"It looked like a jail cell:" Policing of Racialized and Disabled Students' Bodyminds in Higher Education

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Abstract

This article examines how carceral logics manifest for undergraduate racialized and disabled students who identify as or have a lived experience of disability. Using Disability Critical Race Theory, a crip-of-color critique, and carceral ableism and sanism as lenses, we challenge color-evasive ideology and explore how services that purport to "help" or "support" students—like mental health resources or disability support services—track, surveil, and police racialized and disabled students' bodyminds on college and university campuses. This qualitative study employs critical race methodology and critical disability methodology to center the counternarratives of ten undergraduate students. These findings expand the current K-12 literature in considering how racialized and disabled students continue to be subject to carceral logics as they enter institutions of higher education. Our themes examine how Disability Resource Centers enacted administrative violence, how racialized and disabled students were marked for removal and positioned as expendable and disposable on their campuses, and the ways in which students' reimagined alternative futurities rooted in care. This paper contains discussions about racism, ableism, suicide, police and medical violence.

Keywords: race, disability, racism, ableism, higher education, carceral logics

Introduction

Activists, scholars, and organizations engaged in abolitionist work have long examined how carceral logics are perpetuated outside of prisons and jails through a prison-industrial complex (PIC; Critical Resistance, 2023, Davis, 2011; Gilmore, 2007; Kaba, 2013; Kaba & Ritchie, 2022; Rodríguez, 2016). Critical Resistance (2023) defines the PIC as "the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems" (para. 1). This system includes social services, drug and addiction facilities programs, hospitals, psychiatric institutions, crisis care, schools, and other spaces that work with or "do the work of prisons" (Shalaby, 2021, p. 105, emphasis added; see also Ben-Moshe, 2020). But, colleges and universities also sustain the PIC, albeit in other, less overt ways that include and extend beyond the presence of campus police. For instance, in 2019, it was revealed that $3 million of Harvard's Endowment was invested in companies connected to the PIC, like the private prison operators GEO Group and Bail USA (Harvard Prison Divestment Campaign, 2019). Colleges and universities also uphold carceral logics that "frame marginalized communities as threats to the social order rather than adopting a systemic analysis of the structural barriers experienced by such communities" (Bergen & Abji, 2019, p. 35). Said differently, carceral logics allow us to name the ways the logic of prisons gets enacted every day in non-carceral settings and "sustain and maintain the kinds of ideas that prison requires in order to exist" (Bergen & Abji, 2019, p. 107).

We build on the work of critical scholars such as Subini Annamma, Nirmala Erevelles, Carla Shalaby, Margaret R. Beneke, and others who have revealed how carceral logics operate in PK-12 education contexts through classroom management "strategies" and the hyper-surveillance of Black and Brown students to examine how these same logics continue to impact them in higher education (Annamma, 2016; Beneke et al., 2022; Erevelles, 2014; Shalaby, 2020). Research has shown how carceral logics can also be embedded

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into service provisions that purport to be rooted in care because "the workers inside these institutions, even when coming from a helping profession philosophy, become state agents focused on producing docile, obedient bodies" (Annamma, 2016 p. 1211). For example, many disability resource centers (DRCs) have medical documentation policies that require students to submit "proof" of a disability as a prerequisite to accessing their services (Dorrance et al., 2023; Evans et al., 2017). While presented as "fair and objective," these practices do not consider the experiences of racialized people and communities within the medical-industrial complex (MIC; Mingus, 2015). These experiences include both the "fight or right to receive care, but also the right to refuse care" (Mingus, 2015, para 1). Mingus (2015) defines the MIC as a system that reaches "beyond simply doctors, nurses, clinics, and hospitals" and "it is… about profit, first and foremost, rather than 'health,' wellbeing and care" (para. 2). Not only are there long histories of racialized and disabled people being forced to have, or denied access to, care, as well as being criminalized while receiving that care, they are also framed as passive recipients of that care (Piepzna-Samarsinha, 2018). This type of racialization and criminalization is replicated in higher education where DRC offices become the arbiters of what constitutes an institutionally recognized disability and what "care" (e.g., accommodations) students are eligible to receive and to what extent (Dolmage, 2017; Dorrance et al., 2023). DRC accommodations also require that students "receive rights and inclusion only in exchange for conformity, self-support, silencing dissent, and erasing differences" (Chapman et al., 2014, p. 13).

Services such as counseling and psychological services (CAPS), as well as faculty and staff not affiliated with these services, also participate in the coercion and surveillance of racialized and disabled students' bodyminds through "the removal of non-normative bodies from public spaces through a host of discourses and practices" (Annamma, 2016, p. 1211) such as calling campus police to respond to actual or perceived mental health crises as part of mandated reporting policies and ableist and sanist leave of absence policies (Anderson, 2019; Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020; Nishar, 2020). In this article, we use bodyminds to name "the inextricable nature of body and mind, insisting that one impacts the other and that they cannot be understood or theorized as separate" (Schalk, 2023, p. 15). We also challenge the color-evasiveness that has permeated the study of disabled lived experiences in higher education by examining how carceral logics are perpetuated and sustained by practices and policies under the guise of "support" for disabled students and/or students who are or perceived to be in crisis (Ben-Moshe, 2020; Nishar, 2020). Building on the work of Annamma et al. (2017), Stapleton and James (2020) define color-evasiveness "as a racist ideology rooted in white supremacy to avoid accountability, acknowledgement, and identifying historical and continuous race-based discrimination while instantaneously allowing race neutral justification, laws, policies, and beliefs to persist as normal" (p. 216). We argue that not only are disability-related policies and practices *not race neutral*, they perpetuate and sustain carceral logics through the policing, surveillance, and dehumanization of racialized and disabled students' bodyminds on campuses.

