Informed Asset-Based Pedagogy: Coming Correct, Counter-stories from an Information Literacy Classroom

KIM L. MORRISON

ABSTRACT

The cultural assets and lived experiences of communities of color are surfaced through asset-based informed autoethnographic counter-stories of students and teacher. These counter-stories often refute external narratives and provide an academic space for students to articulate their lived experiences. The curricula combine autoethnographic methods, hip-hop, and asset-based pedagogy that centers students' explicit racial, cultural context, lived experiences, and cultural wealth as foundational to student learning. Teacher and students express how they use their cultural assets to drive academic literacy and engagement.

   The structure in which I am presenting information in this article differs from that of "traditional articles." The structure of the article and methods used are, in my opinion, the best way to present what my students and I have to say. Please honor and engage with it. I take the approach of writing in the first person in this article. It is indicative of the method of autoethnography, rather than producing information in the third person.

INTRODUCTION

Recently the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) produced a report identifying five information trends that they believe will shape what information is in the world. Trend 4 states, "Hyperconnected societies will listen to and empower new voices and groups" (IFLA 2016). The autoethnographic voices in this article are from people of color, first-generation community college students in a library classroom. Our voices and the way in which I format and present information in this article give full voice to our stories, in the spirit of IFLA's Trend 4.

Tell It Like It Is, A Translation for This Article: Code-Switching/Double Consciousness

My philosophy to win is calling me to spit this shit . . . (Blue Scholars 2005)

Throughout this article I write with a sprinkling of Black English, code-switching, and double consciousness that is authentic to the African American experience, hip-hop culture, and my class environment. The code-switching reflects a double consciousness—the awareness of how students survive in a white dominant culture and how they are in their own community that is common within African American and communities of color. In this study I have translated meaning in social context, "*academic research language,*" and with it *code-switching/double consciousness.* Subheadings are provided to change the advantage of those who are dominated by academic language in the form of hip-hop metaphor. View the *code-switching/ double consciousness* as literacies situated in cultural and social practices of everyday life of myself and students in this study. *Code-switching/double consciousness* translates and reinvents language construction, use, and cultural interactions. Many African Americans and communities of color alter what has traditionally been the culture of the ruling class, stretching the limitations of standard language. It is a code of communication, it reverses the power of the dominant culture and its linguistic colonization (Alim 2011).

Subheadings provide what the following paragraphs are about, changing and challenging the dominant form of presenting information. My subheadings are a form of rap and hip-hop, a genre and culture that translates and reinvents language construction and use. You have the "formal headings" of "academic research language" and with it the hip-hop biliteracy in social context. View the subheadings, like code-switching and double consciousness, as literacies situated in cultural and social practices of everyday life of students and myself. Interpret the subheadings as a reflected metaphor. The subheadings situate hip-hop language pedagogies: "real talk" language in our lives.

The words throughout this text are a part of our class curriculum and are defined and located at the end of this article. These words have been established from disciplines residing outside standardized curricula/classrooms within the field of information literacy. They represent decolonizing methodologies in many cases, theories that have been in existence for years, and were developed with students and communities of color in mind (Chisa and Hoskins 2015), particularly those residing at the margins of dominant white culture of schooling in the United States K-12 and higher education systems.

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Bypassing the lies and the bullshit . . . (Blue Scholars 2005)

This article illustrates how an asset-based curriculum, combined with a mixed ethnographic method, allows students and myself to articulate our experiences when our cultural assets (Yosso 2005) guide our academic engagement. In the tradition of analytic autoethnography (Neumann and Neumann 2015), I situate myself in vignettes (Elbow 1981) and storying stories (McCormack 2004) in relation to my students and their experiences. I provide background context for students represented here. Next I introduce the literature that articulates the historic and current cultural context of schooling for many students of color. These pedagogies—many are post desegregation—are used to engage marginalized students, along with current pedagogical methods that attempt to interrupt deficit and subtractive educational concepts. These pedagogies are assets informed (Morrison 2004) by indigenous knowledge. These pedagogies build upon and provide the foundation for our indigenous knowledge, and our asset-informed learning experience within our *information literacy* (I.L.) classroom. I then offer an overview and the impact of using the research methods within our community college information literacy classroom. I end with excerpts from conversations detailing students' experiences of schooling. I conclude with how the method and counter-stories collected can help us understand and engage students with culturally relevant engagement and create lifelong learning.

This study intends to demonstrate how, in collaboration with students, information literacy practitioners, and other academics and theorists can develop culturally relevant (decolonized with critical race theory) and sustaining and revitalizing (cultural wealth) classrooms.

History and Issues of Student Engagement with their Education

Scholars have long wrestled with the problem of unequal access to education. A number of distinct approaches have focused on the cultural biases inherent in curriculum and pedagogy. In the educational environment, the "struggle over the curriculum over whose experience would be represented as valid or whose language or history would be taught—are unquestionably long-standing" (Apple and Buras 2006, 24). What is knowledge? Who can create knowledge? Whose stories are told and how are they told? Whose lived experience is valued? The answers to these questions serve to define certain knowledge and literacies as assets, which can be used in education.

Today marginalized groups want to see themselves, their histories, their experiences authentically reflected. Jennifer Houston states, "At the heart of this recognition is a belief in the need to challenge the established ways of acquiring knowledge, particularly knowledge that is collected, analyzed, published and taught about the 'Other', the 'colonized', the Indigenous"

(Houston 2007,1). There has been a constant need for the authentic reflection of the history and cultural assets marginalized peoples have managed to maintain in the face of genocide, slavery, racism, socioeconomic disadvantages, unequal access to education, and a push for them to assimilate. Michael Apple states, "A historical nature of education in the context of the United States makes it far too easy to forget how schools sought to assimilate Black and Latino youth, thus marginalizing if not outright devaluing these student's familial and community contributions" (in Fisher 2008, 63). The devaluing is evident in the displacement of African American teachers post desegregation and busing (Alim 2011). Community people involved in the schools and schooling of black children were also displaced with attempts to desegregate. The strength to hold together community ties to cultural practices for many remained within the church.

Marginalized populations are struggling to rectify, reclaim, and revitalize their cultural practices/wealth/literacies. Michael Apple states, "common struggles to build and keep alive aesthetic and insurgent meanings are so much a part of a peoples' past and present" (2008, xi), this is evident in the proliferation of counter-stories tackling bias and the dominant narrative coming from communities of color. The idea of assimilation is consistent with what the dominant culture would have one believe—what is truth in education—though in fact education was often unequal and biased. Buffy Sainte-Marie's lyrics "our history gets written in a liar's scrawl" says it all. Education continues to be unequal with a biased curriculum.

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To be young gifted and Black . . . (Nina Simone, 1958)

I am the ninth of ten children born to Emanuel and Ola Morrison, the first to attend and graduate from college. I happened to land at a college with interdisciplinary curricula, where narrative evaluations of students and faculty were used instead of grades, and where seminar classes using primary text were conducted instead of lecture classes conducted with textbooks. In the self-evaluations, I was asked to write about how I engaged with class texts, my classmates, and professors. I knew all my classmates and professors by name and had the opportunity to sit on curriculum and hiring committees as a student representative. The student body was diverse, and I felt truly engaged in school for the first time in my academic life. My chosen major became American cultural studies. I was learning about Asian/Pacific Islander Americans, African Americans, Latinx, and of the indigenous experiences. I was learning about lived experiences that had not been a part of my schooling. I was participating in classes that covered chattel slavery, genocide and the colonization of indigenous nations, relations between enslaved and free blacks with indigenous nations, white privilege, and gender studies, among many other topics on, within, and written by marginalized groups.

There was a librarian who specialized in working with the students at my school and with the American cultural studies majors. He was this "old white dude," balding, who wore a bowtie—at least this was my first take on him. I thought we had nothing in common and challenged him on a variety of topics. We created an unlikely friendship. In the end this librarian got me hooked on researching, got me hooked on information literacy by having me research and write on something I already knew something about—an asset I brought with me to college, a cultural knowledge. He sparked in me, for the first time in my life in an education setting, a thirst for learning and the realization that I was not in deficit of anything. That in fact, I had my lived experience in the academic environment right along with me. My own experience with my mentor librarian has guided my thoughts on why I choose to engage the assets students bring with them to college and into our critical information literacy class.

SITUATING MYSELF IN ACADEMIA

> *Tell us what the world has been to you in the dark places and in the light.*
> (Morrison 2004)

Entering the academic conversation as an academic of color, I find that I am situated in a system that bell hooks (1994) articulates as being a constant situatedness in race, concurrently, always working in the lives of those colonized and marginalized. A wonderful quote from hooks exemplifies this: "White supremacist, capitalist patriarchy: interlocking systems of domination that define our reality" (1994, 4). So in trying to "make it" in the league of academics, not only do I have this interlocking system, I have a double consciousness, one that I must present and articulate in an academic discourse: how others have situated me, and then how I situate myself.

So, as far as being an academic, in my lived experience, I concur with Brenda Croft (2015, 232) that "I am attempting to un-do myself, un-doing kardiya (whitefella/non-indigenousness) learning then relearning all I have been taught through a Western pedagogy, and then redoing, re-making myself." Croft goes on to explain that the tools needed for this, doing and undoing of self, are products of the academy and its methodologies. Yet all the while she must stay present, connected, and community situated, otherwise she could not fathom "Ngumpin/ngumpit (Gurindiji-Aboriginal/(wo)man) ontology and epistemology unless actively engaged with and in my community" (2015, 232). I brought these insights into decisions about the pedagogical approach used in my themed library class. This is also influential in the design of my study and research methodology.

