

Re-Membering Freire: The Links between Hip-Hop Culture and Paulo Freire

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Introduction

From its onset, Hip Hop has been inextricably linked to critical thought. With its roots in West African culture and the identity of the griot/bard (Keyes, 2002), spreading through the Caribbean (George, 1998; Rose, 1994; Kitwana, 2002), and re-membered² in the mid 1970s in the streets of New York, early Hip Hop pioneers gazed upon their experience of living in poor conditions and began a running dialogue with each other that took many forms. Black and Brown urban communities were plagued by “shrinking federal funds, affordable housing, [and] shifts in the occupational structure from blue collar manufacturing toward corporate and informational services” (Rose, 1994, p. 31). Through dance, art, poetry, and music, a critique of systems of oppression began in a language that those connected to the oppression could understand. And understand they did. Today Hip Hop music exists as a main feature of the soundtrack to a new globalization and corporate culture, but embedded within Hip Hop culture is the critical discourse upon which it was founded. This discourse is buried beneath corporate control and unconscious/uncritical thought, but it is still there buried within the subconscious minds of everyone connected to Hip Hop whether they know it or not.

As Hip-Hop was being born, the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) was tapping into pathologies that were also found in the streets of New York. Freire investigated his Brazilian home and focused on the field of education. In particular, he identified a problem in which students were

systematically relegated into the conceptual role of an object rather than the more empowered position of a subject. In other words, students were often disempowered by schools and were, as a result, not afforded the chance to actively construct their own realities. The lack of critical consciousness in the United States has allowed a pattern of systematic control and oppression in schools to rob many students of their right to be viewed as subjects. Hip Hop culture has been a space where the youth of today have come to see themselves as subjects, found their identity and humanity, and created a place to develop their critical consciousness through the engagement of humanizing discourses (e.g., art, music, dance).

As educators link the power and potential of Hip Hop as a pedagogical tool, Hip Hop culture has begun to creep into the classrooms (as well as informal sites of education) in three distinct ways: (a) Hip Hop has found its ways into after-school programs where teachers are taking an entrepreneurial approach with the students as they are constructing their own music and expressions (Anderson, 2004), (b) Hip Hop has been used inside formalized classrooms to scaffold subject matter at both the elementary and secondary levels (Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2002; Sitomer, 2004), and (c) Hip Hop is used in classrooms to introduce a critical analysis of systemic forms of oppression that pervert our society (Williams, 2004).

In this essay, I investigate the links between Paulo Freire's philosophy and Hip Hop culture, looking to draw out the links that allow educators to ground pedagogical philosophy within the lived experience of students. I will specifically explore (a) the birth of Hip Hop culture as culturally dominant discourse, (b) the theoretical framework of Critical Social Theory and its relation to Hip Hop Culture, and (c) the development of Hip Hop's voice as Hip Hop's version of *consientização*.

An Introduction to Hip Hop: The Birth of a Culture

*But like I told those in the ghettos
Here's the facts! True hip-hop is so much more than that
Some much more than rap, so much more than beats
Hip-hop is all about victory over the streets*

—KRS-One: 9 elements (2003)

The question is often posed, "What is Hip Hop?" Mainstream America is stuck using commercial rap music, often heard on the radios and on the music television channels, as a complete representation of Hip Hop culture. But Hip Hop is, in fact, a culture³ complete with its own system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that Hip Hoppers use to cope with their world and with one another. Ethnomusicologist Cheryl Keys (2002), in looking for the historical roots of Hip Hop, traces

the origins back to the West African tradition of the bard/griot that was the designated consciousness of the tribe. Nelson George (1998), on the other hand, begins his investigation of the origins of Hip Hop at the beginning of the civil rights movement in the New York borough of the South Bronx. He found that the birth of the modern Hip Hop era led many to connect with the hypnotizing beats of the DJ, the mesmerizing lyrics of the Emcee, the fantastic moves of the B-Boys/Girls (the break dancing elite), and the intricate recordings of the Taggers/Writers (graffiti artists).

