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Foreword

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After issuing the call for *Pedagogies for Creative Justice: Artivism, Digital Media, and Filmmaking*, the community's response surpassed expectations. The multitude of valuable contributions and insights prompted the collective body overseeing this special issue to make the decision to split the content into two consecutive issues. In so doing, we aim to provide our readers with a more comprehensive exploration of the critical themes surrounding action-based research, academic journal and college scholar activism, curriculum development, and reflective pedagogies aligned with the spirit of creative justice. We believe that this decision will enhance the impact and accessibility of the content, allowing for a more in-depth engagement with the crucial topics addressed in the special issue. We are excited about the prospect of sharing this wealth of knowledge and look forward to presenting these two distinct issues, each contributing to the ongoing dialogue on progressive pedagogies and transformative education.

I am excited to bring to your attention the release of the special issue, "Pedagogies for Creative Justice: Artivism, Digital Media, and Filmmaking (Part 1)." This collection serves as a powerful amalgamation of action-based research, art, diverse voices, film knowledge, lesson plans, poetry, podcasts, testimonios and other creative experiences within the realm of academic journal and scholar activism. In a landscape often dominated by traditional approaches, this special issue stands out by delving into ethnic studies curriculum development and encouraging educators to reflect on their pedagogies. The contributors provide insightful perspectives on youth, K-12 education and classroom practices that resonate with the spirit of the work, emphasizing the importance of aligning teaching methods with the dynamic nature of artivism, digital media, and filmmaking.

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary education, this collection of works forms a vibrant tapestry contributing to an ever-evolving archive of ethnic studies pedagogies. Rooted in the principles of anti-racism, decolonization, and rehumanization, these pieces emanate from and resonate with the transformative movements both within and beyond the traditional K-12 educational framework. Embracing an ethnic studies ethos characterized by community-based practices and culturally relevant pedagogy, the contents of this issue delve into the intricate intersections of diverse knowledges. These manuscripts offer a nuanced exploration of how various forms of knowledge are not only processed but also creatively disseminated, challenging conventional educational boundaries. From multimedia works to community events, and from the lens of photography to the rhythms of dance, this compilation reflects the expansiveness of ethnic studies as it permeates unconventional educational spaces, illuminating the manifold ways in which learning unfolds and impacts our broader societal narratives.

Moreover, the special issue advocates for a paradigm shift, urging us to break away from patriarchal, colonial, and capitalist knowledge construction. The exploration of how knowledge is processed and taught in the classroom challenges existing norms and fosters a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. I believe that this collection will be an invaluable resource for educators, researchers, and scholars seeking innovative approaches to pedagogy. It not only sheds

light on the transformative potential of creative justice but also inspires a reevaluation of our teaching methodologies to better align with the evolving needs of our educational landscape. I encourage you to explore this special issue, as I believe it will contribute significantly to ongoing conversations surrounding creative justice, artivism, and the intersection of digital media and filmmaking in educational settings.

Cover Art

Gracing the cover of this issue is a captivating piece of art by the talented duo of artists, Omar G. Ramirez and Fabian Debora. Titled *Homage to Beatriz Solis*, the artwork is a testament to their collaborative genius. Crafted in 2022, this large-scale painting is a harmonious blend of mixed media, expertly employing collage and acrylic paint on wood to create a visually striking composition. Commissioned and installed by The California Endowment Conference Center in Los Angeles, the painting finds its home at the renamed Dr. Beatriz Solis Hall. The cover art not only reflects the artists' remarkable skill but also serves as a poignant tribute to the influential figure it commemorates, embodying the intersection of art and recognition within the walls of this esteemed conference center.

