



FAHRENHEIT 2024: Censorship, Education, and Immigrant Youth in Texas

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Introduction

How does censorship in education, Senate Bill 3 and Book Bans, impact immigrant youth in public K-12 education?

Implementation and rise of censorship perpetuates “cruel optimism” toward immigrants

A call for a systematic change in the inclusion of silenced voices in Texas K-12 curricula

Lit. Review

- **Optimism Hypothesis**
 - Early immigrants have a generally optimistic outlook on the facets and promise of upward mobility in the U.S.
- **Cruel Optimism**
 - “A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing” (Berlant 2011)
- **Critical Awareness**
 - Immigrant youth develop a “critical awareness of disparities and inequalities in material conditions, opportunities, and access to rights” (Dyrness 2019, 169)
- **Structural Violence**
 - “That which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which *impedes* the decrease of this distance” (Galtung 1969, 168)

Background

Book Bans

- 2022-2023 academic school year
 - 625 banned books in Texas
 - 3,362 banned books across the United States
 - 30% subject matter was characters of color or themes of race and racism
- How books are banned in schools
 - Representative (school/state) challenge books
 - Matt Krause’s Letter
 - Parents challenge the books
 - Frisco ISD

Senate Bill 3 87(1)

- House Bill 3979 Revision
- September 2021
 - Author: Senator Bryan Hughes
- SB3
 - “updates civics and social studies curriculum and instruction and prohibits the teaching of Critical Race Theory and its elements” (Hughes 2021)
 - restricts classroom conversations on current events
 - restricts educator peer training about systemic racism and oppression
 - restricts extra credit for volunteering with social or public policy advocacy

Methods

- **Mixed Methodology**
 - Online Survey
 - In-depth semi-structure interviews
 - Policy Analysis
- 18 years or older
- First and/or second-generation immigrant
- Has been previously or currently enrolled in any amount of K-12 public education in the state of Texas
- And/or the primary caretaker of the student

Quant. Results

- 50 responses, 43 fully completed
- **Demographics**

- 62.5% female
- 18.75% male
- 6.25% rather not say
- 4.17% non-binary
- 4.17% were genderfluid
- 2.08% were transgender
- 2.08% were genderqueer
- 34.29% Mexico
- 8.57% from Colombia
- 8.57% from India
- 5.71% from Venezuela
- 5.71% from Syria
- 2.86% from: Argentina, Canada, England, Guyana, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Scotland, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Ukraine, and Kenya.

Qualt. Results

- **Surveys**
 - Optional elaborations
- **Interviews**
 - 4 participants
- Participants' experience in education was that “for the most part, it was okay,” but they did not realize the lack of representation until they left high school.
- Several participants expressed that they felt hidden, that they had “to accept that [they] was less than; that [them] and [their] people, [their] religion, and [their] history did not matter or were just not as important.”
- There was worry for the next generation of immigrants for what they have to go through and that it would be even “worse” than their personal experiences.
- Some participants felt neutral or leaned on the side of supporting the censorship

“Frustrated”
“Ignored”
“Under-represented”
“Disappointed”
“Unwanted”



Discussion

- Overall consensus
 - Majority of participants disagree with censorship
 - Implementation of censorship promotes marginalization
- Knowledge gap
- Producers and consumers of knowledge
- Call for diverse histories and perspectives in classrooms
- Systematic change in the Texas education system to uphold its promise of upward mobility and equality.
- The political and social climate surrounding education in Texas causes perpetual “cruel optimism” for immigrants

Do you support Book Bans?



How do you think the passing of Senate Bill 3 does and/or will impact immigrant youth in public education?



Gone with the Wind

The Color Purple

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

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