

# A Latinx Student Critical Race Counterstory from Latina/o America

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## Abstract

This article shows how a DREAMER, a Latinx student shares his counter-story to express how he experienced and signified being a DREAMER in an occupied territory of Latina/o-America. Drawing from the qualitative perspective, the method of this study draws from narrative inquiry to analyse the counter-story of Cabañas, a DREAMER. The findings suggest that the stories of the Latinx oppressed peoples can challenge the apparent monocultural educational systems of the U.S. and Mexico and how the counter-stories of Latinx students can reflect the extent to which borders are just expressions of how colonialism is still alive in Latina/o- America.

Key words DREAMER, Latina/o- America, narrative inquiry, counter-story.

## Resumen

Este artículo muestra la manera en que un SOÑADOR, un estudiante Latinx, comparte su contra-narrativa para expresar la manera en que él ha vivido y significado el ser un SOÑADOR en un territorio ocupado de Latina/o- América. Usando la perspectiva cualitativa, este estudio ha empleado el método del pensamiento narrativo para analizar la contra-narrativa de Cabañas, un SOÑADOR. Los hallazgos sugieren que las historias de los Latinxs oprimidos pueden contrarrestar los sistemas educativos aparentemente monoculturales de los Estados Unidos y de México y cómo las contra-narrativas de los estudiantes Latinxs pueden reflejar la manera en que las fronteras son solo expresiones de como el colonialismo todavía sigue vivo en Latina/o- América.

**Palabras clave:** SOÑADOR, Latina/o- América, pensamiento narrativo, contra-narrativa.

## Introduction

If we understand that colonialism has not ended and it is still alive in symbolic terms, as the colonality of power perspective states (Quijano, & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b; Quijano 2000a, 2000b), then we can see how stories from Latinx students (either Mexican-Americans or Mexican immigrants) reveal this colonial situation. This paper is about how the counter-story of

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Cabañas of Latinx students, as *Dreamers*, reveals the extent to which Texas is a Latin American occupied territory in a context of a global apartheid reinforced by borders in the western hemisphere. His counter-story portrays the racial segregation against population between México and the United States that started when the U.S. stole the 50% of the national territory of México in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

I made use of narrative inquiry theoretical framework and the methodology of counterstory to analyze how Cabañas as Dreamer Latinx student reflects the colonial situation of education in relation to Mexico and the U.S. That theoretical framework assert to establish that narratives are ways of knowing themselves so that they are not just techniques in the qualitative perspective. The conclusions reflect that Latinx students can be active creators of knowledge that contribute through their counterstories to counter-shape the reality of the colonial situation of millions of students that can change the geography of the occupied Latina/o America<sup>1</sup>

### **Some historical notes of racial segregation against Mexican Americans and Mexican Immigrants.**

On June 15th, 2012, President Barack Obama granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to undocumented immigrant students between the ages 15 and 31 years of age. This meant students could be granted a two-year deferral of deportation proceedings and a work permit if they met all of the qualifications. Since Donald Trump took office he decided to shut down the DACA program. Nevertheless, those forms of racial segregation are not new. The racial segregation against Mexican Americans and Mexican Immigrants is of large historical tendencies as those of colonization throughout history. In “Chicano Indianism: a historical account of racial repression in the United States” (Menchaca, 1993), Menchaca explains how laws have been an important part of the racial order against Mexican Americans. She portrays the racial segregation against the Mexican-American population between México and the United States from 1848 to 1947. Since the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo by which the U.S. stole 50% of the national territory of México, many laws have been tools

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<sup>1</sup> I am using the term Latina/o America to refer to the territories (occupied or not) from Canada to Argentina. This includes the United States since it is the “America” that struggles to acknowledge its Latina/o character; in other words, the U.S. that is not monocultural and monolingual and which is the largest hispanic-speaking

of racial order. It is possible to say how that historical racial segregation also exists today. A clear sign of how colonialism has just changed in order to continue existing has been addressed by great intellectuals, like: Frantz Fanon, (1967, 2004), Anibal Quijano (2000a, 2000b); Walter Dignolo, (2000, 2001); Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2006) Enrique Dussel, (1985,1990, 1996, 1998a, 1998b); Nelson Madonado-Torres (2007); Ramon Grosfoguel (2008); Bouaventura De Sousa Santos (2009) among others.

