Global Hip Hop Studies
Volume 5 Numbers 1 & 2
 https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00085_1
Received 31 August 2022; Accepted 4 November 2022; Published Online October 2024

EMILIE SOUYRI
Université Côte d'Azur

Le hip hop à l'école: Practising the 'fifth element' as a pedagogical tool in French schools

ABSTRACT

There has been very little dialogue between hip hop pedagogy research in English-speaking countries and in France so far. Through an analysis of fourteen teachers and hip hop educators, I provide a preliminary exploration of the current status of hip hop education in France. I suggest that even though French hip hop pedagogues are not familiar with critical pedagogy or culturally relevant pedagogy, they do share key questions, themes and practices with their counterparts described in the existing anglophone literature. French artists and teachers participating in this study display a strong sense of how its aesthetics can nourish 'knowledge of self' in a way that the founders of the hip hop movement might be inclined to embrace. They also all insist on building a locally anchored community of learners to foster knowledge transmission and underline the decolonial dimension of the hip hop knowledge they teach. These views on how hip hop can and should be used to transmit knowledge contribute to define the critical core of hip hop pedagogy and lead us to consider roadmaps to develop the praxis dimension of hip hop pedagogy that seems to have previously been neglected by French hip hop pedagogues.

KEYWORDS

hip hop
rap
Paulo Freire
culturally relevant pedagogy
praxis
critical race theory
classroom
France

The specific field of hip hop pedagogy, which has elicited much attention across the Channel and the Atlantic, remains virtually nonexistent in the Hexagon, apart from a few isolated books or articles (Tripier-Mondancin 1998[1]; Faure and Garcia 2005; Patard 2009; André et al. 2011; Jésu 2017; Weill 2018). These contributions overlook the connections of hip hop pedagogy to critical pedagogy, or the rest of the anglophone literature on the subject. The language barrier and the relative invisibility of Paulo Freire (whose *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*'s French translation was republished last year, after a long hiatus) may partly explain this oversight (Freire 2021). Hopefully, it is only a matter of time before the work of French scholars on critical pedagogy (De Cock and Pereira 2019; Hedjerassi 2020) has an impact on this area of study.

While a separate study would be required to determine the precise frequency of hip hop workshops in French schools and their historical progression, it is clear that the socialist policies beginning in the 1990s under the impetus of Culture Minister Jack Lang – whose nickname 'Jack the rapper' (Hammou 2012: 126) speaks for itself – have allowed hip hop workshops to become a regular fixture in some youth and community centres (Bordes 2003; Lafargue de Grangeneuve 2008). And while the availability of funding ebbs and flows, it seems that the government-subsidized *contrats locaux d'éducation artistique* (CLEA or local contracts for artistic education) have played a large part in helping hip hop artists find their way into schools and universities since 1992. Even though these CLEA contracts, meant to leverage the arts as a tool to foster academic success among underprivileged youth, only reach roughly 10 per cent of students in the country (Hammou 2012; Moirin et al. 2012), they are significant enough to call for an analysis of the pedagogical methods of the artists who benefit from them.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The following ethnographic research intends to unveil the way not only artists, who teach hip hop workshops in junior and high schools, but also teachers, who use hip hop in their classrooms, understand and transmit the fifth element of hip hop: 'knowledge'.

Knowledge is understood here as the fifth element of hip hop that unites MCing, DJing, graffiti and dance through 'the aesthetic, social, intellectual, and political identities, beliefs, behaviors, and values produced and embraced by its members' (Morgan and Bennett 2011: 177). It is meant to promote 'knowledge of self' that is the 'Afro-diasporic mix of spiritual and political consciousness designed to empower members of oppressed groups' (Gosa 2015: 57). In other words, the hip hop concept of knowledge is, by definition, a decolonial one that is oriented towards social transformation from the inside (Seidel et al. 2022). It entails both a factual approach to knowledge understood as curriculum or disciplinary content (knowledge about music, beat-making, dance, history of hip hop, for example), and a political approach in which 'knowledge of self' implies understanding the identities, values and beliefs promoted by the members of the hip hop movement. This double dimension of knowledge, at once factual and political, informs each other much in the same way as curriculum and hidden curriculum in schools[2] and, as such, reflects a philosophy of education that requires further exploration.

To study this parallel, I engaged in fourteen extensive semi-directive interviews, via Zoom or in person, with both teachers and artists in France disposing of varying levels and practice of 'hip hop knowledge' between May 2021

1. Tripier-Mondancin's article stands out as the only one that is the work of a music teacher who gives an impressive amount of contextual knowledge on hip hop culture while describing ways to bridge rap and 'traditional' forms of music. As such it resembles the seminal article by Morrell and Duncan-Andrade in 2002.

2. The concept of hidden curriculum refers to all the values that are passed on tacitly at school through the teachers' teachings methods or lack thereof. One frequently quoted example is that of teachers who recurringly (consciously or not) dialogue with boys rather than girls, thus reinforcing gender stereotypes.

and July 2022. The qualitative research obtained aims to present the educators' vision of knowledge and the common ground they share with culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP; Gay 2000; Petchauer 2015; Ladson-Billings 1995; Kim and Pulido 2015) and critical pedagogy in a very organic manner (only one of them had heard of Freire, none of them had heard of CRP). Keywords were isolated as soon as the interviews were transcribed in order to identify recurring themes, which were then explored in follow-up conversations via audio or written messages over the same period. The teachers who were not aware of the origins of hip hop history were presented with the above definition of 'knowledge of self' as part of the questionnaire and subsequently asked to share their own vision of hip hop knowledge. All of the artists involved were familiar with 'hip hop knowledge' and provided their own version. In total, I interviewed nine artists (three DJs: Mac Larnaque, Vin's Da Cuero, Malik Berki; and five rappers: Ismael Metis, Pumpkin, Loréa, Punchlyne, Datitcha; and one amateur rapper who presides the wakeupmouvement[3] NGO in Nice, Julien Monteiro[4]). At least two of these artists are also former breakers. They have all given numerous DJing/rap/spoken word poetry workshops at schools or in juvenile correction facilities. Datitcha, for example, was a high school English teacher and now raps and makes YouTube videos about how to practise it. These artists were chosen for their enthusiasm about both hip hop and teaching.

The six teachers that I contacted over the same period had different levels of connection to hip hop culture but were also very enthusiastic about it and about teaching. MG Merveilles, a French literature teacher in the Paris banlieue of Courbevoie, who has been teaching middle and high school students, moonlights as a rap journalist. She has created the podcast *Passe ton rap d'abord* with her students.[5] Kednop, a philosophy teacher near Toulouse has been an amateur rapper for over twenty years and recently had a moment of fame on TikTok by sharing a video of himself rapping a presentation on the method for the commentary of a philosophical text (an exercise required for high school graduation). Yass Sogo, who teaches French literature at a middle school on the French Riviera and rap workshops in his spare time, was a special guest on Youssoupha's[6] concert in Grasse in October 2021. Middle school teachers Liloye, who teaches French in the Nord department; Christelle, who teaches music in the Var; and Sandrine, a PE teacher in the Marne have only fairly recently started their hip hop journey. On top of the interviews, I observed one of Ismaël's workshops at a middle school as well as a joint workshop given by Malik and Ismaël with sixth-grade students and assisted the live recording of one of MG's podcast *Passe ton rap d'abord* where one of Ismaël's song was discussed by her students after I introduced him to MG. Finding these participants has not been easy. Online searches, social media searches and word of mouth contributed to build the sample. There was also a snowballing effect. Ismaël Metis pointed me towards Punchlyne, Loréa, Vin's Da Cuero, Pumpkin, Malik and Liloye. Datitcha directed me to MacLarnaque.

