Contradictions and Opportunities:
Learning from the Cultural Knowledges of Youth with Histories of Domestic Violence

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i

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother Pearl Pyscher, who through all the demands of this unkind life, attempted to be the best mother one could be under such harsh conditions. Because of this project, I have come to better understand my mother, myself, my relationship to my social worlds, my profession, and other youth like me. I would also like to dedicate this to the people of Flint, Michigan, my hometown, who continue to endure the racial, classed, and environmental injustice that Flint is facing today and has experienced over the entirety of my lifetime. We are a strong people and will continue to fight back!

Abstract

As a society, we do not openly discuss domestic violence and yet its reality is front and center for children and youth whose lives are deeply shaped by it. At best, the school landscape is bleak for many, if not all, HDV youth (i.e. youth with histories of domestic violence and youth currently living with domestic violence). We know little to nothing about how HDV youth navigate school from their perspectives—how they engage with and resist educational discourses and practices and thus take up subject positions. What we do know from popular, psychological literature is that HDV youth are often objectified as troubled and deficient and this shapes their identities and experiences in school.

In this study, I discuss the challenges HDV youth face when they navigate normative and hegemonic interactions in school. I also analyze the resistive identities and performances HDV youth take up in response to interactions perceived as violating. The study is situated in a public, urban middle school and outlines how HDV youth make sense of their daily interactions with school peers and staff. The study is told through the subjective voices of three female middle school HDV youth—Jen, Mac, and Shanna. Their stories along with the voices of their caregivers offer a counter-narrative to the dominant discourses often shaping the representations of HDV youth.

Data analysis is grounded in the theoretical conceptions of critical sociocultural theory (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007), resistive ambivalence (Pyscher, 2015; Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014), and Scott's (1990) conceptualization of hidden and public transcripts. I seek to better understand and theorize the intersections of actions, identities, practices,

and discourses that HDV youth use in educational interactions. The methodological

foundation of this study is fourfold: critical discourse studies (Gee, 2014), critical

ethnography (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995), geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003),

and mediated discourse analysis (Jones & Norris, 2005). Implications include the

possibility of creating more liberating educational practices for youth with histories of

domestic violence and marginalized youth in general. I conclude by suggesting that we

consider creating more transgressive and humane school cultures that embody carnival-

like practices.

Table of Contents

CONTRADICTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES: LEARNING FROM THE CULTURAL
KNOWLEDGES OF YOUTH WITH HISTORIES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: A Thorny Backstory

The paradox is that in the process of accepting the reality of trauma, it is easy to lose one's sensitivity and to retreat into dry scientific observation or cynical capitulation. However, beneath the tidiness of emotional distancing and scientific classification lie the human vitality and energy to struggle against, and to create meaning out of, what appears to be the random cruelty of fate. This struggle to transcend the effects of trauma is among the noblest aspects of human history.

—Van Der Kolk & McFarlene, 2012, p. 574

The Difficulty in Knowing and Not Knowing Domestic Violence

Jen,[1] an eighth grader who often carried herself with a fierce intensity and proudly identified as a survivor of childhood domestic violence, stared forward with her body purposefully positioned away from the attention of her math teacher, Citra, and her special education teacher, Kathy. Both teachers hovered near Jen, one from the side and one from the back, while quietly awaiting a satisfactory response from Jen to focus on her math problem. A special education assistant stood at the far wall observing the interaction. For well over 20 minutes Jen had been doing her math in spurts, engaged and disengaged in soft talk with her friends who shared space at the same table. As the teachers continued to hover, Jen abruptly stood and faced the opposite direction; with a stern glare she moved her body toward the door and walked out. Citra, the math teacher, followed the forward motion of Jen and tenuously asked: "Jen, Jen . . . you . . . you . . . need a pass . . .Can you fill one out please?" Jen continued to walk out and paid no attention to Citra's apprehensive question. Other students continued to work, giving no attention to the situation. Looking towards the open door, Kathy moved towards Citra who was standing in the center of the classroom. She leaned into Citra and whispered something inaudible. Minutes passed. Citra engaged the class and Kathy exited.

Jen reentered eight minutes later, walking assertively past Citra. Jen ignored her stare and moved toward the back of the room where I sat with video camera in hand. At this point in time, I had been documenting Jen's actions for well over four months. Jen sat down next to me, and we immediately engaged in discussion. I turned the conversation to ask her about abruptly walking out of the classroom. I inquired, "any chance you can negotiate?" She responded strongly, "no, I'm not negotiating, she's irritating me!" I am unsure who "she" is in this context—the math teacher, the special education teacher, or the educational assistant. For several minutes, Jen and I bantered back and forth. As the educators timidly glanced our way, we discussed how to make sense of one's participation in tension-filled interactions without giving up power. Jen and I continued to talk about the possibility of her going back to her worktable and focusing on her math,

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[1] All names are pseudonyms.

attempting to find some way of negotiating her resistance to what she deemed as a violating act—hovering on the part of the educators.

The tension-filled interaction described above is an all too common experience for disengaged and marginalized youth. When I followed Jen into other classrooms, her engagement and/or resistance in interactions depended on complex variables. These variables are discussed throughout this study. Also captured in this interaction is how youth like Jen, who proudly identified as an adolescent survivor of domestic violence, often become objectified as "troubled" youth in schools. If we choose to flip the popular script of "troubled," we invite an alternative story. The "troubled student" narrative is neither simple nor clear for youth with histories of domestic violence or for youth living currently with domestic violence. In this study I sought to explicate the meanings embodied in interactions between youth with histories of domestic violence and educators, offering a complicated and unique view of the interplay between normative and hegemonic powers[2] and high and low forms of youth resistance in school settings (see chapters two).

In the context of this study, the concept of hegemony is grounded in what Foucault described as a political task in which we criticize "the workings of institutions which appear to be both neutral and independent; to criticize them in such a manner that

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[2] In this study, I used the terms normative and hegemonic throughout. They are not interchangeable terms, but are often related experiences. Using these terms allowed me as an analyst to show how marginalized participants experienced a wider range of social violation in school contexts. Normative evokes expectations to behave in "normal" ways whereas hegemony surfaces when social domination and resistance for the marginalized intensifies and where the normative shifts into overt power play for the dominant. I used Scott's (1990) conceptualization of hegemony. He suggested that hegemony not only be thought of as an ideological experience for the marginalized, but rather that the hegemonic experience is consciously recognized. This is later unpacked in chapter two.

the political violence which has always exercised itself obscurely through them will be unmasked, so that one can fight them" (see Ayer & Elders, 1974, p. 172). The power of hegemonic violation and its social and psychic effects on the lives of raced and classed marginalized youth in school environments is well established in educational literature (Carter, 2005; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Giroux, 2001; Tuck & Yang, 2014; Willis, 1977). The same cannot be said for marginalized youth who have histories with and are currently living with domestic violence,[3] referred to from this point forward as HDV youth (youth with histories of domestic violence and youth currently living with domestic violence). We know little to nothing about how HDV youth navigate school from their perspectives—how they engage with and resist educational discourses and practices and thus take up subject positions. What we do know from popular, psychologically focused literature is that HDV youth are objectified as troubled and deficient and this in fact often shapes their identities and experiences in school.

Not Knowing Domestic Violence: Problematic Schooling Environments and Deficit Discourses

HDV youth not only face or have faced harsh conditions in the home; they also often experience similar conditions in school. While significant research exists across wide fields of studies related to more generalized topics of youth and violence/trauma (e.g., bullying), it often does not specifically focus on the experiences of HDV youth. The

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[3] In the context of this study, domestic violence is more broadly defined as often but not always including "all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence" that may be committed by a person who is a family member or a person that has been an intimate partner or spouse, irrespective of whether they lived together" (Council of Europe, 2012). The term "histories" in the plural refers to the multiple forms of abuse a child/adolescent might experience (e.g., emotional, physical, sexual) that uniquely shape their identities as HDV youth.

dominant research related to HDV youth is almost entirely grounded in medicalized,

historicized, and psychologicalized deficit perspectives that tend to objectify them, at

best, as deficient (Baker, 2002; Pyscher, 2015; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006; Ward, 2003).

Traditional and re-emerging fields of study prescribe specific disciplinary practices to be

used for HDV youth as defined in the American Psychiatric Association's manual for

mental illness (DSM-V), leading to self-disciplining schooling models like Positive

Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) frameworks (Bornstein, 2012). Discussed

more in-depth in chapter three, such models grounded in larger disciplinary discourses

put the onus of responsibility on HDV youth who may exhibit problems when engaging

in normative and hegemonic interactions. Often, these youths' actions are viewed as a

"problem" of their individualized social and emotional maladjustment (e.g., Hughes,

1988; Hughes & Graham-Bermann, 1998; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 2001;

Sternberg et al., 1993).

Based in deficit-oriented beliefs and frameworks, these practices can further

marginalize an already marginalized group of youth. Although the intention of such

practices and their related fields of research is to support HDV youth, these practices in

fact lead to interactions that are counter-productive in educational systems. Compounding

this reality is that HDV youths' social experiences of domestic violence are mostly

invisible or altogether ignored in school settings and their "assigned" identities (e.g., at-

risk, troubled) lead them to be dealt with through disciplinary practices like suspensions

and/or expulsion. Compounding their experiences of social violence is the reality that

HDV youth make up the bulk of the U.S. foster care system and constitute a majority of

the youth who have come to be labeled as Emotionally and Behaviorally Disordered (EBD) in public schools (Administration for Children and Families, 2004). There is a clear relationship between HDV youths' experiences and incarceration and prostitution. For instance, Acoca (1998) found in her study of 3200 incarcerated girls that 92 percent had experienced one or more forms of HDV abuse (p. 565). This study and many others suggest the disturbing reality that experiencing childhood domestic violence is a greater common denominator than race or poverty for U.S. prisoners. For HDV youth and adults, trajectories toward incarceration are not only socially shaped by their experiences of domestic violence in the home, but also shaped by the social conditions of their experiences in school, emblematic of the school-to-prison pipeline (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). Yet we know little from research literature about the experiences of these youth beyond these medicalized, deficit models.

Knowing Domestic Violence

As a childhood/adolescent survivor of domestic violence (an HVD child and youth), I am intimately aware of how domestic violence shapes our identities, interactions, and opportunities. During this study I also came to better understand the cultural practices I employed when I navigated normative and hegemonic interactions at home and in school. As a doctoral researcher, I dedicated a vast amount of effort to theorizing domestic violence as a sociocultural experience, not so unlike being classed or raced in marginalizing ways. In my scholarship, I came to argue that HDV youth carry culturally specific expertise(s) or knowledge(s) (Bourdieu, 1997; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) in reading and negotiating violating interactions. I claimed that these nuanced ways

of reading social spaces were an embodied experience for HDV youth in which they could identify pretense and violation/violence when interacting with educators who deemed them emotionally disordered (Pyscher, In Press; Pyscher, 2015; Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). My early scholarship came to shape not only the conceptual framework of this dissertation, but also informs the theoretical framework and methodological applications.

Specifically, my study attempted to unearth and reframe the often-reproduced objectification of HDV youth driven by what Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008) referred to as "incomplete knowledge or flawed understanding" in research contexts (p. 59). They contended that a research problem is best grappled with when "you solve it not by changing the world but by understanding it better" (p. 59). My effort toward "understanding it better" was to examine the interplay between hegemonic and resistant responses found in school interactions of HDV youth as told through their subjective experiences as well as those of their caregivers. At the most macro level, I asked: how do HDV youth respond, adapt, or resist the power situations embedded in violating school interactions while also shaping and reshaping varying contexts and school culture/environments in both agentic and problematic ways?

As seen in the opening story of Jen's messy interactions with educators, I used critical sociocultural analysis (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007) to better understand how HDV youth might take up agentic actions in alternative ways when navigating their social conditions in school. Offering a counter-narrative to the dominant discourses shaping representations of HDV youth, the study is told through the subjective voices of

three female middle school HDV youth—Jen, Mac, and Shannon—and their caregivers, along with my autobiographical school memories. I triangulated data across stories described in interviews, eight months of observations, and cultural analysis taken from school artifacts to outline the navigation of three HDV youths' public school experiences. This approach offered a broad but cohesive foundation where actions, identities, practices, and discourses of HDV youth participants, their caregivers, and educators could be analyzed (see Appendix A).

Specifically, the study explored how mediated actions shaped the construction and performances of HDV youths' identities in school situations. These mediated actions included analysis across (1) the entanglement of identity, language, and interaction; (2) relationships and pedagogies; (3) moments of interactional tension and freedom; and (4) prevalent belief systems and discourses related to childhood/adolescent histories of domestic violence (see Appendix A). At the macro and micro level, the study aimed to trace how HDV youth and educators produce, use, and perform power (Douglas, 1966; Foucault, 1977; Scott, 1990) through acts of compliance and resistance in relationship to larger school and societal discourses in more micro interactions.

Methodologically, critical ethnography grounded the data collection, analysis, and discussion related to the central school culture in the study was used (Ball, 1994; Barton, 2001; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). To highlight the complicated macro to micro effects that shaped interactions between HDV youth, their caregivers, and educators, several other methodologies were used. These included Scott's (1990) analytic of hidden and public transcripts, critical discourse studies (Gee, 2014), geosemiotic analysis (Scollon,

7

2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2003), and mediated discourse analysis (Norris, 2011; Jones & Norris, 2005). These methodologies also helped to complicate and counter the dangerous single story narrative (Adichie, 2009) that HDV youth and their caregivers often faced in the school interactions—that they were individualized objects of disorder in need of fixing. Importantly, the study also troubled a secondary single story narrative for educators who are often solely assigned blame for the hegemonic conditions and practices found in our public schools.

Researcher Perspective: An Uneasy Knowing

My answer to the ethnographer-as-colonizer dilemma is that I will not stop at being the public translator and facilitator for my communities, but that I am my own voice, an activist seeking liberation from my own historical oppression in relation to my communities.
—Villenas, 1996, p. 730

My research agenda was inherently complicated by my standpoints/identities, histories of participation in educational settings, and activism. This study was intimately shaped by my standpoint of childhood and adolescent domestic violence (Bourdieu, 1997; Hill-Collins, 2000) and a professional determination to better understand the social and cultural experiences of HDV youth as they navigated interactions in school. The following section highlights how my HDV insider and outsider status, or rather my researcher identities, shaped my dissertation research process (Villenas, 1996). I discovered that there were no simple researcher positionalities to take (Lather, 2007). Specifically, I wrestled with the process of representing personal and participant stories as data that speak to our most intimate relationships of social violation like that of childhood and adolescent domestic violence. I grappled with the identity of researcher

who shared standpoints with HDV youth participants, researcher as urban teacher, researcher of the academy, researcher as my white, now middle class self, and researcher engaged in participatory and activist practices (Fine, 1994a, 1994b). Over the life of the study, I have wondered how to hold these competing identities in some balance while attempting to represent three HDV youth and their caregivers' subjective experiences.

The Difficulties and Opportunities of Insider and Outsider Status

Entering my doctoral program, I intended to explore my experiences of childhood/adolescent domestic violence while seeking explanations for why I was perpetually labeled *troubled* and disciplined for "behavioral problems" during my K-12 school experiences. As an educational researcher, I find myself at a juncture of theoretical entanglements fittingly situated in two metaphors: resistance and ambivalence. With these complexities in mind, I struggled with how to enter into relationships with HDV youth as a university researcher. I was both an "insider" who shared standpoints of childhood/adolescent domestic violence with HDV youth participants and an "outsider" or rather a researcher documenting HDV youth participants' actions. Ngo (2010) described this entanglement:

> The ethical and epistemological concerns surrounding the positioning of the researcher within ethnographic research cannot be reduced simply to notions of an intentional identity. . . . Because identity is discursively constituted by ourselves, as well as others, how we position ourselves . . . and how others position us . . . may collide and conflict" (p. 122).

9

As a researcher, I tried to hold these thorny understandings of my histories, the realities of HDV youth participants and their caregivers, and what I documented in my fieldwork.

During the beginning of my fieldwork, I quickly became aware that my research project "brought me face to face with my own biography as one who 'got away'" (Reay, 1997a, p. 20). For instance, during the first consent meetings, I began to see and hear in the faces and voices of caregivers my own mother's narrative as a survivor of domestic violence. Between the youth participants and myself, I heard familiar problematic stories regarding their educational experiences. It became clear that I escaped the claws of my own troubled childhood/adolescent experiences of domestic and school violation while the HDV youth participants in my study were still living with or battling with their histories/identities of domestic violence while navigating being labeled "troubled" in their elementary schools. During consent meetings with caregivers of youth participants, I realized I was now largely a product of my post-secondary success in school. It became painfully obvious that I no longer lived with the familiar experiences of these deeply marginalized youth and their caregivers who all endured recent and continuous social experiences of domestic, racialized, and/or impoverished violence.

In turn, this sharpened for me "the contradictions within academic claims to political and intellectual advocacy on behalf of those I left behind" (Van Galen, 2004, p. 667). I wondered if my insider status afforded me enough of a stance in documenting HDV youth practices to represent their cultural knowledges when I seemed so distanced from such practices/identities as I had experienced them in the context of my own K-12 school experiences. Could I hear HDV youth participants' voices *differently* and would

they allow me, a now very privileged white researcher from the university, access to *hear* such things? To what extent could my younger, queer, white working class self shaped by experiences of childhood/adolescent domestic violence meet my new middle class researcher self? Like Cruz (2008), I worried that I would be lost between at least two worlds—being a survivor of domestic violence and a researcher/teacher—worlds that often collide in the settings of our public spaces. At the beginning stages of the study and discussed in the following section, I wrestled with personal and psychic dilemmas related to researcher identities that spanned many contexts, including caregiver consent, a shared HDV affiliation, queered uneasiness in fieldwork, and a desire for "traditional" school success for the youth participants.

   Consent or not? A mother's perspective. Negogiating assent/consent was an intricate process in this study. Prior to the design of the consent/assent scripts with the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I had to decide if I would exercise the researcher right to bypass the requirement for parental/caregiver consent altogether for the participants in my study who easily fit the description for vulnerable populations. *The Institutional Review Board Guidebook* (1993) stated that assent without consent could occur if the:

   research involving older adolescents who, under applicable law, may

   consent on their own behalf for selected treatments (*e.g.*, treatment for venereal

   disease, drug abuse, or emotional disorders). In other research (*e.g.*, research on

   child abuse or neglect), there may be serious doubt as to whether the parents'

   interests adequately reflect the child's interests. In these cases, IRBs should devise

   alternative procedures for protecting the rights and interests of the children asked

to participate, including, perhaps, the court appointment of special guardians

(http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/archive/irb/irb_chapter6.htm).

As a researcher with a shared HDV standpoint, it distressed me to circumvent the consent of youth participants' caregivers. I suspected most caregivers of HDV youth potential participants were going to be deeply marginalized women (e.g., mothers, grandmothers, aunties) of color, survivors of domestic violence, and/or experiencing poverty. I wondered how I could ethically circumvent consent without this very act being inherently marginalizing. In my angst, I came to realize that there was one important woman I neglected to ask: my mother. I called and asked her opinion. My mother is a working class woman who endured over 30 years of domestic violence at the hands of my father. We talked through the intent of my study as I framed the research context and asked, "how would you feel if a priviledged university researcher approached me as a middle school student and did not ask your permission to engage me, your daughter, in a year-long study because we as a family were living under conditions of domestic violence?" My mother strongly stated that this would be wrong, stating that she felt it was important for the caregivers to know and that she, not so unlike the IRB committee, thought I should start the conversation (e.g., consent meetings) by telling my personal story of enduring childhood/adolescent domestic violence along with my struggles in school. She believed that the caregivers would come to trust me with their children once they knew my story. Based on this experience, I decided to include caregivers in the consent process although I feared that it would hinder my opportunties for access to HDV youth both during the IRB process and in later negogiating caregiver consent.

12

A shared identity and a proud affiliation. At the most basic level of entry,

tensions related to researcher identities persisted, spanning from the initial IRB process to

consent meetings with caregivers of HDV youth who either survived or were surviving

domestic violence themselves as adult women. Solidified from the beginning of the study

and as my mother predicted, the importance of HDV identity affiliation between the

researcher and the researched was transparent and played out positively in two ways.

First, the full IRB committee required me to foreground my narrative centered on my

own histories of domestic violence in the script to be used in the assent/consent meetings

with possible HDV youth participants and their caregivers (see Appendices B and C).

Emotionally and psychically, I did so tentatively. More than I would have ever expected,

the IRB committee surprisingly pushed me into a far more transparent and generative

communicative process with HDV youth participants and their caregivers.

"Marissa," the social worker at the school ("Saturnalia") central in this study,

helped me mediate these consent discussions that began with me sharing childhood and

adolescent survival stories of domestic violence and my frequent disciplinary problems in

K-12 schools. Marissa's mediation was also an expectation of the IRB committee's

approval of my study. I was both apprehensive and thrilled that my university's IRB

committee assumed my HDV standpoint was significant to the study and the overall story

of these youths' experiences as they navigated school cultures. Emotionally, I was

apprehensive because I was not sure how to talk about domestic violence in the context

of consent and assent processes as both researcher and survivor of domestic violence. In

collaboration with Marissa, I approached potential HDV youth participants and their

13

caregivers: three mothers, a grandmother, and an auntie/ "mother" in one-on-one, face-to-face meetings to discuss the study and the possibility of their daughters' participation. Marissa requested that I write her a specific script beyond that of the IRB (which she believed sounded too official) that she could use with caregivers in her first attempt to set up consent meetings (see Appendix C; formal scripts are in Appendix B).

Ironically, this experience did not feel liberating, but rather increased my distress. I could find no educational literature that reflected some perspective on my situation—I realized once again how HDV experience was often silenced and how very little research on HDV experience in school there is from a social and cultural perspective. I feared that foregrounding domestic violence would push potential participants away, mostly through caregiver/parental fear and resistance. Frankly, I feared talking about my stories of domestic violence.

I was unequivocally *wrong*. I discovered that from the very first consent discussion, the bond among us—the caregivers, their children, and myself—was centered on our shared and prideful narratives of marginalization grounded in HDV experiences. Caregivers told the family's stories of surviving domestic violence and their navigation of public school practices with pride. This helped my fears melt away. Affirming my narrative and research agenda, their heads often shook in agreement as they followed along with my reading of the IRB script. It was also clear that the caregivers could identify with the story of my mother as an adult survivor and my struggles in school as a HDV youth; their stories intermingled with each other and punctuated the assent/consent

process as the caregivers integrated their own experiences of violence in the larger discussion.

Rather than presenting this study as a grand truth, I recognized that these shared identities required it to be multivoiced (Bakhtin, 1981; Barthes, 1968; Foucault, 1972; Morris, 1994). I used multivoicedness as a method to include traditional voices and related data from the fieldwork and perspectives of youth participants as well as voices of caregivers, educators, and my own autobiographical reflections of navigating violating public school experiences. The integration of autobiographical or disability life writing and what Ferri (2011) refers to as the "politics of knowing" helped to triangulate observational and artifact research data in important ways. Scholars from (dis)abilities studies draw on a range of interdisciplinary texts, including autobiography and autoethnography (Ferri, 2011), using what they refer to as life writing when they grapple with complex researcher-standpoint positionings. Cowley (2012) explained: "life writing (life autobiography) emerged alongside the disability rights movement as a counter-narrative to medicalized discourses that position the disabled body outside the boundaries of normalcy" (p. 85). Critical (dis)abilities scholars often recognize standpoint perspective as data. Ferri (2011) believed life writing as data was a form of "counter discourse" (Couser, 1997) and that such narratives "do cultural work," providing social action/critique (p. 2268). From Ferri's (2011) perspective, standpoint narratives "have the potential to unravel the myth of normalcy that undergirds so many of the exclusionary practices in education" (p. 2271). In fact, these narratives helped critical (dis)ability scholars to understand that positioning (life writing and related tensions) was central to

the creation and troubling of knowledge and its representation. As a critical ethnographer, I used life writing and integrated autobiographical memories of school experiences as a way to connect my lived experiences as an HDV youth who navigated problematic K-12 school interactions with the experiences of HDV youth participants. Using both participant data and researcher standpoint perspective allowed me to trace how HDV youth identities were shaped through interactions in school**.**

Uneasiness in fieldwork: Becoming queer. Outsider/insider researcher anxieties were present in the assent/consent process as well as embodied in the ongoing study. I was viewed as an affiliated member belonging to the childhood/adolescent survivor of domestic violence alliance who was also raised in a working class family who aspired to be a university researcher. It was a proud narrative, and yet as the fieldwork stretched across time, informal conversations, and youth participant observations of my interactions in the school context, another shared identity emerged, as did a new level of uneasiness. Eventually, I came to be identified as a queer woman and female survivor of domestic violence in the eyes of my HDV youth participants and their HDV affiliated friend group[4] where many of the youth and their HDV affiliated friends identified as GLBT.

My relationship to the research school site (Saturnalia), a fifth through eighth grade urban, girl-focused chartered public middle school, had been in the making for well

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[4] The notion of HDV affiliated friend group represents the friends/friend groups that the HDV youth participants in this study interacted with and depended on significantly as they negotiated school experiences. A vast majority of their friends self-identified as HDV youth or were framed as HDV youth by Saturnalia's staff. This notion and its relevance will later be unpacked and analyzed in chapter five.

over nine years. Although I was not a founder of the school, I played a significant role in the start-up team. I led the development of the learning and teaching framework and continued to work with school staff offering professional development support. My partner of a decade was the Founder and Executive Director of the school, although I did not make this transparent to the youth participants in the early stages of the study. In fact, out of fear, I chose not to share my queered identity; rather, I foregrounded our shared HDV and identities of working class/poor. Yet for me, as the study unfolded, my GLBT identity actually further solidified my relationships with two key HDV youth participants, Jen and Mac, while at the same time a secondary tension permeated. I feared that my queer identity and affiliation might cause access issues after caregivers gave consent, especially if they were uncomfortable that I identified and lived as a queer woman. With youth participants, our relationship reflected a typical GLBT relational agreement that our solidarity was dependent on keeping our shared GLBTQ identities secret while acknowledging them between each other.

These queered tensions created both dilemmas and affordances as researcher. Villenas (1996), a critical researcher who shared similar standpoints with participants, said she could not separate herself from her own identities/communities. She stated, "I cannot continue to pretend that as a qualitative researcher in education, I am distanced from intimacy, hope, anger, and a historical collectivity with Latino communities. To take on only the role of facilitator is to deny my own activism" (p. 727). On my part as researcher, what was unexpected was that the two central youth participants in my study, Jen and Mac, would also identify as queer youth. In fact, they had been dating on and off

17

for over two years before the start of my study. As this became clearer, both Jen and Mac, grew to realize that we had shared GLBTQ identities. They, along with their HDV affiliated friends, came to playfully tease me about my relationship with my partner, the Founder and Executive Director of the school. Again, I would contend that the uneasiness was solely on my part, and I was afforded much more through this shared identity than was hindered by our shared queer identities.

Yet, I was unsure how to "come out" to the youth participants. I feared again that this might affect caregiver consent or participant assent. Interestingly, the outing process became quite natural, with me eventually identifying as queer in informal conversations with no obvious negative ramifications. As the study progressed, our shared queer affiliation created conditions where HDV youth participants and their friends came to me as a queer adult resource. In many ways, this helped to build a stronger researcher-participant relationship with the youth in my study. They quizzed me on topics ranging from navigating the straight world as a queer woman, to coping with ending same gender relationships, to negotiating queer and gender expectations with older, more conservative family members, including caregivers whose voices are represented in this study.

Disciplining the teacher self: Desiring "traditional" success for HDV youth. A last tension related to researcher identities centered on my struggle to stay both "objective" and honor the HDV youth participants' subjective experiences while I was documenting their actions during fieldwork observations. When observing youth participants in the early stages of the study, I worried about my representation of their success as they performed frequent low and high forms of resistance in their interactions

with educators. These tensions often placed them in precarious situations. I met their caregivers and listened to their narratives seeped in intimate and sustained domestic violence, and as a former urban teacher and middle class researcher, I fretted over their ability to be successful in a "traditional" school experience. For over eight months of field observations, this uneasiness sustained itself and especially rang true in my field experiences such as those accentuated in the study's opening story. At the same time, during especially difficult interactions, Jen and the HDV youth participants in the study (as well as their friends who also self-identified as HDV youth) often came to rely on our discussions in their sense making of navigating what they felt where violating (hegemonic) experiences with educators at school. This often happened in real-time classroom situations. Jen and several of her HDV affiliated friends, along with all the other youth participants, relied on me when these moments would erupt. I held a deep desire for her and for the other youth participants and their HDV affiliated friends to find traditional "success" in school. Like all the HDV youth participants, Jen's resistant stance of walking out of the room became a typical action. Other common actions are discussed more thoroughly in other chapters, including talking back to teachers in farcical ways, refusal to focus on learning expectations, and/or engaging in subversive and resistive social acts during informal and formal class time. In my researcher teacher angst, I realized how I had mostly *disciplined out* my cultural knowledges shaped by domestic violence and subsequent resistance to similar violating school experiences at the hands of educators (Foucault, 1977). Once faced with the realities of the field like the dynamic interactions in classrooms between HDV youth and teachers, I came to desire a

traditional educational success story for the HDV youth participants in my study. This was in spite of the fact that during my childhood and adolescent experiences in school, I often experienced similar violating interactions with educators in which I often responded in resistive ways as the HDV youth in my study did.

This *disciplining* of cultural knowledges surfaced early in the study. I worried as a researcher that the HDV youths' tension-filled interactions with staff positioned them toward an unsuccessful trajectory in school. I wanted most of all for them to "succeed" in school. Ideologically, in my concern for their schooling success, I often fell back on the dominant discourses that framed them as emotionally "troubled," and early on I questioned if my emergent scholarly ideas (e.g., a theory toward resistive ambivalence) would or could do them more harm than good. I was also influenced by my desire to discipline the resistive cultural performances and identities of the HDV youth participants because I am someone who cares deeply about the school central to this study, Saturnalia, and wanted to contribute to its success**.**

Methods To Address Insider/Outsider Tensions and Knowledges

My histories of participation shaped this tension. An intervention on *my* part was needed. I decided to use the integration of therapy as an analytical and emotional method that helped me to refocus my own ideological struggle between insider/outsider knowledge and how those knowledges shaped my early observations. As a method, I audiotaped weekly therapeutic sessions with my psychotherapist whom I have worked with for over two decades. "Marta," my therapist, helped me to mediate these insider/outsider struggles as I sought to understand how I desired the youth participants to

be someone other than their cultured selves. I continued to use these therapeutic sessions

to analyze not only the observations I collected and difficult experiences related to my

researcher status, but also as an analytic method in making sense of the stories embodied

in interviews, analysis of artifacts, and my own autobiographical integration. It was in

this therapeutic and analytic space that I came to realize how I was disciplining my own

cultural knowledges in response to the greater dominant discourses I critiqued as a

researcher.

Overall, the narratives and proud identities I shared with the study participants

permeated our relationships and interactions as researcher and the researched. These

uneasy experiences and subsequent research as both survivor of domestic violence and

researcher of survivors was shaped by the tensions inherent in insider and outsider status.

I desired a research approach that unearthed counter-narratives, and paradoxically I had

to move beyond my desire to also smooth over the very tensions created by hegemony

and resistance that I sought to better understand. I wanted the HDV youth participants to

sit quietly *and* I wanted them to resist violating practices. I was faced with an impossible

dilemma. While balancing moments of researcher anxiety, I tried to embrace Lather's

(2007) difficult challenge to engage in a researcher stance of "getting lost." Her words

rang especially true for me once I realized was I disciplining HDV youth participants'

cultural ways: "to not want to not know is a violence to the Other, a violence that

obliterates how categories and norms constrain AND enable" (Lather, p. 76).

Cruz (2008) offered a perplexing set of questions that I used in my efforts to hold

back my teacher disciplining gaze: "What happens with the knowledge of those who do

not write for 'the public,' those who do not write at all, those who speak but need to be translated. . . . what kind of text do these 'other people' produce? How can their texts be at the center" (p. 657)? Chaudhry (1997) highlighted the conflicting dilemmas and identities wrapped up in researching "her people." She suggested during a particularly painful realization that her position didn't fit neatly into "insider" status. She postulated, "so this is what happens when margins generate their own centers" (p. 443) as she described what she called the "ebbs and flows" of analysis seeped in insider/outsider tensions.

How could I challenge my own competing desires to have the youth participants perform school well and still be a researcher attempting to capture the counter-narratives of HDV youth who often refused to perform school "well"? In conjunction with the understandings generated in therapeutic sessions, I used Pillow's (2003) disrupting reflexive approach in the field. She suggested that critical researchers "do not seek a comfortable, transcendent end-point but leave us in the uncomfortable realities of doing engaged qualitative research" (p. 193). She also suggested that researchers not replace reflexivity with yet another methodological tool. Rather, she challenged researchers to practice reflexivity as a discomforting act. She called for "a positioning of reflexivity not as clarity, honesty, or humility, but as practices of confounding disruptions – at times even a failure of our language and practices" (p. 192). Perhaps this is the practice of getting and staying "lost" that Lather (2007) proposed. To an extent, these methods helped to free me psychically from the effects of the larger Discourses that shaped my images of traditional school success for the HDV youth participants in the study.

Fine and Weis's (1996) suggestions also became a buoy in my efforts not to take up additional deficit analyses in my study. They claimed that it is vital for a critical ethnographer to push back on the dominant discourses of deficit by researching and writing in a way:

> that spirals around social justice and resilience, that recognizes the endurance of structures of injustice and the powerful acts of agency, that appreciates the courage and the limits of individual acts of resistance but refuses to perpetuate the fantasy that victims are simply powerless and collusive. (p. 270)

For instance, when I recognized that traditional discourses of what it means to be successful in school were influencing my desire for HDV youth participants to engage in interactions at school in more complicit and less resistive ways, I strategically reminded myself both in fieldnotes and therapeutic conversations that these youth where responding to immense hegemonic practices and that they were exercising the kind of agency that Fine and Weis spoke of. I came to engage my researcher subjectivities and representational practices as acts of "spiraling" and staying "lost" as I did not want to further solidify an already ossified set of deficit discourses often inscribed on the bodies of HDV youth. As a sustained part of the research process, I recognized and reframed my tensions through a discomforting reflexivity. In some ways, I managed to "discipline out" myself as teacher researcher and practice an observational and representational spiraling espoused by scholars with similar researcher intentions.

Even now, it is difficult to "leave" this study. I carry anxiety for the HDV youth participants whose vulnerabilities, sometimes, sorrowful existence, and beautiful

endurance afforded me such rich data to analyze and discuss. I have had to leave my own histories and experiences to return and leave once again. I continue to struggle with the reality that I cannot do full justice to/for these youth and their families as they continue to cope with their histories or real-time realities of domestic violence, which are often compounded by racism and poverty. My outsider stance gave me the ability to leave physically, and yet emotionally and psychically I am grounded in my insider reality in that I can never truly leave the sorrow and cultural knowledges born out of our shared experiences of domestic violence.

Organization of the Study

In what follows, I describe how I organized the written product of this work and these relationships. I begin with conceptual frameworks. Chapter two foregrounds the conceptual framework of the whole study: the relationship between resistance and hegemony for HDV youth as they navigate interactions in school. Using theory from Scott (1985, 1998, 2009), I unpack both the theoretical framework and first significant finding of the study: the common use of resistive ambivalence or high forms of social resistance performed by HDV youth (Pyscher, 2015; Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). I do this in an effort to understand how HDV youth embody and use different forms of symbolic and material resistive acts when negotiating interactions fraught with violating tensions in school. I also introduce the three youth participants, Jen, Mac, and Shanna, as well as their contexts. Foregrounding the cultural effects of traditional and current deficit discourses (e.g., medicalization, pathologization, disciplinary actions) in school environments, chapter three then analyzes and discusses the dominant and deficit

discourses that shaped the realities of HDV youth in general and the HDV youth participants in their elementary school experiences; this provides background for what follows (see chapter two).

In chapter four, I use critical ethnographic analysis to explore what appear to be unsolvable dilemmas that Saturnalia middle school faced as it attempted to function as a more liberatory and humane environment for HDV youth participants and their caregivers. Highlighted are a variety of Saturnalia's humanizing practices, including analysis of the school's signs/symbols and the liberating movement of bodies in the school space. Chapter five traces the low and high forms of resistive actions and discourses (e.g., infrapolitics of the marginalized) performed by the HDV youth participants as cultural acts of strategic negotiation. I analyze low and high forms of resistant responses displayed by HDV youth participants to better understand the youths' actions and how they shaped daily interactions and the school's culture. I explicate important connections that surface between HDV youth participants' interactions with HDV affiliated friend groups and school staff, showing that they are both problematic and generative for the participants and school. The final chapter considers the implications of the whole study, including the possibility of creating more liberating educational practices for HDV youth and marginalized youth in general. I conclude by suggesting that we consider creating more transgressive and humanizing school cultures that embody carnival-like practices. I explore the realities of school segregation and revisit the popular deficit ideologies and representations often ascribed onto HDV youths' bodies/identities in a different light, offering new possibilities in educating HDV

25

youth.

Chapter Two: Toward a Theory of Resistive Ambivalence

All identities, without exception, have been socially constructed: the Han, the Burman, the American, the Danish, all of them. . . . To the degree that the identity is stigmatized by the larger state or society, it is likely to become for many a resistant and defiant identity. Here invented identities combine with self-making of a heroic kind, in which such identifications become a badge of honor. . . .

—Scott, 2009*, pp. xii-iii

I got in trouble, but I really didn't get caught.

—Mac, HDV youth participant, in an interview

Children and adolescents whose habitus is shaped by domestic violence develop unique cultural performances and identities as they navigate their social worlds. Gutiérrez and Rogoff (2003) suggested that over time, children develop repertoires of practice from which they make cultural meaning and then draw upon them in situated moments. These repertoires are developed as children interact individually and communally with their social worlds. In order to understand a child's repertoires, one must know their individual and community history. I (2015) suggested that youth whose childhoods have been shaped by domestic violence have developed their own low and high forms of liberatory-resistive repertoires of practice that have proven successful for them in handling socially violating experiences. These resistant identities were illustrated in Mac's words: "I got in trouble, but I really didn't get caught." For HDV youth like Mac, exercising resistive repertoires of practice, often under harsh conditions, can be viewed as a liberatory act.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore how HDV youths' stories of violating school experiences offer insight into the relationship between resistance and hegemony. The chapter addresses the following inquiries:

27

(1) From their own perspective, how do HDV youth perceive and navigate

moments of tension with educators that often arise from power differences?

(2) What social identities are performed when HDV youth perceive that

hegemony is prominently in play?

(3) How and to what extent are HDV youths' cultural repertoires, including their

language, actions, and practices, "misread" as deficit rather than strategic and/or

liberatory when they occur at moments of tension?

This chapter discusses the first significant finding that emerged from youth participant

and caregivers' interviews and autobiographical memories of my educational

experiences. All three HDV youth participants commonly performed a steady stream of

low (i.e., hidden transcripts) and high forms (i.e., resistive ambivalence) resistive acts in

response to acts of violation considered normative in elementary school. These resistive

performances are similar to informal and formal K-6 stories I tell through the analytic of

life writing (Ferri, 2006). Important to the remainder of the dissertation and serving as a

conceptual framework for the chapter, the relationship between habitus (Bourdieu, 1990,

1997) and hidden and public transcripts, or what Scott (1990) called the infrapolitics of

resistance, is introduced and positioned alongside the notion of resistive ambivalence

(Pyscher, 2015). This framework allowed me to outline the complicated low and high

forms of HDV youth resistance that arose when such youth experience hegemony as

normative interactions in school.

Domestic Violence and the Shaping of Habitus

Early experiences of intimate and sustained forms of domestic violence exacted

by adults who are caregivers shapes one's habitus in uniquely profound ways (Bourdieu, 1990, 1997; Pyscher, 2015). Vadeboncoeur (2005) defined habitus as "a collection of dispositions that are inscribed on and lived through the body. . . .Through disposition, people evaluate and judge the value of the social languages of others and, in doing so, they may recognize, re/produce or resist dominant . . . linguistic or symbolic capital" (p. 128). Bourdieu (1990) helped to explain how habitus is shaped in its earliest stages of development so that one responds not as a calculated action, but rather "in relation to objective potentialities, immediately inscribed in the present, things to do or not to do, things to say or not to say, in relation to a probable . . . [and] puts itself forward with an urgency and a claim to existence that excludes all deliberation" (p. 53). If the earliest experiences of a child are defined by the social and psychic shaping effects of familial domestic violence, that child's habitus and subsequent responses embody low and high forms of lived cultural resistances, especially when negotiating social situations ripe with violation. These HDV youth know, as a way of being, how to read violation and resist its normative power in nuanced ways.

Sometimes, this is true even from very early ages. If HDV youth perpetually "recognize, re/produce or resist dominant . . . linguistic or symbolic capital" as a cultural way of navigating acts of violence in the home, then it can be reasoned that they can also do so in any given social situation as an iterative conscious and unconscious way of being; resistance may become an *embodied* act on the part of HDV youth (Pyscher, 2015). In fact, Bourdieu (1990) suggested that one's habitus is "a product of history" producing "individual and collective practices—more history—in accordance with the

schemes generated by history" (p. 54). HDV youth, whose childhoods are significantly

shaped by domestic violence, also develop their own cultural repertoires or practices that

can be read as necessary forms of cultural survival in the face of other socially violating

conditions like the disciplining practices found in schools as forms of control.

It is common in general and special education schools of thought to frame HDV

youth experiences through a behavioral lens of EBD (emotional and behavioral

disorders). These frames are more fully examined in chapter three as several HDV youth

participants in this study were positioned as objects of disorder in their elementary

schools. If these HDV children/youth are objectified and their subsequent cultural

responses are deemed at best "troubled" and at worst labeled as EBD, then it may be

assumed that their cultural responses in socially tense moments might be resistive in

practice as a habitual way of being. Drawing on the work of Kliewer and Fitzgerald

(2001), a clearer picture emerged for my work. They suggested that children labeled as

"troubled" in schools *read* such a message as "You are a broken version of what we wish

you to be, and we will attempt to fix you to whatever degree possible in the basement

workshops out of the way of the general household" (p. 451). Bourdieu (1990) argued

that cultural resistance embodied in one's habitus can develop, exist, and attempt to

surpass social experience: "the concept of the habitus aims to transcend…determinism

and freedom, conditioning and sensitivity, consciousness and the unconscious, or the

individual and society" (p. 55).

Importantly, as Kliewer and Fitzgerald (2001) warned, if these beliefs permeate

public school practices, then the desire to "fix" is central to the institution's actions when

working with labeled youth. When youth are deemed "troubled," dominant actions on the part of those in power, like for instance, labeling a child EBD, not only shape the life trajectories of such youth, but also shape the ways they will respond to such formidable practices. As illustrated in the youth stories that follow, when a youth becomes objectified as "troubled," a wide variety of educational practices respond and take hold, such as a constant gaze or a vigilant attempt to control these youths' bodily actions. It is logical that HDV youth will resist such an objectifying force as they often read normative acts as something between violation and violence.

These practices may seem mundane and necessary, even harmless, from the perspective of the educator, *and* HDV youth may simultaneously read them as dangerous, condescending, and permanent. For HDV youth, these resistive practices and identities might best be described as a barometer measuring interactional social violation and violence through a variety of speech and bodily acts. But what if these youth *read* their social and cultural worlds with more depth and complexity than the educators or administrators in school systems can fathom? What if the system itself and its actors actually *misread* such perceptive youth whose habituses are built on reading social violation and violence in nuanced ways? How might we expect these youths to respond?

The Carnivalesque Body and Histories of Domestic Violence

Children know more than we wish they knew; they know as much, if not more then we know. And yet our fetish for ignorance, our desire not to know, produces a discursive representation of the innocent child who cannot handle the talk. . . .We think it is important to recognize that children are struggling for dignity within structures, which are struggling to shut them down.

—Weis, Marusza, & Fine, 1998, p. 57

31

Hidden and Public Transcripts: The Art of Resisting Hegemony[5]

For marginalized people in general and for HDV youth specifically, tracing the often tension-filled interactions embedded in hidden and public transcripts (Scott, 1990) helps to describe their symbolic, psychic, and material resistive acts in response to members of the dominant culture and their normative expectations. Scott (1990) referred to the subversive responses of the marginalized to experiences of hegemony as the "infrapolitics" of the marginalized (p. 19). Framing the relationship between the marginalized and the dominant through hidden and public transcripts highlights the dominant incorporation of the marginalized in unique ways. The following section theoretically outlines Scott's (1985, 1990) conceptualization of hegemony. I use his conceptualization of hegemony as theory and method throughout the study.

For Scott (1985, 1990), the notion of hegemony differed dramatically from Gramsci's (1971) conceptualization. Scott (1990) moved beyond viewing the relationship between hegemony and resistance as an experience situated in one's thoughts or ideologies and formed in response to systems of alliances (p. xiii). Rather, Scott (1985, 1990) claimed that hegemony is shaped by resistive responses on the part of the marginalized in everyday actions and interactions. Scott's conceptualization of hegemony suggested a very different approach—one where the marginalized have not consented to the dominance they experience. Little (1993) suggested what Scott successfully managed to show:

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[5] I liberally use Scott's (1990) phrase "arts of resistance to hegemony" from his text *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*.

that what is taken as hegemony of dominant-group ideas is in fact often only an uncritical observation of the performance of the public transcript and that the dominated are perfectly capable of formulating their own criticisms of the social relations in which they find themselves. (p. 155)

Framing hegemony and counter-hegemony in this way is unique, for it affords a space for experience and agency to emerge for the marginalized subject in response to a lived experience of oppression. In fact, Scott (1985, 1990) believed the marginalized are well aware of their exploitation and that they have *not* fully internalized the politics of the dominant group(s). He (1985) viewed resistance as a fluid response situated between structure and agency: "Most of the political life of subordinate groups is to be found neither in the overt collective defiance of power holders nor in complete hegemonic compliance, but in the vast territory between these two polar opposites" (p. 136). He contended that this more cultural and individualized view of hegemony as conscious, subconscious, and internalized is embodied in public and hidden transcripts produced by both the marginalized and dominant groups.

In an interview with Holtzman and Hughes (2010), Scott was asked to explain his unique view of hegemony. He responded that he needed to figure out what he discovered in his study (e.g. a type of hegemony and responses of resistance) of Malaysian peasants. He asked:

how did the poor and disadvantaged of the village create a kind of discourse that was not known among the rich, and how did this create a way of talking about things, a set of reputations, and a set of norms about what decent people do?

33

Although there was nothing grandiose about them, these practices served as a sort

of criticism of the existing order (p. 3).

Using Scott's (1985, 1990) conceptualization of transcripts as an analytic was helpful in

my analysis because it allowed me to name the complicated tensions embodied in the

hegemony/resistant interplay of HDV youth and educators.

