



Making *Connections*

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A JOURNAL FOR TEACHERS OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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CLARION UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



*Statue of Booker T. Washington located at Hampton University.
He was the first president of Tuskegee Institute and aspired to assume
Douglass's leadership role.*



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Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Address in 1895 at the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition stands as an historical moment in the history of black leadership. In Chapter 13 of Washington's autobiography *Up From Slavery*, entitled, "Two Thousand Miles for a Five Minute Speech," Washington conveys his recognition of the importance of the occasion:

The receiving of this invitation brought to me a sense of responsibility that it would be hard for any one not placed in my position to appreciate. . . . I remembered that I had been a slave; that my early years had been spent in the lowest depths of poverty and ignorance, and that I had had little opportunity to prepare for such a responsibility as this.

While scholars continue to debate the idea of whether or not Washington successfully assumed Douglass's designation as the primary black leader, their former slave status and self-elevation is worthy of further inquiry and scholarship. In this final Making Connection volume published at Clarion University, we urge scholars to continue writing and thinking about Douglass's work and influence on history.

Dr. Uraina N. Pack
Editor, *Making Connections*
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This issue of *Making Connections* reflects the evolution of a journal established in 1996 to promote the teaching and research of culturally diverse literatures in Pennsylvania's schools, colleges, and universities. After it was adopted in 2002 as the research outlet of the Frederick Douglass Institute Collaborative of the Pennsylvania State System of Education, it became an interdisciplinary journal for teachers of cultural diversity. Both the nature of the articles included in the journal and its physical appearance have changed significantly since it was first published at Bloomsburg University. From 1999 until 2002, *Making Connections* was published at Indiana University of Pennsylvania before moving to Slippery Rock University, which published the journal from 2002 until 2005. Since 2005, the journal has been housed in Clarion University. Along the way it acquired the Library of Congress cataloging number.

Let me take this opportunity to thank Dr. James Trotman, System-wide coordinator of the Frederick Douglass Institute Collaborative for providing the leadership and support that has been vital for the continuous publication of the journal. I would also like to thank and congratulate Dr. Uraina Pack, who has served as editor of the journal for the past three years. Not only has she raised the quality and variety of articles published in the journal, she has transformed *Making Connections* from a newsletter format to a bound publication. After nine years *Making Connections* is moving back to Bloomsburg University thanks to Dr. Betina Entzminger who has agreed to take over editorship. As we explore new ways of infusing diversity into the school and university curriculum, *Making Connections* will remain a useful medium for sharing ideas among teachers and scholars.

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Singing for Freedom: The Negro Spiritual as a Tool for Free Expression

Dr. Rachelle C. Prioleau

“There are many who have not the gift of speech-making, but who can, by song-singing, make strong appeals, in behalf of the slaves, to every community and to every heart.” Jairus Lincoln in the preface to *Anti-Slavery Melodies: For the Friends of Freedom* (Hingham: Elijah B. Gill, 1843, p.3)

The Negro spiritual has long been considered one of the most beautiful forms of musical expression indigenous to the United States. Over the past century, numerous scholars have studied the spiritual as an expression of hope for all suffering under the scourge of slavery and oppression. Historian James Blasingame (1979) contends that the agony and despair suffered by slaves inspired these heartfelt expressions. He states, “Slaves sought some hope, some solace for their suffering in the spirituals. Toiling from day to day, they sang to lighten their burden” (140). Additionally, as abolitionists began to organize the antislavery sentiment of the early 1830s into a structured movement, the Negro spiritual served as an integral part of the campaign for emancipation.

Truly, the Negro spiritual possesses an ameliorating quality. However, the spiritual also possesses a rhetorical power capable of inculcating values and inspiring action. As a unique genre of music composed and performed in response to racist ideologies and practices, the spiritual gave voice to those denied freedom of speech. More than just songs of “solace,” opponents of slavery used Negro spirituals to promote solidarity in a quest for freedom and justice.

This essay will explore the rhetorical power of the Negro spiritual as a tool for free expression during the abolitionist movement. Specifically, the presence and role of spirituals in slave gatherings, antislavery meetings and abolitionist conventions will be studied. Whether enslaved or free, opponents of slavery recognized the power of the Negro spiritual to protest the unconstitutional and inhumane treatment of blacks. Just as important, these songs gave voice to those

denied the constitutional right of free expression. This investigation represents scholarship that attempts to provide evidence of the role and influence of Negro spirituals on the antislavery movement. Contemporary movements which attempt to promote solidarity, empower its membership and protest injustice will also be informed about the power of music in the fight for justice.

The Battle for Emancipation

Political abolitionists experienced few victories and many defeats in the decades preceding the civil war. Even the Free Soil Party (political abolitionists organized to fight the spread of slavery to new territories) found few sympathetic ears in Congress. As late as 1845, Texas (an independent republic since 1836) joined the union as a slave state. The battle to end slavery on legal grounds was not convincing to many. So, after suffering numerous setbacks in the political arena and discouraged by the denial of America's "claims of freedom" to its citizens, abolitionists recognized the need to protest slavery on moral grounds, and move the battle to a religious arena (Sterling, 1987, p.164). According to Vicki Eaklor (1988), author of *American Antislavery Songs*, "The responses to these conditions [political defeats, insurrections, and pro-slavery violence], however, were characterized in the 1830s by the effort to work outside rather than inside the political system; this would remain a hallmark of abolitionism" (p.xv).

As with many campaigns, the involvement of the religious leaders was critical to persuading the masses of the inhumane nature of slavery. The mass of American society seemed to grant religious leaders automatic source credibility, while wealthy politicians living elaborate lifestyles seemed unable to establish a meaningful connection with the common citizenry. In fact, even many antislavery politicians (who also owned slaves) were more interested in maintaining and acquiring wealth than persuading the masses that slavery was unjustifiable. As an example, Thomas Jefferson may have appeared hypocritical and lacking credibility in the minds of many individuals who discovered that he owned slaves while simultaneously condemning the institution of slavery. Anti-slavery advocates recognized the inability of such men to convince their peers or the masses to categorically abolish slavery. And, organizations affiliated with the abolitionist movement would not settle for anything less than absolute condemnation and eradication of the institution of slavery. In the words of William Lloyd Garrison, "We shall spare no exertions nor means to bring the whole nation to speedy repentance."¹

¹ This statement appeared in an undated declaration written for the American Anti-Slavery Society.

By the early 1800s, most major religions had adopted resolutions condemning slavery in the United States (Haynes, 1953). As a matter of fact, religious leaders were among the first to carry the torch of liberty in behalf of the slaves, serving as the molders of beliefs and opinions among church-goers. Many historians agree that the Quakers were among the first religious groups to form an organization committed to the abolition of slavery. Historical records indicate that an antislavery organization of Quakers was established in Philadelphia as early as 1775.² Out of this group developed a strong and vocal leadership, who advocated assistance for fugitive slaves, and published antislavery materials. One such publication was the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, published by Benjamin Lundy. Lundy, who fearlessly printed personal attacks against supporters of slavery, was so tenacious in his fight against slavery that William Lloyd Garrison credited his personal commitment to the abolitionist movement to a meeting he had with Lundy in 1828 (McFeeley, 1991).

On the other hand, many religious leaders continued to promote the divine subjugation of blacks based on the Bible's account of the cursing of Ham. For example, Dr. Thomas Cooper of South Carolina published a pamphlet that supposedly provides scriptural proof of the divine subjugation and genetic inferiority of Blacks based on the Genesis account (Jenkins, 1960). Also critical to the religious battle over slavery was a resolution presented to the Southern Religious Organization in 1850. This resolution endorsed religious training as a mechanism for controlling blacks, and justifying the institution of slavery (Aptheker, 1939). Consequently, abolitionists could expect reprisals not only from politicians, but also from the pro-slavery clergy.

Unconvinced by scriptural arguments supporting slavery, slaves and abolitionists "constructed a different religion," one that condemned slavery (Aptheker, 1939, p.58). Antislavery groups rejected the teaching that God had sanctioned such an abuse of human rights. And, as abolitionists and pro-slavery religious leaders continued to argue the issue of slavery from the pulpit, the antislavery message took on significant spiritual proportions. Eaklor (1988) writes the following in this regard:

To abolitionists, the first step was a series of individual "conversions" to the idea that slavery was a sin, after which those believers would necessarily work to eradicate it as soon as possible. (xv)

² See *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* by Bernard Bailyn (Harvard University Press, 1967).

With “conversion” attempts meeting increased resistance, war was inevitable. In 1861, the Civil War began with secession of southern states, followed by an attack on Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina. That war settled the issue of slavery with a Union victory, while the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment to the constitution in 1865 ended the need for legally establishing the rights of all United States citizens. However, the moral battle—the battle for human rights—continued to be fought (Eaklor, 1988). Consequently, leaders of the abolitionist movement employed many tools in an effort to keep the issue of human rights in the forefront of the international arena for decades before and after the war between the states. Armed with divine arguments against slavery, abolitionists resorted to a melodious expression of faith in the form of Negro spirituals.

The Negro Spiritual and Abolitionism

I did not, when a slave, understand the deep meaning of those rude, and apparently incoherent songs....They were ones, loud, long and deep, breathing the prayer and complaint of souls boiling over with the bitterest anguish.” (Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, 1855, p. 99.)

Along with newspapers, conventions, public speeches, and even insurrections that were utilized by abolitionist leaders such as William Lloyd Garrison, Charles Lenox Remond, and Nat Turner, the Negro spiritual was an integral part of the fight against slavery and for human rights. According to Frederick Douglass (1855), the Negro spiritual was a battle song that inspired and motivated its listeners to action. He remarked, “Every tone was a testimony against slavery, and a prayer to God for deliverance from chains.... Those songs still follow me, to deepen my hatred of slavery, and quicken my sympathies for my brethren in bonds” (p. 99). In addition to being one of the most beautiful musical forms indigenous to the United States, the Negro spiritual served as a commentary on the slaves’ condition and protest against human suffering. Slave narratives provide ample proof of the popularity of such songs, which described the slaves’ experience and culture (Locke, 1936, p. 10). These songs touched the heart and soul of those who were concerned about human rights and personal freedom. In celebrating the role of the Negro spiritual in the fight for emancipation, composer George Clark (1848) declared, “Music has ever been the handmaid of Liberty” (iii).