The theoretical context given to analyse these interviews is that developed by anglophone scholars, who have extensively underlined the convergence of hip hop education, CRP and critical pedagogy (Akom 2009; Alim et al. 2011; Camangian 2008; Duncan-Andrade and Morrell 2005; Ibrahim 1999; Leigh Kelly and Sawyer III 2019; Porfilio and Viola 2012; Stovall 2006). These scholars have focused on generative themes, which is to say, topics that are drawn from the experience of the students themselves rather than from their teachers and which elicit more curiosity for learning. Their research has also suggested

3. https://www.facebook.com/wakeupmouvement/. Accessed 29 August 2022.

4. All the interviewees elected not to be anonymous. I use pen names or artist names for the interviewees who have one, and first names for all others.

5. 'Passe ton rap d'abord' is a pun on 'passe ton BAC d'abord' (that would thus turn 'graduate high school first' into 'graduate rap first'). See https://shows.acast.com/passe-ton-rap-d-abord/episodes/verso-vs-porcs. Accessed 16 August 2022.

6. Youssoupha started his solo career in 2005 and is known for his conscious style of rap. He holds a master's degree in communication from the Sorbonne Nouvelle.

ways in which hip hop could help provide counter-narratives for the overwhelmingly Eurocentric syllabus (Williams 2007; Pulido 2009; Hallman 2009; Petchauer 2017), in line with the counter-narratives that critical race theory scholars have been calling for (Delgado 1989; Delgado and Stefancic 2000; Yosso 2006). It underlines how CRP, along with 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al. 1992), can allow for the experiences, traditions and histories of uprooted, invisibilized and oppressed populations to be forefront in the classroom without compromising academic rigor (Smith-Maddox and Solórzano 2002; Ladson-Billings 2009).

There has been a recent call for a deeper analysis of the musicality, visual and physical expressivity of the genre – in other words its aesthetics – in both French and anglophone hip hop studies (Carinos and Hammou 2020; Petchauer 2015). The initial forays of pedagogues into hip hop culture have generally concentrated on texts and their political messages, but Petchauer has highlighted another area of research that has conceptualized 'hip hop not as a text to be analysed or included in a curriculum but rather as a set of aesthetic practices containing and producing situated ways of doing (and being)' (2009: 961). This approach entails ideological aspects with, for instance, 'a critical wariness towards formal institutions of learning' (Petchauer 2009: 961) that can take shape in the use of cyphers in the classroom (Williams 2015), or a reflection on sampling, but can be more technical as well, with the use of rap as mnemonics (Petchauer 2007). While Petchauer tends to envision the aesthetics of hip hop as 'form rather than content' (2015: 79), we need to insist that 'knowledge of self' is deeply and meaningfully informed by aesthetics. Or as Benjamine Weill has argued 'all of us have aesthetic experiences that express our relationship with the world' (2018: 178). All human beings experience aesthetic emotions, and those experiences inform our identity in a way that is crucial both for everyone's 'knowledge of self' and for our curiosity of the world. Since aesthetics in traditional education is rarely considered central, and 'knowledge of self' through aesthetics even less so, it is, at least in part, through this focus that hip hop can contribute to improve teaching, sharpening its focus on a social justice curriculum.

The analysis of the interviews presented here is organized under four main themes. First, the interviews reveal how teachers and educators underline 'knowledge of self' through an embodied sense of aesthetics that restores students' expressivity and physicality and helps build a desire to learn. Second, they highlight how 'knowledge of self' cannot happen if teachers do not build a community of learners in the classroom. Third, they show that building this community of learners calls for a decolonial approach to knowledge. These interviews also help us foreground a sense of tension and uneasiness regarding hip hop knowledge, which I will elaborate on in the final part.

'KNOWLEDGE OF SELF' THROUGH AESTHETICS

To Weill, hip hop is highly embodied through its focus on a musical beat that reflects the beats of our hearts, the beats of all rhythms in life. Some contend that even graffiti, hip hop's visual form, has rhythm (Fieni 2012). While in 'virtually all other musical currents, the rhythm is meant to merge into the melody, to be a simple backdrop that allows the melody to be transcended, […], in hip hop the beat reigns supreme' (Weill 2018: 181). Through the beat, hip hop focuses on the body, 'our common denominator', and facilitates the aesthetic experience, understood here as a sensory experience of beauty that

creates pleasure or appreciation (Shusterman 2019). As educator John Dewey pointed out almost a century ago: '[Art] quickens us from the slackness of routine and enables us to forget ourselves by finding ourselves in the delight of experiencing the world about us in its varied qualities and forms' ([1934] 1958: 110). The centrality of an embodied aesthetic experience to promote knowledge of self is not lost on the educators I interviewed. To them, aesthetics is at the core of the mechanics of knowledge. Two of the interviewees paid particular attention to the beauty of the place where knowledge is transmitted, mindful that learning can be impeded by an ugly environment, in which colours or furniture somehow block the way. Pumpkin was particularly sensitive to how the 'glum colours and architecture' at school can change the class dynamic, and Julien paid specific attention to how a cypher that got rid of obstructive, inaesthetic desks and chairs could contribute to unlock class energies and foster knowledge transmission.

Literature teacher Liloye explained how her enthusiasm for the hip hop class project that she participates in stems from her own experience as a middle school student in a class where music was taught for eight to ten hours per week. 'It was incredible, she explained, how much it boosted my self-esteem, how much it made us work on our bodies, because it was real work on our bodies, and on how we could work as a group'. Even though Liloye was trained as a classical musician, it was obvious to her from the start that hip hop needed to be central in her school project. From the music and language skills that were to be taught, to the dance moves and the graffiti mural that students were to be involved in, the project was saturated with hip hop aesthetics. To Liloye, the rationale for the project was clear:

> That is the music they listen to and [we need] to start from them and from their desire. And the music doesn't lie. If they listen to hip hop and there is a real desire somewhere in relation to this music which speaks to them, to their feelings and their desire to express themselves, that's where we need to go.

Liloye saw her students' aesthetic experience as a key factor to be leveraged in teaching. Her mentioning of desire is reminiscent of the way Michel Foucault ties it to knowledge, which itself recalls Afrika Bambaataa's choice of 'love and having fun' as two of the central components of his motto. When Bambaataa was dropping speeches by Malcolm X and Martin Luther King in his DJ sets, redesigning hip hop as edutainment (Gosa 2015), he was expressing the same convergence Foucault pointed out in 1975 when he explained: 'I would say the first thing we should be learning […] is that knowledge is in the end deeply connected to pleasure, that there is certainly a way to eroticize knowledge, to make it highly enjoyable' ([1975] 2014: 1655).

For knowledge to be pleasurable, for it to provoke the kind of insatiable curiosity needed to achieve mastery, Freire has shown that it needs to be connected to people's own lived experience, it needs to speak to them (Shor 1993). But while Freirean educators tend to brush past the idea of pleasure to concentrate on political transformation, Foucault and Bambaataa's insights suggest that overlooking aesthetics may be detrimental to the social justice project at the core of critical pedagogy. As Foucault has underlined in the same paragraph: 'Imagine if people had a knowledge frenzy like a sex frenzy. Can you imagine the amount of people lining up at the school gate? But that would be a total social disaster!' (2001: 1655). The social disaster Foucault

is referring to is nothing short of a complete dismantling of current power dynamics. In other words, Foucault suggests that whenever knowledge is made pleasurable and desire for all kinds of knowledge arises, social justice stands a chance to be well served.

In critical pedagogy, the focus is less on how pleasurable knowledge is and more on how connected it is to the learner's experience. Ira Shor insists that critical pedagogy seeks to uncover the

> words, ideas, conditions, and habits central to [students] experience. From this material they identify 'generative words and themes' […] these generative subjects are familiar words, experiences, situations, and relationships [which are then] 'problematized' by the teacher in class through a critical dialogue, that is, re-presented back to students as problems to reflect and act on.
>
> (1993: 31)

What critical pedagogues tend to overlook is that the generative themes that spark discussion and the thirst – or 'frenzy' – for knowledge can also be found in students' artistic tastes for visual arts, dance or music. As DJ and educator Malik Berki explains: 'If from the get-go you tell them: "we're going to talk about music but what you're listening to is crap", you've already lost the game. You haven't even started, and you've already lost'.

