

REMOVAL, BETRAYAL, AND RESISTANCE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BLACK YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES AND HAITIAN-DESCENDANT YOUTH IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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Through a comparative analysis of the physical and social exclusion of African American youth in the United States and Haitian-descendant youth in the Dominican Republic, this paper traces the ways public policies and institutional practices govern the everyday lives of Black youth. We examine how these historical policies and corresponding practices manifest in everyday violence with particular attention to the pervasive removal of Black youth from public spaces. The act of removal is a concerning manifestation of structural violence that has assumed global dimension, as the public has come to expect mass incarceration and deportation as natural state responses to perceived crime or deviance, constructed though it may be. The cumulative impact of structural violence inflicts betrayal trauma upon individuals and communities, eroding trust, violating a state's obligation to its citizenry, and ultimately, denying humanity. To overcome the normalization of this betrayal, or collective betrayal blindness, we argue that youth resist by re-occupying the public domain. Through the reclaiming of space, youth demand accountability from not only the state but also its citizenry.

Keywords: structural violence, comparative perspective, betrayal trauma, betrayal blindness, resistance

When an individual is protesting society's refusal to acknowledge his dignity as a human being, his very act of protest confers dignity on him.
— Bayard Rustin

1. Introduction

In this paper we examine two seemingly disparate but interrelated contexts – Black youth in the United States and Haitian-descendant youth in the Dominican Republic – to argue that structural violence has taken on a new and concerning global dimension – the removal of Black youth from the public sphere. The act of removal manifests as both spectacle and quotidian practice, ranging from excessive state violence to police impunity to discriminatory housing

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policies to judicial practices. In each case, routine acts of violence remove people of color from public spaces, be it schools, parks, places of employment, or through curbing participation in civic life through voting restrictions and legal reforms that marginalize people of color. Perhaps the most spectacular act of removal is the deportation of individuals from the state, yet this form of removal has become so normalized that the global public has come to expect detention and removal as reasonable state action, one enlisted under the guise of ensuring public safety.

We bring together the experiences of Black youth in the United States and Haitian-descendant youth in the Dominican Republic for a number of reasons. In 2013 and 2014, we saw heightened public recognition of the violence and oppression experienced by Black youth in both the United States and Dominican Republic – from videos of police brutality on social media to massive public protests to front-page news media coverage in both countries. We also saw increasingly mobilization of youth through the movements in Black Lives Matter and Reconoci.do, (recognized) (<http://reconoci.do>). Young people organized rallies, protests, and public die-ins, occupying public spaces to demand an end to state policies and institutional practices that systematically erase their voices and betray their trust. These two social movements likewise share in their resistance to structural violence, which specifically and distinctively erases them from the public sphere. Enlisting strategies to reclaim real and virtual publics, youth demand recognition by occupying spaces from which they have historically and actively been removed. Further and importantly, young people lead these respective social movements. While there are few ways that Black youth may escape structural violence in their everyday lives, we argue, youth in particular are not passive recipients of this violence. Rather, young people in both the United States and the Dominican Republic have actively resisted and circumvented violence through their everyday negotiations with state actors. Through their actions, we argue, they have come to recognize collective betrayal trauma suffered at the hands of the state and to actively and publicly reject collective betrayal blindness. By re-claiming public spaces from which they have been systematically removed, young people demand accountability and responsibility from the state and from the global public.

We begin the paper by examining the contexts and social formations that produce structural violence, which had led to the removal of Black youth both in the United States and in the Dominican Republic. In particular, we attend to the ways this violence is enacted through the removal of Black bodies from public spaces. We argue that violence, inculcated in public policies and institutional practices, negates the humanity of Black youth and actively and routinely removes them from family, community and the nation. We argue that structural violence constitutes institutional betrayal trauma, which occurs when influential and entrusted institutions such as schools, law enforcement, and governments act in ways that visit harm upon those dependent on them for care and security or that fail to prevent the perpetration of harm (Smith & Freyd, 2013). Victims of institutional betrayal trauma are unable to trust needed institutions and therefore live outside of the umbrella of protection putting them at risk. Socialized to discriminatory public policies and institutional practices, communities experience a collective betrayal blindness; violence is thus normalized and becomes embodied by the very subjects upon which it inflicts harm and even death. Because the state functions with impunity under the guise of its monopoly on legitimate violence, neither communities nor the public have an expectation of equality. Thus, justice remains elusive. We end the paper with a discussion of the implications of our analysis on community psychology and related disciplines, specifically identifying opportunities for youth-engaged research to inform policy and practice.

