. In the long run, this would also add further expense and economic stress to the working families. This education brought to mind Freire's statement that "emancipatory education is incompatible with a pedagogy that, consciously or mystified, has been a practice of domination."³³⁷ Women began to talk about their experiences in this country and what strategies they had found successful to ensure day-to-day survival. They reflected on how they were seen by others and how this affected how they saw themselves. My notes from 2003 reflect some of these changes:

Yolanda is now learning how to drive. When I met her in 1999, she told me that driving was her husband's job and that she was too afraid to get behind the wheel. Since then, she has advocated for her daughter in the school by speaking in Spanish to the teacher while I interpret. When we were together with the teacher, she informed him that she knew that he required her signature to hold her daughter back, but that she was not going to give it. She asked that he work with ALAS and her child so that she could be successful along with her peers. When we finished the meeting she said her heart was pumping so fast she could feel the blood rush to her head because of how scared and nervous she had been when talking to him. Nevertheless, she said she was happy. She felt she had won because now her daughter was not going to say she was "dumb" like she had in the past few months. Yolanda's hands were trembling and she said "¡Mira, mira como están mis manos!"³³⁸

Thanks to Lorraine Gutierrez' support, her students from the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program were the first University of Michigan English and academic tutors who participated with our initial organizational efforts. As time went on, however, we were faced with the problem that the children were quickly losing their ability to speak Spanish and their parents were complaining of communication difficulties with them. This led us to expand our priorities from English as a second

³³⁷ Freire, Paulo (1970), p. 3.

³³⁸ Notes from parent/teacher meeting with Yolanda and daughter. 3/24/2003

language and social service development to the inclusion of Spanish and cultural maintenance.

The Creation of ALAS

Ideologically, the initial organizing efforts between the Mexican immigrants and myself were strongly influenced by my awareness of American imperialism and colonialism in P.R., Latin America and Native Americans in the U.S. Themes about the role of women in education and child rearing were discussed given the realities of the immigrant populations. The co-founder of ALAS was a Mexican waitress who held an important leadership position within her extended family in this County and was residing here with her husband and two children. Most of the women of the families, often acted as the primary decision makers regarding their children's social and educational goals as long as it did not interfere with their traditional role expectations with regards to their husbands. An important characteristic of the new immigrants was their high level of isolation. They were different in their socio-economic status, resident status, in their ability to communicate in English and in their level of formal education from the Latino populations which had preceded them in Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan for example.

The new immigrant wave in Washtenaw County was mostly made up of young men, single and married who had left their families behind to make a better living and to send monetary support back home. There were, however, some females, tirelessly cleaning tables in the restaurants or cooking until the early hours in the morning after they had completed work in their previous jobs. They were often waiting for the appropriate time to risk bringing their children one by one from their homelands, and for those who had already accomplished this goal, they were now attempting to incorporate their children into the social fabric of their new living environment in this County. The words of one of the members regarding her children were:

Crucé el desierto con mi hijo y dejé a mi hija más pequeña con mis padres. Ella tiene tres años. Ha sido un año desde que la vi. Estoy tratando de casarme aquí para conseguir papeles y traérmela. No me quiero quedar aquí para siempre, pero necesito ahorrar suficiente dinero para construir mi casita en mi país y para

comenzar mi negocio. Estoy preocupada que mi hijo no querrá regresar porque le va a gustar quedarse aquí.³³⁹

As we met in their homes, the families began inviting acquaintances from other ethnicities to our burgeoning group. These invitations were an expansion of their earlier practices of extending their social (friendship) relationships which they could later count on when needed. The increasing size of the group was such that it became difficult to continue to hold sessions in their homes. This led us (the parents and U of M representatives) to agree to convert it into a student organization so we could use the University as the main meeting place to benefit from additional resources. A large party was held at the family leader's house and all members, including the children, voted on several options for a name. They wanted a name that would have an acronym that would "mean something." La Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños (The Latino Association Reaching Dreams) was chosen due to its acronym "ALAS" (Wings). The Logo was also chosen by vote out of several options.

The members organized and created a constitution and a mission in order to enroll as a student organization. This required establishing an official hierarchy, at least by

³³⁹ **Interview** 03/2000

Translation: I crossed the desert with my son and left my youngest daughter with my parents. She is three years old. It has been a year since I saw her. I am trying to marry here so I can get papers and bring her with me. I don't want to stay here forever, but I need to save enough money so I can build a house back home and start a small business. I am worried that my son won't want to go back because he is going to start liking it here

Martin: From your experience, what is the longest time a parent has taken to bring their children to be with them. **Rox:** Remember that girl who was transported by another member to our program? She left her children in Costa Rica with her parents for good, got involved in another relationship here and had her daughter. Her relationship is primarily limited to sending money to her children in C.R., who are now young adults. They are angry, but she sees herself as fulfilling her parental role in this way. **Martin:** My mother's parents and grandparents were from deep Mississippi and they migrated to Tennessee, but everyone in the family came: all the kids, everything. No one was left behind. Sure it's not like coming from Mexico or Puerto Rico or wherever you come from, but the jist was "We're not going to leave our kids behind.

Now fast forward fifty years and now you find, a...some of the grandkids that have gotten married. The economy is super bad, and the husband of one of the girls decided that he could not find a job. There was no work. So, most of the men went to different states like Florida where they could pick fruit and vegetables and get more jobs so they could send money to the family. So, it's a little different from the grandparent era where everyone moved together. Something happened between generations where the new ones were willing to be separated. **Rox:** How do you explain this? **Martin:** Economy. In our grandparent's day it was an agrarian based economy so it was in the mentality that you needed large families for support. Now we have an industrial economy that focuses more on individual work. You are lucky if you can get your brother hired in the same job you have. Now-a- days kids don't give a damn if they have to leave their families behind!

name, which would include university students. The resulting problems of this imposed structure would be substantial: it negated the equity in community representation that we adopted as our original philosophy. The primary purpose of ALAS was twofold: to expand the social networks of immigrant families by making use of, and extending, the strengths already present in their natural networks and to promote strong positive relationships between immigrants and the wider society in Washtenaw County. We also emphasized the promotion of cultural and linguistic pride while supporting academic excellence. This involved improving actual opportunities for the post-secondary educational access and success of our children in the context of Washtenaw County or of their home countries if they chose or were forced to return.

In order to maintain some level of continuity, given the rapid change in membership from the community, as well as from the tutors, I was voted President and the most consistent members of the group were voted into the other roles. The initial Board included one community member and Latino employee from the University of Michigan. She did not remain long in her position, however. She stated that she realized that her interests did not lie in children's education. The new Board included a Honduran mother, a New Yorican mother, a female U of M Student representative and later, the male karate instructor. Initially none of the original Mexican family members voted themselves into administrative positions due to their admitted inconsistency in attendance and follow through. One of the mothers stated the following as the others nodded in affirmation.

No me pidan que esté en la Junta Directiva. Yo necesito atender a mi marido. No sé cuando tendré que ausentarme y pienso que es mejor que ustedes, los de la Universidad nos guíen y sean los líderes.³⁴⁰

My urging that they participate as board members was to no avail. The members of the original extended family insisted that they were not interested in participating at that level. However, they made their presence clearly known by using our limited space to chat amongst themselves when we were trying to tutor the children regardless of

³⁴⁰ Organizational Meeting: 1/2000

Translation: No, don't ask me to be on the Board. I have to cook for my husband, I don't know when I am going to have to miss coming here and I think it is better if you guys from the university guide us and become the leaders.

numerous requests from other parents and tutors to study English or keep their voices down. ALAS attempted to form collaborative relations with other Latino organizations on campus, but found resistance from Mexican-American students during this time who did not wish to be affiliated with immigrant Latinos “who might be undocumented.” This became my first encounter with the ruptured nature of “Latino” as our ethnic identifier.



6. *First Meetings at William Monroe Trotter House before the Renovation*

Consensus in Services and Consistency in Attendance; Are we speaking the same language?

The success of our group in advocacy and mutual education, also began to experience many internal conflicts which, given the critically engaged inter-subjective research paradigm, require exploration. Several complicated dynamics and participant positions within the organization arose during this time, making it clear that the extended families had their own kind of natural networking and organization based on economic as well as interpersonal relationships. This was a community based on geographic, ethnic, vocational and familial bonds. They lived in the same apartment complex, they worked in the same restaurants, were all Mexican from the same part of Mexico and had similar levels of education.

The families counted on each other for mutual and financial support within contested status hierarchies. They developed friendship networks with other Latin Americans and with American work colleagues to procure various resources. They developed relative relations of trust with their employers. The original family, which facilitated the arrival of the other family members, was better adapted linguistically and was wealthier by virtue of being in the U.S. the longest. This family held a leadership position that was often described by the others as abusive and arrogant. Nevertheless, the other members were highly dependent on it and very respectful towards its members at least while they were in their presence.

Vinimos a vivir con mi hermano porque el nos trajo aquí...Nos prestó el dinero para venir con la promesa de que le pagaríamos de vuelta. También nos consiguió nuestros trabajos. Ahora que estamos aquí, nos trata como basura. Constantemente nos recuerda que estamos aquí por él y se aprovecha de nosotros porque él habla inglés y nosotros no. Se puso bravo con nosotros y nos echó puerta afuera. Por eso ves todos nuestros muebles aquí afuera. Tenemos que rogarle que nos deje entrar porque no tenemos a donde ir.³⁴¹

Despite this dependency, the families demonstrated their desire to change the extended family hierarchy by attempting to outdo each other in major purchases such as automobiles or homes. Alcoholism among the husbands was common and episodes of infidelity created significant strife in the families, but were tolerated by the women as a necessary evil. On one occasion, while laughing, the grandfather informed us, in front of his eldest sons, that he used to tell his wife not to worry about the other women since they were “capillitas mientras ella era la cathedral” (“the little chapels while she was the cathedral.”) The grandmother limited herself to a disapproving stare and proceeded to serve us coffee. These hierarchical gender relations went beyond in the immediate extended family and also came to have an important effect on the day to day functioning of the organization. Absenteeism was often related to spousal demands on the wives time and attention.

³⁴¹ Ethnographic experience. 11/1999

Translation: We came to live with my brother because he brought us here...He lent us the money to come with the promise that we would pay him back. He also got us our jobs. Now that we are here, he treats us like trash. He constantly reminds us that we are here thanks to him and he takes advantage of us because he can speak English and we can't. He got angry at us and threw us out of the house. That is why you see all our furniture out here. We have to beg him to let us back in because we have no place to go.

In times of crisis the families depended on a financial organization that they referred to as “la tanda.”³⁴² It was based on a lottery system where one member would ask others if they wished to participate. The main participants were generally the mothers of the household. All those who were “in” would be assigned a number based on how many members were included. Every month, all the members of the tanda contributed an “agreed upon” amount to the member who had the appropriate number for that month. The numbers were paid consecutively and “la tanda” would continue until all members had gotten paid. Generally, the person to start “la tanda” was a person in urgent economic need and would always get the number “1.” “La tanda” was a relationship based on trust as well as power. It was considered unforgivable if the participants did not pay their share when it was their turn and the violating members and the family would risk permanently disrupting their relationship with all the participants. It was based on power because it was common to see those better-off economically using their position to remind the others of their inferior status. They delayed their answer as to their participation in the upcoming tanda or they consistently took on leadership roles in the formation of this financial organization.

The social network was composed of friendships from various Latino ethnic backgrounds as well as some Americans who were either work colleagues or people they had met in health institutions or businesses. The means to solidify these relationships was to arrange large family parties and invite their guests to share in the food and dance. As the relationships were strengthened, requests were made with the clear impression that if they were not met, there would be great harm done to the relationship. I, for example, was asked to be the “Godmother of the cake” during the quinceañera party. This meant that I was responsible for purchasing it. Family members were also to be “godparents” of various objects necessary for the party. The vocational network was similar to the social, only that it was more reciprocal in that the families would work additional hours and be at “the beck and call” of the manager. Their hope was that if certain concessions were needed in the future, the manager would acquiesce. Depending on the manager, they were more or less successful. One of the biggest advantages to this network was the ability to

³⁴² **Comment by Lisandra (PALMA member):** Sí, yo sé lo que es la tanda pero yo no participo porque no quiero arriesgarme a que me quede mal un familiar. **Translation:** Yes, I know what it is, but I don’t participate because I don’t want a relative to “take me for a ride.”

help new family members or friends find employment. An interesting strategy often used when one family member did not get along with a manager was to figure out which family member did so that they could strategize about who would intervene to maintain a positive regard from the family in general. Since employment was not to be dealt with lightly, substantial effort was made to maintain it at all costs. They made sure to understand the managerial hierarchy in detail so they could befriend the individuals who were representative of the upper strata and access their protection when needed.

Creating Dependency Rather than Self-Efficacy: From “Mutual Aid Association” to “Charity Organization”

Although attempts at creating an analogy between “la tanda” and the incipient community organization were made by myself and two Mexican mothers when proposing the idea of the organization, it became clear that educational issues and agreements were not as salient. Money held a power and urgency that the commitment to their children’s institutionalized education did not, therefore the commitment to the organization we were discussing was not viewed as binding as the economically based tanda. Initially, the families who participated in the organization voiced excitement about having tutors help them and their children with English and Spanish. The mothers would bring their children with the approval of their husbands. The mothers requested counselors and therapists to help them with their own symptoms of depression, marital problems, adjustment issues to the new culture and advocacy in hospitals and schools. Given the university resources, and a strong relationship with Lopez and Associates Counseling Services from Adrian, we were able to access therapists as well as tutors.

New and more solid relationships were established with the University when I taught a course which incorporated ALAS as the practicum at the Residential College. ALAS began to grow and experience success, one of the administrators of the Spanish program asked me to continue with ALAS as a volunteer, while she taught the course herself as part of her salaried work load. I stated that I was interested in teaching the class, given that I had been a co-founder and participant from its inception. I was allowed to teach for one term, but this resulted in some strain in our relationship. The Latino parents informed us that they liked the idea of being able to help their children with their

homework in Spanish in conjunction with the tutors. As time went on, however, and family activities and priorities occurred, the mothers began incremental absenteeism without informing the tutors ahead of time.

What began as enthusiasm in helping their children with Spanish and schoolwork dwindled and became extra work that the mothers were no longer eager to do. The tutors began to voice frustrations at the lack of follow through on assignments and attendance. One tutor, who was a Mexican American masters level social worker traveled one and half hours, once a week, from Flint to see the family of the co-founder only to find, repeatedly, an empty apartment. Frustrated the tutor stated:

Yo no voy a seguir viniendo porque si a ellos no les importa y no me quieren aquí, no hay nada que pueda hacer y estoy perdiendo el tiempo. ¡Tengo gastos de gasolina y estoy usando el tiempo de mis estudios para esto!³⁴³

One of the extended families informed us that their cousin was actually in the apartment when the tutor arrived, but she acted as if she was not because “she just did not feel like” it on a particular day.³⁴⁴ These issues were discussed with the families and their reaction was to blame each other. It became clear that there were two main groups “the insiders” (the extended families) and “the outsiders” (the U of M representatives). As I attempted to help in the creation of compromises between both groups, I was increasingly or at least more overtly defined as “of U of M.”

This pattern continued term after term where focus groups were held, needs assessments were made, agreements were reached, but ultimately not consistently practiced. The structure was intended by the U of M representatives to be non-hierarchical. However, the parents were demanding that we assume the leadership, control and direction of the organization. At times, meetings were called by the families and at other times they were initiated by U of M representatives. The mothers began demanding and expecting services and aid in the hospitals as well as the correctional facilities when their family members were in trouble. What was originally defined as a “mutual aid association,” where tutors could perfect their linguistic skills and the Latino families could improve their academic skills, now became, from the point of view of the

³⁴³ Ethnographic notes: Meeting with tutor. 7/2000. **Translation:** I am not going to continue coming because if they don't care and they don't want me here there is nothing I can do and I am wasting my time. I am using money in gas and time from my studies for this!

³⁴⁴ Ethnographic notes. 7/2000.

families, a “charity organization” which entitled them to services. This change became more apparent as the families were able to receive increased social services at no cost from the County. Going through ALAS was much simpler for them to receive services than having to go through the bureaucratic processes from the County. However, the fact that the County was offering services to them for free with no requirements beyond County residence and income level, led them to expect the same from ALAS. This, in addition to their well-developed cooptation strategies with regards to hierarchies began to provide a space for hidden conflicts of interest to come to the public arena.

ALAS however, continued to run as usual until two years after its inception. At this time, a large number of Salvadoran members joined who were not acquainted with the original Mexican families. A pattern began to emerge where the Mexican mothers began to isolate themselves from the new members and to alienate them in a show of power. A meeting was held where the new members voiced their concerns about lack of commitment and continued irregular attendance among the Mexican families, as well as their alienating and unfriendly behavior. During the meeting a female parent from one of the Salvadoran families stated the following as she directed herself to the Mexican families:

Nosotros llegamos aquí igual que ustedes y queremos aprender inglés y queremos que nuestros hijos mejoren en la escuela. No entendemos por qué, cuando entramos [a ALAS] ustedes actúan como que no nos ven y sólo se hablan entre ustedes...hasta nos dan las espaldas³⁴⁵.

A Honduran mother who had been a member for some time added:

Sí, todos lo notamos y tienen que darse cuenta que nuestras actitudes afectan las de nuestros hijos también. En el momento menos pensado nuestros hijos se van a tratar así entre ellos también. Nosotros tenemos que dar un buen ejemplo.

³⁴⁵ Organization Meeting, 3/ 2003

Translation from Salvadoran Member: We come here just like you because we want to learn English and we want our children to do better in school. We don't know why, when we come in you act like you don't see us and just speak among yourselves...even with your backs turned to us.

Translation from Honduran Board Member: Yes, we all notice it and you have to realize that our attitudes affect those of our children as well. Before we know it, our kids will be treating each other the same way. We have to set a good example. We have to greet new members and be polite. We have to be here for the tutors because they are coming to help us and they have their studies and other things to do too.

Tenemos que saludar a los miembros nuevos y ser corteses. Necesitamos ser responsables con los tutores y estar aquí para ellos porque ellos vienen a ayudarnos y tienen sus propios estudios y otras cosas que hacer.

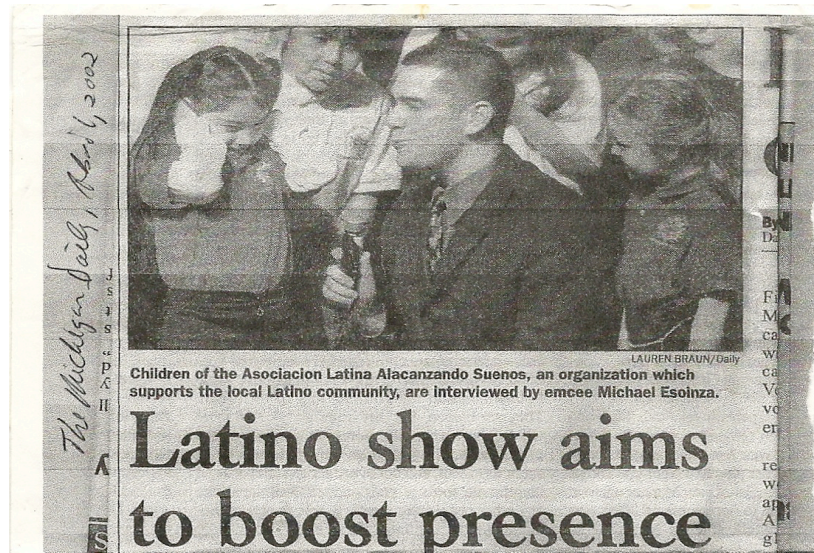
The Honduran mother's comments brought to consciousness a very different concept of education, that of manners which reflected moral valued. She was very involved in her church and this was a theme that she would repeat consistently throughout the years. Education was more than book knowledge, it was being a good, polite and kind person towards others. It was not only about personal needs and satisfaction.

For the most part, the response was silence, but rules about attendance and promptness were recommended by the Mexican mothers and agreed upon, on the surface. However, there was limited and inconsistent follow through. Frustration was felt by all of us and this began to permeate the environment as new U of M tutors and graduate students began participating in the organization and experiencing its internal turmoil.

A Latino graduate student who was volunteering in ALAS requested a recommendation from me because she wanted to teach in the Residential College. Once I provided this, she met separately with the Mexican mothers demonstrating she and the tutors she brought to the program had a commonality in strategy with the originating ALAS extended family. The Mexicans were unhappy about the enforcement of the rules they themselves had suggested. They were also upset about the increasing dues per family of which they had voted in favor. ALAS had gone from a non-dues organization to monthly dues of \$10 per nuclear family with approximate increments of \$10 every two years to cover the costs of educational materials and outings for the children. As an organization, we were now constituted by members of various ethnicities as opposed to the mainly Mexican originators. ALAS had gone from one incipient community organization with internal servicing from tutors and celebratory activities by the families for the them, to an organization with several communities and multiple allegiances with what would prove to be insurmountable obstacles with its originating Mexican membership.

Let's Celebrate!?

The year 2002 could be considered the public heyday of ALAS. Three newspapers contacted the organization to write about its work, The Ann Arbor Observer, The Ann Arbor News and the newly created "La Voz Latina" (the first Latino newspaper in Washtenaw County).



7. *Las ALAS de Fuego at Presencia Latina*

NUESTRA COMUNIDAD DECEMBER 2002 | 7

ALAS
Continued from front page

Karate instructor, who now offers the children classes in martial arts. The classes are one part of a program to keep the kids in shape, with dance and exercise classes also available. In the summer, the group organizes excursions to museums and camping trips. Last year, the Ann Arbor Art Center provided three weeks of free classes to all ALAS students—something the group hopes will happen again this year. Children are provided with textbooks in Spanish, advice and counseling on how to succeed in the American school system, and personalized tutoring for those who are struggling in school. Their parents also receive a host of benefits from their membership in the group. Registration sessions are organized periodically to provide low-income members with health insurance through Washtenaw HealthCare. Unemployed members are helped to search for work, and low-cost translations of documents are provided (with proceeds going toward future ALAS projects). The group has even organized free counseling sessions with a team psychologist to assist those who suffer from depression, a common ailment among the Hispanic community. All of these services, and many more, are provided for a monthly membership fee of \$15 per family (considering the size of many Latino families, extended family members are not included.) The group meets Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 6:00 - 8:00 PM. In spite of its variety of programs, the main focus of ALAS remains on education. In its meetings, the group provides guidance for both parents and children, helping them

person's life. According to Ms. Dantley-Matos, "we often spend money on things like Nintendo games, rather than investing that money in the education of our kids." She adds that Latino parents often enroll the public schools with their children's education and are reluctant to intervene, even when their kids are having problems. At ALAS, parents learn about the rights they and their children have at school. The goal is not to stir up problems, but to ensure that the kids are getting the education they deserve. In this end, the group has received good collaboration with many of the public schools in this area. This emphasis on learning is bringing impressive results: all of the kids who regularly attend ALAS meetings are showing marked improvement at school. They seem prouder, more confident, and so do their parents. Mayra Prince, who spoke only Spanish when she joined the group, is one

one of its consultants, helping to organize events on the county level. She speaks glowingly of the first ALAS meeting she attended with her daughter—it was the first time they'd seen so many Latinos faces together since they arrived in the area. According to Ms. Dantley-Matos, fostering the sense of identity is one of the group's greatest achievements. It's something they hope to do even more in the future, as the Hispanic community continues to grow. In this end, they hope to find new sources of funding, and to establish even more relationships with local businesses and organizations that are interested in helping the Hispanic community. Whatever the future holds for ALAS, their goal will remain the same: to help area Latinos achieve their dreams.

on ALAS,

ALAS Kids and Roxanna Dantley-Matos enjoying a sing-a-long.

8. ALAS Collaborates with the Ann Arbor Public Library for Story Telling in Spanish

others are rather unexpected
See Feliz Navidad, pg. 11
Ven Feliz Navidad, pag. 12

ALAS- Helping Area Latinos Take Flight

By James Millizer

In Spanish, the word "alas" means "wings." It's difficult to imagine a more appropriate name for the group founded by U of M graduate student Roxanna Duntley-Matos. With one look at the faces of the children and adults who participate in it, it's clear that ALAS, La Asociación de Latinos Alcanzando Sueños (the Association of Latinos Achieving Dreams) has become one of the local Latino community's finest resources. Four years ago, many in the community were becoming aware of the lack of an accessible organization for Hispanics in this area. There was no place for Latino families to meet in a Spanish-friendly atmosphere. There was no source of information and assistance for immigrant families struggling to adjust to life in the United States. Some parents were afraid that their children were losing contact with their Hispanic roots, something that Ms. Duntley-Matos feared might happen to her own son. With the Hispanic community

ALAS- Orgullo de la Comunidad Latina

Por Angeles Millizer

Es difícil imaginar un nombre más apropiado para el grupo fundado por Roxanna Duntley-Matos, estudiante de posgrado de la Universidad de Michigan. Cuando uno observa las caras de los niños y adultos que participan en el grupo, no existe ninguna duda de que ALAS, Asociación de Latinos Alcanzando Sueños, se ha convertido en uno de los mejores logros y una de las mejores opciones de la comunidad latina local. Hace cuatro años, muchos en la comunidad se dieron cuenta de la falta que hacía una organización que apoyara a los latinos en esta área. No existía ningún lugar en el que las familias latinas se reunieran y se sintieran bien recibidas. No existía ninguna fuente de información ni asistencia para las familias inmigrantes que estaban recién llegadas y que se enfrentaban al difícil proceso de adaptación en los Estados Unidos. Algunos padres se preocuparon ante la posibilidad de que sus hijos llegaran a perder el contacto con sus raíces latinas,

growing by leaps and bounds, she decided it was time to change the situation. ALAS began modestly, providing English lessons to Latino parents and English and Spanish lessons to their kids. At first, the group met in the homes of its members, but expanding membership eventually required them to find a new home. They began meeting in Trotter House, on the campus of the University of Michigan. Two and a half years ago, they became a student organization at the U of M. And last year, they received the University's Circle Award, which rewards excellence in community organizing. Now, the group is outgrowing the confines of Trotter House, and is looking for an even larger place to meet. The services ALAS provides have grown as much as its membership. Members can still study English and Spanish (with tutors provided by university student volunteers), but that is just the tip of the iceberg. ALAS has developed a relationship with Tom Wright, a local

preocupación que Roxana Duntley-Matos también compartía temiendo le sucediera a su propio hijo. Por lo que ante el crecimiento desmesurado de la comunidad latina, Duntley-Matos decidió que ya era tiempo de cambiar la situación. ALAS comenzó modestamente, ofreciendo clases de inglés a los padres y de español a sus hijos. Al principio, el grupo se reunía en las casas de sus miembros, pero conforme el grupo fue creciendo, se dio la necesidad de ubicar un lugar más grande para sus sesiones. Así, ALAS empezó a reunirse en la Casa Trotter, propiedad de la Universidad de Michigan y, hace dos años y medio, el grupo se constituyó como una organización estudiantil de la Universidad de Michigan. Ahora, la Casa Trotter está empezando a ser insuficiente para albergar al grupo, por lo que está buscando un lugar aún más grande para sesionar. Los servicios que ALAS ofrece han crecido tanto como el número de sus miembros.

See ALAS, page 7

"Si se Puede!"



Pg. 3

Xavier Corona-Latino Student Leader



Pg. 6

INDICE

EDITORIAL.....	2
NOTICIAS/NEWS.....	3
SALUD/HEALTH.....	4
CONSEJOS/ADVICE.....	5
COMUNIDAD/COMMUNITY.....	6,7
EVENTOS/EVENTS.....	10
SYLVIA'S KITCHEN.....	11

Alcanzando Sueños



Pg. 7

NAFTA-A Mexican Perspective



Pg. 9

9. La Voz News Article on ALAS

Alcanzando Sueños

Viene de Pag. 1

Sus integrantes pueden estudiar inglés y español (con el apoyo de tutores provenientes de la Universidad de Michigan), pero estas actividades son sólo la punta del iceberg. La organización ha desarrollado una relación de apoyo con Tom Wright, instructor local de karate, quien ahora enseña artes marciales a los niños de ALAS, así como danza y clases de educación física para mantenerlos en forma. Durante el verano, el grupo organiza excursiones a museos y campamentos. El año pasado, el Centro de Arte de Ann Arbor otorgó a todos los niños de ALAS la oportunidad de tomar clases de arte gratuitas por tres semanas; oportunidad que los niños esperan se repita este año.

En ALAS, los niños tienen acceso a libros de texto en español, asesoría y consejo sobre cómo avanzar en el sistema educativo americano, así como de tutoría especializada para aquellos que están teniendo dificultades en la escuela.

Los papás también reciben los beneficios de pertenecer al grupo. Con frecuencia, se organizan sesiones de trabajo dirigidas a jefes de familia de bajos ingresos para obtener seguro médico a través del programa de salud del condado. Asimismo, se ayuda a los miembros que no cuentan con empleo a buscar trabajo y se ofrecen servicios de traducción de documentos a bajo costo. Los recursos obtenidos son destinados a los diversos programas que desarrolla el grupo.

También, el grupo ha organizado sesiones de asesoría gratuita con una psicóloga latina, quien ha prestado sus servicios para ayudar a aquellas personas que sufren de depresión, muy común en la comunidad hispana. Todos estos servicios y muchos más, se ofrecen a la comunidad por una módica cuota de 15 dólares al mes por familia (puesto que normalmente los núcleos familiares son

numerosos, no se consideran a los otros miembros de la familia). El grupo se reúne los martes y jueves de 6 a 8:30 pm.

A pesar de la gran diversidad de servicios que ALAS ofrece, su principal objetivo es la educación. En sus reuniones, el grupo proporciona asesoría tanto a los padres como a sus hijos sobre la importancia de la educación en la vida de una persona. De acuerdo a Duntley-Matos, "con frecuencia gastamos el poco dinero que tenemos comprándole a nuestros hijos cosas como juegos de nintendo, en vez de invertir en su educación". Asimismo, añade que "los padres de familia latinos confían en la escuela pública y a veces se rehúsan a intervenir en la educación de sus hijos, aún cuando están teniendo problemas". En ALAS, los padres aprenden acerca de los derechos que ellos y los niños tienen en la escuela. El objetivo no es crear problemas, pero sí asegurarse de que los niños están recibiendo la educación que merecen. Este énfasis en el aprendizaje está dando resultados impresionantes: todos los niños que asisten regularmente a las sesiones de ALAS están pasando de año en la escuela. Estos niños parecen estar más orgullosos y más confiados, y así lo parecen sus padres también. Mayra, quien sólo hablaba español cuando comenzó a participar en el grupo, es ahora una de las coordinadoras, ayudando a organizar el aspecto contable.

Mayra nos platicó con mucha efusividad sobre la primera sesión de ALAS a la que ella y su hija asistieron por primera vez y en la que también por primera vez, vieron a tantos latinos reunidos desde que llegaron a la ciudad. De acuerdo a Roxanna Duntley-Matos, el haber logrado este sentimiento de identidad es uno de los logros más grandes del grupo; sentimiento que espera sea mayor en el futuro, conforme la comunidad latina crezca. Finalmente, el grupo espera que pueda encontrar nuevos recursos financieros y establecer una relación más estrecha con los empresarios y organizaciones locales que estén interesados en ayudar a la comunidad latina. Cualquiera que sea el futuro para ALAS, sus objetivos permanecerán intocables: ayudar a los latinos a alcanzar sus sueños.

Para mayor información sobre ALAS, llame a Roxanna Duntley-Matos, 546-8446.



10. ALAS Karate Program

Association set up to help Hispanics reach their dreams, become acclimated to area

And there are a number of clubs in town that hold salsa dance nights, like the Heidelberg, where Latinos show up in droves.

"That is where the barriers come down," says Roberto Candelaria, who has found a niche in the burgeoning Latino population.

Nearly five years ago, he opened Sabes Latino, a Main Street restaurant serving food from several Latin American countries. About a year ago, he opened another restaurant on State Street and this fall started a grocery store on Maple Road south of Hill.

Besides the food, Candelaria is a music promoter and runs a money-earning service, an enterprise he started after seeing the difficulties Latinos with limited English language skills had finding money home.

The grocery store on the restaurant, says Candelaria, who was born in Puerto Rico and raised in Chicago. People kept wanting to buy groceries at the restaurant, so they decided to drive all the way to Detroit for tortillas or tamales.

At all his businesses, Candelaria sees many Latinos who are working hard to provide better lives for their families back home. They all miss their families, he says, and work double shifts, six and seven days a week, to perhaps buy property in home, build a house and start a business.

Most of the undocumented workers come into the country to learn English at a small college sponsored in the United States, then head off to earn money.

Candelaria says he objects to his employees, wherever countries like Venezuela

she says. Only Canadians can come into the country without visas. Citizens from other countries must get visas, which in some cases can be picked up when they come into the country.

Medians must apply for visas from the American consulate in Mexico, even if they just want to go to Disney World, says Wise.

And in Central America, an applicant is more apt to be turned down than to be approved, she says. "It'd be hard pressed to find a Colombian we'd let in for a vacation," Wise says.

"Our economy relies on a large part on undocumented workers, who have no rights here," Wise says. "We want them to clean our pools and do our lawns, but we don't want to pay a decent wage or give them any rights."

Bello agrees. "People who want to come here want to work, and we need them here to stand or live of Social Security."

He thinks it's sad when people are called undocumented and complain that it's a terrible place to live. "I am, 'well, we can't stop you from leaving,'" it's kind of not to hear that.

Bello says he could apply for citizenship, but it's a tough issue for him. To him, it would mean turning his back on his country. "I'm an Ecuadorian," he says. "I'm not here to use our country, and we love going back to our country." But he adds, the economy or the government or the immigration is impossible to turn a living there.

Others Latino come to this area, they find a language and a culture different, what they're used to. They might work

ALAS also concentrates on helping the children speaking Spanish, so they will remain bilingual. Otherwise, says Dunley-Mason, the children speak a broken English and a broken Spanish, and aren't considered fluent in either. "They're in nowhere," she says.

Adults benefit as well, getting jobs with issues in American culture and tutoring by U-M students while the children are working on arithmetic.

Twice a week, ALAS holds classes in the U-M's Trotter House on Washtenaw Avenue, where the open third floor can be converted while children are sitting on the floor and singing, along with adults sitting in a few chairs and practicing their English.

Currently, the group is working on becoming a nonprofit organization, which will make it eligible for grant money.

Monthly Dunley-Mason wants both Latino and non-Latino professionals to know what ALAS is doing and to volunteer to help. She especially wants local schools to know that she group can help with Latino children who are having problems.

Finally, she wants to show with classrooms and a gym, where the children can appreciate and feel at home - already they are not at home - about the space at Trotter House is too small, with some tutors meeting on the stairway.

Marya Orestiana Prieto is a regular at ALAS and helps Latino parents who have problems with their children's schools.

It was when Orestiana Prieto first came to Ann Arbor with her American husband, it was a long year. She was sick, her husband was away in Honduras, she didn't know the language, then she found the Trotter House and the Latino Association for Reaching Dreams. ALAS works for Asociacion Latina Alcanzando Sueños, or the Latino Association for Reaching Dreams.



Emily Sotelo, left, helps 11-year-old Manuel Prieto with math with his sister, Whitney, at his late University of Michigan tutor, Sotelo's volunteer as an ALAS tutor. The kids' mother, Marya Orestiana Prieto, who from Honduras, is one of the core members in the program.



Rosanna Dunley-Mason took her two children to Puerto Rico in 2000 for their baptism. The children, dressed in white, are Daniel, then 6, and Alexander, then 3, posing with their cousins.

11. Association set up to help Hispanics reach their dreams, become acclimated to area. Ann Arbor News

town.

I want

an asso-

ciation

to run

in years

ago, he

was as a

of a pop-

ulation

that

he over-

to trust

is sitting

is, who's

four or

and

the age

is. It

changes

if,

the com-

parison

aged its

city could

between

minutes,

and the

is on his

reading

of the 27

significa-

tion did

it through

is origi-

not still

is second

to hit the

back to

to train-

hours a

day,"

stern,"

of birds

in orna-

ment in

years

of inna-

signs on

the way,

and some

of the, will

should"

the

Latin flavor taking hold

As new arrivals learn language and culture and send money back home, their customs gain popularity here

BY MARIANNE RZEPKA
Times Staff Reporter

If you've eaten in a downtown restaurant, had a talking tour or been in contact with a growing sector of Ann Arbor's ethnically diverse population, workers from throughout Central and South America are living in the area. Some are long-time professionals, an increasing number are here to earn money for families still in Latin America.

The 2000 census found that 9 percent of Washtenaw County's population - about 8,829 people - is Hispanic, up from 6 percent in 1990. Throughout the state, the Hispanic population rose 81 percent over the decade, to reach 325,877, mostly in Detroit and Grand Rapids.

One example of the influx can be seen any Sunday at St. Mary's Student Chapel at the weekly Spanish Mass.

When Leonardo Bello first started attending three years ago, there were perhaps 20 people in the youth group. Now there can be more than 100, he says.

In past years, the services stopped when University of Michigan students left for the summer. This past summer was the first time they continued without a break, says Bello, who is from Ecuador and belongs to the church's Hispanic-Latino ministry group.

St. Mary's also has classes for children who are making their First Communion. ADP has set up a leadership team, which includes students and members of the Spanish-Latino community, to work on the Latino ministry, says Sue Walters, director of administration and development at St. Mary's.

Church members are also meeting with other Catholic churches in the area to find better ways of helping the Latino population, says Walters.

Bello, who lives in Ann Arbor and works as a business analyst for a Toyota firm, says he's begun to see more Latinos. Usually administered at Latino older children are receiving the sacrament, he notes. That found a church that would perform the ceremony.

Language just the start

There are two big problems for Latinos in the



Rosanna Dunley-Mason, right, talks to her student tutor at the Trotter House in Ann Arbor. Dunley-Mason runs a program called ALAS, the Spanish word for "wing" and an acronym for Asociacion Latina Alcanzando Sueños, or the Latino Association for Reaching Dreams. ALAS works for Asociacion Latina Alcanzando Sueños, or the Latino Association for Reaching Dreams.

gion, but culture."

Bello came to the United States in 1991 to attend Kalamazoo College, and graduated from there in 1993 before going to Miami to get a graduate degree. He moved to the Ann Arbor area when he got the job in Livonia.

At first, Bello lived in Farmington Hills, but moved to Ann Arbor where the Latino scene is much more lively and jumping. Here, he says, you can walk down the street speaking Spanish and no one gives you a second glance.

He's been able to see a number of Latino performers, including Cuban salsa singer Gloria Cruz and Brazilian singer-songwriter Caetano Veloso, in the past few years. Sometimes, an event - like the Cuban orchestra Buena Vista Social Club - sells out. In fact, the University Musical Society has moved

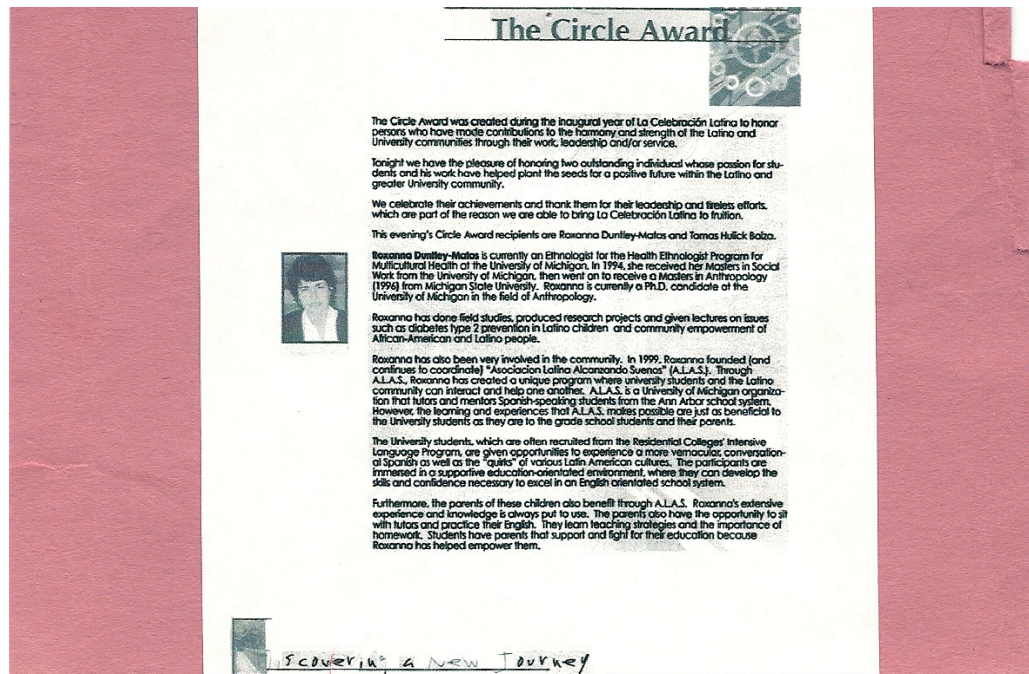
About the series

Members of various ethnic groups have gathered in the Ann Arbor area for many reasons - to flee oppression, to look for work or for an education. More than 20,000 strong, Washtenaw County's European-born residents have brought much of their culture with them. As they adopt the language, food and traditions of their new home, they also enrich the community with their customs. Today, we continue a six-part series looking at some of the more recent arrivals.

Dec. 8: Eastern Europe and Russia
Wednesday: The Indian subcontinent

Today: South and Central America

12. Ann Arbor News Article



13. ALAS Circle Award 2002

This was also the year that ALAS began its diabetes type two prevention program which was established after my position as Health Ethnologist at the University of Michigan Program for Multicultural Health (PMCH), a mostly African American run program. Initially I began a research project through the PMCH at the request of the female African American Director. The program was seeking funding, and the interest in Latino research was growing at this time. ALAS collaborated with PMCH to aid over one hundred Latino families sign up for the Washtenaw Health Care Plan. My notes of that time reveal the political dynamics surrounding social services in the early years of Latino immigration to the County.

Visité la oficina de Servicios Sociales y una representante me dijo que hay un seguro médico nuevo del Condado que va a cubrir a inmigrantes indocumentados. Sin embargo, me dijo que no se lo dijera a nadie pues tienen esa información bien protegida. Quieren limitar el número de solicitantes. Así es que lo que vamos a hacer es regar la voz para que todos aquellos inmigrantes sin seguro lo soliciten.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁶ ALAS Meeting, 2002

This initial experience with the Washtenaw Health Care Plan and its bureaucracy is a vivid example of the way power limits accessibility to those it is meant to serve; those who are defined, simultaneously, as underserving and threatening. The rupture occurred through the ambiguity of my identity. In this case, my image as a Latina was obscured by my professional credentials, leading service bureaucrats to assume and demand my complicity because of their institutionalized view of social work. This use of the profession to make the individual compliant with corrupt political priorities is similar to the use of social workers as tools to carry out state policies in the past. Some examples include removing Native American children from their homes to be “educated” in punitive and assimilationist boarding schools under inhumane conditions up to 1970, as well as the efforts made in Puerto Rico to decrease the so called “overpopulation” by carrying out mass sterilizations of the women as discussed previously.

The loss of language cut deep into the heart of the Native community... where [the children’s] mouths were scrubbed with lye and chlorine solutions for uttering Native words.³⁴⁷

ALAS provided the contacts and translations necessary, as well as the locations where Latinos could be helped. This was the first stage of the research. However, I became disillusioned with the Program for Multicultural Health as I found them to have unfair employment practices towards Latinos and, based on the reports of their own African American staff members, they had questionable ethics in their research. During an informal conversation, two African American employees were talking about a cover-up they did when their research on African-American cardiovascular disease revealed that the subjects had fared worse on the knowledge post-test than the pre-test. They also voiced resentment about their perception that the person hired to create cultural competence programs within the hospital system was a white female who they accused of

Translation: I visited the Social Services office and a representative told me that there is a new health insurance from the County that will cover undocumented immigrants. However, she told me not to tell anyone because that is highly protected information. They want to limit the number of applicants. So what we will do is spread the word so that all uninsured immigrants can apply.

³⁴⁷ Monette, Richard (2007) Native American Bar Association President in Soul Wounds: The Legacy of Native American Schools. Amnesty International Magazine March.
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/node/87342>

making open discriminatory comments³⁴⁸. The African American employees stated that she had been hired by the African American Director because being white would afford the program more credibility and opportunity for support within the hospital system.

As I became aware of the discriminatory practices of this program and my own salary was affected, I terminated my employment there and discontinued my work on their diabetes research project. When I asked them why they did not just call the program “Program for African American Health” to reflect what they were doing more faithfully, they responded with silence. Even though I was hired to address their growing interest in the Latino population due to new funding sources, PMCH revealed an active resistance towards cultural influences or competition for positions that Latinos were bringing into the Program. For example, some of the other Latino employees complained about being disciplined for using Spanish during working hours, they were submitted to repressive supervision practices where they were forced to write down all of the tasks they had completed in 15 minute increments and they were subjected to verbal harassment about their Spanish accent in English with veiled critiques that their work was less than competent because of it.³⁴⁹

I found one employee in tears on more than one occasion. In the meantime, the African American employees, regardless of academic qualifications, had higher salaries and were given the freedom to come and go during working hours without the same requirements for reporting. I submitted a formal complaint via e-mail to the Director’s supervisor (who was also African-American) and to a collaborating physician after several unsuccessful attempts to address their practices with the Director. I never received any response (beyond one e-mail) acknowledging the receipt of my message.

A few years later, I received a call from a University of Michigan investigator who informed me that a Latino employee had recently made a complaint against the Program for Multicultural Health due to discriminatory practices. She asked me about my own experiences during my employment and informed me that there were no records of

³⁴⁸ **Interview with ex-PMH employee. 9/2011:** At the time I worked there I believed what the African American administrator used to say about her, but I later found out that they were the ones who didn’t like white people there and that is why they would say those things.