Indeed, discarding students' aesthetic preferences as irrelevant not only deprives the teacher of a way to connect with them and trigger their thirst for knowledge but also reasserts a power dynamic where the student is considered as unable to contribute to the relationship. Whatever the type of audience, rapper Loréa always asks each participant in her workshop what 'hooks them up' and always keeps her judgement to herself. For rapper Ismaël Metis, surpassing the urge to apply his aesthetic judgement, and the symbolic violence that comes with it, was a pivotal moment in his pedagogy: 'Having the right to say what is right, true, good [and by extension beautiful] and to define all so-called universal value', as Bourdieu explained, is an 'important weapon', and it constitutes the source of the symbolic violence that is exerted to disqualify those who see things differently (1998: 143). Some ten years ago, as a 23-year-old rapper teaching a workshop in a juvenile correction facility, Ismaël had an epiphany that revealed how his passing of aesthetic judgement on the rap kids listened to placed him on the side of the oppressor who disqualifies others:

> They tell me: 'this is old people's music'. And, you know, I saw myself becoming an old fart, explaining to them that no, the music I brought was good and what they were listening to was shit. And I really believed it in fact. I really believed that rap was better before, and anyway it's the text that counts, and JUL[7] is all crap. And that's the beginning of everything. I see myself hitting the wall. I see there's no dialogue. It wasn't working. So, I decided to have them listen to the music they liked […] and from there we did some straightforward things. They made some paintings and explained why they chose this song, what the message was, what point of view it had.

As a teacher eager to pass on hip hop knowledge, Ismaël understood early on that his students' aesthetic tastes and experiences had to be respected,

7. JUL is a French rapper who became the emblem of Marseille rap. Discarded and mocked by many at the start of his career, he is now a staple of French rap, with his festive depiction of ghetto life and occasional incursions into pop music. His minimalist, self-composed beat is also vastly influential internationally. In April 2022, US rapper 6ix9ine freestyled on the beat of JUL's megahit 'Bande Organisée'.

treasured and leveraged, even though his own aesthetic proclivity may differ. Christelle, a music teacher, explains how the joy and pride students expressed when recognizing PNL[8] in a music quiz motivated her to learn more about rap and be able to teach about it too. However, students' tastes keep changing with hip hop, which is anything but a frozen art form. Aine McGlynn insists that '[i]n its purest form, hip hop is dynamic and constantly morphing' (2007: 269), which rapper and ex-high school teacher Datitcha was also adamant about:

> I say to myself wait, […] if you start to make your videos on old school rap and only use what you listen to, then, man, for real, you're going to segment rap and you're going to be like those American rappers who didn't validate mumble rap or drill. I don't wanna do that because either I stop rapping and do something else, or I understand the evolution of this artistic movement. Because it's not *my* rap, it's rap.

The elusiveness of rap demands that artists, just like teachers, stay 'on top of the game'. The latter generations will always invent new forms of expression that the former ones will struggle to understand. But for most interviewees, hip hop and teaching can converge to keep their own curiosity towards their students alive. Without having read Freire's dialogic approach to teaching, teachers display the same interest in learning from their students and becoming 'jointly responsible for a process in which all grow' (1970: 80). DJ Mac Larnaque sums it up quite efficiently in saying that lessons are always a 'two-way street' for her. She does not come to class as 'an old dinosaur' but as 'someone who wants a dialog'. This openness is also what fosters the students' curiosity for new contents and discoveries. As Yass underscores:

> I tell them that I have no preconceived notions about what they listen to. They need to feel respected and safe because they'll often tell me: 'I listen to JUL, or I listen to Soprano'[9] and frequently adults will say 'but what you listen to is lousy'. Personally, I have no issue with [the fact that they listen to JUL etc…] and I tell them: 'that's all great, you do you'. […] This generation listens to a form of rap that is rather vulgar and very childish. So, what I try to do is to modify their views on rap, to show them that some lyrics are more stylistically demanding than others […] they like it […] and I tell them: 'don't say that to make me happy', but actually, they are genuinely interested. They wanna learn the ropes.

Yass, like Loréa, Vin's, Pumpkin or even Malik and Ismaël, who are all in their early thirties to early forties, have a hard time connecting to some of the rap teenagers listen to now. But they share the same desire to avoid shaming students for their tastes. Without necessarily being Bourdieu scholars, they understand the damage that the disowning of their students' aesthetic enthusiasms can cause, and while deep down they may despise JUL and Soprano as childish and vulgar or altogether subpar artists, they all strive to find connections between their aesthetics and those of the students' in order to lead them into new cultural territories. Vin's pointed out that even if his taste in rap was notably different from the trap and drill or the 'zumba rap'[10] of JUL and Maître Gims, he was keen to show students the abundance of what he considers 'excellent' trap tracks by Kendrick Lamar or Jack Harlow, who enriched their tunes with jazz riffs. While some workshop leaders like Yass or Loréa sought

8. PNL is a hip hop band composed of two brothers. They made 'cloud music' popular in France with their own groundbreaking version of it.
9. Soprano is a French rapper who markets most of his music to younger audiences.
10. In 2013, Rohff disparaged fellow rapper Maître Gims's style of music as being closer to zumba than rap. Maître Gims' more danceable type of rap was thereafter branded 'zumba rap'.

to focus students on rappers they viewed as 'aesthetically demanding' in order to work on language and style, Datitcha focused on an artist who is more popular with young people, Koba laD,[11] to discuss his musicality:

> On my online pedagogical videos, I listen to tunes that are buzzing now, and I try to extract the positive in them. For instance, Koba LaD, that cat is filthy, man. He is apologetic of drug selling […] but what I dig in a Koba tune, that I unpacked, is his vocal performance. So, if you dig rap and you wanna understand the artistic project of Koba LaD, you can access it through his voice. There are tons of rappers who have a conclusive tone at the end of the bar and he starts up the following bar with a tone that is not conclusive at all so he has an amazing vocal flexibility, it's crazy.[12]

Even poor lyricists can constitute worthwhile sources of investigation if teachers are ready to venture away from text into the musicality of rap. In that respect, hip hop requires an analysis that is unsettling for classically trained literature teachers. It demands that teachers suspend their aesthetic judgement in order to stay open and curious about what new art can bring to the table. This aesthetic openness and curiosity is, in turn, indispensable to foster a true sense of community in the classroom.

COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS AND KNOWLEDGE

The openness at the core of KRS-One's motto 'each one, teach one' is a key building block for increased collaboration at school. When a student told Vin's and Pumpkin that he only listened to French variety music, they still found a way to include him. They used hip hop's propensity to explore unexpected cross-pollinations in order to build a stronger sense of community in the classroom. Deftly overcoming the group's initial reluctance, they managed to get the whole class enthusiastically rapping a trap tune that sampled the intro of Michel Berger's 'la groupie du pianiste'.[13] These incursions into musical genres outside of hip hop are very typical of what hip hop can do: sampling reveals a thirst for reinterpretation of older and different styles. Cultural knowledge can be transmitted by reusing older music, like a code. As Petchauer has underlined, sampling, which was a technique that was elaborated 'because of restricted [material] circumstances and not in spite of them' (2015: 82), also contributes to unsettling the power relations at play wherever artistic judgements take place. Judgements that impose a hierarchy between styles of music are interrupted by the circulation of these potentially clashing genres within hip hop. Moreover, thanks to sampling, those who could afford to make music were no longer the only ones making it. The mechanisms of cultural 'distinction' that Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron (1979) highlighted as sources of exclusion and perpetuation of hierarchies are disrupted when one samples other styles of music or older tracks because the music perpetually looks outwards to genres whether they are generally considered noble or not. This very circulation builds inclusion by making cultural distinction and its associated notion of a hierarchy between styles irrelevant.