The racial order is part of a large process of colonialism that the U.S. has implemented since the nineteenth century throughout America. For instance, Menchaca (1993) says: “If Mexican immigrants wanted to be naturalized, they had to prove that they were eligible to apply because they were white (Padilla, as cited in Menchaca, 1993, p. 594). In this way the Naturalization Act of 1795 and the Naturalization Act of 1802 affected Mexican immigrants because these laws failed to classify Mexicans as white people. Noticeably, the government of the U.S. took only Mexican lands but no Mexican people. These kind of practices are usual in a process of colonialism.

As San Miguel (1993) expresses: “After the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, Americans introduced new political, economic, cultural and social institutions and organized the society on the basis of certain Protestant, capitalist, republican, gender and racial ideal” (p. 298). In this racial process, education was the social tool used to organize the colonization of the new territories stolen from México.

That shows a large process of colonization against Mexican-American individuals, especially about education. In “Chicano Indianism: a historical account of racial repression in the United States” (1993), Menchaca describes how racial laws between México and the United States from 1848 to 1947 portray the racial segregation against the Mexican-American population. Menchaca (1993) documents how laws are legal discourses and social practices made to justify racism. In this regard, some of the questions that this subject raises is: why did the government of the U.S. reject the racial agreement of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and took the Mexican lands but not Mexican people? After all, the war and invasion from the U.S. to México has been a single part of a historical colonial attempt in Latin America. Why is it that even now Mexican people are disposable but not the resources of those lands?

In the late 1880 when the jure segregation was enacted, Mexican litigants defended themselves in court arguing

that they were white or that they at least had the right to be treated as white citizens. These historical facts prove that colonialism is an arbitrary imposition of symbolic and objective order upon Latin American people. Therefore, it is not possible to understand colonialism without understanding whiteness.

On another hand San Miguel (1993) also describes some ways in which colonialism impacted the lives of Mexican-Americans. He explains how from 1540 to the twentieth century racial segregation has been the norm against Mexican-Americans—and even today. It is interesting the extent to which education was an important element in society in the territories stolen from México mostly in the period of 1850-1900. San Miguel (1993) describes how education was an important social institution between 1850-1900 because during that time the government of the U.S. wanted to ensure the colonization of the territories stolen from México in 1848, and, in order to reach this goal the government of U.S. used education as an important force of colonization imposing whiteness and racism upon indigenous and mestizo Mexicans. As San Miguel (1993) expresses: “After the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, Americans introduced new political, economic, cultural and social institutions and organized the society on the basis of certain Protestant, capitalist, republican, gender and racial ideals” (p. 298).

Before the U.S. vs. México war the Hispanic southwest territories were mostly indigenous lands and territories where the Catholic Church established some missions. During that time (1540-1847) education was mostly informal. After 1848 the government of the U.S. and some churches started a new colonization— the Anglo colonization. In doing so, education was the social tool used to organize racial segregation. Gastón García Cantú, in his book *Las invasiones norteamericanas en México* (1974) describes how Sam Houston led the war for the independence of Texas against México using the slogan: “This war is to expand the land of freedom” but the new constitution of Texas assured slaves to slaveholders because the new constitution protected properties (land and slaves) of “legitimate” owners.

In “Anglo-Saxon ideologies in the 1920-1930s: Their impact on the segregation of Mexican students in California”, Menchaca and Valencia (1990) explain the Anglo control thesis and the racial ideologies of Anglo-Saxon superiority and their subsequent impact on education. Menchaca and Valencia (1990) explain how ideologies of Anglo-Saxon superiority strongly influenced the formation of school segregation in Santa Paula,

California, in the 1920s. Therefore, they explained not only the discriminatory nature of school administrative practices (San Miguel as cited in Menchaca and Valencia, 1990), but especially the political nature of segregation (Gonzalez as cited in Menchaca and Valencia, 1990). In other words, they made clear the political construction of Anglo superiority, demystifying the “natural” character given to this Anglo superiority worldview. For instance, Menchaca and Valencia (1990) talked on how an article in *Los Angeles Times* in 1975 reported how in the early 1930s the Oxnard school board used the following tactics to implement systematic segregation of Mexican students: “(1) building of a “Mexican school” in the *colonia*, (2) manipulating attendance zones, and (3) staggering of playground periods and dismissal times so as not to allow the Mexican and Anglo students to mix” (Menchaca, 1990, p. 239).