The persuasive power of the Negro spiritual fostered solidarity among abolitionists, inculcated values of freedom and justice, and fomented rebellion against oppressive authorities. This beautiful form of music served as the perfect weapon of abolitionists who wielded little power through political position or by means of traditional oratory. “In spreading antislavery propaganda to non-abolitionists, boosting the morale of those already converted seemed to be the

most vital utilization of performers and songs alike” (Eaklor, 1988, p. xxvii). Frederick Douglass acknowledged that he sang the Negro spirituals in preparation for his escape to freedom. Not surprisingly, Harriet Tubman is also reported to have sung a Negro spiritual just prior to her initial trip on the Underground Railroad (Bradford, 1961). For slaves, former slaves and prominent leaders in the abolitionists’ movement, the spiritual served as a source of hope, inspiration and courage.

In part, the power of these songs was a result of the process used to create them. During the nineteenth century, slaves and freed blacks constructed Negro spirituals as a political protest against bondage and racism. A majority of these songs were based on hymns used by during church services for whites. Slaves were allowed to attend, but not participate, as a part of their religious training. During these services, blacks learned these traditional songs, and adapted them to reflect the sentiment of the slave culture and community (Higginson, 1900). In the process of adaptation, blacks incorporated elements of African tribal rituals, dances and music that were typically a part of life in slave communities (Blassingame, 1979 and Stuckey, 1987). Far from accepting the divine subjection of blacks, slaves “constructed a different religion” that denounced human suffering and oppression (Aptheker, 1939, p. 58). In fact, many slaves would risk their lives to attend illegal church services for blacks. During these services that were often referred to as hush-harbor meetings, slaves would perform a “selective adaptation” of white hymns (Greenway, 1970, p. 77). As a result, these adaptations could accurately reflect the social condition and sentiments of the slave, as well as those who opposed political oppression. The Negro spiritual, in particular, reflected biblical and religious concepts that cast slaves in the role of God’s chosen people. For example, in the song “Go Down, Moses,” slaves could identify themselves with the Israelites held in bondage in Egypt. John Lovell (1942) states:

If the Negro spiritual came from the heart of the slave, it should be covered with such sentiments. The spiritual, then, is the key to the slave’s description and criticism of his environment. It is the key to his revolutionary sentiments and his desire to fly to free territory....But, let us not put emphasis on the negative side. Most important of all, the Negro spiritual is a positive thing, a folk group’s answer to life (p. 638).

Through a variety of similar metaphorical associations, these songs gave slaves hope of escape, divine intervention and an end to their oppression.

Since the message contained in the spiritual was indicative of the sentiment of all the groups affiliated with the abolitionist movement, it could be used in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. George Clark (1856), in the preface to his collection of antislavery songs, suggested that music contained in his text had been “adapted to use in the domestic circle, the social gathering, the school,

the club-room, the mass-meeting, and in short, wherever music is loved and appreciated..., slavery abhorred, and liberty held sacred” (p. iv). Such expressiveness can also be found in most collections of antislavery songs compiled contemporaneous to the abolitionist movement. In addition, many music compilations contained instructions within the preface or as part of the conductors’ notes indicating when and where to sing the songs. As an example, William W. Brown (1848) subtitled one of his compilations *A Collection of Songs for Anti-Slavery Meetings*.

Vicki Eaklor (1988) describes another source of power for the Negro spiritual. She notes that “music has the power to convey moral principles, especially that of freedom” (p. xx). During conventions of antislavery groups, a combination of speeches, lectures and music were used to enhance the commitment and emotional intensity of the delegates. According to Clark (1848), “music has charms, and is irresistible to all the finer things of nature [sic]” (p. iii). Among those “finer things” that abolitionists valued were the principles of freedom and justice. Convention planners used the rhetorical power of music to convey these principles. Notice the words written by a delegate of an antislavery convention in which the Garrison Juvenile Choir performed Negro spirituals. He writes, “I do sincerely believe that a concert of that kind, will do more towards the curing people of prejudice, and consequently of Colonizationism, than the best sermon which the most able orator” (Letter to the *Liberator*, December 28, 1833, p. 207). Another delegate adds, “Speechifying, even of the better sort, did less to interest, purify and subdue minds, than this irresistible [sic] anti-slavery music” (Letter reprinted in the *Liberator*, June 30, 1843, p. 102). These delegates understood the language, message and musical form of the Negro spiritual. Listeners, whether enslaved or free, realized that the songs described unbearable conditions experienced by slaves. Listeners recognized that the creators and performers of Negro spirituals such as black abolitionist Joshua Simpson, sang of suffering that was often difficult to articulate in any other form (*The Emancipation Car*, 1874). Additionally, many abolitionist publications, including *The Liberator* published by William Lloyd Garrison, regularly contained reports concerning events at antislavery conventions that attest to the frequent use and integral role of music in fomenting antislavery sentiment. Songs were usually performed after an opening prayer and before adjournment (*The Liberator*, September 2, 1842). Compiler Vicki Eaklor (1988) has identified 122 such songs that were incontrovertibly sung at antislavery gatherings. She comments, “Even a brief perusal of these [convention reports] immediately illustrates the place given to music in the movement; mention is so frequent, in fact, that its absence is almost more noticeable than its presence” (p. xxiv).

Interestingly, there were two regularly scheduled conventions, on the fourth of July and the first of August, for which many songs were specially written. The purpose of the Independence Day gathering was to remind the nation of the disparity between the promises of freedom and justice and the actual treatment of blacks in America. The musical performances emphasized the disparity between words and actions, as well as reaffirmed the goals of the abolitionist movement. One songbook compiled for the Independence Day gathering was entitled *Anniversary Book of Music: For the Fourth of July, Temperance, and Anti-Slavery Occasions* (Wood, 1843).

The August first gathering commemorated the anniversary of the emancipation of the slaves in the British West Indies and served as a reminder to abolitionists and proponents of slavery alike that freedom was possible, and probably inevitable. During this convention, the United States was compared to Great Britain, the original “oppressors,” who exemplified the “American Dream” better than America recognizing the liberties of all the citizens. As with the fourth of July celebration, the music written on this occasion was an important part of the day’s ceremonies.³ Eaklor (1988) adds that “the purposes of song, like those of the gathering themselves, were to reinforce the commitment of those in the movement and to convert listeners sympathetic enough to attend (p. xxvi).

During the antebellum period, a large number of Americans were illiterate. In fact, 50 percent of men and 75 percent of women could not read. The illiteracy rate was even higher among those who were traditionally denied a basic education. The education of freed blacks and slaves was disallowed by law. The persuasive use of music helped the abolitionist leaders to overcome the barrier of illiteracy much like the reading groups and committees used by leaders of the American Revolution. The ability to read was not a prerequisite for blacks or whites in order to comprehend a message when music was used to explain the plight of slaves and provide hope for the eradication of slavery. In the words of composer George Clark (1844) in *The Liberty Minstrel*, “All creation is musical—all nature speaks the language of song.” Even illiterate whites could relate to the expressions and understand the nature of suffering that threatened all American society. This ability to overcome illiteracy was especially important at spontaneous gatherings, which occurred during the capture of a fugitive slave, the arrival of a prominent abolitionist leader, or the death of an abolitionist (Eaklor, 1988, p. xxv).

³ See the songs listed under “My Country” in the collection of antislavery songs compiled by Vicki Eaklor (1988).

The religious background, training and convictions of many abolitionists was an influential component in creating the power of the Negro spiritual. As already discussed, proponents of slavery and abolitionists received religious training that supported their view slavery. Church services usually included sermons and musical performances by the entire congregation that were led by a choir. The interweaving of political issues with spiritual matters has proved to be powerfully persuasive tool for both sides of the slavery debate. Delegates to antislavery conferences would be familiar with the combining of political issues and spiritual matters. This context must have been especially compelling for those black abolitionists who were familiar with African tribal practices that utilized spiritual values as a foundation for community life.⁴ These blacks, some of whom may have personally experienced African tribal dances and rituals, would have felt comfortable with political discussion in a religious setting (Blassingame, 1979).

Finally, in considering the power of music, it should be noted that the Negro spiritual offered a variety of rewards to the audience. For example, although few women served as public leaders in the antislavery movement, the songs could well express the oppression experienced by women as a result of being denied the right to vote. As a matter of fact, there were numerous efforts made to combine the battle over voting rights for women and the fight for emancipation for slaves into a single cause (McFeeley, 1991). Reasoning that many pro-slavery arguments were also used to promote male dominance, Frederick Douglass attended the first National Woman's Rights Convention (1850 in Worcester, Massachusetts) to show his support for human rights. In regard to activities of that convention, Douglass later remarked:

Whatever may be said as to the division of duties and avocations, the rights of man and the rights of woman are one and inseparable, and stand upon the same indestructible basis. If, for the well-being and happiness of man, it is necessary that he should hold property, have a voice in making the laws which he expected to obey, be stimulated by his participation in government to cultivate his mental faculties, with a view to an honorable fulfillment of his social obligations, precisely the same may be said of woman. (*Frederick Douglass Papers*, October 30, 1851)

⁴ Sterling Stuckey writes about the Denmark Vessey Conspiracy in Charleston (1822) in which free blacks, slaves and fugitives would secretly gather for worship services.

Just as Frederick Douglass recognized the ability of the Negro spiritual to inculcate values of rebellion and freedom in singers and listeners, modern scholars have acknowledged its integral role in the abolitionist movement. As indicated, the adaptive nature of this musical form allowed singers, writers and listeners to experience and/or understand the sentiment and pain caused by the inhumanity of slavery. Just as important, however, is the fact that these songs expressed the social conditions and sentiments of the slaves, as well as whites and free blacks who feared political oppression. Eaklor (1988) adds, "The cry of "Free Soil, free labor, free men and the fear of a "Slave Power" in Congress ready to curtail the rights of all had combined to win more converts to antislavery" (xxxiii). The Negro spiritual could serve a diverse group of people who feared the potential threats posed by a government that sanctioned oppression.

The Negro spiritual was also critical to the process of moral education necessary if people were to understand and repent. The masses received moral training through spirituals that discussed God's view of slavery, oppression and human suffering. Only then, could the public understand the political protest and call for reform inherent in the spirituals' persuasive connection of slavery with sin. The masses had to understand that they were sinning before they could recognize and acknowledge that they needed to repent.

Negro spirituals were also instrumental in persuading the illiterate masses who did not have access to the messages contained in newsletters, pamphlets and newspapers published by abolitionists. Individuals with religious backgrounds could readily understand the moral message of the spiritual. Women (especially those active in the Suffrage Movement) could adapt and apply the expressions to their own experience, creating solidarity among movements.

