

When Boys Become Men:
Chicano/Latino Middle School Students and their Identities.

Eligio Martinez

A dissertation
submitted in particular fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2014

Reading Committee:

Shirley Hune, Chair
Frances Contreras, Co-Chair
Filiberto Barajas-Lopez

Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

College of Education

©Copyright 2014
Eligio Martinez

University of Washington

Abstract

When Boys Become Men: Chicano/Latino Middle School Students and their Identities.

Eligio Martinez

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
Shirley Hune, Professor
College of Education

This ethnographic study explores the educational experiences of Chicano/Latino Middle School Males and their emerging racial, ethnic, and gender identities. This study employed Racial/Ethnic Identity Development Theory and Critical Race Theory to examine how racial, ethnic, and gender identity intersect and shape the experiences of Chicano/Latino middle school males. Findings revealed that race, gender, and masculinity were central to the formation of social groups at school. Study participants categorized themselves into four main social groups: Soccer Players, Average Kids, Nerds, and Lost Boys. Each group developed and adopted a particular set of behavior, style of dress, and attitude towards school. Social group membership influenced student-teacher interactions and peer group dynamics. Students who had stronger identification with Chicano/Latino culture often encountered lowered academic expectations and increased disciplinary practices from teachers. Findings from this study begin to demonstrate the significance of middle school as a critical juncture that can help close the opportunity and gender gap for Chicano/Latino males. This work contributes to the college access literature by expanding it to include the middle school experience. It also adds to research on middle school that demonstrates how institutional practices can marginalize particular groups of students and

explores the effects of identity formation, social groups, and masculinity on the school experience of Chicano/Latino middle school males.

Keywords: Chicano/Latino Males, Middle School, Masculinity, Critical Race Theory

Dedication/Dedicación

Para mis padres, que sacrificaron todo para poder
darme la oportunidad que ellos nunca tuvieron.

To my parents, who sacrificed everything to give me
the opportunity they never had.

Acknowledgements

As I reflect on the past 7 years of my graduate education, I am grateful that I was surrounded by good people that were courageous and determined, who whether they know it or not, their examples gave me the strength and courage to continue to move forward. I cannot sit here and not pay tribute and acknowledge the people that have helped me achieve my goals and supported me since the day I left Santa Ana. While I have lost friends along the way, their memories are still with me and continue to be a source of inspiration. Jorge, Armando, Jose and Alena, your spirit and fire still live inside of me and continue to drive me forward.

I first of all thank my parents who supported me throughout this journey, which would not have been possible without the sacrifices that they made for me. I thank my dad Eligio Martinez Sr who instilled in me the value of hard work from a young age. His example of what can happen with hard work showed me that anything is possible as long as I put my mind to it. Fate would have it that I would come to Washington seeking a new opportunity, just like he had done so some thirty years earlier. My mom, Ofelia Martinez who at a young age instilled a fighting spirit and also ensured that me and my siblings had an environment that we could blossom in. Gracias por su apoyo, cariño y compasión y por darme la oportunidad de seguir mi sueño. Sin ustedes nunca hubiera logrado mis metas. My brother, Gerardo, who has always been there, I appreciate everything that you have done and am grateful for all of your support. My sister Cynthia, thank you for taking care of mom, dad, and Nene throughout these years. And Nene, although you may not know this, you have been my inspiration and motivation. My hard work and dedication has largely been fueled by my desire to be a big brother that you could be proud of.

Cynthia Denning del Rosario, my Seattle Mom. Thank you for treating me like your son and walking me through all of the difficult moments throughout this process. From the day I arrived you treated me like family and opened the doors to your home. If there's one person responsible for making sure that I never left the program during difficult times it was you. Walking into your office and your home allowed me to relax and put my guard down. Thank you and Jay so much.

To my committee members, thank you for all of your hard work, thoughtful feedback, and commitment. Dr. Luis R. Fraga, I will miss our frequent taco runs but I'm grateful for the opportunity to have worked with you and benefited from your mentorship. Dr. Filiberto Barajas, thank you for agreeing to sit on my committee on your first day here and taking the time to sit down and help me develop the framework. Dr. Frances Contreras, thank you for bringing me to the University of Washington. None of this would be possible without you. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to prove that I belonged in the academy and for always supporting my ideas. I can never thank you enough for believing in me and giving the opportunity to work under you. Dr. Shirley Hune, thank you for always being there and providing your support. Thank you for agreeing to take me on these past two years and ensuring that I finished my dissertation. Thank you for pushing me and challenging my thought process to ensure that I wrote the best dissertation I could. Your support and guidance made this final stretch possible.

I also want to acknowledge Drs. Michael Knapp, Bob Abbott and Bill Zumeta for selecting me as an Institute of Education Sciences Collaborative Researchers for Education Science Training Fellow that funded my doctoral education. Professors Joy Williamson-Lott, Alexis Harris, Joe

Lott, Roberto Gonzalez, Rick Bonus, Juan Guerra, and Diem Tran, I appreciate your mentorship throughout the years. Thank you to Angie Windus, Marty Howell, and Michael Lindsay. The Graduate Opportunities-Minority Achievement Program, in particular Cynthia Morales for always keeping her door open and welcoming students into her office. Los Hombres con Hambre: Andreas Chavez, Cisco Orozco, Ebrain Mirambeau, Abe Guerrero, Sergio Casillas, Tino Castañeda, Mateo Banegas, Juan Magaña, and Randy Nuñez. Thank you as well to Irene Sanchez, Laura Martinez, Enrique Morales, Sandra Herrera, Miguel Bocanegra, and big thanks to Marisa Duarte for helping through the final push. Thank you to my SOCC Crew: Liz Word, Jessica Rodriguez, Lorena Guillen, Jessica Norouzi, Dudney Sylla Maria Zavala, Winston Benjamin, Cristina Gaeta, Drego Little, Nate Parham, Jackie Martinez, Audra Gray, Maria Oropeza, Emma Flores, Third Andressen, Tiffany Brown, and Kathryn Torres. Thank you Dr. Ed Taylor, our quarterly check-ins went a long way to ensure that I stayed here. A huge thank you to Cuauhtemoc Mexica, Ismael Fajardo, Tarence Powell, Maurice Dolbery and Jose Hernandez for making this place feel like home.

At UCLA, big thank you to Tim Ngubeni, Mandla Kayise and Dr. Berky Nelson for your mentorship, guidance, and encouragement since my days at UCLA. Thank you as well to Ralph de Unamuno, Gabriel Perez, Henry Perez, Rudy Figueroa, Carri Fierro, Vanessa Sifuentes, Dr. Reynaldo Macias, Vice Chancellor Janina Montero, Rosa Pimentel, Yousef Tajsar, Shiva Bhaskar, Gabriel Serrano, Oscar Flores, Jesus Prado, and Pablo Mejia for your continued friendship. My UCLA School of Education crew, I would not be here without all of you: Eddie Lara, Erica Yamamura, Danny Martinez, Nolan Cabrera, Tyson Marsh, Cheryl Matias, Arshad Ali, Oiyen Poon, and Cynthia Alvarez, thank you all. Thank you as well to Aurora and Mark Kamimura, Graciela Lopez, Lynne Kramer, Tyrone Borelli, Steve Carrillo, Milton Castillo, Ruben Perales, Joel Crespo, Leo Villareal, and Jennie Beltran. Additional thanks to the UCEA Barbara Jackson Scholars program, particular my mentor Dr. Pedro Reyes and Enrique Aleman.

Big thank you to my AAHHE familia: Sofia Bahena, Ruth Lopez, Ana Torres, Wil del Pilar, Nancy Acevedo-Gil, Irene Vega (and Joey), Rosa Manzo, Mayra Olivares-Urueta, Susana Hernandez, Desiree Zerquera, Tracy Arámbula Ballysingh, Luis Ponjuan, Victor Saenz, Leticia Oseguera, Janelle Silva, and Christopher Tudico. My compadres Manny Gonzalez, Ignacio Hernandez, Juan G. Berumen, Enrique Lopez, Carlos Maldonado, and Jose Muñoz (I bet Dr. Olivas didn't see that one coming!). Dr. Cristobal Rodriguez and Dr. Fernando Valle, thank you for your friendship, mentorship and advice. It's amazing to see what a pound of carnitas can do.

Thank you to Patrick De Walt, Joshua Childs, Shaka Rawls, Luis Ramirez for your friendship. And of course, Michelle Castellanos, thanks for putting up with my crazy shenanigans these past couple of years. Thank you as well to Lorena Santos, Iris Marlene de la O, Ana Graciela Najera-Mendoza, Stephanie Garcia, Angela Rivera, Atzimba Parra, Armando Carmona, Angelica Rangel, Frania Mendoza, Ulisses Sanchez, Gerardo Correa, and David Gracia.

A big thank you and appreciation to the staff at my research site, especially Maureen and Zack. Finally, a very sincere thank you to the young men in this study for sharing their lives and stories with me. I have learned as much from you as I hope you have from me, I enjoyed the laughs, talks, and all the memories. I will miss seeing you guys on a regular basis but look forward to hearing of your future successes. I hope that this work does justice to your experiences.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vii
List of Figure and Tables	x
Chapter 1	1
INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Research Trajectory	7
Statement of the Problem	9
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions	14
Significance of the Study	15
Organization of the Dissertation	17
Chapter 2	19
LITERATURE REVIEW: CHICANO/LATINO STUDENTS, EDUCATION AND MASCULINITY	19
Chicanos/Latinos and Schools: Roots of Underachievement	20
Gendered Treatment of Chicanos/Latinos and Chicanas/Latinas	21
Stereotyping Chicanos/Latinos as Delinquent	23
School-Home Culture Conflict	25
Teacher/School Role in Student Disengagement	27
Immigration and Generational Status	28
The Significance of Middle School	30
Student Development	30
Hierarchy and Student Groups	30
Engagement and a Sense of Belonging	31
Foundation for Career Aspirations	33
Masculinity, Social Class and the Male Experience	35
Learning to be Masculine	35
Masculinity and Social Class	37
Athletics and Masculinity in Schools	38
Peer Groups	39
Machismo and Caballerismo	41
Summary	43
Chapter 3	45
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS	45
Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation in Adolescents	46
Critical Race Theory in Education	53
Intersectionality	56
Operationalizing Critical Race Theory	58
Storytelling and Counter-Storytelling	59
Interest Convergence	60

	Identity Performance Theory	61
	Conceptual Framework	63
	Contributions to Critical Race Theory and Literature	66
Chapter 4	METHODOLOGY AND STUDY DESIGN	67
	Target Population, Sampling and Participants	68
	Observations and Shadowing	70
	Interviews and Focus Groups	72
	Data Collection, Coding and Analysis	74
	Positionality and Perspective	75
	Research Site: Dolores Middle School	79
	Teachers and Other Staff	80
	Academics	82
	Social Spaces and Activities	83
	The Emergence of a Soccer Program	85
	Surrounding Community	86
Chapter 5	CHICANO/LATINO STUDENTS AND SOCIAL GROUP FORMATION	89
	General Overview of Chicano/Latino Students	89
	Social Groupings at Dolores Middle School	91
	The Soccer Players	93
	Average Kids	103
	The Nerds	111
	The Lost Boys	115
	Summary	120
Chapter 6	NO COUNTRY FOR YOUNG (BROWN) MEN	122
	Racial Microaggressions	122
	The Creation of Public Enemies	127
	Institutional Racism: School Personnel	135
	Interest Convergence at Dolores Middle School	140
	Summary	142
Chapter 7	BOYS, MACHOS AND MASCULINITY	144
	Conceptualizing Masculinity	145
	Academic Masculinity	148
	Social Masculinity	156
	Cultural Masculinity	163
	Summary	167
Chapter 8	CONCLUSIONS	169
	Understanding the Significance of Social Groups	171
	Institutional Racism	174
	Performing Masculinity	176
	Limitations of Study	179
	Contributions of the Study: Adopting School Practices to Improve	

Chicano/Latino Education	181
Expanding Opportunities for Engagement	182
Improving Language and Teaching Practices	184
Diversifying Teachers and Staff	185
New Directions for Future Research	186
References	189

List of Tables and Figures

Figure 3.1. Conceptual Framework of Student Identity based on perceptions of race, class, and gender.	65
Table 5.1. The Soccer Players	93
Table 5.2. The Average Kids	103
Table 5.3. The Nerds	111
Table 5.4. The Lost Boys	115

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Background

“Tonight, we’re going to celebrate! We’re not supposed to be here. Two Chicanos from Santa Ana, California in grad school have to celebrate!” Those were the words of my roommate and high school friend Jose the weekend before the start of my second year as a graduate student at the University of Washington. Words that made me look back and think about my experience growing up in Santa Ana and how our lives had been shaped to the point that led both of us to the College of Education at the University of Washington.

As a teenager growing up in Santa Ana, a predominantly Mexican community in the heart of Orange County, there were many things going on around me that at the time I did not understand how they would impact my social and academic development. As I reflect on my educational trajectory, my experiences growing up have influenced not only my career path but also the area of research that I have decided to pursue as a graduate student. From the community that I grew up in to the way that my parents raised me to the schools that I attended, each aspect of my life added a different element that played a significant role in my development that still resonates with me today.

I attended Santa Ana Valley High School, in Santa Ana, California, a school that was predominately Mexican-American with few Asian Americans, African Americans and only five white students. Although the school was predominately Mexican-American, very few of these students were in AP/Honors classes and very few matriculated into institutions of higher education after graduation. While in high school in the late 1990’s, Valley was ranked as the second worst high school in Orange County, second only to another school in the district. As a

kid who was trying to use education as a way of social mobility, this was not something that I wanted to see or hear and chose to ignore it. The passage of California's three strikes law and Proposition 187 in 1994 which if enacted would have eliminated social services for undocumented immigrants and their children, negatively impacted my development and made me question what my place in society was and whether education would be my passport to the future.

Growing up in such a conservative environment, all I knew was that being Mexican in Orange County was a bad thing and any association with it would ultimately cause my peers and I to get in trouble. As such, I adopted white middle class values. I dressed in brands that middle class white kids wore and spent time hanging out in places where white kids socialized. I essentially did everything that I could to disassociate from the traditional trademarks of other *Mexicanos*: Dickies, baggy jeans and white shirts. Academically, because I had been placed in the Academy Program, a majority of my classmates were Vietnamese students and I opted to hang out with them outside of the classroom. While I did receive help and guidance from my counselors, it was the representatives from University of California, Irvine's Early Academic Outreach Program, Graciela and Aurora, that kept me on track, making sure that I did not miss any test dates and workshops that would help prepare me for college. The constant conversations that I had with both of them made me think about what schools I wanted to apply to, but more importantly, it was their encouragement that led me to conquer my fears and take the chance and apply to UCLA, a school that I had always dreamt of attending but thought I did not belong in because of who I was and where I came from.

Socially, the only thing that kept me a legitimate Mexican amongst my peers was the fact that I was a member of the boys' soccer team, the Mexican sport. Even in these spaces, I was

constantly told by my peers that I acted Asian because I was in all of the Advanced Placement and Honors classes and had lunch with all the Asian students in the Academy Center instead of hanging out with the other *Mexicanos* outside in the quad. However, it seemed that every time I stayed outside to eat lunch with the *Mexicanos*, we would either be harassed by the security guards at the school or the military recruiters who had a daily presence at our campus.

Regardless of who I associated with, I was still just another Mexican at the school in the eyes of many. I recall an instance during my junior year in which those of us that were members of the soccer team were called “a bunch of wetbacks, who were full of Mexican bullshit” by one of the football coaches because we set up practice by his car, even though his car was parked in our practice field. All of these experiences would influence who I would become, by influencing how I dressed, how I was socialized and how I began to situate myself in the larger social context in which I was growing up in.

After gaining admission to UCLA, I majored in History and Chicana/o Studies, focusing my studies on understanding the causes for social movements in the United States and national liberation movements by third world countries seeking independence from the countries that colonized them. Outside of the classroom, my time was spent working for outreach and recruitment programs that serviced historically underrepresented students throughout the greater Los Angeles area, giving me a deeper understanding of the educational inequities that existed. Upon graduating from college, I worked as a recruiter for the UCLA Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools. I focused a lot of my work on recruiting Chicano/Latino students from inner-city high schools throughout Los Angeles. While I was successful for the most part in attracting students simply because of the weight that the UCLA name carries, I jumped to the quick conclusion that I could go anywhere and attract a crowd.

Towards the end of my time as a recruiter for UCLA, I was sent to Anaheim High School to work a school wide college fair. Since I had grown up nearby, I figured that I should not have a problem attracting students since I came from the same demographic background as most of the students at the high school. After a quick start, the crowd at my table dwindled after about five minutes and students just simply kept walking by, looking at my banner and smiling as they walked away. I had to call on students as they passed by and encourage them to come up to my table and not be shy.

About 15 minutes from the end of the fair, I noticed a young man wearing a shirt with the traditional marine scripture, USMC, a USMC lanyard and drinking out of a bottle that the Marine recruiters had just given him. I called him over in an effort to engage with him. He was apprehensive and stood about ten feet away from the table as I began to engage in conversation with him. I asked him if he had considered UCLA as an option for college after graduation, to which he quickly responded no. I began to dig deeper and asked him why not and he responded, "Well I don't think that I can get in." I asked him "why not?" He began to say things like, he felt that his background was a challenge, that he was first generation, working class and from a bad high school. All to which I responded, "Me too, I grew up down the street in Santa Ana and my parents are working class and have a limited education." After a few minutes, he simply said, "you know what, the Marines have the pull-up bar, so we get to do pull-ups while the girls are watching. And you know, the girls kind of like that." As the young man walked away, I stood there stunned at the realization that I was completely oblivious to what was important to that young man. As I packed my things and drove home, I could not help but think about that young man and his reasoning for opting to hang out with the Marines that afternoon.

This dissertation is derived from my lifelong experiences with the educational system and my previous research on Chicano/Latino students. I focus on 7th grade because that's the year that I feel I almost got lost in the school system. Having returned from a two-year stay in Mexico, I remember my first day back at school in 7th grade at Garden Grove and how I felt out of place. I remember thinking that once I got to the soccer field I would be with my people and everything would be fine. As soon as the lunch bell rang, I remember running out to play soccer. When I got to the field I ran to one of the two teams that were forming, one of the guys quickly informed me, "*Hey, the Pochos are on that side.*" Confused by his comment, I went over to the other side where I was quickly told by somebody on that team, "*Hey, the immigrants are on that side.*" For a kid who is just returning to the American educational system, this was a cruel awakening as it was my own community that was making me feel out of place.

After a few weeks, I transferred back into Santa Ana schools and remember just searching for a sense of belonging. Being placed in a tracking system, I had the same classmates every period, and they quickly accepted me. When the opportunity presented itself to move into the honors program, I quickly rejected it because I finally felt that I belonged and did not want to leave my boys. I remember being asked by my 7th grade language arts teacher to stay after class, when I walked out, my friend Tony asked me, "What did Henry want, did he want to throw you into the honors program?" I told him that he did, but that I had told him that I was okay staying in regular classes. When 8th grade came around, the choice was taken away from me and I was placed in the honors program against my will. When I was asked by my friends during nutrition why I had not been in class during first and second period, I told them that they had thrown me into honors, but that I would take care of my schedule and be back with them by the end of the day. This never happened and I was not allowed to return to regular classes. Without knowing,

this decision by my teachers to keep me in the honors program would set my life in motion into a direct path through the educational pipeline that would lead me to the University of Washington.

The idea for this project began out of a conversation with community members from a Latino empowerment organization. While attempting to gain access to a school district to conduct a research study that explored the reasons why Latino students chose to enlist in the military, members of the organization began to talk to me about the problem that was going on with the young Latino men and the fears that they had for their future. As my then-current project came to an end, I continued speaking with the community members to see what we could do to help these young men succeed academically. I was invited to speak to some of these young men at Dolores Middle School (pseudonym) and share my personal and academic experiences. These conversations made me reflect on my experiences as a middle school boy trying to fit in. It was in middle school where I began to question who I was. Was I a Chicano? A Mexicano? A Hispanic? What's the difference and does it matter? It was also in middle school where I began to hate who I was. I am that young boy who is scared because he is Mexican in a society that is criminalizing young men of color. I am that high school boy who thinks that being a man means doing pull ups in front of women. I am the young men whose stories you will read in this dissertation. As I write this, the young men in this study are struggling to figure out who they are while attempting to navigate through a school system that does not understand how to meet their needs. While I can only hope that these young men will have the same opportunities that I had and be able to follow their dreams, the academic community can play a more involved and significant role in improving the quality of their education and help guide and nurture them into successful young adults.

Research Trajectory

This work is part of a trajectory of research that I have conducted as a graduate student. Having been an admissions officer at UCLA and worked with youth who were preparing for life after high school throughout the Los Angeles area, my initial research interest focused on why Chicano/Latino students chose to enlist in the military instead of pursuing a higher education. I first explored the reasons why three Chicano/Latino high school seniors, two males, one female, from two distinct high schools outside of Seattle choose to enlist in the military after graduation. While the schools that students attended were vastly different, as one had a smaller Latino population and was a comprehensive high school while the other was divided into three small schools, the school setting did not make much a difference. All of the participants clearly made the conscious decision to disassociate themselves from other Chicano/Latino students for fear of being perceived negatively by school staff. Participants felt that the other Chicano/Latino students perpetuated negative stereotypes associated with Mexican and Latino students and if they socialized with them, their opportunities for success would decline. Regardless of their generational status, all three students viewed the military as the most secure way of upward social mobility. Although all of the participants were seniors, none of them had developed any meaningful relationships with teachers and counselors who could advise them about their career options. These findings gave me glimpse of two critical issues that students faced: the complexity of identity formation for Latino students and the impact that the lack of meaningful connections with key school agents have on the development of career aspirations.

I replicated my initial study with a focus on Chicano/Latino men who had enlisted in the military before returning to school to pursue a higher education. For this second study, I interviewed five men who had grown up in different parts of the country and came from both

rural and urban communities. At the time of the study, most of the men had graduated from college and were either enrolled in a graduate program or had completed a graduate or professional degree. I was puzzled throughout the process to see how men, who had been written off by the American educational system as youth, were able to achieve success by the American standards through education. Results from this second study proved similar to my initial study. Participants dealt with identity battles, having to negotiate their ethnic, masculine and academic identity, but never being able to become comfortable with any of them. Within the school, there was a failure to develop relationships with crucial school agents to guide students and provide them with the appropriate academic support. More importantly, most of these men had become disengaged from schooling at a very young age, and by the time they entered high school, they were simply going through the motions and benefitting from social promotion.

Both of these studies revealed that generational status and patriotism did not play a role in enlisting in the military as I had previously believed, but rather, it was the shortcomings of the schools that students attended that led many to believe that enlisting in the military gave them the best opportunity for success. While all of the participants had aspirations of being successful, in both studies, many of them mentioned seeing the image of a Marine in uniform at a young age and how that image stuck with them, sending messages about what it means to be a man and leading them to equate success through military service. The findings prompted me to ask the question, what is going on at earlier stages of the educational pipeline that is shaping the educational outcomes of young men of color? More importantly, it made me wonder how the identity development process of young men of color coincided with and paralleled their academic development.

During the middle of these studies, Victor Saenz and Luis Ponjuan (2009) published “*The Vanishing Latino Male in Higher Education*” and made the call for researchers to focus on issues facing Chicano/Latino males through the educational pipeline, in particular the need to focus on earlier stages. Dr. Saenz prompted me to consider looking at middle school as a research area as it played a key role in shaping the educational trajectories of Chicano/Latino students, yet remained heavily understudied. Having opted to go an unconventional route as a higher education researcher, I have been constantly asked the question, “What does middle school have to do with higher education?” My usual response is simple, “How many guys like Jose and myself do you see running around here?”

Statement of the Problem

Recently educators have shifted their attention to the educational crisis facing young men of color. In 2010 and 2011, the College Board released two reports, *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color* and *The Educational Experiences of Young Men of Color*, which focused on the educational experience of men of color. The reports concluded that young males of color face different obstacles than their white and female counterparts. Rather than having a direct pipeline to college, young men of color are more likely to have a different path to degree completion given the unique challenges that they face. The PEW Hispanic Research Center’s 2009 report, *Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America*, attempted to capture how the next generation of Latinos come of age and explored the attitudes, values, social behaviors, family characteristics, economic well-being, educational attainment and labor force outcomes of the group. The report found that while most Latino youth are optimistic about their

future and place a high value on education, hard work and career success, they are more likely to drop out of high school and live in poverty compared to their white and Asian American peers.

Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) argued for the need to shift the attention to Latinos and look at different junctures in the educational pipeline as their numbers are drastically decreasing in secondary and post-secondary education, yet limited research has been conducted that explores the experiences of middle school students. Research that does exist on middle school students focuses on English Language Learners (Valdés, 2001), discipline (Brown, Jimerson, Dowdy, Gonzalez, & Stewart, 2012; Gregory, Skiba & Noguera, 2010) and school failure (Brewster & Bowen, 2004). But limited research exists about identity development and the institutional factors that shape the experiences of students. Nishina, Bellmore, Witkow & Nylund-Gibson (2010) explored the change in ethnic identification amongst middle school students over the course of the six middle school semesters, but their approach is quantitative and does not investigate how students make meaning of their identity. As the largest growing ethnic group in the United States, understanding Chicano/Latino underperformance becomes critical to the economic future of the nation (Dondero & Muller, 2012; Gandara & Contreras, 2009; NCES, 2012). While strides have been made that have improved the quality of education, Chicano/Latino males continue to fall behind their female counterparts particularly in terms of college attainment (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2012). Graduation data over a 20-year period (1999-2009) show that the percentage of Chicano/Latino males above the age of 25 with a bachelor's degree went from 11% to 11.7%, while the rate for Chicana/Latina females increased from 8.8% to 13.7% (American Council on Education, 2011). The gender gap between Chicano/Latino males and females continues to widen with males more likely to drop out of high

school, to join the workforce rather than attend college and leave college before graduating (Solórzano, Villalpando & Oseguera, 2005; Gandara & Contreras, 2009).

The challenges in educating young men of color begin at an early age and continue through early adolescence. As Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) note, boys are twice as likely as girls to be labeled “learning disabled,” seven times more likely to be diagnosed with attention deficit or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and constitute up to 67% of the special education population, and in some cases are up to 10 times more likely to be diagnosed with serious emotional and behavioral disorders. In addition, boys in 4th through 8th grade are twice as likely to be held back a grade, with the rate being higher for boys of color (Shaffer & Gordon, 2006). All of these challenges cause boys to be more likely to face disciplinary problems, exhibit suicidal and depressive tendencies, be suspended from school, and drop out of school (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009). Thus, while sharing a common cultural and ethnic experience, Chicano/Latino males and Chicana/Latina females experience schooling in a much different manner with gender playing a role in shaping that experience.

Chicano/Latino males face several challenges that differ from their female counterparts that severely impact their educational outcomes in different manners, yet these differences are not discussed nor taken into consideration when attempting to understand the experiences of male students. First, rarely are the psychological issues associated with the transition to middle school discussed in attempting to understand educational outcomes. The transition to middle school can have tremendous psychological effects on students which can be associated with decreased academic performance and increased emotional stress (Burchinal, Roberts, Zeisel & Rowley, 2008; Holas & Huston, 2012). Students are often in search of a sense of belonging or attachment to the school, which is connected to their motivation and academic success (Eccles,

Midgley, Wigfield, Buchman, Reuman, Flanagan & Mac Iver, 1993; Osternam, 2000). Failure to develop a sense of belonging during middle school can lead to low performance and increased feelings of alienation, ultimately leading to early school departure (Finn, 1989). Low academic performance can contribute to students feeling out of place and lead them to search for a mechanism to cope with their emotions. Many students search for cultural affiliations amongst their peers and adapt their behavior in order to develop a sense of belonging.

A second problem that contributes to the disenfranchisement of Chicano/Latino students is the lack of engagement in schools that begins in middle school that leads to academic isolation and low performance. Student failure to adapt psychologically is due to the inability of students to become engaged in school academically and socially. When coupled with poor academic performance, lack of engagement can lead to the development of low self-esteem and lack of confidence in their academic ability (Lys, 2009; Wang & Holcomb, 2010). This then leads to several behavior issues that cause many young men to begin to act out and defy their teachers.

Third, Chicano/Latino male students, along with other male students of color, face stricter disciplinary practices from teachers and other adults that lead to the criminalization of youth of color. Excessive punishment can be a major cause for academic failure amongst Chicano/Latino students as constant punishment can lead to more time outside of the classroom and cause students to fall behind academically (Losen & Skiba, 2010; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May & Tobin, 2011). Middle school, in particular, is a stage in which increased suspension rates occur for students, primarily due to behavioral issues related to disrespectful conduct towards other students and authority figures (Kaufman, Jaser, Vaughan, Reynolds, Di Donato, Bernard & Hernandez-Brereton, 2010). At Dolores Middle School, the pattern seems to follow the national trend as Latino students represented a significant number of the disciplinary

cases. In 2009, Latino students constituted 22 percent of the school population at Dolores Middle School, yet accounted for 33 percent of the out-of school suspensions and 66 percent of the in-school suspensions, with more recent data expected to show a higher rate of discipline for Latino boys.

Excessive punishment can partly be attributed to the misperception of behavior that teachers and administrators may have of Chicano/Latino students. Too often Chicano/Latino males are portrayed as deviant, malicious and troublesome in the media, causing many educators to buy into these stereotypes and treat students accordingly (Yosso, 2002). The portrayals that adults develop of students can influence the way that they interact with students from different backgrounds. Often, teachers misinterpret cultural affiliations or social norms that students embrace as signs of defiance or deviance (Katz, 1999; Morris, 2005).

Many of the issues that Chicano/Latino males face in school are largely related to the search for identity and cultural solidarity that they undergo with their peers. Students desire a sense of belonging and to feel they are a part of something at the school. New approaches that analyze how young Chicano/Latino males come of age and are socialized through the school system are necessary in order to improve the educational outcomes of these students. Schools also need to look at the role that their institutional practices play in shaping the experiences of students rather than simply passing the blame onto students and their families. Educational researchers need to give more attention to root causes that are disenfranchising young men of color during the early stages of the pipeline. Research needs to differentiate and highlight the uniqueness of Chicano/Latino males and demonstrate how they differ from their female and white counterparts.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this research study is to explore how Chicano/Latino middle school students come to develop their racial, ethnic and gendered identity in Middle School and how their identity choice can shape their educational experience. Understanding that race, gender and class intersect to structure opportunity, there is a need to investigate how students begin to develop an identity based upon their race, ethnicity and gender and how it will impact their educational experience. Identity formation does not occur in a vacuum. The school, home and surrounding environment provide a context that influences how students begin to comprehend what it means to be a Chicano/Latino male and how that process can be negotiated through different spaces.

To examine how the academic and social environment interact to shape the identity development process and school experience of Chicano/Latino middle school students, I used the following questions to guide the study:

- 1) How do Chicano/Latino middle school male students make meaning of their racial, ethnic and gender identity? How does identity influence the formation of social groups and behavior and vice versa?
- 2) How does race shape school practices that impact Chicano/Latino male student behavior and experience? In particular, what forms of systemic racism are present at the school that impact Chicano/Latino students?
- 3) How do Chicano/Latino male students conceptualize and perform masculinity? How does masculinity affect behavior in relation to their academic performance and social and cultural interactions?

Through these questions I seek to assess how students make meaning out of their everyday life experiences in and out of school and to give them a voice that helps drive the direction of the study as they describe their reality as students at Dolores Middle School and as Chicano/Latino males.

Significance of the Study

This work is important for several reasons that help expand and challenge particular areas about our understanding of the educational pipeline. First, it contributes to the college access literature by adding to the limited literature that exists on Chicano/Latino middle school students and how their future aspirations are formed. With the limited amount of literature on middle school in general, it is difficult to get an accurate picture of how students are socialized by schools and how their socialization shapes their aspirations for post-secondary opportunities. Knowing that it is during middle school that students become more conscious of their ethnic and racial identity, this realization of who they are can impact their career aspirations and school outcomes. While we know that Chicano/Latino students enter the school system with high aspirations, and that school and peer support is important for maintaining high aspirations, we do not know much about how school practices affect the development and maintenance of these aspirations and further give them the necessary information that they will need to follow their chosen career paths as they prepare to transition to high school (Gándara, O'Hara, & Gutiérrez, 2004). Similar to Katz (1999), this project also places the responsibility back on schools for the outcomes of Chicano/Latino students by examining how everyday school practices impact students.

Second, it contributes to the middle school experience literature by looking at how institutional practices marginalize some students and protect others. The qualitative nature of the study allows us to explore in depth and paint a clearer picture of how everyday practices benefit particular students, while placing others at risk. It also adds a face to quantitative data that demonstrate increased behavior and disciplinary problems for young men of color.

Third, this project explores the identity formation process of middle school Chicano/Latino males at a critical point in their educational trajectory, allowing us to see how students negotiate and deal with different forces that are pulling them in different directions. It allow us to explore how the search for an identity can lead students to make decisions that may alienate them from their schools and lead to lowered academic expectations and outcomes. Rather than approach identity as one-dimensional, this study incorporates several layers that shape an individual's identity and how students negotiate and create balance among these different layers.

And finally, the current study contributes to the growing literature that attempts to redefine masculinity by placing students as the definers of what it means to be a male and how they come to understand masculinity. Masculinity is not static, and while previous researchers have created different categories that place masculinity into typologies, they do not necessarily take into account its fluidity and contextually how masculinity changes. Abalos (2002) contends that categorical data on Chicanos/Latinos can only let us know so much about their experience, and instead, we need to understand their personal stories.

But the facts about Latino men, their socioeconomic status, their levels of employment, their income, their level of participation in the workforce, how many years they went to school, tell us little about such complex individuals. We know almost nothing about

them. We need to know on a deeper level what is happening in the lives of Latino men.
(pp. 47)

More attention needs to be paid to how individuals negotiate the changing meaning of masculinity and how traditional and cultural notions of masculinity are being redefined by immigration and the different experience that a student's context can provide.

Organization of the Dissertation

In chapter 2, I outline literature from various fields as it relates to this study. I give an overview of the literature focusing on the educational experiences of Chicano/Latino males and compare it to the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas as well as students from other ethnic groups with a particular focus on the middle school experience. I also discuss masculinity as it pertains to this study. Chapter 3 describes the theoretical frameworks that ground my study. These include racial and ethnic identity development, which lay the foundation to the discussion of the usage of Critical Race Theory as the theoretical framework, along with a more detailed discussion on intersectionality and other elements of Critical Race Theory that I employ. Chapter 4 discusses the study design and provides a detailed description of my research site, which I have given the pseudonym of Dolores Middle School.

Chapter 5 begins the discussion about my findings and the themes that emerged during the study. It begins by introducing the research participants and discusses the different social groups that students formed at the school. The characteristics of each of the four social groups at the school are discussed as well as a discussion about the background of each participant. Chapter 6 provides a background for the institutional context in which these students experience schooling. In particular, I focus on the forms of systemic racism at the school that serve as a

mechanism to shape their marginalized identities. I examine several incidents that occurred during the data collection process. Chapter 7 explores how Chicano/Latino students construct masculinity within the school context. I focus on how students make meaning and opt to enact masculinity in relation to their social group membership and their identification with particular aspects of masculinity. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses what can be gained from this study and its contribution to the body of research on Chicano/Latino males. In particular, it discusses how middle school is a critical stage during which future opportunities can be structured or hindered according to race, ethnicity and gender identification. I also make recommendations for practitioners that can help improve engagement and academic outcomes for Chicano/Latino male students.

CHAPTER 2:
Literature Review:
Chicano/Latino Students, Education and Masculinity

The current literature on the educational experience of Chicanos/Latinos overlooks the experiences of students at earlier stages in the pipeline and devalues the significance that these stages can have in shaping the school outcomes and future aspirations of students. Works on school engagement (Flores-González, 2002; Valenzuela, 1999), identity development in school (Bejarano, 2005; Pizzaro, 2005), and academic culture in high school (Conchas, 2006), provide an in-depth understanding of how Chicano/Latino students experience school throughout the United States. These works help fill a significant gap in the literature on the educational experiences of Chicano/Latino students, but leave a void in explaining our understanding what is happening to them before high school.

