# Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture

Khirsten L. Scott

## **Course Description**

"Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture" is an ongoing revision of a seminar I designed and taught as a graduate student instructor at the University of Louisville before moving to the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor. This first-year seminar—and how I use the word *seminar*—is to emphasize the dialogue-centered course design and enrollees, ranging from seventeen to nineteen student-contributors. Hip hop is both subject and method of this seminar. Drawing its title from Nas's 1994 "The World Is Yours," this seminar specifically investigates hip-hop writing, performance, and culture within a US context across the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As a medium, hip hop remains an intentional, experimental exploration of survival. The course offers an occasion to make and hold space for myself and Black life and Black culture, centered on the following: Who survives the university? Who survives the US?

#### **Institutional Context**

Only 2 percent of full-time professors at degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States are Black women (National Center for Education Statistics). At the University of Pittsburgh, as of December 2020, Black women comprise 3.3 percent of the faculty population or approximately 71 Black-identifying women, according to the university's Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The university notes that it "currently does not collect non-binary or transgender as a category...[but they] will collect and report this moving forward" (University of Pittsburgh). Faculty population here includes full-time faculty employees across ranks (Faculty Dashboard), so parttime faculty and adjunct/non-contract part-time faculty are not included, rendering contingent labor invisible. Meanwhile, Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission has named Pittsburgh, PA, "the worst place for Black women to live" (Howell et al. 2019, Mock, Philyaw). Each layer of these lived and embodied realities prompts me to lean on and lean into Black feminist theories and pedagogies declaring that "Black women are inherently valuable" (Combahee River Collective).

The timing of my arrival as the English department's first Black woman tenure-track appointee at Pitt in composition coincided with the department's official introduction of Seminar in Composition: Topics in Diversity. The introduction occurred alongside a number of other course designs described as having a diversity focus. Within the University's Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences's general education curriculum, the English department offers over 100 Seminar in Composition sections, 30 of which focus on specific curricular possibilities, such as gender studies, service-learning, education, disabilities studies, engineering, and topics in diversity. According to John Twyning, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, "The Dietrich School faculty and undergraduate council decided to revise the requirements after realizing that the GER [General Education Requirements] did not properly reflect the world we live in today and changes were necessary" (Pitt News).

My arrival was also my introduction to the composition legacy of the "Pitt Way." That is, the feeling expressed by Dave Bartholomae, Anthony Petrosky, and Stacey Waite in *Resources for Teaching Ways of Reading* as the distinctive "features and concerns that represent both a tradition of teaching and our determination to work together as a collective: the assignment sequences, the sets of readings, an emphasis on revision, a desire to represent students as intellectuals, a respect for difficulty" (24). This tradition is situated within the white writing studies imagination and furthers the white university's imagination, which assigns value to certain kinds of knowledge production depending on the culture that produces it. That is, white culture produces white knowledge. Those who are not white have to learn how to navigate everything from language usage and coded meaning to appearance and posture, even in the classroom.

Shifting that gaze and making room for unaccountable beauty, hip-hop pedagogy opens space to interrogate what diversity does and what we do when we use the language of diversity (Ahmed; Morrison). "Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture," then, challenges the diversity label attached to it by unapologetically naming and engaging race while also attending to the aforementioned Seminar in Composition variations of gender studies, service-learning, education, and disabilities studies.

### **Theoretical Rationale**

Black feminist theories and pedagogies center the idea that action and thought ineffably inform one another. Similar to Black feminist scholars, like Patricia Hill-Collins and bell hooks, and the Combahee River Collective, this seminar prioritizes Black knowledge production that has been contorted and devalued by white cultural expectations. This seminar specifically draws on my embodiment and facilitation of the following Black feminist tenets. We must acknowledge: liberation is possible; all systems of oppression exist; we live at intersections; we all benefit and are harmed by systemic oppression; all systems are interconnected; dismantling systems of oppression benefits everyone; work for equity and justice can be both painful and joyful; change

happens through ongoing dialogue; rejections of homogeneous assumptions, perspectives, and stories are of absolute necessity; intellectualism is limited to neither individual experiences and perspectives, nor university spaces/experiences. These acknowledgments are reflected in my syllabus and collectively represent my own exegesis of Black feminist theories. That is, I am not creating this foundation, but I am committed to being a part of a larger movement and introducing students to it.