Poetry

Angie Ojeda's bilingual poem, *Mi Tata*, beautifully encapsulates the profound significance of family, heritage, and the pursuit of dreams within the context of the American experience. The poet poignantly expresses the idea that the United States is her home since it embodies the realized dream of her Tata (grandfather). Through vivid imagery and heartfelt language, Ojeda paints a portrait of resilience, love, and determination that transcends generations. The repetition of the phrase "America is my casa because I am my Tata's sueño logrado" reinforces the theme of the American dream being fulfilled through the struggles and sacrifices of previous generations. The poem also highlights the importance of love, patience, and respect in navigating life's seasons, echoing the wisdom passed down from Tata. Ultimately, Ojeda's words celebrate the enduring legacy of familial love and the belief that, like Tata, she too can contribute to the betterment of her family, community, and herself within community.

Art

The art piece, *Dedos del Chamuco*, by Teotl (Michael Villa) is a compelling exploration of the human condition, skillfully executed in ink. The title, which translates to "Fingers of the Devil," immediately hints at a narrative that delves into the complexities of human nature. The artwork masterfully employs recognizable human features such as hands, heads, and legs, forming a visual tapestry that offers viewers a glimpse into the inner mechanisms of the creative individual. Through this combination of abstraction and cubism, Teotl captures the multifaceted nature of the human psyche, particularly in youth. The intricate portrayal of multiple identities within the artwork serves as a visual representation of the struggles faced by young individuals in understanding and embracing their true selves. By acknowledging the internal battles and emphasizing the importance of mental wellness, the piece encourages self-reflection and empowerment. The piece becomes a powerful metaphor for the intricate layers that compose our identities—shape-shifting desires, passions, and the constant ebb and flow of our internal landscape. It conveys the idea that actions stem from thought and that fostering a healthy mental

state is crucial for meaningful and purposeful engagement with the world. "Dedos del Chamuco" stands as a testament to the transformative potential of art in conveying complex narratives and promoting self-awareness and mental well-being.

The photograph, "Yo Soy El Futuro" by photographer-artivista Felicia 'Fe' Montes serves as a visual document of the social and political landscape during the Summer of 2020, a time marked by intense activism against racism. The image captures a poignant moment at one of the largest Black Lives Matter protests in Los Angeles, California. Against the backdrop of the widespread outcry for racial justice, the photo features a young girl standing proudly out of a car, holding a sign that declares "Yo Soy El Futuro" (I am the future). The girl's symbolic proclamation resonates deeply with the broader movement, encapsulating the spirit of hope, empowerment, and resilience. The act of performative protest, captured by Montes' lens, becomes a vivid example of artivism — the intersection of art and activism — and how digital media can be a pedagogical tool for creative justice. The contextual mention of AB 1460 being signed in the same year, bringing ethnic studies courses to students in California, further underscores the significance of the photograph. It highlights the interconnectedness of social movements and educational reforms, emphasizing how advocacy and inspiration can bridge generational gaps and lead to positive societal change. In essence, *Yo Soy El Futuro* becomes a visual narrative of intergenerational education, inspiration, and advocacy. The image not only captures a moment in time but also serves as a powerful reminder that the younger generation is a driving force for change. The photo encapsulates the belief that, through artivism and digital media, youth can contribute to shaping a more just and inclusive future. The girl in the photograph emerges as a symbol of that future – one that is bright, empowered, and committed to the principles of equality and justice.

Articles

“Resistance, Empowerment and Pedagogical Possibilities in Public Spaces: Student Archival Learning with Mervyn M. Dymally, The Bridgebuilder of Los Angeles” by Dawn A. Dennis, Lynn V. Dymally, Azalea Camacho, Ivan Rodriguez Garcia, Rigo Garcia, and Daniel Andalon chronicles an inspiring and multifaceted collaboration in a compelling effort that spanned almost two years. The project, initiated in 2019 at Cal State LA, resulted in a virtual exhibit, public programming, and K-12 curriculum development, all funded by a California Humanities quick-grant. The article skillfully exemplifies a comprehensive K-16 framework by connecting university archival collecting to the collaborative development of K-12 lesson plans with a museum partner, fostering an integrated educational approach that spans primary research to curriculum design.