While there have been recent attempts to begin to fill the gap in literature about males of color through earlier stages of the educational pipeline, the literature is often focused on African American students (Ferguson, 2000; Rashid, 2009), or combined with African Americans (Gillen-O'Neel, Ruble & Fuligni, 2011; Morris, 2005, Noguera, 2008), rendering the experience of Chicano/Latino males less visible than that of African American students (Noguera & Hurtado, 2011). Recent works by Noguera, Hurtado, and Fergus (2011) and Saenz and Ponjuan (2009) have highlighted the need to focus on Chicano/Latino students as a stand alone issue. Current literature that does discuss the experience of Chicano/Latino students at earlier stages of their education tends to focus on negative aspects of these students' lives, such as drug use (Guilamo-Ramos, Dittus, Crossett, Holloway, & Bouris, 2011; Kulis, Marsiglia, & Hecht, 2002), behavioral issues and punishment (Estrada-Martinez, Padilla, Caldwell, Schulz, 2011; Kupchik & Ellis, 2008; Peguero & Shekarkhar, 2011) and as dropouts (Rodríguez & Conchas, 2009).

Research is needed that reframes the conversation around Chicano/Latino students to portray them in a positive light and challenges the traditional narrative of them as deviant, deficient and problematic. Middle school is a critical juncture in the educational pipeline that has been understudied and warrants researchers and practitioners understanding of what factors shape the experience of students during this critical stage.

This chapter examines the research literature on how race and gender shape the experiences of Chicano/Latino students, the differences and similarities with other communities of color and the differences with their female counterparts. It explores the significance of middle school for Chicano/Latino students and how this stage of the educational pipeline plays a vital role in shaping the aspirations of students. In short, this current dissertation builds upon three areas of research: Chicanos/Latinos in education, the significance of middle school, and masculinity, and the young male experience.

I. Chicanos/Latinos and Schools: Roots of Underachievement

One limitation with previous research on Chicano/Latino students is how they have been portrayed. Chicano/Latino middle school students have largely been depicted as deficient, troubled and disrespectful (Carter, 2003; Katz, 1999; Rios, 2011). Compared to their white teenage counterparts, who are often viewed as needing an intervention to guide them through their hormone-besieged adolescence, males of color are constructed as being at-risk and a source of danger (Garcia, 2009). Chicano/Latino students are often represented and treated by researchers in the same way. Rather than looking at the root causes that may lead to academic underperformance, researchers tend to focus on Chicano/Latino students as problems. As Pizarro (2005), explains:

For years, researchers have gone into Chicana/o communities, extracted the information they were seeking, and used that information to explain the condition of Chicanas/os, most often blaming them for this condition and unintentionally or intentionally ignoring a host of systemic influences (23).

A more critical approach to researching Chicano/Latino communities is needed. An approach that incorporates a meaningful understanding of the conditions of the Chicano/Latino community and not one that approaches them from a deficit mentality. Research that is more holistic and balanced can better address their educational status and experiences.

Gendered Treatment of Chicanos/Latinos and Chicanas/Latinas. Chicanos/Latinos experience schooling different from their female counterparts principally as a result of gender. From a young age, males are made to feel inferior to their female and white counterparts. Alexander and Entwisle (1988) note that by third grade, children have already established a learning pattern that shapes the course of their entire school career, and if boys are turned off from school at a young age, it becomes more difficult to reengage them and motivate them to be successful learners as they get older. When looking at classification problems, boys are more likely to be classified as learning disabled, diagnosed with attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder compared to their female counterparts and constitute about 67% of the special education population over the past decade (Gurian & Stevens, 2005; Noguera, 2008; Saenz and Ponjuan, 2009). These feelings of inferiority can lead to tremendous psychological problems that can go undetected and ultimately lead many students to navigate away from schooling (Pollack, 1998).

Students of color often deal with racial and class structures that limit their ability to succeed, but females also encounter a gendered hierarchy that places women as inferior to men

(Bettie, 2003; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). While schools can hinder the opportunity of females, schools, and the people in them, are more welcoming and supportive towards them compared to their male counterparts (López, 2003; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008). Chicanas/Latinas are often more likely to be viewed as being more hopeful than their male counterparts. In Valenzuela's (1999) work, the boys were often represented as being detached from schooling as a result of the conditions in the school. The Chicanas/Latinas on the other hand were more engaged and responsible, often keeping track of their male counterparts, and assisting them with their schoolwork. Broughton & Fairbanks (2003) followed a group of middle school girls for two years and found that while the girls initially had high academic aspirations and felt welcomed at school, their career aspirations declined over time. Girls in this study were portrayed as victims of their environment rather than being judged by their ability. These depictions are a common theme that demonstrates how females are viewed as hopeful and more responsible than their male counterparts but affected.

Women today are viewing education differently and seek to obtain the necessary credentials to achieve a higher economic status. This new situation is challenging male domination and offers them greater autonomy, which may lead to greater optimism about schooling (Cammarota, 2004; Fine & Weis, 1998). One of the major differences between the experiences of Chicanas/Latinas is that while they may still be viewed as deficient, they are largely represented as innocent and more engaged in their schooling. Being seen more engaged than their male counterparts, females are often given more support from their teachers, significantly enhancing their educational experience and their ability to develop positive career aspirations (Valenzuela, 1999; Lopez, 2003). The gendered practices in schools can both

stigmatize male students and have the potential to create tensions between male and female students within ethnic and racial communities.

Stereotyping Chicanos/Latinos as Delinquent. One of the major differences in the experience of males is the mass stigmatization of young men of color in school. From a young age, young men of color, in particular African American and Chicano/Latino males, are marginalized and are not given the same opportunity to succeed in school, nor are as engaged by teachers in comparison to their white and female counterparts (Ferguson, 2000; Noguera, 2008). Many young men of color are constantly policed, contained and treated as offenders in their schools, neighborhoods and community centers, limiting the possibility for success (Camarota, 2004; Rios, 2011). When students view teachers as treating them as delinquents, students may internalize some of these notions and develop an oppositional identity to schooling, impacting the way that students view themselves and the aspirations that they may develop (Tatum, 2003). Thus, if students diminish schooling as part of their identity they may not see education as the way of upward social mobility and pursue other means (Rios, 2011).

In her study on African American males, Ferguson (2000) found that the practices in place within schools exceedingly scrutinize the behavior of young men of color as early as elementary school. Ferguson demonstrates how eleven and twelve year old boys are identified by school personnel as bound for jail, causing Black males to be disproportionately labeled at risk for failure and punishment. While young men are constantly trying to define their own identity, they are constantly challenged by the beliefs and perceptions that their teachers have of what it means to be a Black male in an inner city. López (2002) found similar practices amongst Dominican high school students in New York City, in which she argued that informal and formal practices within the school racialized and gendered students in ways that significantly affected their

outlooks on education. She argued that young men were viewed as threatening and potential problems causing them to face severe punishment for minor behavioral issues. Whether formal or informal, these practices serve as a way to alienate young males and cause them to believe that education is not a viable option for a successful future.

Morris (2005) begins to challenge the unfair treatment of Chicanos/Latinos by looking at the effect of race, class and gender on school discipline in Texas. Morris' (2005) research found that Chicano/Latino and African American students, in particular males, were disciplined more than their white and Asian American counterparts. While African American women were disciplined for not acting lady like, teachers would often invest time to teach them different mannerisms, and engage with them so that they would change their behavior. Male student behavior, however, was constantly regulated and students were often reprimanded for how they dressed and the language they used. Teachers often misinterpreted the style of dress that students wore as gang like behavior. Asian American and white students, in Morris' study, however, were not associated with gang like activity when they showed similar patterns of dress and behavior. As Morris notes, even when Asian American males exhibited specific markers associated with gang affiliation, and in some cases were actually involved in gangs, teachers did not view them as threatening or dangerous, especially compared to Chicano/Latino males (39). As such, teachers associated certain styles of dress with gangs only when worn by Chicano/Latino and African American males. While some Chicanas/Latinas displayed similar behavior to that of their male counterparts and were disciplined, they were not perceived to be dangerous.

Morris' findings on school discipline match national trends that see Chicano/Latino students disciplined at higher rates than their white and Asian counterparts (Gregory, Skiba & Noguera, 2011; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Rausch, May & Tobin, 2011). Such research begins to

give us an understanding of what is happening in middle school and how it is shaping the educational trajectories of Chicano/Latino students. More importantly, it also demonstrates how severe punishment causes declining academic performance of students, aiding the formation of the school to prison pipeline (Lewis, Butler, Bonner, & Joubert, 2010; Losen & Skiba, 2010).

School-Home Culture Conflict. A common cause for the underperformance of Chicano/Latino students is the cultural conflict that takes place between teachers and students (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991; Rodríguez-Brown, 2008). Yowell (2000) argues that Chicano/Latino students with traditional Latino values such as *personalismo* (personal goodness and getting along with others), *familismo* (placing family and parents first), and *respeto* (respect for family) are at odds with the competitive and individualistic nature of American schools which can hinder their educational aspirations and motivation. While students and parents see the value of education, many conflicts emerge as to whether or not a student should adopt new values from their school, even if they conflict with one's family's cultural values. In addition, the community culture and knowledge that students may bring from their home and community may be at odds with what schools and the people in them may view as valuable (Yosso, 2005). As Morris (2005) argues:

[P]oor and minority students have obtained a certain knowledge, as well as ways of speaking, behaving, and dressing, from their community contexts. These communities require such skills for survival and cultural participation. However, schools require a set of skills and knowledge, which poor and minority students often seen to lack. (pp. 26)

Thus, the culture that students obtain in their communities, which can serve to give them credibility with their peers both in and out of school, can be misinterpreted by their teachers and

not valued by their schools and other community members, serving as a mechanism that ostracizes youth (Carter, 2006; Rios, 2011).

For many young men of color these cultural differences that exist between them and their schools may take away the opportunity to succeed. One such example is the common identification of a certain style of dress as being gang affiliated, such as wearing a particular brand of pants, or a particular color of shoes or shirts (Katz, 1999, Swain, 2002). While many teachers may associate a certain style of dress as gang related, their style may in fact reflect a working-class identity amongst a particular group of students (Morris, 2005). Rather than attempting to engage with students, schools reprimand students for language, behavior and dress that they see as inappropriate. As Katz (1999) demonstrated in her study of middle school Latino students, what Latino students interpreted as having cultural solidarity with one another, by doing certain things such as choosing a certain style of dress, the use of certain terminology or slang, and the way they carried themselves was interpreted by teachers as gang like behavior and reprimanded students for it. While the decisions that students made increased the bonds that they had with one another, they also pushed them further from schooling. School engagement and teacher recognition for doing well often meant being ostracized by their peers at school. The decision to do well academically and dissociate from other Chicano/Latino students in order to do better is a common theme in the high school literature and is what researchers have termed as “acting white” (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Fordham, 1996; Tatum, 2003) or being a school boy (Hurd, 2004). While students may want to perform well in school, their peers may be discouraging and create an internal conflict for students between wanting to succeed and fitting in with their peers.

Teacher/School Role in Student Disengagement. Another common finding in the literature about Chicano school failure is that many of the teachers and school administrators attribute low school achievement to parents and students lack of engagement in schools, believing that students may be more in tune with street culture rather than being academically successful (Amatea, Cholewa, Mixon, 2012; Lopez, 2002). In many instances, teachers and school administrators fail to see how they push students down this path and perpetuate negative stereotypes by reprimanding them for any minor offense and allowing police officers onto their campus to harass students (Rios, 2011). Thus, it is school practices that create an environment that is not conducive to learning for students, in particular for Chicano/Latino and African American males.

Katz (1999) attempts to reframe the discussion around Latino school engagement from an issue of students dropping out into students being “pushed out” by changing the question from “What is it about Latino culture or history that causes disengagement about school?” to instead ask “What is it about U.S. schooling that causes the disengagement of Latino Students?” Katz examined the teacher-student relationship for Latino immigrant students who have been identified as at-risk in a Northern California school and the tensions that exist between them and their teachers. Katz’ findings suggest that while students may want to become engaged and succeed in school, discrimination on behalf of teachers is the main cause for disengagement from school. Teachers reported being overwhelmed at the school and could only focus their attention on the students who wanted to succeed. The failure of teachers to see problems with their teaching approach and to develop a good relationship with students led many students to become ostracized from schooling. Further, findings showed that being Latino was a central part of the students’ identity, as such, students adopted their own style of dress, speech and representation,

something that would distinguish them from the Chinese students whom Latino students felt were nerds and preferred by the teachers. This sense of cultural unity however was misinterpreted by teachers, who began to view all Chicano/Latino students negatively and associated them with the gang culture prevalent in the external community. While the participants in this study were academically underperforming in middle school, all of the students were highly motivated and successful students in elementary school, but the misunderstanding of youth culture and the adoption of cultural stereotypes by teachers impacted the experience of these students and marginalized them from their more successful peers.

Immigration and Generational Status. Finally, immigration and generational status add a unique layer to the Chicano/Latino school experience. While Chicano/Latino students may share various commonalities, their experiences vary according to their generational status and exposure within U.S. schools (Hurd, 2004; Portes & Zho, 2005). One of the early studies that explored the group differences within Chicano/Latino students was Matute-Bianchi's (1986) seminal study on Mexican American students in the California Central Valley, which revealed the extent to which Mexican American students self-segregate into multiple categories within their own community. Matute-Bianchi found that Mexican American students separated themselves into five distinct subgroups: Recent-Mexican immigrants, Mexican-oriented, Mexican-American, Chicanos and Cholos.¹ Students in each subgroup maintained their own styles, cultures, engagement and academic performance. Matute-Bianchi found that students performed academically on a curve, with students who were closer to the middle of the group, Mexican-Oriented and Mexican-American students performing well and declining with Chicanos

¹ The author describes Mexican-American students as students with Mexican parents born in the United States that are more American-oriented; Chicanos as students born in the United States as more Mexican-oriented; and Cholos as gang oriented or gang sympathizers.

and Cholos. Mexican-Oriented and Mexican-American students were also more actively engaged in school activities but the nature of their activities varied with Mexican-American students participating in more mainstream activities. Recent-Mexican immigrants had increasing academic aspirations, while Chicanos and Cholos had decreasing academic success, and were the least engaged students at the school, often considered at-risk. This study increased our knowledge of the Mexican-American student experience by featuring the uniqueness and intricacies within the Mexican-American population alone.

Amongst immigrant students for a variety of reasons, longer exposure to U.S. schools can lead to declining expectations and school outcomes with 2nd and 3rd generation students performing worse than immigrant students (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008). Immigrant students may have a more positive outlook on school than their native-born counterparts largely in part because of the experiences that they bring with them to the U.S. Immigrant students who began their schooling elsewhere, develop a point of reference that allows them to see education in the United States as a great opportunity creating what scholars refer to as immigrant optimism (Suárez-Orozco, 1987, Kao & Tienda, 1995). Students who have been in the United States for a longer period may become disillusioned with the American educational system as they have seen their older siblings, and in some cases their parents, go through the same schools and end up working in service sector or industry jobs, prompting many to become discouraged from continuing their education (Lopez & Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Mariscal, 2005).

II. The Significance of Middle School

Middle school marks an important period in the development of students' early career aspirations and educational opportunities. It is during this period that students begin to experience a greater need for autonomy, identity exploration, and peer-orientation (Simmons & Blyth, 1987). Students will generally seek to find answers about who they are, which will influence how they behave, socialize and perform academically.

Student Development. The transition from elementary school to middle school, coupled with students' developmental needs, presents several challenges. For example, middle school classrooms, compared to elementary classrooms, are marked by a greater emphasis on teacher discipline, fewer opportunities for student decision making and self-management (Midgley & Feldlaufer, 1987), fewer personal and positive student-teacher relationships (Eccles & Midgley, 1989), and an increase in ability grouping (Oakes, 1981). These practices are likely to emphasize social comparison and competition as well as threaten students' sense of autonomy during a developmental period in which students are most concerned with peer relationships and need a greater sense of control. According to Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchman, Reuman, Flanagan, and Mac Iver (1993) the fit between middle school students' developmental needs and the educational environment plays an important role in students' self-perceptions and motivation to succeed academically. Given the nature of middle school, males of color may be at greater risk during this stage as they may be placed into lower academic tracks (Oakes, 1985).

Hierarchy of Student Groups. Additionally, middle school plays a key factor in determining the social hierarchy within schools as students are made aware of the role that race plays in their schooling and places males of color at the bottom of the hierarchy. Tatum (2004) argues that it is during middle school when issues of race and difference occur. In particular, she

notes the self-selection of friendship groups that is developed by students based upon race in search of cultural solidarity with their peers. Through this self-selection process, many more differences become apparent that carry over into the classroom and impacts the experience of students.

Increased racial grouping and a racial hierarchy can cause students to develop animosity towards other ethnic groups, particularly white and Asian American students, who may be viewed more favorably by teachers and school administrators (Matute-Bianchi 1991; Katz, 1999; Morris, 2005). White and Asian American students are often given other privileges and can get away with certain behavior that students from other ethnic groups cannot, such as not following school dress code, getting up from their seat without permission and not doing their work (Morris, 2005). Teachers also see white and Asian American students as being more committed to school than African American and Chicano/Latino students, and thus are more willing to engage with them academically than students from other backgrounds. African Americans and Chicano/Latino students share a similar experience as they are often criminalized, marginalized and viewed as deficient at school. In many cases, students are stereotyped by their teachers because of their physical appearance, often assuming they have been held back a year, creating feelings of inferiority amongst students (Rios, 2011).

Engagement and a Sense of Belonging. Middle school is also the place where many students distance themselves from schools and inevitably become at-risk of leaving school. Wigfield, Eccles, Schiefele, Roeser, & Davis-Kean (2006) argued the importance for achievement motivation amongst students and the role in students' failure to remain engaged in school as they progressed from middle school to high school. Osterman (2000) contends that in order for students to be successful in school they have to psychologically develop a sense of

belonging to the school community. This in turn impacts motivation, school behavior and performance. She argues that students who experience acceptance by peers and teachers are more highly motivated and engaged in learning and more committed to school. Higher levels of commitment and engagement in turn are linked closely to students' performance and to the quality of student learning.

Finn's theory of school withdrawal further supports this argument as it maintains that identification with school is an important factor in maintaining school involvement and that participation in school activities increases the level of identification that students have with the school (Finn, 1989). Woolley, Kol and Bowen (2008) showed that teacher support for Latino middle school students was associated with both student behavior and satisfaction with school. Teacher support was also indirectly associated with time spent on homework and academic performance. If students perceive their teachers as fair and equitable towards them and hold high expectations of them, students are more likely to remain engaged in their schooling (Murdock, 1999). Middle school can be a difficult period academically as students are adjusting to a new environment and teaching style. Without proper support, this stage can become a difficult task for students to navigate through alone. A study conducted by Ryan and Patrick (2001) on motivation and engagement during middle school found that prior motivation during the 7th grade was a strong predictor for subsequent motivation in 8th grade. Students' perceptions of teacher support and views of the teacher as promoting interaction and mutual respect were related to positive changes in motivation and engagement for students.

Murdock, Anderman and Hodge (2000) also investigated students' school context, motivation, and behavior as they transition from middle school to high school. Students in this study were initially surveyed during the 7th grade and then again in 9th grade and had increased

positive interactions with teachers during the 9th grade. Murdock et al. argued that previous research on middle school teachers was inaccurate as it assumed that middle school teachers were not adequately prepared to work with early adolescents, whose characteristics were typically better matched by elementary teachers (Midgley, Anderman, & Hicks, 1995). Instead they believe that increased positive interactions with teachers may be the result of improved maturity and confidence that students gain as they move through adolescence. Further, as students matured, their academic self-concept and number of disciplinary referrals also improved. By the time that students reached the 9th grade, they were better adjusted and began to develop an increased value in education. These studies show us the significant role that developing a sense of belonging and engagement during middle school plays in the attitudes that students develop towards schools and how they in turn impact student outcomes. Race adds a significant layer to our understanding of how students develop a sense of engagement and motivation as it can impact how students feel they are viewed by teachers and whether they are welcomed by school personnel.

Foundation for Career Aspirations. Perhaps the most significant characteristic about middle school is the role that it has in in the development of career aspirations and educational opportunities for students. Cabrera and La Nasa (2000) identified three critical steps that students faced in their path to higher education: acquiring the necessary academic qualifications for college work, securing a high school diploma, and applying and enrolling in a four year institution of higher education. Of these steps, they identified the first step as being the most crucial in laying the foundation for success, believing that the acquisition of college qualifications begins as early as 8th grade. Students who begin to prepare for college in 8th grade

enter high school ahead of their peers, are more prepared to apply for college, and more likely to attend college compared to peers who may not be aware about college at this stage.

Lack of knowledge about college planning and development of aspirations leave students ill prepared to successfully transition into high school. In a study conducted by Kao and Tienda (1998) using the blocked opportunities framework, which considers structural obstacles that bound or level aspirations for students. The researchers discovered that few youth who had high educational aspirations during 8th grade kept those high aspirations throughout 12th grade. For Chicano/Latino students and African Americans, the study revealed that their aspirations were more unstable than students from other ethnic groups. Student academic instability was influenced by family socioeconomic status. Low socioeconomic status caused early aspirations to be less concrete than their white and Asian counterparts. Thus, the development of stable career aspirations at an earlier stage can allow for the maintenance of aspirations as students get older. Developing a sense of belonging and academic engagement during middle school can play a critical role in the types of aspirations that students develop and the extent that they can maintain their aspirations as they transition into high school.

Yowell (2000) explored the structure and function of the aspirations of 8th grade Latino students in a Midwestern town. Students in the study showed high educational and occupational aspirations along with high rates of optimism for their future. While several students stated careers that required advanced degrees, students were confident that they could accomplish their goals. Rather than identifying a fear of failure related to their academic domain, students tended to identify potential problems related to their personal wellbeing, such as gang involvement, pregnancy or drug use as potential barriers to their success. Regardless of the students' background, students generally want to succeed and valued education as they saw it as a form of

social mobility. However, it is the level of engagement that students maintain in school that impacts their academic performance.

Further, previous research demonstrates how inner city boys' post-secondary expectations are highly sensitive to contextual factors, making it critical for them to develop a sense of belonging in middle school (Cook, 1996). Eighth grade boys appear to begin to understand restrictions placed by social structures and develop career aspirations that are perceived as more realistic (Cook, 1996; Gottfredson, 1981). Latino/a students, in particular, seem to have the least stable educational aspirations compared to any other racial and ethnic group (Hill & Torres, 2010; Kao & Tienda, 1998; Mau, 1995). Failure to adapt to middle school and develop realistic expectations for the future can leave Chicano/Latino males at a severe disadvantage moving forward in their educational trajectories.

III. Masculinity, Social Class and the Male Experience

One of the challenges in understanding the educational experiences of Chicanos/Latinos is the limited literature that examines how masculinity shapes the school experience of Chicanos/Latinos. Masculinity adds a different dimension that impacts the educational experiences of students as social and cultural factors intersect to send conflicting messages. While largely believed to be developed through the larger society or familial influences, schools play a large role in shaping the understanding of masculinity that young men develop.

Learning to be Masculine. Previous research has focused on the development of tough, rebel types of masculinity that are largely created by students themselves (Connell, 1995; Mac An Ghail, 1994; Willis, 1977). However, the role that school practices play in the production of masculinity is often ignored. Gilbert & Gilbert (1998) argue that while students' views about

masculinity are influenced by what they see outside of school, schools help reproduce these views through hidden messages embedded in the curriculum, the heavy value placed on sports and the organization of schools themselves. Therefore, an analysis of how schools reproduce and perpetuate masculinity is important to this study.

Mac An Ghail (1994) argues that schools do participate in the construction of masculinity as they teach boys who to be, what to value and how to negotiate and differentiate codes of the school in order to establish their masculinity. Through classed and racialized discourses, Mac An Ghail argues that males learn about the social order around gender and masculinity. In particular, they learn that there are different ways to be a male, some that are more valued, prestigious, and powerful than others. Nonetheless, the main way is to demonstrate their superiority over other males and females.

Connell (1995) makes an additional call for the examination of power dynamics within the discussion of masculinity by looking at its complexities. Connell (1995) argues that masculinity is not a single role, or entity, but rather is only understood in a model of “multiple masculinities” that are enacted by men and embody different configurations of masculinity depending on their social relation to others. Connell divides his model of masculinity into four types that create a hierarchy: hegemonic, complicit, subordinate, and marginalized. Hegemonic masculinity is the type of gender practice that supports gender inequality. It is at the top of the hierarchy and exerts influence over the other types of masculinity. Complicit masculinity describes men who benefit from hegemonic masculinity, but do not enact it themselves. Subordinate masculinity describes men who are oppressed by definitions of hegemonic masculinity. Marginalized masculinity refers to men who may be positioned powerfully in terms

of gender but not in terms of class or race. Therefore, masculinity imposes another set of expectations and struggles for domination amongst males of different backgrounds.

Both the works of Mac An Ghail (1994) and Connell (1995) argue that there are different typologies of schoolboy masculinity that influence behavior and attitudes of students. While other researchers have explored different student typologies as well (Connell, 1989; Walker, 1988), Willis (1977) added a different dimension as he explored the lives of schoolboys from a social class perspective. Willis followed a group of students in England, whom he identified as the lads as they transitioned from high school into the work force. The lads presented tough, careless and oppositional behavior and defied authority whenever possible. Lads constantly positioned themselves against the ear'oles, the term used to refer to the group of school conformists that the lads looked down upon given their academic engagement and perpetual following of school rules. The identities of the lads were largely constructed by their working class background that viewed schooling as a waste of time, and they did not want to conform to what they perceived to be different class values. Lads rejected school and authority and followed their parents' footsteps into the factories and working class lives.

Masculinity and Social Class. Morris (2012) provides a more contemporary look at schooling, masculinity, and social class. Through ethnographic work, Morris (2012) found similar results by showing how masculinity was largely connected to social class and social condition of students, as many boys did not see the need to do well academically given their limited local employment prospects and the lack of education needed for those jobs. Boys adopted class-based masculine identities in accordance to their race and social standing to assert their masculinity through the means available to them, which often was through athletics or fighting. Unlike the lads in Willis' study, many of the boys exerted their masculinity by seeking

respect and popularity amongst their peers through clowning and quick wit, which granted them masculine credibility without directly challenging adult authority. Academically, most males did not engage academically and were outperformed by women. However, a general consensus amongst many students was that males had a superior intelligence than females, but failed to maximize their potential. Morris' work further highlights the insecurities of young men given the shifting foundation of men's power and privilege as females in the study were faring better academically and saw education as a way out of their current condition.

Athletics and Masculinity in Schools. While the categorization of different typologies and formation of social groups may be something that schools may not sanction or believe that they may not influence, athletics or sports programs are an avenue through which masculinity is sanctioned and shaped by schools. Pringle (2005) uses Rowe's (1998) conclusion about sports and athletics to best summarize how they have become central to the reproduction of masculinity and highly exclusive in modern society. As he notes:

To summarize (and, once more, grossly simplify) such positions, sport is a crucial site for the reproduction of patriarchal structures and values, a male dominated secular religion that has celebrated the physically aggressive and often violent deeds of men. Sports has been an integral element of self-sustaining forms of exclusivist male culture, lubricating a closed system of male bonding and female denigration (p. 246)

Athletics constitute a school-sanctioned pathway for young men to demonstrate their masculine superiority over others (Kidd, 2013; Messner, 2002). Yet within sports, there is also a hierarchy as to which sports personify masculinity. Most often mainstream sports, such as football, baseball and basketball are viewed as superior to others, however, they impose a class structure

as they are only available to students who have the financial resources to pay for equipment and other fees and prevents that participation of low-income students (Flores-González, 2002).

Schools often equate masculinity with toughness and poor academic performance amongst young men of color (Carter, 2005; Morris, 2012). This assumption is generally a result of gender scripts, or gender practices, which males and females follow that allow them to constitute themselves as masculine and feminine in structured and locally normative ways (Yancey Martin, 2003; Morris, 2012). As sites of socialization, schools often send messages regarding social order. Masculinity often conflicts with schooling as young men attempt to express themselves through non-academic behavior, while teachers and administrators struggle to control students and to bring them into the academic order of the school (Nasir, 2011; Noguera, 2008). For many schools, control is gained through the suppression of masculinity and the expression of cultural identity.

Peer Groups. Research on typologies of students demonstrates the significant role that peer groups play in shaping the educational aspirations and motivation of youth, particularly boys. Given that it is during middle school where students become more cognizant of gender roles, students will begin to develop identities based upon what they believe are gender appropriate. During early adolescence, peer-influences are assumed to have the greatest effect on students as this is often a time of heightened self-consciousness coupled with instability in an individual's own identity (Erickson, 1968). Chicano/Latino males, along with other males, may adopt what they believe to be male appropriate behavior and act accordingly. When students do not understand the content that is being presented, they develop behavior that is detrimental to classroom learning in an effort to mask their academic inabilities. This behavior is often embraced by other students who fall into the same peer groups and is viewed as the standard set

of behavior for that particular group. Pollock (1988) was the first to discuss this behavior as the “boy code,” or a strict set of rules that boys internalize about how they must behave and that most boys seem to generally fear breaking. These rules include, keeping a stiff lip, not showing their feelings, acting real tough, not acting too nice and being cool. In many instances, the adoption of these norms creates conflict with schooling and tends to cause the academic performance and engagement of male students to decline. While students may behave in this particular manner, much of the behavior that they tend to engage in is regulated by peers.

Young men are often treated by teachers in accordance with larger group to which they belong. In turn, male youth can interpret and absorb negative messages sent by school personnel, causing many students to express themselves in a damaging manner. Carter (2005) found that engagement and interaction with course material was viewed as effeminate in nature by young men who assumed that being smart was not part of what it meant to be a masculine. Feeling a strong sense of masculinity can supplant academic performance amongst males who are academically gifted. Shepard, Nicpon, Haley, Lind & Liu, (2011) discovered similar results with African American males. In their study, Shepard et al. found that males who endorse traditional masculine norms positively associate with feeling competent, self-reliant and self-assured. Feelings of inadequacy for poor school performance also decreased when endorsement of masculine norms increased. Morris (2012) argues that males participate in what he refers to as “contrived carelessness” a publicly displayed absence of academic diligence and planning, and approach school in a carefree manner that often affects their school behavior. This serves as a mechanism for boys to challenge peer standards by associating performing well on a test or assignment as pure luck.

Machismo and Caballerismo. A major distinction for youth of color is that unlike their white male counterparts, young men of color have to develop masculine identities that not only affirm their maleness, but also affirm their racial and cultural identity (Howard, 2012). Chicano/Latino males must constantly battle with the notion of “being macho” or “machismo,” the exaggerated gender role of males that emphasizes toughness, aggressiveness, courage and displayed physical strength (Mosher, 1991; Mirandé, 1997). In the traditional sense, machismo is best described by Mosher and Sirkin’s (1984) script theory of the macho personality constellation, which consisted of three typical behaviors justified by beliefs: a) entitlement to callous sex, b) violence as manly, and c) danger as exciting. Mosher and Tomkin (1984) contend that: “The macho man creates, interprets, and responds to scenes that threaten, challenge or afford opportunities to enact his role as a macho man according to the set of rules in the macho script” (61). As such, adolescence is a critical period in the development of machismo, as it is during this stage that young Chicano/Latino males go through rites of passage in which they must prove their machismo. While boys have learned different scripts about what is right, wrong, tough, and weak from their families, during adolescence, young men encounter others who are also attempting to become men and who attempt to assert their dominance over others.

Traditional views on machismo rely heavily on negative characteristics of males. Researchers began to challenge traditional notions of machismo, arguing that perhaps two forms of machismo exists, a typical negative view and one that includes positive attributes around manhood (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008; Mirandé, 1997). Instead of simply looking at machismo from a negative standpoint, Arciniega et al. (2008) contend that *caballerismo* is also a form of machismo, one that incorporates positive attributes such as being responsible, nurturing and protective. Works such as these help us to redefine masculinity and

understand the complexities and differences that exist within the concept. This redefinition also changes the discourse around the dynamic between men and women, challenging the dominant-oppressive relationship.

Cabrera, Rashwan-Soto and Valence (Forthcoming) further argue that while men may experience schooling in a much different manner than females, they still operate in a patriarchal system in which they oppress and assert their dominance over females. Cabrera et al. argue that Latinos males are systematically marginalized via their racial and ethnic identity through institutional racism, but are systematically privileged through their gendered identity relative to women. This creates a theoretical conflict amongst scholars who may argue that men are marginalized within higher education and masculinity and critical feminist scholars who argue that men are systematically privileged over women (Abalos, 2002).

While traditional views on gender place males as hierarchically superior to females and as providers, changes in the global economy have seen women outperform and outgain males in education, employment and quality of life, challenging traditional gender norms (Gardiner, 2000). Work has long been an integral part of a man's sense of masculinity as it provides a stable right of passage into adulthood (Goodwin & O'Conner, 2005, Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003). The decline in traditional working-class jobs has threatened this aspect of male identity. Increased unemployment, coupled with the decline of many traditional industries and the increased feminization of the labor market has threatened this key aspect of masculinity (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 1996).

Wilson argued that part of the reason for high unemployment for African Americans was due to the spatial mismatch that many males found themselves in, due in large part to the changing economic dynamics of cities (1997). As jobs moved away from cities and into suburbs

starting in the 1970's, it prevented individuals without a means of transportation to follow their jobs into the suburbs. While previous generations had enjoyed the ability to work close to home, recent generations living in inner cities found themselves without the right skills to obtain employment in the industries that are located in close proximity to them. Wilson has referred to this changing dynamic as "the new urban poverty," to describe the phenomenon that has created poor, segregated neighborhoods in which substantial portions of the adult population are unemployed, have dropped out of the labor force, or never participated in the labor force at all. Wilson believes that this dynamic is further coupled with the low-levels of education that many urban men possess, which limits their ability to gain willful employment in high-skilled jobs found in many inner cities.

Summary

These three areas of research of Chicanos/Latinos in education, the middle school experience, and masculinity, class and the male experience provide an explanation of different factors that structure the experiences of Chicano/Latino males throughout the educational pipeline. The Chicano/Latino male experience is characterized by the role that race and gender play in structuring opportunities. While Chicano/Latino males may share cultural commonalities in school with Chicanas/Latinas, males are not given the same opportunity as females and are viewed as lacking in comparison to their female counterparts. Within schools, Chicano/Latino males face stricter disciplinary practices compared to their white and Asian American counterparts that can hamper their academic progress, which begins to intensify during middle school. Practices that alienate students can substantially affect not only academic engagement, but also the sense of belonging that is critical during this stage. Middle school can be a stage

where a significant number of students can disengage, which can hinder their prospects to obtain the adequate credentials necessary for college admissions.

Additional research that specifically interrogates how middle school practices alienate Chicano/Latino students and the role that race and gender play in shaping their experiences is necessary in order to understand how students navigate and negotiate through this critical juncture of their educational trajectories. Research on masculinity needs to be applied to middle school populations in order to understand how the conceptualization of masculinity can structure or hinder opportunities for Chicano/Latino males. Further, new research is needed that explores how Chicano/Latino males come to understand how race and gender impact their identity development within their school and community context.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Frameworks

In order to investigate how students develop multiple identities within middle school, I will explore how students form relationships with other individuals that send messages about race, class and gender. I draw from two theoretical bodies to lay the foundation for the study. First, I analyze Identity Development Theory to understand the unique characteristics that shape the identities of Chicano/Latino students and how they may differ from students from other communities of color. Second, I employ Critical Race Theory (CRT) and its various components in order to center the study around race, class and gender but also to take a critical perspective at everyday practices and how these practices can shape the experiences of students. I focus on the tenet of intersectionality to explore how the experience of Chicano/Latino students differs from that of their female counterparts and other male students. I expand intersectionality by applying identity performance theory in order to analyze how students make meaning and enact different forms of masculinity. Finally, I further use the theory of interest convergence within CRT to explore the implementation of programs and practices that target Chicano/Latino males at the school.

I employ the frameworks of Identity Development Theory and Critical Race Theory to show how identities are formed and what factors, including school, community, personal, and social, impact the experience of students. But I also argue that identities are formed as a result of a much larger external context that influence students' perception of race and gender, rather than through a singular individual process. Identity is often the response to how individuals are treated and viewed by others, causing students to change their identities in accordance with that treatment. Using these two frameworks collectively can show how individuals negotiate different

aspects of their identity, through what context and how their identity can be shaped by peers and other individuals around them.

I. Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation in Adolescents

Identity development is a process that is constantly changing throughout the life span of an individual. Researchers have attempted to understand identity development from a psychosocial perspective to racial/ethnic identity to understand how a person's experiences are shaped through the way that they come to view and understand themselves. As such, it is important to understand how scholars have approached identity development theory during adolescence, in particular that of Chicano/Latino students.