Curiosity also informs the creativity of artists whose performances truly engage with their audiences. Knowledge transmission, as Edmund Adjapong points out, can be enriched by thinking of pedagogy in terms of aesthetic performances (in Emdin and Adjapong 2018). He underlines the intrinsic

11. Koba LaD is famous for his unusual flow, his voice sometimes sounding like that of Homer Simpson. He enjoys displaying his so-called lack of education in a provocative way, going so far as to claim he never heard of IAM, one of the founding groups of French rap.

12. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5XIrqlteKI&ab_channel=DaTitcha. Accessed 19 August 2022.

13. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQFVpPdMFoI&ab_channel=chustiine. Accessed 19 August 2022.

parallels between teachers and artists, who both 'take the stage'. They share a displayed mastery and a capacity to seduce their audiences by connecting with them. But with any performance also comes the risk of exposure, shame and embarrassment. As Malik explains, when he performs in front of his students, he garners a form of respect: 'on fait la preuve par le geste' ('with a show, we demonstrate by doing'). A live artistic performance also builds students' trust because they respect the courage it takes to be vulnerable in front of them. And both respect and trust are indispensable for the passing of knowledge. At least at the beginning of hip hop history, cyphers' emphasis was on mutual support. This emphasis can foster the appropriate climate for transmission. But this cannot happen until both teachers and students understand the importance of vulnerability in the classroom. As PE teacher Sandrine explained, most of her colleagues do not broach hip hop as a dance form, despite the students' enthusiasm, for fear of the aesthetic dimension of 'the sensitive body' at play in dance in general, and hip hop movements in particular:

> At some point, if you want kids to be willing to commit, well whether you are a dancer or not, as a teacher you need to get out of your comfort zone and throw yourself into it. Kids are super receptive to that. You unlock situations this way when they see you dancing.

By taking a risk in front of students, Sandrine models the vulnerability she then asks of students when they perform in front of each other.[14] The risk-taking required in a performance forces teachers to present themselves as embodied, vulnerable human beings rather than pure intellects. This risk factor has also helped Kednop in his relationship to his philosophy students in high school. From the first moment he rapped in class, the motivation levels of the students changed. They used to be uninterested, and suddenly Kednop explains:

> The fact that they saw me through this new angle, saw that the teacher is not only a teacher with his books but also 'someone who understands us, who's close to us', it really created a different relationship. They were much more willing to learn after that.

As Christopher Knaus (2011) and countless others have argued, students do not leave their emotional baggage and needs on the classroom doorstep. The same applies to teachers. So when teachers risk themselves in an artistic performance, they 'get real' and create propitious conditions for learning by acknowledging the humanity in themselves through the emotions, desires, fears and hopes that transpire in their performances. By offering to perform at the onset, teachers are, so to speak, levelling the playing field and making it easier to create a 'community of learners' (Ladson-Billings 2009: 60) that both Ladson-Billings and the interviewees see as indispensable to transmitting knowledge. Ismaël, for instance, sees Bambaataa's motto of unity as no coincidence, for it reveals what hip hop knowledge is really about:

> [I]t's not necessarily transmitting knowledge about hip hop, it's transmitting knowledge in the hip hop spirit, in the hip hop way, with the codes and the values of hip hop, that is to say, the values 'each one, teach one; peace love, unity, having fun'. From the moment we are here and we are inspired by these values, we are doing hip hop knowledge.

14. She has recently detailed her approach to performance and the concept of 'coo-petition' – a contraction of cooperation and competition – in an article aimed at PE teachers (Beulaigne 2021).

> It's what KRS one says. When Médine[15] does a song about the Rohinga, it's hip hop knowledge because he transmits the history of the Rohinga in the hip hop spirit.

In other words, as Dead Prez would say, knowledge is bigger than hip hop. As it entails 'empowerment, self-esteem and equality', it is crucial to any social justice project. 'Art is […] a mode of augmenting community', Anna Hicky-Moody pointed out (2013: 87). Datitcha highlights how teaching students about rhythm, by having them mark the beat with their arms in a cypher, fosters a collaborative atmosphere where students feel united and free to let go of tensions, fears and shyness. For Datitcha, the collective beat-marking is conducive to knowledge transmission – here specifically, he teaches about musical techniques in hip hop, and the centrality of the beat but that leads to opening the students up to a broader understanding of the importance of hip hop as cultural heritage. Because all students are performing the same gesture at the same time, teaching them about beat-marking also helps foster a sense of community. Indeed, Datitcha's intuition is confirmed by research: a sense of community is pivotal in increasing achievement in a classroom setting (Wighting et al. 2009; Ladson-Billings 2009). The sense of community, of unity that lays at the core of hip hop values, or at least at the core of its founding myths (Chang 2011; Williams 2015), is thus fundamental in facilitating learning in more ways than one. It is both a prerequisite and a goal in the philosophy of hip hop education. The idea is at the forefront of rapper and educator Punchlyne's vision of hip hop education: 'Kool Herc's block party was meant for everyone to be able to get together. Rap is a means to get people together. These hip hop values have always resonated in me'.

For Malik, even art is secondary to the goal of community-building:

> What matters is that moment when you are in a room with people coming from different places socially, geographically, culturally and when you start sharing together, building stuff that you will then show to others. That's what matters. Art is the vector, the means to that end.

In line with Malik's example, teachers Christelle, Sandrine, Liloye and MG invite artists into their classrooms as often as they can, not for the artistic experience in and of itself, as much as the cross-pollination that can occur. Connections can be transdisciplinary, as with Christelle, who invited a graffer to her music class, or with Liloye who helped introduce her students to dancers, DJs, graffers and rappers. In a more expected manner, PE teacher Sandrine encourages her students to try out a breakdance class at the community centre, and MG invites local rappers to perform and then be interviewed by the students for her podcast sessions.[16] The incursions of 'real' life into the classroom give students a sense of community attachment and convey the idea that knowledge is present outside of textbooks and traditional curricula.

DECOLONIAL KNOWLEDGE

The presence of performing artists in traditional school settings triggers questions about what constitutes legitimate knowledge within the curriculum and hidden curriculum. As Gosa underlined, Bambaataa was profoundly inspired by the movie *Zulu* (1964) in which Zulu warriors defeat the British invaders by terrifying them with the song of their beating shields. 'In the same way',

15. Médine is a second-generation French rapper of Algerian descent. He has been described by Emmanuelle Carinos as an artist who 'embodies the fundamentals of [the] culture', with his 'love of sharp words, controversial thoughts and confrontation' (https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/13/arts/music/medine-france-rap.html. Accessed 22 August 2022).

16. For US examples of partnerships between teachers and the hip hop community, see, for instance, Akom (2009).

Gosa writes, 'Bambaataa envisioned that music, dance, and a renewed sense of African pride could defeat drug dealers and hopelessness in the South Bronx' (2015: 61). Various hip hop scholars have emphasized the fact that not all 'hip hop heads' were seeing these notions as pivotal to the culture. However, without romanticizing the origins of hip hop or oversimplifying a trend that has always been eclectic, it is worth considering how founding myths of hip hop can help educators reflect on what knowledge is worth transmitting and how best to transmit it. More importantly, even if Bambaataa's theory of knowledge has been sometimes defined as a 'hodgepodge' of 'any and all spiritual beliefs, metaphysics, science and mathematics, world history, and hidden insights from alien conspiracy theories and Hollywood movies' (Gosa 2015: 64), his influence, and the influence of the hip hop movement in general, appears to have consistently brought together artists and teachers, whose philosophies of education align rather well with Ladson-Billing's CRP especially when it comes to acknowledging the importance of knowing one's own cultural roots in order to know oneself and create a community of learners.