2. Structural Violence, Betrayal Trauma, and Removal

The sheer brutality of physical violence directed against individuals and *bodies* often garners significant media attention and public outrage. Whether suicide bombings, mass shootings, gang rapes, or genocide, we mutually recognize the horror of such acts of violence and denounce the actions publicly. More quotidian, mundane manifestations of violence are inherently more difficult to identify because of its normalization and institutionalization into daily life. For example, attitudes toward the poor, women, or people of color are normalized and tolerated, translating into collective violence inflicted against them (Pandey, 2001). As such, structural violence is more difficult to recognize and draw attention to, but no less devastating to the individuals and communities upon which violence is inflicted.

Popularized by Norwegian sociologist John Galtung, structural violence extends beyond the commonsensical conceptions of direct, physical force to a wide spectrum of violence embedded within institutions and processes (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence is often understood as social injustice or inequality, ranging from abusive working conditions to minimal access to healthcare (Farmer, 2004; Shannon et al., 2008). Though rooted in macro-level policies and structures, it is expressed locally, regularly and daily in economic and social exchanges. It is a technology of social control and persuasion. As such, structural violence reproduces exclusion, marginalization, and stigmatization through discourses of differences such as class, sex, race, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, and citizenship status (Barker, 2005; Omi & Winant, 2014; Sampson & Wilson, 1995; Sokoloff & Dupont, 2005). Social structures directly and indirectly reproduce poverty, suffering and death through politics, economic exploitation, and repressive tactics (Farmer, 2005; Gupta, 2012). While often seen as lacking the brute force and public recognition of physical violence, structural violence carries similar conviction and devastation to individuals, families, and communities.

In this paper, we argue that the *act of removal* is a form of structural violence through racialized policies and practices that specifically target people of color. We interrogate different dimensions of removal across two distinct contexts – Black youth in the United States and Haitian-descendant youth born in the Dominican Republic. The act of removal as a form of structural violence takes on various forms, be it the removal of individuals from high-quality schooling (Osler, 2006), opportunities for employment and professional advancement (Rodriguez, Lasch, Chandra, & Lee, 2001), circulation due to limited access to public transportation (Frumkin, Frank & Jackson 2004; Glaeser, Kahn & Rappaport, 2008), opportunities for recreation due to the geographic distribution of public parks (Dahmann, Wolch, Joassart-Marcelli, Reynolds, & Jerrett, 2010), or from occupation of public spaces through curfews and excessive policing that specifically target communities of color (Brunson & Miller, 2006). These erasures of people of color from public spaces are consequential to their safety and well-being, sense of identity and belonging, and to their civic engagement (Watts & Flanagan, 2007; Youniss et al., 2002). The criminalization of communities of color casts a moral judgment on an entire community, excluding them from the law's protection but not from its disciplinary force and punishment (Cacho, 2012). As such, rather than protect its citizenry, the state systematically devalues communities of color, resulting in individuals losing their own identities while the public simultaneously fails to recognize them as fully human.

In opposition to the state's obligations to its citizenry, structural violence constitutes institutional betrayal of individuals and communities. Smith and Freyd (2013) posit that abuse occurring in contexts where an institution betrays its members' trust is more damaging than in settings where members do not have an expectation of safety and protection. The compounded negative impact results in institutional betrayal trauma (Smith & Freyd, 2013). The betrayed member is left in a painful quandary – the pain of the institutional betrayal trauma is felt deeply and intimately, yet acknowledging the abuse is counterproductive to survival as the member depends on the offending institution for survival. The member may adaptively disavow the betrayal and develop betrayal blindness, a denial of the abuse, in order to avoid rejection by the system and to continue to have at least some of their needs met by the system (Smith & Freyd, 2013). The disavowal of the institutional betrayal, or betrayal blindness, can result in an unbearable dissonance between the value of life and the realities of social death (see, e.g., Cacho, 2012; Walton, 2015).