We center the counternarratives of ten racialized students who identify as disabled or have a lived experience of disability. We use "who identify" or "lived experience," as opposed to students with disabilities, to accurately represent how students identified and that, as Mingus (2011) explains, "for many complicated reasons around race, ability, gender, access, etc." might make it dangerous for someone to identify as disabled, and because of this, we must "stop making assumptions about each other's identities and make distinctions between *how someone identifies versus what someone's lived experience is*" (emphasis ours, para 16-17). By being intentional in our language, and recognizing that students in our study, whether they used disabled to self-identify or not, had a lived experience of disability, we push back against the ways in which medical diagnoses and/or medical professionals have been positioned as authorities on disability in higher education, rather than students as experts of their lived experiences and bodyminds.

While we discuss interaction with campus police as one way in which carceral logics manifest for racialized students who identify as disabled or have the lived experience of disability in higher education, we also examine how DRCs, CAPs, and staff and faculty outside of these services can and do uphold these logics and normalize the pathologization, surveillance, policing, and criminalization of racialized-disabled bodyminds. The counternarratives of students in this study reveal how policies and practices on campuses operate as forms of social control, via legal compliance, rather than being rooted in care. Using Disability Critical Race Theory (DisCrit), a crip-of-color critique, and carceral ableism and sanism as frameworks, we consider (a) how carceral logics manifest for racialized and disabled students in higher education and (b) in what ways these carceral logics impact students' ability to access accommodations and other supports on their campuses.

Race, Disability, and Carceral Logics in Education

Much scholarly work on race, disability, and carceral logics centers on the intersections between the school-to-prison pipeline and the school-carceral nexus (Annamma, 2017; Kim et al., 2010; Meiners & Winn, 2010). Research has focused on different aspects of these intersections, from the imposition of literacy benchmarks that stigmatize multiply-marginalized students (Beneke et al., 2022), classroom management strategies that seek to control these students' behavior (Shalaby, 2021), and linguistic confinement that segregates students based on language (Cabral, 2023; Stevens, 2009). Disciplinary practices like zero-tolerance policies (Hines-Datiri & Carter Andrews, 2020) and the use of school resource officers, surveillance cameras, and metal detectors (Krueger, 2010) are additional examples of these intersections. Losen et al. (2021) found that Black students were more likely to be referred to law enforcement, have higher suspension rates, and more likely to be educated in a carceral facility over "discipline" issues than all other students, especially white students. Students who are racialized and disabled are more likely to be funneled out of schools and into sites of incarceration (Losen et al., 2015; Losen et al., 2021). While all students might experience a degree of policing, multiply-marginalized students experience this excessively (Annamma, 2016; Smith et al., 2007; Ward, 2021).

Higher Education and Carceral Logics

Annamma (2016) argues that higher education reproduces the "carceral logic of social control" (p. 1211). As Rodríguez (2010) explains, the tools higher education uses to police, surveil, criminalize, and immobilize students "are *as much schooling practices as they are imprisonment practices*" (emphasis ours, p. 10). Practices such as disclosure of criminalized history in the college application process (Castro & Magana, 2020), sharing of discipline records between K-12 and higher education (Annamma, 2016), and the racial profiling and hyper-surveillance of Black students and faculty (Iverson & Jaggers, 2015; Smith et al., 2007; Ward, 2021) highlight how carceral logics operate on college and university campuses.

Carceral logics also expand outside of instructional contexts to involve other institutional actors and spaces on campus. In 2020, a student at Brown University was followed, confronted, and restrained by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) in a bathroom because of a report that she had hit her head during an event on campus (Nishar, 2020). She was forced to receive care and later suspended by the university and charged with a felony (Nishar, 2020). In 2023, Luís Jiménez, a student at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), recounted in an op-ed how after they had disclosed that they were *in recovery* to the disability services office on campus while meeting about accommodations, they were asked if they were "still using" by the staff and informed they would not be eligible to receive services if they were (Jiménez, 2023). Two years prior, another student at UCLA, Cassandra Gatica, in another op-ed, detailed their experience with counseling and psychological services on campus. After meeting with a counselor during which they disclosed that they had previously struggled with their mental health and suicidal ideation, the counselor called the University of California Police Department; officers came to their dorm, handcuffed them, and took them to Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center where they were forcibly hospitalized (Gatica, 2021). We highlight these narratives not because they are exceptional, but to emphasize how racialized and disabled students navigate these carceral logics every day. Disability, as Puar (2017) explains, "coheres a long-standing avenue for policing, surveilling, and securitizing deviant bodies from slavery through the prison-industrial complex. These differing yet contiguous forms of enclosure are processes of debilitation in the most literal and stark terms" (p. 81). As the stories above illustrate, disability, especially for racialized and disabled students, is utilized as a justification to pathologize, hyper-surveil, and criminalize bodyminds that are socially constructed as non-normative (Annamma, 2017; Kim, 2017).

Theoretical Frameworks

We braid together DisCrit, a crip-of-color critique, and carceral ableism and sanism to make sense of how carceral logics permeate the lives of racialized students who identify as disabled or have lived experience of disability on college and university campuses. DisCrit is a theoretical framework that weaves Critical Race Theory and Disability Studies to expose how racism and ableism are interconnected and have been used to dehumanize and oppress racialized communities within and outside of educational institutions (Annamma et al., 2013). In our study, we focus on Tenets Three, Five, Six, and Seven. The third tenet of DisCrit "emphasizes the social constructions of race and ability and yet recognizes the material and psychological impacts of being labeled as raced or dis/abled, which sets one outside of the western cultural norms" (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11); this tenet reveals how disability-related policies function as a form of social control to pathologize, criminalize, and

remove non-normative students from classrooms, and, ultimately, society. Disability, particularly mental illness, is often used as justification to remove racialized students under the guise of safety, control, and liability (Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020; Nishar, 2020). The fifth tenet "considers legal and historical aspects of dis/ability and race and how both have been used separately and together to deny the rights of some citizens" (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 11) and the sixth tenet "recognizes whiteness and Ability as 'property,' conferring economic benefits to those who can claim whiteness and/or normalcy" (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 16). We discuss how colleges' and universities' narrow definitions of disability "foreclose access to legibility and resources" (Puar, 2017, p. xv) to students who are unable to obtain documentation or whose access needs are deemed too complex to accommodate as was the case of Alex and Rodrigo discussed later (Kulkarni et al., 2021). We also engage Tenet Seven, which focuses on resistance, to uplift how students' resisted majoritarian narratives of expendability and disposability (Annamma et al., 2013).