³⁴⁹ Conversation with Latino employee. 2002. Confirmed on 9/2011 by a different ex-employee.

my earlier complaint. I later met, by chance, with a previous colleague from the Program and she informed me that the PMCH office manager had been accused of fraud, discrimination and had been investigated by the police. According to her, the Program staff was let go and the Director retired, but not before she assured her managers employment in other areas. She added that the employee accused of fraud was dismissed, but was taken to court and charged with a white-collar felony. This was all handled very quietly and although the program name was retained, with the exception of one staff member who remained, everything was revamped. An ex-employee stated that she confronted an African American professor in one of her classes and asked why African Americans who had been so exploited historically would treat Latinos that way and the instructor said “It’s all about power. They [African Americans] are afraid that if Latinos keep growing they will again be exploited or forgotten.”³⁵⁰

I was referred to another Latino employee who had been fired for reporting fraud practices within PMCH to the campus police and to the Director’s Supervisor. This interview became an important part of this research in so far as it helped clarify some of my own experiences in academia with African-American administrators who prevented my attempts to create a collaboration and emphasis on Latino youth ascent into higher education. The person I interviewed stated the following about her experiences with PMCH:

I was born in Detroit, Michigan. I began working at PMCH in 2003. Basically, my sister was the one who got me the job. She had told them that I was about to go into foreclosure. “There is a job opposite to the door of where I am at.” She said. She talked to ***** and she said “Yeah! We are about to lose our receptionist. She was Cuban. She was moving to Florida and they said that it would be great to have me. I interviewed and everything went well. I went through the assessment to make sure that I knew how to do Office Word. ***** told me after about a week, she said, “Just so you know that we know that you need this job.”

Yes, I am grateful and then she said “Do you understand that I hold your livelihood in my hands?” I recall just staring at her. She said “I know about the foreclosure on your house and if you want to keep this job you will do what I tell you. Everything you see goes through me.” I was in a bind so I held off my natural instinct to tell them to F off.

³⁵⁰ Interview with former employee. 3/2011.

The Director looked at the pictures of my kids and said “Oh, is your husband black.” I said “yes.” She said “so your children are half-breeds. In my day if a black man had children with a white woman we called them half-breeds.” I was still in my six-month probation period, so I kept my mouth shut.

The woman I was replacing told me “I’m going to tell you right now, these women are racist.” I said, “what do you mean? They are African American. If anyone knows the racist plight its African Americans.” Everyone who has ever held this position at the front desk is a Latina at the lowest position. I had just stepped into everyone’s worst nightmare.

After my six months were up, I felt more entitled to speak my mind. When I reported **** to the Director, she said “Ok. I’m going to take a look into it and then I got attitude and comments from ****.” Then %%% came back from vacation. She said “Hey, let me talk to you for a second.” She said, “You know what we do to snitches down in the South, we take them to the back, to the highest tree and string them up. Yeah, I heard what you did to my girl.” I had assumed that the Director was on the up and up and that she was good people. Once I realized she was not going to do anything about it and I was being harassed I called the police. They got involved and everything got worse. I found out that the Director treats **** like the granddaughter she never had...

I talked to \$\$\$\$\$, the Director’s boss for HR. I spoke to my human resource counselor and she was African American and she said maybe “You are misunderstanding.... ##### always advocated for us, but they didn’t think of her as if she was really black. They treated her as if she was Latina ‘cause she always hung out with us...

***** said that the only reason we have her &&&& (white employee) is because “we had to add a little white to the office.” %%% would make comments about Europeans whenever &&&& was at ear shot...

I was there for five years and I only saw two projects that they did with the Latino women in South West Detroit. The Latinos got a cookbook about Latino healthy eating and the African American groups got a fifty-dollar card. They got the membership to Curves with exercise equipment. They would give the Latinas wash stuff like a Bath and Body works like of a ten-dollar value.³⁵¹ With the African American group we would give them everything. The Latino group would be more consistent in the program, but when it came to the African Americans, they would only come for the initial gifts...

A white guy came to drop off his resume and %%% said “Throw that out” I’m not going to have a white person working next to me. The Director said “What

³⁵¹ **Comment from another ex-employee:** Actually Latinos didn’t even get that much. The Director and ***** made us purchase everything from the Dollar Store. Even when we told her that we were spending much more on African Americans she said “I don’t care, I don’t want to spend that much on Mexicans.”

did %%% say?, then throw it out. I don't trust white males." I tried to get ahold of the other Latino women who had worked there. They wrote letters.

The Director said "the only reason I am not firing you is because it would look suspicious." Then they started making big cuts and I was the first to go.

My HR rep was in cahoots with the Director. The Latino mediator said there was nothing he could do. Everyone was about saving their own ass. Everyone wanted to keep their mouth shut. The campus police said that there was nothing they could do about that. The Director tried to delete her computer. The University didn't want to go after ^^^^ because she was the first African American woman to get a PH.D. at the University or something like that³⁵²... The Director said "Hey your family is in gardening right?. Don't all Latinos do landscaping?"

When %%% said "What's wrong with you, you are Puerto Rican, you have African American in you don't you? I said "No, we have Africans in us not African Americans who wine about 400 years of slavery. We have all sorts of colors, we have learned to move on. We work hard we don't get benefits for being racist and by doing illegal crap!

I called the Michigan Daily and they said "You know its not like we can put this out there." I know that the Director retired. %%%% also retired and the rest got absorbed by another program.³⁵³

The employee who offered this interview stated that she suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder after she left the PMCH. A second former employee recalled that when seeking volunteers to help with a Latino health intervention she recommended to the Director to use the web site and other electronic means to recruit professional volunteers. According to her, the Director responded "the Latino employees at the University won't have access to the computer because they work in maintenance." The employee did it anyway and several volunteers came to help including engineers and natural scientists. She said "I thought that even if you are prejudiced, once you are confronted with the reality of things you will change your mind, but I was wrong. It didn't make a difference with her or the others like her at the program." She added that

³⁵² The other former employee interviewed, disagreed with this statement and said that it was not that because the Director was the first PH.D., but because she had worked at the University for over 40 years and founded the Program.

³⁵³ Interview with PMCH former Latino employee.3/2011

she believes they forced the Director to retire since doing anything else to someone who had worked for the university as long as she did “would have looked really bad.”³⁵⁴

As observed by Aida Hurtado, a University of Michigan graduate and Latino social scientist, the predominant non-White group in the Ann Arbor area has been African-American.³⁵⁵ It was in this context that the Program for Multicultural Health was created and it has been having substantial difficulty adapting to the new terms of multiculturalism where Latinos are now the largest minority in the nation. PMCH wanted to receive funding based on Latino employment and representation, but it did not want to share the hierarchical power it has struggled to achieve over so many years. This problem regarding a limited definition of diversity in the high administrative structure of the University and in the emphasis/direction of their multicultural programs continues to exist to this day and, as we shall see, and is not unrelated to the University’s traditional community service and research in, and with, Detroit schools.

Thanks to the research I co-directed with PMCH, however, ALAS became aware of the genetic predisposition to diabetes type II among Latino, African-American and Native American populations. With this information, we began our own prevention program in 2002 with Latino community member volunteers who directed soccer activities with the families, which we hoped, would be a culturally relevant sport that would insure longevity. The volunteers and participants were inconsistent, however, and the physical activity program was not initially successful. Due to research reports of the prevalence of the epidemic levels of diabetes type II among Latinos and to the increase of this disease among children, I recommended the prioritization of the creation of a long-standing physical activity component.

We established a relationship with Speedy’s Dojo Organization to provide low-cost karate lessons to the children. The ranking system was also attractive since we thought that the children who struggled in school would have improved self-esteem as they moved up the system and would increase their overall motivation to do better in school. The families agreed to establish this relationship and mothers, as well as children, became involved. The white karate instructor accepted the position of Director

³⁵⁴ Ex PMCH employee. 09/2011

³⁵⁵ Hurtado, Aida 1997, p. 303.

of Physical Activity and Secretary on the Board. However, as the instructor refused to include Spanish in the Dojo, despite his initial agreement to do so, and as he reprimanded the families for not practicing karate at home, they began to discontinue their participation in the karate program. It came to the point where he completely ignored recent immigrant children who could not speak English and left them to struggle while he attended the American children. The instructor, finally lost interest in his position on the Board as his English-speaking student population increased.

Interested in continuing with the investment we had made in the karate lessons and in furthering the children's progress, I contacted the instructor's master instructor in order to reach an agreement. At this time, we were considering going to another karate school. His master instructor, Martin who was a 7th Dan in Isshinryu Karate at the time, decided to re-open his school to teach the children of ALAS at no cost. He did not want the children to begin in a different style after they had invested two years in Isshinryu and he offered to rebuild the dojo he had begun to dismantle when he retired. He stated the following when we discussed the problems with the original karate instructor:

I don't think that he knew what he was getting into when he committed to ALAS. I know my black belts and I could have told you that this was not going to work out. He is not the most flexible of people and he is not going to change. He runs his own school and I have no control over what he does in it. I have spoken to him about your concerns and he says "Yes sir," but nothing changes. I don't think changing karate systems for your kids would be a good idea. To start them in a new system after the time they have invested in our style does not make sense. What do you think of my taking his place and continuing the karate program with ALAS?³⁵⁶

We were shocked by his offer to which I replied; "We can't afford to pay a 7th Dan Black Belt." But, our answer was an immediate "Yes!" especially when he offered to do it for free. We could not believe that a person of his experience and rank would be willing to make such a commitment. By this time, our perceptions about African-American equity towards Latinos had been seriously hampered due to our experience at PMCH, so we were doubly surprised and somewhat incredulous when Martin made his offer. We decided to try it, but we did not think it would last very long. Martin's response was

³⁵⁶ Board meeting with Martin Gatlin. 8/2004

I know what it is like to be discriminated against. I grew up during segregation and despite the racism towards blacks, my mother always taught us that we should treat everyone the same, even whites. She would “slap us upside the head” if we ever disrespected whites. She wanted us to be proud of being black and not act the way white people acted towards us. She taught us to treat people as individuals not based on the group they belonged to.³⁵⁷

This was the time when Perry Nursery School contacted ALAS requesting diversity training for its staff and translations for its Latino families. Perry Nursery School and ALAS maintained a fruitful relationship for many years. We were invited yearly to collaborate with them and in turn, we received a small donation for the children’s scholarship fund. It is important to note that the initial contact of the various agencies and programs seeking services from ALAS, occurred through Trotter House Multicultural Center’s secretary. She was an active supporter of our program. She was enthusiastic about the work we were doing for underprivileged children and for the University by holding our program at the Trotter House.

In the meantime, there was growing unrest and inconsistency in attendance among the original ALAS Mexican families and increased rivalry with the incoming immigrant families from other Latin American countries. The Mexican families coopted three graduate students and they organized a different group “PALMA” under the leadership of the graduate students. To this day, PALMA is not run by families and it specializes in academic tutoring in English; not in linguistic or cultural maintenance. In a recent “GED in Spanish” meeting³⁵⁸ offered by ALAS to the wider community, a PALMA member, who I will call Lisandra stated the following when I mentioned that I had seen the PALMA website and it appeared like a carbon copy of the services ALAS had always offered to its members, with the exception that it did not emphasize Spanish. Her answer and the new ALAS member’s reaction, are enlightening;

Lisandra: Sí, nosotros nos reunimos aparte para decidir qué nos gustaba de ALAS para retenerlo en PALMA.

Lupe: A mí eso me suena a traición.

Lisandra: (Silencio.) A la verdad que mis hijos y yo nos beneficiamos mucho de ALAS pero en aquella época todas las actividades de ALAS eran demasiado para

³⁵⁷ Conversation with Martin: 7/2010

³⁵⁸ PALMA member June, 2011.

mi familia y además mi hijo estaba un poco rebelde y no quería estudiar. Recientemente me dijo que se arrepiente de no haber seguido con ALAS porque le hubiera ido mucho mejor en la escuela. Yo todavía conservo con mucho cariño los videos de los bailes que hicieron en la Feria del Arte y en el Festival de Latinos Unidos. Mi hijo tampoco quiso seguir con PALMA pero mi hijo menor siempre ha tenido tutor ahí y le ha ido muy bien en la escuela. Fue elegido para participar en el programa de “Rising Scholars” de la Universidad de Michigan.

I asked the PALMA representative what she thought about the fact that the reason the Director of the organization had a salaried position in the Spanish Department at the Residential College was because he had retained his Spanish, yet he was not encouraging Spanish retention among the PALMA youth. She remained pensive and then said “Pues Sí.” This did not diminish her allegiance to PALMA in any way, however. Rather she attempted to combine ALAS and PALMA services as long as ALAS did not interfere with the PALMA schedule.

The exodus from ALAS happened in 2003 shortly after it won the Circle Award from the University of Michigan for excellence in community service to Latinos. The ALAS children who were now graduating from middle school and who had entered the honor roll walked the stage and received a special University of Michigan certificate from the Latino Faculty. Within the audience, there were several doctoral faculty and graduate students from the University including Dr. Robert Ortega from the Social Work Department and Dr. Julie Skurski from the Anthropology Department. The announcement of this award, however, was never made public within either department despite my announcing it before hand to my Social Work Prelim Exam Committee.

My speech at this event communicated my pride, at the time, of being a student at the University of Michigan because it had opened its doors to the needs of a very vulnerable population, that of Latino immigrant children and their families. The Trotter House Multicultural Center had provided them with the hope that a higher education was not an impossible dream. In fact, our goal was that these children, by attending the University twice weekly and working with college students, would come to see it as a natural progression of their academic journey. My words were also a rebuttal against an earlier article in the Ann Arbor Observer which disregarded the interview they did of ALAS and, quoting the words of a Latino community immigrant, stated that the

University of Michigan was elitist and too detached from the needs of Latinos. When I spoke to some faculty members about the article, they recommended I write a rebuttal, when I asked them if they would sign it, however, I got an immediate change of subject.

I would not understand the Ann Arbor Observer article's position until a few years later when ALAS confronted what was, in some respects, the apathy of various University of Michigan Departments and the competition of Latino faculty and graduate students. The latter knew of the contributions of ALAS, but now wanted to take center stage with the immigrant community, while disregarding the history and existence of ALAS altogether.

After the Mexican extended family exodus from the organization, its size was reduced to one third and the morale reached an all-time low. The families were fewer, yet more diverse and had regrouped and continued with the ALAS mission. The new families attempted to demonstrate that they were able to maintain certain traditions that they believed to represent Latino culture such as large parties with homemade foods. Previously, it was the Mexican families that had sponsored the parties. Now the Honduran member who had spoken up before, and an estranged member of the original Mexican families accepted administrative roles on the Board. The children became involved in the Ann Arbor Art Fair and with the aid of the student organization "La Voz," they performed a choreographed salsa dance to raise funds for the youth scholarship fund. The Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts awarded 50% scholarships to all ALAS members interested in learning music and the Ann Arbor Art Center awarded all the children 100% art scholarships for the summer term.

ALAS became the organization to design and run the children's section of the First Festival Latino in Washtenaw County. This festival was run by the Latinos Unidos, an organization created by the directors of the newspaper "La Voz Latina" which went bankrupt after its first year. ALAS supported the Latino Festival for two consecutive years and contributed the children's portion of the Latino representation in the Ypsilanti Heritage Festival Parade. We discontinued our collaboration with Latinos Unidos, however, given that the administrators never came through on helping to create a funding source for Latino children's education nor did they support ALAS or any of its needs. In fact, during a group picture where we accepted to join them for the Ypsilanti Heritage

Festival, the Latinos Unidos Director pulled the hand down of one of our five year old members who was holding up the ALAS banner. This action caused resentment among the ALAS adults and had an especially negative impact on the child's mother. The ALAS members decided to sever ties with Latinos Unidos. A clear pattern began to form with Latino and non-Latino power structures at this time that wished to become the symbols of the Latino Community for prestige and funding. They attempted to absorb all other efforts under their name—a re-manifestation of the melting pot philosophy. They were generally stunned when a graduate student and several undocumented and working class immigrants did not demonstrate enthusiastic gratitude. They interpreted our firm stance with regards to the goal of Latino youth education in practice rather than “image” as an affront.

The Romance and Classical Languages Department and ALAS

ALAS was also approached by the Romance and Classical Languages Department. The Department received grant money to run a community service course in Spanish thanks to the efforts of one of their graduate students. Their program, however, was encountering difficulties in Detroit. According to the faculty member, the organizations were not stable nor were they Spanish focused. Thus, the U of M Spanish students could not use their new Spanish skills. ALAS requested \$200 to be contributed to the educational fund per university student, now that the department would not have to expend money on transportation to Detroit. A verbal agreement was reached, but not realized. The Romance Languages Department purchased books for the children with a cost substantially inferior to the original agreement. This and the difficulty of getting the U of M students to follow the stipulations of school visits with the parents and children became topics of discord between the faculty and tutors of the course, and the parents and administrators of ALAS.

Other sources of tension were related to the preconceptions of the Romance and Classical Languages course instructors about their role in the organization during tutoring itself. Many of the instructors defined ALAS primarily as a student organization and not as a community organization. They had difficulty respecting its autonomy of practices and power of decision over the curriculum and teaching approaches during the tutoring.

As the instructors varied every term, the relationship between the course instructor and the U of M tutors varied from being overly lax to overly controlling. The most successful terms were those where the original faculty member, who established the relationship and was clearly invested in community service, taught the course. Her ability to teach the course, however, was sporadic due to other course and research responsibilities. Similar tensions occurred with other U of M faculty who approached ALAS in order to do research, but who became offended when asked to sign an agreement that any research done with ALAS members would be shared with them and a copy would remain in the organization. Verbal agreements were seldom respected. The relationship with the Romance Languages Department, however, continued for several years.

Big Dreams, Small Resources: The Dual Language Charter School

The year 2004 was one of hope. The ALAS members realized the great strides the children had made, despite being labeled by the schools as “learning disabled” prior to joining ALAS. They were now studying with their peers and several were on the honor roll. The Board discussed the idea with the membership and we agreed it was an opportunity to continue the dual language legacy of ALAS in a school that would value and commit to reinforcing the cultural strengths of the Latino children and families. Through great effort, the members of the organization helped write an elaborate proposal which was acclaimed for its excellent quality by Bay Mills Community College; the only remaining certifying institution in Michigan to be able to award approval at the time. Other certifying institutions such as Eastern Michigan University had completed their allowed quota of certifications.

ALAS was one of four applicants granted pre-certification from an original pool of 20. The difficulty faced by the charter school, however, was lack of funding and lack of a management institution. After receiving a denial from the Washtenaw Intermediate School District when we inquired if they would sponsor the school, ALAS contracted with Leona Group, a large corporation specializing in charter schools whose advertisement emphasized multiculturalism. As the time to sign the contract approached and as ALAS had the contract reviewed by its attorney, it became evident that the corporation had its own interests at heart and not the mission of the school. Leona Group

attempted to do away with the school's dual language and karate physical activity components. Leona Group also attempted to limit the school to the elementary level which would have excluded an important portion of the ALAS membership and Washtenaw County Latino youth from entering the school.

After interviewing with the Director of Cesar Chávez Academy (elementary school) managed by Leona Group, we were informed that the teaching philosophy of the corporation, as related to children, was based on "teaching for the MEAP" rather than a holistic education. This, we were told, was the only way of securing funding given the stipulations of the "No Child Left Behind Act." The support of an education that would meet the academic expectations that the children would encounter in higher education was not a priority. In a private meeting in Detroit between the Director and the ALAS Board, the Director admitted to us that all of the educational efforts of his school were focused on drilling the test and not on education per se. "It is the only way we can keep our federal funding and maintain the company's profit," he said. He also emphasized the fact that Leona Groups' ability to fire its employees and educational staff at will made it easier to maintain "the business" and improve educational quality because the teachers were not protected by the union. In other words, the Puerto Rican instructor's assessment of the prioritization of standardized testing over quality education which we saw in the previous chapter of this dissertation was confirmed in Michigan.

The meeting held at the Leona Group headquarters revealed important class and gender differences between the ALAS Board members and the Leona Group administrative staff. The following statement was made by Martin upon recalling the meeting at the management company's headquarters in Lansing.

I still remember the expensive Leona Group office and the businessmen in their perfectly ironed suites with their secretaries tagging along. They were busily taking notes while the "white head honcho" towered over his Latino charter school principal from Detroit and patted him on the shoulders as if he was a kid. He was the perfect token Latino; brown, small, and obedient. The principal looked so small and quiet when all of the sudden "pop!" The ALAS Fundraising Director took out her breast in the middle of the meeting when her baby started screaming at the top of its lungs!... You should have seen the look on the faces of the Leona Group staff!³⁵⁹

³⁵⁹ Interview with Martin on the past of ALAS. 05/2009

Unfortunately, the substantial gains with Bay Mills, did not decrease the incompatibility between ALAS and Leona Group. In a final conference-call meeting, the ALAS Board and our attorney met at the University of Michigan Trotter House to make the call and reach closure regarding our relationship with Leona Group. Our attorney had advised us that the way the contract had been designed by Leona Group, it retained all the power over curriculum, hiring and firing practices. Essentially, the ALAS Board would rescind all its powers and influence over the school if the contract was signed.

When Leona Group was confronted with our concerns, they were unwilling to make any changes to the contract. After consulting with the Board members, I informed Leona Group that we preferred to end the relationship rather than have a replica of the schools that already existed and that did not attend to the needs of Latino youth. We did not want another Cesar Chávez style academy in Ann Arbor. This resulted in Bay Mills denying the certification for the charter. ALAS attempted to apply one more time to no avail through the management agency of Central Academy, a pre-existing Arab-based charter school. The Bay Mills representative had recommended that we contact them. The last time we met with the agency we found our application thrown in a box in the corner of the office. Bay Mills decided to invest in the schools it had opened the previous year, rather than opening another school.

A New Phase in Community Service and Mutual Aid, ALAS Members Discover their Own Preconceptions

In the year 2005, ALAS was able to open its doors to a different population than that which it had traditionally served; a small group of English speaking individuals labeled by the wider society as “disabled.” The ALAS Board, after discussing the issue with the larger membership, agreed that these new members had talents that they could contribute to improve the academic achievements of the children. We hoped that they would also derive the benefit of discovering that their own identities were not defined by their disability, but by their personal talents and contributions to others. ALAS began to offer vocational coaching for brain injury survivors. This afforded ALAS an additional benefit, as the rehabilitation institution was willing to pay for their clients’ participation in the program. The rehabilitation agency staff was surprised, as were the guardians of

their clients, about the new members' positive changes in self-esteem and behavior since their participation in the organization. Despite this, one of the faculty members from the Romance Languages Department asked to speak to me because some of her students were concerned were these adults. "They feel uncomfortable around them" she said and wanted me to "be aware of it." I spoke to the students and asked them to welcome our new tutors because they were ALAS members like everyone else.

September 3, 2011

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Roxanna Duntley Mantos

My son, Charles Walker was electrocuted on July 17, 1989 and has been in various Rehab programs, since that time. He has a traumatic brain injury and cannot live on his own. He is currently residing in a Group Home through the Rainbow Rehabilitation Program.

On May 2, 2005, Chuck enrolled in the ALAS program where he was under the supervision of Roxanna Mantos and Sensei Martin Gatlin. They have Chuck participating in the ALAS Karate program. Since beginning with ALAS, Chuck has lost over twenty pounds, but most important, his self-esteem has returned. ALAS also has Chuck interacting with children and helping them learn the English language.

Roxanna has gone out of her way to help Chuck and understands the devastating effects of a brain injury, not only on the victim, but on the family as well. She has been a great help to me and to my son.

Most recently, around the 22nd anniversary of Chuck's accident, he became almost unmanageable. Sensei Gatlin has been the biggest influence in getting my son back on track. He attended a Team Meeting with me and was most helpful, suggesting that Chuck could obtain further help in the Midwest Journeys program. We are working on making that happen.

If you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Catherine L. Bartley
Mother & Legal Guardian for
Charles J. Walker*

Catherine L. Bartley
Mother & Legal Guardian for
Charles J. Walker
19665 Anita
Harper Woods, MI 48225
313-885-7317 - Home
586-216-8873
Email: kulgrani@aol.com

Cc: Martin Gatlin ✓

14. Katherine Bartley's Letter Regarding Chuck's Progress

Thanks to the dues provided by the rehabilitation agencies and other economic contributions, ALAS was able to start the first college scholarship fund for Latino children in Washtenaw County. The success was two-fold. Not only did it provide an empowering environment for the new members, it also helped the ALAS membership and tutors confront their own preconceptions about individuals with disabilities. In another letter of appreciation to ALAS, one of the brain injury survivors stated the following: "Thank you for letting me help others. You are the light at the end of my tunnel. God bless you."

ALAS began other ventures to increase the scholarship fund which would simultaneously provide an atmosphere of cultural pride for the families and children of the organization. It continued its children's performers group "Las ALAS de Fuego" (The Wings of Fire) that sang for Perry Nursery School, the Veterans Hospital and Glazier Hills Senior Center with the collaboration of survivors of traumatic brain injury.

Is it the End or a New Beginning?

April of 2005 brought the surprise exodus of the Mexican Board member. She opted mid-way through the term to sign her son up for school soccer which conflicted with the ALAS schedule. This left three U of M tutors who were taking the class for credit without people to tutor because her family was composed of three members who attended the program. It created frustration among the tutors, remaining ALAS staff and the faculty of the course from the Romance Languages Department. Due to this and disagreements with the faculty member regarding his role within the ALAS program, ironically a Puerto Rican himself, the ALAS Board was informed by the faculty who initiated the relationship that there were "no instructors interested in teaching the course in the future."

This instructor admitted that "community service [was] not a priority for the Spanish Department." Years later the same Puerto Rican faculty member who I was told had damaged our relationship with the Romance Languages Department, received the Circle Award. In 2006, the ALAS tutors, mothers and children wrote several letters to different departments in the University including the School of Social Work, Women's

Studies and Latin American and Caribbean studies requesting that the course be continued, even as a cross-listed option.³⁶⁰

Participants, community members, children and tutors had derived substantial benefits from its services and programs. Unfortunately, this was to no avail. The few departments that responded reflected a lack of interest in maintaining a for-credit course through ALAS. The Romance Languages Departmental politics with the influence of the Puerto Rican professor took priority over the many years of accomplishment that ALAS had achieved for University students and community members. We were told they had other economic and curricular priorities to consider. We held this in contrast to the fact that the 2002 Circle Award by the Latino faculty and graduate students had been awarded to us in recognition of our contributions to the University of Michigan's efforts to attend to the needs of the community.

I received e-mail responses from Paula Allen Meares; Dean of the School Social Work and from a representative of the Latin American and Caribbean studies Department stating they would not be supporting ALAS. The other departments never responded. We also sent e-mails throughout the years to the Spanish and Bilingual Education Departments at Eastern Michigan University requesting that they announce our call for tutors but we never received a response. We did have one EMU student attend one of our meetings, but he said that he would not be able to become a member because of the EMU and U of M rivalries. The next few pages are scanned copies of the letters sent to the various University of Michigan departments by the children, tutors and parents of the ALAS program in 2006.

³⁶⁰ See samples of letters sent to the various departments.

I Love alas because it is fun. 3/1

I truly like to write because it is good

At alas we practice homework and reading and writing.

I love working with the tutors. The tutors help me learn about Spanish and English.

I would be very sad if we did not have Alas.

I hope we can have Alas for ever.

Thank you.

Elizabeth
Delgado

Roxanna Duntley-Matos, M.A., M.S.W.

From: <mclainj@umich.edu>
To: <rmortega@umich.edu>
Cc: <rmatos@annarborrehab.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2006 3:57 PM
Subject: ALAS and Spanish 448

Mr. Ortega,

My name is Jimmy McClain and I am currently a senior at the University of Michigan majoring in Spanish and Psychology. The purpose of the letter is to convey to you, and the concerned parties, my experiences at ALAS while taking Spanish 448 in the Fall of 2005. As I was browsing the course catalog over the summer of 2005, I came across an interesting class which blended cultural experiences with hands-on tutoring. I had always enjoyed spending time with children and speaking Spanish and so I signed up for the class. My approach to Spanish 448 and ALAS was the same as it was to any other class at U of M: I would do what was necessary for me to earn a good grade and nothing more. Fortunately for me, I did not know what I was getting into. As I arrived on the first day, I was impressed by the number of children and parents who were present. It seemed as though the tutors were out-numbered but not unwanted. Later in the day I was paired up with a student who I will refer to as 'E' so that he is not explicitly named. He seemed a bit difficult, but a child who could be reached and who genuinely wanted to do well. As the first tutoring session came to a close, his mother introduced herself and then her whole family to me, each of whom looked me in the eye and said what a pleasure it was to meet me. She asked me about her son and how we interacted, and we talked about him for a while. Soon afterward, E was begging me to play soccer with him and his friends, sincerely wanting to include me in his fun. This was my first taste of the Honduran, or more generally, the Latino culture: Everyone works hard, but everyone plays as well. As the semester wore on and I began to look forward my time spent at ALAS and with E. His trust in me deepened to the point where I was invited to his birthday party as well as that of his mother. I obliged both times, thinking I would be there for 10 minutes and then leave. Both times though, I ended up staying at least 2 hours after being incredibly well-fed (possibly over-fed), playing with all the children there, and talking with his immediate and extended family members. It was at this point that I realized I was not a guest of the house, but rather part of the family. The sensation when that feeling set in was unlike any I could have expected, wanted, or hope for when I signed up for the class. Thus, you can imagine how devastated I was when Roxanna told me on Monday that ALAS would no longer be paired with Spanish 448. Not only was I disappointed that other U of M students would not be able to have the experiences I had there, but also, I was crushed to learn that ALAS would be losing nearly its entire tutoring force. I have seen first-hand how these kids need and want an older role model; and the truth is, whether the tutors know it or not, that is exactly

3/22/2006

16. Jimmy McClain's Letter Supporting ALAS

what they are, role models. Even aside from having role models and older friends, the tutors provide these children with a way of coping with whatever situation they may be in. Each child there is unique, but to some extent, they are the same. English was not the first language they used and the help the tutors offer is not one that can be overlooked. However, the reward does not only go to the child being tutored. The tutor, the U of M student, is rewarded in immeasurable ways. For a student like me, this was an incredible way to give back to the community while earning credit. I can honestly say I spoke more Spanish in this class than in any other at the University. I am sure you can imagine my surprise when I learned this class would no longer be offered and so I am asking you, please do NOT take Spanish 448 away from the students at the University of Michigan. I think it would be a grave mistake for a University which values social activism and on-site learning. If you have any questions or would like me to detail my experiences further, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail, mcclainj@umich.edu, or via phone, 734.395.5737 (cell). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jimmy McClain

3/22/2006

Esteemed Directors of the Romance
Language Department,

Our ~~reason~~ for directing this letter to you is in order to give you our thanks for your alliance with the program ALAS (Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños) and for your continued support of this program.

We would like to share with you our experiences in their program so that you see how the program, that you have supported has helped us to grow.

My name is Maribel. ALAS has given me the opportunity to learn the English language. For me, it is very important to continue learning because, it helps me to understand and to communicate with many more people and I feel more sure of my abilities to realize my goals.

My name is Theresa and I am a student of Spanish in my fourth year. The opportunity to teach English to Maribel has been, I believe, one of the most important experiences that I have had in my student career. It has not only been an opportunity to practice and better my Spanish, but also an unforgettable experience that has helped me to grow as a person and as a future professional. I have much admiration for all of the students here their daily strength and courage inspires me.

17. Maribel's (Parent) and Teresa's (tutor) Letters Supporting ALAS

The truth is that I'm not the tutor
rather, it is Maribel who teaches me.

We believe strongly in the goals
of ALAS we write to you with the
hope that your support will help us to
achieve these goals. your support
has been essential up until this moment
and for that we give you a thousand
thank yous...

Juan V. W.

Maribel Perez.

NICHOLAS MOWBRAY

March 15, 2006

Dean Paula Allen Meares

Dear Dean Allen Meares,

I am writing you on behalf of the organization ALAS. I wanted to say that in the 3 years I have worked with this organization my experience has been very beneficial. I have helped both adults and children in learning both English and Spanish. Furthermore, it has helped my Spanish education by giving me more opportunities to speak Spanish. In addition, ALAS has done a great deal for the Latino Community in Ann Arbor. It has directly worked with school districts to help children who both do not speak Spanish or English, and has greatly aided bilingual education. Furthermore, It has done a great deal of community service. Most importantly though, it has helped many families obtain social services like health care, which I see as a tangible benefit of the organization. I hope your department can help support on ALAS on our campus.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Mowbray

18. Nicholas Mowbray's Letter Supporting ALAS

Dear Professor Meares/Auerida Professor Meares

I am writing because I hope that you may be able to help save a very beneficial class from being discontinued. For the past three years, Spanish 448 has provided volunteers to serve as tutors for ALAS an organization dedicated to the presentation of hispanic culture and language. ALAS provides an after school program twice per week where students receive tutoring in Spanish and help with homework in English. There is also 45 minutes of Karate each session. Next semester, the class will lose the only faculty member who can teach the class. Without student volunteers, the 30+ members of ALAS will not receive the instruction they need. If your department could provide a faculty member to teach a similar class, the problem could be avoided. Offering an academic class provides us with knowledgeable students, many of whom speak Spanish. ALAS also offers a scholarship for a summer camp. I have been here for 2 years learning Spanish and I want to keep learning it. Please help if you are able. Thank you very much for your time.

Joi Jordan, 7th Grade East Middle School
Ypsilanti MI.

19. Joi Jordan's Letter Supporting ALAS

Hi my name is Minor Altamirano Duran and I am 12 year old. I go to Tappan Middle school and I am from Costa Rica. I am writing you this letter because I want to tell you don't take A.L.A.S. away because kids that only speak Spanish need to learn more English. I have a good time in ALAS because we play soccer and basketball. Thank you for helping ALAS

Minor Altamirano
3/20/06

Hola, mi nombre es Minor Altamirano Duran y yo tengo 12 años. Yo voy a Tappan Middle School y yo soy de Costa Rica. Yo estoy escribiendo esta carta para decirles que no terminen ALAS porque los niños que no saben inglés necesitan ayuda. Yo tengo un buen tiempo en ALAS porque jugamos fútbol y baloncesto. Gracias por ayudarnos.

Minor Altamirano
3/20/06

To whom it may concern
Hi, my name is maricela and I am writing this letter to tell you how good this program is for my family and I. we were in this program two years ago and we decided to come back again because it is good for the whole family. I have three daughters, one is nine and she has done very well here. Her tutor helps her a lot, and my daughter likes to do the exercises. Now she feels more secure of herself. she continues to practice spanish with her tutor, and read and writes in spanish very well. My other daughter Amy is three and this program is good for her because Amy enjoys learning, she gives all her attention to her tutor, and its important that the tutor speaks Spanish because Amy does not speak English. Now she is starting to speak English and each day she says that she wants to do homework. I believe this will be helpful when she begins school. This program helps me because I learned to speak a little English in the house but never outside. Now that I have my tutor, she helps me a lot and explains to me everything that I do not understand she is very patient with me. all the time

21. Maricela's (Returning Parent) Letter Supporting ALAS

Daniel

3/15/06

Dear Dean or whoever is reading
this, (you're important).

You should keep Alas alive
because it helps the latino
community and ~~the~~ ^{the} "american"
community. We have had people
from countries around the world,
including China. My grades used
to be low, but thanks to Alas they're
back on track. Now that there is
Karate, I can get a good exercise
and learn how to ~~to~~ defend myself.
Alas has songs at churches to
catch people's attention so they can
donate money to the churches.

I can pick a topic, then do a
presentation on it, like I have
done a presentation on philosophy and
other cool stuff. I have been
here since the program started. Please
keep it alive!

Sincerely Daniel Alejandro Cordero Matos

22. Daniel's Letter to the Dean. Supporting ALAS

From: <kkardosh@umich.edu>
To: <rmatos@annarborrehab.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 23, 2006 3:25 PM
Subject: ALAS letter

To Whom It May Concern:

Although I have only participated in ALAS for one semester, the program has taught me more than any other class that I have taken at the University of Michigan. Not only do I appreciate the opportunity to teach English, but I also enjoy interacting with those of the Latino community and learning of their culture. In this sense, ALAS provides us tutors with the opportunity to explore the diversity that makes Ann Arbor great. ALAS is a unique program because it focuses on maintaining the Spanish language and culture. This approach is imperative to creating a welcoming environment that respects the identity of Latinos. I am convinced that the tutorees that participate in ALAS rely on the students and the director as an important aspect of their integration into our society. ALAS provides something that the outside world cannot; for that reason, the University of Michigan needs to support the program in any way it can.

Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at kkardosh@umich.edu.

Sincerely,

Kate E. Kardosh

3/23/2006

1 Hello

2 My name is Alexandra Cubero-Martos.

3 I am eight yrs old, I was born in

4 Michigan but my mom was born in

5 Puerto Rico and my dad was born

6 in Costa Rica. I have been in Alas

7 for four years, I have learned a lot

8 from all my tutors. I have learned

9 a lot of stuff like how to read,

10 write, talk in spanish, and do

11 mathematics. I like all the

12 tutors that I have had. All

13 the kids work on presentations

14 in spanish with their tutor. I

15 like Alas because all the

16 kids have energy to learn

17 some thing and all the tutors

18 are learning of the kids to.

19 The activities that we have

20 are dances. We danced in the

21 prairie school and we danced in

22 the festival latind and we

23 danced in the aft festival.

24 We have Karate after Alas. I think

25 karate is good for your energy. I

26 think Alas is a good way to learn

27 other latino cultures. From Alexandra

28 to Mary Sue Coleman

24. Alexandra's Letter Supporting ALAS to University President Mary Sue Coleman

The letters included here are a small sample of the many voices of ALAS tutors, parents and children who sought to gain the support of the University to protect its continued inclusion as a for-credit class. Their content is significant for several reasons. Not only were many of these letters directed to the highest authorities such as deans, the President of the University and Latino faculty four years after ALAS had received the Circle Award, but they made use of official discourses that the University uses in its effort to construct an image of effectiveness in promoting diversity and a quality education for its students in conjunction with service to the wider community.

Dear **Professor Meares**;

I am writing because I hope that you may be able to help save a very beneficial class from being discontinued....

Esteemed **Directors of the Romance Language Department**:

...We would like to share with you our experiences in this program.

I think Alas is a good way to learn [about] other cultures, from Alexandra Cubero Matos to **Mary Sue Coleman**

The letters demonstrate that this was being accomplished not because the University interpellated us like the Ginsberg Center, demanding discrete information in order for it to earn an award, but because this is what the ALAS members had actually experienced, wished to communicate to others and hoped to retain. Senior students who admitted that in their previous classes they had focused on getting a good grade rather than a quality education, stated that for the first time, through ALAS, they had evolved as learners:

Jimmy McClain Senior at U of M majoring in Spanish and Psychology...My approach to Spanish 448 and ALAS was the same as it was to any other class to U of M: I would do what was necessary to earn a good grade and nothing more. Fortunately for me I did not know what I was getting into...It seemed as the tutors were outnumbered but not unwanted. Later I was paired up with a student I will call E... He seemed a little difficult, but a child who could be reached and who genuinely wanted to do well.

Another student voiced a similar sentiment regarding the educational benefits she had received through ALAS, but she reflected, more importantly on the effectiveness of the program in creating a true bridge between the University and the wider community in

preparing its students to be culturally competent professionals. She emphasized the University's responsibility for supporting the program.

To Whom It May Concern:

Although I have only participated in ALAS for one semester, the program has taught me more than any other class that I have taken at the University of Michigan...In this sense ALAS provides us tutors with the opportunity to explore the diversity that makes Ann Arbor great. ALAS is a unique program because it focuses on maintaining the Spanish language and culture. This approach is imperative to creating a welcoming environment that respects the identity of Latinos. I am convinced that the tutores that participate in ALAS rely on the students and the director as an important aspect of their integration into our society. ALAS provides something that the outside world cannot; for this reason the University of Michigan needs to support the program in any way that it can.

Kate Kardosh

Maricela, a parent, became aware of the important role that higher education could play in the improvement of elementary through high school education by offering the services that lead to a culturally rich and validating education. She realized that, after leaving the program for two years, but she found the motivation within herself to return.

To Whom It May Concern:

Hi, my name is Maricela and I am writing this letter to tell you how good this program is for my family and I. We were in this program two years ago and we decided to come back again because it was good for the whole family. I have three daughters, one is nine and she has done very well here. Her tutor helps her a lot, and my daughter likes to do the exercises. Now she feels more secure of herself. She continues to practice Spanish with her tutor, and read and writes in Spanish very well. My other daughter Amy is three and this program is good for her because Amy enjoys learning. She gives all her attention to her tutor, and it's important that the tutor speaks Spanish because Amy does not speak English. Now she is starting to speak English and each day she says that she wants to do homework. I believe this will be helpful when she begins school.

Other tutors chose to focus on the discourse of exceptionality so important to, and emphasized by, an institution with the prestige of the University of Michigan.

The empowering effects of the process of critical intersubjectivity promoted by a Freirean philosophy of education became manifested in the words of children and tutors as they both realized how they were occupying the role of teachers and students interchangeably. They became mentors, facilitators, agents and recipients of validation.

The children and parents opened a window into a cultural world that was experientially unknown to the tutors and that called them forth as extended family, and the tutors became guides on the journey to higher education for the families.

Jimmy (U of M Senior): As the first tutoring session came to a close, his mother introduced herself and then her whole family to me, each of them looked me in the eye and said what a pleasure it was to meet me. She asked me about her son and how we interacted, and we talked about him for a while. Soon E was begging me to play soccer with him and his friends sincerely wanting to include me in his fun. This was my first taste of Honduran, or more generally, the Latino culture. Everyone works hard and everyone plays as well...His trust in me deepened the point where I was invited to his birthday as well as that of his mother...It was at this time that I realized that I was not a guest of the house, but rather a part of the family. The sensation when that feeling set in was unlike any I could have expected, wanted or hoped for when I signed up for the class.

My name is Teresa and I am student of Spanish in my fourth year. The opportunity to teach English to Maribel has been, I believe, one of the most important experiences that I have had in my student career. It has not only been an opportunity to practice and better my Spanish, but also an unforgettable experience that has helped me grow as a person and as a future professional. I have much admiration for all of the students here their daily strength and courage inspires me. The truth is I'm not the tutor. Rather, it is Maribel who teaches me. We believe strongly in the goals of ALAS. We write to you with the hopes that your support will help us achieve those goals. Your support has been essential up until this moment and for that we give you a thousand thank yous.

Hello,

My name is Alexandra Cubero-Matos.

I am eight years old. I was born in Michigan but my mom was born in Puerto Rico and my dad was born in Costa Rica. I have been in ALAS for four years. I have learned a lot from all my tutors. I have learned a lot of stuff like how to read, write, talk in Spanish and do mathematics. I like all the tutors that I have had. All of the kids work on presentations in Spanish with their tutor. I like Alas because all the kids have energy to learn something and all the tutors are learning from the kids too. The activities that we have are dances. We dance in the prairie school and we danced in the festival latino and we danced in the art festival. We have karate after Alas. I think Alas is a good way to learn [about] other cultures, from Alexandra Cubero Matos to Mary Sue Coleman

Some tutors took the more official route and attempted to list in a clear and concise way the practical benefits and institutional responsibility of maintaining ALAS as course.

They also emphasized the needed extension of the civic responsibility of the University with relation to social service and the community.

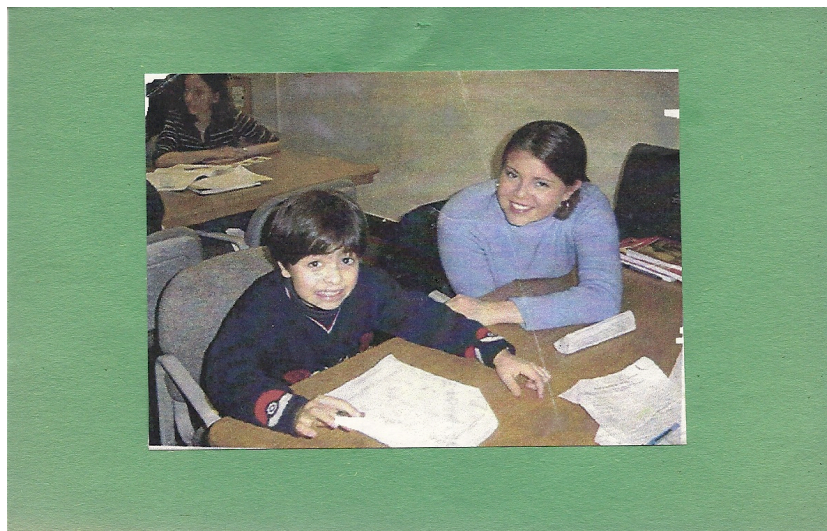
Nicholas Mowbray

...ALAS has done a great deal for the Latino Community in Ann Arbor. It has directly worked with school districts to help children who both do not speak Spanish or English, and has greatly aided bilingual education. Furthermore, it has done a great deal of community service. Most importantly though, it has helped many families obtain social services like health care, which I see as a tangible benefit of the organization. I hope your department can help support ALAS on our campus.

More interestingly, there were at least two examples of the effects of validation experienced by the children and tutors in the program and how this led them to interpellate the University in a similar way. In this child's letter, it was not the administrative title that was of relevance, but the human subject behind it as a representative of the University. The Dean or "Whoever," in effect, became humanized and worthy of appreciation and respect. However, by putting "american" between quotes he appears to be questioning whether the University is acting according to the values and ideals behind it. Is it being inclusive and welcoming of immigrants?

Dear Dean or Whoever is reading this (You're important).

You should keep Alas alive because it helps the Latino community and the "american" community. We have had people from countries around the world, including China. My grades used to be low, but thanks to Alas the're back on track. Now that there is karate, I can get a good exercise and learn how to defend myself. Alas has sung at churches to catch people's attention so they can...
[Daniel]



25. Daniel and Christina: His First and Favorite Female Tutor

[From Maribel--Parent]

Our reason for directing this letter to you is in order to give you our Thanks for your alliance with the program ALAS (Asociación Latina Alcanzando Sueños) and for your continued support of this program. We would like to share with you our experiences in this program so that you see how the program that you have supported has helped us to grow. My name is Maribel...