In the following section, we turn to two sets of experiences, those of Black youth in the United States and those of Dominican youth of Haitian descent, to illustrate the parallel ways historical public policies and corresponding institutional practices govern the everyday lives of Black youth through violence, exclusion, and removal. We trace the ways policies and practices isolate and disappear Black publics and the ways the state betrays its obligations to safeguard individual's rights and to protect communities. The normalization of structural violence has a cumulative and enduring impact on communities – eroding trust, undermining identity and belonging, and silencing communities in the public sphere.

2.1 Black Youth in the United States

A broad cross-section of interdisciplinary scholarship has examined the historical legacy of slavery and exclusion of African Americans and its impact on contemporary Black communities. Through colonial technologies employed to control the native populations, such as pure physical force, dehumanization, and exclusionary policies, Black people were viewed as not fully human, and thus undeserving of equal rights (Du Bois, 1935; Fanon, 1965; Robinson, 1970). In this section, we trace the ways these historic technologies are woven into contemporary public policies and institutional practices which serve to remove Black communities from the public sphere with specific attention to the linkages between discriminatory housing policies, court sentencing practices, and diminished access to quality public education. While we recognize the complexities and tensions that exist in the identification and self-identification of Blackness in the United States and the Dominican Republic, the very nature of structural violence is that individualistic nuances are not generally considered when creating policies or enacting practices that systematically discriminate.

Sociologists have traced the contemporary impacts of these repressive regimes on the contemporary lives of African-American communities. For example, housing policies following World War II (e.g., the GI Bill¹) served to subsidize the wealth of middle class whites through access to property in suburban communities through low interest loans and access to affordable housing, while divesting Black communities through redlining (Moore, 2016). As a result, suburbanization is a racialized process, de facto segregating Black communities of valuable real

¹ Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (P.L. 78-346, 58 Stat. 284m) is known informally as the G.I. Bill.

estate (Powell, 1999). Black people have been geographically excluded from many middle-class and affluent communities, pushed into urban “ghettos,” excluded from circulating in specific spaces and places. Wealth in the United States is passed from one generation to the next; in the contemporary context, this wealth is the basis of opportunity for education and advancement and securing of credit needed to apply for credit cards, to purchase a home, and to fund a child’s higher education. As a result, these historical policies and their implementation through institutional practices have curtailed the opportunities of Blacks to participate in the neoliberal marketplace where access to credit is essential to building financial and social capital. As such, these removals, both spatial and financial, have resulted in diminished social and geographic mobility over time.

At the same time, the War on Drugs and the War on Gangs have resulted in racial profiling and over-policing in geographically-bounded Black and Latino communities (Alexander, 2012). The statistics are staggering. Blacks and Latinos are roughly three times more likely than whites to be searched at a traffic stop; Black people are two times more likely to be arrested and four times more likely to experience police force during interactions with the law enforcement (Durose, Langan, & Smith, 2007). Sentencing practices disproportionately target Black and brown males, and increasingly females, with Blacks receiving sentences 10% longer than whites for the same crime (United States Sentencing Commission, 2011; Davis, 2011; Sudbury, 2014; Walker, Spohn, & DeLone, 2011). In 2008, African Americans constituted one million of a total of 2.3 million people incarcerated in the United States, with Black people incarcerated nearly six times more than the rate of whites (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2009). Given that one out of three Black men will go to prison in their lifetime (Lyons & Pettit, 2011), Black male youth in particular are repeatedly and increasingly removed from public life. Framed as a logical response to threats of crime and drugs, the removal of Black people from public spaces masks the excesses of state power inflicted upon individual bodies.

But, how did we get here? These statistics did not materialize overnight. While detailing the cumulative effect of discriminatory policies and practices over time is beyond the scope of this article, we highlight a few key policies and practices across multiple domains that contribute to this troubling contemporary landscape. For example, popularized in the 1980s, “broken window” policing argues that urban disorder (e.g. vandalism or broken windows) generates increased fear and withdrawal of residents and ultimately facilitates more serious crime. By pathologizing “urban” (read “Black”) behavior as anti-social, increased police surveillance has become justified and normalized (Harcourt, 2009; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Black and brown communities labeled as “hot spots” and “red zones” by criminologists, law enforcement, and policymakers have come to justify policies such as “stop and frisk” infamously popularized in New York City (Gelman, Fagan & Kiss, 2012; Goffman, 2015). The routinization of surveillance of mundane social life in Black communities across the United States has resulted in the normalization of apprehension and incarceration of males of color, leading to a public tolerance, even expectation of, racial profiling and disproportionate policing of communities of color as reasonable state actions.