A crip-of-color critique (Kim, 2017) and carceral ableism and sanism (Ben-Moshe, 2020) urge "us to consider the ways in which the state, rather than protecting disabled people, in fact operates as an apparatus of racialized disablement, whether through criminalization and police brutality, or compromised public educational systems and welfare reform" (Kim, 2017, para. 5). A crip-of-color critique recognizes the role of the state in concomitantly enacting violence while positioning itself as protecting disabled and racialized communities (Kim, 2017). Similarly, we recognize the ways in which the institution, and specific offices such as the DRC and CAPS (a) position themselves as protecting students despite enacting policies and practices that harm racialized and disabled students and (b) work with police on and off campus (Nishar, 2020).

Ben-Moshe (2020) introduced the terms carceral ableism and carceral sanism to highlight the relationship between the carceral state and disability. Carceral ableism refers to "the praxis and belief that people with disabilities need special or extra protections, in ways that often expand and legitimate their further marginalization and incarceration" (Ben-Moshe, 2020, p. 17). For example, the removal of disabled students from general education classrooms in PK-12 contexts is framed as in the best interest of the student, but Erevelles (2014) argues that this segregation operates "along the axis of race and class under the questionable guise of 'special education' and rehabilitation" (p. 93). These practices "target particular identities for removal through racial criminalization" (Annamma, 2016, p. 1212). Carceral sanism refers to "forms of carcerality that contribute to the oppression of mad or 'mentally ill' populations under the guise of treatment" (Ben-Moshe, 2020, p. 58). These forms include nursing homes, residential facilities for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities, and psychiatric hospitals that disenfranchise multiply-marginalized people, as well as practices such as medical coercion and forced treatment, chemical incarceration, and institutionalization (Ben-Moshe, 2020). In the present study, we consider how perceived or actual mental health crises were used as a justification to involuntarily confine students.

As discussed earlier, the MIC extends far beyond hospitals, and we recognize DRCs and CAPS as extensions of this same system. Rodríguez (2012) explains that "the fundamental problem is not that some are excluded from the hegemonic centers of the academy but that the university (as a specific institutional site) and academy (as a shifting material network) themselves cannot be disentangled from the long historical apparatuses of genocidal and protogenocidal social organization" (p. 812). As we consider carceral logics in the context of the academy, we recognize that the university and academy itself not only (re)produce, but are deeply intertwined with systems of racism, ableism, anti-blackness, colonialism, and white supremacy. This means that even services that purport to "serve" marginalized students cannot disentangle themselves from this history. Policies and practices that require students submit to increased surveillance and scrutiny such as medical documentation practices, test-taking accommodations, and mandated reporting are not only upholding and (re) producing carceral logics, but carceral logics also structure how racialized-disabled students are marked as non-normative and disposable within and beyond their institutions.

Together, these theories allow us to consider how carceral logics are embedded in higher education in ways that mirror *and* diverge from PK-12 contexts. We engage DisCrit alongside a crip-of-critique and carceral ableism and sanism to identify how institutions, like colleges and universities, as well as the services within them that profess to "support" disabled students, can act in ways that uphold and exacerbate the pathologization, surveillance, and criminalization of racialized and disabled students (Annamma, 2016; Rabaka, 2010).

Positionality

We come into this work as scholar educators who have navigated higher education as students of Color and disabled. Our experiences inform our writing and our commitment to DisCrit scholarship as we have navigated racism, ableism, and other intersecting systems of oppression in higher education as students and educators. Danielle is a disabled and queer Chicanx scholar educator born in the United States. They were identified with a disability during middle school but discouraged by their family to seek accommodations for fear of the stigma that often comes with mental health diagnoses. During college, they opted to not register for support and knew that they would not be able to obtain an updated diagnosis to receive accommodations because they did not want to re-engage with the MIC. They later worked as a direct support professional with adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in community colleges before and during graduate school where they often encountered the carceral logics explored in this paper routinely normalized. Claudia is a multidis/abled first-generation PhD student and Chinese-Mexican Queer scholar. Claudia was diagnosed with a learning disability and subsequently registered with their DRC office for the first time during graduate school, only to find themselves frustrated by unmet needs and constrained by harmful rules.

I (Danielle) asked Claudia to collaborate on this paper as we had many conversations about navigating similar dynamics as a former and current graduate student. When I began this work, I did not yet hold a degree, and I now revisit these interviews as faculty at a R1 institution, which locates me very differently from the undergraduate students in the study despite sharing some similarities across identities. While we discuss the ways in which support services, faculty, staff, and police engage in violence on campus, we recognize that some people will read this as a call for restructuring; however, as Sandy Grande (2018) reminds us, "the settler state has an array of strategies—recognition being one of them—to placate dispossessed people while evading any effort to change the underlying power structure" (p. 56). As we go into our methods and findings, we want to name our commitment to centering abolition of carceral systems discussed in and beyond this paper at the heart of our work.

Methods

We engaged critical disability methodology (Kim, 2017; Minich, 2016) and critical race methodology (Lee & Lee, 2021; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002) to "epistemologically...privilege the experiential knowledge of People of Color as critical ways of knowing and naming racism and other forms of oppression" (Fernández, 2002, p. 48), and to "unapologetically center oppressive structures such as racism, sexism, and classism in research analysis" (Huber, 2008, p. 160). Discussing Minich's (2016) framework, Schalk (2017) recounts how they "emphasiz[e] that a critical disability studies methodology must engage issues of race and (dis)ability, including in areas not explicitly marked by disability" (p. 2). We recognize the inverse as important as well— we must engage areas not explicitly marked by race as racialized spaces.

