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**Fracturas: growing our understanding of intergenerational trauma, disability,
Latinx girls in the school-prison nexus and community healing**

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**Fracturas: growing our understanding of intergenerational trauma, disability,
Latinx girls in the school-prison nexus and community healing**

by

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Report

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Dedication

for those who love me and love me well.

Abstract

Fracturas: growing our understanding of intergenerational trauma, disability, Latinx girls in the school-prison nexus and community healing

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2022

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Abstract: fracturas is a hybrid work inspired by the format and freedom of zines interwoven with personal anecdotes, art, theory and research. fracturas draws on the placement of Latinx girls navigating the school-prison nexus with regards to disability, intergenerational trauma, community and healing. Examining carefully the historical relationships Latinx and Black women and girls have formed to take care of themselves, to survive trauma and create lives for themselves.

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*IN A VERY REAL WAY
I'LL SAY THIS,
ALL I EVER WANTED GROWING UP
AND EVERYTHING I WOULD GO BACK FOR
WOULD BE
TO HAVE BEEN TREATED LIKE A KID
TO HAVE GROWN UP LIKE A KID
BUT I DIDNT GET THAT
AND THAT GOT TAKEN AWAY FROM ME FOR A LOT OF REASONS
BECAUSE OF SCHOOL
BECAUSE OF THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO ME
AND BECAUSE OF THINGS THAT HAPPENED TO ME
I WOULD HAVE GIVEN EVERYTHING TO HAVE JUST EXPERIENCED LIFE AS A KID
WHEN I WAS A KID
AND MAYBE IM BITTER BUT
I DONT WANNA HEAL AN INNER CHILD
I DONT WANNA GO RESCUE OR SAVE AN INNER CHILD
LIKE IM TWENTYFOUR
I WANTED TO BE THAT CHILD
WHEN I WAS A CHILD*

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

in regards to punctuation, grammar, structure and all other rules as it pertains to the english language—throughout this work you will see that i don't use them or follow them regularly or strictly. i do this as an artist, as a poet, as a storyteller. i also do this as a person of color, as someone of indigenous ancestry, as someone from a dual language speaking home. i do this as someone who has disdain for and trauma from the english language itself. the english language has not necessarily held space for people like me, the words used to describe or talk about me or the ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds i derive from historically have not been kind and are often imbued with underlying messages of white supremacy. i say all this while acknowledging that it is the language i use most often as vessel, but this too was not by choice either, but by a choice that was taken from me very young by white american speech therapists who insisted i learn only english, instead of learning both english and the language my parents relied on primarily to communicate, spanish. if anything has been “corrected” it is because of format requirements enforced by the university of texas at austin.

content warnings: suicide, suicidality, incarceration, immigration, sexual violence, incest, death, violence,

TEXTURE

[ABOUT THE JOURNEY]

fracturas, refers to the fractured pieces of something. fractures can often heal but they signify a split. i choose the words to envision my relationship with this work and how i hope it will impact those who might fall into it, fracturas because everything i cover here and leave uncovered has broken open my own understandings of grief, intergenerational trauma, disability more specifically as it relates to Latinx girls but fractures no matter how violent, how broken, they mend and come together differently than before.

the purpose of this work came to fruition as i continued my academic career. my interests were initially engaged in a class taught by Dr. Nicole Nguyen at University of Illinois at Chicago. in her class we read and digested material about the function of schooling and education and how youth got caught up in it. through her class i decided to take on a much larger personal project, i had read doing my own research in my other feminist studies classes that Latinas under the age of 25 had some of the highest attempted suicide rates, compared to other communities and populations, with LGBTQ Latinas and Afro-Latinas having even higher rates¹² i also read that they were more likely to attempt suicide especially after being justice involved and more likely to die from suicide. this is alarming from the outside, it's also real as someone who doesn't necessarily outwardly identify as latina, but would be classified as such and also as someone who at many points in my life have been very suicidal and/or spent a lot of time with thoughts about suicidality both as someone experiencing them and also as someone wanting to know more about it as a reality and concept.

upon continuing my academic career this expanded and fluctuated, i began with wanting to understand how latinx girls³ are often assigned or responsible for additional labor in their

¹ (Querdasi & Bacio, p. 162, 172, 2021)

² (Zayas et al., p. 1773, 2010)

³ i use this language in a way i hope to bridge that not all of the people i speak about might identify as a girl or woman or female but may identify as such out of safety and/or have been identified as such by the outside world, i do this knowing

households⁴. in many instances they mitigate cultural expectations especially as it pertains to gender and sexuality, they may be language brokering, navigating the justice system whether it be for immigration reasons and/or other reasons such as their own involvement in the system/criminalization, latin@s also make up one of the largest populations of communities experiencing and surviving sexual violence and trauma⁵ and large part of these incidents or instances are perpetuated by relatives, so not only are they experiencing sexual violence and trauma and also in many instances the nature of it is incestuous⁶

i will unfortunately never forget the way my body felt reading that fact, and i say fact because in my body i knew it as a truth. i am not quick to reveal that i have been sexually assaulted several times in this lifetime nor do i hide it but i am extremely unlikely to divulge that the first time it was the summer before i began 1st grade, i was seven and it was my biological half sibling. even writing that i am woozy in my body, there's a kind of shame attached to that, that i don't think or ever know if i'll ever be able to pull part my body from. i didn't deserve to be hurt even more so by someone i share a mother with and was raised alongside of.

i feel like sexual assault by a family member transforms itself into a burden.

and i come from an ancestral trail of people who were surviving, from people who were harmed and abused and people who were the receivers of that violence. i come from a family where inexplicable acts of horror and violence were done onto them and by them, ones that are not my details or stories to share, as well as not sharing out of protection of my loved ones, the survivors, in finding this information in academic settings my involvement grew and changed i immersed myself in reading and writing about the criminalization of latin@s girls and their growing presence

latin@s is not a perfect term and that there won't ever be one but that shouldn't stop us from continually reaching for new forms to communicate to one another and find our names

⁴ (Zuba, 2004, p. 47)

⁵ (Zayas et al. p 1773, 2021)

