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Exclusionary Discipline Policies, School-Police Partnerships, Surveillance Technologies and Disproportionality: A Review of the School to Prison Pipeline Literature

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Abstract

For this review I sought to understand how the field of education has come to conceptualize and study the relationship between schools and prisons. In doing so, I found that the vast majority of scholars who have studied the relationship(s) between school and prisons have done so within the context of the *school to prison pipeline* conceptual framework. This review both explores the affordances and contributions of the school to prison pipeline framework, as well as some of the limitations and critiques of the framework when used as the most preeminent frame by which we understand and study the ties between schools and prisons. I examine these limitations by focusing on four principal areas of study within the school to prison pipeline literature: (1) school discipline policies and practices, (2) school-police partnerships, (3) surveillance technologies in schools, and (4) disproportionality. The broader aim of this review is to develop the way we conceptualize the relationships between schools and prisons by building on what we have already learned in using the STPP framework, while also exploring new ways of theorizing and empirically studying the growing relations between schools and prisons.

Keywords School to prison pipeline · Carceral continuum · School discipline · Disproportionality · Urban education

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Introduction

In 2015 eighteen-years-old Precious Walker was arrested and suspended from school, after a security guard found a box cutter buried in her purse during the school's mandatory morning inspection. In talking to Precious' mother, school officials later learned that Mrs. Walker herself had instructed Precious to carry the box cutter for protection on her two-mile walk to and from school. Their family car had recently broken down so in order to get to and from school Precious was walking several miles a day, alone, through neighborhoods Mrs. Walker did not entirely trust. Relatedly, Noguera (1995) shares the story of a teenage boy who was expelled for bringing a loaded gun to school–his father's gun– after his father expressed suicidal thoughts. Upon his father's directive, the boy took the gun to school so that he would not have access to it while he was alone. In both of these examples, the schools were more concerned with their definition of safety rather than the safety needs of their students. Instead, they were arrested, suspended, and expelled for making a poor decision that in other ways may have saved their lives. This phenomenon by which youth are forcefully removed from school and pushed into the criminal legal system is the meat and bones of what we now characterize as the *school-to-prison pipeline*. The school-to-prison pipeline (STPP) framework refers to a:

> collection of education and public safety policies and practices that place youth at an increased risk of prematurely discontinuing their academic careers while concurrently increasing their likelihood of correctional contact over the life course (Sykes et al. 2015).

Drawing on the latest data from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, during the 2013–2014 school year approximately 2.6 million students were suspended at least once and another 110,000 were expelled from school (CRDC 2014). Nearly 63% of the suspended students were Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, or two or more races. That same year, more than sixty thousand students, a quarter of whom had diagnosed disabilities, were also arrested while at school (CRDC 2014). Once more, 59.5% of those students were Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino or American Indian/Alaska Native. These percentages attest to the mounting racial disparities within school discipline, most often discussed as issues of disproportionality. Disproportionality, which I discuss later in this review, refers to the disparate rates by which minoritized youth– Black, Latinx, Native/American Indian, queer, low-income, and youth with disabilities– are overrepresented at each stage of the discipline continuum from office referrals to suspension to school-based arrests.

Literature Selection Process

For this review, I sought to understand how the field of education has come to conceptualize and study the relationship between schools and prisons. In doing so, I reviewed a range of articles and book chapters that examine various components of the school-to-prison pipeline. This review was neither meant to be exhaustive, nor a comprehensive review of the existing literature, but rather a conceptual review of select literatures that employ and/or grapple with the STPP framework (Maxwell 2006). The STPP literature has grown extensively over the last three decades, a simple Google Scholar search using the key phrase 'school to prison pipeline' renders approximately 41,600 results. A narrowed search using a 20-year custom range from 1999 to 2019 alone produces nearly 19,500 search results. Thus, my goal was more modest in approach and instead I reviewed the literature in broad strokes to first identify some of the principal areas of research within the existing literature.

The review began with a systematic search and identification of relevant literature using Google Scholar as the primary search engine. Numerous searches were carried out using key terms such as ("school-to-prison pipeline") or ("schools and prisons"), ("school suspension*" OR "school expulsion*"), and ("school discipline disparities" OR "zero tolerance policies"). Initially, I limited the search to journal articles and books published within a ten-year span, from 2009 to 2019, but later extended it to 2000 to 2019. The first search produced 17,600 results and the expanded search a total of 18,900 results. Next, I reviewed numerous peer reviewed journal and book abstracts which I used to organize the articles and book chapters into subthemes based on their described focus. Subthemes included 'dis/ability,' 'disproportionality,' 'restorative justice,' 'special education,' 'school resource officers/law enforcement,' 'cameras/metal detectors/surveillance,' 'Black girls,' 'Native/American Indian,' as well as other key descriptive categories. Upon reviewing the various subthemes, I then selected four subthemes for further exploration: (1) *exclusionary discipline policies and practices in school*, (2) *school-police partnerships*, (3) *the expansion of surveillance technologies* and (4) *disproportionality*. I selected these four subthemes based on their saliency, measured by the number of articles that fell within that category. Using these predetermined areas of research, I then managed another Google Scholar search using the four identified categories as the primary search terms. Within each category I selected, approximately twenty to twenty-five articles and book chapters to gain a holistic understanding of that particular subtheme. Peer reviewed articles with 100 or more citations were prioritized, although some less cited articles are included given their argumentative relevance to the review. This review includes a total of sixty-seven articles and book chapters representative of an array of methods, disciplines, theoretical frameworks and all of which engage the STPP as a conceptual framework they are writing *with* or *against*.

I start this review by first presenting different working definitions of the school-to-prison pipeline. I then discuss the sociopolitical context under which the framework was popularized and analyze the affordances and contributions of the STPP as a conceptual framework. Within each of these sections, I then discuss some of the limitations and critiques of the framework when used as the most preeminent

frame. I examine these limitations and critiques through the work of critical scholars, particularly Erica Meiners (2007), Kathleen Nolan (2011), Carla Shedd (2015) and Damien Sojoyner (2013, 2016), whose work advances new ways of conceptualizing the relationships between schools and prisons.

In the second half of this review, I consider how researchers who utilize the STPP framework have defined and studied the relationship between schools and prisons particularly around these four areas of research: exclusionary discipline policies and practices, school-police partnerships, surveillance technologies in schools, and disproportionality. Within each of these sections, I analyzed the relationship between researchers' conceptualization of the STPP and how they studied it empirically. At the end of each section, I then used one of the alternate frameworks to highlight some of the limitations of only using the STPP framework. The broader aim of this review is to develop the way we conceptualize the relationships between schools and prisons by building on what we have already learned by using the STPP framework, while also exploring new ways of understanding the growing relationships between schools and prisons.

What is the School-to-Prison Pipeline?

