Article

"Presenting Our Perspective": Recontextualizing Youths' Experiences of Hypercriminalization Through Media Production

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Abstract

In this study, we examine how youth use media production to represent, (de)legitimate, and reimagine their experiences of hypercriminalization—the pervasive complex of social practices such as racial profiling that position young men of color as "always-already criminal." We analyze two clips from a youth-produced news show called POPPYN, specifically a 2014 episode focusing on youth and the criminal justice system, using tools from recontextualization analysis and multimodal semiotics, which together allow us to index the substitutions, deletions, rearrangements, and additions of component elements of social practices. Through investigation of linguistic and multimodal processes that represent social actors, actions, and constructions of their legitimacy, this study demonstrates ways that media making can serve as a tool for youth of color to process and rewrite persistent hypercriminalizing positionings in more agentive and hopeful ways. We end by proposing implications for multimodal literacy practices and pedagogies.

Keywords

youth media, race, multimodality, genre, legitimacy, recontextualization

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Speaker 1: The news, they let older people say who we are. And what you did, you let us say who we are.

Facilitator 1: *Do you think people on the nightly news want to portray youth how youth really are or are they just trying to perpetuate what they think?*

Speaker 2: NO. They just trying to . . . Hollywood.

Speaker 3: They're trying to tell everybody what they think. They don't tell the full perspective.

Facilitator 1: *Why do you think that is?*

Speaker 2: I think the news people, they really don't care what happens to us.

Speaker 4: Cause they still get paid for it.

Speaker 2: For real for real, it's nothing to them, they still get money in they pocket.

Facilitator 1: *How do you think that affects you?*

Speaker 5: It give us a bad image. (Several others: Yeah.)

Facilitator 2: *How do you think that affects like how parents, and other people in your community look at youth, like adults look at youth?*

Speaker 6: Every time something happens, they just assume it's us.

Speaker 2: Cause we young black kids in Philadelphia.

Speaker 6: Just the other day, I was walking down the street and someone was saying "y'all a flashmob."

Speaker 2: No we're not. We're just walking down the street. Having fun. Talking.

Facilitator 3: *Do you think it could be both? Like could there are just be those certain people that do dumb stuff, for them to assume that's how youth are, but it's not everybody?*

Speaker 2: Yeah but some people they just be in the wrong place in the wrong time, they get caught up.

Facilitator: *Do you think POPPYN got it right, like we depicted youth more accurately than the news?*

Speaker 5: Yeeaah.

Speaker 2: Cause y'all poppin.

Speaker 5: I followed y'all on Twitter, so.

The conversation above is excerpted from a focus group that members of the youth-produced news show POPPYN (Presenting Our Perspective on Philly Youth News) conducted in the winter of 2012 with 14 African American boys, ages 12 to 18, in North Philadelphia. The young men all belonged to a

dance and DJ crew called "New Money Entertainment." Supported by caring adults, the group organized parties at the Peace Spot, a former shoe store front turned multifunctional community space for local teens to safely gather and show off their dancing and DJing skills. The POPPYN team had just screened its latest episode for New Money, and was now asking questions to see whether the show was appealing to them, as the primary intended audience, and inquiring about the teens' views on mainstream media representations of youth in Philadelphia more generally. Among other things, these responses poignantly demonstrate the degree to which Black youth are attuned to media representations and everyday social positionings of their bodies as deviant and dangerous—that is, to the processes of their hypercriminalization.

Our study draws on segments from POPPYN to explore youth media production as an intervention into the hypercriminalization of Black youth in public space and mediated public sphere. It asks, what tools does youth media offer to critique and reconfigure the hypercriminalizing narratives dominating mainstream media channels? How might, and how *does* making their own media, on their own terms, allow African American youth to make sense of and reimagine these persistent social interpretations (and internalizations) of them as "always-already criminal" (Cooper, 2013, 2015)? To explore these questions, we discuss how hypercriminalization persistently manifests in the lives of and media stories involving young urban men of color through the circulation of interrelated sociotextual genres such as racial profiling and news moral panics. We then analyze a 2014 episode of POPPYN focusing on youth and the criminal justice system in order to show how youth media production multimodally recontextualizes hypercriminalizing genres through substitutions, deletions, rearrangements, and additions of the practices' component elements. Through investigation of the ways multimodal and discursive choices represent social actors, actions, and constructions of legitimacy, this study highlights specific rhetorical strategies media production and multimodal literacy pedagogy can leverage to support learners to critically and agentively reimagine oppressive social positionings.

Hypercriminalization and Hypercriminalizing Genres

In the U.S. context, Black men are systematically criminalized—or hypercriminalized—by public institutions and agents, including schools, police, and the media. That is, young Black males' everyday presence and actions are frequently interpreted and treated by others as criminal activity (Rios, 2011). This hypercriminalization is experienced by young Black men ubiquitously

and across public and commercial contexts, when they are followed by a shop clerk who assumes an intention to steal, when their backpacks and clothes are scanned by metal detectors at schools, when police officers stop and frisk them on the street, or when everyday pedestrians regard them with evident suspicion and mistrust in a public setting. As the New Money teens lamented in the focus group quoted above, they are persistently profiled as a "flashmob" when walking in public with their friends. In 2012, when this focus group took place, the "flashmob" was the latest moral panic to infect the local Philadelphia media, repeatedly charging the public imagination with fears of dangerous crowds of teens, powered by cell phone technology, gathering in public and commercial spaces intent on wreaking havoc. The flashmob news trend led to institution of legally enforced curfews for teens, restrictions against traveling in groups larger than two, as well as FBI monitoring of student cell phones and social networking sites (Massaro & Mullaney, 2011).

As Lisa Cacho argues, these systematic processes "permanently criminalize" and thus constitute a kind of "social death" for young people of color, as Black males are not just misrecognized as perpetrators that have committed a crime that has occurred, but instead denied the very right to be law-abiding prior to any action; in other words, they are denied "the possibility of compliance" (Cacho, 2012, p. 6). By using the term "social death," which Cacho borrows from Orlando Patterson's (1982) analysis of slavery and its consequences, Cacho asserts that these permanently criminalizing processes render Black men as ineligible for personhood, as "their behaviors are criminalized even if their crimes are victimless (using street drugs), even if their actual activities are not illegal at all (standing in a public place), and even if the evidence is not actually evidence ('looking like a terrorist')" (Cacho, 2012, p. 6). Hypercriminalization operates through un-followable laws.

The processes and institutional complex of criminalization (surveillance, policing, and punishment) effectively mask larger social forces that produce the criminalizing *potential* of Black youth—their "at-risk-ness" so to speak (Giroux, 2009). Young Black men are seen as a threat because they are in many ways excluded from legitimate participation in capitalism, through neighborhood and educational disinvestments that thwart Black youths' available pathways to legal economic contribution and reward. The unemployment rate for African Americans ages 16 to 24 was 31% in 2015—22.6% higher than for their white peers and 16% over average unemployment rate for this age group (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). In the United States, public school funding depends on local property taxes, and because Black families tend to have less wealth and disproportionately live in neighborhoods with low housing prices (Oliver & Shapiro, 2013), schools have approximately 8% to 18% less to spend per person for

Black students than their white peers (Spatig-Amerikaner, 2012). To the extent that these disinvestments have been systematically and historically enacted through policies of red-lining, inequitable school funding, and criminal entrapment, they continue to reproduce the atmosphere of Black youth disposability and crisis (Waquant, 2009). At best, poor youth of color are reframed as in need of intervention, made subject to various projects of neoliberal governmentality—programs to keep young men off the streets and "out of trouble" (Dumas, 2016; Ferguson, 2001).

In addition to the economic and institutional processes that effectively position young Black men as "at-risk" for being criminalized, hypercriminalization is socially amplified through circulation of media narratives that perpetuate the representation of criminalizing conditions (Bell & Janis, 2011). In particular, news and other kinds of "reality"-based media even more than fictionalized narratives tend to include African Americans in stories related to crime, using more violent imagery and language, and tend to depict them more often as perpetrators, not victims, of criminal activities (Oliver, 2003). Since news media functions as a kind of "deviance-defining elite" that visualize social problems to make them "intelligible to the broader publics" (Watkins, 2004), these representations are powerful in shaping social expectations and positionings. The circulation of these images produces a pervasive implicit bias on behalf of whites and exacerbates conditions of Black vulnerability (Yancy, 2012), including teachers' negative perceptions of and actions toward their Black male students (Sealey-Ruiz & Greene, 2015). Experiences of hypercriminalization also have meaningful psychological and material effects for young people of color. In a study that surveyed and interviewed a diverse group of college students about experiences with racial profiling, Nadal, Davidoff, Allicock, Serpe, and Erazo (2017) found that recurrent events in which the subjects were stopped and unfairly treated with suspicion by police led to feelings of lowered self-esteem, emotional dissonance, sustained negative perceptions of law enforcement, and even intentional modifications to their grooming, dress, or actions, such as shaving or budgeting extra time to walk to school in anticipation of similar future encounters.

Within the scope of this study, we conceive of hypercriminalization as a type of "metadiscourse" (Wortham, 2003), or culturally persistent way of framing for how people come to understand "social events as coherent" (p. 191; see Silverstein and Urban, 1996).[1] We are interested in exploring how hypercriminalization, acting as an interpretive cultural frame, shapes recurrent rhetorical situations, or "genres" (see Miller, 1984) that involve young Black men. Drawing on Miller's use of the term, the presence of young African American men in public space creates an "exigence"—what she

describes as "form of social knowledge" (p. 157) that, in this case, motivates a hypercriminalizing response (e.g., suspicion, interrogation). We argue that this articulation of hypercriminalization as an interpretive cultural frame that is circulated through generic events and media narratives allows us to look in more nuanced and systemic ways at how everyday experiences can be transformed in multimodal texts to reference and reimagine possibilities for social action.