⁶ (Amaya & Gray, p. 722, 2021) and also taking into consideration this what is reported, due to the nature of this kind of violence and the peoples it is happening to we know this only a fraction of the reality

in the school-prison nexus⁷ continuing to grad school, my first semester i took a disability studies course with Dr. Alison Kafer everything came undone in that class in a sort of it all came together in a way and is still coming together, things are brighter more clear, in that class Dr. Kafer and my peers gifted me and cocreated a compassionate, moving language that honored and loved on our collective cripness while making space rejection for the treatment we often receive in the academy as disabled people⁸

through the class with Dr. Kafer and other classes with Dr. Marisol LeBron, Dr. Belem Lopez and Dr. Jossiyana Arroyo-Martinez i began to knit together how Latinx girls are criminalized and caught up in the school-prison nexus, through their queerness⁹, displays of deviant sexuality such as wearing clothes or acting in a way that is perceived as masculine¹⁰, trauma responses¹¹, reading disability¹² into this material i began to wonder what would it mean, what would come from reading through intergenerational trauma from a disability justice lense.

how can our understandings of disability shift and inform our understandings of intergenerational trauma and how it affects criminalized youth of color, particularly latinx girls? in carving this out, i became overwhelmed in my own life realizing how my own life informed and pushed and navigated this research. i held many of these experiences i read about, these experiences i wanted to understand, to fix, to heal. and then i wanted out i didn't want to hear or read anymore about how the things built and maintained in this world and people hurt us, weaponize us, are threatened by us, for just being us.

i also write this on the cusp of the reality that my maternal grandmother has been preparing for her death. she has had cervical and breast cancer, the cancer in her esophagus is untreatable, multiple pacemaker and replacement surgeries, last winter she broke her shoulder—it is inoperable and will never fully heal. My grandmother's maiden name is Clara Medellin and she claims our

⁷ (Flores, 2016)

⁸ I would like to divulge that i don't know if everyone in that class was disabled or identifies as such however the space for me very much centered and practiced crip care and love

⁹ (Flores et al., p.258, 2017)

¹⁰ (Hernandez, p.107, 2020)

¹¹ (Baumle, p.656, 2018)

¹² (Kafer, p.150, 2013)

ancestry has roots in Colombia and the Yaqui tribe, my grandmother shared her life between San Antonio, Texas and Kankakee, Illinois. she made it a point to never develop a relationship with me or any of her other grandchildren despite me having lived in the same town as her for over 17 years.

<3

My research was both rooted in my personal experiences and circumstances as well as the exposure and selection of materials in Dr. Nguyen's class. In her class I was familiarized with educational and schooling practices regarding youth of color. And through my class with Dr. Kafer I began placing together or attempting to place and connect disability studies to the experiences of girls caught up in the school-prison nexus¹³. Although I initially approached it from a place of understanding or trying to figure out how language or background that emerged in disability studies might help us better understand intergenerational trauma, trauma responses¹⁴—behavior that often is criminalized in youth of color

[A WORD: METHODOLOGY]

As I have begun this journey, I have struggled with the words to think through these experiences and these sensations. What are the words I feel, which are the ones that connect me to my truth?

My understanding of these concepts is messy. In respecting how I understand and employ these words, I will draw from various scholars who have informed my understanding of disability, crip theory, intergenerational trauma and trauma. In forming my understanding of these words I am also attempting to articulate or pinpoint a relationship between how conditions of violence are embodied in our daily lives.

In Alison Kafer's "Feminst, Queer, Crip" she references the work of Douglas Baynton who asserts that disability is everywhere¹⁵. Kafer extends this argument and thus raises the question if

¹³ (Kaba & Meiners, p.1, 2018)

¹⁴ (Baumle, p.695, 2018)

¹⁵ (Kafer, p. 149, 2013)

disability is everywhere than where are we not looking¹⁶ what then do we refuse to see, what do we miss continuously, what do we choose to ignore?

I began to think about how disability is understood within the context of schools. Consider the way disability is assigned or identified when it comes to students of color, specifically Latinx girls. Disabled students of color, in the case of Latinx students encounter ableism in the classroom such as low expectations, mistreatment, and refusal of academic services¹⁷ and this is when we are speaking about students that have been labeled as having a disability or being disabled. There are still the students to consider that might be denied the access to receive a diagnosis and support as a disabled person of color, there also students of color to consider who may have been labeled as being disabled due to what instructors, staff, teachers etc. might deem as behavioral problems or rather the reality that some instructors might not want to deal with students of color and will place them in special education classrooms so as to not deal with them.

In looking for disability through previous thinking and working on locating Latinx girls within the school-prison nexus and their experiences. I began to remember and think of the narratives around me as I approached this work. One of my professors had mentioned when she worked in schools that often teachers would complain about having to work with ESL students and special education students, explaining that these teachers would offer to exchange these students with one another. There is something to be said about how these teachers interact with or think of students learning English as a second language and disabled students. This interaction gets at something specific that I don't quite have the language for but connects to me the idea of the future and who is entitled to and worthy of that future¹⁸. Kafer articulates that when we speak about the future, disability, and babies/youth that it is often done with regard to a specific desired bodymind¹⁹ as desirability and disability are tightly intermeshed with one another²⁰. Desirability and futurity is evidently a reflection of white supremacist values. Children who don't speak

¹⁶ (Kafer, p. 150, 2013)

¹⁷ (Davila, p. 443, 2014)

¹⁸ (Kafer, p. 28, 2013)

¹⁹ (Kafer, p. 28, 2013)

²⁰ (Kafai, p. 60, 2021)

English or speak English as a second language, children with a different culture or religious beliefs than that of white american children interfere with the desired futures of the current conditions we live under and against.

Although Latinx students are one of the fastest growing ethnic group in schools²¹ and right after Black students Latinx students and disabled Latinx students make up a large percentage of students who have disciplinary actions taken against, specifically exclusionary discipline such as suspension or even placement in the juvenile detention center²². Despite making up the second largest group facing disciplinary action in schools, I find myself reckoning with a gap in literature as it concerns disabled Latinx girls and their relationships to schools. This is always where and why I began to think of the purpose and the body of this project in that, what would it mean to connect together intergenerational trauma and our understandings of disability? To look for disability in intergenerational trauma, to look at how criminalization of students of color and what might be classified as trauma responses as a potential disability? What then would be our definition of disability? What shifts about our understanding of disability when we look collectively towards intergenerational trauma and it's impact in the lives of people of color? Especially when Latinx people are positioned historically as a traumatized and oppressed community²³ and collectively experience what has been identified in latinx psychology as ethno-racial trauma²⁴.

