CHAPTER THREE

They Schools: Hip Hop as a Pedagogical Process for Youth in Juvenile Detention Centers

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"We ready! We ready! We ready!" echoed throughout the Prince William County Juvenile Detention Center (PWCJDC) as Travis Harris and the young men rhythmically jumped up and down and chanted. Harris hyped them up to believe that they could live a life of purpose and meaning. The chant was popularized by Dirty South rapper Pastor Troy's song "No Mo Play in G.A." and the familiarity contributed to a euphoric moment. In the detention center for juveniles, the atmosphere burst with feelings of freedom and worth. They were getting ready to go out and live free.

This opening scene portrays a high point in my (Harris) training at the PWCJDC while working with Youth Outreach Services. Although I was not aware of the concept of Hip Hop Based Education (HHBE) at the time, it was my primary pedagogical approach. In this chapter, we argue that in focusing on breaking the cyclical oppression of the school-to-prison pipeline (STPP) at the stage of juvenile justice, HHBE (Hill, 2009) can be used as an effective pedagogical tool to empower teenagers to obtain their freedom. HHBE is a culturally relevant approach that allows practitioners to educate the whole being of young people. While juvenile detention centers have inherent limitations to the ways in which a Hip Hop culture can be constructed, the fluidity between Hip Hop and space overcomes this shortcoming. The most decisive factor in implementing HHBE in juvenile detention centers is the instructor. A Hip Hop instructor is crucial in developing the educational plan and gleaning malleable factors from HHBE.

Our chapter, "They Schools," first pushes for expanding our conception of the STPP to include early childhood education and details the cycle of oppression Black and Brown youth face. We then explain HHBE (Hill, 2009) and discuss the ways in which it operates as a form of culturally relevant education. After examining the STPP and why we believe HHBE is an effective approach to disrupting this type of oppression, we focus on Harris' involvement in the PWCJDC. Harris worked with Youth Outreach Services (YOS, a nonprofit organization providing services and training to a racially diverse, but mostly Black and Brown, young people who society has defined as "at-risk"). Based on the examination of Harris' time in the detention center, we offer tangible ways in which scholars and activists can go into detention centers using Hip Hop to create spaces where youth can free themselves from the cycle of oppression.

The explosion of scholarship on the STPP has elucidated the ways in which Black and Brown youth are being funneled into mass incarceration. Fuentes (2011) reveals how the STPP developed alongside mass incarceration, what Michelle Alexander (2012) calls the new Jim Crow. Wald and Losen (2003) summarize the connection this way: "Between 1972 and 2000, the percentage of white students suspended annually for more than one day rose from 3.1 percent to 5.09 percent. During the same period, the percentage for black students rose from 6.0 percent to 13.2 percent" (p. 10). Scholars and activists have provided numerous tactics for fighting the STPP, and Nocella II, Ducre and Lupinacci (2017) synthesize these tactics into the following domains: (1) policy changes, (2) independence from law enforcement in schools, (3) restorative justice, (4) culturally relevant education, (5) personnel within the criminal justice and school system that are from and has the best interest of Black and Brown communities in mind (Nocella II, Ducre & Lupinacci, 2017, p. 3).

We would like to contribute to this scholarship by arguing that a pattern of oppression exists in educational spaces which overlaps with the STPP. Heitzeg (2009) contends that "the school to prison pipeline does not exist in a vacuum" (p. 3). As already stated, the STPP developed alongside mass incarceration; this is important because it highlights the effect of the criminal justice system on families. The rapid increase of imprisoned Black and Brown bodies leads to single parent homes, missing mothers and fathers (Turney & Haskins, 2014). Furthermore, mass incarceration is only one component of the systems of oppression that Blacks and Browns endure. Hall (1980) comes the closest to providing a holistic depiction of racism in his critique of focusing on either the "economical" or the "sociological" aspects of racism. Hall reveals that this approach is too narrow and leads to a reductive and essentialist depiction of the social formations being studied. Borrowing from Louis Althusser, who calls articulation "a complex unity, structured in dominance" (Hall, 1980, 325), Hall contends for a theory of articulation in order to adequately understand racism.

Antonio Gramsci and his conceptions of hegemony and the ideological struggle are also germane to Hall's position of the nuances of racism. In his chapter "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity" (1986), Hall explains that for Gramsci: "Hegemony is not exercised in the economic and administrative fields alone, but encompasses the critical domains of cultural, moral, ethical and intellectual leadership" (p. 426). From this perspective, a theoretical conception of racism through articulation brings together both the economic and the sociological that accounts of the cultural, political and ideological struggles between the dominant and oppressed groups. Pragmatically, that means utilizing every conceivable sociological and economic data point—(e.g., Black unemployment rates; rates of Black infant mortality rate; to anti-Black stigmatization in the media; environmental racism evidence in poor air quality; the proximity of Black spaces to highways)—as vivid illustrations of structural racism.

