Leaving the Academia/Community Borderlands to Enter a Libratory Convivio: An Authethnographic Reflection on Academic and Community Liberatory Dialectics

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Abstract
This article seeks to add to the body of literature in liberation studies including the areas of community psychology, liberation psychology, and critical theory, by addressing the disconnection between community and academia. It does so through an autoethnographic reflection which focuses on the author’s undergraduate experience as an activist, where through the analysis, arrives with the proposal for a convivio methodology to help facilitate the consolidation of academia and community, and dissipate the division between them. The paper elaborates on the need for convivio methodology within the academic and community dialectics, thus proposing the dialectics for liberation. Under the liberation dialectics, the liberation theory and praxis from each respectively, academia and the community, outreach to the others praxis and theory of the other in a sender/receiver symbiotic relationship. These liberation relationships are discussed extensively.

Keywords: Educational liberation, Critical theory, Critical educational theory, Pedagogies for liberation

Resumen
Este artículo busca agregar al cuerpo de la literatura en los estudios de liberación, incluidas las áreas de psicología comunitaria, psicología de la liberación, y teoría crítica, abordando la desconexión entre la comunidad y la academia. Lo hace a través de una reflexión autoetnográfica que se enfoca en la experiencia estudiantil del autor como activista, donde a través del análisis, llega con la propuesta de una metodología de convivio para ayudar a facilitar la consolidación del mundo académico y la comunidad, y disipar la división entre ellos. El documento elabora la necesidad de una metodología de convivio dentro de la dialéctica de la academia y de la comunidad, proponiendo así la dialéctica para la liberación. Bajo la dialéctica de la liberación, la teoría de la liberación, y la praxis de cada uno respectivamente, la academia y la comunidad, la divulgación a la praxis de los demás y la teoría del otro en una relación simbiótica emisor/receptor. Estas relaciones liberadoras se discuten ampliamente.

Palabras clave: Teoría crítica, Teoría educativa crítica, Pedagogías para la liberación.
Background

The center of the student union was bursting with students wearing black shirts with the name La Union Chicanx de Hijxs de Aztlan (LUCHA). LUCHA is the Student organization representing Chicanismx at the University. The local news reporters begun to pour into the university student union, carrying backpacks of recording equipment and their tripod. The lead activist was late. The community activist from La Union del Pueblo Entero (LUPE) was asking when and where we were going to start. The faculty advisor of LUCHA was telling the students to start handing out flyers for the campaign. University police walked by with their hands casually on their waists. The Associate Vice-President for Student Life and Dean of Students was walking amongst us, not in support, but surveilling the details of events mentally. I texted the lead activist. He was barely parking. Yet, the Sanctuary Campus Movement could not wait.

I am not an undocumented student, nor do I claim to understand their hurdle in the United States; but I am driven by Chicanx epistemology drafted in the Plan de Santa Barbara at the height of the Chicano movement, “that man is never closer to his true self as when he is close to his community (La causa publications, Inc., 1969, p. 9). As such, I am led to support all members of my community, and to stand in solidarity with all who, like me, are oppressed and institutionally excluded. At the dawn of the Trump administration, our university saw outbursts of racial micro-aggressions as seen with the racist graffetti posted in girl’s restroom saying “Heil Trump,” “Keep American White and Clean,” and “Spics go die or go home” (Flores, 2017). In an unofficial social media group page composed of students at UTRV, women expressed their uneasiness when they overheard a group of male students overtly claim they could now “grab’em by the pussy.” Students rose against the fear and created a coalition of student organizations composed of LUCHA, Minority Affairs Council (MAC) that represents and advocates for undocumented students, Muslim Student Association (MSA), and the Bilingual Education Student Organization (BESO). It was this very coalition that saw the rise of the Sanctuary Campus movement, which had its origins in Sanctuary cities, and decided to bring the movement to their local campus. The idea was to create college campuses safe for undocumented students.