I am attempting to decolonize my mind (Smith 1999, 2012; Tuck and Yang 2012) so that I can participate as a scholar while describing the conditions of being a colonized scholar (Hodges 2010), while describing the

conditions of being a decolonizing educator, while describing the conditions of being someone who was colonized through education (Croft 2015), shifting constantly—"the form this research has taken is a reflection of my shifting focus throughout the process" (Hansen 2016, 41). My process has also allowed me to explore and share the complicated, personal, political, and emotional aspects of research and being a researcher (Hansen 2016, 41). I ask, "Can I articulate my positionality?" I am trying to articulate myself, struggling to articulate myself in freedom (Madison 2012, 1–5). I cannot do this in reaction to the structures of the process, though more often than not I find myself there. I have to do it in terms of my own work, otherwise the part of me that is reacting cannot do much for myself or my students.

The traditional academic space invalidates the knowledge of cultural wealth my students bring to the classroom, their cultural wealth is "disavowed, displaced, negated, and engulfed" (Silva 2009, 42). My students and I understand the role misinformation has played in our education. Education is not neutral. And these students need to be explicitly aware of how it's not neutral. I am aware of the role of information in students learning, and my students are, on some level, aware of the role of misinformation, and overcoming misinformation, and in the fact of the unwelcoming of their truth. The awareness of what the information is—students are aware that they're being acculturated in the classroom. What I'm doing is saying that's central to your education, and these are things we have to work with in order for you to access education. Part of their informed assets is the role miseducation has played in their lives.

I'm talking about the importance of simultaneous attention to information use and learning, that's all I'm doing. That's it. Students are bringing the information. I'm saying, look, you all know how to learn. You know all these things. You're building on it. It's where both information use and learning are contextualized as being about something. Yeah, it's about something, it's about living in the white man's world, it's about tearing down the dominant paradigm. Really, of course, it's about something. This almost assumes that learning is neutral and abstract. There is nothing more personal for folks of color than education—the struggle on the other side for literacy, for access to education, for education that is meaningful and not traumatic. For all of those things, it's a very different conceptualization of what that access means. For your indigenous students, education is not their friend. They have never been in a place where they thought, "Oh, we should go to school." No, they were forced to go to school. They were separated from their cultures. All of those dynamics about what education means have to be part of it. You have to deal with that.

* * *

We seek the knowledge your colleges lack. (Blue Scholars 2005)

My students and I are struggling with the format of a traditional education (Duke and Beck 1999) because it does not speak truth to power (Tronsgard 1963; Benda-Beckmann 1982), it does not allow for authenticity of experiences (Duke and Beck 1999; Hartley and Betts 2009; Hill et al, 2011). Many of us as students came academically unprepared to withstand the rigors of a higher education curriculum. We often thought of ourselves as not belonging in higher education environments. Many of us come to campus without the necessary social and information context to fully benefit from our higher education experiences. We have no family or friends who could provide background knowledge from their own experiences with higher education. Students whom I work with come with a broad spectrum of academic experiences and skills. They also come with lived experiences and cultural wealth.

Traditional education does not follow the form of acknowledged knowledge transfer in our communities and in our library classroom. In our communities, if someone spits some knowledge or speaks some truth, it is acknowledged. It is not about the carrier; it is not about the format—much as when my students say "you feel me" or "word," it is an acknowledgement in the moment that someone is doing something brilliant. The culture of my students' lived experience has to validate itself because it is eternally cast from the outside as being stupid, empty, and in deficit (Harper 2010; Yosso 2005). The self-articulations, the autoethnographies we are sharing (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner 2011; S. H. Jones 2005) are about defining self and acknowledging assets (Saubich and Esteban 2011).

Today, marginalized groups want to see themselves, their histories, and their experiences authentically reflected. There has been a constant need for the authentic reflection of the history and cultural assets marginalized peoples have managed to maintain in the face of genocide, slavery, racism, socioeconomic disadvantages, unequal access to education, and a push for them to assimilate.

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Attending to Student's Cultural Context

Ain't no love for us ghetto children, so we cold. (Tupac Shakur 1995)

In assisting students in relaying their experiences, to be engaged with depth, I rely on student cultural assets to guide their critical ethnographies and the curriculum. I engage student's cultural assets with the practice of critical race methodology (CRM). CRM "(a) foregrounds race and racism in all aspects of the research process . . . ; (b) challenges the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color;

(c) offers a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination; and (d) focuses on the racialized, gendered, and classed experiences of students of color. . . . It views these experiences as sources of strength and (e) uses the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color" (Solórzano and Yosso 2002, 131).

Many students, when they get to campus, feel the faculty don't understand their cultural context, or they don't understand the cultural context the faculty are coming from. What happens to the students when their cultural context, their lived experience, is misunderstood? They see themselves described as those students who are at risk, with basic skills, or are underachieving; they are the "other" students. Michael Apple states, "A historical nature of education in the context of the United States makes it far too easy to forget how schools sought to assimilate Black and Latino youth, thus marginalizing if not outright devaluing these students' familial and community contributions" (in Fisher 2008, 63).

Community college students, many being first generation and students from diverse backgrounds, are particularly vulnerable to the difference between what is valued in their home cultures and what is important in academia (Tierney and Colyar 2005; Valenzuela 1999). For these students it is timely to consider whether their racial context and cultural assets are central to how they think about, seek, and use information in their educational journey. The following students voice what this type of library classroom environment means to them:

BRIT: I remember we would get in some really deep discussions in our classes, the class, it felt like a home environment almost, a non-judgmental zone. Yeah, definitely felt like I could bring my whole self and talk about real life.

MATAIS: I think just knowing that everyone in that class is somewhat familiar with hip hop, I think it makes the conversation more comfortable, because hip hop is already a rebellious kind of culture, to where everything that's said is to express yourself out of emotion.

TRACE: I think being in that class, it really helped me to build up the confidence to go and check out a book. Read the book. Not just that, to approach other librarians. . . . Just get the help. It helped me to get the help that I need to survive in college.

MATAIS: Everything is not always education and everybody thinks that you got to learn everything through the education. Some tools are learnt outside in the streets and I think that hip hop was street smart to education, because we use that nowadays going to school, like going to library's class. We did the lyrics, . . . people got different songs and then

through that we got different topics. Then from that topic we research that topic and then once we research that topic we came up with a project in that topic. I came up with single moms, kind of tied into like what my background was.

Translating our history of schooling, much of which is riddled with many of the same traumatic experiences, and then sustaining—so it is with us.

BRIT: I remember going home after our library skills class, my sister and I would be like, "What did we just learn in class? Oh my God, do you believe what we just learned and discussed? That was awesome! Then we'd go, try to find more information on the things we had learned . . . and show my brother.

* * *

> *This is my canvas I'm a paint it, paint it, paint it, how I want it . . . there is no right or wrong.* (Cole 2014)

The asset-based model is built upon a foundation historically built by such educators as W. E. B. DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, Zora Neale Hurston, Gay, Ladson-Billings, "all of which used race as a theoretical lens" (Tyson 1998, 22) and considered people's lived experience as being literacy and assets. The asset-based framework I use to engage students in this class is partly new. In many academic environments, defining literacy continues to be a moving target. However, for those who are marginalized in society, their literacy is about knowing. Knowing how to translate their experiences. Knowing how to code-switch in multiple environments are literacies/assets my students and I have. Knowing is about using your cultural knowledge to cross borders (Valenzuela 1999) and the ability to move back and forth fluidly while maintaining one's identity. In this context I use the term *literate* as not only being aware and knowing how I am viewed and my experience in society (critically thinking) but also acting upon this awareness and thus helping others to engage in critical thinking about their experience, as well as the experiences of others. Michael Apple in his editorial introduction to *Black Literate Lives: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (2008, xi) states, "we know that no liberatory movement can hope to succeed without creating the ground for thinking differently." As a librarian/ educator/scholar/producer of knowledge, my aim is to build upon previous liberatory practices developed to promote transformation in the lives of those whose experience is marginalized.

MATAIS: The first teacher that I remember that I really could tell that he wanted me to do well, he was an English teacher and I had him for my sophomore year and my junior year in high school. Back to back and he was just like, he could tell something. He could tell I didn't like being there, but he could tell I had some kind of potential and I just

remember him telling me to just keep going and it was like wow, he sees something.

TRACE: For one professor, he was like "You do know the language." I'm like "No, I don't. I don't understand what you're trying to ask me." What he did was he just broke it down like. . . . He related the book to my life and was like "Just write about that. Because all a reader wants to do is hear what you have to say."

STORYING A COUNTER-STORY

If you want to understand the way I teach, engage students, and do research, see it "not to replace the historical values of academic research in the Western tradition but only to challenge some of these values and offer alternative ideas that stem from different sometimes opposing values" (Jacobs 2009, 4). The students in my class come with cultural and experiential knowledge that is valid. It is known that "critical race theorists view this knowledge as a strength and draw explicitly on the lived experiences of people of color by including such methods as storytelling, family histories, biographies, scenarios, parables, cuentos, testimonios, chronicles, and narratives (Bell 1987; Carrasco 1996; Delgado Bernal 1998, 2001, 2002; Olivas 1990; Solórzano and Solórzano 1995; Valencia and Solórzano 1997, 4). In our class and within our autoethnographies, much of what we share comes in the form of counter-stories.

I have adopted the following definition of *counter-stories*. Critical race theorists Solórzano and Yosso (2002, 32) "define the counter-story as a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society). Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform." Critical race theory in the United States maintains five frame tenets: the permanence of racism; Whiteness as property; interest convergence; valuing the lived experience of people of color (evolved into counter-storytelling); and a critique of liberalism (DeCuir and Dixson 2004; Ladson-Billings 1995; McCoy 2006). The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege.