An additional layer to consider are the dynamics surrounding Latinx folks, mental health, and disability. When approaching mental health, disability, and Latinx identities and cultural values this requires comprehension and resisting generalizing or presenting a single narrative of Latinx identity and their relationship to mental health and disability. There are many elements to navigate when considering the relationship Latinx folks and families when navigating anything as it relates to mental health and disability. One condition to take under consideration is the legal status of the family members or the person seeking or needing support and/or mental health

²¹ (Gage et al., p. 4, 2021)

²² (Gage et al., p. 3, 2021).

²³ (Chaves-Duenas et al., p.49, 2019)

²⁴ (Chaves-Duenas et al., p. 49, 2019)

resources. In the case of Latinx families where family members might be immigrants and/or undocumented they may be more resitant towards receiving help, reaching out to mental health resources, or even seeking diagnosis in fear that authorities might intervene or inquiry into the legal status of those involved/affected. This unfolds amongst the fact that disability diagnoses do not come separate from racialization. And this becomes even more clear through how teachers interpret and make decisions based on the behavior of students of color.

[READING OF THE FILM 'AMERICAN ME']

The following passage below is an excerpt derived from a paper I wrote based on the film 'American Me' for a Latinx Psychology class I took while attending UTAustin. I used this work, the film it covers and resources from class as well as others to extend the framework of looking for disability to include intergenerational trauma. Some parts have been rewritten for clarity.

In the film there is much to dissect in regards to Latinx psychology. The two hour film [American Me] gives insight into Mexican male relationships, intergenerational trauma, ethno-racial trauma, healing and the role of community, homophobia, rape, white supremacy, anti-Blackness, addiction, machismo, brotherhood, and identity. Throughout the duration of this course and even after I have been watching or reanalyzing a lot of film, social media content, and music while framing it within the context of intergenerational trauma. And I find it almost impossible to not pick up the patterns or the indications I see in all this content directing me back towards a new or an understanding of intergenerational trauma that is still in development. There's no way to ignore the presence or the invisible strings of intergenerational trauma pulling on us. As we learned in the presentation regarding Latinx health outcomes and access, our environment has an impact on our health, why would the ways in which our caretakers were or were not traumatized affect the way we navigate or walk through life?

Intergenerational trauma quickly reveals its impact in the film "American Me" within moments of the film starting. The opening scenes of the film are of Santana, Olmos' parents being policed and criminalized because of their pachuco/a lifestyle. Although not explicitly revealed in the beginning of the film, Santana's mother is raped, paying close attention to the details it's not a

coincidence that Santana's mother is raped by white servicemen while his father, the pachuco is stripped and beaten²⁵. The characters and the roles of both Santana's parents allude to the violent and violent history of the zoot riots which are often classified as racist but not necessarily sexist although it was clear that they were²⁶. In situating the rape scene in a historical context the rape scene alludes to colonialism and white supremacy and demonstrates that Latinxs are collectively and historically traumatized peoples suffering ethno-racial trauma and psychological distress²⁷. This is the first rape scene included in the film there are two more, however all three rape scenes shift the trajectory of Santana's life.

In the next rape scene Santana is raped by another boy in the juvenile detention center. This rape scene in particular is framed as one of the major pivoting moments of Santana's life however later on it becomes revealed to us that histories of sexual violence has already informed his life. Through the traumatic encounter of the rape, and the violent experience of Santana killing the person who raped him, Santana's personality or character just becomes fortified, he gains respeto, the people in the prison fear him. Santana through these violent interactions learns how to wield and exercise power within the prison. Despite the circumstances Santana is experiencing there is something to say about his ability to adapt to life while incarcerated, he has power and to some degree autonomy, he has made a life for himself while incarcerated. His transition into the prison system demonstrates how much life on the outside mimics or reproduces the same conditions within the prison as well as Santana's ability to aguantarse--to hold out in a way and make the best of the circumstances at hand.

Later on when Santana is released from being incarcerated he rapes the first woman he is sexually involved with. Although these three scenes demonstrate or allude to the impact and patterns of sexual violence, these scenes can also be read an argument regarding the direct and real impacts on intergenerational trauma. Although the central focus of the film is Santana, his relationships to others all impact one another and reveal that if healing had been a possibility for

²⁵ (Ramirez 2010, p. 71)

²⁶ (Ramirez 2010, p.71)

²⁷ (Chaves-Duenas et al. p. 49, 2017)

him, it's not just his healing that is needed rather a collective healing²⁸ that is necessary. As well as reveal that without adequate resources, acknowledgment and dismantling of the systems and institutions that construct these conditions, that even if healing is possible it will be difficult as those same systems remain intact²⁹. Healing is not possible without treating the current condition and dismantling the systems that produce those conditions.

In analyzing Santana's experience and proximity to sexual violence, I do not attempt to individualize his experiences or place the blame solely on the people involved but to provoke thought about the systems and institutions which they occur in. I also integrate sometimes folks of color don't necessarily have a free choice but make choices based on survival and trying to make their life as bearable as possible considering the circumstances of what it means to be a person of color within the context of the United States³⁰.

In reflection after watching this film I question where is there hope in this film, what can we learn from this film? Can we learn from this film, that pivots us in search of solutions to address the obstacles in Santana's life that are very real and present in the lives of so many Latinxs? Although Santana is very much a fictional character his struggles--the popularity of this film is truly because of its resemblance to so many other Latinxs' lives. Santana's story although his own points us to so many stories in histories as well as signal us to contextualize the realities of our futures.

Looking at the intersections of Latinx girls caught up in the school-prison nexus, Latinx girls navigate a multitude of social positions including but not limited to their race, behavior, appearance, culture, status, education level, class, their relationship to the land/places they are in, around, expected to be immigration history, time in place, language ability more specifically ability

²⁸ (Chaves-Duenas et al., p.57, 2017)

²⁹ (Liu et al., p. 150, 2019)

³⁰ (Liu et al., p. 147, 2019)

to speak English in a way that is seen as “correct” by those around them and who often utilize their power to police and criminalize them.

As I mentioned above I can not seem to identify a term or a phrase that encompasses the sentiment and experience I am referring to, when referring to Latinx girls in certain spaces, belonging, and expectation. When I reflect on my own growing up in my hometown of Kankakee, Illinois a small city an hour south of Chicago comprised mostly of Black, brown, lower income/poor, immigrant folks. I think about the positioning of our bodies in particular settings. Where were expected to be? Where were we allowed to be? Where do youth belong and where are they expected to be, how do social factors such as race influence this? And who more often than not dictates these relationships? Those in power and/or the adults, the adults more specifically in these institutions that youth are forced to navigate. Even more so where do policing forces look for us? Where do they expect us to be? And how does this reflect our relationship to the land and the places we live our lives in?