Indeed community-building is impossible if part of the national community is recurrently being excluded and overlooked by the curriculum. Back in 1989, KRS-One summarized the importance of decolonizing the curriculum: 'It seems to me in a school that's ebony, African history should be pumped up steadily, but it's not and this has to stop' ('You Must Learn' in the album *Ghetto Music: The Blueprint of Hip Hop*). In France, the very same critique of a western-centric curriculum that conveniently overlooks the racism of the Enlightenment philosophy guiding the French revolution[17] was voiced by critically acclaimed rapper Kalash Criminel who sang in his 2017 song 'T'es Mort':

> J'rappe la rue, la violence
> Mais j'le fais d'une autre manière (sauvagerie)
> J'traumatise la langue de Molière (tah tah tah)
> T'as vu ce qu'ils pensaient des noirs?
> Les philosophes des Lumières.[18]

The need to deconstruct French history exemplified here would not be disavowed by critical race theorists in the United States. Datitcha's views of the French curriculum point to the same issue. When he was a high school teacher, he was frustrated that France's complex, colonial past was systematically overlooked:

> If we could talk more freely about the French colonial presence in Algeria or Lebanon and so on, then maybe, just maybe, young people could then tell themselves: 'alright France's history is not all black or all white, so I can find my own place in it'.

Datitcha's quote could be rephrased to mirror KRS-One's: 'In a country that is made up of so many descendants of its former colonies, colonial history should be pumped up steadily but it's not and this has to stop'. Understanding one's past is essential for community-building. In other words, focusing on non-western cultures through hip hop is part of a broader decolonial effort that John Dewey implicitly called for in *Art as Experience*: '[T]he historic reason for the rise of the compartmental conception of fine art is that, most European museums are, among other things, memorials of the rise of nationalism and imperialism' (1934: 8). While hip hop is clearly

17. See Marzagalli and Bayselance discussing racist quotes by Voltaire and Montesquieu (2009: 210, 216).

18. The song was released in his second mixtape *Oyoki* in Lingala. The verses translate as 'I rap the street, the violence/ But I do it differently/ I traumatize Molière's language/ Have you noticed what the Enlightenment philosophers thought of black people?'

not a central topic in French curricula, the recent exhibition *Hip Hop 360* memorializing French hip hop in what is probably the largest French music museum, the Philarmonie de Paris,[19] may be a testament to changing dynamics. Furthermore, all the teachers I interviewed have frequently mentioned the ongoing support of tutors and inspectors,[20] who encouraged them to tap into the resources provided by the hip hop movement. Nevertheless, it is crucial for students to understand where they stand in the community and to discuss the reasons for which some right-wing politicians have vilified rap as 'a subculture for illiterates'.[21]

Malik provides another example of the racism attacking the national community like a cancer, to use Ibram X. Kendi's metaphor, through the story of pop singer Florent Pagny, who announced his move to Miami in order to prevent his children from learning Arabic on the playground at school.[22] Fearing that the 'refined' language of Molière would be replaced by the 'vulgar' semantics of some rappers, Pagny fails to understand the added wealth in the mastery of both. Deftly used, foreign language words can add 'flavour' to the texts, as can slang words, according to Yass. Concentrating on current forms of slang, he asked his students for synonyms of the word *somptueux* ('sumptuous') as an exercise. Students offered 'dar', an abbreviated form of 'chaudard' and possibly the *verlan* (a French slang that reverses the order of the syllables in a word) for the English word 'hard'. It conveys the idea of something that is difficult, dangerous and, by extension, laudatory.[23] Students also came up with 'hala', a word used in French North African communities to mean either chaotic or amazing, fantastic, cool.

Punchlyne offers a related anecdote that unfortunately loses in translation some of its masterful flow. told off by a manager for using the *verlan* word 'toncar' with a student, she reacts by commenting on the power dynamics at play. She felt as if her colleague was telling her that

> 'you speak like people in the hood and I'm teaching you how to speak proper French'. So I was stunned for a second and then I said 'Sir, if I say "carton" [literally cardboard], no one knows what I'm talking about. It could be a cardboard box; it could be a sheet you use to make a sign. On the other hand, if I say "toncar", everyone understands straight away that I'm referring to the homemade cardboard filter of a reefer. In other words, you want me to be clear, and I want to make it crystal clear for you that the word "toncar" is precise and consequently better suited for comprehension'.

Punchlyne corroborates Hallman's claim that introducing 'out-of-school literacy practices […] particularly when labeled as "non-mainstream" has been understood as entailing awareness and critique of societal power structures' in the education system (Hallman 2009: 38; Mahiri 2000). In her workshops, Punchlyne, like Yass, has her students reflect on the tensions that arise from language use and the ways in which mixed coding in rap can suggest new meanings and representations of the world. For Punchlyne, it is a way 'to reverse the stigma' or 'reverse the table of values', as Bourdieu has also explained (1980: 69), thereby celebrating local knowledge and the communities that create them. Not coincidentally, one of her workshops in the Calais region focused on mixing the local, working-class Ch'ti dialect with its reinterpretation by new immigrant populations.

19. For a guided tour of the exhibition, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=knfYpRdjUd4&ab_channel=PhilharmoniedeParis. Accessed 23 August 2022.

20. French K-12 teachers are individually observed every seven years or so by 'inspectors', who are sent by the French Ministry of Education. Trainee teachers are mentored by tutors who regularly meet with them and observe their classes during their first year of teaching.

21. See https://www.rtbf.be/article/punchlines-et-proces-la-longue-bataille-d-eric-zemmour-contre-le-rap-10889715. Accessed 23 August 2022.

22. https://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/pagny-ne-veut-pas-que-ses-enfants-parlent-rebeu_935139.html. Accessed 23 August 2022.

23. A French equivalent to the Urban Dictionary, 'le dictionnaire de la zone', helps source the origins, uses and meanings of the banlieue vernacular while quoting relevant rap lyrics (https://www.dictionnairedelazone.fr/dictionary/definition/dar#:~:text=Dur%2C%20difficile.,%C2%AB%20J'annonce%20%C2%BB%2C%20C.P.C.D.M.C. Accessed 23 August 2022).

The tensions around the 'proper' use of language are due to what Alejandro Quijano defines as 'the coloniality of knowledge'. The reason why some reject rap as a 'subculture for illiterates' stems precisely from the deeply ingrained notion that

> only European culture is rational, [only European culture] can contain 'subjects'- the rest are not rational, they cannot be or harbor 'subjects'. As a consequence, the other cultures are different in the sense that they are unequal, in fact inferior, by nature. They can only be objects of knowledge or/and of domination practices.
>
> (2007: 176)

The logic of the coloniality of knowledge works perfectly to invalidate and exclude non-Euro-centric cultures. As part of Black culture, hip hop can be seen as decolonial by nature. While it has been at times overtaken by commercial interests, envisioned critically, it can help teachers reclaim the wealth present in communities that have been traditionally discriminated against both socially and culturally as it gives not only form but also a distinct aesthetic to the voices and experiences (and hence knowledge) of non-dominant groups.

KNOWLEDGE AND ITS DISCOMFORT

Nevertheless, various hip hop educators have warned against a tendency to romanticize rap and have insisted that the rap young people listen to today is not unproblematic (Khalifa 2013; Leigh Kelly and Sawyer 2019). Sexist, homophobic, antisemitic, hyper-consumeristic and hyper-violent tropes need to be addressed and challenged. Both Punchlyne, who discussed Freeze Corleone with her students, and Datitcha, when he tackled Koba LaD, steered clear of a discussion around the antisemitism of the first and the sexism of the second. But Punchlyne enthusiastically embraced the challenge when I pointed out Freeze's hateful verses. Tricia Rose has covered the crux of these debates in the context of the United States, and her book (2008) is certainly a helpful guide for educators seeking to navigate through such thorny issues. As hip hop feminists have argued, it is important not to shy away from the complexity of a movement whose contradictions are not sufficient grounds to invalidate it (Morgan 1999; Pough 2004).