The school-to-prison pipeline (STPP) slogan first rose to popularity after its widespread usage in community organizing circles in the 1990′s (Sojoyner 2016). It is believed that the metaphor grew from the once popular 'schoolhouse to jailhouse track' comparison often used to describe the educational tracking system that systematically funneled disadvantaged students of color into the lower-performing educational tracks in schools (Wald and Losen 2003). The tracking system, as noted by numerous scholars in the 1980′s and 1990′s, disproportionately privileged middle to upper middle-class values and ways of learning; therefore mostly white students benefited from the upper 'accelerated' tracks in schools that in turn better prepared them for college and later life success (Tyson 2003). Meanwhile, droves of poor and lower-income students of color, especially Black students, were pushed onto the remedial tracks where they were often undereducated and ill-prepared for postsecondary education (Siddle-Walker 1993; Tyson 2003). Concurrently, there was an upsurge in arrests and incarceration rates that gravely effected low income Black people all across the country, presumably the same students who in grade school were forced onto the remedial tracks. These parallel conditions were further exacerbated by a series of sentencing policies, such as the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (i.e. the 1994 Crime Bill), that instituted higher penalties for certain crimes that disproportionately penalized Black people (Alexander 2012; Davis 2003). Crimes such as the distribution and possession of crack cocaine, a drug more readily associated to Black consumption, that unequivocally devastated Black communities for decades (Alexander 2012). It was these mirroring patterns of disproportionality that likely signaled to community organizers, researchers, and policymakers that a phenomenon was unfolding; one we now refer to as the *school-to-prison pipeline*.

Today there are numerous ways to define the school-to-prison pipeline, some of which emphasize the funneling mechanisms that push students out of school and into prison (Wald and Losen 2003), others that highlight the students most targeted and harmed by disciplinary policies and practices, and others the eerie similarities between punitive policies in schools and those in the criminal legal system. Heitzeg (2009), for example, reasons that the STPP refers to the "growing pattern of tracking students out of educational institutions, primarily via 'zero-tolerance' policies, and, directly and/or indirectly, into the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems" (p. 1). Heitzeg's (2009) definition emphasizes the role of zero-tolerance policies and the various direct and indirect paths by which youth are funneled into the juvenile and criminal legal system. Similarly, Hill (2017) offers the following definition:

The moniker denotes structural factors within and outside the United States public school system that push certain children out of school and into the criminal justice system. The pipeline "track" begins with laws, policies, and practices that are hyper-focused on enforcing discipline in public schools. These policies then become the vehicle for the implicit biases of school officials charged with enforcing disciplinary codes (p. 203).

Hill's definition is a bit more expansive in that it considers the role of structural factors other than policy, such as law and practice, that occur both in and out of the public education system that when coupled with school officials implicit biases systematically " push certain children" into the criminal ranks. Importantly, Hill accentuates the role of school officials as the primary enforcers of these policies.

In *Disrupting the School-to-Prison Pipeline,* Bahena and colleagues (2012) defined the STPP as:

an amalgamation of a number of different trends-from the overrepresentation of students of color in special education to the rise of zero-tolerance school discipline polices; from an increased fear related to school safety to perverse incentives from test-based accountability systems to push out low-performing students (p. 1).

This last definition is reflective of the larger body of literature because it captures various individual trends that when taken together constitute the intersecting components that maintain the STPP. What this definition also makes visible is just how extensive and multifaceted the relationship(s) between schools and prisons really are, such that all of the aforementioned definitions are accurate in different ways.

The *school-to-prison pipeline*, as a framework, has been accessible, catchy, and easy to understand and disseminate, sparking countless discussions, research studies, policy briefs, and initiatives at multiple levels. As a framework it inspired an entire body of literature focused on the relationships between schools and prisons and at different points in time has fostered bipartisan investment in dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline; even if their strategies, approaches, and end goals were different. Building on the aforementioned definitions, I now examine the socio-political context through which the STPP arose.

Situating Fear within the Expansion of the School-to-Prison Pipeline

The school-to-prison pipeline is often referenced as a phenomenon of the 1990′s, a phenomenon according to researchers, rooted in a culture of fear and demands for increased social control (Garland 2001). Scholars who study social control more broadly (Foucault 2009; Garland, 2001; Simon 2014; Western and Pettit 2010), might argue that the STPP stems from a longer lineage of 'fear of crime' that since the 1970′s has come to have new salience. In what follows, I explore the literature pertaining to the sociopolitical context in which some policymakers and school leaders pivoted towards retributive policies and practices in schools. I situate the role of fear, particularly that associated with school *rampage shootings*, the ill-predicted rise of the *superpredator,* and the momentary rise of youth crime, as central to how policymakers responded to threats of perceived violence in schools.

According to criminologist Michael Rocque (2012), *rampage shootings,* as they are often referenced in popular media, are characterized as shootings involving a current or former student(s) and multiple random victims. Rampage shootings, he argues, are different than other forms of school-based violence and are often used as districtwide justifications for why school leaders should adopt more punitive school policies (Rocque 2012). Given the heinous and violent nature of school rampage shootings, episodes like the nefarious 1999 Columbine shooting or the most recent Parkland shooting, are imprinted in the social imaginary feeding the illusion that schools are plagued by these random acts of violence (Larkin 2009). Rampage shootings, as argued by Rocque (2012), "create the impression that there is a school shooting 'epidemic' that is ongoing, creating something of a 'moral panic,' or a socially constructed crisis that may not reflect reality" and this pattern has persisted overtime (p. 306). As an example, in a 1998 public opinion poll 71% of respondents felt that a "school shooting was *likely* to happen in their community" (Triplett et al. 2014). As devastating as each of the shootings have been, and continue to be given the loss of life, studies indicate school shootings are a relatively rare occurrence; one youth violent death (i.e. homicide or suicide) per 2.7 million students during the 1992–93 and the 2016-2017 academic year (Fox and Fridel 2018; Noguera 2009; National Center for Education Statistics 2020; Rocque 2012). Despite their rare occurrence, rampage shootings are often cited as evidence for why schools, specifically large urban public schools, should prioritize and invest in school safety and security measures (Kupchik and Bracy 2010; Lassiter and Perry 2009; Triplett et al. 2014).

The disconnect with the previous argument lies in the fact that school rampage shootings are artifacts of suburban and rural schools (Larkin 2009; Madfis 2017; Rocque 2012) and the perpetrators have overwhelmingly been white males (Katsi-yannis et al. 2018). Even so, the *fear* invoked by school-based rampage shootings were used as ideological props during the 1990′s to garner support for zero tolerance policies and practices in schools; a process mediated by media coverage. To further support this assertion, Stanley Kurtz (2002) found that while the number of school-based violent deaths decreased from 44 to 15 between 1993 and 2001, news coverage on school shootings grew from 200 to 450. Despite the nearly 40% decrease in

school-based violent deaths, government statistics demonstrate that "by the end of the 1990′s, 94% of American public schools had zero tolerance policies for firearms, 91% for other weapons, 88% for drugs and 87% for alcohol, 79% for violence" (Triplett et al. 2014, p. 354). Although schools all over the country moved to adopt zero tolerance policies and practices, numerous studies have shown that urban schools are significantly more likely to have zero tolerance policies than are suburban or rural community schools (Triplett et al. 2014). So, while white suburban and rural schools are at the heart of school-based rampage shootings, those most impacted by zero tolerance discipline policies and practices in schools are Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students that attend high poverty urban schools (Triplett et al. 2014).