Although the overall objective of the abolitionist movement was to eradicate slavery, leaders had to reinforce the feeling of solidarity, inculcate values of freedom and justice, and foment rebellion against oppressive authorities. As a result, a majority of the songs were performed by the entire delegation, led by a performer with some special musical talent. This is particularly evident in the fact that very few soloists are mentioned in the convention programs and reports. Some songs were performed by family groups and church choirs. However, audience participation was encouraged. Eaklor (1988) has located several convention reports, which described choirs that consisted entirely of blacks, black children or multi-racial groups of children. For example, an advertisement in the February 1, 1834 edition of *The Liberator* promoted a "juvenile concert of colored children," featuring the Garrison Juvenile Choir (p. 19). In describing her discovery, Eaklor remarks that "overall, it is safe to assume that the most common performers of antislavery music were probably all those attending meetings....Again the influence of church practice and the contemporaneous

movement for more congregational participation is evident” (p. xxx). As a result, the identity of the majority of performers is not recorded, except in cases of extreme celebrity status.⁵

The Negro spiritual was integral in promoting support for emancipation, and the development of the abolitionist movement. The spiritual helped to create solidarity among opponents of slavery, foster a sense of hope for emancipation among slaves and promote a desire for freedom and justice for all Americans. Specifically, the presence and role of spirituals in slave gatherings, antislavery meetings and abolitionist conventions served as a tool for fostering and maintaining a social movement. This investigation represents scholarship that provides evidence of the role and influence of Negro spirituals on the antislavery movement. Additionally, a study of the role of music in the abolitionist movement suggests that contemporary campaigns and social movements can use music to enhance the appeal of a message. As the international community becomes more interconnected, campaigns that utilize music as a tool to promote solidarity, and protest injustice must appeal to broader constituencies. The incorporation of music to convey a message can allow the global community a great deal of flexibility in the interpretation of a message and application of meaning. Future research should include a careful consideration of the characteristics of song which directly contribute to the dynamics of successful social movements. Such research could provide a deeper understanding of the power of music, as well as the impact of song on social change.

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⁵ One popular singing group was the Hutchinson Family, which toured the country performing songs for public audiences. The Hutchinson Family was regularly mentioned in convention programs.

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A Pennsylvania Yankee in El Compañero Evo's Court

Dr. Philippe Savoye

The normally tranquil Andean skies were buzzing with the sound of propellers as I taught my afternoon classes at the *Facultad de Tecnología* of the state university in Sucre, Bolivia. It was June 8, 2005, and members of Bolivia's parliament were flying into Sucre in order to approve the resignation of President Carlos Mesa and appoint an interim president as his successor. The intensity and violence of the civil strife in the La Paz region had forced the legislators to convene in Sucre, Bolivia's second capital.

Since 1995, I had been serving as a volunteer math instructor at the *Universidad de San Francisco Xavier* (USFX), the state university in Sucre, during the northern hemisphere's summers. During my stays, I had taught courses in boundary value problems, partial differential equations, and complex variables to engineering majors. These teaching assignments proved to be professionally rewarding, as my Bolivian students generally surpassed their U.S. counterparts in their abilities and motivation levels.

Nevertheless, the quality of instruction fell short of western standards. Mathematics courses were taught by engineers whose backgrounds were limited to standard freshman and sophomore courses in calculus, linear algebra, and ordinary differential equations. Lectures invariably consisted of monotonous lists of formulas which had previously been copied from a textbook onto a sheet of paper, and subsequently onto the board. There was little or no interaction with the students, and the instructors' focus on tedious calculations and symbol manipulations hid the intrinsic beauty of the subject matter.

My American informality as an instructor was seen as an oddity in an academic culture in which professors dressed very formally and continued to address each other by last name and title, even after decades of having worked together. This became very apparent during my first teaching assignment in 1995 when, in response to an "hola Felipe" greeting from a senior administrator, I saluted him by identifying him by his first name. This provoked the volcanic eruption, "you're supposed to call me licenciado! I have a bachelor's degree!"

The USFX was established during the colonial period and is the fourth oldest university in the Americas. For centuries, the curriculum emphasized traditional subjects such as law and theology. The arrival of a group of American Peace Corps volunteers in the 1960s made possible the creation of the *Facultad de Tecnología*, a school whose specialties were initially chemical, mechanical, and civil engineering. My oldest colleagues were educated by these volunteers, and were subsequently hired as faculty. As in many other Latin American universities, the tradition of “academic incest” was alive and well at the USFX, as most faculty had only an undergraduate degree which they had obtained from the same institution. There was little transparency in hiring and advancement. Bolivians who had studied in Japan, Europe, or the U.S. were usually excluded from the faculty.

During my early years at the *Facultad de Tecnología*, the student body and faculty ranks were overwhelmingly male. This was largely a reflection of the machista perception of engineering as a man’s profession. Nevertheless, female representation increased in later years, especially in newly added majors such as computer science and electrical engineering. This was even more the case in the petroleum engineering specialty, which was recently created in response to the discovery of vast natural gas reserves in the southeastern part of the country.

Although I observed significant improvements in gender equity, I saw few changes in the socio-economic origins of my students, most of whom were *mestizos* (of mixed European and indigenous ancestry) with Spanish last names. Rarely did I come across a student with an indigenous last name such as Ayma, Choquehuanca, Mamani, Quispe, or Condori.

Rural indigenous students who had graduated from poorly funded high schools had to migrate to cities in order to attend a university. They had to work in order to cover living expenses and had difficulty in competing with their better prepared urban counterparts who had graduated from private high schools and were able to live at home. Bolivia’s public universities are widely seen as elitist, as they provide an almost free education to predominantly white and mestizo middle class students while excluding the indigenous majority.

The USFX has reinforced the perception of elitism by retaining the institution’s name from the colonial period: *La Universidad Real, Mayor, y Pontifical de San Francisco Xavier de Chuquisaca* (The Royal, Major, and Pontifical University of San Francisco Xavier of the state of Chuquisaca).

The momentous events that I was about to witness on June 9, 2005 marked an abrupt turning point in the country’s two decade old experiment with democracy. Since the restoration of democracy in 1985, Bolivia’s successive governments had promoted draconian economic policies resulting in the closure of state mines, the privatization of state enterprises, an end to most state subsidies for basic

necessities, aggressive coca eradication campaigns, and the proliferation of private universities. In October, 2003, then Vice President Mesa had succeeded Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (“Goni”), who had fled to the U.S. following the violent repression of demonstrations against his market oriented policies and his plan to export natural gas through Chile, Bolivia’s historical rival. Bolivia’s constitution prescribed that outgoing president Carlos Mesa would be replaced by Senate President Vaca Díez, a representative of the prosperous eastern city of Santa Cruz. Vaca Díez was universally despised by the indigenous majority of the western highlands, because of his support of Santa Cruz’s separatist movement and of the continuation of market oriented policies.

Following its defeat in the civil war with La Paz in 1899, Sucre lost its role as the seat of the legislative and executive branches of government and steadily sank into a state of political and economic insignificance. The tranquility which characterized Sucre contrasted sharply with the frequent demonstrations, roadblocks, and other disturbances which plagued larger cities. This relative stability allowed a large number of university students and foreign tourists to enjoy Sucre’s perfect climate and splendid colonial architecture.

The violent upheaval which overtook the city on June 9, 2005 would make most *Sucrenses* nostalgic for the times in which their city languished in obscurity. Thousands of angry miners from the western states surrounded the buildings in which the legislators had gathered.

The miners threw burning tires, Molotov cocktails, and dynamite at the police, who responded with tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition, resulting in several deaths. Tensions escalated throughout the day and night until the legislators agreed to select the politically moderate Supreme Court justice Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé as interim president until elections could be held. The next morning, as I went to teach my 7 AM class, calm had returned to Sucre as people once again went about trying to eek out a living in the hemisphere’s second poorest country ([3]).

In December, 2005, Evo Morales Ayma won the presidential elections with 53.7 % of the vote, the highest of any elected president, and became the country’s first indigenous president one month later ([1], [4], [5]).

As leader of the coca leaf growers since the mid 1980s, Evo had risen to national prominence through his often violent resistance to U.S.-sponsored coca eradication efforts. By the late 1990s, he was the country’s leading opposition figure, organizing national strikes, roadblocks, and political demonstrations against the pro western governments which had been unable to resolve a worsening economic crisis which had pushed Bolivia’s indigenous majority even further into abject poverty.

In the western hemisphere, only Haiti fared worse than Bolivia in terms of literacy rates, infant mortality rates, and other development indices ([3]). Bolivia's loss of its coast to Chile in the War of the Pacific late in the 19th century is the primary cause of its economic hardships.

Evo rode a wave of national discontent stemming from the widespread perception that the prevailing "crony capitalism" had only benefitted the foreign oil and mining companies, as well as a small minority of Bolivians made up mainly of descendants of Europeans.

When I returned to the USFX in May 2006, there were few notable changes in the campus climate, although most of my colleagues viewed Evo with great suspicion.

On the national scene, profound changes were starting to take place. Thousands of Cuban educators and physicians were involved in humanitarian projects funded by the government of Venezuela. Through the campaign "yo si puedo" ("indeed I can do it"), Cuban reading specialists were dispersed throughout the country, and were making significant progress toward the goal of eliminating illiteracy by June 2008. Cuban doctors were sent to poor neighborhoods of cities and to remote rural areas in order to help address public health problems such as tuberculosis, Chagas' disease, malaria, Hantas virus, rabies, and other endemic illnesses related to underdevelopment. By July 2007, 130,000 people had received free cataract surgery, and over one fourth of the population had received free medical care from the Cubans ([1], [4], [5]).

The fossil fuel and mining industries were nationalized. These populist measures initially enjoyed widespread public support. Nevertheless, there are indications that these sectors of the economy are starting to falter as a result of growing inefficiencies, as well as of a lack of resources and technology. On January 20, 2008, the *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (INE) reported that exports of metals, fossil fuels, agricultural products, textiles, and manufactured goods had declined sharply in 2007, and that tin exports, for example, had fallen by 29.4 %. In June 2008, Bolivia's nationalized oil company YPBF confirmed that it would have to pay a fine to Argentina as a result of its inability to meet its contractual obligations to export increased quantities of natural gas to its southern neighbor ([1], [4], [5]).

Fears of expropriations, along with Evo's announcement that he would nationalize the telecommunications industry, served as deterrents to foreign investment and helped contribute to a deteriorating economy and a stagnant job market. Hundreds of thousands of Bolivians emigrated to Spain, Italy, Argentina, Brazil, and the U.S., leaving behind children in the custody of friends, grandparents, or older siblings, thereby disrupting the social fabric of a culture that had always depended heavily on family life. The remittances sent by these

emigrants, as well as rising food prices, catastrophic flooding in the northern plains, and widespread corruption created inflationary pressures that made the prices of basic necessities spiral out of control, thereby contributing to a gradual erosion of Evo's popularity.