This essay focuses on the transformative potential of university archives, positioning them as places of learning and resistance against prevailing historical narratives. The authors argue for the pedagogical potential of challenging archival silences and disrupting the 'master narrative' of American history through a digital humanities project rooted in primary sources. The essay emphasizes a culturally responsive pedagogy, positioning student culture and knowledge at the core of the curriculum.

The project's semester-long exploration of archival materials centered on counter-storytelling, aiming to deconstruct settler colonialism, confront exclusionary archival practices, and reclaim the narrative authority from colonizers who have marginalized Black, Indigenous, and immigrant

communities. The authors advocate for a humanizing pedagogy, tying assignments to the needs of marginalized students for meaningful social change.

In essence, this essay celebrates the capacity of digital humanities projects to bring about meaningful change by challenging historical narratives, amplifying marginalized voices, and revitalizing archives as living artifacts. The collaborative effort exemplifies the potential of education to empower students and communities through the exploration of untold histories and the development of counter-narratives.

“The Four Corners of Chinanko Hip-Hop Pedagogy” by Shiv R. Desai and LeRoy Saiz critically examines the detrimental impact of a US educational framework on Xicanx youth, focusing on the denial of their cultural and spiritual expression and the use of external educators as agents of colonization. The authors argue that Xicanx youth experience a profound loss akin to *susto*, a structural process where they face intellectual, cultural, and spiritual erosion. However, the article contends that through the arts, particularly critical hip-hop pedagogy, Xicanx youth can reclaim agency, access ancestral knowledge, and find affirming spaces that nurture their cultural identities.

The integration of hip-hop, specifically a critical hip-hop pedagogy informed by Nuevomexicanx and Xicanx traditions, emerges as a powerful tool for empowering Xicanx youth. The article introduces the concept of chinanko hip-hop pedagogy, defined as a neighborhood/community way of knowing. This approach, likened to a garden nourished by hip-hop, seeks to strengthen the mind, body, and spirit of Xicanx youth.

The characteristics of chinanko hip-hop pedagogy, as outlined in the article, include a sense of belonging, sharing of knowledge, reciprocity and respectfulness, and generosity and thankfulness. These elements form a framework that aims to root Xicanx youth in a profound connection to Nuevomexicanx concepts like *el oro de barrio*, *resolana*, and *querencia*. By intertwining hip-hop with the rich tapestry of local knowledge, language, community building, kinship, and socio-political consciousness, the article demonstrates how Xicanx youth consciousness is rooted in tradition and cultural expressions.

The article provides a compelling argument for the transformative potential of a chinanko hip-hop pedagogy, offering a holistic approach that addresses the intellectual, cultural, and spiritual well-being of Xicanx youth within the context of their cultural heritage. The emphasis on a sense of belonging, knowledge sharing, reciprocity, and generosity adds depth to the discussion on critical pedagogy and its role in fostering resilience and empowerment among marginalized communities.

Joey Quenga's essay, "A Testimony: Pasifika Media, Representation and Transformation of Community," provides a powerful and personal counter-story to the historical lack of accurate representation of Pacific Islander communities in mainstream media. Quenga reflects on the limited and stereotypical roles assigned to Asian-Pacific Islanders (API) in Hollywood since the 1950s, emphasizing the detrimental impact of such misrepresentation on Pasifika youth.

The author shares a compelling testimonio, drawing on a 30-year journey within the Pasifika community, to shed light on the transformative efforts undertaken by community members to challenge and reshape media perceptions for the younger generation. The article delves into the

historical legacy of Pacific Island media, highlighting the crucial role it plays in shaping cultural attitudes and beliefs.

One of the key arguments is the importance of accurate representation in media, especially for youth in K-12 schools. Quenga contends that positive and culturally accurate portrayals of Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders in the media can challenge stereotypes, enhance understanding, and foster respect for the diverse cultures within these communities. The author underscores the impact of media as a powerful tool that, when used appropriately, can contribute to the well-being and self-esteem of young individuals by providing them with a sense of pride and validation of their cultural identity.