### **Narrative inquiry.**

Racism and segregation in schools as a colonial historical construction began when the European empires encountered the American continent with miles of Indigenous and African slaves<sup>2</sup> In the nineteenth-century, eugenics anxiety, and social Darwinism inaugurated the “objective” justification of racism in schools. Besides science, economics became an important way to refashion racism; for instance in the U.S. Northern and Southern social forces shared values and assumptions in universal education and white supremacy. In that way Indigenous and African Americans had to build their own schools but at the same time they were enforced to reaffirm the “American” values and life-styles in schools. For Mexican-Americans, educational inequalities have historically meant the Americanization of native Mexican populations through the Anglo-centric curriculum. As such, the goal of the U.S. government in the nineteenth century was the colonization of new territories stolen as a result of the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848 (Menchaca & Valencia 1990).

In that geopolitical context of the construction of

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<sup>2</sup> As Galeano describes (1985) in 1560, the captain John Hawkins started going to coasts of Guinea to capture people and then trading these slaves for sugar, hides, and pearls from the Antilles to North America. What is interesting is that Hawkins made this voyage on his own first, but Queen Elizabeth subsequently made herself a business partner of the enterprise, knowing the balance sheet of the voyage..

knowledge, it is important to rescue those narratives and stories from those Mexicans and Mexican-U.S. individuals as an epistemological battle to incorporate the silenced voices from those who have suffered the process of colonialism.

If the paradigmatic or logico-scientific knowing is different from another non logo-rational inquiry, then, there are at least two distinctive frameworks by which it is possible to approach reality. In rescuing the silenced voices, qualitative mode of inquiry is especially helpful—since it seeks the meanings, symbols, values and stories from individuals and peoples that possess a necessary type of knowledge that should be taken into account.

Narrative inquiry is a comprehensive perspective within qualitative studies that encompasses a different point of departure and end: people's narratives. As Kramp (2004) explains: "Narrative inquiry is a by-product of narrative knowing. The researcher who engages in narrative inquiry is interested in determining the meaning of a particular experience or event for the one who had it, and tells about it in a story" (p. 5). In this case the meaning of the Mexican and Mexican-American individuals is the subject of study as we will see in the next sections.

In the qualitative approach narratives organize and articulate experience, then narrative enables the storyteller to organize the story told by linking events, perceptions, and experiences (Kramp, 2004). Nevertheless, what is key is understanding how narratives are not just techniques in qualitative studies; narratives have their own epistemological status; actually, narrative is a way of knowing since narrative is a mode of inquiry (Kramp, 2004). If narratives are not just appendixes of the main process of the research process, therefore, narratives are the origin and the end of the main process. Therefore, if narratives are themselves the origin, the means and the end of the research process, then narratives are not just vehicles of knowledge, but rather they are knowledge itself.

Narratives then, lead to a special mode of inquiry, a mode of inquiry that is a specific way of reasoning and grasping the world. Narrative inquiry is a way of knowing (Goodall, 2008). Kramp (2004) explains how "Essential to utilizing narrative inquiry as a method of research is understanding that narrative is a way of knowing" (p. 106). Narratives re-structure knowledge, actually, "...the storyteller translates knowing into telling" (Kramp, 2004 p. 110).

One of the critical race theory themes on education is

rescuing the centrality of experiential knowledge (Yosso & Solórzano, 2001) using minority student narratives within a school's curricula can help the process of analyzing local schooling practices that reveal the undergirding racism within typical education. The use of narratives also enables students and teachers to reflect on their experience within the racially bias education system (Fernández, 2002). Similarly, there is an interesting debate on how oral performances captures ethnopoetics of daily activities (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Within the framework of narrative inquiry, I am drawing from the counter-story methodology, which seeks to create a counter-narrative from those who aim to challenge the meta-large narratives that obscure the stories of minority students. Specifically I am sharing the counter-story of Cabañas, a Dreamer who in 2014 was willing to share with me his story as a Mexican immigrant undocumented student in Texas. I divided his counter-story in chronological sections to make a coherent account of it in the next section.

