

Gender, Race & School Pushouts

How Policing Gender Pushes Black & Latinx Students from the Classroom to the Cellblock (& What Funders Can Do About It)



For the purposes of this paper, we have chosen to use the term Black to refer to individuals in the United States who identify as having African ancestry (African American, Afro-Caribbean, African immigrant). This term more fully encompasses the heterogeneity and rich diversity of the Black community.

BACKGROUND

On 2015, at Columbia, SC's Spring Valley High School, a Black teenage girl was reportedly being disruptive and refusing to leave her classroom. School resource officer Deputy Ben Fields was called in, and warned her that she must get up. Before she can fully respond, Fields wrapped his forearm around her neck, and flipped both her and her desk over backwards onto the floor. Deputy Fields, who was suspended but faces no charges following a departmental investigation, was fired by Sheriff Leon Lott who said the video makes him want to "throw up."

In 2017, a 14-year-old Black teen was questioned in Pittsburgh's Woodland High School's office about a missing cellphone by school safety Officer Steve Shaulis. The student left, but Shaulis followed him into the hall, calling him a gay slur. The boy responded in kind, and Officer Shaulis pulled him back in, threw him against the wall, and hit him repeatedly in the head and face, knocking out his front tooth. Principal Kevin Murray watched this happen, but did not intervene. The boy was taken to a nearby hospital, where his tooth was sewn back in – and he eventually had four more surgeries. He was suspended and charged with assault. Neither the Shaulis nor Murray were charged.

It is not safe to be a student of color in America's middle and high schools today. As these harrowing incidents illustrate, Black and Latinx youth are at risk of being dehumanized, their behavior viewed as that of potentially violent adults. They are all too often subjects who must be subdued—with violent force if necessary—and incarcerated.

Zero-tolerance, three-strikes, and similar "pushout" policies popular in many school systems have transformed simple disciplinary issues into grounds for arrest, expulsion, and incarceration. Experts increasingly refer to the combined use of such tactics which remove "difficult" students from their schools and move them onto the streets or into juvenile justice systems as "exclusionary discipline."

The unavoidable effect of such exclusionary policies is that youth of color are being separated from their educational careers in alarming and unprecedented numbers, with impacts on economic outcomes that are both devastating and lifelong.

Pushout or exclusionary policies also play an outsized role in the overrepresentation of students of color in criminal justice and what is increasingly called the "school-to-prison-pipeline" (STPP).

Sometimes this victimization happens quickly through the arrest of students for simple misbehavior offenses, as the above examples illustrate.

Sometimes they happened gradually, through the slow accumulation of minor infractions for perceived attitude, infractions that are both more frequent and more harsh than those meted out to their white peers.

In many cases, school officials have attempted to justify these new "get-tough" policies by pointing to escalating levels of violence. Yet the policies are seldom if ever visited upon the white students— even when the same or similar infractions are involved.

Just as disturbingly, the impact of pushout policies is reaching downward, to ever-younger children of color. For instance, Morris notes that Black children make up just 18 percent of preschool students, but they comprise 42 percent of preschoolers who been suspended—a trend which is as shameful as it is unsustainable.

IMPACTS ON EDUCATORS

Punitive and unfair policies and the dehumanization of students of color take a toll on concerned teachers as well. Recent articles in media outlets like the *New York Times* and *The Atlantic* document how many educators of color are burning out, and leaving teaching for good.

For instance, in his *Times* piece, Christopher Emdin explained that Black male teachers are expected to not only educate, but to dispense masculine role modeling through “tough love” and punishments that will transform “difficult” young Black men into passive, compliant students.

His emphasis on the importance of both toughness and masculinity are telling: while leading authorities have successfully documented the importance of race and class, the central role of gender norms in pushout policies has often been overlooked.

POLICING GENDER

Yet the school disciplinary regime’s efforts to police masculinity in boys of color—and femininity in girls of color—is integral to any understanding of school push-outs and the criminalization of color youth. Indeed, it is at the heart of the problem.

For instance, Morris argues that Black girls are punished more severely and at much higher rates because of stereotypes about Black femininity which leave educators predisposed to view them as unfeminine, unmanageable, and unruly.

Similarly, educators and school safety officials are likely to perceive young Black men and women as older and bigger than they actually are, to view them as more disruptive, and to see them as potentially dangerous.

In part because of this, both boys and girls of color—particularly in low-income communities—are more likely to have their actions, behavior, and psychological disposition viewed through a lens of threat or emerging criminality.