The article makes a compelling case for the broader societal benefits of accurate representation, advocating for a more inclusive and culturally diverse society. Quenga's testimony serves as an important contribution to ongoing discussions about media representation, cultural identity, and the potential for positive change in the portrayal of Pasifika communities. Overall, the article effectively emphasizes the transformative power of media in shaping perceptions and underscores the significance of accurate representation for the well-being of Pasifika youth and the broader community.

Hipolito Muñoz Navarette and Jessica Just's article, "A Testimonio on Developing Creative Thinkers: Creating Creators and Filmmaking in K-12 Schools," offers a vivid and insightful account of a film program implemented throughout southern California public schools, emphasizing the transformative potential of filmmaking in K-12 education. The essay elucidates how project-based learning is employed as a pedagogical practice, allowing students to experience competence, success, and growth lessons in collaboration with industry professionals. The narrative provides a snapshot of students of color actively engaged in the creative process of developing their own "counter-stories" of resilience and transgressing racialized experiences, as well as the empowering environment that emerges when students are guided to tell their own stories through the medium of film.

The article outlines the collaborative nature of the "Creating Creators" program, highlighting its partnership with school districts and teachers since 2007. The integration of storytelling as a tool for students, especially in English Language Arts (ELA)/English Language Development (ELD) classes, is presented as a means to cultivate observation skills, emotional articulation, and a deeper understanding of the world. The authors stress the importance of supporting literacy beyond the third grade and dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline, emphasizing the goal of creating a culture where everyone can learn together.

Navarette and Just's article provides a compelling argument for the integration of filmmaking in K-12 education, showcasing how it can nurture creative thinking, empower students, and contribute to a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment. The emphasis on collaboration with teachers, professional development, and the overarching goal of creating creators in the California public school system adds depth to the discussion on the intersection of education, creativity, and storytelling.

Rick Garcia's article, "A Testimonio on Passing Knowledge: Creating Digital Testimonios for Future Generations," offers a thoughtful exploration of the concept of Digital Testimonio, particularly focusing on its potential for challenging dominant narratives and amplifying marginalized voices.

Delving into personal experience in creating a Digital Testimonio, Garcia recounts his journey from a midterm project on LGBTQIA+ issues to a presentation in a classroom setting. The narrative highlights the author's shift from a traditional essay to a video essay, emphasizing the power of this medium in bringing awareness to marginalized communities. Garcia's focus on the LGBTQIA+ community and the struggles it faces, particularly in the context of K-12 education, serves as a compelling example of how Digital Testimonios can be used as a pedagogical tool.

The article explores Garcia's presentation of his Digital Testimonio pedagogy to an urban learning education class, illustrating the potential for integrating this approach into K-12 teaching curriculum. The connection to teacher education pedagogy adds depth to the discussion. Garcia's goal of inspiring future educators to incorporate Digital Testimonios into their teaching practices aligns with the broader movement towards diverse tools that create safe and inclusive learning environments.

Rick Garcia's article serves as a compelling testament to the transformative potential of Digital Testimonios within ethnic studies classrooms and the transformative power of its pedagogical practice as an alternative tool for storytelling. The work effectively communicates the author's personal journey, pedagogical insights, and the broader impact of incorporating Digital Testimonios into academic practices. More important, pushes K-12 teaching to embrace testimonio pedagogy as a critical ethnic studies tool for youth.

Lucha Arévalo's article, "Nuestros Cuentos Cuentan: Storytelling as a Healing Modality in a Community College Classroom," offers a poignant reflection on the transformative potential of her month-long student project, *Nuestros Cuentos Cuentan*. This project, embedded in an Introduction to Chicana/o/x Studies course, serves as a creative and critical race literacy curriculum, empowering students to author and illustrate the stories they wish had been introduced to them as children. The culmination of the project involves each student creating an original children's picture book, contributing to a growing collection that embodies the healing power of storytelling and serves as a political act within a community college classroom setting.