Scott (1990) defined hidden transcripts as the resistant, artistic, and embodied

actions of nuanced efforts toward disguise and survival that were used by the

marginalized (p. 18). These included four varieties of political discourse that move from

low to high levels of resistance: (1) flattering the self-image of the elites, (2) offstage

gaze/critique of the elite, (3) a subordination of marginalized group politics or the politics

of disguise and anonymity, and (4) ruptures between hidden and public transcripts (pp.

18-19). Hidden transcripts embody both low and high forms of resistive actions and allow

discursive opportunities of liberating, nonhegemonic, contrapuntal, dissident, and

subversive discourses to arise. Further, Scott contended that the first three varieties of

hidden transcripts (i.e., flattering elites, offstage critique/gaze of elites, politics of

disguise and anonymity) are low forms of resistance and are used in distinctive

subcultures of a marginalized group. They were typically used in response to lower levels

of normative conditions where incidences are mediated through perpetual critique, often

subversive, both symbolically and materially. In social interactions with the dominant,

especially in dominant-controlled spaces, the marginalized, he contended, developed

hidden transcripts that were "uniform, cohesive, and bound by powerful mutual sanctions

that hold competing discourses at arm's length" (p. 135). He claimed that these

transcripts were like a dialect developing "as a group of speakers mixes frequently with one another and rarely with others" (p. 135) or more aptly described as a "backstage discourse of customs, heroism, revenge, and justice" (p. 191). Unlike the term discourse that entails a sense of fluidity, the phrase hidden transcript denotes a more permanent creation, a symbolic and material signifier that documents the marginalized experience as one that is "written" on the body.

Importantly, hidden transcripts depend on the opposing force of public transcripts or what Scott (1990) referred to as hegemonic and normative acts on the part of the dominant. Scott suggested that these are active performances, similar to that of hidden transcripts for the marginalized. For the dominant, a public transcript "generates considerable friction and can be sustained only by continuous efforts at reinforcement, maintenance, and adjustment," including "symbolization of domination by demonstrations and enactments of power" (p. 45). He also claimed that there is a particular type of "dramaturgy" contained in this performative maintenance, including "affirmation, concealment, euphemization and stigmatization . . . and the appearance of unanimity" (p. 45).

On the part of both audiences, the marginalized and the dominant, it is in complicated interactions where problematic tensions reside and are maintained. Scott (1990) claimed that for the dominant, these hegemonic laden relationships and interactions are *not* efforts toward gaining agreement with the marginalized, but rather their purpose is "to awe and intimidate them into a durable and expedient compliance" (p. 67). In fact, for the dominant, he postulated that the public transcript might be a kind "of

self-hypnosis within ruling groups to buck up their courage, improve their cohesion, display their power, and convince themselves anew of their high moral purpose" (p. 67).

Throughout my study, I framed the interplay between hidden and public transcripts as a complicated performance in an effort to better understand the sophisticated tensions and the need for liberation for HDV youth as they face the normative and often hegemonic forces embedded in their elementary and middle schools public transcripts. Using the analytic of public and hidden transcripts as the backbone of this study helped me to highlight the complicated interactions between resistance and violation for HDV youth participants and their caregivers while also disrupting an analysis of binary thinking. Scott (1990), a scholar of social anthropology, was primarily concerned with the complicated interplay of symbolic, social, material, and psychic planes of low forms of resistance as evidenced in his close readings of historical instances of resistance and hegemony represented in slave narratives and stories of peasant resistance. He spent limited effort in understanding the meaning that emerges when the "veil is ruptured" between hidden and public transcripts (Scott, 1990, pp. 18-19). In my scholarship, I have spent significant effort theorizing meaning when the veil between hidden and public transcripts is ruptured, or what I have referred to as resistive ambivalence (Pyscher, 2015). This theory, or what I called a theory toward resistive ambivalence, ponders the meaning encapsulated in the rupture—when the interplay between hidden and public transcripts no longer served as an acceptable cultural response on the part of HDV youth due to impossible violations they faced in school interactions.

The Rupture between Hidden and Public Transcripts: Resistive Ambivalence

In my scholarship I have claimed that when the veiled interplay of hidden and public transcripts ruptures between HDV youth and educators, resistive ambivalence on the part of HDV youth becomes a necessary cultural and liberatory response (Pyscher, in press, 2015; Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). The notion of resistive ambivalence or what I have suggested is an *embodied act of carnival* (Bakhtin, 1984; Stallybrass and White, 1986) serves as a means for youth to resist objectification and normative hegemonic violence in its most sustained and oppressive forms. In my theory, the term "ambivalence" was used differently than its traditional definition, which typically evokes images of apprehension or an inability to make choices. Ambivalence, when positioned with resistance in this context, speaks to the bodily and psychic act of absolute negation or a cultural performance of liberation under impossible violating conditions for HDV children, youth, and adults. From the perspective of the marginalized, it is the ultimate form of resistance and is inherently used as a mechanism to dramatically shift power from the dominant to the marginalized. It serves as an intervention of sorts that changes the dynamic in absolute form with complete disruption of social negotiation between low forms of resistance and impossible hegemonic interaction. Bauman (2009) described this kind of ambivalent performance as an immeasurable power or creative process for the marginalized who are often viewed by the dominant as waste:

> an awesome, truly magic power . . .the power of a wondrous transmutation of base, paltry and menial stuff into a noble, beautiful and precious object. It also makes waste an embodiment of ambivalence. Waste is simultaneously divine and satanic. It is the midwife of all creation . . . . Waste is sublime: a unique blend of

attraction and repulsion arousing an equally unique mixture of awe and fear. (p.

22)

Once in this resistive state, the embodied resistance solidifies into a state of ambivalent-

contradictory response on the part of the marginalized to the socially violating

interaction. At this point, all care of social consequences disappear for the marginalized.

Scott (1990) claimed that these moments of rupture are political breakthroughs

that offer a possibility for the marginalized to speak "defiantly"; "their excitement and

energy are part of what impels events, they are as much a part of the situation as

structural variables" (p. 203). Hidden and public transcripts depend on each other in an

infinite struggle and when the "veil" is ruptured, the social interplay between low forms

of resistance and hegemony may then break down, necessitating political and cultural

liberation on the part of the marginalized. Perhaps in a similar fashion for HDV youth,

these moments produce performances of resistive ambivalence. Acts of resistive

ambivalence are symbolic and material forms of dangerous social liberation. Scott (1990)

called this type of resistive response a "symbolic declaration of war" (p. 203). These are

not fixed moments, but rather are complicated and confounding explosions of cultural

actions embedded in social interaction.

Evoking Bakhtin's (1981) notion of carnival, I suggested that children's habitus

and cultural identities shaped out of experiences of domestic violence create on their part

an embodied ability (set of knowledges) to resist authoritative practices or experience

daily navigation of life through *lived carnival* (Pyscher, 2015). Carnival is an expression

of necessary liberation offering boundless possibilities. Stallybrass and White (1986)

suggested that carnival is not solely a ritual characteristic, but rather can be used as a

"*mode of understanding*, a positivity, a cultural analytic" (p. 6). With similar reasoning,

Fine (1994b) helped to describe how the *reading* of structures of power is often invisible

for the dominant and palpable for the marginalized: "Such structures are posited as

largely invisible to common sense ways of making meaning but visible to those who

probe below hegemonic meaning systems to produce counterhegemonic knowledge,

knowledge intended to challenge dominant meaning systems" (pp. 25-26). When one's

omnipresent imprisonment is so thoroughly solidified through every institutional turn

(e.g., violent acts situated in family and school structures), then liberation through low

forms of resistance and resistive ambivalence becomes a necessary *lived* experience.

Not unlike the opening story of this dissertation that described Jen's navigation of

hovering teachers and her subsequent resistive response, these situations are evident in

our schools when tension-filled interactions arise between educators and resistant HDV

youth. If HDV youth *read* authority or authoritative violence in nuanced and poignant

ways, while a vast majority of educators *read* these youth as EBD and/or "at-risk," then

conditions are ripe for a breeding ground of volatile situations in schools. Weis, Marzani,

and Fine (1998) stumbled upon the unexpected theme of domestic violence and how it

seemed to permeate the lives of working class women and children in one of their large

ethnographic studies. They asked, "Given that biographies of violence permeate the

homes and lives of many of our students, what does it mean for our own understanding of

children's behaviors and resulting classroom practices?" They added, "These children are

in our classrooms and schools, smiling and sullen, victimized and victimizing. What do

we know about the effects of violence on them" (pp. 67-68)? The following section discusses these questions with data taken from HDV youth participant and caregiver interviews and through my autobiographical retelling of informal and formal educational violating experiences. The discussion highlights how HDV youth performed both low forms of resistance and resistive ambivalence in an effort to grasp agency under violating conditions in informal and formal educational settings.

Schools as Sites of Exploitation and Stories of Resistance

The following section explores the first finding of this study: how HDV youth (including Mac, a HDV youth participant) and I (as an HDV youth survivor) performed low and high forms of resistance while negotiating violating interactions in educational settings. The data are presented as stories, capturing instances of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 2010) and prominent acts of low and high resistance (e.g., resistive ambivalence). During formal interviews, consent/assent meetings, and informal discussions, Mac, Jen, and Shanna and their caregivers made clear connections between HDV youth's ability to read pretense and social normative and hegemonic violation and respond in kind. This was especially true for all youth participants in their former elementary.

Research Participants and Their Caregivers

Primary youth participants. The HDV youth participants are Mac, Jen, and Shanna, three middle school female students whose childhood/adolescence were/are significantly shaped by histories and current experiences of domestic violence[6]. The

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[6] A fourth participant later decided to drop out of the study altogether.

participants represent a range of race, ethnicity, and student achievement. All participants and their caregivers identified as working class or living under conditions of poverty. All three youth participants were considered to have signficant obstacles in finding full school success, including academic, attendance, and behavioral issues.

Mac. The first HDV youth participant, "Mac," a female eighth grade student, identified as African-American and queer. Mac carried herself in a gregarious and friendly manner, often interacting with friends and school staff with humor and a sense of vitality. When I aksed Mac to describe herself, she responded:

> *"Uhm… I'm very fun. I would describe myself as very funny. Uhm, nice*
>
> *and stuff like that. Trying to make everybody feel happy around me,*
>
> *not scared to say nothing because I won't judge them. 'Cause I don't*
>
> *want to be judged myself."*

Mac, a classic joker, often played around in formal and informal school spaces, struggling to stay focused during class time and often failing to meet traditional academic expectations. Mac openly, with a sense of pride, shared her childhood histories of domestic violence. Her violent childhood experiences can be described as extreme and sustained. Mac was shuffled between her mother, grandmother, and the foster care system between birth and third grade. From pre-kindergarden to first grade, she described her mother's frequent drug use and incarceration, along with daily sexual abuse at the hands of her grandmother's boyfriend for a number of years. At the age of seven, she and her sister were placed in foster care with an older adult woman in whose care Mac's expereinces of domestic violence continued through physical abuse and neglect. Two

years after her foster care placement, her grandmother, "Makita," managed to get custody once again of Mac and her sister. They relocated from a southern state to an upper midwestern state to "restart their lives." Mac's HDV narrative was reiterated by her caregiver, her grandmother Makita, and her older sister. Based on many visits to their family's apartment, it was evident that the family lived in abject poverty. In fact, I organized multiple efforts to find clothing, towels, cooking ware, and furniture for the family.

Jen. The second youth participant, "Jen," a bi-racial female eighth grade student of both white and African-American descent, carried herself as an older, more experienced youth who often shared her strong convictions with friends and school staff. Jen described herself as:

> "knowing that I impact other people's lives and that knowing if I do the right
> thing, they can sometimes do the right thing, too. It might take them a little while,
> but, like, I believe that they can get there and get to like where I'm at. Also, like,
> helping other people out and not always just thinking about myself."

Jen was excited to share her opinions and leadership skills in classroom interactions, although both her mother and several teachers shared that Jen was only partially meeting her potential academically. Her experiences of domestic violence occurred during her early to later elementary school years, when she witnessed extreme domestic violence between her biological mother and father. Her father was incarcerated while she was in fifth grade for felony domestic abuse committed on her mother. Both Jen and her mother, "Jess," lived under protective custody for over two years during her fifth and sixth grade

school years. Jen was reluctant to share her expeirences of domestic violence during interviews as she wanted to protect her mother's privacy. Jen asked that I have her mother, Jess, share her own HDV stories. Jess raised Jen as a single mother and worked as a baker at the local urban grocery store; they live under working class conditions.

Shanna. "Shanna" was the third HDV youth participant. She was a female eighth grade student and identified as white living in poverty. Shanna struggled significantly with school truancy both historically and at the time of this study. Her teachers and the school social worker, Marissa, clearly believed she was not living up to her academic potential. Shanna's articulation of situations and experiences can be described as witty and adept. She carried several special education labels since second grade (or earlier) as evidenced in her IEPs (Individual Education Plans), including being labeled emotionally/behaviorally disabled (EBD), ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), and depressed, along with several medical conditions including allergic rhinitis, Shone Syndrome (congential heart condition), and asthma. The label of EBD did not seem to fit her daily interactions and responses in school as illustrated in my observations and the observations of school staff, including her special education teachers and Marissa. In fact over the life of the study, when not struggling with truancy, she could be described to some extent as an ideal student, including academic motivation and success.

Shanna's experience with domestic violence was unique to this study. She was the only youth participant who was experiencing domestic violence currently in her home, and the violence had continued from her early childhood to her current adolescence.

43

Saturnalia's social worker, Marissa, helped to mediate the relationship between Shanna and me with her mother before and during the consent/assent meetings. Unlike Mac and Jen's caregivers, I chose not to include Shanna's mother as a caregiver "voice" because I knew she was currently living under conditions of domestic violence at the hands of Shanna's father. Marissa was sure that both Shanna and her mother would consent to participation because they often shared the family's stories of domestic violence with Marissa as she struggled to be an advocate for Shanna in truancy proceedings in the juvenile court. It was clear from Marissa that both Shanna and her mother lived in dire risk because of the preponderance of domestic violence that they faced in their home. This included extreme physical and emotional abuse by Shanna's biological father and brothers. In fact, Marissa claimed that Shanna's truancy was primarily due to the fact that Shanna often stayed home from school to protect her mother.

Affiliated HDV friends. I spent significant time observing and engaging in the HDV youth participants' friend groups both in formal and informal learning and school situations. Analyzed in chapter five, these friendships depended heavily on their shared identities as HDV youth. Both Mac and Jen shared why they were participating in this study, and this seemed to open communications with multiple friends in their shared circle. For instance, two mothers of their friend group frequently asked me to help support their daughters. I took their daughters to visit prospective high schools and served as an advocate during difficult school conversations with staff when their daughters found themselves in disciplinary trouble. The friend group was made up of seven to 10 other youth from both seventh and eighth grades with multi-ethnic backgrounds.

Pseudynoums will not be given to members of this friend group outside of the use of "HDV affiliated friend/friend group" because I did not gain consent/assent to include their perspectives in this study. I also wanted to control the boundaries of the study and Marissa and/or the school's administrators did not believe any of the other caregivers would give consent for participation. Although Marissa was well aware of their HDV status as the school social worker, she believed most would not be willing to share this story publicly and/or the caregivers were living under current domestic violence, setting up conditions for non-participation.

Caregivers' voices. As consent/assent meetings were completed and fieldwork collection grew, it became evident that caregiver perspectives, including both a grandmother (Makita) and mother (Jess), would be essential to better understanding the school histories of the HDV youth participants. Their perspectives offered important context to the youths' histories and their childhood experiences. In what became a common theme, their voices also lent a unique perspective found throughout the study that helped to complicate their children's interactions and violating experiences in school.

Data Collection and Analysis

Between October 2013 and June 2014, I collected data through observation of HDV youth participation in middle school and analyzed the perspectives of HDV youth participants and their caregivers through transcribed interviews and school artifacts like IEPs. I used illustrative quotes taken from interview transcriptions to depict the complex perspectives that highlighted complicated and frequent negotiations of violating and normative interactions described by both HDV youth participants and their caregivers. As

I observed and analyzed data, I kept in mind Seidman's (2006) challenge that interviewers "must come to the transcript prepared to let the interview breathe and speak for itself" (p. 100). Although this may connote that I approached interviews as "naturally" occurring discourse, I did not adhere to that belief. Rather, I was very aware that I shaped and reshaped the discourses of transcription. What I meant by letting the "interview breathe and speak for itself" denoted an approach where I very purposely attempted to not interject my own theory toward HDV cultural resistance or other related theoretical concepts I have written about and published during the analysis of transcription texts. This was especially important for the credibility of my study. It was a transparent attempt to curb potential researcher bias. This concern for bias was not only based on my shared HDV standpoints with the youth participants, but also because my emergent scholarship related to HDV youth made previous claims (e.g., HDV youth performing resistive ambivalence) that may have skewed my analysis.

Relatedly, in my effort to use a systemic procedure for data analysis across interviews, schooling and participant artifacts, and observational fieldnotes and audio/video recordings, repetition became a common technique (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). I sought to find common threads and develop conceptual categories related to my larger and more specific research questions (Appendix A). These categories and their descriptors became the headings and subheadings of the findings throughout the study. My coding scheme assigned alphanumeric symbols to each central category as I analyzed interview transcriptions, artifacts (e.g., Shanna's Individual Education Plan), and audio/video transcriptions, making connections across larger central categories and more

micro sub-categories and relevant literature. This helped to create the conceptual framework of the study. I used Dedoose, a qualitative software program that helped me classify and sort data and create higher-order conceptual arrangements in the over 200 hours of audio/video footage and related fieldnotes.

      Critical discourse analysis. At the same time, I also adhered to the belief that neither an interview nor a transcription is ever natural or neutral. The interviewer and interviewee actively build perspective throughout the process. Gee (2014) contended that we "use language to actively build things in our world" (p. 202). As a discourse analyst, I used transcription conventions suggested by Gee throughout the study. He claimed:

> discourse analysis is a reciprocal and cyclical process in which we shuttle back
>
> and forth between the structure (form, design) of a piece of language and the
>
> situated meanings it is attempting to build about the world, identities, and
>
> relationships in specific contexts. (p. 128)

For instance, in chapters two and three, I used a selection of Gee's transcription conventions (e.g., idea units or lines, stress and intonation, and stanzas) to organize and highlight how HDV youth and caregiver identities are shaped through normative hegemonic/resistive interactions in school. These conventions and their meanings are described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Transcription key.[7]

General Transcription Convention	Meaning
Participant (i.e., T., M.)	used to mark the beginning of the turn of the interviewer

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[7] Adapted from Gee's (2014) transcription conventions (pp. 127-147).

Abbreviated letter for participate	used to mark the turn of the interviewee
Ellipsis (. . .)	time lapses between transcription excerpts
Brackets in body of text [ ]	my own comment or to explain something that the interviewer/interviewee didn't fully say or might be doing related to discourse (e.g., gestures)
Double period (..)	slight pause by speaker
Gee (2014) Conventions	
Stanzas (form)	serves as a single unitary larger block of information (setting) within the story as a whole; Sets of lines devoted to a single topic, event, image, perspective, or theme
Line or spurt numbered separately	where a pause, slight hesitation, or (form) slight break in tempo after each spurt
Stress & intonation contour	underlined words represent major pitch movement where the focus of the intonation contour is physically marked by a combination of increased loudness, increased length, and by changing the pitch of one's voice
Italicized word	where a word or phrase contains new information

Gee (2014) claimed that organizing language embodied in interviews and later transcriptions helped to "represent how speakers marry structure and meaning as a reciprocal experience" (p.145). He also claimed that lines, stanzas, and stress/intonation in the representation of a text served two purposes:

first, it represents what we believe are the patterns in terms of which the speaker

has shaped her meanings "on line" as she spoke. Second, it represents a picture of

our analysis, that is, of the meanings we are attributing to the text. (p. 145)

I also used Gee's transcription conventions in chapter three when analyzing Shanna's

special education IEP (Individual Education Plan).

Life writing as method. Along with analyzing data related to HDV youth

participants and their caregivers, my autobiographical life stories (Ferri, 2011) served as a

method to integrate multivoicedness while also constructing a framework for

communicating what the data revealed. Life writing also afforded my stance as

ethnographic researcher activist to spiral in and out of the research process. In the

following section I use data taken from my own educational experiences and stories from

Mac to highlight performances of low forms of resistance and resistive ambivalence.

These stories served as counter-narratives intended to unmask the dynamic factors

shaping the resistive and complicated identities of HDV youth performed in response to

violating school experiences.

When Public and Hidden Transcripts Rupture

Autobiographical Memory

My father carried stories of his father, and I carry similar stories of my father. My

stories are also similar to the stories of HDV youth participants in this study. *I remember*

the big woods behind our house, the sanctuary it offered me as a child while I imagined a

different life than the one I lived in my parents' home and later in my educational

experiences. On many levels I resisted the daily life that faced me. Based on the stories

my elderly aunt told me of my own father, I am not so unlike my father who carried his running shoes when he and his siblings knew that his father would return from long absences. He slept with those shoes on not in an excitement of play, but rather in anticipation of his father's presence and violent ways. In similar fashion, I ran from my father. I remember those woods behind our 1950s track home set against the factories and farm fields of Flint, Michigan. With the setting sun reminding us that this was only a temporary place, my siblings and I spent entire days in those woods trying to be children, to run, to play, to hide, and to create a secondary life away from the violence in our home.

Those woods offered a space with trees and secret camps built from a collection of dried out lumber and neighborhood refuse. Those thrown away things became our brick and mortar as we constructed a new life to escape the life we did not want to live. I suppose my father, who was raised in the woods with no electricity, isolated in a secretive secondary family in northern Michigan, also loved the life that the woods offered. What I know now is that intergenerational domestic violence is a common occurrence. Yet, like the sacred, wooded spaces of my youth, domestic violence remained in the shadows as something secretive, kept hidden from the social consciousness outside of the home. Society doesn't want to talk about domestic violence, and yet its magnitude is front and center for the children and youth who endure its steady force. It is a *cultured* space from which I built knowledges as I navigated my father's violence, and I used those knowledges to resist violating social experiences outside of our home as well.

My relationship to domestic violence informs what I do and who I have come to be. I was born into a working class family in Flint, Michigan, with a father who battled the demons of schizophrenia and alcoholism. Through domestic violence, his demons were played out on my mother, my siblings, and me. I ran away from those demons at the age of 15 and sought refuge to make sense of a violent childhood. This story is not my story alone. Rather, it is a story to that of all youth who have histories of and currently live with domestic violence and who enter our schools as mostly throwaway youth (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). We seem to desire childhood stories that are clean and smooth and the opposite of domestic violence is purity. Douglas (1966) claimed that "purity is the enemy of change, of ambiguity, and compromise. Most of us indeed would feel safer if our experience could be hard-set and fixed in form" (p. 200). These opposing forces, violence and purity, defined the vast amount of my troubling school experiences.

My educational story began in the home and like all of the HDV youth participants in this study, I navigated the daily violence of my father and was labeled a "troubled youth" in K-12 schools. I was frequently suspended in both middle and high school. Although the special education label of EBD did not exist in the late 1970s and the 1980s, I was treated as such. I was frequently self-contained in spaces of ISS (in-school suspension), moved from higher to lower academic tracks, and paddled as a form of punishment. My K-12 school experiences can best be described as a lived resistance to a system that perpetually regurgitated me out and subsequently came to treat me as a broken young person. And yet, I wasn't broken. I was experiencing domestic violence and often found refuge in the presence of a few educators who developed relationships

with me based in their beliefs that I was capable of success. They ultimately served as metaphorical buoys keeping me afloat in the turbulence of family and school violence.

Through my professional commitments, both as an urban high school English teacher and as a teacher educator in the academy, I have come to make sense of my childhood experiences as I negotiated domestic and school violence. As illustrated in chapter three, I argue against the popular and dominant notions that domestic violence is an individualized set of traumatic events that leaves a child emotionally broken. Not so long ago, it was common in educational circles to ascribe to the deficit discourse that children of color and youth from poverty were broken children or children "at-risk." But today, we have come to see how their sociocultural navigation of race and poverty is what truly marginalizes their existence in our institutions. Sadly, regardless of one's ideological leanings, youth with histories of domestic violence (HDV) are repeatedly labeled "at-risk" in the most detrimental and acceptable ways (e.g., traumatic experiences solidifying into deficit disordered identities often embodied by shame/guilt/normal/ abnormal-oriented discourses/binaries). Vadeboncoeur and Luke (2004) called these moments the "the social construction of *at riskness*" (p. 204).

The violence that shaped my beliefs and my resistance to harsh and violating conditions was not exclusively found in the home, but also found in informal and formal educational experiences. HDV youth narratives can be found in the hallways and classrooms of some of most segregated and marginalized schools, and yet there is so little educational literature dedicated to understanding their marginalized experiences in schools. I, for instance, constantly resisted normative and hegemonic interactions through

52

what appeared to be violent responses of using my fists, mocking particular teachers and

administrators, laughing at administrative and classroom punishment, and ultimately

through my poor academic performance. School officials did not know how to *contain*

me or how to *hear* me as they seemed more concerned with shutting down the inherent

ambiguity that I displayed. Douglas (1966) contended that ambiguity breeds cognitive

discomfort for the privileged because "ambiguous things can seem very threatening"; at

the same time, Douglas asked, "how often is one threatened with danger for failing to

conform to someone else's standards" (p. xi)? The following autobiographical

educational memories highlight how I was perceived as a threatening, ambiguous child

and adolescent and how I responded in kind.

Brownies, Corn Cobs, and Smirks

When faced with fierce social repression, my young self always returned to the

resistant cultural practices I learned in the home. Even at the age of six, I was quickly

deemed a "troubled" kid. My daily experience of domestic violence was incongruent with

the realities of many educators and leaders who had neither understanding nor empathy

for my violent home life. Nor did they comprehend how I was performing necessary

resistive cultural practices in response to the violating interactions we were engaged in.

Bauman (Bauman & Donskis, 2013) suggested that such "misunderstandings" create

terrible conditions for the marginalized. He described these socially misunderstood

violating interactions as a "a hell that a totally normal and seemingly kind human being,

fine neighbor and family man creates for the Other by refusing to grant him his

individuality, mystery, dignity and a sensitive language" (p. 8). This first

53

autobiographical story explores the relationship between my resistance and normative

hegemony in one of my first informal educational experiences—participating in the Girl

Scout Brownies.

My removal from the Brownies is one of my first memories of resistance to what

felt like impossible normative hegemonic conditions. The Brownie leader was a neighbor

whom I grew to dislike and who subsequently removed me from the local troop she led

because of my resistant actions in response to what I perceived as her violating practices

toward me and other children. Following are two stories I use to highlight how I came to

define my resistive relationship to education.

(1976-77). I remember my mother, a fierce woman who played a double motherly

role—one as the pretender and the other as the protector. Her face of worry was common

as she protected us from the violent hands of our father and engaged in the silencing

discourse of domestic violence. With a round, naturally pretty face, she endured a life of

pain and it often showed in our personal space of home. She would scream at my father

and at us in utter frustration. I fought both her and my father even in my youngest years. I

was fierce. I resisted their continual battles and her "split" performances as she pretended

through warm smiles to the extended family, neighbors and teachers while she attempted

to protect herself and her children from my father's violence and the social shame of

domestic violence. She was a shape shifter, moving between pretense and protection, and

we adapted to our roles as children who hid family truths as a social charade. I *tried* to

perform my silenced imprisonment, but often fell into direct resistance to these pretenses.

"Ms. Brown," our neighborhood Brownies leader, was a strict and somber

woman. At six years old I became an instant outcast in her presence. I attempted to pretend to be normal (aka compliant), a role taught to me by my mother who often participated in PTA events after enduring nights of brutality. My mother often performed her role well as a courageous working class white woman bent on keeping the family secret. We were all disciplined to not share the home life of our father's drunken and violent craziness. We were to pretend to be proper children, to act as "normal" children in customary social situations. I often rebelled.

Ms. Brown demanded a special performance of compliance in her Brownies troop, one dreaded by most of the children. Because Ms. Brown was intent on keeping order, her rules included no running, no laughing, and no basic feelings of childhood fun. As a six year old I did not perform well under these conditions nor would I ever be able to through all of my years of K-12 educational experience. I was never able to *perform pretense*. It is still difficult to do so today. Conquergood (1993) framed performance as a contested notion that embodies agentic possibility and "locates disagreement and difference as generative points of departure and coalition for its unfolding meanings and affiliations" (p. 137). He continued, explaining: "life on the margins can be a source of creativity as well as constraint" (p. 137). At one particular moment, Ms. Brown socially shunned me for not listening well enough and for talking out of turn.

Our troop was to construct Santa Clauses out of styrofoam balls, glitter, glue, and bits of felted material: all the makings of a perfectly suited Brownies Christmas time creation. We were then to shuffle along to an adjoining room in preparation to sing holiday songs for our troop performance. I never reached that room. I was lingering too

long and not following her directions more quickly. Ms. Brown shunned me in the worst way a six year old who lived in perpetual struggle with violence could be shunned. She banished me to sit alone, sharing space only with the partially completed Santa Clauses as she whisked the other children away to sing songs in preparation for our public performance. My punishment was severe and exacting, and I responded in kind. In a frenzy, I destroyed every single Santa Claus in this space. Styrofoam heads flew, glitter floated to the floor, and I was removed from my Brownie troop permanently. Douglas (1966) argued that "all margins are dangerous. If they are pulled this way or that the shape of fundamental experience is altered. We should expect the orifices of the body [e.g. spittle, tears] to symbolize its specially vulnerable points" (p. 150). My tears, my refusal to sit down under violating experience, and my destruction of Santa Clauses symbolized the orifices and vulnerabilities that Douglas described. My young resistive self collapsed further under the weight of an adult educator who was unable to *hear* and *treat* me with more humanity.

(1981). Fast forward to middle school. It was sixth grade. It was a warm, sunny fall day when I experienced my first suspension from middle school. My physical education teacher, a tall, attractive woman whom I call "Ms. Brown, Part II" took our class of 25 out to run the fields in the back of our school. Though farmlands are not a common image when one thinks of Flint, Michigan, our middle school butted up against farm and factory country. Ms. Brown, Part II exerted a special punitive focus on me from the first days that our relationship began as teacher and student. She was the quintessential beauty queen who seemed more apt to teach beauty maintenance than

physical education. She often wore high heels, and her long brown flowing hair never seemed to show signs of sweat. She appeared to have a disinterest for children in general as she often barked at her students in ways that made most shrink in her presence. I did not shrink. I either loved my teachers profoundly or turned my heated sense of righteousness and resistance toward them as a defense in response to their violating practices. I disliked Ms. Brown, Part II, and I am sure she shared similar feelings for me. She often punished me for not complying with the rules to get in line and to be quiet. I resisted her. What she did not know was that I loved playing softball and football and had played both since my early years. I was an athlete, I loved sports, and I proudly performed my tomboyish/queered ways through athletic activity. She never pulled me aside and asked me in a tender way why I was unwilling to comply with her orders. Rather, I often responded to what felt like violating actions of barking orders and disrespect on her part. The incident I describe below involving a corncob and a smirk has come to serve as a fitting metaphor for my resistance to school. In this situated moment, much like the Brownies incident, public and hidden transcripts ruptured and resistive ambivalence became a necessary cultural response as a performance of my HDV identity.

On that warm, sunny day I bent down to grab the half-eaten dried corncob in the cornfield adjacent to my middle school. It was not a heavy piece of corncob, for it was fall, the harvest was over, and the corncob lay there half-eaten by some bird or animal passing by. It was not an unusual day for Ms. Brown, Part II, for there was no special tension-filled interaction that preceded this one moment that came to define my problematic middle school years. There was no special violating act on her part and no

special act of resistance on my part, but there was a corncob and there was an opportunity for me to use the corncob in a way that would resist our all too common teacher/student tension-filled hegemonic interplay. Often, farcical opportunities like throwing a half-eaten corncob appealed to me as a form of carnival-like play. This was an opportunity for farce and liberation. I grabbed the opportunity. I was straggling along with my best friend Deanna, when Ms. Brown, Part II screamed for us to move more quickly and to get in line. It was the perfect position and I had the perfect aim as I stood upon a hill looking down at my other classmates. I had played pickup softball games since I could practically walk and had just recently joined a more organized team in elementary school. The class walked downhill toward the double doors of our middle school and as one of the two stragglers in tow, I threw that corncob as far and fast as I could and of course, it bounced off Ms. Brown, Part II's head. She turned her angry gaze my way and ran off to get an administrator. The bell rang and as I begrudgedly approached the double doors, two large male administrators awaited my entrance. I had been caught and punishment was to be exacted.

It was in the presence of the principal, my mother, and Ms. Brown, Part II that I eventually came to laugh at their systemic normative hegemony. Here I was, 11 years old, being accused of throwing a large rock at Ms. Brown, Part II's head. Rather than wither under their interrogation, I exclaimed, "it wasn't a rock, it was corncob!" I sat there watching what was meant to be farce turn into a narrative of disorder. I was expected to sit compliantly as my mother, a woman who endured violent brutality and whom I protected with my own fists from a young age, endured shame and guilt under

58

the weighty gaze and words of educational experts. Their eyes shifted between my mother and me as they scolded me for my poor behavior. What I sensed and what I now know was that they were scolding both of us. The danger of such subtractive "scolding" is palpable for marginalized HDV children. Douglas (1966) captured the danger that such discourses have when used by schooling officials: "where the social system explicitly recognizes positions of authority, those holding such positions are endowed with explicit spiritual power, controlled, conscious, external and approved – powers to bless or curse" (p. 123). This was one of many occasions when, my mother watched her youngest daughter be punished by a system that was more compelled to *exorcize* her than to *understand* her navigation of a teacher who really didn't seem to like children.

The results were dramatic. I was suspended for the first time. It would not be the last time. There was no inquiry into why I was doing what I was doing. I was never asked and subsequently my voice was never heard. I still wonder why that particular public school system never listened and why the administration was not curious about this child who was obviously in so much struggle. I am still shocked by the pervasive ability of our schools to disregard and ignore the voices of HDV youth and marginalized youth in general. These youth have much to teach us about how to treat each other more humanely.

Subtractive schooling: "Young lady, wipe that smirk off your face!" During that sixth grade moment while being reprimanded and suspended for throwing a corncob at my teacher, no one in that administration and very few of my teachers understood my cultural navigation of domestic and school violence. With the exception of a few

59

perceptive and loving teachers, they mostly misread me as a broken kid and I knew it. I met them head on. When the opportunity to throw a corncob in Ms. Brown's, Part II's path arose, I jumped in and did just that—a force of both farce and resistance. When she claimed to administration that I threw a rock and that she needed medical attention, I laughed. Then, the *smirk appeared*. I looked at my mother sitting there with the same type of people for whom she cleaned homes—a woman who worked as a house cleaner, who navigated the fists and alcoholism of my father—and I could do nothing less than smirk at the pretense sitting before me. I resisted for both of us. I needed liberation in that moment and the smirk, a performance of resistive ambivalence, provided relief.

That smirk continued through my experiences in secondary school. My cultural ways of interacting in the world embodied in my smirk came out of my historical, individual, and social interactions in which I made cultural meaning. It is a fitting metaphor of my *missed* education. Administrative attempts at removing my smirk were an act of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 2010), for the administrators believed these acts of discipline and "behavioral management" would help me embrace what success in school should be. Bakhtin (1984) contended that symbols like smirks or farcical laughter in the face of hegemony are an example of grotesque realism. Stallybrass and White (1986) followed a similar line of reason, stating that such realism "is always in process, it is always becoming, it is a mobile and hybrid creature, disproportionate, exorbitant, outgrowing all limits, obscenely decentered and off-balance, a figural and symbolic resource for parodic exaggeration and inversion" (p. 9).

They believed their shaming of my mother was an act of showing her how to be a better parent. What they *refused* to see was that she was an amazing mother, an amazing woman. They believed they were scaffolding success for me and for my mother through subtractive acts of violating "care," while all along, I was *successfully* resisting their violating actions as a cultural response. Like a revolving door, I came and went, perpetually suspended or paddled during my high school years for fighting or for telling teachers who treated me poorly to fuck off. I argued that I was actually resisting a system that no longer, if ever, believed in me. To the dominant eye, it seemed I acted in socially unacceptable, violent ways as I fought and used abusive language toward educators and other students as acts of non-compliance or performed violent acts like throwing random corncobs. Rather, I would argue, I was practicing perpetual acts of inverted regurgitation, an inversion of the violence thrust upon me as I *refused to comply,* and they (the system) *refused to listen*. There are many *unheard* experiences in my actions. If we all desire a non-violent utopian vision of education for all youth, then I ask, how might different practices by the people in authority, perhaps *listening* anew to youth like me, actually create moments of realized humanity in schools? How might we come to imagine such spaces and what would their meanings signify for schools and the marginalized youth they serve?

Mac's Ruptures: Necessary Acts of Resistive Ambivalence

> *I thought, "If these people just knew what these kids went through, they didn't know. Just give them a chance"…they couldn't actually see Mac for what she was.*

> —Makita, Mac's grandmother, in an interview

Similar to my K-6 autobiographical life stories, all of the HDV youth participants and their caregivers in this study talked extensively of similar violating experiences in elementary school. These experiences made it necessary for these youth to perform acts of low and high resistance as they navigated these violating interactions with educators and other students. Douglas (1966) suggested that the relationships between the marginalized (the dirty) and the dominant (the pure) are under constant tension and restraint where "everything we do is significant, nothing is without its conscious symbolic load. Moreover, nothing is lost on the audience" (p. 124). For the HDV youth participants and their caregivers and similar to my mother's and my experiences in school, this relational navigation is central to our marginalized experiences in school settings. During interviews for this study, HDV youth participant stories like these emerged, unsolicited and continual. Stories of low and high forms of resistance were central to their reflections of school during interviews and consent/assent meetings. To address potential concerns of researcher bias, the semi-structured interview questions I had prepared contained no references to the notion of resistance, and yet their stories of resistance to normative hegemonic interactions constituted the core of the youths' descriptions of their K-5 school experiences (see Appendix D).

Due to this trend the theme of resistive ambivalence became a central finding of the study, comparable to the centrality of themes found in my autobiographical memories of school. In parallel fashion and to illustrate the experiences of HDV youth participants, I chose to highlight Mac's stories of low and high forms of resistance because her descriptions of navigating school interactions in the general sense embodied sustained

performances of low and high forms of resistance. Mac's stories about her first through fifth grade experiences unearth a range of oppressive conditions she experienced, including frequent disciplinary actions as a way to control her body movements, removal from classes and suspensions, and being paddled as punishment. This constant vigilance and surveillance on the part of school staff created normative hegemonic conditions to which Mac responded in kind.

Mac's story: "I got in trouble, but I really didn't get caught." The following stories from the perspectives of Mac and her grandmother, Makita, regarding Mac's K-5 experiences with school highlight a variety of resistive responses Mac employed to counteract violating interactions in school. For Mac, her acts of low resistance included strategic stalling where she would move into and out of spaces slowly while also refusing to perform pretenses like raising her hand in the classroom. She sustained these resistive acts throughout her K-5 school experiences. As a cultural necessity, HDV youth like Mac learn to read and resist social interactions in complicated ways. When these youth clash with normative hegemonic interactions often perpetuated by educators, hidden and public transcripts (Scott, 1990) rupture into sustained resistive ambivalence.

In the following interview excerpts, Mac discusses her resistance in her earliest formal school experiences while her grandmother, Makita, frames these same experiences from a caregiver perspective, showcasing her navigation of the school systems when disciplinary actions were taken based on Mac's sustained resistive stance in response to violating interactions. The following dialogue between Mac and me from our first interview captured unsolicited stories of sustained resistance with powerful clarity. Gee's

(2014) transcriptions (Table 1) are used to highlight both Makita's and Mac's discourse.

The interview accentuated Mac's perspectives of her earliest years performing resistance

in a formal school setting.

T: How did you do in school?
M: Well, kindergarten, it was kind of good, kind of bad. My years…My school years have been bad. Kindergarten, then I did a lot in kindergarten.
T: What do you mean?...OK…when you were in elementary school did you get in trouble?
M: Yes.
T: Why did you get in trouble? Tell me about that.
M: When I was in kindergarten, I got in trouble one time or several, I didn't know why. I was whooped at school. For the first time I got paddled in kindergarten… well in first grade because I was walking around…I took my socks off..I was a bad kid. Uhm… I took my shoes off and then I started running around the rug at reading time, *but my teacher earlier didn't say nothing so I thought it was OK.* But then my principal came in. She was like, "Call her mom please." Then she told my grandma that I was…No, she told my grandma that I was being bad or whatever…Or my foster… you know, Miss Loretta. That's her name. So her… that she was gonna give me a whooping so she had to paddle me and stuff like that.
T: Wow, the school paddled you?
M: Mm-hm.
T: With what?
M: A paddle!
T: How many times did they paddle you?
M: Two.
T: …Did you get in trouble again?
M: Mm-mm. (smiling) I been good ever since then. I try not to get in trouble…
T: Since the paddle?
M: 'Cause it hurted (grinning and smiling).
T: Keep it real (smiling back). So how about in other grades? How did you do in other grades?
M: ***I got in trouble, but I really didn't get caught***.
T: Ah! (laughing) Tell me about that! What do you mean?
M: Uhm, I … Like, I would take a long time…I was *stalling* back in the years.
T: You were doing what? Stalling? What does that look like? What does that mean?
M: Stalling like taking a long time.
T: Yeah, but tell me what it looks like.
M: OK so, I…like… we have these cubbies and stuff like that. And we supposed to put our stuff away and then I took too long because I didn't want to do the lesson or whatever. And so I just took a long time and I got in trouble.

64

As a common occurrence, resistive acts like stalling, or what she refers to as "getting into trouble, but not really getting caught," permeate Mac's memories of school.

Fast forwarding to Mac's fifth grade experiences of school, similar examples of Mac's resistive acts emerge. These stories were told by Makita, Mac's grandmother. During Mac's fourth and fifth grade years, Makita, who served as Mac's primary caregiver, struggled on a daily basis with Mac's elementary school's administrative disciplinary responses to Mac's "troubling" behavioral issues with school staff. The school would report Mac's problematic behavior through daily phone calls that created deep anxiety for Makita. Importantly, Makita did not place her frustrations on Mac and her "disciplinary" problems, but rather she pointed the responsibility directly at the school's administration, questioning why the school was so intent on controlling even the simplest of Mac's actions.

In the following interview excerpt with Makita, it is evident that Mac's resistive actions continued throughout her elementary school years. It is important to note that the interview contained general questions regarding Mac's school experiences. I intentionally developed questions that would not assume that Mac's experiences in school were inherently problematic and/or related to notions of resistance (see Appendix E). This is important because I interviewed Makita several months after two interviews with Mac. Again, Makita's responses to my general interview questions reaffirmed Mac's commonly performed resistive acts as sustained responses to violating school experiences.

T: …Can you describe what you think most influenced Mac's experience in school and outside of school?

M: She has her church activities… But her basketball… Her love for basketball. Cause she wants one day be big celebrity basketball player…and at school, Mac became a different person…

T: What school was that?...

M: UA school [a pseudonym]…And it's kind of like a school for troubled people. And she was not troubled, but she was there at that school. They would ask her questions she wouldn't have the answers, she wouldn't…Very miserable. She was…I didn't know she was so miserable. She go to school, but…and she'd make good grades, but it was just not something she wanted to do.

T: How was it so different? [about the school]

M: Because everything, if she took a deep breath, somebody'd call me. If she went down the hall and stayed too long, somebody…I couldn't go to the grocery store. I couldn't go nowhere. I couldn't do anything. I had to work.

T: What would they say to you when they called about Mac's behavior?

M: "Grandmother, Miss B., Mac is sitting outside of the class. She was asked to go back to class, but she continued to sit there." And I'd say, "Well, do you want me to come up?" "No, we want you to know." Then they'd call me another day, "Mac's not eating her lunch; she threw it in the garbage and I just want you to know." Mac did this and Mac did that and they said Mac was bounced back on the doors and just everything. I could not go... I kid you not, I couldn't go anywhere. I couldn't go to the grocery store. I couldn't go nowhere. When I went in, when I came back and looked at the caller i.d. and see if I had a call from them… It just got worse. It just got worse.

T: Did she get suspended?

M: Mm-mm…They would talk to me, but you know, they [administration] would say, "Grandma, I feel so bad for you cause here we gotta tell you about Mac today, and I feel so sad for you." And everything, you know. *It was just the little things. God, if I'm gonna be upset about something, let me be upset about something major, not just something minor.* So you know…

T: Why do you think that they were doing that? So they were almost like just wanting to watch her…

M: I think they were so used to focus on children with behavior problems, *they couldn't actually see Mac for what she was.*

As the interview continued, I probed deeper, attempting to draw out Makita's thoughts in response to Mac's apparent resistive responses as she negotiated violating school interactions. Again, it was clear that this was the typical, almost daily experience for Mac and Makita as they both navigated these tension-filled interactions with school staff. I

asked directly how Mac talked to her about these daily occurrences once she returned

home from school. Makita's response was telling, for it drew out how Mac refused to

perform pretense when interacting with school staff. As the interview continued, my

questions became more pointed as the theme of resistance emerged.

> *T:* …it sounds like she was in trouble like everyday.
> *M:* Yes, just about. Just about.
> *T*: And what would Mac say about it? When she would get home?
> *M:* She would get home and she would just be defeated and I would just say, "Why? Why did you not answer the teacher? Why did you not raise your hand? Why did you not answer to the roll?!" [Mac response] "*But Mama, she saw me sittin' there.*" That is no answer. OK, so then they called me to tell me, "She not participating in roll. She won't raise her hand in roll." I talked to her and we practiced and I said, "You know these answers, raise your hand." Then she's taking too much control. She's not letting other children answer, but she answering and not giving the rest of them the chance to answer.
> *T:* They called you about that?
> *M:* Mm-hm. And then they'd call me about when it's time for her evaluation, I got told then.
> *T:* What do you mean for her evaluation?
> *M:* You know, when it's time for parent-teacher conferences.
> *T:* Oh, yeah. Hm. Do you remember anything else Mac would tell you why she just would be…Would you call it a resistance? Is that fair? Was she kind of resisting them?
> *M:* She just… She didn't want to be there and she didn't want…She didn't speak out and say, "I don't want to be here." She went everyday because it's a routine. You go to school.
> *T:* Right. Yeah, Mac has talked to me in a similar way you're talking about it. Is that she would just, when they would write her up a referral for her behavior, she would take it and let it drop and watch them. Cause she said, "They didn't care about me."…
> *M:* It was…I don't know. She just, I'm telling you, if you had known her then, you would not think this is the same Mac.