26. Son of Co-Founding ALAS Family in Angell School Musical

Despite the energy of mutual support that emanated from the various members of ALAS in the praxis of writing their letters to the University, the Institution did not respond. On two occasions, it actively rejected the interpellation, redefining itself, through this act as unsupportive contrary to 2002 when there were fewer options for working with the Latino communities. At this time, several University researchers and programs sought us out to support their grant seeking efforts.

The University's rejection affected the community support of ALAS as well since the membership began to wane. Given the previously publicized social benefits of ALAS, the surreptitious way that the University withdrew its support, made it all the more damaging: silence as indifference is often more potent because it limits the possibility for outward resistance. The Latino professors who felt "off-staged" by ALAS used the hidden script and their status as instruments of exclusion effectively. ALAS' parents, however, also managed silence, but in an empowering way. We remained in

Trotter House and therefore our presence was a reminder that there were other sources of power that had the potential of revitalizing us in the future.

When we realized we were no longer going to have a steady stream of U of M bilingual tutors, a meeting was held between the Board and the organization members to ask about the level of commitment to the mission of the organization. The members discussed their willingness to teach their own children Spanish if arrangements were made through volunteers to teach the parents English. Most parents stated that they were willing. The composition of the membership continued to be primarily adult Latino females who, as opposed to the initial members, were more diversified ethnically, did not belong to large extended families and had higher levels of education. Whereas the majority of the initial community members had not completed beyond the sixth grade, many of the new ALAS members had completed high school courses in their countries of origin and some had even graduated from college. Given their agreement and the mothers' initiative during this term to start their own Spanish reading clubs within ALAS, tentative groups were formed which began April 24, 2006.

ALAS and the Somali Membership

By 2008 the ALAS membership dropped to an all-time low. The parents who had college educations became uncomfortable when we accepted four new black Islamic families from Somalia. Each family had between six and nine children. The Latinos in ALAS became outnumbered by the Somalis. There were important cultural differences as well that were difficult for the Latinos to accommodate. The parents kneeled to pray to Allah before joining their children in the tutoring sessions. The girls were not allowed to shake hands with the boys or touch them. This became problematic during the karate lessons which required partner work. The Latino college-educated families were the most resistant to the changes made to accommodate the Somalis and to the fact that they now constituted the majority of the organization. They left ALAS and the Somalis left a year later. In addition to this, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) raids in the County had increased substantially. There was grave fear among the Latinos. A larger number of Latino families were now connected to PALMA, the organization which had resulted from the internal division in ALAS mentioned earlier. PALMA is widely

sponsored by the public school and library systems and generally accepted by the Latinos for several reasons: it does not focus on Spanish or cultural maintenance, it does not require homework completion or parental involvement to participate in the tutoring sessions, it does not require participation in a physical activity program, it does not have long range goals of preparing the children for post-secondary education nor the structure to facilitate this, it is not involved in participatory research with the community and most importantly, it is free. One ex-ALAS and current PALMA male member from Guatemala stated that

In PALMA no one says anything to us if our kids don't complete their homework or if they are late, or if they are absent. We come when we want. We can just drop our kids off and pick them up later and we don't have to pay. We do not have any responsibilities toward the organization.

Curiously, PALMA was not present at the ESL public school Community Advisory meetings to address the growing needs of the immigrant populations. ALAS was the only Latino organization available at these meetings to represent and advocate for the needs of Latino children and families. The predictions that we had made ten years earlier about the long-term effects for families resulting from Spanish language loss among the children became true. The public school staff and other tutoring programs such as Washtenaw Literacy and the Family Learning Center stated concern over increasing dropout rates among immigrant teenagers, their alienation from the home and communication difficulties with their own parents. A clear pattern was developing where the parents could not speak English and the children could not speak Spanish, gravely affecting the family hierarchy and parent/child relationships. The University of Michigan with the exception of their ties to PALMA as an ESL and remedial tutoring program through their Community Service Learning Programs and through their salaried support of the PALMA Director as a Residential College instructor, had done little to prevent these patterns for which ALAS had requested support.

This is also the case for the Public Library and the Ann Arbor Public School System which also openly sponsored PALMA regardless of its lack of attendance to the ESL Community Advisory Committee. It was probably because of its lack of support for native language maintenance that it was embraced. When ALAS began its presentation about its services at the meeting, a Huron High School ESL instructor and the Public

Library representative immediately voiced their support for the PALMA program which they stated was helping youth at Huron make important strides.³⁶¹ They focused on the fact that there were over one hundred and thirty Latinos attending PALMA sessions in the Public Library. However, one of the current PALMA members informed me that Huron High School was having great difficulty with the Latino students and that she had given the counselor information about ALAS. Huron H.S never contacted us.

Increases in teenage pregnancy and teenage run-aways were discussed at the ESL Community Advisory meeting. Three ALAS Board members were present and emphasized the need for the schools to teach Spanish at the native level for Latino immigrant youth and for heritage speakers. We voiced our concern for the children who were struggling academically and were forced to take Spanish classes designed for Spanish as second language students. There were clear patterns of boredom, lack of motivation and behavioral problems among Latino children in these classes. We also voiced our concerns that interventions were being planned without the direct consultation of the Latino public school consumers. In other words, the staff was basing the organization of their programming and outreach strategies on the feedback from teachers and tutoring program staff who were not well acquainted with the diverse realities and preferences of Latino families. They resisted consulting parents in the planning stages and ignored the recommendations made by ALAS.

Our comment that the ESL Community Advisory Committee should consider including Latino parents in their meetings so they could voice their needs from their own perspective, resulted in an immediate response from Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley, the main authority from AAPS regarding elementary and middle school education at the meeting. She stated that she wanted to reach agreements among the community service organization leaders first. The only Latino leaders at the meeting were those from ALAS from whom they did not wish to accept any recommendations. Our interventions and

³⁶¹ **Comments by Martin:** I remember two or three meetings that we attended and I think the first one, this lady, I think she was a secretary or something. In that meeting there was several people that was discussing about getting help for students in the school, but there was no final conclusion about what was supposed to be done. It was more like a brain storming meeting. You brought up the example of Americans putting toilets in an African village and when they went back to see how things were going, they noticed they had not been used. When they asked why, the villagers said; “We never needed toilets in the first place, we needed other things.” You also recommended that they make CDs with enrollment instructions in Spanish for people who could not read in either language and they didn’t listen to you.

previous advocacy for Latino students would lead to future resistance from the Public School which would affect the collaboration with at least two University of Michigan Latino faculty who admitted not being interested in immigrant education in the past, but who were now working with U of M's School of Education in finding grant money because of the difficulties their own children had experienced in the Spanish as a second language classes ("Spanish World Language classes") offered by the Public School. This was not news since my own son, as well as the children of other ALAS members had experienced a very alienating environment in the public schools where the Spanish teachers were known for not having a sound command of the language and for focusing on book grammar rather than the cultural and linguistic wealth that the children had to contribute.

One Huron School graduate from Guatemala came to ALAS and initially resisted reading to me in Spanish when I was going to evaluate her. When I convinced her, after much persuasion, she read with a passion and fluency that I had never heard before from an ALAS youth. When I told her this, both, the girl and her father were left in tears. This was their testimony:

Emilio (padre): No sabe cuánto me dolía ver a mi hija sufriendo porque le decía la maestra Americana que ella [mi hija] no sabía hablar español correctamente y le daba malas calificaciones. Yo no entendía cómo era posible pues ella hablaba muy bien.

Cecilia (estudiante): La maestra sólo nos ponía a hacer ejercicios de gramática escritos del libro. No hablábamos en español. Yo estaba aburrída y me daba rabia que ella me dijera que mi vocabulario era incorrecto cuando ella a duras penas podía hablarlo. Tenía un acento horrible pero podía hacer conmigo lo que quisiera. Me dieron ganas de dejar la escuela.³⁶²

³⁶² ALAS Spanish Assessment Interview. 06/2009

Translation: Emilio (father): You don't know how much it hurt me to see my daughter suffering because her American teacher would tell her that she [my daughter] did not know how to speak Spanish correctly and she would give her bad grades. I could not understand how that was possible since she spoke very well. **Cecilia (daughter):** The teacher only had us do written grammar exercises from the book. We didn't speak in Spanish. I was bored and I got angry when she told me that my vocabulary was incorrect, when she [the teacher] could barely speak Spanish. She had a horrible accent, but she could do whatever she wanted to with me. I wanted to quit school. **Martin's comments:** Yeah, I remember the girl. The father came in saying that he was interested in our program, but then after paying for the next month, he told us they were going on vacation and they never came back. You told me afterwards that you saw the mother at a party and that she confessed that her younger eight year-old son didn't want to study Spanish. To me, the mom is the mom, but she didn't have gumption to tell her eight year old son that this is what she needed him to do.

While she was taking her high school Spanish class, her self-esteem plummeted and she became rebellious wanting to leave school behind. She completed her Spanish class with a C-. What made the situation even worse was that the student was keenly aware of the contradictions between the teacher's authority and her [the teacher's] inferior pronunciation and grammar in spoken Spanish. This was not surprising given what occurred at the last ESL Community Advisory meeting that ALAS attended. No other organization, with the exception of the Red Cross was present despite the ESL teacher's announcements with months in advance. The public transcript began to reveal its vulnerability through the absence of what three years before had been a room full of community organization representatives. During our conversation, the ESL teacher stated that giving advanced Spanish lessons to heritage or native speakers did not make sense since they tended to fail their own language at the most basic levels. Her reasoning was that they had a limited formal education in their countries of origin. Our explanation that heritage speakers should not be taught by poorly prepared Spanish instructors with a Spanish as a second language curriculum was to no avail.

The discourse of individual responsibility, in this case was being used by both, the ESL teacher towards Latino children to negate school failure and by ALAS to express Latino worthwhile pointing to school deficits. Both discourses were occurring within and because of the mutually appropriated, yet ambiguous broader discourses of equity and human potential that were essential to the validation of the programs. They were, however, managed in opposite ways. The ESL subsumed the official discourse within a deficit paradigm while ALAS did it within one of strength. For us, the individual was being defined as a representative of a wider fabric of cultural potential whereas for the educational system the heritage speaker was portrayed as a representative of an unsolvable problem. The "lack of formal education in the country of origin" was used to imply that it could be remedied by providing education, but the stress on the "origin" imbued her conclusion with negative essence. This was the way of fixating deficit on the culture itself without appearing to do so and without admitting any responsibility for the failure it had in fact created.

In the case of my son, a Peruvian exchange teacher taught him for a year and evaluated him as "excellent" in Spanish. Once the teacher went back to his country, the

American Spanish teacher, who had a mediocre pronunciation and a poor level of practical knowledge of grammar, evaluated my son as “at risk.” She stated that he was “inattentive and easily distracted.” The school isolated his behavior from the context in which it occurred, therefore enabling itself to create a discourse of individual deficit that aligned with the same taken-for-granted and forcefully promoted ideology of Latino inadequacy in their own not so hidden transcript. Contrary evidence was inconsequential, despite their records of his outstanding grades the previous year. This contradiction was exacerbated by the fact that the grade awarded by the Peruvian teacher could not be denied. The American teacher’s emotion of insecurity as a Spanish speaker and as a teacher of native speakers—redefined as a rational observation--would be used as proof of student deficit in order to ignore or delegitimize their own “facts.” There was no response from the school about this contradiction. They chose to employ silence. I prohibited the school from teaching him Spanish and withdrew him from the class. I assumed the Spanish education for both my children through a program from Community High School that provided students the opportunity to receive credit while studying under community experts.

Lee Ann Dickinson’s resistance to the true inclusion of Latino community members and unwillingness to spread the word of ALAS services through the school system would have other negative repercussions. On January 18, 2010 I sent an e-mail to the ESL Community Advisory Committee about our accomplishments requesting that they spread the word among the Latino families in the school systems. The only response we received was an immediate mass e-mail from the Public School System advertising their GED program in English from a library representative who stated that it was better for Spanish speakers to learn the GED in English. Their response was interesting given that the e-mail they received emphasized not only our Spanish services to Latinos, but to children from many different countries such as China, Tibet, Somalia, Japan, Croatia and others. In addition to this, it mentioned the validation of the University of Michigan Circle Award and the fact that we refer several youth to PALMA and the Methodist Church Programs when they do not wish to retain their Spanish language. It was surely surprising to them that ALAS, as a small organization, could offer all of their services and more, under one roof without their extensive funding or infrastructure. It is in fact

our small size affords us the freedom to change rapidly and to adjust in the face of negative circumstance in the way that more complicated and bureaucratically embedded organizations can not. The e-mail they received from us is included below.

Date: Mon, 18 Jan 2010 16:16:42 -0500 [01/18/2010 04:16:42 PM EDT]
From: matos@umich.edu
To: esl@lists.aadl.org
Cc: [Show Addresses - 16 recipients]
Subject: ALAS and its Accomplishments this Past Year with Education, Immigrant and English Speaking Families

ALAS is beginning its new term and we are proud of our many accomplishments this past year! Two thirds of our students, who were originally struggling in school, have reached the honor roll. They are all working hard on native language maintenance as well. This includes not only Spanish, but Portuguese also. Our youth and adults gave presentations in both English and their native language during our holiday party. They worked on these for three weeks with their parents, U of M and community tutors.

The members continue to work on maintaining appropriate physical activity through karate. The membership has also been learning Qigong to help with stress reduction and overall internal health and wellbeing. The youth are now working on leadership skills as they tutor younger children and as they lead smaller Qigong groups as well. We have received a scholarship from the American Go Foundation awarding us several Go sets to help the families work on important cognitive/social and visual spatial skills while we begin to create a bridge with Chinese culture. We have received support from the Ann Arbor Go Club at our summer physical activity camp to get us started on this incrementally challenging game.

Adults are preparing for the GED and TOEFL and we are organizing a fund raising project to help the Haitian survivors. The ALAS parents will be approaching various organizations to find needed information in order to put their thriving English skills to use for the good of the wider community. We are grateful to Ann Arbor Open Elementary/Middle School for providing us with the address to Doctors without Borders.

Our scholarship fund has provided funding to outstanding University tutors as they graduate their programs of study and move on to graduate school. The scholarship program has also benefited immigrant adults who have completed the GED and are now on their way to attending a college or technical school. Our

youth scholarship continues to grow to provide support for our high school graduates.

Our Spanish as a second language program for English speaking youth who wish to become bilingual in order to create communicative and cultural bridges with the Latino communities is also thriving. The youth did a wonderful job with their Spanish presentations in front of the Native Spanish Speaking Community. The native speaking members were impressed with how much the English-speaking children had accomplished in three months.

Although last year was a difficult one for all, we have had many accomplishments and a wonderful community collaboration for which we are grateful.

We are grateful to Speedy's Dojo for providing a locale for our program and to the tutors from the community and the universities for contributing their time and efforts to our program. We are also grateful to the parents who have, not only made a commitment to come to the program twice a week "rain or shine" with their own children, but who have transported other children as well to enable them to have a brighter future. We are grateful to members of the Chinese community who attend Pioneer H.S. who have not only shared their culture with us, but who have given their time to tutor the ALAS children while perfecting their own Spanish skills as a second language. We are grateful to Community H.S. for their wonderful CR program that has allowed students to contribute to the membership while learning about our cultures and language. We are grateful to all those other organizations who have referred adults and children to our program. Our accomplishments are thanks to your beliefs that change for the better through collaboration is possible!

During its ten years, ALAS has provided academic and native language maintenance support to many immigrant communities including: Peruvian, Chilean, Mexican, Honduran, Costa Rican, Guatemalan, Spanish, Japanese, Croatian, Russian, Tibetan, Chinese, Somali, Angolan and Portuguese among others. It is currently collaborating with the African American community members who wish to learn Spanish as a second language and to excel academically while contributing their own culture and experience. ALAS was awarded the prestigious Circle Award in 2002, an award which we proudly share with such outstanding U of M faculty recipients as Robert Ortega and Frances Aparicio.

Many changes are happening in ALAS. We are now in the process of bringing back our guitar program and of continuing our GED and TOEFL programs as well. Just last week our children and adults had a goal setting discussion for this coming term. ALAS has also referred several families to the Methodist ESL program, the Public Library Programs, the Family Learning Center, and PALMA when they want additional tutoring or are looking for programs, which do not

require a membership fee.

If you know of anyone who could use the support of ALAS or who would like to volunteer twice a week, please refer them to matos@umich.edu. The membership fee per family of four is \$60.00/month. The dues go to the scholarship fund, the purchase of academic materials and incentives for families. All ALAS members and administrators are 100% volunteers! We have a one-term scholarship application process for families undergoing economic hardship. This scholarship entails community service in exchange for dues. Please have any interested parties contact me at matos@umich.edu. Please write ALAS on the subject heading to ensure a prompt response.

God Bless and may all the ESL/Dual Language or Academic Programs have a great success this year!

R.D. Matos MA, LMSW PH.C
ALAS Academic Program Director
U of M Circle Award Recipient

In March of 2010, ALAS responded to a forwarded message requesting help for the Scarlett School Latino children. “Monica” is a RAHS School Based Health Center Bilingual Outreach Specialist. The following e-mails reflect the initial collaborative meeting with Monica and John Ramos (the new Latino Scarlett Middle School Principal who informed us that he had a reputation in Detroit Public Schools for helping Latino immigrant youth gain college scholarships). Our first and last meeting, which I would characterize as quite energetic, ended when Gerald informed us that he would be contacting Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley to proceed. In the meantime, Esther agreed to begin thinking about the type of collaboration we could have, given that there was great need among the growing Latino youth population of the school. The following e-mails reveal an important example of Latino complicity in the discourse of bureaucratic silence and the politics of power at the expense of Latino youth.

03/02/10 5:01 PM >>>

Dear *****;

Dr. Ortega forwarded me your e-mail requesting help with your students at Scarlett. I would be happy to talk to you and your families about our program if you would like us to pay you a visit. We run a dual language after-school tutoring program for Latino youth and English-speaking youth who wish to learn Spanish as a second language. We work with University of Michigan and community tutors to strengthen all

of their academic areas.

In addition I am doing my dissertation on university/school collaborations with Latino community organizations to facilitate academic success of these youth and am seeking agencies and schools who would like to collaborate with this ethnographic study. We can discuss this as well if you are interested. Please let me know if you would like to meet.

Thank you,

Roxanna Duntley-Matos MA, LMSW, PH.C.
Doctoral Program in Social Work and Anthropology
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor
(734)262-9935

Quoting *****

Good Afternoon Roxanna and Mr. &&&&:

Are you available to meet this Thursday, March 11 at 11:00 a.m. at Scarlett? I have another meeting to attend at noon and will need to leave by 11:45. Mr. &&&&, if there is no room in RAHS to hold the meeting do you have another empty room we can use?

During this time I am hoping to get information on the previous time the program was run at Scarlett and hear more about the history of the program. And discuss options of the program happening during the school day versus after school. Lastly, find out how many students are needed to start the program. Is there a minimum/maximum number. When can the program begin? With regard to next school year....what would be the process to make this program successful?

If time allotts and with the permission of Mr. &&&& I would like to give you a quick tour of the school and MAYBE stop by Mrs. Carmela's room. In terms of identifying the students who would benefit most from the program I will need to collaborate with some of the teachers at Scarlett. I know Math and Science are subjects that they have mentioned in the past to be difficult.

Please respond to ALL on this e-mail to try to figure out the meeting date.

Sinceramente, *****

matos@umich.edu> 3/3/2010 12:24 PM >>>

Dear *****: Our program is volunteer-based and we can also help with communication, academic goal setting, introduction to post secondary academic options, and follow up with the families by providing them community support. We maintain a strong collaborative relationship with the schools to ensure continuity and consistency with the expected class curriculum. For a meeting, it would best Tuesday or Thursday morning before 2:00 or Friday after school, preferably 4:30.

However, we can make arrangements to meet at 3:30 on Friday if necessary. The following information would be useful: How many students do you have in need of mentoring and what are their grades and ages? Are they bilingual or monolingual Spanish speakers? What are their areas of most need?

Please let us know if you can meet during the times and days I have suggested.

Thanks, Roxanna

****Date:** Sun, 7 Mar 2010 07:49:22 -0500 [03/07/2010 07:49:22 AM EDT]
From: Mr. &&&&&
To: matos@umich.edu
Cc: *****
Subject: Re: latino mentor mtg date/time

I'll check my calendar tomorrow morning to make sure but I believe that Thursday 11:00 a.m. works.
Mr. &&&&& Principal at Scarlett Middle School

The next e-mails were sent &&&&& apparently consulted Lee Ann Dickinson Kelly about proceeding with our collaboration. The first one was sent by ***** after our meeting with &&&&&. Please note the informal referencing towards me as compared to that of the Principal despite my higher academic qualifications and the excitement she revealed as a result of our meeting.

Hi Roxanna and Mr. &&&&&:

Okay, and not that I am excited about this or anything but, I have a name for the program we talked about today.....how does destiny sound.....or DESTINO!

While I don't want to get too far off topic w/ of our goal ...which is Mentor/Tutor program for our bilingual population.....I thought I would forward this to you.

***** is part of SHOC (Spanish Healthcare Outreach Collaborative) who directs the quarterly meetings they have a year. She is also working w/ Washtenaw County Sheriffs Department.....I guess, I am sending you this note just so that you are aware of other groups that are trying to advocate for the latino population.

I will be at Scarlett on Monday and will do some "homework" and try to get back with you Roxanna, by next week.

RAHS School Based Health Center

Date: Fri, 12 Mar 2010 09:11:53 -0500 [03/12/2010 09:11:53 AM EDT]
From: matos@umich.edu
To: *****
Cc: Mr. &&&&s
Subject: Re: Fwd: Washtenaw Sheriff's ques. for Immigrants (esp. Latinos)

*****; Destino sounds like a good name, but what do you think of letting the kids and parents come up with options and then asking them to vote on them so that they feel it is a community rather than a top/down based program. The more we can get them to take leadership and ownership, the higher the probability that it will meet their needs. It might even be cool to ask the kids and families to come up with potential logo to go with the name they choose and to present on their preference. Also, there is money in community participatory research and this would be a great contribution to the empowerment of the Latino community.

Let me know what you guys think of this idea.

Thanks, Roxanna

Mon, 15 Mar 2010 15:59:47 -0400
[03/15/2010 03:59:47 PM EDT]

From: Mr. &&&&&
Subject: Re: latino mentor mtg date/time

After our brief meeting on Thursday I have taken time to consider many of the things that I would like to accomplish at Scarlett. Given the time constraints I am currently facing I will need to pull out of any work we may have been

considering at this point. I certainly would love to use both of you as a resource in the future.

Educationally Yours,

Mr. &&&&&

Date:

Tue, 16 Mar 2010 14:19:00 -0400 [03/16/2010 02:19:00 PM EDT]

From:

matos@umich.edu

To:

[Mr. &&&&&](#)

Cc:

[*****](#)

Subject:

Re: latino mentor mtg date/time

&&&&&, even if you are not able to meet at this time, I think it would be of great benefit to your Latino students to learn about the resources that are available to them. How would you feel about us presenting the program during their lunch hours and giving them information to take to the parents? What about the tutors that we have waiting to work with your students at no cost to them?

Please let me know how you can help us get the information and resources out to your students. We were approached because there is a substantial need in your school.

Thanks, Roxanna

Mr. &&&&& never responded to my last e-mail and it took **** approximately three weeks to answer the e-mail I had sent her after receiving Gerald's decision to discontinue with the agreements we reached during our meeting.

Thu, 01 Apr 2010 18:16:41-0400

Subject:

Re: Scholarships for Undocumented Students

Hi Roxanna:

things have been extremely busy at work and I apologize for not responding in a timely manner. After giving this further thought and, receiving the e-mail from Principle Vazquez I have decided IF/When the program starts that it will be on a much smaller scale. Communication is

very important and I don't want to begin ANYTHING without the approval of Principal Ramos.

volunteering on many levels w/ the latino community here in Michigan is a TRUE passion of mine. And I know from hands on experience that it takes time to build trust, and starting out small is key.

your strong determination and drive will be useful as you continue your Phd studies through U of M.

thank you for your time. *****

Date: Fri, 02 Apr 2010 10:20:50-0400

Subject: Re: Scholarships for Undocumented Students

*****; I am afraid I do not understand your e-mail. The program can start as a pilot and all it needs is to place a few tutors in your school while we begin to look at best practice examples in dual language instruction and grant opportunities that we can work on slowly, but consistently.

Your students need help as soon as possible which can be provided to them while we work on the kinks of a functional program of any size. Let me know if you want to discuss starting a small pilot program in your school. The program which the Ann Arbor Schools has implemented in collaboration with the University of Michigan to teach Spanish as a second language starting in the third grade for all public schools, began as a community initiated pilot program at Burns Park School.

We should take advantage of this initiative and create a component that will ensure true academic success of Latino heritage and native speaking kids. There is substantial research to back this up if we truly wish our kids to have opportunities in higher education. Politics should not take priority over the larger vision of helping these children succeed.

I did find the simultaneous silence exhibited by you, Laura and Mr. Ramos rather difficult to understand given the energy at the meeting. It did not seem to be stemming from an open door community collaborative perspective which the Ann Arbor schools are attempting to promote at this time.

A great deal can be accomplished if we work honestly, openly and passionately towards what we seem to agree is a worthy goal of helping our kids. I am ready to work with you and others on this project. I am currently speaking with other school administrators who have voiced interest in the project. Please let me know how you would like to proceed. The kids are facing an entire summer where they could be getting the additional help they need.

Hoping to establish a strong collaboration;
Roxanna

***** never answered this last e-mail. In the meantime, the Ann Arbor Public School system, after pressure from wealthier white middle class families, agreed to begin Spanish as a World Language program which progressed from a pilot program of Spanish as a second language outside of the school, to an integrated curriculum for K-3d grade through a collaboration with the School of Education and the Department of Romance Languages at U of M. The leadership of this initiative can be attributed to a Pfizer Pharmaceuticals employee and Burns Park School parent who resided in one of the wealthier neighborhoods of Ann Arbor. An interview with the principal of another wealthy elementary school admitted that this intervention had been the result of middle class pressure to prepare their children for the increasing requirements of globalization. These were important steps in the School District's World Languages program. An interview with a Romance Languages Department faculty revealed that the program was not designed for heritage or native speaking youth, yet these children were nevertheless being included in the program without meeting their needs.³⁶³

As part of the public schools' efforts to compete against the charter schools, an aggressive advertisement campaign was developed focusing on the wonders of the ESL public school sponsored program and new plans to focus on "world languages"³⁶⁴ programming for the general population. The following quote appears in the World Languages Pamphlet.

The Partnership is based on a shared group of core beliefs. These include commitments to pluri-lingualism and language diversity, to learning in and from experience both in and beyond the classroom, to transparent documentation and assessment that values languages and language learning in a global world, and to the importance of working collaboratively³⁶⁵.

The public school published pictures of brown skinned children under ESL programming advertisements in the Ann Arbor News and other sources. Many of these children were not English as second language learners, and at least one of these youth was born in the

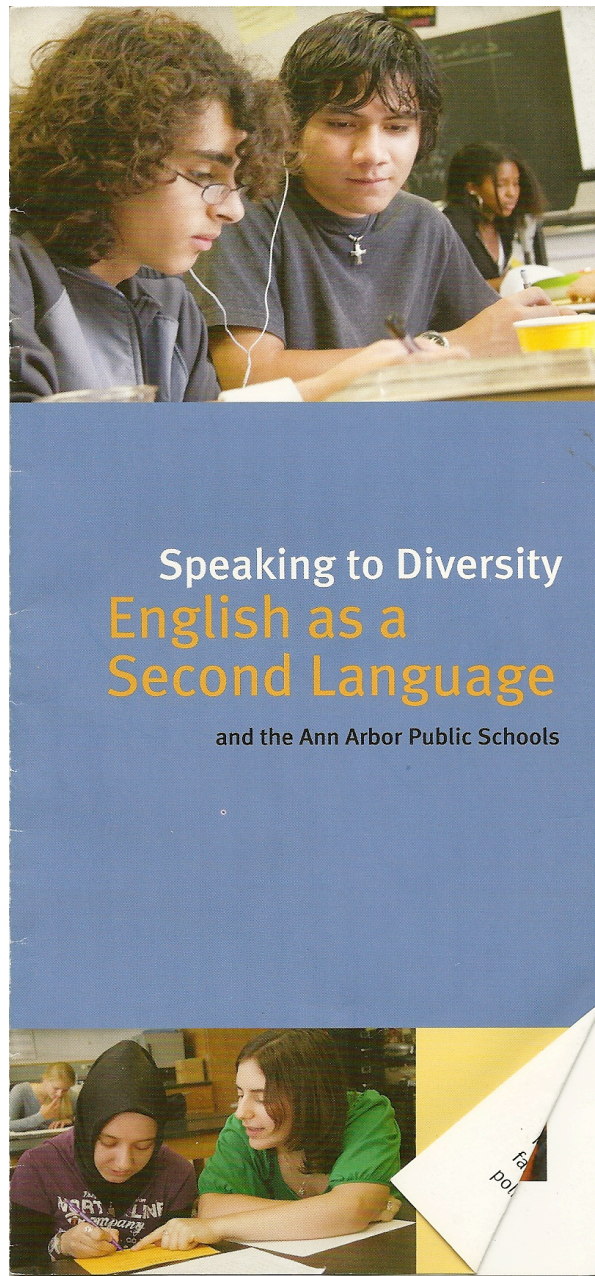
³⁶³ Interview with U of M Romance Languages Department faculty member. 05/2010

³⁶⁴ A2LP "Ann Arbor Languages Partnership (A2LP) promotes language diversity, learning, and achievement in the District's schools to make new languages a tool and a resource for all students...Beginning September 2009"

Serwach, Joe (2008) "U-M, A2 Public Schools partner to teach third-grade Spanish." The University of Michigan Record Online. For Faculty and Staff of the University of Michigan.
http://ur.umich.edu/0809/Sep02_08/27.php

³⁶⁵ A2LP Ibid.

U.S., excelled academically and was the child of a university faculty member. Comments of discontent began to be voiced among the photographed youth when speaking to their peers. It is unclear if their parents had consented to publications of their pictures in the standard mass forms handed out at the beginning of the year requesting permission of all children. It was clear, however, that neither the children nor their families had been asked specifically about publishing their pictures in the context of ESL advertisements.



27. *ESL and Diversity in Ann Arbor Public Schools*

On Monday April 5, 2010 Yanissa, a Latin American Linguist from the Department of Romance Languages responded to an e-mail I sent her. I was inquiring about a pilot program for heritage speakers for which she had received funding from the Arts of Citizenship Faculty Fellows Grant. I contacted her to apply for an assistant position she was advertising and to speak to her about ALAS. In her e-mail she apologized in advance for not being

familiar with any existing dual language program in Washtenaw County. So, I'll begin by commending you on directing such a program, because I know that it is a herculean effort, and often a thankless task that the wider community may not appreciate.³⁶⁶

In the proposal for her program which she attached to her e-mail to me, she stated that "Discussion of the proposed **** has already fostered new dialogues that previously did not exist between potential family-, university-and community-based partners."

However, she admitted to me during our conversation that she had attended one of the ALAS activities at the Public Library years before. She was also collaborating with another faculty from the Department who was aware, as were most faculty members of the Department, which ALAS had received the Circle Award from the Latino Faculty and Graduate student community for the provision of the same services she was proposing. This is an award that is reserved for faculty and community members who have made contributions to Latino community and University partnerships.

Estimada Roxanna: Primero, déjame decir que fue un placer conocerte el viernes pasado y que yo he admirado mucho el trabajo que haces con ALAS (sin saber que eras tú), así que estuvo bien conectarnos...Es más, el tema de tu tesis me parece genial. A caso necesitas otro miembro de tu comité?)³⁶⁷

In her proposal she included among her collaborators Departments such as the Caribbean and Latin American Studies Program, the same that in 2008 informed us that they would not support our program as a course when the children wrote letters

³⁶⁶ e-mail from ***** April, 5, 2010

³⁶⁷ ***** (2010) E-mail Re: Latino Research

Translation: Dear Roxanna: First, let me tell say that it was a great pleasure meeting you last Friday and that I have admired the work of ALAS very much (without knowing it was you), so it is good that we connected...Actually, the theme of your thesis seems great. Do you need another committee member?

requesting their help. She also mentioned Lee Ann Dickinson's support and that of Dr. *****³⁶⁸ from the Department of Education at U of M. I was informed that Dr. ***** was also collaborating with the Ann Arbor Public School System's World Languages Program focusing on Spanish for non-heritage speakers..

When I e-mailed her about a meeting to discuss a collaboration with ALAS, Dr. ***** never responded with a specific date. Yanissa also informed me that it was not easy to get support from Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley³⁶⁹ and given her reaction towards the ALAS Latino student advocacy efforts over the years, my involvement would be less than beneficial for her ***** program. This prevented her from including me as a potential candidate for her assistant position. Yanissa nevertheless e-mailed me requesting to be on my dissertation committee which I declined given that I already had a full committee. In the same e-mail, which was a response to one I had sent her before establishing a strategic plan that included services for K-12, she answered:

Y para serte sincera, así lo quiero. Yo ya me acerqué al AAPS y estaban muy felices de tener profes (!y de color!) de la universidad (!y con fondos!) con el propósito de nuestro proyecto "En nuestra lengua." Pero el AAPS solo quería usarnos para sus fines, precisamente para incorporar nuestros recursos a su programa A2LP.

Nos decidimos rechazar su "ayuda" porque no queremos que tengan tanto control...Te pregunto, ¿como que van a enseñar a nuestros hijos nuestra lengua mejor que nosotros mismos podemos hacerlo?

Pero créeme, entiendo muy bien como funciona el sistema y una cosa que yo se: es necesario empezar "pequeño"...y estar bajo su "radar" un rato. Además algo que yo se que no ha funcionado en el pasado para ti, pero tengo que intentarlo: vamos a jugarles "nice"...

Pero tienes que entender que en este momento yo no estoy lista para montar estrategias globales (por ejemplo, grados K-12 y trabajos sociales), por mas que me duelen los problemas de nuestros jóvenes.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ Yanissa (2010) Arts of Citizenship Faculty Fellows Grant, April 12, p. 5.

³⁶⁹ AAPS News Service (2011) Dickinson-Kelley retires after 38 years, most recently as deputy. June 27. "Dickinson-Kelley began her [career](#) with the Ann Arbor Public Schools as a teacher consultant at Northside Elementary School then moved on to teach Language Arts/World Cultures at Forsythe Middle School where she stayed for 12 years before moving into administration...Two years ago, she brought Spanish language instruction to elementary students through a partnership with the University of Michigan School of Education." <http://news.a2schools.org/?p=5449>

³⁷⁰ "Yanissa" (2010), April 12.

Yanissa's e-mail was a response to my request that in the long term we include social work services, but that she first tackle the K-3 grades while her Romance Languages colleague and I addressed the middle school through high school levels. It was also a response to my statement that the reason AAPS did not want to collaborate with me was because I had been advocating for kids they had attempted to "hold back" or label as "learning disabled" for 10 years³⁷¹. They did not want any one creating difficulties in the implementation of their assessments and decisions towards their students.

Her colleague began to teach a high school course for heritage speakers of her own design through Community High School Community Resource Program. I had taught a similar course in the past. I enrolled my daughter in her course, but I was forced to take her out since the professor moved her class to the high school where her own son was studying, a few weeks after beginning the course at Community High School. It would have been impossible for me to transport her at the time and my daughter's schedule at her home school would have been affected. She stated that the move was due to having her son at that school and that there were more Latino kids there. Recently, I had a request from one of her current students, an ex-ALAS student, who asked to join

Translation: And to be sincere, this is how I want it. I already approached AAPS. And they were very happy to have profs. (and of color!) from the University (and with funds!) with the purpose of our project "En Nuestra Lengua." But AAPS only wanted to use us for their own ends. Precisely to incorporate our funds into A2LP (World Languages Program). We decided to refuse their "help" because we don't want them to have so much control...I ask you, How are they going to teach our kids our language better than we can do it ourselves? But believe me, I understand very well how the system works and something I know: it is necessary to start "small"...and to be under their "radar" a while. Also, something that I know that has not worked for you, but I have to try it: we are going to play "nice"...But you need to understand that at this moment I am not ready to employ global strategies (for example, grades K-12 and social work), as much as the problems of our children hurt me...

³⁷¹ **Martin's Comment:** I don't think she went about this in the right way. She should have given ALAS credit for what it had accomplished for so many years and offered to contribute to it. She chose the path of least resistance, but it was not an honest path. I think about the racism the Peruvians had towards the Somalis and how the black administrators at U of M don't want to really help the Latinos with their bridge programs and the power plays between Latino faculty and ALAS, or between Latino organizations and I see similarities. The Peruvians left the program because they were outnumbered by the Somalis and we would not give in to their racism. We would not give the Peruvians preferential treatment. We were there to serve everybody. The blacks in the administration are acting like the Peruvians. They are not going to budge to help someone other than those that are like them. They are mostly bringing in blacks or helping blacks. With the Latino faculty, "now that there is money", or they have kids who are finally feeling the discrimination from the public schools, they want to jump on the band wagon and act like they were the first and that they have original ideas. How are you guys going to pull together so that Latinos can actually have access to the university if this is the way you act towards each other...letting power get in the way? Once there is money involved, people act the same no matter what color they are. They abuse their power and try to keep it for themselves.

the course I am teaching my daughter and I refused stating that he would do fine with his current instructor. In the meantime, I have accepted another previous ALAS member who left the program when she was about ten years old after being with us for about six years. In the four years she has been gone, her Spanish declined tremendously to the point of causing her embarrassment when she finds herself surrounded by native speaking Latinos. When this child arrived to the U.S., she was a monolingual Spanish speaker and when she left ALAS, she was reading and writing at the native level in both languages. I agreed to teach her again to help boost her self-esteem before I transfer her over to the other native speaking instructor at Huron High School.

Yanissa's e-mail is further evidence of the AAPS resistance to tend to needs of immigrant and Spanish heritage speakers. Her statement that they wanted to use her funds for their World Languages Program is consistent with the experience I have had with them for 12 years. Her strategy of being "nice," the hidden transcript of moderate resistance,³⁷² and her focus on K-3 has to do with her prioritization of her son who was 5 years old when she began the program. It was also a result of the fact that, as an unknown faculty who had never had to advocate for the rights of other children in this County, she was seen as a profitable and a safe choice with whom to attempt a collaboration. On June 9, 2011 an article titled "Ann Arbor: Achievement Gap Plan introduced for Ann Arbor Public Schools" was published in the "A2 Journal." It depicts Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley "drawing graphs" while holding a "yellow legal pad."

It turns out Ann Arbor didn't need to pay a consultant half-a-million dollars to explain why black and Hispanic students consistently perform below the district average. All it takes is a little graph to explain why an achievement gap that's barely present in third grade blows all the way open by the end of middle school.

The article then explains Deb Mexicotte's referencing of "classroom studies showing that teachers spend more time with students who validate their efforts—high achieving students."³⁷³

³⁷² Scott, James (1990) *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. Yale University Press

³⁷³ Dickinson, James David (2011) "Ann Arbor: Achievement Gap Plan introduced for Ann Arbor Public Schools". *A2 Journal*.

http://www.heritage.com/articles/2011/06/19/ann_arbor_journal/news/doc4dfe611a8e342329664728.txt?viewmode=fullstory

In other words, these findings discussed by Spindler in the 1950s were treated as new at this meeting directed by Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley. The greatest silence in this article was caused by the absence of the arguments ALAS had made in her ESL Community Advisory Meetings about the need to raise the achievement gap by providing the children with the right to maintain their native languages. Our findings in ALAS and the success that her own teachers attributed to our program was blatantly ignored. During the years of 2002-2006 we received requests from ESL teachers from Burns Park School, Angel School, Dicken School, Carpenter School, Scarlett Middle School, Perry Nursery School and Pioneer High School. Mexicotte's assessment that "We tend to spend more time around the people we're comfortable with, the people who validate us"³⁷⁴ did not transfer to how this might also be of benefit to immigrant youth if native speaking teachers were provided for their heritage language maintenance. Their solution, which disregards the cultural needs of the children, is "The district will conduct equity training to make sure the time is divided more equally."

On December 10, 2010 I sent the Dean of Community High School (CMH) an e-mail asking if she would be interested in having CMH participate in a participatory research project with a Detroit Public School immersion program. We were in the process of applying to the Arts of Citizenship Program for pilot funding. The content of my e-mail is included below:

I am Alexandra Cubero-Matos' mother and am working on a grant to do a critical education program with a Detroit bilingual middle school. The intent is to create a multi-institution collaboration that will help us close the Latino achievement gap by creating a social science and arts based program that involves discussion of research findings and the creation of public intellectual projects regarding minority education from K-higher ed.

We are playing with the idea of including three or four higher ed representatives that would take turns going to the school to give the kids workshops. I think it would be great if we could add Community H. to this collaboration due to its emphasis on the arts and alternative education. I was wondering if it would be possible to offer the kids who complete the program a high school credit for participating for an entire year. I don't know if CMH has ever collaborated with other district schools in this way, and if not what it would take to make something like this happen.

³⁷⁴ Dickinson, James David (2011)

I also thought that perhaps a part of the program could be based on CMH bilingual students (Spanish/English) acting as mentors to the kids who choose to participate in the program. At this point the middle school administrative staff and I will meet next week to brain storm for the letter of intent requirement which is due December 23d. The grant is sponsored by U of M. Please let me know if this would be possible. I would like to talk to you even if it is not, so that you can guide me about the structure of the public school system and who I might contact to facilitate the program in whatever form that is feasible.

Thank you for your time,

Roxanna Duntley-Matos MA, LMSW, PH.C.
Joint Doctoral Program in SW and Anthropology
University of Michigan

I received a response from her on January fourth after sending her a follow up inquiry e-mail. She stated that she had forwarded my proposal to Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley who was associated with the World Languages Program and that she would get in touch with me “as soon as [she] knew more.” I never heard from the Dean or from Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley regarding our proposal after this last exchange.³⁷⁵

Lee Ann Dickinson Kelly retired on June 30, 2011. The AAPS News Service described her professional trajectory in the following way:

Dickinson-Kelley began her **career** with the Ann Arbor Public Schools as a teacher consultant at Northside Elementary School then moved on to teach Language Arts/World Cultures at Forsythe Middle School where she stayed for 12 years before moving into administration... Two years ago, she brought Spanish language instruction to elementary students through a partnership with the University of Michigan School of Education.³⁷⁶

New Membership in Changing Times

³⁷⁵ **Martin’s Comments:** There should have been a Board made up of different ethnic groups instead of Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley, making those decisions by herself; a Board of people who really understood the needs of the different communities and had the power to actually do something about it instead of saying that they were helping all kids like they did in the World Languages Pamphlet. They are really just ignoring Latinos and other immigrants and making it seem like all kids are getting the same quality of world language instruction.

³⁷⁶ AAPS News Service (2011) “Dickinson-Kelley retires after 38 years, most recently as deputy. AAPS News: features, policies and activities in the Ann Arbor Public Schools. <http://news.a2schools.org/?p=5449>

Due to the high decrease in Latino youth and families in ALAS during 2008 and the lack of support for the program from the University of Michigan Departments, we chose to terminate our relationship with the University as a student organization and move to a new location in Ypsilanti.

From: matos@umich.edu [mailto:matos@umich.edu]
Sent: Friday, September 19, 2008 10:17 PM
To: *****, *****
Subject: ALAS will need to vacate Trotter House

*****; I regret to inform you that we have few children this term and therefore will not be able to recruit enough tutors to make the quota for an official student organization. Given the Trotter House policy, we will have to vacate the office and give up our scheduled tutoring sessions at Trotter. Please let me know by when you need the office vacated. We also have boxes in your storage room on the second floor that we need to remove. We will probably begin during the week and end by the coming weekend.

Thanks, Roxanna

Date: Mon, 22 Sep 2008 09:10:00 -0400 [09/22/2008 09:10:00 AM EDT]
From: *****
To: [Duntley-Matos, Roxanna <matos@umich.edu>](mailto:matos@umich.edu)
Subject: RE: ALAS will need to vacate Trotter House

Hi Roxanna;
I'm sorry to hear this :(I will notify Ed. You can move your things when its convenient for you this week. Does this mean you will not be coming on Monday evenings either? Let me know if that stays the same or needs to be cancelled.

I will let you know if we have any more questions.

Thank you,



28. Last Tutor Cohort from the Romance Languages Spanish Class at William Monroe Trotter Multicultural Center

The karate instructor offered his home karate school as a permanent location for ALAS at no cost to the organization. This proved to be a positive transition since we had control over our own space. As a demonstration of our gratitude to Ed Burnett, the African American Director of Trotter House Multicultural Center, we invited Drs. Robert Ortega, Lorraine Gutierrez and Ed's Supervisor, Monita Thompson for an award/Latino banquet ceremony.³⁷⁷ We left several messages with the University of Michigan Daily newspaper to do a story on his award, but we never received a response. All of the ALAS membership was also invited to award Ed a plaque for his eight years of support of our program and of Latino immigrant youth education. Ed informed us that it was the first award he had received in the more than 10 years he had worked at U of M and also gave us examples of how he had fought for our right to run the ALAS program there. ALAS had also supported Trotter House on several occasions when it was seeking

³⁷⁷ **Martin's Comments:** Ed said that nobody had ever done anything like this during the years he had worked there. He came over and gave me a hug. You could tell he was really moved by what we did for him because he wasn't expecting anything from us. After he gave me a hug he said that he liked the ALAS program and said that we were doing was desperately needed. He said our group was very exciting and smiled. He was referring to the time the Mexican toddler pulled the fire alarm. I remember we had to get his secretary and wife to deceive him for it to be a surprise. They told him House had caught on fire so he rushed in after hours in time for the ceremony. You should have seen the look on his face!

additional funding from the University for building renovations. Below is an article citing me in this effort.

Trotter House plans renovations

By Kim Tomlin
For the Daily On October 15th, 2004

When students walk into the William Monroe Trotter House, they notice stained carpets, chipping paint and missing handicap features. But students who attend activities in the University's 33-year-old multicultural center say they hope a new renovation plan will make such features a thing of the past.

The Trotter House — which is located on Washtenaw Avenue and attracts more than 18,000 students yearly to activities ranging from multicultural conferences to tutoring services — is drawing up plans to reconstruct parts of the building using University funds received over the summer.