When I returned to the USFX in May 2007, the Constitutional Assembly had been in session in Sucre for nine months. This elected body was charged with rewriting the constitution in order to make it more inclusive of the nation's indigenous majority.

The administration of the USFX had become a vocal critic of Evo's government, partly because of his refusal to consider moving the capital back to Sucre, but mainly in opposition to the socialist government's project to completely restructure Bolivia's higher education system. Under this plan, the budgets of existing urban universities would be sharply reduced, and the resulting savings would be used to create new rural campuses. The rationale for these new policies was to better serve native rural people, who would no longer have to move to cities and incur significant expenses in order to obtain a university education.

During my 2007 visit, I repeatedly turned down invitations from the USFX's authorities to take part in "spontaneous demonstrations" against Evo's government. My Bolivian colleagues did not have this freedom; faculty would lose three days of salary for each missed protest, and absent students would have points deducted from their final exam scores. These increasingly frequent marches and roadblocks paralyzed the city and suspended all academic activities. After three months, I left Sucre without having been able to administer final exams.

The protests grew in intensity following my departure. Students and faculty were prisoners in a political process which denied them the opportunity to acquire and disseminate knowledge. In late November of 2007, four people died and over a hundred were wounded in Sucre when student protesters clashed with police following the Constitutional Assembly's approval of an outline of the new Magna Carta. Various police stations and the prison were burned to the ground in the ensuing rioting, resulting in the temporary departure of all police and in the escape of most inmates ([4], [5]).

The Constitutional Assembly reconvened in the mining city of Oruro and produced the final draft of the new constitution that will be submitted to the electorate for final approval in a referendum. The details of the implementation of a referendum on the new constitution, on regional autonomies for the four eastern states, and on recall elections for the president and other elected officials were worked out in parliament during the ensuing months ([4], [5]).

During my 2008 visit, the USFX played a significant role in transforming Sucre into a stronghold of the opposition. On May 24, Sucre's soccer stadium was packed with thousands of indigenous people who were waiting

for Evo to arrive for a rally. Racist extremists from the USFX's FUL (Frente Universitario Local) student organization detonated dynamite to block his entrance. They subsequently beat up hundreds of indigenous people, and humiliated dozens more by forcing them to undress and crawl on the floor in front of television cameras.

In June, 2008, Jaime Barrón, the rector of the USFX, campaigned aggressively on behalf of Savina Cuéllar and was instrumental in her victory over socialist candidate Walter Valda in the gubernatorial elections. Cuéllar, a native speaker of Quechua, had once been a member of Evo's MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) party, but had parted with him because of his opposition to bringing the capital back to Sucre and in response to the brutality and ruthlessness with which anti-Evo demonstrations were repressed in Sucre in November, 2007. Her election reflected a pronounced decline in Evo's popularity in southern Bolivia and broke the MAS party's monopoly on bringing indigenous people to elected office.

Bolivia's political climate had become increasingly fragmented during my most recent visit. By June 2008, the residents of four of Bolivia's nine states (Santa Cruz, Pando, Beni, and Tarija) had voted overwhelmingly in favor of autonomy from the central government in La Paz. It is likely that the same will occur in the state of Chuquisaca, of which Sucre is the capital. Nevertheless, Evo's government and policies remained very popular in the western mining states of Potosí, Oruro, and La Paz, as well as in the coca-producing Chapare region in the central state of Cochabamba.

Relations with the U.S. and its allies continued to deteriorate. Evo made increasingly frequent verbal attacks against U.S. ambassador Phil Goldberg. On June 9, 2008, thousands of Evo supporters attempted to storm the U.S. embassy in La Paz and threatened to burn it to the ground, leading the State Department to call Goldberg back to Washington for consultations. In response to criticisms of the formidable Venezuelan military presence in Bolivia, Evo accused Peruvian President Alan García of harboring secret U.S. military bases on his territory. Perú responded by withdrawing its ambassador for several weeks as well ([4], [5]).

On August 10, 2008, national recall elections were held for Evo, Vice President Linera, and eight of the nine governors. Amid widespread allegations of fraud, Evo and his vice president were reported to have survived the recall elections with 62% of the vote. Nevertheless, the governors of the separatist states of Pando, Beni, Santa Cruz, and Tarija also survived with resounding electoral victories.

The recall elections only intensified the deep divisions between the indigenous majority of the western highlands and the predominantly white or mestizo populations of the prosperous lowlands in the northern, eastern, and southern parts of the country. Evo carried over 75% of the vote in the western mining states of La Paz, Oruro, and Potosí, as well as a strong majority in the state of

Cochabamba. However, he won less than 40% of the votes in the remaining five states, which he had been unable to visit for almost a year due to violent protests against his government.

The recall referendum left little room for optimism regarding the possibility of a national reconciliation. Immediately after learning of his victory, Evo announced his plans to proceed with more nationalizations and to put the proposed new constitution up for approval in a new referendum. In the meantime, Ruben Costas, the ratified governor of Santa Cruz, gave a strident speech in which he accused Evo's government of practicing state terrorism and indicated his intention to immediately enforce the autonomy statutes, completely disregarding the authority of the central government in La Paz.

Regrettably, students at Bolivian public universities will continue to endure great hardships as a result of the escalation of tensions in a country that is sharply divided by regionalist, ethno-linguistic, socioeconomic, and other contentious issues. It is likely that there will be many more disruptions in their education as their multicultural nation struggles to define its new identity.

Recent Developments

On August 19, 2008, the date of my departure from La Paz, a wave of protests began sweeping through the five opposition states. Within two weeks, road blocks had closed the borders with Paraguay and Argentina. Refineries, pipelines, and buildings of the central government were destroyed or overtaken by protesters. Natural gas exports were temporarily reduced by about 50 percent.

On September 10, Evo declared U.S. Ambassador Philip Goldberg to be *persona non grata*, accusing him of funding the opposition and of being responsible for an attack on a pipeline with explosives. This regrettable decision marked a new low point in U.S.-Bolivian relations, and virtually guaranteed that a treaty exempting exports of Bolivian textiles to the U.S. from tariffs will not be renewed when it expires in December 2008. Approximately 50,000 Bolivians depend on such exports for their livelihood.

On September 12, supporters of Evo exchanged gunfire with separatists in the northern state of Pando, resulting in at least 30 deaths. On the next day, Evo's government declared martial law in Pando and troops from the central government attempted to regain control of the airport of Cobija, the state's capital. One civilian and a soldier died from bullet wounds during the ensuing confrontations.

On September 15, Chilean President Michelle Bachelet hosted a summit of South American presidents in an effort to seek a solution to the Bolivian crisis. She spoke openly of the risk of a civil war, and expressed support for the government of Evo Morales.

A truce was negotiated in which the opposition agreed to temporarily suspend their protest activities. Nevertheless, peasants loyal to Evo continued to block the roads surrounding the city of Santa Cruz.

The U.S. State Department announced the suspension of most development and anti-narcotics aid for Bolivia, and evacuated all Peace Corps, non-essential diplomats, and all dependents. Demonstrations by Evo supporters kept the U.S. embassy in La Paz closed indefinitely.

On September 16, the Bolivian army arrested Leopoldo Fernandez, Governor of Pando, and flew him to La Paz where he was being held along with several other elected officials from the opposition.

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No One in This Room

Dr. Denise Seigart
Ms. Christina Fry

President Loeschke had invited our students for ice cream. This was the first group we had sponsored for the Mansfield Leadership Academy, a one week summer experience designed to expose the rising 9th graders to college life. They had returned to our campus after six months away, returned to us from their high schools in Elmira. The president asked, “So tell me, how have you been since I’ve seen you last? What have you decided you will do to change the world?” One boy’s response was rapid, “No one in this room is going to change the world.” There was some laughter, and then a sobering silence. Another student spoke up, I disagree with you Terrel.* I think a lot of students in this room are smart and have a lot of potential. There are a lot of things we can do.” And so the debate began. At Mansfield, we are happy to stimulate this debate among young minority students, and we hope to do more of it. (*Terrel is a fictional name provided here to protect the confidentiality of the student.)

Examining the statistics of schools nationwide easily leads to the conclusion students of color are generally not being well served by our schools, teachers, parents or communities. Dropout rates are higher, college attendance rates are lower and retention is more difficult, particularly in our rural area. According to the New York State report card for Elmira Free Academy, one of the Elmira high schools from which we draw many students, the graduation rate for African-American students is 51% as opposed to 67% for white students.¹ There are many explanations for these disparities. Poverty, lack of parental attention, learning disabilities, emotional disabilities, peer pressure, discrimination within schools,

¹ Elmira Free Academy, New York State report card, 2005-2006 <http://www.elmiracityschools.com/reportcard.cfm>.

lack of adequate resources due to poor funding, inadequately prepared teachers and many other factors have been correlated with lack of student success. The cultural disincentives to attend college among minority students are also strong. As noted by Michael Cuyjet:

The two most significant factors hindering enrollment in the first place (as different from the problem of attrition of those who do enroll) could be characterized as under-preparedness and cultural disincentives. Many African American boys are provided with less-than-adequate academic preparation due to poor school environments and discriminatory practices such as being tracked into behavior disorder classes in inordinately high proportion to their numbers in the school population. Compounding this broad lack of attention to their academic success, many African-American young men fail to consider academic achievement a worthwhile goal and, in fact, often consider college education (and even high school graduation) as not worth the effort or not “cool” among their peers.²

Examining our own university student data, retention of students of color (particularly African-American males) has been hampered by a lack of academic preparation, peer pressure, financial difficulties and problems with adjusting to our rural university environment. Students who are recruited to play sports are frequently unprepared for the rigors of academic life and although they are successful team players, they frequently struggle with the requirements of their curriculum, in spite of academic supports provided. Parents often encourage students to seek athletic scholarships, but perhaps ignore the academic preparation needed to be successful in college environments. Author Mark Robinson states:

According to The Center for the Study of Sport and Society at Northeastern University, a poor African American family is seven times more likely to encourage a male child into sports than is a white family... If a family cannot afford to send a child to college, which is the case for 50% of the athletes in Division I Basketball and Football, what is the harm in pushing a young Black man towards college sports, since, traditionally, it has been marketed as a free education?³

² Scott Jaschik, African-American Men in College, *Inside Higher Education*, April 21, 2006, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2006/04/21/cuyjet>.