The concepts within counter-stories allow expansive room to do interdisciplinary instruction in my library classroom. It also allows for the engagement of student assets. Our history of being marginalized comes with many counter-stories written by those from marginalized groups—yet many of my students are unaware of them. For instance, the African American Experience began with captured transported enslavement from homeland, family and culture, genocide, racism, discrimination, and unequal access. In an African American Experience class, the following was noted by an instructor: "Students enrolled in this course often note that

they are unfamiliar with many of the experiences and many of the ways in which society is structured so as to be able to consciously influence the ways in which African Americans participate as full citizens" (Marjorie Jones 2010, 81). The use of historical and current-day counter-stories lends itself to themes covered by the disciplines I use in class (i.e., film, history, critical race studies, indigenousness studies, ethnic studies, English, political science, to name a few). The counter-stories/autoethnographies shared here are culturally relevant and give students the ability to say what is culturally relevant and their need of it.

TRACE: I think it just opens up doors to how we really feel as African Americans. That people don't know the struggle . . . then when you see it on the film, it's real. It becomes real. It's our world, and we can't get away from it. Being in the class, it was really educational. . . . Just being in a class, it really made me look on the real side of life . . . the real side, because sometimes being black, you want to live in denial, like why do we always have to . . . why do we always have to talk about the struggle? It is a struggle, and it's never going to go away. It gave me another perspective that this is who we are. This is our . . . our history.

BRIT: I went into history and I was like, "I don't know what to talk about." Then he would talk about certain people and I was like, "I know who you are talking about because we talked about this in my library class." I was like, "We went through this." You also showed another video of like the Watts riots, what was behind the Watts riots. I didn't really understand when I was younger what was behind those things like people targeted, African-American people being deemed, those things are still happening today, so it's relevant to class, it's relevant to hip-hop. Hip-hop is, it's a way of teaching people. It's kind of like the news for the people and places who are kind of impoverished who don't really see the news, who don't watch the news. It gives you that information that you don't see.

* * *

To help you enter into our house so to speak, we call upon the literature of several people that have come and gone (historical context), those still present (current context) in the home we have created in a class, in a library, that is an intentional space. We call upon the ones that have in various ways tried, and are trying, to dismantle bias in education, whether the practice of education or the schooling is in our neighborhoods, communities, or classrooms. So, for the purpose of being in our house, get comfortable or uncomfortable and just try to see that education, and information literacy is not stagnant or stationary—it is everywhere. Notice that my students and I are all well rounded because we have many assets

that we have gained from our "street knowledge," "lived experience," and our "traditional schooling."

INFLUENTIAL LITERATURE

> *How could there be a now if there never was a then? That is unbalanced just*
> *like the yang without the yen.* (Cee-Lo Green 2002a)

Below you will find theories and methods that take into account working with communities of color in ways that are asset-based driven, along with their context of racial situatedness. These theories engage the ideas of equity and justice in schools in relation to communities of color that have had their experiences placed at the margins in society and in education. Rather than forwarding the story of being placed at the margins, these theorists tackle the colonial narrative by placing communities' cultural wealth alongside it, giving prominence to cultural wealth and assets.

Early equity-focused approaches—multiculturalism, funds of knowledge, culturally relevant pedagogy, and community cultural wealth— employed to tackle unequal access and bias faced by marginalized peoples within educational settings are embedded within the current asset-based approach. Critical race theory (CRT) (Solórzano 1997, 1998; Delgado and Stefancic 2001; Bell 1995; Yosso 2005, 2006) encompassing the ideas of racism, social justice, the dismantling of dominant praxis, and lived experience of people of color, along with interdisciplinary tools to achieve social justice in academic venues came into play in the post-civil-rights era. An era that saw the beginning of an end to homophobia, racism, unequal treatment of women, and a system set in place to make one race as being superior to others.

MULTICULTURALISM

Multicultural education was developed in the post-civil-rights era. James Banks defines multicultural education as having three components: "an idea, an educational reform movement and a process" (Banks 2001, 3). With funds of knowledge, the focus is about communities as a whole harnessing their shared experiences, alliances, and looking at this knowledge as wealth within their communities (Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg 1992).

FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE

Concurrent with early work in multiculturalism, scholars in anthropology and sociology developed theories of cultural and social capital. For example, anthropologists Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez and James Greenberg's (1992) ethnography of Mexican Americans in Arizona explores their community's systems of exchange. *Funds of knowledge* was further defined by researchers within the education discipline (Moll et al. 2001, 133) as "the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills es-

sential for household or individual functioning and well-being." Communities as a whole harnessing their shared experiences and alliances look at this knowledge as wealth within their communities.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH

Yosso further develops Bourdieu's ([1986] 2011) cultural capital theory and applies it to the educational experiences of Chicana/o students in the United States. Building on earlier work on cultural capital, she intersects recent antiracist work and critical race theory to define the term *community cultural wealth.* Community cultural wealth (CCW) (Yosso, 2005; Delgado Bernal 2001; Auerbach 2001; Ream and Stanton-Salazar 2007; Solórzano and Delgado Bernal 2001; Orellana 2003) "is an array of knowledge, skills, abilities and contacts possessed and used by Communities of Color to survive and resist macro and micro-forms of oppression" (Yosso 2005, 77). Yosso maintains that community cultural wealth, as articulated by multiple scholars (Delgado Bernal 2001; Auerbach 2001; Ream and Stanton-Salazar 2007; Solórzano and Delgado Bernal 2001), is unlike cultural capital that is "narrowly defined by White, middle class values" (2005, 77). Cultural wealth manifests itself within communities of color in many ways, such as "aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial, and resistant capital" (Yosso 2005, 77).

CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY

Ladson-Billings (1995, 459) defines *culturally relevant pedagogy* as "a pedagogy of oppression specifically committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment." This pedagogy rest on three ideas: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the current status quo of the social order.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY

Yosso has outlined a series of tenets of critical race theory in education, two of which are specifically applicable to framing everyday literacy as an asset. The first is the notion that whiteness constitutes a property interest; whiteness has the most value in the racial hierarchy (Harris 1993) and frames cultural literacy as an asset of more or less value in education. Yosso (2005) posits that, in majoritarian society in the United States, whiteness is of greater value and that other forms of cultural literacy (i.e., blackness) have less value and are viewed as deficits. This can also be framed as additive and subtractive (Valenzuela 1999), wherein students who carry whiteness as a cultural asset are adding undecolonized academic and information literacy to it. The second tenet posited by Yosso and other critical race theorists (Solórzano and Yosso 2002; Delgado Bernal 2002; Delgado and

Stefancic 2001 is recognizing the value of the lived experiences of people of color. This positions the cultural literacy of people of color as an asset in education.

ASSET-BASED PEDAGOGY

Asset-based approaches spring from a capacity-focused community development process, a philosophy of full community mobilization based on mapping the skills and capacities of individuals and community based organizations (Kretzmann and Mcknight 1996). Much like funds of knowledge (Wolf 1966; Gonzalez et al. 2001; Hogg 2011), the infusion of asset-based approaches into culturally sustaining pedagogy displaces the deficit models of teaching, which span years and years in the history of education in the United States (Paris and Alim 2014).

Academics are refocusing their views and interactions toward an asset-based pedagogy (Kretzmann and Mcknight 1996) in order to move away from looking at students as lacking the potential and skills to navigate education (Garcia 1993; Ladson-Billings 1992). Paris and Alim (2014) have recently published their work on an asset-based pedagogy, which incorporates Alim's previous work (2011) that intersects with hip-hop literacies. They examine how an asset-based approach improves student success and engagement. Asset-based approaches are not predicated on identifying assets before the educational encounter. Rather students and teachers are continually identifying and translating assets for use in the academic environment (Yosso 2005, 2006; Paris and Alim 2014).

CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY

Culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) (Paris 2012; Paris and Alim 2014; Ladson-Billings 2014) has the intent of creating culturally relevant pedagogy (Gay and Howard 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1992, 1995) that is sustaining in the lives of students (Paris and Alim 2014). Critical hip-hop pedagogy (CHHP), a composite of five elements forming its basic core, can be used by educators as a teaching technique to work with students of color and is discussed below. First, however, is a foundational discussion of critical information literacy (CIL) (Accardi, Drabinski, Kumbier 2010; Elmborg 2006), a library praxis that sees students as knowledge producers/scholars and has liberatory underpinnings.

CRITICAL INFORMATION LITERACY

Critical information literacy is a "library instruction praxis that promotes critical engagement with information sources, [that] considers students [as] collaborators in knowledge production practices (and creators in their own right), [that] recognizes the affective dimensions of research and (in some cases) has liberatory aims" (Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010, xi–xii).

Critical information literacy has the potential to address the politics of knowledge as well as race, sexuality, class, gender, ability, socioeconomics, and white privilege. These topics are mostly absent from the information literacy literature. The critical information literacy literature explores a variety of aspects of social power but does not adequately address the assets of underserved students, their racial/cultural context in society and within the academic environment, and their potential contribution to information and academic literacy.

INFORMED LEARNING

In the informed learning approach, Bruce (Bruce and Hughes 2010, A5) gives examples from a number of studies (Bruce 1997; Edwards 2006; Lupton 2008; Limberg 1998; Hughes 2009; and Maybee 2006) that have been significant demonstrations of "the importance of simultaneous attention to information use and learning, where both information use and learning are contextualized as being about something."

The lived experience of students in and outside of academia, both current day and with a historical context, must include the component of racial context in American culture. How is it manifested in media, academic knowledge, society as a whole? When using these components, we must ask, what are the motivated intentions of how these components are interpreted? Who benefits most by these "intentions"?

Bruce and Hughes (2010, A3) argue that "informed learning is about using information to learn, and curriculum design which explicitly attends to that process; informed learners are those who are aware of the role that information is playing in their learning experiences and are able to use that knowledge to their advantage." It is time to build on this idea.