HDV youth, like Mac and like myself, navigate, construct, and perform their

identities in response to what we read as violating and violent conditions in school

experiences, and yet, we were labeled, at best, troubled youth. I'm interested in what we

might find if we began to consider what is truly troubling in the moments of flying

corncobs, broken Santa Clauses, and the slow stalling walks of HDV youth. Unforgiving

hegemonic presence can create scenarios for practicing cultural meanings while also

creating conditions for resistive identities to emerge. Perhaps HDV youth take up

resistance as a cultural expression when negotiating violating punishment. Perhaps my

smirk or Mac's refusal to raise her hand during roll call were such expressions. This may

be a difficult notion for educators to understand, especially if their childhood cultures and

thus identities were not forged out of childhood domestic violence. In the worst sense, it

is the obvious and miniscule actions that reflect warfare not only in the home, but also in

school, like the punishment-smirk situation that held such power over my mother and me.

As school officials talked down to us while protecting the teacher who clearly disliked

children, administration also expected compliance from me. Another example was Mac's

inability to differentiate between her teacher's expectations and the principal's

expectations when she played by running on the rug during first grade.

     For HDV youth, these moments of violation may come to feel like impossible

scenarios of negotiation forcing ruptures between the hidden and public transcripts (Scott,

1990) or what I have referred to as resistive ambivalence (Pyscher, 2015; Pyscher &

Lozenski, 2014). For me, there was not a single liberating option other than my smirk.

For Mac, whose every action felt (and was) scrutinized, her resistive ambivalent tactics

included refusing to reenter the classroom and refusing to interact in pretense like raising

her hand. These moments resonate in our stories.

     My mother cleaned homes for a living—being paid as a servant for middle class

and wealthy folks like administrators and teachers. In fact, she cleaned the home of my

tenth grade English teacher, and I hated knowing this. We lived in a post-World War II track house, struggling in a working class family with five children and two adults residing in a small space that had no dining room and a refinished garage that served as a bedroom for the four youngest children including me. Most importantly, we were subjected to the uninterrupted brutality of my father. My mother endured the crazy violence of my father and yet, here she was, enduring another exacting violence from administrators. What more should we expect from Mac or HDV youth like me other than resisting the violating experiences she/we felt in school? What more do we expect from HDV children and youth who know how to read social violence in nuanced ways? To what extent does change of perspective lay at the feet of educators charged with working for/with all youth?

As the two additional youth participants and their caregivers told their stories, it became clear that the constructed identities of resistance were central to the HDV youth participants' navigation of violating interactions in school. At times, the ruptures between hidden and public transcripts or resistive ambivalence become necessary for the HDV youth in this study. It was also clear that the resistive identities that Mac and I performed made up our cultural repertoires of practice. Our language and actions were often "misread" as deficit rather than as strategic and/or liberatory by educators when problematic tensions arose. It seemed our schools and those that run them may be unaware that HDV youth *read* authoritative violence in nuanced and poignant ways and when ruptures occur, it was a cultural necessity for HDV youth to call out social farce and pretense shaped by their habitus (Pyscher, 2015).

As evident in these stories, HDV youth may *never* negotiate shared spaces

because they are read as pretense by the youth and as normative by educators. Liberation

for HDV youth then becomes a necessity. It is difficult to disrupt the ideologies shaping

educators' practices during these tension-filled interactions. Ideologies are promoted

through educational practices shaped by solidified traditional (e.g., eugenicist science,

Enlightenment thinking) and emergent neoliberal deficit-oriented Discourses. Chapter

three traces how these Discourses have historically developed and how they are

sustained. In the following chapter, I use the stories of youth participants and their

caregivers and analysis of school artifacts like IEPs to illustrate how these Discourses and

practices become entrenched, normative, and reified in school settings**.**

Chapter Three: But Isn't This Important to Their Survival in Schools and in Life?
To Get Them the Help They Need?[8]

Jen and I...I think, clash with the same type of people...She has no control over her decisions. This is the way it is. "You're gonna like math. You're gonna do it the way I tell you to do it. You're gonna not be disruptive"...You're [the teachers] not gonna get me [Jen] to do what you want by demanding it, you know? Or telling me, "We're gonna fix this part of you.

—Jess, mother of Jen, HDV youth participant, in an interview

Similar to Mac's stories in chapter two, Jess described her daughter's navigation of deficit school practices in her elementary school. Jess expressed that her daughter had "no control over her decisions" while teachers made impossible demands on her daughter with messages like: "You're gonna do it the way I tell you to do it." These exchanges often led to the tension-filled interplay inherent in the relationship between resistance and normative hegemonic violation. The purpose of this chapter is to examine how this relationship, situated in popular, traditional, and deficit-laden Discourses like medicalization and pathologization, shaped and reshaped the relationships between HDV youth, their caregivers, and educators. The findings and discussion demonstrate how both Jen and Shanna were commonly positioned as objects of "disorder" in their elementary public schools.

In violating ways, deficit labels detrimentally impacted these HDV youth and their caregivers. Theoretically, the chapter is organized around (dis)ability studies (Baker, 2002; Mitchell & Snyder 2006) and critical sociocultural theory (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007), beginning with an explanation of how labeled youth in general have come to be

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[8] Dr. Cynthia Lewis, my advisor, asked these rhetorical questions, challenging me to consider how deficit practices like special education labeling are constructed in schooling contexts.

objectified and represented in public schools. Later, the chapter reframes HDV youths'

school experiences as social and cultural rather than behavioral and medical.

Methodologically, I used Scott's (1990) hidden and public transcripts as an analytic to

make connections to findings in chapter two. This included tracing the larger deficit

Discourses that shaped oppressive school experiences for Jen, Mac, and Shanna in

elementary contexts. The analysis and discussion that follow sketch the impact of deficit-

oriented representations experienced by Jen and Shanna. The impact of such

representations was unique for each youth and yet strikingly similar for all HDV youth

participants and their caregivers, often producing damaging effects on their lives in and

outside of school.

The counterproductive impact of being labeled "disordered" became clear through

analysis of Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers interviews and school artifacts (e.g.,

Shanna's IEP). These youth and their caregivers struggled with resisting, deflecting,

and/or internalizing special education labels like EBD. Their subjective perspectives

outline not only what deficit Discourses can do to objectified youth, but also show how

such youth and their caregivers resist the violating forces shaping school cultures and

practices. Specifically, the chapter addresses the following research questions:

> (1) To what extent do educators' belief systems and dominant Discourses shape
>
> the HDV youth participants' participation and subjectivities (identities) in school
>
> situations?
>
> (2) From subject-centered perspectives, how do HDV youth and their caregivers

frame their navigation of and response to violating school interactions?

The Productive Representation and Objectification of Labeled Youth

Jen, Mac, and Shanna shared problematic elementary school experiences. For Jen and Shanna, EBD labels positioned them on precarious school trajectories. From a macro perspective, the process of labeling youth did not originate in schools or with educators, but rather through greater authoritative bodies like the American Psychological Association (APA) and the industrial health care complex. In turn, educators' practices often mirrored these deficit-oriented Discourses (Gee, 2014). In response, labeled youth in general have often been marginalized and have frequently resisted traditional models of school (Carter, 2005; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Willis, 1977). For HDV youth, I have come to call this type of discursive construction the Discourse of disordered Other (Pyscher, 2015).

Foucault (1980a) believed that humanity had a history, or was a project of archaeology, an invention. Such a perspective opens agentic opportunities for marginalized subjects as they name their negotiations through and around the violating experiences of power. Through this process, counter-perspectives emerge. For Foucault, the self is bound up in social experiences and institutions; thus it cannot be excised from the effects of power. He was most concerned with how power operates in our society. A Foucauldian (1965) notion of discourse can be seen as constructed modes of experience. He was less concerned with finding a "truth," but more concerned with understanding the creation of these modes of experience, including the discursive practices that came to constitute objectifying productions like normalization, individualization, and

73

medicalization. Figure 1 and the following sections highlight these kinds of discursive

relationships and how labeled youth have been objectified through them.

Figure 1. Discursive factors shaping labeled youth.

**Objectification of Labeled
Youth**
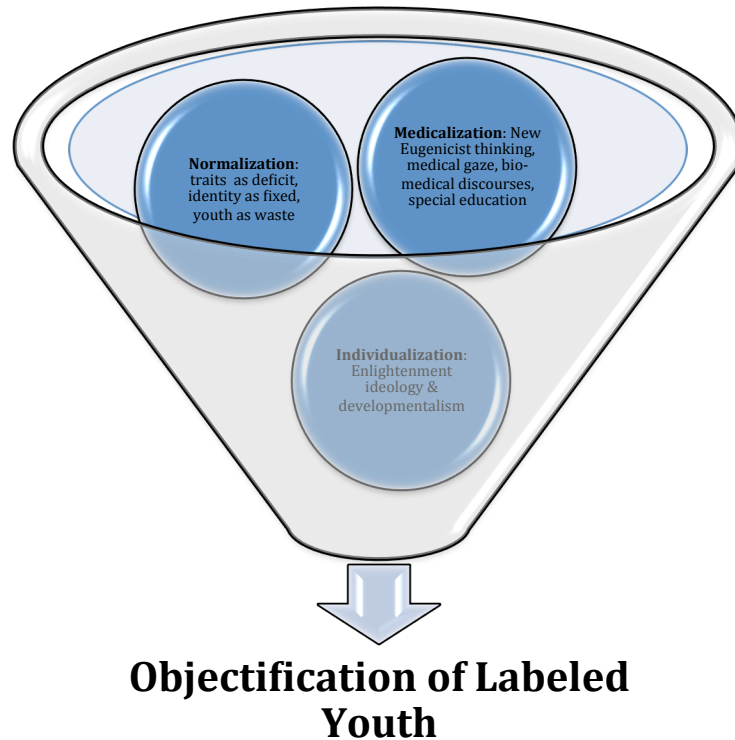
The field of psychology has produced many of these "common sense" Discourses

(Gee, 2014). For instance, a plethora of mental illnesses emerged from such discursive

common sense Discourses. Foucault's (1980b) main goal was to "discover the point at

which these practices became coherent reflective techniques with definite goals, the point

at which a particular discourse emerged from these techniques and came to be seen as

true, the point at which they are linked with the obligation of searching for the truth and

telling the truth" (p. 79). In similar fashion to Foucault, the findings and discussion in this

chapter trace how the Discourse of the disordered Other became a "truth" for Jen and

Shanna. This Discourse impacted their school trajectories in dramatic ways.

The Violence of Normalizing Discourses

From Gee's (2014) perspective and similar to Foucault, dominant discourses, or what he refers to as "Big D" discourses, emerge out of "our words and deeds, [and] have talked to each other through history and in doing so, form human history" (p. 35). Fairclough (*see* Rogers, 2002) suggested that these dominant Discourses occurred in local (e.g., classroom interactions, special education meetings), institutional (e.g., district decisions on special education funding), and societal settings (e.g., policy decisions) (p. 215). (Dis)abilities studies (DS) scholars Mitchell and Snyder (2006) contended, "Nearly every culture views disability as a problem in need of a solution" which "situates people with disabilities in a profoundly ambivalent relationship to the cultures and stories they inhabit" (p. 205); this is to some extent not unlike other sociocultural marginalizations (e.g., race or gender). What often develops as we try to find "solutions" to "problems" are labeling practices like EBD. Baker (2002) asserted that labeling practices reduce "the totality of someone's humanity to a so-called "trait" (p. 690) and that such "proliferation" over the last couple of decades served to "mark students outside the norm of child development or at-risk of school failure" (p. 676). The acts of classifying humans as deficit beg for sociocultural counter-analysis.

In school settings, the traditional practices of labeling marginalized youth are common sense acts often solidifying into common sense Discourses allowing distinctions and categories to arise that reify what norms are to be performed in service to maintaining the status quo. Discourses like individualization and developmentalism

75

served important roles in the discourse of normalization (Ferri & Connor, 2005).

Individualization and developmentalism led to the objectification of youth who were

institutionally labeled "disordered." These Discourses were firmly rooted in

Enlightenment thinking, promoting the belief that each individual human develops

through their own individualized experience (Baker, 2002; Corker & Shakespeare, 2006).

Discourses like normal versus abnormal often marginalize the sociocultural

experiences of HDV youth as representations become fixed and individualized rather

than multiple and ever shifting. These Discourses are fuse with traditional and current

ideological leanings, including humanist-cognivist-behaviorist systems of belief,

scientific-medical-new Eugenicist models of "treatment," and special education-

psychopathological models whose sole purpose is to further the project of normality.

Most importantly, these Discourses are reified and sustained through educator practices

sanctioned by school authorities and cultures.

Normality and the "disordered". (Dis)abilities scholars have theorized that the

construction of the disordered subject is dependent upon societal desires for normality.

For instance, Couser (2006) maintained that the "disordered" Other is not an object that

has been ignored, but rather that "they have been subjected to objectifying notice in the

form of mediated staring" (p. 399). Laws (2011) captured these states of "mediated

staring" in her seven-year study where she traced how her school, while under her

leadership, both helped and hindered the construction of what she came to call the "mad,"

"bad," and "sad" representations of "troubled" youth typically referred to as Emotionally

and Behaviorally Disordered and Disturbed (EBD). She argued that the purpose of

"staring" was to "ensure the norm" for the "norm:"

> imposes homogeneity in ways that mean those who stray from the "norm" are
> made visible, branded. The "norm" individualises and makes it possible to
> measure the gaps and to hold in the spotlight what it is to be "normal"; it makes
> visible who are the "normal" and who is the "not- normal" …(p. 102)

The following section offers a sampling of how conflated Discourses encouraged the growth of deficit labeling as a common practice in public schools.

Medical and scientific Discourses figured prominently as a central means through which labels have propagated. These deficit Discourses encompassed many names and are often referred to as the "New Eugenicist" Discourse by DS scholars (Baker, 2002; Davis, 2006; Kliewer & Fitzgerald, 2001; Snyder & Mitchell, 2006). The notion of a new eugenicist Discourse has been commonly evoked as a continuation of the historical project that embodies eugenicist ideologies and practices of old, including the key shaping effect that coalesced into the Holocaust or justified forced sterilization of poor and immigrant women in the United States. Simultaneously, this new eugenicist Discourse has served to trouble the common belief that the eugenicist movement was temporary (Bauman, 1989; Synder & Mitchell, 2006). In fact, Synder and Mitchell (2006) situated these practices in current Discourses of special education like medicalized labeling based on diagnostic processes. They claimed: "its power [Eugenicist Discourses] is derived from its designation of many forms of deviance as the product of defective competence" (p. 79). Historically, these targets of biological "defective" conditions included the feebleminded, blind, chronically depressed, and the alcoholic; today, this

77

functions in a similarly diasporic manner in which labeling youth "defective" and

"disordered" have become common practices (Synder & Mitchell, 2006, p. 103).

Tracing the Disordered Other in Public Schools

The amalgamation of scientific, new eugenicist, and special education Discourses

in public schools is well documented. Baker (2002) historically tied these entangled

Discourses to genetic determinism and current bio-medical discourses (p. 682, 684),

referring to their uses as submerged "homogenizing techniques" (p. 697). In public

schools, these are situated in multiple Eugenicist reiterations. Davis (2006b) claimed that

disordered subjects often found in special education labels are a newer form of Eugenicist

thinking connecting statistics, normality, and Darwinian notions "for the idea of a

perfectible body undergoing progressive improvement," and the Eugenicist obsession

with eliminating the "defectives" and the "disordered" (p. 7). Kliewer and Fitzgerald

(2001) asserted, "Special Education emerged in the climate of eugenics as a segregating

public school response to the first psychometrically identified group of disabled students,

the morons. . . ." (p. 464). These medicalized Discourses also helped construct the

disordered Other in school contexts. Perhaps Walkerdine (1990) encapsulated the

discursive purpose of the New Eugenicist classroom most fittingly as a "laboratory where

development could be watched, monitored and set along the right path" (p. 29). These

"right paths" have also opened avenues to acceptable labeling of HDV youth as

disordered subjects.

Disordered objectifications of HDV youth. In K-12 public schools, the

Discourse of the disordered Other (Pyscher, 2015) is routinely found in conversations

about HDV youth euphemized in deficit labels like "troubled," "problem student," or "emotionally behaviorally disordered/disturbed." Statistically, HDV youth constitute a majority of the youth who have come to be labeled as Emotionally and Behaviorally Disordered (EBD) in public schools (Administration for Children and Families, 2004). The Discourses of the "disordered" HDV youth can be described as an act of Othering or identifying these youth as in need of treatment-oriented pedagogies as an attempt to *reorder* their childhood and adolescent experiences of violence. Ironically, these "treatment" oriented pedagogies tend to reproduce similar experiences of violation for HDV youth. Indeed, it can be expected that such labeled youth will endure forms of school social control including discipline, marginalization, medicalization, and subjectification.

Under the demands of these Discourses, Laws (2011) claimed that our dependency on validity and scientific truth dedicated to "intervention techniques" and subsequent labeling discourages more complicated social analysis that considers other causal factors like living under the conditions of domestic violence or poverty. Examined in chapter two, this socially decontextualized dominant perspective often met cultural resistance head on with youth like Mac, Jen, and Shanna. Deficit objectifications embodied in labels like "antisocial, behaviourally disturbed or disordered, delinquent or pre-delinquent, and/or severely emotional disturbed" become easily applied representations (Laws, p. 42). This is similar to Foucault's (1980a) argument that the "subject" is often bandied about to the whims of the discursive fields that organize around such efforts toward objectification.

79

A Disciplinary technology: Youth as waste.[9] When educators encounter "disordered" HDV youth, they typically respond with pity and punishment. Tagging HDV youth as disordered can be thought of as an act of discarding *human waste* (Bauman, 2009) or what I along with my colleague Lozenski (2014) referred to as throwaway youth. The following section explores the relationship between HDV youth and their positioning as "throwaway" in public schools. It traces how deficit-based educational practices emerge out of the interplay between resistance and normative hegemony. Youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna shared similar identities of disorder and/or problematic subjectivities placed upon them by educators in their elementary schools. Yet the actual aim of such framing as throwaway is as much about normalizing other children. In fact, Laws (2011) wrote that "perhaps the practices used by the state are not intended to be so very effective. . . . perhaps the strategies are critical for producing, in contrast, the normative subject. The actual intended product is not the child who is in need of help but the one who is not" (p. 109). Similar to this analysis, public schools may just marginalize HDV youth through acts of medicalized labeling in service to other people's children deemed "normal," helping to clear the rubbish (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). Once a youth is deemed wasted, Bauman (2009) argued, "there are no obvious return paths to fully fledged membership. Nor are there any alternative, officially endorsed and mapped roads one could follow . . . towards an alternative title to belonging" (p. 16). How then do schools clear the rubbish to ensure "normal" subjectivities?

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[9] Disciplinary technology is a Foucauldian (1977) notion defined as a set of operations that join knowledge and power that gather around the objectification of the body.

The medicalized gaze. Foucault (1973) called the *medical gaze* a dramatic

mechanism toward disciplining the body (p. 29). Youth like Jen and Shanna know this

gaze intimately. Its authoritative presence is evident in multiple fields like psychology,

social work, medicine, and public schooling. The gaze was illustrated in the stories that

Mac, Makita, Shanna, and I told throughout this study. Using pedagogical practices of

objectification, educators are taught to gaze upon and diagnose HDV youth by observing

their everyday interactions. For HDV youth like Jen and Shanna who performed cultural

practices of low and high resistance, objectification was destructive and often repeatedly

positioned them as throwaway youth. In this chapter, the grim realities that follow

objectification and labeling practices are analyzed and discussed from the perspectives of

Jen's mother, Jess, and Shanna.

HDV Youth Counter Perspectives: Relationships between Public and Hidden Transcripts

If we follow the supposition from chapter two that HDV youth like Mac and me

performed cultural practices of resistance when faced with socially violating situations,

then such a perspective directly challenges the deficit language that frames HDV youth as

"disordered" objects. A significant theme arose when Jen, Mac, and Shanna talked about

their navigation of elementary schools. Their social experiences of domestic violence

were predominantly inscribed as individualized experiences and/or ignored altogether by

school officials. For Jen and Shanna in particular, their resistive responses to normative

hegemonic interactions were labeled as acts of emotional disorderness (EBD). Evidenced

in the perspectives of Jen's mother, Jess, was the realization that Jen was swept up in the

traditional and current discourses pathologizing marginalized children. As stated in

previous sections, discourses of individualization and normalization have failed to recognize the complicated social lives of labeled youth in general. Holland et al. (1998) argued, "behavior is better viewed as a sign of self in practice, not as a sign of self in essence" (p. 31). To be essentialized via labeling was to be made static and to be reduced to atomized bits, thus easily setting up conditions for dominant actors (e.g., educators) to easily practice objectification.

Public transcripts help to solidify the dominant ideologies practiced in social spaces with explicit consent and have significantly shaped the Discourses used by school officials. In fact, Scott (1990) claimed that "the public transcript displays a second consciousness of the situation of power relations and existence, one in which the hegemonic situation is accorded public consent" (p. 190). For the marginalized, such public consents were resisted because they (the marginalized) refused "to accept the definition of the situation as seen from above and to condone their own social and ritual marginalization" (Scott, 1985, p. 240). In this study, using public and hidden transcripts as a form of analysis opened opportunities to connect HDV youth participants' histories of participation in elementary school to the normative hegemonic practices embodied in the public transcripts as the youth and their caregivers navigate and resist its Discourses and practices.

Though Scott (1985, 1990) was primarily concerned with how marginalized people practiced resistance when navigating hegemonic interactions at more personal levels, his notion of pubic transcript can also be used to trace how the powerfully shaping Discourses and subsequent practices shaped the lives of Jen, Mac, and Shanna. This view

is similar to Foucault's perspective on power and how discourse is shaped in general. Spargo (1999) believed "power is understood as a matter of complex relationships rather than as a property inherent in a particular individual or class" (p. 16). For instance, these relationships of power are highlighted in caregivers' perceptions (Jess) and seen in analysis of school artifacts like Shanna's special education IEP. Together they show how larger Discourses are often reified in local school Discourses that set up conditions ripe for tension-filled interactions between HDV youth and educators.

I used the analytic of public and hidden transcripts to outline how the process of EBD labeling helps schools practice comprehensive management and oversight of HDV youth like Jen and Shanna. Original stories from Shanna and Jess, Jen's mother, along with analysis of Shanna's IEP (school artifact) make up the bulk of data and analysis that follows. Analysis highlights how dominant Discourses are discursively reproduced and redeployed by school staff as HDV participants and their caregivers traverse objectification and subsequent deficit practices. For Jen and Shanna, these objectifying experiences were situated in normative hegemonic interactions that shape these youths' responses in profound ways. Analysis and discussion ends at a point of agreement for Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers—a need to find a different and more humane school experience.

The Harmful Effects of EBD Subjectivity

My Fight

In chapter two I shared autobiographical memories (life writing) growing up with violence as an HDV child and youth in school. Socially and psychically, as an adolescent

and young adult, I partially believed that *I* was disordered, and I simultaneously

performed both low and high forms of cultural resistance when faced with social

violence. I harmed myself by engaging in drug use and academically failed school. Yet I

fought back, resisting the social violence at home and school as an expression of agency.

My consciousness was stretched between the dualities of believing in my own brokenness

and understanding my embodied resistance to social pretense and violation. My life

trajectory was precarious at best as a 15 year old on my own who navigated this harsh

reality and the frequent disciplinary punishments I experienced in school. And yet, school

served as the only alternative institutional social space where I might find agentic

meaning of my childhood and adolescent experiences of domestic violence in the home.

It was still my *only* place of refuge. I didn't fully discover the liberating potential that

education offered me until my first experience in a community college course at the age

of 19. It was during these years that I began to question my "disordered" subjectivity

while simultaneously coming to better understand how my cultural ways of resisting

socially violating experiences were dramatically shaped by my childhood and adolescent

experiences of domestic violence and responses to violation in school.

It is clear today that I resisted what I read as social violation during my K-12

formal and informal educational experiences. I fought not only in response to domestic

violence at home, but also at school through resistive ambivalence (e.g., telling my tenth

grade English to F-off and subsequently being suspended) or through lower forms of

resistance like skipping classes where I resisted teachers whom I read as practicing

violating acts. As I have aged and continued my doctoral work, I have come to

understand and embrace Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (1999/2005) poignant description of decolonizing the self. She stated:

> Decolonization does not mean and has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about centering our concerns and worldviews and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes. (p. 39)

I came to see through my own life experiences and subsequent forms of resistances to the violation I experienced in school—like being paddled for insubordination or the slightest gesture of disgust by educational staff—was the symbolic, material, and psychic power of deficit Discourses and interactions with educators that shaped my young self. Scott (1990) suggested that resistance in response to one's hegemonic experiences in localized contexts:

> is not just a question of masking one's feelings and producing the correct speech acts and gestures in a place. Rather it is often a question of controlling what would be a natural impulse to rage, insult, anger, and the violence that such feelings prompt. There is no system of domination that does not produce its own routine harvest of insults and injury to human dignity. (p. 37)

Even though they were in middle school, similar forms of understanding self in relation to domestic and school social violence resonated from the HDV youth participants in my study. The following section discusses similar stories regarding elementary school experiences told by Jen's mother, Jess, and Shanna. Their stories highlighted the pain associated with navigating a school's commitment to public transcripts that labeled Jen

and Shanna EBD subjects. I also unpack the construction of Shanna's EDB subjectivity found in an official school artifact, her special education IEP.

Fighting the EBD Narrative: Jess and Jen's Struggle

This chapter began with a quote by Jess, Jen's mother, in which she powerfully described how violating practices by educators like, "we're gonna fix this part of you," created fertile opportunities for EBD labeling to occur. Such practices often materialize discursively. For Jen, this occurred in her later elementary school years and was based on what school officials perceived as her inability to comply with behavioral expectations set by the school's culture. Illustrated in the following interview excerpts, Jess fought against her daughter being labeled "emotionally behaviorally disordered" (EBD) for well over a year before she decided to transfer Jen out of her elementary school.

Jess, a woman who was enduring domestic violence during this fight with school officials, realized how EBD labels damaged her stepdaughters years before and decided to fight against this label for Jen, her youngest daughter. With powerful assertiveness, Jess named how these dominant actions came to be constructed and reinforced and how she resisted school officials. She realized the destructive force that EBD labeling would have on Jen's own subjectivities and experiences in school. Jess's stories also tied the discursive formation of EBD labeling to the inability of the school staff to understand how domestic violence was shaping their family's reality in and out of school and the school's need for financial "resources." When students are labeled EBD, school systems receive more funds to hire staff, buy curriculum, and create structures designed to manage and control—essentially to weed out those who do not demonstrate "normal"

productive citizenship and behavior. At the local level, the tensions between public and hidden transcripts are resoundingly clear. So is the harsh reality that school funding follows larger mandates (Discourses) that schools often find themselves caught up in.

Laws (2011) claimed, "In order for children [labeled EBD] to be humanized they must be responsive in the right way and become non-violent, rational beings—make the right choices, the safe choices" (p. 43). Yet, what was often ignored in a school's attempts to "humanize" youth like Jen was their inability to recognize that their (educators') interactions are relational and not decontextualized. In the opening quote of this chapter, Jess stated:

> STANZA 1
> Jen and I both.. I <u>think</u> clash with the same, the same type of people…
>
> STANZA 2
> *there's something* that they're [teachers] <u>demanding</u> her to do something [as she taps the table with fist].. she has no control over her decisions.
>
> STANZA 3
> [Jess says in demanding teacher voice] "*This is the way it is*!" [faster and louder movement of fist up and down on the table, voice rising]..You're gonna like <u>math</u>! You're gonna do it <u>the way I tell you to do it</u>! You're gonna <u>not be disruptive</u>"…
>
> STANZA 4
> *There's a personality she does not, you know*...[Jess taking up her daughter's voice resisting the teachers] "You're not gonna <u>get me</u> to do what you want by demanding it, <u>you know</u>? *or telling me*, <u>we're gonna fix this part of you</u>."

For Jess, Jen, and school officials, the resistant and hegemonic interplay is displayed in the stanzas above. These tensions are located in the descriptive words that Jess uses, such as clash, control, disruptive, and fix, and they are also symbolic in Jess's gestures when describing the experience for her daughter. Gestures that Jess used include tapping the table with her fists and switching narrator voice between her daughter and teachers.

Between stanzas two, three, and four, Jess positioned the disciplinary gaze that followed Jen's every interaction as something that was impossible for her daughter to accommodate. In fact, Jess took up similar forms of resistances to the violating interactions that her daughter was expected to acquiesce to. For instance, Jess resisted the school Discourses of individualization and normalization when she stated: "Jen and I both.. I <u>think</u> clash with the same, the same type of people…" (stanza one). Schooling interactions like "You're gonna like <u>math</u>! You're gonna do it <u>the way I tell you to do it</u>! You're gonna <u>not be disruptive</u>" will always be read by HDV youth like Jen as inherently violating (hegemonic) even if the educators believe they are doing the right (normative) thing. It is also clear from Jess's perspective how communications from teachers get read as violating acts by Jen and thus created hegemonic/resistive tension. Jess mimicked Jen's voice, stating: "You're not gonna <u>get me</u> to do what you want by demanding it, <u>you know</u>? *or telling me*, <u>we're gonna fix this part of you</u>" (stanza four). In this instance, the public transcripts of this school culture (demands placed on Jen by educators in an effort to repair her as she was perceived as broken) clashed with Jen's cultural knowledges and she resisted. Jen's cultural knowledge was keen in reading normative violation. She brought to this social situation the ability to fight back and resist teacher practices like an intense demanding stances that subversively felt like violating expectations and reading teacher ideologies (practices) determined to "fix" her.

These normative Discourses do not emerge out of a vacuum. Laws (2011) eloquently captured similar types of dominant Discourses that have significant shaping effects on the public transcripts in the school culture she researched. When working with

and leading special education teachers who directly worked with youth labeled "disordered," Laws asserted, "they [teachers] must be constructed as being the one person who is going to make the difference in the life of a child—to save children from themselves, their abuse, their thinking, and their own behavior" (p. 45). Laws' analysis of what she referred to as EBD subjects or the "mad," "bad," and "sad" offered important, although painful, perspectives on how these objectifying representations are not intentionally created to further marginalize some of most marginalized youth, but are rather discursively taken up as "truths" in our public schools. She claimed, "As teachers we seem to be compelled to order what is disordered, calm what is disturbed, socialise what is delinquent, and fix what is broken" (p. 97). It is difficult, at best, for teachers to disentangle themselves, their beliefs, and their practices when these things are shaped by powerful common sense Discourses promoted by the school cultures.

Jess continued to describe how she fought the labeling of Jen as EBD. She positioned her story in historical terms, detailing how she came to realize the harm that EDB labeling had on her two older stepdaughters. Her stepdaughters, who were also HDV youth, were labeled EBD (among other labels) years earlier at the same elementary school. Through her struggles as an abused wife and mother, she also came to the realization that Jen's cultural responses to school practices read as violating were not damaged, but rather responded to Jen's social conditions at home and to at times harsh conditions in school. She described her own consciousness-raising experience regarding EBD labeling:

> STANZA 1
> He [the father] got custody of the three kids [Jess's stepchildren].

I had Jen and then here we have this family.. *that* we've got the kids in therapy
and we've got all sorts of stuff. *The mom's kind of out of the picture*.
So bringing them up with all the other issues that they had.. they were easily
identified with EBD diagnoses….[describing the older stepchildren] *and*.. the
girls.. I was real strong with their IEPs. Really believing it was because of
all there.. history of everything.. *Well* there was a lot of domestic violence going
on in the home at that time with my ex-husband.

STANZA 2
To me, that was like a whole different thing. I never really related it to the issues
they [stepchildren] were having until after.. we were married for or together.. for
that 8-year span.. *until* I had Jen and had the kids, we were more worried about
the stuff that happened to them prior [e.g., foster care], not really what was going
on in the home at that time, all the domestic violence and all the craziness. *um*.. I
never realized it until he was out of the picture of how that was just
contributing to all of the other aspects of what was going on with those kids.

STANZA 3
It wasn't until I got into my own counseling, was out of the relationship, and *saw*,
"Wow!" I mean, all that stuff that I fought for them having them [EBD labels],
you know, the behavioral problems, it was a lot of her acting out of what was
going on at home...

Jess critiqued the school practices of EBD labeling differently once this same school

attempted to label her youngest daughter, Jen, as emotionally behaviorally disordered.

(The setting of the story that follows is several years later).

STANZA 4
J: *So* one of the things with Jen I wanted to make sure it didn't happen *which* they
had kind of recommended [EBD labeling] when she was at Smith [Jen's
elementary school] and I was very open with the teachers about what had been
going on [domestic violence and family under protective custody]. It was an
African American male teacher that she had in fourth before she came to
Saturnalia in fifth grade…

STANZA 5
J: *I* actually went to school with his brother, so I was open with what was going
on and 'cause he was trying to push *because* of the issues Jen was having for..
um.. having her tested and I'm like..
T: .. For EBD?
J: Right. And I'm *like*..[quoting herself] "No. I don't believe that's what's going
on. I think it's really related to what's been going on at home."

90

T: What did they.. How did they respond to that?

STANZA 6
J: He.. Because he knew me, I think it was the administration that was really trying to push for it more because he knew me on a more personal level.. um.. *and I said*, "We're trying to work it out a different way with dad and into counseling."

STANZA 7
J: *They* were really trying to like.. and I don't know.. *To me*, it almost seemed like funding. [Jess mimicking teacher voice]: "If we're going to have to anything extra, then we're going to need an IEP because we need more money or we need more staffing."…[Jess referring to school staff]: *It* always felt like.. it was.. uh.. more a money push on.. *could* care less what was going on.. with what was really happening. *It was more about*, [teacher voice again] "Let's just get this paperwork signed and figured out to get more funding for.." *You know* they'd say for your child, but you know that it's more for.. the schooling. *I mean for the funding for* the..[Jess mimicking a sarcastic school official voice]: *Oh*, you get more kids in special ed. Then there's more money coming in.

STANZA 8
You know, because they didn't really ever follow the IEPs.. it was just a constant struggle.

Jess's perspective underscored the school staff's one-sided concerns related to her daughter's behaviors as a need for funding rather than better understanding how the school could help support Jen's and Jess's realities of navigating domestic violence. This was an obvious example of how the larger Discourse of special education monies permeated school funding decisions. School officials were made aware that both Jess and Jen were under protective services when this school experience occurred and yet they were determined to offer "support" through EBD labeling. Baker (2002) referred to this type of "normalization" of a school's public transcript as "the propensity to classify, divide, withhold, and promote on the basis of various forms of evaluation that mask their [school officials'] indebtedness to matters ontological," calling these actions "the hunt for disability" (p. 693). This "hunt" served as a set of "technologies of responsibilisation [to]

ensure the shaping of conduct (relations of self to self and to others) is mobilised in a desired direction" (p. 674). Jess's description of this school's need for a label so that money could follow sheds light on the bind that educators find themselves caught in: a tension between a desire for normativity and a desire for funds to support families.

In stanza four, Jess's attention turned toward connecting EBD labeling and a need for funding from school officials—with an eye toward accessing resources for fixing Jen rather than understanding and suggesting resources to support this family living under social duress. Jess resisted this school's recommendation to label Jen EBD. She stated: "No. I don't believe that's what's going on. I think it's really related to what's been going on at home." She later stated: "We're trying to work it out a different way with dad and into counseling." Jess also named the power of funding tied to the process of EBD labeling when she took up a sarcastic and mimicking voice describing what the school officials would do with the additional funding: "*You know* they'd say for your child, but you know that it's more for.. the schooling." From the perspective of school officials, the practice of EBD labeling seemed to be a natural Discourse in response to Jen's resistance. Jess referred to her daughter's resistance to demands read as violating as: "You're [the teachers] not gonna get me [Jen] to do what you want by demanding it, you know?" Public transcripts and the practices that materialize like the ones highlighted in this excerpt help to construct Jen's resistive actions as emotional and behaviorally problematic leading to objectification.

Most problematic in Jess's narrative is the reality that the educators' responses were not because school officials were unaware of Jess and Jen's real-time experience of

92

domestic violence. Rather, they seemed to believe the only way to help them was to label

Jen EBD. When these types of public transcripts dominate a school culture, there is a

great danger for the marginalized person's subjectivity to disappear altogether where "the

human subject has no body, nor does the subject exist, prior to its subjection as

representation. . . .bodies are linguistic effects" (Siebers, 2001, p. 739). For Jess and Jen,

this "linguistic effect" is wrapped in the school's need to have Jess sign the paper work

affirming Jen's EBD label that would then, in the eyes of educators, open doors of

support for Jen as evidenced in stanza 7: "*It was more about*, [Jess mimicking teacher

voice]: Let's just get this paperwork signed and figured out to get more funding…"

HDV youth are repeatedly labeled "at-risk" in the most detrimental and yet

acceptable ways. Government labels like SED (seriously emotionally disturbed), an

official acronym for EBD, served to objectify Jen, making her school identity one seeped

in disorder and in need of behavioral support situated in a system that needed resources to

handle the disorder. Of course, what follows governmental labels and the need for more

resources is money, and the discursive process of labeling is big business. Jess clearly

identified such practices in painfully poignant ways. SED is the current label that public

schools are *required* to use to receive special education funds. Sadly, at the same time,

these institutions refused to recognize their culpability in the very construction of the

disordered Other (Pyscher, 2015). Under these weighty and damaging school Discourses,

what were HDV youth like Jen and their caregivers to do in response to institutional

forces determined to reproduce compliance and objectification?

Importantly, these public transcripts are upheld by school cultures in general and not solely located in the context of special education practices like the meetings Jess described. It is commonly recognized that general education school Discourses also promote practices that try to normalize objectified youth. For instance, Danforth and Navarro (2001) outlined the medicalized discourses that general and special education teachers took up in labeling children ADHD. They stated, "dominant discourses and cultural power is [sic] accorded to public schools and medical and psychological professionals, who are supported by a science of human neurology and behavior" whereby most of the teachers in their study "seemed to submit to these political arrangements of authority and even take hope and comfort in holding that schooling and medicine will lead the way to the good life" (p. 186). In my study, the objectifying practices of special education labeling mixed with disciplinary actions of general education teachers were similar for Shanna. Her process of being labeled EBD is especially difficult to tell because it reveals the obvious tensions and power differentials in public and hidden transcripts that most of us love to ignore. Unlike Jen, Shanna had no advocacy from caregivers or educators, creating an easy target for EBD labeling.

Shanna's Fight: You are the Problem—Own It

For Shanna, the experience of elementary school was at best difficult. Shanna was labeled EBD in her special education IEP by third grade. In interviews, Shanna described the relentless teasing she experienced from other children. Shanna was frequently reminded by her teachers that she "should handle it," the teasing, on her own, and that she should move beyond the experience and ignore the social violation being directed at

94

her. In fact, this request later becomes a failure on Shanna's part when educators told her to "stand up for herself." In the following interview and IEP excerpts, it is clear that Shanna was policed by school staff while also being expected to police her own experiences of bullying by other children. We also see the larger effects of EBD labeling and how, once objectified, HDV youth like Shanna are expected to self-manage toward becoming a compliant body. This process occurred in two ways: (1) school gazing and expectations of self-maintenance as a part of her EBD label and (2) Shanna's expectation to self-manage her personal responses to bullying by other students.

Excerpt one: Shanna as EBD subject. What is amazing in Shanna's stories and reified in her IEP is how the label of EBD became easily applied and thus used to construct Shanna as a disordered youth rather than as an HDV youth trying to navigate violent conditions at home and school. Sadly and unlike Jen, Shanna's mother and father did not resist the objectified EBD status. In fact, their participation not only reified her "disordered" identity in elementary school, but also continued her "disorder" during her middle school years. The following excerpt from Shanna's 2009 IEP emphasizes the origins, construction, and reification of her EBD label that solidified her elementary school identity. In the following excerpt, I use Shanna's third grade IEP as a school artifact, authored by a Ph.D. LP School Psychologist, to show how Shanna's subjectivities were constructed through the process of EBD labeling while her social experiences of navigating domestic violence and bullying were never considered or decontextualized. Shanna's experience seems to have been constructed by deficit ideologies and practices that positioned her in the unsuccessful process of being labeled

95

EBD. Both Shanna and Jen's resistive responses were framed as emotionally and

behaviorally disordered.

> STANZA 1
> In third grade, Shanna was reassessed and was found to qualify for special
> education services under emotional/behavioral disorders and has been
> receiving services under that disability category since that time.
>
> STANZA 2
> Parent interview in 2009 indicated concerns with stubborn and defiant
> behavior. Shanna was described as verbally aggressive and there were
> incidents of pushing mother. Parents also indicated that Shanna had some
> limitations in areas of adaptive functioning including hygiene, knowing her
> phone number and address, sleep and eating habits.
>
> STANZA 3
> Observations conducted as part of the 2009 evaluation included defiance and
> inappropriate verbalizations (such as "Shut up," insults and unspecified violent
> threats mumbled under her breath) directed toward the teacher.
>
> STANZA 4
> Teacher interview in 2009 indicated that Shanna was the victim of teasing by
> peers for her weight and body odor. She was described as having low self-esteem
> and taking the role as class clown.
>
> STANZA 5
> Mental health screening in 2009 indicated concerns with difficulty expressing a
> range of feelings, impulsive and off-task behavior, temper tantrums and immature
> behavior. She was described as often inappropriate in her interactions with others
> including abrupt or demanding behavior with peers, difficulty making and
> maintaining friendships and resistance to authority. It was indicated that Shanna
> was often worried (excerpt one, p. 8).

In the IEP excerpt, Shanna was constructed as an emotionally and behaviorally

disordered (EBD) subject. Especially at the tender age of third grade, such objectification

can detrimentally affect the life trajectories of children and youth like Shanna.

During her elementary years, Shanna's EBD subjectivity became the significant

representation of her school identity. Her IEP served as a direct and powerful public

96

transcript in shaping this subjectivity. It is clear that Shanna's IEP sustained both

normative and hegemonic Discourses as words like "stubborn, defiant, impulsive, and

aggressive" became objectifying descriptors masking Shanna's resistive actions as

something inherently deficient in her. In stanza 3, the EBD described traits were

considered to be disordered by the school psychologist and included "defiance and

inappropriate verbalizations …unspecified violent threats mumbled under her breath

directed toward the teacher." I would posit that these are examples of Shanna's HDV

resistive cultural practices (hidden transcripts) in response to years of violations at home

and her "reading" of violating actions enacted by educators and other students.

The mediated gaze taken up by authoritative voices as a part of the school's

public transcripts include the school psychologist, Shanna's parents, and a teacher. Once

enacted, this gazing effect became a powerful tool ensuring that Shanna was controlled as

an EBD subject or a compliant actor in the interplay between normative hegemony and

resistance. Her disordered identity was now *written* in an official school document,

making it easy to objectify and classify any action or interaction she engaged in as

problematic. McDermott and Varenne (1995) claimed that an "explosion" of disabilities

of deficit have emerged more recently, often objectifying children and youth while none

of these representations "guarantees a balance point between showing how bad things

are in the lives of children who need our help and showing how the problem is a product

of cultural arrangements—*our product of our own activities*" (p. 331). Such "cultural

arrangements" have dramatic consequences for HDV children and youth like Shanna.

Thomas and Glenny (2000) highlighted these effects, describing the label of Emotionally

97

Behaviorally Disordered (EBD) as a destructive signifier that promoted practices of inhumanity in schools:

> A term [EBD] that too conveniently packages together difficult, troublesome children with emotional disturbance. In its use is an insidious blurring of motives and knowledges, which imputes problems to children that in reality are rarely theirs. In the dispositional attributions that are therein made, unnecessarily complex judgments about punitive need take place of simple judgments about what is acceptable or unacceptable behavior for a particular institution. Use of the term "EBD" enables the substitution of the former for the latter—of the complex for the straightforward—and this in turn perpetuates a mindset about behavior that distracts attention from what the school can do to make itself a more humane place. (p. 294)

Shanna's EBD subjectivity followed her into her middle school years and has continued to have significant power in defining Shanna's life trajectory today.

In stanza two, multiple caregivers and school officials solidified her disordered identity as an institutional truth and constructed Shanna's EBD public identity. In the following excerpt, Shanna is socially positioned in four distinct ways as the disordered Other through: (1) school officials co-opting home behaviors; (2) silencing/ignoring her experience of domestic violence; (3) the school psychologist's involvement in constructing her EBD subjectivity; and (4) her third grade teacher's involvement in constructing her EBD subjectivity.

First, in stanza 2 below, Shanna's parents described her as having "defiant behavior" at home whereby the school psychologist uses these descriptions as a way to co-opt Shanna's home behaviors, connecting them to her ascribed deviant school behaviors.

> STANZA 2
> Parent interview in 2009 indicated concerns with stubborn and defiant behavior. Shanna was described as verbally aggressive and there were incidents of pushing mother. Parents also indicated that Shanna had some limitations in areas of adaptive functioning including hygiene, knowing her phone number and address, sleep and eating habits.

Important to this part of the equation was the reality that the parental construction of Shanna as an EBD subject could possibly be her father—the perpetrator of violence in Shanna's home life. I make this conjecture, because in her seventh grade IEP re-evaluations, her father's words in a parental interview served as a continuance of Shanna's EBD subjectivity.

Second, the inhumaneness of this school's actions in blatantly ignoring and disregarding Shanna's experience of domestic violence was significant. School officials who made these decisions were aware of the domestic violence. In fact, domestic violence is non-existent in Shanna's IEP. Shanna's home life was never considered, although her "deviant behaviors" were. Similar to Jess's retelling, why would educators who were working with a deeply marginalized HDV child like Shanna not consider the social effects of familial domestic violence? Danforth and Navarro's (2001) study connecting teacher discourses and how they applied medicalized Discourses through the social construction of ADHD talk in the everyday language of the classroom may shed light on this dilemma. In their study, they traced how educators used the discursive

Discourses of medicalized perspectives in shaping the context of school Discourses. Their findings were telling:

> This medicalized approach to research tends to overlook the way that childhood disorders are social and linguistic products cofabricated within the complex construction and contestation of cultural codes, norms, and identities. A medicalized approach often fails to acknowledge that researchers who "discover" childhood disorders and professionals making diagnoses of those disorders operate within the constructive and contested discursive field of political and normative meanings about the lives of children. (p. 167)

School officials never considered the social conditions of domestic violence or the impact these conditions might have created for Shanna. Nor is there any evidence that school officials questioned the practices of Shanna's third grade teacher or why Shanna resisted this teacher. In fact, this same teacher, along with the school psychologist, aids the construction of Shanna's disordered identity, creating a third and fourth form of positioning by authority figures.

Sadly, Shanna had few opportunities for agentic subjectivity outside the deficit representation ascribed to her by authority figures. In stanza 3, the school psychologist solidified Shanna's EBD subjectivity as the third point of Shanna's EBD positioning through her/his authoritative opinion. At this point, the authoritative power of this school official was clear—she/he authored the IEP or medicalized document, which served as a public transcript. He/she continued to build Shanna's EBD subjectivity through this 30-

minute classroom observation as part of a mandated technique in the construction of a

student's special education IEP.