The interpretive logic of hypercriminalization animates such generic events and texts as youths' stop and frisk encounters with police, broadcast news representations of police shootings of unarmed Black men, news sensationalizations of youth-led "flashmobs," discriminatory court sentencing and school discipline practices, and the connected histories of postslavery portrayals of the "mythical Black brute" that were used to justify (also historically generic and conventionally typified) lynching rituals (Smiley & Fakunle, 2016, p. 5). We can also extend this line of theorizing to describe genres of intervention and resistance, such as academic studies that illuminate and critique (but in the process also reify) hypercriminalization, protest movements like Black Lives Matter, or new social media genres like the Twitter hashtag #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, which invited people of color to share publicly available images of themselves that they think the news media would choose to represent them if they were killed (typically more menacing or "thuggish") juxtaposed with more diverse, complex, and positive images that they would select to represent themselves (Stampler, 2014). Within this sociotextual network of genres, hypercriminalization is continuously reproduced as a key interpretive apparatus for reading and responding to situations that include young Black men; it is not just a situational *trope* for Black youth (i.e., a recurrent literary theme), but a generic *trap* that predetermines their possibilities for action and interpretation in everyday public settings and broader social and institutional worlds.

Our appropriation of the term "genre" here departs from scholars who use it to describe types/categories of texts and instead aligns more closely with those who conceive of genre as a kind of sociocultural interpretive context for *activity*, realized dialogically by the participants within a situation (Bakhtin, 1986; see Collin, 2012; Russell, 1997). Researchers of youth media practices have written about "genres of participation" (Ito et al., 2009) to describe different ways young people engage with technology, media, and each other in different physical and virtual spaces. We also take a cue from the affect theorist Lauren Berlant, who invites us to recognize that there is a "political imperative to be sensitive and creative about all the genres a scene could be, because a genre accounts for and makes available collective experience" (Berlant, 2013, n.p.). Genres as situations realize not only possible

scripts of social events, but also subjective experiences of the participants, and determine possibilities for future actions and relations.

As we participate in social contexts, we acquire a repertoire of words, expressions, and actions and assimilate the kinds of configurations these words and actions typically conform to—we learn the common genres of the social world. However, access to different genres is not evenly distributed. As Martin and Rose (2008) theorize, "Control over the genres of everyday life is accumulated through repeated experience, including more or less explicit instruction from others" (p. 18). More privileged genres such as academic or scientific writing are both recognized and controlled by people with access to professional institutions and postsecondary education. Other genres may be experienced by and familiar to people of only certain demographics; for example, being racially profiled is a more common, and therefore recognizable, genre for people of color in the United States. The legibility of a text or situation is thus directly related to one's experience with a genre form and its corresponding context. To understand and reproduce a genre requires not just the knowledge of its aesthetic features, but also "a knowledge of the social action(s) a genre produces and the social typifications that inform that action: the social motives, relations, values, and assumptions embodied within a genre that frame how, why, and when to act" (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010, p. 77). Following Althusser (2006), genres *interpellate* persons and objects, assigning to them a situationally meaningful and functional identity. In other words, finding ourselves in a social situation with a particular set of coparticipants, we narrow the scope of possibilities for the kinds of interactions and interpretations within which we might engage.

We argue, then, that media texts created by and representing young Black men must inevitably grapple with the constraints of generic and metadiscursive influences on both creators and audiences. Educators too must contend with this unequal and pervasive effect of hypercriminalizing genres on their students. As participants in film classrooms or media production programs, youth obtain access to the means of production of a powerful tool of professional video making and any number of influential cinematic genres including broadcast news, documentary, or narrative film. As they create fictionalized or documentary representations of the social practices they encounter in everyday life, such as racial profiling, youth have the opportunity (and to some extent the obligation as they cannot avoid the hypercriminalizing gaze) to negotiate the generic determinacy of their past experiences and social expectations. As Kamberelis writes, "When people appropriate and use genres, they also inherit these ideologies as obvious and familiar horizons against which their actions and the actions of others make sense" (Kamberelis, 2001, p. 91). How does media production allow for and support the negotiation of these

inherited logics of legibility? In the next section, we review studies that demonstrate the affordances of multimodal composition to contend with dominant interpretive frames such as homophobia, ethnocentricity, and deficit-based representations of urban communities, in order to inform our study of youth media's potential for contending with hypercriminalization.

Media Production as Multimodal Composition

Media production is a form of *multimodal composition*—the process and product of combining disciplinary practices of writing, cinematography, film editing, sound design, dramatic performance and others; meaning is constructed through the interaction of all these affiliated communicative modes. This *multimodal semiosis*—the process of weaving meaningful connections between various social and symbolic objects and actors to produce meanings—is sourced from a layered tapestry of available *modes*—speech, text, images, gestures, sounds, and so on. These modes are culturally patterned meaning-making resources, acquired from participation in local, global, and virtual discourse communities (Jewitt, 2008). In multimodal compositions, modes are deployed in combination with each other, and hold culturally specific meaning as an assemblage (Baldry & Thibault, 2006; Kress & van Leuween, 2006). Literacy scholars have been increasingly attuned to the way contemporary and digital forms of writing (e.g., social media and email communication) are already multimodal, and have consequently analyzed how this expanded repertoire of semiotic tools in a pedagogic context unleashes powerful new meaning potentials (Hull & Nelson, 2005; Mills, 2010; Smith, 2018), including the ability to critique systemic inequalities and stereotypes and produce alternative representations (Goodman, 2003; Morrel, 2015). Smith (2014), in a qualitative synthesis of 76 studies on multimodal composition, found six cross-cutting characterizations of the form. According to Smith's review, multimodal composition (a) is engaging for adolescents, (b) is a collaborative, social process, (c) is particularly beneficial to "marginalized" adolescents, (d) involves overt instruction, (e) is scaffolded in a variety of ways, and (f) is a complex, recursive process.

Several case studies have paid careful attention to how youth use the available tools of media production to author texts that push back against mainstream negative representations. For example, Curwood and Gibbons (2009) analyze a digital video poem produced by a gay Asian male student for a class project. The authors argue that the video is a "multimodal counter-narrative" that uses "multiple modes of expression to both highlight and push back against oppressive master narratives" (Curwood & Gibbons, 2009, p. 63). Using tools of "multimodal microanalysis," they show how the teen creator

artfully combines text, images, color transitions, and an original poem inspired by Walt Whitman and Langston Hughes to highlight unique aspects of his marginalized identity. For example, he uses a screen flooded with the color yellow (representing the word "yellow" as a slang term used to refer to Asians) and footage of two men walking to get a marriage license to multimodally explore the intersectionality of his ethnicity and sexuality.

Hull, Kenney, Marple, and Forsman-Schneider's (2006) case study of youth media produced by urban boys of color similarly found the artful mixing of available meaning-making resources to assert creative and novel subject positions. They spotlight a case study of Taj, a 9-year-old participant in their youth media program, who created an animation using Adobe Premiere about a superhero named *Delicate Man* "whose only superpower is to break into pieces" (Hull et al., 2006, p. 19). *Delicate Man* reflects Taj's own multiracial identity (a mix of Indian, Trinidadian, Jewish, and Irish) that is frequently mistakenly interpreted by others as "Mexican." In Taj's animated story, the Delicate Man is able to use his fracturing as an advantage, by making parts of his fragmented body parts into defense weapons. Taj creatively imagined a way to represent what it feels like to feel misunderstood, and resourcefully used drawings, animation, and voiceovers to transform his experiences into an agentive narrative of a resilient superhero.

Duncan-Andrade (2007) documents how a summer program grounded in critical media pedagogy allowed a group of African American and Latino youth to author a counter-narrative to their underfunded school system and overpoliced community. The youth produced a video project that combined Dead Prez's politically laden raps, footage of their peers being spontaneously apprehended by police during the summer program, visuals of a patronizing and culturally ignorant literacy intervention implemented at their school, and testimonies from local youth about their experiences, to artistically and assertively expose and critique the conditions of increasing militarization and misguided education initiatives in their community. For instance, the video begins with a montage of different billboards in the community—"The Liquor Bank," "888-Get-Money," "Housewives 98 cent store," "Hustler Casino"—cut to the rhythm of a bass drum. This montage transitions to footage of students leaving high school at the end of the day, implying a relationship between the predatory economic institutions and their influence on the children's potential futures. Throughout the film, the youth producers juxtapose statistics, footage from documentaries, and interviews with local community experts, punctuated with a returning screen that poses a one-word question: "WHY?" Using a variety of media sources and modes of address, these youth evaluate and resist the passive inheritance of their neighborhood conditions.

These three examples demonstrate the deliberate and creative choices youth media producers use to expose injustices (Duncan-Andrade, 2007), articulate particularities of their intersectional marginalization (Curwood & Gibbons, 2009), and imagine empowering responses to their oppressive conditions (Hull et al., 2006). In a way, media production in all three cases functions as a form of subjectifying practice (Foucault, 1977)—the process by which individuals come to recognize different ways of being, presenting, and accomplishing a "self" in the world, in relation to the various objectifying discourses of institutions, agencies, and social conventions, or semiotic regimes (Kamberelis, 2001; van Leeuwen, 2005).

While the above studies employ some version of multimodal discourse analysis to deliver a close reading of youth-produced texts and reveal their counter-oppressive meanings, like in most studies of youth media, the researchers focus on the ways various multimodal resources are combined within the scope of the text itself as expressive *design* choices within themselves (Bezemer & Kress, 2008) rather than as reworkings of the media genres and cultural frames within which the creators feel interpretively trapped (i.e., heteronormativity, ethnocentricity, racial capitalism). In this article, we argue for a more nuanced form of multimodal analysis, one that helps us both to put textual genres and social practices in conversation with one another and to understand the possibilities and constraints of media's rhetorical intervention. We propose that the framework of *recontextualization* (van Leeuwen, 2008) offers a productive basis for such a reading in concert with multimodal analytic tools used in studies above. In the next section, we describe our methodological approach and operationalize it using two clips from a youth-produced news show.