### **The current colonial educational racial segregation and a Critical Race Counter-story.**

In this section, I describe the counter-story of Cabañas, (pseudonym), a Dreamer. I make use of his story to portray the current colonial racial segregation against Mexican-American individuals and Mexican Immigrants. In doing so, I hope to establish a connection between narrative inquiries and new forms of colonialism and coloniality today.

Cabañas (pseudonym) is a Dreamer. As he says: "I am currently 23 and a college graduate from the University of Texas and I am undocumented and unafraid ever since I came to this country at the age of 11. Below, I will describe my experience as a Mexican undocumented immigrant in the United States so far and reflect while I am at it". He was willing to share his story. He, as many others, is an example of the current colonial racial segregation against Mexican American students and Mexican Immigrants. Likewise, he is also an example of a Critical Race Counter-story. As Yosso (2006) explains: "critical race counter-story telling is a method of recounting the experiences and perspectives of racially and socially marginalized people"(p. 10). In this sense, Yosso explains the functions of counter-stories: 1) they build community among those at the margins of society, 2) can challenge the perceived wisdom of those at society's center, 3) can nurture community cultural wealth, memory, and resistance and 4) can facilitate

transformation in education.

In this manner, Cabañas starts to share his counter-story:

I came to the USA when I was 11 with my mother. My mother actually came a year before us and the reason me and my siblings came was because my mother wanted us to live with her. My mother and my dad had divorced a few years before (that was the primary reason she left Mexico, to find a new beginning) so the decision meant I had to leave my dad behind, something not particularly difficult since I have been living with my grandmother since the divorce.

I left Monterrey (my hometown) because my mother was asking me to leave, not because I wanted to. I remember clearly that I did not want to leave but I decided to go because I missed my mother and I had a year of not seeing her. I left Monterrey with a heavy heart but with the idea that I would be able to visit frequently since I had a visa

Valenzuela (1999) describes how for immigrant students who live in Texas the decision of staying in the U.S. is never easy. For instance, she describes how many students from Juan Seguin High School were Mexican Immigrants who were living with the pain of constantly thinking if it is better to come back or stay in the U.S. Cabañas continues:

I lived in Austin for 3 years give or take a few months. To me living in Texas was just something I had to do because my mother was here. I never felt Texas was my home during those years, even though I attended school here. I remember the first year was tough on me and my brother, since we had to learn the language and adapt to a complete different environment that was alien to us. In Texas we were told we were Latino (grouped together with other groups that I considered different even within Mexicans), and since we didn't know the language we were put in ESL classes alongside all the other newcomers. The schools were bigger and better that is true, but I felt so dumb in these new schools not knowing the language. It was hard being made fun of by the other kids, treated differently, as if we were animals, unworthy. That first year was hard and I wanted to go back so much but my mother was insistent....

Even though Cabañas only talks about qualitative factors to explain the decision of his mother to emigrate to the U.S., it is possible to infer that labor factors were important to his mother in this decision. A hypothesis is that if Cabañas's mother had had a steady job, she would not have searched for a new job in the U.S. As Héctor E. Sánchez explains in *Disposable Workers: Immigration after NAFTA and the Nation's Addiction to Cheap Labor* (2011): "There is a strong relationship between free trade policies with Mexico, as well as the serious reliance of cheap labor in various economic sectors in the United States, and the drastic increase of undocumented migration to the United States in the last two decades" (p. 45). That is, this addiction to cheap labor force could be an important factor that determined the life of Cabañas, his mother and his family. Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco in *Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Assimilation but Were Afraid To Ask*. Suárez-Orozco (2004) explains that: "These immigrants come to survive- some are escaping economies that more or less "broke" during global restructuring; others are escaping violence or war" (p. 55). Therefore, immigrants are victims of current forms of colonialism today. It is interesting, how he says that although the perspective of coloniality of power (Quijano, & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b; Quijano 2000a, 2000b) points out the extent to which colonialism does not formally exist, the symbolic and cultural aspect of it still shapes the lives of the majority of peoples in the Western hemisphere. Nevertheless, millions of immigrants that try to enter the U.S. demonstrate that colonialism is not only alive in symbolic terms. Cabañas continues his counter-story:

I knew I was undocumented since I came here. It was no surprise to me unlike many others to whom it was. I have always attended schools with large Latino populations, and I knew many people who were in my same situation, especially during my ESL classes.