> STANZA 3
> Observations conducted as part of the 2009 evaluation included defiance and
> inappropriate verbalizations (such as "Shut up," insults and unspecified violent
> threats mumbled under her breath) directed toward the teacher.

The school psychologist's professional observation of Shanna identified very similar

deviant behaviors to those given by Shanna's parents. He/she described Shanna's actions

as "defiance" and "inappropriate verbalizations [e.g., "Shut up," insults and unspecified

violent threats mumbled under her breath] directed toward the teacher." There was no

other content offered by the psychologist outside of language of deviance. Normative

hegemonic actions like these produced by school officials who report such "disorderness"

in efficient, non-contextualized forms confirmed to the greater community that Shanna

was indeed emotionally and behaviorally disordered. At this point, actions like mediated

gazing and documentation of specific "deficit-oriented" behaviors were violating and

especially dangerous because they officially sanctioned Shanna as deviant. This

institutional "truth telling" helped cement Shanna's EBD subjectivity and school

trajectory in precarious ways.

Highlighted in stanza 4, a fourth part of the Shanna's social positioning as an

EBD subject progressed logically as informed by her third grade teacher—a school

official whom Shanna resisted.

> STANZA 4
> Teacher interview in 2009 indicated that Shanna was the victim of teasing by
> peers for her weight and body odor. She was described as having low self-esteem
> and taking the role as class clown.

In this stanza, the teacher offered a perspective on why Shanna might possibly display deviant behavior. What is astonishing in these observational reflections by the teacher and school psychologist was the missing social context and social conditions such as teasing and bullying. These experiences profoundly affected Shanna's ability to act "properly" and "compliantly." Beyond the missing social context that Shanna was a third grader witnessing daily domestic violence was the fact that neither educational official seemed to care that Shanna was a victim of peer teasing/bullying. It seemed the need for EBD subjectivity and social compliance trumped the socially violating experiences Shanna endured as a child and as a student. Any reflection or consideration of responsibility on the part of the teachers or administration was clearly missing. In fact, the excerpt was void of any possible relational influences, with the exception that Shanna was responsible for the bullying she experienced. It seemed that Shanna brought the bullying upon herself—that she was overweight, unclean, and acting as the class clown, that her low self-esteem was a self-produced embodiment of her continued disordered self and part and parcel of her EBD subjectivity. This was the influence and effect of damaging public transcripts for Shanna. When the marginalized subject (Shanna) was deemed the cause of others' hatred and violence toward the Other (themselves), she was expected to be more self-disciplined and more responsible, and to fix her own disorderness. Shanna's story begs us to ask: where is our humanity for children like her?

The educators' analysis and construction of Shanna's EBD subjectivity seemed to be void of recognizing how she was resisting the violating experiences in her home and school. In the final stanza, Shanna is fully immersed as a byproduct of the school officials

102

mediated gaze. This gaze created conditions where Shanna became responsible for

managing her own disorderness based on *her* problematic "interactions with others."

> STANZA 5
> Mental health screening in 2009 indicated concerns with difficulty expressing a
> range of feelings, impulsive and off-task behavior, temper tantrums and immature
> behavior. She was described as often inappropriate in her interactions with others
> including abrupt or demanding behavior with peers, difficulty making and
> maintaining friendships and resistance to authority. It was indicated that Shanna
> was often worried.

Shanna was ascribed emotive words like "impulsive," "off-task," "temper tantrums,"

"immature," "demanding," and "resistance." These descriptions served as a discursive

technique where school officials could explain away her subjective experiences of

violence. In effect, it solidified their ability to objectify Shanna—easily tagging her as a

disordered or throwaway youth (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). The school psychologist

offered only one slice of humanizing perspective in this artifact—offering the descriptor

of "worried." Yet, this one moment of sensitive analysis never solidified into positioning

Shanna as anything less than an EBD subject, making her responsible for changing her

own behavior. As described in Shanna's later elementary stories and discussed in the

following section, when such actions (constructions) like EBD labeling go unchecked the

damaging effects follow children.

Shanna's embodiment of EBD subjectivity. The label of EBD stuck with

Shanna as she began to embody the elementary school's expectation that she learn to self-

manage toward a more compliant body. Shanna's earlier resistance, described as

"deviant," became a self-reproducing resistive process of self-induced truancy. Shanna

tempered her responses to the social violence she continued to endure both at home and

in school by almost entirely disappearing from school altogether. By fifth grade, she became the docile body the schooling officials sought—she collapsed inward and by mid-year of sixth grade, she became a truant youth, missing over 80 percent of school days. These actions on the part of Shanna could be "read" as a full rupture between the public and hidden transcripts between herself and the school she attended. Essentially, truancy became an act of cultural self-preservation or resistive ambivalence.

Important to the following section is the fact that Shanna was the only youth participant in this study who was living under current conditions of domestic violence. And rather than having a caregiver who advocated against labeling, Shanna's parents helped to reify Shanna's constructed identity as an EBD youth through her IEP. As mentioned in chapter two, Shanna's mother was not included in my study due to the difficult circumstances she faced as a mother/caregiver who was experiencing domestic violence. This was made clear during my observations, the consent/assent process, and through information offered by Marissa, the school social worker. I do not place blame on Shanna's mother for her participation in helping to construct her daughter's EBD subjectivity. She was a woman caught up in a horrible web of social violence. Rather, I place blame with the school officials who not only refused to acknowledge Shanna and her mother's socially violent realities, but also actively produced Shanna's deficit objectifications and subsequent response of truancy.

The following excerpts were taken out of the first interview with Shanna where she discussed her elementary school experience of having to self-discipline her responses to violating experiences with teachers and fellow students.

STANZA 1
T: So where we started, Shanna, was um.. What experiences most shaped your life up to this point? You kind of mentioned your family.. but what else has shaped what you think makes Shanna today?
S: *School*.
T: School? How's that?

STANZA 2
S: *Like* I told you before.. like the experiences I've had between like.. the difference between like elementary school and all girls' school..[Saturnalia] an all girls school makes me feel like, like.. it makes me feel like I can open up more because when I was like in elementary school I felt like I was clamping.. really tightly.
T: Why.. why do you think you were clamping tightly there?.. What would be the reasons for that?
S: ..Depression. um.. Bullying the number one thing and then I would say.. No friends. I didn't really make any friends in elementary school except for some boys because like they really understood me and like they like think the same things that I did…Yeah.
T: *And*.. When you say "bullying," what do you mean by that? What does that look like?
S: Like, in elementary school there would be like this group of girls.. and boys and like.. they would do their thing and they would always make fun of me.
T: Hum.. okay, so they were just mean.
S: Yeah…

STANZA 3
T: *And* how would you respond to them?
S: I would just ignore them. I really wouldn't go looking for a fight because I'm not that kind of person.

STANZA 4
T: Mm-hm. What.. How would you describe your relationship with teachers in elementary school?
S: *Not very good* because I.. If I told them that some kids were bullying me, they would say, [mimicking voice of teachers] "Just ignore them. Pretend like they're not there.".. And I'd listen, *but like*.. that wasn't the very best advice that they gave me.
T: Uh-huh. What would you want them to do?
S: To at least like.. tell them to stop.

STANZA 5
S: *or* at least call their parents home because *like* I've been bullied innumerous amount of times in elementary school *and* I've had a lot of phone

105

calls <u>home</u> about how I'm not sticking up for myself and how I'm not.. <u>being</u> confident.

The social identities of EBD and becoming a self-disciplining, compliant student were represented in the public transcripts promoted by Shanna's elementary school. The practices embedded in such transcripts were diverse and efficient processes where Shanna was expected to turn the persistent institutional gaze into a self-disciplining gaze. Foucault (1982) defined this discursive process as one where "the subject is objectified by a process of division either within himself or from others" (p. 208). Shanna, as described in stanzas 4 and 5, was divided from within and outside through the self-disciplining techniques espoused by her teachers who suggested: "Just ignore them. Pretend like they're not there" when she was being bullied because of her weight and hygiene. Shanna questioned these authoritative suggestions that were determined to turn her into a compliant subject. She sarcastically claimed: "<u>that wasn't</u> the very best advice that they gave me." Shanna was well aware that the teachers' practices were unjust. Her realizations captured Scott's (1985) argument that the marginalized "are likely to be more radical at the level of ideology than at the level of behavior, where they are more effectively constrained by the daily exercise of power" (p. 331).

These exercises of power and Shanna's realizations that such exercises are unjust were effectively shown in Shanna's last lines of perspective. She commented on the unjust efforts by school officials in punishing her for not doing a better job at self-discipline when she was being bullied. Shanna explained: "*or* <u>at least</u> call their parents home because *like* I've been bullied innumerable amount of times in elementary school *and* I've had a lot of phone calls <u>home</u> about how I'm not sticking up for myself

106

and how I'm not.. being confident" (lines 4ff-4ii). These school officials exercised both efficient external and self-disciplining processes. These administrative actions shed light on how normative hegemony work as a part of public transcripts. Scott (1990) claimed that such actions persuade the marginalized "that their position, their life-chances, their tribulations are unalterable and inevitable, such a limited hegemony can produce the behavioral results of consent without necessarily changing their values" (p. 74). For Foucault (1977), this type of self-disciplining created conditions where:

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes
> responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously
> upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he
> simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.
> (p. 202-203)

Sadly, what Shanna's story illuminated was how the synergetic relationship of actions embedded in normative hegemonic public transcripts emerges from larger deficit-oriented objectifications that become tactics toward self-discipline for the marginalized. This was a clear roadmap that traced the circulation between resistance and hegemonic actions. Dudley-Marling (1995) suggested that labeled students "who do not achieve to their full potential, given sufficient time and the right learning environment" experience and hear the deficit message that they "have only themselves to blame--they are lazy, unmotivated, not willing to put forth the effort, and, therefore are deserving of their fate" (p. 412).

Embedded in Shanna's school experiences and solidified in her ascribed disordered identity were the more dominant Discourses that shaped the public transcripts and the practices her elementary school chose to engage in. Practices like engineering EBD subjectivity solidified by IEPs come to shape subjectivities for HDV youth in very dangerous ways. For instance, the labels solidified in Shanna's IEP were conflated with medical and psychiatric Discourses that helped to strengthen the relationship between Shanna's social identities and the ways that knowledge was organized, making the school's public transcripts and their practices of objectification a defining life experience for Shanna. These "interventions" on the part of school officials were considered a particular kind of public care espoused by the school, reified by her own parents (regardless of their intentions), and pointed toward the body of Shanna who was deemed in need of manipulation and control. The construction and sustainability of Shanna's EBD subjectivity was a lengthy and complicated process. It was an especially dangerous formation for an HDV child like Shanna who struggled for advocacy and agency against life's greatest odds. It seemed the only other significant adults in Shanna's life, who were charged with ensuring advocacy and agency for children and youth, did the opposite. Rather, these educators represented Shanna's experiences, cultural knowledges, and responses as disordered**.**

Truancy as resistive ambivalence. It was clear in interviews that Shanna's responses through class disruptions or mumbling threats at the teacher (forms of her infrapolitics of resistance) were performances of cultural resistance and developed into substantial ruptures as she aged. One significant sustained rupture or act of resistive

ambivalence was the fact that Shanna engaged in truancy. Her resistive ambivalence was personified in a truant label that followed her through her middle school years, when eventually she landed in the judicial system. Are we then to celebrate such agentic and resistive responses like truancy for HDV youth like Shanna? Shanna's truant identity is both agentic and precarious.

I posit that understanding this interplay of hidden and public transcripts is crucial if we are to take seriously the life potential of HDV youth like Shanna. The missing advocacy from school officials for Shanna and HDV children and youth like her significantly shapes the kinds of futures these youth will experience. It is an astonishing fact that when a child is raised in domestic violence, school may be the only other institutional space of refuge outside of the experience of familial violence. This can be a physical and psychic refuge, as well as a place of social refuge where HDV children and youth can make sense of their cultural knowledges in reading violation in nuanced ways. What power do the dominant Discourses play in shaping the consciousness and (in)humanity of Shanna's elementary educators? An explanation may be found in Scott's (1990) claims that for the dominant, the public transcript was a kind "of self-hypnosis within ruling groups to buck up their courage, improve their cohesion, display their power, and convince themselves anew of their high moral purpose" (p. 67). What are we to do with such harmful practices that permeate our public schools? How might we disrupt a school's institutional drive toward "durable and expedient compliance" (Scott, p. 67)?

When Objectification Harms HDV Youth

Is there a danger in acknowledging that there is no natural and unified EBD subject? For Shanna and Jen, the construction of their EBD subjectivities was centered on the reality that schools are assumed to be "safe" spaces for children and youth. Ironically, this was not the reality for Shanna or Jen during elementary school. Nor was this true for Mac or me as young students. When "disordered" HDV youth garner intense attention like the medicalized gaze, their cultural resistances to these violating actions disrupt the sense of structural and psychic safety for school officials. Dominant practices that are part of the public transcripts hold normative hegemonic power over HDV youth and, to some extent, propel educators to exact violating practices in response to youth who are already deeply marginalized.

Even for some of our most progressive teachers, these youths' cultural resistive responses to normative violating practices are often invisible. Many educators may very much believe that youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna could be stronger, healthier, and better behaved—like non-traumatized, "normal" children. These sympathetic beliefs have the power to turn into a compliance-oriented imprisonment for HDV youth. For Shanna, her early resistance, self-management, and later truancy became a precipice upon which she could simultaneously navigate violent experiences in the home and in school. Jen and Jess exerted their resistance differently, and Jen never became the EBD subject. To what extent is it possible for schools to disrupt practices built upon greater violent educational public Discourses and policy?

All of the caregivers in this study, including Shanna's mother, sought a more humanizing school experience for their daughters and themselves. This occurred either in

their late elementary or early middle school years. All concluded that they found such a place at Saturnalia, a small, girl-focused public urban charter middle school. Saturnalia was the central school in my study. Chapter four outlines how Saturnalia attempted to disrupt the kinds of deficit public transcripts found in the elementary schools discussed in this chapter. In chapter four, discussion is shaped by youth participant and caregiver interviews, analysis of school artifacts, and hundreds of hours of video/audio observations that outline a variety of the school's humanizing practices experienced by Jen, Mac, and Shanna. The chapter also discusses the seemingly unsolvable larger dilemmas that the school faced in its attempt to practice more humanely with HDV youth and their caregivers.

Chapter Four: Unleashing the Unpopular: School Cultures Transgressing

Normative Hegemony[10]

She was different. She was…the expression on her face even was different! It was just, people were so different. They was not critical of her. She felt the love and the warmth…I could notice that she was doing things different… "This is the Mac!" you know, she was talking to me and everything…She could be free…She was just..It was just like she had a sense of belonging. She belonged there. She should have been there all the time and everything. I could see this change in her and everything. That's why it was so important for me to find her another school this year because Saturnalia been a big impact in her life and everything. You know, she could..She had her moments there, but if she had to reminisced about it. She reminisced because she had much more..To her, the good outweighs the bad. But that's the way it is at Saturnalia.

> —Makita, Mac's grandmother, description of Mac's experience after transferring to Saturnalia from her former elementary school, in an interview

For Jen, Mac, and Shanna, elementary school cultures that promoted more humanizing practices were elusive. Makita's opening vignette in this chapter captured a very different experience for her family and Mac, her granddaughter, once Mac entered Saturnalia, the middle school central to this study. All of the youth and caregivers shared similar stories to those reflected in Makita's words when describing Saturnalia. They had all found a school space of refuge.

I foregrounded this chapter with stories from Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers depicting their experiences and awareness of school cultures that fostered deficit Discourses seeped in disciplinary and medicalized practices. Jen, Mac, and Shanna performed necessary resistances in response to violating practices they experienced in elementary schools. Ideologically, educators in previous schools seemed determined to tame Jen, Mac, and Shanna's resistive cultural responses. How do we as citizens of

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[10] The title is borrowed from Britzman's (1991) concept that "unpopular narratives unleash ambiguous effects."

public education expect Jen, Mac, and Shanna to respond in such situations? These dilemmas seem unsolvable when schools develop cultural practices of compliance and conformity over more humanizing possibilities.

For all of the youth and caregivers in this study, there was an urgent need to find a different kind of school that provided reprieve and refuge rather than common practices of normative hegemony. Chapter four discusses a school culture that attempted to serve as a space of refuge, fittingly referred to as Saturnalia. Many school cultures believe they promote a sense of refuge; however, Saturnalia was a school that explicitly developed and encouraged humane and HDV culturally relevant practices, which seemed rare and perhaps unpopular under the threat of current and traditional educational policies shaping schools today. Research questions addressed in this chapter include:

(1) To what extent does Saturnalia's school culture result in more generative experiences for Jen, Mac, and Shanna compared to former school environments?

(2) When set in traditional and current educational Discourses, how do Saturnalia's practices position the school in both generative and problematic ways?

Learning from the Unpopular

For the sake of humanity we need to question and disrupt practices nested in violating public transcripts and disrupt the belief in "what is taken as already settled" (Britzman, 1991, p. 64). The stories told by Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers were unpopular stories. They were unpopular because they embodied the wreckage of

domestic violence and equally showcased how forcing HDV youth into performing compliantly and "normally," when the youth read these experiences as violation, will never work. What might be learned if we actually listened to their unpopular narratives? Their stories revealed the very real violence, intentional or not, perpetuated by educators in our schools. Britzman (1991) captured the effects of unpopular narratives. She claimed:

> Unpopular narratives unleash ambiguous effects. A story may be deemed unpopular if it goes against the grain of the acceptable in ways that either offend sensibilities or challenge the comfort of clear boundaries. The unpopular disorganizes questions of morality, of civility, and of subjectivity. It can grate on the nerves or expose what might have been repressed. In any case, unpopular things call into question what is taken as already settled. It sets loose unanticipated and rebellious meanings that throw into question our very agency. (p. 64)

Also, shown in the unpopular narratives of HDV youth like Shanna, Jen, Mac, and my younger self was a profound longing for a more humane and compassionate educational experience. These stories opened fissures that "challenge the comfort of clear boundaries," while also unearthing deeply reified and morally corrupt representations of marginalized youth. Digging into these unpopular narratives would most likely "grate on the nerves" of those who have aligned and are well versed in educational Discourses of Othering.

Foregrounding School Cultures and HDV Youth

Chapters two and three described the social and cultural circumstances that created violating conditions for HDV youth in their elementary schools. This chapter juxtaposes these findings with analysis of Jen, Mac, and Shanna as they traversed Saturnalia's school culture. Data collection included eight months of observations, hundreds of hours of video/audio recordings, interviews, and analysis of the school's cultural artifacts (e.g., student art work, posters) that traced the relationship between signs, symbols, and discourses in place. I used a critical ethnographic methodology to pay close attention to the youth's social performances as they traversed Saturnalia's school culture. I sought methodologies that afforded a more humanizing analysis for Jen, Mac, and Shanna while also documenting the deficit practices schools often reproduce when working with marginalized youth like these three youth participants.

When I analyzed the youth participants' unpopular narratives, surprising findings regarding Saturnalia continued to surface. In unexpected ways and unlike those of the youths' elementary school experiences, a vast majority of educator pedagogies at Saturnalia were generative in relation to Jen, Mac, and Shanna's culturally resistive performances. Pedagogies like social critique, farce, and love/care often shaped the interactions between Jen, Mac, and Shanna and their teachers. These ways of teaching are often "unpopular" in terms of traditional pedagogies found in most public middle schools. In turn, these generative interactions between the HDV youth participants and Saturnalia's educators opened opportunities for agentic identities and performances for Jen, Mac, and Shanna to emerge. For the school, these shared and unpopular cultural

115

practices also positioned Saturnalia in both liberating and precarious ways. Although for Jen, Mac, and Shanna the school felt more liberating, as Saturnalia attempted to serve HDV youth and marginalized youth in general in more humanizing ways, the system faced a multitude of dilemmas based in traditional educational Discourses of Othering. Unlike the difficult school experiences Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers negotiated in elementary school contexts, Saturnalia's school culture offered possibilities set in a more democratic notion of humane schooling. There is nothing either simple or smooth in telling this next part of the study. These are not heroic stories. Rather, they are messy and, at times, defined by unpopular practices.

As a whole, it seems that school cultures like the ones that promote violation over humanity are comfortably acceptable and easier to sustain. Paradoxically for Saturnalia, humane practices often produced detrimental effects for the school at large. Saturnalia's practices were often in direct opposition to traditional and current deficit Discourses (e.g., medicalization of youth) shaping public school policy today. Saturnalia's choice to continue working with HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, refusing to medicalize or expel such youth, led to a number of detrimental effects, including white and middle class flight (racialized and economic segregation). A second challenge that faced Saturnalia was its opposition to medical and psychological frameworks of classroom management (PBIS), which led to educator "push out." Push out teachers at Saturnalia were educators who were ideologically aligned with the deficit beliefs determined to tag youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna as disordered; they subsequently were pushed out of the school by these same youth and other colleagues who felt alliance to HDV and other marginalized youth.

116

For Saturnalia, practicing humanity and compassion also meant that the administration often listened to HDV youth and their caregivers. The notion of teacher "push out" is unpacked more fully in chapter five. A third effect was situated in another complicated dilemma that I posit as a question to be examined. Can schools that are humane, honoring the carnival-like cultural practices of HDV youth, still exist when influenced by larger social and cultural ideologies of compliance and control? The following section describes the theories and methodologies anchoring chapter four.

The Purpose of Public Schools and Power Relationships

Giroux (1993) described schools as "instructional sites" that produce knowledge and they provide students with a sense of place, worth, and identity. The types of acceptable identities and students feeling a sense of worth are dependent upon the public transcripts that school cultures promote. Smith (2000) claimed that U.S. schools often problematically engage in "transforming diverse groups into similar, individualistic, American citizens…In doing so, they offered students selected representations, skills, social relations, and values that presuppose particular histories and ways of being in the world" (p. 372). For Jen, Mac, and Shanna, it seemed that compliance-oriented public transcripts defined their elementary school cultures, setting the stage for their cultural resistive identities to frequently emerge in response to what must have felt like a steady flow of violation.

Kliebard (2004) captured these macro school Discourses in his analysis of the highly contested history for control of curriculum and instruction in American public schools and highlighted the greater competing Discourses that have shaped the modern

117

education system. Educators who were unaware of the contentious and pervasive struggle over curriculum and the ideological purpose of education were left to believe the way education has been constructed is only a natural phenomenon and that there are few alternative visions for what schooling could entail. Thus, educators who do not understand themselves in relation to the forces mentioned in chapter three (e.g., normalization, individualization, medicalization) are at a loss to locate their position as teachers among the push and pull of deficit Discourses bent toward a project of conformity and compliance (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014).

As seen in chapters two and three, these public transcripts often clashed with the hidden transcripts and resistive ambivalence of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. A unique finding discussed in chapter four is that the HDV youths' resistive and agentic identities are often tolerated, if not at times embraced, by a large majority of educators at Saturnalia. As highlighted in the opening vignette, Mac's agentic subjectivity clearly emerged at Saturnalia. To better understand Saturnalia's school culture, I theoretically used Fine's (2005) description of the emergence of early charter schools that were committed to practices of social justice for urban youth. Fine (2005) argued that schools like Saturnalia emerged out of a particular historical moment as a part of the small school movement preceding the current neoliberal takeover of small charter schools.

A Different Kind of School: A Demand for Social Justice

Overall, Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers described Saturnalia as a generative, just, and liberating experience when compared to elementary experiences. The stories told by the youth participants and their caregivers in earlier chapters set the

118

groundwork for better understanding how school cultures can dramatically differ from each other. In reviewing the transcripts from interviews with caregivers and HDV youth participants a theme emerged, describing Saturnalia as a place of refuge, a theme captured in Makita's opening vignette. Saturnalia seemed to serve as an institutional space that embraced her granddaughter very differently compared to Mac's former elementary school. This vignette also captured how Mac responded more agentically once she co-existed in this space. Through interview excerpts of Jen and Shanna, the following section highlights the differences between Saturnalia and their elementary schools. Jen and Shanna were both asked to name the differences between their elementary schools and Saturnalia. Both students attended Saturnalia fifth through eighth grades.

Jen: In a just community with others. When Jen was asked to describe the difference between Saturnalia and the elementary school where she and her mother, Jess, fought the label of EBD, she stated:

> J: Because they've helped me grow because I started in fifth grade and, like, I've changed a lot.
> T: How.. Can you tell.. Be really specific with me what those things are?...
> J: Uhm..
> T: How has Saturnalia helped you?
> J: Uhm..They..They taught me that not.. That more people's needs are.. Like they need stuff more than what my needs are. And that I'm not always going to be the one that needs the most help and that I should try seeing something from other people's point of view.

She described why her relationships with teachers in her elementary school were different from her relationships with teachers in general at Saturnalia:

> T: OK. So let's talk about elementary school. From your perspective, how would you describe Jen in elementary school?

119

J: Ooh.. Bad.
T: What do you mean, "bad"?
J: Well not bad, more like eh.. I liked getting in trouble for some reason because it
   would give me the time to get away from everybody. Cause like in elementary
   school, I didn't really know how to like tell people to leave me alone or really
   like get my emotions out to teachers.
T: OK. How would you say you were treated by teachers?
J: Pretty good.
T: Pretty good in elementary school? So why not tell them how you felt?
J: I didn't really trust them as much.
T: What do you.. Why.. Why would you say that you.. So is it fair for me to say
   that you trust the teachers at Saturnalia more?
J: Yeah.
T: Why is that?
J: Because I have more in common with the teachers here.

Jen described her commonalities with Saturnalia teachers as sharing similar personalities.

For instance, she described how her love for being loud and outgoing was shared with her

science teacher, Ms. Liz:

T: Can you tell me more about that? (her commonalities with Saturnalia teachers)
J: Like for example, me and Miss Liz.. She connects her life to me because like
sometimes I'm sassy and I'm loud and like really outgoing and she told me that
she was like.. She was just like that when she was younger.
T: She's still kinda sassy!
J: And she still is (laughing). Yeah.

Jen described her art teacher, Ms. Jade, and her wellness teacher, Ms. Kell, along with the

school social worker, Ms. Marissa, as mother figures because they gave good advice

when difficult situations arose. Considering the disciplinary problems Jen faced in her

elementary school and her mother's fight against her being labeled EBD, Jen's response

to the difference in discipline at the two schools was enlightening. She insightfully

differentiated her individual responsibility from a just disciplinary response on the part of

Saturnalia's staff. When I asked her to describe the difference between disciplinary

practices at her elementary school and Saturnalia, she stated:

120

J: At that school [her former elementary school] they really didn't have like good discipline. Like they would just let somebody do something and they wouldn't get disciplined at all. But here [Saturnalia], if you do something that wouldn't normally do, in like elementary school, you'll get a good consequence for that.

T: Hm. OK. So did you not prefer the discipline at your elementary school?

J: Mm-hm.

T: OK. And can you tell me again why you prefer the discipline at Saturnalia?

J: Because it's *fair*…

T: How is it fair? From your perspective?

J: Because like if you do something, they give you a consequence that they know that would fit what you did. And they won't give you a consequence that's over what you did. And they'll make sure the consequence is like.. It's not too much, but then it's not really a consequence.

T: What do you mean "it's not a consequence"?...

J: Because they know that you can accomplish it and that you'll be strong enough to get through it and to get.. Like get back on track and get where you're supposed to be at.

Shanna: Acting "EBD" and not being seen as EBD. For Shanna, Saturnalia provided a whole different generative experience than her experiences in elementary school. In her elementary school, she collapsed under the weight of domestic violence in the home and her EBD subjectivity. Chapter three showed how Shanna's early resistance in her first years of elementary school created an ideal situation for elementary school officials to construct her EBD subjectivity. Damaging objectifications of Shanna were created through normative hegemonic school discourses and reified with a special education IEP. When Shanna was asked to describe the difference at Saturnalia, she reflected many of the same generative sentiments described by Makita in the opening vignette of this chapter and by Jen in the previous section. For Shanna, there was significant irony in the following responses related to her inherited elementary EBD subjectivity. When she described her behaviors at Saturnalia, they fit well with her EBD

subjectivity and yet, at Saturnalia, the school social worker fought against her EBD label.

Many educators at Saturnalia did not think Shanna fit the EBD label. Shanna stated:

> S: The difference would be like me being comfortable with Saturnalia and me not being comfortable with elementary school because I was very..The quiet, shy type back then [in elementary school], but now I'm like a loud, crazy, obnoxious person.
> T: Hm. Why do you think you're loud and crazy and obnoxious?
> S: Because like the people I've met have encouraged me and they give me a lot of good advice to stand up for myself and be more confident and like don't care what anybody thinks of you because they don't know your whole life story, so why should they judge you for who you are?
> T: Is that your friends or is that teachers, too?
> S: Friends and teachers.

It was stunning to hear Shanna describe herself and the identities she took up in elementary school. Descriptions like "quiet and shy" were completely opposite of the EBD representations ascribed to her by school officials in her elementary IEP. In fact, once Shanna was transferred to Saturnalia, the school's psychologist questioned the EBD subjectivity attributed to Shanna in her elementary IEP. This part of Shanna's self-described experience is also stunning because she ascribes herself characteristics like "loud, crazy, and obnoxious" when talking about her identities performed at Saturnalia. These are considered generative performances for Shanna although they would to reify her EBD subjectivity in middle school. She named many of the same teachers (like Ms. Jade and Ms. Kell) as Jen as educators who inspired her to seek advice, stand up for herself, and practice disrupting self-judgment. These pedagogies of love/care are unpacked later in this chapter.

Saturnalia as place and space. As a small public charter middle school, Saturnalia was started as a feminist space where students could be free to find their voice,

explore their potential, and develop their intellects. In many ways, Saturnalia can be described in similar terms as other social justice-oriented small schools that emerged as the first public charter schools opened across the United States with the intention of disrupting the deficit practices shaping the lives of marginalized youth in larger urban public schools. Fine (2005) differentiated these small schools from the current and "new small schools movement [that] is top down and privately subsidized" (p. 4). She described the original small schools movement:

> launched by committed educators and community activists . . . who desperately sought alternatives to the failures of big city high schools, the small schools movement was and in many ways remains, a vibrant, gutsy social movement for creating democratic, warm, and intellectually provocative schools. (p. 4)

Saturnalia can be described as such a school. For Fine (2005), this small schools movement defined by educators and community activists was founded on the premise of offering:

> intellectual possibility for poor and working class youth and to reclaim the public sphere, not retreat from it. Small schools were a strategy to reinvigorate public education with spaces of anti-racist possibility that would inspire, spread and support other schools—not islands seeking exit. (p. 6)

In these small schools, practices were often geared toward social justice. The practices included efforts often only afforded to more wealthy families and segregated schools, such as issues of access (e.g., no entrance criteria, efforts toward detracking), democratic and civic participation, values placed on a sense of belonging, and trust and intellectual

123

possibilities that included a "curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment to nurture the minds and souls of youth" (Fine, pp. 6-7).

Fine claimed that educators in this small school movement often "hold themselves personally and collectively accountable to a complex matrix of outcome and process measures including attendance, persistence . . . quality of student work, depth of student inquiry, relations with educators, performances, and exhibitions of knowledge" (p. 8). Much of this same complex matrix of outcomes and process qualities were practiced at Saturnalia. To understand how these qualities shape and are shaped by Saturnalia's school culture and the social actors that inhabit the space, two central methodologies were employed to highlight the interconnected relationships between these qualities: critical ethnography and geosemiotics.

<div align="center">

Methodologically Mapping Discourses in Place

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Critical Ethnography: The Study of School Culture

To better understand Saturnalia's school culture, critical ethnography (CE) was used (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Noblit, Flores, & Murillo, 2004). CE supported the identification and analyses of mediating actions, practices, and discourses that arose between HDV youth participants and educational staff. CE as methodology is inherently resistant and designed to speak back to normative discourses and hegemony as a way to be in coalition with the oppressed (Ball, 1994). CE opened possibilities for me to hear the counter-narratives related to Saturnalia's school culture from Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers. CE also worked well with mediated discourse (see chapter five) and geosemiotic analysis. I used these three methodologies together to highlight "ideas about

how to link actions to larger structures of social organization" (Jones & Norris, 2005, p. 10).

Geosemiotics: A Rich Micro Perspective

Although Scott's (1990) analytic of public and hidden transcripts offered generative analysis in attempting to name the deficit Discourses and the effects on the subjectivities of HDV youth, his theory was limited to a more macro analysis of both discourse and action. To supplement this macro perspective, I used geosemiotics (Scollon & Scollon, 2003) in chapter four and mediated discourse analysis (MDA) in chapter five. Both methodologies are theoretically similar and helped to unravel how the "everyday" discourses in place at Saturnalia and the actions shaping the interplay between HDV youth participants, educators' practices, and the overall school culture were also reshaping or resemiotizing the actions and identities of all social actors involved in school interactions. In both chapter four and five, I used four intersecting features of both mediated discourse and geosemiotic analysis seeking to better understand how Saturnalia's discourses in place are shaped by: (1) the social actors or the habitus of individuals; (2) the interaction order in which the social actors conduct their social lives; (3) visual semiotics or discourses embodied in images/texts which they encounter in a school setting; and (4) the place semiotics in which all of this happens, including all the other sign equipment and their emplacement or location in time and space in the material world (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 166). Such an approach afforded me a rich method to analyze the discourses in place that shaped Saturnalia's school culture in relationship to Jen, Mac, and Shanna's cultural practices.

125

Scollon and Scollon (2003) sought analytic methods that complicated a singular

point of analysis whereby they "could address problems of societal discrimination,

institutional structure, and social change with any sense that this point was the fulcrum

point around which everything else rotated" (p. 615). Scollon and Scollon (2003)

claimed: "In taking action . . . there is more at stake than indexing what kind of a person

one is. It matters where on earth one is" (p. 204). Specifically, I used the following

principles of geosemiotics to make meaning and discourses in place at Saturnalia: (1)

indexicality or analyzing how all semiotic signs employ an important meaning in how

they are placed in a social space; (2) dialogicality or mapping how signs work in

aggregates as interconnected or intersemiotic, interdiscursive dialogicality; and (3)

selection or how for social actors, each action requires "a form of selection, positioning

the actor as a particular kind of person who selects among different meaning potentials a

subset of pathways" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 205). The following section highlights

findings related to Saturnalia's larger discourses, which in turn shaped the actions/

interactions of the youth participants and Saturnalia's educators.

The Making, Sustaining, and Breaking of Saturnalia

Since its inception, Saturnalia has tried to sustain a school culture dedicated to

social justice. The administration and teachers often troubled practices of special

education placement or adopting deficit-oriented behavioral frameworks like Positive

Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS).[11] In fact, for several years, Saturnalia's

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[11] Borstein (2012) contended a framework like PBIS "intends to replace exclusionary
discipline practices such as suspension and expulsion with more therapeutic supports in
the classroom and the school when students show emotions and behaviors that are

administration refused to adopt such social and behavioral frameworks because they

deemed them to be deficit models where "personal responsibility" trumped the social

effects of race and/or poverty. They viewed such behavioral management frameworks as

a new disciplinary model for marginalized youth (see Bornstein's critique, 2012; Pyscher,

2015). Saturnalia's social worker, Marissa, played an integral part in advocating against

such practices. She openly critiqued EBD labeling and persistently questioned other

factors that marginalized youth experience, such as institutional racism. The staff

engaged in professional development designed by the educators themselves that included

topics like restorative justice (Umbreit et. al, 1994), Developmental Design disciplinary

practices (see https://www.originsonline. org/ developmental-designs), and critical

whiteness and culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Such critical

practices, often unpopular in most schools, positioned the school in paradoxical ways.

Jen, Mac, and Shanna felt a deep sense of community within this small school while

practices like critically questioning EBD labels, detracking, and learning saturated in

critical and social critique often countered larger traditional Discourses bent toward

efficiency and compliance. These were practices typically desired by middle class and/or

white families at Saturnalia, which the administration often refused to enforce to the

school's detriment.

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difficult for school to accommodate" (p. 3). He also contended problematically that this
framework can: "Paradoxically, although the legal intent of PBIS and RTI [Response to
Intervention] is to offer a structure through which to build inclusive schools, they may in
fact establish discourses that functionally reinforce exclusion. They may substitute one
discourse of misbehavior as disability for another in which misbehavior is understood as
deviance, yet with the same power to construct an enduring deficit identity of the student
as one who can be justifiably excluded" (p. 3).

The Setting

Saturnalia is a fifth through eighth grade urban public charter girl-focused middle school and was in its seventh year of operation during the completion of this study. Saturnalia was an aptly fitting pseudonym because of the school's contradictory nature: most of the educators embraced its unpopular practices yet it functioned as a traditional institutional space. As Versnel (1993/1994) suggested, the celebration of Saturnalia metaphorically exemplified "joyful and utopian aspects of careless well-being side by side with disquieting elements of threat and danger" (p. 142). Literally, Saturnalia was also a festival that represented a time where all work was put on hold while symbolizing a time for knowledge and truth (Chance, 1994, p. 71). The school was started and designed by local educators, including traditional and non-traditional educators, K-12 teachers, university professors, and non-profit leaders who were interested in intersecting social justice, education, and community activism. Unlike typical market-driven charters today, the school was built on tenets of sociocultural, social justice, and feminist theories, fitting the description Fine (2005) identified as an urban small schools movement dedicated to social justice.

As a researcher, I knew this school and its culture well. My relationship to Saturnalia began nine years ago and pre-dated the current for-profit driven models of charter schools. My researcher role was also complicated by my participation in the start-up phase of the school. For instance, I led the design of the learning and teaching framework and led professional development sessions with the school's initial staff. My personal relationship with Saturnalia's staff included my partner who served as Executive

128

Director at the time of this study. Although my role as researcher was complicated, this insider status afforded me unique opportunities in understanding the school culture. From this insider and personal perspective, I was privy to the many larger tensions the administration and school faced.

For instance, because of my relationship with the school's founder I saw first-hand the struggles that occurred for Saturnalia as white flight became an issue during its fourth year of operation. In that year, 42 middle class and wealthy mostly white families left the school. For a small school like Saturnalia that only had 200 students, this added significant tensions related to funding. During this same time period, the school enrolled greater numbers of African-American and youth deemed "troubled" by the larger urban school district. In fact, it became well known that the urban public school district located in the same major metropolitan city as Saturnalia encouraged their expelled youth to enroll at Saturnalia. Many of the more privileged families who eventually left demanded that Saturnalia's administration stop accepting *these* youth, whom they believed polluted the school. Jen, Mac, and Shanna were a part of this narrative and although they entered Saturnalia as throwaway youth (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014), the school's administration and a large number of educators refused to rid the school of them and youth like them. It was clear for Saturnalia's administration that these more humane practices were both dangerous for the school at large and potentially agentic for marginalized youth who had been thrown out of other institutions. Saturnalia's social justice mission included serving, rather than ridding, the school of marginalized youth.

The Danger and Potential of Unpopular Practices

As seen above, unpopular practices positioned Saturnalia in precarious ways. Using Fine's (2005) defining qualities of the small school movement and geosemiotic analysis as method, the remainder of chapter four outlines how Saturnalia's discourses in place produced a generative school culture for HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. Saturnalia was a place where they felt liberated to perform their resistive and farcical cultural practices. Unlike the elementary school cultures that Jen, Mac, and Shanna navigated in their earlier years, Saturnalia's discourses in place and educators' actions invited a generative space for Jen, Mac, and Shanna's subjectivities to emerge. Again, this was not a heroic story. As the chapter closes, it becomes apparent why Saturnalia's humane practices positioned the school in paradox and dilemma (one of Saturnalia's core principles).

A Different Kind of School: Saturnalia's Discourses in Place

Understanding Saturnalia's discourses in place personified in words, signs, and symbols served as a structural/material signifier of agreed-upon cultural practices and embodied ideologies, which helped to define the school's culture. Discourses in place can be standardized, situated, or even transgressive (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 166). For instance, as was discussed in chapter three, objectifying Shanna as EBD was a standardized dominant discourse in shaping her EBD subjectivity that was carried out through an IEP (official school text). In many ways, the words, signs, and symbols displayed throughout Saturnalia reflected many of the complex social justice qualities that Fine (2005) described in the small school movement. Figure two outlines how Saturnalia's discourses in place were aligned with Fine's (2005) complex matrix of

130

outcomes that included civic duty, exhibitions of knowledge, social responsibility, and actions toward social justice.

Figure 2: Saturnalia's discourses in place.

Relations of love/care and school culture as farce with educators (culturally relevant pedagogies reflecting HDV youth cultural knowledges)

Liberated bodies in space & critical literacies in place as part and parcel of civic duty

Participation and performances/ exhibitions of knowledge connected to social justice and social responsibility

Saturnalia's complex matrix of outcomes

Liberated Bodies in Space and Critical Literacies in Place: One's Civic Duty

Discourses out of place. Saturnalia's discourses in place communicated that students were expected to take up agency and voice at the school. Cresswell (2009) suggested that "places are practiced. People do things in place. What they do, in part, is responsible for the meanings that a place might have" (p. 2). Saturnalia's discourses in place, like civic duty and social justice, went beyond the school's physical spaces. These discourses were also found in the school's promotional materials that were meant to attract students like girls, diverse populations, and youth who seek having voice in a

school setting. They explicitly communicated feminist and critical discourses. Website

Photo One (Figure 3, below) was a central running header found on the school's website.

The written text on the banner is authored by a Saturnalia parent who stated: "I love the

fact that the girls are being taught how to think and their 'voice' matters." Saturnalia did

not shy away from critical or feminist messaging at a communal or virtual level. This

Figure 3. Website photo one.
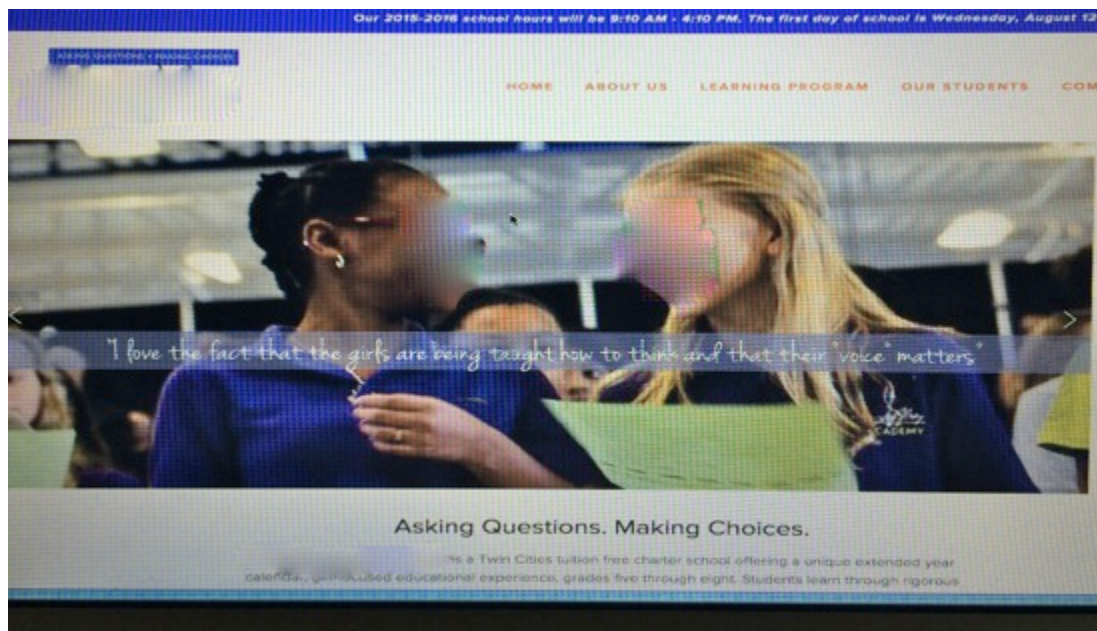
same message was also displayed on metropolitan buses and large interstate highway

signs across the metropolitan area. In the text/caption of School Enrollment Photo One

(Figure 4), an ironic feminist discourse was prominently displayed as the symbol of a

sparkling women's high heel juxtaposed with the blocked words: "Because life is much

more than a fairytale. . . Support Saturnalia Girls In Preparing for Their FUTURES." This

Figure 4. School enrollment photo one: Billboard.
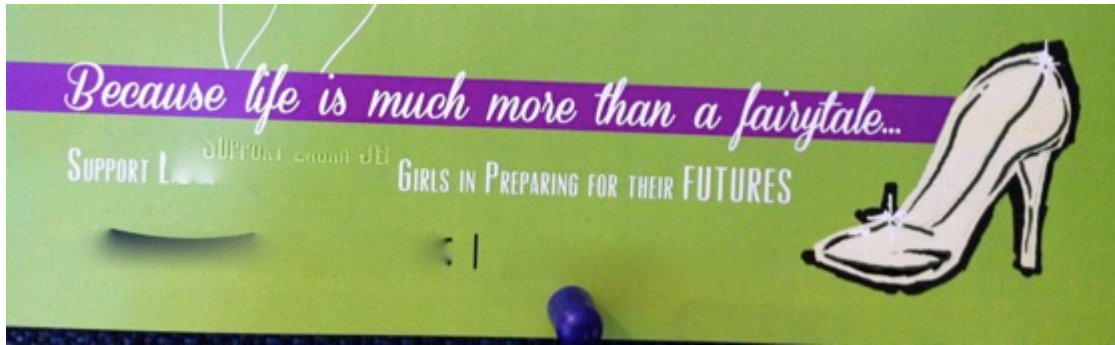
feminist/critical discourse evoked a set of meanings ascribed to the school. Cresswell (2009) argued:

> Materiality, meaning, and practice are all linked. The material topography of place is made by people doing things according to the meanings they might wish a place to evoke. Meanings gain a measure of persistence when they are inscribed into the material landscape but are open to contestation by practices that do not conform to the expectations that come with place. (p. 2)

It is highly unusual for school promotional materials to explicitly communicate critical and/or feminist ideologies. In these current times, it might be expected that much of a school's promotional materials would be tied to successful testing results that are aligned with Discourses like "academic excellence for the 21st Century." This was not the core message of Saturnalia, but rather what was communicated in the physical discourses in place were similar social justice and feminist meanings to those in both virtual and community-based communications.

Discourses in physical place. Similar critical and feminist messaging was found in Saturnalia's discourses in place. These discourses in place were located in classrooms,

133

hallways, bathrooms, and the lunchroom. Discourses promoting critical literacies, student voice, and civic duty are uncommon in today's urban middle schools and yet at Saturnalia, they were common discourses in place. The images and texts in the following sections were signs and symbols found throughout Saturnalia and aligned to Fine's (2005) complex matrix of social justice qualities. They are prominently displayed in various formal and informal spaces in the school.