THIS PAPER

Today there is growing awareness among education funders that school pushouts are an education emergency hiding in plain sight: a school-based version of the New Jim Crow, a system of social control functioning as a racial caste system. This system effectively separates Black and Latinx students from the educations, their white and Asian peers, and their future potential in ways which permanently disempower them and work to push them to society’s margins.

This paper makes the case for addressing masculine and feminine norms as part of an intersectional approach understanding and combating school pushout policies.

It explains the basics of gender norms and intersectional work, documents the current research findings, and closes with some concrete recommendations for funders to take.

The authors are sensitive to the need to avoid adding to the already extensive crisis literature on youth of color, focusing narrowly on the grim circumstances many of them face. While we address the problems inherent in pushout

A Gender Dictionary

“Gender” is used in multiple contexts and connected to many concepts . Here’s a quick guide.

Cisgender

Someone whose birth sex and inner gender identity are in agreement (i.e., someone who is not transgender).

Gender Equality/Equity

Ensuring equal access to resources, power, opportunity for women, men, children and families, LGBTQ, etc.

Gender Identity

An inner sense of being male, female, or neither; useful when discussing transgender individuals who feel a conflict between their sex and gender identification.

Gender Lens

Being aware of the impact of gender equity and/or gender norms on a problem or issue.

Gender Non-Conforming

An umbrella term for the broad spectrum of who transcend the usual boundaries for femininity masculinity.

Gender Norms

Socially-constructed ideals, scripts, expectations for how to be a woman or a man.

Gender Roles

Social and behavioral norms for how men and women are expected to act: being a doctor or nurse, being martial or maternal.

Patriarchy

A socio-cultural system that unequally grants power to men, shaping gendered norms and cultural narratives in order to privilege men and maleness, and generally valuing masculinity over femininity.

Sexual Orientation

Romantic attraction to members of one or more sexes.

Transgender

Umbrella term for individuals whose inner gender identity does not fit with what is traditionally expected for their birth sex or who in other ways transcend traditional binary notions of man/woman and feminine/masculine.

policies and the STPP, we also wish to clearly acknowledge the tremendous resilience youth of color show in surviving and often thriving in the face of institutional indifference and often hostility.

Too little is known about such remarkable young people, and we still have too few tools with which to improve their educational experience and outcomes. It is sincerely hoped that this paper will be a small step towards achieving that goal.

MORE OFTEN, MORE HARSHLY

For some time, education researchers and youth advocates have been raising alarms about school disciplinary regimes, and the unequal rates of suspension and expulsion among youth of color. Yet studies confirming this had been scarce.

In 2010, an Indiana University researcher, Russell Skiba and his partner Daniel J. Losen at the Civil Rights Project at the University of California published a painstakingly analysis of four years of Department of Education statistics from 2002- 2006 collected from 9,220 of the US's 16,000 public middle schools (nearly 60%).

This analysis showed conclusively that youth of color were punished more often, and more harshly, and often for the same infractions. Among its key findings were:

- Young Black men and boys were nearly three times as likely to be suspended as their white peers;
- Young Black women and girls were nearly four times as likely to be suspected as white women and girls; and,
- Both Hispanic and American Indian students were suspended at higher rates than their white cohorts.

Some of the findings defied not only expectation, but also explanation. In two middle school districts in Palm Beach (FL) and Milwaukee (WI), over 50% of Black middle school boys had been suspended at least once in the past year.

Skiba and Losen found that the percentage of students suspended yearly almost doubled from early 1970s through 2006, when new zero tolerance and "get tough" policies became popular

Since then, new studies have found that educators are increasingly viewing low-income youth of color as a permanent underclass, "future felons" deserving of harsh discipline, "difficult" youth who must be proactively separated from school.

SUBJECTIVE INFRACTIONS

These studies have also documented the more subtle ways that school disciplinary regimes target youth of color, including Murphy, et al's, "I'm not running around with my pants sagging, so how am I not acting like a lady?": *Intersections of Race and Gender in the Experiences of Female Middle School Troublemakers.*"

Murphy, et al note that Black and Latinx youth are much more likely than their white peers to be punished for subjective behavioral infractions, like "being disruptive" or "defiant behavior," rather than actual violation of black-letter rules.