* * *

Just revolution of the mind state, not mere words but emotions. Which is essential, influential provin' my people's potential. (Cee-Lo Green, 2002a)

The most influential literature presents multiple approaches over time for creating inclusive curricula for a growing, diverse college student body. The literature in this article is mainly drawn from academic areas outside of the information literacy field. Within the scholarship on information literacy instruction, there is an astonishing lack of work concerning the inclusivity of additive approaches and culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy. The literature in this article also points to the lack of scholarly engagement in the information literacy field with such topics as the racial and cultural contexts of students and its impact on students within an information literacy classroom.

Published scholarship on information literacy instruction does not include the additive models and little about culturally relevant, sustaining, and revitalizing pedagogies discussed in the literature cited here. The lit-

erature in this study also points to the insufficiency of scholarly engagement in the information literacy field as to such topics as the racial and cultural contexts of students and their impact on students within an information literacy classroom. This article attempts to move the literature addressing information literacy closer to culturally relevant ways to engage the racial and cultural assets of our growing diverse student populations. This article is groundbreaking in terms of what an information literacy classroom curriculum can be and its impact on students.

FRAME: ASSET-BASED AND INFORMED

> *School of hard knocks I took night classes.* (Chance the Rapper featuring
> 2 Chainz 2016)

An asset-based approach values strength, resilience, and assets (Rose 2006). Academics are refocusing their views and interactions toward an asset-based pedagogy (Kretzmann and Mcknight 1996) in order to move away from looking at students as lacking the potential and skills to navigate education (Garcia 1993; Ladson-Billings 1992, 1995). Asset-based approaches are not predicated on identifying assets before the educational encounter. Rather students and teachers are continually identifying and translating assets for use in the academic environment (Yosso 2005, 2006; Paris and Alim, 2014). This identifying and translation of assets is the content informing their learning.

Bruce and Hughes (2010, A3) argue that "informed learning is about using information to learn, and curriculum design which explicitly attends to that process, informed learners are those who are aware of the role that information is playing in their learning experiences and are able to use that knowledge to their advantage." My students and I understand the role misinformation has played in our education. Education is not neutral. Informed learning contends informed learners "are those who are aware of the role that information is playing in their learning experiences and are able to use that knowledge" (Bruce and Hughes 2010, A3). These students need to be explicitly aware of how it is not neutral.

My class builds upon Bruce and Hughes (2010, A3) and resonates closely with what I believe I accomplish in my classroom with informed asset-based pedagogy, "rather than focusing on separate information skills, informed learning aims to promote critical and strategic approaches to solving complex problems in differing contexts." My informed asset-based instruction incorporates pedagogies such as cultural wealth, asset-based and informed pedagogy, explicit racial cultural context, and components of informed learning. An explicitly racialized context, cultural assets as lived and voiced by students must be a foundational component of informed learning by community college students.

I am aware of the role of information in students learning, and my students are, on some level, aware of the role of misinformation, and over-

coming misinformation, and the unwelcomeness of their truth—they are aware that they're being acculturated in the classroom. What I'm doing is saying that this is central to your education and these are things we have to work with in order for you to access education. Part of what they are informed about is the role miseducation has played in their lives.

* * *

METHODS

> *A medium to manifest the thoughts I have collected . . . premeditated, political, critical, storytelling, instantly innovative, courageously creative . . . it comes naturally to the native.* (Cee-Lo Green, 2002b)

In considering the lived experiences of students and myself, I have chosen a blended autoethnographic approach. "Autoethnography builds on a familiar qualitative research term while introducing a whole new way of pursuing social knowledge" (Wall 2006, 150). Though my research method of autoethnography may be new to people, I hope that the stories shared in this article encourage the reader to engage with the issues and context that are raised—and be engaged with depth. The use of autoethnography in an information literacy class provided room for social and cultural analysis with interpretation, critique, and social explanation. Autoethnography allowed students and myself to engage the tensions of being in this particular academic environment.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY
Autoethnographic practices in education can open doors to firsthand accounts of bias and also provide opportunities to develop strategies that dismantle bias for many within and beyond the classroom. Student autoethnography and asset-based pedagogy can, in hooks's (2003) estimation, make the student voice essential in the classroom and situate students as the creators of their own learning.

Because autoethnography is a narrative of lived experience, it brings in historical, social, and current issues (Houston 2007; Jones, Adams, and Ellis 2013), it lends itself well to making critical information literacy instruction culturally relevant and sustaining. With autoethnography, and with the practice of analysis, counter-stories emerge from students and myself, stories that have been relegated to the margins, and stories that debunk inaccurate stories and stereotypes that have been articulated about marginalized populations w/o active participation.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY AND COUNTER-STORIES
The acquisition and use of autoethnography by students, coupled with critical information literacy and asset-based pedagogies, invite counter-

storytelling (Yosso 2006). Solórzano and Yosso (2001) and Delgado (1989) argue that counter-storytelling is both a method of telling the story of those experiences that are not often told (i.e., those from the margins of society) and a tool for analyzing and challenging the stories of those in power (whose stories are a natural part of the dominant discourse). New knowledge from the margins is produced where teacher and student navigate in an asset-based critical information literacy class. The use of autoethnography provides an avenue for both the teacher and the student to give voice to counter-stories.

Counter-stories

Counter-storytelling is a framework that legitimizes the racial and subordinate experiences of marginalized groups. Counter-stories are a resource that both expose and critique the dominant (male, White, heterosexual) ideology, which perpetuates racial stereotypes. Counter-stories are personal, composite stories, or narratives of people of color. The use of counter-stories in analyzing the climate of higher education provides faculty, staff, and students of color a voice to tell their narratives involving marginalized experiences. Counter-stories can assist in analyzing the climate of a college campus and provide opportunities for further research in the ways in which an institution can become inclusive and not simply superficially diverse. Autoethnography allows them to theorize and deconstruct it, while critical ethnography helps them move away from the margins.

The methods of autoethnography and counter-stories provide the opportunity for college students and teacher to be ethnographers within a learning space they have intentionally created (Alim 2011). These methods are connected to critical pedagogy, which interrogates forms of knowledge to ask how and why classroom knowledge is constructed, selected, and disseminated. Critical pedagogy would ask, whose voices, histories, and perspectives are not represented in school knowledge? Critical pedagogy also asks, what knowledge is more or less valued by society and why? Critical pedagogy disrupts the standardized forms of knowledge by helping learners realize that curricula do more than present neutral, objective, unquestionable (unchallengeable) knowledge.

In this space personal autoethnographies and collaborative lived experiences underpin a culturally relevant curriculum that is not only a challenge to biased curricula but also a challenge to who can produce knowledge and what is seen as rigorous and scholarly (Houston 2007). The methods I use provide the means for researcher and participants to write their autoethnographies within the context of an information literacy class that uses asset-based pedagogy, hip-hop pedagogy, and intentional inclusion of an explicitly racialized situatedness. These methods provide the opportunity to address race, class, socioeconomics, marginalization vs. a

dominant perspective, bias in curriculum, historical and current phenomena, and situate the researcher in relation to the paper and participants.

* * *

ACADEMIC CONTEXT OF PRESENT STUDY

Upon being hired in my current position as Information Literacy and Outreach Librarian, I was assigned the task of reinvigorating the library's information literacy classes. At that time, the number of students wanting to take a library research skills class was low. I set out to observe the students who came into the library, their cultural demographics within the college, looking for elements such as race, class, gender, and socioeconomic affiliations. What was clear was this particular community college had a high number of African American and Latino populations, and the college was drawing them from nearby cities populated mainly with these marginalized groups.

Having established this context, I reflected upon my own experience as a first-generation student of color entering into a higher academic space for the first time in order to improve my skills and move into a higher socioeconomic bracket. I also thought about what was the hook, so to speak, that got me interested in research and information literacy. It was a cultural asset (i.e., cultural knowledge) that I brought with me, which I was able to apply to a research topic when I was encouraged to investigate something that I already knew about.

After this reflection, I decided I needed a hook like the one I experienced that took advantage of the cultural wealth my potential students brought with them and would assist them to feel safe in the foreign environment of academia. The next question was, how could I put it out there that the I.L. class I would offer would value students' assets, and that I would like to provide a learning space that reflected this?

I have never viewed my approach to I.L. as being distinct or separate from other aspects of the curriculum. I participate in the cadre of critical educators on the basis that I see education as a means/tool for liberation. This is one of the categories of informed learning identified in Bruce, Edwards, and Lupton's (2006) "Six Frames for Information Literacy Education." The issue of compartmentalizing disciplines (meaning librarians teach only research skills and authority) works against the notion of education as liberation. My approach to I.L. is what I call a racially explicit informed asset-based pedagogy, using a mixed ethnographic approach. It is decolonized history and knowledge, with student assets guiding the curriculum. My approach also takes into account what Margot Duncan implores researchers to realize: "that investigating *the one who is looking* might be as valuable as investigating 'what' we are looking at" (Duncan 2013, 201).

Introduction to the Study

> *I'm not saying I'm gonna change the world, but I guarantee that I will spark the brain that will change the world.* (Tupac Shakur 1995)

The persistent problem of cultural bias in curriculum and pedagogy has driven the development of numerous theoretical and practical responses discussed below. The "struggle over the curriculum, over whose experience would be represented as valid, or whose language or history would be taught—are unquestionably long-standing" (Apple and Buras 2006, 24). What is knowledge? Who can create knowledge? Whose stories are told and how are they told? Whose lived experience is valued? The answers to these questions serve to define certain knowledge and literacies as assets, which can be used in education.