At the same time we see the imagined rise of the *superpredator*, a class of juvenile delinquents portrayed as so violent and amoral, that according to John Dilulio (Bennett et al. 1996)–the criminologist and former aide to President George W. Bush who first coined the term– the U.S. should "brace itself for the most violent generation of lawless teens." The anxiety over *superpredators* caused people to fear for their safety and policymakers to embrace a law enforcement inspired get-tough approach that expanded into all facets of youth life including schools (Chung et al. 2005). However, much to Dilulio's (1996) dismay, youth crime and violence reached its peak in 1994 and has since been on a steady decline (Love 2019; Noguera 2009; Wald and Losen 2003). Nonetheless the damage was done and the attack on young people, specifically young men of color, was well underway (Chung et al. 2005; Goffman 2014; Muhammad 2019).

In a seminal paper on the STPP, Noguera (1995) argued that policy responses had less to do with the imminent threat of violence in schools and more to do with what some perceived as a violation of an invisible social contract between schools and communities whereby schools were supposed to be safe havens free of outside violence. As such, policymakers, school leaders, and educators responded to the *perceived* threat of violence, not the actual state of school-based violence. Policymakers and school leaders took community led demands for increased safety as opportunities to increase social control in schools by way of punitive disciplinary policies, the usage of surveillance technologies, and increased school-police partnerships, each of which I discuss below.

Why the 'School-to-Prison Pipeline' Metaphor No Longer Works

For the last thirty years, the STPP conceptual framework has come to dominate how people describe and make sense of the relationship between schools and prisons (Sojoyner 2013). As a framework it galvanized people from all walks of life and was the impetus for the wealth of research and policy initiatives we have to date. Its usage prevails in part because it is easy to grasp and understand. However, for years now, scholars such as Annamma, Meiners, Nolan, Shedd, and Sojoyner have written about the challenges and limitations of reducing our conceptual understanding to the STPP framework and have tried to push the field to rethink how we understand and study the relationships between schools and prisons. For example, Meiners (2007) contends:

Linkages between schools and prison are less a pipeline, more a persistent nexus or a web of intertwined, punitive threads. The nexus metaphor while perhaps less "sexy" or compelling than the schoolhouse to jailhouse track, is more accurate as it captures the historic, systemic, and multifaceted nature of the intersections of education and incarceration (p. 31).

As such, Meiners (2007) argues that the school-prison nexus does a far better job of highlighting the various historic, systemic, and multifaceted linkages that undergird policy and practice. Meiners (2007) maintains that there are more than two linkages sustaining and reproducing the relationship between schools and prisons. Pipeline by virtue of its metaphor implies a singular channel in which schools are *passive* sites that funnel students into prisons whereas the school-prison nexus maintains that schools are one of the most powerful institutional links fueling the nexus.

Relatedly, Native scholars Waterman et al. (2018) critique the overall usage of pipeline metaphors in education arguing that it "dehumanizes students with its focus on the 'pipeline as a conveyor of products' and an emphasis on 'outcomes' and the degree 'credential,'" (p. 161). Drawing on the work of Pitcher and Shahjahan (2017) in which they propose using the metaphor of lemonade—"mixing, tasting and digesting"—instead of pipeline, Waterman and colleagues (2018) sustain that:

The pipeline metaphor decontextualizes and depersonalizes the student experience, and it favors the pipeline. If students leak out of the pipeline, it is assumed a repair is needed, and the cost of repairs becomes the priority rather than examining the ingredients that make up the pipeline (e.g. school resources, college knowledge), how and what counts when those ingredients are mixed, and whether some pipes (institutions) digest (filter) only certain students through various educational processes (p. 161*)*.

Although these scholars are specifically criticizing the usage of 'pipeline' as it relates to higher education access their critique rings true when we consider the implications of using the STPP framework as the primary conceptual framework by which we make sense of the relationships between schools and prisons. Too often the focus immediately turns to identifying solutions and the cost of those solutions rather than deeply and critically examining the underlying issues that birthed the problem.

As such, numerous scholars who study the relationships between schools and prisons have sought to reconceptualize and broaden our understandings of *how, why,* and *when* the criminal legal system, juvenile legal system, and the education system converge. Several have offered new analytic frames for us to consider, such as the school-prison nexus (Meiners 2007; Laura 2018), enclosures (Sojoyner 2013; 2016), youth control complex (Rios 2011), carceral continuums (Shedd 2015), and school-to-confinement pathways (Morris 2016); yet within the broader discourse the school-to-prison pipeline framework prevails. In what follows, I discuss some of these alternate frameworks including Nolan's (2011) nuanced description of daily life in a high-surveillance high school, Shedd's (2015) carceral continuum, and Sojoyner's (2016) enclosure model, as well as some of the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Nolan (2011) reasons that we are in need of a more "nuanced description of daily life rather than a pipeline" (p.72). Drawing on her yearlong ethnographic study at a large urban high school in New York City, Nolan found that the STPP framework did not adequately capture the experiences of the average student who for no other reason besides their being enrolled in their neighborhood high school were subjected to school-based policing, metal detectors, body scans, cameras, hallway stop and sweeps, and police and prison language. The pipeline metaphor, she argues, did not contend with the "more mundane, but pervasive phenomenon: how the lives of impoverished urban students are managed by a complex interpenetration of system" (p.72). In other words, the STPP does not grapple with the everyday lived experiences of *all* students attending prison-like schools; students who themselves may never be incarcerated but are treated like suspects while at school (Garland 2001). To further illustrate her argument, Nolan interviewed and observed a range of students, from those who are regularly suspended and have received court summonses to those who go to school and have managed to evade formal forms of discipline. By doing so she demonstrates that students, irrespective of their disciplinary involvement, who attend high surveillance schools are affected because they all, in some way, bear witness to the unequal treatment of their peers (Nolan 2011).

Building on the charge to reconceptualize the relationship between schools and prisons, Carla Shedd (2015), expands our lens of analysis to include young people's homes and neighborhoods. Shedd explores school discipline across four different public high schools in geographically distinct areas of Chicago. She argues that much like David Sibley's (1991) notion of "geographies of exclusion," youth inhabit and navigate prescribed "adolescent geographies," or social institutions, that inform the development of an 'ecological self' (p.9). According to Shedd, these interlocking "systems of punishment," produced and maintained by various structural forces, follow youth from one setting to the other creating what she refers to as the *carceral continuum.* Using both quantitative and qualitative data, Shedd (2015) makes a compelling argument that in order to broaden our conceptualization of 'justice' we must 1) focus on social institutions outside of courts, jails, and police and 2) develop studies that actively engage student perceptions of justice and injustice as experienced in and across social spaces, especially schools.