³ Mark Robinson, Every black kid should strive to be a professional athlete, *Black Athlete*, August 23, 2004, <http://www.blackathlete.com/Psychology/index.shtml>.

The emphasis on a good education, which was once a priority for minorities such as African-Americans as it led to empowerment and the privileges enjoyed by whites⁴ has become, it seems, not as important in some families as a well-paying career in a friendly environment (which sports frequently offer). Reversing the cultural incentives to excel athletically and not necessarily academically can be challenging, especially given the added disincentives such as poorly run schools, peer pressures, and multiple family problems which are often multigenerational. Breaking the chain of teen pregnancy, school dropouts, unskilled jobs, poverty, substance abuse, family and community breakdown and other abuses can seem overwhelming, and yet, it can be done. Research has shown that students who have one person who believes in them, one positive experience, one chance to show that they can be successful, can overcome these obstacles and more. Research in the area of resiliency has identified several protective factors associated with student success. These include individual characteristics, family characteristics, and community or environmental characteristics. A loving parent, an engaging and interested teacher, opportunities to be successful, high expectations and recognition are all counted as factors important to providing an environment which will promote resiliency in young minority students.⁵ Many states are developing programs to promote resiliency in minority youth. According to Hample & Didrickson: "The Behavioral Health Prevention Department focuses on early intervention and prevention to build assets and resiliency in youth. Community based prevention specialists work with youth on life skills, promoting bonding and attachment and assisting youth in learning and embracing healthy beliefs and standards."⁶ Research has also shown that good teachers and positive learning experiences can influence the success and life choices of young people and perhaps turn them down a road they might not otherwise have considered.

⁴ Heather Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom*. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁵ Lawrence Allen, Nelson Cooper, and Cheryl Estes, Bouncing back: how to develop resiliency through outcome-based recreation programs, *National Parks & Recreation*, April 1, 2004, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-116139170.html>.

⁶ Cheri Hample and Anita Didrickson, Strong Heart, Body, Mind, and Spirit: Building Resilience and Facilitating Recovery in Native Youth, *Northwest Public Health*, Spring-Summer 2007 http://www.nwpublichealth.org/docs/nph/s2007/hample_didrickson_s2007.pdf.

Good teachers make all the difference. According to research by academic-testing expert William Sanders and others, the effectiveness of the individual classroom teacher is the single biggest factor affecting students' academic growth. Teachers' effect on academic growth dwarfed other factors, such as class size, that have been given so much attention. Stanford University economist Eric Hanushek found that having good teachers five years in a row could eliminate the average achievement gap between poor students and their higher-income peers.⁷

So, what we can glean from this literature is that good teachers, positive experiences, engaging environments, and strong attachments to positive role models can make a difference in the lives of disadvantaged youths. Promoting these types of protective factors can be challenging however, particularly in today's poorly funded environments where educators struggle to deal with multiple challenges every day without enough resources.

One Attempt To Deal With These Issues

In an attempt to counteract the plethora of factors working against students of color and other disadvantaged students, Mansfield University has begun the Mansfield Summer Leadership Academy for rising 9th graders. In collaboration with Elmira School District, Williamsport School District and the Pennsylvania State System, Mansfield faculty and staff have developed a small, engaging summer academy for minority and other disadvantaged youth. For one week each July, 14 year olds who have been identified by guidance counselors as promising young students who are not currently on a college "track" are invited to come to Mansfield University for one week. These students are invited to live in a college residence hall, attend college level classes, and experience student life through other typical student activities. The academy is designed to provide an engaging, stimulating glimpse of college life, and to help these students develop their knowledge, skills and self-confidence with regard to college aspirations. In addition to exposing students to a variety of activities geared toward confidence building, the academy faculty expose students to career possibilities. Engaging classes in forensic science (e.g., blood spatter analysis), geology, critical thinking, writing, math, mapmaking, and other interesting topics are offered. Career exploration sessions, especially targeting those fields in dire need of minority candidates such as teaching, nursing, and social work, are also included. Additional

⁷ Deborah Stipek, In praise of good teachers, San Francisco Chronicle, May 23, 2004, pg. E-5. <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2004/05/23/EDGR36PHMR1.DTL>.

activities include athletic events, visits to the Mansfield planetarium, hiking in the local wilderness areas, dances, movies, and other social activities. Students are actively involved in learning about college courses, college preparation and college life, and are encouraged to reflect on these experiences through journaling. Students are encouraged to write each day about what they have learned, what they can do with this new knowledge, and their plans for the future. Parents are also exposed to their students learning through a graduation poster session and ceremony which is held at week end. Students are encouraged to share what they have learned, and what they plan to do with their new knowledge. This small, but important activity, a celebration of what they have learned and achieved, coupled with plans for the future, can make all the difference. As noted by Winfield:

Having a plan to continue one's education was three times as important as the family's socioeconomic status in predicting whether a student would continue in postsecondary training. Planning must occur during adolescence, and this finding suggests an important notion that Clausen (1991) refers to as "playful competence" in adolescence. This notion holds that students must make decisions about what is going to affect them later in their lives when they are in this particular adolescent stage. Fostering protective processes in schools and communities requires a major shift in belief systems among adults in the education community. In the new vision of schooling, it is important to view students' experience, prior cultural knowledge, and language as strengths - not deficits. Believing and expecting that each student has knowledge and experience to contribute to the teaching and learning process is not enough, however. Students also must have opportunities to demonstrate their strengths and knowledge and to see in their evaluations that these strengths and knowledge are valued. Opportunities must be created for young people to show, tell, and demonstrate what they know and can do in schools and communities.⁸

The Mansfield Experience

The first summer session of the new Mansfield Leadership Academy occurred in the summer of 2007. With funding provided by superintendant Ray Bryant and Elmira School District via Senator George Winner, twenty rising 9th graders were brought to the Mansfield campus. Students arrived on a Sunday afternoon,

⁸ Linda Winfield, Developing Resilience in urban youth. *NCREL's Urban Education Monograph Series*. 1994, <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/leadrshp/le0win.htm>.

participated in a welcoming luncheon and ice breaker, and moved immediately into academic studies with a session on journaling. This began what would then be four days of engaging classes, career exploration sessions, recreational activities and late night escapades (carefully monitored by our college counselors!) Our bleary eyed head counselor, Ms. Brandi Mase (a recent graduate of Mansfield's graduate teacher preparation program), along with her peer counselors, followed the students 24 hours a day and guided them through all activities. Engaging professors from multiple academic disciplines provided stimulating, hands-on learning activities at a beginning college level. Counselors and students enjoyed early morning basketball sessions, swimming, movies and a dinner party with our president. The importance of adult role models (some of whom the students already knew from their school community) and young college mentors for these youth cannot be overemphasized. The effect that college students of color can have on minority youth is truly remarkable. In our case, John Hampton, a Mansfield University basketball star and truly extraordinary young man was one example of the role models and mentors the leadership academy provided for these youth. The attention these young people give to John, and the relationship he developed with them contributed a great deal to the success of the academy. Of course, no leadership academy can or should depend upon one individual, and many other notable individuals contributed to the success of this endeavor. Other college student counselors, our dedicated faculty and staff, Elmira faculty and community members also contributed to what we regard as a rousing success.

Celebration, as mentioned previously, is also an important part of the process, and the counselors, faculty and staff took great joy in planning for the Thursday evening banquet celebration of these minority youth and all they had learned. Through poster presentations, the students shared their experiences with their parents, teachers and community members, and then awards were presented following a celebratory dinner. Students and parents were also surveyed at this time, to evaluate their perceptions and experiences.

Evaluation of the Leadership Academy

Students involved in the leadership academy expressed a variety of sentiments on surveys, through their posters and during their presentations. Comments including, "I thought the session on nursing was really cool," "I learned I am a leader," and "I am definitely going to college!" were common.



One poster developed by leadership academy students.

The teachers and counselors also expressed varying attitudes regarding the academy, from “Whew, those kids have a lot of energy!” to “I had so much fun!” One teacher who had been very involved with the students throughout the week and during the return visit stated:

Just as teachers are important (or a single person) in a student’s academic success, the same is true in a summer academy of this nature. For example, when the students returned to campus in January, I entered their bus to welcome them and received no response from the students, not even a smile in most cases. However, when John Hampton entered the bus there was an audible response. Students were reaching over seats to shake his hand. Was it any wonder why later in the day, John was successful in a discipline situation? He asked the student to stop doing something inappropriate, and the student immediately responded. It’s all about trust and relationships, and so many of these students have had negative experiences with trust and relationships. They enter the academy expecting to be let down, AGAIN. John earned their respect because they knew he understood them, and they knew he cared. It isn’t that I don’t care, but in their eyes, I am white, affluent, and clueless. To some extent, they are right. I don’t have the slightest idea what their world is like. If I did, I think I would have a greater impact on their success.⁹

⁹ Christina Fry, e-mail message to Denise Seigart, February 22, 2008.

Parents who attended the banquet were surveyed and overwhelmingly expressed satisfaction with the leadership academy and the outcomes they noted in their children. They were particularly grateful for the opportunities the academy provided for their children, and expressed hope that it would make a difference in their lives and future goals.

Overall, the 20 students who attended the last academy are not performing particularly well academically in their first year of high school. Multiple factors impact their performance of course, and some students have insurmountable family problems which are requiring interventions, including foster care. The GPA for many of these students after their fall semester is dismal according to one of their counselors, and yet, we still have hope. Fourteen year olds can be very unpredictable, and ours are no different. Given the multiple factors influencing their academic performance, on one level we are happy they are still in school. We have hopefully planted a seed that may not sprout for some time, but like the seeds of the white pine tree, it may require weathering the fire of adolescence before we see a crack in the seed and significant positive results taking root.