I knew I was undocumented because although I had a visa at the time, I knew it was a tourist visa. I always wanted to go to college and I felt even since I was in Mexico that that was something that I wanted to do. Looking back I come to the realization that I did not feel Texas was my home because I was afraid I could never achieve my goals here. I was afraid I would never be able to learn English, a fear that was so intense during my first year that I wanted to go back constantly.

My visa finally expired when I entered high school, taking advanced classes already, and I decided

not to renew it. That decision was one of the most important decisions of my life. Until then I have lived in Texas for 2+ years and I have been going to Mexico constantly. The decision not to renew (which I knew I could thanks to my dad) meant that I would not be able to go back anymore, that I would have to stay here permanently (at the time that is how I felt and still do to some measure). It was a heartbreaking decision but one I did because crossing the border was getting harder.

Cabañas is portraying the suffering around schooling in the U.S. because he is showing how deciding to attend school is not a simple issue for many immigrant students in the U.S. In doing so, Cabañas is challenging the majoritarian narrative of what it means to go to school in the U.S. As Yosso says: "Majoritarian narratives tend to silence or dismiss people who offer evidence contradicting these racially unbalanced portrayals" (2006, p. 9). After all, "The legacy of racism and White privilege determine whose stories are recounted as historical and whose experiences are dismissed as merely anecdotal"(2006, p. 9).

Cabañas explains the way in which schooling in the U.S. is not only about "going to school", but rather it is something related with an immigrant's status, family's separation, identity, being afraid of learning English, etc. Those factors are aspects of how colonialism is still alive in a tangible way. Nevertheless, it is interesting how the coloniality of power perspective describes the difference between former colonialism and coloniality: "*incluso una vez acabado el status formal de colonia, la colonialidad no terminó, ha persistido en las jerarquías sociales y culturales* [although the formal status of colony finished, coloniality has not finished, it has persisted in the social hierarchies]" (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, p. 584, my translation). The counterstory of Cabañas might describe the tension, then, between colonialism and coloniality. As he continues:

I spent my first year of high school in Austin and during that year I set a goal for myself that I would go to college, the University of Texas in particular held a fascination for me. Knowing that I was undocumented regardless, at the time I had virtually no idea how it would impact my life, I just knew that since I decided to stay I might as well aim high. I was very surprised that no matter how much obstacles I have already overcome, my undocumented status would be the one that

would be the hardest to overcome.

We moved to Houston at the end of my sophomore year because my stepfather at the time moved us there looking for better working opportunities. Another new beginning just as I was beginning to set my roots. Austin was home for me, although we were never very stable and moved frequently from apartment complex to apartment complex. In Houston we expected our situation to improve economically and socially however that did not happen. My mother left my stepfather soon afterward and became a single mother. In Houston we continued the erratic pattern of moving constantly.

That year disaster happened and it threw my whole world upside down. My mother went to Mexico to visit my grandmother as she usually did and this time she was not destined to come back. They caught her at the bridge as she was crossing under the suspicion that she was living here. After hours of questioning they broke her visa and refused her entrance into the country. Our entire world went into disarray. My siblings and I did not know what to do, fortunately we had our aunt with us and the situation happened during summer so it gave us time to think. Although we stayed together for a few months, all of my siblings decided to go back to Monterrey with my mother, first my little sisters who missed her the most, my older sister left almost along with my mother, my brother had already left prior to that but usually visited every weekend or so, after that incident he did not do so anymore. It was not long before I was left by myself here with only my aunt. My whole immediate family had gone back and I was about to do so as well however I did not. My mother knew of my goal and she wanted to stay because she knew how close I was of making it, and even though I faced the brutal possibility of not being able to see her again, she encouraged me to stay here in Texas. I made a choice when I did not renew my visa that I wanted to stay here and I did because my mother supported me even from the situation in which she was in. So I stayed and made a promise of getting into college for her. My goal was no longer about my ego; my goal was now a promise to my mother.