In our estimation, the STPP functions within this system of subjugation. Inside this system, there is a pattern of criminalizing Brown and Black bodies. The trajectory to incarceration encompasses key milestones that begin in early childhood: early childhood—third grade—juvenile justice—adult justice—reentry. In reality, there are no magical occurrences at these markers; these are checkpoints that if measurable actions are not taken to reverse and derail the STPP, countless Black and Brown students will continue to suffer. The oppressive cycle starts before children enter K–12 with a focus on early childhood education. The next crucial point is third grade, because this is the first period in which student reading performances are recorded (Okilwa, Khalifa, & Briscoe, 2017). After third grade, the line shifts based on the state because there is no federal minimum age for entrance into juvenile detention centers (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2012). Entrance into the detention center is also a student's entryway to the justice system. From this point forward, Black and Brown young adults are more likely to go to prison. The second to last step in the cycle, imprisonment, marks Black and Brown youth for life. For those who do not do a life sentence, they are continually entangled in their criminal record when they reenter society (Kim, Losen, & Hewitt, 2012, Okilwa, Khalifa, & Briscoe, 2017).

The plethora of scholarship on the STPP has made great advances to our understanding of systemic injustice, and we hope to add to this burgeoning scholarship a focus on early childhood education. Rashid (2009) uses the term "preschool-to-prison pipeline" to capture the importance of early childhood experiences in our understanding of how the STPP actually operates. We are not arguing for an increase in responsibility of the parents and the youth. We concur with Darder, Baltodano and Torres' (2003) assertion that it is the educational responsibility of critical pedagogues to teach Brown and Black youth. Darder, Baltodano and Torres highlight a range of issues they believe must be addressed in order to adequately educate Brown and Black boys and girls, and Brown and Black LGBTQI

identified youth including the importance of teaching models to language and literacy. With this in mind, here are some important areas to focus on in early childhood education.

The primary reason we do not advocate for greater parental responsibility and focus on the role of critical pedagogues is because of the systemic injustices constantly coming at Black and Brown parents, perhaps none greater than the STPP itself. The STPP is cyclical because, as Cho (2009) and Turney and Haskins (2014) reveal, parental incarceration is a key factor in child development. There are close to 2.6 million children with incarcerated parents (Pettit, 2012). Turney and Haskins (2014) detail that "the three main explanations for the negative intergenerational consequences of paternal incarceration—trauma, stigma, and strain—may be consequential for grade retention through their influence on children's cognitive and noncognitive skills" (p. 242). These three factors—trauma, stigma, and strain—represent some of the barriers that parents endure and the negative effects they have on the children. In addition to this situation that many Black and Brown parents face, this also makes it difficult for them to be fully equipped to train their children. Furthermore, when Black and Brown children are fortunate enough to have access to daycare, preschool or Head Start, they can experience criminalization and trauma in those spaces as well.

Rashid (2009) summarizes the problems with Black and Brown youth during early childhood education:

> The work of Gilliam (2005) has shown, for example, the expulsion rate for preschoolers to be higher than the K–12 expulsion rate, and that African American boys are the most likely to be expelled from preschool. It is also documented that children from high poverty neighborhoods are less likely to be exposed to high quality early childhood settings (LoCasaleCrouch et al., 2007). (p. 349)

The Office for Civil Rights (2014) reports for the years 2011–2012 that:

> Black children represent 18% of preschool enrollment, but 48% of preschool children receiving more than one out-of school suspension; in comparison, white students represent 43% of preschool enrollment but 26% of preschool children receiving more than one out of school suspension. (p. 1)

In reference to daycare, Katner (2010) states that "at-risk" children, often conflated with Black and Brown youth, are more likely to receive poor quality childcare.

In addition to inadequate childcare and preschool, a larger problem that looms in the lives of many Brown and Black youth is that they do not have access to early childhood education. Ryan (2006) and Magnuson and Waldfogel (2016) provide data that can portray the extent to which Brown and Black youth do not receive early childhood education. Ryan indicates that for "low-income families," "those left out number in the millions" (p. 49). The combination of not having access to

adequate childcare and preschool and being treated poorly when attending these settings indicate that Black and Brown youth are not receiving the benefits of early childhood education.