Recontextualization and Multimodal Semiotics

Our methodological framework follows the lineages of social semiotics and critical discourse analysis. Scholars in social semiotics tend to approach all forms of social life as constructed from meaning making resources: words, gestures, images, sounds, and so on (van Leeuwen, 2005). Social semioticians are especially interested in tracing the ways these meaning making resources are regularly and systematically patterned together in social spaces and texts, and how these associated relations function to produce, maintain, critique, and change the larger social semiotic system or some part of it. Aligned with Marxist and poststructuralist traditions, the project of social semiotics is not only theoretical but political as well, whereby the praxis of sociosemiotic analysis is "directed toward the exposing, challenging, and changing of those social meaning making practices that function to conceal

and to maintain illegitimate and repressive relations of power and domination in the social order" (Thibault, 1990, pp. 8-9). Critical discourse analysis is one of the primary approaches used in social semiotics to study the construction and reproduction of power and inequality through discourse.

In his book *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*, social semiotician Theo van Leeuwen (2008) proposes a theory of discourse (whether textual, spoken, or multimodal) as a recontextualization of social practice. He defines social practices as "socially regulated ways of doing things" (p. 6), what we have referred to in this article as genres. Discourse on the other hand is "socially constructed knowledge of some social practice," that is, a set of resources for understanding and representing a social practice (p. 6). Specific texts draw on available discourses—their meaning-making resources and rules—taking up and reproducing ways of making sense of reality (van Leeuwen, 2009). Borrowing the term "recontextualization" from the sociologist of education Basil Bernstein (1990), van Leeuwen develops a framework for analyzing the ways social practices are recontextualized—transferred and transformed—when represented in texts, and the resulting meaning relations that are constructed in the process. Within this framework, van Leeuwen conceives of all social practices as including five primary interrelated elements: participants (or actors), actions, locations, times, and resources. In addition, the five elements are informed by typical corresponding modes, styles, and conditions the above elements must have to be legibly included in a given social practice (see Table 1).

Van Leeuwen argues that when a practice is realized in a new form—e.g., when told as a story, made into a poem, or visualized into a film—the elements undergo substitutions, additions, rearrangements, and deletions (van Leeuwen, 2008). What decisions are made in the process of representation—what gets excluded or changed—functions to potentially reposition and reconfigure the power and ideological relations commonly embedded in the represented practice. Actions may be legitimated, such as by emphasis on their authority or morality, actors could be presented as having agency or stripped of it, and eligibility conditions could be upheld or defied to communicate traditional or new possibilities for actors' situational moves. In other words, through recontextualization, social practices may be critiqued and revised in rhetorically meaningful and ideologically implicative ways—ways that not only demonstrate the particular creator's resistance to or negotiation of their socially imposed identity within the text, but potentially forge a critique of the social practice itself.

Van Leeuwen (2008) offers an extensive taxonomy or "grammar" for analyzing recontextualization moves in English discourse. Specifically, he is motivated by a range of questions: How can social actors and actions be

Table 1. Van Leeuwen's Elements of Social Practice and Their Qualifying Conditions.

Elements of social practice	Modes/styles/conditions
Participants/actors—the main actors involved in the practices	**Eligibility conditions** of the participants including things like race or age that might "qualify" someone to play the appropriate role in the social practice
	Presentation styles, including dress, body, groomings of the participants that are typical of the social practice
Actions—activities, performed in sequences, with varying degrees of choice	**Performance modes** like stage directions for the actions; these qualities with which the actions are typically performed may include pacing, gestures, and attitudes
Locations—where the actions are performed	**Eligibility conditions** of the locations
Times—more or less defined times of the social practice	
Resources—tools and materials, or props needed to perform the practice	**Eligibility conditions** of the resources

represented in English discourse? How does English discourse legitimate actions, by providing implicit answers to the questions: Why do we do this (i.e., enact a particular social practice)? Why should we do this in this way? A choice of particular term can index a moral or rational evaluation of an activity (e.g., "exercised" or "abused" power). The selection of a word to represent an actor or actors (e.g., "officer" or "cop"; "citizen" or "kid") can represent them as having agency or authority or signal mythically laden connotations. While language already offers a complex set of resources for constructing and modifying meaning, when texts include other modes, such as image, sound, and editing, the meaning-making and transforming potentials are multiplied.

In order to examine how different elements (actors, actions, resources, etc.) are recontextualized (added, deleted, substituted, or rearranged) multi-modally, we developed a distinctive multimodal transcription scheme (see Table 2 and Figure 1) that draws on multimodal studies of youth media (Burn & Parker, 2003; Curwood & Gibbons, 2009; Domingo, 2011; Halverson, 2010; Halverson, Bass, & Woods, 2012) and methods from social semiotics (Baldry & Thibault, 2006; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). To

Table 2. Multimodal Transcription Scheme.

Mise-en-scène	Cinematography	Speech	Editing
Participants and their attributes, such as race, dress, groomings Actions and their pacings and performance modes Circumstances such as times, locations, resources used by participants	Angle (high, low, eye level—signaling equal or unequal power relations) Frame (close up, medium, long—signaling social distance, genre conventions)	Spoken discourse, which itself indexes the component elements of social practices including actors, actions, circumstances, and eligibility conditions (see Table 1)	Including text, graphics, color, transitions, special effects, and sounds added in postproduction—index moods, relationality between different scenes or subjects

index the configurations of participants and their performance styles (e.g., race, gender, dress, age), activities (e.g., gestures, gaze and movements), and artifacts (tools and circumstances) that are represented in the scene, we described each of those elements as part of the mise-en-scène—everything "on the stage"—placed in front of the camera (Thompson & Bordwell, 2003). Because the medium (video) we analyzed also constructs meaning through modes of cinematography, editing, speech, and sound, and because configurations of those elements cohere into socially recognized genre conventions (such as a news broadcast), we use multimodal transcription to index these semiotic choices as well (Halverson, 2010; Halverson et al., 2012). In our scheme, speech includes verbal linguistic utterances; cinematography includes distance, angle, position, and movement of the camera to the subject; editing refers to multimodal decisions made in postproduction, such as the arrangement and layering of footage, addition of graphics, titles, or logos, transitions (such as fades, dissolves, or jump cuts), nondiagetic sound, and special effects (Lam, Smirnov, Chang, Rosario-Ramos, 2015).

As seen in Table 2, whereas the components listed in the mise-en-scène column include van Leeuwen's (2008) elements of social practices (i.e., participants, actions, locations, etc.), and the transcription of spoken discourse allows us to index these elements linguistically, the filmic modes of cinematography and editing create additional opportunities for representation and recontextualization, such as use of genre-conforming camera positions or genre-bending graphics and special effects. Thus, the layered methods of multimodal transcription and recontextualization analysis allow us to expand van Leeuwen's toolkit of linguistic recontextualization and apply it to multimodal texts. In the rest of the article, we operationalize this framework using

two clips from the youth-produced news show POPPYN. Specifically, our analysis aims to answer the following questions:

1. How does POPPYN recontextualize the social practices of hyper-criminalization and specifically the social practice of "youth-police interactions" through both linguistic and multimodal discourses?
2. How does POPPYN critique the legitimacy of hypercriminalization through linguistic and multimodal discourses?
3. How does POPPYN construct new possibilities for actors and actions through recontextualizations of hypercriminalizing practices?

Study Context

The data for our analysis come from a youth-produced news show called POPPYN (Presenting Our Perspective on Philly Youth News). POPPYN was started in 2010 by the University Community Collaborative, a youth civic engagement initiative at Temple University in Philadelphia. The first author of this article was the media productions manager at the collaborative at the time, responsible for developing curricular resources, training teens and college students in media literacy and production, and coordinating youth media projects as part of the University Community Collaborative's several youth leadership programs. The idea for POPPYN was originally proposed by a group of 5 older youth leaders in the collaborative, who wanted to create a youth news show covering "positive things youth are doing" in the city, to counteract what they perceived as overly negative representations of youth in mainstream media. Collectively, the 5 youth leaders and media productions manager developed the structure of this program and chose a name that signaled both youthfulness and "newsiness" (the word *poppin* in youth vernacular means both something that's happening and something that's cool, as in "what's poppin tonight?" or "my lipgloss is poppin").[2]

After some experimentation with formats, the team settled on a standard structure for the show: a 30-minute TV news magazine episode, typically with an overarching theme, made up of 5 or 6 segments: street interviews, spotlights of youth-serving organizations, coverage of youth-led events such as public protests or conventions, a skit (an exploration of some aspect of the issue through a dramatized narrative), and a segment called "Breakin' It Down" that educates viewers on a current social issue through satirical commentary and special effects. While Smirnov left the position as POPPYN's program coordinator in 2012, the show is still produced under the leadership of a different coordinator and newly recruited youth participants. We provide this developmental context to situate the particularities of "literacy

sponsorship" (Brandt, 1998) of this pedagogical project. The origin of POPPYN is deliberately political, oriented toward empowerment, and iteratively developed in professional collaboration with young people (Chávez & Soep, 2005). Critique and rearticulation of discourses about urban youth are central to POPPYN's collective mission. As such, the pedagogy and products of this project need to be understood differently from individual multimodal compositions created in, for example, a literacy classroom (see Ferman & Smirnov, 2016, and Smirnov, Ferman, & Cabral, 2015, for more institutional context of the show).

To conduct the present analysis, we received permission from the University Community Collaborative to use the publicly available episodes and internal organizational documents (e.g., focus group transcripts) as research data. The study proposal was reviewed and approved by Northwestern University's Institutional Review Board.