One of the pioneers around identity formation research was Erik Erikson (1964a, 1964b) whose work focuses on adolescence as the crucial time in life in which youth experience some form of crisis and go through a process of self-exploration. This process of self-exploration leads to a commitment to a personal identity, which in turn, serves as a guide in their lives. Pizarro and Vera (2001) believe that a critical aspect of this process is the development of a sense of continuity between the way others see the individual and the way the individual sees her-or himself, resulting in an identity status. While individuals may develop identities based upon their familial home structure, identity is often mediated and influenced by race, class, gender and social status.

As Beverly Daniel Tatum (2003) explains, "The concept of identity is a complex one, shaped by individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors, and social and political contexts. Who am I? The answer depends in large part on who the world around me says I am" (18). Identity, therefore does not encompass a single element, but rather a wide variety of

components that impact how individuals come to view themselves, and how they believe those around them view them. The environment in which individuals grow up can largely influence the self-perception that individuals develop. How individuals make meaning of their identity throughout their childhood and adolescence can greatly impact their educational experience and shape their outcomes as they come to structure opportunity based upon how they believe they are perceived by others.

Three models of racial and ethnic identity development attempt to explain the role that race and ethnicity play in shaping the identity of a person. First, William Cross' (1978, 1991) model of racial identity development explains the different stages that an individual will go through as they explore their racial identity. Cross' (1971, 1991) model of Black racial identity development consists of five stages of development: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, internalization and internalization-commitment. In the first stage, the individual absorbs many of the beliefs and values of the dominant white culture and internalizes the idea that it is better to be white. The second stage is typically brought on by an event or series of events that forces an individual to acknowledge the impact that racism has on their lives. Tatum (2004) argues that while Cross (1991) and Parham (1989) believe that this process may unfold in late adolescence and early adulthood, this process can begin as early as junior high school for Black youth who grow up in white communities.

In the third stage, individuals attempt to internalize what it means to be Black and may seek to surround themselves with visible symbols of their culture. Individuals in this stage begin to demolish the old perspective about being Black and simultaneously attempt to construct what will become their new frame of reference. While individuals have not changed, they have made the decision to commit him or herself to change. In the fourth stage, individuals work out of the

challenges and problems from the previous transitional stage and begin to internalize a new identity. This new identity gives high salience to Blackness. It is also in this stage that Cross argues that the successful resolution of one's racial identity conflicts make it possible for an individual to shift their concerns to other aspects of their identity, such as religion, gender and sexual preferences, career development, social class and poverty and multiculturalism. The final stage of internalization-commitment is not one that all individuals achieve as many individuals will fail to sustain a long-term interest in Black affairs. Individuals who do sustain a Black identity devote an extended period to finding ways to translate their personal sense of Blackness into a plan of action or general commitment. It has been argued that this fifth state has few differences and in some instances has been combined with the fourth stage (Cross, Parham, Helms, 1991; Tatum, 2004).

Second, Janet Helms' (1990) provides a different perspective on racial identity development. Helms (1990) proposed that a person's racial identity consists of three interacting components: personal, affiliative, and reference group. In the personal component, individuals develop a self-concept or "who am I?" aspect of racial identity. The affiliative component concerns the extent to which an individual believes that what happens to other members of their racial group also happens to them. The final reference group component refers to an individuals' level of conformity to the norms of their racial group(s). Helms (2003) suggests that during the formative years of childhood and adolescence, each of the three aspects of racial identity can be shaped and influenced by a variety of environmental factors including: societal messages about the individuals worth as well as of their group, parental socialization concerning race relations, peer influences and educators' communications about race and racial difference.

As a majority of the contemporary research on racial identity development continues to focus on the experience of African Americans (Helms, 1990; McAdoo, 2002), Helms proposes a People of Color model that attempts to encompass the shared experience of communities of color. This new model consist of five stages of development: Conformity, Dissonance, Immersion/Emersion, Internalization, and Integrative Awareness, however this model is similar to that of Cross' racial identity formation theory with Integrative Awareness being the only difference. While Cross' fifth stage of development maintains a commitment or reaffirmation to an individual's identity, the Integrative Awareness status that Helms proposes involves integration and resolution of issues pertaining to one's various demographic identities, such as race and gender, and the recognition of shared conditions of oppression or advantage with a variety of groups. The Helms Integrative Awareness status complements Cross' model and adds another dimension to racial identity formation that can allow us to see how communities of color view each other. Helms' model does not take into account the differences in experience that members of different communities possess, nor does it consider the impact of within-group differences.

Third, while Cross and Helms provided an explanation of racial identity formation, Jean Phinney defined ethnic identity formation. Phinney's (1989) model consists of three stages of ethnic identity development: unexamined ethnic identity, ethnic identity search/moratorium and achieved identity. In the first stage of ethnic identity development, adolescents have given no thought to issues of ethnic identity. This initial stage continues until an identity crisis occurs, triggering the second stage of ethnic identity search/moratorium. While this second stage may not necessarily be triggered by any pivotal event as in Cross' second stage of encounter, a search process is necessary to reach the final stage of an achieved identity. In this final stage,

individuals become confident and comfortable with their ethnicity along with their positioning in society.

One of the challenges with these frameworks is that there is no clear distinction between racial and ethnic identity and sometimes they are used interchangeably along with culture (Sheets, 1999). Thus, racial and ethnic identities encompass common elements in which adolescents and young adults come to “understand and internalize a positive sense of their ethnic and racial background” (pp. 423), yet important distinctions about each groups experience remain that need to be further explored.

While the theories of Cross, Helms, and Phinney have emerged as a way to explain how individuals construct a racial and ethnic identity, they are limited as they attempt to place individuals into categories that are fixed and betray the complexity of identity in the real world (Pizarro, 2005). Chicano/Latino identity is more complex as it has several aspects that are particular to this ethnic group, such as generational status, language rights and citizenship (González, 2006). Further, researchers on Latino immigrants and children of immigrants contend that Latinos have multiple identities that emerge simultaneously, which differ from the unilinear model described by Erikson (Suarez-Orozco, 2000; Trueba, 2002). Trueba (2002) argues that immigrants manage to acquire and maintain multiple identities that co-exist and function without conflict in different contexts simultaneously, warranting the need to analyze identity through different lenses.

Pizarro and Vera (2001) suggest that Chicano ethnic identity is part of a more complex construct referred to as “social identity” and use Tajfel’s (1974) definition of social identity of “an understanding of the self that is based on the social realms in which one interacts” to understand the identify formation process of Chicanos/Latinos (91). Pizarro and Vera argued that

the Chicano/Latino experience is primarily ethnic and is largely shaped in part by the role that enculturation (the process by which individuals learn that they have specific ethnic roles and behaviors), acculturation (the process by which Chicanos adopt traits and characteristics from the dominant group), and assimilation, or the end result of complete acculturation in which individuals lose all of their ethnic and cultural traits, becoming indistinguishable from the dominant group. They argued that the level to which Chicanos/Latinos ascribed to each would influence their educational experience and outcomes as they each carried with them different meanings that would shape the identity of students.

Knight, Bernal, Cota, Garza and Ocampo (1993) developed a model that attempted to capture different elements that influence the identity development of Chicano/Latino students. They suggest that acculturation and enculturation work together to shape the ethnic identity and behaviors of youth. In their model, the family ecology or background such as generational status, acculturation, ethnic identity of the parent, language, cultural knowledge, and family structure interact with the ecology of the community in which they live. Collectively, the family ecology and community ecology work together to influence the socialization of the youth as they transition from the family into schools.

Having this understanding points out several differences about Chicano/Latino identity that make it difficult to assume that the identity formation process is as unilinear as previous theories of identity formation suggest. Tajfel's concept of social identity, however, provides us with a starting point from which to begin to understand the identity development process of Chicanos/Latinos and shows how identity is fluid. Tajfel (1981) argued that social identity is understood as, "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance

attached to that membership” (pp. 255). He further argued about the relationship between an individual and his group membership:

The assumption is made that, however rich and complex may be the individuals’ view of themselves in relation to the surrounding world, social and physical, some aspects of that view are contributed by the membership of certain social groups or categories. Some of these memberships are more salient than others; and some may vary in time and as a function of a variety of social situations. (pp. 255)

We can, therefore, argue that identity is affected by the group memberships that individuals belong to and is also situational, which can change depending on the context. We must also be aware of the fact that the social context can impact how individuals chose their identity and how this can change over time. Further, we also understand that groups do not exist in a vacuum but rather, coexist with other groups whose characteristics as a group are pointed out by differences in relation to one other (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1982).

There are limitations within racial and ethnic identity formation theories that surface when examining the experience of Chicano/Latino students. In particular, racial and ethnic identity development theories do not take into account how Chicano/Latino students may negotiate multiple identities at the same time and how these identities may be contextual. Other critical elements that are missing from ethnic/racial identity models include the role that class and gender play in shaping the identity development process of individuals. Further, racial and ethnic identity models do not consider how gender impacts the understanding that individuals develop about themselves and their surrounding environment. Critical Race Theory helps fill this void by analyzing how different aspects of a person’s identity can intersect, such as race, class and gender, and how these intersections shape their lived experiences. Exploring the identity

formation process allows us to understand how identity can be contextual and under what circumstances it can change.

II. Critical Race Theory in Education

Critical Race Theory (CRT) as an analytical lens acknowledges the presence and persistence of racism in schools, discrimination and hegemony, and enables various cultural and racial frames of reference to guide research questions, influence the methods of collecting and analyzing data, and informs how findings can be interpreted (Howard, 2008). CRT is a lens that centralizes the discourse about race, class and gender as the focus of analysis. In this study, I apply CRT to analyze the educational experiences of Chicano/Latino middle school males. The usage of CRT here is purposeful and unapologetic. I seek to interrogate race and racism in the everyday practices of school and society and provide the ideal framework to begin to interrogate the experiences of Chicano/Latino middle school students by focusing primarily on the role that race and gender play in shaping their experiences and identities.

In order to apply CRT to this study, I look at the basic tenets of CRT to develop a frame of reference. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001) some of the basic tenets of Critical Race Theory are that: (a) racism is ordinary, not aberrational and is part of the everyday life of people of color; (b) a racial hierarchy exists that serves important purposes, both psychic and material; (c) race and races are products of social thought and relations and are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient; (d) intersectionality shapes the experience of people, that is no person has a single, easily stated, unitary identity; and (e) people of color have a unique voice different than that of their white counterparts and hence their narratives and counterstories are important in documenting their experiences. These basic tenets

point out the role of race and racism has on the lives of people of color and how they shape the everyday experiences of individuals. Further, the tenets provide a starting point for analysis for this study.

Critical Race Theory accounts for the role that race and racism play in education while acknowledging the intersection of race, class and gender, allowing researchers to comprehend how multiple social constructs shape the educational experience of students of color (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, & Delgado-Bernal, 2001; Solórzano, & Yosso, 2000). At the same time, “Critical Race Theory research interrogates race and racism as defining and organizing constructs in U.S. society, culture and institutions” (Poon & Hune, 2009, p. 85). Adding another dimension to this, CRT calls for thinking of the structures imposed by race and understanding what structures are put in place because of class. However, as Carbado (2011) reminds us, “In describing racism as an endemic social force, CRT scholars argue that it intersects with other social forces, such as patriarchy, homophobia and classism” (1613-1614). Therefore, CRT must be employed to analyze the experiences of people of color beyond race.

Stovall (2006) reminds us that reducing Critical Race Theory to identity politics is an improper reading of the theoretical construct. CRT recognizes that race and class are central to the analysis of hegemony and one should not go without the other. As he argues:

The use of the term ‘race’ in the title CRT is misinterpreted. It is not steeped in the narrow concept of ‘race’ as a monolith encapsulating the entirety of experiences of people of color. Instead, CRT recognizes in situations where class is argued to be the central theme, it would be just as damaging to exclude race and vice versa. The purpose in this instance is not for CRT to bemoan the issue of being considered secondary to class

analysis. Instead, CRT is making the point to name the structural function of racism as relevant and significant, in addition to class. (pp. 248)

Researchers must be cautious not to reduce CRT to racial politics or race as a central point of criticism, but rather to consider how it is connected to other social structures.

Within the field of education, Critical Race Theory operates under five basic tenets that were first explored by Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995). Solórzano (1998) defines these five tenets in order to challenge the dominant discourse on race and racism in education by examining how educational theory, policy, and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups. First, CRT starts from the premise that race and racism are endemic, permanent and central rather than marginal. Second, CRT challenges dominant ideology by critiquing traditional claims of the educational system and its institutions to objectivity, meritocracy, color and gender blindness, race and gender neutrality, and equal opportunity. Third, CRT has an overall commitment to social justice and the elimination of racism. Fourth, CRT recognizes that the experiential knowledge of women and men of color is legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing and teaching about racial subordination in the field of education. And fifth, a Critical Race Theory in education adopts an interdisciplinary perspective and insists on analyzing race and racism in education in both a historical and contemporary context using interdisciplinary methods (pp. 122-123).

I apply CRT at this juncture in the pipeline to gain insight into what is occurring in middle school that is impacting the experience of Chicano/Latino students at later stages in the pipeline. This, in turn, can allow us to change school practices in middle school in order to improve and enhance the experiences of students. In recognizing that the Chicano/Latino experience is unique, I also employ Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit). As LatCrit scholars argue,

the Chicano/Latino experience is differentiated from that of others as they encounter language issues and rights, immigration and citizenship issues, and gender and sexuality issues that are unique to their experience (Johnson & Martinez, 1999; Rodriguez, 2009). CRT and LatCrit are compatible and not in competition, allowing researchers to highlight issues that are critical to Chicanos/Latinos (Gonzalez, 2006). LatCrit draws from both Chicana/o Studies and the civil rights literature and provides a historical and social context and theoretical basis that allows us to explore these issues (Rodriguez, 2009).

Intersectionality

Critical Race Methodologies are central to this study on Chicano/Latino middle school boys. I adopt intersectionality as the main tool of analysis of the experiences of Chicano/Latino students. As defined by Delgado and Stefancic (2001), “Intersectionality” means the examination of race, sex, class, national origin, and sexual orientation and how their combination plays out in various settings (51). It serves as a framework to examine how individuals view their identity and how the various surrounding elements interact to shape their experience, pointing out the uniqueness in experience.

Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) posits that individuals possess multiple identities that are constantly interacting with one another. Who we are and are perceived to be is a function of the intersection of different aspects of our personhood, for instance, the intersection of our race and gender. Fundamentally, race and gender are interconnected, they do not exist as separate identities and cannot be separated, nor can one aspect be considering without taking into account the other. It is impossible to think of a person either through gender, without thinking of them as a man or woman through their race. These categories intersect to compound the level of racism and other forms of discrimination that individuals’ experience.

First, intersectionality argues for analyzing the experiences of students in the context of race, gender, ethnicity, class, and other categories in everyday school practices. Race plays a significant role in shaping the experience of Chicano/Latino middle school boys. Second, gender plays a role in shaping academic attitudes and outcomes. While young women of color may be treated as hopeful, young men may be viewed as hopeless and marginalized. Third, class status creates a systematic structure that influences how students develop group hierarchies, but also how teachers understand student culture. Fourth, race and gender combine to create a difference in experience for male and female students, however, Chicano/Latino boys experience school different than their white and Asian male counterparts. While boys may share a cultural experience with their Chicana/Latina counterparts, they do not share a common experience because gender creates differences in how they are treated. Finally, while they may have similar experiences with other students of color, including Chicano/Latino boys within their group, class can create a different level that can grant access to resources to some, but not to others, which can create barriers amongst themselves that can change their experience.

Intersectionality allows us to see how race, gender, and class intersect to shape the experiences of Chicano/Latino males in a school setting and social context, it further differentiates and highlights their uniqueness. Generational status, ethnic group affiliation, and immigration status can also add further layers of analysis and discrimination that can show within group differences, along with between group differences. One of the current limitations of intersectionality is that it has primarily been used in the Critical Feminist literature (Bernal, 1999; Crenshaw, 1995; Wing, 2000) to analyze the experience of women or in the Queer literature to look at LGBT men (Carbado, 2000; McCready, 2010). While their experiences are different, men of color also experience racism and oppression in different ways that are unique

compared to their female and LGBT counterparts. Implementing intersectionality into this study allows us to fill this gap, and understand how their experience is uniquely shaped by who they are as Chicano/Latino males.

Finally, CRT situates research in a historical context. Going back to its origins in legal studies, CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a contextual/historical analysis of the law and society (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado and Crenshaw, 1993). This study focuses on the context in which students are learning and growing up. It also values the historical presence of communities of color and the contributions that their experiences have had on the surrounding environment. Understanding that racial formation is a sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed, it is necessary to understand how race, racism and racial dynamics are situational and contextual (Omi & Winant, 1994).

Operationalizing Critical Race Theory

In using CRT as a framework, I first turn to the fifth tenet of Critical Race Theory in education; the centrality of experiential knowledge. By focusing on personal narrative and creating a voice, CRT scholars assert and acknowledge the importance of the personal and community experiences of people of color as a source of knowledge (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006). CRT allows for the creation of a voice for students about their reality and perception of schools, community, and surrounding environment, including how race, gender, ethnicity, and class impact their lived experience. As Dixson and Rousseau explain,

CRT scholars believe and utilize personal narratives and other stories as valid forms of “evidence” and thereby challenge a “numbers only” approach to documenting inequity or discrimination, which tends to certify discrimination from a quantitative rather than a

qualitative perspective. Critical Race Theory places the students and their experiences in the center of the analysis. (pp. 35)

Therefore, CRT challenges traditional research methodologies by placing the narratives of people of color and their experiences as the central research piece and showing the uniqueness and variance in the lives of people of color.

Storytelling and Counter-Storytelling

Storytelling and counter-storytelling are additional tools that I employ to name one's own reality and provide students with a voice. Counter-storytelling provides the mechanism to capture the voices of the subaltern, such as People of Color to emerge from the boundaries and challenge dominant discourse. As Yosso (2006) discusses:

Critical race counterstorytelling is a method of recounting the experience and perspectives of racially and socially marginalized people. Counterstories reflect on the lived experiences of People of Color to raise critical consciousness about social and racial injustice...counterstories do not focus on trying to convince people that racism exist. Instead, counterstories seek to document the persistence of racism from the perspectives of those injured and victimized by its legacy (pp. 10).

While race and racism are prevalent in the educational experience of students in middle school, counterstorytelling allows for Chicano/Latino male students to share their perspective and vantage point on schooling. It allows for students to critique the educational system and provide accounts of how they are countering stereotypes that have been placed upon them. As Delgado (1998) adds, "Counter-stories can quicken and engage conscience. Their graphic quality can stir imagination in ways in which more conventional discourse cannot" (260). Counterstories become a means for empowering students and building a collective consciousness. Using

counterstorytelling will allow the themes to emerge from participants and not from the preconceived notions of what I may believe is important during that stage of the educational pipeline. In short, naming one's own reality with stories about their experiences can affect school practices by informing teachers, counselors and school administrators how everyday practices marginalize students (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

CRT permits researchers to understand the experience of Chicano/Latino middle school males from their perspective, allowing them to dictate the direction of the conversation and giving them a voice. Students will be able to discuss what issues matter to them and share their perspectives on those issues. CRT allows for the experience of these students to come to the center of the discussion and truly understand how they construct their racial, gendered and social identities. More importantly, it validates their voices and experiences by placing value on them and showing students that their lives do matter and have not gone unnoticed.

Part of naming one's own reality is examining racial microaggressions experienced by individuals. Racial microaggressions are subtle insults, that can be verbal, nonverbal and/or visual, that are directed towards people of color either on purpose or unconsciously which can influence racial climate (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). Racial microaggressions are often experienced through interpersonal microaggressions, racial jokes and institutional microaggressions (Yosso, Smith, Ceja & Solórzano, 2009). Students must often decipher and determine how they will respond microaggressions and weigh the consequences of their actions.

Interest Convergence

As part of my analysis of racial microaggressions, I employ Bell's (1980) theory of interest convergence to analyze school practices at Dolores Middle School. The principle of interest convergence provides that the interest of Blacks, or other racial groups, in achieving

racial equity will be accommodated only when it convergences with the interest of whites and so long as racial equality does not threaten the superior status of whites (Bell, 1980). Interest convergence emphasizes that racism operates to reinforce material or psychic advantages for groups in a position to command them (Delgado, 2000). Gains will only be achieved when a breakthrough is necessary for communities of color, but done so only for the sake of appearances or the imperatives of global competitiveness (Bell, 1980; Dudziak, 1988). While programs may be instituted that can improve outcomes for Chicano/Latino male students, programs such as athletics, often benefit whites students as well, and do not divert resources away from the general student population.

Identity Performance Theory

Finally, I push the boundaries of CRT and research on intersectionality by further exploring identity performance theory. While intersectionality demonstrates how the experiences of Chicano/Latino males are shaped by the intersection of different elements of their identity, Carbado and Gulati (2001) push us to consider how individuals choose to highlight certain elements of their identity through “identity performance.” Identity performance theory (Carbado & Gulati, 2001; Cooper, 2006) posits that individuals make conscious decisions about how they choose to perform and enact different elements of their identity, which influences the way that individuals will be treated. As Carbado and Gulati (2000) explain:

The theory of identity performance is that a person’s experiences with and vulnerability to discrimination are based not just on the status marker of difference (call this a person’s status identity) but also on the choices that a person makes about how to present her difference (call this a person’s performance identity) (pp.701).

Individuals can choose to enact parts of their identity, whether it is gendered, cultural or social, in order to position themselves as to how they may want to appear to others. Being Latino and male may not be the same for two individuals who may choose to perform their identity in different forms. Categories such as style of dress, institutional identity, academic inclination, social identity and professional affiliations, differentiate the experience that individuals can have.

Identity performance theory allows researchers to understand how and why students choose to enact different elements of their identity that can impact how they are viewed by their teachers and their peers. Understanding that teachers can treat students who choose to disassociate themselves from their cultural background and assimilate better than their peers (Katz, 1999), as well as go against peer culture can allow us to begin to understand differences in student outcomes based upon how they choose to “perform” different aspects of their identity. Previous research on identity formation fails to make the connection between student outcomes and how students choose to enact their identity within school by merely discussing the process through which individuals go through. This failure to do so then portrays students as passive victims of their educational experience rather than active agents who chose how they perform in school based on their peers and context.

Identity formation and CRT come together when CRT scholars reject and challenge the binary that has existed as identity-as-category versus identity-as-process (Hobbell & Chapman, 2009). Rather, CRT takes into account how identity is contextual to the environments and spaces that individuals occupy and changes according to how individuals feel is necessary. Identity must be looked at as fluid, not static and as something that is constantly being negotiated and one that is performed as well.

Conceptual Framework

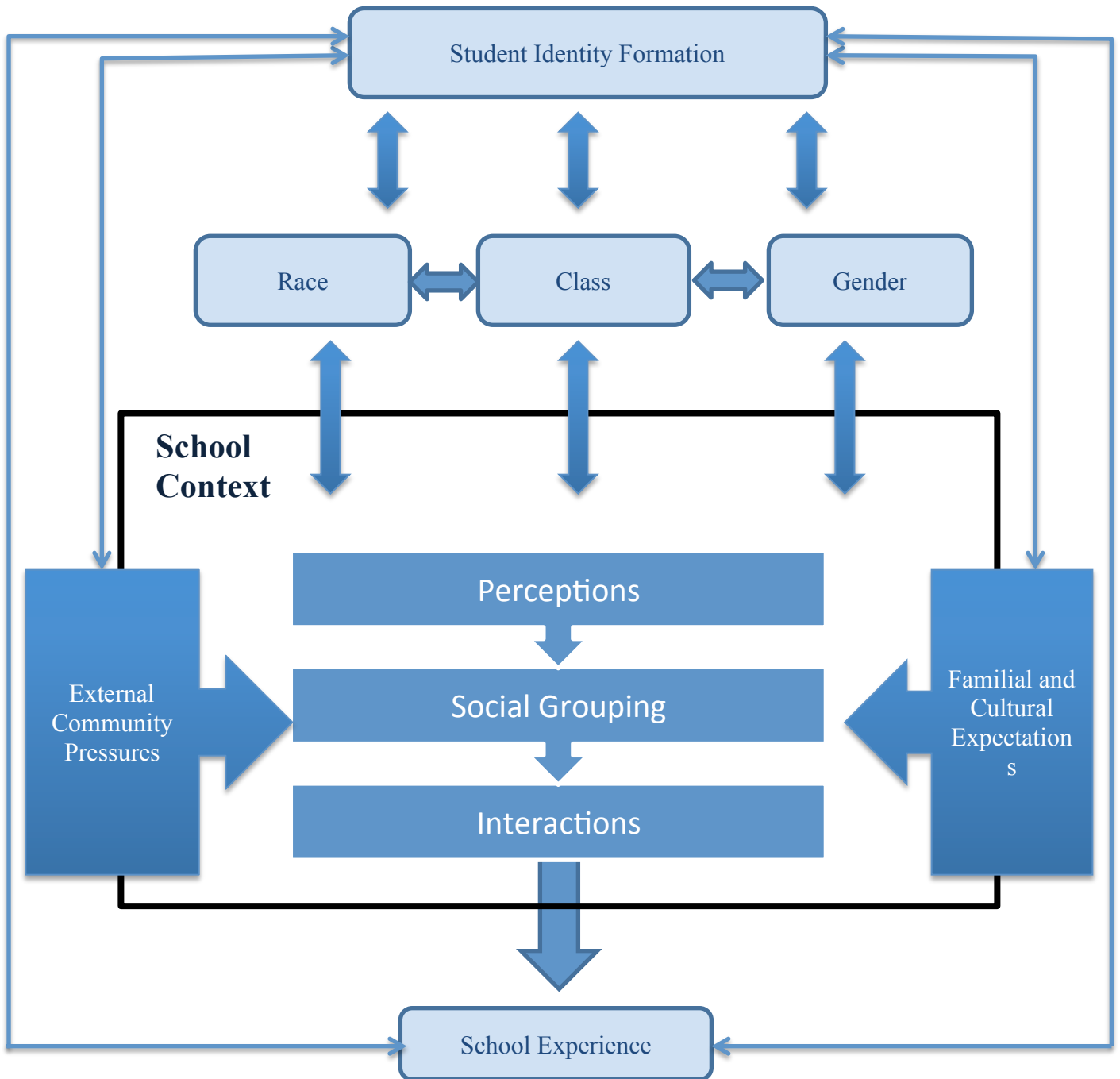
By combining the theories of identity formation and Critical Race Theory, I argue that the experiences of Chicano/Latino middle school students are largely dependent on the relationship between identity formation and social groups. While both of these categories can be independent from one another, they do not exist in a vacuum and are connected within the school environment. The relationship between the two can also be shaped by the school context, as the perceptions that students develop of themselves, may be different based upon their experiences within their school. Therefore, the school context must also be taken into consideration when attempting to understand the experiences of students.

Race, class, and gender shape perceptions that students develop about themselves and their peers, often assuming how others may view them. Students enter the school context with these previous notions of race, class and gender which affects the formation of social groups as students may group themselves with individuals who they may feel are similar to them. Social groups can influence the behavior, attitude, and engagement for students at school. More importantly, it can also affect the types of interactions that students have with other students, teachers, and staff members.

Figure 3.1 shows the influences on student identity formation and the process by which students enter the school system with particular views about race, class, and gender that are initially structured through family and their surrounding environments. As they enter school, students negotiate their race, class and gender identities and develop perceptions about others based on their views towards each. How they shape their identities will influence the structure of social group membership and who they chose to interact with while at school. Within school, students must still respond to external community pressures, such as peers and older adults who

can influence their behavior along with cultural expectations developed by their families. The student experience will be determined by how they negotiate their identity, the social groups they join and the interactions they have with other individuals based upon their group membership.

Figure 3.1. Conceptual Framework of Student Identity Based on Perceptions of Race, Class and Gender.



Contributions to Critical Race Theory and Literature

One area that researchers have failed in is to give middle school students a voice. CRT provides an avenue in which the voices of these students can emerge. While CRT has been widely used in education to capture the racialized and gendered experience of undergraduate students (Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000; Villalpando, 2003), graduate students (Malagon & Alvarez, 2011; Poon & Hune, 2009; Solórzano, 1998), and faculty members (Smith, Yosso, & Solórzano, 2006), CRT has not been used during the critical stages of identity development. In her work on Chicana/o students throughout the educational pipeline, Yosso (2006) gives a voice to Chicana/o students at different stages in the pipeline examining closely the experiences of Chicana/o graduate students, undergraduate students, and high school students. While she also looks at the experience of students in elementary school, she approaches that stage through the usage of the community cultural wealth of the mothers of the children, thus leaving the voices of the students out of the discussion. It is necessary for us to close this gap and expose the experience of middle school students in order for researchers to successfully understand how this critical stage is impacting the development of students.

This study is also an attempt to stretch CRT's research on intersectionality further by considering how individuals begin to make decisions about their identity at a much younger age. While Carbado and Gulati, (2000, 2001, 2013) discuss how identity performance is played out in legal settings, employment and other contexts, their analyses focus largely on the experience of adults. Expanding identity performance to middle school students can give us deeper insights into how students make decisions about their identity that can impact their academic development and school experience as they get older. Such insights can help close the achievement and gender gap amongst students of color.

CHAPTER 4: Methodology and Study Design

In order to fully engage and absorb the experience of young Chicano/Latino males from their point of view as they transition through a critical stage of adolescence, I developed an ethnographic study that incorporated various qualitative research methods such as participant observation, shadowing, semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995; Merriam, 2009). As Hammersley and Atkinson (2010) note, “[E]thnography usually involves the researcher participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and/or asking questions through informal and formal interviews, collecting documents and artefacts” (pp. 3). From late March 2012 to the end of June 2013, I became fully immersed in the day-to-day activities of Dolores Middle School, engaging with research participants (students) in the different spaces and contexts that shaped their experiences.

Ethnographic work studies people’s actions and accounts in everyday contexts, rather than under conditions created by the researcher (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). It focuses on how the day to day experiences of participants are informed, not only through the people they interact with but also through the spaces they navigate. Ethnographic research allows for the collection of data that can be used to construct rich, empirically based descriptions of the way of life or culture of a society, and identifies their behaviors, beliefs, understandings, and values that imply in a particular social world (Emerson, 2001; Berreman, 1968). Geertz (1973) referred to this as the understanding of culture and as he defined it, “Culture is not a power, something to which social events, behaviors, institutions, or processes can be causally attributed; it is a context, something within which they can be intelligibly described” (14). Therefore, ethnography allows for a deeper understanding of the environment in which participants live, the people they

interact with, and the spaces and institutions that, in this case, students occupy and how these individuals and spaces shape the experiences of students.

In his classic work, *Street Corner Society*, Whyte (1943) argued that the only way to gain intimate knowledge of local life was to live and participate in the activities of its people. This way, the study can be shaped by the participants and their daily activities, creating a picture of what the day-to-day activities of a community are like. In his study on Black street corner men, Liebow (1967, 2003) stated that his work “is an attempt to meet the need for recording and interpreting lower-class life of ordinary people, on their grounds and on their terms (5). Rather than attempting to test out theories or assumptions that he may have had, Liebow allowed for the participants to go about their daily lives and made meaning from what he witnessed. In a similar fashion, I followed and observed students in their natural environment, sitting in classroom, hanging out with them during lunch, at soccer games, and through non-school spaces that students navigated through on a daily basis. An ethnographic study that explores the day- to-day activities and interactions of middle school Chicano/Latino males is an ideal approach to examine how students not only experienced schooling, but how larger social issues within their community and society and the historical context that shaped their lives impacts their identity development and school experiences.

Target Population, Sampling and Participants

I employed a homogenous purposive sampling strategy to obtain the target population of Chicano/Latino middle school males (Patton, 2002). I invited all 32 of the 7th grade Chicano/Latino male students at Dolores Middle School during the 2011-2012 academic school year to participate in the study. Sixteen students agreed to participate initially and three more

students joined later. After speaking with the principal at the end of the 2011-2012 academic school year, an additional six students who would become 7th grade students during the 2012-2013 academic school year were added to the study, yielding a total sample of 25 participants. During early December 2012, one of the 7th graders withdrew from the study, leaving a final sample of 24 participants. The sample included an adequate representation of the different friendship groups at the school, as well as students from different academic abilities, immigration/generational status and ethnic backgrounds. Rather than entering the site with fixed categories that may have not existed, I invited all the subjects to participate, which allowed for the emergence of specific social groups that served as a more adequate unit of analysis.

Fieldwork for the study began in late March of 2012 and concluded in June 2013. During the initial months of fieldwork, I served as a teaching assistant and volunteered twice a week at Dolores Middle School, spending Mondays in the 7th grade Language Arts Class and Wednesdays in the 7th grade Social Studies class. By the time that the 2012-2013 Academic School Year began, most students and teachers were aware of my presence on campus and teachers were willing to allow me into their classrooms as a volunteer but also just simply to conduct observations or as some teachers put it, just “hang out.” As such, I conducted observations in the 8th grade physics, language arts, social studies, 7th grade language arts and social studies, and some math classes. I was also actively involved in helping Mr. Jackson², the 7th grade Language Arts teacher with the 8th grade Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program, a college readiness course that students opted to enroll in as an elective course, after he took over the course during the 2012-2013 school year. By this point, I was considered part of the school by most of the staff as my presence increased from two days a week to three or

² All names have been changed and pseudonyms have been used in place of actual names.

four days a week. Given my height at 5 foot 4 inches, I often blended in with the students when I sat down to eat lunch with them and was only distinguished by the staff members by the beard that I grew out.

During the fall semester of 2012, I was asked by the soccer coach to help out with the boys' soccer team, allowing me to observe students more closely in a different setting. This experience proved valuable as I was able to spend time with participants on the soccer field and in the locker room that allowed me to hear conversations about leadership, masculinity, and respect for others. Through soccer, I was able to see how students behaved differently than in the classroom, with many of them having a complete 180 degree turn in behavior and dedication, with a handful of them growing into leaders of the team.

Observations and Shadowing.

As an ethnographic study, I observed and followed participants for this study within various school and external spaces employing both shadowing and observations (Patton, 2002). As Merriam (2009) notes, "Observation is a research tool when it is systematic, when it addresses a specific research question, and when it is subject to the checks and balances in producing trustworthy results" (pp. 118). In addition to being in the classroom, I often sat with students during lunch and afterschool. I also walked around with teachers and administrators who were on supervision duty. Through these interactions, I followed up with students on issues that came up about what was happening in their lives and at school. On several occasions, I would follow particular students through several periods, spending up to three of four periods with them since many of them shared the same classes.

I also shadowed two students on multiple occasions, spending the entire day with them from the moment they left their house, until they returned home at night. The settings in which I

shadowed students also ranged from and included a regular school day, a weekend and a weekday during their spring break. Shadowing, as described by McDonald (2005) is a research technique that involves a researcher closely following a member of an organization over an extended period of time through different areas. Shadowing enhances our data by providing us with information that would otherwise be unaware to the researcher by following participants through their daily environment.

Understanding that students begin to negotiate their identity the moment they walk out the door, it was necessary to shadow them as they went about their daily routine (Rios, 2011). In such instances, I would speak with the parents the night before to inform them of the purpose of shadowing and my plan for the next day, and also inform teachers that I would be in their classroom the next day. On school days, I showed up and met students at their home up to an hour before school and walked with them to school, followed them through all of their periods at school observing how their behavior and engagement changed from class to class, hung out with them during lunch and after school and then walked back home with them at the time that they normally would walk back home. Often, I would meet their parents and talk to them as they were curious about what I was doing, but more importantly, they were curious about who I was and where I came from. On non-school days, I would arrange a time to meet with the students and go with them through their normal day as they socialized with their friends in spaces outside of school. Observations and shadowing also allowed me to have follow-up questions and discussion points for focus groups and individual interviews throughout the length of the study.

Merriam suggests, “What is observed is determined by several factors. The most important is the researcher’s purpose in conducting the study in the first place” (pp. 119). I focused my attention during observations at Dolores Middle School on the interactions between

research participants, their teachers, and peers, with a focus on race, ethnicity and gender. While other issues arose during fieldwork, the focus of my attention was largely around these three categories as they were focus of my study.

I wrote extensive field notes at the end of each site visit or between class periods, allowing me to create accurate accounts of daily events at Dolores Middle School. Field notes and informal conversations with students and staff allowed me to develop a better understanding of what the day to day experiences of students at Dolores Middle School were like. By observing the interactions that students had with one another, body language, and behavior, I captured data that may have been unobtainable through interviews alone. Further, in my field notes I recorded what practices were in place at the school that in some instances served as a form of institutional racism by witnessing incidents first hand, rather than having them described to me afterward by an administrator or a student. Collectively, these methods provided an in-depth picture of what occurred at Dolores Middle School, allowing me to understand things through different perspectives.