The discourse of student voice was often connected directly to civic duty and social responsibility. Images hung freely and were plentiful throughout the school. For instance, School Photo One (Figure 5) shows a very unorthodox scene in the social worker's office where students had graffitied Ms. Marissa's office with their names, Saturnalia's founding principles (e.g., empathy), and general messages of social responsibility like "believe in yourself." These messages covered the walls of this small office space. It was clear that students were invited to have a material and transgressive voice in the often-private school space of a social worker's office. Not only were students

Figure 5. School photo one: Social worker's office.

names written throughout this space but other civic and socially responsible messages were transposed over student names. These messages were taken out of Saturnalia's school principles (e.g., empathy, asking questions/making choices); more generalized messages promoted self-esteem and pushed for engagement of diversity. Even symbols held interdialogic meaning, like the heart representing the notion of love symbolized as the "v" in diversity.

Representation of student voice was also found in the art classroom where students spray-painted their names throughout the classroom as a part of the art curriculum (see Figure 6). They studied the genre of graffiti art and the critical messaging embodied in such an art form. As can be seen in the photo, a protest poster on the far wall exclaimed, "Keep Calm, Join the Resistance." This poster was created in the students'

Figure 6. School photo two: Art classroom.   *Social Justice Sign*

language arts and social studies classroom (LASS) as part of a larger social justice Zine

project. It can be seen leaning and prominently displayed near the entrance of the art

classroom. School Photos Three and Four (Figures 7 and 8) depict a larger photo of the

leaning protest posters. These signs, along with the graffitied messages, indexed the

importance of civic engagement projects within the school while also promoting a sense

Figure 7. School photo three: Poster.   *Figure 8.* School photo four: Poster.

of social responsibility. In a similar style, student art pieces with messages like stopping

human trafficking (Figure 9, School Photo Five) or promoting GLBTQ civil rights

(Figure 10, School Photo Six) were prominently hung throughout the school. Civic

Figure 9. School photo five: Poster.   *Figure 10.* School photo six: Poster.

engagement as a central discourse in place is illustrated in School Photos Five and Six.

There was an expectation that learners engaged in learning tasks and inquiry situated in

critical literacy practices (Janks, 2009; Luke, 2012). These critical literacy discourses

were prominently displayed on Saturnalia's webpage as an explicit form of literacy

instruction (see Figure 11, Website Text Two).

Figure 11. Website text two.

Critical Literacy at Saturnalia: Asking Questions

One of the key pieces of our instructional framework is critical literacy. Through critical literacy, we live out our motto of *Asking Questions, Making Choices.*

What is critical literacy?

Critical literacy is an approach that encourages the reader to actively analyze and deconstruct the texts they encounter in and out of the classroom. In this approach, literacy is about more than the ability to decode or "sound out" the words on the page, or the ability to summarize the main points of a story or article. Critically literate students see any text, whether it is a novel, picture book, textbook, song on the radio, or advertisement, as something that was created by a person or people with their own particular perspective in society, and are able to analyze those texts and reflect on their layers of meaning. Paulo Freire, the educator, philosopher, and author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* said that critical literacy was a vehicle for students and their teachers to learn to "read the world."

What might you see in classrooms that promote critical literacy, and how is it different from other approaches to literacy?

- teachers guide students in encounters with multiple viewpoints rather than presenting one voice as definitive or authoritative.
- students and teachers ask and discuss questions such as: Who created this text? What is this text about, and how do we know? Who is allowed to speak, and what are their perspectives on the world? Who benefits from the text? Who or what has been left out from this text?
- when textbooks are used in the classroom, they are not presented as the ultimate authority on a topic, but rather as another text to be analyzed and deconstructed with a critical lens. Texts are not considered to be universal or unbiased.

These politically oriented discourses of critical literacy interdialogically melded in with

Saturnalia's school motto: "One of the key pieces of our instructional framework is

critical literacy. Through critical literacy, we live out our motto *Asking Questions,*

Making Choices."

Specific feminist/gendered and socially conscious scientific texts were randomly displayed throughout the school serving as a reminder of Saturnalia's discourses in place related to social critique. In School Photos Seven and Eight (Figures 12 and 13), the indexing of gender in the form of troubling "proper" behavior for women is communicated in various forms. Quotes related to feminist perspectives demanding equity regardless of gender are displayed throughout Saturnalia's hallways. Social

Figure 12. School photo seven: Quote.   *Figure 13.* School photo eight: Quote.

critique as a discourse in place was also found in scientific posters created by students, shown in School Photos Nine and 10 (Figures 14 and 15). These posters served a purpose

Figure 14. School photo nine: Poster.   *Figure 15.* School photo 10: Poster.

138

of publicly displaying what was learned in science classes. The messaging on both posters related to sustainability in particular forms. For instance, on the Economic poster (School Photo Nine, Figure 14), students documented their learning that included "Preserve natural resources, save money, more trees." Statements on the Lifestyle poster (School Photo 10, Figure 15) stated: "Don't kill bumble bees." Saturnalia expected students to engage in critical literacy practices/critique in disciplinary classes that created learning conditions where critical and ideological meaning making was common practice. Saturnalia was a place where interdialogical practices were reiterated and "simultaneously individual and social" (Cresswell, 2009, p. 7). Such discourses in place indexed these assumed practices throughout the school. These critical practices did not solely exist in the form of traditional texts; they were also performed by the students. The following section highlights one instance of this practice where students participated in the critical discourses in place that were indexed throughout the school, and also performed civic and social critique during public performances, constituting a discursive dialogicality.

Social justice and performances of knowledge: Dialogic practices and agentic learning. In the LASS (language arts/social studies) seventh and eighth grade classrooms at Saturnalia, quarter and yearlong projects required students to engage in learning that reflected several of Fine's (2005) matrix of complex qualities. In the following example, qualities such as social justice, participation, performance, and student inquiry via civic duty were displayed in Jen, Mac, and Shanna's participation and production of social critique as a part of their end-of-year projects. Such projects served as a semiotic

139

aggregate highlighting how the youths' social experiences and histories of participation connected to literacy practices at Saturnalia and social justice/social responsibility discourses in place. These youth productions involved civic and social critique that can be mapped to demonstrate how signs work in aggregates as intersemiotic, interdiscursive dialogicality with larger discourses in place, including how youths' bodies in space are used in collaborative productions dedicated to agentic, socially just actions. These public productions resemiotized Saturnalia's public transcripts for youth, their families, and educators, while they also provided a space for self-designed (agentic) social, critical, and feminist critique to (re)occur.

The LASS classroom can be described as a dialogic space (Bakhtin, 1981). In this classroom, words, responses, and student productions had a history of use built out of previous responses and in which future responses continued to build as learning continued—or what can be termed a resemiotization of learning. In the following data example, Saturnalia's dialogic culture depended upon overt practices of critical literacy that included student-led productions and public performances where youth self-designed their projects and engaged in social critique of women's gendered roles and status. All seventh and eighth grade students were expected to participate and perform in the year-end project "As a Girl." Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their classmates were tasked with designing a skit that disrupted the stereotypical single story narratives (Adichie, 2009) facing girls and women in the larger societal context. These collaborative youth performances included an opening skit where Jen began the performance standing, holding a book, and asking: "why does she have to look like a Barbie?" as other students

exclaimed, "yeah, why can't she save the day?" In that same scene, a group of 13 to 15

youth throw stereotypically gendered texts to the ground and walk off stage. Other social

critiques performed by students included topics that questioned and resemiotized the

meaning of stereotypical fairytales. For instance, Disney's popular stories like the "Little

Mermaid" were troubled as they were resemiotized by students into tales of time travel

and newly created gender roles that embodied GLBTQ and feminist discourses.

All the skits were original, and students were responsible for designing the

backdrop of the performance. School Photos 11 (Figure 16) and Twelve (Figure 17)

captured this backdrop and outlines how it indexed overt gender and feminist messaging.

*Figure 16:* School photo 11: Backdrop for "As a Girl."

Statements like "AS GIRLS WE NEED TO FIGHT GENDER STEREOTYPES," or "My

voice will be heard," or "I am brave" indexed explicit feminist discourses not only

semiotically in the general space, but interdialogically as the actions of the school's social

actors positioned "the actor as a particular kind of person who selects among different

meaning potentials a subset of pathways" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 205). School

Photo 12 (Figure 17) features the far side of the stage backdrop that was framed as a

symbol of a woman's face.

Figure 17: School photo 12: Close-up of backdrop for "As a Girl."
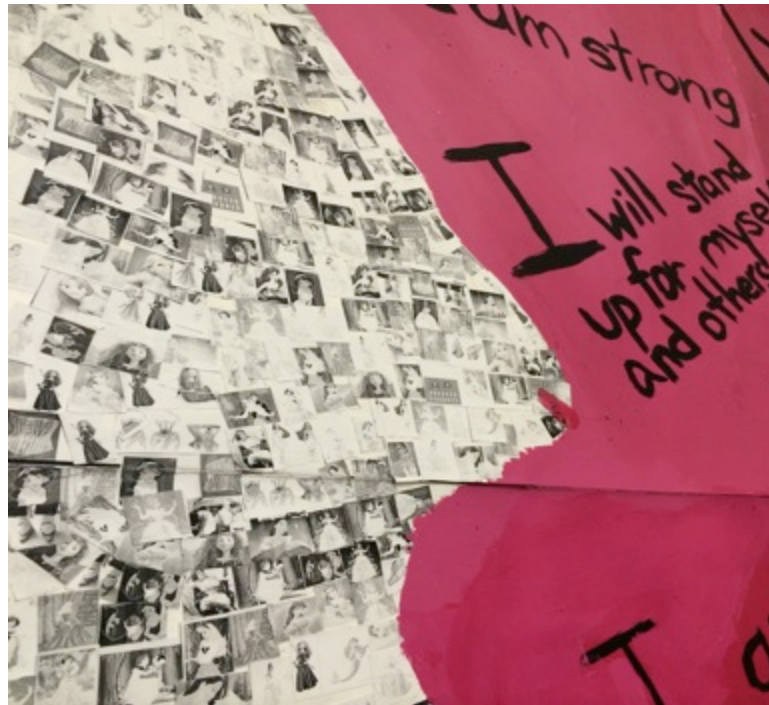
The montage of photos filling the woman's face contained stereotypical gendered images,

including Barbie and popular magazine images, as yet another means of social critique.

For Saturnalia's youth, the discourses in place depicted in this backdrop signified a

resistance to gendered norms of performance.

Once the skit began, Jen proudly performed a desire to time travel as a way to

escape the stereotypical gendered society she endured. Jen's self-respect and pride was

evident in her performance as she performed her part of a collaborative skit (see Figure

18, School Photo 13 below). Again, this was not solely a unique individualized

performance, but rather it was a practice of social critique ritualized not only by youth,

but in response to Saturnalia's discourses in place that served as significant public

transcripts. These social performances of critique did not only occur during the end-of-

the-year celebration, but were common learning experiences in Saturnalia's LASS class.

Figure 18. School photo 13: Jen as part of skit.

School Photo 14 (Figure 19) is a post-performance shot of Ms. Kasey and Ms.

Katie modeling a protest in the school hallway near their LASS classroom. This teacher

Figure 19. School photo 14: Teachers modeling protest.

143

performance was a part of the Zine social justice project where students earlier in the school year produced original Zines that included topics like ending human trafficking and sexual abuse of children. Youth then performed public protests outside of Saturnalia with posters in hand, as featured in School Photos Three and Four (Figures 7 and 8). It was not only the students who used their bodies intersemiotically with the discourses in place, but the staff as well. During passing time, while one educator played live protest music on her guitar, the teachers, Ms. Kasey and Ms. Katie, stood upon purple chairs in the hallway ripping up images of female bodies from popular magazines exclaiming that women should resist such images in popular culture. Students gathered around the teachers watching this surprising performance (modeling) occur. The scene was both chaotic and powerful as evidenced by the mess of ripped images left in the hallway. The teachers left this mess that then served as a sign of a proper protest throughout the school day (see Figure 19).

For both educators and youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, such texts, actions, and school discourses in place shaped and transformed their surroundings and interactions. These intersemiotic experiences offered transformational ripple effects through an interdialogical saturation of social critique, civic duty, and literacy learning. The youths' performances, both independently and collaboratively, served as a larger resemiotization of Saturnalia's discourses in place. The ways that youth and educators used their bodies also played a key role in these resemiotizations. The use of their bodies served as key factors to additional resemiotizations and are unpacked in the following sections.

Bodies and discourses in place. What we do with our bodies in social spaces

matters. Bodies are not produced and reproduced in some natural developmental stage.

Stallybrass and White (1986) claimed that "the body cannot be thought separately from

the social formation [place/space], symbolic topography [signs/symbols] and the

constitution of the subject [identities in place]" (p. 192). They suggested that the body "is

a privileged operator for the transcoding of these other areas" (p. 192). They also claimed

that the body is not draped in some individualized "mystification," but rather "is actively

produced by the junction and disjunction of symbolic domains" (p. 192). They applied

these notions to the "high" and "low" discourses that produced and reproduced class

distinctions in European contexts (e.g., development of the middle-class imaginary).

Their notion applied in the context of spaces like Saturnalia afforded a

geosemiotic analysis that mapped how signs work in aggregates as an intersemiotic,

interdiscursive dialogicality not only through intersecting discourses in place, but also

through the movement of educators, HDV youth participants' bodies, and youth in

general throughout the school. For Saturnalia as a whole and for Jen, Mac, and Shanna in

particular, bodies were shaped and reshaped by the discourses of social critique in place

and by a discursive dialogicality that often shattered traditional notions of how bodies

typically move in school spaces. This is especially true during these current educational

times when the control of urban youths' bodies seems to garner such special attention

(Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014). At Saturnalia, the movement of youth and educators' bodies

could best be described as freeing, if not transgressive. Perhaps Saturnalia's discourses in

place promoted a school culture where freedom of mind, taking up one's "voice," and the

liberated movement of bodies served as public transcripts that promoted a more transgressive school culture. Cresswell (2009) suggested, "the sense we get of a place is heavily dependent on practice, and, particularly, the reiteration of practice on a regular basis" (p. 2).

At Saturnalia, it was clear in hundreds of hours of observation and through interviews with Jen, Mac, and Shanna, that physical bodies were allowed a particular freedom of movement. This was not just a liberty afforded to the youth participants in the study, but for youth in general and for a large number of educators at the school. This freedom was (re)semiotized in multiple ways that included how classrooms were set up for learning and how youth were allowed to move their bodies in these classrooms. As in School Photo 15 (Figure 20), the vast majority of classrooms had seating configurations that signaled a freedom where dialogical learning was the norm and students were often given choice in the ways they wanted to move and use their bodies

Figure 20. School photo 15: Typical classroom configuration.

during learning tasks. In School Photo 16 (Figure 21), Jen, who was wearing the sweatshirt with the "Big Baby" label, was sitting in a small child's chair while her friend was comfortably reading and laughing with her legs hung over the cozy couch in LASS class.

Figure 21. School photo 16: Reading in LASS. In School Photo 17 (Figure 22), Mac and

Jen participated with the LASS teacher, Ms. Kasey, in a performance of dance, singing, and patty-cake games as a way to take a break from the learning tasks at hand. In School

Figure 22. School photo 17: Break from learning tasks.

Photo 18 (Figure 23), Shanna was completing independent math work while sitting on the

carpeted floor in the far corner of her math classroom. The core classes at Saturnalia were

Figure 23. School photo 18: Independent math work.

90 minutes long, and it was not unusual for teachers to stop all academic work and

engage students in fun, moving their bodies, and building community (as in Figure 22) or

mob flash dances where students danced in a train throughout the hallways of Saturnalia.

These actions disrupted the monotony of sustained intellectual work and allowed students

and teachers the ability to release stress through bodily farce. In School Photo 17 (Figure

22), Jen was holding Ms. Kasey's hand while Mac holds Jen's hand to the left. It was

obvious by their facial expressions and from their interviews that they fully enjoyed these

"body breaks" with Ms. Kasey and other educators.

Students also had access to different types of chairs and classroom desk

arrangements while they engaged in learning tasks (see Figures 21, 23, and 24). In School

Photo 19 (Figure 24), Mac was comfortably engaged in a skit production/practice with

other students in LASS class while leaning sideways in a circular pink chair. The

adjacent School Photo 20 (Figure 25) was a posted photo in the hallway that served

Figure 24. School photo 19: Practice in LASS   *Figure 25.* School photo 20: Tenacity.
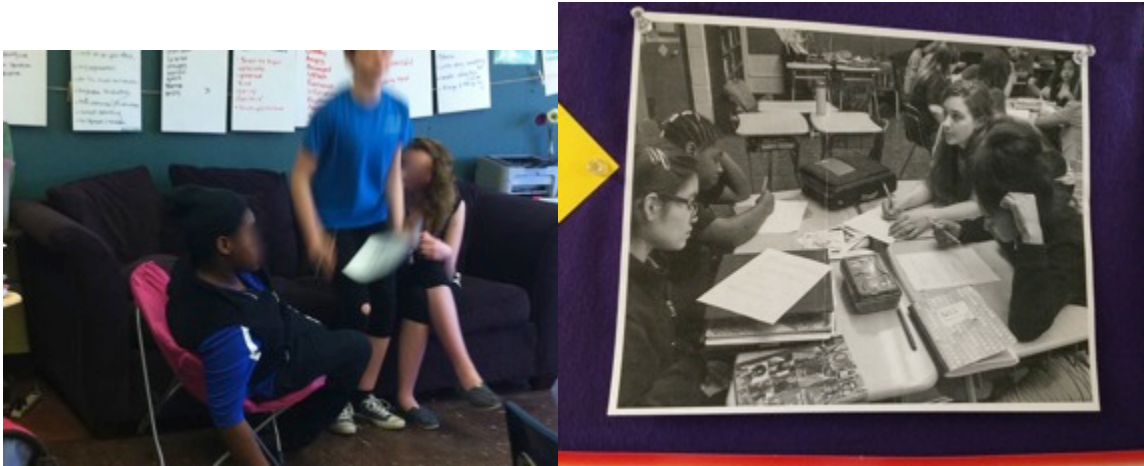
as a model communicating what "tenacity" looked like related to learning at Saturnalia. It was telling that even in the photos modeling academic behavior, dialogic practices were exemplars for students to follow. Discourses in place like these do not seem to fit with the current popular narrative in educating urban youth. In these contexts, "tenacity" might typically be associated with photos (texts) displaying independent work rather than dialogic interactions. In unison with the structural setup of unconventional classroom learning configurations and the discourses of critical literacies in place, exchanges of care, love, and farce between Jen, Mac, and Shanna and a large number of educators at Saturnalia also resemiotized the actions of the social actors within the school space.

Bodies, love/care, and farce. Jen, Mac, and Shanna often engaged Saturnalia's educators in forms of farcical humor through one-on-one interactions and body movements that were shaped by the discourses in place. The interdialogical relationship between critical discourses in place and the ways in which bodies had freedom helped to create a unique school culture for Saturnalia. Most unexpected was the fact that the discourses in place not only occurred in terms of social justice messaging (as shown in

149

previous sections), but also in the ways that students and educators used their bodies that seemed to mimic the many liberating messages found in the discourses in place. Both seemed to have shaped the other. For instance, educators spontaneously initiated activities like flash mob dances and jump-rope contests. Social events like a zombie film festival, school carnivals, spontaneous Michael Jackson Thriller dancing, and general freedom of movement in classrooms were common and expected occurrences at Saturnalia. In fact, the Thriller dance, performed at the school's mid-year concert, was showcased by a local NBC news station during their 6:00 and 10:00 p.m. broadcasts.

Often, movements of bodily freedom resemiotized the school space not only through civic and social critique, but also through a particular kind of love, care, and farce. These discourses in place were found in texts, signs, pictures, and posters throughout the school. They also appeared in exchanges in gestures and body movements between Jen, Mac, and Shanna and particular educators at Saturnalia. The image of Ms. Kasey (Figure 22) holding the hand of Jen and other students while dancing and building community was a typical scene at Saturnalia. In School Photo 21 (Figure 26, below), the wellness teacher, Ms. Kell, actively engaged Jen (to her left) and other youth while they performed planks in physical education class. During these engagements, Ms. Kell often checked in with Jen, Mac, and other youth, listening and giving advice. At times, like in School Photo 22 (Figure 27), she engaged youth in farce. They often laughed and carried on with persistent joke making even during physical activity.

Figure 26. School photo 21: Planks in PE class. *Figure 27*. School photo 22: Farce.

These shared performances of farce between Saturnalia's educators and youth were common occurrences. For instance, in School Photo 23 (Figure 28), Ms. Kell came to school dressed as Beyoncé while Mac, to her left, was dressed as Tupac in celebration of Dress Up as Your Favorite Character Day. Photos, texts, and symbols discussed in this chapter highlighted the importance of the interdialogical connection between discourses of social critique, farce, and love/care. Saturnalia's school culture was also steeped in a

Figure 28. School photo 23: Dress up as your favorite character.

sort of cultural farce that seemed to be completely embraced by Jen, Mac, and Shanna as well as by many of Saturnalia's educators. Jokes, hugs, dance, and play were a common part of the school culture. For instance, when Jen, Mac, and Shanna described the many positive relationships they had with several educators at the school, they emphasized the importance of play and farce as a significant reason why they felt a sense of belonging at Saturnalia (e.g., Shanna describing herself as "a loud, crazy, obnoxious person").

Other instances of discourses in place like farce and love/care were evident in posters and photos located throughout school spaces. In School Photo 24 (Figure 29), Saturnalia's school principal, Ms. Ally, was shown in a farcical photo with her face pasted on a hand-drawn, powerlifting body builder communicating a message of love and care reminding students to "keep up the hard work." This was posted on her office door.

Figure 29. School photo 24: School principal as body builder.
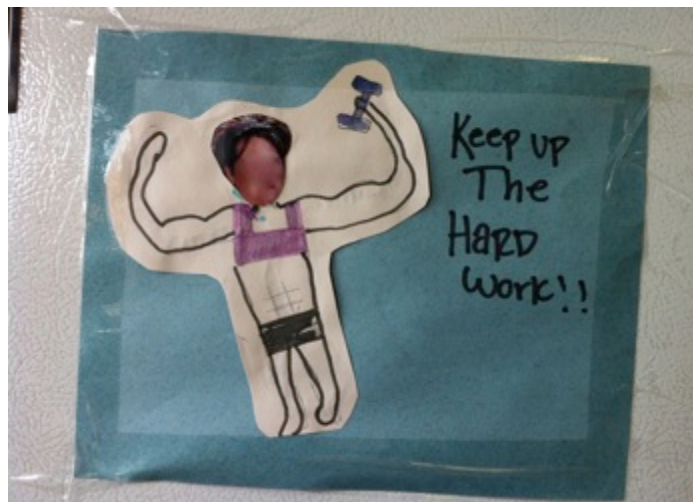
Additional depictions of love, farce, and play included Jen hiding Ms. Kasey's coffee cup and Ms. Kasey hiding Jen's classroom text or Jen, Mac, and Shanna engaged in long hugs

and play with Ms. Kasey, Ms. Marissa (school social worker), Ms. Kell (wellness teacher), Ms. Liz (science teacher), and Ms. Jade (arts teacher).

Texts as farce. As a part of the school culture, it was common to find all kinds of farcical discourses in place that communicated circus-like signs and symbols that indexed carnival-like qualities school-wide. School Photo 25 (Figure 30) showed students dressed in scary clown and surgery costumes as a part of the annual haunted house celebration. In this student designed and led festivity, students resemiotized pedagogies of farcical fear

Figure 30. School photo 25: Haunted house celebration.

and humor in the school basement through creations of haunted scenes. Bathroom mirrors were splashed with fake blood as creepy music blasted through the hallway (depicted in Figure 31). In School Photo 27 (Figure 32), a sign was posted inside bathroom stalls that mimicked Aaliyah's popular song "Try Again" as a humorous attempt to engage students

Figure 31. School photo 26: Bathroom splashed with fake blood.

in flushing the toilet more often. School Photo 28 (Figure 33) shows a student-produced

Figure 32. School photo 27: Humorous sign in bathroom.

advertisement that was displayed in the hallway that offered students the opportunity to

tape the school's principal to the wall as a way to raise money for the eighth grade trip.

Even more farcical was the bizarre image of a unicorn with a humorous message: "If you

help duct tape Ms. Ally—you'll make a unicorn happy, maybe even he'll poop you a

rainbow!!" A drawn figure of a unicorn was postured in the position of pooping. These

types of farcical discourses in place and overt social critique created a carnival-like

Figure 33. School photo 28: Poster advertising taping principal to the wall.

school culture not typically experienced in public middle school spaces (Bakhtin, 1984;

Stallybrass & White, 1986). The following section discusses how Saturnalia's unique

school culture interdialogically depended upon pedagogies of love and care.

   Discourses of love/care in place. For the vast majority of Saturnalia's educators,

pedagogies of love and care were also semiotically indexed in the texts displayed

throughout the school. These loving and caring texts were interdialogically connected to

the school's founding principles, which were displayed on the school's webpage (see

Figure 34). These same principles can be seen spray-painted in School Photo One (Figure

5) and embedded on the wall in the social worker's office where the principles were

graffitied by students. These principles were also randomly displayed throughout the

school on posters in classrooms or scattered in other texts throughout the school. Some of

Figure 34. Website text three: School's founding principles.

> **Our Principles**
>
> **Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability**. We work together to solve problems and are accountable for our own choices and our impact on the community and the environment as a whole.
> **Searching for Truths**. We build communities of inquiry capable of supporting free and open conversation on the most important issues.
> **Building Empathy**. We try to be aware of the situations and experiences of other people so that we can act in ways that are sensitive to the way they see the world.
> **Developing Generosity of Spirit**. We assume that each of us tries to do what we believe is right and just, and we ask each other how we see things that lead us to act as we do.
> **Becoming Competent**. We help each other become increasingly able to bring about the results we each desire. We believe that effort creates competence and competence helps build confidence.
> **Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma**. We make progress at Saturnalia by opening our minds to complexity while continuing to take action in response to the paradox or dilemma.
> **Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability**. We value help from others in seeing our shortcomings and potential as we continue to evolve and grow.

these resemiotizations of Saturnalia's school principles were student produced (e.g.,

graffiti art) and not strictly propaganda created by school staff as an act to socialize

particular ideologies and behaviors school-wide. These principles communicated a set of

values like persistence, critical inquiry, and self/social responsibility. These themes

emerged again in chapter five as Jen, Mac, and Shanna shared how Saturnalia's

discourses in place generatively emulated some of the HDV cultural knowledges the

youth brought to social experiences.

The following images and texts were indexed throughout Saturnalia, and they

clearly reflected the values embedded in the school's principles along with a sense of

love and care that also served as a cultural signifier or public transcript. In the Website

Text Three above in Figure 34, Saturnalia's founding principles and the discourses in

place of love and care were either explicitly or implicitly embodied (interdialogically) in

photos and texts found throughout the school. For instance, posters depicting learning

targets for science class (School Photo 29, Figure 35) highlighted discourses of

persistence and collaboration related to scientific knowledge. In School Photo 30 (Figure

36), the school principle related to empathy is explicitly displayed in a stacked form on

the sidewall in the LASS classroom.

Figure 35. School photo 29: Science targets.   *Figure 36*: School photo 30: Empathy.

In fact, the very motto of the school, "asking questions, making choices" was indexed on

the back of the shirts of students in School Photo 31 (Figure 37). This motto explicitly

communicated a kind of intellectual and inquisitive commitment for students. The

letters—bold and in block form—are communicated on the bodies of students.

Figure 37. School photo 31: School t-shirt: Asking questions, making choices.

In School Photo 32 (Figure 38), a random sticky note with the words "Take a breath"

with a smile emoticon was randomly displayed on a window near the entrance of a

hallway. School Photo 33 (Figure 39) embodied a sense of love and care that was

Figure 38. School Photo 32: Take a breath.

prominently displayed on the principal's office that expressed how Ms. Ally cared for

students. This text, fashioned by a student, produced a sense of omnipresence that

explicitly communicated and indexed a kind of care and love on the part of the school's

administrator who held the responsibilities of being Saturnalia's disciplinary authority.

Figure 39. School Photo 33: Student-produced poster on principal's door.
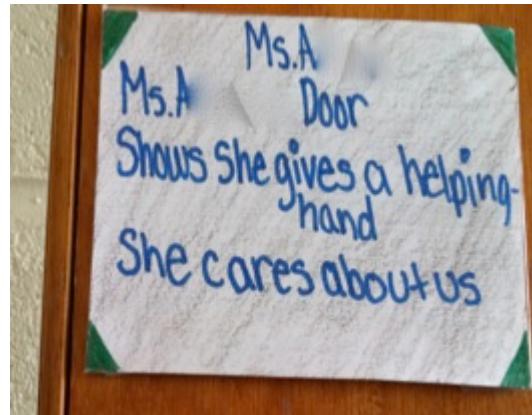
Most of these semiotic images and texts (discourses in place) had an informal quality to them. One might then argue that such a quality communicated a particular and effective non-official school discourse that served as a reminder to the valued agreements of social behavior and self-preservation espoused in the public transcripts of the school. This seemed especially true for HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. For instance, in one interview with Mac, she talked about how Saturnalia's "Redirections" poster displayed in all sorts of formal as well as strange spaces throughout the school served as a daily loving and caring reminder of how to respond to social interactions even when those interactions were tension-filled (see School Photo 34, Figure 40). The term "strange" was used because these posters were often located in spaces that were informal and scattered about, near other strange physical spaces, like above the recycling bin (Figure 40). Mac read these types of discourses in place as both loving and caring, even though they were official school texts. At a larger level, perhaps Mac's experience of

Figure 40. School Photo 34: "Redirections" above a recycling bin.

love and care rang especially true because the school's principles were resemiotized not only in the images and texts found throughout the school, but through youths' bodies (i.e. school motto on shirts) that carried these discourses in place.

Indexing Saturnalia: What Unpopular Practices Do

All semiotic signs communicate an important meaning depending on how they are placed and embodied through actions and discourses in a social space. In many ways, Saturnalia's discourses in place inspired a transgressive quality not only because they promoted social and critical critique, but because they intersemiotically communicated both farce and a deep sense of love and care. These are not the popular (or the traditional) discourses in place at most urban public middle schools. These generative discourses positioned Saturnalia in problematic ways. Discourses in place like farce, freedom to move one's body, social responsibility, critical literacies, and love and care often matched the transgressive needs (e.g., carnival-like cultural knowledges) of HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. These same discourses in place were reflected and indexed in the practices of Saturnalia's educators.

160

The intermingling of such discourses produced both generative and more problematic/complex issues for the school at large. Saturnalia's school culture created both desires and tensions for many privileged families. Upon discovering Saturnalia as a school option, a majority of these families were attracted to (desired) the school's principles and learning framework. Once the school explicitly practiced acts of access for all youth, including youth deemed marginalized and deeply "troubled," these same families communicated frustration as the school's administration practiced the school's principles (ethics). In many instances, school administrators explained, these families not only left the school, but also spread the notion that the school was becoming "alternative" because certain kinds of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna were allowed to stay and be "who they are."

The discourses produced by privileged families were harmful to Saturnalia in terms of the school's reputation in the larger community. These discourses dramatically repositioned the school in the maelstrom of urban school segregation. Although they may not have been aware of the impact of their actions, the families who fled Saturnalia were determined to reify the status quo and ironically desired pedagogies of meritocracy and compliance. This overarching desire for control, privilege, and power disrupted their initial desire to be part of Saturnalia. When these families left, the loss of money followed in terms of enrollment and status. Such realities beg the question: can any school be transgressive (carnival-like), practice Discourses of compliance, and still be sustainable?

For Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their families, Saturnalia served as a place of refuge nested in a larger educational landscape being shaped by damaging traditional and current Discourses. The metaphor of a nest was aptly descriptive. When Saturnalia's school culture attempted to function as carnival (e.g., social critique, farce, love/care), many unsolvable dilemmas emerged. This same "nest" of refuge precariously positioned the school in direct opposition to the greater expectations of control and compliance engendered in public school policy, urban segregation, and many educator and parent expectations.

Carnival-like School Cultures: "**To her, the good outweighs the bad. But that's the way it is at Saturnalia.**"

In Makita's opening vignette and from the perspectives of Jen and Shanna that opened this chapter, Saturnalia was described as a space of refuge. *And* for many of the mostly white and/or middle-class families of color who have come and graduated, the school served as a symbol of a new kind of "liberal" charter school option. When Saturnalia's administrators refused to rid the school of throwaway youth (Pyscher & Lozenski, 2014), specifically youth like Jen and Mac, and challenged internal practices of rubbish collecting (Pyscher, 2015), the school was set on a collision course with Discourses of historical segregation and educational policies practiced by middle-class families desiring status quo. The force of Saturnalia's dilemma can be understood by tracing the power of the middle class's desire for status quo and its fear and disgust of the "low Other." Stallybrass and White (1986) contended that the middle class carnivalesque desire is halted by its own "subliminal elitism." They stated:

162

the carnivalesque was marked out as an intensely powerful semiotic realm

precisely because bourgeois culture constructed its self-identity by rejecting it.

The "poetics" of transgression reveals the disgust, fear and desire which inform

the dramatic self-representation of that culture through the "scene of its low

Other." This poetics reveals quite clearly the contradictory political construction

of bourgeois democracy. For . . . [it] emerged with a class which, whilst indeed

progressive in its best *political* aspirations, had encoded in its manners, morals,

and imaginative writings, in its body, bearing and waste, a subliminal elitism

which was constitutive of its historical being. (p. 202)

Saturnalia's administrators described multiple acts of subliminal and conscious "elitism"

(hegemony) on the part of privileged families as a specific form of pressure demanding

the control and ultimate removal of students like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. HDV youth and

youth deeply marginalized in other ways (raced, classed, queered) have enrolled at the

school in larger numbers over the past four years. It seemed Saturnalia's reputation

proceeded itself for families like Makita's (e.g., HDV, African-American, poverty-

stricken) while on the flipside, more privileged families who chose to exit expressed

frustration with the fact that the school was trying to be a good school for ALL youth and

their families. Ironically, the school's attempts at equity created conditions where the

privileged parents positioned Saturnalia as a problematic school in the greater

community.

For Makita (and for Mac), desires for a place of refuge represented the "scene of

the low Other" that Stallybrass and White (1986) aptly described. Discussed more deeply

in chapter five, these "scenes" of low Other performances (hidden transcripts and resistive ambivalence) on the part of Jen, Mac, and Shanna were both tolerated and at times embraced as shared actions of social critique, farce, and love and care by a large number of Saturnalia's staff. This synergy is central to the unsolvable dilemma Saturnalia faces: can a school sustain itself when its public transcripts reflect social critique, farce, and love and care that are then extended to all youth, including the "low Other?" Makita's descriptions of Saturnalia as a much different school for her granddaughter Mac was importantly humane and yet, this same humane school struggled to remain viable.

When Mac was transferred to Saturnalia from her elementary school, Makita described Mac's new experience as:

> *"She was different. She was…the expression on her face even was different! It was just, **people were so different. They was not critical of her.** She felt the love and the warmth…I could notice that she was doing things different… 'This is the Mac!' you know, she was talking to me and everything… **She could be free…** She was just.. It was just like she had a **sense of belonging**. **She belonged there**. She should have been there all the time and everything. I could see this change in her and everything. That's why it was so important for me to find her another school this year because Saturnalia been a big impact in her life and everything. You know, she could.. She had her moments there, but if she had to reminisced about it. She reminisced because she had much more. **To her, the good outweighs the bad. But that's the way it is at Saturnalia."***

In the bolded words of Makita, the dramatic physical and psychic differences between her elementary school and Saturnalia school experiences were emphasized. Makita used descriptions like "love," feeling "free," not being "critical of her," and feeling "a sense of belonging" when she talked about Mac's experiences at Saturnalia. It is clear that their shared feelings of liberation are also rooted in Mac's bodily responses. Makita took note of these physical changes displayed on Mac's body: "the expression on her face even was

different!" I believe Makita's descriptions of Mac's experience at Saturnalia along with the discussion of geosemiotic analysis of the school's discourses in place offer instructive lessons in designing more humane school cultures.

Equally, a painful realization must also be acknowledged. Discourses in place like social critique, farce, and love/care are mostly unpopular practices when compared to the Discourses shaping our public urban schools. "Unpopular" things have material effects. The obvious dilemma that Saturnalia faced is reflected in a school that intentionally enacted practices grounded in critical pedagogy and feminist thought. This in itself is politically unpopular, if not outright dangerous. The flipside of this dilemma is that such a school culture must then *actually* practice the discourses in place or rather, the practices it physically and semiotically preaches. If it does so, it must then tolerate, if not embrace, the cultural practices that *all* youth bring to its social space. It seems this was intentionally designed and actually practiced at Saturnalia. The school often embraced the HDV resistive cultural practices that Jen, Mac, and Shanna brought with them from their elementary schools. In turn, this loving practice positioned the school as too lenient, not professional, and undisciplined from the perspective of privileged families.

The Challenge of Working with Resistive HDV Youth

For Saturnalia, the forces of school segregation were not the only dilemma it faced in its commitment to providing access to marginalized HDV youth. Jen, Mac, and Shanna brought their HDV resistive cultural practices with them to Saturnalia. These cultural performances often positioned them in precarious ways not only in their elementary schools, but at Saturnalia as well. Just because Saturnalia practiced more

humanely with the youth participants in this study, it did not mean that Jen, Mac, or

Shanna's resistive cultural identities disappeared. In fact, depending on the experience of

the social interaction at Saturnalia, their resistive cultural practices and knowledges

continued to emerge, even though Saturnalia was a space where they felt loved and cared

for. For Saturnalia's educators, this made tension-filled interactions difficult, not so

unlike the educators who worked with Jen, Mac, and Shanna in their elementary schools.

The vast difference at Saturnalia was how many of the educators responded differently

and more humanely when difficult interactions emerged between themselves and the

HDV youth participants. Chapter five analyzes and discusses what these interactions

looked and felt like for the youth participants and the school at large. I took a micro view

and analyzed the resistive cultural practices in real-time moments. This highlighted not

only the complexity of the HDV youth's cultural knowledges and identities, but also the

unsolvable dilemmas that face schools who attempt to be a culturally relevant space of

farce, care, and love for *all* youth.

Chapter Five: The Socialization of Resistant Practices: Agentic Subjectivity and

Hidden Transcripts

Jen, Mac, and Shanna's cultural performances of resistance (hidden transcripts) significantly impacted Saturnalia's dilemma—being a space where youths' resistive identities took up agentic residence in the margins found between school discourses of transgression and compliance. Saturnalia offered a unique school culture where Jen, Mac, and Shanna developed and embraced their own subjectivities. The educators' practices helped to outline what generative culturally relevant pedagogies might look like in practice when working with HDV youth. This chapter more fully examines how Jen, Mac and Shanna used and moved their bodies and performed high and low forms of resistance to access agency. Several mediating factors, like their interactions with educators and their histories of participation, shaped their performances and resistive identities.

These factors are unpacked and analyzed through the HDV youth participants' perspectives countering the deficit representations assigned to them in elementary school. I analyzed Jen and Mac's use of oppositional body language, acts of farce, and resistive ambivalence, referring to their performances as acts of carnival, negation, and/or unique infrapolitics of resistance. Methodologically, hidden and public transcripts were used along with mediated discourse analysis (MDA) in efforts to understand what mediated these youths' carnival/negating acts of resistance in the context of classroom interactions.

As Jen, Mac, and Shanna negotiated Saturnalia's school culture, their performances encompassed positive and negative responses that often led to a mix of liberatory and problematic interactions with Saturnalia's staff while also positioning them

in coalition with their HDV affiliated friends. An interesting finding was that their performances of carnival-like resistance did not end with school officials imposing authority, but rather seemed to celebrate ambivalence by mutating and transforming actions, interactions, the school culture, and educator practices. Research questions include:

(1) How and to what extent are Jen, Mac, and Shanna's HDV cultural knowledges performed through their language and actions?

(2) When tension-filled interactions arise, how do educators respond to HDV youths' cultural ways? What mediates the shaping/reshaping of HDV youth participants' and educators' actions and identities? How do Jen, Mac, Shanna and their caregivers view these relationships, pedagogies, and school culture?

The Mediation of Hidden Transcripts

It is clear from chapter four that Saturnalia served as a semiotic aggregate where the intersections of multiple discourses intersected (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 167). These discourses were indexed in formal website texts/images, in classroom configurations, on student's bodies, and in how students moved their bodies. The discourses in place included social critique, body movements that were liberating, farce, and love/care that connected to Saturnalia's greater Discourses of justice and injustice. In turn, they also dramatically shaped the school culture and youths' responses as they negotiated this culture. For Bakhtin, the body played a mediating role in "cultural designation" (see Stallybrass & White, 1986, p. 21). Semiotically, our bodies shape and reshape the spaces we reside in. Studying the signs and symbols found at Saturnalia

through geosemiotic analysis (as seen in chapter four) afforded me a rich database, allowing me to name the "indices of discourses constituting this web of pathways through the material environment" (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 168). It also helped me frame how Jen, Mac, and Shanna's actions were mediated by the complex web of discourses in place.

In addition, I analyzed how the bodies of Jen, Mac, and Shanna were positioned, coded, and/or indexed differently when compared to their experiences in elementary school spaces. For instance, in elementary school, Shanna was indexed in her IEP as having an EBD subjectivity, which was then troubled (and mediated by) Saturnalia's discourses in place. Literally, Shanna's EBD subjectivity was questioned by school officials like Marissa and by the school's psychologist in her updated IEP. Returning to Scollon and Scollon's (2003) geosemiotic notion of selection, it was clear that the way an individual is positioned affects how "the actor as a particular kind of person" can select "different meaning potentials" as "a subset of pathways" (p. 205). For Shanna, these pathways were oppressive in her elementary school. Her experience at Saturnalia, much like that of Jen and Mac, embodied different, more generative discourses in place that offered a different set of "meaning potentials" and "subsets of pathways" that felt more humane. In fact, at times, these pathways seemed to reflect both Jen and Shanna's HDV cultural knowledges. One such example was the shared sense of justice and injustice embedded within particular expressions of love, care, and farce.

For HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, their hidden transcripts are embodied HDV cultural knowledges shaped by their intimate experiences of domestic social

violence (Pyscher, 2015). They are hidden because they are performed as significant forms of cultural resistance by HDV youth and marginalized communities in response to violating actions perpetrated by those in dominant social roles. Scott (1990) contended that for the marginalized subjects he studied (i.e., peasants, slave narratives), hidden transcripts could be seen as the "infrapolitics" of resistance. In everyday (inter)action, they are personified in acts of negation, including gestures and discourses like grumbling, gossiping, and low-level resistive actions that are often anonymous and ambiguous.

The clash between hidden and public transcripts were tension-filled representations, highlighted through illustrations and discussions in earlier chapters including Jen, Mac, and Shanna's acts of negation (low and high forms of resistance). Examples of these negating responses included Mac's refusal to raise her hand when her name was called because she felt the teacher's demands were acts of violating pretense or my refusal to wipe the smirk off my face during my process of being suspended in middle school (see chapter two). These hidden transcripts or acts of negation are defined by Scott (1990) as a "counter ideology—a negation—that will effectively provide a general normative form to the host of resistant practices invented in self-defense by any subordinate group" (p. 118). How then, do acts of negation uniquely emerge in the interplay between HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna and what they read as violating actions on the part of educators? Embodied in their HDV hidden transcripts, what do their performances and identities look like in response to Saturnalia's public transcripts espousing a more liberating, carnival-like culture? More specifically, I was interested in how these youths' performances may or may not look and feel different in a school

170

culture that troubled the popular school practices of special education labels and disciplinary acts of exclusion.

As discussed in chapter four, Saturnalia's many generative public transcripts and discourses in place created a more idyllic picture of a school culture that offered HDV youth participants and their families a humane school experience. Important at this point of the study is to highlight that Jen, Mac, and Shanna's cultural knowledges built from a habitus shaped by experiences of domestic violence were *not* necessarily more docile in Saturnalia's school environment. Their resistive cultural practices were performed minute-to-minute, and at times, second-to-second, in interactions with Saturnalia's school staff and other students. In fact, in many instances, their resistive cultural practices and identities (embodied in their carnival and negating acts) presented as both amenability *and* defiance, depending on the discourses, actions employed, and the social actors involved in the interaction.

The differences between Jen, Mac, and Shanna's elementary and middle school experiences were apparent in their resistive interactions, acts of negation and resistive ambivalence often tolerated, if not altogether embraced, by a large number of educators at Saturnalia. These resistive practices were also resemiotized by the very discourses in place at Saturnalia, such as social critique/justice in response to violation, farce, and participation. This resemiotization was a two-way relationship. In several instances, Jen, Mac, and Shanna felt emboldened in their actions to use their cultural practices of negation to produce and (re)shape the actions of Saturnalia's staff and discourses in place. In the following section I used mediated discourse analysis (MDA) as

methodology to highlight a number of these interactions and to discuss the implications when school cultures tolerate/embrace transgressive and resistive performances/identities of youth like Jen and Mac. The implications are twofold: (1) such acts are generative in many respects from the perspective of Jen, Mac, and their caregivers and (2) such acts are simultaneously problematic for Saturnalia's school culture as they created tension and disequilibrium that ranged from expecting compliance to allowing transgression for Saturnalia's staff, youth participants, and their HDV affiliated friends. During tension-filled interactions, this disequilibrium positioned even some of the most respected educators at Saturnalia in problematic ways because they then felt compelled to exact compliance-oriented actions in response to the HDV youth who, in turn, read their actions as violating.

MDA: A Methodology for Analyzing Hidden Transcripts

Similar to the method of geosemiotics, I used mediated discourse analysis (MDA) to analyze the relationships between youth and educator actions when tension-filled interactions arose (Norris, 2011; Jones & Norris, 2005; Scollon, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2003). These actions were situated not only in discourse, but also in actions, including how both youth participants and educators used their bodies, gestures, or tones of voice when interacting. Jones and Norris (2005) claimed that MDA:

> provides a way of understanding how all the objects and all the language and all the actions taken with these various meditational means interact at a nexus of multiple social practices and the trajectories of multiple histories and storylines that reproduce social identities and social groups. (p. 4)

172

Scollon (2002) suggested that a MDA analyst is afforded the ability to unearth how:

> social actors who are acting in real time are able to strategize their own actions
>
> within a negotiative process with other social actors to achieve their desired social
>
> meanings, including their identities, footings, alignments with others and their
>
> positionings of themselves and others. (p. 163).

Such an analysis supported alternative perspectives for both HDV youth participants and educators and helped to outline how such interactions shape school cultures.

In chapter four, important factors like discourses in place and the context of space were analyzed in an effort to understand what mediated and complicated social interactions at Saturnalia. In this chapter, MDA extends and complicates the earlier geosemiotic analysis of discourses in place by documenting the discourses and actions used by Jen, Mac, Shanna, and Saturnalia's educators. It also helped me to understand the mediational means that Jen, Mac, Shanna, and educators used when they negotiated tension-filled interactions. MDA, as theory and methodology, was ideal for a researcher participant like myself who studies and theorizes HDV youths' experiences in institutional structures. Scollon and Scollon (2007) imagined nexus analysis as embracing dilemmas that are difficult to comprehend and take social justice action against structural marginalization. Nexus analysis is a research strategy that affords deep analysis of complex social situations highlighting the evolving processes shaping social action not only in the situation, but also stretching across long-span timescales.