As Murphy, et al put it, “White students are more likely to be referred for objective infractions (e.g., smoking, leaving campus without permission), whereas Black students are punished more for subjective infractions (e.g., disrespect, excessive noise).”

Because such subjective infractions are mostly a matter of perception, they are highly vulnerable to existing teacher biases about low-income youth of color.

In addition, because they are so subjective, they also readily lend themselves for use to police and punish behavior that falls well short of being wrongful, but which teachers find offensive or objectionable.

While such violations may seem minor, their aggregate takes a toll. As Skiba noted to TrueChild in a private conversation, often a student’s first or second offense is nothing more than “oppositional attitude” or “defiant behavior,” which may translate into a boy trying to look tough by having an attitude, talking back, or otherwise showing the teacher up.

Then when student does break an actual rule, they have already been dismissed as a “troublemaker” with two strikes, and are likely to be summarily suspended or expelled, or shunted into juvenile court and the school-to-prison pipeline.

SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

The school-to-prison pipeline or STPP is both a metaphor and shorthand for the increasing convergence of educational and criminal justice systems.

Rigid school disciplinary policies are backed up by the presence of police officers in school hallways. This combination has the effect of criminalizing minor classroom misbehaviors, turning what for decades had been simply school disciplinary issues into grounds for arrest, criminal charges, and court adjudication.

For instance, a frustrated student who pushes at a teacher is no longer sent to detention or the principal’s office; now they are likely to find themselves thrown on the ground and “subdued,” led away in handcuffs, charged with aggravated assault, and stuck in a jail cell until an adult can bail them out.

The rise of the Prison Industrial Complex, the overlapping web of corporate and political interests which supports expanding the incarcerated population through expanding the scope of criminalization of behavior, longer sentencing, trying juveniles as adults, also plays a role in the STPP.

In effect, many schools are becoming part of a caste system in which low-income Black, Latinx, and Native American students are subjected to one set of treatment, punishments, and justice, and their white, Asian, and upper-class peers another.

In 2015, the National Education Association (NEA) adopted a resolution decrying the STPP and its effects, citing the case of a young Mississippi student who spent 21 days in juvenile detention for little more than talking back to a teacher.

In surveying pushout policies, the NEA came to similar conclusions to Skiba’s landmark study. Key NEA findings about the STPP include:

- On average 5% of white students are suspended compared to 16% of black students;
- American Indian students represent less than 1% of students but 2% of out-of-school suspensions and 3% of expulsions;
- Latinx students are 1.5 times more likely to be suspended and twice as likely to be expelled as their white peers;

- Black girls are suspended at higher rates (12%) than girls of any race and most boys; and,
- American Indian girls (7%) are suspended at higher rates than white boys (6%) or girls (2%).

GENDER NORMS



Much of the conflict between school disciplinary systems and youth of color, particularly among adolescents, is motivated by efforts to enforce more traditional, middleclass notions of masculinity in boys and femininity in girls. Yet the importance of gender norms to school pushout policies and the STPP are often overlooked.

“Gender norms” refer not to the biological fact of being male or female, or even to specific traits usually associated with one sex or the other. Rather, “gender norms” refer to the customs, beliefs, and expectations most of us hold for how to be a man or woman, for how to be masculine or feminine, as well as the inherent inequities of power and privilege associated with these.

Traditional masculine norms are understood as a combination of strength, aggression, emotional toughness, dominance, and sexual prowess.

Traditional femininity is usually considered to be a combination of the “three Ds” of being desirable, deferential, and dependent as well as qualities like sociability, sexual purity, and maternalness.

While biological sex is a physical fact of bodies, gender norms are cultural, and are learned from childhood onward. Both feminine and masculinity vary in important ways among racial and ethnic groups; nonetheless key features are remarkably common across very different subcultures.

Learning how to “do” manhood or womanhood and be recognized as a masculine young man or a feminine young woman may be the central rite of passage and developmental task of adolescence.

This is particularly true for adolescents ages 10-14—what some researchers have called the “gender intensification” years. This is when interest in traditional gender norms starts to accelerate, and belief starts to solidify.

This gender intensification period is also precisely when grade point averages often begin to drop off, and rates of school disciplinary conflicts, suspensions, and drop-outs all begin to climb.

One factor in these years is that as a person moves from childhood to their adolescent and teenage years, they come under increasing pressure to conform to traditional social expectations for masculinity and femininity.

They may feel this from a variety of sources, including family members, peers, religious institutions, and media—and of course educational and juvenile justice systems.