Influenced by the work of Nolan and Meiners, Sojoyner (2016) notes the limitations of the school-to-prison pipeline framework on account of it being entirely abstracted from "the historical and contemporary roots of planned malaise within Black education" (p. xii). Sojoyner (2016) asserts that schools have always done more than simply funnel students into prisons and have historically themselves been sites of organized anti-blackness through policies and practices that have promoted racial segregation in schools, inequitable funding formulas, and funneled hordes of underprepared teachers into already disadvantaged schools. For that reason, Sojoyner (2013) finds that the "STPP framework does not provide room to analyze the manner in which the technologies of control and *enclosure* models utilized within the current prison regime were foregrounded by processes set into motion over 50 years ago in the realm of public education" (p. 242). As such, Sojoyner prefers the concept of *enclosures* which he maintains is:

representative of social mechanisms that construct notions of race, gender, class, and sexuality: and just as important as the imposition of the physical and unseen, enclosure embodies the removal/withdrawal/denial of services and programs that are key to the stability and long-term well-being of communities (p. xiii).

Enclosure as a method of analysis is thus rooted in understanding the various connecting social mechanisms in relation to how they emerged. Using the enclosure model, Sojoyner (2016) challenges the idea that policy alone is the primary motor of school exclusion, as often characterized by the STPP framework, and through his study illustrates how policies are one of many modalities historically used to suppress Black liberation. By drawing a historic thread through a contemporary example in a Los Angeles school, Sojoyner demonstrates that in order to truly understand the relationship(s) between schools and prisons, and perhaps one day abolish these ties, as researchers and policymakers we must first understand the historic and ideological foundations of the relationship.

These arguments force us to consider how conceptual frameworks inform how we understand, study, and attempt to resolve the purported problem. For the purpose of this review, I argue that there are two lines of inquiry with distinct ways of conceptualizing and studying the STPP. There are researchers who study the STPP as a policy failure and attribute the overrepresentation of minoritized youth as symptoms of ineffective policy formation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation. Then there are other scholars who recognize that exclusionary discipline policies and practices are part of a larger web of mechanisms deployed within the education and criminal legal systems that have historically and systematically pushed minoritized youth out of school. Scholars in the second camp understand that eradicating exclusionary discipline policies and technologies of control, will not alone fix the issue of ailing schools and pushed-out children. Instead there are more powerful forces at play that impede racial, ethnic, gendered, and social progress.

From Referrals to Suspension: Punitive Policies and Practices in School

In sifting through the existing research, I found that various scholars have focused on the role of (1) *exclusionary discipline policies*, (2) *school-police partnerships*, and (3) the expansion of *surveillance technologies* in schools as contributing factors to the growing number of students suspended, expelled, and arrested in schools. These first three areas of study emphasize the *mechanisms* that fuel the relationships between schools and prisons, whereas the fourth thread of research focused on disproportionality; one of the "unintended consequences" of the school-prison relationship (Heitzeg 2009; Mallett 2016; Martinez 2009). Within each section I review articles and book chapters that relate to the discussed area of study and then provide an overview of their central arguments and consider the ways they inform how we theorize the relationship between schools and prisons. At the end of each section I then use one of the alternate frameworks to ask: (1) If we were to use this alternate framework what might we

better understand about this particular dimension of the relationship between schools and prisons? (2) How might the alternate framework shift our approach to the problem?

Exclusionary Discipline Policies

Within the STPP literature, one of the most studied threads is that which explores exclusionary discipline policies in schools. According to education policy scholars, the first of these policies was the 1994 Gun Free Schools Act (GFSA), a federal mandate under the Improving America's School Act, that made it so that all local educational agencies (LEA's) receiving Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) assistance had to adopt a zero-tolerance policy that would automatically expel students caught with firearms (i.e. guns, knives, or other weapons) on school grounds (Heitzeg 2009; Martinez2009; Potter and Boggs 2017). In theory, the policy would punish students who came to school with a firearm by expelling them for no less than year while simultaneously deterring other students from bringing a weapon into school (Casella 2003). The policy was grounded in the belief that the only way to successfully counter violence was with force, a theory as I will discuss later, rooted in the 1980′s 'get tough' crime approach (Noguera 1995). Conceptually, the policy was straightforward; you minimize the risk of students bringing guns, knives, and other harmful objects to school by punishing those who do and scaring others from even considering the idea. In practice, however the policy morphed into something entirely different resulting in the over-punishment and pushing out of hundreds of thousands of minoritized youth each year (Casella 2003; Skiba and Losen 2016). Three years after it was passed, the GFSA was amended and on-campus fights and alcohol/drug related violations were added to the list of school code violations also punishable with up to a yearlong expulsion (Martinez 2009; Milner et al. 2019). By then numerous schools all over the country were using zero tolerance as more of a schoolwide approach applied to all types of nonviolent behaviors such as dress code infractions, truancy (Losen et al. 2017), public displays of affection (Losen 2012), and verbal and physical threats (Monahan and Torres 2010). Wald and Losen (2003) describe this shift in policy application as "preventive detention," such that students were increasingly excluded "from school for their perceived potential to be dangerous rather than for any overt act they may have committed" (p. 13).

The GFSA, like other education policies of that time, are considered offshoots of punitive criminal and juvenile legal policies and laws of the 1980′s (Martinez 2009). Because of the mounting fear of violence in schools, the education system turned to the criminal justice system for management models thought to ensure safety and lessen student misconduct (Kupchik 2010; Nolan 2011; Simmons 2017). It is well documented that zero tolerance school policies are modeled after zero tolerance drug policies and policing strategies first adopted by the U.S. Customs agency (Martinez 2009; Triplett et al. 2014) and heavily employed in high poverty urban centers like New York City, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles (Goffman 2014; Losen and Skiba 2010; Simon 2014). Similarly, zero tolerance school policies established 'predetermined consequences' to certain school code violations with very little regard

for the student's context, personal and academic background, or rationale for the behavior (Milner et al. 2019; Potter and Boggs 2017).