We position students' stories as *counternarratives* that "function… as explanatory tools in naming, explaining, and showing racial inequities" (Lee & Lee, 2021, p. 85). We seek to upend discourse framing carceral policies and practices such as mandated documentation and reporting as "normal" or "neutral," and how "programs that attest to be race- and gender-neutral and merely administrative" and people who operationalize these programs (re)produce racialized harm and violence (Spade, 2015, p. 5). Counternarratives also allowed us to "dwell in the messiness of lived experience" (Stapleton & James, 2020, p. 216) and naming and interrupting whiteness in our research helps expand disability scholarship and practice in "ways that might have been missed if" white disability continues to be normalized as *the* disabled experience (Stapleton & James, 2020, p. 219). The data at focus in this study were collected as part of a larger qualitative study which examined the experiences of racialized students who identified as disabled or had a lived experience of disability at four-year colleges and universities in California.

Participants and Data Collection

I (Danielle) reached out to undergraduate students using emails, flyers, and in-class presentations. To be eligible for the study, students had to identify as Black, Indigenous, or a person of Color and as having a disability and attending a four-year college or university in the state of California. Students were first asked to fill out a survey about how they self-identified and about their experiences on campus. The last question on the survey asked if students were interested in participating in the interview stage. Twenty-three students responded to the survey and 14 indicated they would be interested in being inter-

Table 1

Participant Information

Pseudonym	Age	Race/Ethnicity	Disability	University/ College	Registered with DRC?
Tiffany	27	Black or African American	Traumatic Brain Injury	Public	Yes
Baudelaire	21	Mexican American	half deaf or deaf	Public	Yes
Susana	23	Filipina	Major Depressive Disorder, General Anxiety Disorder	Public	Yes
Bea	21	Latina; Mexican-Guatemalan	Type 1 Diabetic	Public	No
Alex	21	Asian; Asian American; Korean	Depression, anxiety	Private	No
Micah	20	Indian	Chronic allergies/ illness, Tourette's Syndrome	Private	Yes
Rodrigo	34	Korean	Head trauma; PTSD; tinnitus; hearing impaired	Public	Yes
Marisol	34	Afro-Latina (Black-Mexican)	Physical and mental	Public	Yes
Kennedy	19	African American	Cognitive processing disorder	Private, Christian	No
Andrea	29	Biracial - Guatemalan/ Black or African American	General Anxiety; Depression; Adjustment Disorder	Public	No

viewed. Of those 14, 11 responded to a follow up for an interview. One student was not able to meet due to ongoing scheduling conflicts. While discussing participants' backgrounds, we use how they self-identified through the survey and during interviews. When discussing students' collectively, we use racialized and disabled students.

In total, 10 undergraduates participated in informal, semi-structured interviews; the majority of participants met with me (Danielle) in-person, and one participant met with me over Zoom. Interviews ranged in time from one to three hours each, though most were around 90 minutes. The first interview focused on participants' experiences prior to college, while the second interview focused on their experiences in higher education. This process was adapted from and guided by Seidman's (2006) approach to qualitative interviewing which calls for contextualizing people's experiences and understanding the meaning that they make of their experiences. Examples of questions included, "How comfortable do you feel sharing the nature of your dis/ability(/ies) with new people? Friends? Teachers?"; "Did you register with the Student Disability Resource Center? Tell me about that. If you have not registered with them, what has prevented or discouraged you from doing so?"; and "Where have you found support in college?"

Data Analysis

Guided by our theoretical and methodological frameworks, we identified patterns and themes in the data that addressed our research questions. We read

and reread the transcripts and took notes, and then identified preliminary codes from our first readings and new codes that we generated from our rereadings. We met regularly throughout the data analysis process to identify and discuss patterns in the data. Examples of early deductive codes included "categorizing/sorting," "surveillance," and "safety/order." We also identified inductive codes such as "going through hoops" and "resistance" from our rereadings. For example, "resistance" included instances when students named the ways in which their college or university failed them and how services on campus could do better not only for them, but future students who had similar experiences to their own.

From our coding, we identified three overarching themes: (a) DRCs and administrative violence, (b) expendability and disposability, and (c) futurities rooted in care. In the first theme, we focus on instances of administrative violence enacted by DRCs. We discuss how documentation and accommodation policies and practices function as a form of gatekeeping and social control of racialized and disabled students' bodyminds. The second theme considers how carceral logics structure racialized and disabled students' experiences more broadly on campus including in interactions with faculty and staff. We discuss how students were positioned as expendable and marked as disposable on their campuses. The last theme centers students dreaming of a different kind of care—not as "a mechanism of control and oppression" (Nishida, 2022, p. 17) but care that was non-carceral, authentic, and humanizing.

Findings

Higher education has focused on a legal compliance model to accommodate students through designated DRCs. It is important that we problematize the ways in which accommodation, even as a term, is not *neutral*. As Dorrance et al., (2023) explain, "the concept of accommodations first referred to a process of gradual integration and compromise, a strategy referring to the white supremacist logics of accommodation of the minority by the majority" and "this concept of accommodation holds the racial capitalist valences of productivity—normatively construed—as a central value that refigures the disabled body toward maximum efficiency and output" (p. 51). "Special or extra protections" offered by institutions require not only that disabled students conform to racist and ableist institutional ideologies of normativity and productivity to access accommodations, but that they submit to institutional "track[ing], observ[ation], surveill[ance], and polic[ing]" (Dorrance et al., 2023, p. 52) of their disability in exchange for often the most minimal forms of access that do not fundamentally challenge the able-bodied white supremacist culture of higher education. Before we begin this section, we want to remind our readers that our findings discuss racism, ableism, suicide, police and medical violence.