Looking to scholars such as Edmund S. Adjapong and Christopher Edmin, who describe hip-hop pedagogies as ways of "authentically and practically incorporating the creative elements of hip-hop into teaching and inviting students to have a connection with the content while meeting them on their cultural turf by teaching to, and through, their realities and experiences," this seminar acts as a negotiation of that cultural turf (67). The seminar's rationale does not assume that seminar participants are consumers of hip-hop culture, and it does not seek to develop active consumption of it. Rather, seminar participants represent the fullness of individuals, sounds, and energies that contribute to our learning community. Contributors range from students to facilitators to sonic participants. Together, our contributions guide the seminar. In fact, this seminar leads with observations of how we interact with hip hop, both passively and actively. In this way, the seminar assumes and challenges our willingness to locate ourselves within proximity to hip-hop culture to situate and interrogate difference. Ultimately, seminar participants are invited to develop a range of multimodal, expository composing skills and projects; explore a range of intersectional presentations of hip-hop writing, performance, and culture; consider social, historic, theoretical, and critical approaches to hip hop; and engage in studying a range of research methods.

Taken together, both Black feminist and hip-hop pedagogies provide the frame for answering the seminar's guiding questions: How do we understand and define hip-hop writing, performance, and culture? How do we research and engage with hip-hop writing, performance, and culture? How do we construct them? And what do we gain from doing so? Our exploration over these questions looks to scholars Aisha Durham, Brittany C. Cooper, and Susana M. Morris and positions hip-hop writing and culture, in addition to writing about hip-hop writing and culture as, "pivotal site[s] for political intervention to challenge, resist, and mobilize collectives to dismantle systems of [oppression]" (721).

# A Cypher in 5 Units

"Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture" is taught across a 15-week term in five units that revolve around cyclic engagement with self, community, and world. This dialectic continuum is essential

to the critical dialogues and composing that occur across the 16 major assignments. "Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture" becomes a cypher. Hip hop cyphers are opportunities for emcees to take turns freestyling, battling, and/or exchanging stories and rhymes. My integration of the cypher intentionally centers the impact of using hip hop as both content and method. The cypher encourages intentional reflexivity with/in community. A hip-hop praxis of reflexivity allows expansive engagement with oneself as writer and the trans-action of producing knowledge. This reflexive focus necessitates a seminar design that prioritizes inquiry-based instruction and introduces students to a range of methods and modalities for sharing those inquiries. Additionally, this focus requires prioritizing practices of collaboration that imagine generating knowledge and composing ideas as communal, semi-public practices rather than isolated individual ones. As such, I begin every seminar with the individual exploration of identity awareness alongside the collaborative practice of composing shared agreements and assumptions. These shared understandings help us locate and name what we need to be a part of our community in an accessible, mindful, and respectful manner.

Facilitating learning within the university's framework for general education requirements often prompts resistance to the required first year writing seminar. This resistance increases as many students navigate interactions with their first Black instructor and their first seminar focused on hip-hop writing and culture. In response, I design the seminar's evaluation of material such that each assignment holds equal weight, prompting the expectation for equal engagement for each assignment. This distribution of value also signals the importance of each assignment and interaction to build and sustain our learning community. This intentional decision and its impact, as I discuss below, reinforce the seminar's guiding rationale of questioning whose world we are occupying. Balancing the course work and its value in this way directly exposes them to the oppressive institution of grades and assessment. Often, students do not know that they operate within this oppression, so their response to this equity among assignments is often shocking. By the seminar's end, my hope is for students to value each moment of exploration—from reflections and revisions to submitting assignments and completing co-curricular engagements—as contributing to their world-making sensibilities.