As a consequence of geographic segregation and excessive surveillance, young people of color unsurprisingly also experience lower levels of academic achievement, high school graduation rates, and matriculation in higher education than their white counterparts. Alongside the legacy of segregation and discriminatory housing policies referenced above, there are parallel trends in school segregation in which under-resourced schools fail to adequately serve youth of color. Illustrative of this troubling trend is the problematic of school discipline. Zero tolerance

policies toward discipline, routine police presence and surveillance in schools, and the disproportionate suspension of Black youth compared to their white counterparts have become everyday realities in many poor, urban schools (Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Losen, Hewitt & Kim, 2010). Taken together, social scientists have termed this the school-to-prison pipeline, in which children of color are not only segregated geographically but also placed in remedial programs, repeatedly suspended, and exiled to “alternative” schools until they drop out or are expelled. At the same time, public policies, institutional practices, and public discourse have lessened tolerance of juvenile crime and adapted an increasingly punitive approach to justice in which young people are transferred to adult courts and jails at younger ages. “Since 1992, 45 states have passed laws making it easier to try juveniles as adults, 31 have stiffened sanctions against youths for a variety of offenses and 47 loosened confidentiality provisions for juveniles” (Wald & Losen, 2003, p. 3). And, while recent research on the maturing brain has challenged the mature minor doctrine, reform remains uneven and highly contested (Aronson, 2007; Steinberg, 2013). Thus, Black students confront parallel trends that simultaneously diminish their opportunities for education while facilitating incarceration.

Scholars have carefully traced how these policies and institutional practices haunt the everyday lives of Black communities from limited access to healthcare (Fiscella, Franks, Gold, & Clancy, 2000; Pieterse & Carter, 2007; Williams & Mohammed, 2009), under resourced and de facto segregated schools (Downey, 2008), and employment that fails to offer living wages and dignified work conditions. These policies and corresponding practices also undermine Black masculinity (Alexander, 2006; Ferguson, 2001), kinship and belonging (Jones, 2007; Meadows, Kaslow, Thompson, & Jurkovic, 2005), and community cohesion (Hammack, Richards, Luo, Edlynn, & Roy, 2004). In other words, marginalizing state policies and institutional practices are so pervasive that there are few ways in which people’s lives are not constrained or informed by this institutional mode of being. Communities of color, themselves, have come to expect that the state will neither provide nor protect them, but rather inflict violence upon their minds and bodies.

2.2 Dominican Youth of Haitian Descent

In this section, we provide a brief history of the policies and institutional practices that govern the lives of Haitian-descendant youth in the Dominican Republic. Analogous to Black Americans in the United States, the history of structural violence against Black youth in the Dominican Republic has its roots in the slave trade and the colonization of Hispaniola (Sagas, 2000; Simmons, 2010). In the sixteenth century on the east hemisphere of Hispaniola, the Spanish brought African slaves and sugar, as well as racial denigration (Sagas, 2000). The French colonization of the western hemisphere of Hispaniola in the eighteenth century included an influx of African slaves which solidified the denigrated status of Black skin in Hispaniola (Sagas, 2000), and initiated centuries of contestation regarding citizenship and belonging on the island.

The Haitian Independence of 1804 and the move over the next forty years towards expanding to the Spanish-speaking side of the island gave rise to significant battles between the two countries during the first half of the nineteenth century. Mazzaglia and Marcelino (2014) posit that this tension was a source of Hispanic nationalism in the Dominican Republic and a racially-infused source of distrust towards Haiti. However, Mazzaglia and Marcelino propose that the

current nationalist and anti-Haitian sentiments in the Dominican Republic are the result of 20th century politics promoted under the dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo from 1930-1961, and later promulgated by President Joaquín Balaguer. Political scientist Ernesto Sagas succinctly names the resulting and persistent sentiments towards Haitian people in the term anti-Haitianismo, or antihaitianism. He wrote:

Anti-Haitianismo ideology combines a legacy of racist Spanish colonial mentality, nineteenth-century racial theories and twentieth-century cultural neo racism into a web of anti-Haitian attitudes, racial stereotypes, and historical distortions. Not only does this hegemonic ideology affect Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic, but it has also traditionally been employed as an ideological weapon to subdue the Black and Mulatto Dominican lower classes and maintain their political quiescence (Sagas, 2000, p. ix).