Around the beginning of the 1970s, urban America was heavily involved with the sound of Motown. But as the music industry began to try to exploit the talents of the urban community for their own profits, the Motown Era was evolving into a sped up, watered down form of R & B that came to be known as the Disco Era. As quickly as it arose, the disco era began to fizzle and left many in the boroughs of New York City searching for a sound and more importantly, a culture, that matched the intensity of their lives. Hip Hop as a culture began to take shape as a culture of resistance when the authorities (police, older generations, etc.) took a stand against the youthful practitioners. Hip Hoppas were routinely harassed and arrested by police (Rose, 1994; George, 1998; Kitwana, 2002; KRS-One, 2003), but through the perseverance of seminal figures in Hip Hop culture—Kool Herc, Africa Bambaataa, and Grandmaster Flash—Hip Hop culture began to take root in the South Bronx and beyond. In 1979, Hip Hop culture became legitimized with the establishment of Sugar Hill records and the release of the first hit rap record *Rapper's Delight* by the Sugar Hill Gang. People began to discover the roots of Hip Hop in four essential elements: graffiti art, break dancing, deejaying, and emceeing, and it is at this intersection where the world began to receive a taste of the future generation. All in all, it was these four aspects of the Hip Hop culture that provided the foundation for the multi-ethnic/generational/faceted culture that we call Hip Hop today.

Hip Hop began to attract national attention and sustained such attention when Russell Simmons and Rick Rubin began Def Jam Records, where their first big group, Run-DMC, became the first rap act to reach platinum status in record sales.⁴ The flood gates then opened and Hip Hop became recognized by record executives for its profit potential and a series of emcees (rappers) were signed, including LL Cool J, The Fat Boys, Kurtis Blow, and KRS-One. KRS-One was one of the first Hip Hop emcees to gain widespread recognition in the 1980s for his unquestioned connection to the streets. His story, which is widely known throughout Hip Hop culture, took him from a homeless shelter where he teamed up with DJ Scott La Rock to form the group *Boogie Down Productions* (BDP). Scott La Rock was subsequently murdered following BDP's first

record release, after which KRS-One continued to emcee, unfurling consciousness in rap music where he earned the nickname “The Teacher.” KRS-One has more recently turned his attention to the legitimization and formalization of Hip Hop as a respected culture, which he states is broken up into “nine essential elements: deejaying, breaking, graffiti art, emceeing, beat boxing, street fashion, street language, street knowledge, and street entrepreneurialism”⁵ (KRS-One, 2003).

Many would seek to define Hip Hop in a way that operationalizes a framework which captures the essence of Hip Hop. But as Potter (1995), who investigated Hip Hop and the politics of postmodernism, asks, “Can Hip Hop be defined? Or is definition a kind of death, a refusal of the change that any evolving artform [culture] must embrace?” (p. 25) Potter (p. 25) captures the political difficulty of definition, explaining that:

Hip Hop is all too often conceived of by casual listeners as merely a particular style of music; in one sense they are right, though the question of style has far more political significance than they may attribute to it.

Throughout history, the ability to define has held political significance. One outcome of the postmodernist’s apprehension to define is that the power to define resides in the hands of the individual or group, usually the powerful. Cultural critics (George, 1998), scholars (Kitwana, 2004; Rose (1994), and actual participants in Hip Hop culture (KRS-One, 2003) have all moved away from a postmodern discourse and taken their turns attempting to construct a working definition of Hip Hop culture. For me, Tricia Rose’s definition (1994) essentializes Hip Hop culture as a workable form although her definition by no means is or can be used as the decisive definition. Rose defines Hip Hop (as) “a cultural form that attempts to negotiate the experience of marginalization, brutally truncated opportunity, and oppression within the cultural imperatives of African-American and Caribbean history, identity, and community” (Rose, 1994, p. 21). Here, Rose captures the essence of Hip Hop as an experience which adequately addresses the resistant strain that binds Hip Hop to the history and the context of Blacks and other marginalized people living in America today.

Critical Social Theory and a Language of Transcendence and Critique

To exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it. Once named the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new *naming*. (Freire, 2000, p. 88)

Knowledge can be a source of fear, but it can also be used for libera-

tion. Critical Social Theory (henceforth CST) “is a multidisciplinary knowledge base with the implicit goal of advancing the emancipatory function of knowledge” (Leonardo, 2004, p. 11). CST weds Critical Theory and a broader theoretical framework which includes but is not exclusive to sociological theory, cultural theory, and race and ethnic theory, and includes theorists like Calhoun (1995), Morrow and Torres (1995), and Collins (2000). In the field of education, the Brazilian educator Freire is seen as one of the fathers of CST and with his work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* applied CST to work towards the spiritual growth of students in the face of oppressive and debilitating social, political, and economic regimes.

