



Class IV-----HIP HOP  
Will Copeland-adjunct Faculty

**ATLANTA CAMPUS**

This is the full plan from which the lesson plan came. Obviously I didn't have time to do every component below

peace I used Seth's template and created this lesson plan for Wednesday. I will need your help for materials. I talked to Rasha about duplicating the CD. I'll bring a few copies and we can make more. My only regret is that I have not really incorporated Southern hiphop. If I were in Atl for a few days before the session I would have liked to do that. I would like to use this time to really make an Up South Down South hiphop connection and am not yet sure how to do that. Please review and advise or even edit!

Class IV- Hip Hop: Southern sounds, migration & urban rebellion.

Materials

Play 1 video (youtube)

Hand out of article

Hand out of lyrics page

Play 2 songs

Short Professional Bio:

William Copeland is an organizer and cultural worker from Detroit. He works as EMEAC's Youth Director. He is a founding adult ally for the Young Educators Alliance (YEA). He served as one of the local coordinators for the 2010 US Social Forum and participated in the 2011 Detroit 2 Dakar Delegation to the World Social Forum held in Dakar, Senegal. He is also a founding member of the Detroit Palestine Solidarity Committee, the Creative Resistance Affinity Group, and advisor for the Young Educators Alliance. He is also currently working on creating the D.Blair Theater Space and LightBox Youth Media Productions in the space of the Cass Corridor Commons and has significant affiliations with the healing justice movements in Detroit and nationwide.

Copeland has been published in Drumvoices Revue, the Listen zine, quill puddle and Museum Of Contemporary Arts Detroit's Telegraph. He has written two poetry

collections, Detroit Sun (chapbook) and New Haven Green. His science fiction poetry has received recognition by the Science Fiction Poetry Association and the Odd Contest. Also a MC, spoken word poet, performance artist, and cultural organizer he has flowed throughout the Midwest with the Long Hairz Collective and is featured on their CDs “Dreadlocks and Pony Tales” and “Burning”. He has performed or taught at high schools, community colleges, prisons, conferences, and numerous rallies and political gatherings. His single “Water Power” was released on June 1st in conjunction with the People’s Water Board of Detroit. His single “Emergency/EMF” is being released and distributed in conjunction with protests against Emergency Management in Michigan. Both records are from the upcoming album “The Basics.”

Objectives of Course: This course will ask the question: "How can culture and music advance peoples liberation in the US South today?" The course will uncover the roots of Blues music as a foundation of Black music globally and its evolution as cultural resistance to colonialism, capitalism, and white supremacy.

Objectives of Class IV:

To express the potentials for hiphop culture to serve as a liberating force  
To deepen our collective understanding of the corporate domination of rap music and popular culture  
To understand the intersections between urban culture, hiphop culture, and rebellion especially in the Southern context

Introductory Remarks

I turned away from the academy in order to emphasize practice and praxis rather than research and description. I don’t have a historian’s reach and understanding of dates and details. My memory doesn’t work that way, anyways. I have a cultural organizer’s passion to keep finding points of intersection and impact. We can’t discuss the progression in time from the Blues to hip hop without recognizing that hiphop culture has become a global economic force, and a very significant part of it is created and distributed by multinational corporations. The Blues came forth in Southern segregation. Hiphop can be seen as hyper-integration where Black bodies display the all-American “achievement” of conspicuous consumption and business savvy in an extremely exaggerated form. Hip hop itself has taken a journey from the neighborhood, barrios, and parks to the boardrooms, owners’ suites, and branding. Hip hop today travels around the world as is perhaps the most defining image of Black American culture around the globe.

A look at hiphop today requires us to look at the extent to which corporations have infiltrated our lives and our minds. A look at hiphop as a force for liberation requires us to ask how we can liberate ourselves from corporations—their products and their programming.

Section 1

First Round Robin Question “What is hiphop to me?”

Section 2

Play Video “The Signs”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJKsHtLSTAE>

Second Round Robin Question “What signs do you see about the connection between corporations and rap music?”