Scholars overwhelmingly agree that early childhood education leads to long-term success, not just in school, but life in general (Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, 2017; Katner, 2010; Rashid, 2009; Ryan, 2006). An often-cited project on the topic of early childhood education is the Abecedarian Project being conducted by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's. Starting in 1971, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute studied ninety-six children who received high-quality childcare and traced their progress to the present day. In their most recent findings in April, 2017, they have discovered "that children who are given high-quality education at an early age, starting at six weeks old and continuing through their first five years of life, are more likely to be employed full-time and have better relationships with their parents as adults" ("New Findings from the Abecedarian Project," 2017). Their overall conclusion is "that when we provide vulnerable children and families with really high quality services—educationally, medically, socially—we have impacts of a large and practical magnitude all the way up to middle age" (New Findings from the Abecedarian Project, 2017).

There is a clear link between parental incarceration and Black and Brown youth experiencing educational difficulties. This linkage persists throughout school and manifests in Brown and Black students not meeting state and national academic standards. Harris and Graves Jr. (2010) describe the inextricable link between parental involvement and academic achievement in their study of Black youth during middle childhood (six to twelve years old). While some scholars have argued whether educational success in early childhood or middle childhood offer the best variable to predict future outcomes, we would assert these two periods as a consistent evolution in which both stages offer crucial insights. Since the linkage of parental incarceration and additional components of systemic racism continues into middle childhood, the whole cycle is interconnected and each segment of the cycle affects the other.

The third grade is considered a key point because it is the first year that the state and federal government measure and record students' performances on standardized test. Lovelace (2012) explains that students' performance "on these tests is connected to the evaluations of each school, school district, and school systems broadly" (p. 10). These evaluations are important because they shape national policy and school funding. Also, third grade reading proficiency is a marker for how many jail cells are to be made. According to a longitudinal study of almost 4,000 students, the Annie E. Casey Foundation (2010) indicates, "that those who do not read proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to leave school without a diploma than proficient readers" (p. 4).

This juncture of young people's lives is also important because this is when they begin to recognize their role in society, and society starts to define them based on preexisting dominant ideologies (Harris & Graves Jr., 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2011). Ladson-Billings (2011) posits that "By the time Black boys reach the 3rd or 4th grade their teachers and other school personnel no longer treat them like children, but rather like men" (p. 7). Ladson-Billings provides a telling story that illustrates the ways in which Brown and Black youth are being defined and categorized in society as numbers from test scores.

I recall sitting in a classroom of 3rd graders observing a student teacher. The classroom was filled with a diverse group of students—Latinos, Asian Americans, African Americans, and White students. One little boy, an Asian-American student I will call 'Stanley' kept getting up out of his seat. Repeatedly, the student teacher said things such as, 'sit down Stanley,' 'go back to your seat Stanley,' and 'not now Stanley,' while she was attempting to work with another group of students in a reading group. I documented nine times that she spoke to Stanley about getting out of his seat. Sometime later a Black boy I will call, 'Larry' got up out of his seat to ask the student teacher a question and immediately she snapped, 'What are you doing out of your seat? You're out of here!' In a few minutes, he was on his way to the principal's office. During our post-observation conference, I pointed out the disparity between her responses to the two boys. I showed her each time I had documented her repeated warnings to Stanley and her one sanction issued to Larry. When she looked at my log, she was shocked at what she had done and at a loss for words to explain why she had treated the two boys so differently. Hers was a classic example of how her fear of losing control (after all her supervisor was observing her and she wanted everything to go smoothly) fostered criminalization. (p. 11)

Ladson-Billings heart-wrenching story shows how teachers criminalize Black boys, how their mere presence marks Black boys as troublemakers, and how quickly Black boys are suspended. While she focuses on Black boys, numerous other studies have shown how girls and LGBTQI-identified students also experience this same type of maltreatment (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015; Human Rights Watch, 2016). Black and Brown youth respond in a variety of ways to this maltreatment, with one response being internalizing the way they are treated and acting according to these classifications (Harris & Graves Jr. 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2011).

The next three points, juvenile justice, adult justice, and reentry, have been covered in depth (Alexander, 2012; Bahena, Cooc, Currie-Rubin, Kuttner, & Ng 2012; Fuentes, 2011; Kim, Losen, & Hewitt 2010; Nocella, Parmar, & Stovall, 2014; Nocella, Ducre, & Lupinacci, 2017; Office of Justice, 2000). Since Alexander's (2012) groundbreaking book and the national awareness of the STPP and mass incarceration, it helped generate some of the most recent data about the

justice system and indicates, clearly, that race continues to be a determining factor in how people experience the criminal justice system. Black youth continue to receive harder sentencing as indicated, for instance, in Peck and Jennings (2016) study where they found that "race was still found to influence the likelihood of intake (OR = 1.54; 95% C.I. = 1.48–1.62, $p < .001$), adjudication (OR = 0.80; 95% C.I. = 0.76–0.84, $p < .001$), and disposition (OR = 1.64; 95% C.I. = 1.54–1.76, $p < .001$) outcomes" (p. 219).