CST is distinctly wedded to criticism as a way to cultivate students’ ability to question, deconstruct, and then reconstruct knowledge in the interest of emancipation. Thus, CST: (a) promotes criticism as the defining aspect of a quality education, (b) puts criticism at the center of its knowledge production which pedagogically speaking shifts the focus from knowledge transmission to knowledge transformation, and (c) exposes and develops a language of critique which exposes the contradictions of social life (Leonardo, 2004). CST in education foregrounds the role criticism plays in the development of an education in which students can deconstruct oppressive regimes and then reconstruct knowledge in the interest of emancipation (Leonardo, 2004). Critique is introduced into education as a linguistic discourse that exposes contradictions in students’ understanding of their own social, economic and political world in an attempt to understand the nature of oppression, not to justify oppression’s existence but to demonstrate oppression, on whatever front (e.g., gender, race, class), is genuine and challenging. Giroux and McLaren (1995, p. 32) remind their peers “that many current trends in critical pedagogy are embedded in the endemic weaknesses of a theoretical project overly concerned with developing a language of critique.” One theoretical answer to Giroux and McLaren’s concern lies in CST’s promulgation of a language of transcendence which assumes the possibility of a less oppressive condition. When engaging CST, it is necessary to see the possibility of establishing alternative realities in the construction of the future. This less oppressive condition counters the fatalistic beliefs that lead many to claim, “That’s the way it is and I can’t do anything about it.”

CST distinguishes between criticism for the purpose of foregrounding one’s own political, social or economic agenda and ideology critique, emphasizing discourse development as a key component of quality education. Criticism is a tool and is used to open dialogue to multiple perspectives. It would be very easy for an educator to misconstrue the

nature of CST thinking that it gave them license to criticize all that they find disagreeable. Rather, critical dialogue is a methodology of CST in that meaning is constructed with students. Education is not a one way process.

Within the classroom, CST utilizes the Freirean methodology of problem posing for opening up problems and considering multiple solutions. This methodology places the onus for thinking back in the hands of the students. This is directly oppositional to the “banking method” of education in which information is deposited in the heads of the students for the purpose of regurgitation at a later date (Freire, 2000). The methodology itself becomes an act of love in that the spiritual growth of students is developed by foregrounding the development of not only a consciousness of their lived world, but the development of problem solving methods that can be applied to other areas of their lives.

The Development of a Language of Critique and Transcendence in Hip Hop

*Thinkin how they spent 30 million dollars on airplanes
when there's kids starvin*

'Pac is gone and Brenda still throwin babies in the garbage

I wanna know "What's Goin' On" like I hear Marvin.

No schoolbooks, they used that wood to build coffins

—Hate it, or Love it: The Game (2005)

African Americans have a long history of signifying existent language structures for the use of critique and transcendence. During a time when slavery was a legal system of labor, slaves sang spirituals based in biblical verses. The spirituals held alternative meanings to the literal interpretation of the verses so that slaves could disguise their communication patterns and conceal their ideas from slave masters. Blues artists' use of language continued the tradition of using music to critique systemic oppression. Woods (1998) describes the “transcendent social agenda inherent in the blues tradition” (p. 208) as an essential component in not only the success of the blues but in its health as well.

Hip Hop artists have continued this tradition of critique and transcendence as evidenced by The Game's (2005) song *Hate it, or Love it*, from which the verse above was taken. Here The Game turns his critical eye towards the government and identifies what he considers a misuse/misappropriation of federal dollars. This critique turns to a song about an individual's ability to transcend despite the circumstances when he (The Game) and rapper 50 Cent continue with the chorus:

*Hate it or love it, the underdog's on top
And I'm gon' shine homey until my heart stop
(Go 'head envy me, I'm rap's M.V.P.)
(And I ain't goin nowhere, so you can get to know me)*

Another Hip Hop artist takes on the global problem of blood diamonds from the African country of Sierra Leone. Kanye West's song *Diamonds from Sierra Leone* helps make critical connections between beliefs, values, and understandings of Hip Hop's practitioners and the events that are the site of some of the worst atrocities the world has seen.