When youth of color are released on probation there are often conditions or stipulations they must agree to on the condition of their release. In some instances this means those youth are not allowed in and can be punished for being in gang territory, for associating with known gang members, wearing certain colors. While this might seem reasonable to some people, it’s important to remember there is nothing reasonable or natural about the presence of the prison system in our lives. Probation is just an extension of the criminal justice system entering into some of our most intimate spaces. The function of probation is not about safety or rehabilitation. This is demonstrated by the reality that some youth live, attend school, work in “gang territory” the last two of which are considered in violation of their probation. Consider the example of the Chicago gang database: the criteria that places people in that system is dangerous and racially charged. In some cases Latinx boys are entered into gang databases solely based on their appearance, where they live, as a result they have increased chances of interaction with the police and subsequent incarceration. Challenging gang affiliation in schools is difficult as the individual is not notified that

they have been placed into this database³¹. People have been admitted to the database for things such as having a certain last name, being spotted on a certain corner of a street, being related to others in the database, being related to gang members, wearing certain colors, being seen interacting with others who are also in the database and/or gang members as well as other criteria that CPD develops and deems acceptable/lawful.

ETHICAL FEMINIST RESEARCH

The following section is an excerpt from a paper I submitted in a feminist theories class, regarding the impact research can have when not conducted in a mindful manner. I incorporated this piece because it entails one of my other struggles when covering topics concerning Latinx girls, trauma and disability.

In researching vulnerable or protected communities we introduce or risk exposure of other forms of harm and violence to these communities. Through research we can perpetuate harm or violence such as furthering narratives that these communities can only be one thing³² and in doing so we continue to contribute to and validate these harmful narratives. These singular narratives are harmful to the people we initially intended to help through this research. There is a need to re-envision how we conduct research to understand the ways in which we are oppressed³³. Through examining struggles and debates of feminist scholars concerning ethics I hope to piece together, imagine alongside them the possibilities of feminist research ethics, as they probe and gaze into their own dilemmas with practices of research and explore solutions. We must be cognizant of where we write from³⁴, our ways of knowing our ways of trying to understand are not free from the same systems we hope to resist against and dismantle by knowing and doing.

³¹ (Dillard 2019)

³² (Tuck, 2009, p. 409)

³³ (Tuck, 2009, p. 410)

³⁴ (González-López, 2011, p. 451)

Before choosing to conduct her research on incest in Mexico, González-López had initially approached mental health professionals and activists on the ground in Ciudad Juarez and asked what research they felt was necessary thus leading her to her topic of inquiry³⁵. In asking or speaking to the community to ask what was missing or what was needed this demonstrates how researchers might think more carefully about how they pursue their research and its purpose. By grounding research in mindful practice, it urges researchers to move from selfcenteredness and with an intention to alleviate suffering³⁶. The practice of mindful ethics is a feminist one it seeks to do work with compassion and care while trying to subvert power hierarchies of oppression. In conducting researching within our own communities and vulnerable or protected communities the complexities of relationships between participants and researchers motivate the way we might think through ethical feminist research. Research within vulnerable communities can be considered damage-centered research³⁷. Upon entering these vulnerable communities which sometimes are our own we must be mindful of how research can be harmful. Researching often subjects these communities to an additional layer of surveillance³⁸ or enable outsiders' fantasies of these vulnerable communities³⁹. Damage-centered research often leaves participants and their communities misrepresented and oversearched but underseen⁴⁰. Confronting damage-centered research entails thinking through intentions and practices of researchers before they are provided entry to these vulnerable communities to conduct their research⁴¹.

As feminist scholars approach the role of ethics in research there are many elements to take apart and inspect. Research is not possible without it's participants, the dynamics of the relationship between the researched and the researcher must be inspected. There have always been

³⁵ (González-López, p. 451, 2011)

³⁶ (González-López, p. 449, 2011)

³⁷ (Tuck, p. 409, 2009)

³⁸ (Tuck, p. 410, 2009)

³⁹ (Tuck, p. 412, 2009)

⁴⁰ (Tuck, p. 412, 2009)

⁴¹ (Tuck, p. 410, 2009)

risks even in feminist practices of research such as the process forming rapport⁴², and understanding how complex and complicated rapport can be. The process of conducting research requires vulnerability⁴³ as researchers navigate the connections, they form with participants all the while remaining mindful of boundaries. It is contested that feminist research requires vulnerability and openness; knowledge production is not possible without this kind of approach⁴⁴. Although forming this rapport might be essential for extracting evidence it may leave participants feeling betrayed once the study comes to an end⁴⁵. As well as another feminist ethical concern to be raised in research, the toll on the researcher⁴⁶, what happens to the researcher after leaving the field. What does the researcher do with the connections they made while completing their fieldwork, the emotions they felt were real and have their toll? How does the researcher mitigate all of this once they have completed extracting the research? Despite potential limitations and navigating important ethical moments we are reminded telling the truth is a form of care, a necessary feminist practice⁴⁷.

Ethical research requires the consideration that the information circulating within our intellectual communities' benefits those that lie outside of them⁴⁸. However, I propose in ethical research intellectual communities are not as separate from other communities as they have been made out to be, nor should they be kept separate. Especially when research is extracted from these communities and then used as professional development⁴⁹. This happens quite often when researchers from the North decide to conduct research in the South⁵⁰. This movement of researchers from the North pursuing or conducting research in the South to extract rich data for

⁴² (Kirsch, p. 2163, 2005)

⁴³ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁴⁴ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁴⁵ (Kirsch, p. 2163, 2005)

⁴⁶ (McCormick, p. 28)

⁴⁷ (Alfar, p. 789)

⁴⁸ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁴⁹ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁵⁰ (Rajan, p. 270, 2018)

professional development can be referred to as maquiladora syndrome⁵¹. Through this there exists an opportunity to practice professional reciprocity⁵². Professional reciprocity is an opening for researchers to give back or participate in a feminist ethical exchange with the communities they collected their research from. The practice of professional reciprocity challenges power relations within research and interrupts the maquiladora syndrome⁵³. Feminist research requires attention to the notion of reciprocity, reciprocity is grounded in the idea that research should benefit both the researcher and the research participants⁵⁴. Feminist praxis of research provides an opening a potential to explore and practice how we might conduct research more ethically and with care.

Above all else feminist scholars and researchers are still capable of causing harm to the communities they are researching through the exercising of privilege and power⁵⁵, ethical feminist research is a necessary tool to interrogate this process and potentially prevent or reduce the impact of this occurring. Researchers have an obligation to the communities they research, beyond telling the truth. Researchers must interrogate the power relations between themselves and the participants as well as they institutions they collaborate with to make this research possible.