Interviews and Focus Groups

Interviews and focus groups began in May 2012 with the first round of interviews conducted in the spring and continued throughout the summer and into the fall. Individual student interviews lasted approximately 20 to 35 minutes and were conducted in the conference room of the counseling center at Dolores Middle School. Interviews were conducted after school and during lunch in order not to interfere with class time. The second and third interviews were conducted between September 2012 and February 2013.

The first interview I conducted with participants discussed the family background of the students and served the purpose of familiarizing myself with the students, their family and family

history as well as the neighborhood they lived in. The second interview examined peer groups, their views towards school, gender dynamics and the students' future career aspirations. I adapted Phinney's Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (1992) for the third interview and investigated student views towards their ethnic background and other ethnic groups. This interview also asked questions about nationalism, patriotism, and the family migration story. Individual interviews provided me with a mechanism to follow up on issues that would come up at school, such as suspension and academic performance, and helped monitor students' academic progress throughout the year. Additionally, I conducted a fourth interview that examined participants' early college and career planning between March and June 2013, but information from these interviews is not included in the final analysis of this dissertation.

I also conducted focus groups throughout the length of the study that covered various topics, including school culture, views on masculinity, the 2012 presidential election and other current events. The size of the focus groups varied, ranging from 18 students to as little as five students, depending on the topic and the availability of students. For most of the focus groups, all participants were invited, with some students opting not to take part in them. A number of focus groups were conducted by grade level, with only students in each respective grade invited to participate.

These conversations were structured as informal conversational interviews that offered maximum flexibility to identify issues and other information in whatever direction appeared to be appropriate, depending on what emerged from the conversation with participants (Patton, 2002). In the initial focus group I asked questions regarding student views towards their school, teachers, and surrounding community that helped lay the foundation for subsequent focus groups and individual interviews.

Data Collection, Coding and Analysis.

I audio recorded all interviews with the students' permission and transcribed them for accuracy. After transcribing the interviews, the interviews were coded in two phases, first after the completion of the focus group interview and second after each individual interview. I employed open coding at the beginning of the study primarily to code focus group interviews in order to identify any emerging themes outside of race and gender that may play a significant role in the experiences of students (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). Coding data in this manner provided me with topics that I followed up on with participants at a later time through individual interviews or in conversations, and to identify emerging themes and how specific themes or issues may intersect and overlap with one another (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Through this process, issues related to generational status and masculinity emerged, which were then included and followed up throughout the study. Second, I used focused coding for the individual interviews as I was specifically searching for signals about how students interpret the role that race and gender play in their experiences. The coding process generated themes and patterns that provided a starting point for the structuring of findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

I followed up on instances in which a student was unfairly disciplined by speaking with students involved in each incident, through conversations with teachers and staff who were present, and in some cases discussions with the principal and vice-principal. In most cases when something major occurred at the school, students would explain to me what happened from their perspective. I obtained responses from multiple students, both those involved in the incident and those not involved in order to ensure that multiple perspectives were represented. I talked with the teachers whose trust I had gained the most and discussed the incident for verification. While still placing student accounts at the forefront, this allowed me to verify some of the facts. I

explored instances in which student and teacher accounts differed and to the extent to which their accounts varied. This allowed for a form of triangulation to compare and crosscheck my findings with students and staff and ensure that my findings were as accurate as possible (Merriam, 2009).

Positionality and Perspective

Recognizing that my positionality as a graduate student has provided me with many privileges associated with being at an institution of higher education, I sought to immerse myself in the same spaces that research participants occupied in their daily lives at school, at home, and in their community to gain their perspectives. Villenas (1996) cautions researchers of color not to be co-opted by the academy and fall under the belief that we may know what is best for our subjects. She warns us to be careful and not engage in the same type of “othering” that has occurred by outside researchers on communities of color for so long. While it may be easy to assume that being cultural insiders may facilitate the research process, the experiences of researchers of color may differ from those of the participants as there may be other external factors affecting participants. As such, researchers cannot understand the larger educational process taking place without also having a sense of how the local “on the ground” context shapes and is shaped by macro processes (Rios, 2011). Conducting research simply within schools diminishes the value that the home and neighborhood environment contribute and also presents an incomplete picture of what students go through on a daily basis.

While I share a common background with my research participants, I do not feel comfortable saying that I share a common experience with them because of all the privileges that my many years of schooling in higher education have granted me. I wanted to avoid being like many researchers who attempt to do good but because of their lack of knowledge continue to

perpetuate the negative stereotypes of the communities they seek to study. Villenas (1996) points to how researchers serve as modern day colonizers of the communities that we seek to understand:

In the last decade, ethnographers and qualitative researchers have illuminated the ways in which the researched are colonized and exploited. By objectifying the subjectivities of the researched, by assuming authority, and by not questioning their own privileged positions, ethnographers have participated as colonizers of the researched (pp. 714).

I did not want to enter the community and sensationalize the lives of students or treat research participants as the “other” whom I had come to attempt to understand their experience. Rather, I wanted to come in and understand their experiences through their perspective and place them at the center of the conversation.

As a researcher of color, I was quickly caught in the between the insider-outsider phenomena. Researchers with insider positions have largely been characterized as those who share multiple identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, or profound experiences with those being researched (Chavez, 2008). Others, however, have argued that the lines between insider and outsider is not as clear cut as believed (Ganga & Scott, 2006; Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane & Muhamad, 2001). Banks (1998) defines insiderness through his typology of cross-cultural researchers in which he argues that there are two types of insiders, indigenous and external. Indigenous insiders, he defines as someone “who endorses the unique values, perspectives, behaviors and beliefs, and knowledge of his or her indigenous community and culture and is perceived by people in the community as a legitimate member who can speak with authority.” This differs from the indigenous outsider who may be socialized within the context of the community but has left it and experienced high levels of desocialization and cultural

assimilation into outside, or mainstream culture. Having been away from the community and been a part of the academy for 12 years, the term indigenous outsider seems to fit me well as I grew up in a similar environment, but have drifted away from the community because of my education and my affiliation with institutions of higher education.

Regardless of what category of insider-outsider I placed myself in, most of the staff at Dolores Middle School treated me as a cultural insider because I was of the same background as the research participants, but as an outsider because I was coming from an external institution to conduct research. Over time as teachers and administrators grew comfortable having me around, the lines would blur. Sometimes they would ask me to play on their side and help out with disciplinary issues. Other times, they quickly reminded me that I was an outside volunteer and asked me to give them privacy while they discussed individual students. This, however, played to my advantage as I often had to “play dumb” and pretend that I did not know what was going on with some of my participants in order not to violate the confidentiality that I had established with participants and was bounded to by my institution’s human subject’s protocol when administrators tried to pry information from me that would help place participants in trouble. This stance also allowed me to remain neutral and minimize the effect that my presence had at the school.

Having been raised by parents who had immigrated to the United States from Mexico in search of a better future, I had a substantial amount of background knowledge which allowed me to become a cultural insider to many of the students. Aside from my cultural and ethnic background, my knowledge of soccer and basketball, my shared interest in gangster rap, and old school hip hop allowed the students to see past my age and view me as an adult who they could confide in, but not an authority figure as they saw most of their teachers. My ability to speak

Spanish with many of the students furthered my insider status with many of the students as we constantly switched to Spanish during conversations in order for teachers and other students not to understand what we were talking about, and in many cases, to be able to talk about them.

My involvement at the school made me a participant observer throughout much of the length of my study. As a researcher I observed and interacted closely enough with research participants, which allowed me to establish an insider's identity without participating in the activities that were the core of my study (Adler & Adler, 1998). As Merriam adds, "[T]here is often a mix of roles wherein one might begin as either a full participant and then withdraw into a more of a researcher stance or, in reverse, begin as a total observer and become more of a participant over time" (pp.125). While I tried not to interfere with the day-to-day activities of the school, my simple presence alone had an impact. Something simple as walking into a classroom while class was in session would cause students to react to my presence, which inadvertently impacted their behavior as they tried to get my attention. Merriam responds to this concern by arguing that:

The question, then, is not whether the process of observing affects what is observed but how the researcher can identify those effects and account for them in interpreting the data. At the very least, participants who know they are being observed will tend to behave in socially acceptable ways and present themselves in a favorable manner (pp. 127).

Understanding that my presence not only had an impact on the participants, but also on other students who in turn influenced research participants' behavior, I spoke with teachers on several occasions to see how students behaved when I was not there and considered their comments in my analysis. But I also understood as Walford (2001) argues that being an observer is a "process

of role definition, negotiation and renegotiation” (pp. 62). As such, my role as a participant observer became contextual, and changed in the different settings in which I interacted with research participants.

Research Site: Dolores Middle School

Entering the halls of Dolores Middle School, it is easy to notice the banners and paintings promoting school pride. As you walk through the main buildings, college flags and banners are visibly displayed throughout, promoting a college going culture for their students. On Fridays, students and teachers are encouraged to wear college sweaters and shirts, with most of the teachers wearing shirts of the colleges they attended. While still a middle school, the school considers itself to be a college preparatory school that seeks to inform their students about the various college and career opportunities available to them after high school.

Located in the suburbs of a large vibrant urban community in the Pacific Northwest, Dolores Middle School lies within a predominantly white and affluent community. Over the course of the past ten years, the demographics of the southern part of the city have drastically shifted and seen the emergence of a large immigrant Latino community. Since 2001, the population of Chicano/Latino students at Dolores Middle School more than doubled from 11.7% to 26.1%, becoming the middle school with the largest concentration of Chicano/Latino students in the district. Part of this can be attributed to the working class communities of color adjacent to the southern part of the city. In addition to the large growing Latino population, the neighborhood in which Dolores Middle School lies has also seen a growth in Russian and South Asian Indian immigrants. The growing Russian population has changed the dynamics of what it means to white and American for students, as most Latino students at the school do not consider

themselves to be American, nor do they consider Russian students to be white, but rather European. The emergent Russian and South Asian Indian peers shared a common working class background with their Chicano/Latino peers and often struggled financially to secure good paying jobs.

The school has a very diverse student body, with 39.6% of its students being white, 21.4% Asian/Pacific Islander, 4.7% African American, 0.8% Native American and 7.3% multi-racial. In terms of social class, 48.6% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch during the 2011-2012 school year (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2012). While some students may come from more affluent families, a majority of students at Dolores Middle School are either lower middle class, working class or live below the poverty line. Amongst Latino students, most of the students are working class, and only a few are living at or below the poverty line.

Teachers and Staff

While the population of the school has changed, the composition of the teaching corps has remained largely white and female. Of the 36 teachers on staff, only a handful are faculty of color. Two of them, the Spanish teacher Mr. Lopez and a reading instructor, Ms. Benavidez are the only Latino faculty members. Ms. Benavidez does not have a full teaching load and only teaches three periods a day, but provides support for students in other capacities. In addition to the two teachers, a third teaching aid, the mother of one of the participants also works at the school as a Special Education assistant. The school registrar, a female in her early 30's, is the only other Latina on staff and recounts how not much has changed in the school district since the time she and her siblings attended its schools. She believes that the school's lack of willingness to meet the needs of young men of color caused her brothers to become involved in gangs and

leave the school system early, something she has seen repeatedly over the years with subsequent generations of Chicano/Latino students. During the second year of the study, a Latino male was hired to coordinate the parent resource center, but his contact with students was very limited.

In regard to staff, the school is led by a very caring and concerned individual, Mrs. Matias who considers herself to be a person of color but because of her racial ambiguity the students do not know if she's white, Latina or something else. Her parents are German and South Asian Indian, but since she grew up in the Northwest, she feels that the students do not necessarily see a direct connection to her experience, although most students do respect her and are cordial with her. While she is constantly in meetings, Mrs. Matias is very visible, often interacting with students during lunch, walking through campus throughout the day and often staying late at night for evening events. On the other hand, the Vice Principal is a tall white male who few of the Latino students like because discipline falls under his jurisdiction and he often hands out suspensions and detentions to them. At the beginning of the study, the vice-principal was not very welcoming to me and often kept a close eye during my visits, something that changed as he warmed up to me as time progressed.

One of the most influential staff members is school counselor, Ms. Brown, who has been at the school for seven years. While she is only responsible for half of the students at the school, she also provides additional support to all of the Chicano/Latino students, helping to run the Latina Girls group and has made a huge effort to jump start a Latino Boys Club. The students believe she is the most caring person at the school and the person that they trust the most, often going to her when they have personal issues.

The school registrar is another important staff member for some of the participants. While not officially a teacher or certified staff, she is Latina and one of the few people that

speaks Spanish. Because of the limited number of Spanish speakers on staff, Ms. Nayeli is often called in to translate for parents during meetings or make phone calls to parents to outreach for particular events or when students are required to return paperwork. Some of the Chicano/Latino students frequent her office and talk to her on a regular basis, telling her how they are doing in school, how their families are doing, and how things are going for them personally.

Academics

Academically, the school does not have a tracking system and a majority of students are enrolled in Honors level courses. Only students identified as English Language Learners are placed in separate language and reading support courses, but most students are placed in the same classes for math, social studies, and science. Math courses are divided by ability level, with some students taking courses as advanced as geometry. The school also offers foreign language courses in Spanish and French. A majority of students become fluent in another language before they graduate from Dolores Middle School and take up to two years of a foreign language. Although the school belongs to one of the top public school districts in the country, it has recently faced several challenges, largely believed to be due to the changing student demographics. For decades, all four of the public high schools in the district ranked amongst the top 100 high schools in the country, however, with a growing Chicano/Latino population, the high school to which Dolores Middle School feeds has failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years and has seen an increase in truancy and disciplinary issues leading many to believe that the problems are stemming from Dolores Middle School.

At the start of the 2012-2013 academic year, Dolores Middle School underwent a restructuring process as part of the state compliance process for failing to meet AYP for the fourth year in a row. As part of their restructuring process, the school integrated English

Language Learners into mainstream classes in social studies, science and math. Students who had previously been in sheltered courses were now a part of regular courses, but were still in separate language arts classes, with many of them continuing to be enrolled in reading support classes. Throughout the length of the 2012-2013 school year, ELL students struggled to adapt to the fast pace of regular courses.

During the summer, students who were below reading comprehension and math for their grade level were invited to participate in Dolores Academy, a four-week summer program to help improve their ability in these two areas. Many of the participants in this study were in this program as they were struggling academically. Further, the school launched an after school support program for students who had a grade point average below 2.0. Students who failed to meet the grades academically were required to attend a one-hour after school support program every day in an assigned classroom. Here, the students would get help in finishing up their homework assignments and other course projects. Once a student's grade point average improved, they were allowed to leave the program the following grading period. Many students, however, would end up back in the program a grading period after they left the program.

Social Spaces and Activities

The cafeteria at Dolores Middle School is the public space where a majority of students spent their free time while at school. A significant amount of non-class time was spent observing student interactions in this space throughout my fieldwork. In the morning, students would congregate in the cafeteria, eat breakfast and hang out before classes commenced. During lunchtime, all of the students would eat lunch in the cafeteria and were under the supervision of adults. Once students finished their lunch, some of the students, primarily Chicano/Latino males, would walk out to the athletic fields and play soccer for a few minutes before their next period.

Other students would walk outside the cafeteria and hang out outside of the buildings where their next class was located and talk.

Lunchtime also revealed some of the divisions at Dolores Middle School, as students would sit with their respective social groups, which were largely grouped along racial and gendered lines. Cafeteria tables were organized into three rows of benches, with one row set up side by side rather than behind one another. Chicano/Latino males would often sit in one of the corners of the cafeteria in the tables that were side by side, with the 7th and 8th grade soccer players sitting at the very corner, and the 6th graders sitting in the table adjacent to them. Girls would largely sit in the middle rows, with the Latinas at the center of the cafeteria and the other girls taking up the middle row as well. Other males sat on the outer row, on the opposite side of where the Chicano/Latino males sat.

The school also receives after-school services from a Christian service organization that staffed the cafeteria after school and provided a space for students to engage in recreational activities and/or continue to do their homework. While the organization also provided athletics to the other schools, Dolores Middle School was the only school to receive the afterschool programs in the district. Volunteers would come in after school and tutor students, or play pool, foosball, or table tennis. Other students would just hang out and socialize until 5 P.M. or 6 P.M. when the after school program would end and students were required to leave for the day. If students opted to stay for the clubhouse, they had to sign in and had to be inside the cafeteria unless they were with an adult who would take them into the gym or any other classroom where an activity may be taking place.

The Emergence of a Soccer Program

Three years ago, after noticing that very few Chicano/Latino male students would stay for afterschool activities, one of the staff members, Ricardo, brought out a soccer ball to school after speaking with some of the Chicano/Latino males and started playing soccer with them. Seeing the group grow in numbers, Ricardo proposed the addition of an athletic component to the services offered by the board of directors of the Christian outreach organization. Believing that it may be beneficial for the students, the board agreed and provided funding for Dolores Middle School and other schools in the district to create soccer teams. Ricardo, who at the time had just graduated from high school, was offered the position of coach at Dolores Middle School. He initially refused but was convinced by his mentors to do so and remained the coach through the conclusion of the study.

Soccer plays a pivotal role for Chicano/Latino students at Dolores Middle School as it is the main form of engagement for many male students. While other schools in the district struggle to field a full boys team, Dolores Middle School has over 30 members, a majority of whom are Chicano/Latino. Soccer is the only sport that is offered twice a year, becoming the main activity of Chicano/Latino students. The team is heavily influenced by their coach Ricardo who runs the team as if he was a drill sergeant. Born in the border town of Tijuana, Ricardo grew up in Sacramento, California as a teen and was heavily involved in gangs until he moved to the Pacific Northwest towards the end of his high school years. It was in the Pacific Northwest that he decided to turn his life around and became more involved in his church, which led him to become involved in the outreach program. At the time of the study, Ricardo was in the process of becoming a youth pastor at his church. While he can intimidate members of the soccer team,

many of the boys respected him and considered him to be like a big brother as he looked out for them and constantly offered advice to students about personal issues.

Surrounding Community

Dolores Middle School is located near a couple of shopping centers in a primarily residential neighborhood. On weekends and over breaks, students usually meet and hang out in the local mall that is walking distance to many of them. If the weather permits, many of them will meet at local parks to play soccer. Most of the students live in four major apartment complexes that are near the school, with very few students living in houses. Participants that lived in these apartment complexes reported that these complexes were diverse and included many Russian and South Asian Indian families. The school itself is adjacent to three large apartment complexes, with back entrances to the school for students to go through.

While the surrounding community was relatively safe, many community members and school staff are concerned about the small, but growing drug and gang problem that began to make its way onto some of the schools in the area. In particular, there is a concern that many of the high school students involved in gangs will come back and try to recruit students in the middle schools and provide drugs and alcohol to younger students. The school is also in close proximity to large technological centers and is located in a city that has the headquarters for many large corporations. These high tech companies cast a shadow over the realities of many of the parents of the students at Dolores Middle School who work in the service sector industry, with many working as cooks and janitors in restaurants and hotels in the area.

During the late 1990's community members came together to protest the increasing level of police brutality after a Latino immigrant who failed to comply with the officers' orders because he did not speak English was killed by a police officer. As a result, the Latino Eastside

Advocacy Forum, LEAF (pseudonym), was formed. Over the years the mission of the organization has shifted to include cultural awareness and educational advocacy, amongst other issues. During this recent period of population change, many community members have raised the concern that many of their young men were becoming disconnected from the school system and were a lost cause by the time they enter high school. The school administration itself has identified this as problematic and attempted to create a solution for it. Members from LEAF sought to work with the school district to implement programs for Latina/o students, which have been well received, but short lived as there have been few people within the schools that have been willing to take on the responsibility of coordinating events and programs. Four years ago, LEAF created a Latina mentoring network for the young women through a community organization, but due to the lack of involvement from male community members, was not able to do something similar for the male students. This has led many of the male students to feel left out as if there was not any concern for them. The organization has also been involved in some political campaigns, including the recent re-election of a Latino judge.

At the district level, leadership has been constantly changing over the past 5 years. Three superintendents have been hired and left during this time period. One of the teachers at Dolores Middle School had four different superintendents during his 5 years at the school. A couple of years ago, members from LEAF were excited that a Latina had been hired as the superintendent of the school district, but concerns quickly arose because she kept referring to her Harvard degree and they felt a sense of elitism from her. The Latina superintendent lasted little over a year before leaving the district with no significant changes.

The following year, a new superintendent was hired, a white male, who LEAF members had picked as their top choice from the three finalists. One of the promises that he had made if

selected superintendent was to hire a director of diversity and equity for the school district.

While many LEAF members liked the idea, they felt that it would be something that he would not do or be one of the last things he would implement. When this new superintendent began his term, his first action was to hire a director of equity, sending a clear message to the school district and surrounding community. The person hired to fill the position of director of equity for the school district was a Mexican immigrant male, who was quick to set up appointments and meetings with community members and school leadership teams. At the conclusion of this study, the director of equity was in the process of formulating his plan and implementing district wide changes, including cultural competency trainings for teachers and administrators.

CHAPTER 5: Chicano/Latino Students and Social Group Formation

General Overview of Chicano/Latino Students

One of the factors that stood out at Dolores Middle School was the unity that existed amongst Chicano/Latino male students regardless of ethnicity and/or generational status. Chicano/Latino students at Dolores Middle School covered a wide range of generations from immigrant students to 3rd generation. Immigrant student arrival ranged from as early as a few years of age to as recent as a few months. Families of the participants came from Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala, but this did not hinder students from getting along with one another. Social class was not a major differentiating factor amongst participants as the group ranged from poor to lower middle class, however students adopted working class identities through their style of dress and language typical to those of urban youth. The type of social groups that the students opted to belong to created separation and was the most significant distinction amongst students, which I explain in the next section.

Of all the Latino students, only one student in the 8th grade who refused to participate in this study did not associate with Chicano/Latino students. He kept his distance and often referred to them as “those Mexicans.” Many of the participants claimed that this student thought that he was white and repeatedly said that his family was from Spain, not Mexico. This student however did associate with some of the Latina girls at Dolores Middle School. A second student, Drake, had mixed interactions with the group as he was mixed white and Mexican, but his Mexican father was not present in his life. Drake often made it clear that he did not speak Spanish, which caused some of the Latino students to alienate him. At times, this led other participants to ask me not to invite him to focus group interviews. Drake also associated more with the Latinas at school than he did with the Chicano/Latino males.

One of the most distinctive features about Dolores Middle School is that contrary to previous research on Chicano/Latino students (López, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999), it was the Chicano/Latino male students who were more actively involved in school activities compared to females. Most of the participants in this study had been largely responsible for changing the culture at the school and the perception that many teachers had of Chicano/Latino students. While other students who had come before them had stood out individually, it was the current group of 8th grade class who stood out collectively for their academic accomplishments, behavior and achievements. The 8th grade students during the 2012-2013 school year had the distinction of being the first class to go through the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at the school as discussed in Chapter 4, helping lay the foundation for the program. The young men in this study took a lot of pride in being part of the Latino Boys Club, a group that was started with the help of their counselor Ms. Brown. While they did not always enjoy some of the conversations, the participants always looked forward to the next gathering and would constantly ask when the next meeting would be, taking a lot of pride in being part of the group. One thing that did stand out at Dolores Middle School was that there were not many male students of color outside of the Chicano/Latino students. While the AVID class had a good number of Asian American and Black female students, there were only Chicano/Latino males and one white male student in the class, placing more attention on Chicanos/Latinos.

The Latina students at Dolores Middle School were largely different than the males; some being academically inclined and engaged and others coming off as tough girls. As they were outside the scope of this study on Latino/Chicano males, my interactions with them were limited to conversations in the classroom or in the cafeteria after school. A clear division existed amongst the Latina students in the 8th grade and their male counterparts. Only a handful of the

girls associated with the male students, and the few that did largely did so because they were involved in the girls' soccer team and often hung out and dated some of the boys. A Latina Girls Club also existed at the school, but a majority of the 8th grade Latinas were not involved with the group. Future research on Latina girls in middle school could shed additional light on the experiences of Chicanos/Latinos.

Social Groupings at Dolores Middle School

This chapter discusses my findings on Chicano/Latino student identity and how it structured the organization of social groups at Dolores Middle School. Chicano/Latino male students at Dolores Middle School categorized themselves into four main social groups. These groupings influenced how students behaved, their academic performance and the views that they developed of themselves and their surrounding school environment. Participants in the study fell into one of the four categories and will be discussed individually according to their group membership.

Race played a major role in determining how students opted to cluster themselves and largely determined the types of social dynamics at the school. While not the sole factor, it was the main aspect of students' identity that defined who participants were, who they interacted with, and the types of interactions they had with various individuals at school. More importantly, social groups also shaped the perception that other students and teachers developed about them. In most instances, students chose to place themselves into particular groups, while in other instances, participants were placed into groups by their peers due to their association with particular students. Social groups largely shaped the culture and experience of participants at

Dolores Middle School as students and teachers identified particular groups with certain attitudes and behavior.

Chicano/Latino male students at Dolores Middle School categorized themselves into four main social groups: Soccer Players, Normal Kids, the Nerds or geeks and students who did not fit in any other group. I refer to the latter as the Lost Boys. In accordance with Critical Race Theory's tenet of the value of experiential knowledge (Solórzano, 1998), three of the groups have been self-described by the students, the "Soccer Players," the "Normal kids" and the "Nerds." When asked to describe the social group that they belonged to the members of the Soccer Players referred to themselves by this, rather than saying that they were the Latino Boys since they felt that there were other Latino students who did not identify with the Soccer Players and did not get along with them either. Students who fell under the normal category, also referred to themselves this way, and was the way that members of other groups referred to them. However, I renamed this group the "Average kids" as labeling them as "normal" would insinuate that something was abnormal about the other participants. These students felt that they were just as Latino as the Soccer Players but were defined by different characteristics. The third group, the Nerds, was a smaller group and only three of the participants in the study belonged to this group. This term was used for students who were primarily into video games and were considered to be the smart kids. The Nerd group was largely made up of white male students and few Asian American students, who were not involved in any other activity and tended to keep to themselves. In some cases, these students were also described as being awkward by some of their teachers.

I gave the name "Lost Boys" to the last group as there was no one name that the students could give to this group that described the students who were left on the margins. Some students,

however, referred to these students as the smokers, to insinuate the use of drugs. Because drug use was not apparent amongst most participants in this category and none of the students in this category showed destructive behavior as was apparent with other students who did not fit in with a majority of students at Dolores Middle School, it did not feel appropriate to deem this final group the smokers. Rather, this group was used to define students that did not seem to fit in with any of the other three groups at the school but were also not defined or joined together. A few participants did drift on the margins between being called Soccer Players or being in this category, but because of their strong ties with other Soccer Players, they are referred to as Soccer Players.

The following is a description of the participants that made up each of the four social groups at Dolores Middle School with details about each of group member. A summary about each group is at the end of each section.

The Soccer Players

Table 5. 1 The Soccer Players: Personal and Family Characteristics

Name	Age	Birthplace	Ethnicity	Gen. status	Parents Marital Status	Social Class	Siblings
Escobar	13	Oaxaca, MX	Mexican	1 st	Separated	Working Class	None
Ganso	13	Los Angeles, CA	Salvadorian	2 nd	Married	Working Class	2 sisters
Pablo	13	Los Angeles, CA	Mexican	3 rd	Separated	Working Class	4 sisters
Memo	13	Jalisco, Mexico	Mexican	2 nd	Married	Working Class	2 brothers
Teddy	13	Bellevue, WA	Mexican/Honduran	2 nd	Married	Poor	1 brother, 2 sisters
Rafa	12	Los Angeles, CA	Mexican	2 nd	Separated	Working Class	1 brother, 1 step-sister

At first sight, the Soccer Players were easily distinguished by their trademark Mohawk haircut that was a current trend amongst many professional soccer players that the students idolized. Soccer Players were often considered to be good students who occasionally had a lapse in behavior but largely stayed out of trouble because they feared that if they got into trouble, their coach would kick them off of the soccer team or suspend them for a game. While there is a lot of pride and support for their accomplishments on the soccer field, some of these students are often troubled in the classroom and struggled academically. Many soccer players reported that before joining the soccer team, they had grade point averages below 1.0, but because of soccer, most of them had raised their G.P.A. well above a 3.0. Although soccer is central to their identity, these students suffered academically in the offseason. A few weeks after the season ended, the grades for most of the students on the soccer team began to drop, with many of them carrying multiple F's. The counselor believed that there was no one to motivate them during the offseason and there was no incentive for them to do well since they were not playing sports during the winter, something that many of the Soccer Players confirmed. In some cases, students even boasted about their low performance, making comment such as, "*Last week I had six F's and one D, but now I only have five F's*" to show how much they stopped caring about their grades.

Members of the boys' soccer team were central to the culture of Dolores Middle School. The team, which is largely comprised of Chicano/Latino students, prided itself in never having lost a championship. They were also four-time reigning champions of their school district. The Fall 2012 season proved to be a difficult one as the team lost a couple of games and lost in the semifinals. Members of the soccer team are considered to be the cool students at the Dolores Middle School, not only because they are part of one of the more visible groups at the school, but

because they brought pride to the school through their athletic accomplishments. Further, Chicano/Latino members of the soccer team were the most welcoming and helpful students, a large deviation from previous Chicano/Latino students who largely kept to themselves and frequently got in trouble.

Essential to the Soccer Players is their team captain, Escobar and his best friend Ganso. Escobar was born in Mexico but came to the United States during elementary school. After his arrival, his parents separated and he lived with his mother. His father lives in a nearby suburb and they see each other often. While his parents are separated, they still do a lot of family things together and often go out as a family. His father owns a Sushi restaurant, which keeps him busy but still manages to spend a good amount of time with Escobar and his mom. Ganso was born in Los Angeles, California to immigrant parents from El Salvador. While strong tensions exist between *Salvadoreños* and *Mexicanos*, Ganso and Escobar put these differences aside and enjoy playing soccer together and hanging out in and out of school. Shortly after my arrival to the school, the boys were joking around in their 7th grade social studies class. Ganso kept insisting to Escobar that I liked him better, something that he did throughout the length of the study, often referring to himself as “my favorite one.” When he asked me for confirmation, rather than answering their question, I asked them if they remembered my name, to which neither one could answer and just burst into laughter. This behavior was typical of their relationship as they were often in a friendly competition with one another but always looked out for each other.

On the soccer field, Escobar received the most accolades as he was a starter and had been a team captain since the 7th grade. Ganso, meanwhile, came off the bench or was substituted regularly and was punished with conditioning drills more often for lack of discipline in the classroom. Escobar was also academically a better student than Ganso, as Ganso was required to

attend mandatory afterschool tutoring session throughout the year, while Escobar regularly maintained grades above a C. Although both enjoyed playing soccer, Escobar was the one that initially wanted to become a professional soccer player and believed that if he worked hard he could achieve it, something that was common amongst a majority of the members of the soccer team. Ganso, on the other hand, wanted to enlist in the Air Force, the same way that his uncle had enlisted and served the country. Ganso knew that if he wanted to be eligible for enlistment he would have to do well in school and stay out of trouble.

Pablo is another key member of the boys' soccer team and also close friends with Escobar and Ganso. Pablo's home life has largely been surrounded by women as his parents separated when he was four years old while the family was living in Southern California. He recalled several instances of domestic abuse by his father, including the day his father stabbed his mother. This incident led Pablo's father to walk out on the family and also caused his family to separate. Pablo has twin sisters that are two years older than him, another sister that is a year older than him and a younger sister. After this incident with their father, his older sisters were traumatized and no longer wanted to live at home for fear that something else would happen, causing them to move to the Northwest with Pablo's godparents. When Pablo and his mother relocated to the Northwest, his older sisters continued living with his godparents, which limited the relationship that he developed with them.

Pablo has struggled to maintain a good relationship with his mother as he feels she prefers his sisters over him and believes she is prouder of their accomplishments than of his own. Although Pablo is considered one of the best soccer players at the school, his mother has only seen him play once, after which she apologized for not seeing him play before and told him that she thought he was really good. Pablo believed his mother has low expectations of him and even

when he received praise from teachers, she rarely believed it. During the middle of 8th grade, Pablo lost focus academically and was disciplined on a regular basis. After the winter break, Escobar, Ganso and other soccer players began to disassociate themselves from Pablo as they felt he was going down the wrong path.

A fourth member and key figure amongst the Soccer Players was the goalkeeper, Memo. Memo is good friends with the rest of the guys but came off as more mature than the rest of his peers and often referred to the “dumb things” that the other guys did that he does not understand. In particular he was critical about relationships and dating. *“They [Soccer Players] do have girlfriends for a couple weeks or so. But it gets me mad sometimes because I see the girlfriend flirting with others, and then he's flirting with others. And so it's like why are they going out or something.”* Unlike the other guys, Memo had the same girlfriend for almost a year and would often take the bus for an hour to go see her until they broke up during the middle of 8th grade.

Memo was born in Mexico and came to the United States when he was five years old. After moving around a lot, his parents found steady work and have been able to keep the family in the same house. Memo is the oldest of three kids and spends a lot of time with his brother, who always follows him around everywhere he goes. Memo is close to his father, and although his father works two jobs to support the family, they share a passion for soccer and often watch games together. His parents want him to be well educated and support him as much as they can. When Memo does something he should not do, he often feels guilty and confesses to his mother about it since he did not like to keep things from his parents. In the classroom, Memo often appeared to be distracted or doze off but when called upon, he usually had the right answer, which caught his teachers by surprise. When asked about this, he often said that he kept his head

down because he gets bored or that the material was not challenging enough, although he struggled academically with some courses.

Teddy is one of the most intriguing members of the Soccer Players as he was on the periphery of the group but was in tune with what is happening with the other Soccer Players. Teddy is the oldest of four children, followed by his brother who was a year younger than him and four year old twin girls. When Teddy was in 7th grade, his social science teacher felt that he was struggling academically because he was worried about his brother whom many considered to be the worst student in the 6th grade at the time. During 8th grade, two of Teddy's nephews enrolled at Dolores Middle School and he was constantly the one trying to get everyone together to go home after school. Teddy's father was born in Mexico and worked for a landscaping company, while his mother was born in Honduras and stayed at home taking care of their younger children. His family struggled financially during the winter months as there was limited landscaping work, which placed a further burden on Teddy.

While he was a member of the boys' soccer team during 7th grade, he quit with a few games left in the season in order to raise his grades. During the fall season in the 8th grade, he continued to focus on school and instead of playing, became one of the team managers, helping the coach set up for practices and games. He also dedicated time to help his younger brother prepare for games and improve academically. By the end of his first semester in 8th grade, he had managed to pass all of his classes with a C or better and planned to rejoin the soccer team in the spring. Initially, Teddy was not very receptive to the idea of having me at school and would often blow me off. When I asked him why he had not attended the first Latino Boys Club meeting, he responded with "*I'm not Latino, I'm Chicano.*" With time, Teddy became friendlier and offered to participate in the study, and would often refer to me as "coach" or would call me

“old man” saying things like, “*ya estas viejito Eligio, no te lastimes*” (Be careful that you don’t hurt yourself Eligio, you’re old already). Towards the end of the 8th grade, Teddy did not associate much with the rest of the Soccer Players as he felt that they were doing bad things and he did not want to get caught up with them, choosing to eat lunch with his brother instead.

Rafa is another key member of the soccer team and is considered to be a good student by his teachers. He was always friendly and cheerful. Since he was the tallest student out of the group, he would constantly stand next to me, look down and say, “*Oh hey Eligio....you’re short,*” with a big grin on his face. Rafa is also very conscious of the role that race plays at school, and is one of the few members of the Soccer Players to admit to this being a problem by discussing several instances in which he felt teachers acted biased towards the Chicano/Latino males. He recognized that he had anger management issues and met with a counselor for the past year to discuss problems, which he believed led to improved behavior and temper. Rafa believed that part of his problem stemmed from the fact that his father walked out on his family and he had largely assumed the role of the man of the house.

When his father left the family, Rafa felt that he had to step up and help his mother out at home and assumed more responsibilities. Although the family does not go out much, he enjoyed spending time with his mother by learning how to cook. During the course of the study, Rafa reconnected with his father, but the reunion was short as his father was deported shortly thereafter. As part of a class assignment, Rafa wrote a letter to a state senator asking for his father to be allowed to return. While he maintained a positive outlook throughout this time, Rafa blamed himself for his father not being allowed to return when his request was denied. Even though several adults expressed to him that it was not his fault, he still blamed himself and fell into a deep stage of depression, which affected his academic performance and attitude at school.

During this same time, Rafa was also being pressured to join a local gang, one that he had previously been affiliated with. After much thought, Rafa did not give in and decided not to join the gang and go down the right path. Towards the end of his 7th grade, he also began dating a girl at the school, which helped improve his attitude and behavior.