The University has set aside \$800,000 for infrastructure repairs and \$200,000 for immediate facility needs, such as a new furnace that was recently installed. In addition, University President Mary Sue Coleman donated \$50,000 toward building repairs.

The house will be modernized to better serve the needs of the students while at the same time preserving its original architecture, said Patricia Aqui Pacania, director of the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Affairs.

House managers have already begun to examine all of its facilities to assess which ones need to be renovated or reconstructed. Detailed plans of these renovations will be announced once the assessments are completed in November, said Edward Burnett, facilities manager and program coordinator for Trotter House.

The house's disrepair earned attention last year when a group called Student Voices in Action protested against the University's cuts to the MESA budget, calling on the University to provide **funding** for repairs to the Trotter House.

The Michigan Student Assembly also held several meetings at the house to highlight the building's dilapidated condition. During MSA elections earlier this year, students approved a \$1 fee increase to fund the building's renovation, although that money is no longer needed and was not taken out of student accounts.

LSA senior Stephanie Chang, a member of Student Voices in Action, said the planned renovations would be an improvement over the house's current conditions.

"It's a good step, but I haven't seen where the money is going," Chang said.

House managers plan to begin reconstruction and renovations in 2005. Trotter House will be closed during the work. Managers are still looking for a temporary location for the student group offices currently housed there and for the weekly multicultural events held at the house. The expected completion of the project is September 2006.

The \$200,000 assigned for facility needs will remain unspent until reconstruction blueprints are completed. The money is likely to be used for painting, furniture and landscaping, depending on the advice of the soon-to-be formed Trotter Advisory Council, Aqui Pacania said.

In addition to the money granted for building repairs, Trotter House has received \$80,000 from the University to support its many multicultural programs, as well as to fund new programs such as the 21st annual MESA Pow Wow, a forum to discuss minority issues and a luncheon focusing on race and gender issues.

Rachkam student Roxanna Duntley-Matos, director of Asociacion Latina Alcanzando Suenos and of Latinos Unidos, two organizations serving the local Latino community, said she would like to see some of the money invested in keeping the Trotter House building open during the summer. In the previous summers it had been closed due to lack of funding. "During the summer we have to find other places to have sessions — sometimes in parking lots," she said.

LSA freshman Magaly Grimaldo previously attended a barbecue for engineers at the Trotter House sponsored by University group Assisting Latinos to Maximize Achievement. "(Here) you are able to learn about others' views and your views on (ethnic) backgrounds," she said.

Grimaldo added that she believes the renovations are important because the house "shows what Michigan has to offer."

Both Burnett and Aqui Pacania said they are looking forward to the new and improved building. "We really appreciate all the support from students and the support of the University," Aqui Pacania said³⁷⁸.

³⁷⁸ Printed from www.michigandaily.com on Thu, 08 Sep 2011 15:50:39 -0400
<http://www.michigandaily.com/print/6206>

Ed told of us of his dream to create a true multicultural program at U of M and not one that only represented one ethnic or racial community “like so many other university multicultural centers.”³⁷⁹ The fact that he had accomplished this was his pride and joy. This statement would become highly relevant in later years as I struggled to create a space for Latinos in the University outreach programs. Despite the numerous diversity discourses that could be found in the publicity of the Educational Outreach Program, GEAR UP, Rising Scholars Program and the Comprehensive Studies Program, the focus of the initiatives and the higher administration and program participants was and continues to be overwhelmingly black.

The difficulties confronted by the move towards a more representative diversity is reflected in a Public Television presentation of “Diversifying Higher Education in the 70s: Reflections on BAM and CASS at U of M” aired March 30, 2010. One of the African American female speakers spoke with pride of the development and role of Trotter House in its beginnings as a place “intended to enhance the social life of black students.” She then alluded to the fact that Trotter, with time, turned to other activities and admitted her ignorance about whether or not it continued in existence.

We had a number of activities at Trotter House, intended to enhance the social life of Black students...I don't even know if Trotter House still exists today. CASS, as a result of BAM helped to diversify the university.³⁸⁰

This statement reminded me of Ed's words about not receiving recognition from the University prior to the award ALAS gave him for his effort to truly diversify Trotter House. It appeared that from the perspective of the black activists of the 70s, who are now in the ranks of the University of Michigan administration, Trotter's mission had somehow been diverted from its original definition and search of “diversity,” at least as it was defined in the 70s.”

After 2008, the ALAS membership began to grow intermittently and became multicultural in a different sense. Since that time, its composition has fluctuated between two thirds Latino and one-third African American to its current half and half

³⁷⁹ Conversation with Ed Burnett. 9/2008

³⁸⁰ Diversifying Higher Education in the 70s: Reflections on BAM and CASS at U of M March 30, 2010. PBS

representation. We have had the sporadic membership of a few white working class families, but these have not continued after they exhausted the scholarship funding we provided them. The program has benefited from the support of some of the karate school's black belts who have helped with the tutoring or who have participated in the Spanish as second language sessions, while the Latinos work on academic areas, Spanish for native speakers or ESL. The children have been given the freedom to do their end of term presentations in any topic of their choosing as long as it is in Spanish. Latino children, for example, as a birthday gift for Martin, gave a PowerPoint presentation on his life trajectory. Latino children also gave presentations on African American themes such as the Tuskegee Airmen and the Harlem Renaissance in order to thank the African American members for their support and participation in ALAS. African American children have given Spanish presentations about their lives and Latino children have also presented on their heritage and other Latin American countries. Chinese students from Pioneer High School gave presentations on Chinese folk tales in Spanish.

Regarding the reason why parents have brought their children to the program, many of the African American children in ALAS have been attracted to it primarily due to the karate lessons. The older children have often been brought to the program for the tutoring because they are struggling in school. Parental involvement in the tutoring of the children has been relatively high as compared to the earlier years of the program. We have had a small number of adult members who left PALMA complaining of their lack of structure in the presentation of educational material and of the inexperience of the University of Michigan tutors. Complaints have also been voiced about the waste of time in placing the children at the beginning of each tutoring session. One ex-PALMA and recent ALAS Mexican female adult stated

Yo me matriculé en PALMA en dos ocasiones distintas, pero no estuve satisfecha con mi progreso. Me asignaron un tutor diferente cada semestre. Una sólo me hablaba en español porque ella quería practicar para sí misma, así es que no aprendí nada de inglés. La otra no me podía explicar la lección. Sólo me decía "Así es el inglés." Con esta última, sólo me pedía que escogiera un libro en la biblioteca y que me pusiera a leer. No aprendí a hablar ni a escribir. No hablaba sobre la lectura. Trabajo todo el día y estoy muy cansada. Hago un gran sacrificio por venir a las clases de inglés porque quiero mejorar. No quiero perder mi tiempo. Cuando estaba en PALMA, oí hablar de ALAS de otros adultos, pero me dijeron que ALAS sólo aceptaba familias con niños. No oí de ustedes hasta que

mi jefa me dijo que tenía a su hijo en su programa. También fui a las clases de “ESL” de la Iglesia Metodista, pero me pasé del nivel más alto hace mucho tiempo. Su membresía y sus maestros cambian muy a menudo así es que se quedan a un nivel básico. No progresan al otro nivel hasta que tengan suficientes estudiantes que continúen con el programa.³⁸¹

These types of complaints are not unusual and ALAS experienced them as well when it depended primarily on the structure of U of M programming. The ideal program would have been a one-year practicum associated with a lecture for the purpose of continuity to ensure better progress with the children. We recommended this to the Romance Languages faculty, but they informed us it could not be done. University students have different levels of competence in Spanish as well as interest in working with the community. The ALAS move to the karate dojo created a more centralized location with easier supervision of the children as well as more efficient access to our educational materials. The parents, children and black belts joined together to build an addition to the dojo to increase classroom space. Male Latino parental involvement increased temporarily due to the karate program. Because our access to tutors has been more limited now that we are not institutionally and formally affiliated to the University of Michigan, parents have been advised that their participation as peer tutors and youth tutors may be requested and is important. We have also emphasized that teaching is an important part of learning and often leads to grasping the material more fully than just memorizing for the self. The adults have voiced pleasure in teaching the children. English speakers teach math and English, and Spanish speakers teach Spanish and math to the children. In fact some of our African-American English speakers who have learned

³⁸¹ Interview with previous PALMA member. 03/2009

Translation: I enrolled in PALMA on two separate occasions, but was not satisfied with my progress. I was assigned a different tutor each semester. One of them only spoke to me in Spanish because she wanted to practice for herself so I didn't learn any English. The other could not explain the lessons to me. She would only say “that is the way English is”. With this last one, she would just have me pick a book in the library and read. I didn't learn how to speak or write. I didn't talk about the reading. I work all day long and am very tired. I make a big sacrifice to come to the I English classes because I want to improve. I don't want to waste my time. While in PALMA, I had heard about ALAS from other adults, but they told me that ALAS only accepted families with kids. I didn't hear about you all again until my boss told me she had her son in your program. I also went to the Methodist Church ESL classes, but I surpassed their highest level a long time ago. Their membership and teachers change too much so they stay at a low level. They don't progress to the next level until they have enough students who continue with their program.

some basic levels of Spanish as a second language are also tutoring the young incoming English speaking children in the basics of Spanish.

We have begun to have meetings in the homes and neighborhoods of our members and have continued our GED program in Spanish. The group is solely made up of women at this time. The new Latino membership has been based primarily in one neighborhood and has been constituted by families of different nationalities, but who are related to each other through similar employment. Their natural networks have been strong as they depend on each other for various services such as transportation and childcare. A female member who knew of ALAS when she was a recent immigrant eight years ago, and who had made my acquaintance, led one group. She only participated for a short time back then and informed me that she left because she “felt rushed by her Mexican tutor.” She returned with a seven-year old boy and informed me that she had been trying to reconnect with us for several years, but could not find us because we “did not even have a web site.” I answered that it was true that public mass advertising had not been our strong point.

Our discussion during our first meeting with this group was similar to the original home-based meetings during the inception of ALAS. We began by talking about the members’ concerns, needs and talents which we could contribute to the organization. I then proceeded to discuss my own membership and interest in the organization. I talked about my limits and the history of ALAS as well as what I felt I could contribute. Among my contributions, I explained was the presentation of research and theories relevant to our organizational efforts. During this initial conversation, for example, I made references to research within community organization and findings about individual and collective motivation. We discussed the effects of these on the organization as a whole as well as the need for tolerance for differences in motivation, as long as the participation of the members agreed with the goals we established as a group.

Moving to Ypsilanti has allowed us to connect with our members in ways that were much more difficult when we were at the University and it has helped us stay closer to our mission as a community participatory organization rather than a service or charity organization. In addition, it has created a window to address important issues confronted by our female membership which may have existed in the past, but did not have a space

for discussion in the previously scheduled and time-limited sessions in the University setting. I am referring to issues of domestic and sexual violence against women and children. The stories voiced by the women about their past and some current relationships of repression and abuse, their traumas related to the educational practices they experienced as children and their day to day struggles as immigrants in this country, were openly and emotionally shared in the context of the safe space provided by their homes and the camaraderie of their neighboring friendships and support networks.

One member, “Sarah,” received a full year scholarship from ALAS for her five children. She provided an interesting example of the effects of assimilation. Although she came to the United States as an adult from Mexico, she was so intent on surviving and learning English that she had difficulty telling when she was mixing English words with her Spanish. In other words, “Spanglish” had become her natural medium of conversation. Regarding her relationship with her husband and children, she informed us of the turmoil she had experienced as a victim of domestic violence.

Al frente de los niños me decía que yo no valía nada y despreciaba todos mis esfuerzos. Si le decía a los niños que hicieran algo, el se ponía en mí contra y me llevaba la contraria. Me decía que yo era una loca y que era ignorante. Cuando estábamos a solas en el cuarto me pegaba pero nunca lo hacía frente a los niños. Yo me aguantaba las ganas de gritar para que los niños no se dieran cuenta. Por eso ellos resienten que yo lo haya dejado porque nunca lo vieron pegarme. Mis hijos mayores no me querían hacer caso y me decían que su papá tenía razón sobre mí. Para mí ha sido muy difícil ganarme el respeto de ellos. Nosotros no tenemos dinero y un día les cociné. Ellos me dijeron; “No queremos esa cochina.” Yo me hastié y tiré la comida por la ventana con todo y ollas y les dije; “Si no van a comerse lo que les cocino, entonces no van a comer nada. ¡Muéranse de hambre!” Después de eso vieron que las cosas iban en serio y empezaron a respetarme.³⁸²

³⁸² Interview 05/2011.

Translation: In front of the children I would say that I was worthless and he looked down on all of my efforts. If I instructed the children to do something, he would go against me and would contradict me. He said I was a “nut” and that I was ignorant. When we were alone in our room he would hit me, but never in front of the children. I resisted screaming so the kids would not realize what was happening. That is why they resent that I left their father because they never saw him hit me. My oldest children did not want to obey me and they said their father had been right about me. For me, it has been very hard to earn their respect. We don’t have money and one day I cooked for them. They said; “We don’t want that trash.” I was “fed up” and I threw the food out the window with pans and all and said; “If you are not going to eat what I cook, then you are not going to eat anything. You can starve for all I care!” After that they understood that I was serious and they began to respect me.

Several of the women, some of them whom have not been motivated to participate in the karate program, did voice interest in a women's self-defense class and in additional ESL classes, as well as a space to discuss their daily struggles and hopes during their off-time—preferably weekends. They also voiced interest in discussing current events and policies which affect them and in inviting guest speakers to promote awareness of legal and other issues.

ALAS has traditionally had a good track record of promoting academic excellence among the children who remain in the program for more than a year. Several of our children have been placed on the honor roll, even children who were initially going to be retained in their former grade or who were being evaluated for a “learning disability.” However, ALAS has had difficulty retaining youth once they reach their teenage years due to competing with school sports programming, lack of school support for ALAS and the increasing awareness of the youth that their undocumented status will likely prevent them from attending college in this country. Our expectations of Spanish language maintenance, ALAS homework and twice a week attendance requirements are also more difficult for teenagers to accept. The programming and consistent linguistic progress of our members, now that our membership is not solely constituted by Latinos, is not always smooth sailing. We have encountered some resistance among native English speakers to learn and communicate in Spanish with the Latinos. Despite this, there has been a growing awareness by non-Latinos of the difficulties experienced by immigrants when learning a new language. In the meantime, Latinos have learned more about the exploitation of African-Americans in the history of this country.

Our growing African-American constituency has brought new life to the organization and the involvement of grandparents who have taken up the role of parents (in many ways) and of families who are foster parents in the neighborhood. These have been consistent in bringing their children and working with them at home. The academic results have been impressive. Some of these children who were struggling for many years in the public school system have made great strides in only a few months. The children have been highly motivated due to the karate program and the one-on-one attention that they have received from both caring African–American mentors and Latino ones as well. My children, youth who have been in the program since they were one and a half and

four years old respectively, are now teenagers who are often involved in peer tutoring. The other children seek them out for companionship, learning and advice. New youth members have begun to volunteer, with no prompting from us, to teach the younger children as well.

The integration between Latino and African-American parents is still a work in progress. They generally prefer to communicate with their own groups in profound ways, while leaving polite day-to-day conversation for the members of the other group. Some ex-ALAS members wish to continue to receive our language services as long as they take place in their homes or in Ann Arbor. Although they have not stated it directly, it appears that the fact that ALAS is located in a mostly black neighborhood could be affecting their decision. Latinos are aware that it is quite common for Latino and African Americans to be mutually racist in this country.

Eso no es nada nuevo. La mayor parte de los negros no quieren a los Latinos y muchos Latinos no quieren a los negros. Siempre hay sus excepciones, como el Sensei, pero eso no es muy común.³⁸³

The Latino families who are attending ALAS are residents of a mobile home park close to Ypsilanti so they live relatively near Martin's dojo. They have demonstrated a great appreciation for what Martin has offered them and African American and Latinos learn and play together. Latinos have attended for several weeks without my presence while I have been working on the dissertation. This is something that has not happened in the past. Before, the Latinos would decrease their attendance when I was not there. This was the case even before African Americans joined us. Their membership has continued to grow as stated earlier and the grandparents have had a great deal to do with the motivation of their grandchildren. Perhaps the racism of the "younger" (middle aged

³⁸³ **Comments from Ex-ALAS member: Translation:** This is not new. The majority of blacks don't like Latinos and many Latinos don't like blacks. There are always exceptions, like Sensei, but that is not very common. **Me:** Desafortunadamente Unfortunately, you may be right. I remember a member who told me I'm not racist, but I don't like the way black kids are always swearing so I don't let my son play with them. **Ex-member:** Oh, Dios Mio! (Oh, my God!).

generations) can be combatted within a coalition of youth and elderly who see beyond the color of our skins.

ALAS has always been an interstitial organization with “the strong foot” in the community and the weaker one in the University. Given that position it has been a constant creator of ruptures that has helped the institution through reports such as the one requested of us by the Ginsberg Center and public showings like the ones we provided for Trotter House. In the past, the Ginsberg Center e-mailed ALAS asking for information about the work we do with youth from “disadvantaged circumstances.” They needed to demonstrate a number of affiliated organizations to compete for an award. At the time of this e-mail, ALAS had not received services from them for many years. It was our affiliation to the University as a student organization that led them to emphasize our responsibility for their representation and social capital.

Date

Tue, 8 Apr 2008 20:18:33 -0400 [04/08/2008 08:18:33 PM EDT]

From:

To:

matos@umich.edu

Subject:

The Ginsberg Center needs info from your organization!

Dear Student Leader,

Each year, the Ginsberg Center submits an application on behalf of the University of Michigan for the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. This program, launched in 2006, recognizes colleges and universities nationwide that support innovative and effective community service and service-learning programs.

As part of the application process, we are required to verify student participation rates in community service and service-learning. I am writing to request the following information from your student organization for the 2007-08 academic year:

--Number of participating students

--Average annual service hours for participating students

--The number of students who engaged in at least 20 hours of community service per semester

--Does your organization serve youth from disadvantaged circumstances?*

**Definition of Youth From Disadvantaged Circumstances: Children and youth up to age 25, who, because of certain characteristics, special and exceptional needs, circumstances, experiences or insufficiencies, encounter financial, legal, social, educational, emotional and/or health problems and may have significant difficulties growing into adults who are responsible citizens, productive workers, involved members of communities, and good parents.*

If you are not the correct contact person for your club or organization, please provide me with the name and email address for the proper individual. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

***** Ginsberg Center Program Assistant

MBA/MSW Candidate

University of Michigan

ALAS germinated within and because of the spaces for action already growing within the University of Michigan classrooms and because of the presence of alternative ways of seeing the world promoted by minority faculty such as Robert Ortega and Lorraine Gutiérrez. This, in addition to the ruptures which I embodied from my transnational experiences, enlarged the spaces of possibility to the point of creating a bridge with other transnational subjects in the community. But the University of Michigan is an institution, and as such, it requires rules, stipulations and a structure of procedures that can be readily assessed. It requires a hierarchy which negates our ideal egalitarian philosophy in the same way as the IRB transformed the type of intersubjective qualitative research which I wanted to carry out because of the medical model on which the IRB is based.

Whereas ALAS began as an idealistic non-hierarchical organization where anyone was welcome and there was the hope that the members would already have or

easily develop a social consciousness about justice, equity and mutual collaboration, we came to understand that this is a slow process which requires long term repetition, experimentation, self-critique, flexibility, patience and endurance. Now we have clear stipulations about the expectations and the nature of the organization in terms of community services and commitment to the educational improvement of our youth. The established “clarity” has had the purpose of diminishing attrition due to frustration or lack of commitment. The members are aware that there are organizations which serve different needs and that one organization cannot serve them all. Although ALAS, by virtue of being the first Latino community organization in the County began as a multi-service mutual aid association, this is no longer necessary or possible. New Latino organizations have been created and some private Latino service organizations have moved from Detroit to Ann Arbor servicing several needs that ALAS is simply too small to address, at least on a large and consistent basis. None of the organizations that have been created since ALAS have had the openly critically engaged intersubjective stance (in practice) that ALAS has always embodied.

A society requires a variety of organizations, the typical ones that imbed themselves structurally in traditional institutions hoping that with time their unique contributions will be acknowledged and valued and the ones that use “playing nice” as the primary vehicle for accomplishing their goals regardless of, and because of, the oppressive actions of those who hold power over them. There are also those which clearly stand for social justice in word and action. This is a stance that may, on occasion pit them against the interests of traditional institutions. A functional society must maintain some semblance of balance, however. This is the only realistic level of “justice” that can be accomplished in an imbalanced global society such as ours that is based on a hierarchy of social, cultural and economic capital.

The primary vehicle for accomplishing this goal, then, requires, as well, the existence of the atypical organizations that are not as embedded in the institutional structures of power and which have somewhat more freedom to scrutinize and gaze back at them. These organizations are the ones which bring the private script into the public sphere breaking, even if temporarily, the subliminal grip of a repressive public script.

Regarding the issue of empowerment, several questions can be justifiably asked of ALAS such as “how is empowerment being defined?” “Who does the empowering and who is empowered?” Stephen Parker, Jan Fook and Bob Pease³⁸⁴ address several contradictions within the concept related to the social work practice emphasis on “empowerment.” They find this to be a concept that is inherently contradictory, especially when analyzed from a postmodernist perspective. Citing Baistow³⁸⁵ they state that “One of the paradoxes of empowerment is that it has both liberatory and regulatory potential.” For example, they mention how empowerment implies that power is held by the self, while in practice, empowerment is often revealed as something that is done onto others by service providers such as social workers. Thus, empowerment is “taken out of the hands of those who are being empowered³⁸⁶.” They also refer to Minnow³⁸⁷ by discussing the disempowering functions of social work empowerment practice. Here, disempowerment occurs when a group is provided services and, in the process, becomes stigmatized because of their increased dependency. In this scenario, the authors clearly equate stigma with difference and state that; “There is, perhaps, something in the modernist approach to empowerment which contributes to, rather than avoids, the ‘dilemma of difference’³⁸⁸. They see the powerless/powerful dichotomy as contributing to the “difference dilemma.”

In ALAS “difference” and “commonality” are used as strategic and mutually transforming tools related to ethnic, class, ability and racial identity depending on the contexts and the need at the time. Thus, differences in ethnicity, gender, race, ability and “disability” are used to emphasize the importance of multicultural understanding and engagement resulting from such identities. Difference and commonality provide a space for cultural pride to be enriched, but de-emphasized in the context of political supremacy vis-à-vis each other. A growing motivation to respect, learn from and interact with other cultures enriches us all ethically, morally, socially and intellectually.

Difference allows us to have qualities which we can contribute to each other and commonality allows us to strive as a collective for mutual goals based on similarities of

³⁸⁴ 1999, 150-157

³⁸⁵ Ibid. 150-151

³⁸⁶ Ibid. 151.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

social location and ethical transcendence. How these differences and notions of commonality are defined and played out vary from day to day, person to person and interaction to interaction. In addition, as stated by Healy "...individuals possess a number of identifications across a range of social categories, particularly those of class, race and gender"³⁸⁹, whose emphasis at different points in time and within different contexts affect the interactions in unexpected ways. In other words, notions of identity are contextually based and inter-subjectively constructed through verbal and nonverbal language and are affected by the numerous discourses within and interpellations of the subject, as well as the negotiation of these and those of the co-communicator. Lorraine Gutierrez discusses a similar argument for empowerment, which she refers to as:

The ethno-conscious approach [which is] concerned with power and confronting social inequality [involving] methods for partnership, participation, and capacity building. In all work, people...are active agents in individual and social change.³⁹⁰

In ALAS ideas of difference are directly addressed to discuss real and hypothetical events of prejudice, as well as examples of how mutual support helps combat power inequalities related to these ideas. The interactions between the various ethnic and gender identities in the organization reveal the tensions so often discussed in cultural competence literature. Tensions result from individual and group egocentric notions of what identities and rights various groups and their representatives should have within our current society. These notions, in turn, are intrinsically related to overarching power structures which promote class, ethnic, gender and hierarchical distinctions of human capacity. Within the context of a mutual support community organization, confrontation, negotiation and progressive mutual transformation (with intermittent events of misunderstanding and readjustment) are part and parcel of the development of increased intersubjective understanding, empathy and support. Tensions, ruptures and disagreements are inherent to the process of community empowerment and have important effects on membership continuity and program content development.

Regarding the contradictions within the concept of empowerment discussed by Parker, Fook and Pease as something that is supposed to be held within the self, but is

³⁸⁹ Healy, 1999, 119

³⁹⁰ Gutierrez, Lorraine (1997) *Multicultural Community Organizing in Social Work in the 21st Century*. Michael Reisch and Eileen Gambrill. Pine Forge Press.

often provided by others in the form of charitable services from authorities representing official institutions, several observations can be made of ALAS. Families oftentimes arrive seeking services for their children or themselves. Parents bring their children expecting, initially, to receive tutoring or karate and a few parents or adults come wanting English or karate lessons for themselves. Their power lies in their decision to seek services and to pay for them. In such a context disempowerment is heightened when the parents disengage themselves from their children's learning and allow the tutors or instructors to have near total control over their education while in ALAS. However, parents who participate in the program have an important effect on the children because they contribute to the tutoring as teachers as well as students depending on the needs of the children at the time. They have control over the continuity of the lessons between ALAS and the home. They are able to make adjustments, changes, creative recommendations and participate in their implementation due to the nature of their work in the program. They collaborate in the assessment of various teaching techniques and in their transformation, abandonment and implementation depending on their children's needs. Power in the tutor/parent relationship is fluid and collaborative while involving some level of tension.

Power is negotiated, adjusted and differentially shared by all the players involved. The parents may impose the conditions of their own or their children's participation in some contexts, they may accept external conditions of participation in others or they may negotiate and participate in their modification. The children influence both the program designers and their own parents in the prioritization of various activities. The tutors and directors have a strong influence in decision-making, but do not have the ultimate power to determine level of participation. The negotiation between all members results in the transformation of the location of power in differing contexts within a larger structure framed by consistency in meeting time, dates and general educational themes; Karate, Spanish, English, school homework, Go and guitar.

The contradictions of empowerment are also inherent in ALAS' ties to the University, not only because it originated within it (at least as an idea) and benefitted from several of its resources (faculty, tutors, small grants and a location for 8 years) when it was a student organization, but because a two-way interpellation continues to exist.

ALAS receives several e-mails on a yearly basis from previous tutors who are now employees of the University of Michigan who, in turn, send prospective students who wish to benefit from and support the Latino and African American communities. ALAS responds and therefore, by doing so, validates and is appreciative of those “hidden script” efforts. Although hidden, these interpellations are harmonious. Adversarial interpellations, however, also occur. Through us, an “ethics of justice in action” remains to point to the subtle, yet highly powerful contradictions of institutions that represent themselves as “benevolent,” “caring” and “authoritative” regarding what is best for minority children. Our ethics of justice disrupt (to various degrees), in the process of human interaction, the very harmful binary “us versus them” which results from taken for granted identifiers such as race, ethnicity, class and gender that institutions tend to reify and adopt.

From the point of view of the higher and lower educational systems that have attempted to exclude ALAS, we become an “uncomfortable polluting substance” that with time flows into the crevices of their subconscious interpellating them with regards to their communal responsibility. It is here that ALAS is most powerful, unlike the other groups that focus on only one main identifier which, by definition, excludes others, ALAS calls upon the culturally rich capability of learners more so than as black, Latino, white underprivileged youth or disabled adults. It actually achieves what others say they are setting out to do. ALAS is successful at closing the academic achievement gap because it intervenes on various fronts simultaneously; the subjects (youth and parents), the family, the tutors and the educational institutions through the subjects.

At the same time, ALAS poses a threat to many burgeoning Latino organizations and University faculty who wish to disregard its history and accomplishments in their efforts to appear foundational and indispensable before the community. Despite this, ALAS continues to live on through various informal, but potent networks. Former ALAS members return, or at the very least spread the word to new families. New families recruit others. Those Latino faculty who were instrumental in the rise of ALAS refer other institutions and individuals. As we have seen, ALAS is a community-based organization which, at some levels, combines in its development aspects of consensus

building, adversarial stances and critically engaged feminist narratives which prioritize emotion and reflexivity as a medium of understanding.

Critically engaged intersubjective research invites the discussion of insights and feelings as a medium for understanding and validating past, present and future actions. Sarah's narration of her abusive relationship with her husband and disrespect from her children is an example. She reconstructed what under normal circumstances would have been considered an irrational action: that of throwing out the food with the pans, to one of emancipation, dignity and empowerment as she regained her subjecthood before the eyes of her children, leading them to respect her.

Yolanda, when she chose to confront her daughter's teacher and assert her right to participate in the decisions about her child's education, demanded of us to be witnesses and validators of the struggle and triumph she had accomplished when she called upon us repeatedly to see her trembling hands and to visualize the blood rushing to her head. This became tangible proof of her act of self-affirmation. In these examples, emotion, especially when it reflects a crucial inner struggle, became the trigger of emancipatory agency. In both cases there was a transformation from their self-perception as helpless victims before an "undefeatable" foe, to proud agents who, through their actions, overcame the hegemony of patriarchal and institutional oppression. This act of liberation, for example, open the space for others to occur.

This research has brought to the fore the fluidity between the private and public spheres as arenas of concerted agency and social justice, but not always unproblematically so. Political action is wrought with discrepancies between good intentions and actual agency, polarizations within, as well as between subjects, groups and organizations in the redefinition of concepts we assume to be commonsensical "democracy," "Justice," "Latino," "African American," "disabled" and so many others.

For example, in the former PMCH employee interview, the administrator's interpellation of the Puerto Rican staff member as African American attempted to portray a historical and racial commonality in order to obscure the true exploitative nature of the relationship. The employee, however, subverted and redefined the administrator's efforts for what they were. In so doing, she mocked and dismantled her intended power by disavowing their cultural commonality. More importantly, she ruptured the color binary

that the official discourse in U.S. society takes for granted by stating; “We have many colors.” In other words, the Puerto Rican employee was able to separate ethnicity and culture from biological determinism. This is especially significant given that the administrator possessed a higher education degree as compared to her employee who had only completed high school. In this sense the employee disrupted the hierarchy of “book knowledge” over “craft knowledge a well.”

When %%% said “What’s wrong with you, you are Puerto Rican, you have African American in you don’t you? I said “No, we have Africans in us not African Americans who whine about 400 years of slavery. We have all sorts of colors, we have learned to move on. We work hard we don’t get benefits for being racist and by doing illegal crap!

In the case of the brain injury survivors, faculty and students who became uneasy with the presence of adults they viewed as “disabled” and “threatening” in their difference, had difficulty dealing with the competing official discourses of “diversity as strength” versus “difference as deficit” in the context of the University of Michigan; the bastion of affirmative action. Chuck, on the other hand, felt empowered. He flourished through his teaching role of immigrant children and as a result of the acceptance of the ALAS members. Again, the power hierarchy became inverted. Those who assumed normalcy became uncomfortable in the public arena that validated Chuck’s humanity and agency.

An example of the discrepant views of social justice is revealed in the attitudes and requests for favoritism by the Peruvians as opposed to the Somalis. The white middle class Peruvians believed that they should be charged less per family because Latino immigrants were initially the focus of ALAS. They had a difficult time understanding that the main reason for this was that there were no services for these immigrants at that time. The Board members and the Peruvians believed in the idea of “justice” in a general way, but its internal components were defined differently. Whereas in the program, the Board members defined it as inclusionary, the Peruvians defined it as exclusionary (based on race, ethnicity, religion and class.) The departure of the Peruvians, however, did not prevent me from giving them a recommendation to teach Spanish in the public school when they requested it. Here, being just, had to do with the ability to discern their competence to teach Spanish to heritage speaking youth, and they were very competent.

An ethics of justice requires a constant process of distancing oneself from one's subjectivity in order to come back to it reflexively, as difficult as this may be.

As we have seen, ALAS has suffered numerous obstacles in its trajectory. The internal difficulties are complicated and, depending on the time period, had to do with family and ethnic rivalries, the assimilation of the "English only discourse" (at least with regards to formal education) and intra-ethnic rivalry as represented by Latinos Unidos, PALMA and Latino faculty. Discrimination within the organization also took its toll on its development as reflected in the attitudes towards the Somali membership and the apparent resistance of former members and prospective University of Michigan tutors to hold ALAS meetings in a black neighborhood.

The most important obstacle in the trajectory of ALAS, however, was not internal. This came from failed institutional attempts to coopt the organization for the purposes of self-aggrandizement as revealed in the experience with Leona group and with the Departments at the University that wanted us for their research, tutor training and advertisement within an unequal power relationship that disregarded their ongoing responsibility towards the community. The Public School System, similarly, called upon us for help on various occasions, but for similar reasons as the University were not willing to see us as equal and contributing participants.

Given these internal and external forces of disruption, how can we explain the continuing survival and development of ALAS during twelve years when the Latino newspaper of the County disappeared after one year and Latinos Unidos—the self-proclaimed "Latino umbrella organization" did the same a few years later? How can we explain this, especially given the scarcity of Latinos in Washtenaw County during its inception, its entirely volunteer nature, the lack of continuous external funding for its projects and the aggressive exclusionary tactics used by public lower and higher educational institutions against us?

Several factors stand out, as revealed in the ALAS trajectory, that provide clues to the answers. First of all, ALAS started outside of the University as an organization that took place in the various homes of the community members. It was, and remains, flexible in terms of its membership because, as stated by Daniel in his letter to the University when he was 12 years old, ALAS opened its doors to children from different

countries around the world, including non-Spanish speaking ones. It invited members who identified themselves as being of different races, classes, gender and religious affiliation. It welcomed individuals that the general society defined as disabled and helped them flourish as mentors. It created services that changed according to the needs of the population at different times. It welcomed and promoted the skills, talents and knowledge of all its members regardless of their formal educational level. In this way it strove to create a non-hierarchical atmosphere for its members.

In spite of its flexibility, ALAS has remained centered on its primary purpose which is to provide all children an opportunity to excel academically while retaining their culture and native language in order to strengthen their self-esteem and identity as leaders in an increasingly transnational society. Since ALAS arose as a non-economically dependent organization, once there was a need to fund various projects or activities, its primary source was its own membership. ALAS has essentially functioned through the work of committed volunteers who share our vision. It has long-term consistency through Martin, myself, Alexandra, Daniel and its Board members. It has moderate consistency through those members who remain for more than one year and through those who return or who recommend us to others.

We have been able to engage, at different times in our development, with community organizations such as the Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts which provided music scholarships, the Ginsberg Center which provided two small grants to buy instruments and books, and the Ann Arbor Art Center which provided a full summer scholarships for all children on one occasion.



29. *SCORE Group with ALAS Scholarship Recipients at the Ann Arbor School for the Performing Arts*

The Spanish Department from the University of Michigan purchased the Spanish texts, board games and books for the children that we continue to recycle to this day. The services we provided the tutors in their credit course was the opportunity to engage with native Spanish speakers. By doing this we effectively reduced the expense they would have had to incur going overseas or even to Detroit. We provided a safe space in the University and a truly Spanish immersion program. This is reflected in the letters of tutors who were devastated when the Spanish and other departments rejected us.

Other services we provided the community were cultural competence workshops at Washtenaw Intermediate School District and several pre-schools, elementary and high schools. We interpreted for agencies and for Latinos in courts, prisons and hospitals. Through López and Associates Counseling Services, we provided free mental health services. Our children, as they developed their musical talents, contributed to the fundraisers of other agencies and worked hard at changing the image of immigrants in Ann Arbor from socially and economically dependent to exceptional contributors to society. ALAS also provided the context and families for faculty to do research on Latino issues right in their own higher education institution. It began to transform the university environment from one of alienation to one of community inclusion. Finally,

ALAS did not permit other institutions to coopt it because of our need to guard the primary goal of our mission and our Freirean and feminist philosophies.

The philosophical underpinnings of our organization led us to the next step in community-engaged research. The following chapter discusses our attempt to join the knowledge of the community and that of the social sciences in an effort to begin an understanding of the Latino and African American experience with the educational system from K- higher education and beyond. An arduous process with the Institutional Review Board, in charge of ethical research with human subjects, had to be completed so that current and former ALAS community members could participate as co-researchers in this effort. In other words, this was our attempt to expand our previous public scholarship efforts to true intersubjectively engaged and potentially publishable research. During this facet of our work we extended our search for understanding to the Academy of the Americas and interviewed the founding Board members as well as the current Director, faculty and middle school students. The expanding transnational corporatization of lower and higher education as it relates to the dismantling of Detroit and Washtenaw County schools is addressed. Finally, I address the growing literature on the deficits of minority mentoring as an additional cause of low minority achievement in higher education.

Chapter 5
The Transnational Push: Part Three
Expanding the ALAS Collaborative Research Horizons: Detroit, Mexico and
The American Go Foundation

Every move brings change.
Pierre Audouard (Go Proverb³⁹¹)

The energies and hopes of the many immigrant, Latino and African American youth and their parents who have journeyed through the paths beset by institutionalized education have nourished and maintained their spirit through their ongoing struggles to validate their humanity and the wealth of knowledge they bring to society. Although hidden beneath the innumerable discourses of failure and so called “achievement gaps” their mere presence continues to rupture such definitions. In the ALAS examples discussed with relation to the immigrant mothers, their agency began to be skeptically acknowledged through their increasingly visible advocacy when they united nervously to speak for their children’s rights in the classrooms during the late 90s. They were also validated through the printed media in 2002 in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. More recently, some of these parents united as interviewers, question designers and analytical partners of this research.

The principal question was how to accomplish their insertion into the world of university protocols when the hierarchies that create them are based on symbols of exclusion such as degrees, titles, years of experience, courses in research methods so on and so forth. How could the knowledge of everyday actors enter the halls of academia without being invited? The university, despite its categorizations of separateness requires the community to survive. Without it, there is no research and without research

³⁹¹ Go Proverbs <http://gobase.org/reading/proverbs/>

the universities as research institutions cease to exist. The 60s, a time of war, poverty, social unrest and a desire to see a different kind of world, are again calling upon us to actively disrupt the clouds of separatism, the imaginaries of hierarchies of knowledge enveloped in such terms as “craft vs. book knowledge.” It is in the evolving confluence between the community’s push to be heard and the need for the university to create spaces for its ongoing interests in the community that old restrictions begin to become more malleable and the interdependent ties, albeit still supremely unequal, become more visible.

Hierarchies may be temporarily inverted providing just enough time for the energizing of hope and the push for change to begin to surface. The excitement of those who have been held at the bottom in conjunction with those supporters who are in the middle, begin to create even larger or, at least, more numerous spaces of possibility. Such was the case of our next move, our push into higher education when we were all excluded from it in different ways. The other members for lack of a high school or college degree and I because of the less than ideal nature of my academic standing: minority, female, “non-traditional” and “too publicly audible.”

This is a narration of how ALAS engaged the University of Michigan, not as a student organization, but as a more defined community organization due to our formal separation from it. The requirements that we had to meet and those that the University was able to adapt, at least up to this point, with multiple obstacles and hidden scripts before us at every turn, enabled us to carry out a type of critically engaged inter-subjective action research with the collaboration of other organizations, individuals and institutions that voiced their desire to contribute to equity, justice and peace. These include ALAS, former ALAS members, the Academy of the Americas in Detroit, the American Go Foundation, some IRB representatives and dissertation committee members. This is also a look into the experiences of administrators, teachers, parents, program directors, children and myself, all transnational subjects immersed in the dynamics of internal colonialism, to understand our role in the use and rupturing of official discourses in our journey through the educational system.

The Beginning: The IRB and Institutional Research Requirements

The research requirements at the University of Michigan include approval from the human subjects ethic committee otherwise known as the Institutional Review Board or (IRB). The community-engaged nature of this work required two main components: the analysis of the trajectory of ALAS with the inclusion of research collaborators (community interviewers) from, or previously related, to the organization and an expansion of the ethnographic work to the Academy of the Americas; a Government sponsored public Spanish Immersion School in Detroit that would serve to contextualize the reality of ALAS.

The IRB process included five community interviewers: four Latino females from three different Latin American countries who represented two current and two former ALAS members, and Martin who represented the African American membership. I asked these individuals to participate in this capacity because they had all been members for more than one year, had experienced the various programs and meetings of ALAS and because between all of them the two majority ethnic/racial populations of the organization would be included.

The IRB and Our Community Interviewers

The IRB process was grueling in many ways. It required re-writing and rethinking creatively about ways to involve community members in the research in a way that was acceptable to the University of Michigan. My hope was we would gain a broader and more complicated view of the so called Latino and African American educational experiences than what we experienced in our day to day in order to transform our own lives and how we related to others. Originally we planned to include children as co-researchers, but had abandon this idea since the IRB had legal expectations that could not be applied to them (i.e. passing the PEERS modules). I was informed that researchers had done work about youth directed research, but had never had youth as co-investigators. The next hurdle was how to comply with the PEERS certification requirement for the community interviewers when they were not fluent and where some had less than a completed elementary education. There was another agency that had translations for the modules, but it would have taken substantially more time to acquire it

and my time was running out. The final obstacle was how to pay community members that might have also formed part of the “high risk” category according to IRB classifications. The IRB was finally able to find a way to classify parts of the research into different tiers depending on the level of risk.

The PEERS certification difficulty turned out to be a blessing in disguise. I split the four Spanish-speaking community interviewers into groups of two and did two four-hour sessions on different days. In addition, I had another four-hour session in English with Martin. I was a bit nervous about the outcome because several faculty and experienced researchers had told me they had not been able to pass the certification on the first or even second try. In fact, it took me two attempts to get through it when I was doing it on my own. I decided to interpret the modules into English while the prospective community interviewers were with me. I then read each question to the person that was going to take the test. After her answer, I asked the other community interviewer what she thought the answer was and why. Once she gave her opinion, I returned to the test taker and asked her what she thought the final answer was, now that she had heard the opinion of her colleague. The test taker then gave her final answer and explained her reasoning. This procedure elicited very interesting discussions from the community interviewers. They were especially interested in the various examples of unethical research to which African Americans had been exposed. The first test taker passed the certification after her first attempt. The second test taker passed it with a higher score because she had already benefitted from the in depth discussions the first time around. This experience also repeated itself with the second. Then the interviewers chided each other in fun about which group got the highest scores.

The women were elated when I printed out their PEERS certificate with the University of Michigan emblem on it. They framed it and put it on their wall. In their minds they were almost as qualified as U of M researchers. Our biggest surprise, however, was the IRB’s representative’s words to us which added energy to the already existing excitement.

Fri, 16 Jul 2010 09:08:28 -0400 [07/16/2010 09:08:28 AM EDT]
Hi, Roxanna. It was great to talk to you today.

I went through the community interviewer contract and added a lot of

suggestions. I am sorry that we didn't anticipate this issue up front. Your work in community-based research is pushing the IRB and the financial folks to consider a different sort of model, and that's a good thing.

I've attached my comments to the document, along with a little "how-to" document on submitting amendments. I also gave you a blank merge fields template (remember that merge fields are in the footer and allow the IRB to date-stamp documents). Finally, I attached a sample informed consent document if you need to look at language, style, or format. Please change the name of the document to Community Interviewer Informed Consent or something that like. Let's lose the word "contract" altogether.

I'll be around most of the day today if you need any help. I'll also be in next week. I want to get this approved for you before I go, which is in one week.

On 7/21/2010 10:55 AM

[Hi, Roxanna]

Maybe down the road we can collaborate..... we work well together.

I think this looks fine, Roxanna, and should satisfy the HSIP's concerns. Go ahead and submit this document as part of the amendment, and I'll do my best to get it through quickly.

All the best

Training and Interview Review Sessions:

Now that everyone was appropriately certified, we got the “go ahead” from the IRB to proceed. The research team met on a weekly basis for three months with the exception of the three weeks I spent in Seattle when my husband was ill. During the first session we discussed the research topic, the interview format, confidentiality forms, focus group protocol and how to use the recorders and notebooks. We also had a practice session where the interviewers interviewed and recorded each other. The sessions that followed were used to review and adjust our questions, discuss our progress, comment on the content of the interview, view documentaries of Spanish immersion programs, discuss Freirean theory and to relate our findings to our own lives. We took turns providing food and meeting at the interviewers’ homes or at ALAS.

When asked why they had agreed to become co-researchers these were their responses. (The text is written according to the original grammar.)

(Costa Rican ALAS member 4th grade education) La principal razón porque hala persona ala cual estoy ayudando es una amiga, porque creo que aprendere mucho de esta experiencia y sobretodo creo que pueda ayudar a mucha gente aparte de las amistades que pueda hacer durante esta nueva experiencia.

(Mexican ALAS member H.S. Graduate): Primero porque para mi la amistad es algo especial y cuando yo concidero a alguien una amiga yo trato de ayudar con lo que pueda sin esperar nada acambio y segundo porque para mi es una experiencia nueva y sobretodo yo se que voy a aprender mucho y que cuando esto termine voy a tener una idea diferente pues aprender de la experiencias de los demás³⁹².

(ALAS Co-Director): You asked me to. I thought it would be enlightening. I wanted to learn how those people who use those big words function and the Latinos could work with the Latinos and I could deal with the African Americans. I think I understand black people and I don't think some of you would understand them, because some of you think that for us there is no prejudice anymore. I thought it was important to have the African American component in the project because in ALAS we work with African Americans, we don't just work with Latinos right?

The two non-ALAS members who participated as community interviewers did not answer the question specifically. They may have forgotten that they were asked to do this at home. One of them however, included relevant information to this question in her description of her first experience with the research team.