As can be noted this counter-story describes experiences that have been dismissed by the majoritarian metanarratives (Yosso, 2006) in the middle of colonialism and coloniality of power. Majoritarian metanarratives

are part of the mainstream schooling in the U.S. uses the banking method (Freire, 2000) to deposit the idea that schooling has the same experience for everybody into students' minds. It is part of depositing "American" knowledge into students. In this manner, banking education has the epistemological purpose of silencing the suffering of students who come from oppressed peoples. This description of how Cabañas's mother was caught at the bridge at the border represents what Freire (2000) calls "limiting situation", in which social actors decide on continuing transformations.

I received a lot of help from people I knew would help me and some from unexpected sources. My college counselor at my high school was very well versed in the process I had to go through...and if there was a situation in which he did not have the answer to he went out of his way to look for it. Through him I got access to multiple scholarships to which I could apply, and he guided me through what I needed to do to apply for admission under my status, an admission process that was already difficult for the regular student and that becomes even more troublesome because of my undocumented status....Thanks to my counselor at my high school and the university financial aid counselor I was able to go through the hoops and ladders ...I went through the motions a high school senior goes and eventually received my admission letter to the university and graduated from high school in the top 2 percent of my class.

Fortunately, Cabañas received caring within this subtractive schooling system (Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela constructs the category of subtractive schooling in order to cover an existing hole in the caring and education framework drawing from a) caring and education theory; b) subtractive assimilation; and, c) social capital theory. Besides many aspects that entail subtractive schooling, it is important to say that in not taking into account narratives such as Cabañas's narrative, the schooling system of the U.S. is subtracting stories from Latin American students.

As Cabañas describes, he received care through a dialogic relationship between him and his counselor that in turn was fundamental for her success to continue studying. As Freire (2000) points out this kind of horizontal dialogic relationships embedded in humility and faith constructed mutual trust between students and teachers. In the case of Cabañas this dialogic caring represented a social capital and navigational capital (Yosso, 2006) that helped him achieve success in the educational system of

the U.S. As he continues:

Once at the university I truly learned the meaning of the word minority. I have never come into such close contact and much less interact with the majority culture, in other words white people.... My first year at the University was a journey of self-discovery, trying to find out who I was in this new world. It was during this first year that I found out about PDLP student organization (pseudonym)<sup>3</sup> as well.... PDLP opened my mind to actually cause a change politically, something that could benefit not only me but others as well, instead of playing by the laws the system set on us, we could change the system to benefit ourselves and our families.

Through PDLP I became empowered. Indeed the purpose of the organization is creating a safe space for undocumented students where we can share our stories, and find the power that our situations developed in us and using that power to advocate for solutions to our dilemma, the most popular of those is the famous DREAM Act legislation. ... Thanks to PDLP I was part in the struggle for the DREAM Act back in 2010, I was in DC where we lobbied, stage actions, and fought hard as a coordinated national movement to pass the DREAM Act.

As can be seen, the PDLP (pseudonym) student organization was an important counterspace (Yosso, 2006) by which Cabañas was able to handle the culture shock of studying as an undocumented student and this organization enabled her to develop critical navigation (Yosso, 2006) to be used in her life as a student. This described the process by Cabañas in PDLP was praxis. About his point, Freire explains praxis drawing from important thinkers: "As Lenin pointed out, the more a revolution requires theory, the more its leaders must be with the people in order to stand against the power of oppression" (as cited in Freire, 2000, p. 138). At the same time, the PDLP was counterspace in the middle of sophisticated forms of colonialism, as the perspective of coloniality of power states. That counterspace was necessary to Cabañas since the social hierarchies of colonialism (race, class, gender, knowledge) have now a distinctive characteristic but still shape the lives of Latin

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<sup>3</sup> PDLP is a student organization at an university in the state of Texas that has been in the forefront for the past seven years supporting Dreamers.