In addition, once they leave childhood, gender nonconforming behavior or dress is much less likely to be ignored or met with an amused smile, and more likely to result in ridicule, ostracism, or punishment.

AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

Major international donor institutions like CARE, UNFPA, UNAIDS, and WHO** have all implemented initiatives that address the impact of rigid gender norms, and found them effective.

USAID no longer funds new programs that lack a strong gender focus. PEPFAR has made changing masculine norms one of its top three priorities worldwide. And the World Bank has begun an extensive and highly public effort to integrate a focus on gender norms to all aspects of its equity funding worldwide.

But in this area the US lags behind. The authors hope that this paper will be part of an overdue dialog between funders and practitioners to move gender norms to the center of philanthropic and policy debates, reconnect it with race and class, and create programs that more effectively address educational injustice.

Gender norms do not exist in isolation, but are interact with other factor like race, sex, class, age, and disability.

For instance, a young women (sex and age) may not just be singled out for unfair punishment because she is “unladylike,” (gender norms), but also because she is also Black or Latina (race and ethnicity) and perceived as being too “ghetto” (class). In this way, categories like gender norms, race, and class are not never really separate but always intersect and overlap.

An analysis that asks not what it means to be young or female or Black, but young and female and Black—that is, which examines age, race, and sex as well as factors like class, disability, or ethnicity—is what theorist Kimberle Crenshaw termed “intersectional.”

Intersectionality seeks to examine the ways in which different forms of oppression overlap and interact with one another in people’s real, lived experience.

While there are decades of scholarship which has theoretically examined the concept of intersectionality, unfortunately the empirical research in this area is still growing.

The authors hope this paper will help encourage more educational funding and investigation of the intersectional roles played by race, class, and gender in school pushout policies and the STPP.

POLICING MASCULINITY AMONG BOYS OF COLOR

Boys entering adolescence they come under increasing pressure to “man up” and embody more traditional adult notions of masculinity. This can include showing emotional toughness, being strong, risk-taking, displaying aggression, and having sexual prowess.

In addition, young men of color are often perceived by educators as older and bigger than they actually are, and as more aggressive, dangerous, or unmanageable than their peers. School safety police may be inclined to view disruptive or disobedient behavior from young Black or Latino men through a lens of delinquency or criminality, rather than tween-age misbehavior or hijinks.

As Anne Arnett Ferguson notes in *Bad Boys: Public Schools and the Making of Black Masculinity*, boys are color tend to be viewed as “challenging, oppositional bodies” in need of whose behavior, dress, and speech are in need of constant monitoring, regularly, and punishment.



Intersectional Approach

Addressing different facets of oppression—race, class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.—as interacting in people’s lives rather than compartmentalizing them and treating each as independent of the others.

Even urban masculine fashion plays a role. A study perceptively titled “Tuck in That Shirt!” documented how hallway displays of contemporary urban manhood among young Black men—lowered and baggy pants, untucked shirts—had a profound impact on teachers. Educators—both white and Black—immediately perceived the boys as oppositional and threatening, responding with more focus on bodily discipline, regulation, and punishment.

Within school environments, boys just entering manhood tend to establish social status and hierarchy through masculine behaviors—such as physicality, verbal boisterousness, public risk-taking, defying authority figures, and suffering punishment silently—which are practically a checklist for bringing them to the attention of school disciplinary regimes and into conflict with juvenile justice systems.

Yet too often, schools impose the maximum penalty of suspension, expulsion or arrest, thus giving young men just learning to “do” masculinity precious little margin for error in navigating the twin shoals of manhood and school disciplinary regimes.

In effect, masculinity and school discipline form two systems in blind and often disastrous collision: an urban male “gender culture” which demands that adolescent boys master public displays of masculine strength, toughness, and indifference to authority—and school disciplinary systems inclined to view precisely those displays as oppositional and threatening, a cause for increased surveillance and punishment, and signs of emerging criminality.

As Anne Arnett Ferguson memorably relates in the opening words of *Bad Boys*: “[A]n African American man pointed to a Black boy who walked by us. ‘That one has a jail-cell with his name on it.’ We were looking at [Lamar] a 10-year-old, barely four feet tall, whose frail body was shrouded in baggy pants and a hooded sweatshirt.”