(Former ALAS member, GED Graduate): Lo que yo esperaba al llegar ahí, fue que me iba a divertir. de alguna manera porque ya teníamos aquí tiempo de no haber estado reunidas Sensei, Mayra, tu y yo. Cuando comenzamos con la introducción de “como se llevaría a cabo el programa de investigación con el resto del equipo, me encanto la estancia las bebidas y galletas, ofrecidas por Elena. Fue divertido de la manera como se fue desarroyando combinando risas he investigación y además aprendizaje, con la dirección tuya. Como se caracteriza Roxanna de organizare y los detalles, me agrada que se asegura de que entendamos de lo que nos esta hablando, y toma en cuenta nuestra opinión...El resto de la reunión fue muy amena, bromeando, comiendo y bebiendo. Creo que

³⁹² **Translation:** (Costa Rican ALAS member 4th grade ed.): The principal reason why I am helping the person I am helping [is that] she is a friend, because I think I will learn a lot from this experience and above all I think that I can help many people in addition to the friends I can make during our experience. (Mexican ALAS H.S. Graduate) First because for me friendship is something [that is] very special and when I consider someone my friend I try to help as much as I can without asking nothing in return and second because for me it is a new experience and above all I know that I will learn a lot and when this finishes I will have a different idea, to learn from the experiences of others.

es un proyecto interesante y nuevo para mi, que me dejara una experiencia agradable a parte del Dinero, ¡verdad! Agradezco Roxanna por haber pensado en mi, para este proyecto.³⁹³

The interviewers words revealed that they all agreed to participate in the project initially because of their friendship to and familiarity with me, regardless of their continued membership in ALAS. They were also all curious about the research process and what they could find out about their own populations. Martin, being the only non-Latino, thought that, in addition it was important to have someone who really understood the African American population because he felt that Latinos were still naïve about the level of prejudice towards blacks in this country, as he would confirm during our next few meetings. He also thought that it was very important to include the African American experience in the research because the ALAS membership is also composed of African Americans. The community interviewers' first experience interviewing each other, learning the research protocol and how to use the machines differed in important ways between the Latinos and Martin as represented in their notes. During the actual meeting, Martin was laughing and quite involved teaching us all how to use the electronic contraption (the digital recorder). Although they all appeared to be highly engaged in their first informal interview experience, Martin's notes would demonstrate he had a somewhat different reaction.

(Mexican Former ALAS Member): Cuando llegó el momento de entrevistarnos unas con otras nos sentíamos un poquito cohibidas al principio, pero enseguida fue un poco mejor para al final ya nos sentíamos en confianza. Elena y yo nos turnamos haciendo las primeras preguntas en orden, pero con el paso de la entrevista fueron saliendo respuestas de las otras preguntas. Mi experiencia hoy con la entrevista fue muy interesante por varios aspectos. Primero por que hace mucho tiempo que conozco al sensei y casi nunca habíamos tenido una comberzacion a sí y no lo conocía de esa manera como hablamos, otra es que fue

³⁹³ **Translation:** (Former Mexican ALAS member, GED Graduate) What I expected when I got here, was that I would have fun. For some reason because [much] time had passed since Sensei, Mayra, you and I had met. When we began with the introduction about how we would carry out the research program with the rest of the team, I loved the meeting place, the drinks and the cookies, offered by Elena. It was fun the way it started developing combining laughter and research and also learning, with your guidance. How it is characteristic of Roxanna's organizing and the details, I like that she makes sure that we understand what she is talking about, and takes into consideration our opinion... The rest of the meeting was very engaging, joking, eating and drinking. I think it is an interesting project and new for me, that it will leave a good experience in addition to the Money. Really! I am grateful to Roxanna for thinking of me for this project.

en inglés lo cual me encantó practicarlo. Las preguntas estan muy bien y entendibles para aplicarlas, y El contestó³⁹⁴.

(Current ALAS Member 4th grade ed.): En esta primera entrevista al principio yo como también Rocio estábamos nerviosas pero al pasar el tiempo me cuenta que la entrevista se combirtio en una platica común ala cual intercambiamos pensamientos y sentimientos encontrados de nuestra infancia. Durante esta platica pude darme cuenta que Rocio se indentifica con sus padres al explicarme deque manera educa ha sus hijos entre otras cosas tratando de corregir los errores que talvez pienso que no estaría de acuerdo³⁹⁵.

(ALAS Co-Director H.S): When I first arrived [I noticed] the smell of cookies baking. The T.V was playing in the Living-room, one member had her children with her. Her older child was going in between the living room and dining area. The host for the evening and her husband was in the kitchen preparing the snack and drink for all the group members. We started working with the recorders and I was worried that they might not work because we were having trouble with figuring out how to record. When we was working on them, I felt outnumbered. I felt we needed more guys. With my first practice interview I didn't feel it was real. We was talking laughing and joking. It just gave me the feel that we were working these things out. At that time I was mainly worried about the recording coming out right. I didn't feel nervous about the practice interview.

Whereas for the women the first experience interviewing was a bit “nerve racking,” with time the interviews became an enlightening conversation filled with emotion and mutual curiosity. They came to know each other as people rather than as research subjects. From Martin’s perspective, more men were needed for him to feel comfortable. The interview as he saw it, was not “real” because what resulted was the intermingling of past personal experiences mixed with feelings (laughter) and not the clear and concise information he was after when he asked the questions. Whereas the

³⁹⁴ **Translation:** (Mexican Former ALAS Member): When the time arrived to interview each other we (women) felt a little inhibited at first, but it got better immediately [and] towards the end we already felt more comfortable. Elena and I took turns asking the first questions in order, but as the interview went on some of the other questions were already answered. My experience today with the interview was very interesting for several reasons. First of all because I have known Sensei for a long time and we had almost never had a conversation like this and I didn't know him that way, how we spoke, another is that it was in English which I loved to practice. The questions are very good [and] understandable to use them, and he answered.

³⁹⁵ **Translation:** (Costa Rican ALAS Member): In this first interview at first I like Rocío were nervous but as time went on I realized that the interview became a common conversation through which we exchanged thoughts and feelings we found in our childhood. During this conversation I was able to realize that Rocío identifies herself with her parents when she explained how she educates her children among other things trying to correct the mistakes she does not agree with.

women felt it had been a productive and enjoyable meeting, Martin felt it was a “working out the kinks” meeting.

This experience revealed some important differences in gender and cultural outlooks and expectations. For example, when Martin wrote his notes about the interviews he did with African Americans in the context of his dojo, he also mentioned laughter and expanded substantially on the questions and comments demonstrating a similar relaxed atmosphere as the one the women had described when we met at their homes. The call for efficiency and timeliness is more associated with American cultural expectations, especially with regards to business interactions. It is more common for Latinos, regardless of the meeting place, but even more so in their homes, to diminish the importance of time constraints and to focus more on sharing, camaraderie, food, experiences and emotions. When this is accomplished it is a sign of a successful transition into a more serious exchange.

In the context of his home, Martin also experienced some of this conviviality when interviewing African Americans which reveals that perhaps a double segregation was taking place; that of race and gender. It was not so much that there was a significant difference between the role of conviviality with regards to both homes, it was more about the equity in control between Martin and the ladies during the meetings.

Some difficulties we experienced during the entire research process included the tendency of one or two members to arrive up to a half an hour late. This was problematic because several of the women said they could only stay for the scheduled hour and half since they had to tend to their families. Martin was a stickler for time as well. In addition, he felt that the meetings were less productive than if he met with me on a different occasion due to the language difficulties. I did my best to interpret and some even tried to speak English themselves, but Martin, as stated in his previous comments, felt out of place and self-conscious about holding up the meeting. There were times when we would all be responding to each other in Spanish and several seconds would go by before we would interpret for him. The fact that he was the only male there and the only African American on the team exacerbated this. The notes he wrote while I was gone revealed some of the frustrations he felt with the team:

I arrived at the meeting at 5:00. Everyone else was late. One member asked me to speak in Spanish. (I don't think that having a meeting without our main leader present is a good idea.) First issue was with one member. The recorder was not audible at all. The second issue was with the dog running and jumping up on me. Mildred was fixing snacks. Juana was quiet and she began playing with the baby. I think nobody wanted to carry on the meeting. Not much got done because everyone's attention was on the baby.

It is important to note that even though the women probably enjoyed their mutual company to some extent, they also stated that the meetings that took place without my presence were generally unproductive. The tensions that existed between past and present members of ALAS, although not spoken, were felt with more intensity. Similarly, my absence was taken some advantage of by committee members who had been told in the dojo that they should speak more English. Now, that they outnumbered him, they asked Martin, albeit jokingly, to speak more Spanish. This role reversal from the perspective a male karate instructor was problematic.

The different historical experiences of oppression due to race and class also took their toll on the interactions. One of the women, a former ALAS member, stated that there was no longer any discrimination in this country. She believed that "if Latino children [were] failing it [was] because their parents [didn't] care about their education. They are lazy." She also stated that, "racism against blacks is old history and does not happen anymore." She was married to a white middle class American and worked as the Latino consultant for a WISD program. Thus, she was experiencing a privileged status that the other interviewers did not share.

In his attempt to help her realize that discrimination was still quite apparent in the present, Martin gave her two examples.

Ok, when me and my wife went to purchase a home in the Canton area. There were a lot of new homes going up. We figured we worked at GM so we should be able to afford a brand new home. So when we got out of the car and was going up to, I guess, where they have the models to show off, when we walked up to the door, just before we got up there, they closed the door and we wasn't able to get in. So we knew that the sales people were in there because we saw them before we walked up. They acted like no one was in the building. We waited a while and then we left. We figured that if they didn't want us to spend our money, then we wouldn't live there.

The second example was when my kids was always going to Chapel School, from my eldest all the way to Mag, but when my son was supposed to start at the Chapel school, they changed the line of where the school district was. They changed our street, which was closer to Chapel school and then bussed him to another school; I think it was Adams, which was across town.

Her response to his story was “Sí pero ¿cuántos años tiene usted? eso seguro fue hace mucho tiempo. Las cosas ya no son así.” (Yes, but how old are you? That was surely a long time ago. Things aren’t like that anymore.”) Martin proceeded to tell the story of his son’s experiences of “Driving while black.”

My son was driving by a light at 11:40 at night after the light automatically turns to “caution” (blinking light). The police followed him and pulled him over in front of the house. When I asked them what the problem was, they explained that he had ran through a light and that they were going to give him a warning. The same night we got in the car and we went down town to speak to the sergeant and explained that he could not have ran the light because it was already on “caution.” We told him that he had been stopped on another occasion for the exhaust being too loud. But that it was a factory exhaust and that if they were going to stop him for that, they were going to have to stop everyone who had ever bought a Trans am. Then I told the sergeant that if they ever stopped him again for anything, that they would have a lawsuit on their hands. They never stopped him again. So even though I never got stopped for “driving while black” my son did and he’s not old.

At the time of this conversation the Latino community interviewer was very proud because her son had graduated from high school. She gave us all a picture of his graduation and said that the schools had done a great deal for him. As time went on, and we had more theoretical discussions in relation to our life experiences, she commented on the fact that although the honors roll at her son’s graduation from Huron High School had been impressively large---“over 100 students,” not one of them was Latino from what she could see. There were moments of awareness experienced by her, but what appeared to be a more consistent realization about the various forces of oppression at play in the lives of minorities by the other interviewers, to her it generally came down to individual responsibility.

Other dynamics that emerged during our discussions about Freire related to what appeared to be resistance on the part of one of the ALAS interviewers (Petra) who happened to be the employer of the other ALAS team member (Juana). Freirean theory requires reflexivity about oppressive, alienating discourses of subordination with the

purpose of empowerment. Although they never voiced this, there appeared to be discomfort in relation to her employee, who often remained silent during our meetings. At one point Petra, rather uneasily stated “Yo no sé pero toda esta discusión de oprimidos y opresores lo que hace es oprimirme y deprimirme a mí!” (I don’t know, but all this talk of oppressors and oppressed makes me feel oppressed and depressed!). We all laughed, and continued our discussion. I later read the notes of her employee who repeated a very similar idea in her reflections. She often seconded the comments made by her employer.

Hoy también lei a Paulo Freire pero no entendí nada creo que quede mas oprimida que la pedagogía del oprimido porque el vocabulario que tiene es muy complicado pero volveré a leer para ver si tengo suerte y entiendo algo.³⁹⁶

After I asked them to read Paulo Freire on their own first, to see how much they comprehended, we discussed it as a group and they were still having difficulty with it because of their lack of familiarity with the terminology. This was interesting given that even the young teenage Salvadoran youth to whom I talked during my previous fieldwork managed the terminology and Freirean themes with ease. This led me to become aware of the ideological effects and the politics of crisis on the way we think and manage the language we use to communicate ourselves. The interviewers from Mexico, Costa Rica and Honduras had not experienced the strife of civil war and had not been exposed to the multiple discourses that were second nature to the Salvadorans of the Guerrilla Controlled Zone of Morazán. The Freirean themes, which were new to the interviewers, were also leading them to think reflexively in ways to which they were not accustomed. Petra’s written comments about her experience reading Freire are included below:

Bueno yo lei la lectura de Paulo Freire y no entendi casi nada solo que era un defensor de la gente que tenia poco estudios o que no sabia ni como expresarse. Lo unico que no me parece es que utiliza palabras que en este tiempo serian un poco ofensivas, como por ejemplo analfabetos y yo cambiaria oprimido por frustrado³⁹⁷.

³⁹⁶ **Translation:** Today I also read Paulo Freire but I didn’t understand anything I think I became more oppressed than the pedagogy of the oppressed because the vocabulary that it has is very complicated but I will read it again to see if I have more luck and I understand something.

³⁹⁷ **Translation:** Well, I read the reading of Paulo Freire and I didn’t understand almost anything. Only that he was an advocate for people who did not have formal education or that did not know how to express themselves. The only thing that I don’t like is that he uses words that today would be a little offensive like illiterate and I would change oppressed for frustrated.

Petra's words reveal a general comprehension of Freire's work as well as the use of her own agency to critique what she felt were obsolete and offensive terms such as "analfabeta" (illiterate). It is important to note that she may have demonstrated special sensitivity to the term because she had only achieved a fourth grade education. Similarly, she found the word "oppressed" to be inappropriate given her reality. It seems that she felt that "frustrated" was a more accurate descriptor of her own situation. Freirean themes about social justice led them to think about their experience from a critical perspective, when up to this point, although they would agree that there was discrimination against undocumented Latinos, it was harder for them to think of it as going beyond the lack of documentation of so called illegal immigrants. They tended to define the problems they had faced with the educational system as a personality conflict with a particular teacher or a student. They also associated it with parental laziness.

The discussion of documentaries about Spanish immersion programs and the comments about discrimination that were included in them were difficult for several of the community interviewers to grasp or even agree with wholeheartedly. The texts and films asked them to think about things they took for granted; things they had not noticed before, even their own privilege. Juana, the most silent interviewer at our meetings, the one who wrote about feeling oppressed by Freire's terminology, included the following thoughts in her notes about her research experience.

Hoy la reunión se torno mas interesante pues, no solo fue una reunión de tantas, sino que ya hubo una conversación mucho mas a fondo sobre la educación, pues sin querer nos dimos cuenta, que la educación tiene una influencia política, que a simple vista no se ve para eso tenemos que averiguar a fondo como estamos haciendo ahora, aunque también se va complicando mas para entender lo que realmente pasa en las escuelas, bueno lo que importa es que cada uno de nosotros va descubriendo cosas nuevas respecto a la educación, quizá cuando yo tenga hijos tome deciciones muy diferentes, pero vere que pasa en el futuro, por el momento seguire tratando de entender todo esto³⁹⁸.

³⁹⁸ **Translation:** Today the meetings became more interesting since, it was not just one meeting of many, but we had a much more profound conversation about education, without expecting to, we realized that education has a political influence that cannot be seen by plain sight that is why we have to figure out in depth how we are doing now although understanding what really happens in schools starts getting more complicated, what is important is that each one of us starts discovering new things about education, maybe when I have children I will make very different decisions, but I will see what happens in the future, for now I will keep trying to understand all of this.

She also commented on the process of discussion at our meetings, the place and purpose of disagreements and the change in atmosphere once I returned from Seattle:

...hoy todo volvió a la normalidad porque hubo muchas risas, y también muchas diferencias porque no todos estábamos de acuerdo con las opiniones, pero todo eso es parte del proyecto y de eso se trata de tener opiniones diferentes porque si no esto no funcionaria, además que tenemos la libertad de opinar lo que querramos respecto al tema es divertido a la vez ver como defiende cada uno su punto de vista por ejemplo: hay quienes piensan que este es un país donde los blancos tienen más privilegios que los latinos y los afroamericanos, otros dicen que no, que nosotros los latinos somos los culpables de que nuestros jóvenes no puedan seguir estudiando y así como estas encontramos más y más opiniones diferentes pero lo que más me agrada es que Roxanna este de regreso, pues ya la extrañábamos, aunque no siempre este de acuerdo con ella.

What is especially revealing about this interviewer's thoughts is that her notes now included African Americans in her discussion about discrimination. In other words, there was a significant change from thinking only of the ethnic group she represented to thinking of the effects of discrimination as a systemic force that affects other groups. In addition, she was able to stress the importance of disagreement in the process of mutual understanding and mutual validation, even disagreements with me. In this way, her comments began to reveal a progressive process of equalization in our inter-subjective engagement.

As time went on, and their productivity with the interviews began to lag, they began to feel the pressure of incompleteness. I reminded them weekly that we needed to get the interviews done. They also could see that Martin was completing and transcribing his regularly. In addition, learning about the role and place that their particular ethnic group had in relation to academic achievement, according to their understanding of the documentary that we saw, led them to think reflexively and admit disappointment. The interviewer who wrote the following notes, admitted that she was not able to see the video carefully and hoped she would get to see it again to make sure she understood correctly and agreed with what was being said. Her first concern, however, was that she had not yet completed a single interview.

Hoy fue un día más de reunión y yo sigo sin tener ni una entrevista, pero la verdad es que no he tenido tiempo para hacerla, tratare de que la próxima vez que nos reunamos cuente por lo menos con una. También hoy vimos un video sobre la educación y me lleve una decepción cuando vi las estadísticas y los porcentajes de

los mexicanos en especial, que estudian. La verdad es que yo nunca me imagine que Mexico fuera el país que menos preparación academica tiene. Tambien es el país que mas inmigrantes tiene, pero también es el país que tiene los peores salarios. Mexico en este país prácticamente, bueno a la gente de Mexico es a la que peor tratan aquí, yo aun no entiendo porque. A la gente de Mexico le dan menos oportunidades simple y sencillamente por ser Mexicanos, bueno ya me hice bolas! La verdad es que me gustaría volver a ver ese video porque como fue aquí en mi casa yo no puse demasiada atención porque los que estaban aquí me pedían algo y yo tenia que irme así que estuve perdida todo el tiempo, pero tal vez pueda volver a verlo³⁹⁹.

On her first interview with a community member she began to run into problems; he would not let her record and she was tense because she noticed that he was more tense than she was. As the interview went on they both relaxed, but she felt like she was not able to get the information she was looking for. In her second interview she felt more confident, but this community member would not let her record either. She said he was very nervous, but she lamented that even though he did not have many experiences in this country with respect to education, he had many interesting things to say. She found herself making an extra effort to make him feel comfortable. She ended her notes by stating that she hoped that her third interview would go even better.

On May 27th, the interviewers decided to stay home because they heard numerous messages on the radio stating that immigration raids were going on in nearby neighbourhoods.

Me dio miedo y medio miedo [por los inmigrantes] porque toda la mañana estuvimos recibiendo mensajes y llamadas diciendo que tuviéramos cuidado porque ICE estaba en los vecindarios Latinos pero no solo ahí sino que estaban en las calles, parando a la gente y pidiendo identificaciones y cosas así. Tambien las organizaciones como WICIR estaban mandando correos diciendo lo que estaba pasando y tambien dando el numero de teléfono por si alguien era detenido y necesitaba ayuda. Por eso es que la gente ahorita tiene que tomar muchas

³⁹⁹ **Translation:** Today was one more day and I still have not completed a single interview, but the truth is that I have not had time to do it, I will try so that next time we meet I can have at least one. Also, today we saw a video about education and I was disappointed when I saw the statistics and the percent, especially of Mexicans that study. The truth is that I never imagined that Mexico is the country that is the least academically prepared. It is also the country with the most immigrants and with the words salaries. Mexico, in this country, Well, this country treats Mexicans the worst. I still do not understand why. They give Mexicans fewer opportunities simply because they are from Mexico. Well, I am so confused! The truth is that I would like to see the video again because since we met in my house, I didn't pay very much attention because everyone was asking me for things and I had to go get them. So, I was lost all the time, but maybe I will get a chance to see it again.

precauciones al manejar y a andar en lugares donde puedan ser detenidos...[En algunos vecindarios] los policías cercaron las calles y entradas principales y detenían a todo aquel que transitara por allá. Tal vez después podamos saber quienes fueron los detenidos. También nos dijeron que había varias gasolineras vigiladas. Esto cada vez esta peor. Yo no se que va a pasar en los próximos días. Esperemos que todo esto mejore pronto porque si no es asi las cosas cada vez se van a complicar mas.⁴⁰⁰

The emotional devastation that the ICE raids were causing within the immigrant population led several members of the Team to comment on the similarities between what was being done to Latinos and what the Jews must have felt like when the Nazis were after them. The Latinos in Ann Arbor had to contend, simultaneously, with the contradictions of the public scripts of a liberal, welcoming and progressive town, and with the real terror of being chased like animals or convicts, worried that they would be torn away from their children by immigration.

By the end of the project, each community interviewer completed between four and six interviews. Although they really enjoyed our meetings, for most of the first two months, they had not completed more than the practice interviews and one actual interview with the exception of Martin, who being retired, had more flexibility and easier access to those he interviewed.

Before actually engaging the Latino and African American community members, the community interviewers assumed that the experiences of those whom they were going to interview were very similar to their own. Upon completing them, however, the women stated that many things they had learned had surprised them. Martin wrote that with regards to the interview team he “got a better understanding of the difference in culture and ethnic background of those he interviewed” and that he was better able to “engage in dialog with the members, finding out what makes them tic and how to respond to

⁴⁰⁰ **Translation:** I was afraid and half afraid for the [immigrants] because we were receiving messages and calls all morning saying that we should be careful because ICE was in the Latino neighbourhoods, but not only there, but on the streets, stopping people had asking for ID's and things like that. Also, organizations like WICR were sending e-mails saying what was happening and also giving phone numbers in case someone was detained and needed help. That is why people now have to take many precautions driving and going to places where they could be detained...In some neighbourhoods. They also told us that there would be many gasoline stations under observation. The situation is worse every day. I don't know what will happen in the next few days. Let's hope that all this gets better because if it is not that way, things will get more complicated every day.

different situations.” With regards to the African Americans he interviewed he stated that:

What I found interesting is that all the interviews with black Americans [revealed] similar growing up experiences, the way they were raised and the way they raised their children. This also included some white Americans that were raised in the South.

In addition, the team members began bringing information to the team about radio and television news broadcasts that they had heard that could help us with our research. After listening to the “National Action Network,” his favorite African American focused radio news broadcast, he gave us the following report:

I was listening to Reverend Al Sharpton⁴⁰¹, a civil rights leader and community talk show host... Anyway its on from one to four except weekends and they have different topics. The one topic was on the school. The caller was saying that the school was blaming them for not visiting the schools to see how the kids were doing. When they go into the school, because they are black, they look at them as if they are going to rob them. They feel like its not a friendly atmosphere for them to go into.

I feel like no progress has been made. My kids went to mixed schools. At Perry at the end of Hawkins. It wasn't very friendly and they had mostly white teachers at that time. There were very few blacks. If you were walking down the hallway, teachers would look at you as if saying “What's he doing here and where's he going?” All that I was doing was going to a play that my son was in. Now, at Chapel Hill, the school had a friendlier atmosphere and the principal cared about her students. She was white... When there is an administrator that is a lady, they tend to be more concerned with the student outcomes and they are more friendly towards the student and the family. The other school that wasn't very friendly had a black male as a head administrator. He wasn't as friendly. The man was experienced, but I think anybody can be an obnoxious ass, no matter how smart they get. I think that in certain situations its not about race, its about status.

As revealed in Martin's comments above, the community interviewers began identifying and reinterpreting experiences they had in the past that had bothered them, but that they had not stopped to analyze in detail. They began to deconstruct taken for

⁴⁰¹ **Comments from my mother:** Tu sabes que ese Reverendo Al Sharpton participo en la lucha para que la marina saliera de Vieques. Creo que lo arrestaron con otros líderes Americanos que fueron a apoyar a los que protestaban. **Translation:** Did you know that Reverend Al Sharpton participated in the struggle to evict the marines from Vieques (an island belonging to P.R.). I think he was arrested with other American and Puerto Rican leaders who went there to support the protestors. [The U.S. Marines had occupied Vieques for 60 years. They used it as a shooting range, causing a very high incidence of cancer in the population because of radioactive materials in the weapons. They also caused the death of a civilian worker who was shot during one of their exercises.]

granted discourse that related race to specific behaviours. Martin was able to undermine the discourse that administrators who represent the ethnicity of students will inevitably be better. He began to wonder about the importance of gender in these relationships as well.

An observation that all the interviewers made was their surprise at how difficult it was to get people to talk about salaries and their lives regardless of whether or not they knew the interviewer personally. “A la gente no le gusta hablar de cuánto ganan.” (“People don’t like to talk about how much they make”). They became frustrated when interviewing adults without children because many of the questions were not geared towards adults without children. Similarly, those who attempted to interview children stated that it was “impossible.” They wrote that they would keep trying, however. Even though the number of people interviewed was small, some interesting patterns arose that could be researched with a larger population and in more profound ways in the future. The interviews were broad in scope, but related to the educational experiences of the adults as children, their experiences with ESL or tutoring programs with their own children, the influence of their own education on their kids, their level of education and income, the importance of native language maintenance and who was responsible for this, and the extent of integration they thought beneficial between various ethnic groups within one organization.

Latino Interview Findings

Latino adults who were in English programs offered by the County, non-profits or churches, as a general rule did not believe they were responsible for the organization or the other members. Their sole purpose was to receive the English classes for which they came. Most women were employed as house cleaners, housewives, and one taught English as a second language. The ones who completed a high school degree in their countries of origin were generally very adamant about providing a sound and nurturing education for their children. They all said they wished their children to maintain their native language, but they also admitted that they themselves were having difficulty studying English because of lack of time due to work. Many of the women had tried at least three different ESL programs. Given this response and behaviour, this is likely an

important reason why many Latino parents do not take it upon themselves to teach their own children Spanish at a more formal level.

Regarding their social ties, they mentioned that Americans and Latinos formed part of their friendship networks with a stronger emphasis on Latinos. Some of them characterised Latino networks as problematic as well, however, because they felt they were more likely to intrude in other people's personal affairs. "Sonia," one of the women interviewed, stated that

Mi comunidad es latina y son los únicos que me apoyan, pero también son los que mejor me critican, la gente latina siempre se mete, opina en lo que no le importa. Hay varias organizaciones que dicen apoyar a la comunidad, pero yo no estoy muy segura de eso.⁴⁰²

She characterized the ESL programs in the following way:

Methodist Church Duration: Two terms (nine months)

Benefits: Not many.

Deficits: Poor organization and distribution of personnel

Reason for termination: I got bored

Improved English: I don't think I learned anything

Long term positive effects: Blank

PALMA Duration: Two terms

Benefits: Not many here either.

Deficits: The same poor organization

Reason for termination: I also got bored

Improved English: No

Long term positive effects: Blank

ALAS Duration: One year and two months (14 months)

All other information was left blank, but said she was also going to leave this program.

When asked about the ALAS philosophy, she stated that it was "to help and its responsibility was to support its members and, above all, to provide them an atmosphere of trust and safety." The responsibilities of the members were "to help each other." She became a member to "see how things went." She hoped to learn English, but it seemed to be increasingly complicated. She did not know what she could contribute to the program

⁴⁰² **Translation:** My community is Latino and they are the only ones that support me, but they are also the ones that criticize me the most. Latinos always get into other people's business. They give opinion when it is not wanted. There are many organizations that say that they help the community, but I am not very sure about that.

and realized that each member “had their own goals and responsibilities.” She also stated that “she did not have any talents.” She was not happy with her tutoring and felt that the best way to learn English [was] in a “real school,” but she could not afford it. Regarding program delivery, she felt it would be difficult to solve this problem because of its dependence on volunteers. Another adult stated that she had gone to an afterschool program for a year and two months, but had difficulty due to lack of time. This member stated she had attended ALAS for one year and 2 months as well and felt it had benefitted her significantly. She came for the karate classes and hoped that life for her son would be easier in this country. He learned how to read and write in both languages in ALAS.

Sonia agreed that Latino family relations were being disrupted because the schools were not encouraging the children to maintain their Spanish and because parents were not learning English. She argued that it was a very difficult situation to solve since parents did not have time to study. When asked what level of Spanish Latino children should be exposed to in school, she chose advanced Spanish for Latinos over learning Spanish as a second language or a foreign language. This was a unanimous response from all the parents interviewed. Learning how to read and write was especially emphasized by one of the mothers since she said that speaking could and should be taught in the home.

“Marisol” experienced “Project Read.” She felt there was improvement in English, but that it was based on tutors “who are often absent and who don’t teach.” She left the program when her tutor left. Americans and Latinos constituted her networks. There seemed to be somewhat of a pattern with the men limiting themselves primarily to Latino networks while the women had broader relationships with non-Latinos. This is difficult to say, however since there were so few men among those interviewed. “Yolanda” was happy with a reading program for her son that she identified as “FLI.” She argued that his reading skills had improved in three months. All the parents who answered this question believed that an organization, even one which focused on Latinos, should expand to become multicultural because children should learn to treat people equally despite their color and because this would make them more successful in their

future relations with others. “Carlos,” “Vanessa,” “Felipe” and “Juanita” for example, stated the following.⁴⁰³

Creo que es una buena manera de integrarse a la comunidad multicultural también, y yo estoy de acuerdo con este tipo de programa porque creo que beneficia especialmente a los niños porque ellos aprenden a que no hay diferencias por tener diferente color.

Es beneficioso entender más su cultura y cuando es multicultural aprenden sobre diferentes culturas. Yo pienso que es muy bueno este tipo de programa porque este grupo étnico se siente que en otro país tiene personas que lo apoyan.

Yo creo que es algo positivo porque cuando hay una población multicultural significa que los demás les interesa también lo que pasa en nuestra cultura.

Pienso que está muy bien que en un país como este haiga gente que se preocupa por nosotros que nos defiende y nos apoya. Para resolver las dificultades trabajar en grupo con la comunidad.⁴⁰⁴

Based on these answers there seemed to be a general awareness among Latino immigrants that multicultural networks were important to establish a broad level of support where others could advocate for them. There were some concerns about the potential complications of such an arrangement, however.⁴⁰⁵ These included the potential

⁴⁰³ **Translation:** I think that it is a good way to become integrated in a multicultural community as well, and I agree with this type of program because I think that it is especially beneficial for the kids because they learn that there are no differences because of color....It is beneficial to understand more about ones culture and when it is multicultural they learn about different cultures. I think that it is very good, this type of program, because this ethnic group feels that in another country there are people that supports it...I think that it is positive because when there is a multicultural population, it means that others are also interested about what happens in our culture...I think it is very good that in a country like this one there are people that worry about us and that defend us and support us. In order to solve [our] difficulties [we must] work as a group in the community.

⁴⁰⁴ **Translation:** I think that it is a good way to become integrated in to the multicultural community as well, and I agree with this type of program because I think that it is especially beneficial for the kids because they learn that there are no differences due to being of a different color. It is beneficial to understand their culture more and when it is multicultural they learn about different cultures. I think that this type of program is very good because this ethnic group feels that it is supported in this country. I think that it is positive because when there is a multicultural population it means that the rest are also interested in what happens in our culture. I think that it is very good that in a country like this there are people that worry about us, defend and support us in order to solve work difficulties in a community group.

⁴⁰⁵ **Translation:** I think that programs like this are a bit complicated, but if every member makes an effort, it will be easier for this to work...The problem is that sometimes they start well, but when they expand it to others it is different because other people do not understand the language and they need much more time and the kids get frustrated.

for children to become frustrated when time was taken to translate for others because of linguistic differences, but argued that these problems could be overcome if every member was invested in making the program work.

Yo creo que los programas así son un poco complicados pero si cada miembro pone el empeño suficiente, es más fácil para que eso funcione.

El problema es que a veces empiezan bien pero cuando lo expanden a otros ya es diferente porque la otra gente no entiende el idioma y necesita mucho más tiempo y los niños se frustran.⁴⁰⁶

All the Latinos interviewed stated that they would like their children to go to the university and that if there were economic resources, they would be willing to pay for tutoring to help them. They also identified economic difficulties as the biggest obstacle for going to college. One parent mentioned the lack of legal documentation as a significant obstacle. About half of the adults had debts in their countries of origin, but all of them were sending money back home. Regarding the question of whether they would agree to contribute to an organization emergency fund for members who were undergoing economic hardships, the answers were quite varied. Some said yes with no interest charges, others said no because people are often not responsible and the rest left the question blank. Again, these answers appear to be reflective of their discomfort discussing issues related to income, what these may reflect about their social status and their willingness to support others.

Most parents believed that given the cost of education for foreigners at a community college, that they would prefer their children to attend universities in their home countries rather than stay here and pay little by little as resources became available. In practice, however, it was generally the case that the Latinos would not go back as a family or even send their teenagers back home to study. Instead they either found full time work, or worked part time while they paid for a few courses at a time at the community college.

That education was important to some parents, even in the scarcest of circumstances is revealed in the interview carried out by “Juana” and in the positive

⁴⁰⁶ **Translation:** I think that programs like this are a bit complicated but if every member puts energy into it, it is easier for this to function. The problem is that sometimes they start well, but when they expand it to others it is different because other people do not understand the language and the need much more time and the kids get frustrated.

observations made by the Honduran interviewer about the picture we chose as an advertisement for this research. The interviewed parent stated the following of her own mother's efforts to encourage her education:

Claro que si porque yo recuerdo que yo no tenia los recursos pero mi mama se preocupaba por recolectar hojas tamaño oficio y me hacia los cuadernos, también se preocupaba por hacerle las líneas para tener una libreta rayada que era lo que necesitaba para aprender a escribir. Creo que eso fue algo muy difícil.⁴⁰⁷

All households except for one person, who did not answer the question, stated that their income was about \$24,000 a year per person. Men and women who were married answered most of the interviews. The most common age range was 24-30 years old, similar to that of the interviewers. Their ethnicities included Mexican, Guatemalan, Honduran, Panamanian and Costa Rican. Most had achieved at least a middle school level or high school while one had college studies. All of the adults who had parents who encouraged them to study, regardless of their own academic level, reached beyond the middle school grades and several completed high school. Andrea, who only reached a fourth grade level of education, stated she had been an honors student until then, but the multiple moves of her family, when seeking employment, and the lack of encouragement of her parents led her to begin working instead. Her lack of access was what prompted her to focus on a good education for her children. In the past, however, she stated that once they reached adolescence the choice of continuing with it would be up to them.

The community interviewers found interesting patterns as a result of their interviews and stated that they enjoyed the process overall. However, as mentioned earlier, they had to deal with some serious stumbling blocks in addition to the inconsistency of attendance and promptness of some of them. Gender, race and cultural expectations in relation to the context of their homes affected their views of the research process.

⁴⁰⁷ **Translation:** Of course because I remember that I didn't have the resources, but my mother would worry about finding official paper and she would make me notebooks, she would also take the times to draw the lines on the paper which is what I needed for to write on. I think that was probably very difficult.

Community Interviewer findings with African Americans

The interviews carried out by Martin generally focused on adults that were closer to his age and gender. Most of the ages were between 51 and 75. There were three between the ages of 28-35. Like the Latino interviewers, his tendency was to find people he already knew and with whom he had something in common. In other words, at least for this initial research project they chose to stay “close to home” with their interviews. Martin interviewed two couples at the same time and the rest were all done with individual males. Two of these were single. The differences in patterns regarding the number of children were interesting. The 75 year old had 12 children where as the others averaged between one and three per household. Although it is impossible to establish patterns from one individual, the number of children in his family may be reflective of farming economy mentality that Martin referred to previously. With industrialization the number of children became smaller and the family ties less cohesive as the children had to move away independently to find work. The professions of those interviewed were quite varied. They included a chocolatier, retired factory worker, retired supervisor from GM, custodian, waste manager and social worker.

All of them owned a home or were in the process of buying one with the exception of the “Harry” the custodian who was a renter. “Harry” was also the one who described his parents as not being interested in his studies. He was the sixth of ten children. He mentioned his talent as being related to “skilled trades.” He left his home as a teenager because he was fleeing from his older sisters who he described as “tyrannical” and overly controlling. He did not have anything particularly positive to say about his school experience. He did advise that for children to learn how to speak, read and write well, they needed a teacher who would speak to them “formally” so they could follow a role model, The only teacher he had that could speak correctly, he said, was “too distracting”:

So when a teacher speaks informally, that is all the students learn how to speak [incorrectly]. But there was a teacher who spoke correctly, but he was gay and distracted. He was trying to get into the boy’s pants. This was in Bolivar Tennessee. I was in tenth grade so that had to be in 1964. He called me and asked to meet up with me. I said “What for?” He said, “You know what I’m talkin’ about.” And I said, “I don’t know what you’re talkin’ about,” but I knew. “I can make you happy.” And I said “I’m already happy ‘cause my mom is fixin’

me dinner and we're getting ready to eat and I ain't going no where." When he called up the boys to them their grades, he would have them stand next to him and he would feel on their legs, but when he called the girls, he would have them stand across the desk. For us it was more of a joke. We never turned him in because he had control over our grades. We were trying to get the hell out of doge!

He was caught "in the process" with our gay schoolmate. He was one of us so we didn't joke with him about it. He was doing what he did because of what we did at "Tree Leaf Hotel" with the girls. We didn't want anyone to know about what we did either... This is another "tree leaf" experience. There was this one guy that was taking this lady to "tree leaf" and as he was pulling in, his wife was pulling out with someone else. They looked at each other and kept on about their business. Last I heard they were still together.

Harry also experienced difficulty with the education of his son. He tried to help him by putting him in three different schools with no success and because of this he ended by blaming him for his hardships.

I made sure I told [my son] that education was very important. It was an extremely difficult job having to raise the kids by myself...so I was left with just a bit mom and dad. I tried two or three schools, not private, but public and the charter school. None worked. It was not the school, it was him. He's got to go and be willing to learn. I tried but he just wasn't getting the message. I had help from his grandmother. We tried our best. I thought my son was dyslexic, but I found out that he was only distracted. I put him in the Boys Club for several years. He got good physical exercise. There was one lady who worked there. She was helping my son, his academics improve, but when she left, my son did not do very well. She left for a better paying job. I understood her reason.

Harry's life was filled with missed opportunities of educational engagement which repeated themselves again with his son, to a large extent due to lack of resources. Harry also suffered sexual harassment from a teacher. Despite his best intentions, his lack of formal education and continued poverty led him to have to depend completely on the "diagnosis" of the teachers and school system with regards to his son. When he finally found someone who cared and was having success with his son, the issue of resources again gave him another blow and his son's academic future was hampered. His social networks were highly limited as well. He described them as "friends and relatives mostly, who only came when they needed money." He stated that he had "no outside

help.” Despite this, Harry believed that his culture and language were very important and needed to be preserved.

Because the number of people interviewed was so small, we did not hear from others like Harry. All of the others interviewed by Martin were settled and were earning between thirty and seventy thousand dollars a year. This revealed what would appear to be a greater degree of stability than the Latinos who rented apartments. The level of education of the African Americans ranged from a high school to masters degree. About half had completed one or two years of college, but did not complete their degrees. The education of their parents varied between the eighth grade and college. The social worker, who had had parents who had achieved a bachelors and a master’s degree respectively was the only one of those interviewed to complete a college degree.

The achievement of a high school degree or a few years of college by their parents did not lead to the completion of a college degree for those interviewed. Only two of them stated that their parents helped them with their homework and these were the ones who completed between two and three years of college. Interestingly, they all stated that their parents wanted them to succeed in school despite not providing them help with their homework. This, in addition to the messages they were getting from school counselors who were tracking them into technical careers, with promises of jobs awaiting them, may have been enough of a motivator to complete high school. The lack of academic support, disciplined study habits in the home and interpellation as intellectually capable youth in school probably affected their level of skills and motivation to enter and complete college successfully. The types of jobs these adults ended up with, regardless of having a few years of college education were generally related to service and industry.

The African Americans interviewed varied in their responses about their perception of where the U.S. stood in comparison to the educational systems of other countries. One stated that it depended on the area of the United States to which we were referring. Others responded that we were behind Asian schools, one abstained from commenting on this all together by stating “No comment” and another did not respond at all. Because those interviewed tended to be older, they had grown children. Of these, all except for one encouraged their children to go to college and all the children went for at least a few years. It appears that it took three generations for college attendance at some

level to be common in the life histories of those interviewed. About half of them believed that their educational experience had affected how they viewed their children's education. The social worker who earned a master's degree stated that;

Yes, if I had not gotten two college degrees, I don't think I would've known for sure what it would take to get a college degree and that my children could accomplish those things, but since I did it and I know how intelligent my kids are, I now they're capable and that makes me encourage them and insists that they do well academically.

When asked what dreams they had for their children all the African Americans interviewed except for one who did not answer, stated that they wanted them to go to college and to be successful in whatever they chose to do. The Latinos focused on hoping they would have academic success, but in addition many emphasized, "being a good person and being there for others." This is reflective of an awareness that expansive networks were and continue to be invaluable for their survival. The African Americans tended to describe more limited circles of support that were related to their churches or extended families with a few neighborhood friends. None of them mentioned networks involving non-African American groups directly.

Regarding the acquisition of foreign languages they believed that this was a good idea, but one of them did not agree with the idea that it was the schools' responsibility to support native language maintenance because this would compete with other programs they were discontinuing because of lack of funding. "Harry," stated that for native speakers of other languages it is the parents' responsibility to support their language at home.

No, [The schools should not teach native languages] because the household should be responsible for teaching native level Spanish to their children. The school systems are cutting back programs, but to add a new program, how could they explain why they cut programs they normally taught?

His response regarding native languages as opposed to his emphasis on the need for English speaking black children to learn formal English well from teachers who knew how to speak it correctly is important. It revealed a differentiation between a school system's moral responsibility to teach American children their language in all its breadth, while freeing it of its responsibility to the same for children whose native language is not

English. Languages other than English are defined and pedagogically structured as skills that are detached from their integral role as safe-guarder of self-esteem, potential, general learning success and their role in cultural and family sustenance.

The concerns voiced at the Ann Arbor ESL Community Advisory Committee by teachers and organization representatives who informed us of the negative effects of native language loss on family cohesion and support for students were not heard beyond the parameters of that meeting. Ideas of skill-based individual competitiveness with regards to language acquisition in a world economy were and continue to be prioritized instead. The discourses about “promoting cultural understanding” are not absent in the public justifications of foreign language learning, however. They are subtly couched in the broader discourse of defining them “As an essential component of U.S national security in the post 9/11 world [to] engage foreign governments and peoples, especially in critical regions to encourage reform...a challenge for which most citizens are totally unprepared.

The Department of Education's FY 2007 budget proposal will include \$57 million for this initiative, a \$35 million increase over FY 2006...The National Security Language Initiative is designed to dramatically increase the number of Americans learning critical need foreign languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, Farsi, and others through new and expanded programs from kindergarten through university and into the workforce. An essential component of U.S. national security in the post-9/11 world is the ability to engage foreign governments and peoples, especially in critical regions, to encourage reform, promote understanding, convey respect for other cultures and provide an opportunity to learn more about America and its citizens. To do this, Americans must be able to communicate in other languages, a challenge for which most citizens are totally unprepared.⁴⁰⁸

It is likely that Harry was unaware of the national push for foreign language learning by the Department of Defense when he gave his opinion and it is probable that he would have found the logic of this new emphasis reasonable enough. The role of language in both discourses was s a tool of reform for, and protection against, others. But Harry’s response revealed even more. It demonstrated a limited awareness of the actual parental capacity to teach the native language to children, regardless of his own

⁴⁰⁸ National Security Language Initiative. (2006) The U.S. Department of Education, The U.S. Department of State, The U.S. Department of Defense, The Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

admission that he, as a single parent, did not have the time he would have liked to educate his his children. Immigrant parents with two or three jobs generally have a great deal of difficulty teaching their children the formal aspects of their language consistently. Harry knew this regarding his own situation because he emphasized the need for teachers to speak formally to their students. By implication, his statement reflected an understanding that even English speaking youth were not acquiring the skills needed to move up the vocational ladder from their own parents. Harry admitted not having knowledge of community or other programs that taught native languages when he posited the responsibility on parents. His was one example of the difficulty that subjects face in the process of understanding the conditions of their own oppression as a symptom of a much larger system of inequality that goes beyond any particular race or ethnicity and it is perpetuated by members of all groups not just “white males.”

The discourse of “separate, but equal” continued to run strong in the African Americans interviewed. They were unanimous about wanting separate organization meetings for English and non-English speaking members. This was interesting given that of those Latinos who answered this question, the majority stated that they would like the meetings to be held together with a translator so they could comment on each other’s ideas to create an atmosphere of inclusion “so no one would feel left out.”

The difference in these answers may be related to varying experiences with segregation. Latinos born abroad, as demonstrated in my own anecdote going to a largely segregated neighborhood in Syracuse, are not generally accustomed to geographical distinctions based on skin color in the same way as African Americans. The relation between wealth and color is more complicated and is revealed in the aphorism “Money whitens.” In other words, in Latin America it may be visible to an outsider that the wealthier neighborhoods tend to be lighter skinned, but the general fluidity between dark and light is such that those distinctions do not form a part of the public script as evidently as in the U.S. Martin’s notes are telling in this respect:

In America, if you are not 100% black, you are white. The Latinos have not figured that out yet. Some people who could pass for white had an easier time mixing with whites than blacks because they wanted an easy way out, but being light skinned was sometimes a curse rather than a blessing because sooner or later the truth would come out. You would lose the respect you had from whites and you would not have any respect from blacks either.

The most relevant findings of the research completed by the community interviewers, in addition to the process experienced by them during their work and discussions of this project, related to how official discourses that reify ethnicity and race are so powerfully manipulated so as to veil their presence. Initially, the community interviewers tended to posit personal responsibility on the individuals who are most oppressed by official deficit-based discourses which, in turn, perpetuate self-blame and that of their children. The negative self-images and psychological ravages of internalized colonialism expressed by Native American children who were torn away from their families, African American and Latino children who learned to silently wish for whiteness and who were denied their cultures and languages reemerged repeatedly.