Scholars who study the relationships between schools and prisons from a policy perspective note the shifts from 'firearms' to 'weapons' as one of several turning points within the unraveling of the school-to-prison pipeline (Martinez 2009; Milner et al. 2019; Potter and Boggs 2017). Potter and Boggs (2017) argue that once on the ground the GFSA produced a conglomerate of zero-tolerance policies that in theory fell within the scope of "safety" measures, but in application made it easier to suspend and expel students from school. Students nationwide were suspended, and in some cases expelled, for nonviolent school code violations simply because they were perceived as dangers to the educational environment. As a result, school suspension rates skyrocketed. It's estimated that since 1972, out-of-school suspension rates have increased for *all* students and nearly doubled for all nonwhite students (Losen and Skiba 2010; Weissman 2015). According to Wald and Losen (2003), the percentage of white students and Black students suspended annually for more than one day increased from 3.1 percent to 5.09 percent and from 6.0 percent to 13.2 percent respectively in a twenty-eight-year period. Notably, suspending and expelling students from school are not new practices and have in fact been the primary approaches to school-based discipline since the 1970′s once corporal punishment in schools was abolished (Triplett et al. 2014). However, what changed was the rate and rationale under which students were forcefully removed from school.

From a policy perspective the school-to-prison pipeline is often studied as a policy failure. Using Linear Purposive Action and Alternative Sequence Framework, a sociological framework used to analyze policy implementation, Potter and Boggs (2017) examined zero tolerance discipline policies in education and the "hidden abode" of how the policies took shape. They used "hidden abode" as a conceptual tool to think about the "unexpected results" of zero-tolerance policies in schools, specifically the disparate impact it had on poor youth of color. Potter and Boggs (2017) note that policies can often be shortsighted given the focus on "linear and rational relationships" which they argue cannot account for social capital. As such, Potter and Boggs (2017) maintain that even if policies are theoretically universal in approach, arguably the case with zero tolerance school policies, they can still significantly disadvantage certain individuals and communities with less access to hegemonic forms of social capital.

To further illustrate this point, Potter and Boggs (2017) analyzed school discipline data from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) for the 2000 to 2011–12 academic years and ran a risk index calculation and compared it across time, gender, and ethnicity (p. 41). Their study revealed two key findings; (1) African American and Hispanic youth were repeatedly suspended at higher rates than white students and (2) while the suspension rates for white students gradually decreased over time, the rates for African American students steadily increased. In a more recent study, Milner and colleagues (2019) examined the most recent OCR school year discipline data (2013–2014) and their results were consistent with the Potter and Boggs' study. While suspension rates had decreased by twenty percent, the racial and ethnic disparities persisted. These findings align with the larger body of research, although

what is different and compelling about the Potter and Boggs' (2017) study is their application of the Linear Purposive Action and Alternative Sequence Framework. The framework gives us a new way of understanding how and why zero-tolerance policies may have diverged from their initial intent. The policy orientation makes visible alternative means of understanding the problem, noting the role of street-level bureaucrats whose actions can expand and change the policy midcourse to involve more than what was originally intended. Accordingly, Potter and Boggs (2017) suggest that future policymakers spend more time contemplating the role of on-the-ground policy actors and their interests.

Faulty Framings

The abovementioned articles and chapters have done a great deal to help us understand the severity of the problem, however there are some limitations pertaining to how the studies have defined the problem. For one, these studies assume that the primary mechanisms by which youth are pushed out of school and into prisons are those created by these exclusionary discipline policies (i.e. the GFSA and the zero-tolerance approach) meaning they almost exclusively examine the policy process. By default, if the problem is framed only as a "policy issue" then the natural response is to change the policy which is what we see with policy reform efforts (Sojoyner 2013). Instead, were we to acknowledge that these policies are *not* failing and that they are in fact working in the way they were designed we can critically examine the underlying ideologies embedded in the policies themselves. What is missing is a critical and historical examination of *why* and *how* these policies emerged. Further, *who* were they designed to protect? Most of the aforementioned policy studies were ahistorical and absent of any critical racial, class, gendered, and sexed analyses although it could better situate the multilayered linkages between prisons and schools (Sojoyner 2013, 2016).

In turn, because so much of the literature has focused on the role of punitive disciplinary policies in schools the responses have also been policy centered. While policy can alleviate some of these problems, policy alone will not eradicate the racial disparities much less the ever-evolving relationship between schools and prisons. Future research might take a more historic and contextual approach to how we understand these education policies, rather than framing them as one-off policy blunders.

School-Police Partnerships

A second key area within the school-to-prison pipeline literature is school-police partnerships. Nationwide, there has been a marked increase in the number of employed security personnel in schools, including security resource officers (SROs), school-based police officers, and security staff. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), the percentage of schools with a security guard, a school resource officer or other sworn law enforcement officer on campus at least

once a week increased by fifteen percentage points from 42 to 57% in a ten-year period (2005–2006 to 2015–2016). Another study found that the overall percentage of 12 to 18-year-old students who reported having security guards and/or assigned policy officers in schools increased from 54 to 74% between 1999 and 2015 (Musu-Gillette 2017). While these percentages reflect an upward trend in the number of SRO's, upon closer analysis it is evident that SRO's are concentrated in high-poverty urban areas (Monahan and Torres 2010). Yet, the research on whether school resource officers or sworn law enforcement officials help make schools safer is at best inconclusive. Proponents of school-police partnerships maintain that the presence of SRO's and law enforcement officials in schools prevent students from misbehaving which according to that logic helps keep schools safe (Finn 2006; Kupchik and Bracy 2010; Simmons 2017). Opponents, however, argue that SRO's are often the catalyst for school issued court summonses, school-based arrests, early contact with the juvenile legal system, and sometimes even police assault (Love 2019; Noguera 2009; Nolan 2011; Simmons 2017). Yet, the current political discourse, particularly under the Trump administration, suggests these numbers will only get worse over the next several years.

The 1994 Safe Schools Act was the first of three policies–followed by the 1998 Amendment to the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act–passed in the 1990′s that facilitated and funded school-police partnerships (Kupchik and Bracy 2010; Monahan and Torres 2010; Heitzeg 2009). Thereafter, thousands of armed and uniformed police officers were deployed into schools, most with varied understandings as to what their role and duties entailed (Curran et al. 2019; Finn 2006; Portillos et al. 2012). School resource officers (SRO's) *are* "career law enforcement officers with sworn authority…deployed by an employing police department or agency in a community-oriented policing assignment to work in collaboration with one or more schools" (FAQ National Association of School Resource Officers 2021). SRO's are tasked with identifying and preventing crime in schools, meaning they can legally arrest, issue court summonses, and physically restrain a student perceived as a threat to themselves or others (Curran et al. 2019; Kupchik and Bracy 2010; Nolan 2011; Hirschfield 2010). Currently, only twelve states require that SRO's receive "student-specific training" and more than half are employed by a local police or sheriff's department (Curran et al. 2019). Security personnel on the other hand are typically unarmed, cannot legally arrest or issue court summonses, and are district employees like any other school official with no material ties to the criminal or juvenile legal system (Brady 2007; Curran et al. 2019).