POLICING FEMININITY AMONG GIRLS OF COLOR

Although early studies of pushout policies and the STPP focused mostly on boys, researchers like Crenshaw and Morris have increasingly demonstrated that Black, Latina, and American Indian girls (as well as low-income Asian American youth) face the same barriers when it comes to attempts to enforce traditional femininity.

While girls also are surveilled and monitored by educators for their dress and deportment, the emphasis is somewhat different.

Boys of color might be targeted for too uninhibitedly embodying traditional masculine attributes of physicality, independence, and aggression; girls of color are often targeted because they are perceived as failing to enact middle-class feminine norms of submission, deference, and passivity.

In effect, somewhat like many LGBTQ students, they are picked out because they are perceived as not conforming to gender norms.

In “Ladies or ‘Loudies?’” researcher Edward Morris found that “teachers encouraged these girls to exemplify an ideal, docile form of femininity, emblemized in the prescription to act like “ladies.” Teachers viewed the existing femininity of these girls as coarse and overly assertive, leading one teacher to describe them as “loudies.”

Interestingly, some researchers like Edward Morris have found that some of the teachers involved were themselves of color, and were responding to the girls as an “embarrassment” to their racial identity.

As with boys of color, educators are predisposed to view low-income Black and Latinx girls as older than they actually are, and as more challenging or oppositional. As Murphy, et al explain, this “corresponds with stereotypical views of Black women as ‘hypersexualized, angry, and hostile.’”

TOO “GHETTO”, NOT “LADYLIKE”

As Monique Morris explains, schools tend to view young Black women as “either ‘good’ girls or ‘ghetto’ girls who behave in ways that exacerbate stereotypes about Black femininity.

“‘Ghetto’ is often a euphemism for actions that deviate from social norms tied to narrow, White, middle-class definitions of femininity...Black girls nonconformity to traditional gender expectations [includes] teachers perceiving Black girls as being ‘loud,’ defiant, and precocious’ and...being reprimanded for being “unladylike.”

Often this gender regulation is confusing for adolescent girls, who—like boys—are still unsure and learning to master womanhood just when gender norms become the basis for ongoing conflicts with teachers. Complains one girl interviewed by Murphy, et al after being admonished not to be “loud and unladylike:”

“They’ll say I’m not acting like a ho, I’m not acting like a dude. I’m not walking around with my pants sagging, so how am I not acting like a lady? Like how a lady supposed to act? I’m walking, I’m talking. So I don’t know how they want me to act if I don’t act like a lady. I don’t understand.”

For girls, an unrecognized part of the problem is that many experience regular sexual harassment which goes unaddressed by school systems and is considered “normal.” When they resist, it is their behavior, and not the harassment, that is punished.

THE ROLE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The American Association of University Women’s national survey *Crossing the Line* (to which TrueChild contributed) found that “sexual harassment is a part of everyday life in middle and high schools [with] nearly half of students experiencing” it each year.

As one adult explained in *Black Girls Matter*, “Teachers have a culture of sweeping it under the rug. They will say ‘Boys will be boys’; ‘This is sexual awakening.’

“Yet they know all the stuff that is happening. . . . [T]hey talk about girls feeling shamed coming to school, like they can’t concentrate because the boys are making lewd comments, constantly pressuring them to have sex with them, slapping their butts and bras...”

This sexually-charged environment not only prompts girls to call in sick or cut class, when they protect themselves or push back, they risk being victimized for protecting themselves. This is inseparable from school gender cultures that excuse boys’ sexual predation as hormonal hijinks, while viewing girls’ resistance as unruly and problematic.



GENDER NONCONFORMING & LGBTQ STUDENTS

This institutional urge to police and regulate gender even when it involves punishing the victim and normalizing the perpetrator extends to LGBTQ youth as well.

Researchers like Stephen Russell, Shannon Snapp, and others have drawn new attention to disciplinary disparities among LGBTQ youth, especially those who are Black or Latinx. They have documented how LGBTQ youth who are bullied or harassed risk being punished for protecting themselves or resisting own victimization.

In other cases, LGBTQ student are targeted simply because boys are perceived as masculine, or girls as unfeminine, or because they fail to fit binary gender stereotypes at all as Snapp, Hoenig, Fields, and Russell found in *Messy, Butch, and Queer: LGBTQ Youth and the School-to-Prison Pipeline*.

Snapp, et al also found that LGBTQ youth constitute a significant portion of the STPP, as evidenced by their over-representation in juvenile detention facilities: “LGBTQ youth are twice as likely as their heterosexual peers to be detained for non-violent offenses such as running away, prostitution, and truancy.”