While many feminist scholars have spent years studying, examining, and reconstructing the goal of ethical feminist research throughout the years some core components of understanding and praxis remain intact. Feminist research within itself is understood as having an underlying ethic of approaching research with integrity and responsibility⁵⁶. Feminist analysis of research can offer insights into power imbalances between researchers and those being researched⁵⁷ this is necessary especially in research concerning vulnerable or protected populations. Feminist research aims to develop research in a way that benefits or improves the lives of those being researched, usually

⁵¹ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁵² (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁵³ (González-López, p. 40, 2013)

⁵⁴ (Huisman, p.374, 2008)

⁵⁵ (Rajan, p. 271, 2018)

⁵⁶ (McCormick, p. 25, 2012)

⁵⁷ (Letherby, p. 4, 2003)

vulnerable populations such as women⁵⁸ or youth. Feminist research also seeks to complicate the intersecting power hierarchies that negatively impact the lives of women⁵⁹ and other members of vulnerable populations.

We internalize our oppression; we teach our oppression we transmit it ourselves⁶⁰ our ways of knowing are not free of harm or violence or oppression. Feminist scholars have long had to remake, rethink, and reconfigure the ways in which we can approach research without furthering or contributing to a narrative of harm and violence against our communities. This requires care, constant internal and external dialogue with all those involved, it means mitigating how we know what we know and how continue to learn and seek out knowledge. This must be examined even more closely when we research our own communities, or communities that are identified as vulnerable.

Another ethical dilemma that feminist researchers often come up against in their research is the notion of informed consent. Informed consent can become a site of conflict especially when it comes to researching vulnerable and protected communities such as youth, people with addiction, and incarcerated peoples to name a few. Informed consent is not always a direct process, it might more closely resemble an ongoing process⁶¹ especially in the instance of working with a protected or vulnerable population. Although participants might understand informed consent, they may not fully grasp all the potential implications of what it means to participate in a research study⁶² and it is up to the researcher to attempt to mitigate any potential opportunities for harm that might come up. As such feminist scholars and researchers have come to understand consent as an ongoing process⁶³ and as something that can be revoked at any given time throughout the process. In the case of working with youth, specifically in the instance of working with youth experiencing

⁵⁸ (Letherby, p. 4, 2003)

⁵⁹ (Brooks & Hesse-Biber, 2006)

⁶⁰ (Chirix)

⁶¹ (McCormick, p. 25, 2012)

⁶² (McCormick, p. 25, 2012)

⁶³ (McCormick, p. 27, 2012)

houselessness, typically the consent of the parents would have to be obtained in order to interview youth for research. However, in the case of the participation of youth experiencing houselessness reaching out to the parents for consent may not be safe for the youth⁶⁴ and cause further complications for the youth. In using feminist research as a tool to better help, develop opportunity, or alleviate suffering feminist researchers have to examine how their own methodologies might actually accomplish the opposite.

However, they still understand the importance of highlighting these difficulties and the mechanisms they relied on to think more openly and vulnerably about their intellectual processes. In doing so they work through tensions, conflicts, their own feelings as this process unfolds and continues to unfold even after they have left the field or published their findings. They reveal this attachment to the work they do; they reveal the care they have for the work they do and an understanding of how their work transcends itself. In detailing their accounts of how they approach their research they leave future tools for feminist researchers and scholars in the making embarking on their first journeys of research. They leave outlines, maps that may not be fully fleshed out, they leave answers as well as questions. In publishing and sharing both their research and the processes they struggled through they leave an opening for research to continue to evolve in an ethical feminist manner.

[LAS DESAPARECIDAS: BUILDING HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE CRIMINALIZATION OF LATINX GIRLS]

‘Desparacida’ refers to someone who identifies or is identified as a women or girl has gone missing or has been forcibly disappeared. This phrase is often used when discussing victims of femicides.

The next part is also an excerpt taken from previous work regarding the criminalization of

⁶⁴ (McCormick, p. 26, 2012)

Latinx girls and women compartment and styles of dress.

The relationship that students possess with teachers or other staff in the schools they attend, these interactions with teachers and other staff in the school is what can implicate or initiate contact between students with the school-prison nexus. In positioning the ways in which Latinx girls and women are criminalized I am specifically interested in how this is influenced by certain styles of dress and compartment. In doing so I gesture towards the relationship between the queerness of certain styles of dress and compartment and criminalization. Paying close attention to the connections between queerness, and the criminalization of Latinx women and girls I consider the pachuca, as well as young Latinx girls caught up in the school-prison nexus. Examining the pachuca figure in Catherine Ramirez's, "The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory" and the young Latinx girls in Jerry Flores' "Caught Up" I seek to understand how politics of criminalization function to identify and punish certain styles of dress and compartment read queer. In positioning the pachuca and the Latinx school girl, I trace the ways in which Latinas read in excess (which is all Latinas typically) are disappeared through the criminal justice system, as well as written out of history as seen in the case of the pachuca. When Latinx girls or women are found in violation of gender expectations they are often criminalized, punished, and policed as a result of their compartment and/or style of dress. In Jillian Hernandez's, "Aesthetics of Excess: The Art and Politics of Black and Latina Embodiment" Hernandez explores the ways in which young Black and Latina girls are constantly in negotiation with their identities as it relates to their appearance, compartment, and the expectations or perceptions of others. Hernandez focuses on one Latina youth in particular Dimple, who is often teased for her sexuality and nonnormative gender presentation (p. 101). Hernandez in observing the interactions between Dimple and the other girl in the group, articulates that Dimple's presence in the group is constantly regulated or decided by the straight-identifying girls in the group. The group has the power in deciding whether or not Dimple is classified as an outsider or an insider (p.101). The interactions between Dimple and the other girls,

as well as Hernandez's analysis demonstrate that Dimple's access to the world or certain spaces, and treatment is influenced by the perception of her appearance and behavior.

The bodies and the presence of Latinas is constantly in negotiation within the context they are being perceived in. As Munoz describes his sense of brown, he articulates whiteness as the backdrop brown people are thrown against. They are identified or become brown through the context of whiteness. Hernandez argues that while there is nothing inherently excessive about the aesthetics and adornments of Black and Latina women, they are rendered so against European stylistic values (p.99). Munoz in describing whiteness as a lack, the subjecthood of people of color then becomes excess. This excess is policed, sexualized, racialized, and classed. As such the queer Latina is always thrown against the white backdrop, she is always in excess, in violation of gender norms and cultural or traditional expectations and because of this she is policed and criminalized. In existing at the particular intersection of queerness, Latinidad and/or brownness the queer Latina faces racialized, sexual and gendered violence within her home, communities, schools, streets etc.