Many of the previous questions can make academics feel uneasy in regards to information literacy (Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010). If answered with the marginalized (explicitly in the terms of race within the United States) in mind, they could accurately account for and genuinely reflect students' cultural wealth/literacies, not maintain the narrow dominant norm. Inviting student lived experiences can open the door to address not only their people's history and current-day cultural context but also their experiences within the dominant culture (Alim 2011; Akom 2009; Ladson-Billings 1995; Yosso 2005, 2006).

Information literacy praxis can be a unique opportunity for guiding inclusion and acculturation of those that have been underrepresented and underserved in academia. Whether it is in one-shot orientations, a research project, or in a class curriculum created with a colleague in a different subject area, librarians must begin to look at the diverse population they serve, their situatedness, and make information literacy relevant (Bruce, Edwards, and Lupton , 2006; Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010). Doing so could help inform and transform information literacy praxis with the engagement of students and their voiced lived experiences guiding the way. Developing a transformational research instruction curriculum with aspects of critical information literacy (Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010), encompassing asset-rooted pedagogy (Paris and Alim 2014; Akom 2009), along with what I term "explicit racialized situatedness/context pedagogy," which capitalizes on the knowledge, cultural wealth, and cultural situatedness of community college students, can help student engagement, building upon their assets. It is my hope that there are useful components in this study that spark other ways to build upon this type of engagement of student assets. The technique of learning from my students about their context through their autoethnography is an important part of using their assets in the academic environment. The use of autoethnography allows me, as the teacher/researcher, to understand and

describe what my students are bringing and how I can use this to improve their educational experience.

The Study

> *On a mission for medium to manifest the thoughts I have collected.*
> (Cee-Lo Green 2002b)

Conversations occurred within an intentional space that foregrounded the lenses of critical race methodology (CRM). These lenses, used along with mindful inquiry (Patton 2002), and seeking vs. researching (Paris and Winn 2014), lend themselves to reciprocity, respect, and humanizing research and data collection. Conversations and interactions happen with what each individual brings with them—assets acquired over time, informed indigenous knowledge, and their current context are essential to this study's frame of informed assets.

Students and myself were engaged in conversation leading from the assets we brought. Our discussions did not happen with a barrage of open-ended questions. This way of collecting data is the exception to "teaching techniques that colonize research, education, and the marginalized" (Paris and Winn 2014). This way of collecting data lends itself to opening research to the participant's unique voice and personal contributions. Information was gathered through formal and informal conversations, classroom observations, and the examination of students' academic artifacts. Member checking was employed to enhance understanding and accuracy.

Fist Bumping: One Teacher's Autoethnography Engages Students

> *When I first got my big break, I said that I would never bend and discredit my character to keep up or contend.* (Cee-Lo Green 2002b)

My main and early connection with students is by telling my story—and by privileging their lives and their stories of their lives. The telling of my story lets them know who I am and where I come from and what I understand. It also helps them imagine themselves as scholars—like myself. I'm a teacher telling a story to which they can connect. I am privileging the lived experiences of young and poor people of color by using the cultural content of hip-hop. It says hip-hop is an articulate expression of culture, and says that all of these things matter. Instead of requiring that they supplant their own knowledge with the standard colonizer's explanation, I use asset-based rap/hip-hop pedagogy and traditional African American literary tenets of double consciousness and code-switching to translate their expertise into our lived experience of being in a classroom or library.

Jazz: I remember we would get in some really deep discussions in our classes, the class was, it felt like a home environment almost, a non-

judgmental zone. Yeah, definitely felt like I could bring my whole self and talk about real life.

BRIT: I remember going home after our library skills class, my sister and I would be like, "What did we just learn in class? Oh my God, do you believe what we just learned and discussed? That was awesome! Then we'd go, try to find more information on the things we had learned . . . and show my brother.

Of importance to the lived experience of these students in class is their need for connecting and validating their experience across history, their context of the neighborhoods they reside in to be validated, and validated in an unbiased way. Students across race and socioeconomic status unanimously voiced feeling as if finding a home in the classroom when teaching was conducted in an unbiased way with relevancy to students' lives.

Inside the academic environment, my students and I learned by translating our histories of schooling, much of which is riddled by the same traumatic experiences. Our translated lived experiences then became sustaining, acknowledging it is with us, making it academic, helping us to be informed life-long learners—a tenant of I.L.

The students had completed their autoethnography during the course, which informed their answers in the research study conversations. From these answers came the three main themes listed above and examined in detail below. The data (i.e., their answers) suggest that what is significant to these students is their sense of creating community within this classroom space, one that allowed a nonjudgmental environment to discuss cultural assets, racial cultural context from a diverse student body, and how this informed each student of their own information literacy praxis. The data suggest also that a student's cultural assets/lived experience lead the way for information literacy instruction and that the use of these assets is lacking in their other classes. The students also provided suggestions for how to make information literacy instruction relevant to them and other students.

<p align="center">* * *</p>

COMMON THEMES THAT SURFACED FROM STUDENT CONVERSATIONS

Let the thing between my eyes analyze life's ill's. (Jay-Z 1998)

Below are the themes that surfaced from conversation with students:

- College knowledge and informal information networks
- Lived experience of using student cultural wealth/assets to guide curriculum and engagement in academic classrooms
- Public conversations about race

Connecting these themes to the primary research questions asked in this study was a critical step in gaining insight into the importance of asset-based, critically explicit racialized situated pedagogies in a library class curriculum. The primary research questions are as follows:

• How do community college students use their cultural assets in an I.L. class?
• How do community college students participate in additive pedagogical practices in an I.L. classroom?
• How do community college students experience explicit racial and cultural situatedness in an I.L. classroom?

Each of these themes will now be described and the student stories woven together using quotations from a variety of student conversations. In each of the quotations below, the student names are pseudonyms to protect student confidentiality.

College Knowledge and Informal Information Networks

Many students spoke about getting to college and how once there they relied upon their peers to maneuver applications, financial aid, and registering for classes. Each of the students emphasized the importance of using their informal networks due to not having anyone in their orbit "that knows" or knew about college. This reliance on fellow students proved to be indicative of many students. Unable to manage, how do they navigate, figure out, and process what is needed in this college environment?

Jazz: Nobody asked me about college . . . it's so hard, you don't know what classes to take, from the simplest things to, "Where do I pay for my classes?" . . . if I don't pay for my classes, what happens?" . . . "Where do I get my books? How do I even know what I need?" It's hard for somebody with no support. If it wasn't me asking around, asking random people in my classes, "Hey, how do I figure this out?"

Jazz states how she relies upon and seeks out students for information. Much like in her community and home environment, she seeks out the familiar. She knows that she needs more information in order to persist and be successful.

Brit: For the first semester . . . financial aid wasn't easy. We didn't know what we were doing. . . . We didn't really have the experience from a counselor or anybody because we came from an adult school.

Brit reiterates what Jazz said earlier, not having the tools to make decisions about financial aid, along with feeling at a disadvantage with not having the experience of getting the help at the start of her education endeavor. Brit uses the assets she brought with her and uses them to seek out stu-

dents to get the answers. These students experience a barrier in getting the help needed for basic information. Several spoke of the unapproach-ability of faculty and staff, along with prior negative experiences with those in charge of their education. Remaining quiet and not drawing attention to oneself was the means for being successful in maneuvering through the system. Rather than seeing faculty and staff as people that could help them, they see them as trying to make them fail—be stuck. The hip-hop pedagogy experience opened doors for students. They found the courage to go and seek out more help in their academic environment—to con-tinue to move forward.

What Students Know—Their Own History and Their Own Neighborhoods

Of importance not only to this study but also to the lived experience of these students in class is their need for connecting and having their expe-rience validated across history; their context of the neighborhoods they reside in has been validated, and validated in an unbiased way. Students, independent of race or socioeconomic status, unanimously voiced feeling as if they were finding a home in the classroom when teaching was con-ducted in an unbiased way with relevancy to students' lives.

Trace: My educational experience has been hard . . . educational lan-guage is different than street language. It's just different . . . when teachers ask you questions, I'm like what are they really asking me? Can't they just break it down plain? I think that when I do have the op-portunity to bring my life to the table, that it works.

Trace is speaking for a culturally relevant curriculum, though without us-ing those terms. She asks for those teaching to find out where she is in her understanding—then teach from there. She is also talking about building upon her double consciousness within an academic environment. In this class she experienced and engaged in translating street knowledge into academic knowledge and vice versa. She could see where they related and conflicted. Trace makes a strong argument for the value of having and us-ing survival skills in the unfamiliar academic environment. Trace reflects that when she is able to bring her assets to the table, she feels comfortable in the school environment and that it helps her self-esteem and helps her to persist and succeed in her educational goals.

Trace: What we didn't know at the time is—that's how we were being saved. By connecting. Like if you let us do what we know to do, and ap-ply it to education, that's our life jacket.

Trace speaks on how being exposed to a culturally relevant curriculum is her life preserver in regards to using what she already knows. Many of the students spoke about what it meant to them to be in a learning space that

allowed them to come as they are and to engage in a relevant curriculum. Trace explains that the way I teach the class, using informed assets and autoethnography, created an academic life jacket. She also articulates the direction I believe information literacy must move toward—especially in capturing the attention of the diverse student body making up our campuses.

TRACE: You're . . . The way you teach the class it's a life jacket . . . it's up to us to put it on. . . . That library class it's just much more . . . way more than learning to research . . . it's also the knowledge that you gain about how the world functions. We was doing life in that library class . . . with the different films . . . readings . . . it connected our lives to it. Our street knowledge does connect to . . . book knowledge in your class. We learned to use our survival skills from surviving on the streets to surviving in education.

How Talking about Race Becomes Part of Public or Official Conversation
It isn't often that students get the chance to engage in a serious conversation on race in their classrooms. It is also unusual to have a diverse student population within one class and talk about race. The discussion of race must take place in an environment that is safe. This environment must have participants willing to go deep and not address the issues of race superficially—superficial in the context of our cultural conversation, and meaning conversation is not taken any furthr than what it already is.