*Though it's thousands of miles away
Sierra Leone connect to what we go through today
Over here it's a drug trade, we die from drugs
Over there they die from what we buy from drugs
The diamonds, the chains, the bracelets, the charms(es)
I thought my Jesus piece was so harmless
'Til I seen a picture of a shorty armless*

—Kanye West (2005)

Here West reflects on his actions and practices and makes some startling reflections that not only moved him to write about this, but is now influencing the world through his music. It is important to point out that the critique is a critique of a large system followed by personal and individual transcendence. West here applies his critique to himself and his culture and the following transcendence can be seen as young people, influenced by his powerful words, reconsider their purchases. West continues:

*And here's the conflict
It's in a black person soul to rock that gold
Spend your whole life tryin' to get that ice
On a Polo rugby it look so nice
How can something so wrong make me feel so right?*

The use of a language of critique and transcendence is not only essential to the continued applicability of Hip Hop as a tool for understanding the Hip Hop community, it is foundational. Hip Hop, as I stated earlier, was founded on such critique and the hope found in the lyrics of the emcee, the moves of the b-boy/b-girl and the pieces of the taggers, will continue to inspire for years to come.

Paulo Freire and Consientização

Looking at Freire specifically, the heart of his literacy and libratory framework beats by the power of his problem posing, dialogical approach.

Freire (2000) problematized an educational methodology that he viewed as systemically oppressive, due to the methodology's ability to dehumanize people connected to it. More specifically, Freire problematized a banking methodology in which teachers' deposited information into the minds of the waiting students. The oppression was evidenced in an educational setting by the oppressed's need to subjugate their own experiences to the privileged responses that held value in the eyes of the dominant class that governed the educational system. The hegemonic dominance of the privileged class's way of being, thinking, and doing was seen as a problem that Freire was seeking to resolve through his employment of a problem posing methodology, which "is the antithesis of the technocrat's 'problem solving' stance" (Goulet, 2002/1973, p. ix). In other words, teachers are taught using a strategy that does not profess to possess answers, which forces the teacher educators to look within themselves and their own experiences to solve posed problems. This made the lives of the oppressed valuable and, more importantly to Freire, was a step in *consientização*.

Freire implemented in Brazil a national literacy program, which he dubbed a cultural circle, to move participants from objects to subjects in their learning. A subject is someone who "has the capacity to adapt oneself to reality *plus* the critical capacity to make choices and transform [their] reality" (Freire, 2002, p. 4). This is in opposition to an object that is subjected to the choices of others and is forced to adapt to their prearranged circumstances. Because illiteracy was such a big problem in Brazil, Freire linked literacy to the mission of the cultural circle along with *consientização*. In the beginning of the process, the cultural circle was used, not to develop a literacy in the traditional sense of the word (reading and writing), but more for a cultural literacy, where the participants would identify subjects that impacted their daily lives. Through dialogue, the participants and the coordinator of the cultural circle *together* would either "clarify situations or seek action arising from that clarification" (Freire, 2002, p. 42). The topics were presented to the participants using visual aids and through the dialogue, would formulate actions that could be taken to address the empowerment of the individuals within the group. The results of these original cultural circles led Freire to link literacy to the cultural circles in an attempt to develop literacy and what he termed *consientização*.

The movement towards *consientização* is a process through which the participants will enter the circles at various stages of consciousness: Semi-intransitive consciousness or magical consciousness, naive transitivity or naive consciousness, and critical transitivity or critical consciousness. The semi-intransitive consciousness is characteristic of

a person who possesses “an inability to objectify the facts of problematic situations, an inability to see the reality as a challenge” (Perry, 1996, para. 16). Heaney (1995) further suggests that, “Semi-intransitive consciousness is the state of those whose sphere of perception is limited, whose interests center almost totally around matters of survival, and who are impermeable to challenges situated outside the demands of biological necessity” (para. 11). Naïve consciousness is marked by an oversimplification and generalization of problems; a fragility of argument; a lack of interest in investigation; the practice of polemics rather than dialogue; and magical, emotional explanations for problems (Freire, 2002). Another aspect of naïve consciousness is “a strong tendency toward gregariousness” (p. 18), which could hold significant weight in light of classrooms today. A critical consciousness is the ability to perceive social, political, and economic oppression and to take action against the oppressive elements of society. This is highlighted:

by depth in the interpretation of problems, by testing one’s own findings and openness to revision and reconstruction, by the attempt to avoid distortion when perceiving problems and to avoid preconceived notions when analyzing them, by rejecting passivity, by the practice of dialogue rather than polemics, by receptivity to the new without rejecting the old, and by permeable, interrogative, restless, and dialogical forms of life. (Freire, 2002, p. 18)

These three levels of consciousness represent the progression of a participant in the cultural circle and is a foundational principle upon which my work as a researcher is grounded.