The ways in which young queer Latinas present themselves and/or perceived is often regulated and policed by their peer groups, communities, schools, to homes. Queer latina youth confront gendered, sexual and racial violence, particularly when they violate norms or cultural expectations placed on them. Hernandez's excess explores how Black and Latina girls are often othered as they agitate expectations of respectability (p.16). The queer Latina is often recognized as a threat to the construction of the traditional family, and defies the legacy of the Latina body to reproduce more Latino babies. Latina girls are often pushed out of their homes or forced on the run when they defy or do not fit with gender roles and expectations placed on them in their home life. Often when girls act or identify outside of these norms they are punished and rejected by their families. Flores et al. describes several cases in which Latina girls are forced to leave their homes and run away from their parents as they have violated gendered and cultural specific expectations (p. 258). Diana is one example of a Latinx girl violating heteronormative expectations as she engaged in a relationship with another girl. Diana shares her mother's response with Flores, who ironically runs a group home for girls, and used her knowledge of the criminal justice system to

have Diana punished, criminalized and incarcerated (p. 258). Young queer Latinx girls found in violation of gender and cultural norms and expectations experience material consequences.

Young Latinx girls who are queer, or gender-nonconforming are often found in violation gender roles. They often face violence as a result of their queerness or queerness that is read on them. As such young Latinx queer girls are often criminalized or policed because of their queerness or queerness read on them.

1. Latinas are queered/ what does this actually need to be called?
2. Queered Latinas experience violence → they are criminalized and policed
 - a. Using the pachuca as an example in that 1. She is found in violation of gender roles and expectations because of her dress → Explain how and why
 - b. Her dress is more masculine presenting
 - c. Her makeup
 - d. She is seen as la Malinche as she is in betrayal of gender expectations
 - e. She is there to further the Mexican family and somehow the pachuca is a direct threat to that
 - f. How the girls involved in the Sleepy Lagoon were literally assigned to the state, in removing them from the home and becoming parentless they are moved out of the family they are in violation of
 - g. Laws made concerning dress, a literal example of how what they wear is policed and criminalized
 - h. The style of the pachuca was in excess and was queer and was brown
 - i. What does it mean to consider all three of those things together ^
 - j. Hooking together Munoz, Hernandez, and Ramirez

In the case of the pachuca, Ramirez positions the zoot suit as a text, image, representation, and social relationship arguing the ensemble is construed as aberrant femininity, competing masculinity, and homosexuality as a non-white, working class, and queer signifier, it was perceived

as un-American⁶⁵. Women who wore the zoot suit were known as a variety of names such as pachucas and also malinches (Ramirez xiii). The language of malinche suggests the dress these girls choose is something negative or not encouraged. The zoot suit functions as a mark of difference (xviii)

The zoot suit emerged at a flashpoint in U.S. history. The instability of race, class, and gender categories; fear of nonnormative sexualities, especially unchecked female sexuality and homosexuality; and concern over the widening rift between adults and adolescents⁶⁷ while marriage, birth, and divorce rates surged. World War II also impacted relations between parents and children and the young and old. Juvenile authorities, academics, police officers, and civic leaders fretted over what they deemed “new patterns of adolescent behavior” and a spike in juvenile delinquency.⁶⁸

Placing into context meaning or trends that were identified in relation to pachuca and historical context, this framing also needs to be examined in relation to how language is developed regarding particular bodies. Drawing this further out to examine how language can be used as a weapon against specific oppressed communities or be used to oppress communities.

“As one contemporary observer remarked, “in becoming ‘American’”—that is, in pursuing “nice clothes and a good time”—some Mexican American girls slipped into delinquency.”⁶⁹

- Not wearing three articles of clothing, male impersonation (79)
- Butch identifiable female body in masculine garments
- Pachuco queering American and Mexican culture
- Appropriation of masculinity thru clothing

⁶⁵ (Ramirez, p. xvii, 2009)

⁶⁶ I want to call attention to the use of the term american and place it together with the title of the film discussed earlier “American Me” what is this language trying to do here?

⁶⁷ (Ramirez, p.1, 2009)

⁶⁸ (Ramirez, p.2, 2009)

⁶⁹ (Ramirez, p. 18, 2009)

The pachuca symbolizes or demonstrates this in contrast to expectations placed by the Mexican-American or Chicano family.

How do I want to frame certain styles of dress?

Well as queer. This engagement of dress defied narratives and expectations set on the bodies of these Latinas. In the case of the pachuca the zoot suit pushes up against norms or expectations of femininity, it also rejects notions or eligibility to Americanness and citizenship, as well as playing with ideas of class and excess in particular pointing to Hernandez's theory of excess.

The pachuca in the zoot suit suffers at the hands of the family, she is abandoned by the male zoot suitors and her family. In the case of the Sleepy Lagoon trials she is literally disowned and signed over to the state. She becomes familyless, and property of the state. Through the family's decision, the abandonment of the community, and the erasure in the media. There is no support for the pachuca because of who she is and what she represents, a threat to the Mexican family and the perseverance of Mexican nationalism. Not only is she not supported she is also turned away as concluded by Ramirez but I want to extend this by saying she has also been disappeared from Mexican-American/chicano history. The pachuca has been disappeared and abandoned both in her current lifetime and in the afterlife.

TENDRILS -

[GRASPING STRUCTURES OF DISABILITY AND TRAUMA]

I'll never forget the only class I ever took with Dr. David Stovall, in his class my peers and I discussed and argued through countless articles and material regarding the criminalization of youth and the justice system. Dr. Stovall at one point expressed something along the lines of trauma being a wound inflicted upon us without choice or consent in the matter. Trauma disrupts our autonomy.

Intergenerational trauma can be understood as emotional and psychological suffering and pain that affects and is passed from generation to generation⁷⁰. In buddhist Lama Rod Owens

⁷⁰ (Cerdena et al., 2021 p.1)

disclosing his own experiences of trauma as a young fat Black man, Owens articulates that his personal trauma is exacerbated and I will argue connected to what he identifies as generational trauma; legacies of violent and racist histories of actions taken against Black and brown folks⁷¹. He argues this is equivalent to what he names racial battle fatigue which can also be inherited⁷².