DRCs and Administrative Violence

Students' counternarratives reveal how social control is enacted by disability services offices in subtle and covert ways that make accessing care difficult. Spade (2015) refers to these processes as administrative violence. For racialized and disabled students, this violence occurs through disability "classification systems" on campus that seek to manage and regulate disabled students, and also subject them to forms of categorization and surveillance from the institution that are not experienced by students who do not register for support (Spade, 2015, p. 77). Registration and documentation processes are structured in a way where students must first *prove* their disability to the institution. We argue that these policies and practices within DRCs functioned as a form of "procedural hassle" (Kohler-Hausmann, 2019), in which students had to comply with various DRC policies and practices in order to receive their *mandated* accommodations or risk not receiving them at all. This process included students having to submit initial records (i.e., proof of disability), go through various hoops each time they needed an accommodation for a class (especially for note-takers and test-taking), and comply with regulations in test-taking rooms around when they could enter and what they could bring inside. As Marisol discusses later, these practices that socially construct students as "criminals" or at the very least, "suspects" (of faking a disability, having a disability but using accommodations to cheat, and so on), and monitor them based on these deeply embedded and normative assumptions of worthiness. These processes are not only administratively violent, as well as carceral, but also require that students interface with the MIC, which has historically been and continues to enact violence on oppressed communities (Mingus, 2015).

Rodrigo, a Korean student who became disabled from the military, explained how even though he had documentation of disability from Veterans Affairs (VA), he was required to return to the VA hospital to get letters from doctors.

> They wanted doctors' letters, so, I mean, I don't know if you have any veterans in your family but, if you do, you're gonna know that the VA hospital is not a very friendly place. It's not. It's a very time-consuming place. You're not gonna get any

> work done there. You're not gonna get an appointment. You're not gonna get anything done. So, trying to get a letter from the doctor was not going to work and then, so, it was a week-long battle of me talking to the director like, "Look, man, you don't know what the VA is like just accept this damn letter as proof that I have headaches—that I have sleep problems." And then finally, you know, she was like, "Ok I'll accept it."

As Dorrance et al. (2023) explain, "registration is a logistically complicated and laborious process, and offices are often understaffed, sometimes taking months to process a request" (p. 52). It is also important to note that "*no legislation or regulations require that documentation be requested or obtained* in order to demonstrate entitlement to legal protections because of a disability and seek reasonable accommodations" (AHEAD, 2023, para. 3, emphasis added). Despite this, many college and university campuses require students to submit documentation from a medical or other professional as a prerequisite to receiving accommodations (Evans et al., 2017). These productions of disability "classification standards" through DRCs and then doctors and other medical "experts" perpetuate and sustain racialized harm and violence that many Black, Indigenous, and People of Color navigate when interacting with the MIC (Spade, 2015, p. 77). Building on the work of Spade (2015), Harris (1993), and Annamma et al. (2013), we recognize disability classification systems as one of the mechanisms in which whiteness and ability become forms of property. These systems also reinforce the notion of disability as individualized without recognizing how racialized disablement impacts entire communities through environmental racism, criminalization, ongoing colonial violence, and "resource deprivation" (Kim, 2017, para. 5). Resource deprivation is also a guiding logic of many DRCs which approach accommodations and services as a finite resource to be meted out to students.

Bea, a Latina student with diabetes, recounted a situation where her blood sugar suddenly dropped on campus. While Bea was not registered for support, she went to the DRC for help because she was unable to purchase juice on her own:

> I remember once I went in there cause my sugar had dropped and I have, no, I remember, I was really broke and I had like no juice on me, no glucose tablets. And I was like, "Oh, like, I'm diabetic…I was hoping you had like a juice or a candy" and the front desk lady was just like, "Who are you? Why are you here?" Like, "I've never seen you here…why should I believe you're a diabetic?" Like, she gave me an orange and I was like, "This is going to take too long for me to help… I'm supposed to drink juice."

Bea was not the only student in the study to recount hostility while trying to access support on campus. Tiffany, a Black student with a TBI, discussed an interaction she had with a DRC staff member while she was in a test-taking room on her campus:

> I was trying to take my test and now that I'm looking at it—it's like super petty—but one of the, the persons who works in there, um, he was in charge of the scheduling and I came—I believe it was like ten minutes early or whatever and I as like trying to get situated to take my test, like, you know? And words were exchanged and it was basically like, "No, you can't come in here yet. No! Bye! No!" It was rude and like I was emotional already because, you know, the level of test I was taking on, you know, so like I was already emotional from my course load. So, when I went in the office, I was just, you know, ready to just take my test but he was being, like, confrontational, you know, so it was like real bad, real bad. I didn't even take my test. I left out crying—like and I'm a pretty strong person—but I was crying, yeah.

Bea and Tiffany's interactions with disability services office staff reveal how these interactions were not rooted in care for disabled students but social control and surveillance. For Bea, she was met with suspicion, and unable to access support during an emergency because she wasn't institutionally classified as having a disability. Tiffany, who was registered, was met with hostility by DRC staff for wanting to come into the exam room to get situated (something she would be able to do in most classes had she not been using the test-taking room).

Students also shared their frustrations with how services were organized in ways that made it difficult for them to use their "mandated" accommodations. For example, students talked about having to request test-taking accommodations weeks in advance. Tiffany explained how this process did not consider the control her professors had over this process and also puts the onus of scheduling for services and support on students.

> As far as like, making tests, we have to you know, go through a…portal—and you have to do it this many days before and then just say, for example, just now like it was real—the semester—the start

> of the semester happened fast, so I was having quizzes and tests at the beginning of the [semester] even though we are still at the beginning of the [term], but like the following week of the [term], I had a quiz and it was hard for me to get accommodations from [the disability resource center] because it was the beginning of the [semester]. The teachers had not really established their schedule because at the bottom of every schedule it says tentative…meaning that if they choose to change the date, they can, you know? So, I had to interact with my, you know, teachers, and I tried to explain that to [the disability resource center] and they would give me—I want to say drama, but I know there's more professional terms—they would give me problems about the fact that I was so late scheduling and scheduling my tests and that happened like consecutively.