Lessons Learned

Upon completion of our first summer academy, our team reviewed the lessons learned. Although the week was largely successful, we knew there were areas we could improve. Hiring of counselors/peer mentors was a critical area, and we vowed to approach this more cautiously in following years. The important role these young people play is critical, and we knew we needed to strive harder to hire more young adults who could act as role models, who love working with challenging teenagers, who understand learning theory, who understand diversity issues, and who have the stamina and communication skills to work in this very demanding role. We also vowed to establish better training for all counselors early in the summer to prepare them better for the challenges they will face during the academy week. We confirmed our fears that we had, in our enthusiasm, asked too much of our students with regard to academic lessons, and vowed to allow a bit more free time and more sessions designed to expend physical energy such as swimming, basketball and bowling. We also vowed to insure that adult mentors the students know and respect continue to be included among the adult role models and teachers who participate in the academy.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Following the first summer leadership academy, the first cohort of students returned to their homes, their communities, and their first experiences with high school. They have been engaged with counselors in the high school, and their progress followed with interest. They have returned to Mansfield, as mentioned previously, for follow up activities including ice cream with Mansfield's President and a basketball game. We planned to bring them to us again in spring for the documentary *God Grew Tired of Us* and a presentation by John Bul Dau, but we were unable to coordinate this event with the school. We hope to keep them tied to us, in whatever small way we can, so that we might have some impact in their lives. We don't have a great deal of money (this program is run on the proverbial dime, like so many of these types of programs are), but what we lack in funds we make up for in passion. It is our sincere hope, that as we follow the paths of each of our academy students, we will see a significant difference in their attitudes towards college attendance, aspirations for future careers, and success in life. It is a lofty goal, to be sure, but we hope for it nonetheless. Our goals include the expansion of the summer leadership academy, to make it available to more students. We are in the planning stages to double the number of students we will bring to Mansfield in the summer of 2008 for the next leadership academy.* Our goals also include, four years from now, not one student that we have engaged in our leadership academy will again say "No one in this room is going to change the world."

*Since writing this article we have held our second Mansfield Summer Leadership Academy for 50 students! We will write of what we learned from this academy in future articles!

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Of Brutal Necessity: Rap Music and Black Language

Dr. Debra C. Smith

A language comes into existence by means of brutal necessity, and the rules of the language are dictated by what the language must convey—James Baldwin

A student once told me that “in a perfect world people would be able to speak the way they feel most comfortable. Unfortunately that is not the case.” Probing the student further, I learned that his natural discourse was rooted in the rap music to which he frequently listened. It was the language he used with his friends, the people he spent more time with than even his own family. In grade school and beyond, the student felt ostracized by the language that was usual for him. Standard English being the customary language of schooling, he found himself lamenting his wish to me, a self-proclaimed “culturally responsive teacher,” that he not once again be separated from his language in yet another classroom. For it was in this language of rap music, he later elaborated, that he was able to find power, challenge hegemony and signify on those systems and institutions that he found to be oppressive in American society. The student’s point is endorsed by Patillo-McKoy who says that using Black English provides a connection to the black poor (and to black culture in general, for that matter) for the black middle class that distinguishes them from the white world they pilot for business/employment purposes (and in this student’s case, educational purposes). It is this student’s story that prompts me to examine black language usage in rap music for its ability to create a means for the disempowered to elicit some means of control in their lives.

In this article I will begin by defining black language and rap, discuss the conceptual/theoretical lens through which this work is articulated, define the approach/methodology of the article and draw conclusions on the use of black language in rap music as a means of creating influence by those who have been marginalized in society.

Geneva Smitherman's definition of rap is "any kind of strong, aggressive, highly fluent, powerful talk" (4). Similarly, Cheryl Keyes defines rap music as "a confluence of African American and Caribbean cultural expressions, such as sermons, blues, game songs, and toasts and toasting . . ." (Strode and Wood 3). Meanwhile, Black language has been defined in a variety of ways. The everyday African-American version of Standard English is also called African-American Vernacular English, Black Vernacular English, and Ebonics (collusion of ebony and phonics). In *Talkin' and Testifyin'*, Smitherman defines Black English as "Euro-American speech with an Afro-American meaning, nuance, tone and gesture" (32). On his website, Peter L. Patrick defines black language as "one name for a collection of varieties (ways of speaking) characteristically used by African Slave Descendants in North America ." Baldwin, on the other hand, defines black language as a product of "the black Diaspora" in that it was formed during slavery when slaves who spoke different languages needed a means to communicate with one another. For the purpose of this article, all of the aforementioned definitions of black language will be observed in addition to exploring and revealing the creative language and phraseology rap artists utilize in their music.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

Central to the analysis of rap music and black language usage are assertions made by authors James Baldwin and Mark Anthony Neal. Baldwin says that those who are defined by society as "other" eschew the "standards" of society in favor of their own standard. Baldwin continues by saying "language . . . is meant to define the other—and, in this case, the other is refusing to be defined by a language that has never been able to recognize him" (para. 1). Similarly, Neal says that the "narrative and stylistic" components of hip hop was an intentional move of "young urban blacks" to "use mass-culture to facilitate communal discourse across a fractured and dislocated national community" (136). Additionally, Murray Forman goes one step further in stating how mainstream radio stations collude in the "othering" of rap music with tag lines indicating that their station format is "no rap, no crap" or that their station plays "music you can understand" (xvi). These are covert references to music that employs language that mainstream listeners do not always have access to. Accordingly, in examining rap music and black language usage, I will explore Baldwin, Neal and Rose and Forman's claims that rap artists create their own language to respond to a society that marginalizes them.

Methodological Framework

In examining rap music and black language usage, I admit to being a rap music, hip-hop junkie. I own a collection of rap music from artists including Jay-Z, Nelly, Tupac, Talib Kweli, 50 Cent, The Game, and Queen Latifah, to name a few. For the purpose of this paper, I listened to four rap albums in their entirety: *The Black Album* by Jay-Z, *Greatest Hits* by Tupac, *The Beautiful Struggle* by Talib Kweli, and *Black Star*, a collaboration by Talib Kweli and Mos Def. For simplicity and focus, I settled on four rap songs in which to reveal black language usage within the context of the theoretical framework and analysis. The rap songs that are deconstructed include:

“Moment of Clarity,” a song by Jay-Z that emphasizes his rags to riches success tale where he defied music business attempts to “make” and mold him to instead create music that not only appeals to the people on the streets that he was once part of but also acknowledges them.

“Changes” by Tupac details experiences similar to Jay-Z’s. Tupac raps about the victimizing socio-economic conditions that he has come up against alongside other black men and women. Candid references to drugs, racism, poverty, distrust of government, and violence are all primary themes in this song.

Finally, “Ghetto Show” and “Thieves in the Night” by Talib Kweli further accentuate themes of personal worth, survival in a callous world, and rites of passage to black manhood. All four provide effective contexts for identifying incidents of black language usage merged with the theme of power and dominance. The lyrics to each of the four songs are included in the appendices to this paper.

Critical Analysis

In reviewing selected rap music lyrics, I will explore the conception of black language in rap music as a means of power and as communal identity. In *Speaking in Tongues* authored by Angela Spivey, Dyson advises:

Language is crucial to understanding the questions of identity that blacks and all Americans wrestle with, (Dyson says) because language reminds us that we exist at all. The complex identities of blacks are expressed in forms as wide-ranging as the preaching of Martin Luther King Jr., the gangsta’ rap of Snoop Doggy Dogg, and the writing of James Baldwin. Using many languages, speaking in many tongues, is a habit of survival that African-American people across the board have learned (he says). For instance, young blacks must learn the rules of common English usage, of street speech, and of the dialects and social accents of their own region or turf. (para. 7)

That is, black language in rap music creates a space for rap artists to move from the fringe of existence by allowing them to design and own a language that is meant to be inaccessible by dominant culture. At the same time, black language usage in rap music creates cohesion and communal identity among its users. For example in “Moment of Clarity,” Jay-Z speaks to other rappers as well as to his listening audience: “I know what I’m up against . . . We as rappers must decide what’s important” (see Appendix 1). He endorses support for giving back to the poor considering, as he says, he was once one of them. Likewise Tupac’s communal interaction with his listeners is evident when he says “You gotta learn to hold ya own,” and “. . . so it’s on us to do what we gotta do to survive” (see Appendix 2). Both artists show a clear association with the marginalized and through their music and language create a force to survive and succeed.

Black Language in Rap Music as a Source of Power

To begin to situate black language as a means of power in rap music, I begin discussing signifyin’. Henry Louis Gates (1997) defines signifyin’ as

a form of verbal play, centering primarily on the insult, whereby people can demonstrate a mastery of improvisational rhyme and rhythm; the demonstration of such verbal mastery is a mechanism for empowerment within communities where other forms of power—political, economic—are unavailable. (310)

Jay-Z is a master of signifyin’ in songs like “99 Problems” from *The Black Album*, where he describes in surreptitious detail his confrontation with a racist law enforcement officer who pulls him over for driving one mile over the speed limit. Jay-Z “talks” to black men who can identify with being racially profiled. By boasting that he might not be a lawyer, but he knows the law, he speaks for black men everywhere who know the injustice and indignity of being unfairly scrutinized by law enforcement. In “99 Problems,” he can “call out” law enforcement antics by utilizing a shielded message. He is similarly skillful in “Moment of Clarity,” a rap song where he brags about being self-made based upon his own creativity, lyrical expertise, and talents. Jay-Z makes clear in many of his rap songs that he is a product of the mean, hard streets, and rap was one of the survival skills he enlisted to be able to eat every day. Though successful, he covertly reminds mainstream business managers that he still relates to his homies with the rims on their cars. In his music, Jay-Z uses the black language staples of no “s” on verbs (*The music business “hate” me*) as well as the “habitual or invariant be”—the nonexistent “to be” verb pattern frequently associated with black language (Alim): (*And the music I be makin’; You be hustlin’*) all while using colloquial terms in his lyrics like “ain’t” and “wanna.” References to “ballin’

(making money); “*flowin*” (hanging out, rapping); and “*triangles on our wall*” (music awards) are creative rap artists’ terms, some of which were penned by Jay-Z and some of which are commonly used in the rap game.

Like Jay-Z, Tupac Shakur was known for rap music that “confronted” dominant white society generally and law enforcement specifically. In “Changes,” Tupac talks about how he lives in turmoil as a black man on drug-infested streets where black men are harassed by the police. Tupac lyricly warns other blacks about his conflicts with the law and the survival skills of black men using black language patterns in these verses from “Changes:” “Can’t a *brother* get a little peace . . . *they* got a war on drugs so the police can bother me . . . And I *ain’t never did* a crime I *ain’t have* to do.” References to *pimp smacks*, (getting beat up) holding “*ya*” *own*, (staying positive despite negative surroundings) “*bust this*” (say something) and staying “*strapped*” (carrying a weapon), indoctrinate Tupac into the lyrical world of rap artists using a comfortable language known to only them and their communal brethren and created by them to express their frustrations and aspirations. For example in “Changes,” Tupac signifies about the law:

Instead of a war on poverty, they got a war on drugs so the police can bother me . . . Don’t let ‘em jack you up . . . and pimp smack you up . . . You gotta learn to hold ya own . . . And as long as I stay black, I gotta stay strapped.