As a critical ethnographer, participant observation using MDA offered three distinct advantages: (1) MDA "threatens to undermine scientific canons of objectivity

and distance" (Scollon & Scollon, 2007, p. 612) which was needed in troubling the traditional discourses of psychology and medicalization that often shape the experiences of HDV youth in schools; (2) MDA has become a significant ethnographic method to "report out to other academic communities" (Scollon & Scollon, p. 615) as researchers who share similar standpoints with the members they study as such analysis points "at which historical trajectories of people, places, discourses, ideas and objects come together to enable some action which in itself alters those historical trajectories in some way as those trajectories emanate from this moment of social action" (Scollon, 2004, p. 8); and (3) MDA offered possibilities for counter-narratives of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna to be highlighted.

As a MDA analyst, I was interested in how youth participants perceived moments of tension-filled interactions in response to hegemonic and normative experience and how these interactions shaped the school culture. The following section discusses two examples of such analyses. These examples highlight how Jen, Mac, and their HDV affiliated friends uniquely negotiated the hegemonic and normative interplay situated in two school interactions at Saturnalia. Jones and Norris (2005) suggested that central to MDA "is the desire to effect positive change by focusing on projects that help people to see beyond abstract notions of power and to start noticing the moment to moment workings of power in their everyday actions" (p. 11). This more detailed nexus analysis then "probes outward into the histories of actors, resources, scenes, or settings across time and place—first into the past to see how the actions are constituted and into the future to work toward shaping future actions" (Scollon & Scollon, 2007, p. 619).

Cultural Knowing: "Reading" Just/Unjust Actions in Classroom Interactions

The distinction dominant elites are likely to make between the inadequate performance of subordinates and a declared violation of norms is not the result of an overly touchy sense of honor. It originates rather in their understanding of the possible consequences of open defiance. Many forms of authority can tolerate a remarkably high level of practical nonconformity so long as it does not actually tear the public fabric of hegemony.

—Scott, 1990, p. 204

For HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, the cultural knowledges built out of a habitus shaped by an intimate knowledge of domestic violence equipped them with an uncanny ability to "read" just and unjust everyday actions—a barometer of sorts. The HDV youth in this study were especially keen at reading the symbolic and material signs/actions performed by educators (i.e., school officials), especially if these signs/actions felt violating. The school culture also proved to be a powerful mediating factor in youths' and educators' negotiation of tension-filled interactions. Based on analysis in chapter four, Saturnalia can be described as a school culture balancing traditional schooling pedagogies of compliance with transgressive qualities. These opposing discourses open possibilities for HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna to access a wide range of generative options in participating in more agentic ways compared to the elementary school cultures they experienced.

In fact, in a school culture where social critique is the norm (the public transcript), it would then be expected that youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna feel empowered to exercise acts of negation as part of their HDV cultural knowledges because the school culture reflects similar values. This may not only be true in forms of resistance to interactions defined by normative hegemony, but also as a semiotically conscious right

for HDV youth reflected in Saturnalia's discourses in place that tied social/individual responsibility to social critique. This "right" was a two-way street for both youth and educators at the school. It was a space where uniquely agentic and complicated interactions emerged and at times clashed, depending on whether the liberating or more compliant-oriented discourses were in action.

Although these possibilities of engagement were agentic (for youth), they also posed continuing challenges for Saturnalia's educators when interacting with Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their affiliated HDV friends. In the next section I used nexus analysis highlighting the complications represented in the interplay between hidden and public transcripts of a classroom interaction between Jen and two Saturnalia educators that led to a full rupture of resistive ambivalence for Jen as she and the educators negotiated resistant and normative/hegemonic interplay. Engaging in a nexus analysis documenting the mediated actions of social actors requires understanding what shaped the site of engagement. Jones and Norris (2005) defined a site of engagement as "the orientation towards time and space, distributed in built environments, social practices, and the habitus of individuals, that people bring to situations" (p. 139). This analysis captured several sites of engagement primarily set in a math classroom. I analyzed the following MDA features that shaped the classroom interactions: (1) the histories of participation that the social actors brought forward into the interaction and (2) the public and hidden transcripts that circulated in response to mediated actions and means.

Nexus Analysis One: Distributed Acts of Agency

This nexus analysis examined the mediating factors shaping Jen's low and high forms of resistance or what could also be termed acts of negation in response to what she read as violating actions on the part of two Saturnalia teachers. The analysis was of a complicated and tension-filled 17 minute interaction in a math classroom that revealed many fascinating intersections between youths and educators' histories of participation, how the situation is affected by the interaction order of actors, and the larger effects of Saturnalia's discourse of social critique. Counternarratives arose for Jen and her HDV affiliated friend group (i.e., Mac, K., R.), unsettling the objectifying "troubled" student subjectivity placed upon youth like Jen and her HDV affiliated friends. Findings include: (1) necessary and distributed acts of agency for Jen, her HDV friends, and educators; (2) the emergence of seemingly unsolvable tensions shaped by larger school discourses in place; (3) a variety of performances of Jen's low and high forms of resistive cultural practices; and (4) how normative educator pedagogies can be read as violating for HDV youth.

Jen, hidden transcripts, and normative pedagogies. For Jen and the educators involved in the interaction analyzed here, complicated timescales, semiotic arcs, and histories of participation circulated and were recycled in the classroom space. They are visually highlighted in Figure 41. The first timescale/semiotic arc outlines Jen's cultural acts of low and high forms of resistance developed from experiences of childhood domestic violence and her ability to keenly read normative violation. Jen had a long history of reading social violence and read gazing and hovering on the part of educators

177

Figure 41. Semiotic arcs shaping nexus analysis one.
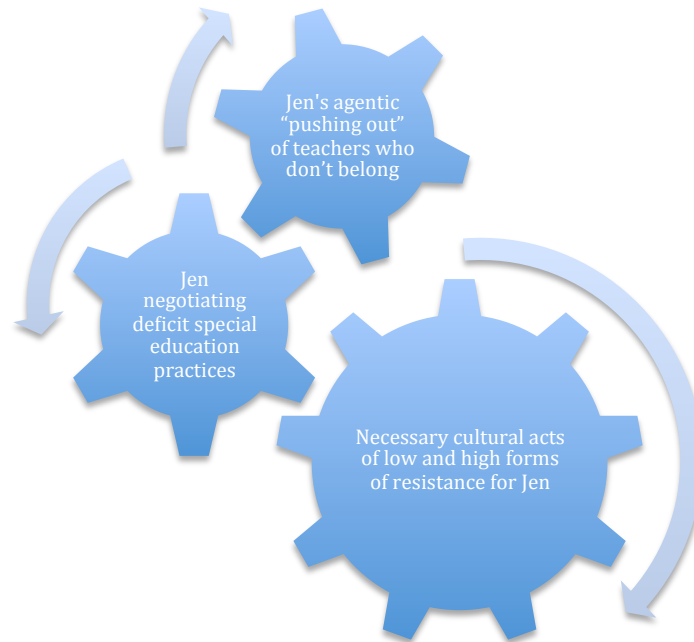
as an act of violence. The second semiotic arc/timescale involved Jen persistently

navigating deficit special education actions like the attempt to label her EBD in

elementary school. In this nexus analysis, Jen performed acts of negating resistance with

special emphasis pointed toward the special education teacher, Ms. Kathy. In fact,

throughout the study, both Jen and Jess discussed their continued annoyance with several

special education school officials at Saturnalia who they believed were determined to

label Jen in need of special education services. Jen's agentic feelings about Saturnalia

being "her school" were a third timescale (semiotic arc) that shaped her belief that she

could "push out teachers that don't belong." For Jen, these were teachers who she thought

did not have a right to teach at the school. This timescale is further unpacked later in this

chapter.

Attention structures also shaped the interactions between Jen and the educators in this nexus analysis. Jones (2005) described attention structures as residing "partly in the mediational means and partly in the ways people use these mediational means in patterned interaction that reproduces some aspect of their social identity" (p. 152). He suggested that these attention structures were built by social and cultural experiences and developed as we interact with those worlds. The attention structures embodied in the educators' and Jen's responses created both problematic and agentic sites of engagement. This created a dilemma for both educators and Jen. Sites of engagement and attention structures were used as a heuristic device to document/analyze both Jen and educators' actions.

In nexus analysis one, Ms. Citra, her math teacher, and Ms. Kathy, a special education teacher, circled around, gazed at, and hovered over Jen, attempting to pressure her to comply and do her math work. This fixated attention became quickly problematic as it seemed that Jen was performing like most other students in the classroom space. For instance, in Video Clip One (Figure 42), Jen can be seen sitting at her work table engaged in small talk with friends much like the other students in the room. Jen, Ms. Citra, Ms. Kathy, and Jen's HDV affiliated friends including Mac, K., and R[12] are in their respective positions. Jen, wearing a gray headband, is sitting down, staring forward, and ignoring Ms. Citra, who stands directly next and above her while Ms. Kathy stands to the side of

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[12] "K" and "R" are close friends with both Jen and Mac; both young women came to engage with me as mentor over the life of the study. Both young women were viewed from the perspective of the school social worker, Ms. Marissa, as having HDV status.

Figure 42. Still from video clip one.
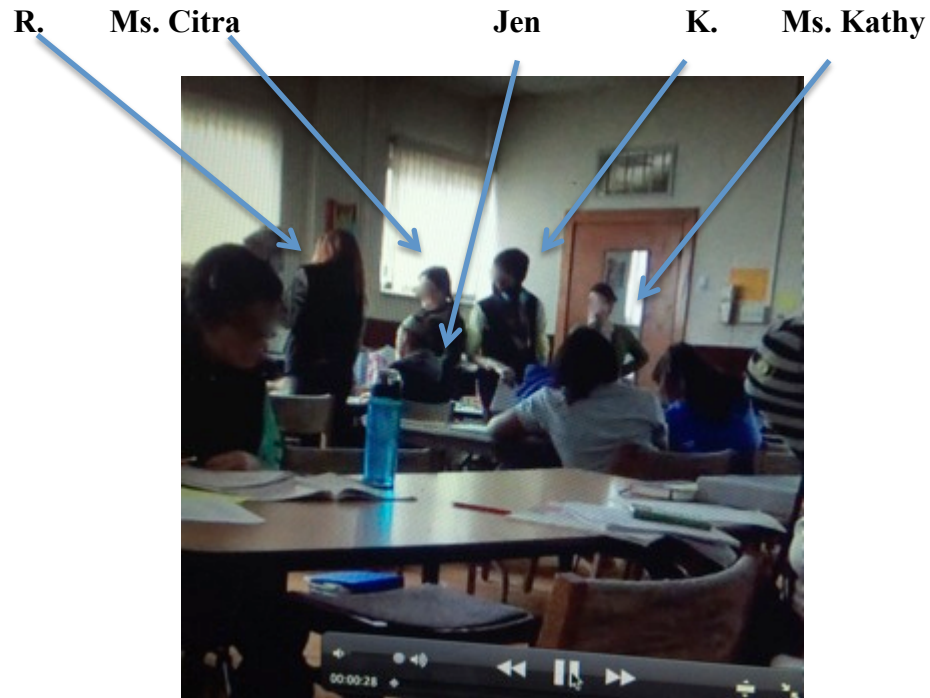
Jen and back from Ms. Citra, watching the interactions with her closed palm to her chin.

Jen's friends, K. and R., walked around Ms. Citra and Jen. This clip was taken 28

seconds after the recording began. I walked in on the interaction and immediately began

filming from the back of the room.

      MDA Transcript One (see Table 2, below) described the interactions preceding

Video Clip One. This transcription maps the actions of Jen, her friends, and the educators

while also showing the circulation of hidden and public transcripts being performed and

the mediational means and attention structures shaping the interaction. Reading through

the entirety of this MDA transcript highlighted the interaction order and the factors that

shaped the interaction order. Bolded items represented examples within particular

categories.

Table 2. MDA transcript of nexus analysis one.

Social Actors
Jen: HDV youth participant
Ms. Citra: math teacher
Ms. Kathy: special education teacher
Mr. Roy: special education assistant
K. and R.: Jen's HDV affiliated friends
Tracey: researcher

Time	Action/Social Practices	Circulating Hidden (HT), Public Transcripts (PT), and Resistive Ambivalence (RA)	Mediational Means/Attention Structures with Interpretation
0:05	**Jen stared forward with her body positioned away** from the attention of Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy who hovered near Jen as she sat at a table with three of her HDV affiliated friends.	*Educators:* expectations for compliant student (PT); educator as authority (PT) *Jen:* low form of resistance (staring forward as HT)	*Educators:* **hovered and gazed** *Jen:* **ignored** attention of educators through body positioning
0:12	**Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy hovered near Jen and two of her close friends; Ms. Citra from the side and Ms. Kathy from the side back.** Jen continued to face the opposite direction staring at the wall in front of her. Jen shrugged her shoulders slightly, still staring away from Ms. Citra who was standing directly next to and above Jen. Student sitting next to Jen (her friend K.) was heard saying "give me a number" while Jen continued to stare forward. Ms. Kathy continued to watch the interaction from the side.	*Educators:* performed nonverbal communication to reinforce social codes of behavior for students (PT) *Jen:* resistive gestures as continued response: staring forward and shrugging shoulders as acts of negation (HTs)	*Educators*: continued authoritative **gazing** on the part of all educators; verbal **redirects**; continued **hovering**—embodied authoritative gestures Jen: **stared away** from educators and **shrugged shoulders**; continued **ignoring friend's effort** to renegotiate educators gaze and hovering
0:13-	Jen's two friends circulated	See above	See above

181

0:35	around her as Ms. Citra stood directly next and above Jen. A third special education assistant stood at the far wall observing their interaction. Ms. Kathy continued to watch the interaction from the side in back of Jen who continued to stare forward. Mr. Roy circled around, crossing in front of the path of the camera, and continued to watch interaction from far opposite wall (*not on camera*).		
0:36-0:43	**Jen stood abruptly and moved** toward the direction of her friend and away from Ms. Citra (who was standing on the other side of her). Ms. Kathy was leaning in, continuing to watch the interaction. As the educators continued to hover, **Jen faced the opposite direction and with a stern glare moved her body toward the door and walked out.**	*Jen:* performed resistive ambivalence rupturing the interaction between HT & PT. *Educators:* collaborative problem solving as authoritative response (PT)	*Jen:* **stood** and **separated her body** from the interaction altogether; she **ignored** requests by Ms. Citra to take a pass when she left the classroom. *Educators:* bodily, verbal, and nonverbal **apprehension**
0:43-0:56	**Ms. Citra tenuously asked** following the forward motion of Jen: "Jen…you… you...need a pass…can you fill one out please?" **Jen continued to walk out,** paying no attention to the apprehensive question.	*Jen:* Power shifts to student as she left without permission (PT ruptured) *Educators*: apprehension sets in as they talk near the front of the classroom (PT)	*Jen:* social code **to leave under necessary conditions** as high form of resistance *Educators:* social code to **let Jen leave with little interference and apprehension** as reflection of educators not practicing like other educators in the school culture

182

			(dilemma)
0:55	Jen continued to walk out and ignored Ms. Citra's apprehensive question. Other students continued to work, giving no attention to the situation.	*Jen:* action on the part of Jen who refused to follow compliant social codes (PTs) embodied in educators' actions.	*Jen:* **Jen left the space**; this is a common action for Jen in other school spaces (often as redirect from particular teachers).
0:56-2:06	Ms. Kathy looked toward the open door and moved near Ms. Citra, leaning in and whispering something inaudible at the front of the classroom. As time passes, both educators continued talking with head nodding and hand gestures.	*Educators:* collaborative problem solving as authoritative response (PT)	*Educators:* **collaborative problem solving** regarding Jen walking out/interaction in general
2:06	Ms. Kathy and Ms. Citra split; Ms. Kathy sat at teacher desk and Ms. Citra moved toward the smart board.	*Educators:* all hovering stops in terms of Jen's learning space and classroom space in general. Educators seem more relaxed (PT).	*Educators:* bodies are **relaxed, creating a relaxed atmosphere**—Ms. Kathy sat at desk and Ms. Citra moved to smart board; neither educator continued to hover or gaze attempting to redirect behavior of other students.
2:26-3:29	From Jen's table, Jen's friend, K., loudly stated: "she's nosey" looking towards Ms. Kathy and Ms. Citra. Ms. Kathy stood and begins to move toward K./Jen's table more directly while Ms. Citra stood watching from center of room. Ms. Kathy crosses path of Jen's table while Jen's friend K. decided to abruptly walk out of the room directly in front of Ms. Citra. Both teachers ignored K. walking	*K.:* act of negation by naming the irritating stance of teacher (nosey) (HT) *Educators:* nonverbal teacher authority (PT) Normal teacher pedagogies once resistance is removed (tension decreases again) (PT)	*Affiliated friend K.:* **named irritating behavior of educator** who then proceeded to abruptly **walk out** of classroom interaction (resistive ambivalence) *Educators:* **body as authority** in the gestures of positioning

	out. Ms. Kathy sat once again at teacher desk stretching neck back and forth as Ms. Citra continued to observe student behaviors intersecting a group of students near the smart board. Ms. Citra began to talk to whole class at 3:29. Jen and her friend K. were still missing.		
3:29-11:01	Jen was missing from class for over 10 minutes	*Jen:* was missing from classroom for close to 10 minutes (resistive ambivalence as rupture between HT and PT)	*Jen:* **Resistive ambivalence** as high form of resistance
11:02-11:25	Jen reentered classroom, crossing the front center of the class. Jen walked sternly past Ms. Citra. Ms. Kathy was not in view. Ms. Citra seemed unaware that Jen had reentered. Jen made a sideways beeline toward where I sat at the back of the room.	*Jen:* Reentered and continued to ignore the presence of teacher (HT and resistive ambivalence?) *Jen:* Came back toward researcher with shared standpoint (HT/RA)	*Jen:* **freedom of moving body** and **ignored presence of teachers** in and out of classroom during tension-filled interaction
11:31-11:59	*Tracey* can be heard engaging Jen saying: "it's freakin dark in here." *(conversation is not seen on camera)* Jen immediately responded: "**Ms. Kathy is getting on my nerves**." Tracey: "okay, remember when we talked about negotiating?" Jen: "Nay, I'm not about to negotiate." Tracey: "Okay…Jen, connect with me. Keep it real with me. Bring it down with me." Tracey continued talking about negotiation as a way for long-term success. *(some sections inaudible)*	*Tracy & Jen:* discussed Jen's ability to negotiate violating experience (HT) *Educators:* Neither educator approached Jen and Tracey as they continued to talk; they seemed comfortable with the researcher/youth interaction (PT).	*Tracey:* researcher shared similar standpoint as generative resource for Jen when navigating hegemonic interaction; researcher **talked with Jen about negotiation with the teachers;** researcher **played role as stand-in authority figure and HDV affiliated mentor** *Educators:* **deference** to

			authority of researcher
11:55	Ms. Citra leaned in at table where Jen and Tracey were talking while working with other students. Ms. Kathy crossed classroom to other student table.	*Jen:* continued discussion with Tracey (HTs) *Educators:* deferred authority to Tracey while working with Jen (PT)	*Educators:* continued **deference to researcher authority**
11:59-12:45	Tracey said off camera: "…Don't give her so much power." Jen responded: "She's irritating me!" Tracey **changed direction of conversation,** asking Jen why she has painted cat whiskers on her face: "what's up with the cat whiskers?" Jen: "I feel like a cat!" (laughing) Tracey laughed and asked: "And B. (friend) too?" J: squeaks with laugher: "uh hah." Tracey and Jen continued talking about Jen's focus on her math work and negotiating while the educators seemed content with Jen talking with Tracey at the back of the room as they continue to work with other students. *(some sections inaudible)*	*Jen and Tracey:* discussed how to negotiate hegemonic experience in real-time interactions (HT) *Educators:* continued to glance infrequently at Jen and Tracey while they continued to work with other students/at other student tables (PT)	*Tracey:* attempted to **deflect intensity of Jen's resistive responses** and words **via new more uplifting subject**; **turns topic back to renegotiating Jen's participation** in the math learning/tasks at hand *Educators:* continued **deference to researcher**
12:45-16:12	Tracey **moved conversation back to negotiating again,** proposing that Jen will always have to work with all kinds of people. She stated: "There will be a thousand people like this in your life…" *(some sections inaudible)* as Tracey continued to talk with Jen about "harnessing" her power.	*Jen and Tracey*: continued talking about Jen's navigation of hegemonic experiences (HTs) *Educators:* continued to work with other students (PT)	*Tracey:* researcher attempted to **turn conversation back to generative potential** for Jen to reengage in class participation
16:14-	Jen **walked back to her table,**	Jen: walked back more	Jen: **changed body**

185

| 16:55 | sat, and began working again, facing out toward the classroom… class continues… Ms. Citra later thanked Tracey as she walked past the back desk where Tracey was sitting. | relaxed and changed her body position where she was now facing outward toward the whole class. Jen looked at the text in front of her while toggling between text, her cell phone, and side talk with friends. Ms. Citra: shared appreciation of researcher intervention (PT) | position-facing classroom as if she were willing to reengage. Ms. Citra: acknowledged and seemed thankful for Tracey's discussion/ intervention with Jen. |

This MDA transcript describes the multiple mediational means of resistance Jen engaged in while negotiating what she read as a violating interaction with educators. Resistive ambivalence became a necessary cultural response represented in her action of walking out of the classroom. Jones and Norris (2005) described mediational means as:

> (1) carriers of social, cultural, and historical formations that amplify certain social actions and limit others
> (2) the dialectical relationship between objects in the world and social practices associated with these objects appropriated within the habitus of the user. (p. 50)

In Video Clip Two (Figure 43), Jen used oppositional gestures and body positioning like staring forward and ignoring the gestures and words of Ms. Citra as both mediational means and interpersonal communication via attention structures to communicate a low forms of resistance. She used her body as a form of resistive expression, Jen also stared away from the gaze of Ms. Kathy who stood at Jen's backside.
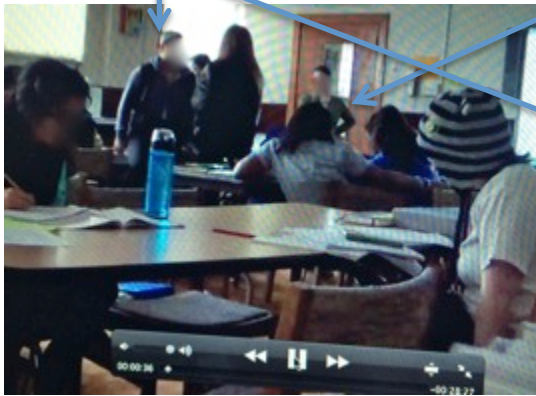
186

Figure 43. Still from video clip two.

**Ms. Citra**   **Jen**   **Ms. Kathy**

Eventually, as seen in a series of clips in Figure 44 (Video Clip Three), Jen

performed resistive ambivalence when she abruptly stood and walked out of the

classroom. Ms. Citra then apprehensively called behind Jen stating, "Jen…you…

you...need a pass…can you fill one out please?" Jen continued to walk out paying no

attention to the question (0:36-0:52 seconds). For Jen, this was an agentic response to her

interaction in real-time and to her histories of participation as a child and youth who often

experienced intense surveillance in school. Throughout Video Clips One, Two, and series

Three (Figures 41-43), Jen, Ms. Citra, and Ms. Kathy clearly struggled in their

interactions. It seemed that their responses were mediated by two conflicting desires. The

first was Jen's need for Ms. Kathy to stop hovering, and the second was the teachers'

desire for Jen to comply. In addition, it was difficult to ascertain exactly what the
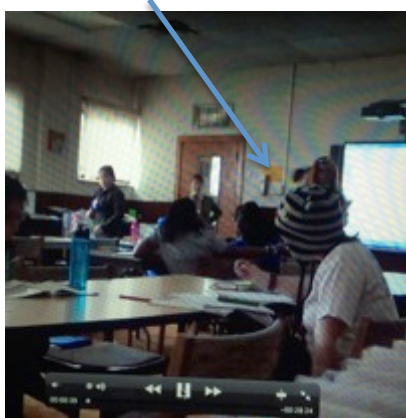
Figure 44. Still from video clip two (series).

Jen standing and walking out   **Ms. Kathy watching**
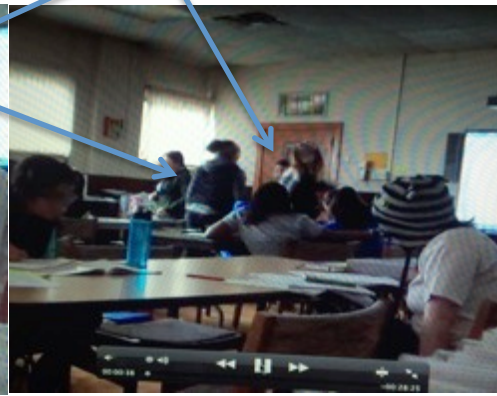
Jen abruptly walking out   **Ms. Citra asking Jen to get a pass**

Ms. Citra & Ms. Kathy discussing situation

teachers needed from Jen in terms of compliance. Jen and her friend group appeared to perform similar behavior as other students in the classroom. Low levels of student talk could be heard while on and off-task academic behaviors seemed consistent across the class space. Yet in this interaction, more intense expectations were seemingly laid out for Jen (and her friend group). This special attention mediated the situation where Jen seemed to garner even more overt attention embodied in the educators' actions of hovering and gazing. This was true even when Jen's friends stood and circled around the interactions of Ms. Citra and Jen.

What might seem to be a minuscule amount of time for the outside observer (52 seconds), the interaction for Jen felt very different in terms of normative pressure. It felt oppressive. Eventually, Jen stood and walked out of the classroom in oppositional resistance (0:38), rupturing the interaction. Scott (1990) explained that the ruptures between hidden and public transcripts served as powerful performances of resistance. He claimed that the:

> first declaration speaks for countless others, it shouts what has historically had to be whispered, controlled, choked back, stifled, and suppressed. If the results seem like moments of madness, if the politics they engender is tumultuous, frenetic, delirious, and occasionally violent, that is perhaps because the powerless are so rarely on the public stage and have so much to say and do when they finally arrive. (p. 227)

For teachers, these interactions with HDV youth were difficult tightropes to walk not only because they were difficult to see and understand in real time, but also because they were dependent on necessary and dynamic distributed acts of agency.

      Necessary and distributed acts of agency. One of my most intriguing findings was the realization that power was essential for all of the social actors involved (e.g., Jen's resistance, Ms. Citra's need for compliance) as well as distributed across the social actors. For instance, Jen appeared to return when she wanted (after 10 minutes) and of her own volition. In Video Clip Four (Figure 45), she reentered with the same fervor (perhaps a continuation of resistive ambivalence) that she stormed out with. Rather than returning to her student table, she ignored the presence of both Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy and proceeded to walk back to the area where I sat while filming. She stood to my side and then sat as I engaged her in conversation while trying to reframe her interaction with Ms. Citra. I was attempting to convince her to reengage in math class.

Figure 45. Still from video clip four.

*Jen*   *Ms. Citra*

I often found myself wrapped in complicated intersections of insider/outsider status (as highlighted in chapter one). My desires were wrapped in my shifting identities of researcher, teacher, and HDV survivor. For instance, I wanted Jen to return to class to complete her academic work (public school teacher identity), and I struggled with my desire for her to disengage from me as a courtesy to the teachers (researcher identity). I also sought to reaffirm her necessary forms of low and high resistance (HDV survivor identity). Although I struggled with these shifting identities, power shifted to both Jen and me. In fact, Jen's agentic acts of resistance and my presence as an educational researcher and perhaps my shared standpoint as HDV survivor/researcher created conditions where power distributed itself away from the educators to the researcher and researched. For well over seven minutes, our conversation served as an agentic moment for Jen where both Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy timidly glanced back at our interaction. Neither educator attempted to discipline Jen for walking out and ignoring their authority just minutes earlier. To me, our shared moments of agency felt mixed. I could feel its agentic effect for Jen, and I struggled with its potential impact on my relationships with educators and my concern that Jen was losing out in math learning.

The power also shifted because of our shared HDV standpoints as researcher and researched. This was clearly connected to our conversations where I attempted to mentor Jen in how to negotiate her violating experiences with teachers differently so that she could both resist and continue to engage in classroom learning or deter disciplinary consequences. This same conversation also highlighted how the distribution of power can also be situated in the distant gaze of an authority figure. Jen stated: "Ms. Kathy is getting

on my nerves!" while I responded: "Don't give her so much power" and Jen stated: "She's irritating me!" (*see* transcription 11:59). What intrigued me most in this exchange was that we might have assumed from viewing the video clips that Ms. Citra was the source of irritation because of her close proximity to Jen (standing next to and above her as Jen sat), but rather it was the special education teacher, Ms. Kathy, who gazed from the back side of Jen who was framed as the problematic educator in this site of engagement (see Figure 46, a series of Video Clips Five below). It was Ms. Kathy, who stood watching from afar, behind Ms. Citra, while Ms. Citra attempted to engage Jen and her HDV affiliated friends, who loomed large for Jen. Although Ms. Citra was in close proximity and attempted to verbally discipline Jen, it is fascinating that Ms. Kathy held power nonverbally in this interaction. Power was distributed through Ms. Kathy's distanced gaze. As shown in the series of Video Clips Five, Ms. Kathy gazed for well

Figure 46. Still from video clip five (series).

0:11   0:28
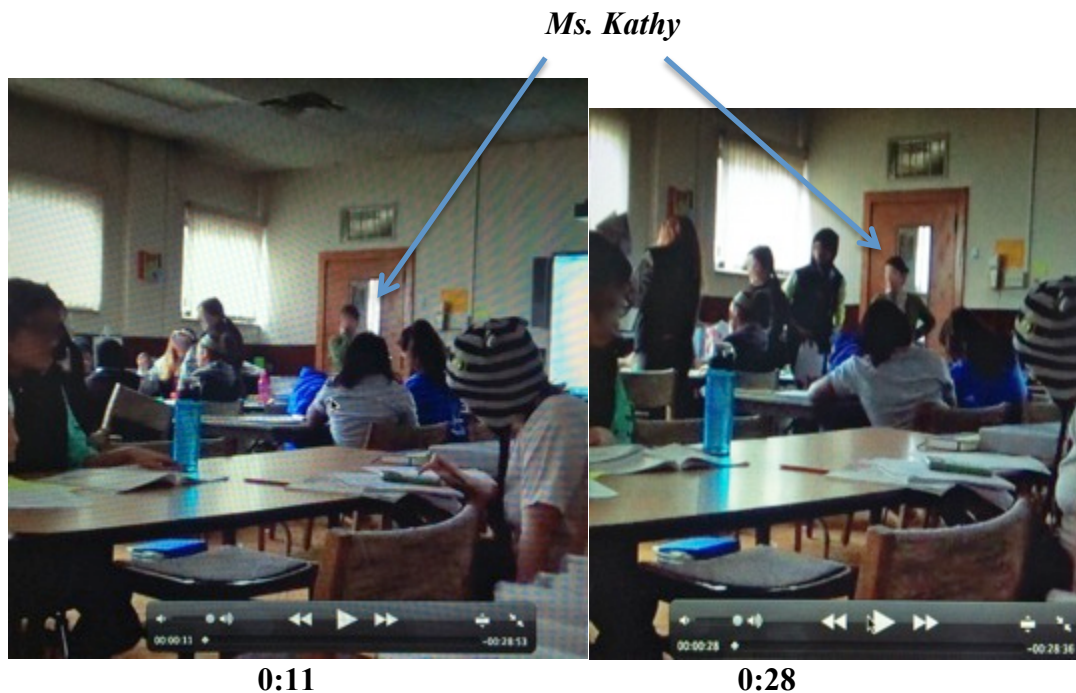
0:36

over 45 seconds. For the general observer, this extended moment of gazing may be ignored altogether or might look like a standard request for compliance, but for Jen, it felt like an institutional and personally offensive violating gaze. Ms. Kathy stood in one spot, gazing heavily without direct interaction and with her open hand resting upon her chin. Ms. Citra is not "read" by Jen as the irritating figure and, surprisingly, her presence did not serve as a mediating factor shaping this tension-filled interaction. In actuality, it is Ms. Kathy's gaze that shaped the distribution of power. Eventually, power shifted again toward Jen when she ruptured Ms. Kathy's gaze and Ms. Citra's proximity through a performance of resistive ambivalence (i.e., storming out while ignoring the request from Ms. Citra).

It is clear in this interaction order that agency was distributed rather than performed individually by Jen or the teachers. Agency was shaped and reshaped by mediated actions and the means in which the mediated actions and trajectories intersected. These were also influenced by semiotic cycles and histories of participation for all the social actors involved. Scollon (2001) captured these qualities of distributed power stating: "social actors who are acting in real time are able to strategize their own

actions within a negotiative process with other social actors to achieve their desired social meanings, including their identities, footings, alignments with others and their positionings of themselves and others" (p. 163). The teacherly acts of gazing and hovering positioned the teachers in powerful ways, but once these interactions were abruptly interrupted by Jen, through her performance of resistive ambivalence (leaving the classroom space), power was redistributed. Jen's agentic act was followed by Ms. Citra's meek request of "Jen…you… you...need a pass…can you fill one out please?" Jen completely ignored her request and continued to walk out.

Blommaert (2004) suggested that power is not so much about who "has agency as much as who is able to control the positioning through which motives are assigned and exchanged, often through controlling that timescales and trajectories along which actions are defined" (p. 160). Jen's resistive ambivalence in this interaction allowed her to achieve her desired identity where she was able to control how motives were assigned and exchanged in this interaction between her and teachers. For instance, Jen's need for liberation (embodied and cultural) in response to the educators' intense surveillance of her behavior was a motivating factor that redistributed how power was assigned and exchanged in this interaction order. Most students would comply with this type of positioning of educators because of their authority, the power engendered in that authority, and their desire to maintain status quo. For Jen, this was not the case. Her resistive responses reshaped the distribution of power in significant ways so that she could carve out necessary agentic experience for herself.

Throughout the first part of this analysis, agency was afforded to the teachers as a normative effect of what schools typically expect students to be and do. As the interaction unfolded, agency was redistributed depending on the variety of responses used by educators, Jen, and me. This included actions such as a shared apprehension between the teachers and me, resistive ambivalence, and hidden transcripts as acts of negotiation. Jen's resistive ambivalence, embodied in her walking out, demonstrated an individual agentic move as she left a normative interaction at her own discretion. She continued this agentic performance even when she returned 10 minutes later. In fact, she completely ignored the teachers when she reentered, much like she did when she first left, and then assertively walked back to where I sat. This was a clear and sustained agentic performance for Jen.

At this point and as seen in both Video Clip Six (Figure 47) and in the following excerpts, both Jen and I held power in this classroom during these moments of interaction. Jen and I engaged in overt forms of hidden transcripts via an open discussion

Figure 47. Still from video clip six.

Ms. Citra

related to her need to rupture the earlier normative interaction with the teachers. I encouraged Jen to negotiate and to an extent comply with the normative expectations expected of her. As we talked, both Ms. Citra and another special education aide (EA) stood just a few feet away and worked with students. At point 11:31 of the MDA transcription, the conversation between Jen and me highlighted our discussion regarding resistance and negotiation:

> T: "it's freakin dark in here." *(conversation is taking place off camera directly behind Ms. Citra, EA, and other student in Video Clip Six)*
> J: "Ms. Kathy is getting on my nerves."
> T: "Okay, remember when we talked about negotiating?"
> J: "Nay, I'm not about to negotiate."
> T: "Okay…Jen, connect with me. Keep it real with me. Bring it down with me." *(referring to Jen's intensity)*

Jen and I continued to talk about negotiation as a strategy for long-term success. The interactions and attention structures that surfaced are complicated for all the social actors as power redistributed itself, shaping and reshaping opportunities for different subjectivities to arise. For instance, Jen is neither emotionally or behaviorally disordered—the popular objectification often ascribed to HDV youth like Jen based on power struggles in classroom spaces and subsequent youth responses like walking out. Nor were the teachers intentionally trying to violate Jen in their performance of normative actions like expecting Jen to sit compliantly and work on her math while they gazed and hovered around her. We expect educators to redirect off-task behavior, and we expect they will gaze upon students to ensure that work is getting accomplished.

At this site of engagement, the mediated discourse analysis provided insight into the complexity where the most minute and common gestures like teacher gazing and

196

hovering and Jen's resistive response of staring forward were situated in much larger time scales and mediated by negotiation of hidden and public transcripts. These complicated factors shaped and redistributed power in a continuous movement toward real-time and future trajectories of interaction. In addition and beyond the actions of Jen and the educators, many additional factors shaped the interactions and distribution of power. These included my role as participant researcher, the actions of Jen's HDV affiliated friends, and Saturnalia's larger public transcripts in place (e.g., social justice). These factors complicated and co-created the interactions as sites of political struggle, which also created conditions for larger tensions to consistently (re)emerge.

The following section highlights these tensions (mediating factors) that further complicated Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy's classroom culture. They include (1) the larger school discourses in place and (2) the youth participants' HDV affiliated friend/friend groups. In several instances, it became clear that the normative expectations of authoritative gazing and hovering were problematic not only for Jen, but also for educators who found themselves positioned by a school culture that tolerated and often embraced Jen's cultural practices of hidden transcripts and resistive ambivalence (walking in and out of the classroom in a self-liberating fashion)*.*

Domestic Violence as Identity, Affiliation, and Performance

In this study, it quickly became clear that many of Jen, Mac, and Shanna's friends also shared histories of domestic violence in some form. This clarity emerged in three ways: (1) shared connections made by the school social worker; (2) friends of Jen and Mac who shared their childhood and real-time HDV stories with me as

mentor/researcher/fellow survivor; and (3) stories told by Jess, Jen's mother, that described how this affiliation often positioned Jen problematically as she surveyed, read, and resistively responded to what she deemed as just/unjust practices by Saturnalia's staff in response to her HDV affiliated friends.

In fact, this resistive affiliation can be seen in nexus analysis one where Jen sat with Mac and their HDV affiliated friends K. and R. Both K. and R. were engaged in acts of negating resistance along with Jen. It would be a safe to assume that HDV youth who share similar cultural knowledges would find themselves easily affiliated with similar youth. In fact, Jess (Jen's mother) claimed that Jen's HDV experiences significantly shaped her shared identity and affiliation with her friend group. The following dialogue between Jess and me captured the importance of Jen and her shared HDV identity with her friends at Saturnalia.

> T: So you were saying about B. and Jen becoming really close friends and
>   you think that's around their shared histories?
> J: …Right. Not necessarily their ethnic background. It's more the shared history
>   and Jen identifies with anybody who's had any kind of trauma and works with
>   them.
> T: She says that. To you as a mom, can you tell me more about that?
> J: Sure…There was another girl, A., where Jen….She.. Caucasian girl, but her
>   mother was dating an African American man that was very abusive. The
>   mother's an alcoholic. They live close by us. I…Many times would work
>   through with Ms. Marissa that I know it's not a safe environment for Jen
>   to be in. We live too close. I'm at work and I know she's hanging out with
>   her and that kind of thing. Because of their similar history, I think, with
>   abuse. Jen just zoned in on that and like all of a sudden, like, "We need to
>   be connected this way. I can help her through what she's dealing with cause I
>   lived through it myself." And she just does…
> T: Right! She just has that about her.
> J: I know! (laughs) But then I worry and I see that it brings her back into
>   remembering that..
> T: Oh, you do?

J: Oh yeah. I see how it digresses her own advancement of "You're not living… You're not there anymore. You've come out of that. We're OK. We're working through the things." But she regresses kinda into someone else's story and hearing about it and trying to help them. Even to the point where sometimes she hasn't been honest with me with what's going on because she knows that...

Jen's readability of just/unjust actions and thus serving as an advocate for friends with similar HDV experiences was a performance—a keenness related to what is socially shared and just as a cultural practice. As Jess conveyed, this was a heavy burden for Jen to tow and it shaped her relationships with friends in important ways. Brown (2005) claimed that a similar affiliation was significant in her research with girls who had been objectified and labeled as "violent" (via formal agencies). She claimed that the girls' affiliation or "sticking together" in her study "was paramount" from the perspectives of the research participants when discussing their friendships (p. 70).

These HDV youth affiliations powerfully mediated the actions of Jen, Mac, and Shanna as they negotiated shared normative interactions on the part of teachers. Often, their HDV affiliated friends responded similarly through resistive responses when faced with normative interactions that they read as violating. These connections appeared in anonymous spaces like hallways, the lunchroom, and on Facebook, and for Saturnalia's staff, they unknowingly shaped interactions in close vicinity. Scott (1990) suggested that homogenous groups of the marginalized do not require physical distance from the dominator to perform hidden transcripts "so long as the linguistic codes, dialects, and gestures—opaque to the masters . . . were deployed" (p. 121). These hidden performances are reflected Scott's assertion that distinctive marginalized subcultures who share similar cultural practices of negation often produce a shared social mantra of " a strong 'us vs.

them' social imagery" developed much like a dialect that unifies and is "bound by powerful mutual sanctions that hold competing discourses at arm's length" (p. 135). This unified subculture can become "a powerful force for unity as all subsequent experiences are mediated by a shared way of looking at the world" (Scott, p. 135).

One such instance was found in nexus analysis one after Jen performed resistive ambivalence by walking out and her friend K. walked out under what she read as a similar duress just minutes later. Perhaps Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy cannot fully comprehend how the incitement embodied in Jen and her friend's act of defiance shaped the socially tense collective situation their actions created. It seemed that Jen's friends, B. and K. (see Figure 42), colluded with Jen through low forms of negation by standing and moving their bodies in circling motions around Jen and Ms. Citra as Ms. Citra struggled to get Jen's attention and hold the attention of her friends who shared the same table (*see* actions described in transcript, 0:15-0:35). Later, as Jen performed an act of resistive ambivalence, K. followed suit; both educators seem paralyzed when Jen and K. walked out of the classroom without permission. The educators' reactions to Jen and K. walking out of the classroom can be explained as a lack of consciousness related to how the HDV youths navigated this intense normative experience. In fact, Scott (1990) claimed:

> Neither social scientists nor ruling elites, moreover, are likely to fully appreciate the incitement a successful act of defiance may represent for a subordinate group, precisely because they are unlikely to be much aware of the hidden transcript from which it derives much of its energy. (p. 224)

Also significant to the interplay between hidden and public transcripts is that the marginalized subject and their movements between these tension-filled negotiations are complicated. Scott contended that the marginalized:

> moves back and forth . . . between two worlds: the world of the master and the offstage world of the subordinates. Both of these worlds have sanctioning power. While subordinates normally can monitor the public transcript performance of other subordinates, the dominant can rarely monitor fully the hidden transcript. (p. 191)

Such "world traveling" (Lugones, 1987) is especially difficult for Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy to understand, especially when it was clear that Jen, K., and R. monitored each other's actions while the educators most likely missed their hidden transcript performances.

Some may argue that such petty performances of resistance (acts of negation) on the part of Jen and her HDV affiliated friends do not have long-term effects on the dominant. In the case of Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy, the effects presented a dilemma as these two educators found themselves in a dynamic and complicated situation—their practices became problematic as they countered the school-wide discourses in place. The following section highlights how the competing discourses in place (pedagogies of farce/love/care versus substantial compliance) also mediated the interactions of youth like Jen and educators whose pedagogies overtly counteracted Saturnalia's unpopular public transcripts.

Push-Out Teachers and Competing Discourses In Place

Highlighted in nexus analysis one, the effects of competing discourses in place in Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy's classroom and the school as a whole were dramatic. For instance, the teachers in this nexus analysis found themselves in their own localized knotty situations when responding to Jen's hidden transcripts and resistive ambivalence. Neither Ms. Citra nor Ms. Kathy typically practiced Saturnalia's discourses of social critique, farce, or love/care in place. This tension positioned them in problematic ways and potentially influenced them to leave Saturnalia after their first year of teaching at the school. They appeared to be in constant conflict with the youth participants and with many of their friends. I came to call these teachers at Saturnalia "push out" teachers, as they constituted a group of teachers that Jen framed as "teachers who don't belong."

In fact, Jen strategically performed acts of negation to "push" unjust teachers out of Saturnalia. She expressed that she viewed her behaviors as just acts as she was seeking justice. Jess, her mother, described Jen's agentic acts in the following excerpt: "Jen will acknowledge that every year, there's one teacher that she just would zone in on and she would not behave for them at all." She described how her daughter found personal and political satisfaction in pushing out teachers who didn't seem to fit Jen's definition of a just Saturnalia teacher. Jess described a particular teacher who left Saturnalia and the role that she saw her daughter play in pushing this teacher out. Jess stated,

> "Well Jen was… almost took personal satisfaction when Ms. C. walked off the job and swore or whatever. Like she had beat her down almost… Which, I mean, she was twelve. She was like, 'Guess what, Mom?' Kinda like she must…She knew that the woman wasn't cut out to be a teacher or something. Like…But that's kind of scary that at twelve years old, she was able to zone in on the Father… like [teacher]…To notice…"

Jess further described how she tried to persuade Jen to stop her push-out practices once they met with Ms. C. together, but Jen responded with a keen and logical defiance for what was just. Jess described the situation as:

> "Well she'll pick.. She picked up on things! …I mean, Jen just tells me everything.. (laughs) …she goes, 'But did you hear, she didn't wanna be a teacher!' … And I said, 'Yeah, I did pick up on that.' I'm interested that she did. She [Ms. C.] goes, 'I didn't wanna do this job. I got let..' She was laid off from her engineering job or whatever she was doing and Jen hears that. I mean, most kids would not pick up on it… She's [Jen] like, 'Hm. You don't even wanna be a teacher. You're just mad at me because I don't like math and that's what your life is, you know? So I'm not doing it because you like it.'"

Jen's performance of push out was a common practice, and it became clear to both Jess and Jen that Jen refused to go along with the hegemonic pretense and compliance when she interacted with teachers whom Jen thought did not belong in Saturnalia's school culture.

For Ms. Citra, an older immigrant teacher, who came to Saturnalia mid-year, her new role in the school and her perceived collaboration with Ms. Kathy tended to position her as an outsider from Jen's perspective. Thus, Jen's performance of push out was perhaps a mediating factor that shaped her interactions with both educators in nexus analysis one. For Ms. Kathy, a first year special education teacher who held a specific license in working with EBD youth, the tension was thick and seemed more ideological between her, Jen, and Jen's HDV affiliated friends. In my one-on-one conversations with Ms. Kathy and the other special education assistants over the span of the study, their descriptions of these tension-filled interactions with Jen, Mac, and their HDV affiliated

friends often reified the dominant discourses of special education that frame HDV youth like Jen as emotionally and behaviorally damaged (Baker, 2002; Pyscher, 2015).