Anti-Haitianismo is the foundation upon which contemporary structural violence towards Haitians in Dominican Republic currently manifests.

It is this very same anti-Haitianismo that fueled Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo to wage the “Parsley Massacre” also known as “*El Corte*” (Spanish) and “*Kout kout a*” (Haitian Kreyol) killing thousands of Haitian people living in the Dominican Republic over six days in October 1937 (Paulino, 2006). Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent were asked to pronounce *perejil*, the Spanish word for parsley. If unable to roll the “r”, a sign of their Spanish heritage, they were subject to death. Estimates of the numbers of Haitians killed vary from hundreds to several thousands and the Parsley Massacre remains the largest slaughter, en masse, of Black people in the Americas (Paulino, 2006). Although the Parsley Massacres officially ceased on October 8, 1937, many Haitians fled the Dominican Republic fearing the anti-Haitianismo and anti-Black sentiments that persisted and continued to endanger their lives (Sagas, 2000). Throughout the twentieth century, Dominicans of Haitian descent, continued to experience systematic discrimination and degradation in the Dominican Republic (Gregory, 2007). This history has resulted in contemporary tensions which manifest in anti-Haitian rhetoric repeated across multiple dictators and democratically elected presidents from Trujillo (1930-1938, 1942-1952) to Balaguer (1960-1962, 1966-1978, 1986-1996) to Fernandez (1996-2000, 2004-2012) to Medina (2012-present).

While such physical and violent removals may appear spectacular, over the past century, we have seen several examples of anti-Haitianismo that lead to the routine and repeated removal of Dominicans of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic. For example, in May 2005, several Haitian men living in Hatillo Palma, Dominican Republic, allegedly attacked a Dominican couple, Domingo Luna and his wife, Maritza Núñez (Paulino, 2006). Maritza was killed; her “husband barely survived teeth-crushing machete blows to his mouth” (Paulino, 2006, p. 267). The alleged perpetrators were eventually captured. However, the anti-Haitian sentiment led to a rash of violence against Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. Reportedly, residents of Hatillo Palma struck back by forcibly ousting all Haitians from the town (Paulino, 2006). As a result, between May and September 2005, Dominican authorities deported nearly 3,000 Haitians living in the Dominican Republic to Haiti (Paulino, 2006).

Paulino (2006) notes that many Dominicans with whom he spoke offered painful stories about growing up Black and of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic. They spoke of seeing friends and family deported and experiencing prejudice on a daily basis. They lived in constant

fear for their corporal integrity; such fear transcended socio-economic status, including a wide range of Dominican-Haitians in the Dominican Republic from lawyers to non-governmental organization (NGO) workers to students to *braceros* (Haitian agricultural workers). All recounted experiences of direct or indirect racism by Dominicans from racial slurs to deportations. The impact on the youth is particularly striking:

Haitian students voiced to immigration authorities their fear of being targeted by the arbitrary deportations and xenophobia gripping the nation at the time. According to Jean Ferdino, president of the Haitian Student Committee, ‘We have come legally to this country to study. We are not responsible for the criminal acts committed by other Haitians. We need spiritual and emotional tranquility to study (Paulino, 2006, p. 272).

These students implored multiple institutions, tasked with caring for them, to protect them. In response, university officials instructed students to carry their citizenship papers (Paulino, 2006). While astonishing, these types of state actions and institutional responses have become routine state practice, a mode of being, in which Dominicans of Haitian descent have come to recognize the impunity of the Dominican state in deciding who belongs and who is *othered*.

Anti-Haitianismo is historically rooted in both policy and practice, and it likewise inflicts significant contemporary disparities in health, living conditions, financial status, and education for Dominicans of Haitian descent in the present day. Anthropologist David Simmons (2010) explores the lives of *braceros* working on *bateyes*, shantytown communities that form around the Dominican sugar plantations. Simmons notes that structural violence towards Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent is expressed through anti-Haitianismo and manifested in spatial and racial segregation of *braceros* in the *bateyes*. Known to offer harsh living conditions, the *bateyes* are at times without drinkable water, waste disposal or electricity, and are under constant surveillance by police (Simmons, 2010). The *bateyes* are paradoxically over surveilled by police yet left in deplorable living conditions. Simmons (2010) finds that Haitians/Dominicans of Haitian descent *braceros* experience geographical separation, diminished access to transportation, increased occupational and health challenges, and generally poor treatment by doctors and other health professionals—manifestations of structural violence impeding their health and wellbeing. Not only does structural violence undermine the well-being of Haitian/Dominicans of Haitian descent agricultural workers, but also restricts their access to appropriate healthcare.