The Senate Committee on Government Affairs (2004) shows how a large population of mentally ill youth is not receiving proper treatment; instead, these youth are being placed in juvenile detention centers around the country. Waxman (2004) highlights that, on a daily basis, "about 2,000 young people are incarcerated simply because community mental health services are unavailable. This represents about 7 percent of all youth in juvenile detention" (p. 8). Additionally, there are young people in juvenile detention centers who have no charges against them and are only in there because of mental illness. In a more recent study, White and Aalsma (2013) state that "roughly half of all juvenile adolescents meet criteria for mental illness, with many juveniles having co-morbid substance abuse and history of trauma" (p. 11). Both reports contend that juvenile detention centers are not qualified to meet the needs of youth who experience mental illness. As a result, White and Aalsma (2013) insist that "juvenile adolescents have low rates of mental health care utilization, high rates of recidivism, and a mortality rate 4 times greater than the general population" (p. 11). Since, as their study confirms, Black and Brown youth are affected the most, sending Black and Brown mentally ill youth to juvenile detention centers is literally killing them.

Thus, there is a need for Hip Hop–based education. Education is central to all of this and a centerpiece in this argument. Let us now examine the case for Hip Hop–based education.

HIP HOP BASED EDUCATION

Scholars point to Petchauer (2009) as laying the groundwork for the emerging field of Hip Hop Based Education (HHBE). While we are tracing the evolution of Hip Hop scholarship, particularly HHBE, we contend that HHBE started along with Hip Hop. There was definitely a type of learning occurring in the Bronx that pushed traditional notions of education. In the same year, that Petchauer published his review essay, a pioneer in HHBE, Marc Lamont Hill, published *Beats, Rhymes and Classroom Life* (2009). He shares his motivation in developing this work: "I found that many of the attempts by non-African American scholars to represent the voices of African American youth by proxy resulted in scholarship that did not represent my experiences of those of my peers, students, and elders" (p.

xviii). His experiences included being both Black and Hip Hop. Hill also provides a definition for HHBE:

> In particular, scholars have shown how the elements of hip-hop culture-rap music, turntablism, break dancing, graffiti culture, fashion, and language-can be used within classrooms to improve student motivation, teach critical media literacy, foster critical consciousness, and transmit disciplinary knowledge. These foci and approaches, along with others, collectively comprise the field of study that I refer to as Hip-Hop-Based Education (HHBE). (p. 2)

As HHBE continued to grow, Hill and Petchauer came together and edited *Schooling Hip-Hop: Expanding Hip-Hop Based Education across the Curriculum* (2013). Their introduction provides a review of HHBE up to that point and posits that educators first used historical and literary analysis of Hip Hop culture and rap lyrics in the classroom. HHBE grew along with scholarly understandings of Hip Hop that included moving beyond rap lyrics, examining Hip Hop internationally and analyzing Hip Hop across disciplines. One of the key texts during this time has been Emdin's *Urban Science Education for the Hip-Hop Generation* (2010b), which reveals the ways in which culturally responsive pedagogy embraces Hip Hop culture. Hill and Petchauer decided to co-author this piece because "the overwhelming majority HHBE scholarship has failed to broaden the bounds of possibility for theorizing, researching or implementing hip-hop based educational practices" (p. 2). Hill and Petchauer's volume pushes HHBE further in the direction it was going to ensure that it aligns with the growth of Hip Hop scholarship and raises new theoretical and methodological questions.

The most recent scholarship on HHBE examines how teachers can learn from students during teen years, implementing HHBE in English education, imagining the syllabus as a turntable and the ways it can be mixed and used in an African-centered education to promote activism in African-American communities (Jennings & Petchauer, 2017; Rashid, 2017). One of the leading scholars to emerge since Hill and Petchauer (2013) is Bettina Love. Two potent pieces she has published are "What Is Hip-Hop-Based Education Doing in 'Nice' Fields Such as Early Childhood and Elementary Education?" (2015) and "Difficult Knowledge: When a Black Feminist Educator Was Too Afraid to #SayHerName" (2017). Love (2015) brings forth an important connection between critical race theory (CRT), critical pedagogy, and HHBE when she reveals the ways in which CRT informed critical pedagogy and how HHBE can be used "to address the inequalities in early learning and school readiness by utilizing the skill sets children bring to early learning spaces to further their development" (p. 113).