Because hip hop pedagogy entails a radical rethinking of both the content and form of knowledge and its transmission, it implies a certain level of discomfort or push back from students and teachers. As Bourdieu and Passeron have pointed out, the passivity required in the traditional approach to pedagogy also allows for students to enjoy 'the safety and freedom' of anonymity (1979: 65). As MG has shown, participating in a year-long project that disrupts the coloniality of knowledge builds a community of learners where this very anonymity is imperilled:

> Year after, year, they keep wanting to get together. They stay on their WhatsApp groups. Schools create such a feeling of anonymity, the 'passe ton rap d'abord' podcast provides a place where kids get their sense of self back, all the while reconnecting them with the collective.

MG jokes that there are times when the sense of unity feels a bit 'cultish'. Indeed, on the day of the recording I observed 16-year-old Soraya,[24] who

24. The students' names have been changed to maintain anonymity. The student had an Arabic first name.

responded to one of Ismaël's verses ('appris à pas dire aux filles le nom du quartier'[25]), stating that she would never date anyone from Sevran. She was immediately called out by the group for having a 'racist-like reasoning'. The exchange was fast-paced, and she withdrew from the discussion even though the person who had called her out had just upheld an equally essentialist position on the role of local culture in shaping everyone, just moments before. MG chose not to intervene, preferring to let them ponder over the exchange on their own. In other words, the podcast, like hip hop pedagogy in general, does not promise a silver lining. Some end up – if only temporarily – misunderstood or silenced while others, overly confident. At school, just as in life, human interactions are not predictable, and the critical thinking that teachers and rappers aim to bolster is not systematically what is obtained.

What is the responsibility of the educator here? Was MG right to let her students come to terms with this on their own? Would have she perpetuated a form of coloniality of knowledge had she intervened? The unease that accompanies reflexivity and doubt is unavoidable in the quest for an emancipatory form of knowledge that strives to stay true to itself. Darren Chetty and Patrick Turner (2018) made a similar argument to promote the discomfort of dialogue in hip hop education. Yass demonstrated this by the confession of his disquietude in tackling rap at the outset of the schoolyear with students who were already struggling with writing and reading:

> Reading texts, is something very important and listening to songs or people who talk about them will never replace reading a book. So, in terms of proportion, I don't think it should replace a more […] traditional pedagogy, but supplement it, yes.

These questions are worth asking and may obtain different answers, depending on the context. Has Yass, who also describes classical lexicon as 'high' and slang words as 'low', somehow internalized a sense of the hierarchy of these literacies? What texts should schoolchildren read before they can turn their attention to rap lyrics?

One way to overcome this problem may be to promote a decolonial remodelling of the literature curriculum. Just as the Mexican American Studies programme in the public high schools of Tucson (Arizona) has been foregrounding titles by Sherman Alexie, Rudolfo Anaya or Luis Rodriguez in a pledge to reconnect local students to their Indigenous roots and lived experience (Souyri 2021), the selection of books to be studied for the baccalaureate in France could also reflect the country's literary diversity.[26] Rappers from Booba[27] to Youssoupha and Kalash Criminel (who was born in Zaïre in 1995 and grew up in Sevran) have frequently referenced much overlooked authors such as Léopold Sédar Senghor, Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire. Critical race theory (Ladson-Billings 1998; Martin 2014; Lynn and Dixson 2013) and white teachers' identity studies (Jupp et al. 2019) could be helpful in bolstering French research in decolonizing curricula, which has often been the target of political witch-hunts (Heron 2021). The racist tensions Datitcha experienced as a high school teacher are explicit in this anecdote:

> One day [a colleague] told me: 'Yeah, right but you have no class management issues because you're a rapper and you dress fly'. I told her: hold on a sec ... When I passed the CAPES[28] there wasn't a 'dressing

25. 'Learnt not to tell girls the name of the hood'.

26. The complete, most recent syllabus for the French baccalaureate in literature is available at: https://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/21/Hebdo5/MENE2036974N.htm. Accessed 24 August 2022. There is not a single non-white writer in it.

27. Booba is part of the second generation of French rappers. Still active and popular today, he used to be cherished by scholars for his searing denunciation of racism and his masterful use of language and flow, but sometimes leaving admirers dumbfounded with his apparent support for right-wing views.

28. The CAPES is the national competitive exam through which middle and high school teachers are recruited.

fly' module just for me. The reason why I am good at class management is not because I say 'yo'.

Datitcha's colleagues seem to attribute his class management skills to his appearance. Because of the unspoken association between rap and ghettos, she appears to be implying that he can deal with his students because he is also from the ghetto and not because he is good at his job, which is undoubtedly hurtful. But read through the prism of Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, Datitcha's mastery of certain codes that are foreign to his colleague extends his credibility and could contribute to granting him the respect his colleague aspires to (Clay 2003). Datitcha's capacity for code-switching, much like Barack Obama's (Alim and Smitherman 2012), creates envy. What could a white teacher, who has not grown up listening to rap, never popped or krumped or graffed, do with the same students? How could hip hop knowledge be mobilized without risking cultural appropriation, without reducing hip hop to an object of knowledge and overlooking its potential contribution to the classroom? Freire's dialogic approach to education can be useful here, as can the hip hop slogan 'each one, teach one'. For hip hop knowledge to thrive at school, teachers must be determined to learn from their students and to accept that 'people teach each other, mediated by the world' (Freire 1970: 80) – that is to say, by their political and aesthetic experiences of the world.

CONCLUSION

Despite the reduced circulation of the literature on critical pedagogy, CRP and critical race theory in France (Bentouhami and Möschel 2017; Bessone 2017), certain core principles, integrated into US hip hop pedagogy direct the approaches of these French educators. They use generative themes to decolonize the curriculum, reconnecting students with the knowledge of self that Bambaataa was keen to develop and convey in teaching their own critique of the coloniality of knowledge.

Furthermore, while teachers lacking a hip hop background do not seem familiar with the concept of knowledge of self, or the history of the hip hop movement in general, they understand how crucial a part hip hop plays in their students' experiences and how the aesthetic dimension of this experience can be used to create a community of learners able to live up to KRS-One's 'each one, teach one' motto. More importantly these teachers are eager to learn alongside their students. Even though the details of their teaching practices could not be extensively discussed here, the testimonies presented allow us to reflect on the attention paid to cyphering, sampling, performance and mixed coding. In other words, the examples show the importance these educators give to the aesthetics of hip hop as a way of facilitating access to and formation of knowledge. The critical, decolonial tradition of the hip hop movement as well as its more intimate aesthetic dimension appear to be indispensable elements in fostering 'knowledge of self' for these French educators. However, as the interviews have shown, pursuing hip hop knowledge in schools is not an easy task. It raises multiple questions pertaining to the political (and sometimes controversial) nature of education in the diverse, postcolonial context of the French republic. Religious, racial, gender and class tensions often find their ways into the discussions, and scholars need to work with teachers to shed some light on these complex issues.