Schools, like many religious institutions, both act as guardians and regulators of very traditional and rigid binary gender ideals, of what is appropriate or allowable for boys and girls. This can be seen by the separate dress codes, and in some older schools, even separate entrances.



BRINGING IT ON THEMSELVES

School officials are predisposed to view students who are openly gender nonconforming as “flaunting it” or being deliberately “disruptive” or “inappropriate”—although such students are only trying to express who they are, or even struggling with what that self really is.

In addition (as with society in general) educators and officials may be predisposed to view dress or behavior that embraces femininity in boys or masculinity in girls as personally offensive and even morally wrong. This of course enhances the probability that they will single out and punish such behavior.

As one California youth explained:

“In my school, some of my security guards are coaches, so when they do see like a more feminine male, they do kind of tease them and they’re like, ‘oh, he’s a fairy.’”

As a result of such prejudices, when students are bullying for being gender nonconforming, educators are reluctant to intervene, sometimes feeling “they brought it on themselves.” In effect, LGBTQ students are blamed for interactions in which they the victims.

As Snapp, et al note, this all leads to a vicious cycle, where unfair discipline and “discriminatory harassment make LGBTQ youth more susceptible to truancy, assault, and disorderly conduct charges [which lead to], disparate rates of suspension or expulsion.”

Sometimes this can lead to a lose-lose proposition, where LGBTQ students are caught between peers and school officials. As one Latinx girl explained:

"I got bullied, so I, like, started dressing like a boy and got this thug mentality. They looked at me like I was the bad Chola, the Mexican lesbian bitch. So no one messed with me anymore at school, but the administration, they were always watching me." (Youth, Arizona)

Exacerbating the situation, LGBTQ youth—including those who are of color—often have tenuous home lives in which they face hostility from siblings and parents. Because of this, LGBTQ youth are more likely to be disowned by their families and end up on the street than their peers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Young Black and Latinx students face many challenges, including having to navigate gender norms and race- and ethnicity-based experiences that place them at risk for negative life outcomes. For some of them these risks will be amplified by the barriers associated with low-income and disinvested communities, and by hostile policing of their communities that can make homes and streets unsafe.

For too many of them, the school and the classroom have become a place of risk as well, where the promise of a better education and better future is being replaced with surveillance, incipient punishment, and even criminalization.

Despite this, youth of color have shown significant levels of resilience in overcoming, surviving and in many instances thriving.

The purpose of our report is to highlight where the literature finds we need further exploration as it relates to how gender impacts school disciplinary systems and school pushout policies, and feeds the school-to-prison pipeline.

Some consensus on areas to focus programmatic and philanthropic efforts include the following:

- Toolkits and online resource center for educators, administrators and parents about the role of gender norms in school disciplinary and juvenile justice systems, including the challenges faced by gender nonconforming and/or LGBTQ youth.
- Conference which bring together policy-makers and stakeholders with key researchers to discuss how philanthropic goals can better address the needs of young Black men.
- Partnerships with national organizations like the NEA, PTA, NAACP, and National Urban League to train parents, educators, and administrators in local chapters about gender norms.
- Gender Audits[©] of education funders and grantees that track how they address gender norms and move the field towards more gender-informed and "gender transformative" programming.
- Trainings for school administrators, safety officials, and educators to implement models of school discipline that address the policing of gender norms, and provide incentives for implementing and evaluating them in schools.

CONCLUSION

This report has been offered as a snapshot of the huge impact the role gender norms play in school pushout policies and moving young of color into the school-to-prison pipeline —particularly Black and Latinx boys and girls. It has been able to provide broad strokes at best of very complex issues that often have historical and cultural roots. The literature is both wider and deeper than we have communicated.

With that said, we sincerely hope this paper is the beginning of a dialogue that can unpack, challenge and positively influence how gender is understood and enacted in the classroom.

Too many funding priorities, programs, and policies aimed at improving our educational and juvenile justice outcomes ignore the central role played by schools' increasingly surveillance, regulation, and punishment of how youth of color enact femininity and masculinity.

Until this changes, it will be difficult to fully address pushout policies and the school-to-prison pipeline and the full range of forces that continue to contribute to them.

An intersectional understanding of gender, race, and class should be standard in philanthropic approaches to education if we seek to truly have a long standing impact on the life disparities among young Black men and women.