A major contribution Love makes to HHBE is focusing on the Hip Hop identities of urban youth. She posits that HHBE scholarship has not paid enough attention to early childhood and elementary education. Love argues "that teacher-educator programs must explicitly position HHBE under the framework of

culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP; Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014) because young urban children's Hip Hop community of practice is entwined with their identities rooted in cultural plurality" (p. 114). Her argument draws attention to the communities that shape the students, including the cultural, literary and linguistic practices that are influenced by a dynamic Hip Hop culture. Therefore, HHBE can effectively communicate to students' very ontology and educators' investment in learning how these cultural practices can shift their pedagogy and how they perceive themselves.

Love's most recent piece emerged during a tumultuous time in America. The daily news cycle broadcasted deadly acts of violence against Black and Brown lives. One of the most prevailing occurrences has been the extrajudicial murder of Black and Brown people by police officers. While the media has provided an abundance of attention to Black and Brown men, Black and Brown women and trans-identified folx have received inadequate attention. The death of one Black woman, Sandra Bland, did spawn the hashtag #SayHerName. Love's beautiful and breathtaking piece communicates the challenges and risks inherent to being a Black woman Hip Hop educator who teaches about state-sanctioned violence against Black folks. Love discusses her experience teaching elementary and middle at a public charter school in Atlanta. She expresses:

> As a class, my students and I were comfortable discussing, critiquing, and thinking about creative ways to speak back to anti-Black racism and policing of Black men. We had the language for Black death when focused on Black men but were tongue-tied and silent for Black women. One major reason I was reluctant to engage my students, especially my young girls, in critical, in-depth conversations about the police killings of Black women was the already present and overwhelming fear for the lives of their brothers. (p.#)

Throughout the essay, Love describes how the academy is structured to address the death of Black men. Love also provides psychoanalytical theory to explain how humans create defense mechanisms. As a result, she depicts the ways in which even Black women educators revealing their concerns to their students can be traumatizing. Love's contributions to HHBE go deeper into the identity of educators and students and highlight the pertinent issues of Black female Hip Hop educators.

CASE STUDIES

Love (2015, 2017), Hill and Petchauer (2013), Hill (2009), and Emdin (2010a) all speak to HHBE's utility to address the components within the aforementioned cycle. The effectiveness of HHBE they present provides potentially ameliorative interventions to keep Brown and Black youth from entering the justice system. Our focus is on training programs for Brown and Black youth already

within juvenile detention centers. These two case studies are meant to contribute to HHBE scholarship by highlighting the ways HHBE can be used to intervene in this deadly cycle.

In 2006, with Youth Outreach Services, Travis Harris provided training to twenty-six racially diverse, mostly Black and Brown, young males at a detention center. The founder and chief executive officer of Youth Outreach Services (YOS) is Elizabeth Harris-Charity. Harris-Charity started working with young adults as a Sunday school teacher in her church at the age of seventeen. Her official implementation of YOS came as a result of systemic racism. In the 1980s, during the "color-blind era" when many white Americans thought the racism of old was defeated during the 1960s (Bonilla-Silva, 2013), she lost her job as Supervisor of the Account Receivable Department at American Tobacco Company to a white woman who had less experience and fewer qualifications. To make matters worse, Harris-Charity was expected to train this less qualified colleague, and no proper reason was provided for her dismissal. She responded by developing Youth Outreach Ministries in 1989. Harris-Charity did not consciously connect her firing to racism, and some may argue that she was not fired as a result of institutional racism. She developed an organization that would empower her two Black male sons and the many other Black males she saw that were potential victims to the system trying to capture them. Alexander (2012) explains that the 1980s was also the start of the War on Drugs which led to the "rapid explosion of the prison population" and attempted to "destroy" black people in the United States (p. 5).

When Harris-Charity first started YOS, the organization was named as Youth Outreach Ministries. She developed positive activities for young Blacks in Henrico County and the City of Richmond, Virginia to get involved with. During that time, the organization offered a range of activities for youth to participate in, including Bible studies in her home and community cookouts where rappers who are Christian performed. Youth Outreach Ministries also had a radio talk show on 1580 am and a television show on Continental television broadcasting. The weekly television program and radio show called, respectively, *Involvement Showcase* and *Teen Talk on WDYL radio and WFTH Radio*. These shows addressed issues teenagers dealt with such as peer pressure and loneliness. In its early stages, YOS provided constructive recreational time, equipped and trained Black teenagers on mass communication, and provided a communal safe space for Black teens that was distinctly different from the color-blind, racist, American society that dehumanized them.