As our three months together progressed, the interviewers began to question their observations from a more systemic and political point of view. However, the short duration of our work together (3 months) revealed that official discourses are powerful, ubiquitous and hard to displace without long-term and consistent engagement. Two important reasons can be attributed to this: critical engagement about oppression requires an examination of one's own complicity in its perpetuation. Action against it requires sacrificing many of the advantages that maintain us in our own positions of privilege. The first results in feelings of guilt that, if not aligned with emancipatory action, tend to be dismissed. The second, the action component so necessary to create change, risks emotional pain and a loss of current privileged networks.

In the case of immigrants who have become aware of the importance of native language maintenance and who know of services that are available, it is often their privileging of family time over instructional time that leads them to decide not to take advantage of programs like ALAS or of programs that require them to spend additional effort doing homework with their children. In these cases, they often dismiss formal native language instruction by stating that "at least they continue to speak Spanish at home" or they begin to justify their decision by stating that English is more important for their survival. This is why, if we are to prevent the continued alienation of immigrant youth from their families and to help them succeed academically, it is essential that the schools assume the moral responsibility to support and validate the native languages and cultures of these children.

The understanding of the discourses at play, their medium and context of distribution and the potential for their deconstruction as revealed in the research experience shared with the community interviewers, led us to seek a similar program in Michigan. My search on the internet led to two possibilities, The Foreign Language Immersion and Cultural Studies (FLICS) a multilingual immersion school in South East Detroit and the Academy of the Americas a Spanish immersion school in South West Detroit. FLICS did not have the level of positive recommendation and ratings from parents that the Academy of the Americas had and it catered to a more diverse and economically stable middle class. I was attracted to the Academy of the Americas because of its five star rating from the 17 parents who posted comments and because of the intriguing news of its “Toilet Paper War,” the only news I could find about it on the web. Below are the reviews from teachers and parents throughout the years that reveal the effects of l cut backs on the school.⁴⁰⁹

Posted May 9, 2004

I find the Academy of the Americas to be a caring institution. The teachers go out of their way to ensure that each child has the attention they need to succeed. As each child graduates with a bi-lingual education, they already have a start on their higher learning skills. Opportunity also exists for them to go beyond the scope of the median. Children are encouraged to participate in non-academic classes such as band, DAPCEP, art, and various clubs. This is a wonderful little school.

—Submitted by a teacher

Posted July 9, 2006

The Academy of the America is a good school with great children. It is unforgivable to the students that enjoy band so much the program will not be returning. Many of the children that had band where so excited about the school and their own personal sucess in the program. Many of these children have no other outlet so band was a great way to enteract with other peers in there age group. This was an excellent program but due to the district funding

⁴⁰⁹ Great Schools, Involved Parents, Successful Kids
<http://www.greatschools.org/school/parentReviews.page?id=1010&state=MI&sortBy=dd&page=2#revPage>
nation

Posted December 5, 2007

I have had 3 of my children attend in previous years and now a small one, I love the school and the standards are higher than most schools which is a wonderful thing, But the teachers have a attitude towards parents as though we didnt care for our children they ask for help from parents but parents voices are not heard. The principle seems to act on what teachers or office aids say like she doesnt have any authority. AND its all a shame because its such a wonderful school I hate it that parents dont have any say in what goes on in the school. Most schools are hungry for parent participation involvement! One thing to stringley consider before sending your child here is if your child is started in spanish and you later decide to change to another scho ol the language makes it the transition very hard

—Submitted by a parent

Posted June 13, 2008

I have been a teacher for the past 3 years at this school. We strive to do our best with what the school district provides for us. We have to get out of pocket monies to buy materials (hands on, posters, games and such). So if anyone is to blame is not the teachers or school administrators. Is the Detroit school district for not providing the funds needed for those items. Our school does reach to the parents and community and we do care very much about the success of our students from pre-K to 8th grade.

—Submitted by a teacher

Posted October 13, 2009

It is the only school in Detroit that teaches children to both read, write and speak Spanish. By the time students graduate they are fully bilingual. The staff and the parents are really dedicated to helping the kids succeed. I think this schools hidden gem. Parent bring their kids from all over the city just so that their kid can graduate bilingual.

—Submitted by a parent

Posted April 19, 2010

My children have at this school for one year. Their teachers have been great. The teachers care for the children as if they are their own. We have a great relationship. The majority of the children come from Spanish speaking homes. My children are fully immersed in Latino culture.

—Submitted by a parent

DPS Academy of The Americas begs parents for toilet paper

By [Minehaha Forman](#) | 01.08.09 | 3:16 pm

We all know these are tough economic times. But things are very bad when you cannot afford to buy toilet paper — and things are really that bad for Detroit Public Schools.

The Detroit News [reported](#) that Naomi Khalil, principal at DPS' Academy of the Americas, sent a letter this week to parents of students asking them to donate items “that are of the utmost importance for proper school functioning and most importantly for student health and safety.” The list included light bulbs, trash bags, [paper towel rolls](#) and toilet paper.

In the letter Khalil said due to “budgetary constraints” the school could no longer provide these necessities.

This is not the only DPS site facing such dire needs. There have been [reports](#) of classrooms going without heat, lights or paper to write on. Michigan Messenger has also [reported](#) that toilet paper has been a scarcity at other schools in the DPS system.⁴¹⁰

The Academy of the Americas with its intriguing depictions in the media and evaluations on the web would provide an interesting contextualization of ALAS that would clarify the differences and similarities that existed between our work and experiences. Both institutions, ALAS and AOA strive to address the academic achievement gap, while reinforcing the cultural and linguistic strengths of its students. However, there are important distinctions. The Academy of the Americas is structurally integrated into the public educational system where as ALAS is not. The emphasis of AOA, because it was designed to be a K-8 school, has focused primarily on ensuring student success at this level. ALAS was born within the University of Michigan. Its attention to K-12 education, therefore, has been to improve the education and cultural maintenance of immigrant, minority and underprivileged children with the purpose of extending their educational networks through higher educational institutions to ensure their professional success. In addition, as we shall see in the youth interviews, a large number of the children live in unsafe neighborhoods and come from single headed

⁴¹⁰ Minehaha, Forman (2009) The Michigan Messenger. The American Independent News Network. January 8. <http://michiganmessenger.com/11300/dps-academy-of-the-americas-begs-parents-for-toilet-paper>

households. The children from ALAS tend to live in safer environments and most have come from two parent households.

The Academy of the Americas and the Detroit Reality

The comparison with AOA sheds light on the dynamics that ALAS has and continues to experience in relation to lower and higher education, or shall I say the wider politico-educational and economic system. AOA also has an emphasis on a Spanish immersion and bilingual curriculum. In addition, it is relevant because it is an older public institution (1992), as compared to ALAS, that arose during a particular historical moment of educational experimentation within the City of Detroit through the “Schools of Choice initiative.” Understanding the process of its formation helps clarify the relationship between the manipulation and redefinition of official discourses in relation to changing political and administrative educational structures that affect the children whom they are responsible for educating. In conjunction with ALAS it provides the possibility of discerning how the dynamics of internal colonialism function within the transnational push and pull of the United States. It reveals how populations that undergo simultaneous interpellations as equal subjects while being relegated to the margins of political and social inclusion are affected from the perspective of educational ascent. More importantly, it reveals the multiple forms of creative resistance that have maintained the presence of these institutions for 12 (ALAS) and 19 (AOA) years.

With regards to AOA, the initial and primary purpose of the schools of choice initiative was geared towards desegregating the mostly black student populations across the nation. In the early 90s when the Academy of the American arose, this was especially relevant in Detroit given the growing numbers of white upper middle class suburbs that were segregating the mostly African American student population in the city. However, this initiative also created the possibility for other groups to take advantage of its promise.

The Schools of Choice Programs

In 1954, *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka* held that *Plessey vs. Fergusson* (of 1896), which allowed state sponsored segregation, was unconstitutional

according to the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th amendment⁴¹¹. In essence, the court ruled that separate educational systems were inherently unequal given “the stigma created by segregated schools” with regards to black students⁴¹². The schools of choice programs began as a right wing attempt to maneuver themselves away from integrated schools and, according to James Forman Jr., this delayed the implementation of anti-segregations laws for over a decade.⁴¹³

While the *Brown* decision eliminated *de jure* segregation via statutorily ordered segregation, in the wake of *Milliken*, schools, particularly in the Northern areas of the country, could maintain a policy of *de facto* segregation, by which segregation was achieved not through any statute but through where one chose to live; where “[t]he school segregation mirrored the residential segregation.” Indeed, the influence of *Milliken* on local enrollment policies cannot be denied; black students are “more segregated today than they were in 1940...Perhaps nowhere else is this type of racial segregation and local control in the school systems seen more clearly than in Detroit. “In 1954, 84 percent of the students in Detroit public schools were white...Today, it’s 3.7 percent.”⁴¹⁴

Nineteen ninety-one was a major transformative year in Detroit. The heated battle for the position of Superintendent of Schools took place between Richard C. Hunter from Baltimore school and Debora McGriff of Milwaukee school who was voted in unanimously by the five members of the search committee. This was a big loss for Dr. Hunter since Mayor Schmoke stated he had lost confidence in his abilities and prompted the school board to deny him a renewal of his post⁴¹⁵. Dr. McGriff, on the other hand had, been a highly accomplished administrator before applying for the position. She was recognized for being the first female Assistant Superintendent of Cambridge, Massachusetts, the first female Deputy Superintendent of Milwaukee, Wisconsin and in 1991 the first female Superintendent in the history of Detroit⁴¹⁶.

⁴¹¹ *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954)

Find Law for Legal Professionals.

<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=347&invol=43>

⁴¹² Seewer, Jason (n.d.) *University of Detroit Mercy Law Review* Vol. 83:411. P. 412.

⁴¹³ Forman, James Jr. (n.d.) *The George Town Law Journal*. Vol. 93, 1297. Pp. 1287-1289.

⁴¹⁴ Seewer, Ibid. P. 414.

⁴¹⁵ Hunter Looses bid for Detroit school superintendent job. *The Baltimore Sun*. March 21, 1991.

http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1991-03-29/news/1991088044_1_superintendent-detroit-school-hunter

⁴¹⁶ New Schools Venture Fund (2011) <http://www.newschools.org/team>

Dr. McGriff brought with her a strong vision of reformation centered on school decentralization. In her own document titled “Decentralization Lessons from Detroit Public Schools” she summarized the rocky road of this effort prior to, and during, her tenure. She referred to herself as a “participant observer in decentralization efforts since 1970.”

On January 1, 1971, the Michigan Legislature mandated that the Detroit Public Schools become decentralized. Detroit was divided into eight administrative areas, each with its own school board. The major power of each of these regional boards was the authority to hire and fire its regional superintendent. . . . In 1973, New Detroit, Inc., a civic organization, issued an assessment of the Detroit Public Schools' decentralization effort. Concluding that there was a need for improvement. . . . Despite efforts to implement these recommendations, on September 15, 1981, Detroiters voted to eliminate decentralization by more than a two-to-one margin. . . . Seven years after the governance of the school district was recentralized, then General Superintendent Arthur Jefferson introduced two new decentralization efforts: participatory management in education (PME) and school-based management. . . . The following month, July 1990, the board approved a "Proposed Policy on Empowerment and Schools of Choice."⁴¹⁷

The Academy of the Americas, a Spanish dual language immersion school in Southwest Detroit was created within the parameters of the policy on Empowerment and Schools of Choice brought about with the advent of Superintendent McGriff to Detroit. Choice, from her perspective, was understood as allowing teachers to

design and submit proposals for new schools, shifting resource control from the central administration to individual schools, permitting schools to design their own curricular and pedagogical approaches to educational improvement and as transforming the role of administration from process control to being primarily responsible for assessing outcomes and ensuring compliance with Board legal requirements, and adherence to the District’s educational mission and other objectives.⁴¹⁸

Teachers were encouraged to write letters of intent for innovative schools of choice, which included

the school’s theme, focus and curriculum, the target group and the need for the school to ensure responsiveness to parents and students. They also had to include “information on the school’s enrollment area, proposed location,

⁴¹⁷ McGriff, Deborah (1993) Decentralization: Why, How and to What Ends. NCREL’s Policy Briefsfile:/// Detroit%20Public%20Schools/Decentralized%20Schools%201993

⁴¹⁸ C. Choice as Paradigm Shift: Detroit Leads the Way. <http://www.mackinac.org/5747>

recruitment plans, student selection criteria, student application process, staff selection process and grades to be served.⁴¹⁹

The selection of the schools was based on the “likelihood of success” which if chosen, would make the design team eligible for further refinement funds.

On August of 2010 I had the honor of meeting the design team of the Academy of the Americas whose members in 1991, realizing the unattended needs of Latino children in South West Detroit, heard through the grapevine that a new opportunity was being discussed downtown. If successful, this opportunity would help put their dreams of providing culturally and linguistically relevant education to Latino children into action. I had already been doing fieldwork at the Academy of the Americas two and half months before participating in this meeting. My initial entrance in the school was preceded by numerous calls and e-mails to the central office and Director of AOA in my attempt to arrange an initial meeting. When we were finally able to get in touch, the Director, Denise Fielder who would become a great collaborator in future joint project with ALAS, the American Go Foundation and Papiolo elementary school in Mexico, wrote me a letter of support to submit to the IRB for approval of this aspect of my ethnographic work.

My first visit to the Academy of the Americas required me to drive on Livernois St. before turning onto Michigan Ave, followed by Junction St. and then Konkel Rd. On my way through, several abandoned and unkempt buildings surrounded me. Michigan Ave, was also under construction. Upon turning onto Konkel Rd, to my left, I could see over thirty Latino children playing in an open field across the street from the abandoned convent which had missing bricks on the wall. Reluctantly, I parked on the lot next to the convent and proceeded to walk towards the smaller of three buildings containing a large glass front behind the fenced gate.

⁴¹⁹ <http://www.mackinac.org/5747>



30. *The Academy of the Americas*⁴²⁰

Initially I was unsure what buildings formed part of the school, but the paintings on the walls guided me toward the entrance where I met the school guard, a heavy set man in uniform sitting at a desk behind the front door. After signing in, I proceeded to walk through the hallway until I found the main office after turning onto a left passageway. To the right lay the office with a large mural on the back.

I introduced myself and sat on one of the chairs surrounding the receptionist's front desk in a dark brown colored office with a large window to the right which enabled the receptionist to see who was waiting to enter the school. Behind her was a larger room separated by another large windowed divider where two secretarial desks were placed beneath the Cesar Chávez mural. I waited for the Director to meet me as I observed parents and children coming in and out noisily with bits of Spanish and English playfully intermingled with the energy of the day. In the meantime, the receptionist was trying to help some parents enroll for the following year.

- Buenos días, me dijeron que aquí podía llenar una aplicación para mis dos niños.
- Buenos días. ¿Qué edades tienen y en qué grado están?
- Maestra, Duffy dijo que si me podía dar la lista?
- Mi'jo se dice con permiso cuando las personas están hablando y no se les camina entre medio. Vuelve a pasar. Inténtalo otra vez.

⁴²⁰ Academy of the Americas DPS Website. <http://detroitk12.org/schools/school/341/>

Denise, a petite, kind, yet energetic Director came in to greet me apologetically for taking some time to respond to my e-mails. She invited me into her office and, as children buzzed everywhere, she explained that she was rather new at the school and was just becoming acclimated to it. She led me into her office on the other side of the secretary's desk across the hall and asked me to sit down. After we discussed the nature of my research and my desire to visit several different grade levels during the months of my work, she proceeded to show me the building and stated "Would you like to see the hole in the ceiling of my gym?" I was caught off guard by the invitation and looked at her with a confused expression. Then, she added, first let me show you what used to be our library before it flooded." I followed her as she explained how they rushed to move the books while she pointed to some piled remainders on a few tables. We then stopped by another room where we met a painter who "just appeared one day from DPS." The colors he had available were limited and rather odd according to her tastes. She told me of a binder with three years worth of requisitions for repairs that had not been attended to by DPS.

When we arrived at one of the top floors (there were several and I was confused), it was clear that the gym had originally belonged to a Catholic school. Three older buildings had been connected through internal stairwells to create the Academy. The gym still possessed a character of prestige despite the wear and tear of years gone by. While she was talking to me, I was imagining blonde and light brown haired students in their expensive logoed gym uniforms playing basketball when Denise asked me to look at the ceiling and, in effect, there was a piece missing that she informed me had fallen on a student. Concerned, I asked, "Was the student Ok?" She replied, "Well yes, but it hurt!"

Our conversation that day included the themes that I would hear from the teachers, children and secretaries during the next two years of our collaboration. "We have achieved the No Child Left Behind "Adequate Yearly Progress," but it is near impossible to get resources for our school in South West Detroit." Other schools in Detroit have been getting resources and new schools have been built for them. In the meantime, the Academy of the Americas was taken off the list of building improvements. They did not have appropriate Spanish immersion texts and materials for

years before my first visit and they were being told to use the same Afro Centric curriculum expected of the rest of Detroit.

Denise informed me that Dr. Byrd Bennett, the Academic Deputy Chief chosen by Robert Bob, had hired her for a specific reason, but that Dr. Byrd was on her way out.

Her time is up March 20, 2011 at the same time Robert Bob's time is up. I fear that their work will not be continued. If we do not hire someone who can speak Spanish...Dr. Byrd's mother was Puerto Rican. She speaks Spanish and is a huge advocate of the dual language school. She has encouraged me. The model needs to be changed to be immersion and so the kids can do well on the MEAP. Dr. Bennett contacted the original designers and got their view point of what their ideas was. The original model was consistent. It seems like the problems started when they added the middle grades...The problems we face are mostly related to the facilities. The people at the top are making curricular plans for all Detroit. For professional development they teach everybody the same. It is a totally African Centered curriculum. Even with the stimulus fund, they don't ask us what we need. I need a strong ESL program and a strong Spanish as a second language program. The Academy doesn't get a lot of Title 1 funds as compared to other schools. We are making sure our kids bring in their "free and reduced lunch forms" since this is what the Title 1 funds are based on. How do you explain Roberto Clemente? Its a new school and a beautiful facility. When they need something they get it. My biggest issues in K-8. We have to get some extra support.

The question was how did this lack of resources come to be? Why would an educational system create a school of choice geared towards meeting the needs of Latino and other children interested in learning Spanish, and then deny them the basic resources to carry out this goal?

The answers to these questions would come much later after we met with the design team near the end of my research grant from the Rackham Graduate School. Before this, however, I observed teachers and youth interacting in the classrooms, I helped teach the curriculum to students who needed additional support and I carried out focus groups with students and instructors. On my way out one day, I saw Elsa, a Puerto Rican teacher storm in the office stating "What is this?" as she waved a piece of paper in the air. She continued quite vehemently so that everyone could hear "You call this Spanish? With all these errors?... This is not Spanish! I know! I'm from Puerto Rico! We are a Spanish immersion school people! We should know how to write our memos correctly!" After getting everybody's silent attention she stormed out again with half a

smile. That day I got my first taste of the toilet paper theme, but the issue was the missing paper towel. I helped the pre-school teachers guide the youngsters to wash their hands and observed how their teacher split each towel into four pieces. They had the children shake the excess water off their hands after washing them so they could receive a small square of paper towel to dry any remaining moisture. The teachers purchased the roles themselves. Regarding the toilet paper incident, I was informed that truck loads were sent from N.Y. causing embarrassment to Detroit Public Schools which led to a severe reprimand for the former Director of AOA. Like other directors at the Academy, she would not last long in her position.

During the summer of 2010, I realized firsthand what it was like to have to spend the entire day in a classroom filled with students in 90+ degrees of heat with no air conditioning. The children were often overexcited, rowdy and distracted. The teachers became irritable and the children rebellious while sweat was streaming down their faces. “Emergency fans” were brought in from other rooms. While the lower elementary and pre-school grades were highly organized with well-behaved and motivated children and instructors surrounded by nicely decorated walls, the middle school grades offered a drastic contrast. These were on the higher floor, unforgiving in the rise of its extreme heat waves. Its hallway, dark and grey, had the paint peeling from the numerous unfinished murals of years gone by. As the teachers attempted to give their lessons, eighth grade students would walk uninvited in to the seventh grade classrooms and start greeting and talking to other students. On several occasions the door had to be shut with a serious reprimand when the behavior reoccurred...which it did, several times a day, every day. The seventh grade students, still with a year of innocence left to go, appeared to be a world apart from the eighth graders who were practicing for what was awaiting them in a few months.

As usual, the school was understaffed and the middle schoolers were irritated to have to spend their summer in school when most of them had passed their classes. They were there, because they had not passed the MEAP, the Michigan assessment test. Their first few days were riddled with multiple evaluations and the teachers were required to take attendance every hour in addition to teaching their classes, often by themselves with an overabundance of students. The District had decided that the teachers should attend

workshops on the benefits and techniques of co-teaching. The irony was, as several of them pointed out, that they would rarely have the chance to co-teach because there were generally not enough teachers to even cover the classes that they had running. They could not implement what they were learning during the summer either because, while one was at the workshop, the other was teaching the class.

An Ann Arbor teacher was hired temporarily to help fill the gap over the summer. She was a colleague of a special education teacher whom I met through one of the former ALAS youth. I informed her that the Academy of the Americas was seeking certified instructors and she recommended her to Denise. Things would not go well for her with the eighth graders, however. They were getting ready for the transition into high school and they were full of uncertainty. Many feared the gang life that would be calling them once they left the safe haven provided by the Academy. The students were allowed to use clothing of their own choice during the summer months so as to make the load of having to attend school a little lighter. This led a group of about six of them to wear the extra-large red gang t-shirts that they admired and feared. As they became more comfortable with my presence they began showing me how proficient they were at forming gang letters with their hands. During class they often took time to pass an artist pad amongst themselves to admire and comment on each other's graffiti. They even recommended films for me to see so I would understand what it was all about: "Tiene que ver "Sin Nombre." Es sobre la mara salvatrucha." Ahí sí sabrá de lo que estamos hablando."⁴²¹ Their confrontational behavior towards the new teacher and their lewd comments were voiced, consistently, while she attempted to give her lesson.

Just as the youth were trying to make sense of the violence that surrounded them, they were also trying to understand their sexuality and behavior in relation to others and the expectations of society. The teacher found herself unable to respond to the discourses she had prompted and when she was unable to redirect them; the students continued leading her to their own interests, perpetuating the same kind of oppressive forces that they were experiencing in their own neighborhoods⁴²².

⁴²¹ **Translation:** "You should see "Sin Nombre" it's about the Salvadoran gangs. Then you will know what we are talking about."

⁴²² Names have been changed.

Chepe: You're gay man!

New Teacher: You talk a lot about homosexuality, do you know any gay people?

Chepe: No, they would rape me!

Maria: I always wanted a homosexual friend. They say they are more loyal than regular friends!

Javier: Hey miss, what would you do if I told you I was molested?

Juan: I would laugh my ass off!

N. Teacher: When you grow up, do you want to live here? [Attempt to redirect.]

Javier: I'm from the hood and I want to stay in the hood.

N. Teacher: Does anyone want to go back to Mexico? [Assumes all are Mexican.]

Javier: Me? ¡A huevos!

N. Teacher: Do you know of anyone that uses drugs?

Chepe: I had cocaine and my nose bled...Ask my uncle.

N. Teacher: [Changes the subject.]

Chepe: I had sex last night.

In the eighth grade several episodes of resistance, reprimands and “lock downs” (two or three minute lunch detention) occurred because of the students’ unwillingness to comply. In one incident a few boys were play-fighting which resulted in a girl yelling “Guys stop being so loud.” When the boy answered, “I don’t have a pencil.” The teacher replied, “I will get you one” which led him to whisper, “bitch, agárrenle las nalgas.”⁴²³ Meanwhile a conversation was going on between two girls: “You want to trade lives with me? You don’t know what you’re talking about. If you think about the bad part of Cinderella’s life, that is my life.”

An important incident with one of the rising leaders of the gang-associated boys occurred one afternoon when the new teacher gave me a ride in her Yukon to pick up my car at the parking lot. The boy was waiting there for his mother. When he saw us arrive, he asked the teacher, “Is this your car?” She replied “Yes, it is.” He looked at both of us with resentment and told her “You said you weren’t rich. You lied.” Before this, the boy had agreed to be in one of my research focus groups and to give me a picture of his graffiti on a building wall for my dissertation. After this incident, however, he did neither. He was the boy that later stormed in unannounced in the middle of my focus group. His sense of emerging trust had been betrayed and it was important for him to gain some sense of dignity by imposing his presence. He found me

⁴²³ **Trasnlation:** “Grab her butt.”

guilty by association and he made sure that I knew it. I did not react, respecting his need to have some control and almost as soon as he entered he left, but not before giving another boy an ultimatum which I will discuss in the context of my focus group. It is important to note that he was effective because he took me back to my experience in El Salvador with Nora when, upon my departure, I was left seeing myself through the pained eyes of another.

While the new teacher was involved in her lesson on “fractals,” several boys were slapping their rulers on their desks and dropping books on the floor. Meanwhile, in the seventh grade the instructor asked, “Why do you use multiplication instead of division?” A student responded “Because its shorter.” The instructor, increasingly frustrated stated “Deberían sentir vergüenza, han estado aprendiendo a multiplicar desde el tercer grado.”⁴²⁴ In the meantime, most of the students continued chatting with their classmates. Most days during that summer, especially during math, the children would leave with their work largely undone. Some changes in attitude began to appear after we individualized the lesson with those who were struggling the most and then asked them to help teach others what they had learned. The first day we tried this most students completed their worksheet successfully before going home. This was an exercise in “peer tutoring from below.” The instructor informed me that one of the children was now volunteering to help him teach.

In the eighth grade there were moments of quiet and obedience as well, when their main instructor (Mr. Brown) entered the room and explained the consequences of their actions to them. The students demonstrated a great appreciation for him and the time he spent talking to them about their problems. Several returned to him during high school to let him know how they were doing or to ask for a recommendation for college. Nick Brown became the Assistant Director a few months later and Denise’s right hand. They began to stabilize the school and plan various interventions to improve the level of education they had accomplished thus far, despite the chaos permeating the school due to numerous district and school- wide layoffs. Regardless, the Academy was holding together because of the multiple generations they had of teachers who had first begun as

⁴²⁴ **Translation:** “You should be ashamed of yourselves. You have been studying multiplication since third grade.”

volunteers, moved up to assistants and then received their teaching certification. The strength of the school and their consistent “adequate yearly progress” had to do with the loyalty they felt toward the students and the mission of the school. In addition, Denise proved to be truly committed. She was an extension of the philosophy embodied by the instructors. She would tutor the students when they were sent to the office for misbehaving, she stayed after hours on a daily basis to oversee the afterschool program and even drove students home on occasion if they did not have a ride. The actions of the staff, despite the dearth of resources and non-sensical district policies attempted to carry out the philosophy of their school:

We, the staff, parents and community members of the Academy of the Americas are committed to creating a safe, nurturing learning environment for all students, parents and staff. Through a multicultural, developmentally appropriate curriculum, with emphasis on the cultures of the Americas, we will empower students to become respectful and responsible citizens who will achieve academic excellence and literacy in the Spanish and English languages.⁴²⁵

Teachers like “Mariana” had an embrace of encouragement waiting for the students when they walked into the classroom. When I introduced myself to them, spoke about my research and told them the story from my youth of Mistel Acosta, “Mariana” commented,

You tell stories too! That is how I teach them, I tell them stories so they will feel proud of who they are. I told them about when I was growing up in Puerto Rico. I lived surrounded by mountains. Other children mistreated me because I had a brother with a disability. I used to dream that, like a bird, I would one day fly away, above the trees and over the mountains. And one, day I did! I took a plane and came to the United States and here I am, your teacher. Look at how far I have come. And you can go even further!

Nick Brown told me of the struggle he faced as a youth attempting to come to terms with his African American and Venezuelan identity. He rejected the latter until he traveled to Venezuela on his own when he was in ninth grade. His parents sent him there to get a sense of who he was. This is when he fell in love with Venezuela and when he embraced his Latino identity. As a result, he decided he wanted to help the Latino youth of Detroit because they were “the forgotten ones” of the educational system.

⁴²⁵ Academy of the Americas School Mission Handout.

I grew up in North West Detroit. It is mostly African American whereas South West Detroit is mostly Latino. I grew up near the University of Detroit. I didn't have it as rough as these kids. The only time I heard gunshots was on the fourth of July. Some of these kids have seen them. Most boys either don't have a father or have a bad relationship with them. The good thing about the kids here is that they are honest about this...When I ask them about their dreams, many times they are apathetic. They haven't bought into the idea that education will lead them anywhere.

Nick's anecdote led me to tell him about an assumption I had made about a student when I was trying to give her an example of the use of the verb "to merit" which was in her reading. I assumed she had a good relationship with her mother when another student told me, "She doesn't live with her mother." Nick told me something similar had happened to him the day before as he scratched his head disappointed in himself.

I made a mistake yesterday when I asked them to change places with their mothers and do their work for them while they took their place in the classroom so they could see how hard their mothers work. And then I realized that one of the girls lost her mother a few years ago. That's why I said "or your Dads, change places with your Dads."

A few days later Nick came up to me and said he had the opportunity to think about my question regarding the reason for the achievement gap when schools like the Academy of the America manage, without resources, to meet adequate yearly progress.

I have had a chance to think about this and thought about teacher meetings where some of my colleagues have admitted to just sitting at their desks all day long. I think a lot has to do with the teachers as well. How invested are they?

After speaking to Nick, I had the opportunity to visit Andrew's class. He was standing in the front of the room explaining the rules of grammar to the children as the hour was coming to an end. Before dismissing them, he reminded them "Remember, if you don't have time to do it right, then you have time to do it over." Andrew was an African American teacher who chose to leave an Afro-centric school 12 years before because he realized that Latino children in Detroit did not have any schools to look out for them.

He stated the following:

It's the challenges of the system. The tough thing about the school is that we need bilingually certified teachers. Last year we had an ESL teacher, but they were not getting content in their native language. When I was teaching fifth grade, they brought some students who had not moved up through the system. This made it very difficult. I was the only African American instructor for many years and

then there was another. There are a few who are mixed. I taught at ***** Academy, an African American academy for seven years. Both schools started at the same time (1991-1992). They were both schools of choice. I had an African American colleague who had her kids here [at AOA]. I thought ***** was wonderful and leaving it was difficult. After seven years the teachers were leaving to Southfield to earn more money. When I moved to AOA, I didn't lose a year of salary. I worked in administration and then the Board asked me to go back into the classroom.

Andrew observed that there used to be a larger population of African American students at AOA somewhere between 15-20%. However, he added that many African American families did not feel welcome at AOA.

I attribute it to the language. I have a different view. I took Spanish when I came here. I didn't finish the class. Just being immersed in the school...I just felt that there was a deeper language that allowed me to connect with the students. Since Leaving ***** I have been able to see things from a different perspective. I have seen students and staff who have not been adequately serviced by DPS because of language barriers...I have always felt a little inadequate because I don't speak the language. One of the biggest advantages would be for me to speak to the parents. We would have our conferences with other bilingual teachers so that they could translate.

Our conversation about the difficulties in building support networks between African Americans and Latinos led Andrew to consider the geographic layout of the populations.

I think that because of the segregation of South East Michigan people don't know or understand each other. When I talk about the system it all shuts down. I was born and raised in Detroit. For most of my life people did not come to South West Detroit. It seems like they were pitted against each other. When I was leaving ***** I did have some people who asked me "Why are you leaving our kids to teach other kids?" By the time I got here a lot of African American parents were gone. Some parents felt that their kids were singled out or that they were silenced. I did feel that there were people here who had not dealt with African American parents. They thought that they were pushy and they questioned them.

Andrew's thoughtful comments about the race/ethnic dynamics in the school also led him to guess at the number of AOA graduates who, in turn graduated from high school. His view was less optimistic than that of the Latino instructors. He believed that 4 out of 10 AOA students successfully graduated from high school. He attributed this to gang influence. "A lot of boys come to expect that this is the way to go."

I can't speak on whether they valued education or not. There were years where we exposed them to four-year schools and vocational programs. Many get

teachers that are not nurturing when they get to high school. A lot of parents have moved so kids won't go to Western. Its that labeling. If teachers keep students in classes according to ability and there might have been some teachers who told them that they were dumb.

The other problem Andrew saw as affecting the progress of many students had to do with the results of the instability caused by the administrative offices which controlled the resources of AOA.

People are so busy putting out fires. Sometimes what is most important takes the back seat to putting out the emergency of the fire. You can't keep changing new programs.

His views on language maintenance for Latinos were insightful. Language became separated from culture, especially in middle school.

Its not immersion anymore, its just a Spanish class. "Why should I take Spanish if I already speak Spanish?" The class is not that deep for them. It is boring, just more grammar. I don't think a lot of the parents understand what immersion is. We, as a school are revisiting this. I think our school is a very good school because we have teachers who are invested and we are trying to make the mission work. I would like to see it become more of what it was meant to be. I think there is a need for kids to return to their culture and open books with people who look like them. Eight graders have required books on U.S. and African American books.

Despite Andrew's urging for a deeper level of cultural instruction, he discussed his awareness that that there was a substantial difference between Latino and African American willingness to act against social injustice and oppression.

In "the dungeon" [the basement], I saw some Latino experience book and couldn't figure out why they were not being used. The fact that the book was not required by the District is that they didn't see the need even though they had a Latino school. There was a bigger push for African American education. To my surprise, the Latino teachers didn't use them either after I told them that they were there. I would like to see more Latinos who are passionate about Latinos in history in a way that is inclusive and not exclusive...I do not think that there are as many passionate Latino educators as African American educators.

In his comments, Andrew was voicing an important realization that groups in power, regardless of the oppression that they themselves have experienced, tend to perpetuate the same type of exclusion rather than attempting to create equitable coalitions with other underrepresented groups.

When students opened those books, their eyes lit up! I have always felt that there is a disconnect when you are learning about a culture without learning about your own. I talked to a student about the violation of rights last year who was stopped by the police, but it became clear that he wasn't going to pursue it. Many Latino students associate that kind of oppression with black people only.

Despite the many obstacles and severed ties with some of his own professional networks when leaving his previous African American centered school to help Latinos, Andrew ended our conversation with hope and optimism within a strong dose of realism.

In the Academy of the Americas we do good work. The strength of passion has outweighed the disadvantages. Students come back to us to tell us how they are doing. My advice for those who wish to become administrators is that being an administrator in a school that is broken...It is better to devote yourself to the students.

Andrew chose to leave teaching after more than a decade of working for DPS to start a family and devote himself to another career about which he was also passionate. At the time I received the news, everyone in the school had been sent "pink slips" (termination notices) that would require all DPS employees to reapply for their positions, running the risk of being transferred to other posts or of not being rehired.

While at AOA I had the chance of talking with the students to try to gain a better understanding of their perspective. I held four focus groups of five to six children each: two with the seventh graders and two with the eighth graders and attempted as much as possible to separate them by gender so that the voices of the girls would not be silenced. The eighth grade focus group was the rowdiest and we had an impromptu visit by a male student who was wearing the gang t-shirt. He came in demanding that Jaime, a focus group participant hand over his PSP. When he noticed that the battery was dead he told him he would likely receive a demerit. Jaime became very nervous and told me "So you know what that is?" I did not and he proceeded to explain that the other boy would tell the gang members and he (Jaime) would get a beating for three minutes from all the gang members for not recharging the battery.

The youth who chose and were given parental permission to participate ranged between 12 and 13 years old. Many of them were from Mexico although some of them had been born in Texas, California and Detroit and were Mexican descendants. They were working class with the exception of few who came from singled headed or

reconstituted families. They were all aware of the violence on the streets and, while some of them lived surrounded by it, others lived safe enough away. I informed them that they could speak whatever language made them comfortable, even “Spanglish.” I followed their lead by speaking the same way.

“Marta”: I was born and raised in Detroit by my mom. I have a sister who studied at AOA, but she became una alcohólica and started doing drugs in high school. She’s been to rehab. She disrespects her teacher and my mom and does bad things. My other sister didn’t finish high school and went to “Life Skills” to get her GED. She is now in ***College. My brother is the only one who finished high school and wants to start his own business. My Dad doesn’t live with us. He is from Mexico and my mom is from Puerto Rico. I don’t like speaking Spanish, but sometimes I practice on the phone with my cousin who lives in Puerto Rico. You know, even though I didn’t raise my hand in the class when you asked us who wanted to go to college, I really do want to go. [She looked down sullen.] My Mom tells me I should at least finish high school.

“Pedro”: Tengo 13 años y estoy en séptimo grado. Mi Hermana trabaja en un salon de belleza. Ella tiene 20 años. Mis padres son de Durango, Mexico. I’ve been here since kindergarten because it is bilingual. Mi mamá limpia un mall and my Dad hace volantes de cuero.

“Gilberto”: I came from Mexico. I went to an elementary school where they only spoke English and eran puros morenos. They used to make fun of me every day and at lunchtime they would rip my backpack off my back. I had to spend the rest of the year eating lunch with the teachers so the kids wouldn’t bother me. That’s when I came here. I like it because I feel safe. They are like a family.

“Sonia”: I am 12. I have to come to summer school because my mom doesn’t want me at home. I have four brothers and sisters. I grew up with my Dad until I was 12. He used to fight with my mom every day. I was happy and sad because I wouldn’t see him anymore. He got arrested many times for violencia domestica. He got caught by la migra three times. I get along with my step Dad. He makes jobs and we go places. He’s from Durango and my Mom is from Jalisco. I was born in California and I came to Detroit when I was a baby.

“Esperanza”: I’m 14. I was born in Chicago. I’m here because I got kicked out of the charter school. I went to a tratamiento one-month program. Yo quise ir. Después a una escuela de ... Después a otra y no me dejaron entrar y después vine a la Academia de las Américas. Estuve fuera por tres meses y después entré. They told me I had to take the MEAP thingy. Summer school is boring. Aquí es mejor porque en el charter school teníamos que tomar 4 clases y teníamos que pasarlas todas. I live with my step Dad. I don’t know my real Dad. He travels a lot.

“Jazmín”: Most want to go to Cesar Chávez Academy. It’s fun because you can get out. I live close to CCA. Allá los llevan to a lot of movies, skating and they have air conditioning. If you meet different people you will feel comfortable with them.

“Alberto”: Education is very important to my parents. They didn’t get paid very well. For them it is important because they dropped out in sixth grade. They wish they would have studied.

“Gil”: My Mom dropped out of high school and my Dad finished college.

“Marta”: I do well in school, but first I have to sleep when I get here because I can’t sleep at night ever since a guy put a gun to my head when I was walking home. I hear gunshots all night long. The teachers let me lay my head down on my desk until I am ready to work.

When I asked the youth if they liked AOA, most of them said yes and described it as a “family.” They all agreed that “El ser bilingüe vale por dos.” (being bilingual counts for two). One said he wished AOA would go all the way to becoming a University so they would not have to face the gangs. When they tried to explain why there is such a difference in behavior between the elementary students and the middle schoolers they said that “most kids act bad at school because of the things that are going on at home.” They also mentioned that “[some] don’t have confidence.” When I asked them how they thought they compared to kids from other schools they said “We are dumber. Los otros niños saben más que we do because they have nicer schools.” When I asked them why so many kids wanted to go to Cristo Rey (a private school), two of the boys answered “It’s better.”

Rox. : I’ve been told some of you are going to Cristo Rey H.S. I heard you guys like it. What do you know about it?

Rox.: What school are you going to? (Asked of Mario, a youth who had received detention on several occasions for disrupting his classes and who was also being sought by gangs.)

Mario: I’m going to Cristo Rey. It’s really good. They are really strict.

Rox: Wait a minute, you are often joking around, why would you want a strict school?

Mario: Because its safer and you learn more. The gang members that are looking for me probably won't get me. And you learn Latin.

Rox: Have you heard of Cristo Rey?

Osvaldo: Oh, its good!

Rox: Why is it good.

Osvaldo: Its private.

Rox: So?

Osvaldo: They check you when you go to the bathroom!

Rox: What?

Osvaldo: They check the walls when you come out to make sure you didn't paint on them.

Rox: You mean graffiti?

Osvaldo: Yes.

In this conversation it became apparent that the youth who exhibited the most disruptive behavior were also seeking a substantially higher level of structure to feel safe and protected. Their resistance towards authority was an attempt to test the limits to see if the adults charged with their care would provide unconditional support. Our focus group ended with a list of recommendations for school improvement provided by the students.

- A new heater so we won't burn ourselves when we get close to it.
- An air conditioner
- Newly Painted walls
- More activities
- Field Days
- A soccer team
- Volleyball
- Teachers with better attitudes when students fall asleep
- Less noise in the hallways
- Late starts on Monday class
- Language clubs (Japanese, French)
- Paranormal activity and graffiti clubs
- Student field trip committee

- Photography
- Documentary Club
- Basketball
- Year Book Committee
- Tennis

AOA had several programs that collaborated with its efforts to support the kids and their parents on their way through school. One was an English as a second language parents group called “Even Start.” This provided parents the opportunity to join their K-3 grade children in the classroom and learn the academic material with them so they could support them with their homework while improving their English. The Cuban teacher discussed some of the problems with the education of Latinos from what he had observed in his program. He believed the biggest obstacle was the “machismo” of the men. If they attended the program, they quickly felt outnumbered by the women and would become discouraged. They also became insecure if their wives had a male teacher or if they were learning more than the husbands. They often forced their wives to discontinue their participation despite the fact that their children had advanced substantially in school. In addition to this, when the families had their first and youngest child in the program substantial improvement could be seen. This did not transfer to the children who came after because by that time the parents were already tired and tended to take the other children out.

The AOA teachers had their own stories of accomplishments and obstacles related to being Latino in the U.S. The first is especially intriguing because it represents a Mexican American youth who had not grown up knowing how to speak Spanish in the home as a result of the experiences of discrimination her own parents had faced in the Texas schools when they were growing up. Nevertheless, due to her father’s support she decided to learn Spanish and perfected it at Wayne State University after tolerating the reality of having to learn it from a “Greek.” Her Spanish accent now is almost indistinguishable from that of a native speaker.

“Josefa”: I was born in Detroit...My mother was a migrant worker. She was born in Texas. The mentality in my household was “you need to know English, not Spanish. In Texas my mother was not allowed to speak Spanish in school. My father was different. When I became 15, I decided to teach myself. My teacher asked, “Why do you want to learn Spanish? You are Mexican?” I said,

“This is sad, a Greek man teaching me Spanish.” Now there is more of a Latino community here. I took more Spanish classes at Wayne State University. I thought Spanish or art are not good because you could be downsized. Then I decided for the Chicano/Boricua program. When my daughter was ready for school, I became a parent here. I was in the building in 92. I said, “I want my daughter to learn Spanish Dr. Kenrick [previous AOA Director]. They hired me. I was so excited. I teach third grade and I have been here for seven years.

“Mercedes”: Nací en el DF, México, estudié para ser educadora. Trabajé 5 años, cuatro como directora. Me casé allá y nos vinimos aquí por seis meses. Mi esposo encontró un trabajo de ingeniero. Empecé como voluntaria con Genara. Cuando mi hijo cumplió siete años, decidí empezar a trabajar más en la academia. Empecé a dar talleres para los papás. Después me contrataron como Ed Tech. Después pasé al salón de computadoras y después fui maestra de ESL. Ingresé a Wayne State University...

Mercedes was a middle class certified teacher in Mexico and when she came to the U.S. with her husband who had accepted a job as an engineer, she became pregnant and had her two children in the U.S. She began at AOA as a volunteer and continued her studies, moving up the employment ladder from “Tech. Ed” to ESL instructor and beyond to finally acquiring a master’s degree in school administration. Although she sought the position of Assistant Principal, DPS placed her in another school. Nevertheless she had been at AOA for many years prior to this.

Genara had also been a pre-school teacher since 1992, the school’s first year. Berna Rabitz, Lydia Engel and Theresa Rodriguez, the design team, hired her. Genara was born in Detroit of Mexican parents. She left the school for three years and then returned when she received an ultimatum from DPS. By that time there was already a new Director at AOA.

Enar worked at the AOA for 16 years and she began her work at the Academy in 1994. She voiced a strong conviction that “hispanos” should work for “hispanos.” She argued that Latino parents tend to support the education of their children more than the white and African American parents. Her opinion was partially seconded by an American teacher who learned how to speak Spanish in high school and then maintained it during his time with the kids at AOA. He began in 1999. He said, “I speak as fast as a Puerto Rican, but I use all the Mexican words.” Regarding the education offered by Latino parents, he said that they start out more interested initially “but then it wanes by

8th grade.” He believed that this was just a part of the cultural expectations of the families in which the boys would take on a leadership role. Thus, their actual academic skills were often higher than their academic achievements it was their role in their family responsibilities that affected their school work.

These focus group members were only a few of several that had worked at AOA for many years, establishing the consistency and nurturing of students and staff in the school atmosphere that was required for its continued success regardless of the multiple changes in its administration and the lack of resources. The teachers received encouragement from their colleagues to keep moving forward and they were integrated as much as possible into various employment options (according to their credentials) as they became available.

One of my last meetings with the staff had to do with a focus group organized by the Director to discuss the kind of Spanish immersion program the teachers thought would be best. Denise informed me that the school, at this point, did not have a cohesive program; every teacher was combining Spanish in the lessons in their own way. Initially there was resistance from the faculty to change to a school-wide immersion design, but after Denise took them to a successful program in Grand Rapids, the teachers were highly motivated and began to engage actively in the planning stages. According to the founding AOA design team, the Academy was very successful from 1992-1997 when they had support from the higher administrators like Deborah McGriff. At this time, they had their grant money and the necessary bussing to transport the kids required to maintain the ratio between native Spanish and English speakers. As their supporters left the administration, the Academy began to suffer the consequences. One of the design team members recalled what happened to a 1.2 million dollar Title VII grant.