As students, we wanted to hold academia accountable for its ideals of promoting vigorous yet composed exchanges with communal and individual respect (Cronon, 1998; Harney & Moten, 2013). We drafted a petition on the website Change.Org directed at our President uy Bailey to assure campus police will not question religious or immigration status nor allow ICE to do so, to make a public commitment to not release student records to ICE, and to create a Dream Center to assist and support the undocumented population (“Petition to Declare,” 2016). When the petition circulated on social media, it was widely shared with supporters as it garnered a total of 1,685 supporters. Nevertheless, a counter petition was circulated called “No Sanctuary Status for UTRV : Save Federal and State Funding,” which was not as widely circulated, with 292 supporters. Essentially the counter petition expressed fear of the Trump administration and the Texas overnor defunding the university via political persecution; the argument of the petition ran off xenophobic views aiming at stirring naturalized students’ fear for their loss of financial aid as seen with the following comment:
I’m signing because sometimes we have to be selfish and care about the people that are documented and work hard and look forward for financial aid to help cover 70% of their tuition. To those who are undocumented I’m sorry you cannot come get [sic] come into this country and start demanding things hurting student who are already here. These are some of the prices you pay when you are illegal (“No Sanctuary,” n.d.).

The local newspapers were looking around the Student Union as all the activists were scattered without any form of organization for the press conference. I called the lead activist again, but he didn’t answer. Finally he came from the other side of the building, looking at everyone, and I immediately reminded him of the news. He was still taking in the support for the Sanctuary campus campaign. We needed to begin. I announced to everyone that we would begin. The press proceeded to set up once we had a position within the student union. The lead activist welcomed and thank everyone, he proceeded to address the petition and administration’s lack of proper attention. With copies of the petition in his hand lifted for all the cameras to see, he made it clear; “Bailey can either stand with us on the right side of history, or against us.” As the press conference finished, I led a march to the student service building but in a moment of passion (and empowerment), the lead activists decided to personally deliver the letters with the community joining him.

Introduction

As Freire (1976) reinforces in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, praxis and reflection are intertwined in the process of liberation of oppression. Through my academic training, I came to associate praxis with community, and theory with the academy, as if both exclusively belonged to those I associated with. It was because of this epistemological error that I failed to grasp academic and community activist coming together to embrace a deinstitutionalized liberation philosophy. It is the purpose of this paper to share with you my dialectical journey to mediate the “separation” between praxis and reflection. My questioning of it remained for so long within the walls of the institution, referred to in a dissenting manner by many community activist as “the ivory tower.” Choosing to remain solely within the ivory tower failed to facilitate the praxis/theory and community/academia paradox. Therefore to be able to allow myself to leave it, I had to accept the chaos of the socio-psychological borderlands encountered for individuals of color in academia.

Upon accepting the intersectionality of education, class, race, politics, and culture in my experience within higher education, I was able to make the following claim that will form the guiding idea of this paper: To foster a liberation education, faculty and student’s dialectics need to be joined into one to support each other’s struggles. This will require transcending the contradiction of praxis/theory by acknowledging communities and academia as capable of bearing both. As such, community contains its own individual set of praxis and theory that is different from that of academia, and vice versa. To embark on the never-ending journey to liberate education, the dialectics are weaved into one by having the praxis of academia linked directly to the theory of communities, and by having the praxis of communities directly linked to theories of academia. This is process I call the uniting of the liberation dialectics. This process, if done humbly and appropriately, will transcend the separation between academia and the communities via the master’s tools enabling for advancement of communities and the academy alike. (Zulé, 2011).
In trying to make sense of the institutional border between the academy and my Chicanx community, I will explore the following different components that influenced the liberation dialectics. They include: liberational psychology, community psychology, and critical theory which inform my ontology within the Chicanx community; and an autoethnography of my role in the Sanctuary campus movement at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRV). Liberation Psychology, community psychology, and Critical theory formed my theory, while my activism in the Sanctuary campus movement formed my praxis. The exploration of the Chicanx activity during the Chicano movement was the catalyst and vessel for reflection of the liberation sought in the sanctuary campus movement, and largely, my realization for the need for a partnership between the academic and communal dialectics.

Theoretical underpinnings

By merging liberation psychology, Community psychology, and critical theory, a Chicanx theoretical understanding of dialectics can be understood. According to Flores Osorio (2009), dialectics “means mediation and synthesis of social praxis” and becomes “a rational instrument for investigation, one which furthers the present, the appearance, of social reality, through a string of abstractions-concreations tending to transform reality” (p. 13). Here, critical theory provides lenses to scrutinize the present day reality, liberation psychology serves to overcome that dominant reality by reinforcing people’s own sense of being, and community psychology serves as a guide to support people as they work together to change their reality. While it is tempting to identify critical theory as reflection, liberation psychology as promoting a liberation theoretical background, and community psychology as a liberation praxis, such would negate the abilities of each to interact with other. In other words all three fields help to create a liberation theory, praxis, and reflection.