Focal Segments

The focus of our analysis is on Episode 13 of the show, released in 2014.[3] The subtitle of the episode is "Youth in the Criminal Justice System." We chose this episode for several reasons. First, the particular episode's theme is especially politically timely and relevant in light of increasing attention to police violence against Black men, social disposability of Black lives, and mass incarceration. Second, the episode's focus on hypercriminalization of youth addresses the core mission of the show overall—that of challenging negative representations and expectations of young people in Philadelphia, making it particularly representative of the whole project. Finally, we wanted to select an episode produced after the first author of this article left the role of the show's coordinator, to reduce personal bias in analysis of the content.[4]

Originally, we transcribed and analyzed each of the different segments of the episode, to understand how the different media genres used in the show critiqued and represented hypercriminalization. For this article, we highlight two segments in particular: street interviews (length = 3 min 51 sec) and a narrative skit (length = 3 min 40 sec). Because the two segments we analyze deal most directly with youth and police interactions in public space, we look at how the creators of the show recontextualize this social practice and related practices of hypercriminalization. The street interview segment features public interviews with 8 young people about their experiences with police and their responses to the then recent trial and acquittal of George Zimmerman, a Florida man who a year and a half earlier had shot and killed Trayvon Martin—a 17-year-old African American high school student.[5] In effect, the interview segment pools the voices of various young Black men to establish

a "typical" experience of youth-police interactions from their perspectives, defining the actors, actions, times, locations, and eligibility conditions of this recurrent genre of event. The narrative skit represents and reimagines the typical experience of "youth-police interactions" by presenting parallel stories of two pairs of young Black men encountering the same police officer in different ways and experiencing different outcomes. Although both segments represent discursive recontextualizations of several social practices, examining the two together allows us to (a) look at typical and reimagined instances of youth-police interactions and (b) analyze the ways discursive and multimodal compositional choices work to intervene into the interpretive logic of hypercriminalization.

Multimodal Transcription and Coding Procedure

After downloading the segments, we created detailed multimodal transcripts of the selected clips using a combination software tools: InqScribe (for time-stamping and transcription), StudioCode (for multimodal coding), and Microsoft Excel (for constructing detailed multilayered transcripts paired with still shots of the video taken at one-second intervals), using the framework outlined in Table 2 (see Figure 1).

We also used qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti to separate the component elements of social practices as constructed in the spoken discourse of the two segments, indexing the ways actors, actions, locations, times, resources, eligibility conditions, performance modes, and presentation styles as well as legitimation strategies were represented through youths' verbal descriptions and reactions to personal and mediated hypercriminalization events (e.g., the Trayvon Martin shooting). From these transcription and coding processes, we were able to identify the component elements of hypercriminalizing practices such as "youth-police interactions" (as described and enacted by young Black men interviewed in the show), isolate the legitimating strategies used by speakers and producers, and analyze ways that the focal segments recontextualized component elements to imagine new possibilities for acting in and navigating hypercriminalizing situations.

Analysis

Hypercriminalizing Genres Recontextualized in POPPYN's Focal Segments

The interview segment opens with a youth reporter posing the question, "Have you heard about the George Zimmerman trial?" and seven interviewees

STILL FRAME	START TIME	Mise-en-Scene PARTICIPANTS (and attributes)	ACTIONS	CIRCUMSTANCES (locations, artifacts)	Cinematography CINEMATOGRAPHY (angle, frame)	Spoken Discourse SPEAKER	SPEECH	SOUND	Editing GRAPHICS/TEXT	TRANSITIONS
POPPYN STREET INTERVIEW	9:18							electric piano beat begins	POPPYN Street Interviews (Full Screen Graphic)	Cut
	9:19	Reporter1: Young African American woman, wearing a black tanktop with bra straps showing, long gold chain, hair up, gold earrings. She holds a microphone with POPPYN logo on the mic box as she asks a question, then moves the microphone to Interviewee1		SETTING: Location1 - Center City 15th street. Construction fences block view of city hall. In front of it, a woman in full-length colorful muslim dress is slowly boarding a SEPTA bus. A gray haired man is walking towards the bus. Three younger people walk quickly from right to left of the frame in the background. Daytime.	MS, Eye Level	Reporter1	Have you heard about the George Zimmerman trial?	electric piano beat	POPPYN logo with subtitle "Street Interviews" in orange and purple font appears in the left lower corner	
	9:20		Reporter1 brings microphone back towards herself	MEANS: Reporter1 holds a microphone with a POPPYN logo box. The proximity and direction of the microphone head cues the speaker. ACCOMPANIMENT: The participants face each other, and stand in 3/4				electric piano beat		
	9:21	Interviewee1: Young African American woman with short red				Interviewee1	Mmhm, yes, I have.	electric piano beat	Poppyn street Interviews in lower left corner	

Figure 1. Example of multimodal transcript from street interview segment.

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responding with variations of "Yes" or "Yeah." In this beginning montage, three social practices are recontextualized: the practice of U.S. judicial trials, the practice of journalistic reporting of controversial trials, and the practice of consuming news reports in some form which leads to a widespread public awareness of a particular event. In addition, two more specific events, related to the abovementioned social practices, are embedded in the POPPYN reporter's question: the shooting of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, and the specific procedures and outcomes of the State of Florida versus George Zimmerman trial, which found him innocent based on the state's "stand-your-ground" laws. The interviewees respond with their opinions on the case, transforming it from a broad news event to something that affects them personally ("that can happen to me") and is a matter not only of institutions of justice but also of "family" (@9:31), thus calling in the social practice of a mourning a child (Figure 2).

The next majority of the interview segment recontextualizes the social practice of what the show calls "youth-police interactions," by posing the question to the interviewees, "Have you had any interactions with law enforcement good or bad?" (@10:25). The following sequence of edited interviewee responses (Figure 3) represents various actors, actions, resources, times, locations, and eligibility conditions involved in this genre of interaction, as well as interviewees' added evaluations of their personal experiences and the phenomenon more broadly. In several instances, speakers use the terms "racial profiling" and "police brutality" when discussing the above practices and events. For example, Interviewee 6 says, "And I see them do a lot of *police brutality* on like young, younger kids" (@11:16). Similarly, in the interview segment @09:40, Interviewee 5 responds to whether the George Zimmerman trial affects him by saying, "Me being an African American man I feel that it affects me because he was *racially profiled* and that can happen to me" (Figure 2). Here, "that" refers to the social practice of "racial profiling," which can include youth interactions with police and other practices that target people of color, including Zimmerman's interpretation of Martin as suspicious.

Although "racial profiling" and "police brutality" aren't fully elaborated in the segment in terms of their component elements (other than Interviewee 6 mentioning that being an African American male means he fulfills the eligibility conditions for the practice) the interviewees interchangeably use these terms to refer to the practice of "youth-police interactions." In van Leeuwen's taxonomy, this kind of substitution is a *generalization* (2008, p. 69), as it renames specific events (i.e., the interviewees' own experiences with police) in terms of larger institutional patterns of injustice (i.e., racial

Time	[09:29]	[09:31]	[09:36]	[09:40]
Freeze Frame				
Speech	**Reporter2:** Do you think that it affects you in any way?	**Interviewee7:** I mean, I feel that there was like a great injustice done to Trayvon Martin's family	**Interviewee4:** That little boy Trayvon is somebody's son. Somebody brother.	**Interviewee5:** Me being an African American man I feel that it affects me because he was racially profiled and that can happen to me

Figure 2. Excerpt from street interviews transcript—How the Zimmerman verdict affects youth.

Time	[10:50]	[10:52]	[11:00]	[11:07]
Freeze Frame				
Speech	**Interviewee7:** Directly where at, like right here.	**Interviewee8:** I'm pretty much a young man, trying to do what I need to as far as take care of a family as well as, I mean, better myself.	**Interviewee7:** This cop, this transit cop, he a bit husky, ugly bull, just came up. And he must've got mad, cause I was standing there.	**Interviewee8:** But I've actually been stopped several times by the police officers from downtown and all around the city, mistaken for other people, just because the way I dress.
Time	[11:16]	[11:21]	[11:33]	[11:36]
Freeze Frame				
Speech	**Interviewee6:** And I see them do a lot of police brutality on like young, younger kids.	**Interviewee7:** I was standing there, and he's like MO:OVE, and I start moving, he just start saying like... a lotta.. what's the word for it, inappropriate stuff to me. Start cussing at me and stuff.	**Interviewee8:** I would say, this actually happens every day.	**Interviewee6:** Just coming up to me bothering me, you mean harassing me. Asking do I have guns and I don't. And do I have drugs, and I don't.

Figure 3. Excerpt from street interview segment—Interactions with police.

profiling, police brutality), thus functioning to morally delegitimate their recurrence.

The interview segment uses the media genre of broadcast news street interviews to recontextualize the aforementioned social practices. This broadcast interview genre has its own conventional elements that can be indexed in multimodal transcription, including the traditional medium shot, eye level angle of the camera, the public outdoor setting (location) used to source opinions of regular citizens (participants), a microphone with the show's logo box (resources), and the familiar actional sequence of question and response between the reporter and interviewees (see Montgomery, 2007, for an in-depth discourse analytic treatment of the broadcast news genre). Of course, the POPPYN interview segment is not a pure broadcast news report; rather,

the broadcast genre is itself self-consciously recontextualized by the larger social practice of "youth produced media," with its component elements of nonexpert youth producers, semiprofessional equipment, and uses of youthful cultural resources and discourses such as African American Vernacular English or pop music heard in the background.

While the interview segment represents hypercriminalizing practices such as "youth-police interactions" through a *documentary* format, the narrative skit segment recontextualizes the same practice in two *dramatized* ways: multimodally through black-and-white flashbacks of two groups of two young men being stopped by a police officer (visual frames in second row of Figure 4 and speech @6:32 and @6:35), and linguistically through the retelling of these events by the two groups of young men to each other the next day (first row of Figure 4 and narrated speech corresponding to frames @6:27 and @6:31). Specifically, youth 1-A and 1-B had a negative encounter with a police officer, and openly express their hatred of "cops" @6:15—adding a form of *evaluation* (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 21) to the social practice of "youth-police interactions." Furthermore, the speech row of Figure 4 demonstrates how embedding the recontextualization of "youth-police interactions" within the social practice of "youth hanging out with each other" in the narrative skit allows the producers to use more casual linguistic expressions (e.g., "he was chillin" or "he light" @6:20), physical gestures (1-B @6:15), and playful commentary (e.g., "Oh no he too tall to run" @6:31) than in the interview segment, which adheres to somewhat formal broadcast news conventions.

