

To consider the body as a rhetorical site is to concede that the body, as a physical entity, has no meaning but that which is given to it by something external. Anything from sartorial choice to body language assigns meaning to a physical body, and these deliberate and performative actions are all precipitated by ideologies. Yet, consideration must also be given to the ways that external forces exert power over how bodies are perceived and maneuvered. For instance, adolescent Latinxs constantly contend with outside influences dictating how they should act and move within a particular space. However, far from being passive subjects, Latinx youth resist. Folded into this resistance is the potential for sartorial choice to then serve as activism. Carole Scott explains, “Clothes serve both to protect and to restrict” (192), that is—clothes are a signifier of resistance, but the hegemony also uses them to control and limit individual action. I explore this tension through Benjamin Alire Sáenz’s young adult novel *Sammy and Juliana in Hollywood*, wherein Sammy’s activism is galvanized by his efforts to alter his school’s discriminatory dress code. While his participation in this action allows Sammy to engage in more recognizable activist behaviors, such as giving speeches, getting signatures, and leading protests, his own sartorial choices act as a metaphor for all that this activism stands for: not just changing the dress code, but shifting the way that he, and other young Latinxs, are viewed as deficient or acquiescent. Even as the hegemony misperceives Latinx youth as passive, Sammy and his peers leverage bodily autonomy and posit themselves as symbols of resistance. Thus, in this presentation, I argue that Sammy’s resistance throughout *Sammy and Juliana* is curated and performative, subtly achieving that which is often spectacularized through protests and riots.