Dancers are underrepresented in this sample, and graffiti artists are absent. Further research is clearly necessary to shed light on hip hop pedagogy in France. Many aspects remain to be explored: the students' perception of the teachers; the impact of French hip hop pedagogies on academic performance; the form and nature of collaborations between hip hop artists and teachers. Finally, any reflection on community-building, especially one that is inspired by Freire, needs to engage with praxis or 'political practices informed by reflection' (Aronowitz 1993: 9). But none of the educators I interviewed described teaching practices that led students to take action for social justice or used youth participatory action research (Cammarota and Fine 2008) to this end the way Akom (2009) did. Further research on hip hop pedagogy in France thus needs to identify teachers and artists who already work on praxis or are interested in doing so. A first effort in that direction occured in October 2023 when the LIRCES lab at the Université Côte d'Azur in Nice, France, and the Aix-Marseille Pôle d'Innovation de Recherche et d'Enseignement pour l'Éducation (AMPIRIC) programme hosted a participatory action research workshop on hip hop pedagogy and praxis. The challenge, in the French context, will therefore be to balance the constraints of a rather rigid and demanding curriculum in primary and secondary education and the desire to carve out time and space to properly implement a praxis-oriented project. Furthermore, while the emphasis of programmes like AMPIRIC on citizenship education bodes well for a pedagogy that seeks to implement a transformative social justice approach, accusations of political indoctrination are easily triggered by pedagogies that challenge current systems of domination. A second challenge will, therefore, be to navigate these perilous political waters. Praxis-oriented programmes like the Mexican American Studies programme in Tucson, Arizona, that was shut down for a while by Republican-elected officials in 2012 (Souyri 2021) are a reminder that any large-scale attempt at change will receive push-back. For now, the field of French hip hop pedagogy is very much a new frontier for research and practice, but hopefully one that will elicit many new vocations in the near future.

REFERENCES

Akom, A. A. (2009), 'Critical hip hop pedagogy as a form of liberatory praxis', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42:1, pp. 52–66.

Alim, H. S., Baugh, J. and Bucholtz, M. (2011), 'Global ill-literacies: Hip hop cultures, youth identities, and the politics of literacy', *Review of Research in Education*, 35, pp. 120–46.

Alim, H. S. and Smitherman, G. (2012), *Articulate While Black: Barack Obama, Language, and Race in the US*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

André, A., Deneuve, P. and Carpentier, C. (2011), 'Impact de l'apprentissage coopératif sur les relations entre les élèves de l'enseignement général et ceux des classes spécialisées en fonction de la référence culturelle de deux activités physiques sportives et artistiques enseignées au collège', *Spiral-E.: Revue de recherches en éducation, supplément électronique*, 47:1, pp. 3–17, https://doi.org/10.3406/spira.2011.1716.

Aronowitz, S. (1993), 'Paulo Freire's radical democratic humanism', in P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds), *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 8–24.

Bentouhami, H. and Möschel, M. (2017), *Critical Race Theory: Une introduction aux grands textes fondateurs*, Paris: Dalloz.
Bessone, M. (2017), 'Quelle place pour la critique dans la théorie critique de la race?', *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, 142:3, pp. 359–76.
Beulaigne, S. (2021), 'Une forme scolaire de pratique en hip-hop pour passer de l'exploit individuel au show collectif', *Actes de la 4e biennale de l'AEEPS*, 7, pp. 172–77.
Bordes, V. (2003), 'Institutions et cultures émergentes. Le hip-hop comme gestion de la jeunesse', *Débats Jeunesses*, 13:1, pp. 289–97.
Bourdieu, P. (1980), 'L'identité et la représentation', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 35, pp. 63–72.
Bourdieu, P. (1998), *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J. C. (1979), *The Inheritors*, Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
Camangian, P. (2008), 'Untempered tongues: Teaching performance poetry for social justice', *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 7:2, pp. 33–55.
Cammarota, J. and Fine, M. (2008), 'Youth participatory action research', in J. Cammarota and M. Fine (eds), *Revolutionizing Education*, New York and London: Routledge, pp. 1–12.
Carinos, E. and Hammou, K. (2020), *Perspectives esthétiques sur les musiques hip-hop*, Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence.
Chang, J. (2011), *Can't Stop Won't Stop: A History of the Hip-Hop Generation*, London: Ebury Digital.
Chetty, D. and Turner, P. (2018), 'Towards a hip hop pedagogy of discomfort', *Journal of World Popular Music*, 5:1, pp. 71–87, https://doi.org/10.1558/jwpm.36674.
Clay, A. (2003), 'Keepin' it real: Black youth, hip-hop culture, and Black identity', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 46:10, pp. 1346–58, https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764203046010005.
De Cock, L. and Pereira, I. (2019), *Les pédagogies critiques*, Marseille: Agone.
Delgado, R. (1989), 'Storytelling for oppositionists and others: A plea for n arrative', in *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, pp. 71–80.
Delgado, R. and Stefancic, J. (eds) (2000), *Critical Race Theory: The Cutting Edge*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
Dewey, J. ([1934] 1958), *Art as Experience*, 1st ed., New York: Capricorn Books.
Duncan-Andrade, J. M. R. and Morrell, E. (2005), 'Turn up that radio, teacher: Popular cultural pedagogy in new century urban schools', *Journal of School Leadership*, 15:3, pp. 284–304, https://doi.org/10.1177/105268460501500304.
Emdin, C. and Adjapong, E. (eds) (2018), *#HipHopEd: The Compilation on Hip-Hop Education*, Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill.
Faure, S. and Garcia, M.-C. (2005), *Culture Hip-Hop, jeunes des cités et politiques publiques*, Paris: La Dispute.
Fieni, D. (2012), 'What a wall wants, or how graffiti thinks: Nomad grammatology in the French banlieue', *Diacritics*, 40:2, pp. 72–93.
Foucault, M. (2001), *Dits et écrits, 1954–1988. II, 1970–1975* (ed. D. Defert, F. Ewald and J. Lagrange), Paris: Quarto Gallimard.
Freire, P. (1970), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York: Teachers College Press.
Freire, P. (2021), *La pédagogie des opprimés* (ed. M. Kerhoas, É. Dupau and I. P. Pereira), Marseille: Agone.

Gay, G. (2000), *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, New York: Teachers College Press.
Gosa, T. L. (2015), 'The fifth element: Knowledge', in J. A. Williams (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hallman, H. (2009), '"Dear Tupac, you speak to me": Recruiting hip hop as curriculum at a school for pregnant and parenting teens', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42:1, pp. 36–51, https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680802612642.
Hammou, K. (2012), *Une histoire du rap en France*, Paris: La Découverte.
Hedjerassi, N., Pereira, I. P., Darder, A. P., Mayo, P. A., Institut national du professorat et de l'éducation de l'Académie de Créteil and École supérieure du professorat et de l'éducation de l'Académie de Paris (2020), *Pédagogies émancipatrices: Actualités et enjeux*, Bellecombe-en-Bauges: Éditions du Croquant.
Heron, C. (2021), 'Islamo-gauchisme: "On nage en pleine confusion" – Interview', *Le Temps*, 26 February, p. 21.
Hickey-Moody, A. (2013), 'Affect as method: Feelings, aesthetics and affective pedagogy', in R. Coleman and J. Ringrose (eds), *Deleuze and Research Methodology*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 79–95.
Ibrahim, A. (1999), 'Becoming Black: Rap and hip-hop, race, gender, identity, and the politics of ESL learning', *TESOL Quarterly*, 33:3, pp. 349–69.
Jésu, L. (2017), 'La transmission du hip-hop. Entre professionnalisation artistique et ancrage dans les quartiers populaires', *Agora débats/jeunesses*, 77:3, pp. 27–40.
Jupp, J. C., Leckie, A., Cabrera, N. and Utt, J. (2019), 'Race-evasive white teacher identity studies 1990–2015: What can we learn from 25 years of research?', *Teachers College Record*, 121:1, pp. 1–58.
Khalifa, M. (2013), 'Creating spaces for urban youth: The emergence of culturally responsive (hip-hop) school leadership and pedagogy', *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, 8:2, pp. 63–93.
Kim, J. and Pulido, I. (2015), 'Examining hip-hop as culturally relevant pedagogy', *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 12:1, pp. 17–35, https://doi.org/10.1080/15505170.2015.1008077.
Knaus, C. B. (2011), *Shut Up and Listen: Teaching Writing That Counts in Urban Schools*, New York: Peter Lang.
Ladson-Billings, G. (1995), 'Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy', *American Educational Research Journal*, 32:3, pp. 465–91.
Ladson-Billings, G. (1998), 'Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education?', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 11:1, pp. 7–24, https://doi.org/10.1080/095183998236863.
Ladson-Billings, G. (2009), *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, 2nd ed., Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass.
Ladson-Billings, G. and Tate, W. F. (1995), 'Toward a critical race theory of education', *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, 97:1, pp. 47–68.
Lafargue de Grangeneuve, L. (2008), *Politique du hip-hop: Action publique et cultures urbaines*, Toulouse: Presses universitaires du Midi.
Leigh Kelly, L. and Sawyer III, D. C. (2019), '"When keeping it real goes wrong": Enacting critical pedagogies of hip-hop in mainstream schools', *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, 9:2, pp. 7–21.
Lynn, M. and Dixson, A. (2013), *Handbook of Critical Race Theory in Education*, New York: Routledge.