For certain, a message of survival in a non-standard language provides a sense of power for listeners of rap music who are being directly spoken to by some of their music icons. What’s more, these idols in many instances have grown up on the same streets as their fans and preach a common survival story. This adds further validation to their art because their fans not only understand from where they are coming, they also recognize that their experience is shared.

If rap artists seem particularly naturally rooted in lyrical creativity, the reason can be linked to hereditary history according to Scott Mervis:

Although it may have seemed like it, rap didn’t come out of nowhere. Its seeds could be heard in African griots, Chicago blues, bebop scat, Jamaican toasts, the beat poetry of Gil Scott-Heron and even the verses of Muhammad Ali . . . (para. 25)

Further, Professor Todd Boyd says (in Mervis’ article) that rap music turned serious in response to social and political occurrences that served to keep black people feeling like they were “in a jungle” trying to keep from “going under”¹:

¹ Lyrics from “The Message” by Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five.

Early '80s, Reagan era, you have a point about living in the inner-city at that time and the conditions for poor and working class people. It indicated that hip-hop could be more than boasting and bragging and rhyming to be funny, which is all cool and part of hip-hop, but 'The Message' indicated hip-hop could be serious as well. Grandmaster Flash took the game to the next level. (para. 35)

Like his fellow rap comrades, Talib Kweli accentuates his music with stylistic black language. Kweli has a skill for droppin' the "g" in words (chasin', lookin', hidin'), a style reminiscent of black language when he sings about *cats* (people), *gats* (guns) and his *ghetto hood* (neighborhood). Kweli is particularly effective in his use of black language to assert that every hood has its own ruling power regardless of what structure is in place in dominant society: "We got our own elected officials, no matter who the mayor." In another example Talib Kweli "hollas at" (recognizes) the late lawyer Johnny Cochran when he raps: "We *shorties* in the court, need Cochran yea" where in this line "shorties" refers to black people. The reference to Cochran accentuates a familiarity black rappers employ in their music when it comes to black public figures and those who are sympathetic to black issues. Even recent lyrics tout rappers' affinity for black presidential nominee, Barack Obama, according to Washington Post writer J. Freedom du Lac:

Rappers tend to love him—or at least the basic idea of a black man in the White House. Pro-Obama rap songs and references are proliferating at a staggering clip, and online video endorsements are arriving just as quickly, from . . . (artist) Will.I.Am and hip-hop impresario Sean "Diddy" Combs on down. (para. 5)

Teresa A. Martinez asserts that "African-Americans and other oppressed groups . . . have discovered varying ways to resist systematic injustice" while Trisha Rose (in Martinez) calls rap artists and their lyrics "prophets of rage" vying to bring equity to "hegemonic paradigms" and move blacks off the fringes of existence. By using black language, they give "power" to their own voices and communicate within a circle where others see their voices as being influential as well. Moreover, rap music allows its artists to signify and "talk back" to dominate regimes in a coded language that emphasizes their frustration reminiscent of the way, historically, that spirituals and work songs permitted slaves to "speak" to each other without white slaveholders being able to understand. In the present day, law enforcement, government, educational institutions, and the economy are all fodder for rap's "encoded messages" that pose as "natural conversations" between "homies" trying to catch a break (Mitchell-Kernan).

Smitherman says "rap music is not only a Black expressive cultural phenomenon; it is, at the same time, a resisting discourse, a set of communicative practices that constitute a text of resistance against . . . cultural dominance" (7). In *Language and Symbolic Power*, Pierre Bourdieu says:

If linguistic theories have tended to neglect the social-historical conditions underlying the formation of the language which they take, in an idealized form, as their object domain, so too they have tended to analyze linguistic expressions in isolation from the specific social conditions in which they are used. (7)

This statement further underlies the point that social and political reasons lie at the heart of the creativity of black language in rap music. Artists have created a language that insulates them from societal repression while simultaneously empowering them to speak out against the same. What's more, rap music has reached billion dollar sales by making music wherein the majority of it is performed by black artists utilizing black language, slang, and idioms in a cultural space in which they are at ease. For example, the rap artist Snoop Dogg's use of "for shizzle" (for sure) and St. Louis native Nelly's "hot in herr" (to rhyme with "urr") only scratch the surface of the creativity black language enjoys in rap music. In fact, according to the Katherine Miller in the New York Times, Music Television (MTV) calls Snoop Dogg the "slanguage sensei" of the hip-hop generation. His "slanguage" is "based on his use of *izzle* as a suffix for existing words, sometimes substituting all but the first letter of a word." An example is "get bizzle" (get busy). According to the New York Times, Snoop credits himself with bringing his unconventional "slanguage" into the mainstream though he says it is not his original conception: "...it's a way of speaking that's been around for years. It originated in Northern California." Once Snoop Dogg branded the use of "izzle" into something hip, he not only made money from his music but also from commercials featuring him speaking his language.

Managing their identities is another reason black language is utilized in rap music. Rap artists strive to highlight the streets from which they come whether it is in St. Louis, Atlanta, New York, or South Central Los Angeles. To use Nelly as an example, Alim says "language was an essential part of establishing (Nelly and the St. Lunatics') identity in a fiercely competitive world of hip hop culture." Dialect, "country grammar," or regional pronunciations of certain words aid in this identity-building and distinguish rap artists from one another even as they enjoy a communal relationship. Nelly's "country grammar" pronunciation of words like there and care as "therr" and "curr" respectively have branded him as a rapper from a particular "region." And, although each rapper may have a trademark style, the messages they advocate frequently have a common theme.

The ability of black language in rap music to provide a location for community between its artists is expressed in references to my brutha, homey, and even the "n" word. "Shout-outs" from one rapper to another within the lyrics of a song further confirms their collective identity and participation in the struggle to have a credible voice that people will not only listen to but also hear. Rap is an art not only by the people, but for the people.

James Baldwin once said that “A language comes into existence by means of brutal necessity, and the rules of the language are dictated by what the language must convey.” Inherent in that statement is urgency, destiny, and a passionate need to be articulated as a sense of renewal for blacks. In describing hip hop as “urban renewal,” Rose says:

Developing a style nobody can deal with—a style that cannot be easily understood or erased, a style that has reflexivity to create counter-dominant narratives against a mobile and shifting enemy—may be one of the most effective ways to fortify communities of resistance . . . (qtd. in Strode and Wood 27)

Comparable to Rose’s assessment, John Russell Rickford and Russell John Rickford say that rap artists articulate “loudly but privately” in reprimanding America for its ills “in a language that leaves her puzzled” (86). Just like black Spirituals that advanced a message that “insiders” could understand, rap music’s language eschews the standard on which America prides itself. Furthermore, the black language used in rap music is dynamic, changing frequently. What’s hot at one moment can be discarded in favor of a “fresher” more up-to-date slang word. Rap artists speak black language to a knowing audience who can relate to the experiences they relay in their music. They provide a voice for the individual on the streets who does not draw an international listening audience—the individual that not only identifies with what they are saying but also sings loudly along with them.

Conclusion

As the black language of rap music winds its way into the mainstream, dominant culture gives it validation. Countless advertisements produced on Madison Avenue feature black language and rap music. Yet an endorsement from the mainstream only serves to assimilate that which was designed to be positioned against the standard. “Membership” into a clan that values the same black language usage as the user sets an identity that is counter to dominant systems while empowering the user. The student mentioned at the beginning of this work who wanted to be able to use a language he felt comfortable with perhaps reveled in a language that gave him authority and with which he identified. Rap artists’ utilization of black language and any alternative to the “standard” for that matter creates that space for him. For students like the one I spoke with and for voices silenced because they are not understood or because they do not adhere to a standard, creating a language where they can exercise the authority of their own voice is of brutal necessity.

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Appendix 1 – Lyrics to “Moment of Clarity” by Jay-Z

(Woooooo)

(Yeah)

(Turn the music up turn the lights down i'm in my zone)

[Chorus]

Thank God for grantin me this moment of clarity

This moment of honesty

The world'll feel my truths

Through my Hard Knock Life time

My Gift and The Curse

I gave you volume after volume of my work

So you can feel my truths

I built the Dynasty by being one of the realest niggas out

Way beyond a Reasonable Doubt

(Yall can't fill my shoes)

From my Blueprint beginnings

To that Black Album endin

Listen close you hear what i'm about

Nigga feel my truths

[Verse One]

Pop died

Didn't cry

Didn't know him that well

Between him doin heroin

And me doin crack sales

With that in the egg shell

Standin at the tabernacle

Rather the church

Pratendin to be hurt

Wouldn't work

So a smirk was all on my face

Like damn that mans face was just like my face

So pop i forgive you

For all the shit that i live through

It wasn't all your fault

Homie you got caught

And to the same game i fault

That Uncle Ray lost

My big brothers and so many others i saw

I'm just glad we got to see each other
Talk and re-meet each other
Save a place in Heaven
Til the next time we meet forever
[Chorus]

[Verse Two]
The music business hate me
Cause the industry ain't make me
Hustlers and boosters embrace me
And the music i be makin
I dumb down for my audience
And double my dollars
They criticize me for it
Yet they all yell "Holla"
If skills sold
Truth be told
I'd probably be
Lyricly
Talib Kweli
Truthfully
I wanna rhyme like Common Sense
(But i did five Mil)
I ain't been rhymin like Common since
When your sense got that much in common
And you been hustlin since
Your inception
Fuck perception
Go with what makes sense
Since
I know what i'm up against
We as rappers must decide what's most impor-tant
And i can't help the poor if i'm one of them
So i got rich and gave back
To me that's the win, win
The next time you see the homie and his rims spin
Just know my mind is workin just like them
(The rims that is)

[Chorus]

[Verse Three]

My homie Seigel's on a tier
Where no tears should fall
Cause he was on the block where no squares get off
See in my inner circle all we do is ball
Til we all got triangles on our wall
He ain't just rappin for the platinum
Yall record
I recall
Cause i really been there before
Four scores and seven years ago
Prepared to flow
Prepare for war
I shall fear no man
You don't hear me though
These words ain't just paired to go
In one ear out the other ear
NO
YO
My balls and my word is alls i have
What you gonna do to me?
Nigga scars'll scab
What you gonna box me homie?
I can dodge and jab
Three shots couldn't touch me
Thank God for that
I'm strong enough to carry Biggie Smalls on my back
And the whole BK nigga holla back

[Chorus]