American peoples (Quijano & Wallerstein, 1992a, 1992b; Quijano, 2000a and 2000b). In the next section, Cabañas shares the moment in which he graduated from college:

When I graduated from an university of the state of Texas I fulfilled one the greatest goals of my life and I was very satisfied with what I had accomplished. Even though I had changed from who I was in high school, I still remembered the promise I made to my mother. Thankfully my mother had found a way to regularize her status and returned to the country before my graduation and was able to attend. Although it was a day full of triumph and joy, there was a certain degree of sadness in the fact that I would not be able to practice my degree or even to work at all. I did not felt that all those years in college were a waste now, quite the contrary I felt thankful for the experience that the University had made possible for me and the change I have gone through thanks to it. DACA took me completely by surprise. Although we had been pushing the Obama administration to grant us deferred action for a few months prior, I was not expecting the announcement before elections. Our first victory after so many losses. It felt like a dream but it wasn't, it was real and although at first I was skeptical I applied and went through the motions. The process was fast and relatively easy to follow, and I became a believer.

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As the above except says, Cabañas had mixed emotions when he graduated; since he knew he would not be able to get a job because of his immigration status. His story reflects the hope of the analogic word (Dussel, 1990), that one not only expresses, but rather reveals his reality as sign of how colonialism still exist. For Dussel, (1990), *analogía verbi* (the word that reveals reality) opposes to the *analogía nomini* (the word that just express reality). Cabañas' counter-story not only expresses the experience of a Mexican immigrant student reveals the extent to which Texas is still an occupied territory and not a conquered one. Cabañas' counter-story is, then, a way of knowing that the tension existing in this territory remains contentious.

### Discussion

The educational colonial racial segregation against Mexican Immigrant and Mexican-American is part of a historical process (Menchaca & Valencia, 1990; González 1990; Menchaca, 1993; San Miguel, 1993; Donato 1997; Valencia 1997; Johnson, 2005 among others) of colonization from the U.S. against Mexico. Before the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo the indigenous peoples of North America suffered the Spanish and Anglo invasion. After 1848 indigenous peoples and Mexicans were the target of a new colonial racial order of the Monroe Doctrine. As the critical race counter-story (Yosso, 2006) of Cabañas shows, this process of colonization is alive and it uses education as a social tool.

This historical process of colonization can be currently understood as "addiction to cheap labor"(Sánchez, 2011) from the U.S. that in turn results in migration from México to the U.S. Durand, Massey and Zenteno (2001) describe how "...the massive legalization of former undocumented migrants in the late 1980s seems to have elevated overall rates of return migration in the 1990s, as a larger fraction of the migrant population no longer faces barriers to the cross-border movement"(p. 124). Thus, what is the purpose of keeping Mexicans undocumented? The answer: cheap labor force and justifying "reasons" for having private prisons.

Cabañas, like other Dreamers have suffered the lack of caring (Valenzuela, 1999) for a colonial educational system that historically has silenced counter-stories of students who come from oppressed peoples. As the case of Cabañas portrays, within this process of migration, being undocumented, being schooled, having a family, having dreams, etc., are elements that create tragedies, but also conform counter-stories that challenge the majoritarian narrative of education in between the U.S.



and Mexico.

These stories have to be part of the U.S educational system and should be part of the curriculum at schools in a way it can portray the suffering, the pain and the hope of transnational counter-stories which are pedagogic elements that create dialogic educational process among pain and hope. Those translational counter-stories create a transnational dialogue among Latinx students from Mexico and the U.S., which in turn generates critical thinking. As Freire states: “[...] dialogue which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking” (2000, p. 92).

If these counter-stories dialogue each other, as Freire invites (2000), the stories of the Latinx oppressed peoples will disrupt the apparent monolithic educational system and either the schools of the U.S. or Mexico will teach how the counter-stories of Latinx students can reflect how borders are just expressions of a global apartheid and those Latinx students will help to achieve, Neruda says, that day that all human beings have been waiting will come: *el día final del sufrimiento [the final day of suffering]*.

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