## Unit 1: Our Learning Community's Foundation

To introduce Major Assignment 1, "Allow Me To Reintroduce Myself," it is important to establish a dialogue with oneself about the consonances, dissonances, and resonances of identity. This approach proves to be an effective starting point and consistent point of return for every seminar I facilitate. Us-

ing the University of Michigan's Inclusive Teaching "Social Identity Wheel" worksheet, I introduce "self" as a starting point for inquiry. The worksheet prompts seminar contributors to complete the wheel's entry by "fill[ing] in various social identities (such as race, gender, sex, ability, disability, sexual orientation, etc.) and further categoriz[ing] those identities based on which matter most in their self–perception and which matter most in others' perception of them." The exploration's circular presentation—followed by the critical reflection questions, which are outlined in the center of the circle—establish the first layer of the seminar's cypher. For this seminar, the Social Identity Wheel acts as a guide for contributors to locate themselves, specifically in proximity to hip hop. The resulting approximations prompt participants to consider how our collaborative work requires us to locate ourselves within our seminar's learning community and negotiate our approaches for interaction with one another.

Major Assignment 2, "Composing CommUNITY Agreements," follows my own exposure to the co-designing of community agreements and assumptions from Native, Indigenous, and Black folx who practice anti-racist teaching and organizing principles. The students connect their individual identity explorations with the collaborative practice of composing and communicating engagement expectations. It is inevitable that we all bring assumptions to what we do, and these assumptions are often personally and/or collectively unexamined. Similarly, we rarely encounter learning spaces where shared agreements for interaction and engagement are established and revised collaboratively. Through these foundational community-building activities—and interrogating our social identities and collaborative composing community agreements—we work through these assumptions and arrive at understandings that support the sustainability of our learning community. The resulting cypher helps us locate and name what we need to be present and accounted for in a response-able way. Together, we take the occasion and invitation to respond while pondering what we need to ensure our ability to do so. Here, presence, accountability (Hill Collins), and response-ability (Morrison xi) are central measures of accessibility, meaningfulness, mindfulness, and respectfulness. At the conclusion of the first day's meeting, students are tasked with composing a commitment statement to ensure that students maintain personal and communal accountability in our learning spaces.

These foundational activities guide our conversations and act as a guiding learning culture for our interactions throughout the semester. Seminar contributors are encouraged to revisit this material often with focused intention at the mid-term and end-of-term stages. In these moments of revision, by way of extension, students are asked to evaluate shifts in their understanding of

themselves with, and in, the community. The resulting reflexivity, then, both motivates and shapes the cypher.

## Unit 2: Establishing Community Texts

The cypher experiences of critical examination, community building, and collaborative practice guide and shape our journey through hip hop. In fact, these three focal points motivate the primary focus of Unit 1: to understand how hip hop has offered alternative avenues to exploring a US story. It is through our listening, our dialogue, our compositions, our revisioning, and our community that we mediate our hip-hop explorations. Unit 2 begins with seminar contributors presenting their experience with hip hop through four composition efforts: annotating the seminar's zine, compiling a playlist assignment, establishing a digital notebook and working definitions, and composing a critical literacies narrative. Each of these efforts are revisited at later points in the term as a means of revising and re-envisioning one's engagement with, and proximity to hip hop.

Major Assignment 3, "Seminar Zine Annotation," deviates from the conventional, contractual form of the syllabus. Instead, "Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture" offers a zine–inspired narrative of our journey—my own imaginings of a narrative meditation across geographies of Hip Hop Feminisms (Kynard). The narrative presentation serves as an invitation to extend opportunities for dialogue and deeper understanding of the seminar's motivations and potential outcomes. As such, I invite students to annotate the syllabus shortly after it has been introduced. The addition of narratives, notes, interpretations, and questions acts as an extension of my own thinking. Annotation (and/as dialogue) therefore acts as a communication pathway for student contributors to be in conversation with themselves, with the material we engage, with me as a facilitator contributor, and with their peers. In this way, annotation is an extension of the cypher.

Major Assignment 4, "Playlist and Analysis" considers contributors' proximity to hip hop and rhetoric by asking them to compile a playlist. Afterward, the students perform an explanatory analysis of the playlist and its relevance to explorations of the following: their first semester at Pitt, first week of the semester, or a current/recent life happening. This preliminary engagement with critical composition and analysis serves as a direct pushback against the application and adaptations of diagnostic essays. Moving away from the prescriptive rhetoric and assumption that an assessment is needed first and foremost, I look instead to spaces that illuminate critical composing. The playlist presents extensive potentials for understanding how we interact with hip hop, writing, and rhetoric—passively and actively, intentionally and unintentionally, consciously and subconsciously.