Dialectics, whether in academia or in the community, aims at the formation of conscious individuals through the process of conscientización, or the use of dialogue or platicá to create horizontal relationships and partnerships geared at humanizing the oppressed (Freire, 2015, p. 67). To arrive at conscientización requires members of both the academy and the community to intervene theoretically and by means of praxis in the lives of their respective avenue, by doing so they can ensure that their formation, or upbringing, is one of liberation (Horton, Bell, aventa, & Peters, 1990, p. 220-221). Liberation here is defined as empowering individuals to become critical of the larger oppressive social structures they are members of and enacting change upon them through marco and micro approaches (Paloma & Manzano-Arrondo, 2011, p. 311). Academia and the community can work to alter the internalized dehumanizing behavior of their members by addressing the realities in which they live in, acknowledging and validating them, and assisting in the exposing of the subversive themes by the higher powers that be (Freire, 2015, p. 94-95).

A Liberation Theoretical Framework

Liberation theorists Martín-Baró (1994) in his call to action for Latin American Psychology to become emancipated, assists in outlining the “urgent tasks” to help the formation of a conscious liberated individuals (p. 30). Martín-Baró (p. 199) includes to de-ideologize the dominant narrative and social constructs, in which people reject this and instead (re)construct their own knowledge based on their own experiences and those shared collectively (p. 31).
Horton, Bell, aventa, & Peters (1990) additionally advocate for education derived from everyday life and practice called “experiential education (p. 202).” A precursor to this step, also alluded by Freire’s concept of intervention, is the need to recover the historical memory of the marginalized masses (Horton, Bell, aventa, & Peters, 1990, p. 146; Martín-Baró, 1994, p. 30). Resurfacing the “lost” history to the people will allow them to reflect, thus stimulate their praxis and can potentially aid them in rejecting the oppressor’s theoretical underpinning. The last step mentioned by Martín-Baró (1994) is the use of people’s virtues to liberate, also part of community psychology’s philosophy (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).

In order for the urgent tasks to be carried out, a new form of unorthodox psychology is required, one that strays away from the notion of objectivity, and positivism. The notion of objectivity has been challenged by critical theory according to Cordetti (n.d.). Under critical theory, objectivity is seen as used by the dominant form of power to engage in “instrumental” rationality were the masses surrender to normative criteria devised in a despotic manner and enforced through social, political, and violent means (p. 12). This process echoes that of false generosity (Freire, 2015, p. 44-47). In false generosity the will of the oppressor is prescribed to the oppressed who then attribute the act to benevolence further solidifying the hierarchy of the oppressor. Positivism is heavily engrained into mainstream psychology. It recreates the notion of “objectivity” ignoring the human aspect, or the conditions under which it can find itself. It can be identified as a social laboratory whose attempts are ineffectual at humanizing its subjects, therefore not a method for liberation (Martín-Baró, 1994, p. 21).

To counter these forces, Martín-Baró (1994) and Waltkins and Shulman (2010) have provided the framework required to generate the structural liberation. Watkins and Shulman used the analogy of assisted regeneration, a term from contemporary environmentalist were humans collaborate in devastated environments to strengthen and grow the biodiversity (p. 15). Under this process, various layers of development need to occur: First, a local area of desired biodiversity needs to be selected and fenced to keep animals and people out. In liberation psychology, this search for biodiversity is associated with Freire (2015)’s problem posing education (p. 83). By posing a question, the individuals seeking liberation can reflect on their way of life as dynamic and not static, and seek a plan of action. Next, the species of plants need to be identified in both forms: mature and seeds. In liberation psychology, this means for the liberation team to be knowledgeable of their community, resources, and socio-political structure. Lastly, the biodiversity is continuously strengthen to the point of new hybrid species emerging and keeping invading species or colonizing species at bay. In liberation psychology, this is the road to empowering communities.

Martín-Baró (1994) lists the frame for a structural liberation within the context of the field of psychology in academia. For psychology in Latin America to be liberated, it will require the following: a new horizon, a new epistemology, and a new praxis (p. 26). This process is similar to the biological analogy of assisted regeneration. Establishing a new horizon requires for the liberation seeking individuals, alongside with the practitioner, to reject a drive for positivistic neocolonial tendencies and intellectualize and strategize on the problems affecting the community (p. 26). Establishing this new horizon, under the analogy of assisted regeneration, is fencing the rich biodiversity to be cared for at the later stage.