Jen and Jess spoke openly in their interviews about Jen's agentic agenda in ridding the school of teachers who didn't perform similar pedagogies of farce, care, and love as did Ms. Jade, Ms. Kell, Ms. Kasey, Ms. Liz, and Ms. Marissa, as they felt they should not have been teaching at Saturnalia. Jen's ideological stances were saturated in what was just/right from her perspectives. These ideologies were also apparent in Saturnalia's public transcripts, which allowed Jen to perform an agentic righteousness as she sought to rid Saturnalia of certain teachers. It seemed that Jen felt a complete right to do so. Jen was not only concerned about defending herself, but she was also protecting the school. The notion of "push out" was yet another negating and agentic form of resistance performed by Jen and her friend group. Scott (1990) suggested such bonds of human solidarity were not mystical, but rather

> a shared discourse of the hidden transcript created and ripened in the nooks and crannies of the social order, where subordinate groups can speak more freely. If there seems to be an instantaneous mutuality and commonness of purpose, they are surely derived from the hidden transcript. Such mutuality may not be a pretty sight. . . . (p. 223)

These agentic acts on Jen's part cannot be separated from the discourses in place at Saturnalia. In fact, there appeared to have been an interdialogicality that occurred between Jen's acts of teacher push out and Saturnalia's school culture shaped by discourses of social critique and love/care.

Tensions between Discourses in Place and Educator Pedagogies

At the classroom level, the nexus analysis showed how Jen's negotiations, rupture, and eventual return to the classroom significantly impacted the class environment and subsequent educator pedagogies. Even discourses like teacher "push-out" impacted the actions and actors in this social space. In addition, Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy had very limited engagement with Jen compared to Jen's agentic participation at Saturnalia (three years) and earlier negotiations of deficit in her elementary school. Important to this analysis, and to the study as a whole, is Scollon and Scollon's (2007) contention that social actors in dominant roles often do not intentionally attempt to discriminate in the social interactions (p. 615). From a participant researcher perspective, this view rang true in the nexus analysis. It appeared that Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy did not intend to discriminate in their social interactions with Jen, but rather were determined to reproduce typically enacted public transcripts laden with authoritative presence (e.g., gazing, hovering); they actually gave special attention to Jen and her HDV affiliated friend group compared to other students in the classroom space. For teachers, this "special" attention was normalized, and for Jen and her friend group, the attention was read as discriminating—as deeply complicated sites of engagement and ripe for unsolvable tensions. For parents of non-HDV youth, this special attention was also contentious, as they expected the same amount of attention to be given to their non-HDV students. Paradoxically, HDV students, non-HDV students, and their parents all read the educators' actions as discrimination. Different meanings were attached to those actions

depending on the social actors involved and the actors' alignment with public and hidden transcripts.

Saturnalia's culture could best be described as paradoxical and contradictory, requiring a stable and compliant environment of normative public transcripts and embracing the opposite in hidden transcripts that created a carnival-like space. Complicating matters further, Saturnalia's normative public transcripts also embraced unorthodox carnivalesque practices through discourses in place. Normative pedagogies like hovering and gazing were not typical pedagogies practiced by most of the long-term Saturnalia teachers including Ms. Liz, Ms. Marissa, Ms. Kasey, Ms. Kell, and Ms. Jade. These teachers happened to be, by no surprise, the teachers that Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers mentioned as culturally relevant teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This reality and the related discourses in place precariously positioned new teachers like Ms. Citra, who Jen referred to as "nice" in the larger study, and Ms. Kathy, who Jen described as "irritating," in this nexus analysis.

When teachers carry ideologically blinded perspectives in response to HDV youths' cultural ways of navigating socially tense interactions, then their very ideologies and histories of participation also mediate the tensions between hidden and public transcripts. This imbalanced interplay was captured in the mediational means and attention structures identified in nexus analysis one and specifically represented as the factors that shaped the tensions between resistance and normative hegemony (*see* Figure 48 below). This literal and figurative imbalance is especially precarious for educators like Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy especially when HDV youth like Jen read these sustained efforts

of normative compliance as violating. Their classroom actions dramatically counteracted Saturnalia's discourses in place that embraced carnivalesque pedagogies of care/love and farce. How are youth like Jen to respond to social practices that seemed to thwart the greater school culture that promoted critically agentic public transcripts and teacher pedagogies that often embraced Jen's cultural infrapolitics of what is just/unjust?

Figure 48: Tensions between resistance and normative hegemony.
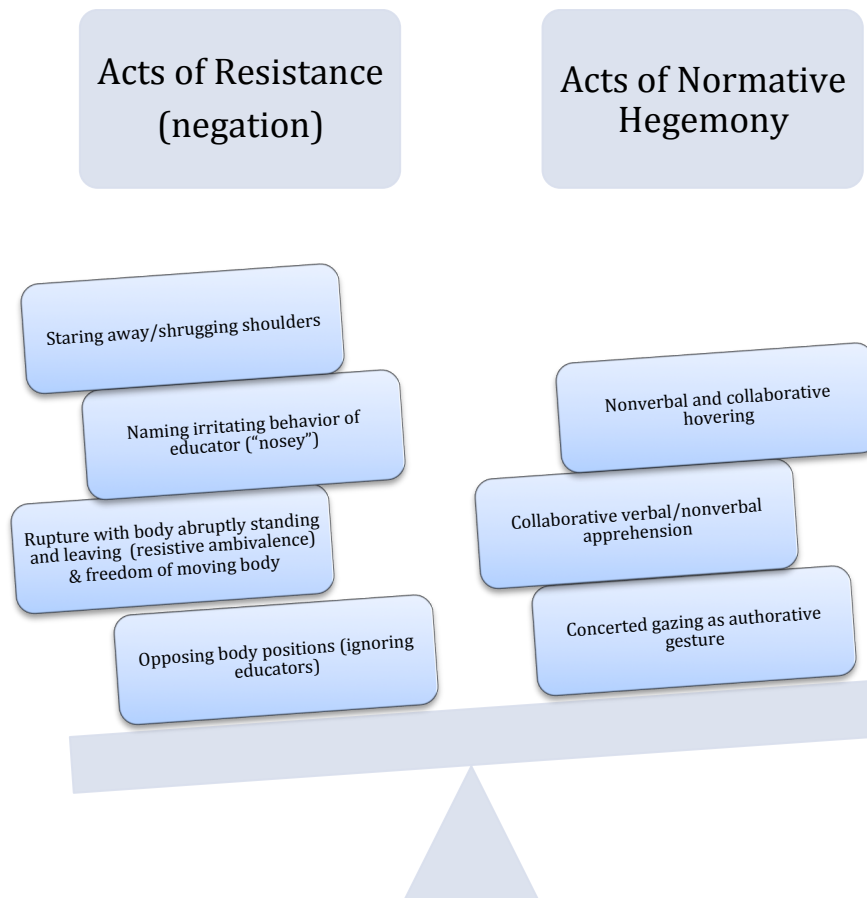
In many ways, Jen's agentic resistive actions resemiotized an altogether different authority and participation structure being produced in the class space. For Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy, who often contradicted the school's larger, unorthodox public transcripts, their teaching experiences must, at best, have felt oppressive when these tension-filled

interactions emerged with HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. These conditions set up a seemingly unsolvable dilemma that often positioned Jen with agentic power while the educators were stripped of their traditional and positional authority.

This complicated dilemma was not a linear story of compliance, resistance, and middle class desire solely mediated by teachers like Ms. Kathy who practiced traditionally normative practices in response to the resistive performances of Jen and her HDV friends. We expect all teachers to perform this way. In fact, throughout the study, Jen, Mac, and Shanna's cultural performances of negation and resistive ambivalence were not strictly in response to practices/discourses bent toward middle class desires of status quo. Their unique resistive performances were discursively executed regardless of the educator involved in the interaction once social tension emerged. Even when engaged with a teacher who embodied the discourses in place (e.g., social justice, love, farce), their resistive identities emerged in response to their reading of normative acts of injustice. It is the everyday act, not solely dependent upon the social actors involved, that created conditions for hidden transcripts and resistive ambivalence to emerge. The second nexus analysis examined an interaction involving Ms. Jade, the art teacher, who engaged in pedagogies of compliance under conditions of duress when interacting with Mac and her HDV affiliated friend K. This further compounded Saturnalia's larger school dilemma—according to many middle class parents the school culture was not sufficiently oriented toward compliance when working with students viewed as "troubled."

Nexus Analysis Two: Carnival as Process and Representation as Product

Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy viewed Jen's resistive responses to normative expectations as deeply problematic; these views evolved into a reified representation that Jen and her friends were, in fact, disordered youth. For Jen, her carnival-like cultural practices were in constant process and preceded her teacher's ascribed representations. Jefferson (1989), further theorizing Bakhtin's (1984) notion of carnival, suggested that carnival is a process, whereas representation becomes its byproduct (p. 168). This can result in contradictory social clashes, such as one where the problematic representation of Jen precedes her resistive process, producing a boomerang effect that creates an unsolvable ideological tension as Jen's resistance counters the teachers' deficit representations. Both Jen and the teachers were caught in a damaging cycle of representation and process. Jefferson suggested that "it would be rather extraordinary if carnival did not succeed on some occasions in actively ousting representation" (p. 168). Jen's process (or liberating performance) would then seem to be in constant conflict with the solidified deficit representations (or products) produced by Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy.

These clashes within process and product also collided with the unorthodox discourses in place that ranged between transgression and compliance. These problematic interactions frequently emerged in classroom or school spaces with teachers who had difficulty practicing culturally relevant pedagogies when working with youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. This was evident in the clash between Jen, Ms. Citra, and Ms. Kathy in nexus analysis one. Even more complicated scenarios arose when Jen, Mac, Shanna, and Saturnalia's critically astute teachers clashed. These scenarios emerged out of situations

where the most well liked teachers at Saturnalia found themselves reinforcing practices of compliance in violating ways in response to complex social conditions and to HDV youth themselves. When Mac, Jen, or Shanna were pushed to a point where they read these interactions as violating, they responded in similar resistive ways to these well-liked teachers. Nexus analysis two highlights such an interaction. This second interaction took place in Ms. Jade's art classroom. In this analysis, Ms. Jade struggled in her negotiations with Mac and her HDV affiliated friend K.'s farcical responses to her student teacher's introductory art lesson. This analysis illustrates how the tensions between hidden and public transcripts continually manifest in complicated and dynamic ways regardless of the larger positive relationship in place.

Turning farce on its head: The complications of resistively reading "fair" discipline. As evidenced in chapter four, Ms. Jade's classroom and pedagogies truly embraced the discourses in place at Saturnalia, including social critique embedded in her curricular design (e.g., socially critical art hanging in hallways). In addition, her classroom was a space where students had voice. For instance, student names were graffitied all over the classroom walls, semiotically representing the many transgressive discourses in place. All three HDV youth participants described Ms. Jade as a teacher who exuded a sense of farce and performed pedagogies of love/care for her students. In interviews, both Jen and Mac referred to Ms. Jade as a mother figure because she offered such loving advice when youth needed a teacher to talk to about the challenges they were struggling with. Yet, in the following nexus analysis, a clash erupted between Ms. Jade, Mac, and another HDV affiliated friend of Mac's (K.) during a classroom interaction. I

210

used the following video excerpts to document a 32 minute interaction between Ms. Jade, Mac, her friend K., and a new art preservice teacher (Ms. Smith) who led the classroom in an introductory lesson. The discussion began at the 29:19 mark of the MDA transcript where a clash between Ms. Jade and Mac erupted as Mac claimed that her humorous interactions garnered unjust attention when compared to other students' similar interactions in response to the new student teacher.

The analysis began with Video Clip Seven (Figure 49) below, where students and two teachers, Ms. Jade and Ms. Smith, were sitting in a circle as Ms. Smith introduced herself and the curriculum unit she expected students to engage in over the next quarter. Ms. Jade sat next to Ms. Smith; Mac and K. can be seen sitting at their side. In Video Clip Seven, Ms. Smith's presence mediated the interactions between Ms. Jade, Mac, and

Figure 49. Video clip seven.

K. However, it was clear throughout the 30 minute lesson that the interaction order was also mediated by Ms. Jade's body language and gestures (e.g., leaning forward, stern voice) and by her frequent interjections that often interrupted Ms. Smith's lesson demanding that students listen more closely to Ms. Smith and each other's comments. Ms. Jade's frustration grew with students in general and with Mac and K. in particular. She seemed to struggle with the students who were not paying enough close attention to Ms. Smith's introductory lesson. As Ms. Smith continued to frame her introduction, Mac and K., sitting to her side, smiled and engaged in small talk with each other as they shifted between quiet listening and off-task play behavior. Their behavior was not strikingly different then the other students' behavior during this 30 minute lesson, although Ms. Jade gave them special attention. She glared in response to their playful antics until she interrupted Ms. Smith and firmly asked Mac and K. to talk with her in the hallway. Table 3 is the MDA transcript of nexus analysis two and outlines the factors shaping this interaction.

Table 3. MDA transcript nexus analysis two.

Time	Action/Social Practices	Circulating Hidden (HT) & Public Transcripts/ Discourses (PT)	Mediational Means/Attention Structures with Interpretation
22:48 - 29:18	*Ms. Smith* began talking about "the latest scientific news…" *K.* exclaimed in a joking form: "about the giant dinosaur?" *Ms. Smith,* ignoring K's response with her body turned toward the rest of the group, stated: "No, no, they decided	*Mac & K*'s continued use of humor and farce as pretense of participation, but actually collaborating in off-task behaviors (HT) as Ms. Jade continued to listen and watch their behavior more closely	**Tension** between the bantering and irrelevant talk on the part of Ms. Smith, and Ms. Jade's anxiety about **tying the work to the art**

212

	to add letters to the genetic alphabet." She then began equating this with the image of a zombie apocalypse. Students laughed and responded in various surprising ways. Bantering goes on for well over six minutes as *Ms. Jade* eventually takes over and talks about how their shared ideas will shape the quarter's curriculum. *Students* continued to talk over each other, Ms. Jade, and Ms. Smith in what seems to be a standard type of dialogic discourse in the art room until Ms. Jade stands to address the louder laughter of Mac and K.	(PT). *Ms. Jade* directly used authoritative body stance in response to Mac and K.'s loud laughter (PT)	**curriculum** Mac & K used **humor** to resist new teacher who seemed to frustrate them and Ms. Jade.
29:19 *30:31* *30:36 -31:28*	*Mac's* body could be seen bobbing back and forth out of the view of the camera as louder laughter from Mac and K. was heard. *Ms. Jade* stood and walked sternly to Mac and K. Mac looked directly up as the smile left her face. Mac and K. followed Ms. Jade into the hallway. *Mac and K.* reentered with Ms. Jade following behind them. Mac was displaying a huge grin as she sat on the stool near the center of the classroom. Ms. Jade could see this grin. *Ms. Jade* reentered and began telling students in a frustrated tone while pointing her fingers	*Ms. Jade* directly used authoritative body stance in response to Mac and K.'s loud laughter (PT) *Mac and K.* continued to use humor and farce as pretense of participation, but were actually collaborating in off-task behaviors (HT) *Ms. Jade* directly used authoritative body stance and tone of voice in attempts to get students to comply (PT) while directly calling out Mac and K.'s names.	*Mac and K.*'s **humor became unacceptably loud** for Ms. Jade **Removal from the classroom**—more explicit disciplinary act by Ms. Jade

	crossing the room: "Alright, we're into cleaning. K. and Mac, you guys are on…pick up every little thing, paper…" as she directed all students in a general sense to pick up the art space.	*Mac and K.* continued to use humor and farce as pretense of participation, but are actually collaborating in off-task behaviors (HT)	**Gestures of humor** between Mac and K.
31:29	*Mac*, with her back to Ms. Jade, walked with a funny face along with K. back toward where I was filming. Mac was picking up small bits of paper as other students begin organizing and cleaning the space.		**Explicit authoritative actions** by Ms. Jade
31:43	*Ms. Jade* continued to sternly remind students that their eighth grade trip "rides" on their behavior, stating in a threatening tone: "I am in charge of the eighth grade trip." She continued: "Be respectful of the art room, pick things up, let's go. I'm not playing today" as she hovered around the back of the classroom near Mac and K. stating: "You're very rude. I'm not happy with most of you…"	*Ms. Jade* used harsh words while threatening the loss of a privilege (eighth grade trip) if students didn't comply and clean up the Art room (PT).	**Threat** by Ms. Jade of **loosing privilege** in attending 8th grade trip
32:10 - 32:25	K. is seen trotting past Ms. Jade, humming a childlike tune and swinging her arms back and forth, licking her fingers as Ms. Jade intensely looks on.	*K.* continued to use humor and farce as pretense of participation with her back to Ms. Jade (HT).	
	Mac could be seen leaning down picking up bits of paper with a grin on her face. She continued walking across the room past K. with a grin on her face.	*Mac* continued to use humor and farce as pretense of participation with her back to Ms. Jade (HT).	**Farcical bodily movements and gestures** as sign of resistance

Ms. Jade walks to where Mac was throwing away paper near the entrance of the classroom and engaged Mac in direct conversation. *K.* was seen laughing at Mac (pointing) as Ms. Jade engaged Mac. Ms. Jade's back is to K. while Mac can see K. pointing and laughing at her.	*Ms. Jade* confronted Mac. It is not clear what Mac did to get her direct and sudden attention (PT). *K.* continued to use humor and farce as pretense of participation with her back to Ms. Jade (HT).	Ms. Jade **revoked permission** for Mac to attend 8th grade trip
At first, *Mac* was smiling, then she abruptly walked out of the classroom as K. walked away toward the back of the classroom. She was no longer laughing.	Rupture occurred between Mac and Ms. Jade; Mac performed resistive ambivalence (RA).	
Ms. Jade turned her attention toward another student. Mac was missing for the remainder of class (two minutes). Video recording ends…	Ms. Jade settles back in and begins addressing other students (PT).	Tension and **resistive ambivalence**; Ms. Jade's **authoritative actions**

In the transcript excerpt, Mac and K.'s loud laughter garnered Ms. Jade's frustrated attention as she directed both students into the hallway (see Video Clip Eight, Figure 50). Over the life of the study and important to this specific nexus analysis was the fact that Mac typically engaged in farce and scenes of love and care with Ms. Jade (i.e., histories of participation). It seemed Mac's more general jovial attitude was often safely performed in Ms. Jade's classroom. In Video Clip Nine (Figure 51), Mac and K. returned with Mac sporting a large grin as Ms. Jade followed them back into the classroom. In this

Figure 50. Video clip eight.

Mac   **Ms. Jade**

interaction, new mediating factors were reshaping the typical performances of love, farce, and care between Mac and Ms. Jade. Ms. Smith, the visiting student teacher, became a

Figure 51. Video clip nine.

Mac   **K.**   **Ms. Smith**
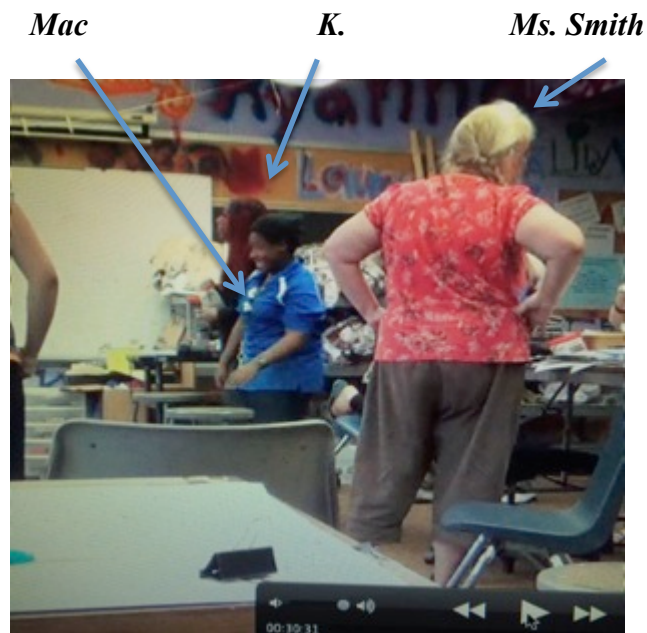
mediating factor shaping this classroom interaction. It seemed Ms. Smith's inability to use farce, care, and love in running the classroom space created the need for Ms. Jade to call upon traditional public transcripts of compliance in response to Mac and K. That in turn disrupted Mac's usual histories of participation in this particular classroom culture and specifically with a teacher with whom she often farcically played and depended upon in seeking advice. Once this moment erupted, Mac performed resistive ambivalence and ruptured the typical generative interplay between herself and Ms. Jade. Video Clip Ten (Figure 52) shows K. pointing and laughing prior to Mac's performance of resistive ambivalence when Ms. Jade disciplined Mac for her farcical behavior. Mac then stormed out of the classroom two minutes before the bell rang when she was told that she lost her privilege to attend the eighth grade trip. Ms. Jade's intensity was met head on by Mac's intensity and eventual resistive ambivalence.

Figure 52. Video clip 10.

K. (pointing)   **Ms. Jade**   **Mac**

When I entered the hallway after class, a blowup between Ms. Jade, Mac, and K. had occurred. I found Mac dramatically crying, angry, and refusing to acknowledge Ms. Jade's presence as she stormed down the hallway. Similar to Jen's tension-filled interaction with Ms. Citra and Ms. Kathy in nexus analysis one, I engaged Mac and K. in conversation related to negotiation. I spent the next hour talking to both Mac and K. separately about choosing their battles when they felt they are being mistreated and singled out unfairly. I also challenged them to consider how they might be able to mend their relationship with Ms. Jade.

There were two factors mediating the dynamic and tension-filled interaction between Mac and Ms. Jade. First, Ms. Jade, in a side conversation with me, shared her opinion that the student teacher, Ms. Smith, did not seem to fit well at Saturnalia. Throughout Ms. Smith's student teaching experience, Ms. Jade felt significant pressure to get students to respect and comply with Ms. Smith—a new student teacher who did not necessarily understand or embrace Saturnalia's discourses in place. There was also a second larger discourse (semiotic timescale) mediating the tension between Mac and K.'s farcical resistance and Ms. Jade's unusual intense normative expectations. Ms. Jade felt pressure from the special education administrator to keep Mac, Jen, and their affiliated HDV friend group members to the same behavioral expectations as other students if they wanted permission to attend the eighth grade trip. Although Ms. Jade did not typically engage in the resistant and hegemonic interplay and had a positive relationship with youth like Mac, Jen, and Shanna, she was given no more latitude to not practice hegemonically than other teachers (e.g., Ms. Kathy) who typically demanded more

normative behaviors as common practice. Perhaps the dynamic difference was that rather than performing outright acts of rigid resistance and disengagement, the youth used farce, which invited at least some engagement based on their generative relationship with Ms. Jade and their positive shared histories of participation prior to the full rupture.

Perhaps Ms. Jade's reputation as a farcical and loving teacher afforded her a different experience of resistance with Mac and K., although the eventual results led to a rupture—a performance of resistive ambivalence. For Mac, it seemed once the interaction became read as an act of injustice (i.e. loss of privilege to attend 8th grade trip), she ruptured the resistive/hegemonic interplay and resistive ambivalence was the result. Ms. Jade was caught between two opposing positions: as a mentor teacher, she felt compelled to ensure that students comply, even though she thought Ms. Smith's teaching was problematic in Saturnalia's culture. The second and opposing position demanded that Ms. Jade act like an ad hoc disciplinary administrator who was expected to use the privilege of attending the eighth grade trip as a threat to equalize behaviors between youth like Mac and other non-HDV youth. These positions placed Ms. Jade in a precarious situation with both Mac and K. For Mac and K., their acts of negation could be described as more innocent acts of social farce disguised as social critique and, eventually, outright resistance (e.g., Mac walking out and both youth screaming back and forth with Ms. Jade after class). Neither youth was fully willing to perform acts of pretense for a teacher they have no investment in (Ms. Smith), while both Mac and K.'s resistive ambivalence was a response to what they deemed was a completely unjust consequence of their farcical play by Ms. Jade—the loss of privilege in attending their eighth grade trip.

Mac's responses of farcical play may just have been complicated forms of

disguising her off-task behaviors so as to balance her refusal of pretense for a teacher she

was not invested in and to honor her respectful and caring relationship with Ms. Jade.

This refusal to comply with pretense and the farcical play bounced back and forth

between Mac, her friend K., Ms. Jade, and Ms. Smith and eventually crescendoed into a

full rupture between the public and hidden transcripts shaping the interaction. In fact,

Mac and K.'s farcical like play looked similar to other students' play in this situation,

even though they garnered more direct disciplinary attention from Ms. Jade when their

laughter filled the room. Scott (1990) claimed such an act allows the marginalized

> to undercut the authorized cultural norms . . . by virtue of its polyvalent
>
> symbolism and metaphor [that] lends itself to disguise. By the subtle use of codes
>
> one can insinuate into a ritual . . . meanings that are accessible to one intended
>
> audience and opaque to another audience that actors wish to exclude (p. 158)
>
> —or what he referred to as a form of "guerrilla warfare" (p. 192).

Acts of negation essentially served as a significant mediating factor and attention

structure in this interaction. For Mac and K., these infrapolitics of resistance were unread

(ignored) by the student teacher, yet read as a lack of respect by Ms. Jade who held the

power to take away the privilege of attending the eighth grade trip if students didn't

comply. These mediating influences created conditions for a rupture to occur, even

between social actors who typically engaged in interactions of farce and love/care. Scott

(1990) claimed, "alternatively, the excluded audience [here, Ms. Jade] . . . may grasp the

seditious message in the performance but find it difficult to react because the sedition is

220

clothed in terms that also can lay claim to a perfectly innocent construction" (p. 158). In the center of this interplay are hidden transcripts, public Discourse transcripts, and Saturnalia's unorthodox public transcripts. How could these conditions not create a state of disequilibrium even for teachers who practiced culturally relevant pedagogies in the eyes of HDV youth?

The push and pull between compliance and resistance continued to be in play in the classroom interactions between Ms. Jade, Mac, and K. In Video Clip Ten (Figure 52, above), Mac reentered the classroom with a big grin on her face while Ms. Jade carried a stern look. Scott (1990) might claim that Mac is *not* (re)conforming because she has "internalized the norms of the dominant, but because a structure of surveillance, reward [love/care], and punishment makes it prudent for them [Mac and K.] to comply" (p. 193). This burden heightened as displayed in the interaction between Mac and Ms. Jade. There was a dance between social actors as power was distributed not only in moments of tension, but also in moments of farce. At times, Mac and K. quieted down and seemed steady and calm while also reveling in subversive play.

On the other hand, Ms. Jade, who did not necessarily understand these particular hidden transcripts during moments of this interaction, seemed out of sorts. Scott (1990) referred to such resistive and normative interplay as the "dramatology of power" (p. 50) where the dominant social actors' grandeur and authority reign. This dramatology was complicated for HDV youth, and marginalized youth in general, as normative actions (interventions) are often believed to be what is best for youth/children in deep social struggle. Typically Ms. Jade's culturally relevant practices of farce, love, and care would

221

ease tensions. However, even for teachers like Ms. Jade, handling new and unforeseen mediating factors like the presence of Ms. Smith create the need to demand new and different forms of compliance from students. The new compliances can then be easily read by youth like Mac as inherently violating once they result in a serious consequence deemed unfair.

Up to this point, I have focused my analysis on mapping how HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and their affiliated friends performed a variety of acts of negation and/or resistive ambivalence in response to either explicit or implicit normative and hegemonic conditions at Saturnalia. The HDV youths' resistive responses were mediated by many complicated factors. The following section returns to a final theme that surfaced in the study—how just/unjust touch significantly mediated the resistive and hegemonic interplay and youth/staff interactions at Saturnalia. Moments of touch, especially in informal learning spaces like the lunchroom or the hallway shaped and reshaped whom the youth "read" as humane educators (or not) and how these youth chose to respond in kind.

Youth Resistively and Lovingly Reading Bodies—Mediated Actions of Just/Unjust Touch

Jen, Mac, and Shanna all talked about touch as a sign of connection or violating threat that occurred everyday when interacting with Saturnalia's staff. In several interviews, youth and their families discussed who was allowed to justly/unjustly touch the youth participants and referred to this touch as a special cultural knowledge (practice). Just/unjust touch was a mediating factor in relationships, performances of

resistance, and compliance and observable in interview, video, and audio data. I used the

following interview excerpts with Jen, Jess, and Mac to emphasize the importance of

touch as a mediating factor in the youths' acts of resistance and/or their engagement in

the discourses of farce and love/care.

Jess (Jen's mother) described just/unjust touch as an important mediating factor in

Jen's relationships with educators. The following interview excerpt highlights the

importance of touch.

> T: What teachers do you specifically see that Jen connects with deeply?
> J: Ms. Kell… The phy ed..
> T: Yeah, Ms. Kell… Why is that?
> J: I think she's just no nonsense with Jen. She [Ms. Kell] calls it like it is and she'll
>   call Jen out on stuff that she knows she should know better at. They just have a
>   better relationship.
> T: Why does she get away with it when other people, like you were saying..?
> J: Oh, she can't.. I mean Jen has huge physical boundary issues like if Ms. Ann
>   would touch her on the shoulder, she would absolutely flip out. Ms. Kell can
>   come up and embrace her. Not a problem. But I mean, that's with everybody!
> T: What is that?!
> J: Well I think it's just your comfort level…
> T: How would you describe why.. What do you think that Ms. Kell's..
> J: Ms. Ann wants to get the way that Ms. Kell has and I said [to Ms.
>   Ann], "She may never, ever get that with you. It just depends on your..
>   Unfortunately your personality." I mean I know I'm the same way. I couldn't
>   tell you what it is. It's just your.. Like you said, she reads the space around her.
>   There's something that she's not comfortable with, so you don't have the right to
>   touch her like somebody else would. And I know, even as adults that can be
>   frustrating not.. Well she's a kid, she shouldn't know that. She does know that at
>   14. She knows what makes her uncomfortable and she voices her opinion
>   and Jen will say, 'Get your hand off of me. Don't touch me.'

When I asked Jen how she would describe her interactions with Saturnalia's staff, she

talked about how just/unjust touch mediated her interactions and evolving relationships

with Saturnalia's educators:

J: …Well every year I've been here, there's always one teacher I don't really get along with at the beginning of the year. They're like..They don't understand me. Like I don't like being touched by people that I really don't know.

T: Right.

J: And that like if they touch me, I'll probably just tell them not to touch me, but probably in a rude way. But then by the end of the year, I'll probably like start to get to know them better and.. yeah.

T: Has that happened to you this year?

J: Uhm.. Yes.

T: Can you talk to me about that?

J: Uhm.. Yeah. Do you know Ms. Ann?

T: Mm-hm.

J: Yeah. Like it's been the same thing with like every.. There's always a different teacher, like I said. Uhm.. Like she doesn't really take the time to understand me and like I've told her multiple times to like not touch me. But then like.. Cause somebody I would have a good bond with like Ms. Marissa, me and her like we hit each other but not like..

T: Yeah.

J: Yeah. Not like abusively, we just bump each other around. And like yeah, because we have a really good bond. I've known her for four years. But like Ms. Ann was just starting here and I don't really know her that well and..

T: OK. And how is it now with Ms. Ann?

J: Still the same.

T: Why do you think that?

J: Cause like she hasn't really taken the time to like understand me or anything.

T: What does it look like for somebody to take the time and understand you?

J: Like.. Actually be there for me to talk to instead of like.. Like if I need time by myself, not to bother me. Cause like Ms. Marissa and Ms. Kell and Ms. Kasey.. Like most of the teachers I have a bond with know that like I need time to like just get my stuff together and be by myself. And then like they'll come ask me if I'm OK and stuff.

Jen's desire to not be touched by particular educators could spiral quickly into acts of low and high forms of resistance. For Jen, just and unjust touch represented the type of relationship Jen felt with Saturnalia's educators. For some educators like Ms. Marissa, Jen would literally play fight and wrestle around. She saw this as a representation of trust and mistrust, depending on the educator attempting to touch her. In the instance of Ms. Ann, both Jen and Jess felt this educator violated Jen's bodily boundaries by attempting

to touch Jen without invitation. Again, this resistance was a response to normative expectations that educators have the right to touch youths' bodies regardless of whether they want this experience or not.

Practicing vigilance around touch was perhaps not only strictly a cultural practice of resistance that these youth brought to social interactions. Jen's sense of just and unjust touch could have also been shaped by Saturnalia's discourses of social critique and social responsibility in place. Throughout Jen's four years of experience at Saturnalia she was explicitly exposed to discourses in place that promoted the idea that she (and all youth) had socially just rights to their own bodies and opinions. This cultural and embodied right also intersected with the discourses of farce and love/care in terms of the kinds of touch Jen embraced. She outlined this difference when she talked about how Ms. Marissa, the school social worker, could playfully "bump" into her as she quickly reframed it as a "non-abusive" (just) form of bodily interaction. Youth like Jen may feel a sense of emboldened agency when it comes to setting boundaries and using their bodies as both a personal and public cultural performance in Saturnalia's school space.

Containing Cultural Knowledge

This chapter opened with the supposition that performances of carnival-like resistance by Jen and Mac were diverse and dynamic, imposing a special authority in resisting, and at times rupturing the interplay between this resistance and normative hegemony. The HDV youths' carnival-like cultural practices also celebrated a unique ambivalence that allowed the mutation and transformation of actions and interactions to stretch toward liberating possibilities. Performances of resistance were political acts.

225

Youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, who vigilantly read social violation and thus performed resistive identities in response, have much to tell us about how to educate HDV youth differently. This is true even when the violating actions are unintentional and/or in response to teachers, like Ms. Jade, whom these youth perceive to be trustworthy.

For Jen and Mac, the infrapolitics of their marginalization was uniquely formed as part and parcel of their habitus shaped by experiences of childhood domestic violence. We need to consider how their specific resistive performances are their own (infrapolitics) and are also shaped by their everyday social interactions (public politics). Their resistive acts are commonly misunderstood as demonstrations of deficit rather than dynamic responses to marginalization. Perhaps Jen, Mac, and Shanna's low and high forms of resistance represent the poetics[13] of HDV youth—essential meanings of cultural self-expression when faced with social violation. Any school culture or school official determined to unjustly contain and control such poetic acts faces an unsolvable dilemma. When such dilemmas emerge, schools need to engage in more transgressive practices and HDV culturally relevant pedagogies to change the violating practices and transform the detrimental trajectories of HDV youths' lives.

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[13] I use the term "poetics" as a loosely used notion defined in the Urban Dictionary as "a word that describes your self expression. Being poetic is turning little things that no one would see right away and turning it into a wonderful meaning" (http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Poetic).

Chapter Six: Dilemmas and Possibilities

Too often, we read the future into the lives of our participants, informed largely by our own ideas of change and historical teleology. At the very least, we have the responsibility to avoid making our stories neat—to create heroes and imagine happy endings for them and the world they are supposed to represent.

—Dimitriadis, 2014, p. 45

Carnival, Liberation, and Danger:
Domestic Violence as Social and Cultural Experience

I am choosing not to close this dissertation smoothly. There is nothing agentic in experiencing childhood domestic violence. No human, but especially children, should experience social violence perpetuated by their most intimate caregivers. And yet, these youth populate our classrooms in greater numbers then educators may realize. As a researcher, a teacher, and a childhood/adolescent survivor of domestic violence, I want to erase the stories I have told in this study. I do not want Jen, Mac, or Shanna to know what they know, for it will be a life-long burden they will endure—a justified anger that they will continue to negotiate and a humbleness built out of sorrow and loss. No educator, behavioral program, or disciplinary punishment can erase the cultural knowledges of HDV youth. If the popular practices promoted by behavioral/medical/disciplinary frameworks like PBIS continue to be the impetus for relational interaction between HDV youth and educators, both the educators and youth will continue to positioned towards failure. Instead, schools should resist the often damaging and idealistic practices embodied in these frameworks that often push teachers to believe and take actions determined to emotionally and socially "fix" HDV youth. If not, then these maelstrom-

like moments (damaging interactions) will continue to be unsolvable. And yet, I have hope.

For marginalized HDV youth to exist and thrive in our schools, educators must come to favor engagement of carnival over control. It is difficult work, but necessary. It is messy work and requires educators to reflect upon their own actions in response to social contexts while also honoring the complicated identities being performed by both HDV youth and themselves. Such a relationship begs this question: what would our schools feel like if educators were committed to seeing their students as unknowable especially during their most tension-filled interactions with youth like Mac, Jen, and Shanna? Yet in another way, Ferri (2004) asked, "What would it mean to consider all students essentially unknowable, exceeding any categories we might try to impose on them—regarding them as always in a state of becoming" (p. 513)? Perhaps this is the space where agentic possibilities emerge for HDV youth and educators to take up agency and subjectivity, while ushering in room for new, non-deficit discourses to surface.

I am also hopeful because these youths' resistive cultural responses to nuanced forms of social violation were experienced differently at Saturnalia. I am hopeful because a majority of Saturnalia's educators choose to engage in complicated culturally relevant practices when interacting with the HDV youth in this study. In fact, often, these youths' carnival-like cultural performances were thoughtfully negotiated and at times, reflected back by the educators' themselves through the pedagogies of love, care, farce, and social critique. In many ways, it seemed to counteract the violating elementary school experiences of Mac, Jen, and Shanna. In fact, Saturnalia's school culture seemed to

228

pulsate a similar carnival (a sense of liberation) and a messy synergy for youth in general. This is a hopeful because educators' practices that recognize and respond differently to the cultural knowledges of HDV youth have very real material and agentic effects on these youths' futures.

For instance, Jen, Mac, and many of their HDV friends have returned often to Saturnalia even though they have graduated and currently attend high school. They still talk about Saturnalia being *their* school in a deeply prideful way. They return because they feel like they belong to this small school community. They attend events to welcome new fifth grade students, and they return informally just to say hello to many of the teachers highlighted in this study who had a positive impact on their lives. It should be noted, that even in their return, they continue to culturally perform in these carnival-like ways that are both liberating and demanding of educators. For the educators mentioned in this study, they still find themselves negogiating these messy relationships during these 'return' interactions. It is *never* smooth.

In fact, none of these educators would claim that any of the youth in this study were really ever easy to work with. From their very first days at Saturnalia, Mac, Jen, and Shanna showed up with cultural knowledges that led to negating acts of resistance, farce, and at times, resistive ambivalence. Yet, they were welcomed back day after day, which illustrates that a good number of Saturnalia's educators made efforts to practice in more nuanced and humane ways and also suggests that Saturnalia's administration supported such efforts. Often, Jen, Mac, and Shanna performed their HDV resistive cultural practices with agency, without being violently misrepresented or pushed out of the school

altogether. Perhaps because the lives of educators are so complicated and many lack HDV experience, it is difficult for them to not desire anything but smooth interactions, especially when interacting with youth who are culturally compelled to push back against such desires. What then would compel educators to differently engage carnival-like cultural practices of HDV youth? How can one be both in control and trans/progressive?

In this dissertation I wanted to illustrate to a larger audience that HDV youth read their social worlds in unique ways. I also wanted to illustrate very different recommendations in working with HDV youth and their carnivalesque cultural performances. This is evidenced in my unexpected implication that can be seen as an opportunity—the possibility that a school can also disrupt deficit practices often taken up in response to youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. Saturnalia seemed determined to serve HDV and other marginalized youth differently compared with traditional models of school. Perhaps what we learned best from these educators and their school culture is that even our most easily thrown away youth can be treated with more humanity because as educators we bear the responsibility to teach *all* youth. And, while all along, we can engage in both the joy and difficulty in interacting with such youth differently for their and our sake. In the face of new technologies like PBIS that is determined to smooth out (as a violating act) emotional and social cultural knowledges of youth like Mac, Jen, and Shanna, our educators are faced with a deep dilemma. My study suggests that they do something very different, if not altogether completely opposite of the PBIS Discourse— engage in more transgressive and more-messy pedagogies when interacting with the carnival-like performances of HDV youth.

230

Chapter one began with my reflections of knowing the effects of domestic violence and also discussed the implications when educators and schools either do not know or ignore HDV experiences of the youth they serve. These reflections were discussed from the stance of researcher and also out of the deep cultural knowledge I have acquired about what it means to walk in a world constructed out of a childhood and adolescence of intimate familial violence. Unlike racism, sexism, or homophobia, this type of social violence today exists in a strange vacuum, a social void that has been ascribed to individual bodies (e.g., traumatized Other) rather than being seen as a profound social and cultural experience. I seek to change this popular and dangerous framing because it is almost always ascribed to survivors of domestic violence, regardless of their age.

Chapter two laid the groundwork of my emergent scholarship related to resistive ambivalence. Through the retelling of my own personal stories and the stories told by Mac and her grandmother Makita, I outlined how this high form of resistance was not only cultural, but also a liberating necessity for HDV youth when they face violating experiences in school. In chapter three, I traced the significant discrepancy between the popular literature of medicalization and psychology and the subjective perspectives told by Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers along with a data analysis that corroborated their negotiations of violation in their elementary schools. I wanted to disrupt the traditional story of HDV survivors as youth who are in need of being fixed. Jen, Mac, and Shanna's responses should be read as their attempts to push back against normative school narratives that often violate our marginalized children and youth.

231

After analyzing specific examples from Saturnalia, chapters four and five close with a discussion related to the complicated dilemmas that face both Saturnalia and the youth in this study who will continue to practice what they have built and know from their habitus. Paradoxically, their resistance in response to violating social experiences will be both a burden to endure as well as containing opportunities to perform their resistive identities in agentic ways. They will always experience normative discipline and will mostly read it as violating. There will always be power dynamics at play, and, I fear, HDV youth will challenge them head on, often to their own detriment. Perhaps the ways in which schools choose to discipline such youth and their carnival-like spirit is yet another layer in our national conversation in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline (Pyscher & Lozenski, In Press, 2014). I am hopeful there is a different way forward.

Disciplining the Carnival-like Spirit of HDV Youth

I thought, "If these people just knew what these kids went through, they didn't know. Just give them a chance."

—Makita, Mac's grandmother, in an interview

In reviewing the educational landscape, it is easy to succumb to the fear that schools like Saturnalia will not thrive or be allowed to exist. This fear radiates from my stance as a critical researcher, former teacher, key designer of Saturnalia, and most profoundly, as an adult survivor of long-term childhood domestic violence. Youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna have not yet been given a place or voice in the halls and spaces of institutional schooling. They do, however, have significant residence in our social spaces like prisons and prostitution. And, they represent a significant number of throwaway youth whose unpopular narratives intersect with the social realities of racism, sexism, and

poverty (Pyscher & Lozenski, In Press, 2014). I didn't intend to begin my dissertation by telling my own school experiences in addition to Jen, Mac, and Shanna's stories. Going into my study, my intention was to focus solely on the youth participants' social navigation of Saturnalia's school culture.

Sadly, during my research, I discovered that their stories and mine were, in many ways, the same damaging representations that often shape the life trajectories of HDV children and youth toward incarceration and/or prostitution or something in-between. Jen, Mac, and Shana's stories of elementary school demanded a stage and surprisingly provided a backdrop that helped all of us envision what more humane school practices might actually look like. Yet, the creation of such spaces comes up against a long history of human desire for differentiation that in the case of HDV youth is damaging and inhumane. Stallybrass and White (1986) claimed:

> Differentiation, in other words, is dependent upon disgust. The division of the social into high and low, the polite and the vulgar, simultaneously maps out divisions between the civilized and the grotesque body, between the author and hack, between social purity and social hybridization (p. 191).

Another dilemma that faced Jen, Mac, and Shanna in their elementary schools was the need for educators to "civilize" their grotesque bodies. For Mac, it meant making her raise her hand under conditions of violating pretense and public humiliation. For Jen, it meant trying to control her actions and behavior through attempts of EBD subjectivity. For Shanna it meant turning social violation inside out so that she came to believe in her

233

own disorderness and disappear from school altogether. For me, it meant wiping the smirk off my face in an effort to discipline my mother and me.

These hierarchical desires for differentiation serve very important institutional purposes and their impact has dramatic effects on the lives of HDV youth. Embodied resistive actions like my middle school smirk or throwing the corncob, Mac's refusal to move her body more quickly, or Shanna's grumbling come to represent what is considered grotesque and carnivalesque about HDV children and youth. All of these grotesque resistive practices were situated in profound moments of social pretense and violation where resistive farce (the carnival) became an essential cultural response. Again, I claimed that these actions were cultural practices learned through habitus and not disordered behavioral responses of the individualized traumatic experience.

The ability to name and resist moments of social violation, whether it is a simple gesture or a school's public transcripts, is a brilliant cultural response embodied in the repertories of HDV children and youth. Sadly, most schools—and educators—do not recognize this brilliance, which then makes the performance of such cultural knowledges read as something dangerous. It seems the potential of a very different interaction between HDV youth and educators lies at the feet of the educator themselves who must come to see these youth as unknowable and move beyond the stagnating impulse to so quickly label these youth as emotionally and socially damaged. Educators must reflect in real-time ways on how their own feelings and desires are equally, if not overwhelmingly, shaping the interactions with HDV youth in problematic ways. If educators are unwilling to reflect on their murky participation in these interactions, then chances are, youth like

234

Mac, Jen, and Shanna, will be further socially marginalized because of their carnival-like cultural practices developed at very young ages. These youth will continue to be read as dangerous and in need of fixing.

The Danger of Misread Unpopular Cultural Practices

To my own detriment, I ran away at the age of 15, even though I knew my mother needed my protection. My middle and high school years were full of perpetual resistive performances that often devolved into disciplinary suspensions. Much like Jen, Mac, and Shanna, I was not a "beat the odds" youth, but somehow I became a "beat the odds" adult. Through my years of college, I have met very few HDV survivors in the academy, perhaps because so many of us exist in the margins of social spaces. We are statistically overrepresented in prisons and prostitution. Perhaps HDV survivors end up in EBD classrooms and/or prisons because such spaces more easily contain and discipline cultural representations of carnival. We need to disrupt the mentality that reinforces the discourse of youth "beating the odds" for many obvious reasons. I can unequivocally predict that most youth will never beat the odds of domestic violence. Nor should they! When these realities are entangled in other marginalizations like race and class (which is common), then the odds are mostly impossible.

"Beating the Odds:" Challenging the Lack of Desire for Humane Schools

The commitment to engage in more humane practices can be equally a struggle for conservative, liberal, or progressive educators. A majority of educators, regardless of their ideological stance(s), struggle to understand and engage differently with the carnivalesque cultural practices of HDV youth. As I mentioned earlier, it is a demanding

counter stance to take and educators of all strips seem not to favor understanding the meaning of embodied carnival for HDV youth. This can be seen in the interactions analyzed throughout this study between Mac, Jen, and Shanna and the educators they engaged with at Saturnalia. Educators must question deficit beliefs that HDV youth can learn to "beat the odds" and stop perpetuating a damaging discourse aligned to the rational Discourses of medicalization and punitive disciplinary models described in chapters two and three. Overall, Jen, Mac, and Shanna's elementary educators and a smaller number of Saturnalia educators seemed deeply misguided in their social commitments to caring for youth with histories and real-time realities of domestic violence. This is a frightening fact that must be better understood and challenged.