Major Assignments 5 and 6 center Elaine Richardson's characterization of hip-hop literacies, where she posits:

Hip hop is a rich site of cultural production that has pervaded and been pervaded by almost every American institution and has made an extensive global impact. Hip hop discourse, no matter how commodified or 'blaxploited,' offers an interesting view of the human freedom struggle and aspects of the knowledge that people have about the world [...] all Afro American narrative can be traced (in part) to an "economics of slavery" and is tied to a bill of sale. Thus, like "traditional" African American language data, Hiphop discourse tells us a lot about socioeconomic stratification and the struggle between culture and capital. Hip hop discourse, like previous Afro-American expressive forms, is a Black creative response to absence and desire and a site of epistemological development. Though it is often seen as mere corporate orchestration, Hip hop is a site of identity negotiation. (9)

The meaning-making and culture-shaping possibilities imagined through hip hop connect to the preceding foundational assignments and shape the remainder of the semester. Using hip hop literacies as a guide, Major Assignment 5, "Developing Working Definitions," invites seminar contributors to develop working definitions of hip hop. When outlining this assignment, the directions are clear that the definition is and will remain in development. This linguistic and semantic negotiation builds on the cypher by asking seminar contributors to consider their personal experiences and observations around hip hop's usage. Students add working definitions to a Digital Notebook, which is inspired by and modeled after Howard Rambsy's Cultural Front blog (www.culturalfront.com). The notebook functions as an ongoing archive of responses, reflections, and citational artifacts. The Digital Notebook acts as a collection site and archive for material collected and inspired through the seminar. Building on the cypher, students revisit the working definitions at the conclusion of each unit, therein revealing hip hop's cultural evolution and each student's engagement. Ultimately, the progressive development and reevaluation of the working definition intends, as Richardson makes clear, to make space for the growing knowledge that people have about the world while leaving room for questions and ongoing revision.

Major Assignment 6, "Hip Hop Literacies Narrative," presents the occasion for the development of a hip hop literacies narrative. Drawing on current and developing knowledge of hip-hop culture, this assignment asks seminar contributors to compose an autobiographical essay. This essay centers relationships with communication (speaking, listening, writing, reading, and/or performance) and endeavors to challenge how we come to know and engage with hip hop. The essay emphasizes literacies as plural, encouraging student contributors to start with themselves and elaborate on their experiences, whether seen, heard, felt, witnessed, and/or performed. Similar to the working definition, the Hip Hop Literacies Narrative is revisited throughout the semester as an essential element of our cypher. The literacies project narrates our journey and provides space for accessing new paths into hip-hop epistemologies.

## Unit 3: Exploring Hip Hop's Foundations and The Rap Year Book

Unit 3 takes the seminar into hip hop's origin, across foundational elements, and through the development of the rap genre. Using Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk "The Danger of a Single Story" as a guide, this unit brings into focus the foundational assignments across the first third of the term through the questions: What dangers do we face by having a single story of the world? Of the US? Of hip hop? Responses to these questions introduce aural and oral compositions that call to bear the ways we engage assumptions, biases, critiques, and modes of analysis.

Major Assignment 7, "Reading Responses," encourages student—contributors to listen to recordings of Audre Lorde, Amiri Baraka, Gil Scot—Heron, and The Last Poets alongside readings on graffiti, beatboxing, scratching, DJing, emceeing, and breakdancing. The resulting reading responses are focused on summary, quotation, paraphrase, and critical reaction, and the assignment encourages students to compose one audio response and one written response from the critical clusters. Because sonic engagement is central to this seminar's design, the decision to include speaking as a mode of composition is essential for the seminar's impact.