The second element proposed by Martín-Baró (1994) is a new epistemology. Seeking a new epistemology requires revolutionary perspectives and praxis. As mentioned before, to
establish a counter perspective itself requires to de-ideologize the oppressive tactics found within the oppressed. This requires neocolonial institutions to be transformed through internal and external advances (Horton, Bell, aventa, & Peters, 1990, p. 206). This allows for an internal push on the neocolonial institutions that allows for external advances to critique the neocolonial institutions. By doing work through external and internal channels, liberation messages are prevented from being filtered due to being coopted on either channel. This course in itself is practice till the liberated individuals reflect on their reflection, constituting praxis (Freire, 2015, p. 65). The internal advances benefit from this movement as they can bring liberation dialogue into the system, and assess the neocolonial institution using their own tools (hooks, 1994; Sulé, 2011). This step is synonymous with assisted regeneration to identifying infant seeds and mature plants imperative to the biodiversity of the environment. The seeds and plants are synonymous to the liberation perspectives rooted in the community that will aid in its salvation, and the search for the best planting techniques correlates to searching for prime liberation practices and liberation tools for reflection to ultimate in a liberation praxis.

A liberation praxis, the third element proposed by Martin-Baró (1994), requires liberation psychologists to circumvent neoliberal institutions and transcend the notion of subject/object binomial (p. 29). This requires the rejection of the colonial definition of objectivism because it assumes the liberation researcher, practitioner, and individual unsuited to take a stance, but to contrary, liberation requires subjectivity to allow the liberation seeking group and individuals to bare their voice as part of the society that is aiming to designate them as stagnate objects who are acted upon (Jiménez-Domínguez, 2009, p. 41). As it was with the racialization of African Americans, when individuals and communities arrive at the intersecting road of “turn white or disappear,” those assisting them in their liberation lay out the decisions based on their level of consciousness (Fanon, 2008, p. 75). The two routes include action, or passivity. Action, other the contrary, leads to reject the dichotomy of “turn white or disappear” and engage in refortalecimiento (Vázquez Rivera, 2004). In critical psychology, under refortalecimiento, it is implied that systemic change cannot provide immediate relief for those seeking liberation, therefore, individuals and communities must resort to their “weaknesses” and convert them into strengths by creative and revolutionary means (Vázquez Rivera, 2004, p. 45). Passivity leads to the (re)creation of the oppressed being socially, culturally, and political dehumanized, leading to fatalism. Under fatalism, not only do individuals further plunge into neocolonial hierarchies, but experience symbolic loss. This means the loss of culture, rituals, and individual identity (Watkins & Shulman, 2008, p. 2). Thus, objectivity and passivity cannot be incorporated into the praxis of liberation seeking individuals and community.

Raising and cultivating consciousness in the community and academia is a daunting task that requires for the individuals to come to their own startling realization. Both the community and academia must realize they are in need of humanization and freedom from institutional systemic oppression (Freire, 2015, p. 67). Such an extensive process requires a revolutionary liberation leader to be trained beyond dialogue; the revolutionary leader needs to be able to plant liberation seeds, or moments of reflection, strategically within the system and outside. If the external world is outside of their spheres of influence because the leader has been co-opted, the revolutionary liberation leader must then find innovative new approaches for them to bring the external into the internal. Additionally, this means for the internal to spill flow into the external. Identifying the internal or external depends to the perspective.
For an academic, who seeks institutional liberation of her/his program, college, university, field, conference, and so forth, they likewise must seek communal liberation (Martín-Baró, 1994). Such is the current case with western psychology (re)creating colonization and alienating their patients because they are incapable of conforming (Duran, Firehammer, & onzalez, 2008, p. 288). For a community member seeking communal liberation of their colonia, barrio, neighborhood, city, nonprofit, and so forth requires her/him to seek academic (educational) liberation. This is in part because members of the academy are part of one’s community, but unfortunately have been subjugated to the ivory tower’s norms (Sulé, 2011). These individuals, although part of the academy, are disenfranchise due to their racial and sociocultural upbringing. Furthermore, outside of academia, they too are disenfranchised for the communities they constitute. Thus, individuals within academia need a liberation rooted from the community.