Arévalo's inquiry into the intersection of healing, education, and ethnic studies is framed by questions about the delayed access to critical knowledge experienced by many students. The article engages with the pedagogical challenge of cultivating communities of care and relationships of healing, underscoring the importance of imagining and working toward alternate futures in the classroom. Arévalo shares her central challenge as an educator — fostering empowering environments for students and centering the healing of wounds and trauma in the ethnic studies classroom. Furthermore, the article emphasizes the necessity of an anti-racist curriculum rooted in the core competencies of ethnic studies, especially in the context of Rio Hondo College's mission as an anti-racist institution. The author's commitment to meeting students where they are, recognizing the diverse backgrounds and challenges they bring, is evident throughout.

The implementation of *Nuestros Cuentos Cuentan* in 2019 serves as a powerful example of Arévalo's pedagogical approach. The project not only aligns with the mission of empowering

students to reclaim their narratives but also contributes to anti-racist cultural production, critical self-reflection, and knowledge production. By providing students with the tools to engage in storytelling as a healing modality, the curriculum transcends traditional academic boundaries and fosters an environment of creative expression and personal growth.

Arévalo's article offers a rich exploration of the intersection between storytelling, healing, and education, presenting a compelling model that has the potential to inspire educators in creating transformative learning experiences within diverse academic settings. The emphasis on anti-racist pedagogy and the integration of creative projects like *Nuestros Cuentos Cuentan* contribute to the ongoing dialogue about inclusive and empowering ethnic studies practices.

In "Bridging Youth & Community: Digital Testimonio with Maria Baeza," David Ramos provides a captivating account emerging from the GRITO Series Project, an initiative spearheaded by graduate and undergraduate students at California State University, Los Angeles (Cal State LA). Under the guidance of Dr. Alejandro Covarrubias, the GRITO - Getting Revolutionary & Intersectional Testimonios Out - Series hosted the UMAS/MEChA Reunion for the Cal State LA chapter in May 2022, featuring a Youth Conference reminiscent of Cal State LA's Community Day in the 1960s. This conference welcomed high schools from East LA, El Sereno, and South LA, providing students with an opportunity to visit the campus, engage with Chicana/o Movement organizers, and listen to their testimonios.

Ramos' essay focuses on a conversation with Maria Baeza, a significant but often overlooked figure in the Chicana/o/x Movement. The mention of her involvement in key college organizations and her instrumental role in the development of Mexican American Studies at Cal State LA adds depth to her narrative. The testimonio aspect promises a personal and insightful glimpse into Baeza's experiences, making it a valuable addition to the broader GRITO Series. Overall, it serves as a compelling teaser, leaving readers intrigued to delve deeper for a more comprehensive understanding of Maria Baeza's impactful journey.

Ramos' article not only serves as a documentation of the GRITO Series Project but also underscores the transformative potential of digital testimonios in bridging the generational gap, empowering youth, and democratizing historical narratives. It showcases the importance of preserving oral histories, particularly those rooted in marginalized communities, and how digital platforms can serve as powerful tools for knowledge dissemination and community engagement. Overall, Ramos' essay stands out as an exemplary initiative in reclaiming and disseminating marginalized narratives, fostering intergenerational dialogue, and contributing to the broader goal of democratizing knowledge.

The article, "The 4 I's of Liberation: Moving Beyond Oppression and onto the Struggle to be Free" by Kiki Ochoa and Guillermo Gomez, offers a valuable teacher practitioner reflection on the intersection of John Bell's 4 I's of Oppression and the authors' innovative concept, the 4 I's of Liberation. Drawing on their extensive collective experience in the public school system, particularly teaching Ethnic Studies, Ochoa and Gomez provide insight into the evolution of their curriculum.