In addition, the mode of narrative film storytelling (Thompson & Bordwell, 2003) uses more expressive forms of cinematography and editing than the broadcast news genre, such as black-and-white overlay footage to construct flashbacks, as well as a wider variety of angles and special effects (e.g., vignette close-ups @6:31 and @6:35). Whereas the interview segment presumes to be presenting truthful but unverifiable testimonies of real youth experiences, the narrative segment gives the viewer a dual view of the social practice of "youth-police interactions": the embedded flashbacks present a more "objective" version of the events, including participant reactions (see 1-B's annoyed tilted head @6:35) and actual officer speech (@6:32), while the retelling of the encounters to each other allows the youth to incorporate more linguistic and physical humor, exaggeration, and evaluation of their experiences. Thus, the two segments present three forms of recontextualization (i.e., documentary interview, multimodal flashbacks, narrative storytelling) and in doing so take advantage of different affordances and constraints for representing the social practice of "youth-police interactions" and of hypercriminalization genres more broadly.

Figure 4. Excerpt from youth interactions with police skit—Negative encounter.

Legitimating and Delegitimating Hypercriminalization

Since our project is concerned with the ways that youth contend with the genres of hypercriminalization through production of media, we pay special attention to the linguistic and multimodal elements they substitute, delete, rearrange, or add and how these work to construct meaning. Table 3 presents the four transformations with descriptions, examples, and their functions in our case study. We are particularly interested in ways media production allows youth to critique the legitimacy of hypercriminalization—to (de)legitimate its practices—through linguistic and multimodal discourses. Both the interview segment and the narrative skit segment in various ways provide opportunities for the young people included to offer their evaluations, reactions, and legitimations of hypercriminalizing social practices of youth-police interactions, racial profiling, police brutality, the Trayvon Martin shooting, and the George Zimmerman trial. As demonstrated in Table 3, it is primarily *additions* in recontextualizations that function to legitimate or delegitimate a social practice.

To explore how youth use media production to critique the legitimacy of hypercriminalization, we first introduce the four kinds of legitimations discussed in van Leeuwen's scheme: *moral evaluation* is a form of legitimation that references value systems; *authorization* is a form of legitimation that acknowledges the authority of tradition, custom, or law; *rationalization* is a form of legitimation that references the goals and uses of social actions; and *mythopoesis* is a form of moral narrative that rewards legitimate actions and punish nonlegitimate actions (van Leeuwen, 2008, pp. 105-106). The focal

Table 3. Examples of Transformations in Focal POPPYN Segments.

Possible transformations of elements of social practice and descriptions	Example from case study	Semiotic function
Substitutions refer to any replacement of elements of the actual social practice with a semiotic element; depends on the kind of context/text into which the practice is recontextualized	In the focal segments, the elements of the practice of "police stopping African American male youth in public space" are substituted with (a) oral stories from youth in the interview segment and (b) dramatized cinematic stories constructed as black-and-white flashback scenes in the narrative skit segment.	The choice of substitutions in the two different recontextualizations takes advantage of the semiotic affordances of each textual genre (i.e., street interviews, narrative film). The genres in turn produce effects of either (a) the commonality of the practice or (b) dramatization of the focal practice, respectively.
Deletions refer to omission or deletion of elements or their details (e.g., parts of actional sequences, locations, etc.)	In the interview segment, neither the reporters nor the interviewees discuss the details of the events of the Trayvon Martin shooting or the corresponding trial of George Zimmerman, while discussing their opinions and reactions to these events.	Deletions of elements can signify assumed knowledge on part of the audience. In the case of the Trayvon Martin shooting/ George Zimmerman trial, the events were so heavily publicized and controversial at the time of POPPYN episode production and release, the details were expected to be easily supplied by viewers themselves.
Rearrangements refer to ways that elements of the social practice "insofar as they have a necessary order, may be rearranged, scattered through the text in various ways" and are done so "to suit the persuasive and hortatory purposes which constitute them as a social practice" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 18)	In the interview segment, the various actions of social practice of youth being stopped by police in public are described by multiple interviewed participants, mixing the sequence of actual events. In the narrative skit segment, the social practice of youth being stopped by police is presented not in sequence, but in parallel flashbacks of two groups of young men who encountered the same officer.	The juxtaposition of multiple, nonsequential examples of youth-police interactions in interviews functions to represent the event as *generalized*, experienced by a large number of African American young men. In the narrative skit, the presentation of parallel youth police encounters as flashbacks allows the close comparison of specific actions and performance modes that lead to different outcomes.

Van Leeuwen (2008) describes five kinds of recontextualizing **additions:** repetitions, reactions, purposes, legitimations, and evaluations

Table 3. (continued)

Possible transformations of elements of social practice and descriptions	Example from case study	Semiotic function
Repetitions refer to instances when "different expressions are used to refer to the same element of a social practice . . . new angles, new semantic features are added each time a new expression is used, gradually building up a more multifaceted concept" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 19)	In the interview segment, Interviewee4 says: "That little boy Trayvon is somebody's son. Somebody brother" (@9:36), thus elaborating the identity of one of the participants of the Trayvon Martin shooting in four ways: little boy, Trayvon, somebody's son, somebody's brother.	The additions to Trayvon Martin's identity made by Interviewee 4 function to build a more socially embedded view of him as a person. He is not just a victim of a shooting, or an African American male involved in an event of racial profiling, but also a participant in the social unit of family, and is a child. The repetitions, thus, function to highlight Martin's vulnerability, innocence, and elicit empathy.
Reactions refer to "participants' subjective reactions to the activities that make up the social practice" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 19); they can be emotional or behavioralized	In the narrative skit segment, 1-A and 1-B's reactions to being stopped and questioned by the police officer are constructed multimodally through close-up shots of their faces (see for example how @6:35 1-B is tilting his head back away from the officer and rolling his eyes defiantly). Later, as 2-B hears 1-B's story of the officer ripping off his POPPYN pin and making him and 1A miss the weekly screening of the show on TV, 2-A says sympathetically, "Yeah I be mad too."	On the one hand, the defiant and sympathetic reactions from 1-B and 2-A to the officer's actions function to situate the recontextualization of the social practice of youth-police interactions in the perspectives of youth (rather than police). However, 1-A's defiant body language captured @6:35 also functions to represent the particularities of the youths' performance mode which 2-A later characterizes as problematic and as provoking the officer's aggression.

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Table 3. (continued)

Possible transformations of elements of social practice and descriptions	Example from case study	Semiotic function
Purposes, usually implicit in social practices themselves, may be explicitly added to particular elements of social practices, revealing assumed ideological values of the participants or authors of recontextualization	In the narrative skit segment, officer Gamble adds a purpose to his action of stopping the youth when he says, "The reason why I was stopping y'all right now is cause there been a lot of robberies" (@6:32). One of the youth, I-A, however, explains the officer's insistence on questioning him and his friend as a result of the officer being "bored with his life" (@6:15 and 6:47), essentially without a legitimate purpose.	The different purposes added to the different recontextualizations of the practice—the more "objective" cinematic flashback versus the more subjective storytelling of the event between peers—themselves function to recontextualize the broader conflict between youth and police, by highlighting the different experiences and perceptions of the practice. The police officer's added purpose emphasizes his aim to solve a crime, while the youths' added "purpose" for interrogating them portrays the officer's action as driven by "boredom," in other words by aimlessness or purposelessness. Thus, in recontextualizing the event and adding his own spin on the officer's purpose, I-A delegitimates the purpose given by the officer.

(continued)

Table 3. (continued)

Possible transformations of elements of social practice and descriptions	Example from case study	Semiotic function
Legitimations of social practices refer to "reasons that either the whole of a social practice or some part of it must take place, or must take place in the way that it does" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 20)	In the narrative skit, I-B reflects on the practice of youth-police interactions @8:03 by saying "'Man, they be abusing their power all the time" and "Just cause you're a cop doesn't mean you gotta beat somebody up."	This additional reflection to the of the specific negative interaction experienced by I-A and I-B answers the question "why"—the social practice happens. In effect, it both offers a rational legitimation of the practice (it happens because police have power) and delegitimates it by implying that power does not have to be abused or used unfairly (moral legitimation).
Evaluations refer to additions of authors' evaluations to some elements of a social practice or the practice itself; they are different than reactions which are expressed by participants of the practice itself as it is happening	In the interview segment, the interview subjects evaluate the verdict of the George Zimmerman trial. In contrast to the outcome of the actual trial which found Zimmerman innocent on the basis of stand-your-ground laws, all the interviewees featured in the segment indicate believing that Zimmerman was guilty. One interviewee says, "the whole judicial system is wrong." In the Narrative Skit, I-A repeatedly says, "I hate cops" before beginning to recount his and I-B's specific experience with the police officer the day before.	The addition of evaluations in both the interviews and the narrative skit functions to center the recontextualization of hypercriminalizing social practices—racial profiling, discriminatory laws and sentencing practices, and youth interactions police—in the perspective of young people of color, rather police officers or other members of the public. In the two examples, different elements are evaluated: Zimmerman in the event of the Trayvon Martin shooting, "the whole judicial system"—the complex of social practices related to making and enforcing laws, and "cops" as social actors.

(continued)

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POPPYN segments incorporate all four forms of legitimations to critique experiences of hypercriminalization.

In the interview segment, moral evaluation is predominant; the interviewees evaluate the events experienced through a system of moral values, declaring the actions and outcomes of hypercriminalization as nonsensical, wrong, and unjust. For example, Interviewee 5 says in response to whether George Zimmerman was guilty: "He didn't have the right to kill anyone just walking up the street that he believed was a suspect of nonsensical crimes" (@10:19); thus, he evaluates Zimmerman's action as not morally justifiable under the known circumstances. Other interviewees extend this evaluation in their responses; Interviewee 4 says "In my eyes, he guilty. In God eyes, he always gonna be guilty" (@10:03), calling on the moral authority of religious doctrine. The subjects also continue to use moral evaluation when considering whether the events of the Zimmerman case affect them personally (see Figure 5). Interviewee 7 says that he feels "a great injustice" was done to Trayvon Martin's family (@09:31, see Figure 2), while Interviewee 4 expands the claim to argue that "the whole judicial system is wrong" (@09:47). Interviewee 2 characterizes the events as "very unjust, unfair. It was like basically racist?" (@9:50). In the sequencing of these statements, the interviewees present the scale of hypercriminalization as extending beyond just the individual event involving specific human participants, and toward "the whole judicial system," thus using moral evaluation to delegitimate not just the actions but the institutional actors that perpetuate hypercriminalization.