TRACE: We was all on the court, we were able to talk about our struggles. We had different nationalities in there. I feel we were all comfortable though. I don't think anybody took anything personal. It was really . . . it was good.

Given the opportunity to speak on race issues in a classroom where everyone felt safe enough to speak truthfully was appreciated by the students. For many it was the first time being able to do this outside of their own race and community.

BRIT: Throughout the class, . . . the articles. Which wasn't necessarily library research skills, it was about everyday life. . . . We were learning about real life and researching it. . . . Then when we see it on film, read it in an article, it's real. Being in the class, it was really educational. Just being in class, it really made me look on the real side. It is a struggle. It gave me another perspective. This is our history, our anger that lives inside of us from our experience, from our history. That library class it really opened up . . . opened up my understanding to this is who we are.

Students spoke of how culturally relevant pedagogy, and their lived experience, is documented and taught, and of how it can inform students about their culture and what may not have been taught or spoken of—giving them clarification and filling the gap in what they already know. Without the mentioning of a decolonized framework—students are articulating the need and process for it.

MATAIS: Then there were people in the class and they also experienced the same experiences as me, they are just not the same as you are. I think it helped educational-wise because we could talk about these things that we can't talk about in our other classes. I think you also showed another video of like the Watts riots, what was behind the Watts riots. I didn't really understand when I was younger what was behind those things like people targeted, African American people being different, those things are still happening today, so it's relevant to class, it's relevant to hip-hop. Hip-hop is, it's a way of teaching people. It's kind of like the news for the people and places who are kind of impoverished who don't really see the news, who don't watch the news. It gives you that information that you don't see. I think the atmosphere we created was just helpful and we maintained that through our class. I liked that it was something that tied into when that particular time where we were at in our lives.

What is being described above falls into the practice of providing transformative learning materials that "reflect the real-life experiences of the learners and are designed to foster participation in small-group discussion to assess reasons, examine evidence, and arrive at a reflective judgment. Learning takes place through discovery and the imaginative use of metaphors to solve and redefine problems. To promote discovery learning, the educator often reframes learner questions in terms of the learner's current level of understanding" (Mezirow 1997, 10). These counter-stories argue for relevant, sustaining, explicit racial situatedness, meaningful engagement of the colonial narrative, and alongside it, the cultural wealth of their communities. These counter-stories reveal the necessity to move education toward being equitable, along with a larger intent of epistemic justice in curricula, classrooms, and society as whole. Students' counter-stories place their I.L. research and instruction at the intersections of these ideas with the pedagogical and theoretical theories used in this study.

FINDINGS

> *What we must know as peoples of color—we must know to survive, to understand who (and where) we are, to imagine freer and more joyful futurities—demands curricula that honor the knowledge production of our ancestors; engage the yearnings of our children, families, and communities; and interrogate the enduring tradition of White supremacist subjugation and misrepresentation.* (Dumas 2016, 151)

STUDENT CULTURAL ASSETS AND EXPLICIT RACIAL CULTURAL SITUATEDNESS

In reviewing students' stories, it became clear that two of my research questions intersected in ways I had not anticipated. The study's research questions are as follows:

- How do community college students use their cultural assets in an I.L. class?
- How do community college students participate in additive pedagogical practices in an I.L. classroom?
- How do community college students experience explicit racial and cultural situatedness in an I.L. classroom?

The study's research questions inquired about student use of the cultural assets, their participation with added pedagogical practices, and their experience of an explicit racial and cultural situatedness in an I.L. classroom. Although I asked the questions separately, the students' experiences made clear that race, class, culture, and gender are interconnected, and for these students, they are enmeshed, and are not separate experiences. In hindsight, it seems obvious that students' racial experience and cultural wealth make up their lived experiences and identities in ways that cannot and should not be separated. The students in the study cannot talk about what they know "and lived" through their families and cultures without race!

Intersectionality deals with the multiple identities of race, class, and gender—identities that, in the students' experiences, could not be separated. Not accounting for this phenomenon in students' lives would be an injustice to their counter-stories when presenting my findings. It is imperative to present their responses to the two questions of cultural assets and explicit racial and cultural situatedness together. This is evidenced by Ida B:

> So, one of the reasons I really liked that class is because there were so many different types of people. It was different races, different ages, different backgrounds. So, it was really interesting to me to see you present this one information, that this information is the same information that is presented to all of us but through all our different backgrounds, we all come up with different responses to that information. That was what was really cool about that class to me. I was seeing how everybody contributed their own piece of their mind to the class.

Students' lived experience of the required research and instruction in the informational literacy classroom was far outside their lived experience in other classes. Jazz stated, "In our education system there's this hierarchy where 'You're the student. I'm the teacher. You listen to what I say. You're going to do what I say.' When you just rub a little bit on that line, rub it off, where it's not that boundary where I should be scared of you, kind of

thing, 'You're in charge of my grade, let me just do my work and leave.'" Essentially Jazz articulates here that neither the classroom nor instructor is a safe place: an environment she cannot become a part of because of instructors' imposed constraints. In their accounts, multiple students made clear that the explicit racial context of the curriculum in this class provided new opportunities to name, uncover, and recover their cultural assets. Ida B articulates this clearly,

> First, I loved the class. It gave me a chance to connect to things that I was learning in my history class with the research class. And it also, I guess connected me with I guess our culture. Like the African American culture because I could relate to what was being said. Like putting the information together I guess with what I already knew then learning more on top of that. Things I wouldn't have known to look for or at, you know?

Students developed counter-stories from their cultural assets and termed them *lifelines*. They found these lifelines necessary to their survival in college. For example, Trace passionately stated,

> What we didn't know is that's how we were being saved. By connecting. Like if you let us do what we know to do, and apply it to education, that's our life jacket. We can't do it the way they want us. . . . We try, but we need . . . we need that survival skills that we have out, our struggles, to be able to make it, and if they allow us to do that, to connect it, then it makes our educational experience a lot better. Because that is the life jacket. That's the savior, is that I can express who I am and feel comfortable and it feels like you said, you're a character. You build your self-esteem. Your confidence. Because when we come, we come beat down like "Oh, my God. I don't know." This was like 90% of African Americans. You got some that comes in like "Yeah. I know who I am in an educational world." For the most part, their struggle is so real is it not even funny.

For students in this study, recovering and uncovering the generational and current racial context in which they live were nothing short of epiphanies—epiphanies about their families, communities, their educational experiences, and even current events. Ida B reflects,

> For me everything just kind of spoke like that even though it's not necessarily taught in via textbooks like from kindergarten through high school or whatever. African Americans are deeply rooted in I guess you'd say the backbone of the country, our country. It seems like almost everything was based off of something that African Americans created themselves. We don't get taught a whole lot that our people made.

To further emphasize this point, King commented,

> This class was an opportunity . . . a space that acknowledged . . . people come into learning environments with experiences that could be useful . . . are useful . . .valuable. . . . This class turned . . . experiences that are . . . dramatic . . . traumatic into . . . academic to us—learning why

certain things happen in our neighborhood, experience certain things. This was before I ever learnt about the crack epidemic. It didn't make any sense to me why it was so dangerous . . . why it wasn't considered a good environment. . . . It started to make sense. This class, what we read, our discussions, research—just put things into context for me.

King goes on further to say,

I think in this class it was a lot of moments where people had epiphanies including myself where I began to realize the importance of free expression, of freedom really. To understand that the music that we make in our culture is a way of transferring messages, important messages and sometimes they are gateways to pretty much start a movement in the community. To keep movements strong. It just reminds me of how difficult it is to . . . I guess it's difficult to try to do anything without first having knowledge or even a plan of what you want to do. I think no matter what my aspirations are I have to be knowledgeable of the world around me and of the world in general.

The study found that students also articulated what it meant to have new awareness connecting learning to research. Brit stated,

I think having a hands-on class that gives you weeks on end to study something that you want to, you are building . . .. You know what I mean? You are building your research, that helps you build research because you are finding things that you want to look for. Everything is not always education and everybody thinks that you got to learn everything through the "regular" education. Some tools are learnt outside in the streets and I think that hip-hop was street smart to education, because we use that nowadays going to school, like going to library's class, like going to your class where we do the lyrics. After we did the lyrics, I think other people got different songs and then through that we got different topics. Then from that topic we research that topic and then once we research that topic we came up with a project in that topic. I came up with single moms, kind of tied into like what my background was. I got like first what I felt like a bunch of pictures of like single moms. I got it from the Tupac song, I believe it was, "Dear Mama."

Student motivation, their knowledge compounded with the resources provided in class and their own research projects, drove their voiced *need* to accumulate more knowledge and gave them the bases on which to pursue the knowledge and cultural wealth of their communities. This was expressed by Trace:

Because you're more engaged. It's more interesting when . . .. Like in your class, we were more open. We were . . .. It was more freedom. It's not shackled. If I brought that, if I had that type of freedom in the 4-year college, yeah, I would . . .. It would be more interesting. It would be more like "Ooh, this is good. This is good." Make you want more and more and more.

Additionally, students became more confident in voicing their stories about previous and current educational experiences. In this study, stu-

dents voiced that attending, participating, and doing research in this class for them was political, social, and culturally relevant in comparison to their experiences in other classes. For them, we were looking at what was relevant in their lives and communities in the most current context. For many, this meant dealing with police brutality, poverty, and homelessness. Students showed confidence in using their informed assets in classroom discussions and the research topics that interested them and later pursued. Jazz expressed this finding:

> For example, you know how when we did our little project thing, we got to pick a topic that actually interested us and we actually wanted to do, rather than, "Oh, here. Here's your topic." The fact that it actually interested me, it grabbed my attention, it made me want to research it, but it didn't make me want to research it to, "Oh, these are the questions that you need to answer." It made me want to research it to beyond those questions, like, "Okay, well, this is like this. Well, why?" At the same time, we were learning how to annotate, do our MLA format.