Tiffany's experience shows how these processes not only put additional stress on students but are not backed up with institutional accountability. Students' counternarratives highlight how carceral logics circulate in subtle and covert ways that can go unrecognized and are even normalized under the guise of necessary administrative procedures (i.e., procedural hassle). Students' experiences with "rude" and "hostile" faculty and staff highlight how these administrative procedures, such as documentation requirements and testing accommodation requests, often take priority over students' receiving actual support, and even discourage students from using accommodations or going back to the DRCs after having such experiences. Rather than "helping" students, DRCs often prioritize social control, via compliance, rather than meeting students' access needs, especially the needs of racialized and disabled students.

Students in this study also navigated more overt forms of social control and surveillance from their institutions than their white and/or able-bodied peers. In higher education, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are often met with punitive measures that "replace the student-teacher relationship with the criminal-police relationship" in which students become academic "criminals" who warrant institutional retribution (Howard, 2002, p. 47). Marisol, an Afro-Latina student with physical and mental disabilities talked about how discourses around cheating shaped the physical space of testing centers:

> Um, even when I went to go, you know, I went to go see like their testing room she kind of gave me a tour of their area. It looked like a jail cell, honestly, because there's like—there's like a monitor. I mean again, I don't know how it is— not that I do it for the intended purpose of like cheating of any sort— but I just felt like I was in a federal penitentiary taking an exam. I'm like, okay, well, I mean, I have more anxiety you guys watching me on, not only on one camera, but there is a camera on every angle from me and you have a monitor upfront? To me, I thought it was just, like, too much.

For racialized and disabled students who already experience hyper-surveillance, the use of surveillance technologies such as cameras can cause increased anxiety and create a hostile environment. Susana, a Filiipina student with depression and anxiety was also subject to similar forms of surveillance. She recounted an experience where she tried to bring her stress ball into a test-taking room:

> I remember going in…for one of my midterms, I asked just the faculty there in the testing office, "Hey, could I have my stress ball?" And they're like, "Well, unless it says on your accommodations you won't be allowed to have it." And I thought it was weird because in the lecture hall, I could just bring it out during an exam and have it…They wanted to make sure that, you know, it wasn't...Any part of it had answers in it or anything like that. Because sometimes, I think, the director told me that some people need to wear hats because of surgery or something. And they wanted to make sure that their hat didn't have any notes or anything like that, right.

While DRCs are separate from student conduct offices, they often are positioned as the first line of defense to proactively prevent disabled students from using their services to cheat. Preventing cheating, while not a stated core function of disability services offices, often provides a rationale to hyper-surveil disabled students like Tiffany, Susana, and Marisol through the monitoring of when they can enter, what they can or cannot bring into the room, and cameras. As Susana observes, if she had taken the exam in her classroom, she would have been able to bring the stress ball in, but because she was taking the exam in the test-taking room she was unable to do so. As discussed earlier, these policies and practices were forms of procedural hassle and are administrative violence. Returning to our theoretical frameworks, carceral ableism highlights that positioning disabled people in "need" of "special extra protections" functions to "expand and legitimate" their marginalization (Ben-Moshe, 2020). For racialized and disabled students, this meant additional scrutiny and surveillance in exchange for the

possibility[2] of access to accommodations and services that institutions are mandated to provide.

Expendability and Removal

This surveillance and policing can lead to more serious, and even deadly, consequences for racialized and disabled students including their removal by suspension, expulsion, and forced hospitalization, and even incarceration (Johnson, 2019; Nishar, 2020; Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020). A report from *The Washington Post* found that from 2019-2021 there were at least 178 cases in which police shot and killed people they were called to assist (Gerberg & Li, 2022). In many of these calls, police were called because a person was perceived to be experiencing a mental health crisis, was reported to have made a suicide threat, or to request a wellness check (Gerberg & Li, 2022). On college and university campuses, police also function as first responders, which can lead to students' being forcibly detained, hospitalized, and criminalized rather than receiving care (Johnson, 2019; Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020; Nishar, 2020).

Two students in this study, Rodrigo and Alex, had encounters with campus police while experiencing mental health crises. Rodrigo attended a two-year college after being in the Marines and talked about struggling in his adjustment to "civilian life." He had campus police called on him three times—twice by faculty and once by another student. In each instance, Rodrigo explained he was experiencing distress, ranging from military trauma to losing a friend. Rather than care, he was placed in what his campus called "the holding cell." He recounted in one instance how his professor called campus police on him during class after throwing a chair during a "debat[e] on whether or not the war [in Iraq] is justified or not" in his English class:

> And so, she pulled me to the side and she said um, "I'm gonna need you to step out of the class, I'm all for veterans, I support everything, but what you just did is against school policy. And as much as I'm for supporting you, I, I, have to stand up for this or I'm going to lose my job. I am going to have to call campus police." And I was just like "Okay whatever." And so, they called campus police, campus police came over and they took me into their little, their little hut. It was a small kiosk and they called it their "holding cell" and I went in there and they just sat me there.

While both the professor and the officer recognized that Rodrigo was experiencing trauma from being in the military, he was not offered support; instead, he was detained and held involuntarily until he "cool[ed] off." It's also important to note that the professor felt that she would be punished (i.e., losing her job) if she did not call campus police and report Rodrigo, highlighting how faculty can also become complicit in these logics through coercion.