We had a track record for getting money. We went for it. I think it started out as 1.5 and they cut us back. I should tell you that ***** and others helped. ***** coordinated writing the grant and we had a parent meeting. We explained the grant and you had to be a two way Spanish immersion school to get the grant and there was no one else in the school who could write it so we had to write it... So I called downtown said have you heard because you write the grant, have a parent meeting, sign it you bring it down town to the assessment and evaluation office and they sign it and they send it to Washington... You have to have it go through the District because they sign it and send it in.

&&&& was an underling. We had good relations with him. ... So I'm starting to hear that people are starting to find out whether they got the grant or not and I said &&&& have you heard whether we got the grant or not. "Nope I haven't heard anything." So I called Washington and said, "Can you tell me what is going on with the Title 7 grant?" They said what do you mean, you already got it, you already sent back the modification. I was furious. So I looked at it, he actually had it in front of him.. I get off the ground, I go into &&&& office, it must have been seeping out of me and I said, "What the hell is going on here."

I said we got that grant and you know we got it don't you? He was red in the face. He was practically crying. He said ***** I didn't want to do it. They made me do it and I said &&&& that's disgusting and I was screaming. I don't get out of control very much but I was out of control. All these people came out of the office and they were herding me to the table. They said "You, Dr. ***** you had no business calling Washington." I'm like, "You break the law and you're trying to turn it on me? I said, "You people are crazy." You people are nuts." You thought you would get away with this and my school?" See these signatures? They are real parents, there is no way you are getting this money.. I said, "I want a copy."

The last thing they said to me is "You don't have our permission to call Washington ever again." I looked at them as if saying, "Excuse me" and I turned around and left. I called Washington and told them what had happened and told them I needed to re-do the modifications. I said for example, they took a secretary for this grant. You don't take a 1.3 million grant and get no help. We got together, sent in modifications, the substitutes, the workshops and a big part of this grant was being connected to... We didn't really get any money in our pockets but it was very helpful.

But then we hooked up with the people in California. That was a different grant. What happened was there was a school ... The Government chose the top schools in two-way immersion, science, technology and we put in an application to be mentored by the Spanish Immersion School in River Glenn California. They had money to come out and do in-service with us. It was a program from the Government like Golden Schools, some special thing, it wasn't Title Seven...

Once the District eliminated the busses which had maintained the needed ratio of English to Spanish speakers, several things happened. Most of the students accepted into the school were from its immediate surrounding neighborhoods. These were characterized by a mostly immigrant working class Latino population as opposed to the original school population which included a greater diversity of students with regards to class, ethnicity and race from various parts of Detroit. The percent of native English speakers was also reduced substantially. In addition to this, the school did not have the Spanish immersion resources. The Directors tended to be short lasting and each one

brought her own ideas about how to implement the program. The policies the design team had established for admission in order to socialize the students in its program were not respected by the District.

AOA was forced to accept middle school transfer students; many of them had been rejected from other schools. Previous to these changes, according to AOA's initial design, its graduates would have been completely bilingual by middle school graduation since admission into the school could only occur between kindergarten and first grade. The incoming middle school students could not achieve bilingualism due to lack of time in the program in addition to the social difficulties they were experiencing. They were not the only students affected, however. When the resources were taken away, each teacher had to devise the best plan, given their circumstance, to continue with the mission of the school. Due to a lack of a comprehensive and unified program, some students graduated bilingual while others who had been in the school for four or more years were highly limited in their Spanish speaking abilities. Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, AOA, as opposed to many African American focused schools managed to maintain the adequate yearly progress expected by the No Child Left Behind Act. This is significant given that, as cited in the CBS news report dated May, 4, 2011, "Half of Detroiters Can't Read." Forty seven percent of Detroit residents were found to be functionally illiterate by the Detroit Regional Worker's Fund.⁴²⁶

The most evident explanation for the success of the school, despite all the odds, was the solid foundation provided by its original design team and the truly committed directors who have led it, despite their short tenure. Most important, however, have been the teachers—the backbone of the school. They have nurtured each other and the students and maintained the school ideal to the best of their ability throughout the years. Above all, they have created an atmosphere of an "extended family" for the children.

Despite these accomplishments the Detroit Public Schools has taken it upon itself to dismantle this last and most important stabilizing fabric of the school. DPS has dismissed several of the teachers and more importantly, it transferred Nick Brown, the Assistant Principal to another school, creating even more instability and confusion. The

⁴²⁶ <http://detroit.cbslocal.com/2011/05/04/report-nearly-half-of-detroiters-cant-read/>
The Detroit Regional Worker's Fund derived its statistics from the National Institute for Literacy.

argument for not supporting the school and transferring the Assistant Principal was that its enrollment would drop due to the new school that they just built. The director of this new school is African American and the majority student population is Latino. In the meantime, AOA's enrollment increased to 846 as opposed to last year when it was in the 700 range. It is becoming clear that DPS is attempting to eliminate AOA without appearing to do so. It cannot justify its actions by arguing that restructuring is needed due to its failure to meet the NCLB academic expectations.

The heightened surge for Afro-centered interventions disguised under the rubric of "diversity" is not limited to Detroit Public Schools. It is, in fact, an extension of a broader collective effort of a group of African American administrators who are in the position to choose and direct exclusionary institutional interventions and bridge programs based on racial preference.

Minority Student Mentoring and CEO

Previous efforts of minority student recruitment, retention and graduation at the University of Michigan like the Center for Comprehensive Studies, for example, have come under closer scrutiny due to their less than successful ability to raise the academic preparation of minority students, primarily African Americans, accepted into the University. A representative from The National Center on Education and the Economy stated that only one study had been done of this program, but due to the negative outcomes, no future studies of it would be funded⁴²⁷. The program itself, however, continues to be economically and institutionally supported because it is strategically useful for the University to maintain an image of its diversity maintenance efforts. Through this program it attempts to retain and successfully prepare students of color, primarily black students, for academic success and post university employment. The University of Michigan has benefitted a great deal from its reputation as a bastion of affirmative action and the concrete existence of minority geared programs help maintain such an image.

Similarly, the recently instituted Center for Educational Outreach, a program created within the University of Michigan to promote access of minority and

⁴²⁷ University of Michigan Department of Public Policy, Program, 9/2009

underprivileged high school students to the University, was opened in September of 2009. This program continues to be led by a mostly African-American administrative staff as is the GEAR UP Program from U of M and Eastern Michigan University, and the Upward Bound and Rising Scholars programs respectively. In fact, the Director of the Center for Educational Outreach is the previous director of the Center for Comprehensive Studies referred to at the CLOSUP conference.

Two employment openings became available in the Center for Educational Outreach seeking experienced individuals with k-12 educational programming who also had established relations with the public school system to promote academic success of underprivileged youth through links to the University. I applied to both positions given my experience of bringing the Latino community into Trotter House and successfully raising their academic achievement with tutor and parental support. I responded with an e-mail by giving a general idea of my experience without discussing any ideas in detail after the secretary informed me over the phone that the Director wanted these e-mailed to him before our interview.

According to the Director, during my interview, I was one of the few people chosen for this stage of the employment process. I informed him and his secretary of my qualifications, positive outcomes in promoting academic excellence among Latinos, immigrants from other countries and African American youth. I also told him I hoped I could make a difference with the African American students that were sponsored by the Comprehensive Studies Program since I had taught several in Spanish and it was clear they were still struggling at the University level. It became apparent that my work went beyond an exclusive focus on African Americans. I also informed him of my interest in doing critical anthropological research on his program. I showed him the pictures of the development of ALAS which revealed a large number of Latino youth and one or two African Americans who included Martin teaching karate. After hearing the comments from the PMCH employee and noting the mostly African-American advertising and administrative staff for the CEO I realized that the ALAS pictures, to him, must have been the materialization of one of his worst fears; minority programming at the University with a large Latino staff and constituency. The Director began to state that I

might not be hired because I was a graduate student at the University and he advised me to call the pertinent offices to make sure.

I made several calls to my two home Departments and to the Human Resources office from the University. I informed him, by leaving a message with his secretary and through e-mail that the University did not see a conflict of interest in my position and I could therefore be employed. In other words, a conflict of interest did not exist as my employer because he was not on my dissertation committee or in any of my departments; this was their only stipulation. His secretary sent me an e-mail stating that I had been “one of the top candidates until the very end,” but unfortunately, the reviews had “coalesced around another candidate.”

I then requested to be considered for the next position in line and I received a standard depersonalized electronic e-mail thanking me for applying and stating that another candidate had been chosen. They chose an African American male. I wrote a personal e-mail to the director requesting to do my research on his program regardless of payment and I never received a response. The CEO website currently contains in their 2009-2010 Report, a page of the high administrators made up of African Americans, one white co-director, one Asian female who was accepted for the initial position to which I applied, and a page for a diversity of student researchers who appear to represent several countries and ethnicities, including a female who might be a Latina. It appears to be another example of the racial/ethnic structure instituted at the PMCH with regards to Latinos.

Date: Thu, 15 Jan 2009 11:24:29 -0500 [01/15/2009 11:24:29 AM EDT]

From: *****

To: [Duntley-Matos, Roxanna <matos@umich.edu>](mailto:matos@umich.edu)

Subject: The Program Manager Position-CEO

Hello Roxanne:

Thank you for your interest in our position of Program Manager. You remained among our top choices until the very end, but I regret that we

are unable to offer the position to you at this time as the evaluations have coalesced around another candidate.

Making hiring decisions is often difficult, and especially so when the possibilities include well-qualified candidates such as yourself. I do want to extend to you my best wishes for finding a position suitable to your liking.

Kindest regards, ***** Newton Center for Educational Outreach

Mon, 26 Jan 2009 00:32:00 -0500 [01/26/2009 12:32:00 AM EDT]

From:

To:

matos@umich.edu

Subject:

U-M Job Requisition Number 25467

Dear Roxanna Duntley-Matos:

Thank you for your application for the Community Outreach Coordinator position in the department of Ctr for Educational Outreach, requisition number 25467. This position was posted 01/09/2009 through 01/09/2009. The department has completed their activity on this position, and it has been filled.

You are encouraged to continue your career search by using the University's automated employment system at <http://www.umjobs.org>. If you have questions about this email or your application(s) for positions, please call the HR/Payroll Service Center at 734/615-2000.

Sincerely,

The University of Michigan

Please do not reply to this automated email. Direct responses and inquiries to the HR/Payroll Service Center at 734/615-2000.

Date: Fri, 16 Jan 2009 10:02:00 -0500 [01/16/2009 10:02:00 AM EDT]

From: matos@umich.edu

Subject: Ethnographic work with CEO

Dear *****;

Given that you have chosen another candidate for the position of Program Manager I would like to ask you if you could consider me for a position as ethnographer.

My dissertation topic will be based on a national and perhaps even international comparison of University Educational Outreach Programs and their impact on the educational outcomes of k-12 program participants. My work bringing the community children to Trotter for the last 8 years for university sponsored tutoring will be a part of my research as well. If you do not have an opening for such a position, would you be willing to consider collaborating on a grant with me related to this research project.

Again, thank you for considering me for the CEO Program Manager Position.

Roxanna Duntley-Matos MA, LMSW

According to their Center for Educational Outreach Report that informs the public of their programming, accomplishments and staff, not one Latino was hired in their top administrative positions⁴²⁸. The Diversity in the staff is much more represented in the graduate students they define as “collaborators.” The descriptors do not define ethnic origin ancestry or place of birth. They let the pictures “speak for themselves.” The front cover of the report is composed of four pictures, three of African American staff and students and one that could be of Latino or white students. In addition to this, the programs that they are supporting include the University Preparatory Academy, a mostly African American charter school that they have been mentoring for several years in Detroit.

According to Denise, they have never contacted the Academy of the Americas even though they are the only Spanish immersion program in the area with a majority Latino student body. AOA has also had a relationship with a faculty member from the U

⁴²⁸ Center for Educational Outreach 2009-2010 Report.
ceo.umich.edu/2010.2011%20annual%20report.pdf

of M Department of Education who takes his students to the school about once a year. As we will see in the discussion about the collaboration between AOA, ALAS, the American Go Foundation and Pipiolo, the joint grant that we submitted to the Arts of Citizenship Program at the University of Michigan is also represented by African American centered administration. The director specializes in African American history and the assistant director is African American.

The American Go Foundation Anthropology and Social Work: A Prospect of Hope

The nature of a game comes
from what is played, but it's the
sensitivity to the possible and
the impossible that gives it value.
*Audouard, Pierre, (Go Proverb)*⁴²⁹

ALAS is always seeking new ways to inspire the youth to become more involved in higher level learning, especially when it relates to themes of cultural inclusion through reflexive understanding that will encourage service to others, camaraderie and a willingness to work through contested terrains. One day, while visiting a Chinese supermarket on Washtenaw Ave. in my attempt to find Japanese food items that we could use at a Karate camp, I noticed a glass showcase. In it, there were two different games for sale. One was clearly described as Chinese chess for a price of \$6.00. It had an attractive painting on the box of two bearded wise men in kimonos playing the game. I thought this was inexpensive and I liked the painting so I bought a few. Next to it was a small translucent plastic box with white and black stones. A Chinese gentleman stood beside me, pointed to it and said, "Now, that is a very difficult game." I looked at him silently. He smiled and left. I asked an employee, "How much does that cost." It was \$13.00. I thought that would be too much to spend on three or four sets, so I left. I began looking it up on the web and I found the American Go Foundation (AGF) and a description like the one below:

⁴²⁹ Go Proverbs http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Go_proverb

Go was developed 4,000 years ago in China and is played today by millions in Japan, China and Korea. Thanks to the massive popularity of the Hikaru no Go manga in Shonen Jump, US kids are flocking to learn this timeless game. The rules are so simple they can be taught in a few minutes, but it can take a lifetime to master the game. Skilled play requires mathematical analysis, tactical insight, intuition, and a sense of poetry. Like the Eastern martial arts, Go teaches concentration, balance, and discipline. Respect for one's opponent and mutual appreciation of each other's ideas are a fundamental part of the game.

Go is considered to be the deepest game of strategy in the world - even greater than Chess. The greatest computer in the world can beat the world champion in Chess, but a strong 9 year-old student training to be a professional Go player beats the best program in the world every year while giving the computer an enormous handicap!

Five minutes to learn, a lifetime to master, studying Go is known to improve students grades, self-esteem, and visual perception. A well-developed handicap system makes Go enjoyable for players of different skill levels.⁴³⁰

We discovered that AGF had grants to start clubs in schools and non-profit organizations. We applied and received a starter kit which included a book written by Yasutoshi Yasuda, a 9th Dan Professional Go player.⁴³¹ The book was about the therapeutic uses of Go to prevent violence in the schools and to improve the social skills of vulnerable populations (the elderly and individuals with handicaps). Most importantly, it discussed Yasutoshi's initial motivation to act after hearing a news report of a child who committed suicide. Yasutoshi felt called upon to use his Go playing skills to address the social malaise of Japan. He embarked on an impressive organizational effort, first in Japan and then in the West that started with his response to a social interpellation by the voice of the deceased boy. His voice arose through the crevices of a highly controlled media and ruptured the authority of the official discourse by counterpoising it to the logic of sentiment.

It was around the beginning of 1993. I was only half watching the news on TV when a short item caught my attention: "A junior high school student playing in the gymnasium somehow caught his neck in a rope and died." This so shocked me that I felt as if I had been hit on the head. How on earth could a boy of junior high school age be killed by playing with a rope? It had to be a case of bullying, which was becoming a serious problem in many schools. The boy must have been driven to suicide by being attacked by bullies. Surely anyone could see that. Why was this

⁴³⁰ E-mail sent to me by Paul Barchilon. AGF Director. 9/2011

⁴³¹ Yasuda, Yasutoshi (2000) Go as Communication. Tosho-bunka Publisher.

report presented in this way? Then, I heard a voice in my head, as if the boy was appealing to me, “There is something wrong with Japan.”...The voice crying out “Something is wrong!” could have come from my own heart.⁴³²

Yasutoshi’s words reveal the ever-underlying awareness in subjects of the contradictions between what is said in the public script to maintain an imaginary of a smoothly running society and the reality of social oppression subsumed within it. There is a dark insidious power dynamic that tears at the innocence and self-esteem of children to the point of leading some to give up on the re-energizing potential of life. Yasutoshi could not remember what led him to act. He admitted that the problem was not new in Japan, but he suddenly felt an urgency to do more than merely popularize the game and act indifferently.

I still don’t understand why I was so shocked by the news in the schools, or why I decided to start such a program all of the sudden. At some point, I became obsessed by the notion that I had to do something about the social problem...Children need something that will bring them face to face together.⁴³³

Despite his understanding of the seriousness of the problem, he faced many obstacles, just the same, when confronting the school bureaucracy and the overworked and unmotivated teachers.

Even with the support of the Board of Education, however, getting the teachers at the kindergarten to agree was another matter entirely. Each kindergarten had its own curriculum, and the teachers there are extremely busy. Furthermore, they knew nothing about Go.⁴³⁴

An opportunity came about, with the transfer of the principal and a political and structural opening was created for Yasutoshi’s intervention. His “craft knowledge” of the game, immersed in the common understanding of human relations, had empowered him with a nagging sense of justice and helped him prepare the groundwork for such an opportunity.

Principals of kindergartens are transferred every five years, and it so happened at this time Mr. Terumi Tamura, who is a Go player, became principal of the Shonai Town Kindergarten.⁴³⁵

⁴³² Yasuda, p. 1

⁴³³ Yasuda, p. 2

⁴³⁴ Yasuda, p. 3

⁴³⁵ Yasuda, p. 11

Through Go, also called “shudan” (hand talk) and Igo (the surrounding game) Yasutoshi came to realize, upon observing how the children crowded around the board to see their classmates play, that it went beyond surrounding stones to calling forth and creating a space for friendship, camaraderie and mutual teaching.

The psycho-social benefits of the game as revealed by Yasutoshi, led us to begin a pilot program in ALAS in conjunction with the Karate theme of mutual respect, learning and teaching. In addition, there was a manga about it that could motivate the children to read more. Its relation to Chinese and Japanese cultures reinforced the transnational emphasis we were trying to promote in the program. I also used it in my social work classes to relate its strategy and the collaboration dynamics that resulted from it to analyze the links between interpersonal practice and community organization.

In order to accomplish our goal, I split the class into two teams according to their original seating positions. Minority students tend to sit together (Latinos and African Americans) and so do Euro-American students with a few exceptions. I only gave the most basic rules. I told them that they could play anywhere on the board with the objective of capturing one stone from the opposing team. One of the most important observations made in the class was that the minority students inevitably won. This occurred every time I taught the course. The reason was that the minority students (regardless of their ethnic or racial origin) would consult each other, whereas the Euro-American students tended to work independently and frown upon the conversations of the other side. During our review of the game, all the students were fascinated by the cultural patterns that were revealed in class. This was a perfect opening to discuss the relevance of community organizing in social work; a much-needed discussion since students commonly join the profession because of their exclusive focus on interpersonal practice. I demonstrated how the more stones are connected, the stronger the group becomes, but its rigidity increases. On the other hand, the smaller the group, the more mobile, flexible and creative it can be in terms of strategy, but its propensity to be surrounded and attacked is greater. The students gave the exercise very positive reviews.

With regards to ALAS sometime later, Paul Barchilon, the American Go Foundation Vice-President, e-mailed me about a school in Mexico that was promoting

Go through Art and tournaments to raise funds for the Japanese survivors of the earthquake. I communicated with their representative Siddhartha Avila, and asked him if he would be willing to collaborate with us on the AGF Spanish cartoon translations to give our children some practical and motivating reasons to practice their Spanish writing skills. He agreed. After I met Denise I asked her if she would be interested in working with us and starting a club in her school. This would be a way to begin to address her students' interest in Japanese culture and to give them a fun and therapeutic after-school activity. She agreed as well. At this time I received an e-mail from Lorraine Gutierrez about the Arts of Citizenship Public Scholarship Grant. We decided to apply for it and were accepted into the next stage.

My faculty mentor visited AOA and participated in the grant design discussions. It was in these meetings that the severity of the tension faced by the AOA teachers began to be voiced, mostly by the two non-Spanish speaking members who feared losing their jobs. Now that AOA was going to implement their immersion program the District required their teachers to be bilingually certified. The two teachers did not provide feedback for the grant, but they did tend to voice their frustration with DPS and the school administration.

In the meantime we completed the grant, the faculty advisor provided the final edits and submitted it. We attended the grant information meeting with other faculty and community collaborators since this was a requirement of the grant prior to its submission. Our group was one of two applicants who brought their community collaborators with them. The others were faculty who had not managed to do so. We were on "live feed" via the internet and our discussions about the difficulties and benefits of doing community-based research were broadcasted with comments from audiences in other institutions.

At one point an associate dean from the School of Social work stated that communities often found it problematic that researchers had funding for only three months. Other faculty voiced their concerns about the community not understanding the priorities of the researcher. I commented on the need to, first and above all, establish a relation of trust by working with the community on their needs since we were going in there for time-limited research. I talked about the idea of professional "humility" so

often discussed in social work. An administrator of the Grant stated at the end of the Conference when there was no time left to respond that “there is such a thing as too much humility” and alluded to the need to get “Our” research objectives met as well.

Before this, the Director of the Arts of Citizenship Program offered the AOA/ALAS group the microphone to present our project before the camera. Our work focused on teaching the youth critical theory to help them comprehend their lived experiences from the perspective of the social sciences while motivating them to read and write about their findings at higher academic levels. They would also have the opportunity to share their work with public audiences and would begin to build informal mentorship networks with universities across the nation to increase their possibilities for long-term academic success. The Director of the Arts of Citizenship Program congratulated us and stated that graduate students often come up with the most creative work because they are immersed in the latest research. Unfortunately we did not accept the microphone to present before the camera because Denise had stepped out for a minute and we wanted her to be there. The time ran out and we were unable to discuss our project over live feed.

Motivated to continue on with more force, we invited the American Go Foundation, Pipiolo Elementary School and the Director of the Museum Studies Program at the University of Michigan to be collaborators on the grant. In other words we strengthened what we had already been told was a strong proposal. The Director of the Museum Studies Program had been on a previous Board of the Arts of Citizenship Program and after reading our proposal said, “This is darn impressive.” He agreed to collaborate so we included him on the grant. We communicated with the Assistant Director throughout the grant writing process to make sure we were on track. When we finally submitted it, after a delay in their response to all applicants, they denied our proposal. I requested a meeting with them which our faculty advisor stated he could not attend. The Director and Assistant Director of the Arts of Citizenship Program stated that it was not clear in the “introductory paragraph” how our work was related to scholarship even though its relation to my dissertation was discussed throughout and there was extensive information on the work that the children were going to produce.

They did admit that our proposal had been the strongest in two of the three requirements; social justice and community collaboration.

I informed them that I was surprised about their decision given that we had received a very positive review from the Director of the Museum Studies Program who had been on their Board in previous years and that our faculty advisor had reviewed the grant as well before submitting it. This issue was never brought up by them or by the Assistant Director of the grant who had remained in contact with us. In fact, I looked at the grant that was approved for the Spanish Heritage Literacy Project” discussed in the previous chapter. It was funded by the Arts of Citizenship Program and it did not discuss the scholarly production in the first paragraph either. The Director stated that the requirements of evaluation had changed recently and that now they had to be very careful because the money coming from the University was distributed in larger sums to programs like “the Center for Educational Outreach (CEO) and the Ginsberg Center.” Upon hearing this, everything became clearer. In addition to the reappearance of CEO, another reason for their concern was probably the critical theory and the multi-university networking that our proposal was recommending that earned us a denial. With more expansive networks there was less control on their part and more accountability required. “The ***** Literacy Project, “ although more culturally committed than the World Languages collaboration between the U of M School of Education and AAPS, it did not have an emphasis of social critique and emancipatory theory.

The Assistant Director then informed me that a problem with our grant was that it focused “too much on social justice” and that “social justice” was only one of many components down the list subsumed under public scholarship. She then asked, “Do you understand?” I responded that I did not since to us public scholarship was entirely about social justice, otherwise why not just do traditional scholarship? The Director looked down at the table and nodded silently in affirmation. I also informed them that AOA would be disappointed. They had made a great sacrifice to come to U of M for the information meeting when most other faculty did not have their community collaborators present as required by the grant. In addition, the AOA students and teachers had voiced, on many occasions, how they were being disregarded because the priorities and resources always went to African Americans. Again, the Director nodded

silently moving uncomfortably in his chair. It had been difficult to convince them to travel to U of M because the University of Michigan had a reputation for being arrogant, elitist and detached from the community. Again, the Director nodded silently in affirmation while looking down at the table. The Assistant Director became more irate as the conversation progressed.

Nevertheless, I thanked them for their comments and I asked them if they could provide them in writing so I could share them with AOA. This would help us improve our re-submission to other granting sources. The Assistant Director immediately asked where we were planning on applying and then informed me that they were not required to provide written comments. At this point the Director intervened and gave her a verbal authorization to do so. She would not let me keep the comments she had written by hand on our proposal. I e-mailed them thanking them for agreeing to send us the written comments and I copied AOA and the faculty advisor. We never received their comments. I met by chance with the Director at a talk in the History Department and soon after seeing me he stood up and leaned against (and to the side of) a column that divided the room where he was mostly hidden from view. He left shortly after. I e-mailed him some articles I found on the web about African American faculty who had been acknowledged for their community service and academic work and he did not answer.

My greatest fear was that being denied by the University of Michigan (more evidence for the Academy of the America's ongoing experiences of exclusion) that AOA, Pipiolo or AGF would become disillusioned and discontinue their participation. As I mentioned in the previous chapters, institutions carry great power of representation through their ascribed status. The denial did take a toll on our motivation and many of the teachers who formed part of the original committee did not remain. Part of the problem was also that they were receiving termination letters from DPS. Nevertheless, AGF, Pipiolo and Denise said they were willing to move ahead and so we began a pilot program with Pipiolo twice a month. The ALAS parents agreed to send their children with me to Detroit so we could join the AOA kids for Siddhartha's Go lessons. One of the parents, Lupe, told me that she informed her son's teacher that he would be missing school twice a month. She told him how important this activity was for her son's

cultural enrichment. I made sure they completed their school homework before the next day. His teacher gave permission and told her that she had all the right to support her son's heritage language and that as a parent she knew what was best for him.

Ella dijo que yo estaba en todo mi derecho de hacer todo lo mejor para él y si yo creía que eso era bueno para el niño, dijo que ella estaba de acuerdo y que era perfecto. Así dijo.⁴³⁶

Through SKYPE Siddhartha taught the AOA and ALAS kids Go at lunch time on Wednesdays. The Pipiolo children practiced their English and the ALAS/AOA students practiced their Spanish and strengthened their transnational networks when they talked to them. AOA received their GO starter kit and Denise purchased the study manuals with the plan to have the children become teachers and Go club starters in other schools beginning January of 2012. Siddhartha visited us over the summer for four days at his own expense and cemented relations with us. ALAS provided room and board and we took him on a tour of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Frankenmuth. After Siddhartha's workshop at AOA, Denise and Mark Duffy (an AOA teacher) invited us and the ALAS families out for lunch. Siddhartha, Alma (a Pipiolo administrator) and I accompanied Denise on a tour of Detroit. She showed us the different schools that were being added or renovated by DPS and discussed the situation of AOA. We ended our visit with her by walking on the Detroit River Walk.

Siddhartha and Alma talked to us about the educational situation in Mexico as a result of a PowerPoint created by Lupe's 8 year-old son Michael and Allen, his other ALAS friend. Their topic was Michoacán, Michael's mother's place of birth. While teaching over SKYPE, Siddhartha asked Michael about his Mexican origins. Since he did not know, Siddhartha asked him to learn about them and so, we set out to help him present before AOA and Pipiolo through SKYPE. This turned out to be a wonderful opportunity given that Michael's reading skills in Spanish are still quite basic so we enlisted the AOA kids who took turns helping him read. The AOA and ALAS youth were elated when they heard a hearty applause over SKYPE from the Pipiolo children. The PowerPoint and future public scholarship work created by the children will be

⁴³⁶ **Translation:** She said that I had all the right to do the best for my child and if I thought this was best for the boy then she said she agreed and that it was perfect. That is what she said.

posted on a site designed by Siddhartha. We have named our collaboration the “Cultural Ambassador Program.”



31. Siddhartha's and Alma's visit to AOA (Detroit) and ALAS (Ann Arbor) August 2011

Awareness of social discrimination, political openings, access to networks of power added to passion and persistence characterize the efforts of ALAS and the Academy of the Americas. The Academy of the Americas arose during a political opening directed primarily to African American desegregation and a focus on Afro-centrism. The exclusive categorizations based on race were partially disrupted when Deborah McGriff, an open-minded African American educational reformist, strongly supported the policy on “Empowerment and Schools of Choice.” ALAS arose at time when the University of Michigan was experimenting with alternative community-based research models thanks to Latino and other faculty from the School of Social Work and the School of Public Health. Both were initially supported by an increasing influx of

grants. AOA benefitted from large Title I and Title VII grants, school bussing, community support, parental involvement and strong research based on other successful models of language immersion. ALAS benefitted from immigrant Latino community support, small Ginsberg Center community service grants, University of Michigan tutors and the originally African American centered William Monroe Trotter House.

When the Academy of the Americas was created in 1992, although there was some growing awareness of Latinos as competitors for funds and other resources, it does not seem like African Americans considered us a serious threat in the context of the DPS. Our new status as the largest and fastest growing minority in the nation, however, has created some serious exclusionary backlashes towards the educational prospects of our youth. This chapter has discussed several educational prioritizations and interventions that exclude Latinos from the opportunities promised by the highly touted official discourses on diversity. Administrators from the Academy of the Americas as well as their teachers and even students have complained of being treated as if they were “invisible” or “non-existent.” They have experienced several incidents where they have been removed from resource priority lists, their staff has been decreased and they have had to wait inordinate amounts of time to receive the most basic services (wall painting and toilet paper).

With regards to Washtenaw County, a clear example of this is a former ALAS and PALMA student who, at his young age, was able to become aware of his token inclusion into the Rising Scholar Bridge Program.

I think I am the only Latino in the program. They had a meeting with me because my grade had gone down to a B- and let me know that if I did not bring it up, I could be dismissed from the program. That made me mad because I knew other students who were black who had lower grades than me and they never got that talk.

Our first field trip is to Africa and now they are asking for social security numbers so we can take a required lecture for that class even if we are not going to Africa. The program has been great for me academically. I have been able to go to workshops at the University and everything. The only thing is that it is geared mostly to African Americans⁴³⁷.

⁴³⁷ Interview with Rising Scholar Latino youth. 4/2011, 6/2011

Although the parents gave me permission to include this information, they were fearful of the potential consequences of expulsion for their son because they spoke to me.

In the 2010-2011 academic year two of my Eastern Michigan social work students did a short presentation on the GEAR UP Program at Eastern Michigan University and explained how the Director who is also African American, justified having a mostly African American student body. They stated that they were targeting the students in schools that had been defined as high risk. The two students who interviewed the Director chose not ask why the Latino students who were at risk were not targeted. They said they could always “ask the Director at a different time.” One of the interviewers was Latino and the other stated being of minority descent. Martin called the GEAR UP Program at U of M and received similar information. Although they stated that they target “all youth,” regardless of ethnic or racial background, they do so within particular schools chosen because of the percentage of academically “at risk” students. They could not answer why there were no Latino students in their program and they were not able to inform Martin where he could find evaluations of the success of their interventions. Martin received similar responses from the Comprehensive Studies program at University of Michigan.

Traditionally there has been a strong coalition between black and white administrative structures that have benefitted from their alliance in the representations of diversity. Examples include the strong resistance of Ann Arbor public schools and the School of Education at the University of Michigan to create heritage language programming despite the wealth of research from education, social work and the social sciences about the importance of the native language in identity formation, emotional resilience and cognitive development. The Ann Arbor ESL Community Advisory Committee actively resisted, under the direction of Lee Ann Dickinson Kelley, the inclusion of immigrant community participation in the development of their ESL geared programs.

ALAS and the AOA have benefitted from the same official discourses of diversity inclusion as those of the University and public school administrations. Their definitions and applications of them, however, have been more expansive for ALAS and AOA because they do not view the world in two colors as revealed in the words of the former

PMCH employee. A more diverse administration and constituency characterize both organizations and, in the case of ALAS, the curriculum reflects an inclusion of cultural and social science themes that related to both. As new members from other ethnicities join the organization, the curriculum continues to expand to reflect their needs and so do our cultural activities.



32. Siddhartha, Alma and the ALAS membership playing Go. August 2011

In the case of ALAS our minimum dependence on outside resources has provided us with more freedom to exercise our philosophy and critical judgment. In other words, it has been more difficult to dismiss our presence despite multiple attempts by various administrators. AOA, because it is embedded in the system, may be more vulnerable to encroachments by school administrations. As a larger institution, it could also garner greater force than ALAS through the community if it decides to mobilize that power and that of the press. Detroit is rich in Latino organizations which would most certainly

rally to their aid. The impact of ALAS is mostly in the hidden script. It works through the consciousness of its present and past members and supporters and through the informal and semi-formal networks it continues to build. Its greatest influences have revealed themselves in the high school graduation of all those who were members for at least one year. We already have former ALAS members who are in college. We have also observed a greater political activism among Latinos who, after we demonstrated that it was necessary and important to march for immigrant rights, joined other marches.

Some social action accomplishments do not require large masses of people, but only the prospect of their possibility. Our intervention in the schools to protect the rights of inclusion of undocumented immigrants only required creating the awareness among school administrators that we were knowledgeable about what they were doing. It did not take a large number of protestors to spread the news that there was a health plan available for immigrants. It only required the use of informal networks that worked rapidly and efficiently. Immigrants by their very definition embody interstitiality and they use this position cleverly to gain as many resources as they are able. As stated in the anonymous Go proverb they have “learn[ed] to play under the stones.”⁴³⁸ For one, as revealed in the interviews, they rely on multicultural networks for survival as opposed to other oppressed groups such as African Americans who often see power in enclosure. These strategies are used with service seeking as well, as in the case of Lisandra who chose to take advantage of the programs provided by PALMA and ALAS simultaneously.

The small size of ALAS and its inclusive philosophy allows it to learn and change to accommodate the growing needs of its members. This provides it a certain level of adaptability while maintaining a general community supported structure that provides it with continuity. The critical education allied to action which is encouraged and mentored in ALAS has greatly contributed to the personal growth of several of its members. On the one hand, the expansion of the organization to include members of the global community such as the Somalis, Chinese, Peruvians, Tibetans, Croatians, African Americans and the brain injury survivors disrupted preconceptions of “abnormality” and difference. By so doing, it led to broader spaces for acceptance, validation and

⁴³⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Go_proverb

intersubjective communication, taking perhaps the first steps towards Bourne's cosmopolitanism.

The experience that several of the current and former ALAS members had through their participation in the research process (i.e. the IRB requirements) allowed them to overcome hurdles that were difficult even for academics. In effect they experienced a hierarchical inversion, which, although temporary, provided them with a University of Michigan certificate, a tangible symbol of their accomplishments. This is an enabling experience that may pave the way for future personal triumphs. Through their discussion of critical theory, the community interviewers were able to see themselves through each other's eyes and began to confront their own prejudices and preconceptions related to race and gender.

Another example includes a former ALAS board member who had begun her GED studies in the organization and then left prior to completing them. She continued on her own several years later and earned her certificate which enabled her to enroll in a community college. Finally Lupe, is a current ALAS member. She arrived to our program with her seven year-old son. She was feeling very insecure and vulnerable. She has a sixth grade education which she completed many years ago. After spending three hours with me discussing some basic concepts of critical theory such as "hegemony," "reification," and "alienation," she attended my Eastern Michigan University Class as a panel member and applied these terms correctly and with passion to her own lived experiences.

This left my university students baffled since they had been struggling with these concepts all term long. From her and from my memories of the women of El Salvador I came to understand that learning occurs best when it is practically applicable and when it liberates the most subjugated experiences through the act of naming them. Those who have been denied an education are apt to do anything to acquire it. Those who have experienced education as a tool of oppression and who have been demeaned by it, resist it. Those who have received its symbolic rewards without its substance feel entitled to its validation without the effort that the symbol represents.

Lupe came to ALAS to learn English, and yet she learned more than this. She became and advocate for her son's right to speak Spanish and maintain strong ties with

his grandparents in Mexico. She confronted the school psychologist by herself, with her limited English and informed her, despite the psychologist's demands that she leave her son with English speakers in order to assimilate him, that it was the school's responsibility to teach him how to read. Her son spent eight hours a day in school, "What were they doing wrong?" She asked. Her son would learn Spanish at home and in ALAS. Today Lupe is studying for her GED and her son has begun to learn how to read and write in both languages in less than a year. In this way, the experience of ALAS has transformed all of us through our transnationality in our common resistance against the oppressive nature of internal and external colonialism.

Our trans-city and trans-national collaboration with AOA, AGF and Pipiolo offers great potential for strengthening our bonds of peace and mutual learning. Many of the comments of disruptions within the family and social alienation due to neighborhood violence mentioned by the AOA kids can be ameliorated through these growing networks of children and adults in other countries who act as additional role models, mentors and potential liaisons to other higher education institutions. This and the future involvement of the youth in inter-subjectively engaged research is an intervention to which both social work and engaged anthropology can contribute.

In the next and concluding chapter we will include a summary of findings and the contribution of home ethnography. We will explore the role of the corporatization and colonialist practices of higher education in terms of the interaction between applied anthropology, reformist social work and the deficit of minority mentorship in education. Finally, we will make recommendations for further research and for what we believe should be the emancipatory and transnational role of the University with regards to anthropology, social work and education in a truly inclusive environment of diversity.

Chapter 6

Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

This dissertation points to how cosmopolitan transnational subjects, those who find themselves in the interstices of ideologies and hierarchical structures (within and between class-based and other forms of status validation), are the most capable of being transformative agents as their critical awareness develops into praxis. The most potent example of this is revealed through the role women and minorities who, despite their position of substantial patriarchal and racially constructed subordination have played primary roles in taking surreptitious advantage of official discourses to create far reaching emancipatory and inclusive spaces by opening the doors of education to themselves, their children and to future generations of marginalized youth. These are the subjects who have the potential for combatting the highly toxic effects of historical repression which, as demonstrated in this thesis, have even permeated and been reproduced in many minority power circles in some of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning as well as in the generalized public educational system.

Its stylistic contribution is intimately tied to the development of its contents. By including, not only the voices which I have chosen for the central text, but the comments by its participants in the margins, ruptures of possibility are created through the presentation of confluences and differences which are transformed by the passing and clashing of different historical periods. For example, the responses of today's community members to the words of the priest from the early 90s in El Salvador reveal a level of common understanding that crosses the boundary of time. It also alerts us, however, to the different subject positions held by the women in a male hierarchy that is simultaneously co-constructed and resisted to different degrees. This brings about the interpellation of the women as subordinate subjects through the words of the priest and leads them to see themselves through his eyes in the process of double vision discussed in

this thesis. The double consciousness, in turn, enables them to oppose him. Thus, a central contribution of this study is the understanding of the emancipatory power of participant voices, which through their interwoven presence disrupt my own authorial privilege and our complicitous hegemonic discourses of oppression. In this way, participant and authorial voices in the analysis are used to diminish power imbalances.

This research is a tribute to colonized subjects who, by sharing their lives, have helped us see how the notion of “exceptionality” is constructed and reframed in their struggle for social justice in relation to specific socio-historical circumstances. It addresses the potentially emancipatory effect of Freirean pedagogy if maintained over the long run. The initial stage of this process has to do with a growing awareness of the self in relation to the perpetuation of wider systemic dynamics of oppression that may result in feelings of guilt, defensiveness or escapism if it is interrupted.

Another important contribution is its analysis of how educational bureaucracies that spend substantial amounts of money creating an imaginary of diversity and inclusiveness have very active, powerful, but well hidden mechanisms of discriminatory exclusion and repression. If those of us charged with intervention responsibilities are not careful, we will end by reproducing the same inequalities that that we profess to oppose.

Understanding Interstices: The Relevance of a Historical and Transnational Analysis

Through the discussion and practice of intersubjectivity we are confronted with the nature and processes of historical relevance in the production of agency and emancipatory possibilities. The relevance of Puerto Rico as a colony of the United States in the context of education lies in the early and current American imperialist policies geared towards the democratization and “melting pot” conversion of Puerto Ricans much as it is with the immigrant populations in the United States. The nation building push towards American “democratization” in Puerto Rico continues to this day on the mainland. During the early to mid part of the twentieth century the English Only policy on the Island was founded on the erasure of the pre-existing legal-economic and Spanish-based educational system. Similarly, the dismantling of bilingual education programs that validate (even if minimally) the language and culture of the students in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Detroit public school systems and the resistance to support Spanish for

heritage speakers, reveals a continued attempt to put the melting pot ideology into practice with the goal of so called assimilation. However, the actual results of this policy as seen in the academic failure of immigrant students and the disruption of family and community ties are of great concern.

The resistance to these policies in Puerto Rico was carried out on various fronts: the highly educated were instrumental in the unmasking of the political deception carried out through official discourses. In the meanwhile, the students and the teachers refused to carry out the policy while feigning compliance. The resistance in Ann Arbor, Detroit and Ypsilanti has occurred primarily through ALAS, AOA and those families who have made efforts to maintain the language and culture of their children through informal education despite lacking institutional support.

In the context of the Island, primary political ruptures came along with the New Deal efforts during and after WWII which attempted, on the one hand, to deal with the excesses of poverty and on the other to demonstrate to the world that humanitarian and democratic processes could lead to a social advancement that outweighed any benefits communism could offer. The plan to turn Puerto Rico into a “showcase of democracy” was an attempt to create an imaginary of corporate sophistication for the world to see the wellbeing of their “citizens.” The 1965 educational conference in the United States also exalted the benefits of corporatization by actively constructing a historical amnesia that disregarded Bourne and Kallen’s call for a transnational cosmopolitan education and the well-documented devastating effects of the colonial interventions in other countries and with Indian populations on the mainland. AOA and ALAS also arose during important, although less overarching political ruptures. AOA was founded as a result of a push to create Afrocentric schools of choice and ALAS resulted from the experimentation in higher education with participatory community organizing and research models. All were infused with a strong public rhetoric of agency and empowerment for marginalized populations. They have also been characterized, however, by substantial contradictions between theory and practice on the part of the sponsoring educational systems.

Thus, the U.S. colonizing policy did not only affect Puerto Ricans on the Island, it also extended to minority children on the mainland. AOA benefitted from initial resources only to find that whatever it secured was under threat of being taken away.

ALAS, after being given an award by the University for bringing the community to its services, was completely neglected by administrators when it sought their support for maintenance and further development. However, they have both endured beyond much better funded and privileged programs despite the innumerable odds they have confronted. This is due, to a large extent, to the transnational leadership of its women who have found themselves in the interstices between an elite education and a subordinate gender and ethnic status.

The life stories of the Puerto Rican intellectuals who gained access to Harvard as a result of the New Deal Policies revealed crucial emancipatory interstices that help us understand the conditions that made it possible for ALAS' and AOA's resilience. While the Puerto Rican Harvard students were studying in the United States, they experienced the double consciousness described by Du Bois, Fanon and Freire as they saw themselves as colonized subjects through the eyes of the majority. This was an alienating experience which, ironically, strengthened their sense of ethnic identity and led them to return to Puerto Rico and assume their leadership roles in the legal and the educational systems. Their education and loyalty to Puerto Rican culture enabled them to resist assimilationist discourses and practices through a similar impression management used to create allegiance to the idea of the showcase of democracy. This is evident in Jaime Benitez' words (the University of Puerto Rico Chancellor from the 1940s to the 60s) that the Spanish language was not a political issue at the time, but it could very well become one if the "English only" policy continued to be enforced in the educational system. The power of Benitez's threat lay in the potential for a national revolt which would demonstrate the fallacy of the image we, as Puerto Ricans were actively complicit in portraying, that of an advanced and self-sufficient democratic and autonomous state. The disruption of this image would, in effect, put into question the so-called "benevolence" of a capitalist democracy.

Thus, the strengthening of the University of Puerto Rico at this time was crucial in creating the spaces necessary for the development of a Puerto Rican intellectual middle-class that would reinforce a pre-existing national identity, while, ironically, at the same time, persecuting the "independentistas" and instituting the educational structures funded by the United States. This led to the policies that tie Puerto Rico to the mainland

in the present such as the No Child Left Behind Act and the discourses about inclusive diversity. Both portray a beneficial interest in education that in practice proves to be highly deleterious. Both AOA and ALAS have suffered the effects of this Act. AOA, as a public institution, has been driven by the demands and disciplinary repercussions of NCLB while ALAS has had to deal with the loss of self-esteem exhibited by minority children and their lower academic levels due to the Act's prioritization on standardized testing which ignores cultural differences and learning needs of its students.

The main purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. It rests on four main principles. The first one is accountability for results in grades 3-8 through standardized yearly testing, the provision of test results to parents, citizens, educators and administrators through annual report cards on school performance. This method of obtaining accountability is based on the idea that all children learn the same way and excludes all other methods of assessment. Furthermore, it is based on a neo conservative idea that there is a canon of knowledge that all children should obtain in a democracy.

The second is the creation of greater flexibility at state and local levels with regards to the use of funding. This appears to be beneficial in giving more say to the local levels that are in direct contact with the schools. However, it reduces the requirements for accountability because 50% of the funds can be allocated without asking for permission and without having to explain why, so that it actually increases the danger of fund misuse. The third is the expansion of options for parents of children from disadvantaged backgrounds (the provision to allow parents to move their children to other schools if the school is failing). This Act is not culturally or ethnically sensitive and it blames schools and teachers for failures that often are not their fault. In giving parents the option of moving their children to another school, the community schools instead of receiving help are dismantled disrupting community ties and making children travel unnecessarily. Finally, the fourth purports to strengthen teacher quality, but actually blames them. Furthermore, requiring excellent teachers in every classroom by 2005 has proven to be impossible.