Although the use of moral evaluation predominates in the interview segment, other forms of legitimation are also evoked. For example, Interviewee 2 appears to refer to the legal definition of murder and responsibility when she says, "Like yes, he committed the murder. He is guilty" (@10:11), using the *impersonal authority* of the law to delegitimate Zimmerman's actions (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 108). Interviewee 8 uses the *rationalization* form of legitimation when he says, "Going towards violence isn't the answer" (@12:00) and "we can't fight violence with violence" (@12:08), invoking the means and goals of actions to delegitimate potentially more combative responses to hypercriminalization (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 117).

The narrative skit on the whole serves as a kind of *mythopoetic* form of legitimation, in which actors who engage in legitimate practices (e.g., using legal discourse and speaking to the police officer with respect) get rewarded with positive outcomes. For instance, youth 2-A and 2-B, unlike their peers, don't get searched or beat up by the officer that stops them. The mythopoetic function of the segment is brought home when 2-B says, "what's that jawn they had at school or whatever like uh no act of kindness is wasted?" (@8:06)),[6] using a presumably shared ethic that if one treats others with kindness and

Figure 5. Excerpt from street interview segment—Moral evaluation.

Figure 6. Excerpt from skit—Rational legitimation, moral delegitimation, and mythopoeisis.

respect, one will be rewarded with the same treatment in return (Figure 6). The skit thus places more responsibility on youth as participants in hypercriminalizing practices. However, the segment also evokes both *rational authority* and *moral evaluation* when @8:03 1-B says, "Man they be abusing their power all the time," admitting that police both do have legitimate power to stop people (rational authority) and abuse it unjustly (moral evaluation).

Four Recontextualizations of "Youth-Police Interactions"

So far we have begun to answer the first two questions of our study: (a) How does POPPYN recontextualize the social practices of hypercriminalization and specifically the social practice of "youth-police interactions" through both linguistic and multimodal discourses? and (a) How does POPPYN critique the legitimacy hypercriminalization through linguistic and multimodal discourses? We will now expand on these answers and consider how POPPYN constructs new possibilities for actors and actions through recontextualization of "youth-police interactions" in four different ways across the two focal segments. As discussed earlier, the social practice of "youth-police interactions" is recontextualized in the interview segments when the reporters ask, "Have you had any interactions with law enforcement good or bad?" (@10:25). Interviewees 2 and 3 (both female) respond that they have not had direct experiences, while three young African American men (Interviewees 7, 8, and 6) describe various components of their frequent negative experiences with police. The narrative skit segment functionally presents three different recontextualizations of youth-police interactions—two stories of two different groups of young men stopped by the same police officer presented through black-and-white flashbacks, and a narrative of the two groups meeting each other and recounting their respective experiences the following day.

In Table 4, we collected all the words, phrases, and aspects of multimodal elements represented in the mise-en-scène (for this view leaving out cinematography, sound, and editing) related to the component elements of the social practice of "youth-police interactions": actors, their eligibility conditions and presentation styles, actions and their performance modes, resources and their eligibility conditions, times, and locations and their eligibility conditions. We think this view is especially powerful for highlighting the different choices made across the recontextualizations, and their implications for understanding the aims, successes, and limitations of the focal youth media texts. In particular, we notice the ways these recontextualizations (a) foreground the regularity of hypercriminalizing events in the lives of young men of color, (b) highlight the invalidity of alleged reasons for being hypercriminalized, and (c) present modified actional sequences and performance modes as strategies for navigating hypercriminalizing situations. We elaborate upon these assertions below.

Regularity of hypercriminalizing events. The "times" row in Table 4 provides a striking demonstration of the regularity of hypercriminalizing events in the

Table 4. Four Ways Youth-Police Interactions are Recontextualized across the Focal POPPYN Segments.

	Street interviews	Narrative skit		
Social practice component elements	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
Actors (Who are the actors participating in the practice "youth-police interactions"? How are linguistic and multimodal discourses employed to include and describe them?)	**YOUTH:** *Interviewee8*, describes himself as "a young man, trying to do what I need to as far as take care of a family, as well as, I mean, better myself" *Interviewee7* *Interviewee6* "young, younger kids" **POLICE:** "law enforcement" "this cop" "this transit cop" "a bit husky, ugly bull" "he" x4 "back up" "they" x2 "police officers"	**YOUTH:** *I-A & I-B* **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble*, presented with a freeze-frame and suspenseful music	**YOUTH:** *2-A & 2-B* **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble*, presented with a freeze-frame and suspenseful music "officer"	**YOUTH:** *I-A & I-B* *2-A & 2-B* **POLICE:** "tall black cop" "bull like eight feet tall" "bull is like twelve nine" "Gamble" "Gamble" "Gamble" "same bull" "cops" "he" x 21
Eligibility conditions for actors (What are the conditions that qualify the actors to participate in this social practice?)	**YOUTH:** *Interviewee5* says "Me being an African American man" [racial profiling can happen to him]. *Interviewee8* says he gets stopped by police "just because the way I dress."	**YOUTH:** *I-A* and *I-B* are both African American and male **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble* is wearing a blue collared shirt signaling uniform, police cap and badge.	**YOUTH:** *2-A* and *2-B* are both African American and male **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble* is wearing a blue collared shirt signaling uniform, police cap and badge.	**YOUTH:** *2-A:* "Y'all weren't involved in none of the muggings or robberies around?" *I-B:* "NO! What I need to mug somebody for? I'm rich!"

Table 4. (continued)

	Street interviews		Narrative skit	
Social practice component elements	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
Presentation styles (What are the dress and grooming requirements of the participants? How are they described linguistically or depicted multimodally?)	**YOUTH:** *Interviewee8* wears a baseball cap, what looks like a chef's uniform shirt, and backpack. *Interviewee7* wears a T-shirt, rolled-up jeans, chain, holds a Gatorade bottle. *Interviewee6* is shirtless, torso tattooed, hair in afro hairstyle.	**YOUTH:** *1-A* is wearing a button down shirt and khakis. *1-B* is wearing a T-shirt, baseball cap, dark pants. **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble* is wearing a blue shirt and sunglasses.	**YOUTH:** *2-A* is wearing a dark T-shirt. *2-B* is wearing a white sleeveless tee. **POLICE:** *Officer Gamble* is wearing a blue shirt and sunglasses.	

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

	Street interviews	Narrative skit		Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
Social practice component elements	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	
Actions (What actions do participants enact within the social practice?)	**YOUTH:** "Walking up the street" "I was standing there" "Walk" "I start moving" **POLICE:** "just came up" "must've got mad" "stopped" "mistaken for other people" "do a lot of police brutality" "he just start saying like . . . a lotta . . . what's the word for it, inappropriate stuff" "start cussing at me and stuff" "coming up to me bothering me" "harassing me" "just like tackled me" "threw me on the ground" "stomped me" "called back up" "put hands on me"	**YOUTH:** 1-A and 1-B walking down steps 1-A says: "we going to the garden." 1-B tilts head back defiantly. 1-A says "So why do you expect us if somebody that I don't care about", throws up hand. **POLICE:** Officer says: "Alright, copy" into a walkie-talkie. Officer asks, "Where ya headed to?" Officer asks "we're going to the garden, huh?" Officer says: "The reason I was stopping y'all right now is cause there been a lot of robberies, a lot of muggings around here." Officer asks: "Um, can I finish?"	**YOUTH:** 2-A asks: "is there any particular reason you're stopping us now?" 2-A says: "Uh, sir, this is my bag, so." 2-A says: "With all due respect, I know I haven't done anything so I do not consent to any searches?" 2-B asks: "Excuse me sir, are we being detained or are we free to go?" 2-B says: "Yes. Yes, I really wanna know that cause I'm trying to watch POPPYN and it's coming on at 4." 2-A & 2-B walk away. 2-B: "Thank you" 2-A: "Thank you." 2-A: "Have a great day! Good luck man."	**YOUTH:** "got stopped." "so we about to run." "we like about to eat sandwiches." "I'm trying to leave." "I had to go get another one" (POPPYN pin) "I got in the house at 6 o'clock." "They can't detain you if you let them know you want to leave." "I did try to leave." "We said nobody knows what you're talking about, no one cares, then we tried to leave." "No what you say is Am I being detained cause I would like to go. You have to let them know and you can use it in court if they ever try to stop you." **POLICE:** "he came up to us." "he yell at us."

(continued)

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Table 4. (continued)

	Street interviews	Narrative skit		
Social practice component elements	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
		Officer grabs I-A's shirt and pushed him down on the steps. *Officer* twists I-B's arm and pulls his backpack off of him. *Officer* searches through I-B's backpack.	**POLICE:** *Officer* asks: "What is that bag from?" *Officer* asks: "I can't take a look real quick?" *Officer* asks: "you don't consent?" Officer asks: "Are you being detained or are you free to go?" Officer rubs his eyes and says: "Y'all can go."	"He's like yo, bout ask you about a robbery." "He asked like what we doing." "he like (in deep voice EAT SANDWICHES." "just drawling like he bored with his life." "he just like threw me on the thing then start diffing through I-B's bag." "he like what's in your bag." "He locked my POPPYN button off." "he made us miss POPPYN too." "he threw me on the steps." "body slammed." "He just body slammed me and ripped off my bag." "they be abusing their power all the time." "Just cause you a cop doesn't mean you gotta beat somebody up."