The insidious structures of violence that have established the underclass status of Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican Republic are reified by specific policies, institutional practices, and public discourse over time. The consistency of anti-Haitianismo over time reduces the surprise of anti-Haitian rhetoric or discriminatory policies aimed at the social and physical removal of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. To the contrary, it has become the expectation.

La Sentencia (TC 0168-13, 2013) has been the most obvious expression of a recent crest in anti-Haitianismo. Until 2004, the Dominican government, like many other countries, offered *jus soli* (birthright) citizenship to those born in the Dominican Republic, with the exception of those children born to parents “in transit.” In 2008, Juliana Deguis Pierre, a Dominican born to Haitian immigrant parents, sought to register for a national identification card in order to work legally and to vote in the Dominican Republic. Pierre was denied an identification card and her legally

tendered birth certificate was confiscated presumably because of her Haitian surname and dark skin. Pierre sued the Dominican government and the appeals reached the Constitutional Tribunal, the highest Dominican court. In September 2013, the court delivered a ruling now known as *La Sentencia*, or The Sentence. *La Sentencia* ultimately revoked the Dominican citizenship of those born after 1929 to parents not of Dominican ancestry. The court decided against her and expanded a loophole in Dominican law that denies citizenship to the children of those “in transit”. This legal provision was meant to apply to children of tourists and diplomats, but in September 2013 *La Sentencia* expanded it to cover the children of all undocumented Haitians. *The Sentence* was retroactive to 1929 and made an estimated 210,000 Dominicans of Haitian descent people stateless. Since June 2015, an estimated 20,000 Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent have been expelled, or been deported from, the Dominican Republic to Haiti (Ahmed, 2015). Many of these refugees speak neither French nor Haitian Kreyol. As a result of the current climate of fear, tens of thousands of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent have fled the country (Ahmed, 2015).

A disturbing consequence of *La Sentencia*, de facto statelessness has resulted in restricted access to education for children who are Dominican of Haitian descent (Georgetown Law Human Rights Institute Fact Finding Project, 2014). The Georgetown Law Human Rights Institute Fact Finding Project (2014) concluded:

Without documentation and divested of the chance to enroll in high school or attend university, Dominicans of Haitian descent reported being forced to work in the informal labor market and consequently being prevented from improving their socio-economic situation, or that of their children. Rendered stateless by their own government, these individuals are denied the opportunity to realize their potential and remain trapped in an insidious cycle of deprivation from which they have the desire, but not the means, to escape (p. 2).

Akin to Black youth in the United States as discussed above, Dominican youth of Haitian descent are routinely removed from public spaces of education. Restricting access to education is a form of social removal that prevents pathways to success in the labor market, rendering youth invisible. Such policies and corresponding institutional practices are a form of structural violence that targets foundational rites of passage into adulthood while impeding civic participation essential to full and productive membership in society.

The history of Haitians in the Dominican Republic is shockingly violent yet normalized in everyday life. In other words, these spectacular and violent removals—via segregation in certain spaces of residence to massacres to physical removals via deportation to exclusions from education and employment—create a culture of anti-Haitianismo in which communities are desensitized to violence as it has been repeated for centuries. The spectacularity of violence itself has become mundane. The structures of violence are so deeply ingrained that they are experienced as the norm, rather than an aberration.

3. Betrayal Blindness and Youth Resistance

Removal of Black voices and bodies from public spaces has become a global strategy of social control. This harmful strategy points to weakness within state-based guarantees for human rights as states fail to acknowledge and to protect rights of some individuals. With little recourse, communities come to expect state violence and impunity as a mode of being, forced to navigate everyday violence and the perpetual threat of removal from social life. Oppositional voices are silenced and relegated to the shadows. Betrayal trauma theory suggests that individuals may experience normalization of the betrayal, or betrayal blindness, in an effort to continue to have their needs met by the perpetrating system (Smith & Freyd, 2013). The result of betrayal blindness is silence in the face of oppression. Thus, this mode of being highlights a conundrum on how to foster systemic change.