The process of *consientização*, though, does not end with the completion of the cultural circle because regardless of the transformation of the participants within the circle setting, the participant is still connected to a system of oppression: Education is one such system of oppression. When read in Portuguese, Freire defines the oppression within education as a virus and the people are the host. This virus is within everyone connected to the system and the only way to eliminate this virus is for the oppressed to engage the oppressors in more humanizing joint practices (Correa, 2004). This is the only way to virtually unplug from the system and redefine your self. But, the unplugging is a sometimes violent⁶ and gradual process.

Freire makes clear that consciousness of oppression, alone, does not create freedom; and education, alone, does not transform society. The means to liberation, however, require an understanding that is ‘steeped in the dialectical movement back and forth between consciousness and world. (Stokes, 1997, p. 205)

The back and forth that Stokes (1997) talks about involves another process that is essential to Freire's framework: critical reflection (Freire, 2000). Michael Eric Dyson (2001) spoke to the critical process of reflection in his exploration of the life and legacy of one of Hip Hop's biggest icons and most influential artists, Tupac Shakur. Tupac took the Freireian process of reflection out of journals and other westernized educational models and extended them into a new arena. He "reflected out loud" and put a beat behind the words. Tupac's reflections were the basis for not only his music but more importantly, an exploration of identity. The role of the critical pedagogue then is identified by Keesing-Styles (2003) as:

To assist students in engaging in critical consciousness, the educator's role is to empower students to reflect on their own worlds, to self-assess in fact. In doing so, teachers will need to employ processes that help the students in building their ability to 'become.'

The Development of Hip Hop's Voice as Consientização

The development of critical consciousness directly coincides with the development of student voice in that the students must learn to name their lived oppression. When this oppression lies within the actions and beliefs of the teachers, a tragically ironic situation is faced. The hidden curriculum, as defined by Bennett (2001), consists of teacher attitudes and expectations, the grouping of students and the instructional strategies, school disciplinary policies and practices, school and community relations and classroom climates. While these are not the only areas in which voice can be developed, the hidden curriculum is nevertheless important for the students to recognize. Without analyzing this area, interpretations are incomplete and could lead to a misdiagnosis of the locus of the problem. For example, in the study by Bennett and Harris (1982), unless there is a critical analysis of teachers' beliefs, students who might be disciplined for reasons other than academic performance (e.g., interracial beliefs), could attribute their suspensions and expulsions to themselves and their own inability to perform a certain task.

Critical consciousness is reliant on the complete empowerment of students to define their reality and everything that lies within it, including teachers' actions and beliefs. But when teachers' professional lives are currently being threatened, the question is: what incentive does a teacher have to be open and honest? After all, the way that education is currently set up, it is not the teacher working with the student; it is the teacher versus the student.

One of my main contentions is that Hip Hop gives voice to a population that is rarely heard. This giving of voice has historic relevance.

Rose (1994) identified New York's transformation to a post-industrial marketplace as a location in which this giving of voice helped Hip Hoppas express their frustration with their place in a "new" New York.

Hip Hop gives voice to the tensions and contradictions in the public urban landscape during a period of substantial transformation in New York and attempts to seize the shifting urban terrain, to make it work on behalf of the dispossessed. (Rose, 1994, p. 22)

This not-so-subtle form of resistance allowed Hip Hoppas to express their distaste for their forced experiences and this expression has been one of the ways in which Hip Hop has connected with people around the world. Their expressions and the power of and their ability to make their voice heard strike a chord with people frustrated by their own silence. "Rap's global industry-orchestrated (but not industry-created) presence illustrates the power of the language of rap and the salience of the stories of oppression and creative resistance its music and lyrics tell" (Rose, 1994, p. 19). The content also speaks to the masses of oppressed people for the same reasons:

The cries of pain, anger, sexual desire, and pleasure that rappers articulate speak to Hip Hop's vast fan base for different reasons. For some, rappers offer symbolic prowess, a sense of black energy and creativity in the face of omnipresent oppressive forces; others listen to rap with an ear toward the hidden voices of the oppressed, hoping to understand America's large, angry, and 'unintelligible' population. (Rose, 1994 p. 19)