To further understand the effects of law enforcement in schools, Kupchik and Bracy (2010) gathered observational and interview data from four schools in two states that employed school resource officers. Within each state they studied two schools, one that predominantly served low-income students of color and the other mainly white middle class students. They developed a comparative case study to better understand "how policing operates across diverse student bodies, as well as in different regions of the United States" (Kupchik and Bracy 2010, p.23).What they found was that there was "no 'typical' SRO" (p. 24), meaning each school used SROs differently. Further, Kupchik and Bracy (2010) discovered that the mere presence of school resource officers changed how administrators

and teachers responded to student misbehavior. They (2010) found that having SRO's on campus evoked more socio-legal interventions as opposed to "softer forms" of school discipline, read in-house disciplinary methods such as detention, referrals, or parent-teacher conferences. As an example, when discussing the purported benefits of having police in school, Kupchik and Bracy (2010) found that it was administrators and SROs, not students, who expressed their being benefits to police in schools. School administrators maintained that having SROs on campus helped particularly when making legal or security decisions. They also felt that the presence of SROs brought legitimacy to their efforts, as school leaders, designed to keep their schools safe. As a result, Kupchik and Bracy (2010) credited the change in referral rates, at all four schools, to the increased "criminal justice orientation" pervasive in SRO and police friendly schools.

Nolan (2011) similarly found that the combination of zero tolerance policies and order maintenance policing in school not only criminalized noncriminal adolescent behavior, such as talking back, ditching, and fighting, but also established a schoolwide culture of penal control. The school's decision to employ police officers and "safety agents," as Nolan referred to them, changed how school staff engaged issues of student misconduct. Administrators and teachers alike espoused prison language to describe everyday school infractions. Nolan (2011) convincingly illustrates how misbehaving students were treated as "suspects" and "offenders" who needed to be punished and removed from the school environment on account of them being perceived as "threats" to school safety. She writes:

> *In a building full of struggling and alienated students, order-maintenance policing took precedence over educative aims, and a culture of control permeated the building. Hallways were heavily patrolled. Police officers and agents would routinely confront students for taking too long to get to class, shouting too loudly, or wearing a hat. Additionally, many spaces within the school had taken on precinct, or even prison characteristics* (Nolan 2011, p. 4).

Establishing a police presence in schools is part of what Garland (2001) and Simon (2014) both describe as the normalization process of law enforcement in everyday life; a presence that contributes to the growing phenomenon of mass imprisonment. School-police partnerships are yet another example of where and how the education and criminal legal system converge to entrap students within the carceral continuum.

These studies capture the magnitude, depth, and pervasive impact of school-police partnerships. However, one of the underlying limitations of some of these studies is that they only consider the effects of school-police partnerships within the context of schools. Instead were the field to consider an alternate framework, like that of the carceral continuum (Shedd 2015), perhaps we could better illustrate that putting police in schools, particularly in some neighborhoods, may feel like an extension of the policing strategies students encounter in their daily lives. With this in mind Shedd (2015) designed a sociological study that examined Chicagoan youths' school and neighborhood experiences, as well as their journeys to and from school, to better understand youth perceptions of fairness, equality, and

social injustice. In doing so, Shedd found that Black and Hispanic youth reported higher rates of contact with police in schools and in their neighborhoods compared to their white peers which may speak to Black and Hispanic youth having higher perceptions of injustice. In a similar fashion, future studies might look at the effects of school-police partnerships as closely related to policing in the home and neighborhood context. Unlike the STPP framework, the carceral continuum recognizes that minoritized youth are constantly negotiating and traversing police in their homes, neighborhoods, and schools, such that policing is far more encompassing of everyday life.

Surveillance Technologies in School

In addition to the exclusionary discipline policies and the school-police partnerships of the mid-1990′s, schools also experienced a "security boom" (King and Bracy 2019; Monahan 2006). In this section, I explore the usage of surveillance technologies, specifically metal detectors and security camera systems, in schools. I start with an overview of how surveillance technologies in schools factor into our understandings of how schools and prisons relate to one another. I then highlight a few key studies, as well as some of the inconsistencies that arise in trying to characterize surveillance technologies as central to our understanding of the problem.

In a national study of 12 to 18-year-old students, the percentage of students who reported having security cameras at their school more than doubled from 39 to 89% (Musu-Gillette et al. 2017). Relatedly, Musu-Gillette (2017) also found that between 1999 and 2015, students reported there being more metal detectors in their schools, though the percentage was minimal—from 9 to 12%—compared to that of camera surveillance. This finding is surprising in part because popular discourse suggests that metal detectors are a fixture of urban high poverty schools. The twelve percent could however be an artifact of the students surveyed and may not accurately capture the reality of minoritized youth attending high poverty, high surveillance schools. Still, the more I examined the literature pertaining to surveillance technologies, it became increasingly clear that the exact number of metal detectors in schools is unknown. Although the approximations are inconsistent, there does seem to be a general consensus that if and when metal detectors are placed in schools, it is often in the context of large urban school districts with reported histories of weapon-related offenses (Nolan 2011).

Through the enactment of the 1994 Safe Schools Act, school leaders who could establish that their school had "serious crime, violence, and discipline problem, as indicated by other appropriate data," (H.R. 2455-Safe Schools Act of 1994) were eligible for federal funding which they could use to hire security personnel, to acquire and install surveillance technologies, and/or reimburse law enforcement authorities for school-based violence prevention (Kupchik and Bracy 2010). Importantly, the funding was also available to schools that received funding under 1006 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, and/or that could demonstrate that they had high rates of "youth under the supervision of the courts," "expulsions and suspensions of students from school," "referrals of youth, for disciplinary

reasons, to alternative schools," and/or "victimization of youth by violence, crime and other forms of abuse" (H.R. 2455-Safe Schools Act of 1994). By design the policy created a funding stream for all schools who needed the financial support, although the demographic requirements made it so that 'high need' schools in particular benefitted from the additional funding.

The STPP literature suggests that punitive disciplinary policies such as the Safe Schools Act are to blame for the expansion of the STPP, but what is missing is a critical examination of the individual policies. Contrary to what the literature might suggest, the Safe Schools Act could have been deployed in numerous ways, not just security personnel, metal detectors, or law enforcement partnerships, yet countless school leaders chose instruments and partnerships that made schools more prison-like (Shedd 2015). The Safe Schools Act endorsed partnerships "with other education, law-enforcement, judicial, health, social service, and other appropriate agencies and organizations," meaning school leaders could have used the funds to support community education programs, school-based activities designed to promote school safety and reduce or prevent school violence, counseling programs, 'safe zones of passage' for students walking to and from school, and even peer led mentorships programs, yet many invested in structural changes such as metal detectors, scanners, and cameras.

