



# **Dreams Deferred: Dropping Out and Struggling Forward (Research for Social Justice: Personal, Passionate, Participa)**

*Chris Liska Carger*

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*(Sponsorship: Aera Division B, Division K, and Bilingual Education Sig)* In *Dreams Deferred*, a follow-up to *Of Borders and Dreams* (1996), Chris Carger takes us further into the life of Alejandro Juarez, Jr., and his family. This work envelopes readers in “la vida real,” real life. Carger followed Alejandro for thirteen years, as he moved from school to school, experienced difficult relationships with his peers, dropped out of high school, struggled with employment and an early marriage. The compelling story of Alejandro's parents obtaining U. S. citizenship parallels the border crossing story of Carger's first book and illuminates triumphs and tragedies the family, and many other immigrants, experience as they negotiate life in the United States, and as they, all too often, have to forsake their hopes and dreams. There are no easy answers, nor happy endings, to the story of Alejandro and his family. Unlike many studies on dropping out, Alejandro, his family, and his community are viewed from a positive perspective versus deficit, “at risk,” models in dropout research. The book fits into a newly evolving, increasingly important, research paradigm that focuses on students' experience in the context of families, communities, and schools, and deals with issues of language, culture, and power related to multiculturalism and social justice. This book informs pre-service and in-service teachers, educational researchers, administrators, educational policy makers, and those who advocate for people are marginalized because of cultural, linguistic issues and learning challenges. It is a timely reflection on a problem that is at the intersection of this nation's immigration controversies and dropout crisis.

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