Mahiri, J. (2000), 'Pop culture pedagogy and the end(s) of school', *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 44:4, pp. 382–85.
Martin, J. L. (2014), 'Critical race theory, hip hop, and Huck Finn: Narrative inquiry in a high school english classroom', *Urban Review*, 46:2, pp. 244–67, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-013-0250-9.
Marzagalli, S. and Baysselance, J. (eds) (2009), *Comprendre la traite négrière atlantique*, Bordeaux: SCÉRÉN/CRDP Aquitaine.
McGlynn, A. (2007), 'The native tongues', in M. Hess (ed.), *Icons of Hip-Hop: An Encyclopedia of the Movement, Music, and Culture*, vol. 1, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLO, pp. 269–70.
Moirin, J.-Y., Le Guevel, A.-M. and Lauret, J.-M. (2012), *État des lieux des dispositifs d'éducation artistique et culturelle*, Ministère de l'Education Nationale and Ministère de la Culture et de la Communitcation, https://www.education.gouv.fr/etat-des-lieux-des-dispositifs-d-education-artistique-et-culturelle-4445. Accessed 17 April 2024.
Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D. and Gonzalez, N. (1992), 'Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms', *Theory into Practice*, 31:2, pp. 132–41, https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849209543534.
Morgan, J. (1999), *When Chickenheads Come Home to Roost: My Life as a Hip-Hop Feminist*, New York: Simon & Schuster.
Morgan, M. and Bennett, D. (2011), 'Hip-hop & the global imprint of a Black cultural form', *Dædalus*, 140:2, pp. 176–96, https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_00086.
Morrell, E. and Duncan-Andrade, J. M. R. (2002), 'Promoting academic literacy with urban youth through engaging hip-hop culture', *English Journal*, 91:6, pp. 88–92.
Patard, J.-M. (2009), 'Du rap au grégorien', Ph.D. dissertation, Nantes: Université de Nantes.
Petchauer, E. (2007), '"Welcome to the underground": Portraits of worldview and education among hip-hop collegians', Ph.D. dissertation, Virginia Beach, VA: Regent University.
Petchauer, E. (2009), 'Framing and reviewing hip-hop educational research', *Review of Educational Research*, 79:2, pp. 946–78.
Petchauer, E. (2015), 'Starting with style: Toward a second wave of hip-hop education research and practice', *Urban Education*, 50:1, pp. 78–105.
Porfilio, B. J. and Viola, M. J. (2012), *Hip-Hop(e): The Cultural Practice and Critical Pedagogy of International Hip-Hop*, vol. 56, New York: Peter Lang.
Pough, G. D. (2004), *Check It While I Wreck It: Black Womanhood, Hip-Hop Culture, and the Public Sphere*, Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press.
Pulido, I. (2009), '"Music fit for us minorities": Latinas/os' use of hip hop as pedagogy and interpretive framework to negotiate and challenge racism', *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 42:1, pp. 67–85.
Quijano, A. (2007), 'Coloniality and modernity/rationality', *Cultural Studies*, 21:2&3, pp. 168–78, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353.
Rose, T. (2008), *The Hip Hop Wars: What We Talk about When We Talk about Hip Hop – and Why It Matters*, Middletown, CT: BasicCivitas.
Seidel, S. S., Simmons, T. and Lipset, M. (2022), *Hip Hop Genius 2.0: Remixing High School Education*, 2nd ed., Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
Shor, I. (1993), 'Education is politics, Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy', in P. McLaren and P. Leonard (eds), *Paulo Freire: A Critical Encounter*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 25–35.

Shusterman, R. (2019), 'L'expérience esthétique: De l'analyse à l'éros', *Nouvelle revue d'esthétique*, 24:2, pp. 111–28.
Smith-Maddox, R. and Solórzano, D. G. (2002), 'Using critical race theory, Paulo Freire's problem-posing method, and case study research to confront race and racism in education', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8:1, pp. 66–84.
Souyri, É. (2021), 'Pédagogie de la résistance: Les lycées de Tucson et la lutte pour les Mexican-American studies', *Mouvements*, 107:3, pp. 145–55, https://doi.org/10.3917/mouv.107.0145.
Souyri, É. (2024), 'Young M.A and a few others: Queering blackness in the classroom', *Popular Culture Studies Journal*, 12:1, pp. 120–35.
Stovall, D. (2006), 'We can relate: Hip-hop culture, critical pedagogy, and the secondary classroom', *Urban Education*, 41:6, pp. 585–602, https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085906292513.
Tripier-Mondancin, O. (1998), 'A propos du rap. Racines, évolution, scène française, perspectives pédagogiques', *Musiques émergentes des trente dernières années et adolescents*, October, pp. 32–41, https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00609569. Accessed 18 April 2024.
Wighting, M., Nisbet, D. and Spaulding, L. S. (2009), 'Relationships between sense of community and academic achievement: A comparison among high school students', *The International Journal of the Humanities*, 7:3, pp. 63–71.
Weill, B. (2018), 'Le hip-hop comme expérience esthétique fondamentale: Enjeux et mises en perspective', *Revue de l'enfance et de l'adolescence*, 97:1, pp. 177–95, https://doi.org/10.3917/read.097.0177.
Williams, A. D. (2007), 'The critical cultural cypher: Hip hop's role in engaging students in a discourse of enlightenment', Ph.D. dissertation, College Park, MD: University of Maryland, https://drum.lib.umd.edu/handle/1903/6989. Accessed 18 April 2024.
Williams, J. A. (ed.) (2015), *The Cambridge Companion to Hip-Hop*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139775298.
Yosso, T. J. (2006), *Critical Race Counterstories along the Chicana/Chicano Educational Pipeline*, New York and London: Routledge.

SUGGESTED CITATION

Souyri, Emilie (2024), '*Le hip hop à l'école*: Practising the "fifth element" as a pedagogical tool in French schools', *Global Hip Hop Studies*, Special Issue: 'Droppin' Knowledge: The Fifth Element in Hip Hop Culture', 5:1&2, pp. 111–31, https://doi.org/10.1386/ghhs_00085_1

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Emilie Souyri is a lecturer in US studies at the Université Côte d'Azur and working at the LIRCES, laboratoire Interdisciplinaire Récits, Cultures et Sociétés. Her research centres on pedagogies inspired by critical race theory and critical pedagogy. She recently published 'Pour une pédagogie hip hop en France', in A. Derobertmasure, M. Demeuse and M. Bocquillon (eds), *L'École à travers la culture pop* (Mardaga Supérieur, 2022) and 'Young M.A and a few others: queering blackness in the classroom' (*Popular Culture Studies Journal*, 2024). Since 2021 she has been co-organizing, with Jean-Luc Primon (Unité de Recherche Migrations et Sociétés [URMIS]), a series of symposia entitled 'Race in All Its Forms: Visibility and Invisibility' where race is discussed

in various geographical and conceptual contexts from Black Marxism in the United States to racism in Italy.

Contact: Université Côte d'Azur, Campus Carlone, 98 Bd Edouard Herriot, BP 3209, France.
E-mail: emilie.souyri@univ-cotedazur.fr

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9872-0043