The authors commendably recognize the significance of John Bell's framework in analyzing oppression at ideological, systemic, interpersonal, and internalized levels. However, they aptly

identify a crucial gap in the model—its lack of a clear path toward liberation. In response, Ochoa and Gomez introduce the 4 I's of Liberation, a transformative concept designed to empower students and redirect their anger into constructive energy for conceptualizing active liberation.

The article navigates through the practical application of these frameworks in the authors' teaching context, emphasizing the importance of building a strong community and fostering identity through activities aligned with the principles of Ethnic Studies. The unit's focus on analyzing, deconstructing, and resisting colonialism is enriched by the combined use of John Bell's and the authors' frameworks.

As lead teachers in Ethnic Studies, Ochoa and Gomez acknowledge the critique that their approach might lead students into a victim mentality. However, they skillfully counter this concern by highlighting the necessity of first enabling students to identify, name, and analyze oppression, thereby laying the groundwork for critiquing and challenging oppressive systems.

Overall, this article serves as a thoughtful and practical guide for educators seeking to enrich their Ethnic Studies curriculum, providing a nuanced perspective on utilizing frameworks for oppression analysis and, importantly, moving toward the active pursuit of liberation.

The article "Artivism: The Social Intervention" by Harpreet Kaur Dhir, Meghann Kraft, Lisa Ruiz, and Helene Cunningham delves into the transformative power of K-12 artivism, exploring its role in civic engagement, expression, and driving social change on both local and global scales. The authors set out to answer key questions surrounding the nature of artivism, its distinction from political art, its theoretical foundations, and its tangible impact on societal transformation.

The article emphasizes the importance of integrating artivism into educational practices, especially within the framework of Ethnic Studies. It advocates for a connected arts learning approach that draws on community cultural wealth to empower students, foster cultural relevance, and celebrate diversity. The authors underline the need for educators to make subject matter personally relevant to students, fostering a sense of ownership and civic participation.

The incorporation of K-12 artivism-centered lessons is shown to enhance students' connection to historical and ethnic studies, contributing to social-emotional learning. The article provides practical examples of artivism in action, demonstrating how students engage with their cultural and historical perspectives through artistic expression. This connection, the authors argue, disrupts popular narratives and can lead to systemic paradigm shifts.

Overall, the article makes a compelling case for the integration of artivism into teaching and learning. By providing concrete examples and illustrating the impact on students, it serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to harness artivism as a means to bring about positive social change. The emphasis on ongoing professional development and intentional implementation ensures that artivism becomes a powerful tool for cultivating student agency and active participation in shaping a more just and inclusive society.

"Advancing Critical Digital Pedagogy: Teachers' Reflections on the Utility of Podcasting as an Instructive Tool Toward Youth Wellness" by Tiffani Marie and Sharim Hannegan-Martinez is a compelling exploration of the "Drawing from the Well" podcast. The article delves into the

podcast's origins and purpose as a counter-narrative initiative, challenging dominant academic narratives through critical discussions on race, wellness, and cultural relevance in education.

The authors effectively present the podcast as a form of sonic reclamation space, emphasizing its role in community empowerment and challenging the exploitative nature of Western technology. The incorporation of Cherrie Moraga's "theory in the flesh" and a femme and queer-led production team adds a unique social context to the podcast, framing it as an indigenous technology that addresses human needs for community health and a sense of life purpose.

The article introduces key concepts, such as trauma-informed, healing-centered, cultural wealth, and wellness, which serve as foundational elements for the podcast's approach. The authors skillfully connect these concepts to the podcast's mission, emphasizing its role as a tool of resistance, a platform for unheard voices, and a digital apothecary for healing collective traumas.

The use of dialogic history from Black intellectual conversations and Chicana Feminist Pláticas enriches the podcast's narrative, grounding it in a rich tradition of meaning-making practices. The authors successfully leverage the podcast format to bridge these conversations, creating a space that challenges traditional beliefs about wellness and expertise by incorporating diverse voices.