The Epistemological Hybridity

This is the foundational philosophy that alludes to the need for new revolutionary dialectics for both academia and the community. Furthermore, this philosophy establishes the desperate need to have both dialectics intertwine. To continue the analogy of assisted regeneration, both dialectics need to be triaged, protected, and restored together. A call to have this dialectics merge has been advocated by Duran, Firehammer, & onzalez, (2008) when they speak of the epistemological hybridity. The call is to mental practitioners to include the “cultural life-world” of their patients in their treatment (p. 30). While the step is one of revolutionary liberation leader, it will only enable the liberation of the patients and their community, but will leave the field of psychology waiting for their liberation. Therefore, while it is a great stride for liberation, is incomplete.

The epistemological hybridity is a change from the traditional positivistic and neocolonial academic dialectic, but still requires the community’s dialectic to acknowledge and respond to their desire to work toward a unified liberation. Otherwise, as previously stated, if the community’s dialectic does not respond, then liberation for the Academic dialectic is unlikely. Under the new liberation academic dialectic, the praxis of Academy, both their practice and reflection, is grounded on the theoretical underpinning of the community. As Paulo Freire said about the Institute of Cajamar, an institute in Brazil that trains the working class in becoming conscious citizens and workers, “It is a center that wants to be a theoretical context inside of which the workers can make a critical reflection about what they do outside of the theoretical context” (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 214). When Freire references “outside” he refers to the theory belonging to the Academic dialectic. In the Institute of Cajamar, the workers recognize their own theory, not in the shadows of the academia’s theory, but independent of it. Therefore, Academia and the community each have their own theory and praxis (practice that informed their own theory thru reflection).

Watts & Flanagan (2007) proposed a liberation framework for youth activism that when combined with the epistemological hybridity create the theoretical structure for the merging of the academic and community dialectics. Watts and Flanagan’s framework has four components that are: worldview and social analysis, societal involvement, sense of agency, and opportunity and structure (p. 784). The world view and social analysis is synonymous with theory. Societal involvement is synonymous with praxis as reflection connects both. Encompassing reflection is a sense of agency and opportunity structure. The sense of agency is the capacity of the youth to enact liberation both individually and in conjunction with a group (Watts & Flanagan, 2007, p.
Opportunity structure refers to the resources readily available to the youth. Returning to the epistemological hybridity, under the academy’s dialectic, their praxis is directly attached to the theory (cultural practices and their reflection on it) of the community’s dialectic. However, the community’s praxis is not valued, and its knowledge can be used to reinvigorate the theory of academia as the example of the liberation of psychology. Thus, the epistemological hybridity requires for academia’s theoretical framework to be informed by the communities’ practice.

**Liberation Dialectics**

While the aim for liberation within academia and the community is to disrupt the institutional and social borders, the amalgamation of both dialectics can be observed through each dialectic acting upon the other in a symbiotic relationship. The liberation journey is a two-prong process achieved by one dialectic reaching out to the other dialectic. The theory of one dialectic has to be intertwined to the praxis of the other, and the praxis of one has to be intertwined to the others theory (Figure 1).

![Figure 1. Liberation dialectics](image)

Under the liberation dialectics, the respective theories of each are interconnected to the other’s respective praxis. For example, in academia’s liberation dialectic, academia’s theory counsels the community’s praxis (Appendix A). The knowledge of the conceptual world and critique of it inform the community’s action and engagement as it works to mold it. It should be noted, the social movement made accordingly springs from a horizontal relationship. Then, the praxis of academia’s liberation dialectic is mobilized by the community’s theoretical orientations (Appendix B). The decolonial process means for academia to be informed by the durability and endurance of the community. Through the process, the community’s knowledge is validated, and their critical consciousness provides to the academia an unorthodox approach to liberating itself, one that is unyielding to institutional hierarchies and unconstrained in making progress.

In addition, under the liberation dialectics, the respective praxis of each are interconnected to the other’s respective theory. Under the community’s liberation dialectic, the community places itself into an uncharted social, cultural, and political institution when their praxis is informed by academia’s theory (Appendix C). This does not mean for academia to fall into the banking concept, for them to decide what "knowledge" needs to be "deposited" into the minds of the community (Freire, 2015, p. 72). Instead, it requires for a problem-posing education that is
co-intentional (Freire, 2015, p. 69 & 79). To do so does not mean for community to be incapable of reflection or of having their own theory, it means for academia to present the neocolonial ideologies and the reality they create, so that together with the community they can recreate them in the shape of the liberation dialectic. Then, academia’s praxis needs to be informed by the community’s theory, as is seen with the epistemological hybridity (Appendix D). Such happens by valuing the community’s culture and wealth (Yosso, 2005).