Perhaps anticipating these spending trends, the Safe School Act capped expenditures for subparagraphs (K), (L), and (M) to no more than 33% of the allotted funds (H.R. 2455-Safe Schools Act of 1994).[1] If school leaders had all the above-mentioned choices, why did so many opt for structural changes, metal detectors, security personnel, and law enforcement partnerships? These ambiguities highlight the need for more nuanced analysis on how these various policies and funding streams contributed, and continue to contribute, to increased school-police partnerships. While macro-level analyses help capture larger state and national trends, district and school level studies might shed light on how school leaders decision-making processes. For those who did move forward with school-police partnerships, willfully or not, how did they then navigate SRO's and law enforcement officials in their schools? Future research might attend more closely to processes of adoption, debate, resistance, and local adaption on behalf of school leaders and school staff (e.g. teachers and support staff) throughout the decision-making process.

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[1] *K) minor remodeling to promote security and reduce the risk of violence, such as removing lockers, installing better lights, and upgrading locks.*

(L) acquiring and installing metal detectors and hiring security personnel.

(M) reimbursing law enforcement authorities for their personnel who participate in school violence prevention activities.

Disproportionality

In this last section, I explore the issue of disproportionality by focusing on the literature that centers the experiences of youth with disabilities, Black males, and Black females. Although there are other marginalized identities (i.e. Latinx, Native/Indigenous, and LGBTQIA youth) represented in the disproportionality literature, for the sake of this review I limit my discussion to Black youth for the following reasons: (1) Black males and females are by far the most overrepresented students throughout the discipline continuum (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Morris 2016; Gregory et al. 2010; Winn 2011) and (2) some of the more critical research interventions, thus far, have done so by centering the experiences of Black youth. I couch this discussion within a broader discourse about the 'discipline gap' and then highlight some of the canonical studies whose research brought the narratives of minoritized youth to the fore. In this section, I ask how are imagined social hierarchies embedded within the construction and maintenance of the school-prison nexus? Here it's important to explicitly acknowledge that when we talk about the links between schools and prisons, minoritized youth–Black, Latinx, Native/American Indian, and youth with dis/abilities—*are* the links. The links exists in so far as education and crime policies as conceptualized and studied within the STPP literature directly and indirectly punish the already marginalized and undereducated (Milner et al. 2019).

Research has consistently revealed (Losen and Skiba 2010; Milner et al. 2019; Skiba et al. 2011; Wallace et al. 2008) that school discipline and incarceration disparities persist even when accounting for poverty, race, and gender variables. Males of all races and ethnicities are far more likely to be suspended and expelled from school (Gregory et al. 2010; Losen and Skiba 2010; Noguera 2009). Black, Latinx and Native female students are significantly more likely to be suspended and expelled from school compared to white female students (Annamma et al. 2014; CRDC 2014). According to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Black students represent approximately 16% of the total student population, but account for 40.3% of all out-of-school suspensions (CRDC 2014). Native youth constitute less than 1% of all public-school students but made up nearly 2% of all out-of-school suspensions. Latinx students on the other hand, are the fastest growing group of students at 25% and represent 21.4% of all out-of-school suspensions (CRDC 2014).

In a study of 364 elementary and middle schools during the 2005 to 2006 school year, Skiba and colleagues (2011) found that Black students were 2.19 times as likely, at the elementary school level, and 3.78 times as likely, at the middle school level, to be referred to the office for behavioral misconduct. Once referred, both Black and Latino students were more likely to be suspended or expelled for behaviors similar to that of their white peers (Skiba et al. 2011). In an earlier study, Skiba and colleagues (2002), also found that when comparing the types of referral infractions that Black and White middle schools students received, they found that Black students were often referred for less serious discretionary offenses, such as being perceived as *disrespectful, defiant*, or *loitering*, whereas White students received referrals for objective behaviors, such as vandalism, fighting, or drug possession. These studies suggest that at all levels along the discipline continuum–classroom

removal, office referrals, suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests –Black students are more prone to experience the heavy hand of school discipline.

Black Boys and School Discipline

In reviewing the STPP literature it is apparent that Black males face the highest risk of out-of-school suspension, expulsion, and arrests in schools (Milner et al. 2019; Skiba and Losen 2016); as well as higher incarceration rates and cumulative risks of incarceration rates—six to eight times higher—than that of white young men (Western and Pettit 2010). It is estimated that Black males (20%), despite their being less than sixteen percent of the student population are at least three times as likely to receive out-of-school suspensions compared to white male students (6%) (Arcia 2006; CRDC 2014; Losen 2012). Another study similarly concluded that in a single school year (2011–2012) one in four Black students, in grades sixth through twelfth, were suspended at least once that year (Skiba and Losen 2016). Contrary to what the data may suggest, there is no evidence to support the argument that Black boys misbehave more than white boys (Losen 2012; Skiba et al. 2002). Instead research suggests Black boys are often "unfairly singled out when it comes to prosecuting misbehavior that requires a more subjective evaluation" (Losen 2012, p. 53). Black boys, over the course of U.S. history, have continuously been criminalized at times for no other reason than their racial and gender statuses (Muhammad 2019; Ward 2012). As such Black males, as young as four and five years old, are frequently suspended from (pre)school because they are perceived as *defiant*, *uncooperative*, *disrespectful*, and *rule-breaking* (Gregory and Cornell 2009; Skiba et al. 2002). These biases are steeped in a history of Black males being portrayed as the "ultimate other" (Noguera 2009); an 'othering' that may contribute to teacher racial bias and how teachers, especially white teachers, respond to perceived instances of Black male misconduct (Okonofua and Eberhardt 2015; Okonofua et al. 2016).

Ironically, what is seemingly missing from the STPP literature are the actual voices and experiences of Black males. Although Black males are the most studied group within the STPP literature, seldom do these studies include first-hand accounts of their experiences (Irby 2017). It is almost as though the numbers are meant to speak for themselves. Too often these studies rely exclusively on statistics to capture the phenomena rather than supplement the numbers with real life accounts of how Black boys experience the criminalization of school discipline (Hirschfield and Celinska 2011). The reverse seems to also be true for other groups of students, such as Southeast Asian students, Native/American Indian, and Latinx girls, who are also disproportionately affected by exclusionary discipline policies and practices but whose numbers are not as outwardly devastating, or geographically widespread, as that of Black males (Gregory et al. 2010; Muhammad 2019; Noguera 2009). Those studies typically employ more qualitative, narrative based methods that center student voice. Although the numbers exist to support the existence of the discipline gap, more work can be done to explore the multilayered realities of students who are Black, male, and differently abled.

Black Girls and School Discipline

Boys are by far the most disciplined group in schools, however, the number of girls, specifically Black girls, suspended, and arrested in schools has grown exponentially in the last thirty years (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Losen and Skiba 2010; Morris 2016; Winn 2011). On average, Black girls are suspended six times the rate of White girls, and at 67% higher rates than boys (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights 2014). These national trends attest to the fact that in some cases the intersection of race and gender–being Black and female–can lead to increased vulnerabilities such that Black girls are increasingly more likely to be impacted by criminalizing policies and practices in school. Similar to Black boys, there is no research to suggest that Black girls are committing more serious offenses or that the nature of their offenses changed, instead research suggests that they are being *punished* at higher rates than any other female group of students (Annamma et al. 2014; Morris 2016; Richie 2012; Winn 2011).