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

Social practice component elements	Street interviews	Narrative skit		
	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
Performance modes (What are the qualities with which the actions are performed?)	**POLICE:** "inappropriate" "disrespectful"	**YOUTH:** 1-A and 1-B are defiant, say they don't care, roll eyes. **POLICE:** Violent, pushes 1-A and 1-B and forcefully looks through 1-B's bag.	**YOUTH:** 2-A and 2-B are patient, polite, say "with all due respect" and "thank you." **POLICE:** Amused, smirks when 2-B says "I don't consent to any searches."	**YOUTH:** 2-A describes 1-A's speech as "talking trash" and "you starting with him." **POLICE:** 2-A describes officer as "light" (easy) and "stopped messing" (not persistent in his interrogation)
Resources (What material resources are involved in the performance of the practice?)	**YOUTH:** Interviewee6: [police] "asking do I have guns, and I don't. Asking do I have drugs, and I don't"	**YOUTH:** 1-B has a backpack **POLICE:** Officer has a walkie-talkie	**YOUTH:** 2-A has a backpack **POLICE:** Officer has a walkie-talkie	**YOUTH:** 2-A: "Like he can't check your bag unless he got a warrant for real"
Eligibility conditions for resources (What makes the resources qualify for the practice?)	See above. Illegal resources are suspected, even if not visible.	Officer suspects 1-B's backpack to potentially have stolen items.	Officer suspects 2-A's backpack to potentially have stolen items.	See above. 2-A says police need warrant to search bag.

(continued)

Table 4. (continued)

	Street interviews	Narrative skit		
Social practice component elements	Reported instances of youth-police interactions	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (bad outcome)	Dramatized instance of youth-police interactions (better outcome)	Narrativized recounting of youth-police interactions
Times (What are the times when the social practice happens?)	"a lot" x3 "several times" "this actually happens every day"	Daytime	Daytime POPPYN time—2-B says "I'm trying to watch POPPYN and it's coming on at 4"	"yesterday" "all the time" "not every time" "next time" "again" POPPYN time—I-B says "I got in the house at 6 o'clock—it come on at 4:30 on Thursday like"
Locations (What are the locations where the social practice happens?)	"directly where at, like right here" (Philadelphia's downtown) "Downtown and all around the city" "street"	Public steps into the garden	Undefined outside location	"The garden"
Eligibility conditions for locations (What qualifies the locations to be the settings for the practice?)	Public spaces	Public spaces	Public spaces	Public spaces

lives of young people of color. In the interview segment, three male participants say that they have interactions with police "a lot," "every day," and "several times," while the young men in the narrative skit emphasize that an encounter with police will happen "next time" and the strategies offered by 2-B might not work "every time." Seen together, these temporal references emphasize the extent to which young men of color experience interactions with police regularly, not as rare or discrepant events, but as frequent and qualitatively similar social practices.

Invalid reasons for being hypercriminalized. In the recontextualizations above, certain actions, eligibility conditions, presentation styles, and resources are mentioned as alleged reasons for police stops or aggressive actions. For example, Interviewee 4 says that he could be racially profiled "being an African American man" (@9:40). Interviewee 8 shares that he gets regularly stopped and mistaken for other people "just because the way I dress" (@11:07). However, in the visual frame, we see that Interviewee 8 wears what appears to be a chef's uniform (a white double-breasted collared shirt), a backward baseball cap, and a backpack (see Figure 3). His visible presentation style, in other words, does not appear as a valid cause for criminal suspicion. Interviewee 7 says that an officer "must've got mad" because "I was standing there" (@11:00), attributing the very legal action of standing in a public downtown square as the cause of being criminalized. Interviewee 6 reported being asked "do I have guns" and "do I have drugs," highlighting the suspected resources he might have if he was legitimately criminal but then looks at the camera and says, "and I don't" (@11:36), asserting that he is not eligible for the criminalization. In the narrative skit segment, carrying a backpack—a resource that would reasonably qualify someone as a student—seems to inspire an officer to suspect the young men as concealing potentially stolen items. When, in recounting their respective stories, 2-A asks 1-A and 1-B whether they had anything to do with the local muggings, 1-B responds defiantly, "NO! What I need to mug somebody for? I'm rich!" (@7:27) emphasizing that not only does he not engage in the practice of theft, but he is not even eligible for it, because he is already "rich" (see Figure 7).

The above examples demonstrate that the event of hypercriminalization itself constitutes a kind of semiotic transformation, in which young African American men, as actors in a public scene who participate in legitimate practices of walking, standing, wearing T-shirts or carrying backpacks, become subject to *physical identification*, whereby some part of their visible characteristics is used to "obliquely classify or functionalize" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 45) as "always-already criminal" (Cooper, 2013, 2015). Physical identification often works through a process of *connotation*, suggesting a mythical,

Figure 7. Excerpt from youth and police interactions skit—Modified actional scripts.

culturally embedded relationship to another, not directly represented, social practice (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 47). In this case, the combined physical attributes of young African American men get connoted with socially pervasive images and stereotypes of young Black men as deviant, poor, and violent. By highlighting the inaccuracy of these connotations through interview testimonies and dramatized storytelling, the young men in POPPYN resist and delegitimate their hypercriminalizing positioning.

Modified actional sequences. The comparison of recontextualizations in Table 4 allows us to see how POPPYN moves from representing typically negative experience of "youth-police interactions" to imagining a more positive, agentive, and hopeful outcomes. The narrative skit functions to compare two

parallel situations where two young African American men were stopped by the same police officer and questioned about their knowledge of local muggings. While the dramatized narratives 2 and 3 provide a view into the interactions between the youth and the officer, the recounting episode between the two groups (recontextualization 4) serves to analyze their differences and suggest new actional possibilities for similar situations. In particular, the youth 2-A and 2-B who had a better outcome with the police officer (they were not searched or physically mistreated) responded to him with a different tone and some different language than 1-A and 1-B, who had a negative outcome with the same officer.

After hearing 1-A and 1-B's account of being searched and "body slammed," 2-A says, "they can't detain you if you let them know you want to leave" (@07:08). In that statement, 2-A proposes an agentive strategy, and introduces a legal term: "detain." 1-A protests (@07:09), "I did try to leave! And he threw me on the steps." 2-A then clarifies his actional proposition by offering a model of what to say (@07:13): "no what you say is 'am I being detained cause I would like to go.'" He adds that you can "use that in court," again translating his intention into legal discourse, and assures "like he can't check your bag unless he got a warrant for real," introducing the legal word "warrant" and outlining its eligibility requirement of the action of being searched (@07:20). 1-B continues recounting his experiences, emphasizing the police officer's aggressive behavior. 2-A then offers another conditional approach (@07:30): "If you know nothing about it, let him know 'I know nothing about it.'" 1-A quotes what he said to the officer instead (@07:33): "we said! we said nobody knows what you talking about, noone cares." This exact quote allows 2-A to diagnose the cause of the negative resolution. He says (@07:36), "that's talking trash, you starting with him," suggesting that it was 1-A's disrespectful performance mode that provoked the officer. While this statement may sound like it distributes the blame for the hypercriminalizing situation to 1-A and 1-B, 2-A in fact offers an agentive possibility to use a legalese response that denies affiliation with any activities, by saying, "I do not consent to searches." 2-A advises (@07:40), "with some respect to the officer, you'll be good," linking an legalistic actional strategy and a respectful performance mode to a positive outcome (see Figure 7).

Although this storyline does not aim to dismantle hypercriminalization on a broader scale, it offers youth a possible script that embeds some local individual agency. As mentioned in the introduction, Nadal et al. (2017) found that young people who have experienced negative encounters with police might alter their behavior or grooming (e.g., carrying a school schedule with them or changing their hairstyle) in anticipation of future police encounters. POPPYN's narrative skit thus provides an educational resource from the perspective of youth for other youth who might be at risk of being hypercriminalized.

Discussion

In the sections above, we have presented several analytic views that demonstrate the combined framework of multimodal transcription and recontextualization analysis for examining how youth produced media can represent, critique, and offer new agentic possibilities for young Black men who face daily experiences of hypercriminalization, an interpretive logic circulated through a complex of sociotextual genres, such as public encounters with law enforcement and news media narratives of Black criminality. Specifically, we have demonstrated how the documentary mode of the interview segment constructs a multivoiced recontextualization of "youth-police interactions," and offers opportunities for young people of color to evaluate and delegitimate the hypercriminalizing frame that animates their experiences with police. The narrative skit, through a dramatized portrayal of "youth-police interactions," enables young people to imagine and enact new actional sequences, providing a pathway to agency in the face of persistent and frequent hypercriminalizing experiences of public space.

In this final section, we extend van Leeuwen's recontextualization framework, which primarily focuses on the ways social practices are transformed through linguistic discourse, to our analysis of and work with multimodal texts. Specifically, we propose two forms of recontextualization, inspired by van Leeuwen's categories, that we believe have not been previously identified in other studies or theoretical explorations: *multimodal authorization* of social practices by appropriation of elements from authoritative, expert, and traditional media genres, and *multimodal overdetermination* of actors, by representation of participants in multiple civic and performative roles.

Multimodal Authorization

According to van Leeuwen, social practices can be legitimated by *authorization*, that is, by "reference to the authority of tradition, custom, law, and/or persons in whom institutional authority of some kind in vested" (2008, p. 105). In multimodal texts, expertise or authority can be visually signified such as "by laboratory paraphernalia, books, or other professional attributes" (p. 107). We propose that POPPYN aims to legitimate the youth perspective on hypercriminalization by drawing on the authority associated with the semiotic regime the news—the authority to visually produce and reproduce visions of reality in a way that privileges certain viewpoints while marginalizing or stigmatizing others. News is constructed and establishes its authority multimodally, through features such as direct visual gaze, self-referential signage, and the orchestration of multiple expert and witness voices to construct

Figure 8. POPPYN's intro sequence includes multimodal elements associated with authority of the news.

a "synoptic account of reality" (Montgomery, 2007, p. 87). POPPYN leverages this institutional authority to legitimate the viewpoints and experiences of youth by appropriating genre conventions of a broadcast news show. POPPYN reporters and anchors use broadcast traditions of direct visual gaze and greetings to construct a conventional form of public address. They report from "the scene" in organizational spotlights or street interviews, speak in present tense and appeal to documentary evidence (e.g., "as you can see"), playing on established news expectations to make the viewer feel part of unfolding events. The POPPYN logo hovers on the left of the screen as the program bug, and the symbol is repeated on the reporters' T-shirts and microphone box. Through this oversaturation of self-referential signage, youth speakers appropriate the institutional authority of broadcast news to assert and legitimate their own perspectives (Figure 8).