The interview discussions were particularly revealing. For example, Trace, King, and Brit each spoke of their peers as feeling safe enough in this class to engage each other honestly on racial and cultural topics for the first time in college. As Ida B expressed, "It didn't really to me ever get into like a hostile mode. Like everybody was pretty much you know calm when we discussed topics. Even if they were you know topics that normally get people heated. It stayed pretty calm. People were respectful of their comments and everything. And I just felt comfortable." Although conversations got heated—the group comprised a variety of races and cultural backgrounds—they all stayed engaged in the conversation. Trace comments, "We was all on the court, we was able to talk about our struggles. We could agree to disagree. It gets heated. It wasn't an all black class. We had different nationalities in there. I feel we were comfortable. I don't think everybody took anything personal. It was really . . .. It was good." Findings from the group context showed students to be engaged and excited to discuss race explicitly, and to share the learning of new and old stories that fueled and added to everyone's racial context and understanding.

Such classroom discussion among the students in this study was possible despite the fact that they came from a variety of racial backgrounds and lived experiences; the students and I together in this I.L. class created a safe community where they could disagree and yet still be committed to engaging with one another. In this class, I.L. learning was about real life, at times painful to acknowledge, but when mirrored by others, one did not feel alone. As a result of the fact that their voiced racial and cultural situatedness was not ignored, displaced, or marginalized, students came to realize that they were ready to engage in this way in other classes. They had gained the self-esteem and confidence to express who they are and be comfortable in their academic environment. Brit stated, "I think that

class gave us that reinforcement, it wasn't ever like you are doing it wrong, you are not finding what I want you to find. You are finding what you want to find and you are exploring. I think that's all education is, its exploring and experiencing. The word I'm looking for is experimentation. You know what I mean?"

Students Interact with Additive Pedagogy

Students' active participation in this course was obviously enhanced by the autoethnographic nature of the pedagogy and interaction with the materials and resources presented in the classroom. This autoethnography material is centered in my own and students' biographies. I have chosen to use an explicit racialized situated pedagogy in my instruction of informed asset-based research. The research instruction is political, social, contextual, and cultural, and focuses on student assets and their lived experiences. The themes come from African American historical and popular culture, which in turn open an intellectual avenue for them to engage their own assets in addressing bias and decolonized curricula in education.

This study's theoretical framework is informed asset based and includes tenets of cultural wealth/assets, critical race theory, and decolonizing theories and methodologies. This is an *additive framework,* one that assumes students have assets that help, rather than hinder, the acquisition of more knowledge, and, as a result, help in the advancement of their educational experiences. Assets of culture, race, and gender are additive, not subtractive, not things to be overcome. The findings in the study are counter-stories presented by student voices as they articulate the answers to the questions they were asked. These counter-stories argue for relevant, sustaining, explicit racial situatedness and meaningful engagement with the cultural wealth of their individual communities. I developed a culturally relevant curriculum based on student-voiced assets (i.e., what they bring to this I.L. class). With this class, the curriculum dealt with rap/hip-hop and popular culture. With the use of rap/hip-hop, students were able to engage with topics concerning their communities, both current and historical.

Counter-stories provided by the students give meaning and legitimacy without detracting from their lived experiences. In turn, the use of student assets and counter-stories give students an awareness of the distortion that occurs in their perception of their own reality when viewed within the *colonial context*—a context that was pervasive in distorting and delegitimizing student's cultural assets. The work itself is autoethnographic, which is the most useful, to them and to me, in understanding how their own stories about their lives intersect with their academic endeavors. Further, a curriculum that is based on their stories and autoethnographies helps the students examine and build on what they already know from their informed assets and lived experiences. In this study the use of a racially explicit informed asset-based I.L. curriculum makes clear how informa-

tion literacy is an appropriate intersection for helping student use what they already know to further their knowledge.

Summary of Findings

> *Indeed, within the histories and lives of people of color, there are numerous unheard counter-stories. Storytelling and counter-storytelling these experiences can help strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance.* (Solórzano and Yosso 2002, 32)

Research findings offer indications that, with engagement of student assets guiding I.L. curriculum, students will provide their own means for research and instruction to be culturally relevant, sustaining, revitalizing, and racially situated. In turn, the use of student assets and counter-stories provides students with an awareness of the distortion that occurs in their perception of their own reality when viewed within the *colonial context* lens. It is hoped that when academics help translate student assets, and the cultural wealth of their communities, alongside the colonial narrative, this will situate the praxis of I.L. at the intersection of educational equity and epistemic justice. The students in this study have offered a passionate remedy for how I.L. can make an impact in the lives of students in an educational setting/college setting.

In table 1, I have distilled what students are saying in this study's findings without quotes. First, I present the research questions and under them the themes articulated by students. These themes for the first two research questions are the following: (a) Intersectionality; (b) Lived experience in this class is not reflected in others (i.e., this class pedagogy, context, structure; (c) Classroom pedagogy; (d) Student epiphanies; (e) Traumatic and dramatic lived experiences; (f) Importance of free expression; (g) What we make in our culture; (h) New awareness; (i) Research beyond required questions; (j) Racial and cultural situatedness was not ignored, displaced, or marginalized.

Table 2 addresses the following research question: How do community college students participate in additive pedagogical practices in an I.L. classroom? These are the themes distilled from the study's findings on additive pedagogical practices: 1. Classroom informed assets additive pedagogy, 2. Informed asset-based learning materials, 3. Classroom discussions, 4. Autoethnography: reflections journal, 5. Research project.

Student-informed asset-based learning in I.L. is the engagement of information for un/recovering historical assets, decolonizing one's frame, colonial narrative awareness, and the understanding that race is always a contributing factor in the structure. Informed assets are the historical and cultural knowledge of one's race and community. It is the decolonized narrative alongside the dominate narrative. It is one's current cultural knowledge and lived experience through the lens of race, class, and gender. The

Table: 1. Review of what students are saying in findings about Student Cultural Assets and explicit racial cultural situatedness

Distillation of findings for research questions w/o quotes	• How do community college students use their cultural assets in an I.L. class? • How do community college students experience explicit racial and cultural situatedness in an I.L. classroom?
Intersectionality	• Racial experience and cultural wealth make up students' lived experience and inform their assets.
Lived experience in this class is not reflected in other classes.	• Student inspired/lead curriculum • Sense of community • No hierarchical relationship w/ instructor
Classroom Pedagogy	• Explicit racial context • Provided opportunities to name, uncover, and recover cultural assets • Cultural assets used in this environment created lifelines from what they know by connecting what they know to what they wanted to know and learn. Once learning commenced, it was built upon by creating more literacy with informed assets . . . more literacy from literacy.
Student Epiphanies	• Epiphanies about themselves, their communities, brought about from historical context and connecting this to current context through traditional knowledge, indigenous knowledge, and their community knowledge
Traumatic and Dramatic lived experiences	• The creation of a safe space can help them acknowledge, talk through, dramatic and traumatic cultural, racial, etc. situatedness, current context, and historical cultural phenomena and context.
Importance of free expression	• This is articulated in a safe space, and is inclusive of Traditional, Indigenous, CRT. • Students viewed Traditional, Indigenous, CRT knowledge as free expression.
What we make in our culture	• Transfers knowledge and produces gateways to organize community-based movements • Creation of cultural wealth
New awareness	• Connecting learning to research • Whose story is told, whose is left out, whose story has prominence and why? • How this has impacted them, their communities, in every aspect of their lives—compounding creates insights into a decolonized frame
Research beyond required questions	• Lifelong learning, going beyond what is needed for assignment
Racial and cultural situatedness was not ignored, displaced, or marginalized.	• Ready to engage this way in other classes

Table 2. Students Interact with Informed Assets Pedagogy

Classroom informed assets additive pedagogy	• Informed asset-based pedagogy includes tenets of cultural wealth/assets, critical race theory, decolonizing theories and methodologies, explicit racialized situatedness.
Informed asset-based learning materials	• Culturally relevant • Gives them clarification and fills the gap in what they already know • Assets of culture, race, historical and current-day context • Film, articles, music: African American historical and popular culture
Classroom discussions	• Seminar based • Students articulate the need and process for decolonized pedagogy and curricula.
Autoethnography: reflections journal	• Brought about understanding of how their own stories intersect with their academic endeavors • Students examine and build upon what they already know from their informed assets and lived experiences.
Research project	• Students examine and build on what they already know from informed assets and lived experiences. • Student-driven research and final presentation of findings

support required to make an informed asset-based classroom is covered in tables 1 and 2. This support in the I.L. curriculum is about creating a decolonial narrative that embraces and imparts equity and epistemic justice. This type of pedagogy is fostered by CRT, informed assets, traditional indigenous knowledge, and community cultural wealth in order to further informed assets and experience.

STUDENTS' INTERVENTION ON ACADEMIA: RESUSCITATING I.L.'S CONTRIBUTION TO LIFELONG LEARNING

Once learned you must learn you must yearn to discern. (Cee-Lo Green, 2002b)

Intentionally integrating an asset-based, hip-hop, explicit racialized cultural context and a multidisciplinary library curriculum received overwhelming confirmation from past and current students. Every student agreed that this type of approach in a library research class was not only relevant to their lived experiences but also provided a safe space for them to think critically about and engage with peers on topics that are highly racialized within the United States. Further, they believed that this way of

engaging what students know could, and should, happen in other classes. The students also confirmed that the multidisciplinarity of the curriculum allowed them to research and engage with information that had a historical and current-day context in their lives and in the lives of their families and communities.