As a group, the Soccer Players were a more welcoming group than most students at Dolores Middle School. Unlike previous groups of Chicano/Latino students, the current group often interacted with students of different backgrounds and of different grade levels, and were more inclusive than the majority of their peers. As Escobar explains:

Well it depends like, it depends on how they treat other people. Like they, some people like, some like, Latinos they say that white people are racist sometimes but it depends on how you treat them and how you talk to them. Because like I have a lot of white friends and it's just, if you're nice they'll be nice. You'll respect them and they'll respect you.

Soccer Players often interacted with students of different backgrounds primarily because they were teammates on the soccer team and because they shared some classes and common interests with other students, such as music and style of dress.

One of the changing characteristics of the group is their attitude about the role that race played in their experience. Initially, many of the students in this group felt that race was a major factor that shaped their school experience. While many of them felt that many teachers were racist and hostile towards them and gave preferential treatment towards white, Asian and lighter complexioned Latina students, their views towards their teachers changed during the second year of the study. Initially, participants felt that teachers had lower expectations of them and treated them differently from other students.

Memo: My biggest surprise [of teachers' reactions] is when we get an answer right.

EMJ: Like most of the teachers?

Memo: *Yeah most of the teachers.*

EMJ: Okay, how so?

Louie: *Like I actually got something, like a good question and then some 6th grader who's like Caucasian and all that goes up there and writes this big ass one, and they're like "oh okay". And they don't ask him to explain it.*

Memo (Simultaneously as Louie): *Like they ask us to explain.*

Drake: I know it's like when they see us it's like "Whoa"

Memo: *They think we cheated or something.*

While students believed that teachers were often surprised by their correct responses in class and their ability to comprehend the material, during the individual interviews students felt that teachers were not that bad towards them as few students in this group reported having major problems with teachers aside from speaking during class. This may be due in part to the students having classes with a male Jewish social studies teacher, a male Korean American science teacher and Mr. Jackson, their former language arts teacher who had become their AVID teacher, rather than majority white female teachers as they had the previous year. The Soccer Players recognized that this particular group of teachers sincerely cared for them and built strong relationships with them. They served as strong male figures that students could emulate. However, the students did not feel comfortable disclosing personal issues with them and did not seek their advice for personal issues that were not related to school.

The Soccer Players in this study were also responsible for changing the perception that the school had of Chicano/Latino students, as they were not only more engaged, but made large strides academically compared to previous groups of Chicano/Latino students. During the 2011-

2012 school year at Dolores Middle School, there was a clear-cut separation between the 8th graders who often kept to themselves and did not interact with younger students and those who were not part of their circle. During lunchtime, the 8th graders often sat together in the middle of the cafeteria and kept away from others students. They also were more likely to wear baseball caps and play football instead of soccer. The following year in 2012-2013, as the study participants entered the 8th grade, there was a more inclusive culture amongst students at Dolores Middle School. No longer did the 8th graders keep to themselves, but welcomed some of the 7th graders to sit with them and also sat with some of the girls from the girls' soccer team, mainly white female students. These students also were okay with having some of the white students interact with the group and were courteous and friendly with most of the students at Dolores Middle School.

In summary, Soccer Players were friendly and courteous towards other students and staff but often had lapses of behavior inside the classroom. Academically, Soccer Players ranged from good students to struggling students who were failing several courses. The academic performance for this group also varied largely according to the time of the year as Soccer Players would perform better during soccer season and decline after the season ended. While not exclusive of other ethnic groups, Soccer Players had stronger ties to their Chicano/Latino identity than any of the other social groups and primarily associated with other Soccer Players and other Chicano/Latino students, something that will be discussed in depth in Chapter 7. Participants in this category also felt that teachers had lowered expectations of them, which often discouraged them from working hard and completing their assignments.

Average Kids**Table 5.2. Average Kids: Personal and Family Characteristics**

Name	Age	Birthplace	Ethnicity	Gen. status	Parents Marital Status	Social Class	Siblings
Dre	13	Utah	Mexican	3 rd	Separated	Lower middle class	none
Lupe	13	Guerrero, MX	Mexican	1 st	Married	Working class	1 brother, 1 sister
Jaime	13	Washington	Mexican	2 nd	Married	Middle class	1 brother
Bobby	12	Guerrero, MX	Mexican	1 st	Married	Working Class	1 brother
Alexis	12	Washington	Mexican	2 nd	Married	Working class	1 brother
Jefferson	12	Los Angeles, CA	Salvadorian	2 nd	Divorced	Working class	2 brothers, 1 sister

Most of the students in the Average Kids group did not play soccer but shared many common experiences with the Soccer Players who were often considered to be regular students. While the Average Kids shared ties with Soccer Players based on their Chicano/Latino identity, these students were more prone to hang out with students from other ethnic and racial groups. This included sitting down with them during lunch, interacting with them during class and after school activities. Members of this group often associated with the Soccer Players and floated back and forth between the two groups. Average Kids also shared a taste in dress and music with them, usually preferring to listen to gangster rap from the 90's rather than the current group of rap artist. What distinguished the Average Kids from the Soccer Players is that the Average Kids were not as attached to other Chicano/Latino students as the Soccer Players and were more prone

to have closer ties to non-Chicano/Latino students. Average Kids also pointed out that they were different than the Soccer Players, primarily through behavior and choice of friends.

Students in this group shared some academic struggles with that of some of the members of the Soccer Players, but were generally more academically engaged. Their academic performance was more consistent throughout the year and did not fluctuate as much as the Soccer Players. Additionally, Average Kids had more concrete career aspirations than the Soccer Players and understood some of the requirements for the careers that they were interested in pursuing. In some cases, average kids knew that their career interest required a master's degree or beyond. While the Average Kids rarely got into trouble at school, they were often the ones who were more critical of the role that race and gender played in school and pointed out instances in which their classmates and teachers were racist towards Chicano/Latino students.

Dre is a third generation Mexican-American student and one of the most visible male students at the school. Dre was born in Utah and grew up there until the start of middle school. When he was little, his father left him and his mother and he has not had any communication with Dre the past few years. His mom has since dated and moved in with another man whom Dre refers to as his dad. His mother's boyfriend is an Honduran immigrant who grew up in South Central Los Angeles and shares Dre's taste in 80's gangster rap and hip hop culture. When his mom's boyfriend got a job offer in Washington, the family relocated together. Both of his parents speak English and work in office jobs, a clear distinction from the jobs that most of the other participants' parents hold. Dre was clearly distinguishable from the rest of his peers. He was the first one in his grade level to start wearing baseball caps, which became his trademark until most of the Chicanos/Latinos began to wear them during 8th grade. Dre struggled academically in a couple of subjects, but is generally considered to be a good student. He does

not get in trouble and tries hard to get his work done. Even though he is a native English speaker, he was accidentally placed into English Language Learners classes from 6th grade through most of 8th grade because of his last name, something that administration later admitted as a mistake on their part.

Since his mother was born in the United States, Dre has had limited interaction with his Mexican heritage and his exposure to it has largely been through his grandmother. When asked about cultural practices and knowledge about his heritage, Dre said it has been limited to reading the bible in Spanish with his *abuelita*, his grandmother. He also wears a bracelet with small images of Catholic saints on it, suggesting that religion is a strong connection to his culture. Although he speaks little Spanish and does not participate in many of the cultural traditions, he is strongly associated with the Chicano/Latino students, hanging out with them during lunch and after school. Even without being as culturally connected compared to other Chicano/Latino males, Dre did not feel excluded. *“No, because once I talk to them, then I just like it because all of them say they're from Mexico and I just feel like part of them. So I just get used to it because since they're Mexican, since I don't feel like I'm left out of the group that's Mexican.”* Towards the end of the 2012-2013 school year, Dre's outlook for the future had changed. He felt he was not good enough to go to college after family problems arose at home. His parents, who had always been supportive, began putting him down because of his bad academic performance and disciplined him more for his behavior at home.

Lupe is another student who floats between Average Kids and the Soccer Players. During the 7th grade, he spent most of his time with other students and did not really hang out with the other Chicano/Latino guys. Although he likes soccer he did not play for the school because, in his view, the team did not know how to play and he did not like their style. During the 8th grade,

his attitude seemed to change and he started hanging out with the rest of the Chicano/Latino guys. He came out to practice for the boys' soccer team, but sprained his Medial Collateral Ligament during the first practice, causing him to miss the rest of the season and go through physical therapy. Throughout the study, he would tell the Soccer Players how he was better than the rest of them, even though he would never play against any of them.

Academically, Lupe is a very bright and sharp young man who is conscious of the role that race plays at school. Unlike his other classmates who may not be willing to speak about racial disparities, he is quick to point out the preferential treatment white and Asian students receive compared to tougher punishment for Chicano/Latino males. He recalled an instance in which he jokingly asked one of his classmates "*what did five fingers say to the face?*" and then softly slapped his friend, which earned him an in house suspension the following day. While he appears to be quiet and does not speak much during class, he is very hyper with his friends. He often hung out with one of the white male students, sitting with him in class and hanging out during lunchtime. Lupe was a little arrogant compared to other Chicano/Latino males and came off as if he was better than them, something that other students also pointed out.

Jaime's mother works at the school as a teaching assistant in the Special Education program. He has a friend with whom he spends a lot of time and calls his cousin who also attends the school and is in the same grade as him. He referred to this friend as the white Mexican since his friend is half-white/half-Mexican, and Jaime felt that because of his friend's appearance, teachers would leave them alone since they thought he was also white. Jaime has a keen sense for seeing the role that race played at Dolores Middle School. Although he has never been in trouble, he had observed how some of his friends had been treated. When asked if he felt if students were treated different, he responded, "*Yeah. Because some teachers chose some kids by*

race. That's what I think." As a 7th grader, he rarely hung out with the Soccer Players, but got along with them very well, often switching jackets with Ganso during class, or joking around with Escobar and other guys during AVID.

At the start of 8th grade during the 2012-2013 school year, Jaime started spending more time with the Soccer Players and less time with his other friends. Not only did he have most of his classes with Soccer Players, but also started hanging out with them outside of school and even joined the soccer team for the Spring 2013 season. His increased interaction was facilitated by his parents' decision to move back into the neighborhood, allowing him to walk to school and stay afterwards. His new set of friends also came with a different attitude as his grades dropped slightly and he was grounded a few times by his parents for his behavior. Before the end of the Spring 2013 soccer season, his parents made him quit the team because they felt he was changing too much. While he remained a good student, his outlook shifted. Initially, Jaime wanted to be a veterinarian. Over the summer, he changed his mind and decided to pursue a career in law enforcement as a police officer. While he knew that he had to go to college and take certain courses, by the end of the study, he pretended not to know much about college or what he needed to do to be successful and became indifferent about his future career.

Bobby is a nice and friendly young man who stood out from his peers through his haircut, which included a Mohawk with different patterns shaved to the side of his head. His parents are Mexican immigrants who struggled financially because of their undocumented status. Bobby was a member of the soccer team during 6th and 7th grade, but because he has asthma, he was no longer able to keep playing soccer. Bobby floated around amongst different crowds of students, often sitting with some of the girls during lunch. While he was not part of the Soccer Players group, he would frequently hang out with them at school and outside of school. Towards the end

of the 8th grade, many of the boys, particularly the Soccer Players, began to dislike Bobby because they felt that he would tell lies about the other guys in order to prevent girls from dating them. Although Bobby is a good kid, he struggles significantly academically, constantly carrying low grades that affected his confidence. He felt that the negative attitude from others would prevent him from being successful. *“Like people saying I’m not going to do it, or people putting me down, like...Like the judgmental people, too.”* Bobby wants to grow up and be a teacher or social worker so that he can be in a position to help other people that are struggling with poverty, just like his family had experienced.

One of the personal challenges that Bobby has endured was seeing his father struggle with bouts of alcoholism. While his father cares about him and supports him in everything, Bobby would talk to his father about trying to stop drinking and make him realize the negative effects of alcohol. Because his parents are undocumented, he has seen them struggle to make ends meet, often taking low-paying jobs at fast food restaurants. Over the summer before 8th grade, Bobby’s dad was fired from work for getting in a fight with his supervisor. Although Bobby recognized that his dad should have not done what he did, he felt that his dad was discriminated against because of his legal status. After his father lost his job, the family came close to relocating to another city before his dad opted to take a different job and keep the family in the area.

Alexis, the younger brother of the girls’ soccer team coach, is one of the two 7th grade students in the Average Kids group. Alexis was always in a good mood with a smile on his face and would often ask me when his next interview would be every time I saw him. Although he may be considered part of the Soccer Players, he chose to leave his options open and not be tied down completely to that social group. He is not defined by his involvement in soccer, but rather

knows that it's a part of who he is at school. Alexis did not have a single set of friends but floated around and spent time talking with different people at school. While he best fit the description of an Average Kid, he could have also belonged to the Nerds had it not been for his relationship with other Chicano/Latino students. Alexis would often hang out and interact with the other members of the soccer team but chose not to follow a particular group. As he explains, *"Well, [I hang out with] a lot of people-- I just be myself and don't follow other people. I don't-- like just because one person says oh, you should try this because it's cool. I'm like, no."* Although he is one of the youngest participants in the study, he is very critical of the role that race plays at the school. While he had never been in trouble and is considered a good student, he has observed some of his friends get treated different by their teachers.

His brother was 19 years old at the time of the study and his best friend. They tended to do a lot of activities together, including playing soccer. Alexis was part of the boys' soccer team for the past two years, but also did *Folklorico*, traditional Mexican dance, outside of school. Because of his close relationship with his brother and his father, Alexis rarely spent time outside of school with any of his classmates. His family is very traditional and involved in their church, which prevented Alexis from getting involved in anything negative. Having his brother as his role model, Alexis was focused academically and planned to pursue a career as a lawyer or become a special education teacher.

Jefferson is the other 7th grade student in the Average Kids group and was also a member of the soccer team. He is the youngest of three boys and is related to two other participants, his cousin Ganso and his brother Anthony, another student in the study. His family is from El Salvador and is very active in their church. While Jefferson and Anthony are only a year apart, they do not get a long and do not talk to each other at school, nor does Jefferson have a good

relationship with Ganso. Even though Jefferson was a soccer team member, he did not socialize with them or other Chicano/Latino guys during lunch since his brother would usually hang out with the Soccer Players. Due to the family dynamics, he had a tendency to get in trouble because his mom did not always believe what he said. Being the youngest in his family, also led him to feel some animosity towards his older brothers and he began to develop a temper from being teased by his brothers. During the Fall 2012 soccer season, he got into an argument with his mother because he left for school earlier than Anthony did without giving her a reason. As a result, his mom did not let him play soccer for a week. Even when he played soccer, Jefferson felt a lot of pressure from his peers and was never really comfortable on the soccer field.

As time progressed during the 2012-2013 school year, Jefferson began to move further away from the Soccer Players and the other Latino boys. He started dating a white female student and slowly removed himself from the rest of the guys, even though he had several classes with the 7th grade Soccer Players. Halfway through the spring 2013 soccer season, he quit the soccer team and said that he wanted to play football instead of soccer in high school. While he remained upbeat, he was clearly trying to differentiate himself from the rest of his Chicano/Latino peers. Academically, Jefferson was an average student who struggled with social studies and math. He has an interest in building cars and plans to be an engineer or an architect when he grows up.

In summary, Average Kids were more mainstream than the Soccer Players and were often caught between trying to define their uniqueness while trying to balance their Chicano/Latino identity. While unintentional, Average Kids desired to differentiate themselves from other Chicano/Latino students, which was particularly true for the 7th grade Average Kids who over time developed weaker ties with each other and with other Chicano/Latino males.

Average Kids got along with Soccer Players and often blended in with them, interacting with them during class, at lunch and on some occasions outside of school. Teachers also held Average Kids in a better light. They were rarely disciplined and were better students academically. Average Kids were middle of the road students, who had the capability to perform at a high academic level, but often performed lower than their potential would indicate.

The Nerds

Table 5.3. The Nerds: Personal and Family Characteristics

Name	Age	Birthplace	Ethnicity	Gen. status	Parents Marital Status	Social Class	Siblings
Michael	13	Washington	Mexican	2 nd	Married	Middle	1 brother
Stark	13	Washington	Mexican	2 nd	Married	Middle	1 sister
Louie	13	Mexico	Mexican	1 st	Married	Middle	1 brother, 1 sister

The Nerds comprised one of the smaller and quiet groups at Dolores Middle School. They largely kept to themselves and usually associated with other boys with similar characteristics. Teachers referred to them as the socially awkward kids who did not socialize with many girls at school. Interactions with these participants were largely limited to the classroom and interviews, as it was difficult to find them during lunch since they blended in with other students. Nerds rarely displayed any behavioral problems, and when they did it was usually speaking in class or as a response to being picked on or teased by other students. What distinguished Nerds from other participants is that they struggled with their Chicano/Latino identity and struggled fitting in with other Chicano/Latino males.

Michael is an academically gifted student who struggles with his ethnic identity. While his parents are both Mexican immigrants, he identifies as Latino. He avoided and had limited

interaction with a majority of Chicano/Latino males, whom he referred to as “Mexicans” rather than Latinos. Michael knew that a Latino Boys Club existed and was encouraged by his parents to attend, but did not feel like being a part of the group. He wanted to join the group, but later opted not to do so because he did not know if he would fit in. When the first focus group was conducted, he did not remember the location of the interview and when he asked the other participants, they did not let him know where the interview was going to take place, causing him to feel isolated. One of the challenges for Michael is that he lives in a city adjacent to the school and was always picked up after school by his parents, limiting his interaction with his peers beyond the regular school day. In the classroom, there were instances in which he seemed to be disengaged and kept his head on the table, but Michael always completed his work with the exception of physics class. In his 8th grade physics class, he appeared to be disruptive, often talking out loud and yelling out the answers, which irritated his teacher and got Michael in trouble. When asked about his feelings towards his physics teacher, he said that the teacher was actually his favorite teacher and physics his favorite class, but he could not contain his excitement or communicate his interest, causing him to appear disruptive.

Michael has a younger brother who started the 6th grade during the 2012-2013 school year. While initially being excited about his brother attending the same school, he rarely talked to or hung out with his brother during school hours. Although Michael enjoyed playing soccer, he never played for the Dolores Middle School soccer team. He felt that he did not fit in with the rest of the group, causing him to develop some animosity towards the other Chicano/Latino students on the soccer team. *“I don't want them to start thinking that I'm not Mexican and stuff. They should understand that I'm kind of in between the two where I wasn't raised in Mexico and I didn't learn Spanish as my first language kind of thing.”* Even though he was fluent in Spanish,

many of his peers thought he was a bit whitewashed as he preferred to speak in English rather than Spanish. Michael got along better with some of the female Latina students rather than with other Chicano/Latino guys. As an academically motivated student, Michael wants to be an architect when he grows up and has an extensive knowledge about the requirements and the different institutions of higher education that exist.

Stark is academically gifted as well, has a big interest in becoming an architect and is perhaps the smartest boy at Dolores Middle School. While he was a good student, he did not seem to fit in with many of the Chicano/Latino males at the school. He considered himself to be an athlete and amongst the most athletic students, but he did not play any sports at school until the 8th grade when he joined the basketball team. He also did not associate with any of the guys who participated in athletics. Stark often sat alone in the cafeteria after school doing his homework. During lunchtime he would associate more with students who belonged to the Nerds but he did not consider himself a part of this group. When asked what group he felt he belonged to, he said the athletes, which was not a group that clearly existed at the school besides the Soccer Players.

During the summer before the 8th grade, he learned that his great grandfather was a German immigrant who had settled in a small town in Southern Mexico. While he did not know this at first, he quickly developed a huge interest in this part of his background and began asking more questions. As time progress, he tried to have this aspect of his identity define him and made many references to this part of his heritage. While he was not snobby, he felt that he was better than the other Chicano/Latino students and believed guys acted tougher than they really were just to fit in and be popular. *“Usually the people that think they're the cool kids are people who try to*

act like other people-- like try to act like someone they're not." Stark believed that many of the Soccer Players acted this way and he opted not to interact with them outside of class.

Louie is the last member of the Nerds. He is one of the best students in the 8th grade at Dolores Middle School, slightly struggling with math but excelling in his other courses. He has two older siblings, but they both live in Mexico so he is the only child at the house. Louie usually wakes up early on Saturday mornings and goes to work with his dad delivering newspapers. His father sets a high standard for him and both of his parents expect him to get good grades. Louie wants to become a police officer when he grows up, just like his dad had been in Mexico before he came to the United States. Although he had never been in trouble at school, he is very critical of the way that teachers treat Chicano/Latino students and is cognizant of the preferential treatment that white students receive from them.

Initially, Louie usually hung out with non-Latino students but would fit right in with other Chicano/Latino students when he was around them. Things changed during the 8th grade. After getting his ears pierced over the summer, he gradually changed his style making him stand out from the rest of his peers. Louie added a pair of fashionable, non-prescription glasses to his look and towards the end of the year began to dress up, wearing dress shirts, ties and occasionally suspenders. When asked about his new style, he simply said, "*just because.*" At the end of the 8th grade, he also dyed the top part of his head red, which made him stand out more than anyone else at school. Unlike most of the other Nerds who did not associate with the rest of the Chicano/Latino students, Louie also did not associate with the Latina girls, but rather chose to socialize with white females. This decision left him a complete outcast with the rest of his peers as many began to question his sexuality. While it was never brought up in an interview, many of the participants claimed that Louie had come out to them as an openly gay student.

In summary, the Nerds were a group that distinctly stood out from the rest of the Chicano/Latino students. This group was particularly unsure about where they stood with their ethnic identity and often developed animosity towards other Chicano/Latino students as they felt they were excluded from the larger group given their preference to speak English and higher academic ability. Unlike the Average Kids and Soccer Players, Nerds were placed into their social group category by their peers and not by choice. Nerds rarely socialized with Soccer Players or Average Kids and would normally hang out with students from other backgrounds. With the exception of Stark and Louie who participated in the first focus group, Nerds preferred to do individual interviews rather than take part in the larger discussion. Nerds were very clear about what they wanted to do and the path that they needed to follow in order to be successful and usually stood at the top of their class academically.

The Lost Boys

Table 5.4. The Lost Boys: Personal and Family Characteristics

Name	Age	Birthplace	Ethnicity	Gen. status	Parents Marital Status	Social Class	Siblings
Drake	14	Washington	Mexican and White	2 nd	Separated	Middle	None
Pedro	13	Washington	Mexican	1 st	Separated	Poor	1 brother

While comprising the smallest category amongst Chicano/Latino males at Dolores Middle School, the Lost Boys are perhaps the most significant group of students as they were at a higher risk of become at-risk students. There were no characteristics that tied them together as a group. Instead they were the ones that stood on the peripheries of the school culture. They included students who were recent arrivals to the country and struggled with the English language and

those of mixed background. Students in this group often tended to struggle academically and were required to attend mandatory tutoring sessions, had disciplinary problems and were punished more frequently than other students.

Drake struggled to fit in at Dolores Middle School with other male students, particularly with other Chicano/Latino students. He has been raised by his single mother, who is mostly-white and a quarter-Mexican, for the past 6 years. When he was 7 years old, his father was deported to Mexico for dealing drugs and was not allowed back into the country. He still maintains a relationship with his father and spends every other summer in Mexico with him. Because of the family's past, his mother is very overprotective of him. She often came to the school to protest about the way her son was being treated and even walked into a classroom to complain to a teacher in the middle of class. Drake is also overprotective of his mother and does not like that his mother dates other men. Amongst the rest of the Chicano/Latino guys, Drake was considered an outsider and rarely interacted with the other males at school. Drake did not speak to his father often and did not care much about developing a relationship with him, Drake did see and speak to his maternal grandfather on a regular basis. As he explains, "*Not really, he's [his father] okay but it's been my moms, me and my moms, I don't really care, I wished he would pay child support or something.*" He did not have many relatives that were close in age to him, which was part of the reason why he lacked many male friends at school.

Drake made it very clear that he does not speak Spanish and does not like soccer, causing many students to see him as an outsider. While he did not socialize with other Chicano/Latino guys, Drake often hangs out with some of the Latinas and other female students of color, acting funny and nice around them, a big contrast to his behavior around other males. During interviews or brief conversations, he would always answer a question with another question. Drake was

considered a bully by many teachers as he often teased and picked on other students and always acted tough around the other males. He would always talk back to teachers to give them an attitude, which caused many teachers to yell at him. Drake was older than the rest of his peers as he was in Mexico during the start of kindergarten, and his parents opted to keep him there instead of bringing him back in time for the start of the school year. The Chicano/Latino guys also say that he tries to be tough and picked on everybody else. When a new student transferred from another school, Drake befriended him at first but was soon at odds with him as they were both trying to be the dominant male at the school. They got into a fight and Drake ended up having his nose broken and was suspended for the incident. Although some teachers worried that other students would follow the new student's lead and challenge Drake, the rest of the guys were indifferent about the incident and left Drake alone. Unlike most of the Lost Boys, Drake had a plan for the future and wanted to pursue a business degree in order to be able to make a lot of money to support his mother.

Pedro is perhaps the most intriguing participant at Dolores Middle School. Pedro was from a single parent family from Yucatan, Mexico. His father had been largely absent throughout his life and had not communicated with him in years. He lives with his mother, his brother and his brother's girlfriend, all of whom work fulltime. Pedro's brother is significantly older than him and fills the void of a father figure as he often gives him advice about school and life. Although his brother cares a lot about him, he was busy trying to start his own business with his girlfriend and did not have much time to dedicate to Pedro.

One of the reasons why teachers thought that Pedro struggled academically was because he could not see well. He refused to wear glasses, believing that glasses made him look like a nerd. A local optometrist offered to make glasses for free but he refused for a long time, and

finally accepted the glasses towards the end of his 7th grade year. Shortly after the start of the study in March 2012, he was suspended for fighting during his Physical Education class. Both Pedro and other students described the incident as unfair. He claimed, as was verified by other students involved, that he had placed his arm around Memo and was shaking him. The P.E. teacher accused him of fighting and sent him to the principal's office. Memo stated that he was just hugging him from the side and nothing else, and when they tried to explain, the teacher did not listen to them. He was suspended for a few days and not given a chance to plead his case to the principal. Pedro was trying really hard to change his behavior and do better in school, and finally appeared to turn the corner and be ready to succeed.

Over the summer, he was caught shoplifting and was banned from the area mall for a year. He claimed that he did nothing wrong, but was with a group of other students who were shoplifting, and he got punished by association. He never told his family about this event as he feared that he would get in trouble and not be able to hang out with his friends or play soccer anymore. As the school year began, Pedro hung out with a different crowd that included a new student who had transferred into the school from another city and was thought to be distributing drugs to students at school. Because his friends from the soccer team believed that he doing drugs, Pedro did not join the soccer team at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. Most of his friends on the soccer team began to distance themselves from him to avoid getting caught up in the wrong crowd. Towards the end of the season, he joined the team and tried to incorporate himself back with the rest of his friends.

Throughout the first semester of the 8th grade, Pedro struggled personally, including getting suspended. After a few months, he disassociated himself from the students who were a bad influence on him and started hanging out with the soccer players again. When Coach

Ricardo was not at the school, Pedro came to soccer practice, but was disruptive and was sent home. He cursed at others and was mad at them, but later apologized to everyone about his behavior. Pedro admitted that he was trying really hard to change, both personally and academically and recognized his mistakes in the past, but felt that the teachers were not giving him a chance. Pedro felt that he was targeted by teachers for his previous behavior and was accused anytime something bad happened in class.

Towards the end of the fall 2012 semester, Pedro seemed to have turned a corner. He had changed his attitude towards school and was starting to perform better academically. He also started hanging out with the Soccer Players again and resumed playing soccer with them. During winter 2013, Pedro was involved in a major event at school in which he received a lengthy in house suspension and was not allowed to interact with anyone at the school during his suspension. When asked why he had done what he did, he just shrugged his shoulders and smiled. Pedro struggled to stay out of trouble throughout the rest of the year and was ostracized by the rest of the Chicano/Latino males who felt that he had gone down the wrong path.

In summary, the Lost Boys did not seem to have any characteristics that strongly associated them with other social groups at the school. Lost Boys largely remained on the periphery of Chicano/Latino student culture at Dolores Middle School, but were not a united group. There were no clear characteristics that united the group other than the fact that they did not belong to any of the other social groups at the school. While the two students described under the Lost Boys got in trouble at school, their reasons were quite different, with Drake consistently acting out in class while Pedro was involved in more serious problems.

Summary

The formation of social groups at Dolores Middle School was influenced by the way that students chose to identify. Race and the extent of students' association to Chicano/Latino culture played the most significant role in determining how students categorized themselves. Association in a particular group came with social and behavioral expectations. Who students socialized with went beyond peers as teachers often treated students based on who they associated with and how receptive they were to school, often interpreting stronger association to Chicano/Latino identity with opposing school.

The description of the students provides an overview of the participants that make up the different social groups at Dolores Middle School. Social groups played a major role at Dolores Middle School dictating discipline and academic performance of students. In many instances, for example, they determined how students were treated by teachers and how students interacted with one another. While the four distinct categories were evident amongst participants and other students at school, most participants believed that a significant number of teachers would lump all Chicano/Latino students together, with the exception of the Nerds, and treat them in the same manner, regardless of their academic performance and good behavior.

Previous research has shown how students tend to separate amongst generational status (Matute-Bianchi, 1986), but this was not the case here as Chicano/Latino students at Dolores Middle School were largely united by their cultural and gender experiences, which often included racial discrimination and stereotyping. Students represented a range of immigrant students who arrived at different ages and are often referred to as the 1st generation or 1.5 generation to 2nd and 3rd generation. While students displayed several characteristics based on

their generational status, no apparent divisions existed amongst the Chicano/Latino students who identified as being Chicano, Latino, Mexican or Hispanic students.

High academic performance was the one mediating factor that created some separation amongst Chicano/Latino students as students who did very well academically were often ostracized by the rest of the students. While Fordham and Ogbu (1986) and Carter (2005) have demonstrated that academic success by students of color can be portrayed as acting white, this was not the case as all participants valued education and understood how a good education was important for their future. The division between the Nerds and other social groups can be attributed more to the preference of Michael and Stark to speak English compared to the participants.

CHAPTER 6: No Country for Young (Brown) Men

This chapter discusses the different ways in which institutional racism was imbedded in everyday day practices at the school. Racialized practices were a common occurrence at Dolores Middle School whereby Chicano/Latino males were punished more severely compared to their white and Asian American counterparts. Chicano/Latino male students were disenfranchised and felt alienated at Dolores Middle School by teachers and administrators. Specifically, I examine the interactions between Chicano/Latino males and their teachers, disciplinary procedures by administration, punishment patterns for Chicano/Latino males and other institutional practices. Finally, I employ the theory of interest convergence to explore the role of outside agents in providing services to Chicano/Latino males and the failure of engagement on behalf of staff within these services.

Racial Microaggressions

Racial microaggressions are subtle insults that can be verbal, nonverbal and or visual, that are directed towards people of color either purposely or unconsciously (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). While the current group of Chicano/Latino students had largely been responsible for changing the perspective that teachers and staff held of Chicano/Latino students by being more engaged academically and socially than previous students, racial microaggressions occurred on a regular basis that stigmatized the participants in the study. Comments such as “*this is a difficult class*” by teachers in reference to classes that had a high number of Chicano/Latino students were a common occurrence and a discrete way to single out a particular group of students. While numerous practices went unnoticed, participants

were able to catch some comments and made meaning of them on their own. Generally, participants would notice which students would be called on and who would be complimented for their responses and class participation. Jaime explains:

Teachers should call on Latinos more because they don't call on us most of the time. They should stop focusing on us, they're just on us to see if we are doing something wrong but they don't focus on other students who are doing wrong also. I think the teachers do care about us and they help us but they don't praise us for the good things that we do. For example, when Latinos do something good they just say good job but when we do something bad, they give us a long lecture.

Jaime, one of the Average Kids, believed that teachers often focused more on the negative aspects of Chicano/Latino students rather than providing them encouragement when they did something right. Academically, Jaime felt that his peers were not treated equally and were not given the same praise as white students for doing similar work. Sentiments like this were also shared by other students who felt that some teachers showed preferential treatment towards non-Chicano/Latino students and had developed a deficit thinking mentality towards Chicano/Latino males. As Escobar, a Soccer Player, recalls,

Another thing that I see in class is that, we, Latinos are viewed in a different way than other races. For example, when I was in class, the teacher asked a question and one of my friends that's Hispanic raised his hand and then a girl raised her hand, to be honest, she's really smart, and the teacher called on her, even though my friend raised his hand first. I kinda see this as if the teacher was racist, because well my friend is Latino and the girl is Asian and just because she's smart, the teacher didn't give him a chance. I've seen

this a lot of times here, but there also teachers that do give you a chance, even if you're not that smart.

Escobar recognized that some of his teachers did try to include every student in the conversation and treated students fairly, but there were also several teachers who gave preferential treatment to white and Asian American students. This gave the perception that teachers believed white and Asian American students to be smarter than Chicano/Latino students, which Escobar began to internalize and questioned his academic ability.

Although teachers rarely directed comments at students, they often slipped and on occasion would make direct comments towards students that would make them stand out. Lupe, an Average Kid member, recalled an instance in his afterschool tutoring class with one of his close friends, a white student. As he recalls:

[D]uring tutoring, there was only one white person in there and the rest of us were either Hispanic or some other race. And when one of the teachers walked in the first day they were shocked to see that one white person in SOAR. The teacher even said, "you shouldn't be in here."

Despite the fact that this comment by the teacher was directed at the white students, it left Lupe puzzled. The teacher who made the comment was respected by most of the study participants, but Lupe and Jaime, who also heard the comment, began to think that this teacher believed that white students were superior to students of color and did not belong in a tutoring class. This comment strained the relationship that Lupe and Jaime had with the teacher and the consistently pointed out the differences in interaction that this teacher had with white and Asian students compared to Chicano/Latino males.

In other instances, teachers would make comments that were meant to motivate students but had the opposite effect. Rather than encouraging students to succeed on their own merit, teachers would pit students against their friends by marginalizing them. Escobar was one of the students with whom many teachers invested a lot of time and effort to have him succeed, but he felt the stigma that teachers had placed on other Chicano/Latino males.

They [teachers] told me that some of my friends, they're probably going to drop out or something because of what they do. They tell me not to do that, to stay out of trouble, and that to keep it up because they know that I can go to college and they know that I can have a better life.

While comments like this may have been intended to encourage Escobar to stay out of trouble, it made Escobar question the teacher's intentions. Advice like this also sent covert messages about the views that teachers had developed about the larger group of Chicano/Latino males and their future outcomes.

Jaime, a member of the Average Kids, who had been a good student and performed well academically, was also given similar advice regarding the company to keep. Although he was not part of the Soccer Players and rarely socialized with them until the 8th grade, Jaime still felt the negative views that teachers had of Chicano/Latino students.

Sometimes teachers will tell us, don't hang out with "those kids" but what they really meant was don't hang out with those Mexicans. They might think that the Latinos have a bad influence but it's up to you to make the choice to be good or bad.

Students internalized comments like these as they began to feel disenfranchised by their teachers. But Jaime believed that instead of generalizing all Chicanos/Latinos, teachers needed to believe that students could make the right decisions on their own.

In instances where students would attempt to do a good deed, teachers instead questioned the intent behind the deed. Teddy, a member of the Soccer Players, witnessed an event outside a classroom in which one of his friends was told to go to class when he tried to open the door for a teacher. As he recalls,

One day, we were walking to class, and one of my friends [joking] do it in front of the teacher. And then she told him to go in the class so he wouldn't be late. But then another kid came and opened the door for the teacher, and then the next day he gave a Dolores Hero [a school recognition] to that kid. And then he would argue that why would he give him one when he tried opening the door-- like he opened the door for her, to help.

Seeing his friend get reprimanded and the white student get rewarded with a small prize puzzled Teddy. Regardless of what he and his friend were doing, the teacher assumed they were up to no good and told them to get to class. Even when students tried to do good deeds, they were reprimanded rather than thanked for their courtesy.

These examples show small racial microaggressions that students experienced on a regular basis during their time at Dolores Middle School. What distinguishes microaggressions from other school practices, such as excessive punishment, is that they were experienced by all participants regardless of group membership, behavior or engagement in school. While not intentional, the language, tone and actions of teachers had an unintended impact on participants as they influenced motivation and attitude. After witnessing or experiencing differential treatment from teachers, participants felt disenfranchised by their teachers' actions and became discouraged from participating in class discussions and doing well academically. As students progressed from 7th to 8th grade, many of them began to recognize racial microaggressions more frequently and became cognizant of how they were often directed towards Chicano/Latino males,

causing them to question certain teachers' intentions and views towards race. The heightened sensitivity that students developed became problematic as students could only feel safe with particular teachers and began to feel that school was a hostile environment, leading them to doubt their academic future.