Section 3

Small Groups: “In what ways is hiphop culture/music a form of rebellion?” and “What is hiphop rebelling against?”

Will’s comments

Challenge tradition of not being paid for work

Challenge assumption of stupidity

Oral history

“Give a voice to the priceless” Omari KingWise

“HH is a total rejection of that responsibility (for this country’s failures)” George Henry

Challenge to consumerism (hustler, creator, entrepreneur)

Alternative identities in naming

Making a way out of no way

Pass out handout of lyrics

Play song “Emergency/ EMF”

‘Play song “Own It”

Discuss Detroit’s 21st century Environmental Justice

Pass out copy of MI citizen??

<http://michigancitizen.com/detroit-hip-hop-artists-speak-out-on-efm/>

Examples from Detroit:

Food Justice Friday

The Collective

Raiz Up

D Blair Theater

5E the Foundation

The Heru

21st Century: trying to effect a shift

(20th Century based on violence, trauma, oppression as entertainment)

Our generation’s communication between social justice orgs and hiphop community

“Take Da Houses back” featuring YEA

Maureen Taylor at YEA movement

Facebook discussion with peers

Digital justice: Changing Narratives, Changing patterns from consumer to creator

Entertainment justice: take patterns of entertainment that people are used to and use to

promote community and awareness

Round Robin Question What can 21st entertainment justice look like for your community?

Concluding Segment

How do we connect with hip-hop and contemporary culture to resist cultural domination and programming (neo-colonial, corporate, etc.) here in the USA South?

Verse 1

these financial dictators pay now take your shit later. grab 15% like a tipped waiter or a pound of flesh like slick gators on your feet no debating me trying to recreate the D. put the town in debt till it's down saying "mercy me." #marvin gaye probably, rightsizing policies snatch silver gold, rear naked choke figure four. tighter than submission hold. til your knee hits your nose. what you think we elected em for oh wait we ain't elected them hoes. it's an EMERGENCY

Verse 2

they're appointed by the governor. to run up in a motherfucker's oven pass the bread and the buns to his cousin and dash laughin like a nigga in the dozens. "you SO broke like a thousand piece jigsaw puzzle" I'm off the leash they want to keep a brother muzzled where my dogs at? yo the governor's a tall rat where my dogs at? the mayor is a mouse and the governor's a tall rat. they want to take all the city's cheese cripple its abilities, sell its facilities. I'm "hot and ready" like a little Caesar's pizza, mayor asks "Do you believe"? tell his ass - No one believes ya. it's an EMERGENCY!

Verse 3

she was a strong sister: hood fixture. in the struggle as a Panther, government resister. i had to humble up and ask her "What does EFM STAND FOR" and her answer-- he's the ECONOMY'S FABULOUS MANWHORE operate by ERASING FAMILIAR METROPOLIS and more-- ELITES FUCKING with MONEY. why you think the cancer rate is one out of three honey? What do you EXPECT FABRICATED MEDICINAL? EGOTISTICAL FEMA of MIDWEST think the little kids of Katrina EVER FORGET MUCH? Greedy bastards- EXPECTED FUNCTION as MASTER. EVICT FENKELL MCNICHOLS, EAST FERRY and MACK. Granny's dressed in black like miss mary mack. this ain't no kids' game: too many slain and buried out back. they set a trap and say "He fell between the cracks." ENJOYING FLINT as a MEAL, Pontiac, Detroit as a snack. Dammit all- these uncivilized animals- EXECUTIVES FEAST on our MEAT like cannibals. licking lips- EATING FAMILIES & MOTHERS. in other words we're dealing with some EVIL MOTHER FUCKERS

On Tue, Apr 9, 2013 at 12:37 PM, Rasha Abdulhadi <rasha@projectsouth.org> wrote:

If we missed you last week, I hope we'll see you back for the solid set this week!

Everyone in this course brings rich knowledge, experience, and history to the conversations - it means a lot to learn together.

We spent some time last week reflecting on what we've discussed so far, and we heard Blues from the early 20th century to today. The notes and papers from our class are typed and attached, with thanks to class scribe Cita Cook!