Students also stated that this type of instruction fostered long-lasting friendships among their classmates and a desire for lifelong learning—a tenet of information literacy. The use of the autoethnography method in this study acted as a tool for participants to tell a narrative about the way they have been schooled and counter-stories to the ones that have been created about them—not with them. Delgado (1989, 2436) acknowledges that "oppressed groups have known instinctively that stories are an essential tool to their own survival and liberation."

Asset-Based and Informed: A Model for Supporting Information Literacy's Effectiveness

Nurturing the seed planted in the fertile youth (Blue Scholars 2005)

This is my contribution to information literacy. I can't assume neutrality. Because there's nothing about educating folks of color that has ever been neutral. It's always had a purpose, acculturation bound to education. The intersections of the pedagogies I use are not unusual in other fields, why isn't it present in our field? What is it in our field that keeps us from intersecting all of these pedagogies, the informed assets of students, in this very explicit way? How do we account for the lived experiences of the students? How do we get there? How do we get to the point where we're teaching underserved populations while utilizing what they know and what they learned on campus. Period. That's it. That's it right there in a nutshell.

Scholars have long wrestled with the problem of unequal access to education. A number of distinct approaches have focused on the cultural biases inherent in curriculum and pedagogy. In the educational environment, the "struggle over the curriculum over whose experience would be represented as valid or whose language or history would be taught—are unquestionably long–standing" (Apple and Buras 2006, 24). What is knowledge? Who can create knowledge? Whose stories are told and how are they told? Whose lived experience is valued? The answers to these questions serve to define certain knowledge and literacies as assets that can be used in education.

I'd like to shed light and welcome you to our home—one that was intentionally created not on the premise of defining what I.L. is, or practicing and gaining I.L. skills. I.L. is present—but in the context of teaching I.L. that allows my students and I to do I.L. in a way that is culturally relevant to our lived experience, and revitalizing in a way that makes room for healing.

In this classroom, information literacy instruction had a unique opportunity for guiding inclusion and acculturation of those that have been underrepresented and underserved in academia. Whether it is in one-shot orientations, a research project, or class curriculum created with a colleague in a different subject area, librarians must begin to look at the diverse populations they serve, their situatededness, and make information literacy relevant (Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010). I believe the information shared here has the opportunity to help inform and transform information literacy with the engagement of students and their voiced lived experiences guiding the way. Developing critical information literacy curricula (Accardi, Drabinski, and Kumbier 2010), encompassing asset-rooted (Paris and Alim 2014) pedagogy (Akom 2006) and informed learning (Bruce, Edwards, and Lupton 2006), with what I term "explicitly racialized situadedness context" that capitalizes on the knowledge, cultural wealth, and cultural situadedness of community college students, can help students' engagement and persistence in academia.

The assets that my students and I bring into our classroom helped us create an environment that made a library classroom relevant, revitalized, and sustaining in our lives. Our classroom is a place where student assets are the defining components and where I believe the library classroom environment and information literacy instruction must move toward. This article contains autoethnographic snapshots from my hip-hop themed library classroom. My conclusion up front is that, if there must be academic intervention protocols, let the students do the intervention—on us, for us. Our students are giving us their assets to revitalize our curricula—for them, for us, and for those who follow.

Conclusion

> If you walked by a street and you was walking on concrete and you saw a rose growing out of concrete—even if it had messed up petals and it was a little to the side— you would marvel at just seeing a rose grow through concrete So why is it that when you see some ghetto kid grow out of all of the dirtiest circumstance and he can talk and he can sit across the room and make you cry, make you laugh, all you can talk about is my dirty rose, my dirty stems and how I am leaning crooked to the side. You can't even see that I've come up from out of that. (Tupac Shakur 1994)

Teaching information literacy from the viewpoint of what I know and what my students/people know provides validation and an inclusive classroom. What my history tells me, what is important to understanding a topic, understanding anything is always central to my learning. I do this by tapping directly into students lived experience and their connection with rap and hip-hop. Students show me that they can flip things around.

Students understand now that they are sitting in academic classes, get-

ting a neutral education—an education that leaves race and cultural context out of the conversations; that leaves their knowledge/lived experience out of the conversations; and that is not attempting to look at the formal and informal information networks that students know exist. My information literacy praxis is based on formal and informal information networks. It is based on informed assets and cultural context alongside the dominant narrative. Much of today's academic curriculum and instruction is in deficit. As an information literacy librarian, I need to acknowledge and engage students' real assets. The real gain by teaching information literacy in this way gives students the ability to bring their entire selves and create a whole picture. Adding student assets to the situation makes information literacy more valuable, relevant, and useful. Another benefit of this type of I.L. instruction is increasing cultural literacy from their historical context—they can learn more about their cultural context and the dominant narrative alongside it in this formal/neutral environment.

I assume that students have cultural assets and that I am enriching their cultural assets via information literacy. I assume it is an important enrichment—part of their education—and that this process helps them use the informal and formal. This study constructs a definition of information literacy that includes the identification of how information intersects with students' cultural knowledge, with their racialized cultural context, and considers information literacy to be valuably applicable to many different classes, necessary in understanding how the people involved, whose knowledge intersects becomes a part of the story, are part of information literacy praxis.

In this study the use of student voice placed students as experts in an environment that has seen them as being in deficit. In concluding this article, I harken back to what I believe the skills of an asset-based-minded teacher/researcher does; it is to understand what my students bring in their own terms. Acknowledging their assets means I want to learn from them. It is my students doing the intervention on me, doing intervention on the practice of information literacy instruction/definition for librarians. In conclusion, these students speak and end this study with their own autoethnographic voices:

KING: I think this class was an opportunity for me to . . . . It was a space that acknowledged that people come into learning environments with experiences that could be useful or they are useful and they are valuable. To me this class turned some experiences that are sometimes dramatic and traumatic into something that could be academic to us learning why certain things happen in our neighborhood and why we experience certain things. It puts a lot of things into context for people who are not necessarily aware or knowledgeable about why your neighborhood is the way it is.

JAZZ: Yeah. If you just get rid of some boundaries. Teachers, I understand there has to be boundaries, of course, but if you get rid of that teacher, student hierarchy, students are going to want to come back, students are going to want to learn, they're not going to just sit there and be like, "Oh my God, I'm in this class."

JAZZ: In this library class—because of the stuff I was learning. It was relevant, I wanted to, how do I put it in words? I wanted to learn. It was something that, I can't even put it in words. I took the library class a second time. I needed to, I was craving to learn more, because I wanted to feel like I did in that first class.

GLOSSARY

> *I can teach you my language rosetta stone.* (Drake 2010)

additive: Assumes that students have assets to help them in acquiring more knowledge, and that student assets are additive not subtractive (Valenzuela 1999).

asset-based approach: "Emphasizes strengths over weaknesses, resilience over risk, and assets over deficits" (Rose 2006, 239). It is an infusion into culturally sustaining pedagogy that displaces the deficit model of teaching approaches that spans years and years in the history of education in the United States (Paris and Alim, 2014).

authenticity: When one's behavior is deemed truthful by those within one's community.[1]

bias: An inability for impartiality due to notions and assumptions encountered prior to exposure.[2]

Black English: Any of a variety of dialects of English or English-based pidgins and creoles associated with and used by black people.[3]

code-switching: The modifying of one's behavior, appearance, etc., to adapt to different sociocultural norms.[4]

critically explicate racialized context: Acknowledgment of race as being essential and of the utmost importance in the lives that have been racially marginalized by the dominant culture (author's definition).

double consciousness: An experience of having two selves experienced by African Americans, first noted by Du Bois ([1903] 1989).

informed assets: Informed assets is the historical, and cultural knowledge of race and community. It is the decolonized narrative alongside the dominate narrative. It is current cultural knowledge and lived experience through the lens of race, class, gender. Informed assets theoretical framing assumes that what students know, and their cultural assets, help them in acquiring more knowledge.

intentional space: A culturally relevant space where members mutually agree to come together to create a context of conversational intimacy in which participants feel comfortable telling their stories, discuss shared experiences, and critically think about social/cultural context in society (author's definition).

lived experience: Personal knowledge gained from surrounds, and interactions within society/community.

street knowledge: Resourcefulness to survive at the margins of society.

subtractive schooling: The concept that schools subtract resources from students (Valenzuela 1999); this is on top of cultural assimilation and de-ethnization (Lopez 1976).

traditional schooling: The dominant ways of teaching education—defunct of cultural and indigenous knowledge and ways of teaching and learning.

underrepresented/marginalized: Groups that identify in terms of physical, cultural, and class characteristics—race, class, gender, caste, tribe, minorities—and lack representation in areas that have the prolific presence of a dominant culture (Solórzano and Yosso 2002).

NOTES

1. *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. "authentic," accessed June 16, 2016, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/authentic.
2. *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed., s.v. "bias," accessed June 16, 2016, http://thefreedictionary.com/bias.
3. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*, s.v. "Black English," accessed November 17, 2016, http://www.dictionary.com/browse/black-english.
4. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*, s.v. "code-switching," accessed November 17, 2016, http://www.dictionary.com/browse/code-switching.

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kim l. morrison is a critical educator whose interests center on student agency and the use of informed assets-based pedagogy in the development of student agency and academic achievement with college students. She teaches library research courses, engaging her students' lived experiences and cultural assets by exploring themes such as Tupac, rap, and hip-hop, and the images and experiences of black women in film, music, and literature. Together with faculty across institutions, she considers knowledge construction in cultural context, the application of critical information literacy theory and pedagogy, and innovative approaches to supporting sustainable cultural wealth. She currently serves as the library coordinator at Chabot College, Hayward, California, where she has been the information literacy and outreach li-brarian since 2004. At the present time, kim is working toward a PhD in library and information science from Queensland University of Technology and San Jose State School of Information.