The program continued to evolve when Harris-Charity began to fully realize the ill effects of being a Black teenager in America during that time. Many of the YOS participants were dropping out of high school; the young women were having unexpected and unprepared pregnancies, and some teens were impacted by the War on Drugs and became users. Due to the increase in incarceration,

many of the Black families had single mothers—this does not, however, suggest that Black women were not being arrested and/or harassed just as much, if not more, than Black men. Five years later after recognizing these systemic problems, Harris-Charity officially shifted from Youth Outreach Ministries to Youth Outreach services in 1994 by obtaining its 501 C-3 status. She developed several training models that focused on young African Americans from the inner city. Harris-Charity also wrote a Welfare-to-Work proposal and submitted it to the former Governor George Allen in 1994. She believes he adopted the plan and used it to create the Virginia Initiative to Work Program. In March of 1995, Allen signed the HB 2001 from Welfare to Work: Independence Program. Youth Outreach Services then received a grant for $69,000.00. YOS officially commenced operation in the Old Thalhimers building in Richmond, Virginia.

The new sense of focus in 1995 as a non-profit organization focused on equipping and empowering young Blacks in Richmond, Virginia with the tools they needed to be successful and fight the ongoing cycle of oppressing Blacks. YOS worked to create communal spaces with and for Black teenagers labeled by society as "at-risk." In addition to the radio and television broadcasting, YOS provided homes for Black teens that either had been in the juvenile detention center or as an alternative for those who were going to be sent to the detention center. YOS provided an array of pragmatic services including but not limited to tutoring, studying skills, job placement, and entrepreneurial training. YOS functioned in this capacity in Richmond from 1995 to 2002. The program moved away from the Thalhimers building and opened homes dedicated to training young Black men for employment, education, and basic life skills in predominantly Black areas around Richmond, VA including Church Hill, Highland Park, and Henrico.

With a focus on juvenile detention centers, YOS started operating in the Bon-Air Correctional Center in Richmond, Virginia and Hanover Correctional Center in Hanover, VA in 1995 and continued until 1999. This program was started at these detention centers in order to develop a relationship with the teenagers and provided a support team to help them reenter society. YOS fought hard against the recidivism rate that was primarily affecting Black teenagers. Other activities established were recreation and inspirational guidance. At first, the program conducted group discussions on theology, sociology, and education. YOS allowed the Black teenagers who participated with Youth Outreach Services to be a part of the training being provided at Bon-Air and Hanover Correctional Center. This allowed teenagers who were a part of YOS to obtain skills in training and enhanced the discussions amongst the teens because of the various perspectives that were shared. YOS called the interactions between these two communities positive peer-pressure.

YOS then shifted focus from young Black men involved with the justice system to young Black women. In 2002, the program opened a home for teenage girls

who were pregnant and homeless. In addition to providing basic necessities (e.g., food, shelter and clothing), this home helped these teenage girls receive proper prenatal care and assisted them with obtaining employment.

This very brief history, consisting of sixteen years working with Black teenagers, provides the context for Youth Outreach Services training in the Prince William Juvenile Detention Center. In 2005, Harris-Charity met Reverend Johnson who invited her into the PWCJDCs. After visiting, she obtained a grant for $35,500.00 from Senator Charles Colgan and developed the twelve-week job readiness mentoring program. YOS provided training every Thursday night. The job readiness program consisted of invited speakers, mock job interviews, religious education, graphic designing, and Microsoft office suite usage (e.g., Word, PowerPoint, etc.). The diversity of speakers aided greatly in the job training program. The professional speakers were teachers, principals, football players, business owners, and community members. Their input provided unique and direct information from their perspective fields.

The overall goal of the job readiness mentoring program was to prepare the young men for employment and personal development when they re-entered society. When applying for a job or trying to get back into school, they could use Youth Outreach Services as a referral. YOS provided the training for transferable skills that could be used in a variety of jobs. Also, the goal of the religious education was to address the whole being of the young men. Activists, educator and very close friend of Martin Luther King Jr., Vincent Harding, after being heavily involved in the freedom struggle in the 1960s, argued that:

> And at best the river of our struggle has moved consistently toward the ocean of humankind's most courageous hopes for freedom and integrity, forever seeking what black people in South Carolina said they sought in 1865: "the right to develop our whole *being*." (Harding, p. xix)

YOS recognized that simply providing employment skills would not address self-worth, identity, psychological, or emotional struggles.