In recent years, we have seen several examples of Black youth speaking out, a rise of global youth movements from Egypt to Guatemala to the United States and the Dominican Republic. In the United States, the Black Lives Matter movement has spotlighted important issues such as police brutality towards Black youth. In the Dominican Republic the Reconoci.do movement seeks to promote human rights and “strives for true integration, full and effective Dominicans of Haitian descent in the Dominican society” (Reconoci.do, 2016). The members of these movements challenge the very structures that perpetrate violence against them by naming structural violence and institutional betrayal. Notably, they do so by reclaiming the public spaces from which they have been historically removed, enlisting traditional forms of public protest and civil disobedience combined with new technologies of social media to organize and to publicly denounce institutional betrayal trauma on a global scale. Youth in these movements are naming the responsibility of the institutions that must care for and protect them, institutions that have historically and systematically failed them.

Denouncing these powerful institutions, however, comes at a cost. Youth continue to be dependent on larger systems for their survival. Speaking out may highlight them as targets for social removal. In spite of this risk, what the Black Lives Matter and Reconoci.do movements both demonstrate is that some youth are rejecting betrayal blindness through public acts of resistance. And, while these public displays of resistance bring threats of further violence and state retaliation, it also serves as a call the global public to value the lives of Black youth and to work in solidarity to dismantle entrenched structural violence. In what follows, we conclude with a discussion of the implications of our analysis on the research and practice of community psychologists and allied disciplines.

4. Implications

The lessons that we learn from this critical comparative analysis of structural violence and youth resistance have significant implications for research and practice of community psychologists and allied disciplines. The first lesson, among many, is that structural violence is a form of betrayal trauma (Comas-Díaz, 2016). Black youth in the United States and Dominican youth of Haitian descent are betrayed by agents of the very systems upon which they rely for survival. Community psychologists, and those in related disciplines, must recognize the deleterious impact of youth development within a system that they are unable to trust (Carter, Forsyth, Mazzula, & Williams, 2005; Helms, Nicolas, & Green, 2012; Surko, Ciro, Blackwood, Nembhard, & Peake, 2005). We must also clearly and publicly identify and denounce structural

violence as betrayal, lest marginalized youth believe that discriminatory policies and practices are acceptable.

Second is the importance of recognizing the various platforms from which youth speak and the related manners in which they form community (Lenzi et al., 2015). Both Black Lives Matter and Reconoci.do have a strong foundation in social media (Bonilla & Rosa, 2015; Martinez, 2014). As scholars and practitioners, how do we understand the formation of community in our age of ever-evolving technology? How do we partner with and support youth to harness the power, voice and agency that arise from virtual platforms that have a palpable social and political impact (Harris, 2008; Lee, Shah, & McLeod, 2013)? How do we use social media platforms in our own community research and practice? How do we understand and navigate global communities formed in ways never before imagined? It is important that community focused scholars and practitioners keep pace with the interplay between technology and community in order to critically *and* fully engage with youth.

A third lesson for those engaged in community psychology and allied disciplines, is that we can co-create other public spaces, through participatory action research, where marginalized youth have a platform from which to explore, solidify, and communicate their messages (Cammarota & Fine, 2010; Ozer 2016). However, it is important that the research we conduct is *with* youth not *about* youth (Rogers & Chance, 2013). We ought to privilege youth voices in decisions about policies and practices that impact them. As we have seen in the above analysis, marginalized Black youth in the United States and Dominican youth of Haitian descent are actors in their own right, making space for themselves to be heard. They are social agents mobilizing and leading their communities (Durham, 2000; Heidbrink, 2014). We must listen. Striving for youth-driven and youth-engaged research enables the transformation from resistance to institutionalization, a critical step in unhinging the discriminatory practices inculcated in structural violence (Suárez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, & Tseng, 2015; Zeldin, 2014).

A fourth lesson is that as youth demand recognition and change, we must support them. Black youth in the United States and Dominican youth of Haitian descent are eager to engage a broader public in the ways structural violence manifests in public policies, quotidian practice, and public discourse and shapes their everyday lives. In solidarity, we can shine a light on the structural violence that denigrates Black youth in the United States, Dominican youth of Haitian descent, and worldwide, and demand the structural transformations critical to address structural violence. From our respective positions of power as researchers, scholars, teachers, and activists, we must build individual and *global* communities, which ensure state accountability to all individuals and communities. Solidarity transcends nation-state boundaries; it is our global responsibility.

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