At this point, the seminar turns to *The Rap Year Book: The Most Important Rap Song From Every Year Since 1979, Discussed, Debated, and Deconstructed* (henceforth *TRYB*) for a two-week engagement with oral, written, and visual rhetoric through critique and analysis writing. Shea Serrano's and Aurturo Torres' collection of 41 short essays and style maps presents more information than we are ever able to cover in one term. The encyclopedic delivery presents shared, equitable access to information that we can use in our discussion and project development because it provides a shared generalized knowledge for a learning space where we may have varied exposures and understandings of hip hop. This appeal to access complements the "starting with self" foundation presented in Units 1-2. The text does not function as an authoritative text, but instead a space to explore multimodal approaches to rhetorical analysis and critique writing. I move us through the first 15 years of the text, modeling and contextualizing these approaches. Major Assignment 8, "*TRYB* Presentation,"

invites student-contributors to compose presentations around rhetorical effectiveness and analysis for an assigned year. Major Assignment 9, "Extending TRYB," invites student-contributors to imagine their own contributions to TRYB. This invitation asks that students select a year more recent than 2014 (the end of TRYB's scope) and then develop a criterion for selecting the most important song in that year. They then compose an essay and style map.

Major Assignment 10 is "Revision Considerations," which opens space for a mid-term extension of the hip hop literacies narrative and working definitions. Because student-contributors have been encouraged to revisit these spaces throughout Unit 3, this intentional attention prompts an opportunity to further develop and represent our growing knowledge of hip-hop writing and culture.

# Unit 4: Critical Conversations and Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop and Why It Matters

Major Assignments 11, 12, 13, and 14 look to Tricia Rose's Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop and Why It Matters for conceptual framing. The text challenges cultural polarizations through its primary exercise, interrogating how hip hop informs our conversations about race and how race informs our conversation about hip hop. As such, the book is divided into two sections: hip hop's critics and hip hop's defenders. Each chapter explores claims around particular debates in hip hop: Does hip hop cause violence or merely reflect a violent ghetto culture? Is hip hop sexist or are its detractors simply anti-sex? Does the portrayal of black culture in hip hop undermine black advancement?

Major Assignments 11-14 are completed in two parts, across the two sections (critics and defenders) of the text. Student contributors are moved into small groups, composed of four or five students where they read and annotate one chapter from each section. Each group is tasked with completing Major Assignments 11 and 12, a presentation (5-7 minutes) of their respective chapters. Major Assignment 13 asks student-contributors to complete two Table Talk statements of their choosing from each section. These assignments bring together the range of skills covered throughout the term. I conclude Unit 4 with the final project, Major Assignment 14, which provides space for original contributions to the hip-hop wars. Students spend the remainder of the semester designing and developing a response to a debate within hip hop using the diversity of compositions that they explored throughout the term.

As the seminar progresses through this unit, students develop original research on the ongoing hip-hop wars presented in the text and throughout broader culture. Using Hip Hop Wars as our focus, we discuss the text's table of contents and introduction, moving through a series of individual and collaborative engagements (e.g., discussion questions and reflection prompts). We then move through the text's outlined structure of hip-hop debates which act as a model for the developing, debating, and debunking arguments. Together, we read, discuss, debate, and deconstruct in a live "Table Talk" activity. Student contributors are invited to a Table Talk where they are assigned a hip-hop speaker perspective from which to engage. These possibilities include, but are not limited to, hip-hop critics, hip-hop defenders, active consumers of hip-hop culture, passive consumers of hip-hop culture, and music mogul. We begin the live discussion by sharing general position statements and build on those positions through dialogues from the range of perspectives at the table. The primary purpose of these Table Talks is to challenge the oft-misappropriated seat at the table myth—that somehow having a seat at the table might influence change. Student contributors quickly see the need for deep ideological shifts and systemic changes. After 30 minutes of dialogue, we table the discussion, and all student-contributors are encouraged to compose a statement that reveals their stance on this particular debate.

## Unit 5: Co-Curricular Explorations

Within my first design and implementation of this seminar, I dreamed of a structure that would allow me to bring the hip-hop theories into a practical focus to make good on Barbara Christian's encouragement to avoid monolithic elitism and prescriptivism (see "Race for Theory"). That is, I was intentional about the course design's efforts to teach against assumption and reject liminal ideas of language, communication, and culture. I wanted students to see both the difficulties and beauties that hip hop allows. As a graduate student, I would invite (often virtually) members of the local hip-hop community into our learning space as speakers and encourage walks around campus and neighborhoods to locate hip-hop culture. The movement from graduate student to faculty opened possibilities to build a more robust community connection through co-curricular engagement activities.