In 2006, Harris functioned as the Executive Director of YOS and bought HHBE into the juvenile detention center while working with the young men. At that time, he did not fully prepare a theory of HHBE and his work was several years before Petchauer (2009) and Hill (2009). The guiding model that Harris utilized was his identity as Hip Hop, meaning, how he positioned himself as a Black male in the world, how he walked, talked, dressed, and his desire to meet the young men where they were. A Hip Hop identity, to Harris, was more than a culture; it was the driving force that inspired him to see those affected by systemic racism, overcome their predicament, and live to their fullest potential. In the same way, Afrika Bambattaa and other Hip Hop pioneers played an integral role in stopping gang violence and partied in the middle of literal burning, a Hip Hop identity

thrived and transformed lives. Several scholars have laid the groundwork for alternative and effective modalities of education than the lecture-based banking model predominant in traditional educational settings (Freire, 1968; hooks, 2014; Love, 2015). While Harris was not particularly aware of those theories, his Hip Hop background guided him.

Freire (1968) revealed that the majority of education employed the banking model. He stated:

> Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (p. 72)

Harris did not draw on this banking concept because it left the students uninterested and did not challenge them to think critically. hooks (1994) built on Friere's work by aiming to make the classroom an "exciting place, never boring" and offered "pleasure in the classroom" (7). The primary ways Harris provided Hip Hop Education were by: embodying Hip Hop as the educator; using Hip Hop videos to illustrate how to create PowerPoints; playing and discussing Hip Hop songs; and leading Hip Hop chants and movements. Overall Harris was successful in presenting the information in an accessible manner and keeping the young men engaged.

HHBE has already discussed lyrical analysis and is using the aesthetic qualities and components of Hip Hop to teach various subjects. Therefore, instead of focusing on listening to rap songs and using Hip Hop to create PowerPoints, this approach will zero in on identity and space, particularly in the detention center. YOS's primary purpose of going into the detention center to end this vicious cycle motivated Harris to provide meaningful training. Reducing the recidivism rate created an urgency that Harris would not normally feel. This weight affected every aspect of the training he provided: lesson planning, delivery of the material, and reflection. While planning the material, either choosing the songs or creating the demo version of PowerPoint, he wanted to make sure he selected the best possible song and that there were no problems with the presentation.

While I, Harris, communicated with the young men, I constantly was aware of my own position within the discussion. On one hand, I knew that after we left, these young men would remain locked up and I would be free to go about my day. On the other hand, I questioned my identity and my "realness." "Who am I?" was a continual question I asked when I was with the young men and when I was not. Because I felt like if I was not being real when I taught and I questioned the authenticity of what I taught, I felt they would see right through me. To avoid this misperception, I was constantly evaluating myself to be certain I kept it "real." At

that point in my life, I defined real as being fully transparent about my past and present. In the midst of this ontological anxiety, Hip Hop provided comfort.

I grew up in the hood in Richmond, Virginia. Being raised by my mother in a Black space meant that I directly experienced the effects of systemic racism. Granted, I did not formulate a Hip Hop identity at the time, it was through Hip Hop that I was able to bring together my rough background, keeping it real, and being fully present and transparent with the young men. As a result, my Hip Hop "realness" was instrumental in teaching the young men. Along with what Love (2015) revealed, they were receptive to my pedagogical approach because of their own cultural practices. One interaction I can share is during a discussion I revealed to the young men by background of growing up in the hood and being in the military. A smile came over one of the young Black male's face, and he instantly related to what I shared. He was fully involved in the conversation and shared his own personal experiences.

As I spent more time in the detention center, this interaction between the young men and I changed. When I first started, I had just graduated from college and spent several years in the military. I did not see the world as I do now. I thought that every hood was like mine, which meant that people from the hood had similar experiences to me, and every young male in the detention center was a real "bad boy." After spending several months there and several in depth conversations, I discovered that was not the case. Some of the young men came from two parent homes. They were not as "hard" as I thought they were, and they shared that they committed deviant acts "for fun." This new information did not change the seriousness with which I approached the training because I wanted to stop the cycle but it did change my internal battle with "realness."

I now felt like I was in a position of authority. At first, I was nervous and a bit doubtful about my ability to truly affect their lives. After being there and getting to know the young men better, I communicated with confidence and believed that I was going to play a positive role. My position with those twenty-six young men greatly affected the space. Detention centers bring new challenges to creating a Hip Hop classroom. I did not imagine changing the colors of the wall, painting graffiti, rearranging the furniture, or redesigning the entire building. These decisions are made at the state level and the Justice Policy Institute (2009) describes the importance of the facility in determining the likelihood of re-offending.

