

BOOK REVIEW

Intersectionality and Criminal Justice Experiences

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Latinas in the Criminal Justice System: Victims, Targets, and Offenders.
Edited by Vera Lopez and Lisa Pasko. New York: NYU Press, 2021.
Pp. 369. \$35.00 (paperback).

Lopez and Pasko (2021) offer a collection of chapters that address a critical, yet underexamined area of research, Latina involvement in the criminal justice system—namely their roles as victims, offenders, families of victims or offenders, or advocates and allies. The authors employ a variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies derived from individuals, families of individuals, and actors involved in the criminal and juvenile justice systems. This collection exemplifies the continued need to examine the intersection of race/ethnicity and gender as it relates to individuals' experiences with the criminal justice system, as the cumulative factors that impacted the Latinas described here are unique, compared with the factors traditionally examined in criminology more broadly.

The text is divided into four distinct, yet interconnected sections. The first section, "Victimization to Offending: Blurring the Boundaries," includes chapters that articulate the isolation, intersectionality, and importance of informal support that is present among Latinas experiencing interpersonal and intimate partner violence (IPV). The second section, "Latina Offenders from Court to Correctional Involvement," includes chapters that articulate the cumulative trauma resulting from the home, schools, and the justice

system that can further result in intergenerational trauma being passed from mothers to children. The third section, “Immigration Enforcement, Crimmigration, and the Deportation Machine,” centers on relying on informal safety nets over formal processes when it comes to immigration, as well as some of the collateral consequences related to the crimmigration process. The final section, “Community Programming for System-Impacted Latinas,” discusses the importance of utilizing trauma-informed, culturally-sensitive programming and practices for Latinas that have been involved in the justice system.

The importance of intersectionality is a key component of *Latinas in the Criminal Justice System*. For example, in chapter one, Vega and colleagues discuss how race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, linguistics, and mental health all impact one another when Latinas are deciding whether or not to seek out formal support services. While not explicitly stated by the authors, the focus on identity politics is consistent with intersectional theory (Crenshaw 1989) broadly and intersectional criminology (Potter 2013) more specifically, which articulates that a multitude of identities are related to one’s experiences with crime and the criminal justice system. What is more, chapters thirteen and fourteen discuss the need for “strengths-based” recommendations (304) and programming that emphasizes the entirety of one’s ecosystem, in line with both the positive youth development (Lerner 2018) and socioecological systems (Bronfenbrenner 1986) perspectives. These holistic and strengths-based approaches have been utilized to examine antisocial behaviors (Eamon and Mulder 2005) and positive youth development among ethno-racial minority youth (Fine, Padilla, and Tapp 2021), and bear continued promise for examining Latina criminal justice system involvement. Hispanic and Latino individuals account for approximately eighteen percent of the total United States population (U.S. Census Bureau 2021). This translates to roughly sixty

million individuals (Krogstad 2020), approximately thirty million of those being Latinas (AAUW 2021). This growing segment of the United States population, with its' multitude of identities, requires a unique understanding of the pathways to criminal justice contact that centers Latinas.

Latinas in the Criminal Justice System provides an eloquent depiction of the need for the criminal justice system and its actors to take into consideration the lived experiences of the sociopolitical and historical disadvantages present in the lives of many justice-involved Latinas. Indeed, feminist and critical race theories, and particularly the emergence of LatCrit perspectives to examine Latina experiences with IPV (see Garza 2021), have been addressing these multifaceted influences. Altogether, Lopez and Pasko's (2021) text provides methodologically rigorous, yet accessible and culturally sensitive research as it relates to Latina involvement in the criminal justice system. A variety of fields, including sociology, social work, psychology, and criminology, as well as academics, practitioners, and policymakers alike would benefit from the work showcased in *Latinas in the Criminal Justice System*.

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