To further illustrate this argument, I turn to a recent mixed methods study conducted by Annamma, Anyon, Joseph, and Farrar (2019) in which they analyzed a cross-sectional data set of all disciplined female students ($N=3,628$) in grades K-12 enrolled in Denver Public Schools (DPS) ($n=183$) during the 2011–2012 school year. In comparing the overall number of enrolled female students to the data on disciplined female students, Annamma and colleagues found that although Black girls comprised less than 15% of all enrolled female students, they represented 29% of all females disciplined in DPS. Influenced by Skiba's (2002) earlier work on racial differences in subjective office referrals, Annamma and colleagues (2019) conducted a bivariate analysis of the office referral reasons and exclusionary discipline outcomes. They found that, on average, Black girls were significantly more likely to be referred to the office for subjective reasons, such as, behaviors categorized as *disobedient* or *defiant* (49%) and behavior deemed *detrimental* (53%). In holding for socioeconomic status, ability grouping, school composition, and grade level, both Black girls and Latinas were more likely to be referred to the office for perceived disobedience and defiance. In reviewing the office referral outcome data, Annamma and colleagues (2019) then discovered that 52% of the Black girls referred to the office were suspended, compared to 20% of Asian girls, 31% of White girls, and 41% of Latinas. This study illustrates that in some districts Black girls are just as likely as Black and Latinx boys to be suspended and ushered into detention when their behaviors are subjectively deemed disruptive to the school environment.

In *Girl Time: Literacy, Justice and the School-to-Prison Pipeline,* Winn (2011) challenges ill-conceived assumptions about Black girls and argues that the entire STPP is raced, classed, and gendered, making Black girls the perfect target for school exclusion. Winn critiques the critical omission of "Black girls' voices, stories, and experiences with schools and now the juvenile justice system," in social science research and advocates for the re-centering of their experiences. Winn models their re-centering by focusing on the lives of formerly incarcerated Black girls- between the ages of 14–17- participating in a theater program, Girl Time, who navigated what she terms the "betwixt and between," or liminal state, of schools and the juvenile justice system, freedom and incarceration, voice and silence, choice

and consequences (Winn 2011). This multi-sited ethnography moves between several regional youth detention centers, a public theatre, the Girl Time program, and their performances both in and out of the regional youth detention centers. Her study provides a window into how Black girls along with teaching artists create spaces of freedom, in this case through playwriting and performance, under oppressive conditions and institutions.

Monique Morris (2016) continues the charge for centering Black girls in her breakout book, *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in School*, a narrative-based research study that explores the lives of Black girls in schools and prisons. Similar to Winn (2011), Morris contends that the STPP literature has primarily focused on the experiences of Black boys, and to a lesser extent Latinx boys, which invisibilizes the experiences of Black girls and nonbinary Black students. She argues that the experiences of Black girls and boys are often treated as synonymous, as though their experiences with school discipline and criminalization are one and the same. Others have similarly argued that in order to understand the relationship between schools and prisons, we have to move towards a more nuanced conceptualization of Blackness, that considers multiple and contrasting Black intersectional identities, including that of Black girls, Black queer youth, and Black trans-youth (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Dumas and Ross 2016). Morris maintains that in order to truly map how and why Black girls are disciplined, pushed-out, and criminalized we need to acknowledge all facets of what she calls the 'school-to-confinement pathways,' including historical and contemporary constructions of Black femininity. Specifically, the distinctive ways that Black femininity has been rendered inferior and within a more recent discourse as "ghetto," "ratchet," and/or "too loud" to be deserving of dignity, opportunity, and, in some cases, even life.

Unlike the previous sections on exclusionary discipline policies, school-police partnerships and surveillance technologies, the disproportionality thread within the STPP literature is more theoretically and methodologically diverse. The scholars in this section, particularly those concerned with the experiences of Black girls, were less concerned with statistics than they were with understanding the lived experiences of marginalized girls caught in the "between and betwixt" and "school-to-confinement pathways" (Morris 2016; Winn 2011). Both Winn and Morris use the girls' experiences in schools and juvenile detention centers to highlight why we need a more raced, classed, gendered and sexed framework. The disproportionality literature is the first of the four threads to critically engage alternate frameworks to help us better understand the relationship between schools and prisons.

Conclusion

In this article I explored the emergence and genealogy of the STPP framework as we know and use it today in educational research. Today the framework is used as a stand-in for understanding the state of school discipline and its ever-expanding relationship to prisons. Critics of the STPP framework, find that the framework does little more than signal the existence of a problem while missing the historical,

material, and ideological complexities involved in its maintenance (Sojoyner 2016). For them the school-to-prison pipeline is simply another mechanism by which minoritized youth are removed from schools and pushed into the ranks of undereducation, underemployment, unemployment, and imprisonment. These are the scholars advocating for more student-centered analyses and frameworks that get at the historical, systemic, and ideological linkages embedded in our public education and criminal legal systems.

For others the tension lies in the very way "the problem" is theorized and studied as a result of the framework. Most of the existing STPP literature has focused almost exclusively on the policies and practices that have led to millions of children being suspended, expelled, and arrested in the last three decades. While that work has been incredibly insightful and necessary to how we understand the relationship between schools and prisons, it has also hindered our approach to the problem. The STPP framing suggests policy is the primary problem, thus policy can resolve the problem. The issue with this assumption is that policy alone did not get us here, nor will policy alone dissolve the linkages between schools and prisons. Here I am reminded of Dr. Bettina Love's cautionary words (2019):

> *An ahistorical understanding of oppression leads folx to believe that quick fixes to the system, such as more surveillance, more testing, and more punishment, will solve the issues of injustice and inequality. This way of thinking is a fallacy of justice like the achievement gap is a fallacy of educational improvement* (p. 92).

Ahistorical understandings, as noted by Dr. Love, lead to quick fixes that oftentimes exacerbate the problem and/or worsen the conditions for those already most vulnerable. Instead, we must study and historicize our understandings of punishment and its relationship to the carceral state, carceral logics, and antiblackness (Dumas 2018).

Lastly, the existing framework suggests there is a linear trajectory from the schoolhouse to jailhouse which overlooks the existence of classrooms in the jailhouse and the experiences of young people living and learning in confinement. To negate the carceral classroom is to overlook a space of opportunity and potential intervention. As such, the framing of the school-to-prison pipeline and the corresponding research, is, however, incomplete if we do not also acknowledge and study the various "betwixt and between" (Winn 2011) spaces along the carceral continuum (Shedd 2015), as well as the historical, material and ideological complexities involved in its maintenance (Sojoyner 2016). Contrary to what the pipeline metaphor suggests, the relationship is neither linear nor streamlined. Youth do not simply exit school and enter prisons; in most cases there are various stops along the way and thus numerous opportunities to intervene.

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