The Creation of Public Enemies

During the length of the study participants often experienced policing and disproportionate punishment. While some of the young men placed themselves in situations or frequently misbehaved at school to warrant discipline, teachers and administrators overreacted when punishing Chicano/Latino students. Teachers were quick to discipline Chicano/Latino students and often blamed them for instigating fights with other students, even when they were not responsible for starting trouble.

At the beginning of the study in late spring of 2012, an incident occurred the day after the first focus group took place. Drake, one of the Lost Boys, told a white female student that the group had said that she was loud and annoying during the conversation. While what was discussed in the group was supposed to be confidential, the teacher, a white female, who heard this comment immediately emailed the entire staff at the school stating "*I need to speak to someone that was a part of the conversation with the Latino boys group this week. Please let me know who to contact.*" This email was responded to by the curriculum coordinator at the school who inquired what happened. To this, the teacher who sent out the initial email responded by stating:

Drake told [a female student] today that they were talking about her at the Latino boys group. He said they were saying how loud and annoying she is. This is an inappropriate conversation to have about a specific student and cruel of Drake to repeat it to [her].

The teacher also demanded that other staff members be present in order to supervise and hear what was being said. The principal, the counselor and myself had been added to the email response by the school's instructional technology coordinator. Throughout the rest of the morning, emails were sent back and forth in order to clarify what had occurred. In subsequent conversations, the assistant principal was included and the teacher was informed that the conversation was part of a focus group interview for the study and the purpose and context were explained to the teacher. The teacher was also informed that the reason why the female student's name was brought up was because most of the participants actually liked her. She was thought to be cool because she did not treat them the same way that other white students treated Chicano/Latino males. The teacher was informed that the conversation was confidential and that Drake should have not shared any part of the discussion with those outside of the group. By the end of the day, the email exchange concluded with the counselor saying that Drake would be talked to and a call home would be made. Drake viewed the matter as nothing serious, and gave no particular reason for his actions: "*Nothing, she [the student] just annoyed me so I said it.*" This was also not the first time that something like this had occurred to Drake, whom many teachers viewed as a bully, partially because of his size and because he often talked back to teachers

While the email exchanged clarified a lot of things regarding the focus group interview the day before, only the six people that were a part of the exchange were able to get clarification about what had happened. What remains unclear is how the rest of the staff at Dolores Middle School on the original email interpreted the incident. Further, given that the focus group came only a few days before the end of the school year, no clarification was ever sent out to the rest of

the staff regarding the incident and most of the staff at Dolores Middle School left for summer break shortly thereafter.

While inadvertent, the tone and purpose of the email served as a way to paint a negative portrait of the purpose of the Latino Boys Club at Dolores Middle School. Teachers may have developed a perception that this may be an inappropriate student group to have at the school and may be more problematic than beneficial. While the email was intercepted by a staff member who was able to contact the right people in order to clarify the situation, it remains unclear whether teachers exchanged other emails with other teachers who are not aware and simply curious. And if so, what impressions did those teachers walk away with?

Mr. Jackson vaguely recalled the email regarding the Latino Boys Club. He did not respond to the email because it did not pertain to him and he did not feel the necessity to get involved since he did not attend the group meeting and did not have a problem with any of the students in question. While Mr. Jackson cared about the students in the Latino Boys Club, getting involved would have resulted in unnecessary work and since he was not present for the meeting, his contribution in the email exchanged would have been fruitless.

This confrontation between Drake and the white female student is further significant given the heightened scrutiny that was placed on an innocent comment, considering who that comment came from, a Chicano/Latino male. In the days leading up to this incident, Drake had been accused of bullying another student and had been removed from his 7th period band class in order to separate him and the other student. As a result, Drake spent the final two weeks of 7th grade in the counseling center during 7th period surfing the internet. Because of his prior behavior, Drake had been singled out as a problem student.

Jefferson, a student from the Average Kids group, who was usually mild mannered and easy going, was involved in an altercation in October 2013 after he responded to another student's instigation. The other student, an Asian American boy, began teasing Jefferson by pulling on his backpack and ignored Jefferson's plea to stop. After doing it a few more times, Jefferson turned around and grabbed the student in a headlock and told him "*I told you to stop but you didn't listen!*" In the tussle, Jefferson accidentally bumped the other student's head into a pole. Alexis and Jefferson said that the injury was not done on purpose, nor was it a hard hit, but enough cause for the student to complain of a headache. Jefferson later acknowledged that he was upset at something that had happened at home which added to the way he responded. When Jefferson released him, the other boy said that his neck hurt and Alexis and a female student took him to the nurse's office. For his actions, Jefferson was given a three-day in-house suspension while the other student, who instigated the incident, was not punished at all.

Through their time at Dolores Middle School, participants felt that teachers had developed certain views of particular students and would only give importance to an incident if a Chicano/Latino student was the perpetrator. Escobar, one of the Soccer Players, pointed out, for example, that teachers would not care if a student was late, unless it was a Latino student.

She's always mad and all that remember? (Looking at Ganso) And then, the people that she likes, she never says anything bad about them. Like when we're late she's like, "Where is he?" then when like [a female student] is late or someone like that, someone she likes, she doesn't say anything.

Practices like these made Chicano/Latino males feel that they were under more scrutiny than the rest of their peers and were observed closely.

Labeling students as troublemakers or as problem students was also a common practice at Dolores Middle School. Pedro, a student belonging to the Lost Boys group, was another student who had gained a reputation as being a troublemaker and never given a chance to redeem himself. During most of his classes, Pedro felt that he was blamed every time something happened in class. In the spring of 2012, Pedro was involved in an incident in which he was suspended for fighting with Memo, a Soccer Player. According to both Memo and Pedro, this incident was misinterpreted and blown out of proportion since there had not been a fight. Rather, Pedro claimed that they were just hanging out. As Pedro recalls:

I was like just hugging him like homies and then the teacher was like why are you pushing or hitting him? I'm like, I'm not doing anything. And she's like, she started talking about something else and then, they called me in 7th period and I came to the office and [the assistant principal] said I was suspended. And I was like, can you ask Memo what happened. And then she [the principal] answered, "no, I don't have time to deal with this.

For Pedro, it had reached the point that any physical contact with another student was considered fighting and dangerous. Memo's account matched Pedro's description of the incident and he also felt that the teacher misinterpreted what had actually occurred. As Memo recalled,

I don't know what they thought. He just went like that [gestures placing arm around him], I don't know why. He didn't go like that [gestures a punch], he went like that, like put his arm over here [around my shoulder]. He was on this side and he put his arm over here.

Memo was unsure about what the teacher thought what was happening between the two of them, but believed the teacher, a young, white female quickly jumped to the wrong conclusion because Pedro had a bad reputation at school. Pedro felt that he was being targeted by teachers for his

previous behavior, even though he was trying his best to change and improve. By the end of his 7th grade, Pedro had become ostracized and felt that he could no longer redeem himself no matter how much he tried to improve his image.

EMJ: So do you think that teachers have developed a reputation about you?

Pedro: *Yeah, cause they think I'm bad and they think I'm always doing bad. I'm like trying to do good.*

EMJ: What do you think you can do to change their perceptions?

Pedro: *I've been trying to like not get red cards and all of that and but the, there's some teachers they just give it to me for like no reason.*

That teachers failed to give Pedro a second chance both with his behavior and academically, left him seeking other ways to fit in with his peers at school. More importantly, he felt academically incompetent and less capable of reaching his academic goals. Among his peers, Pedro would often act like the group clown in front of others in order to fit in and to feel like he belonged. This only perpetuated his bad reputation amongst teachers. Pedro's failure in the long run to feel engaged and connected to the school ultimately led to continued poor behavior and declined academic performance.

The same female teacher who accused Pedro of fighting with Memo during the 7th grade later accused Pedro and Drake of verbally abusing her while she was trying to break up a fight between the two of them. During a soccer game in the fall of 2012, Drake and another student were pushing each other, when the teacher caught them swinging at each other. The teacher immediately ran over to them to break up the fight and ordered the students to follow her to the principal's office. Drake was talking back to the teacher and told her that he did not want to go with her. Pedro pleaded his case that he was not involved and was just walking by when the

incident took place. Pedro, Drake and a third Chicano/Latino student all followed the teacher to the principal's office and Drake and the other student were given an in-house suspension. Pedro decided not to come to school the next day in order to avoid punishment and was not reprimanded. In the aftermath of the incident, the teacher had claimed that the students involved had verbally attacked her and made threats to her.

Another incident occurred in late December 2012 when some students were found to be drinking alcohol on campus. Three male and two female students, all Chicano/Latino, were suspended as a result of their involvement in this incident³. One of the males involved in the incident stated that he was tricked and pressured into drinking the contents of the bottle, but upon tasting it, he spit it out. The two girls and two boys involved were given a 10 day in-house suspension, but had their suspensions reduced to three days as long as they took part of a substance abuse evaluation before they returned to school as it was standard procedure for the school district. When these two male students returned to school, they were treated as they were before with no consequences. One of them recalls, "*I was worried that teachers and my friends would treat me different because of what had happened, but nobody did and everyone was cool with me.*" Things returned back to normal for these two boys and the two girls, however, for the student, who I will refer to as Mario, who brought the alcohol to campus, his life was never the same.

After a lengthy discussion, the school gave Mario a 45 day in-house suspension. He had to report to school in the morning without having any contact with any of his peers was placed in a room all day to do his work, and had lunch brought to him. One can argue that Mario was

³ The names of students involved have been omitted in order to prevent them from being identified due to their involvement in the incident, nor will I state if any of those involved were participants in the study.

submitted to the prison-like practice of solitary confinement. After school, Mario was not allowed to leave until his mother came for him. This was all done to limit his interaction with other peers. From a Critical Race Theory standpoint, this was a form of institutional racism as the school could remove him from the rest of the school in order to prevent him from influencing other students, without losing any of the average daily attendance funding. This practice was standard for many other young men of color at Dolores Middle School, as they would often be placed in a room with no supervision and left alone for most of the day to do their work, with very few students actually attempting to do any work.

Given that Mario was struggling in most of his courses, the 45 day suspension was detrimental to his ability to get back on track academically. The nature of his isolation, further alienated him from the school and his peers as a number of his close friends decided to dissociate themselves from him. Continued isolation and increased stigmatization caused Mario to continue socializing with individuals who had a negative influence on him, causing him to fail a drug test shortly after he returned to his regular schedule. As this study concluded, Mario had been placed in indefinite in-house suspension and was not allowed to return to his regular schedule the final three months of school nor partake in the 8th grade promotion ceremony. Mario was seen shooting basketball hoops with a substitute teacher on numerous occasions during class time. By the time that the 2012-2013 school year culminated, Mario had been on in-house suspension for two-thirds of the academic year.

The alcohol related incident justified excessive surveillance of Chicano/Latino males, however, this practice began before anything actually occurred. The school staff recognized that it was during 8th grade that they began to lose many young men of color. It appears that they did not know how to address the issue aside from policing and excessive punishment. A few days

before this event occurred, administrators, believing that a group of boys had left campus during lunch to smoke marijuana, instructed teachers to keep an eye on some of their students. Teachers were instructed to pay extra attention to any particular changes in behavior and to look at the eyes of students to see if there were any visible differences. The day before the incident, three of the study participants missed their assigned after school tutoring class, which placed staff on high alert. While the participants had not done anything to raise the concern of the principal and other teachers, the assumption was made that because they were Chicano/Latino and had missed tutoring the same day, they had all left together to do something they were not supposed to do.

Excessive monitoring coupled with higher discipline alienated a significant number of participants from their teachers. In a few instances, students like Pedro and Drake had repeatedly been disciplined for their behavior, but often students like Jefferson, who had few behavior issues, were punished to the same extent as troublesome students. Excessive punishment created a hostile environment for students that caused them to feel like they were always being watched and made some of them believe that their teachers were just waiting for them to slip up to justify their punishment. Rather than motivating them, this excessive policing left many students to develop negative perceptions about themselves and believe that regardless of what they did, teachers would never see the good in them.

Institutional Racism: School Personnel

One of the major problems at Dolores Middle School was the lack of a diverse teaching force and support staff at the school. While not directly a funding issue, the hiring of teachers, staff and the types of services offered is a matter of allocation of resources that directly benefits a particular group of students over another. As the demographics of the student body changed over

the previous decade, little effort had been made to recruit and hire a more diverse teaching force. During the 2011-2012 school, there were three staff members that were visibly Latino at Dolores Middle School: the school registrar, the Spanish teacher and a reading instructor. A fourth person, the curriculum coordinator is half-Mexican, but because of her English last name, few students know that she's Latina. The following year, a parent outreach coordinator was hired to help improve outreach to immigrant parents. The other two individuals that worked with students were the boys' soccer coach and Alexis' brother, who was hired during the 2012-2013 school year as the girls' soccer coach. These positions, however, were paid by an external organization that funded all afterschool and extracurricular activities.

The school registrar grew up in the community and had seen the community transform since her days as a student in the district. While she is not responsible for students, she is often brought into disciplinary meetings to translate for parents, or is often the first point of contact for many of the students and their families. Because she is from the community, many of the students respect her and often drop by her office to check in with her. While she does a lot of things that are outside of her job description, she does not receive additional support for the additional work and services that she provides for the school.

The second person at the Dolores Middle School is the Spanish teacher Mr. Lopez who formerly served as the community engagement specialist at the school. As the only full time Latino teacher, Mr. Lopez often faced challenges in managing his classroom since very few students show him respect. He was not well respected by the students because of his Columbian background and the inability of students to relate to him. Students often acted out in his class, including Chicano/Latino students, and as Escobar, one of the Soccer Players, recalls,

Because they think he's just like a teacher and they make fun of him, like take advantage. Like when he says to stop doing it, the other students keep doing it, like when he says stop talking they still talk, or stop listening to music during class they still do it, or eating they still do it. They think that his class is fun because all their friends are in it, and they just feel like taking advantage of him.

As a result, he was often amongst the teachers with the highest number of student referrals, making it difficult for him to gain a good rapport with students. The reading instructor is someone with whom many of the English Language Learners participants felt comfortable, but she only teaches part-time and has other responsibilities aside from teaching, limiting her influence at the school.

Beyond the academic sphere, Ricardo, the soccer coach, played an influential role for many of the Chicano/Latino students at the school. While he was part of the school and had an office, he was not paid by the school district. His position was funded through an outside organization that funded all of the school's sports teams and some of their afterschool activities. The girls' soccer coach was in the same situation, as such, the school has no control over their schedule nor could they dictate what they should do while at Dolores Middle School. In many cases, both coaches would be gone for long periods during the off-season or would not arrive to school until later in the school day.

While the school did recognize the need to hire someone to outreach to parents, the person they hired, a Latino male, rarely if ever interacted with students outside of making sure that they delivered messages to their parents. Two Asian American males and one female were the only other teachers of color at the school. There are no other teachers that the students could identify with culturally, limiting the number of adults with whom students might form strong

relationships. The previous school psychologist was an African American male, but he left after the 2011-2012 school year and was replaced by a white woman, who largely sees white students. Whenever participants had to see a therapist, the school referred them to community organizations that provided services to Spanish speaking communities rather than the school making an investment to provide services themselves.

Failure on behalf of the school to recruit and hire a more diverse teaching and support staff is a form of institutional racism as they are neglecting the needs of Chicano/Latino students. While the district has a policy that states that no first year teachers will be hired, the district and Dolores Middle School have made exceptions and hired “exceptional” white teachers fresh out of their teacher education programs. Regardless, very few teachers were culturally competent and capable of teaching a diverse student population. Lack of knowledge and sensitivity of student needs prevent teachers from adding materials to the curriculum that could have caught student interest. During the 8th grade AVID class, Mr. Jackson incorporated material that covered the experiences of various communities of color that allowed him to connect and engage his students at a deeper level.

Students recognized the benefit of having more Latino teachers and how this could potentially impact their education. Jaime, an Average Kid, believed that having more Latino teachers could improve student-teacher relationships. *“If we had more Latino teachers it would be different for us Latinos because then I think we would interact more with the teachers.”* Having teachers that came from the same background would also allow students to feel more comfortable around them and also have someone who could advocate for them as well. Ganso, a Soccer Player, shared a similar sentiment as Jamie believing that students’ attitudes would be different with more diverse teachers. *“Having more Latino teachers would be different because*

they would probably understand our responsibilities we have at home or parent issues/family problems.” Ganso believed that by having someone who came from the same background as him would be beneficial as Latino teachers would understand their unique challenges and experiences.

Students developed the perception that some teachers just saw teaching as a job and did not care much about students of color. Lupe, an Average Kid, argued that his attitude towards a particular class was often shaped by the attitude that teachers had.

The teachers’ attitude impacts me in a way that I don’t really want to engage during class. The reason why I either want to be respectful to a teacher or not is based on how they treat me. Some of my teachers barely even care about the students based on our race.

The teachers’ failure to engage with students caused students like Lupe to feel disconnected from some classes and the course material. Rather than being dismissive or not caring, students like Escobar, recognized that some students, including Latinos needed more academic support.

I think that us, the Latinos, we need more supportive teachers because we were not born here and we face more obstacles compared to other students that were born here and that don’t face as many obstacles. For us Latinos, it’s not that we don’t want to learn, it’s that sometimes we don’t get the chance from teachers and other adults. Just because English isn’t our first language and because we’re not as smart as Asian or white kids, we shouldn’t be left behind.

Escobar understood that Latino students sometimes struggled with the language barrier, but that was not be a reason to dismiss them or believe that they do not want to learn. Instead, he felt that teachers should recognize this need and provide Chicano/Latino students additional support.

Ultimately, the lack of interest by Chicano/Latino students can be partially attributed to the failure of teachers to engage their students. This was compounded by the failure to hire a more diverse teaching staff that students can relate to. Even as the demographics of the school and surrounding community continue to become more diverse, with a growing Latino population, little effort was done to hire teachers from different backgrounds to meet the needs of the student population. With few teachers and staff that students could relate to, students often found themselves with no one to go to for advice or very few staff members in key positions to support them academically and personally. Having an increased number of teachers of color could also encourage students to be more engaged academically by having someone whom they could relate to and aspire to become.

Interest Convergence at Dolores Middle School

The final method of institutional racism was in the form of interest convergence. I identified three significant examples of interest convergence at Dolores Middle School. First, on a structural level, it was the failure of the school district to recruit a more suitable teaching force that could engage students on a more personal level than was being met by outsiders, such as Ricardo and my presence on campus. Many of the teachers believed that the students would be okay because Coach Ricardo and myself were working with the Latino boys through soccer and through the Latino Boys Club and they may have become complacent allowing us to do this work while they kept on their daily activities. Very few teachers, with Mr. Jackson and the counselor Ms. Brown being the consistent presence, attended soccer games and dropped by to the Latino Boys club meetings.

Second, my presence at Dolores Middle School is another example of interest convergence as the school allowed an outsider onto campus, trusting that the outcome of my study could ultimately benefit the school and the district. The school district has a reputation of being one of the toughest districts to gain permission to conduct research, yet my proposal was not only supported by the principal, but also by one of the executive cabinet members from the district office who believed my research to be valuable. As such I was given full access to the school and the freedom to conduct research and be on campus as much as I pleased. Whenever a student was misbehaving, Coach Ricardo was quickly informed about this and I was asked to speak with the student. Rather than trying to solve the issue themselves, most teachers were okay with passing on the problem to others and have them come up with a solution with the hope that certain students would not disrupt the class further.

The third example was the creation and development of a soccer program at Dolores Middle School. By allowing the expansion of athletics into the school through an outside organization, the Latino boys, who had largely been an underperforming group could finally become engaged at a minimal expense to the school. Having a coach or an adult at games and practice limited the responsibility that the school personnel had, but would also pass the responsibility of supervising the students to somebody else. Requiring students to have a minimum grade point average to play soccer also ensured that students' academic performance would improve. Again, the school received a direct benefit from an outside agency that would address the needs of a population that had largely been ignored. In return, the school did not have to make much of an effort and reaped the benefits of improved academic performance and behavior from Chicano/Latino students and other students who participated in playing sports, in particular male students.

Participation in athletics also helped students build their self-confidence and improve their attitude towards school. Having a coach with a similar background also allowed students to have someone to relate and confide in. Beyond that, the success of the soccer team also brought a sense of pride to the school and improved the image that outsiders had of Dolores Middle School.

Allowing outsiders in to the school to provide services solved one of the issues of the school; Chicano/Latino males now had individuals who were successful and whom they could see as a role model. This alleviated the school from having to hire or invest any additional resources in order to improve the experiences of Chicano/Latino students. It also took the responsibility away from the school to have other teachers engaged with Chicano/Latino students outside of the classroom. Rather, the work was left to individuals to carry out, either through an external organization or through individual teachers and staff who would volunteer their time with little to no support from the school. As the school continued to rely on outside sources to support Chicano/Latino students, no contingency plan was put in place to fill the void that would be left if and when these external services left Dolores Middle School, leaving the students vulnerable and susceptible to negative influences.

Summary

Race was a salient issue that affected the experiences of young men of color at Dolores Middle School. Throughout the length of the study, several instances occurred in which students were treated differently than their peers and were often given excessive punishment. Critical Race Theorists argue that racism is endemic, part of everyday life and perpetuated in schools through curriculum, funding and the maintenance of whiteness as property (DeCuir & Dixon,

2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). The practices at Dolores Middle School were no exception to this as many practices went unnoticed and became part of the day to day occurrences at the school. Without noticing, teachers upheld white cultural values and considered any deviation from it as deviant and deficient. Chicano/Latino males came out in the losing end as many of the practices at the school placed them at a disadvantage and resulted in unfair treatment towards them.

Analyzing the institutional practices at Dolores Middle School, different patterns emerge around hostile practices towards Chicano/Latino males. Collectively these practices served as a form of institutional racism that alienated, disenfranchised and perpetuated the cycle of underachievement for Chicano/Latino males. Chicano/Latino students were subject to more scrutiny compared to their female, white, and Asian American counterparts who faced lesser consequences for similar offenses committed. Even in instances in which non-Latino students had instigated an argument or fight, Chicano/Latino students were often blamed and given excessive punishment while other students were given a slap in the wrist and allowed to return to their normal classes. Further, these students were viewed as more hopeful than Chicano/Latino males and were given preferential treatment.

While not isolated, these everyday practices were deeply embedded in the school. They served as a form of institutional racism that CRT scholars call racial microaggressions, or subtle insults that can be verbal, nonverbal and/or visual and are directed towards people of color either on purpose or unconsciously and shape the experiences of students of color (Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano, Ceja, & Yosso, 2000). As these practices became normal, Chicano/Latino students did feel a stigma against them that included negative perceptions of them on the part of their teachers for the simple reason that they are Chicanos/Latinos.

CHAPTER 7: Boys, Machos, and Masculinity

Participants in this study performed three types of masculinity that were constructed based on how each participant interpreted what it meant to be masculine. I use the terms academic masculinity, social masculinity and cultural masculinity to describe the different forms of masculinity that students negotiated and performed. Each form represents a different aspect that is tied to particular characteristics that shaped how participants behaved and interacted with one another at Dolores Middle School.

The first form is academic masculinity, which was enacted through the interpretation of academic success for Latinos along with how individual students developed attitudes towards schooling. Academic masculinity also dictated how students perceived one another and the types of relationships that students and teachers develop through academic engagement. Social masculinity was the second form of masculinity and centered on the formation of social groups that were hierarchically ordered at Dolores Middle School. For Soccer Players, social masculinity was strongly linked with their involvement in the soccer team, while for others it was dictated by the strong relationships that they maintained with members of the soccer team and their ability to relate to other Chicano/Latino males. The third form, cultural masculinity, was strongly connected to their Chicano/Latino identity and dictated behavior in accordance to their level of association with Chicano/Latino Culture. Students who were fluent in Spanish were regarded higher than others by their peers and belonged to the most visible group of students. An important element of masculinity was the validation that peers received for behaving in a particular manner. Masculinity was dependent on the behavior that needed to be validated by peers in order to be able to assert certain elements of their masculinity.

Conceptualizing Masculinity

Participants primarily conceptualized masculinity through their interactions with adult figures at school and home. At school, students developed views about masculinity through their exchanges with particular teachers who influenced the way that students behaved and understood what it meant to be a man. The soccer coach, Ricardo, and Mr. Jackson personified strong, masculine figures that students often went to for advice and credited them with helping shape their character. Students related to Ricardo and Mr. Jackson largely through sports and respected them because of their athletic ability. Escobar, a Soccer Player, admired Mr. Jackson because of their shared interest in soccer. As he discusses, “*Sometimes it's kind of cool because he [Mr. Jackson] plays soccer and baseball. He's like athletic, and that's cool.*” Mr. Jackson also represented someone from a working class background who made his way through the educational system and became successful by becoming a teacher, something that he enjoyed. Ricardo, the soccer coach, provided students with a different example. He related to students because of his life experiences growing up in an immigrant family. Though Ricardo did not attend college, students respected him because he was able to turn his life around and was in the process of becoming a youth minister.

Pablo: *Ricardo is a youth pastor and stuff and he tells us things that he used to do in his childhood and how he used to be in a gang and stuff like that.*

Ganso: *And like how we should treat a woman. Like how you should treat your mother because one day they won't be there when you most want them to be, so you should treat them nice.*

Pablo: *Because he give us important life lessons.*

Students often develop close ties with Ricardo that went beyond the school environment. Escobar developed a close relationship with Ricardo and often talked to him outside of the classroom and saw him more as a brother than just a coach, as he describes their relationship,

I've known him for like three years now and I think of him more like a brother, like an older brother. And then I know I can talk to him. He tells us how to be respectful and nice and how to treat older people compared to your friends and stuff like that, and that really helps. That really helps you.

Participants were able to relate to both men through athletics and by common life experiences they shared with participants, primarily with Soccer Players and Average Kids.

Mr. Lopez, the only Latino male teacher at the school struggled to relate to students because he was soft-spoken and Columbian. During Mr. Lopez classes, all of his students frequently misbehaved and showed little respect for him. As Bobby, one of the Average Kids describes,

Because they think he's just like a teacher and they make fun of him, like take advantage. Like when he says to stop doing it, the other students keep doing it, like when he says stop talking they still talk, or stop listening to music during class they still do it, or eating they still do it. They think that his class is fun because all their friends are in it, and they just feel like taking advantage of him.

Class management was a challenge for Mr. Lopez and many of the participants often took part in disrespecting him because he was not as bold as Mr. Jackson and did not relate to them given his middle class upbringing. Participants further differentiated themselves from Mr. Lopez because of his Columbian background, believing that he was not one of them. Pablo, one of the Soccer Players, believed that he was different than them, as he claimed, “*He’s not Latino, he’s*

Columbian.” Although Mr. Lopez spoke Spanish and shared some similarities as an immigrant, students did not see him as a mentor who exemplified what it meant to be a Chicano/Latino male.

Outside of school, participants adopted masculine norms from their parents and older siblings. Ganso, a Soccer Player, recognized that his father and him had a different relationship than he had with his mother and sisters. Ganso’s father spoiled him by treating him differently than his sisters, but this behavior was justified by his mother’s preference for his sisters. As Ganso argued, *“Me and my dad go out shopping and he buys me stuff, but then my mom sees it and gets mad and buys my sisters things too.”* Ganso recognized that this was sexist behavior but since it was a cultural practice, it made it okay because he respected his father. Ganso’s father had taught him how to be responsible and set the example for him by working hard. As he states, *“The way he does things, like how he works really hard to keep our family together with a home and to feed us. That’s what makes him my hero.”*

Similar to Ganso, other participants developed a sense of masculinity and respect as a result of their father or father figure’s work ethic. Through conversation, parents discussed the significance of making the right choices in life as part of the responsibility of being a man. Dre, one of the Average Kids, discusses,

There's things that I don't like about him, but the things that I like about him is that he talks to me and he tells me right from wrong, and he tries to move me-- he tries to turn me into a man. And he can help me, but he says I can only help you with a little bit, and the rest is all on you.

While participants’ fathers may not have been highly educated, participants respected them because their hard work ethic taught them that part of being a man was being responsible and

able to provide for your family. As demonstrated with Dre, fathers could only teach participants so much and it was up to the participants to make the right decisions.

Lupe, an Average Kid, had a similar relationship with his dad who often tried to give him advice about staying out of trouble and the level of maturity and responsibility men should have. As he explains,

Because he wants me to be mature. And he's seen-- when he came to the school, he's seen some of us doing something, like how mature they are. He was like you see that? I don't want you to be like that. I was just, I know. He just-- he makes sure and checks on me. He knows that I'm maturing I think on how do I act, school, and my house.

Lupe's father explained to him that he needed to start behaving differently because he was starting to get older and had to mature. Lupe felt that maturing was part of the process of becoming a man and changed his behavior throughout the length of the study.

Interactions with teachers and parents shaped the notions of masculinity and behavior for students. Given Ricardo, Mr. Jackson and the parents' working class background, students associated masculinity with what they believed to be the working class values of hard work and responsibility. Older male figures provided examples from which students could reference about what it meant to be a man and how they should behave, but students chose to define masculinity on their own terms. Below is a discussion of how participants performed the three types of masculinity present at Dolores Middle School.

Academic Masculinity

Academic masculinity, which I define here as the ways in which male students engaged or did not engage in their schoolwork, is a way that participants demonstrate what they believed

to be appropriate male behavior. Academic masculinity is primarily demonstrated in two forms by students: success/engagement or defiance. Students who were engaged academically sought validation from peers by being complimented for their academic success by teachers, giving them a sense of pride and confidence of their accomplishments. On the other hand, students who were not participating in class or did not complete their work defied their teachers and other authority figures. For these students, absence of success was filled by defiance, or talking back to teachers in order to gain a tough reputation that earned them validation as a man from their peers.

Academic masculinity remained constant or fluctuated throughout the year depending on each participant. For many participants, academic masculinity was connected to their involvement in soccer. Pablo, a Soccer Player, made large strides during his three years at Dolores Middle School, however, at the start of the second semester of the 8th grade, his academic performance declined significantly. When asked about the cause, he felt that it had more to do with personal decisions he made more than any other reason.

Pablo: *I'm just not trying.*

Eligio: Why not?

Pablo: *I don't know, I've been lazy. I just don't want to try.*

Eligio: Is there a reason that all of a sudden you got lazy and don't want to try?

Pablo: *No. I guess it's just my fault, I'm just not trying to do my stuff.*

Pablo believed that his declining academic performance was due to his lack of responsibility and did not have anything to do with the school or his teachers. His academic decline coincided with the time period in which many of his peers were beginning to engage in deviant behavior and began to lose interest in school, which could have played a role in Pablo's declining performance. When approached with the decision, Pablo opted to perform his academic

masculinity in a negative manner just as his friends had done so. Pablo wants to go to college and feels that only financial reasons and personal choices could prevent him from doing so. In his opinion, Pablo did not believe that academic success was equated with acting white, but rather understood that a good education was necessary for a brighter future. Pablo however, felt that he did not have a good relationship with his teachers during the soccer offseason, and thus sought to validate his masculinity in any way that he could, which often led to poor decisions and him acting out in the classroom to earn approval from his peers.

Academic masculinity was not just demonstrated through defiance, but also through academic success. When Pablo was doing his work and engaged academically, he often enjoyed the praise he received from teachers and tried to brag about it to anyone that would listen. In early October 2012, the 8th grade social studies class held several discussions about the upcoming presidential election. Pablo was actively engaged in the conversation, answering questions and explaining answers. When he spotted me sitting in the back during a break in class, he said: "*Eligio, you missed it, I was on fire.*" His teacher praised Pablo and said Pablo was working really hard and that he benefitted from having him in class since there were many English Language Learners in the class who were behind and Pablo was very helpful in keeping the class moving along. Pablo then approached me and said, "*Can you tell coach what [my teacher] said about me?*" This change in attitude reflected a conscious decision that Pablo made regarding how he performed his academic masculinity by engaging in class conversations and completing his work. Success and praise were welcomed and participants took pride in bragging to other adults when they received it.

Academic decline during the offseason was largely attributed to a lack of motivation and no visible consequences. Bobby, one of the Average Kids, believed that participating in soccer

motivated students to do well, and felt that his peers did well during soccer season. When asked how his peers were doing academically, Bobby responded, *“Good because if you want to be in soccer you have to have good grades, so they try their best to get good grades.”* Low academic performance and lack of activities to participate left many students with a void to fill, causing many of them to look for alternative forms to perform their masculinity. Many of the Soccer Players sought different ways for social validation, often leading students to be disruptive in class or get in trouble for not doing their work.

While some students were disruptive in class by being defiant, other students chose to disruptive but did so in a playful nature. Escobar, a Soccer Player, and Michael, a Nerd group member, regularly made comments during class that would elicit a response from their peers, in particular female students. Teachers would often play along with them and respond with something amusing, causing the entire class to break out in laughter. At the beginning of the fall 2012 semester, Mr. Jackson opened the floor for students to suggest how they could make the AVID class more engaging and meaningful during 8th grade. While most students suggested fun and easy things to do, Escobar suggested a chant, *“Late! Late! Late!”* to point out students walking into class late. The class responded in unison by saying, *“DUMB!”* causing folks to laugh. Mr. Jackson responded to Escobar suggestion and moved on with class, while Escobar looked at his tablemate and smiled.

Jokes and funny comments often disrupted the conversation in class but were not threatening in nature and teachers were able to get the class to focus immediately. Even though Michael and Escobar, who belonged to different social groups, displayed similar behavior that was done in a lighthearted manner that did not threaten teachers. Indirectly, this allowed students

to be engaged academically, while also being disruptive during class with no consequences, demonstrating a positive way to perform their academic masculinity.

As a Lost Boy, Drake maintained good grades throughout middle school, but was more defiant in class routinely asking questions that would annoy teachers. Drake would tease his social studies teacher daily, knowing that his comments would easily irritate her. On several occasions during class, Drake would ask his teacher, “*Wait, what do we have to do?*” after the teacher gave out directions. In October of 2012, Drake asked the teacher for instructions and after she told him to ask one of his classmates, he responded by cursing at her and saying, “*I’m sorry I wasn’t listening, you don’t got to be [messed up] about it.*” Unlike Michael and Escobar who attempted to get a laugh out of their peers, Drake defied his teachers in order to assert his toughness in front of his peers.

Membership in new social groups also impacted the performance of academic masculinity, often resulting in a change in attitude towards their academic behavior. As a 7th grader, Jaime, one of the Average Kids, was a good student who never got in trouble and had a good idea of what careers he wanted to explore. But as he transitioned into 8th grade and spent more time with the Soccer Players who were getting in trouble and not doing well academically, Jaime’s performance declined. A new social network meant a new attitude towards school and a slight indifference towards his academics. In exchange, Jaime reaped the rewards of his new social membership as he became more popular not only amongst his peers, but also amongst the girls at school.

Sometimes I’m just like, not like doing very good in school and sometimes I am and when I am, I feel like I can get there. Sometimes I try and sometimes I don’t. I guess I get lazy, but I don’t feel motivated I guess.

Jaime understood that his increased association with the Soccer Players made his parents and his teachers believe that his new peers were negatively influencing his behavior, but he believed that it had more to do with him.

I guess I get lazy, but I don't feel motivated. Previous years I had pretty good grades, B's and A's. My mom thinks that it has to do with the friends that I'm hanging out with.

Sometimes, I do good, even when they are my friends, but sometimes I don't care. It's not that it's because they're my friends, because they're my friends I don't care. It's just that I don't feel, sometimes I don't feel it matters. Who cares if I do good in a test? Who cares if I don't?

As an 8th grader, Jaime chose to enact his academic masculinity differently by displaying a tougher, indifferent attitude that made him more popular around his peers. Rather than blaming his peers for his new attitude, he felt that his indifference during 8th grade was caused by the fact that his teachers did not care about how they were doing academically because they were soon off to high school. *"Since it's getting closer to the end of the year, they don't really talk to us as much about our grades."* Because Jaime felt that his teachers did not care as much about the 8th graders, he blamed his new attitude towards school on his teachers rather than his peers. Jaime opted to perform his academic masculinity by acting tough and not trying in school, but understood that if he wanted to go to school, he would have to do better academically. But Jaime was also indifferent about going to college because he knew that if he became a police officer, he would not have to go to college.