In this understanding of trauma I posit we do not just inherit our ancestors trauma from the communities we descend from and form part of. We inherit their survival tactics, we embody knowledge that has kept us alive for centuries and sometimes in that survival we carve out, stake claim and celebrate crafting autonomous communities through our collective healing and joy.

TERNURA

I seek to draw on how trauma, intergenerational trauma structures the lives of so many Black and brown folks. And while we live through these things and are affiliated with these experiences I am interested in how we survive against them. I am not arguing that these violences or harms can be remedied through purchasable notions of self care or liberal politics, I am asserting that we look towards the past, to the work of disability studies and scholars to explore how folks protect themselves, tend to their wounds with balm, justice and love. In doing so I delve into how we move in response to our traumatic experiences or circumstances, how we mobilize, take care of ourselves and one another.

In understanding that the landscapes of most people of color's lives, trauma - specifically intergenerational trauma - and disability make up prevalent parts of those landscapes. Often when we are told our histories, if we are lucky enough, they are imbued with much pain and suffering.

⁷¹ (Brown 2021)

⁷² (Brown 2021)

However, it is in these stories being told that becomes proof that our ancestors preserved enough for these stories to exist for us. Yet I think in our focus in survival, in resisting, in negotiating or finding ways to assert and exercise autonomy, I am drawn to the ways that those who experience suffering together, disability together, trauma together craft up weapons, how they protect themselves. I want to know and understand those weapons of care, how solidarity is formed, collective tenderness. I employ the terminology of weapons of care to think through methods of care and survival folks of color develop to defend and/or protect themselves against violence, trauma and how they tend to themselves through and in the aftermath of those experiences. What are weapons of care, how do people in these communities protect themselves, what does protecting themselves mean? In understanding how folks respond to or create solidarity together I contend experiences of queer kinship, care networks and collective suffering as sites to understand how we form weapons of care to combat intergenerational trauma and trauma in our communities and in our lives.

Through the work of Tinsley, I found something I didn't even know I was looking for. I had taken a class in undergrad almost entirely on the enslavement and kidnapping of Black people. However Tinsley drew an entire different entry point, a portal to theorize the Atlantic as a queer Black space. She does so by honing in on the notion of crosscurrents of the Atlantic as it encapsulates the wateriness of this space, that is ever shifting. Tinsley asserts that the Atlantic is not just Black but is also rendered queer through the happenings of same-sex relations with shipmates⁷³. Tinsley comes to this conclusion with paying special attention to language used between Black same-sex lovers referring to each other as their *mati*, my shipmate. *Mati* is not just a term of endearment, it carries a powerful legacy of history, something that does not romanticize the trauma or tragedy of the kidnapping and displacement of so many Black communities but signals towards something beyond survival, towards desire, care, tenderness and so much more.

[CLARA: A SHORT STORY]

⁷³ (Tinsley, p.2,

nino stared steady, his face was heavy finding everything with the darkness of his eyes. his eyelashes opening-close and then shut signaling the movement of his thoughts. a circular but continuous motion ebbing and flowing, webbing into its own pattern. a pattern careful to never turn or twist into the same exact shape as before. over the same rocks, pebbles and squishy toes in the summer rivers.

mama hummed next to him bobbing her head slow. this was her way of counting her thoughts, words, miles, memories both meticulously hidden and misshapen in her mind. she tsked under her breath almost could be missed as it was almost in beat with the song flickering scratchily through the stereo.

nino looked up and then to the side at his mom

damn texas highways she crooned

stretching her neck forward as she almost too perfectly switched lanes. careful, tight, practiced and fearful.

she looked over nino first through the waves of the thick blackness of his hair. and then his forehead and slowly into his eyes. it took a moment or two before they met each other's gaze. both in admiration and gratitude of each other's quiet presence. nino offered half a smile to his mother which she returned this was not practice but the loose comfort in having Nino as a son, as a companion, as someone to tell stories to if only to hear her own self. and if nothing else they were both sure of how much they loved one another. and this was good, the way things were or had been were not particularly good, they were cruel.

mirandas car hungrily ate miles and miles, stretches of distance, landscapes melted into each of their brains. the distance wasn't enough from lupe. the safest place for them had always been going. refuge was in the movement the prospect of always going somewhere, always getting somewhere but staying still was not possible not ever for not too long. and to believe that it was, was a delusion.

Ninos love wasn't something she was interested in wasting or risking. Even though she recognized the immensity of it, even if her own heart could wrap itself around that bigness, the grandness of

that love. it was beyond a treasure. because more than anything it was deserved and it was necessary. it was both the ignition and the thing that kept them on track, in pace.

mama slid the thin black steering wheel between her palms, her knuckles calloused but her hands so pretty. the color of her nails reminded him of the lightness of sunsets. pulling into the drive thru mama leaned back smiled and sighed looking directly at him.

they split a medium coffee with an extra cup and extra cream for Nino. she watched him as he fished galleta marias into the warmth and brownness of the too milky coffee. nino enjoyed watching the cookies become soft and almost dissolve. It had always wondered him how something so crunchy, sturdy but thin could become a disk of perfectly sweet mush. he rolled his tongue over and over the taste, almost as if he was counting his teeth from inside his mouth. he thought about this mush and he dusted his hands carefully watching the cookie crumbs fly like little stale snowflakes. except these wouldn't melt but just become smaller and smaller. eventually he and mama would have to take out the floormats beating them against the car to the rhythm of their own giggling, creating little crumb clouds.

nino picked it up off the asphalt between the cracks, the dust and the forming potholes. it was too big, too heavy to be something he should be holding. he wrapped his two hands together. tilted his head, weighing uneasily the smoothness of the gun in his possession. nino felt the trigger flicker between his thumb. next the bullet followed through the rust and blueness of the dumpster. their eyes matched in disbelief. nino tilted his head again. squeezing one eye shut watching with the other as if his eye itself was traveling through the gun instead of a bullet.

it was the first time nino had ever seen his father run.

mamis grief, nino's presence were so startling opposite yet each one proof of the other. she clasped for middle ground. the right word might not be there for it yet.

the lump in ninos throat never quite went away, it lodged itself both a rock and a force somehow anchoring him while also pulling him. threatening to shred him from the inside. he was trapped in

himself. absorbing into himself. each time getting sadder, more solemn. cementing him into a shell, reaching closer towards whatever was in him or not in him.