Guest Faculty Will Copeland, poet and community organizer from Detroit -- will join us this week to connect the legacy of the Blues and Southern culture to Hip Hop, migration, and urban culture.

Class continues \*this Wednesday\* April 10th from 6-8pm  
at Pal's Lounge, 254 Auburn Ave

Light refreshments will be provided for each class.

Please prepare to attend the 2 remaining classes and the synthesis assembly on Saturday May 11th.

We are looking forward to seeing you for Class IV- Hip Hop: Southern sounds, migration & urban rebellion.

Please contact [rasha@projectsouth.org](mailto:rasha@projectsouth.org) with any questions. See you tomorrow night!

big cheers,

Rasha

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Project South

[projectsouth.org](http://projectsouth.org)

@projectsouth

Read news, download tools and publications, see photos, check the videos!

Southern Freedom Movements and Southern Movement Alliance

[southtosouth.org](http://southtosouth.org)

NOTES:

Universidad Sin Fronteras  
Liberation Spring 2013: Culture and Liberation in the US South  
Class 3 Papers  
April 3, 2013

**HOW DO WE PROTECT AND EVOLVE OUR CULTURAL LEGACIES FOR DECOLONIZATION IN THE U. S. SOUTH?**

I believe in order to protect something, we first need to know what we are protecting. Culturally, I feel that we are so lost as a people it is hard to decipher what our legacy is and what is. Although our legacy and history began in Africa where we were kings and queens, it seems that people don't focus on that and instead focus on the history of our enslavement. I think if people really got a better understanding of our origins, then they would have a great appreciation for our culture and respect themselves more. When we begin to respect ourselves again as humans, we will be able to protect and evolve as a people.

First we must realize what our roots and culture are that we are protecting. Then figure out how decolonization has evolved since the beginning of its existence. We must train our young people to be leaders in our community and not to be police officers, judges, and lawyers. The older generation should feel responsible for enlightening the youth on what decolonization is and means. Also, an explanation should be brought to youth's attention about how we were colonized. Once we explain it to the youth, then we will have an understanding of how we go to where we are. Now, we can actually set youth up with a vision for decolonization.

I think we evolve our legacies by realizing that nothing is really old and also that nothing is really new. We protect our legacies by continuing the understanding of why they are legacies. If a young man doesn't agree with the old story, let him know as best that you can that this story relates to him. If an old man doesn't like the young man's story, let him know as best that you can about why this story relates to him. And through a process such as this, we evolve and protect in the same sense.

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We protect and evolve our cultural legacies by practicing them, by liberating the practice of art and blues expressions from the confines of the individual artist. [Not?] to expect that only those with natural talent are capable of engaging and articulating, practicing the expression. If in fact culture is ours and is fundamentally an expression of a "feeling," then we acknowledge that we are losing those expressions that are ours, then in essence we're losing or have lost or have forgotten how to feel and express that feeling. Thus decolonialization is the process of liberating feeling and (re)membering how to share what already exists within us and between us. We need ways—better yet, a practice—for convening spaces where poetics of struggle are shared within the range and constellation of expressions we all engage in. We need ways for going deep, for tapping those spaces where rebellion rests.

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I would say by holding musical and cultural events to look forward to. The same as other cultures do in other countries. To me it gives a chance to be proud of who you are all together as a whole (creatively).

Or to share and appreciate others' art by spreading it along, but also stating who it originates from and even why you sparked an interest in it to recite it.

I would also say having proof of the creative process and emotion by storing things in museums or even pyramids!

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I believe there are several ways. However, we must be willing to stop selling ourselves. Capitalism is a monster! Our gifts can no longer go to the auction block of mainstream society. If we decide to spread or share our cultural legacies, we must do so in a way that would honor those that have come before us and preserve the truth and authentic cultural legacies for the ones that will come after.