Alex, a Korean student with anxiety and depression, also experienced involuntary detainment, first by campus police and then through forced hospitalization. He recounted how he had sent a text message to friends about wanting to harm himself. Alex lived on campus, so his friends went to his dorm room to check in on him. When they realized he was not there, they contacted campus police and told them that Alex was missing and suicidal. He explained:

> And then like, as I'm making my way to the dining hall though, I get, like, a call from like [campus police], like a [campus] officer and, and they're just like, "Hi, like, can you, like, stay where you are? Like, we want to, like, talk to you." And I was just, like, "Fine, like, I guess." I mean, it's like [campus police], like, what am I going to do? Like I can't run away from them, you know? So then, like a [campus police], like car, like pulls up to me and then they're just like talking to me about like, you know, my mental health symptoms and everything. And then I guess, I guess like there were also like the crisis intervention center people were also like, on the phone with [campus police] while they're having like this conversation with me because I think they needed, like, some pointers about how to like, assess like my mental health state and whatever.

Alex highlights how campus police were not prepared to respond to a student in a mental health crisis and so they were on the phone with a crisis center while interacting with him. The response to Alex being in crisis was to place him in the back of the campus police vehicle and involuntarily escort him to a hospital where they took all his belongings and he was held involuntarily for three days.

Higher education, with its racist and ableist definitions of the "ideal" student, declares that racialized and disabled students are "essentially excludable," as they are "those who 'we' can't, won't, or don't imagine as potential participants…in everyday life"

[2] We use possibility because students did not always receive the accommodations they were registered for as Marisol discusses with note-taking.

(Titchkosky, 2011, p. 39). Higher education then uses carceral methods to control and ostracize those who do not—and/or cannot—conform to its ideals, ultimately revealing to racialized and disabled students that their nonconformity makes them expendable to the university. This is how disability functions as a verb, or the "state-sanctioned disablement of racialized and impoverished communities" as opposed to "a minority identity to be claimed" (Kim, 2017, para. 5). Rather than "protecting" students like Alex and Rodrigo, the university acts "as an apparatus of racialized disablement" by pushing out and removing students who are marked as expendable (or liabilities) (Kim, 2017, para. 5). A crip-of-color critique exposes how colleges and universities are not "a haven of protection" for racialized and disabled students but are sites of violence (Kim, 2017, para. 5).

Realizing their institutionally-constructed "throw away" status can cause these students anxiety and depression, and lead to their pushout (Waitoller et al., 2019). Rodrigo talked about isolating himself as a result of his experiences with campus police. After the third time campus police was called on him, he was suspended and no longer allowed to attend school full time, and this was documented in his academic record. He was not offered access to counseling or support for his mental health during any of these encounters. Rodrigo felt like an outsider, and he decided to no longer engage with the campus community:

> Um, I-I was just like, "You know what? I'm just gonna go to school and I'm just gonna finish it." And I was kind of, I kind of change everything to the point where I decided I'm no longer gonna socialize with anybody. I'm no longer gonna, you know, actively join clubs or anything, I'm not gonna do. All I'm gonna do is go to school and leave school. Go to school, leave school. That's it, I'm not gonna do anything else. and 'til this day that I still do it, I still do just that. I have no friends on campus. I don't know any of the professors. I don't care. I'm just going to school. And I just want to pass. Get my degree and leave and so, that method has proven to work 'cause I haven't had any incidents or anything. Uh, for now.

Rodrigo recognized how the institution had relegated him expendable and had divested from him as a student. In response, the only way he saw forward was to refrain from forming relationships with faculty and other students, and only come to campus for his classes.

After returning to campus, Alex had a very different response from campus. He explained, "They were constantly, like, calling me, and [CAPS] was just like, please come." He recounted how he experienced additional harm when he attended counseling sessions:

> Yeah, so I mean, like the counselor that I saw, she was Hispanic and so she, like, I just felt like she was not aware or like whenever I would talk to her about, like, you know, my family dynamics or, you know, or…my family background in terms of, like, my mental health issues…I just felt like she didn't really understand that like, as an Asian American, like I always felt like, "Oh, I shouldn't, you know, bother my mom, or I shouldn't like bother, like, my family with my issue is because," you know, I was like, "Oh, you know, my mom like, works like 10 hours a day, you know, she's a single mom now, like, and she, you know, just because like, in the, like," you know, I felt like I tried to explain to her like, you know, "mental health and like, the Asian community isn't a thing." Like, a lot of families just don't get that. I felt like she didn't really try to address— like I didn't really think she encouraged me to like go deeper into that. I feel like she just kind of glossed over it, which I didn't really appreciate.

Landry (2023) argues that universities offer resources at this juncture with students only because of concerns about "risk and liability on the part of the institution," and then, even in these instances, the resources provided function to pressure students "to strive towards productivity and emulate normalcy" (p. 768), rather than to provide real support. For Alex, these sessions caused him additional distress. He explained, "I… just felt like I had to re-explain myself over and over again, and she wasn't providing me like these tangible-like strategies to help or like she just wasn't being very empathetic to that situation."

Students' experiences with disability services offices and campus police highlight how carceral ableism and sanism shaped their experiences on campus. Rather than facilitating access, DRCs often "expand[ed] and 'legitmat[ized]" the hyper-surveillance and scrutinization of racialized-disabled bodyminds (Ben-Moshe, 2020, p. 17). Mandated accommodations, or protections offered through law and facilitated (i.e., gatekept) by disability services offices, often function to restrict students' autonomy and legitimatize their further marginalization on campus. For students who experience mental health crises or distress like Rodrigo and Alex, this approach is used as justification for removal under the guise of their own or other's perceived safety. Students' counternarratives illustrate how racialized and disabled students encounter particular forms of policing and surveillance

on campus through the pathologization and criminalization of difference as well as how faculty, and even students, are socialized into carceral logics.