Appendix 2 – Lyrics to “Changes” by Tupac

Come on come on
I see no changes wake up in the morning and I ask myself
is life worth living should I blast myself?
I'm tired of bein' poor & even worse I'm black
my stomach hurts so I'm lookin' for a purse to snatch
Cops give a damn about a negro
pull the trigger kill a nigga he's a hero
Give the crack to the kids who the hell cares
one less hungry mouth on the welfare
First ship 'em dope & let 'em deal the brothers
give 'em guns step back watch 'em kill each other
It's time to fight back that's what Huey said
2 shots in the dark now Huey's dead
I got love for my brother but we can never go nowhere
unless we share with each other
We gotta start makin' changes
learn to see me as a brother instead of 2 distant strangers
and that's how it's supposed to be
How can the Devil take a brother if he's close to me?
I'd love to go back to when we played as kids
but things changed, and that's the way it is

[Bridge w/ changing ad libs]

Come on come on
That's just the way it is
Things'll never be the same
That's just the way it is
aww yeah
[Repeat]

[2]

I see no changes all I see is racist faces
misplaced hate makes disgrace to races
We under I wonder what it takes to make this
one better place, let's erase the wasted
Take the evil out the people they'll be acting right
'cause both black and white is smokin' crack tonight
and only time we chill is when we kill each other
it takes skill to be real, time to heal each other
And although it seems heaven sent

We ain't ready, to see a black President, uhh
 It ain't a secret don't conceal the fact
 the penitentiary's packed, and it's filled with blacks
 But some things will never change
 try to show another way but you stayin' in the dope game
 Now tell me what's a mother to do
 bein' real don't appeal to the brother in you
 You gotta operate the easy way
 "I made a G today" But you made it in a sleazy way
 sellin' crack to the kid. "I gotta get paid,"
 Well hey, well that's the way it is

[Bridge]

[Talking:]

We gotta make a change...
 It's time for us as a people to start makin' some changes.
 Let's change the way we eat, let's change the way we live
 and let's change the way we treat each other.
 You see the old way wasn't working so it's on us to do
 what we gotta do, to survive.

[3]

And still I see no changes can't a brother get a little peace
 It's war on the streets & the war in the Middle East
 Instead of war on poverty they got a war on drugs
 so the police can bother me
 And I ain't never did a crime I ain't have to do
 But now I'm back with the facts givin' it back to you
 Don't let 'em jack you up, back you up,
 crack you up and pimp smack you up
 You gotta learn to hold ya own
 they get jealous when they see ya with ya mobile phone
 But tell the cops they can't touch this
 I don't trust this when they try to rush I bust this
 That's the sound of my tool you say it ain't cool
 my mama didn't raise no fool
 And as long as I stay black I gotta stay strapped
 & I never get to lay back
 'Cause I always got to worry 'bout the pay backs
 some punk that I roughed up way back
 comin' back after all these years
 rat-tat-tat-tat-tat that's the way it is uhh

Appendix 3 – Lyrics to “Ghetto Show” by Talib Kweli

(Intro: Talib Kweli)

Ghetto to ghetto, backyard to yard
We tear it up y'all, bless the mic with the gods (come on)
Precious metals round our necks and arms (yea)
We tear it up y'all, bless the mic with the gods
Ghetto to ghetto, backyard to yard
We tear it up y'all, bless the mic with the gods (come on)
Precious metals round our necks and arms (yea)
We tear it up y'all, bless the mic with the gods

(Hook: Anthony Hamilton)

Whatever in your heart is where you want to be
My hood is the ghetto
Even when you look
Its never what you see
My hood is the ghetto
I've been down before up is just a reach
Cause my hood is the ghetto
Catch a second wind
Then begin again
My hood is the ghetto

(Verse 1: Common)

Black magic in the hood, its tragic but understood
Crack addicts, crack windows, crack wood
Even whats bad becomes good, status becomes stood
Upon the pedestal welcome to the ghetto show
Federal buildings, pissy hallways filled with children pushing children
Fiends lips peeling, shit seems real and
What's real is the estate of mind that we're in
The situation feels great
My man peels weight, so he can fill plates
You might get love but you still feel hate
Through and chain plates, we communicate
Chicago to brooklyn nigga real ones do relate

(Verse 2: Talib Kweli)

If lyrics sold then truth be told
I'll probably be just as rich and famous as jay-z
Truthfully I wanna rhyme like common sense

Next best thing I do a record with common sense
 Cause its the music, its blues, its jazz, its acoustics
 Soul, rock and roll the hip hop we be producing yea
 It's the gear, it's the flare, it's the stare
 Nowadays they'll shot you where they used to shoot the fair
 Remember the lost soldiers, pour a beer, shoot the air
 We got our own elected officials, no matter who the mayor
 I know you know what I'm talking about
 From New York to the South, take off your shoes when you walk in the house

(Hook)

(Verse 3: Talib Kweli)

Yo

I grew up where they're playing skele in the parking lot
 And sell paintings of Aaliyah, BIG and Pac up in the barbershop
 Buildings too big so you don't really see the stars a lot
 But rapping, drinking, and going to prison you see them bars a lot
 I feel the spirit in the dark and hear it in my heart
 And always keep my ears to the block till I dearly depart
 Hip hop is really the art
 We have to express the part of ourselves that make us want to martyr
 ourselves
 It ain't harder to tell when somebody stick you up and put the hammer to you
 They want them dead presidents like Stickman and Mutulu
 With a gun to your jaw, these kids don't run anymore
 Kicks is a hundred or more

(Verse 4: Common)

A man in front of the store, begging for money and mercy
 I told him say a prayer under his breath, he cursed me
 Niggaz is thirsty, I heard it's a drought
 Up early, serving from their grandmother's house
 Sometime the ghetto feels desolate, yo the eyes of the hood yo is desperate
 Effected by the deficit, times and lessons get hard
 Either get by or get god, but but you try to get by
 It's like the block keep blocking
 You try to make moves, its like the car just keep stopping
 We shorties in the court, need cochran yea
 I tell them why the weed seeds popping, in the game you need options
 No time for feet watching, me and kwe keep rocking for the ghetto

“Thieves in the Night” by Talib Kweli

[Talib Kweli]

Yo Dee (What?)

Come on (Yeah..)

What? What? Come on

(Yeah)

“Give me the fortune, keep the fame,” said my man Louis

I agreed, know what he mean because we live the truest lie

I asked him why we follow the law of the bluest eye

He looked at me, he thought about it

Was like, “I’m clueless, why?”

The question was rhetorical, the answer is horrible

Our morals are out of place and got our lives full of sorrow

And so tomorrow comin later than usual

Waitin’ on someone to pity us

While we findin beauty in the hideous

They say money’s the root of all evil but I can’t tell

YouknowwhatI mean, pesos, francs, yens, cowrie shells, dollar bills

Or is it the mindstate that’s ill?

Creating crime rates to fill the new prisons they build

Over money and religion there’s more blood to spill

The wounds of slaves in cotton fields that never heal

What’s the deal?

A lot of cats who buy records are straight broke

But my language universal they be recitin my quotes

While R&B singers hit bad notes, we rock the boat

of thought, that my man Louis’ statements just provoked

Caught up, in conversations of our personal worth

Brought up, through endangered species status on the planet Earth

Survival tactics means, bustin gats to prove you hard

Your firearms are too short to box with God

Without faith, all of that is illusionary

Raise my son, no vindication of manhood necessary

[M.D.] Not strong

[T.K.] Only aggressive

[M.D.] Not free

[T.K.] We only licensed

[M.D.] Not compassionate, only polite

[T.K.] Now who the nicest?

[M.D.] Not good but well behaved
 [T.K.] Chasin after death
 so we can call ourselves brave?
 [M.D.] Still livin like mental slaves
 [both] Hidin like thieves in the night from life
 Illusions of oasis makin you look twice
 [both] Hidin like thieves in the night from life
 Illusions of oasis makin you look twice

[Mos Def]
 Yo, I'm sure that everbody out listenin agree
 That everything you see ain't really how it be
 A lot of jokers out runnin in place, chasin the style
 Be a lot goin on beneath the empty smile
 Most cats in my area be lovin the hysteria
 Synthesized surface conceals the interior
 America, land of opportunity, mirages and camouflages
 More than usually -- speakin loudly, sayin nothin
 You confusin me, you losin me
 Your game is twisted, want me enlisted -- in your usary
 Foolishly, most men join the ranks cluelessly
 Buffoonishly accept the deception, believe the perception
 Reflection rarely seen across the surface of the lookin glass
 Walkin the street, wonderin who they be lookin past
 Lookin gassed with them imported designer shades on
 Stars shine bright, but the light -- rarely stays on
 Same song, just remixed, different arrangement
 Put you on a yacht but they won't call it a slaveship
 Strangeness, you don't control this, you barely hold this
 Screamin brand new, when they just sanitized the old shit
 Suppose it's, just another clever Jedi mind trick
 That they been runnin across stars through all the time with
 I find it's distressin, there's never no in-between
 We either niggaz or Kings
 We either bitches or Queens
 The deadly ritual seems immersed, in the perverse
 Full of short attention spans, short tempers, and short skirts
 Long barrel automatics released in short bursts
 The length of black life is treated with short worth
 Get yours first, them other niggaz secondary
 That type of illin that be fillin up the cemetary
 This life is temporary but the soul is eternal

Separate the real from the lie, let me learn you
 Not strong, only aggressive, cause the power ain't directed
 That's why, we are subjected to the will of the oppressive
 Not free, we only licensed
 Not live, we just excitin
 Cause the captors.. own the masters.. to what we writin
 Not compassionate, only polite, we well trained
 Our sincerity's rehearsed in stage, it's just a game
 Not good, but well behaved cause the ca-me-ra survey
 most of the things that we think, do, or say
 We chasin after death just to call ourselves brave
 But everyday, next man meet with the grave
 I give a damn if any fan recall my legacy
 I'm tryin to live life in the sight of God's memory
 Like that y'all

[Mos Def]

A lot of people don't understand the true criteria of things
 Can't just accept the appearance
 Have to get the true essence

[Talib Kweli]

They ain't lookin around

[M.D.] Not strong

[T.K.] Only aggressive

[M.D.] Not free

[T.K.] We only licensed

[M.D.] Not compassionate, only polite

[T.K.] Now who the nicest?

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[both] Hidin like thieves in the night from life

Illusions of oasis makin you look twice

[both] Hidin like thieves in the night from life

Illusions of oasis makin you look twice

[Mos Def (singing)]

Stop hidin, stop hidin, stop hidin yo' face

Stop hidin, stop hidin, cause ain't no hidin place

* repeat 2X*

(Ad libs to fade)

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