Currently, the final unit of the seminar is designed to engage hip hop directly through co-curricular explorations, such as:

- Live DJ Sets: Local DJs will contribute to our learning community by delivering a live set and a brief talk about the practice and process.
- Graffiti Sightings: After a talk with local graffiti artists, student contributors are encouraged to explore, locate, and respond to graffiti sightings in spaces they encounter within a week's time.
- Hip-Hop Dance Instruction: In partnership with a local dance studio or performers, we move our learning community into a space

- where hip-hop dance instruction can be experienced. This activity is considered after an assessment of ability to ensure that the experience is safe and meaningful.
- Crate Digging at Record Shop: Part exploratory and part immersive, student contributors are invited to explore a local record shop by filing through vinyl records and listening to the records on record players. When there is funding support, student contributors are able to secure one record.
- Collaboratively Composing and Recording a Track: After listening to the albums and thinking through ways that sound might be carried into different spaces, we work together to compose lyrics to be recorded. In partnership with community-based recording studios, student contributors are able to experience a live recording interaction from composing lyrics to editing the recorded track.

Executing these activities varies each semester based on student participants' ability to engage, availability of community partners, and university support. At the conclusion of the co-curricular engagements, student contributors develop a reflection thread for Major Assignment 16, to be included in their digital notebooks1.

#### Reflection

Designing this seminar in 2016 was an act of survival. At that time, I was very unsure about whether or not I would complete graduate school. Hip hop saved me. Moreover, the Black noise that occupied my headphones as I wrote, as I walked to designated learning spaces, and as I sat through meetings, provided a soundtrack for my survival. I knew that if I were to survive graduate school, I had to do things that felt good to me and kept me going. In terms of my teaching responsibilities, that meant switching to hip hop as both a subject and a pedagogy. By rejecting particular reading sequences and assignments, I reinscribed my value in spaces that, during graduate school, had attempted to project an unwelcomed sense of indebtedness. In the tenure stream, teaching remains a requirement, as does the need for me to not only survive and but also thrive. For me, that means continuing to teach hip hop. Although the University of Pittsburgh's Black student population of 5% limits the opportunities to engage with Black students, I have found instruction in this space generally challenging and immeasurably rewarding. When Black students complete the seminar and pursue newly developed Black rhetoric seminars I am teaching within Pitt's Public and Professional Writing major, I clearly see the ways that seminars designed within the aforementioned theories and pedagogical approaches can serve as recruitment and retention tools.

When a former Vietnamese student invited me to the campus's student-led Chinese New Year celebration—because they now notice the traces of hiphop sounds in some of the dance programs—or a student felt inspired to study copyright law after recording an original track in a community studio, I see the ways that this seminar models expanded understandings of curricular reach and impact. When I recall the circulating energy in the classroom as students deconstruct logical fallacies in hip-hop debates and begin to challenge the fallacies they hold and circulate, I see the potential for similar seminars to continue re-narrating the past, present, and future in order to understand individuals, communities, and cultures. My designing and facilitation of "Whose World Is This?: Explorations in Hip Hop, Writing, and Culture" are testaments to my own thriving in worlds where I—a Black woman with a PhD—was not even meant to survive.

#### **Notes**

1. In 2008, The University of Pittsburgh introduced Outside the Classroom Curriculum (OCC), a university-wide initiative complete with "a collection of experiences, programs, and events at Pitt that help students to make the most of their collegiate experience" ("Outside"). The OCC is "open to all Pitt students, regardless of major or career path ... [and] helps students develop highly desirable character traits and life skills" ("Outside"). When I arrived at Pitt, ten years after the program's inception, I was fascinated by the initiative that included an honors society, a credit-based system for tracking movement through the curriculum, and an app for navigating and archiving experiences. I therefore see this co-curricular structure as an opportunity to move the moments of engagement away from incentivized learning and partner with faculty to develop opportunities that connect students to new and expanded learning.