Dre, an Average Kid, struggled academically throughout his entire time at Dolores Middle School, often leading him to be ineligible to play sports for the school. Despite his academic shortcomings, Dre worked hard in the classroom and remained upbeat about his future

prospects. Unlike students who were performing poorly for lack of effort, Dre attempted to do his work and sought help when he did not understand it.

Sometimes [schoolwork] it'll be easy, like sometimes because we'll do it in class, and then after I go home, some questions I don't get. Sometimes it's OK because after I'll talk to the teacher, he or she will explain what I'm supposed to do and how I'm supposed to do it. Then I'll get used to it and start doing it all by myself.

With help of teachers, Dre worked tirelessly to complete his work and did not give up when he did not understand the material. Dre choose to perform his academic masculinity by engaging with his teachers and with the materials, regardless of the outcome or what his peers did.

As 8th grade graduation neared, Dre's attitude towards school changed as a result of lowered expectations from his parents. After years of struggling academically, his motivation took a severe blow after an argument with his stepfather.

Well, one time I was uh, doing my homework and my stepdad tells me that, "you're not going to go to college and crap that I actually believed cause my grades were bad so he's like, you know what, you're not going to graduate, you're going to be like one of those dumbasses that works at McDonalds. So then, I didn't really believe him or anything and I didn't, I actually, what he said, I actually did when I was in school, like slacking off, not trying, not doing my best, so yeah, ever since he told me that I just not believed or anything.

This altercation with his stepfather changed Dre's attitude towards school, causing him to stop engaging academically. Constant disappointment in the classroom led his stepfather to lash out at Dre, causing him to lose confidence. Dre consciously made the decision to no longer perform his academic masculinity by doing his work, but rather by just sitting there and being passive.

Regardless of his academic ability, Dre made the conscious decision to perform his masculinity by attempting to complete his work initially, and later by just sitting there and being passive.

While some participants changed the way they performed their academic masculinity by opting to stop doing their work, academic masculinity also took the form of improved academic performance for other participants. As a member of the Soccer Players, Escobar's academic masculinity fluctuated depending on the time of the year. While it had become acceptable to his peers that their grades would drop after soccer season, Escobar began to challenge some of the notions of the academic masculinity associated with Soccer Players.

After a focus group in February of 2013, Escobar and Ganso stayed behind and were hanging out in the counseling center when Escobar began to talk to Ganso and shared his concerns with him about their future. Escobar turned to Ganso and told him,

You know I was thinking the other day at my house of how cool it would be if we grew up together and were still friends when we were older. I was thinking that I don't want to do any of that stuff anymore, I want to be the best student that I can be. I don't care what others think about me, I just want to be a good kid and be successful.

Rather than conforming to the standard set for Soccer Players, Escobar attempted to change the perception that other people had of Soccer Players. Having seen how most of the Soccer Players' behavior and academic performance dropped after soccer season, Escobar grew tired of the expectations that others had of them. Instead he tried to encourage his friends to improve their behavior and their grades.

Escobar's performance was noticed by his peers. He constantly told them to stop messing around and to do their work so that they could play soccer and get ready for the future. Sitting down and talking about the change, he simply said:

“Since we had those talks about life and how you should take school . . . like not mess around the whole time but actually try in school. I was talking to [my coaches] and then my social studies teacher from last year was talking to me, telling me to get my grades up. So like, I decided to keep my grades up.”

As he grew older, Escobar chose to enact his academic masculinity by working hard to improve his grades and stop messing around in class. Rather than shying away from success, Escobar embraced it and challenged his peers to do the same.

For a majority of the participants, academic masculinity was fluid and changed throughout the duration of the study. Soccer Players’ academic masculinity was dependent on the time of the year and whether or not they were participating in soccer. When students opted to perform their academic masculinity by defying teachers, their toughness reassured students of their masculinity as it gave students bragging rights amongst their peers for things that they have done in the class. Talking back to a teacher or getting kicked out of class were viewed as badges of honor that were discussed outside of class, often leading to students laughing about particular incidents and developing a sense of respect for their bravado. Choosing to do their work and participate in class discussions also gave students bragging rights over their peers and allowed them to counter the bravado that other students paraded.

Social Masculinity

I define social masculinity as the ways in which participants interacted with each other and assumed particular behaviors to position themselves to assert their dominance over other males in the school’s social hierarchy. Social masculinity at Dolores Middle School was largely connected around the formation of social groups and behavior, which was regulated by peers.

Who each participant socialized with played a defining role on how students performed this aspect of their masculine identity. Students made a conscious effort to choose a social group to belong to, understanding the expected behavior that was required from each social group. Choosing friends and social networks often determined how other students and teachers viewed participants. Hanging out strictly with Chicano/Latino students was generally regarded negatively by teachers, but hanging out primarily with non-Chicano/Latino students was looked down upon by other students.

Teachers often made recommendations to students concerning with whom they believed participants should interact and socialize. Jaime, a member of the Average Kids, was a student who went back and forth between hanging out with mostly Latino peers and non-Latino students. His mother worked at the school and Jaime was widely considered a good student by the teachers and staff members. As such, he picked up on messages about who to socialize with. In the 7th grade, Jaime opted to hang out with a friend who was half-white, half-Mexican because as he explains, “Teachers think that he’s white so they leave us alone.” While not directly blatant, teachers often sent covert messages regarding how they viewed a particular group of students, in this case viewing white students as harmless. Students would make decisions regarding their peer groups knowing that there may be benefits and drawbacks by association with particular students or social groups.

Other students such as Michael, a member of the Nerds, preferred not to associate with the Soccer Players or the majority of the Chicano/Latino guys, for fear of being labeled a troublemaker by teachers. This decision caused him to be scrutinized by his peers. As he explains,

Well, it's not like that. It's because I'm kind of different from them, like I act a different way. They're more like those gangster kids. They're just like sitting around doing bad things. And then I do something weird and then they're like oh, you're so stupid. That's retarded. Why would you even do that?

Michael did not play soccer at the school. He was not part of the Latino Boys Club and did not dress in the same style as the rest of the Latino students. Because he is academically gifted, he sensed some resented from his peers, which he internalized and reciprocated towards them for doing what he believed was perpetuating negative stereotypes about Mexican and Chicano/Latino students. In this process, Michael made a conscious decision to disassociate himself from other Chicano/Latino males for fear that adults at the school would develop negative views about him by his association with them, knowing that his peers would treat him differently.

For many participants, involvement in soccer was the most salient aspect of their masculinity as it was connected to how they viewed themselves and how they were perceived by others. Being a member of the soccer team meant that they would be popular just given the popularity of the sport at the school, but being a starter on the team further raised their popularity amongst peers. However, involvement in soccer also meant that Soccer Players were highly visible and largely correlated with Chicano/Latino students and culture.

Social masculinity is largely transmitted and negotiated through Ricardo, Dolores' Middle School's soccer coach. Ricardo sent his players strong messages about what it means to be a male through strict discipline. Soccer Players also recognized that Ricardo could kick them off the team if they did not maintain the necessary grades or misbehaved in class, which brought a certain level of shame to participants. Failure to meet grades and participate in soccer was

detrimental to participants as it affected their emotional and social well-being. Pablo was kicked off the soccer team in the spring of 2012 for failure to have the minimum grade point average required. The experience of not being on the team had a tremendous impact on his behavior, as he recalls:

First I got really depressed, I started cussing at my teachers cause I wasn't on the team anymore so I was like angry more and my mom really, all she would say was don't do that again so I just got depressed. And then I started taking my anger out on my teachers . . . It was my fault because I wasn't turning in my homework.

Participation in soccer, or athletics for non-Soccer Players, was central to their experience and their lives, failure to play often led students to become depressed and lose motivation. Dre, an Average Kid who played basketball, also felt a similar emotion in the spring of 2012 when he failed to meet the grades and participate in basketball. *"I don't want to go to the game cause I get sad that I can't play, so I would rather not go."* Failure to be a part of their teams impacted not only their status amongst their friends, but also had an emotional effect on participants.

For most of the Soccer Players, other aspects of their identity were strongly linked to this feature. Soccer Players were popular and exemplary students during soccer season, maintaining good grades and behaving well in class. They understood that in order for them to play soccer, they had to maintain good grades and stay out of trouble. Soccer provided them an avenue to enact their masculinity, from which they reaped the rewards. Socially, they knew that they were popular as female students came to see them play. Academically, they knew their teachers would provide them with additional support and speak well about them to their coach. In some cases, teachers would come out to see some of the games and tell the students how proud they were of their success in the classroom and compliment them about how good they were athletically.

Being involved in soccer also made many of the participants popular amongst their peers, but it also enabled a group of them to be able to date many of the girls at the school. Soccer Players who dated female students often boasted about their popularity with females, which allowed them to assert their manhood in front of their peers. Ganso, a member of the Soccer Players, felt that his popularity was based on how many females him and his close friends dated, as he states:

Well, Andres is pretty popular because a lot of girls like him. But if you're saying it like by the girls, probably like...I guess there's just like a little group, like of four people. Me, Escobar, Andres and Gio...We're probably the people-- the guys that have gone out with the most girls in school. I guess you could say that. So as 8th graders they look up to us.

Being Soccer Players and dating female students allowed participants to develop a strong sense of social masculinity as it drew respect and admiration from other males at the school. This placed many of the Soccer Players and other 8th graders who socialized with them at the top of the social hierarchy at Dolores Middle School. Popularity also meant that students were well liked and respected by their peers. Escobar was someone whom Dre thought was the most popular student at Dolores Middle School because of his involvement in soccer, but also due to his friendly personality. As he explains during an interview,

Eligio: So who would be the most, like the coolest guy in school?

Dre: *Coolest guy?*

Eligio: Yeah.

Dre: *Like Escobar, cause everyone talks to him. I always see everyone hang out with him, talking to him.*

Eligio: And what makes him cool?

Dre: *I guess he's pretty chill, like he likes to hang out with people, talk to people. Yeah.*

Eligio: Do you like Escobar?

Dre: *Yeah.*

Eligio: What do you like about him?

Dre: *He's nice. He's a person I could trust, like I'll talk to him and he'll talk to me back.*

And then he'll ask me if I wanted to go hang out or something.

Respect for peers was also something that participants valued as it showed signs of maturity amongst students. Being social and polite carried weight with not only other males, but also with female students and a majority of teachers.

Students that fit in with the larger group of Chicano/Latino students often engaged in non-heteronormative behavior, which was connected to how they expressed their masculinity. Most of the Chicano/Latino guys, primarily the Soccer Players and Average Kids, engaged in a playful flirting, which involved blowing kisses and winking their eyes at one another when teachers were not looking. Oftentimes students would hug one another or insinuate sexual behavior in a flirting, playful manner. Other times, students would tease their friends by insinuating that they liked males during focus groups or during lunchtime conversations. Being part of the popular group at Dolores Middle School facilitated this behavior as students knew that others around them would take it as a joke if they got caught and not questions their sexuality. Some participants such as Lupe, one of the Average Kid group members, tried to distinguish themselves by claiming that he did not partake in non-heteronormative behavior, which he considered childish.

Lupe: *I consider myself responsible and mature. I'm not like most of the people in this room.*

Pablo: *Not like in the gym when you run the floor.*

Escobar: *That's right. You got blasted.*

Lupe often tried to distinguish himself from the group and had a certain over-confidence in himself, believing he was above others when it came to sports, academics and maturity. However, his peers quickly responded to his comments and pointed out several instances in which they saw him acting the same way as the rest of the group. Participants thus regulated peer behavior and ensured that social norms would be maintained. While instances like this would happen on a regular basis, this behavior was very contextual. Students would only behave in this manner when they were around one another and in a space where they felt comfortable. For the most part, this behavior occurred in non-academic settings such as their Physical Education class, during lunch, and before or after school.

Participants equated acting in this manner with being immature or part of their natural development of growing up and becoming men. While they did not think much of their behavior, students did recognize during focus groups the need for them to improve their behavior.

Lupe: *I identify as someone who's a man, as he needs to mature, man up . . . stop acting like a woman.*

Pablo: *I identify myself, or sometimes us, too, like we're on our way to being a man, but we're not really there because sometimes we start to act immature, and then at other times we start to act mature. So we're on our way over there.*

A majority of the participants felt that they were at different stages of their development as young men and constantly had lapses in their behavior, but understood that who they socialized with and how they behaved impacted the way that others would view them.

Social masculinity created a social hierarchy that was determined by group membership and the adoption of particular behavior. Students chose activities to participate in based on the popularity that it would bring. Participation in soccer, or other athletics, allowed students to place themselves at the top of the social structure and facilitated their ability to date female students, which in turn led to increased popularity and allowed students to assert themselves over other male students.

Cultural Masculinity

The third and final form of masculinity, cultural masculinity, merges and overlaps with the other two forms of masculinity. I define cultural masculinity as the ways in which students associate and value Chicano/Latino culture, specifically the norms and behavior that students adopted in relation to their culture. While, cultural masculinity can share several aspects with academic and social masculinity, there are certain elements that make it necessary to separate it from the other forms. Language and pride were two characteristics that were key to how participants performed cultural masculinity. What is different about cultural masculinity compared to the other forms is that it is carried over from their home environments. Many students brought to school specific values that their parents, particularly fathers or father-figures, shared with them. As such, students were not sure how to bridge the home and school environment together, often performed this type of masculinity with caution.

Similar to negotiating their academic masculinity, participants had to choose how to perform their cultural masculinity without being too Chicano/Latino or being too white. Understanding that opting to show a strong identification with Chicano/Latino culture through their social masculinity influenced the way that others would perceive them, many chose to

perform their cultural masculinity in different manners. Michael, a member of the Nerd group, for instance, was one student who took a lot of pride in his Mexican heritage and valued the preservation of it, but opted to perform his cultural masculinity outside of school. Internally, Michael struggled to come to terms with his cultural masculinity as he was not sure how and where to enact it.

I mean I don't want them to start thinking that I'm not Mexican and stuff. They should understand that I'm kind of in between the two where I wasn't raised in Mexico and I didn't learn Spanish as my first language kind of thing. Because I started learning English and Spanish at the same time, and English kind of took over, and then Spanish came in, and I learned more English than Spanish.

Because of his perceived differences, Michael often performed his cultural masculinity outside of school by doing all the things that other participants would do in school, such as playing soccer and speaking Spanish. However, his performance of cultural masculinity would often be faced with increased discrimination from white peers outside of school.

They do, because on my soccer team I feel really, really offended because of this kid. There's this kid on my soccer team and my nickname on the soccer team is, since we have two Chris's, they call me Mexi. But I'm fine with Mexi because it's more of a cool, kind of nickname kind of thing, instead of a more racial kind of thing. And there's this kid that he doesn't call me Mexi, he calls me Mexican, and I'm like dude, just stop calling me that. You can call me Mexi if you want, just don't call me Mexican because I get more offended for that. But then I do something wrong and I'm like oh, I can't do this, and he's like yeah, that's just because you're Mexican. And I'm like dude, just shut up. And I say something like referring to a stereotype like man, I jumped so high over that person. He's like yeah,

that's because you know how to jump over the border because you're Mexican. And I told my mom before and she said that she was going to tell the coach and stuff because they've been doing that.

Michael's performance of cultural masculinity, in this case where he chose to embrace it, had negative ramifications. Performing his cultural masculinity at school in a more white or American manner left him at odds with other Chicano/Latino males, but performing it more aligned with his Mexican background outside of school left him at odds with his white peers.

Performing cultural masculinity was connected to how participants chose to identify culturally. While there was no single term that was used to identify the entire group, participants commonly used the terms, Chicano, Latino, Hispanic, Mexican or Mexican American to identify themselves. The only term that most Chicano/Latino students did not use to identify themselves was American as they felt that they were not American because they equated American with being white. Although many participants felt a connection to American culture, most identified strongly with Latino culture because of their parents' background. Even for students who were born in the United States, many of them felt a stronger connection to their Mexican background. As Bobby explains,

Eligio: How would you describe yourself?

Bobby: *Mexican*

Eligio: Not Mexican American?

Bobby: *No, well, sure, but I consider myself more as Mexican.*

Bobby, one of the Average Kids, was born in the United States and had never been to Mexico, but considered himself more Mexican because of how his parents raised him and the cultural

traditions that his family practiced at home. Other participants shared similar thoughts and took pride in their cultural practices.

For many participants, identity was a mixture of two cultures and they were constantly balancing the two. Michael, who did not interact with most of the Latino boys outside of class, explains his rationale for identifying as a Mexican American, *“I consider myself a Mexican American. Because I don’t want to lose my culture. I want my culture to be mixed in.”* Even for a student like Michael who felt that Chicano/Latino students needed to improve their behavior, maintaining ties to his culture was important. Thus, maintaining ties to their cultural heritage was important for all participants, regardless of how they performed their social and cultural masculinity.

Participants shared a sense of pride about their cultural heritage and made a conscious decision to identify with their culture. Lupe, one of the Average Kids, did not care about what others thought and embraced being Mexican, as he states: *“I’m just proud to be Mexican because it’s a popular race that a lot of people are. And I’m just different than other people. I’ve got a big family.”* Speaking a different language and being different was a sense of pride for many of the young men. Comments such as *“We hang out and we talk in Spanish.”* by Rafa, one of the younger Soccer Players, were often shared to highlight the fact that they shared something unique amongst themselves that their white peers did not possess. There was also a strong sense of pride about being Latino amongst participants, As Ganso, a Soccer Player explains,

Ganso: *Um, well, I don’t think I want to be another race, I just want to be Latino.*

EMJ: Why?

DH: *Um, cause . . . Latinos are cool.*

Being proud of their cultural heritage was a point of pride at Dolores Middle School, as Chicano/Latino students were amongst the most popular students. Although participants felt that racial bias would impact them in the future, they also took it as a way of motivation to do well academically. As Rafa explains, *“Everybody expects less from me. Because people think that Hispanics are like naturally dumb. But that's why I feel like they expect less from me, but I try to prove them wrong.”* Other students shared a similar sentiment. They felt they needed to change the perception of not just teachers, but also of others who had negative views about Latinos.

Cultural masculinity was exemplified by the pride that students had in their cultural background and how they chose to perform it in and out of school. Students who embraced their cultural masculinity did so knowing that it would further fuel the largely negative views that teachers and other students had about Chicano/Latino students. Regardless of their social group membership, all participants took some pride in being Chicano/Latino, but demonstrated it in different ways and spaces.

Summary

Students at Dolores Middle School performed three types of masculinity: academic, social, and cultural. Each type of masculinity had a particular set of norms and values that students had to adopt in order to assert their masculinity. Finding the balance on how to perform cultural, social and academic masculinity was critical for the development of participants. Participants often walked a fine line between how they performed their masculinity and how they wanted to be viewed by their peers. Being too cultural or too social, would often conflict with successful academic masculinity. Those who choose to be engaged academically had to be cautious of the perception that it could bring. Performing academic masculinity through defiance

and strong social masculinity caused adults and other students to associate negative behavior and stereotypes with Chicano/Latino students, particularly males. While unintentional, this affected the perception that many teachers had of Chicano/Latino students. Performing academic masculinity through success and choosing not to socialize with mostly Chicano/Latino peers and performing their cultural masculinity in a more mainstream fashion, led to feelings of alienation on the part of students and views of not being Latino enough and white-washed.

More importantly, participants actively chose how to perform each type of masculinity. While intersectionality theory allows us to explore how student experiences were shaped by race and gender, identity performance theory allows us to see how students shaped their own experiences by enacting certain aspects of their identity different from their peers. Being placed in social categories was a choice that students made and frequently had to negotiate. Although how they performed their academic, social and cultural masculinity was a choice, it was not as freely chosen as it would appear given the racialized climate of school and society.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This study developed in an attempt to investigate the role of race, ethnicity, and gender in shaping the identity formation and experiences of Chicano/Latino middle school males. Further, this study was created to expand research on Chicanos/Latinos during a stage that has been heavily understudied. Findings from this research study begin to uncover the need to focus on the educational experiences and lives of Chicano/Latino students at earlier stages in the pipeline in order to ensure that they remain engaged as they transition to high school and beyond. While the study does not cover a discussion about the development of aspirations, findings allow us to begin to understand how race, racism, and gender begin to shape the educational trajectories of participants. This study can begin to shed light on the factors that are causing Chicano/Latino males to be ill-prepared to transition to high school.

This ethnographic study focused on exploring how Chicano/Latino students come to understand and make meaning of their racial, ethnic and gendered identity during middle school. The conceptual framework I adopted (see Figure 3.1) takes into consideration how student identity is influenced initially by preconceived notions about race, class, and gender that are influenced by their family and surrounding environment. As students enter the school system, students negotiate different elements of their identity and develop perceptions about other students. Formation of social groups and interactions between students and adults are influenced by the school environment and external pressures that students must consistently negotiate. At the core of the study, I aimed to understand the significance of race, ethnicity and gender in shaping the identity formation and experiences of participants. I also sought to uncover the role of masculinity in shaping school attitudes and the behavior that students adopted and how their

behavior changed depending on the context. As school performance is linked to race, ethnicity and gender, students often structure opportunity for the future based upon the way they feel they are treated by teachers and administrators based on their race and gender.

Using Critical Race Theory, I focused on the centrality of narrative, placing the experiences and voices of the participants central to the study, ensuring that what was being discussed was based on the verbal accounts of participants (Dixon & Rousseau, 2006; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Through this process, I constantly checked and verified my conclusions and arguments with participants to ensure that my portrayal of their experiences was as accurate as possible. By using Critical Race Theory, I was able to approach this study through a critical lens that examined the role that race and gender played in shaping the middle school experiences of Chicano/Latino males. The creation of social groups, the examination of school practices and the performance of masculinity were analyzed through a lens that placed race and gender as a central element of the study.

The study was guided by the following questions:

- 1) How do middle school Chicano/Latino male students make meaning of their racial, ethnic and gender identity? How does identity influence the formation of social groups and behavior and vice versa?
- 2) How does race shape school practices that impact Chicano/Latino male student behavior and experience? In particular, what forms of systemic racism are present at the school that impact Chicano/Latino students?
- 3) How do Chicano/Latino male students conceptualize and perform masculinity? How does masculinity affect behavior in relation to their academic performance and social and cultural interactions?

The main findings of the study revealed how students experienced and made meaning of the role that race and gender played in their lives. Class played an underlining role in shaping the ideals of what it meant to be a Chicano/Latino male, largely preconceived by the examples that their working class father and relatives had displayed. Race was the most prevalent aspect of a participant's identity as it influenced how social groups formed, the perceptions that teachers and others developed of particular groups of students because of their cultural affiliations, while also instilling a sense of pride and determination amongst participants.

The main findings from this study were categorized into three areas: 1) formation of social groups, 2) the role of institutional racism in shaping the experiences of Chicano/Latino students, and 3) the formation and performance of masculine identity. While not the only themes that emerged during the data collection and analysis process, these three findings were the most relevant in shaping the lives of participants. The following sections summarize some of the findings of this study.

Understanding the Significance of Social Groups

Key to the experiences of participants in this study was the formation of social groups and how they shaped the lived experiences of students at Dolores Middle School. Participants in the study were categorized into four main categories: Soccer Players, Average Kids, the Nerds, and the Lost Boys. As with previous research, social groups at Dolores Middle School were largely structured around race and gender (Tatum, 2004; Conchas, 2006). Social groups created social hierarchies that determined interactions amongst participants and treatment by teachers.

Soccer Players were the largest group at Dolores Middle School and they strongly identified with Chicano/Latino culture. A majority of these students speak Spanish fluently and

take pride in their cultural background. Academic performance for Soccer Players is largely tied to soccer season, with most of their grades dropping after soccer and picking up right before or during soccer season. Soccer was a key factor in the experiences of Soccer Players as it was the main form of engagement for Chicano/Latino males at Dolores Middle School and helped shape their attitude towards school. During soccer season, Soccer Players became model students and earned praise from their teachers for their performance in the classroom and their improved behavior. After soccer season, Soccer Players' attitudes and behavior declined greatly, changing the view that teachers had of them.

Average Kids consisted of students who identified with being Chicano/Latino but are more prone to socialize with non-Chicano/Latino peers and play other sports, like basketball. Average Kids had a more consistent academic performance and were largely treated the same way throughout the year by their teachers. Unlike Soccer Players, Average Kids had fewer disciplinary issues outside of speaking too much during class.

The Nerds were the smallest group of students and had a tendency to keep to themselves. The students in the Nerds group were academically gifted. What differentiated Nerds from the Average Kids and Soccer players is that Nerds struggled with their cultural identity and did not fit in with the other Chicano/Latino students, straining their relationship with them. Unlike Soccer Players and Average Kids, Nerds were typically placed into this category by other students rather than by self-selecting to join the group. Finally, the Lost Boys often floated around on their own and did not have a particular set of friends. Members of the Lost Boys did not have unifying characteristics and did not fit with any of the other groups. The Lost Boys group consisted of students who were of mixed-racial backgrounds, had recently immigrated to the United States and spoke very little English and had disciplinary issues.

While these groups existed, categories were not exclusive and participants often socialized and interacted with students from other groups. This was particularly the case amongst Soccer Players and Average Kids who frequently interacted with one another, often blurring the lines between the two groups. A huge distinction did exist amongst students categorized as Nerds, as they opted not to interact and socialize with students from other social groups and spent a majority of their time with non-Chicano/Latino male peers.

Race and the extent of students' association to Chicano/Latino culture played the most significant role in determining how students categorized themselves. The perception that many teachers developed about Chicano/Latino attitudes and motivation was largely shaped by their social group membership. Students who had stronger ties to their Chicano/Latino culture, in this case the Soccer Players and the Average Kids, were often treated as deficient and a threat. However, students who did not strongly associate with Chicano/Latino culture, in this case the Nerds, were viewed as being normal. Some of the Lost Boys were treated similar to Soccer Players as they frequently had behavior issues and were disciplined.

Social groups largely defined the school experience of Chicano/Latino males at Dolores Middle School. As demonstrated in previous research (Tajfel, 1974), social group membership was not static but rather fluid, as participants would occasionally change membership or navigate from one group to another for no particular reason. Association with a particular group came with social and behavioral expectations. Students joined groups that they wanted to be a part of and adopted a particular set of style of dress, slang, and behavior that went in accordance with each group.

Findings from this study reaffirm previous research on how teachers can misinterpret cultural affiliations and unity for deviant or malicious behavior (Katz, 1999; Morris, 2005).

Cultural pride in their heritage and a shared common experience on behalf of participants cause teachers to believe that a majority of Chicano/Latino were not interested in school and to develop a deficit-thinking attitude towards students. Further, it demonstrates how Chicano/Latino females continue to be viewed as more hopeful than their male counterparts (Lopez, 2003).

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism in school is present in several forms that include curriculum, funding, testing, and treatment of students (Aleman, 2006; Ferguson, 2000, Howard, 2012, Milner, 2013). The most significant form of institutional racism was the pervasive use of language as racial microaggressions that were directed at Chicano/Latino males. Terms depicting Chicano/Latino males as deficient and problematic became part of the everyday discourse at Dolores Middle School. As Ladson-Billings (1998) argues:

“Conceptual categories like “school achievement,” “middle classness,” “maleness,” “beauty,” “intelligence,” and “science” become normative categories of whiteness, while categories like “gangs,” “welfare recipients,” “basketball players,” and “the underclass” become the marginalized and de-legitimated categories of blackness” (pp. 9).

Language became a way of normalizing whiteness at Dolores Middle School, as white cultural norms became the expectation of all students. Whiteness then became the standard of what was normal and acceptable at Dolores Middle School. Anything that was different was considered deficient or problematic. Words such as “difficult” or “challenging” were constantly used to describe classes with high number of Chicano/Latino students. Racial microaggressions often pointed out differences amongst students and singled out Chicano/Latino students’ behavior in front of peers.

The reproduction and predominance of Whiteness as a culture led to the “othering” of Chicano/Latino students. The concept of “othering”, initially discussed by Said (1978; 1985), is the belief or right to use difference as an instrument to relegate the rights of others and place them as inferior or of lesser status. In education, the practice of othering often leads many students of color to become marginalized and prevents them from being successful academically (Borrero, Yeh, Cruz & Suda, 2012; DeCuir & Dixson, 2012; Kumashiro, 2000). The racial dynamics at Dolores Middle School made Chicano/Latino students the target of “othering” by many school personnel. First, in the absence of a significant Black student population to whom teachers could blame and treat as different, Chicano/Latino males filled that void and were treated as criminals, deficient and a threat. Unfair treatment of Chicano/Latino male students and being seen as having cultural deficits was very present and ingrained in how participants experience middle school, which over time impacted their development and views towards schooling. Second, while there was a large Russian immigrant population as discussed in the community context, many of these students had by all intents and purposes become white. And while many Chicano/Latino students dealt with the realities of having parents that were undocumented, children of Russian immigrants did not have to worry about their parents’ immigration status as they could pass as white, and thus blend in with white Americans.

Further, the persistence of whiteness led to a second form of institutional racism as it normalized the hiring of majority white teachers, particularly females, thus maintaining a majority white staff. White teachers were often ill-prepared to engage and interact with Chicano/Latino students. Few teachers and staff members outside of Mr. Jackson and Ms. Brown attempted to understand the experiences of Chicano/Latino males and made the effort to incorporate their experiences into the curriculum and activities at Dolores Middle School. Ms.

Brown's attempt to create a Latino Boys Club was one of the few efforts to engage students around their cultural heritage and a deliberate one to include Chicano/Latino males into the school culture.

The disciplinary practices that Chicano/Latino males encountered at Dolores Middle School comprised the third significant form of institutional racism. In several instances, participants reported events in which they were mistreated by teachers and administrators and were not given the same treatment as their white and female peers. Even in instances in which other non-Chicano/Latino students were involved, they were punished longer than their peers, who often went unpunished.

Many forms of institutional racism are deeply ingrained in everyday practices that often go unnoticed and are considered a normal part of the educational system. Several practices at Dolores Middle School placed Chicano/Latino males at a disadvantage and affected the way they experienced school. The two most salient forms of institutional practices, racial microaggressions, and the harsh disciplinary practices directed towards Chicano/Latino students placed them at a disadvantage compared to their peers and alienated many students from particular teachers.

Performing Masculinity

While conversations about masculinity center on the notion of being tough versus being effeminate or having domination over others (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1998; Howard, 2012; Mac An Ghail, 1994), I explored how students opted to perform their masculinity. Similar to Connell (1995), rather than reducing masculinity to a static, single heteronormative behavior, I analyzed the multiple masculinities that students in this study possessed and how they chose to perform

each type of masculinity. As with Connell's work (1995; 2005), participants embodied different configurations of masculinity depending on their social relation to others, but my findings also showed that masculinity was contextual as well.

Participants in this study performed three main forms of masculinity, which I term as: academic masculinity, social masculinity, and cultural masculinity. I define academic masculinity as the ways in which male students engaged or did not engage in their schoolwork and the behavior they adopted to perform their masculinity. Academic masculinity was demonstrated through either success/engagement in course material or defiance of the teacher. I define social masculinity as the way that participants interacted with each other and the adopted behavior that allowed them to position themselves in order to assert their dominance over other males. Social masculinity was related to the social groups that formed at Dolores Middle School. Finally, I define cultural masculinity as the ways in which students associated and valued Chicano/Latino culture, specifically the norms and behaviors that they adopted in relation to the level of cultural pride they possessed.

Each category was interrelated and influenced the other types of masculinity, but was distinct enough where they placed a value on different aspects. Masculinity was not static, but rather was a constant negotiation and performance that was very contextual. How students performed their social and cultural masculinity had a direct relation to how students saw themselves and wanted to be seen by their peers. A majority of students developed an understanding of what it meant to be male by seeing their father figures as examples or through conversations they had with them. Given the working class background of students and their families, many students believed that working hard and being responsible were part of what it meant to be a masculine.

What is most salient about academic masculinity is that it challenges the binary of acting white and developing oppositional identities as was found by Fordham and Ogbu (1986). Participants in this study did not believe that being a good student compromised their cultural identity, but rather possessed more of what researchers have called, “immigrant optimism” (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Instead, students understood the value of education and while they may not have performed their masculinity by doing well academically, they understood that education was important to their future. Rebellious against teachers was not in relation to developing an oppositional identity, but often was in frustration for how teachers treated students. Regardless of how students performed, all of them wanted to be successful and to do well in school, even if their behavior showed otherwise.

Social masculinity perhaps had the greatest relationship to the formation of social groups as it influenced the way that students interacted with one another and the perceptions that were developed of each group. Social masculinity was heavily influenced by participation in athletics, primarily soccer, as athletics made participants amongst the most popular students at the school. Academic performance was largely tied to how students performed their social masculinity as many participants went along with how their peers in their social groups were doing academically. Social masculinity also regulated the behavior amongst participants and the types of activities that students would become engaged in.

Cultural masculinity revolved around pride in their cultural heritage, including their involvement in cultural activities, and the usage of the Spanish language. Performing cultural masculinity was very contextual. It was the form that was influenced both by the school environment and the home and community environment. For many of the participants, performing cultural masculinity was a fine balance between their family cultural background and

American cultural influences. How each participant performed cultural masculinity influenced the way that peers, teachers and other adults viewed and treated them. Gilmore (1990) argues that the concept of manhood is not just psychogenetic in origin, but rather, it is also a culturally imposed ideal to which men must conform.

Findings revealed that students who performed their social and cultural masculinity by possessing a high level of cultural pride and through their choice of peer interaction were affected academically. Research on the relationship between cultural identity and academic outcomes (Spencer, Harpalani, Dell'Angelo & Seaton, 2002; Wright, 2011), however, shows that possessing a strong and positive sense of cultural identity can lead to increased self-esteem and higher academic outcomes.

Limitations of Study

While this study provides some insights about the Chicano/Latino middle school experience and how the intersection of race, class, and gender shape their experiences, there are three main limitations. First, because of time constraints, my study was limited to what I was able to see and capture during the 16 months that I was in the field from March 2012 to June 2013. Other responsibilities as a graduate student prevented me from being at my research site on a daily basis, which would often lead to three to four day gaps without going to the school site and forced me to rely on student accounts about events that had transpired during the days that I missed. Time constraints also limited my ability to be in every classroom that some of my participants were in, and excluded me from seeing participants in courses such as physical education, reading support, and other elective courses in which students' creativity may abound more.

My focus on examining the role that race, class, and gender played in shaping the experiences of Chicano/Latino male students through a Critical Race Theory lens prevented me from exploring other issues that may have come up throughout the length of the study. While my focus was looking at middle school males, my study may have been strengthened had I also included interviews with Chicana/Latina students which would have allowed me to have a comparison on the views and attitudes that both male and female students had towards school and their views towards race, class, and gender. The inclusion of students from other communities of color may have provided a different perspective on race that may have revealed a different experience than that of Chicano/Latino students.

A general limitation of ethnographic research is that the findings in this study cannot be generalized beyond the population studied as the environment and context in which this particular group of students is coming of age is unique. However, the findings in this study can provide insight as to how schools with a changing student body can adapt and develop programs to better serve their students. The findings in this study can be considered as a project that tests various theories of identity formation through a Critical Race Theory lens, and suggest new opportunities to develop future studies.

Beyond the methodological limitations, this study is about a particular group of students in a particular community. The context and location in which these students are coming of age help shape their lives in a particular way that may not be applicable to other places. The community in which Dolores Middle School is situated in has been going through a gradual transition over the past decade, which can factor into the experience of students. This may be different for communities that may be more homogenous and primarily Chicano/Latino, African American or any other community of color.

Finally, it is important to understand that participants in this study attend a school that is well funded and has an abundance of resources through the school district. While Dolores Middle School may be underperforming, other schools in the district are excelling and are nationally recognized on a regular basis for their academic accomplishments, hence there is a possibility to better support all students across the district. Higher property taxes throughout the city also contributed higher funds for public education. A strong Parent Teacher Association and strong fundraising efforts through the districts fundraising organization allow the school to have the ability to ask for additional support and funding to improve the outcomes of students that may be falling behind academically. This can be different for schools that may be located in middle or working class neighborhoods.

Contributions of the Study: Adopting School Practices to Improve Chicano/Latino Education

Findings from this study reveal that focusing on improving and engaging young men of color is extremely critical during this juncture of the educational pipeline as it can prevent them from diverting from school. While the present study only focused on Chicano/Latino males, other young men, including white, African American and Native American, also encountered similar challenges as Chicanos/Latinos. Failure to engage these young men socially and academically caused many of the young men to make decisions that further alienated them from the school culture, producing poor academic outcomes.

By recognizing how their emerging identities are shaped by school practices, we can better understand how to address the developmental needs of students and how we can engage them socially, emotionally, and academically. Excessive monitoring and disciplinary practices due to students' racial and ethnic backgrounds must be revised to ensure that students are

learning from their challenges and not continuing to repeat the same behavior that can lead to increased discipline.