I, unknowingly, addressed these concerns by using Hip Hop to change the space. In addition to having Hip Hop music contribute to the atmosphere, we got involved in Hip Hop exercises. Hip Hop has the ability to create a space in which participants do not pay attention to time or "where" they are. Instead, Hip Hop brings in an energy that transforms the space into a Hip Hop space. The opening scene of this chapter captures this space. I used to be a rapper, so I had some experience leading a crowd. We all gathered around in a cypher. I led them in the

chant "We-Rea-dy!" As we did it more, the momentum built up. We eventually all started jumping on beat and in rhythm; a good time, indeed.

Another example of the use of Hip Hop culture to disrupt and dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline was created by a young man name K-Rahn Vallatine. K-Rahn created a curriculum situated in the core values of Hip Hop Culture to be used with and among urban multi-ethnic youth, and for young people who are either incarcerated or coming out of the prison system. But what makes K-Rahn's work so unique is that (1) it is created from an insider's perspective. K-Rahn is an MC and rap music DJ. He knows his craft and considers Hip Hop a part of his life. Moreover, K-Rahn is someone who considers Hip Hop as a positive and not something that needs to be reformed or reinvented. (2) This type of curriculum sees results. California has adopted it into their state curriculum for public schools. Young people respond positively because, as one can imagine, Hip Hop speaks to their being, their existence, and their voice. K-Rahn's goal is to disrupt the prison industrial complex beginning with some of the most vulnerable members of society, young Black people. K-Rhan defines his mission as such:

> Live Above The Hype is a Common Core aligned, Character Development curriculum. This curriculum is to be used as a resource to open insightful dialogue between instructors and students that enables character development, builds critical thinking skills, and ultimately creates positive shifts in their value systems.

By this, K-Rhan is able to successfully work with young people and, through structured curriculum, create pedagogical success. Scholars and activists alike, such as Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, Davey D, Alex Alonso, and Kaile Shiling have not just commented on the success of this curriculum and K-Rhan's work, but have also donated time and money to the mission. Educational spaces such as The University of Southern California, Cal State Long Beach, and Pasadena City College have all adopted parts of the "Live Above the Hype" pedagogy. This type of program is an example that can and needs to be replicated in other towns, counties, cities, and states.

But, much like other programs which utilize grassroots local leadership, adequate funding, and racist ideologies which ignore the success of such programs are always an issue. K-Rahn also faces a current White House administration that is hostile toward Black and Brown communities as evidenced, in part, by limiting funding to programs that assist Black and Brown communities. K-Rahn remains unmoved and encouraged, however, and seeks to continue to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline with the work he is doing (e.g., http://liveabovethehype.com/)

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

There are several components of HHBE involved here, particularly the classroom environment and embodied knowledge. This Hip Hop exercise, at its peak, completely changed the space. Even though these young men were still going back to their beds and not home, even though they were dehumanized by society, and despite the sorrows associated with being away from family and friends, they experienced moments of joy. The joy they encountered communicated hope. The communication of hope they felt in their bodies connected to the knowledge they already had about Hip Hop movements of jumping and waving their hand. This interaction between potential hope and bodily movement is what I am calling embodied knowledge. Therefore, their bodies heard or "learned" through Hip Hop that they were going to be alright.

Based on my (Harris) experience in the juvenile detention center, we believe that the new theoretical question that needs to be answered is: In light of the number of teenagers that are mentally ill inside the detention center, how effective did HHBE address their illness? A possible way to answer this question is to have psychologists meet with Black and Brown youth who received HHBE in juvenile detention centers. The additional pressing issues are to provide HHBE to Black and Brown young women and LGBTQI identifying youth in juvenile detention centers. It is also imperative to hear from Black and Brown young women and LGBTQI identifying HHBE educators.

Lastly, the literature on HHBE demands that we ask whether education, alone, is enough to help young Black and Brown families overcome the prevailing problems they face. Will a degree move them out of the cycle of poverty and raise their intergenerational economic mobility? Moreover, we will need an intricate and holistic model of engagement. Education is but one part of the wheel. In my own journey as an Afro-Latinx identifying person (Hodge), it was not solely a "degree" that "saved" me. It was a community, a network of people, and a web of individuals who wanted to see me succeed. We are in need of that type of process if we are to even begin in dismantling of the school-to-prison pipeline. Let us continue to press forward and #Resist!

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