In order to evolve our cultural legacies we must create moments where intergenerational mentorship happens. Young people must honor and be honored. Blues must be valued and value the young. We must share our experiences with each other and be careful to not share it with those who don't understand it. We must take ownership in how the legacy will grow. Not to be influenced by American culture, but rooted in history and growing toward liberation. For instance, hip-hop was our legacy evolving and we didn't honor the ancestors or consider what giving it to the mainstream would do to our children. Our culture can no longer be bought.

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We can protect our culture first by doing research of our history as a people and our family ancestors. Also not being so quick to sell our culture for a quick dollar. Allowing other people to take the ownership, benefiting, and controlling our culture.

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Culture is a house we have to keep living in. We can't leave the home of tradition abandoned when we venture out looking for liberation from the pain and trauma of history and even current conditions. We should be wary of selling the family, the ancestral home because we think that movement on its own is freedom. We sell the land and then are susceptible to being sold on something that's been packaged, often repackaged by the person who stole and bought our home or someone else's home.

Daily living in our traditions, our forms, playing with them and applying them to the day's needs and demands, will mean those forms, tools, practices will mold to the shape of our days, be smoothed by the touch of our many hands.

We have to keep living in the house, visit the house, host parties in it, cook meals and raise our families in it. Our culture cannot be just left under glass in museums, library shelves, on stone .

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The beginning is creating space to remember the truth and rhythm of legacies at the same time as exposing where, how, and by whom those legacies were taken and repackaged. Another way is celebrating, naming the legacies and practicing them in real time—not as filler or value added—but incorporating practices with the culture of the work and the relationships we're building. To celebrate is to see, praise, and experience the thing of it: the mourning, the expression, the wail, the strong assertion, the testimony. That's protection. And in the practice, we allow space for imagination. How do we get free to what we have, transform our voices to reflect and carry our past with us so our hands shape the future from that line. Remembering is not easy work and requires patience, working harder for the most hidden and most valuable gems, so we learn more, feel more, relate to more people. We also cannot ignore the power dynamic of what it means to remember, protect, and evolve amongst the hostile forces in hostile, deadly environments. Racism shapes both the memory and the keeping of these legacies.

Finding more and more ways to spread the history of the varied aspects of cultures at different points. Celebrate in ways that reflect the new cultural practices the artists and traditions which allowed people to survive and resist. Encourage "testifying" in song, in words, in art, in whatever ways allow us to share pain and resistance in community settings.

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I think we have to encourage expression, people telling their own story, in their own voices, reflecting their own truth. We have to support and spread these stories and leave room for more than one narrative to exist and be true. We have to talk about the roots and traditions and origins and history to the young people in a way that they can receive it. We have to stop telling others that their truth is wrong just because it doesn't look like ours. History and legacy is preserved through telling and retelling, through recording and documenting, through remembering and sharing, through teaching. Young people don't know what we are not teaching them. And you can really only speak from and act from what you know and see and feel. If the generations and the genres and the cultures would talk and learn from and with one another, the art can't help but evolve. It is absolutely possible to protect and preserve and honor the legacy while watching the growth and change.

Define our cultural history and legacy. Give a message that can easily be shared with other black people. By sharing this laid-out, defined legacy, we may see more curiosity. Curiosity can lead to reviving cultural legacies and a widespread interest in protecting this legacy. And then don't sell ownership of the music. Resist commodification.

I feel like we have to keep believing in our dreams like M. L. King did in his boycotting days. I also think that we have to stand firm on our rights and not be sold out. Yes...I know that there are a lot of us who may not have like some of our friends or family members. So we want that quick fix. There is no quick fix. We've got to learn to stand for something or we'll fall for anything. We've got to learn to help each other, so that we are all on the same page.

"I get the blues often, everytime I need to feel my feel...." I see the connect between blues, music, and culture as a power base of resistance, resilience, rebellion, but yet all for emancipation. We need to protect our culture's value and knowledge, yet how do we keep growing with it. Decolonize the commercial expropriation of our culture and music. One step is to take the beer companies out of our culture. To decolonize is to own, set up thousands of cultural centers, promote our culture, document our creativeness. We create new knowledge through culture. It belongs to the people. All power to the people!

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