The reflexive research practice employed in the essay adds depth to the exploration, providing insights into youth wellness and Critical Digital Pedagogy. By examining their own beliefs, judgments, and practices, the authors contribute to a deeper understanding of the innovative use of podcasting as an instructive pedagogical tool.

"Negotiating Organizing Tactics and Digital Media Tools in the Fight for Critical Ethnic Studies in Public Schools" by Joel A. Arce, Kysa Nygreen, Laura Valdiviezo, Keisha L. Green, and Dana Altshuler provides a nuanced and reflective analysis of the complex struggles faced by a community-led Ethnic Studies program. The essay contextualizes the production of a documentary film as part of a broader organizing effort aimed at bringing visibility to the program and safeguarding it from administrative cuts.

The authors shed light on the tensions that arose with administrators during the documentary production, offering a critical examination of the potential power and drawbacks of utilizing film as an advocacy tool for Ethnic Studies. The case study presented in the paper serves as a valuable example of the multifaceted challenges inherent in the movement for K-12 Ethnic Studies, showcasing its adaptability in the face of different forms of opposition, both overt and covert.

The article is a candid reflection from the perspective of the ethnic studies practitioners and community members who actively participated in the organizing efforts and filmmaking process. Acknowledging the contentious nature of their engagement with district leadership, the authors provide a transparent and self-aware narrative that relies on collective analysis of various sources, including fieldnotes, memos, email correspondence, interviews, and debrief sessions.

The authors acknowledge the district's ambiguous support for ethnic studies classes, setting the stage for the challenging journey faced by educators—a road that demands constant navigation to sustain a critical program within the constraints of colonial and neoliberal epistemological frameworks in public schooling.

"Negotiating Organizing Tactics and Digital Media Tools" provides valuable insights into the complexities of advocating for Critical Ethnic Studies in K-12 settings. The essay contributes to the broader understanding of the challenges faced by educators and activists in their efforts to navigate, sustain, and promote critical perspectives within the existing educational structures.

"The Santa Ana Youth Media Project: YPAR and Media Advocacy" by Jorge F. Rodriguez outlines a powerful initiative that emerged from the need for more critical media literacy among youth. The project, born in the summer of 2019, focuses on participatory research and journalistic designs, utilizing tools such as narrative inquiry, Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), and video production to capture and amplify the stories of youth and their community in Santa Ana and Orange County.

The article provides a comprehensive overview of the project's goals, emphasizing the development of a media platform where youth and community members can tell their own stories and advocate for their communities using media as a tool. The interviews conducted during the summer of 2019, exploring the perspectives of youth on their city, reveal the authentic voices of young individuals navigating the complexities of an urban Santa Ana context. The article highlights the importance of these testimonies, noting their alignment with the origin stories of the Ethnic Studies movements and their embodiment of key pillars for effective teaching within Ethnic Studies.

The author accentuates the significance of youth testimonies as counter-knowledge and resistance against a deficit social-cultural context. The narratives shed light on broader youth needs, addressing issues such as racism, gentrification, social-economic class disparities, youth marginalization, and the lack of youth spaces in Orange County. The spirit of Ethnic Studies deeply resonates within the Santa Ana youth, turning their experiences into a form of activism.

Furthermore, Rodriguez calls attention to the need for a shift in perspective when understanding the agency, resilience, and self-determination of Santa Ana youth. The metaphor of youth skateboarding through systemic terrains, facing challenges like school-to-prison pipelines and deficit approaches to youth development, serves as a poignant call for educators to learn from the finesse and swag of the youth, metaphorically skating alongside them in solidarity.

This article presents a compelling case for the transformative potential of youth-led media initiatives rooted in participatory research and critical perspectives. It not only documents the challenges faced by Santa Ana youth but also advocates for a paradigm shift in education that recognizes and celebrates the agency of young individuals.

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