Bakari Kitwana, former Executive Editor of *The Source* magazine, focuses his attention beyond the essential elements of Hip Hop (the music, break dancing, graffiti, deejaying, style and attitude). Instead, he looks at "new attitudes and beliefs of young blacks" and the sociopolitical forces that have shaped a generation of Black youths with birth years from 1965-1984, which he calls "The Hip Hop Generation." Kitwana (2002) identifies the deaths of two figureheads in Hip Hop music, Tupac Shakur and Christopher Wallace (Notorious B.I.G.) as the "coming of age" of the Hip Hop generation. This coming of age happened not in the sense that those in the Hip Hop generation grew up because they were forced to deal with the losses of its two biggest stars (forcing many to reassess their own lives and actions), but the deaths marked an acknowledgement and a consciousness of the very existence of a culture that was distinct from generations in the past. This identification and sense of self is important to the establishment of the argument that those included in the Hip Hop generation have a distinct identity to be formed and that Hip Hop itself is deeply embedded in their identity formation. The implications of a Hip Hop identity and consciousness are crucial to the

establishment of a Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy in classrooms and schools today where much influence over identity formation is exerted.

Critical Hip Hop Pedagogy

The classroom has become a place of fear and alienation for some students. Confronted with a disaffirming curriculum and an unfamiliar system of values, students enter into a classroom and are asked to achieve at a prescribed standard of excellence. The integration of Hip Hop culture and music into the classroom could go a long way in helping these students critically understand and combat their fears, making the task of learning, not only more enjoyable, but more productive. As seen by Morrell and Duncan-Andrade (2002), “teaching Hip Hop as a music and a culture of resistance can facilitate the development of critical consciousness in urban youth” (p. 89).

What is needed now is the integration of Hip Hop music and Hip Hop culture into the classroom fused with a critical interrogation of oppression which could begin the process of re-humanizing the educative process. *Embedded* in Hip Hop are the beliefs and values of the youth today. I say embedded because many critics of Hip Hop only choose to see the superficial, corporate driven expressions of Hip Hop and immediately move to condemn Hip Hop as an immoral influence that is ruining the moral fibers of society (McWhorter, 2003). If, though, we look beyond the significance of Hip Hop as a corporation to the values and beliefs that began with the originators of Hip Hop culture, Hip Hop represents an authentic voice of youth culture (Mahiri, 1998). Today, we have a unique opportunity to tap into the humanity of children by engaging their voices in authentic dialogue, on their terms, which has the potential to transform the landscape of humanity now and forever more.

Integrating Hip Hop in the educational system provides the opportunity to shake people’s foundations by injecting said system with a shot of humanity. Students’ identities and the narrative that describes the students’ identity are often inauthentic in that they are often constructed without the participation of the students themselves. In opposition to this process, the counter-narrative empowers the students as they engage in a critical dialogue about the themes which have been previously identified and which lead to the exploration of an authentic identity. This practice is in contrast to the dominant identity which is often prescribed to them. Exploration of this counter-dominant identity through dialogue leads to Freire’s *consientização*, a concept which serves to humanize both the oppressed and the oppressor. With this, I am attempting to help students construct a narrative that accurately

represents them and highlights the development of a language of critique and transcendence and conscientização, which again represents the development of the awakening of critical consciousness (Freire, 2002). These components are the foundations which lead to the acquisition of a consciously critical identity through which students could be equipped to revolutionize not only instruction, but the social fabric of the world as we know it.

Notes

¹ Griots are either sedentary or traveling wordsmiths who often use poetry, proverbs, and rhythm to teach villagers about their history (Hale, 1998).

² The concept of “re-membering” is one which emerged from the death, dying and bereavement literature and it “emphasizes the ongoing story of relationship... Drawing on practices of story telling, narrative legacy and rituals, these practices aim to keep relationships alive... In the flexibility of stories, relationships can even develop new qualities and enhanced dimensions” (Hedtke & Winslade, 2004).

³ Understood as the beliefs, traditions, habits, and values that control the behavior of the majority of the people in a social-ethnic group. These include the people’s way of dealing with their problems of survival and existence as a continuing group (International Technology Education Association, 2004).

⁴ One million records were sold.

⁵ “Taking something in its raw state (no loans from the bank, no help from parents) and trying to make a dollar out of fifteen cents” (KRS-One, 2003).

⁶ I am using violent, not to represent a physical confrontation, but violent defined as acting with or marked by or resulting from great force or energy or emotional intensity.

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