Mastering genre conventions is fundamental to signaling *multimodal authorization* successfully. Scholars of youth media have written about youth-produced texts feeling confusing or illegible, in part because they are "designed as more personal artistic and reflective works that address issues of identity and human development, and are not designed to speak legibly to broader audiences" (Hobbs and Moore, 2014, p. 25), in other words because they do not conform to the audience's genre expectations (Halverson et al., 2014). Appreciating that media genres have authority by virtue of the recognizability of their multimodal components invites media makers to deliberately identify and use genre-informed ways to legitimate different social positions.

Multimodal Overdetermination

In van Leeuwen's scheme, *overdetermination* "occurs when social actors are represented as participating, at the same time, in more than one social practice" (2008, p. 47). We propose that POPPYN engages in *multimodal*

overdetermination as they simultaneously perform the authoritative elements of broadcast news genre with representations of themselves as authentic urban youth. They do so by creatively deviating from the authoritative tradition, for example, by anchoring from an oversized pink lawn chair instead of a studio setting, or using a logo that features a smashed old TV screen (Figure 8).

POPPYN producers also represent young men of color as *overdetermined*, engaging in multiple simultaneous practices. The POPPYN crew members literally have multiple roles: the same youth are anchors and reporters, and play characters in a fictionalized skits. Again, they mix elements of different social practices, in ways that both appropriate and deviate from the professional speech, dress, and demeanor of the traditional evening news anchors:[7] POPPYN reporters wear casual outfits (T-shirts, baseball hat), use informal voice and youth vernacular (e.g., "what's up everybody" and "let's go see what's poppin!"), and report as a group of three to acknowledge the significance of peer affiliation and approval among teens. Whereas *deviation* in van Leeuwen's framework is typically used to articulate the norms of a genre or practice and to legitimate the norms (a character might get punished for not doing what they are supposed to do, and in the course of the story learn how to perform the norm), in POPPYN the deviation from the typical performance modes of broadcast news actors functions to resist, bend, and *expand* the authoritative norm of the news itself to include youthful forms of expression.

Another illustration of *multimodal overdetermination* can be seen across the 5 male interview subjects in the interview segment. There is a soft-mannered Interviewee 5 in a purple shirt, who sits on a bench with his fingers crossed, his performance mode calm and reflective. Interviewee 4 wears a yellow suit jacket and tie and uses religious rhetoric when talking about George Zimmerman ("He was guilty under the earth. . . . In God eyes, he always gonna be guilty"). There is a dark-skinned, shirtless young man with an afro, pulling a shirt over his neck (Interviewee 6). His torso features many tattoos, his boxers stick out several inches above his pants line, and when he speaks he furrows his eyebrows. His look sharply deviates from the norms of white professional culture and instead signals affiliation with aesthetics of a warrior Black masculinity (Gray, 1995). Next to him, Interviewee 7 sits on a raised concrete ledge, holding a Gatorade bottle and looking relaxed. He wears rolled up pants, high socks and sneakers, a 3/4-length-sleeve shirt with a large 8ball on it and words "Take it Back," and a long gold chain. He looks like a confident and fashion-conscious urban young man, but he is also represented near the shirtless interviewee with tattoos, making them associated with each other. Interviewee 8 wears

what appears to be a chef's uniform, a backward baseball cap and a backpack, says that he is just a young man trying to do what he needs to do to support a family and better himself. These 5 different young men—boyish, religious, tattooed, fashion-conscious, studious—represent young Black men as multidimensional and *differentiated* (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 146) social actors with varieties of cultural preferences and social and economic experiences. At the same time, they are all presented as legitimate holders of public opinion, as citizens.

In including the different types of young African American men as interviewees and treating their civic perspectives as valid and valuable, POPPYN constructs a pluralistic personhood for Black men—a right to claim and enact multiple social identities beyond the singular suspect body trapped under a hypercriminalizing gaze. We see this pursuit for acknowledgment and mobility as the key project of many community media productions created by Black youth, a goal that echoes Marc Anthony Neal's notion of "hip-hop cosmopolitanism." Neal argues that Black masculinity is marked by "desires for physical, social, and economic mobility, including . . . a mobility from or even within the essential tropes" (Neal, 2013, p. 37)—a search, then, for both a recognition of personhood and the freedom from being fixed.

By highlighting *multimodal authorization* and *multimodal overdetermination* as generative lenses for studying youth media texts, we hope to inspire new ways of researching and teaching multimodal composition. In particular, *multimodal authorization* helps us consider youth media texts as strategically appropriating aspects of genre conventions, while *multimodal overdetermination* attunes us to recontextualizations of social actors, their roles, and identities. In other words, these constructs can help to make the teaching and study of multimodal composition more genre-informed and conscious of students' sociopolitical identities.

Limitations

This study used the combined framework of recontextualization and multimodal analysis to examine two segments of POPPYN, a youth-produced news show. Given the scope of the study, our arguments do not generalize widely to all forms of youth media texts, or to ones produced by all populations. However, we do propose that they are theoretically generative, providing a structure for analyzing creative choices made by youth media producers *in relation to* ideologies and genres that affect them on a daily basis. We have only analyzed two segments which used two particular recontextualizing genres—broadcast news interview and narrative film storytelling. Other media genres such as documentary film or satirical commentary would have

different affordances and constraints for recontextualization that deserve to be explored in future research.

In this study, we have focused primarily on the experiences, representations, and responses of young African American men. Although young women were also featured in our focal episode as reporters and interviewees, we have backgrounded their voices in our analysis. While we limited our focus to young Black men, who are historically more acutely affected by hypercriminalization, young women of color are a rapidly growing target group of racial profiling and police brutality (Morris, 2012, 2016), with their experience of these phenomena compounded by intersectional forces of racism, patriarchy and capitalism. Their voices and experiences also deserve to be explored more deeply by scholars in the future.

Finally, we do not propose that in the process of creating these recontextualizations that youth successfully reverse or cancel out the hegemonic power of hypercriminalization as a social and political phenomenon in their individual lives or in society. Rather, we argue that the production of these media texts enables them (and the educators and organizations that sponsor these creations) to iterate on and experiment with the semiotic systems that shape the social practices of hypercriminalization, thereby imagining new possibilities for social action.

Conclusion

When young people make media, they aren't just *learning to* make media, they are actively using newly acquired literacy tools to represent visions of themselves and the world. This article provides a close reading of youth media texts that recontextualize youths' experiences of hypercriminalization—an interpretive cultural logic that circulates through sociotextual genres that persistently positions young men of color as "always-already criminal" (Cooper, 2013, 2015). It is our hope that the recontextualization moves we have highlighted in our study do not function only as tools for rhetorical post hoc analysis of youth-produced media, but can be consciously directed toward designing critical and empowering community media pedagogy. For instance, educators could prompt students to analyze popular media representations in terms of how actors and actions are represented, what perspectives might be missing or misconstrued, and engage them in generating strategies for leveraging various forms of moral or institutional authority to critique oppressive practices and legitimate alternative perspectives and possibilities for action.

Our study also suggests powerful implications for teaching multimodal production. Specifically, we strongly advocate leveraging the conventions

and affordances of both documentary and drama media genres. As we discovered in producing and analyzing POPPYN, whereas documentary forms such as interviews offer a way to source credible and multivoiced perspectives on social issues, dramatizations can enable youth producers to construct new social imaginaries for themselves and their peers. We also call on media educators to encourage students to experiment with forms of *multimodal authorization* and *multimodal overdetermination*, strategically appropriating elements of traditional authoritative genres but intentionally deviating from them to include new and different forms of cultural expression. The resulting texts might be seen as illegible at first, because they defy the conventions of our interpretive apparatus, but it is only through recurrence and recognition that a narrative can become generic, and to begin to inscribe new rules for legibility.

We also might consider ways we could, as scholars, educators, or media producers taking an activist stance (Vianna & Stetsenko, 2011) join our students, participants, collaborators in the larger project of recontextualizing dominant cultural frames like hypercriminalization through the texts we produce and circulate. What would it mean to engage in research and pedagogy that actively advances the legitimation of new genres, and therefore new ways of being and acting together in the world (Berlant, 2013)? What is the alternative to hypercriminalization that we can imagine and construct for Black youth and our society at large? The best way to answer that question is by looking at, valuing, and centering pluralistic, agentic, and hopeful narratives put forth by youth-made productions like POPPYN and movements led by Black activists and scholars such as #BlackLivesMatter, #BlackBoyJoy, #BlackGirlMagic, and BlackCrit (Dumas & Ross, 2016; Hall, 2017; Horry, 2018; Langford & Speight, 2015; Love & Coes, 2016).

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Notes

1. We are interested here in communicating the dynamic and slippery nature of "hypercriminalization"—a semiotic and political process that certainly exists, as evidenced by the data and examples we provide, but is itself emergent and stabilized through patterns of sociotextual interactions over time. In that vein, we see Wortham (2003) doing something similar when he describes "metadiscourses of identity" (p. 194) that are circulated and stabilized through events in which participants both are represented as and enact particular roles. We offer the reference to his work as a helpful aid in thinking along the same lines rather than as a definitive citation on the construct of "metadiscourse," which, like the concept of "genre," has multiple meanings within the writing studies scholarship.
2. As heard in "Lip Gloss," a 2007 single by hip-hop artist Lil Mama.
3. We encourage readers to view POPPYN Episode 13 in full @https://youtu.be/4meTrzTMEjU.
4. This analytic distance, however, does not diminish the activist commitment of the researchers to uplift the voices of Black youth and scholars living and working within the interpretive sociopolitical logics of racism and hypercriminalization.
5. At the time of the shooting Martin was walking through Zimmerman's gated community after buying snacks at a local convenience store. Zimmerman reportedly called 911 to report a "real suspicious guy" walking around seeming "up to no good," followed Martin in his car, and ended up shooting him less than a block away from the townhouse where Martin was temporarily living ("Tragedy in a gated community," 2012).
6. "Jawn" is a Philadelphia term used to replace any noun that one need not or cannot name specifically, in this case referring maybe to a "saying" or positive and proactive "attitude" promoted in school.
7. See Druick (2009), Montgomery (2007), and Morse (1986) for a discursive analysis of how credibility is constructed through the television news anchor personality.

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