**Autoethnographical Reflections: Convivio Methodology**

The lead activists prepared the protestors to march to the president’s office, I was compelled otherwise. I returned to my work at the university’s Visitor’s Center, and did not see myself enjoying the success of community coming together. Instead, I called a friend who worked closely with the undocumented population during his graduate school. I let him know my opinion. They could have marched without needing to be “divisive” and alienating the university’s president. He asked what I would have preferred. The academy has a hierarchy, and if change was to be done, it would have to be by navigating it. It was then that I realize my dialectic was not that of the undocumented students on campus. My friend told me about how after Trump’s inauguration, undocumented students live in constant fear of being deported. They can not afford to “navigate” the ivory tower. I was approaching the disenfranchisement of the undocumented population at the university through an academic dialectic. I knew the hierarchy of the ivory tower as I was a member of it, I worked for it at the visitor’s center. To a certain extent, I was co-opted. I wrongfully projected this dialectic to undocumented students.

Abraham, and the undocumented population at the university, were seeking community liberation within the ivory tower: They were approaching the issue of exclusion and administration within the capabilities of their communal dialectic. Their practice was a petition, marching, and accountability. They were well aware of their resources as they gathered media support and additionally outreached to other Sanctuary movement activist from across the state. That night I maintained my distances from activists as I sought to gain some clarity about the march. However, I later found out a meeting with the university president was granted, and afterwards, Abraham and the other activists strategized the demands they would request during their meeting with him; because I could not still grasp my feelings towards the march, I was compelled not to participate. During the meeting, the president, followed by representatives from departments including the Dean of Students and the police, challenged the students’ fear in an attempt at gaslighting, or causing someone to doubt themselves via mental manipulation, as stated by some of the activists in the meeting (“aslight,” n.d.). Nevertheless, amid their meeting with university president, the activists were able to get him to concede to ensuring a safe climate for students of all backgrounds.

Lastly, there were professors who achieved a liberated academic dialectic. Various professors from the Chicana/o studies program assisted in mentoring the students on the different avenues to achieve attention from the universities’ administration on their issues. They sat down and held informal meetings with the activist, and ultimately, advised student activists on the march. Furthermore, these faculty performed what Freire (2015) calls communion, or the “fusion” and cooperation between a revolutionary leader and his/her people (p. 171). I propose the term *convivio*, based on my Chicana/o epistemology infused with Freiren pedagogy. In *convivio*, revolutionary academics and community members come together to form a sociocultural and
polITICALbondthat serves to consolidate the liberation dialectics, those being the liberation academic dialectic and the liberation community dialectic. *Convivio* has roots in Chicanx culture in that it surpasses mentorships, institutional, professional, and formal relationships and partnerships formed because it values familyism. In other words, the relationships established under the liberation dialectic carry an equal weight to the relationships within one’s core family. By having *convivio*, selfless conscious individuals will be sprung from both dialectics. Conscious individuals who work towards the liberation of both dialectics, academia’s and the community.

**Conclusion**

Upon reflecting on my activism with the Sanctuary Campus campaign, I came to learn that vital lesson I imagined to be self-evident: my experiences and my methodology to change the world does not have to be shared by others. I neglected the Chicanx experience. Within my experience, I was influenced by the academic dialectic. I drew strongly upon liberation theory, but left my practice to be lost with the lonely individualistic walls of the ivory tower. Surprisingly, this went against my Chicanx epistemologies, against my own upbringing. My practice, and subsequently my praxis, was not where it belonged, outside of the ivory tower next to *mi gente*, my community. My praxis was meant to be with them. As an academic in training, my academic praxis has to be rooted in the theoretical upbringing of my community. It is my duty as a liberation scholar and academic seeking to instill consciousness within academia and my community. Had I realized this, I would have proudly marched to the president’s office, but as emphasized in the course of this scholarly article, I would have been able to do so by marching with my community, which was enacting a liberation communal dialectic. Both dialectics support and strengthen each other; separate their journey to liberation is lonesome and tiresome. By having their journey be one through *convivio*, the border between academia and the community may finally corrode and disappear.

**References**