HDV children and youth judged to be in need of personal interventions like EBD labels (for instance) are in fact being cleansed of their carnival-like cultured selves. Educators must disrupt the desire to smooth the messiness of lived experience and the cultural knowledges that emerge from one's social experience of domestic violence. This desire to smooth the messiness that HDV children and youth represent is at best uncourageous and at it's worst, violent. Almost no child or youth one can beat the odds of both familial violence and school-sanctioned violation. Schools play a special role in efforts to contain and discipline the carnival, and this seems to fuel a lack of will in exercising more humane practices related to HDV youth. The power inherent in containment and discipline is deep and strong, as was evidenced at Saturnalia, a school attempting to practice more humanely. And yet, we can learn from such messiness!

The Problematics and Possibilities of Transgressive Public Transcripts

236

Bahktin claimed that opposing Discourses like Saturnalia's transgressive

discourses in place versus traditional notions of school compliance are in "perpetual

dialogic struggle between centripetal forces whose aim is to centralize and unify, and

centrifugal forces whose purpose is to decentralize" (*see* Crowley, 1989, p. 73). When

centrifugal forces are in play, they disrupt authoritative unity, and, depending on the

historical period in which they take place, the forces may position the counter actor or

institution (i.e. Saturnalia) in precarious ways. For Saturnalia, these tensions are multi-

layered. They were also tensions that the educators were well aware of and ones that a

good number of educators actively attempted to rework as a generative attempt to better

practice more culturally relevant pedagogies. The centripetal and centrifugal forces

shaping Saturnalia are shown in Figure 53 below.

Figure 53. The centripetal and centrifugal forces shaping Saturnalia.

Centrifugal

Market reform policies

Traditional norms of school compliance

Special education labeling as norm

Middle class desire of status quo and segregation

Saturnalia's discourses in place (farce, love/care, social critique)

Freedom of bodies

Tolerance and embracing transgressive student actions/behaviors

Transgressive teacher pedagogies
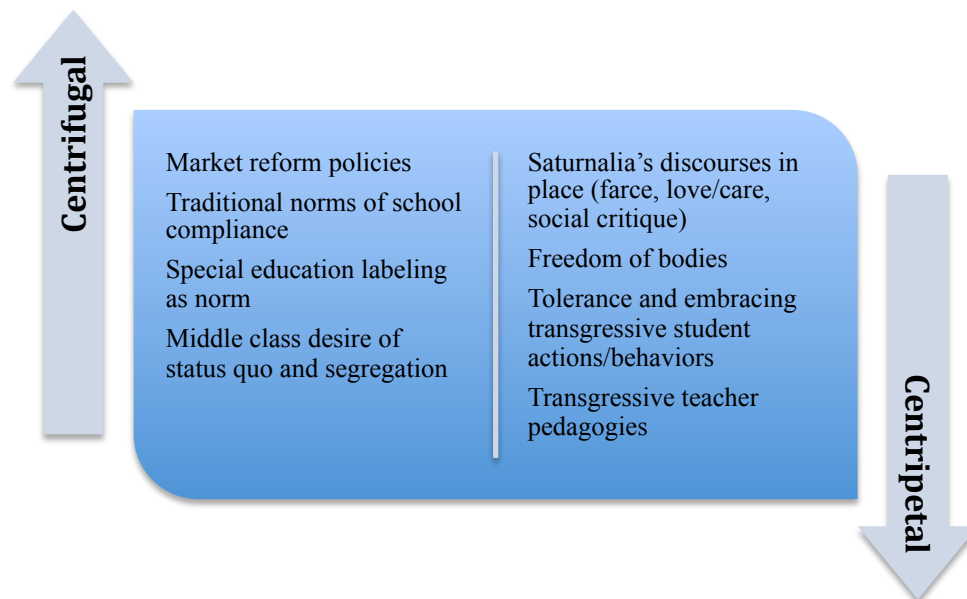
Centripetal

When schools like Saturnalia strategically designed and engaged in practices that

embraced carnival-like cultural performances of liberation by youth like Jen, Mac, and

237

Shanna, then significant generative centripetal forces emerged. The mutuality between

Saturnalia's centripetal forces and HDV youths' cultural ways were a courageous attempt

for sustained humanity even in the crux of tension-filled interactions. I contend that the

blurring between hidden and public transcripts created conditions for agentic possibility

for both educators and HDV youth in this study.

Again, there is nothing smooth in this generative story. For when schools like

Saturnalia promote public transcripts that reflect the carnival-like practices of youth like

Jen, Mac, and Shanna, these schools are deemed in need of discipline not so unlike the

discipline directed toward the HDV youth and their families in this study. The

disciplining of Saturnalia's school culture was sustained and maintained by a larger

culture of capitalism and traditional Discourses of schools as sites of compliance

(centrifugal forces in Figure 53). Perhaps, because Saturnalia was built upon tenants of

critical theory and feminist thought, the lines it tried to blur were too radical. Yet, in this

radical culture, there seems to be beautiful potential.

Scott (1990) viewed carnival "as an institutionalized form of political disguise"

(p. 173), and if HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna and Saturnalia's school culture

embodied similar cultural practices, then their cultural mutuality holds important

meaning in creating schools committed to social justice and equity. From Scott's point of

view, these carnivalesque occasions create conditions where "normal rules of social

intercourse are not enforced and amplifies a general air of license—licentiousness . . .

something of a lightening rod for all sorts of social tensions and animosities" (p. 173).

This study suggests that social tensions can create discursive possibilities for liberated

and agentic identities to emerge for both HDV youth and educators. Perhaps this special kind of freedom, at times temporal (e.g. Mac's low forms of resistance with Ms. Jade) and at times sustained (e.g. Jen's agentic performance of pushing out of teachers), is interdialogically produced at the intersections of carnival-like school practices and the cultural practices embodied in the HDV youth they serve. For educators, this special kind of freedom is a form of love and care born from moments of cultural tension when humility shows itself and honors the humanity these youth so desire.

School cultures like Saturnalia that practice carnival-like pedagogies and discourses may actually be practicing culturally relevant practices with/for HDV youth. Perhaps this is the space where educators can come to understand their need for control and their desire for trans/progressive relationships with HDV youth. These practices could be sustainable if we encouraged educators to embrace the representational meaning of social conflict and tension they experience when interacting with youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. During the study, moments of social conflict served as a form of "symbolic manipulation" for these youth when they felt violated by educators (Scott, 1990, p. 178). These "symbolic manipulations" were not only tolerated, but also often embraced at Saturnalia. For instance, Jen, Mac, and Shanna's HDV cultural identities had room to breathe, stretching toward fundamental desires of liberation. This liberation included a needed pause (and freedom) from their keen ability to read social violation. Their ability to read what is socially just and unjust also needs to be balanced with practices of farce and love and care on the part of educators. Saturnalia was a social space where HDV youth and most of educators experienced a type of cultural mutuality and where, at times,

239

both found agentic residence predicated upon complicated tensions with each other.

Overall, educators described in this study were not quick to rid their classrooms of these

youth and the HDV youth negotiated very differently with these teachers when tensions

arose.

Pushing Against Schools as the New Coffee House

> For the rising middle classes it seemed as though all that messy disruptive, violent
> nonsense of carnival was at last being done away with. In fact, even if the carnival was
> over, a strange carnivalesque diaspora was already taking place.

—Stallybrass & White, 1986, p. 190

In bits and pieces, Saturnalia served a similar purpose as the old folk festivals of

Bakthin's (1984) vision of carnival: a place where social critique, love, and farce melded

into a force driven towards human liberation. It may be that traditional models of school

and the subsequent disciplinary frameworks like PBIS that shape them are much like the

emergence of coffee houses that disciplined the debauchery of village taverns of old in

service to the reification of middle class status quo. Coffee houses were places designed

to discipline the grotesque body. Stallybrass and White (1986) claimed that the

emergence of the coffeehouse was meant to displace the tavern where:

> The coffeehouse was one of the places in which *the space of discourse was being*
>
> *systemically decathected*. Intoxication, rhythmic and unpredictable movements,
>
> sexual reference and symbolism, singing and chanting, bodily pleasures and
>
> "fooling around," all these were prohibited in the coffeehouse. The emergence of
>
> the public sphere required that its spaces of discourse be *de-libidinized* in the
>
> interests of serious, productive and *rational* intercourse . . . [the] regulation of the

240

unruly body. (p. 97)

 Similar "coffeefied" effects explain the double bind that Saturnalia experienced, whose effects were and continue to be severe.

For Saturnalia, these included more segregation with the loss of middle-class and wealthy families and the loss of funding that followed students. Especially in the context of school spaces, like the taverns of old, taming the carnival may go hand-in-hand with actions that reproduce the status quo. Saturnalia's administration and teachers pushed back against the larger efforts of privileged families determined to "push out" youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. When the school pushed back, these families left. Yet Saturnalia's actions offer some insight into how a more humane and culturally relevant school space might look and feel for HDV youth. The lines of hidden and public transcripts were blurred, allowing low and high forms of HDV youth resistive identities' agency. It seems Saturnalia's public transcripts (e.g., discourses of social critique, farce, love and care) shared a subversive carnival-like quality with the HDV youth it served.

To what extent does this shared subversion represent an opportunity for schools to employ different, transgressive, and culturally relevant HDV practices? In interviews with several of Saturnalia's educators, many expressed little interest in enacting traditional Discourses or pedagogies they had learned in teacher education programs. This is difficult work. Images of subversive and transgressive mutuality are not "pretty sights" to experience (Scott, 1990, p. 223). They look and feel like farce (sometimes outrageous) and social critique, yet they seem to embody a sense of love and care. Saturnalia and youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna metaphorically represented both the

241

liberation and danger personified in the spirit of carnival. When schools attempt to hold

hostage the undisciplined soul of these "grotesque" youth, then their many forms of

resistance become essential tools in fighting back. When HDV youth pushed back against

school violation, their acts of resistance (infrapolitics) were real politics. This is a place

where "counterhegemonic discourse is elaborated" and always pokes at "the boundaries

of the permissible" (Scott, 1990, p. 200-201). I imagine that the mutually shared hidden

and public transcripts of Jen, Mac, and Shanna's cultural identities and Saturnalia's

school identity/culture have the "capacity to produce political breakthroughs" (Scott, p.

227) between the youth and the school's educators. But can this form of mutuality create

conditions for political breakthroughs that also disrupt and counteract the larger

dilemmas that schools like Saturnalia face? This is continuing dilemma.

I worry that larger forces of scarcity of funding via segregation and regulation

will discipline Saturnalia into a traditional school, much like the taverns of old that

reappeared suddenly as coffee shops. Or, will Saturnalia sustain itself by embracing its

identity as a "dirty" and "grimy" alternative school option? Perhaps carnival-like cultures

only exist in the grim and dirt of alternative education. Perhaps we need to support

Saturnalia's position so that it can exist and thrive in such margins and not be disciplined

in the face of demanding Discourses determined to reproduce status quo. I am convinced

that studying schools like Saturnalia offers opportunities to better design more humane

urban education spaces. This includes efforts to disrupt the status quo and the school-to-

prison pipeline while also providing educators guidance in engaging in culturally relevant

practices when working with HDV youth who perform cultural resistive performances as a normal part of their social interactions.

Learning from Localized Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces

To be fair, Saturnalia's transgressive terrain created daunting teaching conditions for educators who struggled to work with HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. Jen, for instance, felt justified pushing particular teachers out of Saturnalia. These same educators found themselves whipped up in the centrifugal and centripetal forces that positioned traditional pedagogies of compliance against pedagogies of social critique, love, care, and farce. These competing forces created school and classroom cultures where Jen, Mac, and Shanna's resistive practices were not only tolerated, but, at times, embraced by other educators. It seemed these "push out" educators—who were commonly read by HDV youth as practicing violating pedagogies—were also victims of circumstance. Even the most progressive educators are constantly caught up in this dilemma and it is a difficult fact that creates yet another double-bind dilemma for the schools at large. Foucault (1977, 1982) described such a tension as a "double bind" or an effect that created conditions where the central actors are caught up in the disciplining effects of institutional life in which they experience the ordering of their own behaviors. He claimed (1977):

> In this form of management, power is not totally entrusted to someone who would exercise it alone, over others, in an absolute fashion; rather, this machine is one in which everyone is caught, those who exercise this power as well as those who are subjected to it. (p. 156)

Again, this is prime moment when educators might be best to overtly practice the belief that all youth are essentially unknowable. To see youth as unknowable is to question the power dynamics that Foucault aptly describes.

During these current times, Biesta (2012) described how our most "talented" teachers are ones who master acts of complicity toward efforts in controlling their students, calling this phenomenon the "disappearance of the teacher" (p. 35). She contended, "the best and most effective teachers are the ones who are able to steer the whole educational process towards the production of pre-specified 'learning outcomes' or pre-defined identities, such as that of the 'good citizen'" (p. 35). Perhaps schools have managed to replace the "disappeared" teacher with more inhumane ones. A large majority of teachers feel compelled to manage the bodies of all youth and expect youth to accept practices of violating accountability. In response, youth like Jen, who strategically work to push out teachers like these at Saturnalia, represent both potential and danger in using resistive, carnival-like tactics. How can we counter this powerful surge that not only pushes out HDV youth, but also pushes out ideologically struggling teachers as well?

Push Out as Potential and Representational Danger

Ms. Citra, the math teacher discussed in chapter five, was caught in the entangled web of histories that she, Ms. Kathy, and Jen brought forward, as well as the school's larger discourses in place. As a co-teacher, she was *forced* to negotiate the resistive and violating interplay between Ms. Kathy and Jen. This dynamic represents a larger dilemma facing schools and teachers—how to work with the complexity of interactional dynamics

performed by HDV youth and still expect compliance. Jen described Ms. Citra as "nice" and yet, she became a push-out teacher because she seemed positioned in-between unsolvable dilemmas with the HDV participants, their affiliated friend group, and her co-teacher.

Ms. Citra, a first year teacher, informally shared with me that she grew up in a home of domestic violence when we discussed my study. She did not return to Saturnalia a second year. She expressed that she especially enjoyed working with Jen and her friend group, but found it difficult to maneuver the intricacies of HDV youth practices, the school's culture, and the desires for control of her co-teachers. If we do not work differently in preparing and supporting teachers like Ms. Citra, they will be pushed out by default. For the sake of youth like Mac, Jen, and Shanna and for the creation and sustaining of more humane school cultures, we need to not lose the Ms. Citra's from the field altogether or to have them leave and teach in a more segregated and privileged schools. This situation highlights yet another complicated dilemma in educating marginalized urban youth in general. Some would argue that Jen's agentic agenda in pushing out teachers who struggle to practice culturally relevant pedagogies is a good thing. I agree to an extent *and* I also want to consider how we can change teacher expectations and what might occur generatively if we required teachers to grapple with the ways their ideologies, discourses, and actions affect the social relationships and interactions with youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna.

Re-envisioning Culturally Relevant Pedagogies: Complicated Practices that Work

245

It is imperative that educators recognize that youth with histories of domestic violence populate our schools in greater numbers than they know or sometimes care to acknowledge. Educators also need to challenge themselves to see the relational meaning that undergirds their tension-filled interactions with such youth. If they cannot or refuse to recognize these realities, then they should expect social violence in return. Violation breeds violation for youth who read it in such intricate ways. On the flipside, even within Saturnalia, there were alternative educators who practiced culturally relevant pedagogies and who embraced the resistive performances/identities of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna differently. The differences were both ideological and played out in practice. This difference was not only evidenced in the words of educators, but also in the words of caregivers and parents.

For instance, chapter four opened with a vignette by Makita describing her granddaughter's dramatic positive change once she began attending Saturnalia. Later in that same interview I asked Makita to describe the difference between Saturnalia and Mac's elementary school. Makita transferred Mac when she was suspended from elementary school for disciplinary reasons. It is clear from her description that Saturnalia's educators and school staff created conditions that invited her family in. Also important was Makita's clarity in identifying educators who belong in urban public schools working with youth like Mac:

> M: …they cared about her. [describing Saturnalia].. I could talk with the teachers
> and the teachers.. Just the first day, they told me, "We're so sorry you had the
> experience you did at the other school. Here we take care of our own. If
> there's any problem, we'll try for all eternity to work through it. And if we see
> that it can't be worked out, then we'll call you and maybe you can offer us

some other solution. But.. If we have to call you about anything, it's already taken care of." And that's true.

T: How did you feel about that at.. You trusted that as a parent?

M: I trusted because I know. What I like is when I went over there, what I saw I liked it and everything. And I remember when I went over there for some other reason, about four girls busted in the office and I was sitting there and Ms. Dee [office manager] was talking to them. About four girls bust in the office and they was just.. "Oh, Ms. Dee!!" And she said, "Wait a minute. It's not that serious, just wait a minute. We'll think of something, just calm down!" And I said, "Woah!" (laughing) This woman belong in the school system!

Over and over in interviews and in fieldnotes and observations, the following Saturnalia educators seemed to practice culturally relevant pedagogies with Jen, Mac, and Shanna: Ms. Liz, Ms. Kell, Ms. Casey, Ms. Marissa, Ms. Jade, and Ms. Dee—educators who day in and day out attempted to practice acts of grace and kindness when interacting with Jen, Mac, Shanna, their HDV affiliated friends, and caregivers. It seems, these educators *read* these youth more compassionately than the teachers who believed that they needed to be reordered from their disordered selves (Pyscher, 2015). Again, these relationships were dependent upon many moments of tension and farce where a balance seemed to be negotiated by *both* youth and educator in finding peace. This is a complicated practice to adhere to, as evidenced in Ms. Jade's interaction in chapter five with Mac and K. Yet, somehow, Ms. Jade and Mac recovered their relationship over and over again, even though they shared a deeply intense interaction that pushed Mac into a necessary state of resistive ambivalence. This was not an uncommon occurrence for Ms. Jen and the youth in this study. I might go as far as to claim that this was a special culturally relevant relationship the embodied synergetic tension and love.

The following email by a Saturnalia parent captured some of these key compassionate and nuanced practices. This email was sent as an end of the year thank you to Saturnalia's staff and represented the larger generative discourses embodied in the school's culture:

Subject: A big thank you

Dear Saturnalia Teachers and Staff,

I had initially planned to write individual notes to each of you but finally realized that I, in essence, wanted to say the same thing to all of you: THANK YOU FOR TEACHING OUR DAUGHTERS WITH SO MUCH CARE AND LOVE.

In the past month and a half, I have not been able to be as present at school as previously due to a new job, and I have missed the connection. But when I have been able to pop in, as I did for the 8th grade graduation, I am always reminded of the powerful growth journey that this school offers, not only to its students but also to anyone who chooses to truly ENTER and DISCOVER its riches.

For me, Saturnalia has been an onion. In the beginning, I could not fully fathom [sic] its layers. Those deeper layers began to reveal themselves to me as I waited afterschool to pick up my daughter… and would see teachers stop a child here or there to congratulate them for some job well done, give support and encouragement if a child seemed upset, model respect in their adult-child interactions, and quite essentially truly SEE each child. What at first seemed like a chaotic din afterschool began to transform into richer tones as I LISTENED and noticed that much of the "noise" consisted of laughter, friendly shouts, and general excitement--girls let loose to freely express themselves. As I attended as many school events as possible--from the excellent guest presentations to the parent input meetings, worked with your truly inspirational Ms. Ellie in the reading tutor program, and engaged in deep conversations with Ms. Dee and various teachers, parents, and even some of the girls, Saturnalia just kept peeling back its layers for me to discover its rich complexities.

Saturnalia's teachers and staff, you should be very proud of your hard work this year. For my family, we could not have made it through this school year without your consistent, generous support (a shout out to Ms. A. for all the extra handholding, even though you were also new). I hope that you will get to "put up your feet" and have some well-deserved time off this summer.

Thanks again,

248

Chen Chen

This parent's words were inspirational and captured Saturnalia's school culture as a whole. And yet the dilemmas that the school finds itself in are a disturbing paradox. In many ways, Saturnalia's generative practices of love and care were just one layer of the onion referred to in the parent's email. This was a significant layer because they encompassed generative movements toward culturally relevant pedagogies and a development of a "loving" relationship in the Freirian sense. This kind of generosity is dependent on practicing a particular type of humility that requires educators to see youth as unknowable. Freire (2002) contended that the practice of loving humility is nested in dialogue (both internal and external) as a way through problematic interactions that seem unsolvable. He states:

> dialogue cannot exist without humility. The naming of the world, through which people constantly re-create that world, cannot be an act of arrogance. . . .Men and women who lack humility (or have lost it) cannot come to the people, cannot be their partners in naming the world. Someone who cannot acknowledge himself as mortal as everyone else still has a long way to go before he can reach the point of encounter. At the point of encounter there are neither utter ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only people who are attempting together, to learn more than they know. (p. 73)

This type of love was and continues to be difficult for Saturnalia because it counteracts another layer of the school culture named by Chen Chen—"noise." The metaphor of "noise" encompassed both danger and debauchery (farce) for Saturnalia. "Noise" and all

that it represented positioned the school in problematic ways because this quality was

viewed by the mass of privileged families that left as unpopular practices that encouraged

licentiousness on the part of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. The double bind was that

these dangerous and unpopular practices generatively created a school culture where Jen,

Mac, and Shanna's HDV cultural resistive performances/identities could exist and thrive.

It was deeply complicated to balance these opposing forces, as shown in the

following excerpt by Jess, Jen's mother, who described how Saturnalia's school culture

created a generous place where Jen's resistive cultural performances had space to thrive.

She described how Saturnalia treated students in general and Jen specifically:

> "Just the encouragement. No matter what backgrounds they all kind of come
> from, that they're all being supported, you know, in a scholarly way. I think it's
> huge. There's so many times at the other public schools that I've dealt with, that.. I
> mean they're just getting pushed through. They're not really being individually
> identified as having strengths or weaknesses and I don't know if it's just because
> of the small school size, if it's the all-girl atmosphere or the blend of the way you
> have so many teachers involved with each student… I mean, it's just kind of a
> combination of all those things I think that have really kind of helped grow her
> [Jen] in other areas…If she would not have stayed there, who knows where she
> would have been… I've always been able to work with Ms. Beth (former school
> principal) or Miss Ally, too, trying to figure out what could we do so Jen feels
> like she has an out because she had to do something in class or she could at least
> walk in the hallway for ten seconds or whatever. It wasn't really a need for an
> **EBD deal,** but just some kind of support that when she's kind of reaching that
> point. I would not have gotten that at any other school. They wouldn't have given
> that kind of leeway."

Schools and educators need to consider what "noise" and "leeway" represent in the

context of everyday interactions with HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. To put it

another way, how will educators learn to practice differently with Jen in real-time

moments of tension-filled interaction? What might their culturally relevant pedagogies

look like if they accepted Jen's liberatory and cultural need to be given "leeway" as a

250

way "out" of what feels like violating tension for her? How can we prepare teachers to be more aware of moments of violation that they are equally responsible in creating? From Jess's perspective, these acts of compassion and love extended even to a point of disrupting the need for the school to label Jen EBD (i.e., "EBD deal"). And yet, how do educators learn to balance the "noise" when it thwarts necessary school and classroom compliance? This sits at the heart of the larger conversation educators must grapple with if we are to help redirect the current trajectories of HDV youth towards the school-to-prison/prostitution pipeline.

Although it is exciting to experience these culturally relevant pedagogies in action, I am still left pondering how schools like Saturnalia can be sustainable or even replicable considering the dilemmas such schools face. I wonder to what extent contradictory school practices (see Figure 54 below) like these are sustainable for a

Figure 54. Contradictory practices at Saturnalia.
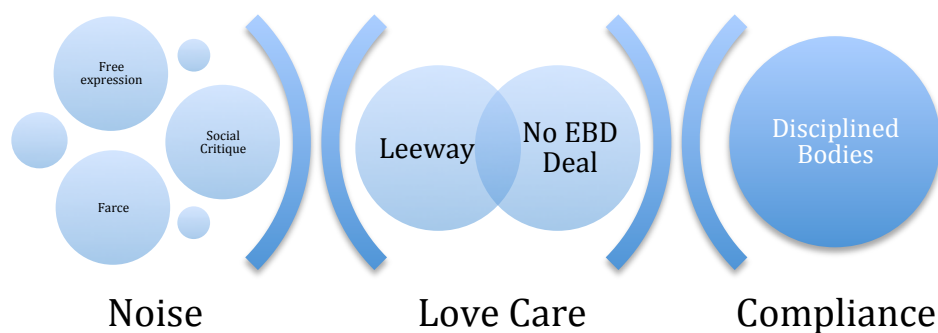
school, let alone for teachers like Ms. Citra who find themselves in impossible situations. We need to prepare our educators to "LISTEN" as intently and intimately as the parent

Chen Chen did and to practice pedagogies where youth like Jen can exercise moments of "leeway" as described by Jess.

Embracing the Carnivalesque Body: Transforming Public Transcripts

We didn't get talked to a lot by teachers because like our teachers were not strict like they were in elementary school because like in elementary school, we were treated as if we were babies. Like, "Don't do this! Don't do that! Don't play with that!" (laughs)…Like in elementary school, they treated like we were three-year-olds and two-year-olds and at Saturnalia, they treated us like we were.. Like.. We felt like as if they could trust us with like going out into public for like protesting in the wintertime.

—Shanna, defining the difference between Saturnalia and her elementary school in an interview

Shanna's statement captured the transformative possibilities that materialized for her when Saturnalia's school culture transgressed traditional notions of school compliance and learning. The key in designing more humane schools may just be the ability of a school culture to transgress popular and mostly normative Discourses shaping it. Perhaps this is a hybridity of transgressive public transcripts. In this hybridity lies the potential for educators to better understand their practical need for control and the cultural desire of freedom from social violation of HDV children and youth. This hybridity is also dependent upon responding differently when dominant practices meet the resistive cultural practices of youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. As illustrated in this study, transgression is both dangerous and liberatory, but it can also be strategically reworked so to create different, and more humane social conditions even when those conditions are fraught with tension.

When Artiles (2004) challenged the label of learning disability (LD) and its conflation with race and class, he asked a poignant question that is applicable to this

252

study: "Do we adopt the parameters and practices of other discourses, do we define our own indigenous discourses, or do we forge hybrid discourses" (p. 554)? Laws (2011) asked another compelling question: "How is it possible to break from these positions and to occupy positions that dismantle the apparent inevitability of these positionings" (p. 115)? This is difficult work for any educator and for any school. To do so requires all educators to challenge how they represent and work with deeply marginalized HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna. Often, during tension-filled social interactions, it will also require them to reimagine agentic possibilities for such youth *and* themselves. This is both challenging *and* liberating work because it requires actions grounded in transgressive ideologies and practices—a sometimes entirely different kind of love for children and youth.

I believe that at a macro level, these commitments are central to our work as educators in challenging inequities in our public schools. And, to be fair, they are difficult practices to sustain. The danger and difficulty not only depends on recognizing and challenging the larger dominant Discourses, but also changing educators' everyday practices in responses to the interplay between hidden and public transcripts. Schools were designed to produce compliant bodies, if not designed strategically to altogether cleanse the grotesque body. This ironically positions educators to practice the very dogmatic ideologies that they often profess to be fighting. Educators must disrupt practices of collecting youth like rubbish even when a school culture adheres to such ideology. In chapter four, it was clear that Saturnalia's school culture "can be seen as active in producing social relations that are contextually specific and productive of social

identities" (Kehily, 2005, p. 90). How are teachers to practice in a transgressive and generative way when they exist in school cultures like the ones Jen, Mac, and Shanna experienced in elementary school?

Perhaps the first step is to challenge educators to trouble their own deficit discourses and ideologies and come to see that HDV youth like Jen, Mac, and Shanna are unknowable and their identities, similar to the educators themselves, are in evolving states of becoming. If educators were to challenge themselves in those very moments (interactions) defined by tension with HDV youth and consider the social and political context of the interaction, then they might be able to understand the often-resistive identities performed not only by HDV youth, but also of themselves. This would be a significant effort towards understanding the relational dynamics between carnival and control shaped by social interaction. Laws (2011) claimed that once the labels of youth as disordered are placed in a sociopolitical context, "rather than being seen as disturbed…[youths'] inappropriate behaviours might be seen as understandable responses to extreme situations" (p. 39). In her research, she also suggested that this type of ideological approach for educators helped them to develop "a sense of agency" in their attempts to understand the dominant and deficit discourses that have come to shape their practices while also helping them to redeploy "strategies to undo marginal positionings . . . thus recognising and re-cognising themselves/ourselves differently" (p. 136).

It is important for all educators to continue to identify agentic possibilities related to their interactions with HDV youth, for their resistive performances help us understand other forms of school violation and violence. Equally, taking up "strategies to undo

254

marginal positionings" helps to reposition reified "disordered" identities placed on HDV youth and opens up perspectives where educators can view HDV youths' resistive responses as dynamic and powerfully forged out of unique cultural knowledges. Youth with these horrific histories are pleading with educators and educational systems to be recognized not as disordered, but rather as powerful knowing beings who understand violence in an embodied sense and call out its reproduction even in its most insidious forms. We should listen closely to what they have to teach us.

My Intentions

Importantly, it is not my intention to argue that school systems and their educators consciously and intentionally enact this brutality on the bodies of youth like Jen, Mac, or Shanna. Rather, I challenge my fellow colleagues to disrupt their violating pedagogies and *re-envision* their own unique ways of working with youth who know violence all too well. I want the discussions about "those EBD kids" to change. I want stories of domestic violence to be less pervasive and silenced, and I want us to challenge the practices that further harm an already abused group of youth. Similar to Saturnalia's discourses in place and its educators' pedagogies in response, I want to stop the metaphorical conveyor belt of the school-to-prison pipeline and challenge fellow teachers to *rethink* and transform their ways of teaching, their interactions, and their beliefs from ones centered on *waste* to ones centered on working with *resistive identities* of HDV youth—an alchemy of sorts. We should listen wisely! Jen, Mac, Shanna, and their caregivers' perspectives and actions offer us a glimpse of a better humanity and a semblance of possibility between discipline and ambivalence. Smith (1999) offered shrewd advice:

255

At some points there is, there has to be, dialogue across the boundaries of

oppositions. This has to be because we constantly collide with dominant views

while we are attempting to transform our lives on a larger scale than our own

localized circumstances. This means struggling to make sense of our own world

while also attempting to transform what counts as important in the world of the

powerful. (p. 39)

To evoke such loving dialogue, educators and our public school systems need to reframe

and redeploy different practices in relation to working with HDV youth.

Jen, Mac, and Shanna need teachers to see and embrace their resistive beauty and

cultural knowledges that beg for a deeper sense of love, support, and liberation.

Educators need to persistently ask: how do we expect youth with histories of domestic

violence "to operate within these multiple positionalities, these multiple worlds, in this

simultaneity of belonging and disbelonging, of being both centered and off-center,

'betwixt and between,' in the middle and on both sides" (Orellana, 2007, p. 129)? In

order to do this, educators must practice and schools must promote cultural norms that

disrupt violation even in their most innocuous forms. I believe it begins with learning to

understand and work in-between compliant and transgressive discourses that are

committed to embracing the cultural knowledges that HDV youth bring to school spaces.

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Appendix A

Research Questions and Mediated Actions

Mediated Actions	Related Research Questions
Identity, language, and action	• How do youth with histories of domestic violence construct and perform their identities? • What mediates the shaping/reshaping of the youths' identities in their navigation of public schooling?
Relationships and pedagogies	• How do teachers and staff establish relationships and pedagogies with youth with histories of domestic violence that appear to result in positive and negative experiences at school? How do youth view these relationships and pedagogies?
Moments of tension	• How do youth navigate moments of tension in interactions with educational staff, and how do they perceive these moments?

Appendix B

IRB Consent/Assent Scripts

IRB Letter of Consent/Dissent for Guardians/Participants

To the Parent/Guardian:

I am writing to request permission for your daughter to take part in a study that focuses on how middle school students who have experienced domestic violence experience school. I am interested in learning how your daughter's relationships and interactions in class, with peers and Saturnalia staff affect her daily experiences in school. If you allow your daughter to take part in this study she will not be asked to do any added academic work. I will observe her as she goes about her typical school day including her involvement in classroom activities, as well as in her lunch, recess, and hallway interactions. I will observe her in a way that would not draw attention to her. I am being allowed by the school to observe youth in their school settings and I am requesting your permission to ask your daughter specific questions.

If you agree to let her be a part of this study, she will take part in:
(1) Her typical school routine while I observe, and in some cases, audio and video record discussions and interactions.
(2) Recorded interviews so that I can learn from her and understand her points of view. Healthy snacks and/or pizza will be provided. Questions would focus on what it is like to be a middle school student and how it feels to interact with Saturnalia staff in different learning situations.
(3) Allowing me to see and copy her school assignments and/or Individual Education Plans (IEPs). I will always ask her permission first and her name will be removed from all materials.

Please be confident that your daughter's participation in this study will in no way affect her grades or her relationship with the Saturnalia staff. If you do grant permission for your daughter to participate or decide at a later date to change your mind, you are able to drop out of the study at any time.

I am seeking your permission for your daughter to participate in this study. Attached is a permission form. Please review it and, if you agree that your daughter can be a participant, please sign and give the form to Ms. Marissa (school social worker). If you have any concerns or questions related to this study, please contact the researcher (Tracey Pyscher) at…

Sincerely,

Tracey Pyscher

Ph.D. Candidate, Literacy Education
University of Minnesota
270D Peik Hall-159 Pillsbury Drive S.E.
Minneapolis, MN

Dear Student,

I am inviting you to take part in a study related to how you think and feel about school as a young person who has experienced domestic violence. I want to understand how your relationships with peers and teachers affect your learning.

I am interested in learning from you and would like to observe your classes, and observe a variety of school activities like lunch, recess and clubs. If you agree, I would like to interview you three to four times, and I will record these so that I can remember and reflect on what you have said. I will ask you questions about your experiences and what I observe during your school day. These discussions and interviews will take place before, during lunch, or after school as to not interrupt your learning during class time. I will make an extra effort not to draw attention to you. I may ask your teachers for copies of some of the things you write or make. If you have an individual education plan (IEP), I will ask for your permission to read it and I will remove your name from all materials. When I look at your class work, I will not be interested in your grades, but will be looking at your work to get to know you better and understand your experiences in school.

Your name or Saturnalia will never appear in any of the information I collect, present, or write about outside of Saturnalia. If you agree to be a part of this study, you will take part in:

1) Your typical school routine while I observe, and in some cases, audio and video record discussions and interactions.
2) Recorded interviews so that I understand your points of view. Healthy snacks and/or pizza will be provided.
3) Allowing me to see and copy school assignments and/or Individual Education Plans (IEPs). I will always ask your permission first.

It is your choice to take part in this study and will not affect your grades or affect your participation in other activities at Saturnalia. If you decide you do not want to be part of the study at any time, you can choose to drop out. If you are willing to take part, please read and sign this form and return it to Ms. Marissa. I look forward to learning from you and your experiences.

Youth with Histories of Domestic Violence and their Public School Experiences:
An Ethnographic Study
University of Minnesota, Literacy Education

You are invited to take part in a research study focused on capturing how youth who have undergone childhood experiences of domestic violence experience and interact in school. The study seeks to understand the difficult conditions and situations that youth with histories of domestic violence face in their daily interactions in school like suspensions or difficult interactions with school staff. Tracey Pyscher, a graduate student from the University of Minnesota is leading this study. Your participation in this study may help school staff better understand the experiences of middle school students like yourself who have experienced domestic violence.

Procedures:
If you agree to be a part of this study, you will take part in:
  (1) Your typical school routine while I observe, and in some cases, audio and video record discussions and interactions.
  (2) Recorded interviews so that I understand your points of view. Healthy snacks and/or pizza will be provided.
  (3) Allowing me to see and copy school assignments and/or Individual Education Plans (IEPs). I will always ask your permission first and your name will be removed from all materials.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
There are minimal risks with your participation in this study including the risk that someone could find out that you are taking part in the study. To reduce this risk, your name will be kept secret and will never appear in written documents or on audio/video recordings. A pretend name will be used in any written work. The school social worker and researcher will provide information about counseling services if you should become upset about anything that happens during the course of the study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Your participation in this study is your choice. Your decision to take part will not affect your relationship with the Saturnalia staff, the University of Minnesota, or myself. If you decide you do not want to be part of the study, you can choose to drop out at any time.

Contacts and Questions
If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the researcher (Tracey Pyscher) at… .You may also contact my university advisor, Dr. Cynthia Lewis at …

Statement of Assent (acceptance):
I have read the above information and have been given an opportunity to ask questions and have my questions answered. I agree to take part in this study.

Student Name: _____

Signature: _____

Youth with Histories of Domestic Violence and their Public School Experiences:
An Ethnographic Study
University of Minnesota, Literacy Education

Background Information:
Your daughter is invited to take part in a research study focused on capturing how youth who have undergone childhood experiences of domestic violence experience and interact in school. The study seeks to understand the difficult conditions and situations that youth with histories of domestic violence face in their daily interactions in school, like suspensions or difficult interactions with school staff. Tracey Pyscher, a graduate student from the University of Minnesota, is leading this study.

Procedures:
If you agree that she can be a part of this study, she will take part in:
   (1) Her typical school routine while I observe, and in some cases, audio and video record discussions and interactions.
   (2) Recorded interviews so that I hold onto her points of view. Healthy snacks and/or pizza will be provided.
   (3) Allowing me to see and copy school assignments and/or Individual Education Plans (IEPs). I will always ask her permission first and her name will be removed from all materials.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:
There are minimal risks with her participation in this study including the risk that someone could identify that your daughter is involved in the study. Your daughter's participation in this study will be kept private. The names of participants and the research site will not be used in any report or publication. Participant information will be kept secured in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home and destroyed by May 2019. A false name will be used in any written work.

The school social worker and researcher will provide information about counseling services if your daughter should become upset about anything that happens during the course of the study. Additionally, while your daughter always has the opportunity to withdraw from the study and never has to answer questions that she would rather not answer during interviews, at times questions can be of a sensitive nature.

Her participation in this study may help school staff better understand the experiences of middle school students like herself who have experienced domestic violence. Her participation will give her the opportunity to her share stories, reflect on her experiences and interactions with Saturnalia and with the staff from her perspective.

Compensation:
There will be no rewards for participating in this study. Your daughter will be offered healthy snacks and/or pizza during interviews.

Confidentiality (privacy):
By law, the privilege of confidentiality (privacy) does not extend to all data collected. The following information is not limited by confidentiality and may be released and reported as governed by law: 1) information about a child being maltreated or neglected, 2) information about an individual's plan to seriously harm him/herself, 3) information about an individual's plan to seriously harm another person. If I am given such information as the researcher of this study, I am required to report it to the authorities including the school social worker. The obligation to report includes alleged or probable abuse as well as known abuse.

Contacts and Questions:
If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the researcher (Tracey Pyscher) at….You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Lewis at…. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher or advisor, please contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent (permission):

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. Please check for permission.

_____ I give permission to have my daughter participate in the study.

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Parent/guardian of _____

Signature of Researcher: _____   Date: _____

Appendix C

Informal Consent/Assent Scripts

Researcher Informal Consent Script:

Hi Jess (or caregiver/guardian name), my name is Tracey Pyscher and I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me and consider allowing Jen (or other student name) to participate in the study I am conducting at Saturnalia this year.

All of my research comes out of my personal experience as a child and teenager who experienced domestic violence at the hands of my father. I am inviting Jen to take part in a study related to how she thinks and feels about school as a young person who has experienced domestic violence. I want to understand how her relationships with peers and teachers and how these affect her learning and her general experience of schooling.

I would like to observe her classes and observe her in a variety of school activities like lunch, recess and clubs. If you agree, I would like to interview her three to four times, and I will record these so that I can remember and reflect on what she said. I will ask her questions about her experiences and what I observe during her school day. These discussions and interviews will take place before, during lunch, or after school as to not interrupt her learning during class time. I will make an extra effort not to draw attention to her. I may ask her teachers for copies of some of the things she writes or makes. If she has individual education plan (IEP), I will ask for her permission to read it and I will remove her name from all materials. When I look at her class work, I will not be interested in her grades, but will be looking at her work to get to know her better and understand her experiences in school.

I am also willing to serve as a resource or mentor to Jen if she likes. I can help talk through difficult situations and/or support her in her academic success. It is both your and Jen's choice to take part in this study and it will not affect her grades or affect your participation in other activities at Saturnalia. If either you or she decides to not want to be part of the study at any time, you/she can choose to drop out. If you are willing to allow her to take part, please read and sign this form. I look forward to learning from Jen and her experiences with hopes to influence other kids lives in our public schools.

Do you have any questions for me?

Informal Research Project Script for Marissa (School Social Worker)

Hi…(parent/caregiver name here)

Tracey Pyscher (pie-sure), a PhD student from the University of Minnesota and one of the key designers of Saturnalia, is going to conduct a research project that focuses on the

experiences of middle school students who have experienced abuse or domestic violence while attempting to understand of their school experiences from their perspectives. I have thought your daughter (grand daughter) would have important insights to share about how she experiences school. Tracey is also interested in their motivation about school and how their interactions with school staff affect their learning and experiences in school. Both as a child and as a teenager, Tracey experienced domestic violence and childhood abuse and did not do very well in school stretching from elementary to high school. She thinks kids like herself have important perspectives to share that are not typically listened to. In this study she wants to understand more about school experiences from others like herself and share these points of view with teachers, social workers, and school staff in hopes of making school experiences better for kids/youth who have had these experiences.

I (meaning Marissa!) am excited by this project and I will be working closely with her over the next 7 months. I have known Tracey for many years (something like this?) and I know she is an advocate for kids/youth who have had tough lives. She was an urban teacher in Mpls. for over 15 years and as I mentioned, she came from these experiences. She would serve as a great mentor for (student name here) on many levels.

Would you be willing to meet with Tracey and I to discuss the possibility for your daugher (name here) to participate? If so, would this date and time work for you to come to school and discuss this? It should take no more than 20 minutes and you can ask all questions you might have for Tracey. She will also discuss the study in more detail then and I will also be present to address any questions.

Thanks.

Appendix D

Semi-structured Youth Participant Interview Questions

Mediated Actions & Related Research Questions

Identity, language, and action:
1. How would you describe yourself in general? As a student at Saturnalia?
2. How would you describe your interactions with Saturnalia staff? Interactions with other students? Why?
3. How would you define your daily experiences at Saturnalia (e.g. ways of talking, reading, writing, and interacting)?
4. Describe any projects or activities you have worked on that have allowed you to express or represent something about your identity. (What was the project? What aspect of your identity? How did you feel about the project/activity?)
5. Describe interactions/conversations with a staff member at Saturnalia that have allowed you to express or represent something about your identity. (What was the interaction/conversation? What aspect of your identity? How did you feel about the interaction/conversation?)

Relationships and pedagogies:
1. What is a word or phrase you would use to describe Saturnalia to another student?
2. What is the purpose of your work as a student at Saturnalia? How would you describe who you are in the classroom or what is your role in the classroom? In the hallways? In the lunchroom?
3. What word or phrase would you use to describe your interactions and relationships with Saturnalia teachers and staff?
4. How would you compare being in this school to your experience in other schools?
5. Describe a typical day at Saturnalia. In the classroom? In the hallway? In the lunchroom? In IEP meetings? In take a break out room?
6. What are the expectations for participating as a member of this school? How do you know?
7. Norms/expectations for communication or interaction with others (i.e., "Do you need to raise your hand to talk?"; "How do you talk to students in class? How do you know how behave/act in the classrooms, hallways, and lunchroom?)
8. Norms/expectations for use of space (i.e., "Where do you sit in class? Is it assigned?")
9. Norms/expectations for accomplishing learning tasks?
10. When do you seem most disengaged in what you are doing in school? Most engaged?
11. What is the process for making decisions and setting goals at Saturnalia?
12. Describe a time when you felt like an active participant at Saturnalia.
13. Describe a time when you felt like you were not an active participant.
14. How would you describe your relationship to teachers and staff at Saturnalia?

15. How would you describe your relationship with your peers at Saturnalia?

Moments of tension:
1. Describe any tensions you typically have with Saturnalia staff. Students?
2. What would you call these tensions? Why do you think these tensions are happening from your perspective? How do they affect you? How do you feel about these moments (or a specific moment) of tension(s)?
3. How do you respond to moments of tension with Saturnalia staff?
4. What heightened or dissipated the tension in the moment or in moments? From your perspective, what factors seem to heighten or dissipate tensions with Saturnalia staff (or specific member)? Did particular responses from Saturnalia staff work to create a better learning or interactional environment for you? To what extent did these interactions create more tension? If so, why?
5. When do you feel most comfortable at Saturnalia? Least Comfortable? Why?
6. What do you do if you have a problem with something related to Saturnalia staff and/or other students?
7. Problem with learning task?
8. Problem with teacher?
9. Problem with student?
10. Personal problem that affects your ability to participate?

Appendix D

Semi-structured Caregiver Interview Questions

1. Can you describe what has most influenced Mac's experience in school from your perspective? At schools outside of Saturnalia? Outside of school?

2. When we first met, you mentioned your other daughters' experiences in schools? Are you comfortable sharing their stories/experiences with me? How has Mac's experience been different when compared to Saturnalia?

3. What has been your experience with special ed. services in schools?

4. How would you describe your experience with schools as a parent? At Saturnalia? Compared to other schools?

5. How would you compare Saturnalia to other schools when it comes to parent/family involvement, communications, preparing Mac for academic success? For high school in general?

6. How would you compare Saturnalia's type of learning to other schools? Do you think Mac has found more academic success at Saturnalia compared to other schools? Why or why not?

7. You mentioned when we first met that Saturnalia was a positive change for your Mac? Can you tell me why?

   a. Was it the culture or environment? How different compared to other schools?
   b. Was it the teachers/staff at Saturnalia? How different compared to other schools?

8. Why were you interested and why did you allow your daughter to participate in this study?

9. How much do you think Mac's experiences with domestic violence has defined who she is today? Her beliefs about the world? Her learning? Her interactions with staff and friends/other students? What experiences most define Mac?

10. Her friend group? How she identifies in the world?

11. If you could speak to the general public, what message would you share related to your daughter's experience with domestic violence and the influence of school on her success or non-success? About the different type of story she or you might tell as her mother that might surprise others?

12. Both you and Mac have shared the details of her history of domestic violence with me (when we first met). Are you comfortable sharing her/your history and how you think it has shaped Mac so far in life? In school? In her friendships? Out of school?

13. Do you think Saturnalia might have helped her older sister differently compared to other schools she attended?

14. What do you think has worked for Mac at Saturnalia? What has not worked for Jenna at Saturnalia? In other schools?

15. What has worked for you as a parent at Saturnalia? What has not?

16. Anything you would like to add that perhaps I missed?