Futurities Rooted in Care

Our final theme discussed futurities dreamed by racialized and disabled students. Nishida (2022) explains that "as much as care is deployed as a mechanism of control and oppression, it has also been a tool for people to resist in oppression and engage in alternative and collective ways of living" that "not only makes one's life more sustainable, but also gives them the power to distract the flow of the status quo and enable another kind of world making" (p. 17). We center students' care dreaming to uplift how they reimagined access and support on their college campuses and recognize this dreaming of alternative care futurities as a form of resistance by racialized and disabled students. Using a crip-of-color critique, we recognize the importance of "the speculative project of world-making" and the necessity to "intervene into narratives of expendability" (Kim, 2017, para. 5). Students' counternarratives resisted majoritarian narratives that they were disposable and reaffirmed that they, and future students like them, were worthy of non-carceral and humanizing care on their campuses.

Some students focused on reimagining how they were perceived by institutional actors and peers, while others discussed how the campus and services could proactively and meaningfully support students seeking support or navigating crises. Tiffany dreamed about a future where racism and ableism were no longer obstacles:

> I wish they knew that I try very hard like I wish they knew that I'm like uhh very strong-minded when it comes to getting something or understanding something um just that uh I wish that they could see my strength, you know, and yeah— not be blinded or yeah blinded by the fact that I have a speech impediment or that my name is [Tiffany]— Black girl— I don't know— yeah.

Kennedy imagined a future where disabled students' needs and talents were honored, and where educators operated from a place of care rather than control:

> I just wish that it wasn't so quick to label kids, and then be like, "Oh, yeah, you have a learning disability," I just wish that it was kind of like… "So, therefore we're going to help you, although we are going to still challenge you" in the sense so that students of Color are not getting pushed back…So, I just wish that we had more teachers that cared.

Central to students' counternarratives resisting expendability and disposability was the need for authentic care from educators (Valenzuela, 1999).

Alex and Marisol reflected on specific changes the institution and services such as disability programs and the student health center could make. In Miller and Dika's (2018) survey on queer and disabled students, participants talked about their difficulty accessing mental health care through the counseling center and supports from the DRC. These difficulties seemed to reaffirm to students that their problems "were unimportant" (Miller & Dika, 2018, p. 94). Alex discussed being unable to access mental health support until *after* he had been in crisis. He reflected on the need for more preventative rather than reactive supports for students who navigated suicidal ideation.

> I feel like for me, because like, after I had gone through my whole, like 5150 experience[3], they kind of put me on like a priority list because they knew like, "Okay, he has like previous, like suicide attempts." So, they— I felt like they did prioritize me and like receiving those sessions from like the therapist at the health center. But, you know, which I feel like shouldn't be the case. I mean, to be frank, I feel like they, I mean, I feel like they also should be, you know, helping people who, you know, preventing people from getting to that point, really like doing more like preventative, like therapy than like more like reactive, you know, therapy after the fact.

Similarly, Marisol discussed how disability services could do more to scaffolding to reach out to students:

> I mean, I just wish there was a whole other way for some of these programs, I mean especially the disability program to be, you know, at least, I mean, noted in this orientation, like, the mandatory orientation. Some of these programs could be talked about because, I mean, I would say I'm a prime example as to what happened. There is no support system unfortunately. I mean yeah, they have this vision that you get here and you're supposed to learn—already [know] how to walk, which is true to some degree, but that's not for everybody. So, I think my experience would've

[3] Alex is referring to a law in California that can place a person who is in or perceived to be in crisis under an involuntary hold.

> been a little bit different had it not been for this—you know, right now, I'm still not getting notes for some of my classes and I've already asked for notes two times. And I'm already halfway through the [term]. So that right there is like, who do you hold accountable? I've done my part, where is the school doing their part? So, that's all. (Marisol)

Co-founder of Sins Invalid and one of the original dreamers of disability justice, Patty Berne (2020), reminds us that "there has always been resistance to all forms of oppression, as we know in our bones that there have also always been disabled people visioning a world where we flourish, a world that values and celebrates us in all our beauty" (para. 17). Students' counternarratives act both as a way of resisting the ways in which they were positioned as expendable and disposable and also offer visions for a different kind of future.

Conclusion

Collectively, these students' counternarratives reveal the ways carceral logics circulate in the everyday of their higher educational experiences, often in ways that go unnoticed and uninterrogated because these logics emanate from offices that purport to "help" disabled students; instead, students often struggled to meet their access needs. Our study also illuminates the need for non-carceral responses to mental health crises on campuses and the necessity of abolitionist dreaming in reimagining services rooted in care and liberation (Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020). Following Zena Sharman's (2021) abolitionist dreaming of healthcare system transformation for LGBTQ+ communities, we recognize the need for "a precise and controlled burn" in higher education "discerning what to keep, what to change, what to get rid of altogether, and where we want to create something new or entirely outside the system" (p. 139). This calls for "cripping accommodations" (Dorrance et al., 2023) and investing in peer support models that do not "replicat[e] oppressive dynamics… we see play out in the mental health 'care' system— dynamics that exist due to concerns of liability and fear of Disabled, mentally ill/mad, and neurodivergent folks" (Kaufman-Mthimkhulu, 2020, para. 15). This also includes abolitionist movements to policing being led by students on college and university campuses such as the #CareNotCops campaign at the University of Chicago and the Cops off Campus coalition which call for access to mental health resources and defunding of police (UChicago United, n.d.).

Through this work we call for a future in which the perceived inevitability of these carceral logics can be and are furiously challenged. Love (2019) implores educators to center Black mattering and joy as keys to transformative liberation, while concomitantly challenging whiteness, engaging in advocacy, moving with love, and speaking truth to power. Accordingly, we dare to imagine a future that recognizes and values all our students, especially racialized and disabled students, in all their humanity; in so imagining, we believe we can create a space for abolitionist practices to take root and grow. Such practices require, and urgently so, a reimagining of care that is not rooted in pathologization or carcerality— a divestment from spaces that "look like a jail cell" (as well as a larger call to abolishing prisons, jails, and other carceral spaces/places). This study spotlights the myriad ways oppression looks in the academy—in naming this oppression more clearly, we can fight it more fiercely.

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