This study also highlights the significant role that social groups can have on shaping the experiences and outcomes of students. Social groups play a critical role in developing a sense of belong at school for students, however, their identification with a particular group should not determine how students are treated by teachers. Researchers and practitioners must understand why social groups forms and how they are important to school culture for students. More importantly, we must be able to recognize how we can engage different social groups and not dismiss any students as a result of their group membership.

Welcoming and working with Chicano/Latino students must be a collective effort that must encompasses school leaders and district administrators and teachers and staff. Institutional changes must be adopted at both the district and school level in order to ensure that the message being sent to students is linear and allows them to be better supported. Disciplinary practices, teacher attitude and teaching styles must be looked at in order to ensure that all students are treated fairly and equally and to eliminate the “othering” of students of color. Drawing upon the findings of my study and towards addressing the achievement gap of Chicano/Latino males in middle school, I propose the following recommendations:

Expanding Opportunities for Engagement. School and school personnel must take the initiative to engage students outside of their academic space. Although the middle school context does not traditionally lend itself to increased engagement as much as the high school environment that may have numerous student clubs, teachers must find ways to become active participants in the education of their students. Programs and services provided by the Christian

service organization at Dolores Middle School, as an example, provided a critical form of engagement for students that allowed them to stay afterschool long after the school day ended and after teachers left for home. Yet, what happens when there is no buy-in from teachers to support these programs or create programs of their own? Teachers and schools cannot pass on the responsibility to outside organizations to ensure for the safety and wellbeing of their students, but rather, must make an effort to become invested in their students. Coach Ricardo is not a school employee and thus is not under the school or school districts prerogative, when his employer asked him to develop a similar program at another middle school, he left and was absent from Dolores Middle School for an extended period. When there is no engagement from teachers, this creates a void that nobody can fill, which, as proven in this study, can have a detrimental effect on the development of students.

Soccer/athletics and other extracurricular activities are critical to the success of Chicano/Latino students that must be further explored as a form to engage students and improve their academic outcomes. Mr. Jackson and a few other teachers' interest in the students allowed them to bring some of the experiences from the soccer field into the classroom by discussing leadership and sportsmanship issues that they saw during soccer games. This allowed teachers to build off of the activities that students were already engaged in and demonstrate to students that they shared similar interests as students.

The Latino Boys Club created by Ms. Brown provided a space for students to learn more about their identity and develop cultural pride through a school-sanctioned activity. By bringing different speakers with who students identified culturally and whose stories resonated with the students' lives, students were able to think critically about their future aspirations and use other peoples' stories in order to navigate through the school environment. Further, the Latino Boys

Club served as a way to validate the experiences of Chicano/Latino males and let them know that they mattered at school.

Additional forms of extracurricular activities that promote cultural awareness must be provided continuously to expose not only Chicano/Latino students to their culture, but also other students so that they can learn about each other's cultures. Teachers must play a critical role in creating and supporting new activities to show students that they are interested in their wellbeing outside of the classroom space. As demonstrated by participants in this study, teacher engagement impacts the perception that students develop about individual teachers and causes some students to be more receptive to listen to teachers and complete their work.

Improving Language and Teaching Practices. Language is critical to the school experience. How we speak and refer to students influences their attitudes towards school and can either engage them or alienate them. Teachers and administrators must be more sensitive and careful with the language they use to refer to and address students. On multiple occasions I observed Mr. Jackson and the 8th grade language arts class and in both instances teachers were actively trying to engage students. When a student answered a question wrong, the teachers often prodded a little more to make the student think critically about the question until they would get the right answer. When a student was stuck, instead of dismissing the student, Mr. Jackson would ask the class, "Who can help your classmate out?" This practice allowed students to feel like their comments were valid and encouraged them to keep participating in class discussions.

Students generally felt that even when they got the wrong answer, teachers would help them find the answer and would thank them for being engaged. Students enjoyed being in their language arts classes and very few disciplinary issues came from these classes. The same thing can be said in the sciences classes. Teachers were more engaging and often asked questions to

students as a follow up. Again, how teachers engaged students in class materials would reflect on the attitude that students adopted when they were in class. When asked about who their favorite teachers were and what were their favorite subjects, a majority of students often said science and language arts and the teachers in those classes were often amongst the most popular classes. Even with the science teacher, who struggled a bit with some of his students, students felt that he cared about them because on multiple occasions they saw him in his classroom late at night setting up labs and working on other materials in preparation for class. Students saw this commitment and reciprocated it by trying to do better in class and completing their work.

Schools can learn from teachers that do a good job at engaging students by observing their teaching style and approach to working with Chicano/Latino students. Although Mr. Jackson was a white male, he constantly looked for ways to connect with students either through his personal experience or through student interests. Students recognized his efforts and were more receptive to his approaches. When teachers do a better job at connecting and engaging their students, fewer disciplinary issues can arise and students can develop a sense of belonging with their teachers that can improve school outcomes.

Diversifying and Training Teachers and Staff. Lack of hiring of teachers of color prevents students from finding someone that they can relate to at school. Hiring practices must be deliberate and target the recruitment of new teachers and staff from diverse backgrounds that can match the demographics of Dolores Middle School. However, the problem with engagement is not solved simply by hiring a more diverse teaching staff, but rather by showing teachers of all backgrounds how to care about their students. Ms. Brown and Mr. Jackson provide great examples of how white educators can work with youth of color and engage them successfully by going beyond what is required of them.

Culturally competency trainings can also help improve the relationship between teachers and students and prepare teachers to be better suited to work and engage with diverse student populations. Showing teachers how to incorporate new material that students can relate to can serve not only as a way to attract student interest, but also to validate student's cultural experiences in the classroom. These new approaches can lead to positive self-imagining by students and help improve student outcomes.

New Directions for Future Research

In conclusion, my findings contribute new understandings of the identity formation and school experiences of Chicano/Latino males in middle school. Their racialization and their treatment in the schools by teachers and other school personnel based on preconceptions of their home lives, abilities, and cultural values, in turn, influences how the students perceive themselves and interact with teachers and peers. Moreover, these dynamics are reflected in how the middle schoolers perform their masculinity as boys who are becoming men, sometimes getting them into trouble with authorities and other times revealing their agency to plan for their future in positive ways.

The significance of my study is that the educational goals of middle school males are far more complex than previously documented. The study challenges the notion that oppositional behavior is the only behavioral form for male students of color. Attention specifically to the struggles of Chicano/Latino males reveals many of the challenges of growing up in a multicultural society when one is a member of a minority ethnic group. For middle school males the academic goals remain high, but we can begin to see how some of them become discouraged because of the way they are treated by teachers. While my findings differ with what previous

research have found, since my study was unique to middle school aged Chicano/Latino males, the difference in age group may account for distinctive results.

These new findings open up new areas for research to understand the pipeline for Chicano/Latino students. As students mature and transition to high school, the understandings they may have about race and its role in their identity formation and educational success may become clearer. As demonstrated by some of the participants, low expectations on the part of U.S. schools and society may also encourage students to work hard to prove teachers wrong and for them to continue to take pride in their cultural background, which is integral to their wellbeing. Students may begin to see the value that their ethnic culture and community possess, what Yosso (2005) refers to as Community Cultural Wealth, and use this as a form of empowerment that will allow them to overcome obstacles.

The complexity of identities for participants revealed some of the struggles that students encounter as they try to balance different aspects of their identities. Further work on identity development using intersectionality can continue to highlight the unique experience of Chicano/Latino students, but more importantly, how school continue to treat them because of their race and gender. As students transition into high school and beyond, attention must be paid to how new environments receive students as they mature and transition into high school and beyond. Further, we must continue to look at the role that masculinity plays in the school experience of students and how it can influence attitude and behavior.

This study also proved how students begin to deviate during middle school and be disengaged by the time that they reach high school. Additional research is necessary on the middle school experience in order to understand how to meet the needs of students during this stage that can ensure that they are prepared and can successfully transition into high school. In

order to close the opportunity gap, researchers and practitioners must pay attention to all of the segments of the educational pipeline and follow students through each stage in order to address the problems that create wide differences in school completion amongst racial and ethnic groups. As researchers and practitioners, listening to students, observing their behavior, and implementing practices that are culturally inclusive, respectful, and fair are approaches to better supporting middle school students in pursuing their educational success.

References

- Adler, P.A. & Adler, P. (1998) Observational techniques. In N.K. Denzin & Y.Z. Lincoln, (Eds.) *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*. (pp. 79-109). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Alexander, K. L., & Entwisle, D. R. (January 01, 1988). Achievement in the first 2 years of school: patterns and processes. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 53, 2, 1-157.
- Amatea, E. S., Cholewa, B., & Mixon, K. A. (July 01, 2012). Influencing preservice teachers' attitudes about working with low-income and/or ethnic minority families. *Urban Education*. 47 (4). Pp. 801-844
- American Council on Education (2011). Minorities in Higher Education: Twenty-Fourth Status Report, 2011 Supplement. Washington D.C.: Kim. Y. M.
- Arciniega, G. M., Anderson, T. C., Tovar-Blank, Z. G., & Tracey, T. J. G. (January 01, 2008). Toward a Fuller Conception of Machismo: Development of a Traditional Machismo and Caballerismo Scale. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 55, 1, 19-33.
- Banks, J. A. (October 01, 1998). The Lives and Values of Researchers: Implications for Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society. *Educational Researcher*, 27, 7.
- Bejarano, C. L. (2005). *Qué onda?: Urban youth culture and border identity*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Bernal, D. D. (March 08, 1999). Using a Chicana Feminist Epistemology in Educational Research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 68, 4, 555-82.
- Bettie, J. (2003). *Women without class: Girls, race, and identity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Brewster, A. B., & Bowen, G. L. (January 01, 2004). Teacher Support and the School Engagement of Latino Middle and High School Students at Risk of School Failure. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 21, 1, 47-67.
- Broughton, M. A., & Fairbanks, C. M. (February 01, 2003). In the Middle of the Middle: Seventh-Grade Girls' Literacy and Identity Development. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 46, 5, 426-35.
- Brown, J. A., Jimerson, S. R., Dowdy, E., Gonzalez, V., & Stewart, K. (November 01, 2012). Assessing the Effects of School-Wide "Second Step" Implementation in a Predominately English Language Learner, Low SES, Latino Sample. *Psychology in the Schools*, 49, 9, 864-875.

- Burchinal, M. R., Roberts, J. E., Zeisel, S. A., & Rowley, S. J. (January 01, 2008). Social risk and protective factors for African American children's academic achievement and adjustment during the transition to middle school. *Developmental Psychology*, 44, 1, 286-292.
- Cabrera, A. F., & La Nasa S. M. (September 01, 2000). Three Critical Tasks America's Disadvantaged Face on Their Path to College. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2000, 107.
- Cammarota, J. (March 01, 2004). The Gendered and Racialized Pathways of Latina and Latino Youth: Different Struggles, Different Resistances in the Urban Context. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 35, 1, 53-74.
- Carbado, D. W. (May 01, 2000). Straight Out of the Closet. *Berkeley Women's Law Journal*, 15, 76-124.
- Carbado, D.W. & Gulati, M. (July, 01, 2000) Working Identity. *Cornell Law Review*, 85, 5, 1259-1308.
- Carbado, D. & Gulati, M. (2001). The fifth Black woman. *Journal of Contemporary Legal Issues*, 11, 2,, 701-729.
- Carbado, D. (2011) Critical What What?, 43 *Connecticut Law Review* 1593-1643
- Carter, P. L. (February 01, 2003). "Black" Cultural Capital, Status Positioning, and Schooling Conflicts for Low-Income African American Youth. *Social Problems*, 50, 1, 136-155.
- Carter, P. L. (2005). *Keepin' it real: School success beyond black and white*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Carter, P. L. (October 01, 2006). Straddling boundaries: Identity, Culture and School. *Sociology of Education*. 79 (4) pp. 304-328.
- Chavez, C. (September 01, 2008). Conceptualizing from the Inside: Advantages, Complications, and Demands on Insider Positionality. *Qualitative Report*, 13, 3, 474-494.
- Clark, M. A., Ponjuan, L., Orrock, J., Wilson, T., & Flores, G. (October 17, 2013). Support and Barriers for Latino Male Students' Educational Pursuits: Perceptions of Counselors and Administrators. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 91, 4, 458-466.
- College Board (2010) *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color: Reflections on four days of dialogue on the educational challenges of minority males*. Princeton, N.J.: College Board.
- College Board (2011). *The Educational Experiences of Young Men of Color. A Review of Research, Pathways and Progress*. Princeton, N.J.: Lee Jr., J.M. & Ransom, T.

- Conchas, G. Q. (2006). *The color of success: Race and high-achieving urban youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Connell, R. W. (1989). Cool guys, Swots and Wimps: the interplay of masculinity and education. *Oxford Review of Education*, 15 (3). pp. 291-303.
- Connell, R. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cook, T. D., Church, M. B., Ajanaku, S., Shadish, W. R., Kim, J. R., & Cohen, R. (1996). The Development of Occupational Aspirations and Expectations among Inner-City Boys. *Child Development*, 67(6), 3368-3385.
- Cooper, F. R. (July 01, 2006) Against bipolar black masculinity: intersectionality, assimilation, identity performance, and hierarchy. *U.C. Davis Law Review*, 39(3), 853-904.
- Crenshaw, K. (July 01, 1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43, 6, 1241-1299.
- Cross, W. E. J. (July 01, 1971). The Negro-to-Black Conversion Experience. *Black World*, 20, 9, 13-27.
- Cross, W. E. J. (August 01, 1978). The Thomas and Cross Models of Psychological Nigrescence: A Literature Review. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 5, 1, 13-31.
- Cross, W. E. (1991). *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Cross, W.E. Parham, T.A., & Helms, J.E. (1991) The stages of black identity development: Nigrescence models. In Jones, R. (Ed.), *Black Psychology*. (pp. 319-338) Oakland, CA: Cobb & Henry.
- DeCuir, J. T., & Dixson, A. D. (June 01, 2004). "So When It Comes Out, They Aren't That Surprised That It Is There": Using Critical Race Theory as a Tool of Analysis of Race and Racism in Education. *Educational Researcher*, 33, 5, 26-31.
- Delgado, R. (1998). Storytelling for opposition and others. In R. Delgado, & J. Stefancic, (Eds): *The Latino/a Condition: A Critical Reader* (pp. 259-270). New York: New York University Press, 259-270.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical race theory: An introduction*. New York: New York University Press
- Delgado-Gaitan, C., & Trueba, E. T. (1991). *Crossing cultural borders: Education for immigrant families in America*. London: Falmer Press.

- Dixson, A.D. & Rousseau, C.K. (2006) And We're Still not Saved. In A.D. Dixson & C.K. Rousseau (Eds.). *Critical race theory in education: All God's children got a song*. New York: Routledge. pp. 31-54.
- Eccles J. S., & Midgley, C. (1989). Stage/environment fit: Developmentally appropriate classroom for early adolescence. In R. E. Ames & C. Ames (Eds.), *Research on motivation in education* (Vol. 3, pp. 139-186). New York: Academic Press.
- Eccles, J. S., Midgley, C., Wigfield, A., Buchmanan, C. M., Reuman, D., Flanagan, C., Mac Iver, D. (1993). Development during adolescence: The impact of stage-environment fit on young adolescents' experiences in schools and in families. *American Psychologist*, 48(2), 90-101. doi:10/1037/10254-034
- Emerson. R.M. (2001). The face of Contemporary Ethnography. In R.M. Emerson (Ed.) *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, (pp. 27-53). Long Grove: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I., & Shaw, L.L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Erikson, E. H. (1964a). *Insight and responsibility: Lectures on the ethical implications of psychoanalytic insight*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Erikson, E. H. (1964b). *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.
- Estrada-Martínez, L. M., Padilla, M. B., Caldwell, C. H., & Schulz, A. J. (August 01, 2011). Examining the Influence of Family Environments on Youth Violence: A Comparison of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Non-Latino Black, and Non-Latino White Adolescents. *Journal of Youth & Adolescence*, 40, 8.
- Ferguson, A. A. (2000). *Bad boys: Public schools in the making of Black masculinity*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Fine, M., & Weis, L. (1998). *The unknown city: Lives of poor and working class young adults*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Finn, J. D. (July 01, 1989). Withdrawing from School. *Review of Educational Research*, 59, 2, 117-142.
- Flores-González, N. (2002). *School kids/street kids: Identity development in Latino students*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fordham, S. (1996). *Blacked out: Dilemmas of race, identity, and success at Capital High*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Fordham, S., & Ogbu, J. U. (January 01, 1986). Black students' school success: Coping with the burden of "acting white." *The Urban Review*, 18, 3, 176-206.
- Gandara, P. C., & Contreras, F. (2009). *The Latino education crisis: The consequences of failed social policies*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Gándara, P., O'Hara, S. & Gutiérrez, D. (2004). The changing shape of aspirations: Peer influence on achievement behavior. In M.A. Gibson, P.C. Gandara, & J.P. Koyama, (Eds.). *School connections: U.S. Mexican youth, peers, and school achievement*. (pp. 39-62). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ganga, D. & Scott, S. (2006). Cultural "Insiders" and the Issue of Positionality in Qualitative Migration Research: Moving "Across" and Moving "Along" Researcher-Participant Divides. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 7(3), Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/134>
- Garcia, L. (August 01, 2009). "NOW WHY DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THAT?": Heteronormativity, sexism, and racism in the sexual (Mis)education of Latina Youth. *Gender and Society*. 23(4). Pp. 520-541.
- Gardiner, J. K. (2000). *Masculinity, the Teening of America and empathic targeting*. *Signs*. 25 (4). Pp. 1257-1261.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gilbert, R., & Gilbert, P. (1998). *Masculinity goes to school*. London: Routledge.
- Gillen-O'Neel, C., Ruble, D. N., & Fuligni, A. J. (January 01, 2011). Ethnic Stigma, Academic Anxiety, and Intrinsic Motivation in Middle Childhood. *Child Development*, 82, 5.
- Gottfredson, L. (1981). Circumspection and compromise: A developmental theory of occupational aspirations. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28, 545-580.
- Gregory, A., Skiba, R. J., & Noguera, P. A. (February 11, 2010). The Achievement Gap and the Discipline Gap: Two Sides of the Same Coin?. *Educational Researcher*, 39, 1, 59-68.
- Guilamo-Ramos, V., Dittus, P., Crossett, L., Holloway, I., & Bouris, A. (March 01, 2011). An integrated framework for the analysis of adolescent cigarette smoking in middle school Latino youth. *Youth and Society*, 43, 1, 193-224.
- Gurian, M., & Stevens, K. (2005). *The minds of boys: Saving our sons from falling behind in school and life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2010). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*. New York: Routledge.

- Haywood, C & Mac An Ghail, M. (1996). "What about the Boys?": Regendered Local Labour Markets and the Recomposition of Working Class Masculinities. *British Journal of Education & Work*, 9(1), 19-30.
- Haywood, C. & Mac An Ghail, M. (2003). *Men and Masculinities*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Helms, J.E. (1990) *Black and White and White racial identity: Theory, research and practice*. CT: Greenwood Press.
- Helms, J.E. (2003). Racial identity in the social environment. In P.B. Pedersen & J.C. Carey (Eds.) *Multicultural Counseling in Schools: A Practical Handbook* (pp. 44-58). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Hill, N. E., & Torres, K. (March 01, 2010). Negotiating the American Dream: The paradox of aspirations and achievement among Latino students and engagement between their families and schools. *Journal of Social issues*, 66, 1, 95-112.
- Hobbel, N. & Chapman, T.K. (September, 01, 2009) Beyond the sole category of race: Using a CRT intersectional framework to map identity projects. *Journal of Curriculum and Theorizing*, 25, 2, 76-89.
- Howard, T. (2008). Who really cares? The disenfranchisement of African American males in preK-12 schools: A critical race theory perspective. *The Teachers College Record*, 110(5), 954-985.
- Hurd, C. A. (2004). "Acting Out" and being a "Schoolboy": Performance in an ELD Classroom. In M.A. Gibson, P.C. Gándara, & J.P. Koyama (Eds.). *School connections: U.S. Mexican youth, peers, and school achievement*. (pp. 63-86). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Johnson, K., & Martinez, G. (January 01, 1999). Mapping intellectual/political foundations and future self-critical directions. Crossover dreams: the roots of LatCrit Theory in Chicana/o Studies activism and scholarship. *University of Miami Law Review*, 53, 4, 1143.
- Kao, G., & Tienda, M. (March 01, 1995). Optimism and Achievement: The Educational Performance of Immigrant Youth. *Social Science Quarterly*, 76, 1, 1-19.
- Kao, G., & Tienda, M. (January 01, 1998). Educational Aspirations of Minority Youth. *American Journal of Education*, 106, 3, 349.
- Kaufman, J., Jaser, S., Vaughan, E., Reynolds, J., Di, D. J., Bernard, S., & Hernandez-Brereton, M. (January 01, 2010). Patterns in Office Referral Data by Grade, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 12, 1, 44-54.

- Katz, S. R. (September 06, 1999). Teaching in Tensions: Latino Immigrant Youth, Their Teachers, and the Structures of Schooling. *Teachers College Record*, 100, 4, 809-40.
- Kidd, B. (May 01, 2013). Sports and masculinity. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics*. 16(4). pp. 553-564.
- Knight, G., Bernal, M., Cota, M., Garza, C. & Ocampo, K. (1993). Family socialization and Mexican American identity and behavior. In M. Bernal & G. Knight (Eds.), *Ethnic Identity: Formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities* (pp.213-234). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Kupchik, A., & Ellis, N. (June 01, 2008). School discipline and security: Fair for all students?. *Youth and Society*, 39, 4, 549-574.
- Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. I. V. (December 07, 1995). Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education. *Teachers College Record*, 97, 1, 47-68.
- Lewis, C., Butler, B., Bonner III., & Joubert, M. (February 01, 2010). African American Male Discipline patters and School District Responses resulting impact on academic achievement: Implications for Urban Educators and policy makers. *Journal of African American Males in Education*. 1, 1, 7-25.
- Liebow, E. (2003). Tally's corner: A study of Negro streetcorner men. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.
- López, N. (September 01, 2002). Rewriting Race and Gender High School Lessons: Second-Generation Dominicans in New York City. *Teachers College Record*, 104, 6.
- López, N. (2003). Hopeful girls, troubled boys: Race and gender disparity in urban education. New York: Routledge.
- Lys, D. B. (November 01, 2009). Supporting High School Graduation Aspirations among Latino Middle School Students. *Research in Middle Level Education Online*, 33, 3.)
- Mac an Ghail, G. M. (1994). The making of men: Masculinities, sexualities and schooling. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Matsuda, M.J., Lawrence, C., Delgado, R., and Crenshaw, K. (1993). *Words That Wound: Critical Race theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Matute-Bianchi, M. E. (November 01, 1986). Ethnic Identities and Patterns of School Success and Failure among Mexican-Descent and Japanese-American Students in a California High School: An Ethnographic Analysis. *American Journal of Education*, 95, 1, 233-255.

- Mau, W. (1995). Educational planning and academic achievement of middle school students: A racial and cultural comparison. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 73, 518-526.
- McCready, L. T. (2010). *Making space for diverse masculinities: Difference, intersectionality, and engagement in an urban high school*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., Johnson-Bailey, J., Lee, M.Y., Kee, Y., Ntseane, G., Muhamad, M. (September 1, 2001). Power and Positionality: Negotiating Insider/Outsider Status within and across Cultures." *International Journal of Lifelong Education*. 20, 5, 405-416.
- Messner, M. A. (2002). *Taking the field: Women, men and sports*. Minneapolis: university of Minnesota Press.
- Midgley, C., Anderman, E., & Hicks, L. (January 01, 1995). Differences Between Elementary and Middle School Teachers and Students: A Goal Theory Approach. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 15, 1, 90.
- Midgley, C., & Feldlaufer, H. "Students' and teachers' decision-making fit before and after the transition to junior high school." *The Journal of Early Adolescence* 7.2 (1987): 225-241.
- Mirandé, A. (1997). *Hombres y machos: Masculinity and Latino culture*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Morris, E. W. (March 01, 2005). "Tuck in that shirt!" Race, class, gender and discipline in an urban school. *Sociological Perspectives*, 48, 1.
- Morris, E. W. (2012). *Learning the hard way: Masculinity, place, and the gender gap in education*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press.
- Mosher, D. L. (1991). Macho men, machismo, and sexuality. *Annual Review of Sex Research*, 2, 199-247.
- Mosher, D. L. & Sirkin, M. (June 01, 1984). Measuring a macho personality constellation. *Journal of Research in Personality*. 18 (2). pp. 150-163.
- Mosher, D. L. & Tomkins, S. S. (February 01, 1988). Scripting the Macho Man: Hypermasculine socialization and enculturation. *Journal of Sex Research*. 25(1). pp. 60-84.
- Murdock, T. B. (March 01, 1999). The social context of risk: Status and motivational predictors of alienation in middle school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 91, 1.

- Murdock, T. B., Anderman, L. H., & Hodge, S. A. (May 01, 2000). Middle-Grade Predictors of Students' Motivation and Behavior in High School. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 15, 3, 327-51.
- Nasir, N. S. (2011). *Racialized Identities: Race and Achievement Among African American Youth*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- National Center for Education Statistics (2012). *The Condition of Education 2012*. National Center for Education Statistics: Washington, D.C. Aud, S., Hussar., Johnson, F., Kena, G., Roth, Yohn, C.
- Nishina, A., Bellmore, A., Witkow, M. R., & Nylund-Gibson, K. (January 01, 2010). Longitudinal consistency of adolescent ethnic identification across varying school ethnic contexts. *Developmental Psychology*, 46, 6, 1389-401.
- Noguera, P. (2008). *The trouble with Black boys: And other reflections on race, equity, and the future of public education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Noguera, P & Hurtado, A. (2011) Invisible No More: the status and experience of Latino Males from multidisciplinary perspectives. In P. Noguera, A. Hurtado, & E. Fergus. (Eds). : *Invisible no more: Understanding the disenfranchisement of Latino men and boys*. (pp. 1-15). New York: Routledge.
- Noguera, P., Hurtado, A. & Fergus, E. (2012) *Invisible No More: Understanding the disenfranchisement of Latino men and boys*. New York: Routledge.
- Oakes, J. (1981). *Limiting Opportunity: Student Race and Curricular Differences in Secondary Vocational Education. A Study of Schooling in the United States*. Technical Report Series, No. 28.
- Oakes, J. (1985) *Keeping track: How schools structure inequality*. Yale University Press.
- Omi, M. & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s*. 2nd Edition. New York: Routledge.
- Osterman, K. F. (October 01, 2000). Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community. *Review of Educational Research*, 70, 3, 323-367.
- Oyserman, D., Johnson, E., & James, L. (January 01, 2011). Seeing the Destination but Not the Path: Effects of Socioeconomic Disadvantage on School-focused Possible Self Content and Linked Behavioral Strategies. *Self and Identity*, 10, 4, 474-492.
- Parham, T. A. (April 01, 1989). Cycles of Psychological Nigrescence. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 17, 2, 187-226.

- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods, 3rd edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Peguero, A. A., & Shekarkhar, Z. (February 01, 2011). Latino/a Student Misbehavior and School Punishment. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 33, 1, 54-70.
- Pew Hispanic Center (2009). "Between Two Worlds: How Young Latinos Come of Age in America," Washington, D.C.: Taylor, P., Kochhar, R., Livingston, G., Lopez, M.H., Morin, R., & Fry, R.
- Pew Hispanic Center (2012), *Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2010*, Table 8: Race and Ethnicity by Sex and Age: 2009. Washington, D.C.: Pew Hispanic Center.
- Phinney, J. S. (February 01, 1989). Stages of Ethnic Identity Development in Minority Group Adolescents. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, 9, 34-49.
- Phinney, J. S. (April 01, 1992). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure: A New Scale for Use with Diverse Groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 7, 2, 156-76.
- Pizarro, M. (2005). *Chicanas and Chicanos in school: Racial profiling, identity battles, and empowerment*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Pizarro, M., & Vera, E. M. (January 01, 2001). Chicana/o Ethnic Identity Research: Lessons for Researchers and Counselors. *Counseling Psychologist*, 29, 1, 91-117.
- Pollack, W. S. (1998). *Real boys: Rescuing our sons from the myths of boyhood*. New York: Random House.
- Poon, O.A. & Hune, S. (2009) Countering the master narrative of the "Perpetual Foreigner" and "Model Minority." The hidden injuries of race and Asian American doctoral students. In M.F. Howard-Hamilton, C.L. Morelon-Quainoo, S.D. Johnson, R. Winkle-Wagner, & L. Santiago, (Eds.). *Standing on the outside looking in: Underrepresented students' experiences in advanced-degree programs*. (pp.82-102) Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Portes, A. & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001) *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation*. Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press
- Portes, A. & Zhou, M. (2005). The New Second Generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants. In M.M. Suárez-Orozco, C. Suárez-Orozco, & D.B. Qin (Eds.) *The New Immigration: An Interdisciplinary reader*. (pp.85-104) New York: Routledge.
- Pringle, R. (2005). Masculinities, sport, and power.: A critical comparison of Gramscian and Foucauldian inspired theoretical tools. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*. 29 (3). pp. 256-278.

- Rashid, H. M. (September 06, 2009). From Brilliant Baby to Child Placed at Risk: The Perilous Path of African American Boys in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Negro Education, 78, 3, 347-358.*
- Rios, V. M. (2011). *Punished: Policing the lives of Black and Latino boys.* New York: New York University Press.
- Rodriguez, L. F., & Conchas, G. Q. (January 01, 2009). Preventing Truancy and Dropout among Urban Middle School Youth: Understanding Community-Based Action from the Student's Perspective. *Education and Urban Society, 41, 2, 216-247.*
- Rodriguez, J.C. (2009) Latinas in Doctoral and professional programs: Similarities and differences in support systems and challenges. In M.F. Howard-Hamilton, C.L. Morelon-Quainoo, S.D. Johnson, R. Winkle-Wagner, & L. Santiago, (Eds.). *Standing on the outside looking in: Underrepresented students' experiences in advanced-degree programs.* (pp.103-123) Sterling, VA: Stylus.
- Rodríguez-Brown, F.V. (2008) Latino Families: Culture and schooling. In E.G. Murillo, S.A. Villenas, R.T. Galván, J.S. Muñoz, C. Martinez, & M. Machado-Casas, (Eds.). *Handbook of Latinos and education: Theory, research and practice.* (pp.350-360). New York: Routledge.
- Rowe, D. (August 01, 1998). Play up: Rethinking power and resistance. *Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 22 (3).* pp. 241-251.
- Ryan, A. M., & Patrick, H. (July 01, 2001). The Classroom Social Environment and Changes in Adolescents' Motivation and Engagement during Middle School. *American Educational Research Journal, 38, 2, 437-460.*
- Sadker, M., & Sadker, D. M. (1994). *Failing at fairness: How America's schools cheat girls.* New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
- Saenz, V. B. (September 26, 2010). Breaking the Segregation Cycle: Examining Students' Precollege Racial Environments and College Diversity Experiences. *The Review of Higher Education, 34, 1, 1-37.*
- Saenz, V., & Ponjuan, L. (January 01, 2009). The Vanishing Latino Male in Higher Education. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 8, 1, 54-89.*
- Shaffer, S., & Gordon, L. (2006, March 24). What is the impact of “boys will be boys”? Presentation at the 2006 annual conference of the Mid-Atlantic Equity Center.
- Sheets, R. (1999). Human development and ethnic identity. In R.H. Sheets, & E.R. Hollins, (Eds.). *Racial and ethnic identity in school practices: Aspects of human development.* (pp. 91-101). Mahwah, N.J: L. Erlbaum Associates.

- Shepard, S. J., Nicpon, M. F., Haley, J. T., Lind, M., & Liu, W. M. (2011) Masculine norms, school attitudes, and psychosocial adjustments among gifted boys. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 12, 2. pp. 181-187.
- Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C. G., Rausch, M. K., May, S. L., & Tobin, T. (January 01, 2011). Race Is Not Neutral: A National Investigation of African American and Latino Disproportionality in School Discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40, 1, 85-107.
- Smith, W.A., Yosso, T.J., Solórzano, D.G. (2006). Challenging racial battle fatigue on Historically White Campuses: A Critical Race Examination of race-related stress. In C.A. Stanley, (Ed.). *Faculty of color: Teaching in predominantly White colleges and universities* (pp. 299-327). Bolton, Mass: Anker Pub.
- Solórzano, D. (January 01, 1998). Critical race theory, race and gender microaggressions, and the experience of Chicana and Chicano scholars. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11, 1, 121-136.
- Solórzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (May 01, 2001). Examining Transformational Resistance through a Critical Race and LatCrit Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context. *Urban Education*, 36, 3, 308-42.
- Solórzano, D. & Yosso, T. (2000). Toward a Critical Race Theory of Chicana and Chicano education. In C. Tejeda, C. Martinez, & Z. Leonardo (Eds.). *Demarcating the Border of Chicana(o)/Latina(o) Education* (pp. 35-65). Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press.
- Solórzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (March 08, 2001). Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students. *Journal of Negro Education*, 69, 60-73.
- Solórzano, D., Villalpando, O., & Oseguera, L. (January 01, 2005). Educational Inequities and Latina/o Undergraduate Students in the United States: A Critical Race Analysis of Their Educational Progress. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 4, 3, 272-294.
- Southern Poverty Law Center. (2010). *Suspended Education: Urban Middle Schools in Crisis*. Montgomery, AL.: Losen, D.J. & Skiba, R.
- Stovall, D. (January 01, 2006). Forging community in race and class: critical race theory and the quest for social justice in education. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 9, 3, 243-259.
- Suárez-Orozco, C., Suárez-Orozco, M. M., & Todorova, I. (2008). *Learning a new land: Immigrant students in American society*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Swain, J. (2002). The Right Stuff: Fashioning an identity through clothing in junior school. *Gender and Education*. 14(1) pp. 53-69. Doi:10.1080/09540250120098889

- Tajfel, H. (April 01, 1974). Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information*, 13, 2, 65-93.
- Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tatum, B. D. (2003). "Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?": And other conversations about race. New York: Basic Books.
- Tatum, B. D. (March 01, 2004). Family Life and School Experience: Factors in the Racial Identity Development of Black Youth in White Communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 60, 1.
- Valdés, G. (2001). *Learning and not learning English: Latino students in American schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Valenzuela, A. (1999). Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Villenas, S. (December 01, 1996). The colonizer/colonized Chicana ethnographer: Identity, marginalization, and co-optation in the. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66, 4.
- Walker, J. C. (1988). *Louts and Legends: Male youth culture in an inner city school*. Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Wang, M.T., & Holcombe, R. (September 01, 2010). Adolescents' Perceptions of School Environment, Engagement, and Academic Achievement in Middle School. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47, 3, 633-662.
- Wigfield, A., Eccles, J. S., Schiefele, U., Roeser, R., & Davis-Kean, P. (2006). Development of achievement motivation. In W. Damon (Series Ed.) & N. Eisenberg (Vol. Ed.), *Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 3. Social, emotional, and personality development* (6th ed., pp. 933–1002). New York: John Wiley.
- Willis, P. E. (1977). *Learning to labor: How working class kids get working class jobs*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Wilson, W. J. (1997). *When work disappears: The world of the new urban poor*. Random House Digital, Inc.
- Whyte, W. F. (2009). *Street corner society: The social structure of an Italian slum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wing, A. K. (2000). *Global critical race feminism: An international reader*. New York: New York University Press.

- Wolcott, H. F. (2008). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Woolley, M. E., Kol, K. L., & Bowen, G. L. (February 01, 2009). The social context of school success for Latino middle school students: Direct and indirect influences of teachers, family, and friends. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 29, 1, 43-70.
- Yancey Martin, P. (June 01, 2003). "Said and Done" versus "Saying and Doing": Gendering practices, practicing gender at work. *Gender and Society*, 17 (3) pp. 342-346.
- Yosso, T. J. (March 01, 2002). Critical Race Media Literacy: Challenging Deficit Discourse about Chicanas/os. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, 30, 1.)
- Yosso, T. (March 01, 2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity & Education*, 8, 1.
- Yosso, T. J. (2006). *Critical race counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano educational pipeline*. New York: Routledge.
- Yosso, T.J., Smith, W.A., Ceja, M. Solórzano, D.G. (January 29, 2009). Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate for Latina/o Undergraduates. *Harvard Ed Review*, 79, 4. pp. 659-691.
- Yowell, C. M. (August 01, 2000). Possible Selves and Future Orientation: Exploring Hopes and Fears of Latino Boys and Girls. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 20, 3.