there would be moments, next to someone he spent the night with, watching a bird out the window, sipping soggy cereal milk from a chipped spoon when he could conjure up mamas voice one more time. strangle the echo from his brain, hoping to imprint, to commit whatever fragment to memory. he hoped. he hoped more than he remembered. and mostly maybe because it was better this way. in some ways he could make up stories of mama and believe them. settling into a sensible truth. she had done everything she could to love him and to survive. if only until she had to let him do it all by himself.

nino at some point knew he didn't believe in surviving, living, dying either.

had not the entire remnants of his childhood become the description of his mothers obituary. and nino knew just enough about his father to not ever think about him as his father, or to think of him either. but rather his actions, the collisions, the force, the sheer wreckage and violence of them he orchestrated relentlessly. he was good at this.

holster

a corner of the sun

for me

nino ducked his head out the window

cocking his head towards the man

the roofer lifted his palm facing nino raising the dusted hand encrusted with age and bejeweled with life lines and calluses

his hand covering the sun briefly, shaping a shadow across the entire roof

once the sun hit ninos eyes, the hand now resting on the mans side dangled between him and his work belt, a team of tools surrounding his waist

nino remembered his father picking his calloused hands with a curved pocket knife. how he laughed at ninos terrified curiosity. he thought he was hurting himself but was only cutting away old skin.

the highways of texas felt like the closest you'd ever get to god or whatever you believe resembled him. nino and his mom would watch the sunrise, casting light over the men scaling roofs. they looked like giant birds erupting into their wings with the sun coming up behind them. they were powerful. rising before the sun, strength and magic proven with each stroke of a hammer, each laid tile, each hand finding a place for every mistake to convert into the roof of a home. protecting them from whatever could come in, out and keeping whatever could come out, in the men would dance all morning into almost the night. nothing elegant about the sweat. the grime encrusted around the beds of their nails. their skin scorched into darkness and tightness. some hands carved with old blood ,new blood, cracking scabs picking new ones. the hours spent up on these roofs adjusting and building and tearing apart it cost strain to imagine his father like this, a human bird urging the sun to come up above his shoulders almost as if he himself was making it lift, to cast over all these homes and their roofs as if to show how proud he was of what he had done and what he could do his hands could make homes complete, keep drips out, make things more secure

his hands his hands his hands his hands his hands his hands

those were memories nino didn't want.

hands, razors, spoons, bruises, fingerprints, needles, fingers

all tools

mama and her frame hanging in the hospital bed

as if she was almost printed into the sheets

she would smile, close her eyes, gripping his chin between her frail fingers and the thin meat of
 where your thumb becomes palm or perhaps the other way around
 dropping his face as if to return it to his own body
 she would shift her head side to side eyes still closed a small smile slightly painted
 under the tubes in her nose
 gently and lazily lifting her other arm over the other
 she swatted at Nino as if she didn't already hold all his attention
 give me the sun she gestured towards the window
 her eyes still closed, veined three quarter moons
 eyelashes parted and sparse

her face gently twitching
 in front of him she contorted, under the sheen of the sun, shape shifted into all her current past
 and present parts of her self
 the curtain shadows fractioning her face as he pulled them together like an accordion embracing
 the air in its chest
 each feature almost it's own segment mismatched and collected on her face
 nino grazed the softness of his mothers hand as he took it into his own
 he wondered if he had counted each bottle she had passed through this fist to her lips
 if in all the pain had there been enough, enough of everything else

if

if i were to write my disability a poem
 the poem would become about me
 if i were to write my disability a poem
 i would tell them

i hope people go soft with ease and something between tenderness and care
a knowing that with this body we move differently
we move gentle

i would tell them about my abuelitos hands
how he made a family and a house out of huaraches

i would tell you his hands don't do much now

i hope they like rest
i hope the knots are tied out of his hands

i would tell you about my grandmother
on my mothers side

three kinds of cancer, pacemakers, meds, a shoulder that will never be the same/never heal,

what does heal mean

i would tell them about the landscape of my abuelitas body

the bridge in her hugs
not about anzaldua

about the hernia in her back

carefully/dangerously removed

the one the meds couldn't budge

i would tell them about language being cruel and warped
to fit itself and fester

i would tell you about my uncle benny
gangrene, wheelchairs, braids, and sugar pies

he would watch cheaters/smoke pot on repeat

how he told everyone they would take his life before his legs

and eventually he would be gone

i would tell you about my uncle henry
losing vision, ambulances at family parties, stroke, aneurysm, brain stem, pulling plugs
how 7 and then 14 years passed before i ever saw my cousins again, there are some i still haven't met

i would tell you about my sister and keloids, ribs wired shut, doctors with gowns of blood

i would tell you about my other sister and preeclampsia and 12,000 dollar helicopter rides

i would tell you the first time i saw my nephew was thru a glass window

i would tell you about my little brother and the 13th floor
and how my nephew's father was on the next floor for adults

i would tell you about my mother and how she refuses to go to st. mary's hospital
 because over 20 years ago she woke up to a son and a death certificate
 and how every december is shaped in sadness

i would tell you about my dad, california fields, picking onions, machine, broken leg, broken hip,
 media muerto
 the only two pairs of pants he owned one for the fields one for sunday church

i would tell you about my ten year old aunt joann and the drunk driver
 the driveway of my mom's childhood home on e. gunther/san antonio
 uncle robert one arm going inside to get his id to prove to police who he was with a dead niece in
 the driveway

they were just sitting on the car, playing

my mom told me on the way to her funeral, a little shadow followed the car and
 then wasn't there

TIERRA

[WHERE ARE WE ROOTED; IN WHAT DO WE THRIVE; WHO DO WE TRUST]

medellín

im 23, i lived in the same town as my grandma for 17 years/may 5th this year she turns 77/i don't
 know what/the inside of her house looks like/i don't know what "i love you" sounds like coming
 out of her mouth/she's got my mother's eyes/and she's got cancer—breast, uterus, and now
 esophagus/my grandmas dying/ the one who tried to make my mother so much not like her and

me like my mother/i wanna ask you/if the reason you don't believe women/is cause someone taught you, you weren't worth believing/im asking did you stay away/cause someone treated you like something to stay away from/or that it was safer inside, better for all of us/cause of how much hurting/we were all a part of /mama says your memory is bad/that you remember what you wanna/i guess you were trying to make us safe/soften the distance between reality and memory /we all know you're dying/i don't know how to prepare for the permanence of your absence/ive felt my whole entire life/stubborn woman/i just ask/que me guardes one last/ay mija/ill be home soon.

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