The NCLB Act has already been amended with unsuccessful results and President Obama is advocating another revision, but one that continues its focus on standardized

testing. NCLB has been implemented in Puerto Rico as well under the direction of the New Progressive Party Government with greater dire results. This is due to the fact that often students have been left without teachers in key subjects ranging from six months to years. There is a lack of materials and no diagnostic testing is given at the beginning of the year to measure what students have learned. In addition, NCLB has led to a vast number of school closures and undue pressure on teachers and administrators. NCLB is based on a neoconservative philosophy as exemplified, for example, by William Bennet who states that there is a classical canon that all students must learn and that schooling is based on the retention of information.⁴³⁹ Emancipatory education that focuses on the local culture and life experiences of the students is opposed because personal and community experience are considered divisive. It is believed that it poses a threat to the unity of the American nation. ALAS and AOA, through their emphasis on heritage language maintenance create spaces within otherwise alienating educational experiences that enable children to become agents in their own learning through validation and the reinforcement of self esteem. Moreover, the networks created by ALAS, AOA and Pipiolo have the potential of expanding this emancipatory work to international and global levels through the American Go Foundation and through professional organizations like international social work and anthropology organizations focused on education.

Critical intersubjectively engaged research is emancipatory and values the cultural differences and strengths that students bring to the classroom. It recognizes that students have different ways of learning and should be taught and assessed through various means. NCLB does not take into account the racist and discriminatory practices that surround education systemically and locally. By focusing on these levels of analysis, this research is able to create a more complex view of the interactional dynamics that need to be addressed in a revision of NCLB if it is continued. For example, the two-way migration that transnationals often experience with the United States and the migration of those who decide to stay on the mainland, makes them subject to racist dynamics that are often more overtly repressive than those in their home countries. Cultural adaptation requires

⁴³⁹ Fletcher, Scott. (2000) *Education and Emancipation: Theory and Practice in a New Constellation*. Teachers College Press.

culturally competent institutional measures to attend to the exploitation and discrimination of these minority populations.

Diversity in Michigan is being defined as African American. Latinos are made invisible as revealed in the higher education bridge programs, the neglect of the Academy of the Americas in Detroit, and in the exclusion of Latinos from the Ann Arbor Public Schools and university needed heritage language programs. Despite the discourses and representations of inclusion which abound in the quotes from the various University of Michigan Departments and the Public School System, for example, the Academy of the Americas, up to this point, has survived the most vicious onslaughts by the Detroit Public School administration to the point of stealing their grants, denying them resources such as toilet paper and paper towel, resisting building renovations and delaying curriculum appropriate materials. DPS has had, in effect, given a deaf ear to their concerns. Likewise ALAS has experienced multiple rejections by the same programs that initially purported to value it, but, through the agency of its members, it continues to promote educational equity.

Like the New Deal policies in Puerto Rico which were originally instituted to spur American commercial and political interests, but ended by presenting opportunities for the ascent of the Puerto Rican middle class elite, the Academy of the Americas arose at a time when innovative educational policies were being created for African American desegregation and not for the benefit of Latino inclusion. The spaces for agency which were created by the design team and perpetuated by the teachers resulted from the interstitial position of the members of the design team who were transnational themselves either through heritage or as a result of having traveled and lived in Latin America. As a result of their knowledge of institutional processes and opportunities they were actively aware of the funding options that became available and they were organized in such a way as to successfully take advantage of them despite the incredible odds.

The teachers have maintained spaces for agency and institutional survival through their mentoring of each other and their students, to the point where several students mentioned wanting AOA to become a university. The graduates return to show their teachers how they are succeeding and in turn, the teachers write recommendations for those AOA students who are about to enter the university. African American instructors

who have become critically aware of the injustices towards Latino youth have left Afrocentric schools in Detroit to offer their support and to help validate the history and culture of the children. These are the necessary transnational ties that need to be nurtured and expanded for a humane society.

Similarly, ALAS arose at a time of an epistemological shift in the University of Michigan that was not only characterized by postmodern thought and critical theory in the social science departments, but which in social work led to experimentation with participatory research methods. My own interstitial position as a minority between two hierarchically distinct departments (Anthropology and Social Work) led me to seek emancipatory opportunities that would at once, validate marginalized Latinos and myself. It was the existing opportunity created by several faculty members within the School of Social Work that enabled me to use the emancipatory discourses and practices they were discussing in contrast to the traditional research and community service provisions of the University exemplified by the Ginsberg Center, for example.

Subjects make use of the official discourses of democracy, equity and inclusiveness by appropriating the few niches that use, tokenize or overlook them inadvertently. Examples of this include the Latino youth from the Rising Scholars program who faced several obstacles to continue in the program despite meeting its qualifications. Program representatives demanded more of him than of others and threatened him with dismissal creating a greater anxiety and possibility for failure. Despite this, he was able to persist in a program that was primarily directed to African Americans because of his endurance and parental influences which demonstrated experience in managing the deceptions of the official discourses and their inconsistencies. This ability, again, was gained through their experiences as transnationals. They were immigrants who had to learn and adjust to competing socio-cultural demands.

The Creation of Spaces for Agency

The use of public discourses to gain entrance into the higher echelons of education is important. But there are times, like those experienced by ALAS when the institutions and their representatives charged with our inclusion, all but close the doors. It is here where network building in hidden spaces create the possibility for resistance.

Sometimes, however, fortuitous opportunities open the way for awareness and action as is the case when the carefully guarded knowledge of social service or educational programs reaches those it is not originally intended to serve.

An example of the creation of emancipatory spaces is the acquisition and power of knowledge and political awareness is the case of Lupe who, after choosing to join ALAS to help her son maintain his Spanish, she confronted the school psychologist by herself to defend that right. In these cases there were different types of interpellations that through their validation, provided the support to resist. In my case, with social services, I was interpellated as a professional. This gave me access to a guarded space. In the case of Lupe the interpellation she experienced from ALAS and from the school teachers who validated her right as a parent to do what was best for her son, gave her the strength to confront what, from the perspective of many immigrants, was a daunting foe.

The critical intersubjectively engaged research process carried out in this dissertation, was in and of itself a creator of spaces for agency that benefitted from the transnationality of its participants and from the interstitial position of key players within the University. For example, the IRB representative was a person who was well versed in qualitative research and knew that the IRB was based on the structure and expectations of the medical model. Her interest in moving to a research position allowed her to work with us to find non-traditional ways to expand the parameters of inclusion to community members who did not have the standard qualifications as researchers. Through this opportunity, the community interviewers were able to push through the standard barriers of academia successfully, transforming the process and requirements enough to enable inclusivity, while still abiding by the ethical requirements and procedures of University sponsored research. The community interviewers, through our creative adaptation to the PEERS educational format were able, again, to create a space for inclusion by changing what would normally be individualized instruction to community-based learning which was more culturally relevant to them.

The emancipatory process of research based on the critical engagement of Freirean theory and of each other led to a burgeoning transformative awareness of the participants with regards to our complicity in the perpetuation of discriminatory and hierarchically-based practices. This awareness and the increasing knowledge of the

contradictions between official discourses of inclusion as opposed to the actual opportunities offered by the educational system led us to consider our potential future role in the education of our children. This was demonstrated in the comments of one of the community interviewers who discussed how her increased awareness would lead her to think more carefully about her role as educator in the lives of her future children.

Policies that Require Revision

The policies that need revision include No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and those which support the corporatization of higher education institutions. The NCLB focus on passing tests undermines the holistic learning that is necessary for a child's development of critical thinking skills. The tests that are required are insensitive to cultural differences and provide only one way of assessing a child's development disregarding the evidence based research of Howard Gardner, for example, who established that children have different ways of learning.⁴⁴⁰ NCLB, in addition, is deficit and punishment-based. It leads to school closings, teacher dismissal and promotion reprisals—all the ingredients for illegal acts such as those reported by Ann Arbor.com news regarding a superintendent who made a teacher crawl under a desk for getting low scores. Similarly, other teachers in the Southern United States were reported for “doctoring” the results of the results to escape punishment. NCLB is attempting to ingrain the melting pot ideology in minorities when, as discussed by Bourne and Kallen, the most that they can expect is to become alienated specters of who they were: hyphenated Americans.

The NCLB ACT is based on an ideology of international competition, which in turn is based on an emphasis of corporate wealth. It creates an obstacle for the development of a consciousness that will allow us to live in mutual support in a global society. This requires more than technological knowledge; it requires the development of a moral and critical consciousness as citizens of the earth. This kind of education is derived from the humanities and social sciences, the very programs they are shutting down in England and State University of New York at Albany for example.⁴⁴¹ Finally,

⁴⁴⁰ Smith, Mark (2002). Howard Gardner, multiple intelligences and education. Infed. Ideas, Thinkers and Practice. <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/gardner.htm>

⁴⁴¹ “In an open letter in the November 7, 1997 *Albany Student Press*, French professor Helen Regueiro Elam wrote that the SUNY Albany administration “has transformed the university into a country club

NCLB prioritizes “truth” based on the privilege of those whom its proponents have defined as holders of academic authority. This has been done by excluding the wisdom generated by experience, the so-called “craft knowledge” which intellectuals often disregard.

The Implications for Anthropology and Social Work

In the past and present anthropology and social work, as demonstrated in this research, have been powerful tools of governmental oppression. Anthropologists have participated as military advisors during war time and have influenced negative governmental colonial policies through culturally biased works such as that of Oscar Lewis’ “culture of poverty” with regards to Puerto Rico. Similarly, social workers have been the medium through which genocidal interventions such as those of the Indian Boarding schools and the mass sterilization of Puerto Rican women have occurred. Despite this, both disciplines share a deep concern for justice as demonstrated in their codes of ethics. Education offers us the opportunity to make amends for these human rights violations imbedded in our history by collaborating and protecting the right of children to be educated equitably in a way that provides them with the tools to become the global, cosmopolitan and moral citizens described by Bourne and Kallen in the early nineteenth hundreds.

Engaged Anthropology offers a depth and breadth of critical analysis that is indispensable to achieve this goal. It enables the identification and understanding of the multiple discursive practices that are used to obscure ingrained systems and ideologies of oppression that we have discussed with relation to ALAS, the Academy of the Americas and Ann Arbor. Emancipatory social work is established on a long-term basis in a community of need and is guided by a philosophy of care as exemplified in women’s contribution to the education of their children despite the obstacles imposed by Latino patriarchal cultural patterns. Women in this research played a central role, not only as

. . . with utter disregard for intellectual values, pedagogical priorities, or the larger role of a university in a democratic culture." Students at SUNY Albany, she believes, are becoming processors of information rather than critical thinkers, as corporations increasingly dictate SUNY's curriculum.”
Zaidi, Ali (1999) Destruction and Resistance at SUNY. *Solidarity: A Socialist, Anti-Racist, Feminist Organization*. Sept-October. <http://www.solidarity-us.org/current/node/915>

community interviewers and organization members, but also as founders and maintainers of the Academy of the Americas and ALAS.

Emancipatory social work emphasizes the interpersonal relations of validation that are required to nurture the emotional and physical wellbeing of the communities in which we live and work. It functions at the various levels of intervention discussed by Payne such as the client/therapist, agency/professional and the political-social-ideological arenas and agents. However, the research methodology proposed transforms the traditional individualist reformist and reflexive-therapeutic discourses of social work through the lens of socialist collectivism. This research demonstrated a beginning emancipatory effect on all of these arenas. The critical theory discussions with the community interviewers reflected the process of engagement at the level of personal, organizational and institutional transformation as related to university research requirements and hierarchies and spaces for knowledge production. Thus, the exclusive IRB research protocols became more inclusive and the elite arena of the dissertation defense became more welcoming to alternative community voices and practices.

The contributions that we can offer, based on our collaborative research, regard the expansion and validation of transnational networks and identities in previously exclusive arenas of practice. Through intersubjective and critical engagement, an awareness is created that, if nourished over the long run, can lead to a liberating praxis that effectively opposes the educational oppression of our youth. For example, our insertion as apparently non-qualified members of the community into the halls of academia through the IRB disrupts ideas of privileged knowledge and opens transformative possibilities with previously excluded populations.

Another important and previously overlooked contribution of this research is our effort to continue to bring to light those things the “we all know” but actively “forget”: our complicity in the oppression of others such as our educational colleagues, other minorities, women, immigrants, the economically underprivileged and most of all our children. With No Child Left Behind and the mass corporatization of education there is a great need for the building of a coalition that includes the entire spectrum of the educational system, especially the university. More than the mere discussion about theory and oppression is needed in the classrooms. This, without an awareness of history

and the recurring patterns of oppression minimize the impact of their brutality. The identification of current oppression requires immediate praxis. Effective and culturally competent mentorship is essential at all levels of the educational hierarchy if we are to combat the current disparity in the achievement gap. It provides goal-focused guidance, validation and an important inclusion in professional networks while saving money for all participants and preventing frustration and alienation on the part of the students. It nourishes the hope in the learners that their educational experience will lead to professional and social success.

Social Work needs to fill the gap that is evident in its role within the educational system. Through its professional association it must lobby openly, actively and consistently against the hidden segregationist practices that lie beneath discourses of diversity in our educational institutions and in its own practices. More courses geared towards political understanding and action are required at all levels of the profession. Watered down courses that do not require students to read, learn how to write, engage in critical thinking or even attend class for the full academic term should be vehemently protested. Social workers cannot be agents of change if they are not taught how to think critically. Corporatization is taking a toll in all fields. University policies geared towards the massification of education and the reduction of time for degree completion are not doing it in a way that maintains the quality of education that was previously accessible to a privileged few. Emancipatory social workers and engaged anthropologists must advocate for a quality education for the masses, not the diploma mills that are currently being produced in our departments.

With regards to supporting the ascent of minority students in higher education, the joint doctoral program would benefit from better coordination between the partners. It should strive to help students find encouraging mentors who also help them structure their tenure as graduate students in a way that they complete their studies with teaching experience, publications in hand and networks in other universities. Social work should improve its visibility in the social sciences by having joint faculty and student conferences as well as research projects with Anthropology.

The university and its various schools and departments need to strive for more autonomy from the Government and corporations and must find other ways to fund their

projects that do not require compromising their mission to truly educate. This is the behavior that future generations of anthropologists and social workers will exemplify. Otherwise they will learn how to write what is expected of them with the niceties that help them climb, but in the classroom they will perpetuate the same kinds of inequality that are characteristic of our divided society. Anthropology and social work must strengthen their ties more equitably in an atmosphere of mutual validation. If this is accomplished, its graduates will teach and behave based on the models that they were taught. They will learn to transcend the theory of the classroom and progress to praxis with their academic community and others.

Anthropologists need to start examining their own practices not only in the way they write ethnographies, but in the way they treat their colleagues, students and immediate community members. Recently a barrage of e-mails were sent by offended social work/anthropology students complaining of a Department administrator's comments that she did not have time to include the program students in the directory. This was evidently the continuing theme of the halfie-anthropologist mentioned by Harry Wolcott in his discussion of anthropology's disdain for educational ethnographers. It is continued evidence of a hierarchization of knowledge that hinders the collaboration between the two disciplines in terms of theory and practice. More importantly, it hinders the possibility for emancipatory praxis.

The rallying activities and scholarly work of Bourne and Kallen against the melting pot ideologies and in favor of a universal cosmopolitanism which valued and emphasized the cultural contributions of immigrants should be our guiding framework in our struggle for a more equitable society. The feminist and postcolonial theories of Du Bois, Fanon, Césaire, and Maguire guide us into understanding how we are viewed by others in the context of global inequality and how others are viewed by us so that we can seek, in collaboration, a way to create a more equitable society of mutual validation through education. As stated by Henry Giroux;

The power of the existing dominant order does not merely reside in the economic or in material relations of power, but also in the realm of ideas and culture. This is why intellectuals must take sides, speak out, and engage in the hard work of debunking corporate culture's assault on teaching and learning, orient their teaching for social change, connect learning to public life, link knowledge to the operations of power...It also means stepping outside of the classroom and

working with others to create public spaces where it becomes possible to not only “shift the way people think about the moment, but potentially to energize them to do something differently in that moment.”...it is time for educators to mobilize collectively...by breaking down the illusion of unanimity that dominant power propagates while working diligently, tirelessly, and collectively to reclaim the promises of a truly global, democratic future.⁴⁴²

The collaboration between ALAS, the Academy of the Americas, Pipiolo Elementary School and the American Go Foundation is an example of this effort to reclaim a democratic future for our youth, regardless of the color of their skin or the language they speak.

The Contributions of this Research

Critical intersubjectively-engaged research extends the agency of participants from a limited understanding of educational oppression to a systemic one. In this process of inclusion, subjugating discourses (e.g. No Child Left Behind Act and discourses on Diversity), which appear to be emancipatory, are demystified. We bring to the fore the development of critical awareness among community interviewers and the possibility for action and transnational network formation. The inclusivity of ALAS which transcends distinctions of race, ethnicity and ability strengthen its resilience and potential for creative and long term emancipatory work from the crevices of institutional power.

Home-ethnography, the primary medium of this research, enables a better understanding of our complicity in the dynamics of oppression resulting from various forms of ascribed and acquired status. It clarifies the dynamics of exclusion and exploitation while also revealing the multiple interstices of resistance fluidly embedded within and across our class hierarchies and institutions. Home refers to those contexts from which we derive our livelihood and validation: our communities, schools, universities, neighborhoods and households among other things. Emotion takes on a privileged position as a source of knowledge and incentive to action. It leads us to question the source of pain when we realize the dislocation insights and experiential shifts mentioned by Hovland. The ethnography of home is infrequently studied due to its

⁴⁴² Giroux, Henry (2006) Chapter 8. The Giroux Reader. Paradigm Publishers. p. 215.

painful nature, the bureaucratic obstacles and the possible repercussions of this type of research on the researcher.

The focus on home ethnography permits the analysis of the contradictory processes between discourse and practice within our academic homes, which are charged with educating future anthropologists and social workers. It enables us to better address the changes we need in order to create a more equitable society through our own practice. This research reveals the individualizing nature of discourses of exceptionality which negate the social and historical underpinning of minority access to a quality and equitable education. The representational mystification of exclusionary practices under the guise of individual merit obscure the many obstacles that are imposed on members of marginalized groups leading them to be depicted and treated as deficient and irresponsible. More importantly, it uncovers the multiple ways in which minority success is often actively obscured, as in the case of the Academy of the Americas, or the Arts of Citizenship grant, for the purpose of privileging one group over another.

This work also contributes the rich and nuanced voices that link generations of minorities from working class to educational elites who contribute to our discussion of internal colonial dynamics that permeate our society as well as the many heroic acts (whether small or large) of a resistance based on an ethics of justice and care. It reveals the cooptation by status and power of members of all minority groups who turn against each other in order to maintain or acquire a position of privilege. In so doing, this work creates resistance, through its voices which refuse to be silenced or erased as if they had never occurred. It is a collaborative project of individuals from different class and academic contexts who have participated in its production to demonstrate how cross class, generational, ethnic and gender coalitions can be formed through the interweaving of their voices, their histories and passions to stand firm and be acknowledged as agents who make history. It is a testament to the primary role of women as agents of resistance in the education of their children despite the limitations imposed by a continued patriarchal society. Finally, this research provides an historical record of the incipient Latino movements in Washtenaw County and the relevance of Latinos from the University of Michigan who have fared alienation and exclusion and who have struggled with much less mentorship and support than those available to the generations of the

present, but who have remained to clear the way for those who are coming forth. It reveals the emancipatory effect of creating a space for inclusion of the knowledge of marginalized populations within the traditionally exclusive arenas of academia (i.e. research and the IRB, and dissertations defenses) and creates a growing awareness of the breadth of centralized discriminatory institutional structures and their mystifying mechanisms.

Recommendations for Further Research

Typical recommendation in the educational ethnographic literature include finding committed directors who will engage the community and the members of the school in concerted action (Trueba).⁴⁴³ Others direct their recommendations towards teaching techniques, but they still do not research the pressures of the system that impinge on the successful education of youth. A good number of these books are directed towards the education of Mexican youth. Although some techniques can be used for the larger Latino population, more research is needed on the cultural variability of minority populations and the various levels of institutional power that affects classroom teaching. For example, Trueba, in his discussion of school principals does not deal with the power structures that facilitate or hinder the principal's performance. Engaged anthropology and emancipatory social work research could, through their institutional representative power, join forces with progressive educators and school administrators who find their efforts frustrated by their overarching administrations.

Regarding critical intersubjectively engaged research as a methodology, we could benefit from longitudinal ethnographic work to find out to what degree these experiences have enabled subjects to face other oppressive situations with more confidence and skill. The content analysis of the community interviews carried out by our team members revealed some apparent cultural distinctions regarding the formation of multicultural networks from the point of view of Latinos and African Americans that could benefit from further research in relation to educational planning and curriculum development. A better understanding of the role of women in promoting the formal education of their

⁴⁴³ Trueba, Henry (2004) *The New Americans: Immigrants and Transnationals at Work*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

children and the cultural and social obstacles that they face could lead to some important interventions with them and their spouses to improve the outcomes of their children in the educational system. Critical social work and engaged anthropology could have a primary role in this process. Finally, the exploration of ways to involve youth in critically engaged intersubjective research with regards to their education could result in much needed emancipatory actions.

As stated by Maguire and reinforced by my own lived experience as an organizer and home-researcher in ALAS and the University of Michigan, the role of emotional life, the private, unofficial and less visible domains usually assigned to women and underprivileged members of our society may not be generalizable to all people, but they do allow us to gain a more profound understanding and corporal sense of subjugated experiences and knowledge through the prism of “us” few. The understandings shared and transformed in the organizing efforts of women help us tear down the discriminatory barriers which inspire actions that impact future generations. Our actions and those of our children are likely to have positive long-term effects on the practices of educational and character forming institutions. At the very least, our organizational efforts can promote a critical awakening of service users and an empowered sense that with community action it is possible to create change and combat institutional oppression in an ongoing and long-term way.

As stated by Robert Chambers in his chapter “Beyond Whose Reality Counts: New Methods We Now Need:

Perhaps the methodological challenge is to find good ways to enable powerful people to gain from disempowering themselves...Challenges in dominant behavior entail having respect, standing down, shutting up, and facilitating, enabling and empowering. This is the key to many changes, professional, personal and institutional.

The participation of our youth and families in this empowering process is the germination of the seeds of change that are necessary for the creation of a new and just global society. Our voices used to break the silence of educational alienation entail taking risks sometimes significant ones in our own homes.



33. *Daniel and Alexandra (my Puerto Rican/Costa Rican bilingual children born in the U.S.) marching against Proposition HR 4437, March 2006, side by side with a First Nation protestor and hundreds of Latino marchers.*

Alexandra:

God Mom, look at all these people marching for Latinos. I never thought I would be part of something so great!

Daniel:

Sí, yo tenía miedo porque uno nunca sabe lo que puede pasar en una protesta política pero estoy orgulloso de mi participación y la de mi familia....Durante el proceso de crear esta presentación yo me di cuenta de cuanto racismo, estereotipos e injusticias hay en este país. También me di cuenta que yo debo luchar por los derechos de otras personas, sin importar el precio que tenga que pagar.

Yes, I was afraid because one never knows what could happen in a political protest, but I am proud of my participation and that of my family....During the process of creating this presentation, I realized how much racism, stereotyping and injustice there are in this country. I also realized that I have to struggle for the rights of other people, even when I'm scared.⁴⁴⁴

⁴⁴⁴ Cubero-Matos, Daniel (2005) Spanish PowerPoint Presentation in ALAS.

Bibliography

AAPS News Service (2011) Dickinson-Kelley retires after 38 years, most recently as deputy. June 27. Printed from www.michigandaily.com on Thu, 08 Sep 15:50:39 - 0400 <http://www.michigandaily.com/print/6206>

AAPS News Service (2011) "Dickinson-Kelley retires after 38 years, most recently as deputy. AAPS News: features, policies and activities in the Ann Arbor Public Schools. <http://news.a2schools.org/?p=5449>

Academy of the Americas DPS Website. <http://detroitk12.org/schools/school/341/>

Addams, Jane (2002) *The Jane Addams Reader*. Jean Bethke Elshtain Ed. Basic Books. Perseus Books Group, XXXV.

Ainsa, Fernando. (1989) "Hostos y la unidad de América Latina: raíces históricas de una utopía necesaria." *Cuadernos Americanos* 16: 67-88.

Ali, Sam (2005). Race is on to Cash in on Booming Hispanic Market. http://www.hispanic6.com/race_is_on_to_cash_in_on_booming_hispanic_market.htm

Alliance for Excellent Education. www.all4ed.org.

Althusser, Louis (1972) in his essay "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation).

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>

American Patrol.com

<http://www.americanpatrol.com/REFERENCE/PlylerVDoeSummary.html>)

Amsley F. and Gaventa J. (1997). Researching for Democracy and Democratizing Research. *Change*. January/February.

Ann Arbor.com <http://www.annarbor.com/news/graduation-rates/> posted May, 2010.

Arts of Citizenship: Public Scholarship at the University of Michigan.

<http://www.artsofcitizenship.umich.edu/>

Baba, Marieta L. and Carol E. Hill (2006). What's in the name "Applied Anthropology": An Encounter with Global Practice 1. *The Globalization of Anthropology*. NAPA Bulletin #25. American Anthropological Association (pp. 176-207).

Bailey, Darlyne and Kelly McNally Koney (1995) *Community-Based Consortia: One Model for Creation and Development*.

Banchero, Stephanie (2010) *Graduation Rates Stagnate as Latinos Continue to Trail*. October 20.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304510704575562352066596296.html>

<http://www.manhattan-institute.org>

Behar, Ruth (1993) *Expanding the Boundaries of Anthropology: The Cultural Criticism of Gloria Anzaldúa and Marlon Briggs*. *Visual Anthropology Review*. Vol. 9. No. 2 Fall. Pp. 83-84

Black, Michael (2007) *Fanon and DuBoisian Double Consciousness* *Human Architecture: Journal of Sociology: Self-Knowledge*, V, Special Double-Issue, Summer 2007, 393-404

Boas, Franz (1940). *Race, Language, and Culture*

Bordt, Rebecca (1997) *How Alternative Ideas Become Institutions: The Case of Feminist Collectives*. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 132-155.

Bradshaw, Soifer and Gutierrez (1994) *The Alinsky Approach to Organizing in Toward a Hybrid Model for effective organizing in communities of color*” *Journal of Community Practice*, I (I). Pp. 26-41.

Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) *Find Law for Legal Professionals*.

<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/scripts/getcase.pl?court=US&vol=347&invol=43>

Brown, L.D. and Tandon R. (1983). *Ideology and Political Economy in Inquiry: Action Research and Participatory Research*. *The Journal of Applied and Behavioral Science*. 19 (3): 277-294.

Burrell G. and Morgan G. (1979). *Assumptions about the Nature of Science in G. Burrell and G. Morgan (eds) Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life*. London: Heineman.

Butler, Sandra Sue and Mary Katherine Nevin (1997) *Welfare Mothers Speak: One State’s Effort to bring Recipient Voices to the Welfare Debate*. The Hawthorn Press, Inc.

Center for Educational Outreach 2009-2010 Report.
ceo.umich.edu/2010.2011%20annual%20report.pdf

Chambers, Robert (1998). Beyond Whose Reality Counts? New Methods We Now Need” in Who Changes? Institutionalizing participation in development. Blackburn and Holland eds. Intermediate Technology Publications. P. 121.

Changing Paradigms in Chicano Studies: Ethnography, Oppositional Ethnography and Ethnobiography by Rafael Chabrán. JSRI Occasional Papers No. 31 in Latino Studies Series. Julian Samora Institute. Dec. 1997.

Clinton, Bill (1995) President Clinton commented on the Final Report on Human Radiation Experiments. YouTube Video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kE878DWbO0w>

Collins, P.H. (ed) Black Feminist Thought. New York, N.Y.: Reutledge, Chapman and Hall.

Collora Flynn, B. et all (1994). Empowering Communities: Action Research through Healthy Cities in Health Education quarterly 21(3): 395-405.

Columbia University. Outstanding Judges Honored at Alumni Gala in Puerto Rico
http://www.law.columbia.edu/media_inquiries/news_events/2005_older/2005/November_1/puerto_rico.

Columbia University Alumni Celebration (2005). Columbia University.
<http://calendar.columbia.edu/sundial/webapi/get.php?vt=detail&id=4844&con=embedded&br=uar>.

Coronil, Fernando (1995). Introduction in Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar by Fernando Ortiz. Duke University Press.

Cubero-Matos, Daniel (2005) Spanish PowerPoint Presentation in ALAS.

Curbelo, Silvia A. y Carmen I. Raffucci (2005) Frente a la Torre in Frente a la Torre: Ensayos del Centenario de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. La Editorial Universidad de Puerto Rico. P. XII.

Dávila, Ovidio (2007) Albizu Campos en Harvard y América Latina. La Voz del Centro con Angel Collado Schwarz. <http://www.vozdelcentro.org/?p=316>

Delpit, Lisa (1995) Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom. NY. New Press.

Detroit National Worker's Fund <http://detroit.cbslocal.com/2011/05/04/report-nearly-half-of-detroiters-cant-read/>

Díaz Soto, Lourdes (2007) *The Praeger Handbook of Latino Education in the U.S.* Praeger. "The entry on the Carlisle Indian School documents how Puerto Rican children were a part of an assimilationist and often genocidal experience. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Diversifying Higher Education in the 70s: Reflections on BAM and CASS at U of M March 30, 2010. PBS

Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos <http://albizu.8m.com/>

Duke, David (2004) *David Duke for Our Heritage and Freedom* http://www.davidduke.com/general/there-is-no-escape_17.html

Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (1996) *Representations, Power and Contradictions: The Women's Communal Movement of Morazán, El Salvador*. Master of Arts Thesis. Department of Anthropology. Michigan State University. Copyright p.160.

Duntley-Matos, Roxanna (2009) *The Relevance of Social Work in the Analysis and Intervention of State Related Torture in the Context of Internal Colonialism: A Psychosocial Study of Five Cases in the U.S. Commonwealth of Puerto Rico*. Unpublished paper.

eWashtenaw

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/planning_environment/planning/comm_prof.html

El Nuevo Día (2011) UPR entre las mejores en sicología. *Calidad de Vida*. El Nuevo Día. Com. 20 de agosto.

<http://www.elnuevodia.com/uprentrelasmejoresensicologia-1045032.html>

Elshtain, Bethke (2002) *The Jane Addams Reader*. Basic Books.

Faulkner, Larry, President "In Memoriam Enrique (Henry) T. Trueba. University of Texas at Austin. <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/2004-2005/memorials/trueba/trueba.html>.

Fanon, F. (1967). *Black Skin, White Masks* (C. L. Markmann, Trans.) [*Peau Noir, Masques Blancs*]. New York: Grove Weidenfeld. (Original work published 1952).

Fell, Claude (2000). Notas explicativas (in Spanish). Ulises Criollo. Colección Archivos. 3. Vasconcelos, José. Editorial Universidad de Costa Rica. pp. 526–573.

Fletcher, Scott. (2000) Education and Emancipation: Theory and Practice in a New Constellation. Teachers College Press.

Foley, Douglas (1990) Learning Capitalist Culture: Deep in the Heart of Texas. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Fook, Jan and Bob Pease (1999) Transforming Social Work Practice: Postmodern Critical Perspectives. Bob Pease and Jan Fook eds.

Forman, James Jr. The George Town Law Journal. Vol. 93, 1297. Pp. 1287-1289.

Freire, Paulo (1970) Pedagogía del oprimido. Siglo XXI eds. 33ra Ed.

Friedrich, Joaquim. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Joachim_Friedrich

García, Ana María (1984) La Operación.

<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC29folder/LaOperacion.html>

García-Moreno, Laura and Peter C. Pfeiffer. Columbia, SC: Camden House, (1996) Text and Nation: Cross-Disciplinary Essays on Cultural and National Identities. Ed.: 191-207.

Garvin and Tropman (1992) in Rothman, Jack. A History of Community Organizing Since the Civil War with Special Reference to Oppressed Communities. Strategies of Community Intervention: Macro Practice. 5th ed. Eds. Jack Rothman, John L. Erlich and John E. Tropman. Itasca, IL:F.E.Peacock,

Ginsberg Center. <http://ginsberg.umich.edu/>

Go Proverbs <http://gobase.org/reading/proverbs/>

Gramsci, Antonio (1985) Selections from Cultural Writings. Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Great Schools, Involved Parents, Successful Kids

<http://www.greatschools.org/school/parentReviews.page?id=1010&state=MI&sortBy=dd&page=2#revPagination>

Greensberg, J and Baron R (1993). Behavior in Organizations. (Fourth Ed). Allyn and Bacon Press. Boston.

Greever, B. (1998). Tactical Investigation for People's Struggles. Washington, D.C.: The Youth Project.

Gutiérrez, Lorraine (1997) Multicultural Community Organizing in Social Work in the 21st Century. Michael Reisch and Eileen Gambrill. Pine Forge Press.

Hall, Stuart (2009) Race, the Floating Signifier Parts 1-7. Youtube.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?=bRk9MZvOd2c>

Have, P. (1994). Capturing the Meaning of “Community” in Community Intervention Evaluation: Some Contributions from Community Psychology. Health Promotion International 9(3): 199-210.

Healy, Karen (1999) Power and Activist Social Work in Transforming Social Work Practice: Postmodern critical perspectives Bob Pease and Jan Fook eds. Routledge.

Hemingson, Michael (2006) Here Come the Navel Gazers: Definitions and Defenses for Auto/Ethnography. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1099750>

Herman, Robert and David O. Renz (1997) Multiple Constituencies and the Social Construction of Nonprofit Organization Effectiveness Press.

Herrmann, Karl Stephen, Brigadier-General U.S. Volunteers, 1900 in Angel Quintero Rivera Conflictos de clase y política en Puerto Rico. Ediciones Huracán, fifth edition 1987, p. 14. Original source, K.J. Herrmann, From Yauco to Las Marías, Boston, p. 35.

Hill, M. (1996). Social Policy: A Comparative Analysis. Prentice Hall. New York.

Hispanic Americans in Congress 1822-1995. Dennis Chávez: United States Representative Democrat of New Mexico.
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/congress/chavez.html>.

Hovland, Ingie (2004) Anthropology Matters Journal, Vol 6 (2), p. 1.

Hurtado, Aída (1997). Understanding Multiple Group Identities: Inserting Women into Cultural Transformations. Journal of Social Issues, Vo. 53, No. 2. p. 299-328.

Howe, David (2009) A Brief Introduction to Social Work Theory, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Hunter Looses bid for Detroit school superintendent job. The Baltimore Sun. March 21, 1991. http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1991-03-29/news/1991088044_1_superintendent-detroit-school-hunter

“Just the Facts: A civilian’s guide to U.S. defense and security assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean, Center for International Policy.

<http://www.ciponline.org/facts/soa.htm>

Kallen, Horace (1915) Democracy versus the Melting Pot in the Nation: A Study of American Nationality. February 25. <http://www.expo98.msu.edu/people/Kallen.htm>

Keeping, Juliana (2011) U.S. Census figures show gains in Ann Arbor Asian, Hispanic population, loss of white, black residents

<http://www.annarbor.com/news/us-census-figure-reveals-boosts-in-ann-arbor-asian-hispanic-losses-in-white-and-black-residents/>

Jansson, Bruce (1997) The Reluctant Welfare State: American Social Welfare Policies: Past, Present and Future. Brooks/Cole Publishing Co. p. 123.

Ladipaolo, Donna (2011) Ann Arbor: Census shows Ann Arbor becoming more diverse. http://www.heritage.com/articles/2011/05/09/ann_arbor_journal/news/doc4dc83d5dc50c6049241512.txt?viewmode=2

Land grant aid of colleges. <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/301.html>

“Juramentación de Pedro Albizu Campos como Abogado: Regreso de Harvard a Puerto Rico.” Periódico “La Voz de la Playa de Ponce.” November 2010.

http://entraysale.com/noticias.php?id_noticia=83 in

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedro_Albizu_Campos

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). Qualitative Communication Research Methods, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

López Cabán, Cinthya (2011) Rio Piedras Busca Superar la Probatoria. Puerto Rico de Hoy. El Nuevo Día. Com. 16 de agosto.

López Cabán, Cynthia (2011) Un éxito el inicio de clases para el Gobernador. El Nuevo Día.com . <http://www.elnuevodia.com/exitosoparaelgobernadoreliniciodeclases-1034463.html>

López Cabán, Cynthia (2011) Oposición a la evaluación de los maestros. El Nuevo Día.com . <http://www.elnuevodia.com/oposicionalaevaluaciondemaestros-1031864.html>

Maguire, P. (1987). Toward Feminist Participatory Research Framework: Challenging the Patriarchy in P. Maguire, *Doing Participatory Research: A Feminist Approach*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.

Maldonado, Denis, Manuel (2002) *Albizu Campos y el Desarrollo de la Conciencia Nacional Puertorriqueña en el Siglo XX*.

<http://mictlantecuhtli.tripod.com/Albizu/concnal.html>

McGriff, Deborah (1993) *Decentralization: Why, How and to What Ends*. NCREL's Policy Briefsfile:///

[Detroit%20Public%20Schools/Decentralized%20Schools%201993](http://www.ncrel.org/publications/policy_briefs/decentralized_schools_1993.pdf)

Choice as Paradigm Shift: Detroit Leads the Way. <http://www.mackinac.org/5747>

Meyer, Gerald (?) *The Cultural Pluralist Response to Americanization: Horace Kallen, Randolph Bourne, Louis Adamic and Leonard Covello*. *Journal of the Research Group on Socialism and Democracy Online*. 54, Vol 24, No. 3 <http://sdonline.org/48/the-cultural-pluralist-response-to-americanization-horace-kallen-randolph-bourne-louis-adamic-and-leonard-covello/>

McKensie, William (1997) *Fostering Community Participation to Influence Public Policy: Lessons from the Woods Fund of Chicago 1987-1993*. *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*. Vol. 26, No. 1 (11-26).

Michigan News <http://aad.english.ucsb.edu/pages/michigannews.html>

Merriam Webster. An Encyclopedia Britannica Company. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/dysgenics>

Minehaha, Forman (2009) *The Michigan Messenger*. The American Independent News Network. January 8. <http://michiganmessenger.com/11300/dps-academy-of-the-americas-begs-parents-for-toilet-paper>

Mora, Juana, Ph.D. and David R. Díaz, Ph.D. (2004) *Plugging the Brain Drain: Bringing Our Education Back Home in Section I: Creating a New Vision and Role for Research in Latino Communities*. *Latino Social Policy: A Participatory Research Model*. The Haworth Press. Pp. 29-30.

NASW Code of Ethics <http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/code/code.asp>

National Security Language Initiative. (2006) The U.S. Department of Education, The U.S. Department of State, The U.S. Department of Defense, The Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Navarro-Rivera, Pablo The University of Puerto Rico: Colonialism and the Language of Teaching and Learning 1903-1952. School of Undergraduate Studies. Leslies College, Cambridge, MA. p.2.

New Schools Venture Fund (2011) <http://www.newschools.org/team>

New York Times (1935) “Obituary: Jane Addams a Foe of War and Need.” <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/bday/0906.html>

Nino Díaz, Jaime (1998) Education and Participatory Research in Who Changes? Institutionalizing participation in development. Blackburn and Holland eds. Intermediate Technology Publications. P. 19.

“One must start from where the level of the student or students is, this is a level of culture.” Paulo Freire—Pedagogía <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwri7pO8UHU>

Packard, Gabriel (2003) RIGHTS: Group Strips Racist Scientist's Name from Award. IPS.org 29 April 21:45:36 GMT <http://www.puertorico-herald.org/issues/2002/vol6n44/PROutragMedExp-en.html>

Payne, Malcolm (2005) Modern Social Work Theory. Third Edition. Lyceum Books.

Parker, Stephen et al (1999) Empowerment: The modernist social work concept par excellence” in Transforming Social Work Practice: Postmodern critical perspectives Bob Pease and Jan Fook eds. Routledge Press.

Picón Salas Mariano (1947) Prologue in Terrazo by Abelardo Díaz Alfaro. Decimonovena Edición. Librería La Biblioteca Inc. Editora Corripio. 1986.

Pintado de Rahn, María (1981) Sus Primeros Años Profesionales in Celestina Zaldondo, Trabajadora Social: Su Vida, Su Obra Profesional. Publicación del Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico. Febrero, p. 13.

Portes, Alejandro (1997) Globalization from below the Rise of Transnational Communities. Princeton University

Puerto Rico: America Acquires Caribbean Territory. U.S. History. U.S. History <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h827.html>

Riihinen comment addressed in Juha Hämäläinen et al. (2004-2004) "Social Security and Social Exclusion: Old and New Challenges for Social Policy and Social Work." IUC Journal of Social Work: Theory and Practice. Issue 10.

http://www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/publications/social_work_journal/issue10/articles/4_Insecurity.htm

Rivera Ramos, Efrén (2011) Don Raul, el Professor: Un Testimonio Personal. Revista Jurídica Universidad de Puerto Rico. Vol. 80 No. 4. p. 926
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/61551579/Efren-Rivera-Ramos-Serrano-Geyls>, p. 932.

Robertson, Jennifer (2002) Reflexivity Redux: A Pithy Polemic on "Positionality" Anthropological Quarterly - Volume 75, Number 4, Fall 2002, pp. 785-
http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/anthropological_quarterly/v075/75.4robertson.html.

Robbins Christopher (2006) Introduction in The Giroux Reader. Christopher G. Robbins ed. Paradigm Publishers. Pp. XII-XIII.

Rosario Natal, Carmelo (2007) Luis Muñoz Marín, Arthur Garfield Hays y la Masacre de Ponce: Una Revelación Documental Inédita. Kálathos. Vol. 1, No. 1. 10 de mayo.

http://kalathos.metro.inter.edu/Num_1/Mu%F1oz_y_Masacre_de_Ponce.pdf
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponce_massacre

Rothman, J. et al (1995). Strategies of Community Intervention. F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc. Itasca, Illinois.

Rudolph, Frederick (1961). The American College and University. University of Georgia Press. p. 3.

Ruiz-Marrero, Carmelo. journalist from the website Puerto Rico Herald:
[www.Puerto Rico-Herald.org](http://www.PuertoRico-Herald.org),

Safford, Kimberly (1984) La Operación: Forced Sterilization from Jump Cut: A review of Contemporary Media, No. 29, p. 37-38.

Seewer, Jason University of Detroit Mercy Law Review Vol. 83:411. p. 412.

Serwach, Joe (2008) U-M, A2 Public Schools partner to teach third-grade Spanish. The University of Michigan Record Online. For Faculty and Staff of the University of Michigan.

http://ur.umich.edu/0809/Sep02_08/27.php

Scheurich (2002) *The Destructive Desire for a Depoliticized Ethnographic Methodology: Response to Harry F. Walcott in Ethnography and Schools: Qualitative Approaches to the Study of Education*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Scott, James (1990) *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. Yale University Press.

Secretary of Agriculture to administer annual college-aid appropriation

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/7/321.html>

Silva Gotay, Samuel (1990) *Desarrollo de la Dimensión Religiosa del Nacionalismo en Puerto Rico; 1898-1989*. *Estudios Interdisciplinarios de América Latina y el Caribe*. Vol. 1, No. 1 (enero-junio). http://www.tau.ac.il/eial/I_1/gotay.htm

Smith, Kerry G. Et al. (1966) *Higher Education Reflects on Itself and on the Larger Society*. *Current Issues in Higher Education* March 13-16 1966. P. 1

Smith, Mark (2002). *Howard Gardner, multiple intelligences and education*. *Infed. Ideas, Thinkers and Practice*. <http://www.infed.org/thinkers/gardner.htm>

Spindler, G. (Ed.) (1955). *Education and Anthropology*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Spindler, George (2002) *The Collusion of Illusions and How to Get People to Tell You What They Don't Know in Ethnography and Schools: Qualitative Approaches to the Study of Education*. Rowmann and Littlefield Publishers.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. (1998) "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 271-313.

Southern Illinois University Carbondale School of Social Work

<http://socialwork.siuc.edu/sswcp/history.htm>

The Darkening of America. <http://conversations.blackvoices.com/>

Torruella, Juan (2001) *One Hundred Years of Solitude: Puerto Rico's American Century*. In, *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, The American Expansion, and the Constitution*. Ed. by Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall. 2001. Duke University Press. p. 243, 248.

Trattner, 1986, p. 245 in Robbins, S. Chatterjee Pranab and Canda Edward (1999) Contemporary Human Behavior Theory.

Trías Monge, José (2001) Injustice According to Law: The Insular Cases and Other Oddities. In, Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, The American Expansion, and the Constitution. Ed. by Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall. 2001. Duke University Press. p. 239.

Trueba, Henry (2004) The New Americans: Immigrants and Transnationals at Work. Rowman 7 Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Tugwell, Rexford G (1946) The Stricken Island: The Story of Puerto Rico. Double Day and Company. p. 35-36.

University of Michigan Center for Educational Outreach <http://ceo.umich.edu/>

University of Michigan Program for Multicultural Health
<http://www.med.umich.edu/multicultural/>

University of Michigan Standard Practice Guide.
<http://spg.umich.edu/200/201%20-%20Human%20Resources%20&%20Affirmative%20Action/201.82%20%20%20%20EO%5CAffirmative%20Action%20Policy.pdf>

Washtenaw County Demography. State of Michigan-County of Washtenaw
<http://www.uscitycounty.com/michigan-state/washtenaw-county-demography.htm>

Washtenaw County Michigan (2010). City-Data.com
http://www.city-data.com/county/Washtenaw_County-MI.html

Willis, Paul (1977). Learning to Labor. Columbia University Press.

Wolcott, Harry (2002) Ethnography? Or Educational Travel Writing? in Ethnography and Schools. Henry Trueba and Yali Zou eds. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. p. 29

Yasuda, Yasutoshi (2000) Go as Communication. Tosho-bunka Publisher.

Yanissa (2010) Arts of Citizenship Faculty Fellows Grant, April 12, p. 5.

Yon, Daniel (2003) Highlights and Overview of the History of Educational Ethnography. Annual. Rev. Anthropology. 32:411-29.

Zaidi, Ali (1999) Destruction and Resistance at SUNY. Solidarity: A Socialist, Anti-Racist, Feminist Organization. Sept-October. <http://www.solidarity-us.org/current/node/915>

Zalduondo, Celestina (1981) Celestina Zalduondo Trabajadora Social, Su Vida, Su Obra Profesional. Publicación del Colegio de Trabajadores Sociales de Puerto Rico.