_____

Professional Book Review

Reviewed by Brandon Lewis, Georgia State University, U. S. A
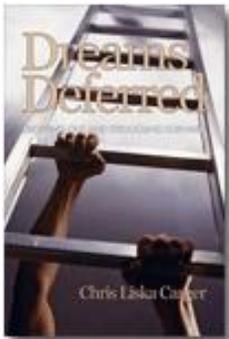
In *Dreams Deferred*, Carger presents an innovative way of approaching academic research. This ethnographic piece is rooted in the quest for equity and unveils the human struggle to adapting to the capitalistic, monolithic warfare aimed at minorities in the United States of America. She avoids the scholarly approach of merely collecting and reporting data but actively participates in her participants' lives. While this sort of approach is risky, her usage of "personal-passionate-participatory inquiry" provides the ability to conjoin with individuals invested in obtaining social justice and aims to "build a community to develop strategies for the enactment of educational and social change that fosters equity, equality, social justice, freedom, and human possibility" (p. xv).

This ethnography is divided into four parts. Part I provides a sociohistorical context of Hispanic students and the schooling process, which often lead to low graduation rates. Although she acknowledges historical underpinnings of first-generation immigrant Hispanic youth struggling to gain equal access in this nation's public schools, Carger delves deeper by offering sociological explanations for students who decide to drop out of school and, reciprocally, public schools that systematically drop out on students. Part II depicts the narrative of Alejandro Juarez and his family. The Juarez family's story of struggle, sacrifice, optimism, and perseverance offers a context for examining culture, community, and family. Through peer observation, interviews, and active participation, Carger explores the cumbersomeness of being an ESL Hispanic in a *de facto* monolingual society. Part III focuses on access. she illuminates the teachers' dispositions toward ESL Hispanic students and the systematic push to drive students out of schools rather than fighting to keep them in. Additionally, various educational agencies and community activists are investigated to offer recourse to the meritocratic school structure. Part IV provides closure to this ethnographic study. Here, she illustrates the complexity of using a personal-passionate-participatory inquiry. She focuses on Alejandro's consistent job layoffs, Alma's unwavering request for Alejandro to obtain his GED, Alejandro's decision affecting his siblings, the obstacles of ending this study, and the explanation of how dreams may be deferred but are undying.

Typically, ethnographies focus on a specific culture and the understanding of that culture, yet Carger approaches this ethnography differently. She situates her study in interpreting how a young man's decision to drop out of school can impact his family. Additionally, she investigates how culture (e.g., language, parental and peer involvement, and the labor force) impacts the lives of Hispanics in America.

Carger's role as a researcher is placed into question because of the friendly relationship that is formed with her participants. In self-reflection, she questions the notion of conforming to the protocol in research and her decision of not having adhered to investigative rules. However, I was pleased to see Carger take risks by debunking the traditional role of the researcher and creating a space for researchers to not only investigate the problem but also care about creating a solution. She avoided scholarly jargon and contextualized her study as a human problem. Ultimately, readers are able to explore this study open-mindedly. Her findings speak largely to the social ailments that plague urban students while capturing the humanness that exists within these seemingly overwhelming spaces—particularly for areas with high minority population. Additionally, the question of who is dropping out on whom raises awareness of the classist and discriminatory practice toward non-English speakers taken by the public schools of Chicago. Dishearteningly, Carger also displays immigrant parents' willingness to acculturate their children into the same system that discriminates against their ideals and practices.

Carger draws attention to several impeding factors that target Hispanics: the school-to-prison pipeline, the lack of care from teachers in urban schools, the gang influence on minority youth, and American citizens' fear of the growing number of Hispanic immigrants. These topics offer insight into the plethora of problems affecting America's youth. This is not, as she indicates, a Hispanic or minority problem; the problem lies in the calculated oppression of people.

Carger is determined to reveal the humanity in the Juarez family and what is being done to remedy the problem of Hispanic youth dropping out of school. She inspires readers to investigate with care and purpose, not simply to gather information but to use data to create change. This work is significant because there is a need for scholarly activism in the academy and, moreover, a need for scholars to use their work as a framework for understanding the sociological underpinnings that affect our youth. It is also essential for teachers, parents, community members, scholars, and educationally-based organizations; I highly recommend this book.