### **Works Cited**

- Adiche, Chimamanda Ngozi. "The Danger of a Single Story." *TED: Ideas Worth Spreading*, October 2009. ted.com/talks/chimamanda\_ngozi\_adichie\_the\_danger\_of\_a\_single\_story
- Adjapong, Edmund S. and Christopher Edmin. "Rethinking Pedagogy in Urban Spaces: Implementing Hip–Hop Pedagogy in the Urban Science Classroom." *Journal of Urban Learning Teaching and Research*, vol. 11, 2015, pp. 66–77.
- Ahmed, Sara. On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Bartholomae, David, Anthony Petrosky, and Stacey Waite. *Resources for Teaching Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers*, 10<sup>th</sup> edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.
- Christian, Barbara. "The Race for Theory." *Cultural Critique* No. 6, The Nature and Context of Minority Discourse. Spring, 1987, pp. 51–63.
- Durham, Aisha, Brittney C. Cooper, and Susana M. Morris. "The Stage Hip–Hop Feminism Built: A New Directions Essay." *Signs*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2013, pp. 724–737.

- Faculty Diversity Dashboard. University of Pittsburgh Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. diversity.pitt.edu/social–justice/faculty–dashboard.
- Hill Collins, Patricia. Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology. Routledge, 1991.
- Howell, Junia, Sara Goodkind, Leah Jacobs, Dominique Branson and Elizabeth Miller.
- "Pittsburgh's Inequality across Gender and Race." Gender Analysis White Papers. City of Pittsburgh's Gender Equity Commission, 2019.
- Jones, Nasir (Nas). "The World Is Yours." Illmatic, Columbia, 1994.
- Kynard, Carmen. "All I Need Is One Mic': A Black Feminist Community Meditation on the Work, the Job, and the Hustle (& Why So Many of Yall Confuse This Stuff)." *Community Literacy Journal*. vol. 14, no. 2, Spring 2020.
- —. "Education, Liberation & Black Radical Traditions for the 21st Century: Carmen Kynard's Teaching & Research Site on Race, Writing, and the Classroom." carmenkynard.com.
- Mock, Brentin. "Pittsburgh: A 'Most Livable' City, but Not for Black Women." Bloomberg CityLab. September 20, 2019. bloomberg.com/news/articles/2019-09-20/how-pittsburgh-fails-black-women-in-6-charts.
- Morrison, Toni. Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination. Vintage Books, 1993.
- National Center for Education Statistics. "Race/ethnicity of college faculty." Fall 2018, nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=61.
- Philyaw, Deesha. "The Not–So Secret Lives of Black Pittsburgh Women." Bloomberg CityLab. 23 April 2021. bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-04-23/pittsburgh-is-not-a-livable-city-for-black-women.
- O'Donnell, Mary Rose. "New Gen Ed Requirements Encourage Cultural Understanding." The Pitt News. January 7, 2019. pittnews.com/article/138967/top-stories/new-gen-ed-requirements-encourage-cultural-understanding/.
- "Outside of the Classroom Curriculum." University of Pittsburgh Student Affairs. studentaffairs.pitt.edu/occ/.
- Rambsy, Howard. "Cultural Front: A notebook on literary art, digital humanities, and emerging ideas." culturalfront.org.
- Richardson, Elaine. Hiphop Literacies. Routledge, 2007.
- Rose, Tricia. Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk About When We Talk About Hip Hop and Why It Matters. Civitas Books, 2008.
- Serrano, Shea and Aurturo Torres. *The Rap Year Book: The Most Important Rap Song From Every Year Since 1979, Discussed, Debated, and Deconstructed.* Abrams Image, 2015.
- The Combahee River Collective Statement: Black Feminist Organizing in the Seventies and *Eighties*. Kitchen Table, 1986.
- University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. "Social Identity Wheel." drive.google.com/file/d/1w7yo6ljyS0pnvEO-BOrE7Aohmaa9n5Jf/view.
- University of Pittsburgh Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. "Climate/Inclusion Initiatives." diversity.pitt.edu/social-justice/climateinclusion-initiatives. Accessed 20 August 2021.